

Dear Members

This letter is read out on behalf Philip Silk, Conrad Energy's Head of Development and applicant for this scheme.

The way this country generates power is changing rapidly in response to the climate emergency. During the last decade, we have seen an unprecedented shift away from coal towards renewables, mainly in the form of wind and solar.

However this move towards a low-carbon economy does have consequences: sunshine and wind are variable resources and can change quickly, and they can't be 'turned-up' when electricity demand increases. Drops in power output or increases in electricity demand in peak periods cannot be quickly and efficiently met by the remaining large power stations which take hours to start and increase output.

The government and the National Grid therefore recognise the need for flexible, fast response generation across the power grid to fill these gaps. They provide a critical safety net of supply and resiliency to ensure everyone has access to the power they need.

Flexible generators, such as the one in our application, will only be used for limited periods, usually 3-4 hours per day, to support peak demand and when renewables do not generate as much power as forecast. They also critically provide resiliency in the event of unplanned power outages or changes in the grid network.

We are also seeing increasing need to support UK Power Networks, the local Distribution Network Operator, to provide the least cost solution to manage increasing demand on substations from new housing and industrial users all of which have growing energy consumption with the electrification of heating and vehicles.

We have listened closely to the concerns raised by local residents about the access to the site and have also engaged with Essex Highways to achieve an acceptable solution during the construction period. As detailed, we did look at an alternative route, but the only viable solution is the one proposed. Our application sets out various measures to minimise any disruption to local residents, this includes:

- A direct contact at Conrad Energy to liaise with the community
- Implementation of measures to control access of HGVs
- Restricted hours for access
- Walking banksman on delivery of equipment

In accordance with the details submitted, there will be some enhancing of the shoulders of the carriageway at certain points to facilitate the vehicles and a need to cut back some of the vegetation. However, there is no need to remove any trees.

In addition, we have liaised with representatives of the adjacent allotments. As a result of this engagement we have made a number of changes to our scheme, including the positioning of equipment and landscaping. In addition, we are proposing to support the allotment with some local initiatives that will benefit its members and users.

Conrad Energy owns and operates many such schemes across the country: they are an increasingly important part of a complex power grid and essential if we are to continue growing the proportion of our energy to come from renewables whilst keeping the lights on.

Our project would be connected into the local 11 kilovolt (kV) grid network in Witham, at the substation directly opposite the site. This means the electricity will be distributed and consumed locally and support the ability for the local grid to meet future growth in the area.

We hope the members recognize the clear need and benefits of this scheme and resolve to approve the application.

Yours faithfully

Philip Silk  
Head of Development