

Bengeworth Road Community Liaison Group

Minutes of the meeting

Overview

On Tuesday 27 September 2022, the eleventh 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 and Loughborough Junction) councillors.

Four residents and two councillors, Cllr Jim Dickson and Cllr Deepak Sardiwal, attended the session. The CLG followed ten previous CLG meetings held throughout 2021 and 2022 and three online engagement events in February 2022 on the design options for National Grid's Bengeworth Road substation and headhouse. National Grid also held three public information sessions between 2020 and 2021 about the overall works at Bengeworth Road.

Meeting called by: National Grid

Date: Tuesday 27 September 2022

Time: 6-7pm

Venue / format: Zoom

Speakers and panel members (6)

- Joe Cawley (JC) Director, Grayling (National Grid CR team)
- Sarah Harris (SH) External Affairs Manager – London and South East, National Grid
- Mark Farmer (MF) Project Manager, National Grid
- Phoebe Adams (PA) Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Manager, UK Power Networks
- Andrew White (AW) Project Manager, UK Power Networks
- Tony Markwick (TM) Markwick Architects

Technical Support and notetakers (2)

- Belinda Charlton Grayling (National Grid CR team)
- Tom Cherrill Grayling (National Grid CR team)

Lambeth Councillors (2)

- Cllr Deepak Sardiwal (Lab, Herne Hill and Loughborough Junction)
- Councillor Jim Dickson (Lab, Herne Hill and Loughborough Junction)

Residents and members of the local community (4)

Presentation

Introductions

As chair Joe Cawley (JC) opened the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance. He introduced himself as a Director at Grayling before handing over to other panellists to introduce themselves.

Following this, JC briefly discussed housekeeping rules, noting that the presentation would be recorded for internal purposes and that the meeting minutes, presentation and Q&A would be made available on the London Power Tunnels website after the session.

JC then provided a brief overview of what was to be covered in the meeting, which was broken down into the following sections:

- An update on the last few months
- Upcoming works – headhouse construction works
- National Grid's substation – designs and next steps
- UK Power Networks' update
- Next steps and contact details
- AOB and questions from attendees

Update on the last few months

Mark Farmer (MF) provided an update on the last few months, noting that the application for Prior Approval on the headhouse was submitted in July. Lambeth Council's response to the application has resulted in the proposed brickwork colour changing from blue to yellow. He explained that the design of National Grid's substation has also been updated to incorporate external changes to its appearance, which were requested following engagement sessions with local residents and applying the brickwork change required by the Council's planning officer.

He noted that an application for prior approval on the substation is planned to be made in mid-October. He added that works have been completed on the shaft and that the Tunnel Boring Machine has now transited the site successfully from New Cross. The site is now being prepared for the next phase of works.

Headhouse construction works

MF explained they are looking to commence headhouse works in mid-October, subject to prior approval, and that work to divert existing services beneath the ground are being carried out. He clarified that working hours will remain the same and that traffic movements during this time are expected to be low. All access and egress from the site will continue to be via Kings College Hospital.

MF explained that the headhouse works will last for 12-15 months in total and, subject to prior approval, mobilisation for substation works will start in early 2023.

Substation update

MF explained that following feedback from residents, design changes have been made to the appearance of the National Grid substation, with dimensions also changing to accommodate emerging technology that is better for the environment.

MF then spoke to diagrams displaying the new headhouse and substation design, highlighting the change in brickwork from blue to yellow, following feedback from the Council. He also clarified that the UK Power Networks substation design isn't currently part of the design shared on screen.

UK Power Networks update

Andrew White (AW) provided an update on behalf of UK Power Networks, noting that they are still awaiting details from the switchgear suppliers to determine building dimensions and final design.

Once the designs are finalised, a prior approval application will be submitted to Lambeth Council in the autumn. AW noted that UK Power Networks should still be on track to commence the construction of the substation in early 2023.

Contact details

JC mentioned that the next CLG is planned for Tuesday 1 November 2022 and provided contact details for attendees to get in touch should they have any questions outside of the CLG meeting.

Questions

Please note that we have grouped questions under themes.

Resident feedback

Cllr Jim Dickson requested a summary of the key changes made to the design of the National Grid substation as a result of resident feedback, such as materials used and colours chosen. Tony Markwick (TM) clarified that one of the requests during the earlier consultations was for more variation on the north west wall of the National Grid substation. TM explained that this has been achieved by adding more colour variation.

Cllr Jim Dickson also asked for a recap on the positioning of the buildings, in relation to their distance from residential properties, and if aspects of the design will be altered to achieve this. Phoebe Adams (PA) confirmed that the distance of the UK Power Networks' substation building from residential properties has increased from 7 to 13 meters. TM noted that to make this work, the roof is no longer able to be angled, but is instead now square to sufficiently house equipment and allow for crane access.

Daylight/sunlight concerns

A resident expressed concern that the UK Power Networks substation would have an adverse effect on the amount of daylight/sunlight neighbouring properties would receive. They noted that the change in roof from curved to square may mean that, even though now further back from the residential properties on Southwell Road, the daylight/sunlight provision would actually be worsened.

AW confirmed that a daylight/sunlight, or 'right to light', assessment will be carried out following confirmation of the substation dimensions (which the switch gear manufacturer is set to provide in the coming weeks). This assessment will determine the impact of the new building dimensions on access to light for the buildings' immediate neighbours.

One resident questioned if this assessment will be impartial, to which PA confirmed it will be. One resident asked if a contingency plan was in place, if the results of the assessment demonstrated that homes were impacted by the substation. AW explained that it is not possible to speculate and that solutions to any potential problems can only be approached after the assessment has been completed.

Zinc alloy concerns

One resident said that they were not fond of the proposed colour scheme of the zinc alloys on the side of the National Grid substation building and asked if there was a different selection of colours that could be used.

Later in the call, the same resident noted that they also weren't fond of the brickwork on the substation changing from blue to yellow. However, a separate resident pointed out that these concerns were actually regarding National Grid's substation and not the UK Power Networks substation and so the changes were to a building further away from their properties. In response to this, the first resident reacted positively, noting that the National Grid substation is less impactful on their property.

Closing remarks

JC drew proceedings to a close and thanked everyone for their time. He confirmed that the meeting minutes will be written up and circulated to attendees. Following this, the minutes and presentation will also be uploaded to the Bengeworth Road website. He reminded attendees that the next CLG meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 1 November, though if anyone has any queries in the meantime, to contact us via the usual channels.

MEETING ADJOURNED

27 September 2022