

Written Representations: Marie Szpak
References: EA1N 20024475 & EA2 20024476

I urge the Examining Authority to refuse the Development Consent Order proposed by the Applicant, Scottish Power Renewables (SPR). I wish to state from the outset that I support moves by the government towards 'green' technology, but not in the way that causes untold destruction to wildlife, land, villages and local communities. What is needed is a holistic coordinated approach by developers, using 21st century technology, to maximize the energy that can be harnessed with the least amount of damage to people and the natural environment. I give my support to the Written Representations made by SASES and those of our MP Dr Therese Coffey.

When I bought my house in Friston in 2017, nothing came up on related searches about any plans for energy infrastructures nearby, yet it seems discussions were taking place but they were not in the public domain. In 2018 the village, was given the devastating news that Friston was to be the preferred location by the Applicant for the onshore aspects of its windfarm. Since then we have been fighting for our community and what a fight we are having:

- Consultation events were posters put up in our village hall by ten to twelve SPR personnel, but with only one or two who actually had the knowledge to answer questions raised by villagers (SPR did not even see it fit to involve the village in the first round of Consultations in 2017/18!). The anxiety of the villagers about the proposed construction has never been mitigated by the Applicant's public engagement, it certainly didn't help when, on one of these occasions, Philip Watkins, an SPR representative, was heard to say: "Not good news to be living in Friston"
- Documents eg Non-Technical Summaries, numerous Volumes of writing, factsheets, maps etc running to thousands of pages to be read and understood in order to grasp the enormity of what was being proposed and to try to plan an opposition
- The revelation that National Grid is involved in the project, and possibly always has been, but has failed to engage in legally required Consultations
- False information, even in documents, so as to mislead people about the gravity of what was being proposed and the proximity of the proposed site to the village.

The Applicant's EA1N Non-Technical Summary page 48 paragraph 156 – 'Human Health' says: "the proposed onshore development is largely comprised of agricultural land and has been sited away from population centres and sensitive receptors". In its EA1N PEI Chapter 27 – 'Human Health' stated that one of the key principles of site selection was "avoiding proximity to residential dwellings"! You will see from the site walks you have conducted that this is not the case. The site is bounded by a Grade 2* listed church, Grade 2 listed homes and other residential dwellings! Landowners and villagers have been approached to sell their land/home to the Applicant or face Compulsory Acquisition for the development. Photomontages produced by the Applicant conveniently failed to show the village location. Since the initial proposals we have seen revised plans, with an extended site footprint, coming even closer to the village and peoples' homes. Some Public Rights of Way are to be lost permanently, others re-routed

after months, if not years, of closure. These paths, so popular with locals and visitors, have become a lifeline to villagers during the Coronavirus pandemic – green space which must not be allowed to be stolen.

I came to Friston having retired from a career of over 30 years in education. Like others, I came for a slower pace of life, to enjoy a tranquil village location but one where there was an active community. This was my experience for the first 18 months here. But since news of the Applicant's plans have come to light the mood has changed. Villagers' lives and mental health has taken a battering. The majority of residents are 60+ - classed as 'older people'. In the Applicant's Chapter 27 'Human Health' page 94 paragraph 276 it recognized that "due to their increased likelihood to spend more time at home and their vulnerability to environmental changes it is assessed that there is increased likelihood of effects on older people, those with existing health conditions...", how ironic that SPR has continued with its plans in this village location. It just confirms to villagers that the Applicant is putting the wellbeing of residents, the loss of wildlife species and habitats and agricultural green spaces behind that of profit for shareholders in a Spanish company. The Government says it is committed to reducing the country's carbon footprint, hence the need for renewable technologies, and it yet it stated in its Plan: 'A Green Future: Our 25 year Plan to Improve the Environment' that "spending time in the natural environment ... improves our mental health and feelings of well being" (Chapter 3) (a). The two can go hand in hand provided that those with the power to do so make the right decisions ie not just based on lowest financial cost but lowest human cost. There are countless studies into mental health which have found that:

- "neighbourhood environment was an important factor in the health and functioning of older adults". Yen, I.H, et al (b)
- "The natural environment provides synergistic, physical, mental and social wellbeing benefits". Julie Newton (University of Bath) (c)
- data analysis "revealed that overall, people living in areas with more green space experienced better general health. The relationship was particularly significant for older people", de Vries et al, 2003 (d)
- "long-term states of anxiety increased the risk of heart disease and premature death". Kubzansky et al 1998 (e)

It may surprise the Examining Authority to know that there are more than five villagers over the age of 90 – at least three of whom live in the Grove Road/Church Road location – the prospects for their final few years are devastating. Imagine my horror this weekend when I noticed that SP Energy Networks (part of the Applicant's conglomerate) sponsors the Scottish Rugby Union team – its name emblazoned on their shirts; they can spend money on this but not on creating more human and environmentally friendly structures which would shelter and protect the lives of the elderly and vulnerable.

I am fortunate to live in one of the Grade 2 Listed properties adjacent to Friston church, but the Applicant, from what I can gather from its countless documents, does not concur that I will be affected by the onshore development. I can only agree with this statement in the context of visuals: fortunately it is only my kitchen window that looks out to the proposed site, however in every other way

my life and my home will be affected both during the construction and operational phases. My property is accessed from Church Road/Lane by a small no-through road "Church Path" – this also provides access to the church and the village hall. The applicant has stated that it will close parts of Church Road/Lane for three weeks during construction, but I cannot work out where this will actually be, nor what for. There has been no communication about arrangements for access etc during this time. Clearly there is going to be an increase in noise in both phases with increased traffic and building works – of course I will be affected by this: I cannot install double glazed windows, the enjoyment of my garden, usually tranquil or full of birdsong, will be gone. EA1N Vol Chapter 25 Noise and Vibration Appendix 24.1 Table A 25.7 data indicated that the 'Predicted night time noise' post construction would be 4.3 – quieter than it is currently with empty agricultural fields where the only noise is from wildlife – I would like someone to explain that data to me! The air around my home will be polluted with diesel fumes from construction traffic, the dark night skies this part of Suffolk is famous for will be gone due to light pollution caused by lighting at the compounds, car parks, security etc. Flooding in the village, a feature of my few years living here, is likely to increase due to the vast amounts of concrete due to be poured on the fields. The issue of where water runs off to within the Friston water course too is unclear and, as far as I know, only desk-top exercises have been conducted by the Applicant. I see on recent plans that the footprint of the proposed site now extends over a Covenanted field where the Applicants are proposing to remove all the hedgerows – why? What are they going to do there? I share an allotment which runs alongside the footpath towards Friston Moor which the Applicant is planning to close permanently, there will be no pleasure working there with the construction so close.

The EA1N Non-Technical Summary Page 52 paragraph 175 dared to imply that the proposed projects would provide significant beneficial impacts to employment in both the construction and operational phases, but these will not be local workers as emphasised in the first round of Open Floor Hearings in October 2020. The reality is that there are NO benefits of this proposed development to those people whose lives (mental and physical), homes and gardens are being destroyed. Furthermore even greater devastation lies just around the corner – there are many more energy projects in the pipeline – these are in the public domain, the cumulative effect of these on East Suffolk coastal communities will destroy this area as a place to live and a place to holiday not just during construction but for the foreseeable future.

I urge you to refuse consent to the onshore aspects of the Applicant's development.

References:

(a) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf

(b) "Fundamental Facts about Mental Health (Mental Health Foundation) 2015 page 41 para 128 Yen, I.H, Michael, Y.L. & Perdue, L. (2009) "Neighbourhood

environment in studies of the health of older adults: A Systematic Review".
American Journal of preventative Medicine, 37 (5) pp 455 -463

(c) "Wellbeing and the Natural Environment: A Brief Overview of the Evidence"
(2007) – Julie Newton – University of Bath

(d) "Natural Environments – Healthy Environments? An exploratory analysis of
the relationship between green space and health." de Vries, S., Verheij, R.,
Groenewegen, P., & Spreeuwenberg, P., (2003) Environment & Planning A, 35
1717-1731

(e) "Anxiety and coronary heart disease: a synthesis of epidemiological,
psychological and experimental evidence". Kubzansky, L., Kawach, I., Weisse, S.,
& Sparrow, D., (1998) Annals of Behaviour Medicine 20, 47-58