

Beckingham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday, 31st March 2011 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

Membership Councillor K Ashworth , Councillor T Fox, Councillor P Hallam, Councillor G Else

Present J Lyon (Parish Clerk), District Councillor Pat Woodman MBE, 7 members of the public,

11/23 Apologies

Apologies have been received from County Councillor Ray Philips, District Councillor Sue Howe and Councillor B Day.

11/24 Minutes of the previous meeting, 22nd February 2011

The minutes were accepted as correct and signed as a true record.

11/25 Matters Arising

Community Led Plan

The completed questionnaires have been received back, just over 50%, and these will be analysed over the next two months.

Grass Cutting– James Webb has not quoted for the grass cutting, so the Council agreed to accept Veoila's quotation

Parish Clerk

The position was advertised in the Bugle, but to date no one has shown an interest. The clerk introduced Alison Chesters Thompson, from Brant Broughton, who may be interested, but it was agreed that if possible, the appointment should come from within the village – to be discussed at the next meeting.

11/26 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest at this point.

11/27 Planning Matters

11/0238 Noble Foods Ltd Lodge Farm Sleaford Road Beckingham Lincoln Lincolnshire LN5 0RB

Construction and operation of 3 wind turbines (each with a maximum tip height of 90m), with associated ancillary infrastructure

Councillor Else's daughter, who is an associate with a firm of consultant planners, has studied the application in detail and has made the following comments

- Assessment of Heritage Assets required - listed buildings etc - no views of turbines are provided against church steeple;
- Further noise assessment against British Standard:4142 and World Health Organisation standards as per attached appeal decision;
- Geo Investigation prior to decision;
- Confirmation of exact wind turbine to be used;
- More viewpoints - not contrived ones and instead those that show turbines with church steeple and views available over hedges;
- How does it affect the Camp?
- Will workers be laid off egg farm during construction - no proper assessment in socio-economic section
- Full investigation into TV & Radio impact prior to determination;
- When were bat surveys undertaken - how long for - seems inadequate to establish extent of foraging especially given large bat roosts nearby;

- Land cover of hedgerows should not be relied upon as not within control of applicant so could be cut back. Also the visual assessment and montages are during summer when leaves on trees etc so does not represent a worse case scenario!

- A PPS5 Heritage Assessment needs to be conducted due to proximity of the turbines to listed buildings and impact on setting of Conservation Area. This should have been included in the Design & Access Statement but there is not even a mention of impact on historic setting;

- Confirmation of which turbine is proposed - leaving the type of turbine to be determined post decision is unacceptable. How has the noise impact been accurately assessed etc if the type of turbine is not confirmed and therefore there is a chance for it to differ.

- The landscape assessment does not include the visual requested during the public consultation and the viewpoints used are not from properties, public footpaths etc. Also they are purposely place to take account of screening etc and do not pay any relevance to the height of the turbine - so that the turbine and blades are clearly visible above hedges etc due to a set back which is how most dwellings facing the site are positioned. Ask for more viewpoints locally.

-The Geo-Investigation ground survey has not been done - not even one test hole on the site. This is completely unacceptable as had been requested by the Councillors at the committee and needs to be undertaken prior to consent so that foundations and depth/extent of works can be properly envisaged. Also to take account of and dismiss clay slippage. Otherwise the exact locations identified may not be acceptable and then all the technical assessments will be wrong if the turbines are moved even a fraction.

- What will happen to the chicken farming during 9 months construction period - will people be laid off? This and the impact on the farm has not been taken into account in Social Economics.

- There is no mention of how it affects the camp - presumably because the shadow flicker is not expected on that area. However, helicopters will be restricted and hand radios for exercises will be interfered.

- There is no investigation of impact on TV picture, despite recognition that it will affect over 1,000homes. The BBC analysis I think said significant but there is no analysis of what this means. Remember this is the whole village, Brant Broughton, Barnby etc so significant. It is not appropriate to say that it can be fixed once the turbines are up as there is no surety especially as cable is not available and listed building/conservation area designation prevent satellite dishes. The Parish Council would want some technical explanation of this before a decision is made.

- the ecological assessment is deficient as does not investigate local wildlife records - County Council and wildlife trust records. No mention of birds of prey etc.

- you want to know when and for how long bat surveys were taken - to gauge bat foraging a period of two nights is not sufficient especially when 4 different species were identified - also flying high across site. What were these species? There is a roost of 200 bats in Pear Cottage so they would use hedges to forage and to get to chicken sheds which seem to attract insects and therefore bats. Request more information and more details surveys be held including roost inspections of all farm buildings on site and all trees.

- Apparently no dwellings would experience noise nuisance despite the scheme not being assessed against BS4142 and World Health Organisation standards which require that night time noise does not exceed 40dBa. Please see attached decision which establishes that these noise regulations can be sued to assess likely impact on dwellings - if they would not allow a supermarket to make that noise why is it ok for a wind turbine to? The Parish Council need to request these noise assessments and ask the Council Environmental Health Officer to assess it

against these standards given proximity of the turbines and likely night time impact when background noise from A17 is minimal.

- The planning policy analysis is flawed as presumes that there is a policy supportive of green energy schemes that all other policies are immediately complied with or not applicable
- no justification of countryside location even though not considered to be truly appropriate.
- How do the turbines enhance sustainability of Noble Foods - they will not own them or use energy generated, they are simply renting land to Wind Direct surely?
- The land cover is not within the control of the applicant and therefore should not be relied upon to provide screening – especially as the application proposes no screening planting. However due to the height of the turbines views are offered above the screening from the village of their most visually harming feature – rotor blades diameter and hub. The viewpoints used are contrived and do not include the church steeple views - views from A17 from Barnby for instance. These should be requested.

The following points were also discussed

There will be a 13 week consultation period after which the planning officers will take a decision – it has to go through ‘due process’. The Planners will make a recommendation to the full Planning Committee of 44 members, but the Committee does not have to accept the recommendation. The Planning Department may feel that 13 weeks is not long enough and may extend that period with the applicants permission. The determination date is June 24th.

There is to be an exhibition of the plans in Beckingham Village Hall next Wednesday (6th April) all day.

Although comments are requested within the 3 week deadline, those received after this date will still be considered.

If the Parish Council ask for more information, they may need to make further comment if these questions are answered.

It was asked whether there is a need for neighbouring parishes to object once Beckingham have done – it was agreed that the more objection letters received the better.

KNOT group are working hard to help people know how and when to object

Sustained objections may lead to the applicant withdrawing, as happened to the Dairy Farm at Nocton.

It was agreed that the Parish Council should make a preliminary objection asking for clarification on all the issues raised – the objection letter will be sent for inclusion on the village website and also to KNOT. The clerk to draft a letter objecting on the following;

- Visual Impact on the countryside
- Loss of amenities in general
- Noise
- Impact on wildlife
- Cultural Heritage
- Impact on TV and radio

This is not an exhaustive list and may be added to.

The clerk will then email to Councillors for their approval before sending to NKDC.

It was suggested that the application be added as an agenda item for the next cluster meeting, and it was decided that this could be discussed under Parish Updates.

It was asked how much land do Noble Foods own at Beckingham – the plans show that it is just the triangle of land beside the A17. It is believed that they also own land at North Scarle.

11/28 Date of the Next Meeting

The date for the next meeting was set for Friday 15th April at 7.00pm in the Village Hall if there has been any response to the questions asked.