

Bengeworth Road Community Liaison Group

Minutes of the meeting

Overview

On Tuesday 18 January 2022, the seventh Community Liaison Group (CLG) meeting was held to discuss the works at Bengeworth Road, as part of National Grid's London Power Tunnels project (LPT). All residents who previously signed up for the CLG were invited to attend the meeting. Emails were also sent to all ward (Herne Hill) councillors, as well as local MP, Helen Hayes.

Six residents attended the session. The CLG follows six previous CLG meetings held in February, March, April, September, October and November 2021 and three public information sessions, two held on 7 December 2020 and one held on 20 January 2021.

Meeting called by: National Grid

Date: Tuesday 18 January 2022

Time: 6-6.45pm

Venue / format: Zoom

Speakers and panel members (4)

- Mark Farmer (MF), Project Manager, National Grid
- Sarah Harris (SH), External Affairs Manager – London and South East, National Grid
- Phoebe Adams (PA), Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Manager, UK Power Networks
- Joe Cawley (JC), Director, Grayling

Technical Support and notetakers (2)

- Priya Aggarwal-Shah, Grayling
- Sophie Finch, Grayling

Residents and members of the local community (6)

Presentation

Joe Cawley (JC) opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending the seventh Bengeworth Road CLG. He continued by introducing the team, starting with himself as a Director at Grayling, noting that he would also be chairing the meeting.

JC moved on to discuss housekeeping rules, asking attendees to raise the hand function or post in the chat if they had any questions to ask. He mentioned that the meeting would be recorded for internal purposes and that the minutes and Q&A would be made available on the London Power Tunnels website following the meeting.

He continued by moving on to the agenda, covering the following:

1. Works on site
 - Progress on site
 - Upcoming activity
2. National Grid and UK Power Networks
3. Public Engagement for substation and headhouse design

- Public engagement
- Post-engagement

4. Questions

JC then passed over to Mark Farmer (MF) to discuss the current works on site.

MF began by showing images of the completed shaft rings on site taken earlier in the week. He confirmed that the segmental lining is finished and that works to dig for the concrete base slab pour are now underway. He also confirmed that the provisional date for the continuous concrete pour on site is Tuesday 1st February. Due to the nature of the works, the concrete pour must be continuous, and due to the size of the pour, there will be 60 lorries coming into the site during the day for deliveries. MF explained that there will be extended working hours on this date and that the pour will start at 6am and should be completed by 8pm with workers leaving site by 10pm. He also confirmed that these works are being coordinated with Lambeth Council's Environmental Health Officer and that National Grid are putting arrangements in place with Kings College Hospital to ensure that the lorries can access the site during the extended hours. Once the date is confirmed, the community relations team will send an email update to all CLG attendees. MF added that once the base slab is complete, the dewatering wells will be decommissioned and works on the shaft dividing wall will start.

Sarah Harris (SH) then provided an overview of National Grid's current relationship with UK Power Networks. She confirmed that National Grid has been working closely with UK Power Networks over the past year. She explained that it had originally been National Grid's intention that the community engagement events in February would be a joint event with UK Power Networks to discuss the designs of both National Grid and UK Power Networks substations. She continued that as UK Power Networks will not begin works until 2023, their designs are not as advanced as those of National Grid. Therefore, only National Grid will present their headhouse and substation designs at the engagement events in February as they need to start the construction of their headhouse this summer (2022). SH also confirmed that UK Power Networks will present their designs to the public at a later date. She reassured the residents that there remains a close ongoing relationship between National Grid and UK Power Networks and that any future UK Power Networks designs will be in keeping with the work done by National Grid.

SH then confirmed that the public engagement events will be held on Thursday 10th February from 4pm-7pm and Saturday 12th February from 10am-1pm. She explained that at these events, National Grid will be sharing the initial design options for the headhouse and substation to the public. SH noted that due to the current Covid-19 restrictions these events will now take place online. There will be an online exhibition where the public can see the designs and communicate via an online chat should they have any questions. SH also confirmed that there will be an online feedback form, where residents can input their thoughts and preferences for the designs and can also raise any issues. Outside of these specified forum times, the plans will remain online on the website for two weeks from the 10th February. SH also reiterated that the community engagement team will be on hand at all times should residents have any issues or questions.

SH then explained the timeline for the designs after the public engagement. National Grid will then consider the feedback in late February and amend their plans accordingly. In late February/early March, National Grid will then update the public on their feedback and explain how this has influenced the final designs. In Spring 2022, National Grid will submit their designs for the substation and headhouse to Lambeth Council to present their proposal and final agreement on designs. SH explained that the headhouse construction is anticipated to start in Summer 2022 followed by the substation construction in early 2023.

Finally, SH confirmed that details of the event and an explanation of how to access them will be sent out to residents living in the area in the next week. JC also confirmed that the community relations team will be working with organisations such as Friends of Ruskin Park (FORP) to take part in the event.

JC brought the presentation to a close and opened the floor to resident questions.

Questions

Please note that this is a summary of the questions and responses and there is a separate document with all questions and answers for your reference. For ease, we have grouped questions under themes.

Substation architecture:

A resident raised a concern around the appointment of Markwick Architects (MA) and expressed disappointment that National Grid appointed an architect without consulting the community. The resident also expressed concerns that historically, the architect has produced designs which are not aesthetically pleasing.

JC initially explained that the architecture of the substation has specific requirements in order to be safe and functional, but that they had committed to going beyond a traditional substation design. JC confirmed that MA were appointed as National Grid needed to speed up the process of the substation and headhouse. JC also confirmed that National Grid has worked with MA in the past and have had success working with them in the process of community engagement. JC noted that whilst National Grid did not commit to public consultation on the architect, they have committed to opening the architectural designs for public feedback.

A resident then raised further concerns over the aesthetics of the substation and suggested that the UK Power Networks building on Cambria Road is an eyesore, raising concerns that the new substation and headhouse will be similarly unappealing. Another resident also expressed concerns that National Grid would be looking to reduce spending on construction rather than choosing the best option for the community.

JC and PA confirmed that there are no plans to change the UK Power Networks building on Cambria Road. They encouraged residents to attend the design engagement events and expressed that the architects will be able to better explain the process. This will provide a good platform for residents to voice their concerns over the designs.

Substation design consultation:

A resident raised a question asking for more information about the procedure of the public engagement and whether the community would be presented with choices and more than one design. Furthermore, the resident explained that if the substation designs fit the landscape, then it could become an asset to the community. The resident also raised disappointment that the public were not consulted on the appointment of MA.

SH confirmed that the community will be presented with several design options which they can feedback on and explain their preferences. SH also reassured the residents that National Grid appointed MA as they have a strong track record of providing architecture which is in keeping with the local area. She also reiterated National Grid's commitment to working with the community on these designs. JC then reminded residents that there are certain aspects of the substation which are non-negotiable such as set parameters to ensure that the substation is functional. However, the aesthetic quality of the substation will remain a priority. JC encouraged those present to encourage others in the community to attend the engagement events to ensure that they can have their say in the designs and that feedback is comprehensive and varied.

Community grants:

A resident raised a question using the chat function to ask for an update on the Section-106 grant and other financial investments in the community and expressed that he believed the grants offer was frozen pending deliberation on the application.

JC confirmed that National Grid's Community Grant Fund, which is separate to the Section-106 contribution, has been discussed with various groups previously such as Friends of Ruskin Park (FORP) and Loughborough Junction Action Group (LJAG). JC also confirmed that currently there have been no applications for a community grant and reminded residents that it is open to any charitable organisation which has been affected by the works. JC explained that the process for

applications for the grant has changed. Applications open once a quarter and applicants have a month to apply. There is then a month where the panel decide on the grant recipient, followed by a month where the grant is distributed before it reopens for the next quarter. JC confirmed that applications are currently open for this quarter. MF confirmed that he would review the current status of the section-106 contribution and that the community relations team would be back in touch to confirm the outcome.

Vehicle movements:

A resident asked if there are any updates on whether vehicle movements can be coordinated with other construction sites in the area.

JC confirmed that after the previous CLG meeting National Grid put HOCHTIEF-MURPHY Joint Venture's (HMJV) logistics team in touch with Peabody's construction firm however they are yet to meet. He also confirmed that they are in touch with Loughborough Junction Action Group (LJAG) on the issue and will liaise with them when construction on the other sites start. JC also reassured residents that after the concrete pour there will be significantly less HGV movements to the site. MF confirmed that it is unlikely that there will be any in-depth logistical interface between National Grid and Peabody, however, they have reached out to arrange a meeting. He confirmed that National Grid will coordinate the HGV movements for the concrete pour.

Car park:

A resident raised a question enquiring about the date for the car park demolition.

MF confirmed that it will be UK Power Networks' work to carry out and that they are looking for a suitable time in the project timeline when this can be carried out. This will likely be after National Grid's headhouse is constructed in the summer, meaning the car park will be demolished next year.

Closing remarks

JC drew proceedings to a close and thanked everyone for their time. He also reiterated that the community relations team will be available for any further questions which might arise and that the next CLG will provide another opportunity to discuss the substation designs. Finally, he encouraged all those who were able, to attend the upcoming public engagement events.

MEETING ADJOURNED
