

# Kingfisher Solar Meeting with Beswick, Leconfield, Lockington, Watton, Hutton Cranswick and Bishop Burton Parish Councils

Held held at 7 pm on Thursday, 6 February 2025 at Kilnwick Village Hall

## AGENDA

### Orsted/Kingfisher Solar Representatives:

Randall Linfoot, Orsted, Programme Director for Kingfisher; Sam Griffiths, Icen, Design and Landscape Architect; Zeeshan Ahmed, Aecom, Electrical Engineering; Helen Scarr, Pier, Stakeholder Engagement and Emily Budd, Pershing, Project Management.

### Parish Representatives:

**Beswick:** Sarah Beachell (Chair), Ben Jeffrey, Tony Corscadden, Mary Scaife (for Sarah Duncan), Julia Bugg (Clerk).

**Leconfield:** Stuart Haywood, Dave Garbutt (Chair).

**Lockington:** Stephanie Taylor, Ian Howett, John Rowson, Andrew How.

**Watton:** Brian May, John Hague, Stuart Bradshaw.

**Hutton Cranswick:** No attendees.

**Bishop Burton:** Sue Ellerington, Steve Knight.

**Beverley Rural Ward Councillors:** Jeremy Wilcock, Diana Stewart.

Sarah Beachell opened the meeting and invited the Kingfisher/Orsted representatives to begin their presentation.

Randall Linfoot introduced himself before requesting that his team did the same. He then explained that those present were able to cover the proposed project's development as experts with much experience of such installations. They ran through their presentation with many questions being posed at all points, by most present. Once the presentation was completed, they took further questions and took details from those who were in a position to assist them with their process. Details were given of the four consultations to take place, commencing on Monday 10 February 2025 at Lockington Parish Hall.

The summarised details are given below:

1. The current design is not fixed and will change over the term of the non-statutory and statutory consultations, which will take 18 months. They seek local knowledge and comments to assist them in the determination of the final design. Listed buildings will be avoided, they look to ensure that the predominant views of homes are not of fields of panels, hedging will be installed of mixed planting to reduce the visual effect of the panels.
2. It will take 2 to 3 years to have the project up and running with traffic management and many other considerations to be taken. It was noted that tourism in the area, such as Laurel Vinyard, Tophill Low, Wilfholme Landing and others had not been noted at this point and would now be added to the items for consideration, as would recently negotiated improvements to roads in Watton Parish.
3. A detailed survey would be made over the next few months to determine the quality of the farmland under consideration, with them assessing the land and its grade. Discussion with locals who have knowledge of this will also be undertaken but their agronomists will do the assessment too. This will be part of the statutory consultation documentation. Both the full report and a non-technical summary will be made public.
4. Once the Environmental Reports have been completed, they will be available to all; full transparency is required at all times. Both the full report and a non-technical summary will be made public.
5. When questioned about the reasons for using farmland for solar panels, they confirmed that the need to meet governments' targets mean that they have to look to such sites as the use of brown field, car parks, houses etc is insufficient to do so. Government targets drive it forward.
6. Orsted can't rely on off-shore and on-shore wind turbines as whilst they produce good levels of electricity in the winter months, they are less effective in the summer when the wind levels are lower. Solar facilitates a

wholistic approach to the production of power, as it is most productive in the summer months when the wind turbines are not. This means that a balanced approach in production is ensured.

7. The lifespan of the development is not yet finalised but the norm is 60 years. This will be given as a specific date in the consent, should it be given.
8. On completion of this lifespan, the land will be restored to its former grade and use before being returned to its owner. No topsoil will be removed. Orsted will remove and recycle all materials regardless of the method of installation: 3m steel pile driven or ballast method, as well as all cables laid as part of the installation.
9. The sub-stations will have to be put on concrete hard standing but these too will be removed.
10. The funding for the decommission has to be set aside at the commencement of the project to ensure that it is available.
11. The rehabilitation of the soil will be undertaken as part of this decommissioning; on questioning they agreed that they didn't know how but would look into this.
12. Solar panels which are ineffective can be replaced but generally are expected to last 25 to 30 years and as technology improves, this life should be extended.
13. They were unable to confirm that the panels would be made in Britain.
14. When asked if the installation would continue, should the current government change its mind or be replaced by a government less intent on meeting targets so quickly, it was confirmed that it would as Orsted is making the investment.
15. It was noted that 2.8 metre deer fencing would be used to separate the sections of the solar panels, that small mammal gates and gaps would be installed. Part of the environmental study would be to watch the wildlife to ascertain passages of travel and to maintain these if at all possible. Previously installed fencing of this type has shown that animals quickly get used to the change and use the gates and gaps effectively.
16. When questioned about the loss of bird habitat so vital to the area and the issue of bird strikes on these fences, they noted that they had no experience of this as an issue but would go away and look into it. Cllr Corscadden volunteered to assist them in this. It appeared that the usage of the land for birds be they roosting or feeding was not seen as an issue as it was felt they would still use it.
17. The issue of the loss of livelihood of tenant farmers and thus the potential loss of their homes and the rights of the families to inherit land which has been in families for decades, was discussed in detail. Parish Councillors present made it very clear that this was not something they felt Orsted would want to be associated with as it would lead to very negative publicity. They agreed that they had currently only engaged with the landowners but their intention was also to engage with the tenants. They took onboard that this issue was, for all of the parishes, a major issue and one of the reasons for objection. They reiterated that the current design is not finalised and will take this concern into consideration as they progress: they seemed to be genuine in their understanding that we needed this to be addressed. They asked that all tenants complete one of the response forms, either on-line or a paper version, outlining their concerns and also, attend one of the open meetings to discuss this with them further – the Land Team will be at Lockington and are specifically able to help in this matter.
18. The building of the proposed site will result in many jobs, though not all for local people, some may well be. Additionally, once in-situ, people will need to be employed to maintain the land and clean the panels (cleaned twice a year but no chemicals will be used for this).
19. Local farmers may well be able to be employed for the above as well as cutting grass, maintaining green areas, cutting hedges etc.
20. Apprenticeship scheme in place at the Grimsby site to help train local young people for professions in a growing industry; the site would be used for part of this training.
21. Wherever possible PROW such as footpaths, bridleways and permissive paths will be maintained. Please ensure that this is reported in the response forms as mentioned earlier. Some movement may have to take place but their environmental survey will record where all of these are.
22. No pesticides or herbicides will be used in the maintenance of the land. Pollinators will be provided for in wildflower planting, grassland and meadows. If a shepherd is available to manage them, then sheep can be used to graze under the panels. All current drainage and other land maintenance will be continued; there may be the opportunity for local contractors to undertake this work.
23. Community Benefit Fund – this is available to parishes, though nothing has been considered specifically at this time. Discussions will be entered into to determine the causes which can be supported. It was agreed that each parish would have individual wants and so should be approached separately as well as collaboratively.

24. The ability of roads to deal with the volume of traffic was seen as an issue and the Orsted team reported that this would be addressed with consideration and would not over-power the area with deliveries; peak times could be avoided. All of the panels would likely be delivered at the start of the project and then stored on-site. Road reinforcement will be taken into account.
25. The location of the substations will not be determined until the design of the solar panel installation has been completed; this means that the most effective and efficient locations will be used.
26. When questioned about the possibility of free electricity for local residents, they were unable to agree to this at this time.
27. Electricity produced by the solar panels will be transported to the south of Beverley where it will join the national grid and be used in the Nottingham area to power 100,000 homes.
28. Biodiversity and the creation of natural habitat was an issue that the Orsted representatives and parish councillors were unable to agree upon but was discussed in some depth.
29. It was agreed that Community Liaison Groups would be an effective way of getting the skills, knowledge and views of parishioners included in the design of the proposed solar farm/generating station. Orsted noted that these had been included in previous projects and didn't see why they couldn't be here.
30. The views of locals and their issues would be addressed wherever possible but at the end of the day, the solar panels are required to meet the demand of the nation for power as well as to meet the targets of the government. The already agreed cable from the east coast to the massive works being undertaken south of Beverley, make this the ideal location for this proposed development. It has to be fully considered and all investigations completed prior to going to central government for approval. Given Ed Milliband's targets and deadlines for meeting these, it is highly likely that this will go ahead. We must ensure that our issues are received by the Orsted team by completing their response forms either electronically or paper based, attending an in-person event or emailing them at [info@kingfishersolarfarm.co.uk](mailto:info@kingfishersolarfarm.co.uk).

The Orsted/Kingfisher team were thanked for their time and being so open in their discussions. It was agreed that whilst the parishes were not necessarily against the proposed development, they did need it to be designed in a way that their issues were addressed and that the inclusion of tenanted land in it, is the thing everyone present needed to be resolved in a way that the tenants were heard and their land not used.

Printed copies of the presentation, A3 printed maps, the Non-Statutory Consultation Booklet and the response forms were made available to all to take back to their parishes. The details are also available on the Kingfisher Solar Farm website: [kingfishersolarfarm.co.uk](http://kingfishersolarfarm.co.uk) for those who wish to access it this way.