TACKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on
19th December 2022 held at Tackley Village Hall

Present: Councillors Liz Marshall (LM) (Chair), Angus Paxton (AP), June Collier (JC), Richard Holland-Oakes (RHO).
Andy Graham (AG) (OCC)
Cherie Carruthers (CC) (Clerk to the Council)
2 Members of the public

TACKLEY PARISH COUNCIL WISH TO STATE THAT HE BELOW REPORT IS FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC, IT IS ONE POINT OF VIEW AND THE STATEMTS MADE WITHIN THE REPORT HAVE NOT BEEN VERIFIED AND CHECKED NY THE PC. WE THEREFORE TAKE NO RESPONSILITY FOR ITS CONTENT AND ACCURACY.

22/069:Public Participation: Dr Anne Gwinnet members of the public addressed the meeting: in relation to the Botley West proposal. She read out the following statement:

The proposal being put forward by PVDP (Photovolt Development Partners, based in Berlin)
Consultation document was circulated round the village recently, and consultation events in person and on-line have occurred between 19 November and 5 December – I attended 2 in-person events and the on-line event. None were highly attended.
The scale of this development is huge – if it goes ahead, this will be, by far, the largest solar farm in this country, and the largest in Europe.
As set out in the consultation document, it will cover 1400 hectares of land on three sites (Northern, Middle and Southern), all of which is currently used as agricultural land (Grade 3B).
This is 3,500 acres!
80% of the land is owned by the Blenheim Estate. The rest by Merton College and farm owners.
The loss of 3,500 acres of agricultural land at a time when food security is an issue, and we need to be able to be more self-sufficient must surely be balanced carefully against the purported benefits of the scheme in terms of energy production and the environment.
There are many such developments being proposed all over the country.

Based on information gained from the consultation events, let's look at some of the pros and cons:-

The consultation document claims:	*Response to queries posed to PVDP:*
Botley West will remove 14.4 million tonnes of carbon over its operational lifetime (35-40 years) *Note: This figure is based on modelling by the Solar Trade Association*	*PVDP were unable to provide any figures on how much carbon will be created in:* • *the processes of extraction of materials to make the panels* • *the transportation of such materials to China* *(PVDP have confirmed the panels will be manufactured in China)* • *the process of manufacturing the panels* • *the transportation of the panels from China to Oxfordshire* *The carbon pushed into the atmosphere by the above processes will be produced over a short time frame,* *and needs to be off-set against the gains being made over 35-40 years.* *NOTE: PVDP were unable to confirm the material composition of the panels, but based on current technology these are likely to include phospherous, boron, gallium, cadmium, lead, glass, aluminium and silicon*

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The consultation document claims:	*Response to queries posed to PVDP:*
…. Nothing about disposal or recycling of the panels at the end of their life	*… and PVDP reps were very vague about if/how this would be done*
Botley West could generate enough low-cost clean and renewable electricity to power approximately 330,000 homes *AND* *Botley West will deliver secure homegrown power…..*	*This is apparently based on an 'average' day across the year, but if we have a long spell with poor light then energy production will be MUCH lower than this.* *Note: Renewable energy is not reliable – we need a balanced portfolio of different types of power generation.* *See * below*
Botley West will provide supply chain and employment opportunities during the construction and operational phases.	*Employment:* *They will need 400-500 for the first 2 years, then just 20 employees to manage the whole site for the rest of the 35-40 years!* *Supply Chain: The panels will be manufactured in China*
Botley West will add to Oxfordshire's biodiversity by helping to protect and rebuild habitats on land currently used for agriculture.	*There is no reference or acknowledgement of the damage that will be done to existing habitats by covering large areas of land with solar panels.* *They don't even seem to be aware of the need to do hedge laying** (which should be done to new hedges after 7 years)*
…. No mention of the fire risks	*I am still exploring this issue, but London Fire Brigade have certainly identified risks, including risks of electrocution to those fighting the fire and of toxic fumes.*

** There are clear benefits to renewable energy BUT also some challenges:*
'Solar and wind power have inherent flaws that prohibit them from ever forming the backbone of an industrialized nation's electrical grid. They require nearly 100 percent backup because they depend on the vagaries of the weather. Just look at how energy from solar and wind fluctuates. In 2019, wind power on one day rose to 59 percent of German power generation, but it fell to as low as 2.6 percent on another day of the year. In the same year, solar peaked at 25 percent and bottomed out at 0.3 percent.'
'Another essential issue with solar and wind power is that they lack energy density. A power source with low energy density takes more space and physical materials to generate electricity than a source with high energy density. Solar plants in Germany take up approximately 500 times more land than nuclear plants, and wind clocks in at 415 times more.'
Above taken from https://quillette.com/2022/07/14/germanys-energy-catastrophe/

*** Hedge laying is the process of partially cutting through and then bending the stems of a line of shrubs or small trees, near ground level, without breaking them, so as to encourage them to produce new growth from the base and create a living 'stock proof fence'.*

A better way forward: Solar could be developed on brownfield sites!
e.g. on the top of buildings. France have just brought in a law that any car park above a certain size must have a roof with solar panels on top. New build houses could come with solar panels as standard.
This approach would avoid losing agricultural land, which is an asset we cannot afford to lose.
Concerns about the DCO process
*This project is defined as an infrastructure project and, as such is taken out of local control*** – BUT councils are being consulted as key stakeholders so could make a difference!*

I ask the Parish Council to please do the following:

1. *ask key questions about the proposals to get a better understanding of the pros and the cons;*
2. *consult us (their constituents) to ascertain what people feel about this development;*
3. *represent these views to PVDP and the Government;*
4. *seriously consider opposing these proposals*

**** The approval process is done via DCO – Development Consent Order process, implemented by a Government agency.*
The DCO process is an application for an order which, if granted, combines the grant of planning permission with a range of other consents.
In order to engage in the DCO process, you need to make a relevant representation. This means you become an interested party, enabling you to also make a written representation and appear at hearings, ensuring that your view is heard and taken into account. See notes on separate pages.
DCO holds 6 months of public hearings. You can take a lawyer. DCO will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State, who will then make a political decision which may, or may not, follow the advice.

LM advised that the Parish Council would be holding a full discussion on this in the New Year, all parishioners would be invited along, so the PC can gather their views.
JC said that the problem is lack of apathy, this is all to do with money and gain.

AG noted that WODC are doing a local impact assessment, which is a very robust test. The Lead Officer is Andrew Thompson, contactable on Andrew.thompson@westoxon.gov.uk.
The second part to WODC's plan is that they will be taking on board what the local community is saying, they will submit their comments to the Planning Inspector, there will have to be proof that the comments and finding from the study are being taken into account. He advised that WODC will not take a view or express a position until there is feedback from the Impact assessment, and suggested the PC do the same.

AP said the key influencers in this will be our local MP Robert Courts, and that the PC is only able to object on planning grounds only.

JC suggested TPC join forces with Bladon and Wootton PC, there was some hesitation, it was agreed to discuss this at the next meeting.

22/070: Matters from the floor:

AG had previously circulated his report, there were no questions on this. He further updated that home school Transport policy was being reviewed for improvements, with a working group putting forward recommendations.

He had also been in contact with officers Nick Motrum and Chris Brown in relation to the catchment survey, they have advised the cost will be approx., £5,000, it was asked whether TPC can us the S106 money to pay for this. AG agreed to look into this.

LM asked AG who is responsible for improving the paths in the village, he said the county, he asked LM to get the resident or herself to send him pictures of the area and he would action.

RHO asked AG where we are with the 20's Plenty scheme, as he had been told the second round was in 2023, but wished to remind the mind of Geoff Barrell, the officer in charge at OCC.

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22/071: Apologies for absence: Councillors Richard Jackson, Martin Mahon.

22/072:Declaration of interest: LM declared an interest in item 8.i – as a family member is a recipient of a payment.

22/073: Minutes of Council meeting held on 24th October 2022 were approved as a true and fair record, proposer AP, seconder JC. In addition the minutes of Council meeting held on 21st November 2022 were approved as a true and fair record, proposer AP, seconder RHO.

22/074: To consider planning matters:

i. Cornerstone 11309823 Pre-Application Letter outlining a proposed upgrade at the existing telecommunications base station at Land At Wood Farm, Tackley, Oxfordshire OX5 3EN - *NOTED*

ii. 22/03149/HHD – 39 Nethercote Road, OX5 3AW – Erection of two storey extension and detached garage. – *No Comment*

It was noted that the PC had not been notified directly of this application. CC to contact WODC and ask if procedure had changed.

22/074: Replacement of ash tree Chaundy Road: The TPO officer had suggested a field maple for a replacement variety, however this can grow to over 20m in height. LM has asked Mark Blake, Tree surgeon to suggest two smaller species. These two will be passed out to the residents for their preferred option.

22/075:To consider matters of finance and policies:

i. It was approved that the following payments were ratified and the impact the payment would have on the budget and reserves.
Proposed: AL, seconded: RHO: **APPROVED**

Online	Gross Amount (£)	VAT Value (£)	Payee	Details	Power
	60.00		Tackley Village Hall	Room Hire	LGA 1972 S112
	1136.04	189.34	Greenscythe Ltd	Inv 15248 Dec maintenance	Open Spaces Act
	31.35		R Strachen	Reimbursement for Bunkers Hill Inv	Open Spaces Act
	797.33		Clerks Pay	November Salary	LGA 1972 S111
	25.00		A Marshall	Dec Bin Emptying	LGA 1972 S112
	25.00		A Khan	Dec Bin Emptying	LGA 1972 S112

ii. Joining the LGPS: It was unanimously agreed that Tackley Parish Council will join the Oxfordshire County Council LGPS Scheme.
The scheme will be open and offered to the Clerk, in this case Cherie Carruthers. The date of joining the scheme is the 1st April 2023.

iii. Approval and adoption of the Standing Orders, Risk Assessment, Financial Regs and Code of Conduct: It was requested that the Risk Assessment included a Risk Management policy. This is come back to the March meeting.

22/075: **To agree and approve the budget for 2023-2024 Financial Year:** CC had circulated the proposed final budget to members (available on the website), it was AGREED and APPROVED to adopt the budget for the coming year.
The bank reconciliation and payments list for 1st April 2022 to 30th November 2022, were both noted and signed by the RFO and Chair.

22/076: **To agree and set the Precept for 2023-24:** CC as RFO put forward the recommendation that the charge per house per annum remained the same as 2022-23 at £56.50. Tackley had gained some band D houses from 495.87 to 502.82, releasing a small amount into the precept.

It was AGREED and APPROVED to set the 2023-2024 precept at £56.50 charge per house per annum, equating to a total precept of £28,409.

22/077: To consider other matters:

i. **Tackley Horse Show:** AL asked whether the PC should be financially supporting the horse show and enquired why the PC received a donation from them. It was decided that the funds should be kept by the show.

ii. **Safety Railings Nethercote Road:** RHO had received a complaint regarding the aesthetics and usability of the railing. Firstly, they are not in keeping with the conservation area and the chicane is too tight to get any mobility aids through. He wondered whether these could be replaced at he expenses of the PC. He agreed to investigate the Disability Act and see if there are any conditions that the design breaches.

iii. **Allotments:** Jan Read (Allotment Representative) had sent correspondence to the CC and AL advising them of some anti-social behaviour on the allotment site. AL briefed the meeting, and the members noted the comments highlighted in the email.

iv. **CCTV:** The PC's contribution to the replacement CCTV is £673.06 plus VAT. It was agreed in principle that the PC would be happy to pay this. LM to advise the shop to go ahead.

v. **Recycle Bins:** AL suggested the PC purchase multi bins with the option of recycling, LM advised that the thought the whole bin is sieved out before land fill, so no need to go to the trouble. AL to check the website for confirmation.

vi. **Tree Roots pathway near school:** LM to report on Fixmystreet.

vii. **Sandbags:** CC to chase Mathew Parkinson regarding sandbags being delivered to the village.

viii. **Location of VAS signs:** RHO had taken delivery of 3 VAS signs, JC said to contact Paul Cheeseman for installation of these.

Next meeting: 16th January 2023 at 7pm.

Meeting closed at 9:12pm.

Signed as a true record of the Tackley Parish Council Meeting held on 19th December 2022.

…… Date…….