

APPENDIX L: COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Low Spinney Wind Farm **Statement of Community Engagement** **As at 23 January 2008**

1. Introduction

The view of the community is very important to Broadview Energy Developments Ltd (Broadview). Broadview is keen to share its plans with the local community and their elected representatives, and to listen to their views.

To inform the local communities regarding the proposed scheme a range of activities were carried out, these included:

- Creating a dedicated website;
- Holding a public meeting;
- Arranging public consultations and exhibitions;
- Undertaking one-to-one meetings, and
- Responding to correspondence received, both electronic and written.

Details of activities undertaken including responses to comments and concerns raised are shown below.

Broadview intends to keep the local community informed at every stage of the project, not just pre application, but throughout the life of the project and to consider and respond to views that are expressed.

The comments and feedback received to date have been carefully considered and have assisted in the final site layout plan.

2. Consultation Process

As indicated above, Broadview has been conscious of the need to keep the local community and its elected officers aware of its intentions.

A range of consultation activity, as detailed below, has taken place to enable Broadview to outline its proposals to from the local community and, more importantly, receive feedback. Broadview will continue this process during the project's life span.

2.1 Dedicated Website

A dedicated on-line consultation website (www.lowspinneywindfarm.co.uk) was launched in May 2008, when the submission of Environmental Impact Assessment scoping enquiry was made to Harborough District Council.

The website was set up with the intent to:

- Provide project information to the local community;

- Provide regular updates on development;
- Receive feedback through the completion of an on line questionnaire, and
- Respond to specific questions and comments received.

The web site has been advertised in all press releases issued by Broadview and in all mailing informing the community of the project.

From inception to the 16 December 2008 the website home page has had over 2,200 'hits' with 51 registered users, of whom with 16 have completed an online consultation document. In addition, responses to 21 individual questions and comments have been provided.

The website has been, and will be, constantly updated with relevant new information and press releases.

2.2 Local Community Consultation and Feedback

District Council

Broadview has kept the local members of Harborough District Council aware of developments through informal discussions with local planning officers and by writing to the councillors.

A number of informal meetings were held with planning officers from the council prior to the public announcement of the proposed wind farm in order that council members might be apprised of Broadview's intentions. Subsequently, the planning officers have been advised of relevant developments.

Following the public announcement of its plans Broadview has undertaken the following:

- Written to all local councillors members informing them of proposed wind farm (08.05.08);
- Met with the Ward Councillor (Cllr. P Fusil) to update him on the project and to consider his constituents initial concerns (03.07.08);
- Wrote inviting all councillors to attend a visit to a local wind farm (31.07.08);
- Wrote to all councillors with further updates on the project including details of a forthcoming community consultation evening in Gilmorton (06.10.08); and
- Wrote to all councillors with further updates on the project including details of a forthcoming public exhibition evening in Gilmorton (15.01.09).

Parish Councils

Broadview has been mindful of the need for the immediate communities around the proposed wind farm to be aware of, and informed, of its intentions.

In this respect Broadview wrote on 9th May 08 to the nearby parish councils (Dunton Bassett, Gilmorton, Leire, Ashby Magna, Ashby Parva, Miserton & Walcot) advising them of the proposal and offering to meet to discuss the matter further. This has resulted in:

- Meeting with Parish Councillors of Dunton Bassett, Gilmorton, Ashby Magna, Ashby Parva and Leir to outline Broadview's intentions (17.06.08);
- Arranging a visit to a local wind farm (Burton Wolds) to give councillors, and local resident's firsthand experience of an operational wind farm;
- Follow up meeting with members of the various local parish councils to discuss the format of the community consultation evening (01.09.09); and
- Arranged with the Parish Councils of Dunton Bassett, Gilmorton and Ashby Magna for community consultation and public exhibition posters and leaflets to be made available for distribution within the local communities.

Neighbours

Broadview wrote directly (on 15.05.08) to over 25 local residents whose properties are adjacent to the wind farm to appraise them of its intentions, and with the offer of a meeting to explain its proposal and answer any questions or concerns raised. Three residents took up this offer.

Local Members of Parliament

The proposed wind farm site lies within the constituency of Blaby. Broadview has appraised the local Member of Parliament, Andrew Robathan MP, of its intentions

Other Meetings

In addition, at either its own volition or in response to requests, Broadview has met the following local groups:

- Pro Wind Alliance, and
- Local newspaper journalists

Against Wind Farm at Low Spinney Action Group (AWFALS)

Broadview is mindful that its proposal has drawn a reaction from some members of the community. Broadview has endeavoured to respond to the concerns raised on AWFALS website and in their newsletters.

Community Consultation

Following completion of various technical and environmental studies that have been undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment, Broadview arranged a community consultation evening to inform the local residents of its intentions to develop a wind farm and respond to comments and issues raised. The community

consultation evening was held at Gilmorton Village Hall, on Wednesday 15th October 2008 between 4-8pm

To publicise the community consultation evening Broadview undertook the following:

- Arranged for posters and leaflets advertising the event to be distributed by the parish councils to the residents of Dunton Bassett, Gilmorton and Ashby Magna villages;
- Placed advertisements in Swift Flash local publication over two weeks;
- Issued a press release to over 10 local paper, radio and TV stations;
- Wrote to all council members of Harborough District Council;
- Wrote to all nearby parish councils, and
- Advised, by e-mail, all registered users of the dedicated web site.

In addition, Broadview is aware that details of the community consultation were recorded on the Harborough Mail website, (13.10.08).

The event attracted people from the whole of the local area with a total of 130 people in attendance. They had the opportunity to view the proposed scheme and discuss issues with the project team and its technical advisers.

The consultation leaflet contained a questionnaire to allow residents to comment on the scheme as well as respond to a number of short questions.

Between 10th October and 16 December, 35 questionnaires were completed at the exhibition or received by post. All respondents lived in the villages surrounding the wind farm, bar two who live in Mowsley and Crick.

The following responses were received to the questions asked:

Question	Yes	No	Undecided
Are you concerned about Climate Change?	28	5	2
Do you agree with the need for wind farms?	15	19	1
Do you support this clean energy proposal?	13	20	2

Prior to submission of the planning application, Broadview held a public exhibition evening on 3rd February 2008 at Gilmorton Village Hall, between 4-8pm, to inform the local community of the final site layout. Other information submitted with the planning application including photomontages was displayed. To advertise the public exhibition Broadview arranged:

- For posters and leaflets advertising the event to be distributed by the parish councils to the residents of Dunton Bassett, Gilmorton and Ashby Magna villages;
- Placed advertisements in Swift Flash local publication over three weeks;

- Issued a press release to over 10 local paper, radio and TV stations;
- Wrote to all council members of Harborough District Council;
- Wrote to all nearby parish councils, and
- Advised, by e-mail, all registered users of the dedicated web site.

2.3 Press Releases, adverts and TV / Radio coverage

To inform the wider local community of its proposals and subsequent developments Broadview has issued a number of press releases.

This has in turn attracted various press coverage. There have been regular reports in all the main local papers Harborough Mail, Leicester Mercury, Lutterworth Observer, The Evening Gazette and New Energy Focus.

3. Community Funds

Broadview proposes to contribute approximately £2,000 per Megawatt per annum to a community benefit fund. It will work with the community, school, and local groups to decide the best use of this fund. This could be used to improve energy efficiency and implement micro renewable generation schemes.

Information on the fund is available on the dedicated website with an option for registered users to put forward ideas of projects.

4. Post Submission

Broadview will continue keep the local community apprised of relevant developments and meet with interested parties to respond to issues or concerns that are raised.

5. Conclusions

Broadview has endeavoured to advise the community of its plans.

Given the nature of our project, some members of the community have expressed some concerns. Broadview feel however that the majority of these concerns, including; visual impact, noise, shadow flicker and impact on wildlife have been satisfactorily addressed in the final design of the wind farm, where these potential effects have been key considerations.

