

Parish Council Update

November 2019

Progress

High level technical design has been completed. A number of innovations have been brought forward by the technical consultants;

- The Energy Centre will now run-off 100% renewable energy sources using a combination of ground source, air source, and solar panels.
- LPG will be used for the back-up boiler.
- Following advice from further technical consultants, the scheme put forward for funding will be capable of delivering up to 80c heat.
- During the summer it was calculated that the Heating Swaffham Prior would save 29,445 tonnes of carbon, the latest design will save an additional 33%, another 10,000 tonnes!

The boreholes and energy centre will be located off heath road on County Council land, this land is currently tenanted by a farmer. The project team have recently met with the farmer to discuss the project programme, planning process, and any potential impacts on their farming plan for the next few years. The meeting went well, and no major issues regarding the farming land have been identified, the farmer will receive a replacement barn when construction begins.

The team are now working towards a pre-application planning meeting to be held with East Cambridgeshire before the end of the year. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the type of planning application to be made, how this is submitted, and will cover all planning aspects of the project; the energy centre, network (works to roads and pathways), and connection with homes. One important aspect of the pre-application meeting is the educational provision within the energy centre. Different options (an open centre / classroom visits / parking levels etc.) will be presented at this initial meeting and then brought to the village for review through engagement for the planning process.

The next work package will include the appointment of a sustainability consultant, they will advise on the embodied and lifecycle carbon associated with the construction and operation of the heating network. These calculations can only be made in the detailed design stages, however, there are a number of carbon savings already achieved by the re-use of the barn and potentially by the use of paths rather than roads for a more efficient network delivery.

Funding + Programme

- The Round 9 funding application was submitted on Thursday 31st October. This submission incorporated work from all consultants and covered three areas; Governance, Engagement, and Technical Feasibility.
- The team expect to hear on the results of the funding application in the next 4-6 weeks and should be able to provide an update in December.
- The capital costs outlined in the funding application are higher than originally anticipated (£7.5m, a £1m increase) this is due to a more technically advanced and efficient design that will be capable of supplying 80c heat from entirely renewable sources.
- To address the £1m increase in costs, the project team are investigating the possibility of raising funds through Corporate Social Responsibility schemes. A sponsorship scheme would enable local companies to offset their carbon and support the heat network development. Companies currently pay £15-£30 per tonne of carbon reduction.