

Lea & Cleverton Parish Council

Minutes of the Extraordinary Lea & Cleverton Parish Council meeting held on the 12th April 2022 in the Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs S Suter, C Pope, D Maidment, N Maidment, & S Carroll

Also present: Claire Mann (Parish Clerk), Elizabeth Threlfall (Wiltshire Council) & 63 members of the Public

In the absence of Cllr Masson, Cllr Suter was elected as Chair.

35/22 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllr Masson

36/22 To receive declarations of interest

None.

37/22 To receive any public questions

It was agreed to defer item 7 on the agenda so that members could receive information from St Paul Malmesbury Without PC

Residents of The Spinney requested further support from the Parish Council since the Traffic Survey Results had still not been received and the speeding issue persists. Cllr Threlfall stated that she would chase up the results. Residents also requested that a Speed Indicator Device be set up.

38/22 To consider Highways Improvement Request received – Lea Top

It was agreed that the Parish Council supported the Highways Improvement Request, Cllr Pope will forward to the CATG meeting on the 26th April.

It was agreed to bring the Battery Storage Facility Application forwards as members of the public were in attendance to hear discussion and make points

39/22 To discuss Planning Applications received

PL/2021/09832 – Proposed Battery Storage Facility

Following discussion it was resolved that members **object** to the application. Points raised among residents and the Parish Council include;

1. Greenfield location/in open countryside: use of brownfield sites more appropriate
2. No imperative or requirement for such facility to be on a greenfield site
3. Query regarding claimed status of layby at proposed entrance to access road
4. Interruption or potential loss of footpath No 1 due to access road
5. Quality of soil - how much of the area is classed BVM (best and most versatile farmland)?

6. Public safety aspects: RoW and new road in conflict: safety concerns re heavy traffic
7. Road safety aspects at junction of access road/B4042: insufficient sight line/splay distances
8. Visual impact of site: difficult to obscure/hide given location and aspect/topography
9. Otters recently identified @ Woodbridge Brook?
10. Other forms of storage facilities/environmental projects should be considered
11. No consideration given to adverse impacts on food security; fields are of 3A and 3B grade soil.
12. The local community will suffer harm and see no benefit from installation
13. There has been no archaeological survey of the site
14. Wiltshire & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service have not been consulted
15. No assessment has been of the impact on air quality?
16. Creating formalised roads in the green belt is classed as development
17. Change of land use; development will trigger change of use from agriculture to industrial
18. BEFs are best placed close to or on supporting infrastructure; not so in this case
19. Details of connection to Minety SS required including environmental impact assessment
20. Sequential test required to validate development location: preferred sites may exist in the locality
21. LVIA inadequate: realistic views with timeline from construction to maturity
22. LVIA deficient: no details or treatment of landscape/visual impact of access road

ISSUES FOR PLANNING CONDITIONS TO CONTROL

1. No contingency plans to clear and reinstate the site should operation cease
2. The proposed site is visually highly intrusive
3. Why is site on a south facing slope? Very conspicuous for village and hard to screen
4. Light pollution at night: confirmation that site will not be illuminated
5. Ambient noise levels: confirmation they will not be unacceptably above baseline levels
6. Working life of development: how long, what arrangements to decommission on termination
7. No specific mandated design standards yet in force for such development
8. Run-off water quality to Woodbridge/Avon watercourses: under operation/emergency conditions
9. Small animals might trigger lighting at night in an area of no public lighting
10. Insufficient detail about how this remote industrial site will be effectively monitored
11. Run-off during construction could pollute Woodbridge Brook and River Avon
12. Run-off in the event of fire-fighting emergency could pollute Woodbridge Brook and River Avon
13. Container colour needs to be specified (olive green?)
14. Clear details required about arrangement for decommissioning bond

ISSUES CONCERNING FEARS FOR THE FUTURE

1. Unclear why not co-located with solar farm equipment: likely to be further applications
2. Potential that access road will become new planning boundary
3. Potential that access road will spawn new development and expansion of Malmesbury
4. Site on slope facing south suggests solar farm(s)/other related development will follow

5. There have been a number of historic incidents involving BESS fires: high risk

GOVERNMENT AND WILTSHIRE POLICY ISSUES

1. Lack of strategic planning to regulate further proliferation of similar development
2. Lack of strategic plan to regulate location of BSF/solar farm sites
3. Need for a limit to the number of such development within an area - cumulative effects
4. An industrial not a green development: simply a storage site: not productive
5. Fire safety: specialised fire-fighting skills needed in event of emergency
6. Who pays for necessary specialist fire-fighting equipment/response: tax payer?
7. What contingency plans to clear and reinstate site should developer go bust

TECHNICAL ISSUES AND UNCERTAINTIES

1. Unclear technical feasibility given distance from Minety SS: transmission losses
2. Unclear economic feasibility: conflicting statements about max distance from SS
3. Risk that financial incentives posed by development will encourage acceptance
4. Unclear/insecure commercial arrangements: who will be owner/responsible for O&M
5. Insurance companies withdrawing from such schemes: perceived high fire risks
6. Working life of batteries will be finite: what is frequency of replacement?
7. A remote standalone site (cf Sub-station location) represents inefficient use of resources
8. Concern that companies with little trading history set up for short-term profit
9. Such developments normally have temporary roads removed on completion
10. Planning Application lacks important detail concerning electrical and battery equipment
11. Planning Application information is inconsistent e.g. number of containers
12. Not enough consideration given to improving aspect of site
13. The beautiful countryside, flora and fauna will be adversely impacted and irreversibly so
14. It would take many years for trees to partially obscure site
15. The Wiltshire Council EIA is from an earlier planning application
16. The number of containers is at variance with number stated in the Pelagic document.
17. The capacity of the site in MW is not specified in the Pelagic submission

40/22 To consider budget requirements for Playing Field Tree Works Group

Following discussion it was resolved that up to £700 be allocated to the Group.

41/22 To discuss Planning Applications received

PL/2022/02610 – Little Badminton

Following discussion it was resolved that members had **no objection** to the application

PL/2022/02751 – 54 Cresswell Lane

Following discussion it was resolved that members had **no objection** to the application

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42/22 To consider purchase of 5 fence posts & 2 gate posts for allotments and to note arrangements for installation

It was agreed to purchase the fence and gate posts and that Paul Fuller and Jim Smilie would install them.

43/22 To consider request from Parish Shed tenant to refurbish and re-paint the front/doors in exchange for two quarter rents.

It was agreed that the tenant of the Parish Shed could have two rent free quarters in exchange for completion of proposed work.

Meeting closed at 9.15pm