

Mynydd y Gwair Wind Farm Community Liaison Group Minutes



8 November 2016

The inaugural meeting of the Mynydd y Gwair Wind Farm Community Liaison Group

Attendees

Philip McDonnell, Chair
Brigitte Rowlands, West Glamorgan Commoners Association
Dean Howard, Highways & Transportation Street Works & Winter Service Manager, City and County of Swansea
Inspector Ralph Harris, South Wales Police
Councillor Kevin Griffiths, Pontarddulais Town and Community Council
Councillor Robert Jones, Mawr Community Council
Sergeant Philip Morris, South Wales Police
Councillor Wyn Morgan, Penllergaer Community Council
Tim James, Construction Manager, Innogy Renewables UK Ltd
Mark Lewis, Innogy Renewables UK Ltd
Angharad Davies, Cadno Communications Ltd
Sarah Jones, Cadno Communications Ltd
Catrin Alun, simultaneous translator

Apologies

Councillor Paul Newman, Pontlliw and Tircoed Community Council

Welcome and introductions

The Chair, Philip McDonnell, welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that the purpose of the group is to provide a forum for the exchange of information during the construction of Mynydd y Gwair Wind Farm. The Chair introduced himself and explained he has been invited as an independent facilitator of the group. The Chair introduced Angharad Davies and Sarah Jones from an independent communications company employed by innogy Renewables UK Ltd (innogy) who will provide secretariat support to the group. The group introduced themselves.

The Chair introduced Catrin Alun, the simultaneous translator, and encouraged the use of Welsh during the meeting.

The Chair explained that there are two other groups dealing with matters arising from the wind farm:

- The Commoners' Council deals with issues particularly relating to commoners. Issues arising at the Community Liaison Group which are better dealt with by the Commoners Council Group will be referred on.
- Separate arrangements are to be made to deal with the Community Benefit Fund.

Introduction to wind farm scheme

Tim James provided an update:

- The planning consent and commons consent have been granted and the project is moving to its construction phase.
- Enabling works will take place between the Project Entrance (Bolgoed Road) and the Site Entrance to the wind farm. Three Welsh companies are being considered for this contract which is likely to be awarded in early December 2016. Work is planned to begin in January 2017.

- The tendering process for the main civils works is underway. The contract is likely to be awarded around the end of Q1 2017. Work is likely to begin in autumn 2017.
- The contract for the turbines is in the final stages of agreement and is likely to be awarded in December 2016. The turbines are likely to be delivered to site in spring 2018.

A question and answer session took place:

Q. We've previously been told that very little concrete work will take place through the mountain area. Can you clarify this?

A. The new access tracks between Bolgoed Road and on the wind farm site will be constructed using compacted aggregate. However, the first 200m section of track from Bolgoed road will be a bound surface (tarmac), this is due to the gradients. Maintenance of these tracks will be innogy's responsibility. The public highway widening will be tarmac. These roads are adopted and maintained by the local authority, for which innogy will pay a sum of money.

Q. What measures will be taken to protect the gas main?

A. The main at this section is heavy duty walled pipe, and was installed in this area by boring through the rock and as the section only has to be widened by approximately 700mm, we will remain within the section of heavy duty pipe. innogy is working closely with NGT who own the gas main, and there is a legal agreement in place.

Q. Residents are concerned about water run-off from washing lorries.

A. innogy is aware of local concerns about this and the design of the permanent works has been undertaken by Ove Arup & Partners and a hydrologist from Wallingford Hydro were used to provide specialist support for the design. An infiltration drainage system along the length of the access track will be installed to deal with excess water. innogy anticipates there will be a local benefit, not a dis-benefit.

Q. Will street furniture be taken down to accommodate the abnormal loads?

A. The only highways changes that need to be made are to remove the two splitter islands at the Penllergaer roundabout. These islands which will be removed prior to turbine deliveries and will be reinstated once the turbine deliveries have been completed. If a replacement blade needs to be taken onto the site at some point in the future, innogy would apply for a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) to remove the splitter islands and replace them again.

Q. Residents have observed bats in the area. What will be done about this?

A. innogy has undertaken a number of bat surveys and the surveys have not identified any bat roots in the trees likely to be affected by the works. An ecologist will be onsite during the site clearance activities to ensure that where necessary trees will be soft felled. innogy will resurvey the trees before carrying out any site clearance activities.

Q. What times of the day will the highways works take place?

A. The hours are determined by the planning consent and are:

Weekdays: 07:30 – 18:00

Saturdays: 07:00 – 14:00

Sundays and bank holidays: no works

Road closures will be advertised six weeks in advance.

Q. What security will there be on the site?

A. Innogy has a security team which is working closely with South Wales Police to ensure the security of the site, specifically relating to criminal damage, or theft, for example, and all such issues should be passed to the police for them to investigate.

Approve terms of reference

The redrafted terms of reference were circulated and were accepted by the group. The Chair explained that the draft terms of reference had been slightly redrafted following feedback.

Group membership (2). The group agreed that in order to keep the size of the group manageable, each organisation should nominate one representative and a substitute in case the representative is unable to attend a meeting. The group agreed that an exception to this is Mawr Community Council which can send two representatives to each meeting, due to the size and disparate nature of Mawr. Contractors will attend the group, once they are appointed.

Meeting arrangements (7). Reference to a quorum has been removed as it was felt that the meeting should go ahead even if there are very few group members present.

The Chair circulated a code of conduct which was accepted by the group.

Schedule of future meetings

The group agreed to meet on a monthly basis. This will be reviewed in future. The venue will be rotated around the communities.

The next meeting will take place at 6pm on Wednesday 7 December 2016 in Pontarddulais.

The Chair invited group members to contribute agenda items. A presentation on the Community Benefit Fund will be added to the agenda for a meeting early in 2017.

AOB

None.