

St Dennis Parish Council
Minutes of the Extra ordinary Meeting held online
on 28th April 2021 at 7.30pm

The Chair welcomed all present to an Extra Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council and explained to those present that the meeting had been convened by St Dennis Parish Council for the purpose of discussing the proposed Treviscoe Solar Farm. Statkraft representatives are invited to give a presentation on the proposed development and members of the public have been invited to raise questions / concerns relating to the proposed development. The Parish Council will not be making any decisions regarding this matter at this meeting, which is being held for information purposes only.

Present: Cllr Clarke (Chairman), Cllr Mr N Edmunds (vice Chair), Cllr Taylor, Cllr Lodomez, Cllr Burnett, Cllr Jones, Cllr Sinnott, Cllr Harwood.

In Attendance: Lynn Clarke Clerk. Cornwall Cllr Dick Cole, 2 representatives for Statkraft and 5 members of the Public.

EO1/21 Apologies.

Cllr Mrs T Edmunds. Apologies noted. Cllr Howard, Cllr Kelsey absent.

EO2/21 Declarations of Interest.

Cllr Mr N Edmunds declared a non-pecuniary interest in the proposed Treviscoe Solar Farm and was advised that as this meeting is for discussion purposes only, Cllr Mr N Edmunds could participate in this meeting. Cllr Clarke reminded those present that if any other matter arises during the course of the meeting, advice should be sought from the Clerk and the Chairman before continuing.

EO3/21 Public Participation Residents Consultation with Statkraft.

a) Presentation from Statkraft:

A representative from Statkraft gave slide a presentation Covering who Statkraft are, their early application design, planning preparation and the timelines for the development of the proposed Treviscoe Solar Farm.

b) Cllr Clarke thanked the representative for the presentation and opened the floor to questions from Cllrs:

Cllr Sinnott asked if there will be any direct benefit for the residents of the Parish, such as reduced electricity costs.

Response: Statkraft are not looking at this at the moment, however there will be a community benefit fund created specifically for this area and Statkraft would welcome proposals for projects and ideas that may benefit people within the area. In addition to this fund, Statkraft are offering residents the opportunity to invest in the scheme.

Cllr Taylor informed that there is already a fund running of this type, which has no benefit for residents who struggle to pay electricity bills, as it has been set up for groups and projects, rather than individuals, and was there no way that the fund from Statkraft can be used to ensure direct benefit. The area that is recognised for financial deprivation, and a direct

benefit fund for residents who need help to pay high electricity costs would be more appropriate.

Response: There is no mainstream system to allow this, but the funding could be used to enhance the lives of residents, for example, the installation of superfast broadband which would help those with slow speed internet connections.

Cllr Jones supported Cllr Taylors statement regarding the deprivation of the area and highlighted that there is a need for support for local people with fuel poverty. Cllr Jones asked the representative if there could be further investigation to utilise the fund to directly benefit residents with the cost of electricity, such as installing solar panels on resident's homes.

Response: this could be investigated.

Cllr Taylor enquired why the company were proposing to use farmland for the installation as opposed to having the panels installed on houses and industrial buildings that are already in existence.

Response: Installations on buildings has been carried out in the past, however, in mid-2019 the subsidies from Government for the electric produced were cut and this is now not a viable option.

Cllr Jones enquired if the existing power station had the capability to accept the power generated from the proposed solar farm.

Response: Western Power have made an offer for the solar farm to connect to the grid so there is not a problem with the existing facilities receiving the power generated.

Cllr Jones then sought clarification for the requirement of the proposed battery storage unit, asking if this facility was required just for use when there a need for additional power during times of high demand. This was confirmed by the Statkraft representative.

c) Cllr Clarke invited members of the public to ask questions.

- why is there a need for such a large plot of agriculture land so close to a residential area?

Response: As there is no longer a subsidy available for the electric produced, in order to make the construction costs viable the size of the site needs to increase. This site has been chosen due to its proximity with the existing power station.

- A proposed site of this size affects the fauna & flora such as birds, bats and butterflies some of whom are already on the decline, this then surely defeats the object of a greener climate/ clean energy?

Response: Statkrat are confident that developments such as this can enhance the existing flora and fauna. They consult with specialists in this field and act on any recommendations made, to ensure that the biodiversity the site is improved, rather than degraded by the development.

- Research (Yuki Hamanda 2016), has identified that living near large solar farms may affect peoples health. The panels contain toxic metals & chemicals which may cause headaches, dizziness, depression and other illnesses. The proposed development, being in close proximately to people's homes, have these effects been taken into consideration?

Response: The health issues are not something that the representative was aware of. There are elements of the panels that are toxic, but they are minimal, and are mainly used in the wiring within the panels. The proposed panels are made with a covering of glass to the back and front in a metal surround containing silicone crystals and minimal metal wiring. The panels are 97% recyclable when they are removed at the end of the development's life.

Cllr Clarke raised the issue that the letters notifying residents of the proposed solar farm seemed to have been limited to a small area.

Response: Letters were sent to residents in the St Dennis area, those who would be directly affected and residents of Treviscoe were notified. It could be that as these letters were sent out "To the Occupier" they may not have been opened. A press release was issued regarding the Solar Farm and, if required, letters could be made available to those who would like to receive them.

- What meteorological studies have been carried out at the proposed site?

Response: At present none, these are not usually carried out for solar installations.

- Will this development affect property values within the area?

Response: The representative has not known solar installations to affect property prices. The company can look to reduce the visual impact on houses nearby.

Cllr Harwood enquired about the route of the cable that was originally shown within this project.

Response: This was an omission by the company and has since been rectified.

- You are looking at applying for planning permission in June. How can you take on board all the comments and concerns raised and still meet the June deadline? Within this time frame how many of these concerns will you address?

Response: The designs are currently being worked on and this could possibly be scaled back to address the concerns raised.

Cllr Taylor asked what other projects Statkraft are running in Cornwall or do they have other schemes already built?

Response: We intend this project to run in parallel with another scheme proposed for White Cross. Other areas have not been considered because of the proximity and convenience to access the power station.

Cllr Clarke put forward questions on behalf of residents:

- With the increase in traffic due to the construction phase, has a road survey been carried out?

Response: Not at the moment, but this is something that needs to be investigated.

- Is there to be CCTV and floodlighting installed and if so, how can you guarantee residents will not be affected?

Response: There will be no flood lighting on the sites, it will only be required for the battery storage building. The CCTV is an infrared system, and the field of vision will be restricted to the fence line.

- What grade is the land where they propose to install the solar panels?

Response: 3B grazing land. A full grading will be required for the planning application.

- How do you propose to gain access to the power station?

Response: there are two options for this. One would be to obtain access by going under the road. The second is to join into an existing WPD cable running within the field.

- What improvements would the power station need.

Response: None that the company are aware of.

- At the end of the life of the solar farm how would the panels be disposed of?

Response: There is a government directive for the disposal of solar panels that would be followed. The panels would be recycled in compliance with this legislation.

Cllr Taylor asked where the materials and panels would originate from for the construction of the site.

Response: From China predominantly.

- Clarification was sought on what benefit this will give St Dennis as a whole.

Response: We hope to employ local companies during the construction phase and, as previously discussed, ways need to be found to direct the funding we will be providing to where it is needed.

- With this type of installation there may be contaminated rainwater run off. How do you propose to prevent this from entering the tributary to the river Fal and the SSSI land at the bottom of this development.

Response: We propose to install features such as ditches and settlement areas so that any runoff from the site will have no impact.

Cllr Jones asked if there could be a simple rebate scheme set up to help residents and proposed that payments could be given directly to each household.

Response: While this scheme sounds simple, there would be a lot of red tape that would prevent this. Handing money directly to residents may breach legislation. Again, Statkraft would welcome ideas on how this could be achieved.

- The Clay district is already being impacted by various industries, and is recognised for being a deprived area, so why this area?

Response: This is due to the access to the national grid. The scheme will provide green energy and aims to help tackle the climate crisis that we are currently facing. This scheme sits well within Cornwall Council's Climate emergency plan.

Cllr Clarke thanked the representatives of Statkraft and the members of the public for attending and drew the public section of the meeting to a close.

Standing order 3e

That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they are requested to withdraw.

**EO4/21 Confidential items –
Staffing – None**

There being no other business to be transacted the Chairman closed the meeting at 21.15pm.

Signed:

DRAFT