

Dogger Bank Creyke Beck Converter Station Working Group

Minutes of Meeting

Location: Cottingham Methodist Hall

Date: 8 March 2012

Time: 18.30 – 21.00

Attendees:

Cllr Don Hardwick (for Cllr Gary Cooper) – Cottingham Parish Council
Cllr Stephen McCloud – Rowley Parish Council
Cllr Peter Roustoby – Skidby Parish Council
Ian Booth – St Mary's Church, Cottingham
Cllr Ros Jump – ERYC Cottingham North Ward
Neville Jones – CPRE East Yorkshire
Steve George – Beverley Minster
Ruth Atkinson – Humber Archaeology Partnership
Rod Mackey – East Riding Archaeology Society
Helen Reynolds – Joint Hull and East Riding Local Access Forum
Lee Clarke – Forewind – General Manager
Mark Baxter – Forewind – Onshore Project Manager
John Hughes – Forewind – Electrical Engineer
Nikki Smith – Forewind - Onshore Consent & Stakeholder Manager
Andrew Acum – Mercury – Group Facilitator

Apologies:

Cllr Gary Cooper – Cottingham Parish Council
Cllr Dominic Peacock – ERYC Minster and Woodmansey Ward
Cllr Tony Galbraith – ERYC Dale Ward
Cllr Kerri Harold – Woodmansey Parish Council
Gordon Scaife – Cottingham Wild Spaces Group
James Taylor – Beverley Parks Local Nature Reserve
Susan Hunt – ERYC Planning Department
Doug Jennings – Cottingham Civic Society

Item No.	Remarks	Action
1.	Election of Chair The meeting was opened by Andrew Acum who announced that Cllr Ros Jump had been elected as chair. Cllr Jump then took the group through the terms of reference which were agreed by the group.	
2.	Introduction to Forewind and the Dogger Bank Wind Farm - Lee Clarke of Forewind A question was asked about how much electricity was scheduled to connect at Creyke Beck from the Dogger Bank	

Zone. The answer was 2GW out of the 6GW of grid connections currently agreed between Forewind and National Grid.

A question was asked about how many turbines would be involved in the scheme as a whole. The answer was that it depends on the size of turbine used. Technology is developing all the time and turbine capacity is increasing. However, it was estimated that assuming a 5MW turbine which is current industry standard, around 2,000 turbines would be required in total.

A question was asked about the size of the Dogger Bank area. The answer was that it is 3,350 square miles or approximately the same size as North Yorkshire.

A question was asked about where the turbines would be sourced from. The answer was that it is too early in the project to look at procurement. This process will begin once consent for the project has been granted.

3. **What is a converter station? - John Hughes of Forewind**

A question was asked about how big a footprint the converter station would require. The answer was 2 hectares/5 acres per GW, so a total of 4 hectares/10 acres of permanent land take for the 2GW of converter stations at Creyke Beck. Additional land may be required on a permanent basis for drainage or landscaping, and on a temporary basis during construction. A 6m wide access road would also be required.

A question was asked about how far apart the two converter stations would be. The answer was that this had not yet been decided and would form part of the group exercise.

A question was asked about whether the two projects would require two different cable circuits. The answer was yes but that they would be installed along the same route corridor. For clarity, one circuit includes two DC cables plus any additional fibre-optic telecommunications cables.

A question was asked about how long the construction would take. The answer was approximately two years per project but that Forewind are looking at options to construct the projects in parallel to reduce the total time taken. The actual construction programme will be decided after consent

is granted, by the organisation that will build the project.

A question was asked about whether work on the cable route would disrupt cycle routes or public footpaths. The answer was that some public rights of way may be temporarily affected. The construction would be likely to be done in 1km sections which may require temporary closure of public rights of way for up to one month. However, where closures are required, mitigation measures will be put in place.

A question was asked about whether the two cable circuits could be laid at the same time. The answer was that this would be difficult as they are two different projects which may have two different sets of investors and two different contractors. The two projects would work within the same easement but it is not possible to say at this stage whether they would be laid at the same time.

A question was asked about what was meant by “security of supply” with respect to the interconnectors. The answer was that interconnectors already exist between the UK and France and the Netherlands which allow the UK to take advantage of different markets and levels of demand, e.g. buying nuclear electricity from France and exporting wind and gas electricity when price differentials are favourable.

4. **The site selection process so far - Mark Baxter of Forewind**

The presentation explained how Forewind had refined the study area through the identification of physical constraints to arrive at the preferred sector – Sector A - in the parish of Woodmansey. It was noted that there was no representative from Woodmansey Parish Council in the meeting. Forewind acknowledged this and offered to brief the Woodmansey representative directly after the meeting. *Post meeting note – Forewind presented to Woodmansey Parish Council on Monday 19 March.*

A question was raised about how Forewind are consulting landowners. Forewind explained that they are consulting landowners directly or through their appointed agents and that all landowners within Sector A had been informed about the decision to select Sector A.

A question was asked about why the existing substation could not be replaced by one which would perform both the

role of a substation and converter station. There are two aspects to this answer. Firstly, the substation and converter station are not inter-changeable as they have separate technical functions and therefore there would always be a need for these two separate facilities. Secondly, Creyke Beck is a key element of National Grid's highly interconnected high voltage transmission system and provides electricity to the local distribution company in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Major works to replace or remove Creyke Beck substation would have a significant impact on the national grid system. Forewind had looked at trying to locate the converter station/s on brownfield land adjacent to Creyke Beck substation but it was not big enough.

No objections or challenges were made to the site selection process and Forewind's selection of Sector A as the preferred sector in which to microsite the converter station/s.

5. **Exercise on micro-siting the converter station**

The group split into three smaller groups and undertook an exercise on siting two 1GW converter stations within Sector A, given the real-life constraints. At the end of the exercise, each group explained their choices and fed back their thoughts. A photograph was taken of each group's proposal.

Key points included:

- Views from the A1079 to Beverley Minster are particularly good from the north western end of the A1079. Views are restricted near to the railway bridge due to tree foliage
- The eastern end of the A1079 has restricted views of the Minster and location on the eastern side of the railway line would be better. There is also a higher embankment at this point which would help screen views from the south
- Existing woodland could be used to screen the converter stations in some positions
- New trees would have to be planted to screen the converter station/s in some areas and these would take several years to grow
- An earth embankment could also be used to help screen the site but in a flat landscape, the embankment itself would become a feature.
- Locating the converter station/s in the middle of Sector A may block views between St Mary's Church

and Beverley Minster

- Locating the converter station north of the A1079 might give rise to creeping industrialisation of the rural area between Cottingham and Beverley. At the moment, the A1079 acts as a barrier to development on the agricultural land on the north side
- Burying the converter station would solve all landscape and visual impacts
- Any lighting could be focused down at the ground so as not to impact landscape views
- There are a large number of archaeological records in the area so archaeological records are unlikely to influence the siting of the converter station/s but it will be important to consider how archaeology will be dealt with in the construction methodology
- Viewing Beverley Minster between two converter stations is considered almost as bad as blocking the view altogether, as it affects the setting
- General preference to reduce the height of the buildings – i.e. larger footprint with lower height.

The outcome of a previous workshop with statutory consultees was also presented to the group. Humber Archaeology Partnership asked why they had been invited to the local stakeholder workshop rather than the statutory consultee workshop. Forewind said they would find out and report back.

6. **Question and Answer session**

There were no further questions.

7. **Next steps**

The micro-siting of the converter station and hence the AC cable route will be developed by Forewind based on feedback both from this group and an earlier workshop with statutory consultees. Discussions with landowners are ongoing and Forewind hope to have a revised micro-site proposal by the end of March, allowing for an Environmental Impact Assessment to take place between April and August 2012. Consultation on the draft Environmental Statement will then take place in the autumn.

8. **Circulation of minutes and attendance**

It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting and the presentation slides would be made available on the

Forewind website within ten working days and would also be sent directly to all attendees. It was agreed that minutes would also be sent directly to all parish clerks and that parish clerks would be invited to attend future meetings as observers. Also if any invitees are unable to attend it is important that they arrange a substitute so that every area is represented.

9. **Next meeting**

The next meeting will be in May and will focus on the appearance of the converter station. Forewind were asked to bring along examples of possible cladding materials.

All attendees were happy with the current venue. It was pointed out that many parish councils have their AGMs in May so dates will need to be circulated well in advance.