

## Suffolk ONE Offshore Windfarm Notes and Updates

### Background

This note summarises the information we have on the preferred underground DC electric cable routes for the proposed offshore Suffolk ONE Wind Farm.

The Cable Route enables DC electric current to be transferred from the offshore windfarm to the National Grid via a converter substation (to convert the DC to AC current) situated in Bramford. The preferred cable route runs to the north of Ipswich, from landfall at Bawdsey to Bramford.

The cable route cuts through the Parish to the north of the village and its Church, and traverses Church Road and Butts Road between the village centre and Culpho, before continuing along the valley towards Tuddenham.

### Playford residents are invited to let their Parish Council know:

- If they have, at this stage, any comments they have so that the Council can represent these in the Village consultation.
- If the Parish Council should convene a village meeting to discuss the plans (the Parish Council suggest a good time for such a meeting would be following the open meeting which is scheduled for June / July – *see local consultative arrangements below*)

### Main points to note:

- Comments and / or objections on the whole Wind Farm proposals (offshore construction and construction of the underground cable routes) should be made by Friday 27 April (following a 30 day extension to the original 30th March deadline).
- The final consent application is scheduled to be submitted in Nov 2012.
- There is a period of one year following submission for a decision on allowing the construction of the wind farm and cable corridors.
- If approved, a construction licence would be granted for 50 years.
- Allowing for the maximum time scheduled for consideration of the planning application and subsequent decision (and not allowing additional time for planning of consultative delays), the earliest construction would start would appear to be 2014.

## Playford Parish Council March 2012

### Local consultative arrangements:

- Playford, Great Bealings and Little Bealings Parish Councils are each representing their own parishes.
- There is a further open consultative meeting, which residents from all three parishes are invited to scheduled for June / July, where more details will be available.

### Q and A (from discussions at the Parish Council meeting 7 March 2012):

**Q1) *Why aren't the existing overhead power lines (from Sizewell) being utilised to transfer wind generated electricity onto the National Grid?***

- If it were possible, this option would have been preferred. However, the Sizewell Overhead Lines' spare capacity will be used by Sizewell C and the Gt. Gabbard wind farm.

**Q2) *Why has Bawdsey (a very unstable coastline) been identified as the landfall for the cables?***

- Because of the environmental fragility of the coast at Bawdsey, the plan allows for the cables to be buried under the coast

**Q3) *How disruptive is the construction going to be?***

- To try to minimise disruption, the work will be carried out in sections. To facilitate the construction machinery, a temporary road will be built alongside the cable trenches.
- A further consultation meeting with local communities will be held in June/July when more details will be known and when, hopefully, there will be more details in this regard.

**Q4) *Can you describe the construction stages: how many contractors are involved?***

- It's too soon to know in detail (please see 3. above). But the construction will create employment for hundreds over the 10 year construction period.
- Due to current planning law, it is not possible to apply for consent to put in capacity for extra cables (which will be required if Anglia 2 and 3 are developed). Additional capacity would mean an effective working area of 35meters width within the overall 160meter survey area rather than 24 metres if only one cable was laid. If this remains, and the wind farm is approved and built with only one cable, there is the possibility, in the future, of further disruption for more cable laying should the second and third phases are approved. Contractors are working the Dr Dan Poulter, the local MP to see what can be done.

**Q5) *How long will the disruption be for Playford?***

- If the going is good, the intention is to lay around 1km of cable each week. (assuming no major disruptions e.g. finding another Sutton Hoo - they will have archaeologists working with them in case of any interesting finds)
- There may be more detail available during the further consultative meeting in June / July (see Qu3). There is already concern from Great Bealings regarding Boot Street. That road closure will also have an impact on Playford, in addition to the disruption to Butts Road and Church Road during the construction.

**Q6) *What compensation for communities is offered during the disruption?***

- Landowners over whose land the cable is being laid will be compensated.
- At the moment there are no plans for amenities' funds for villages but that is not to say that something may not be considered during the consultation.

**Q7) *How will valuable trees, woods and other environmental features be protected and preserved during the construction?***

- The constructors intention is "...to put back as found" as far as it is possible. However, trees directly in the way will have to be cut down and will not be replaced (which is why they are not going further north as there is too much woodland on that route).
- Hedgerows can be re-instated and the impression at the meeting was that every step would be taken to ensure that, as far as possible, environmental features would be protected.
- The contractors have completed several studies and surveys and the Environment Agency, Natural England, English Heritage and RSPB, amongst others, have all been consulted.
- The 160m "corridor" allows for a bit of wriggle room around anything proved to be particularly sensitive.

**Q8) *Following the work, how will access for general maintenance and monitoring be achieved?***

- There will be an access point every 900 metres with an inspection pit accessed by a manhole cover.

**Q9) *What can be build on, or adjacent to the cable route once its completed?***

**Q10) *What precedent for future construction alongside the cable route might be set?***

**Q11) *Is there a commitment to deny the cable route becoming a proxy justification for other development in the future?***

- There will be an opportunity to ask and receive answers to these questions at the consultation meeting planned for June / July