

**Progress Power 'Meet the Team' briefing session**

Eye Community Centre – Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October, 6.30pm

Attendees

**Suffolk County Council:** Cllr Guy McGregor (Hoxne & Eye)

**Mid Suffolk District Council:** Cllr David Burn (Palgrave)

**Brome and Oakley Parish Council:** Cllr Ursula Halton

**Eye Town Council:** Cllr Richard Berry; Cllr Andrew Evitt

**Mellis Parish Council:** Cllr Diana Kearsley

**Yaxley Parish Council:** Cllr John Hawes; Cllr Ian Luff

**Eye Neighbourhood Plan Group:** Peter Gould

**Suffolk Preservation Society:** Phil Butler

**Landowners and agents:** Mr Richard Hammond; Mrs Julie Hammond; Mrs Jacobs; Mr Jacobs; Mr Graham Ford; Mr Robert Bryce; Ms Eleanor Havers; Mr Nick Durrant; Mr Jack Glover

**Drax Group plc:** Thaleia Melliou; Duncan Thew; Robert Warren; Matt Wiley

**National Grid Company plc:** Belinda Farrelly; Aileen Smith; Steve Knight-Gregson; Matthew Bell; James Dear

**Invited/apologies:** Thrandeston Parish Council; Cllr Michael Burke (MSDC, Eye)

Introduction

- TM (Drax) gave an overview of current activities re. discharging the Development Consent Order (DCO) requirements, archaeology and unexploded ordinance (UXO) surveys.

Changes to the power plant design

- DT (Drax) talked through a potential 3D aerial visualisation of the proposed power station, noting that the gatehouse was not required, there would be a single stack with height of 35m (compliant with the DCO requirement) and that the design review process will address aspects such as colour cladding profile, fencing type and colour. The landscaping proposals were being worked on at present building on the outline scheme.
- Drax were asked if there are plans to use the southern section and if that area could be given over to the local community to develop as an environmental resource. TM explained that some of the area may be needed for future maintenance and that it's too early at the moment to say if part of it could be given over to the local community.
- Drax suggested that the northwest corner of the site where no archaeology excavation will take place and findings will be preserved "in situ" might be set aside for wildlife or similar use. This will be included in the Drax landscaping propositions.

### TCPA application in support of the Access Road construction

- RW (Drax) explained that there will shortly be a planning application to Mid Suffolk for hedge removal for the new access off the A140 and junction construction. The work to hedgerows will take place before 1 March to address bird nesting considerations. Some sections need to be removed, but others may only be coppiced/lopped to provide adequate sight lines.
- It was queried whether users of Leys Lane, in particular horse riders (as well as dog walkers), will be able to use the highway safely during access road construction works. Drax explained that maintenance of public access will be included within the Construction Traffic Management Plan submission.

### National Grid update on substation

- AS (NGC) gave an update on the National Grid works, explaining that it has been possible to reduce the size of the electricity substation and height of equipment therein compared to that consented through the DCO, resulting in:
  - A 40% smaller Gas Insulated Substation (GIS) building
  - Likely smaller substation footprint
  - 12.2m high gantries compared to 12.5m
  - 10m high GIS building compared to 12-13m in the DCO
  - A replacement pylon 55m high compared to 58m in DCO
- The group discussed the design of the substation building. Local community representatives voiced their expectations from early design discussions with Progress Power and the Design Principles Document that it would look like a barn. A number of participants sought reassurance that the objectives of the design principles would be implemented.
- AS explained that design details will form part of the design workshops that are planned to start in January next year. NGC committed to provide further design information (in the form of a 3D model) ahead of the first workshop in order for this to be circulated or shared to the community.
- Drax also suggested a “pre-meet” or “introduction” to the design workshops where parties could discuss design principles, set out the process for the subsequent workshops and also use the 3D visuals (if already available by that point) as the basis for their conversation. The meeting participants were open to the idea as way to facilitate a more constructive discussion.

### Design workshops and other key dates

- TM (Drax) noted that a provisional date of 17 January had been identified for the first design workshop with local community representatives and that there would be a second design workshop with local authority officers. RW (Drax) also explained that there will be some independent design review input to this and that Drax are now exploring this with the Design Council who will appoint an independent Design Review expert.
- The local community representatives asked that revised proposals are circulated following the first workshop for further review and comment. Drax agreed that the

community representatives would be involved in both the first and the second workshop.

- Drax outlined some key project dates, subject to the capacity auction's successful outcome:
  - Capacity auction – 6 February 2018
  - Appoint contractors – end March 2018
  - Complete substation access road and allow NGC access to substation site – 1 Dec 2018
  - Break ground at main power station site – as early as 1 December 2018
- Drax highlighted the intention to form a local liaison group to convene regularly during the construction period and discuss construction-related issues that may be of interest to community members.
- Drax explained that an initial meeting would be held before construction commences and that the PCs meeting was the vehicle for community liaison until then. The community representatives agreed that forming a local liaison group would be both beneficial and necessary.

#### Progress Power Community Benefit Fund

- TM (Drax) detailed the terms and conditions of the PPL Community Benefit Fund which will become available to the local communities to manage and spend on worthy causes that benefit local members. Drax stressed their intention to keep this a local fund and not over-extend the list of communities to be benefited to any other than the ones in direct vicinity to the project. Meeting participants agreed with this suggestion and welcomed the agreement.
- Drax explained that the latest draft is in the hands of the Suffolk County Council and Mid Suffolk District Council planning officers and they will be sharing this with parish councils in time.