

## **Note of meeting of the Staveley Solar Farm Community Liaison Group held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> July in Wing Village Hall**

### **Present:**

Doug Reid	Staveley Solar Action Group
Jane Potter	South Luffenham Parish Council
Ruth Blinch	Manton Parish Council
Jayne Williams	Pilton Parish Meeting
Philip Giles	Morcott Parish Council
David Riley	Anglian Water
Alex Riley	Anglian Water
Eric Montmean	TotalEnergies
Thierry Chevrot	TotalEnergies (via Teams)
Yann Bourles	TotalEnergies
Rhonda Miller	TotalEnergies

Apologies from Cllr Andrew Johnson, Edith Weston PC and North Luffenham PC.

After general introductions Eric Montmean gave an update on planning. He explained the role of Bluestone in the development and clarified that if planning was approved, TotalEnergies will be in control of the project.

### **Planning update**

The planning officer at Rutland County Council is still waiting for feedback from the Landscape and Conservation Consultees before he can finalise his committee report. It is likely, therefore that the application will be heard either at the Planning Meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> September, or at a specific committee convened solely to discuss the proposal.

Eric explained that the technical comments submitted didn't have red flags but the landscape consultee feedback still pending will be important. He understands that the community still has a negative view of the proposal, while the objective of this CLG is to liaise together between the project team and the community to clarify all the benefits that this scheme will bring to the community and discuss how the project team can address the main concerns from the community to make this project a success for the community.

**Post meeting note:** We now know that the application will not be heard at the general meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> but will be heard at a specific meeting held for that purpose. No date as yet.

### **Introduction to Construction Manager**

Eric introduced Thierry Chevrot via Teams. Thierry is our Construction Manager and he spoke about his plans to minimise disturbance during construction and he took account of the concerns of local residents.

He spoke about the pull out tests which were planned for August, where they would perform 30 piling tests. As there was concern about the noise and potential vibration during these tests, Eric suggested that a site visit should be organised for residents. This was agreed and Rhonda will send

out an invitation after the meeting. It was decided that during this visit, piling tests should be done as close to the village as possible, to show likely impact, as Jayne pointed out that her house is very close to the site. Thierry agreed that there would be some noise but should not be any vibrations.

Thierry explained that when construction started they would probably have more machines on site, so that the work could be concluded quickly, minimising the length of any disturbance.

Trenching the cables would be the main issue, but again, they would use as much machinery as possible in order to get the work done quickly.

At all times they would liaise with local residents to agree the best times to work.

There was a conversation about getting equipment to site and lorries going through the village of Morcott. Thierry explained that a circulation plan had been submitted to the Local Authority but it was pointed out that the Local Authority don't know the pinch points in the village and would be unaware of areas that could be a potential hazard. It was noted that there is an area near some almshouses where people park illegally and this would be a hazard.

It was agreed that if planning permission is granted, we will convene a meeting with locals to discuss the proposed route for vehicles and see if there are alternatives.

Thierry explained that the total construction time would be 12 months, with piling works taking approximately 4 months. The timeline would be dependent on getting planning permission, but if planning was granted in August, construction would begin in January and piling work in April. The site would likely be operational in mid 2026. TotalEnergies will share the schedule once it is finalised.

Thierry explained that laying the cable between Wing and Oakham will require trenching and backfilling works. Preliminary surveys have been carried out and further survey work will be done.

Thierry also spoke briefly about the potential opportunities for local SME's to gain business opportunities and also the potential job opportunities.

Rhonda explained that as a company our reputation is extremely important and our ethos is to be seen as 'good neighbours.' We will listen to concerns and work with communities to reach a suitable result.

### **Terms of reference**

Rhonda explained some changes already agreed to the ToR – namely to state clearly that being a part of the CLG does not imply any support for the proposed development, and that membership is not limited to one specific person from each Parish, but can be any member of the Parish Council/ Meeting.

It was highlighted that the most affected will be Morcott and Pilton and a question was asked as to why the other parishes were invited to attend.

Rhonda explained that the original invitation had been sent to all of the parishes that attended the consultation, so as not to miss anyone out. Jane Potter explained that her parish attended to show

support for the community and also to keep up with what is planned in case future plans affect their community.

It was agreed that there should be an independent Chair and that we should set up a community interest company.

It was further suggested that the percentage of funds for the community benefit fund allocations should be set by independent mediation.

Members stated again that they feel that £40,000 per annum is derisory. When asked if the fund was to be index linked, Eric clarified that it will be.

**AOB**

Alex Riley explained that he will be leaving Anglian Water and introduced David Riley who will attend in future.

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting will be 19<sup>th</sup> September.