

Solwaybank Wind Farm Community Liaison Group (CLG)

Minutes

In attendance:	Elaine Irving (EI)	Kirtle & Eaglesfield CC
	Jim Rae (JR)	Kirtle & Eaglesfield CC
	Alex Thomson (AT)	Gretna & Rigg CC
	Harry Barrett (HB)	Gretna & Rigg CC
	James Fleming (JF)	Canonbie & District CC
	Rose Sutherland (RS)	Middlebie & Waterbeck CC
	Dennis Reid (DR)	Middlebie & Waterbeck CC
	Avril Bailie (AB)	Lockerbie CC
	Mike Potts (MP)	Member of the general public
	James Douglas (JD)	Member of the general public
	Rachel Anderson (RA)	RES
	Ruth Elder (RE)	RES
	Ben Jeffreys (BJ)	Bellenden (Chair)
	Declan Pang (DP)	Bellenden

Venue: Village Hall, Eaglesfield.

Date: 12th July 2011

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Isabelle Tranter (Springfield and Gretna Green CC)

2. Welcome & Introduction

BJ thanked everyone for coming and outlined the purpose of the meeting which was to discuss the latest developments in the proposed Solwaybank Wind Farm.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Last Meeting

BJ ensured that everyone at the meeting had a copy of the minutes from the previous meeting and gave everyone the opportunity to read them.

RS said that she had not received any of the material as stated in the Follow Up Action points from the last meeting on 05/04/11. RE replied that the Engineer's walkover on the site would take place this Friday and that the action points would be dealt with then. RA circulated copies of the Project Timetable.

AB raised the issue of the likely route that the construction traffic would take to get to the site highlighting concerns over the route from Lockerbie to Langham and Bridge Street. RE said that the construction traffic would enter the site from the B7068 to the west of Callisterhall but that the route which would be taken would be decided as soon as a contractor was appointed by the construction team and once a Traffic Management Plan had been drawn up with the Council.

RE emphasised that the Community Liaison Group would continue to meet throughout the duration of the project, so any more concerns that may arise could be discussed then.

BJ asked if there were any further matters arising from the previous minutes. The minutes were then approved by all present.

4. Solwaybank Project Update

5. Review of Exhibition and Feedback

RE stated that public exhibitions had been held at Waterbeck, Eaglesfield and Lockerbie. RE said that survey work on the site was almost finished and that the application was due to be submitted in October.

RE said that the public exhibitions had included slides outlining the need for renewable energy, information about the environmental studies undertaken and information about the community consultation. RE said that a 3D model had also been used to show what the wind farm would look like and photomontages from different viewpoints were displayed.

RA stated RES sent out over 8,800 newsletters and that there had been 108 visitors to the public exhibitions. 59 people had filled out a questionnaire. Of those who filled in a questionnaire, when asked the question "Which of the following describes your reaction to the proposed Solwaybank Wind Farm?" 37% of respondents supported the proposal, 24% were natural, 37% objected to the proposal and 2% didn't respond.. RA stated that there had been comments left about views on wind energy in general, however there were very few specific concerns about Solwaybank. RA said that the next stage was to put the feedback from the exhibitions into the consultation report.

RS asked why it was necessary for people to state their sex, age and how long they had lived in the area in the questionnaires. RA replied that it was important to record these details to make sure that a cross-section of the community was consulted with – the exhibition seemed to have attracted predominantly older people and so other forms of new media would be explored to try and reach younger people..

DR said that he felt the computer generated video that had been used at the exhibitions was misleading and asked why a real video had not been used instead. RE stated that the model was provided to give more information to people. The company who made the model undertook a site visit and used aerial photography to develop the computer environment. Although we can model the landscape to a certain extent, it very difficult to show a three-dimensional landscape on a computer screen. The software was for indicative purposes only and was to provide local people with an understanding of how the wind farm will look. We did feed back to

the company that in the future it would be useful to be able to remove trees if requested by members of the public, giving more flexibility in demonstrating potential views. In the meantime we have been showing an elevated view over the top of the trees. The 3D computer model was generally very well received by people visiting the exhibition.

RE showed everyone an OS map of the area outlining where trees would be felled and planted. RS asked if community councils would be receiving copies of the OS map. RE replied that a much more detailed drawing would be produced as part of the Environmental Statement.

Concerns were raised by DR and AT about construction traffic. RE said that consultation would continue about where traffic was going to go after any possible consent.

RA circulated a map of the Met Mast location in response to a request made at the exhibition. RA stated that people had asked why Solwaybank had been chosen as a site. RA said that there were typically two ways that sites for wind farms were identified. A landowner could approach a wind farm developer or wind farm companies could approach a landowner. RA then circulated a GIS (Geographical Information System) map for Dumfries and Galloway.

RS stated that different explanations had been given to different people on why the Solwaybank site had been chosen and that this had caused resentment and confusion. RA replied that RES had identified the site in 2000 and had then approached the landowners.

RS and JF said that some people were disappointed that power to the site might be supplied using pylons and asked why it could not go underground. RE said that at present no firm decision had been made regarding how the power would be taken off site. The current expectation is for a combination of wood pole overhead line and underground cable going south from the site to Chapelcross substation and that the final route would be a decision for ScottishPower.

DR and AB both raised concerns that other areas across the country should also be looked at for building wind farms and that it felt as if Dumfries and Galloway was the only area being considered.

DR asked if the site boundary could be extended in the future. BJ reminded everyone that any extension to existing sites would be subject to the usual planning permission process. RE reiterated this and said that existing site boundaries do not influence any future extension application as this would be a separate application with its own site boundary. RE also explained that the site boundary had to also

include all works associated with the development such as access track, habitat management/improvement areas, borrow pits, construction compounds etc.

RA reminded the meeting that all comments should be sent to her via email or post by 29th July 2011.

Once the application has been submitted Dumfries and Galloway Council would publish the dates for public representations to be made. RA reminded the group that the Council were operating a strict 21 day consultation period now.

BJ asked if anyone had any further questions relating to the project or the exhibition. RS replied that people she had spoken to were pleased that the exhibition was well advertised and that leaflets were distributed.

6. Future Meeting Dates

It was agreed that the next meeting would be on Tuesday 27th September at Eaglesfield.