

BROME and OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting of Brome and Oakley Parish Council held at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 7 July 2026 at Brome and Oakley Village Hall.

PRESENT: Councillors Roger Broughton, Stephanie Dennis, Martin Liddell, Tom Pace and John Parry. Also in attendance seven member of the public.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Demangeat and Doe.

2. Declarations of pecuniary and other interests from members on any item to be discussed and requests for dispensations

Cllrs Broughton, Dennis and Liddell had been granted a dispensation to participate in matters relating to the EcoPower application.

3. Public Forum

The Chairman explained that Parish Council had previously made responses to the non-statutory consultation. The statutory consultation was now open and closes on 16 August. All members of the public were encouraged to make individual representations to EcoPower Suffolk.

Residents of Brome and Oakley made the following comments: Residents were informed that the Parish Council did not have answers to specific questions and these should be put directly to EcoPower.

Vehicle access route; Nicks Lane or through the village? Nicks Lane preferred to through the village due to heavy vehicles. Therefore, could the Parish Council ask for clarity on vehicle access.

Access points were marked on maps and it looked like each large clump of panels had at least one access point which suggests Nicks Lane was going to be used. However, it was not clear how access would be gained to the Upper Oakley/Area 2. Concern was also expressed for lack of detailed information and this was highlighted by how poor the maps are in the consultation pack and in particular, it is difficult to identify Rectory Road or Brome Avenue on the maps. The maps, as currently presented, suggest the area for cable corridor was covering a moated area.

Although there was lose reference to the noise from the substation and battery storage there was not much detail around noise mitigation given it was a 24/7 operational facility. Therefore, residents were concerned what noise they would be able to hear.

A resident stated they had been reassured by the environmental and heritage assessments being independent from EcoPower when they had attended the consultation event, however, had not looked at the environmental policy on large mammals. At this event, they had asked about transport routes but they were not confirmed and asked about fencing and routes for deer and answers were not yet available for those matters either.

Another resident was also concerned about deer and could not get a satisfactory response at the consultation event.

It was asked how long the construction phase would be and it was suggestion that this question was referred directly to EcoPower.

Non-resident

A resident of Brome Avenue was concerned about noise from the sub-station behind 'black barn'. Thought it may not be the correct location for the substation and perhaps the landowners could consider having it on their own land not in the development.

Signed R. J. L. L. Chairperson L. Kate Clerk
Date 20.7.2026

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Public Forum closed at 19.59

4. Shaping of the Parish Council response with a view to a draft submission being approved at meeting of 20 July. It was agreed the main areas of concern were:

Maps - were insufficient and not fit for the purpose of the consultation – it is difficult to get a detailed view of how the development affects the parishes.

Construction routes – access and egress, primary and secondary and post construction maintenance access points. A request would be made to Suffolk Highways to ask for any information they may have on the route figure 2.3 linking Upper Oakley to Long Beren. *Cllr Liddell would prepare a response for this section.*

Operational issues – concerns for when the sites are operation included exact areas that were going to be covered in solar panels, sub station noise and battery noise. Measurement of decibels and distance and wind factors and what mitigation the planting may have. Will operational noise be 24/7. Background humming noise from the battery container possibly from the cooling fan. What would happen if the panels needed to be replaced during the life of the operation. *Cllr Dennis would prepare a response for this section.*

It was noted that the size of the area in what was 2C has shrunk considerably. The Parish Council's preference was for it to be removed. There was discussion on areas for inclusion or removal, namely Area 2 (eastern most area) Blue area 6, Brome Avenue/Parcel 2A in the January 2026 consultation documents. *Cllr Broughton would prepare a response for this section including some maps to restate the wishes of the Parish Council.*

Environmental – the concerns were; where was fencing going and how close to panels. What type of planting is going to be used and what species of trees. What mitigations would be in place for planting to survive in areas near batteries due to heat from batteries. Deer movements. Badgers and hares i.e. large mammals. It was agreed that a permissive path to the wetlands area should be requested and acknowledgement EcoPower's intentions to create these habitat/conservation areas. *Cllr Broughton would prepare a response for this section.*

Community Benefit Fund – from research it was noted that the duration of any scheme varies but most of the bigger schemes are for 40 years. There was originally a preference for district, or subsequent authority, to run the fund, however, should be in a separate contract and not subject to any change of ownership of EcoPower. Then discussion took place on the feasibility of the payments being made directly to the Parish Council? It was agreed to ask the other parishes if they felt that the fund should be made directly to individual Parish Councils given the uncertainty over Local Government Reorganisation and if they felt the fund payment was adequate. *Cllr Parry would prepare a response for this section.*

5. Allocation of responsibilities – responsibilities were allocated as above. Drafts were to be submitted to the Chair by Tuesday 14 July.

6. Urgent Matters and matters for report

None.

7. Date of next meeting – Monday 20 July 2026 and Monday 10 August 2026 (extraordinary)

Meeting closed: 20.49.

Signed  Chairperson  Clerk

Date 20.7.2026