

Tye Lane Solar Farm Community Liaison Group (CLG)

Inaugural meeting minutes

6.30pm, Tuesday 23rd April 2024

Parish Room, Ship Lane, Bramford, IP8 4AN

Members

Name	Role/organisation
Laura Butters	Community Grants and Development Manager for Mid Suffolk District Council.
Councillor James Caston	Bramford Ward (Mid Suffolk District Council)
Councillor Chris Chambers	Gipping Valley division (Suffolk County Council)
Rob Clements	CARE Suffolk
Bron Curtis	Planning Department, Mid Suffolk District Council
Councillor Adrienne Marriott	Blakenham ward (Mid Suffolk District Council)
Anne Raymond (via Teams)	Owner of Little Sage Hill Campsite at Copenhagen Cottage on Tye Lane.
Councillor Caroline Wolton	Bramford Parish Council

In attendance

Name	Role/organisation
Ian Booker	Engena Ltd
Mark Collins	Construction Manager, EDF Renewable
Kerry MacPhee	Community Liaison Officer, EDF Renewables UK
Roy Walker	Site Manager, EDF Renewables UK

Apologies

Name	Role/organisation
Chloe Anderson	Planning Enforcement Team, Mid Suffolk District Council
Darren Cuming	Head of Development, EDF Renewables UK
Ed Foden	Business Development Manager, EDF Renewables UK
PC Katie Jarrett	Suffolk Police
Samantha Main	CARE Suffolk
Councillor Lester Powell	Chair, Bramford Parish Council

1. Welcome

KMP welcomed the group.

2. Introductions and apologies

KMP provided an introduction. See above for apologies.

3. Election of a Chair

The group chose to forgo the appointment of a chair and work together as a group going forward.

4. Terms of Reference

The group accepted the terms of reference as proposed.

A question was raised around how external members can bring questions to the group. KMP suggested that representative speak with their networks and share updates and encourage questions from their communities and parishes which can be discussed at CLG's and then shared by the representatives of the group with their communities.

5. Project update – Mark Collins

Feedback received through the planning process and incorporated changes to plans include the following:

- More planting is proposed to act as screening.
- A greater set back between the fence and boundaries of properties and public footpath.
- A plan of action to enhance biodiversity on site, agreed with local people.

The construction team are now busy preparing for pre-construction works and addressing planning conditions. Grupotec Renewables Ltd has been appointed as the EPC (Engineering, Procurement and Construction contractor) for the construction and are in the process of awarding contracts for supporting work.

Archaeology

Archaeological trial trenching onsite is due to be completed by the start of May 2024. Working closely with Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service, any findings will be dealt with appropriately, and with care, to help inform the local history of the area. Some exciting stories of the area have been uncovered and we look forward to sharing more details with you in the coming months.

Drainage

We are drafting a drainage strategy which will need to be approved by Mid Suffolk District Council

Construction Traffic Management Plan

During construction of the solar farm, traffic to the site will be regulated by a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP). The CTMP is a key planning condition which has been submitted to Mid Suffolk District Council for approval. The plan proposes that construction traffic and deliveries will travel south down the B1113 and access the site from Tye Lane. This document also controls the arrival of vehicles at site. Work has been completed clearing vegetation in advance of the bird breeding season to prepare for road improvement works to Tye Lane to accommodate deliveries, including construction of three passing bays and slight widening of the site entrance. The CTMP will include work start and finish times, which EDF Renewables contractors must adhere to.

Biodiversity

Integral to the development of the solar farm are EDF Renewables' plans to improve biodiversity on the site, including planting a tree belt, new hedges and wildflower meadow planting. As a result of EDF Renewables meeting local representatives, the species mix for planting has been agreed, doubling the number of trees within the hedgerows and increasing the species mix to include locally

present species. Gaps below the fencing and access points at key points along the fencing will provide access for badgers and mammals and bat and bird boxes will be installed across the site. Continuing surveys are ongoing to monitor for new badger setts onsite. Additional areas providing habitat for skylarks within the arable fields of the wider landholding will be maintained throughout the life of the project. A series of interpretation boards will be erected at locations discussed with the community and EDF Renewables will be seeking input on what content should be included in the boards

6. Community Benefit Fund

KMP confirmed that the community will receive £20k per year for the lifetime of the project, equivalent to £400 per megawatt. She gave the group an overview of how the Community Benefit Fund will look and that independent third parties will administer the fund but the community will form a panel to inform on how it is spent. As the project nears construction completion, third parties will be invited to submit fund management proposals which will be scored against criteria such as knowledge of the local area, prior experience and proximity.

KMP requested that the group begin considering how they would like the fund to be split amongst parishes or, if preferred, they would like a central pot. KMP reminded the community that they can help develop frameworks and criteria for fund spend. KMP confirmed that EDF Renewables UK will pay for the administration of the fund.

7. AOB

The group sought reassurances that EDF Renewables UK will mitigate against issues that have come up previously around usage of inappropriate paths, disturbance of badger sets and archaeological oversights.

The group asked how they can guarantee that planning conditions aren't ignored. MC reassured the group that usually, fencing would go up around a site, identifying accessible areas and the absence of a perimeter fence meant some workers did indeed use footpath 8A. Contractors will be reminded via briefings of the importance of adherence to all conditions.

The group reminded MC that currently the project has felt like a catalogue of mistakes one after the other with one thing being said and another done. MC reassured the group that lessons have been learnt and that EDF Renewables UK takes responsibility for the oversights.

The group asked for reassurances on how they can communicate on any issues that may arise. The formation of the CLG is the primary forum and the group can get in touch with KMP at any time with anything.

8. Date and venue of next meeting

The group are happy with a meeting every second month and have requested that they alternate between daytime and evening meetings.

Next meeting 2pm, Wednesday 26th June 2024 at the Parish Room.