

FAO  
Lisa Roberts  
New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership

21/5/18

Dear Lisa,

## **South Holland District Council response to the Local Energy East Strategy Introduction**

South Holland District Council supports the key objectives of the draft Local Energy East Strategy, in terms of the potential to increase high quality employment opportunities from clean energy sectors, in increasing the efficiency of energy usage both in the homes and business premises, and as a driver to improve productivity across the East of England's economy.

Whilst we recognise the need to agree a deliver plan to support and implement the strategy's objectives, we would urge that this needs careful integration into each LEP's core delivery plan so that opportunities for local benefit and inclusive growth are not missed.

We would like to take the opportunity to comment on the four main themes within the strategy:-

### **Clean Economic Growth**

South Holland currently has 2 operational gas fired power stations with a third under construction, due to come online mid-2019. This new power station is smaller than originally proposed, the land that will not now be used for the building has been earmarked for battery storage, and this approach should be encouraged for all new generation schemes.

However, the study commissioned by the Greater Lincolnshire LEP in 2017 entitled 'Utilities in Greater Lincolnshire' (Atkins, December 2017) identified utility constraints of some kind on nearly every housing and commercial site in South Holland, many of these constraints being the supply of power.

Whilst there is a strong dialogue within the strategy to expand local employment opportunities close to the source locations of clean energy generation, we would suggest that more focus needs to be given to supply chain opportunities within both

clean energy generation and in uses of clean energy. Specifically we would suggest that:-

- A supply chain audit is undertaken in the major sources of clean generation to establish what percentage of the total value of these major projects is being undertaken using local East of England suppliers. And from this analysis proposals put forward to increase the percentage of local supply, especially in the sectors of advantage engineering and manufacturing.
- In looking to increase local supply content within clean generation, explore what additional leverage the public sector could bring to bear, e.g. through the planning system.

Whilst the strategy details the likely increase in electricity usage in the home for heating and car charging, we would suggest that the strategy should also encompass the specific opportunities for the East of England to become leaders in the development of underpinning technologies, especially in energy control systems and increased efficiency electric based heating. These are opportunities which could significantly increase advanced manufacturing activities in what is a worldwide market.

The emerging Food Enterprise Zone at Holbeach could play an important role in the development and introduction of clean technology into the agrifood sector, taking advantage of the University of Lincoln's Centre of Excellence that will be located on the site, and working with the Agriculture, Horticulture and Food industries, all of whom are moving rapidly towards cleaner, more productive robotics and automation practices.

### **Housing growth and commercial site infrastructure**

Whilst the strategy identifies the potential increased requirements in electricity supply which both electric vehicle charging and a move away from gas powered domestic heating towards electric heating, the focus seems to be mostly on ensuring that the grid coverage and capacity is sufficient to meet the likely demand. We would suggest that the strategy should include an increased focus on how the design and construction of new homes can be influenced to lower overall energy usage and to mainstream local home based energy generation and storage. South Holland has significant housing growth in the pipeline for the duration of the new local plan period in both Spalding and Holbeach

We would suggest the same principles apply to commercial site infrastructure but with the additional potential to reuse 'waste' heat, the by-product of certain industrial processes, and local clean electricity generation through an expansion of local solar farms and other clean technologies such as anaerobic digesters, of which both technologies are being widely utilised in South Holland today.

We would suggest that discussions with UKPN are undertaken to make it much easier for local energy production to be integrated into both the national grid and into robust local distribution networks. Local energy production for local consumption.

We would strongly support the need to build a much more robust local electricity distribution network. It seems ironic that the East of England has become a major electricity generation area and yet much of the distribution network is not in a fit state to support the economic growth aspirations of the region. We also welcome recognition of the need to support accompanying infrastructure, and would suggest that LEP's might want to add further weight to such infrastructure proposals.

At the moment, South Holland facilitates the landfall of the power cable that services the Race Bank, Inner Dowsing and Linc's offshore windfarms, generating green energy, all of which is fed directly into the grid at Walpole.

Likewise, the Viking Link cable from Denmark will feed into a huge converter station at Bicker Fen in the North of the district, consideration should be given to the provision of local green energy networks feeding off these renewable energy sources, particularly in respect of new housing developments and developing employment sites. (Renewable energy to power the electrification of the joint line?)

It seems inconsistent that electricity DNOs are 'not allowed' to invest in network upgrades without these costs being picked up by an external funder, yet the equivalent water utility companies seems to be able to fund the majority of their network upgrades. Perhaps this assumption, concerning electricity DNOs, needs to be strongly challenged.

### **Secure, local, affordable, low-carbon consumption**

Whilst battery storage is a currently well publicised method of temporary energy storage, we would encourage the strategy to explore other energy storage technologies which might be viable as part of low carbon consumption mix. Specifically we are aware of pilot projects in the East of England seeking support to commercialise using liquefied air as a temporary energy storage medium as the process is capable of using 'off peak electricity to power the process, making electricity energy available in demand when needed. This may have applications in both industrial sites and in large housing developments.

However, in terms of an investment strategy for energy resilience, we would caution too much reliance on storage as this may have an unintentional negative effect on prospective investors and their insurers where energy storage is the reinforcement strategy.

With regard to community scale energy schemes, we would suggest that this should also apply to the development of new housing developments so that house builders (much as we wish to remove barriers to housing building) are working at the cutting edge of energy distribution, usage and storage, as an integral part of the housing scheme designs. Again we would ask that the strategy seeks to investigate how we can best lever and incentivise opportunities within this topic.

As one example, should roof mounted solar installations, accessible EV charging points and home based battery storage become obligatory in all new housing developments? Furthermore, should policy be put in place to encourage retrofit on old and existing housing stock, and to make these kind of installations permitted development thus freeing them from process hoops.

### **Clean transport networks**

The strategy correctly identifies the regions reliance large volumes of freight traffic which both feeds the supply chains of our local industry and gets our large scale food production to market. Whilst the challenges of using EVs for freight transport are considerable, there is significant EV technology development within the region which might be supported to look at solutions beyond those currently successfully being development for car and bus transport.

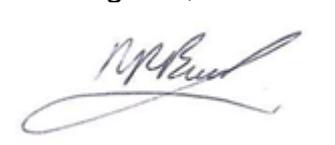
South Holland has a number of large logistics companies with national names such as Fowler Welch and Gist, along with several others, who together contribute to a conservative estimate of at least 1500 HGVs leaving the district in any 24 hour period. There is no doubt that hybrid or fully electric vehicles will eventually start to be introduced as reliance on fossil fuels decreases, there is a great opportunity to work with these logistics companies in the real world trialling of emerging technologies in the field of logistics.

Likewise, some £350m was recently spent on upgrading the joint line that runs through South Holland, connecting to the East Coast Mainline at Werrington in the South, and Doncaster in the North, to facilitate the removal of freight traffic from the East Coast Mainline pinch points, in order to free up additional passenger slots. At the time, the upgrade included raising bridge heights to accommodate the future electrification of the joint line. This electrification should be enabled as soon as possible so that the old diesel powered freight locomotives can be replaced with cleaner electric trains, this approach would also enable electric passenger trains to be diverted when needed as at the moment, only the old diesel hauled trains can use the line.

We fully support the development of an extensive network of publically accessible charging points, especially important to our rural environment, our local people and as support for our visitor economy. We would suggest that supporting the installation of EV charging points at strategic locations, suggesting limited coverage, needs to be rethought in light of much of the rural nature of our region. Consumers

need to be able to access recharging at the same level of convenience as they expect for petrol and diesel refuelling. Unless there is some overriding technology issue, we would suggest that it is time to move beyond pilot schemes and into full scale roll out. EV is the future for mass transport.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel R Burch', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Nigel R Burch

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