

Grange Solar Farm

A tour of both the South and North sites has taken place. This gave an insight into how large the areas are. Good progress is now being made with almost all the structures in place on the South site in readiness to fit the solar panels, which we were informed will be here in a couple of weeks. The work to lay the concrete bases for the five invertors on the South site has started. Work has now begun on the North site e.g. erecting fences, placing ducting for the cables, sitings for the inverters, piling for the structures and the roads are in. Work was also progressing on the sub station at the bottom of the South site.

The Parish Council Liaison Group (PCLG) has not yet met the new owners of the site Liberty Global (LG), although it is hoped a meeting can be arranged soon.

The Community Benefit Deed is progressing. There are several points of clarification that have been submitted to the Council for which we are waiting their response before it can be finalised.

PS Renewables (PSR) have been asked to provide the PCLG with a copy of their detailed construction plan as well as risk register and issues list. PSR were also reminded to continue providing weekly WhatsApp group communications and more frequently as necessary.

The planting for screening and hedging that can be done this season is now complete. PSR will identify on a map where the new planting is to ensure this is watered during the dry season.

As an extra security measure Heras fencing has been installed across entrances to prevent intruders out of hours. Even with the measures that have been put in place such as security men, dogs, and motion sensors intruders are still trying to get onto site, but none have been caught so far.

PSR are still waiting for the section 50 giving approval to drill ducts under Lion Road to connect to the North site. GPS is used for this directional drilling and PSR have confirmed there will be no disruption to Lion Road when this is installed.

Progress is being made on the North site for the preparation of a new compound. The area has been levelled and track mat installed. It will be a similar set up to the one on the South site but with less buildings.

The tower lights that were a great cause for concern by the community have now been removed.

There was a lot of discussion about the various footpath issues that have been reported previously. Technically PSR have a responsibility for land within their fence line, whilst anything outside the fence line is the farmers responsibility. The Public Rights of Way and footpaths are both outside PSR's fence line. However, PSR have cleared some of the pathways whilst they have been sorting their fence line and will flatten and grass some of the areas once construction is complete.

It was confirmed that there would be a permissive path around the site once the construction was complete, although it was noted that it would be at the farmers discretion to allow walkers to use it as it is on his land.

There is currently an attenuation pond on the path between Lion Road and Millway Lane which cannot be seen due to the growth around it. This is dangerous especially for children and needs a warning sign. It may involve PSR speaking to the farmer to make it safe.

Currently walkers walk across the North site almost parallel to where the overhead cable runs. This is not an official right of way. Following installation this footpath will no longer be accessible as it runs through the solar panel site.

Work has begun to put the old overhead electricity cable on the area towards Millway Lane on the North site underground as this crossed the solar panel site. Trenching and ducting has been dug to lay the HV cable. There has been some temporary fencing installed for health and safety reasons whilst this took place.

Given the dry weather, there has been an issue with dust on the site. PSR are looking to dampen down the dust so that it does not become an issue.

There have been no more complaints received about the earth mounds since the one received from the residents at the end of Millway Lane. PSR have now flattened that one and said they will do some planting, which seems to have satisfied the residents.

Lorries belonging to local suppliers appear to still be driving through the centre of Palgrave. PSR said they have reminded them numerous times but will remind them again.

It was clarified that the biodiversity piece of land off Millway lane will be mixed meadow grass with wildflower seed. PSR clarified that although the planting plan did not show a hedge along the fence line to screen off the solar panels, they will be installing a hedge.

The current output from the site is up to 50MW although the site has the capacity for up to 70 MW. Once the main pylons are upgraded it was felt that Liberty Global would wish to increase the output. This could have an impact on the Community Benefit payment and clarification is to be sought regarding this.