

TACKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Page 23/007

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 17th JULY 2023 held at Tackley Village Hall

Present: Councillors Liz Marshall (LM) (Chair), Andrew Lines (AL) (Vice Chair), Richard Holland-Oakes (RHO), Sue Lygo (SL).
Councillor Tim Sumner (WODC).
Cherie Carruthers (CC) (Clerk to the Council)
16 Members of the public

23/027:Public Participation: Tim Chapple read the below statement to the members and public in attendance, on behalf of the Gardiner Arms Community Interest Group (GACIG).

Remarks of the Gardiner Arms Community Interest Group to Tackley Parish Council at its meeting on 17 July 2023

What I say is on behalf of the Gardiner Arms Community Interest Group and has been agreed and approved by the Group. It isn't a personal statement.

The purpose of these remarks is to encourage the Parish Council to take a more engaged and proactive role in the attempts by the village to purchase the pub. Nothing we say is intended to criticise the Council and its role hitherto, but inevitably in making our case to you now there is a risk that there may appear to be such an implication. Please accept that there isn't any criticism in what we say.

What we are seeking to achieve, as you know, is an agreement for the village to buy the pub. We have pursued that aim for about three months and, frankly, have got nowhere. We suggest that the reason for the lack of progress isn't anything we have done or said, but the position adopted by the owners of the pub. They say they want to sell the pub to the village, but the stance they have taken does not reflect that. First, as you know, they have said that they won't accept less than £600,000. Any objective assessment shows that that is a vastly inflated figure. To offer to sell something at a price which bears no proper relationship to reality is not a genuine offer to sell.

The next problem we have encountered, as you also know, relates to the condition of the pub.

Although the owners have steadfastly refused permission for the specialist surveyor instructed by us to inspect the property - which has been a barrier to progress in itself – it is clearly somewhat dilapidated. If it were a private house, perhaps this would be of less concern. But it is not a private house. It is an important asset of the village, listed as such under the Localism Act. Moreover, it is a Grade II listed building. This matters to the village, and I'm sure it matters to the Parish Council.

Where does this take us?

My respectful submission is that the Council owes a duty to the village to take steps both to facilitate the purchase of the pub by the village and to protect the fabric and condition of the building. Because the pub is an asset of community value, and because it is a listed building, the Council should not sit on its hands. Nor does it need to adopt neutral stance. We don't suggest that the Council should adopt a bellicose position, but sometimes it's necessary to (for want of a better term) take sides. There can be nothing wrong with the Council taking a role and a position which supports (a) the purchase of the pub by the village, and (b) the protection of the fabric of the building. If that means disagreeing with the owners of the pub, so be it. Councils often have to disagree with, and even take steps against, residents or businesses within the parish.

What do we propose? We have three proposals.

First, the PC should write to the owners of the pub. It should express its concern about the lack of progress in the attempts to purchase the pub. It should say, clearly, that an important reason for the lack of progress is the completely unrealistic price which they are demanding. It should be spelled-out that asking for a price which is manifestly far more than a reasonable market price is not a genuine offer to sell.

The letter from the Council should also say that it is extremely worried about the lack of repair to the pub and the function room. It should explain that because it is an asset of community value and a listed building, it is of great concern to the Council that so little (if anything) has been done to keep the structure in good condition. It can be pointed out that the status of the pub as a community asset and a listed building means that these are proper concerns for the PC.

Second, we invite the Council to take an active role with us in our forthcoming engagement with the District Council. We shall be asking it to take formal steps by way of enforcement. Specifically, we shall be inviting the District Council to serve whatever notices are necessary and appropriate both to deal with the lack of repair and to deal with the situation in which the owners have closed the pub but continue to live above it. Now is not the time to go into detail about this, but we believe that the District Council has and should exercise its powers to remedy that situation, with the aim of achieving a sale of the whole site to the village for the benefit of the village.

Third, as part of that more active role, we ask the Council to nominate one of its members to have special responsibility for this issue and to liaise with us about it.

We hope you will accept this invitation in the good spirit in which we make it and will now take an active role in assisting us acquire the pub for the benefit of the village.

AL responded that TPC had decided that the PC would reach out to both parties to facilitate the transfer of the pub to the community. He agreed that he is happy to have another conversation about this point.

CC advised that TPC had indeed written to WODC regarding the enforcement by Conservation as to the upkeep of the buildings; she agreed to forward on the correspondence requested by the Freedom of Information request sent to WODC. She noted that she had also phoned WODC to chase up response and sent on the information to TPC's WODC Councillor Mathew Parkinson for chasing.

Tim Chapple asked the members if TPC would be willing to make formal representation on the living accommodation.

Simon Gough and Paul Joslin noted the absence of Councillor Richard Jackson, they requested CC minute that he had not been present at a meeting since February 2023, CC advised that a Councillor cannot be struck off until they miss 6 consecutive meetings.

Tim Chapple asked the members if they can deliver on the three points raised in their report (above), AL and all other present members, agreed that the PC would be happy to deliver on these.

23/028: Apologies for absence:

Cllr Richard Jackson – were noted.

Cllr Angus Paxton – were noted.

CCllr Andy Graham – were accepted.

The members formally accepted the resignation of Martin McMahon, the Notice of Vacancy was published on the 17th June. Co-option to take place in September 2023

23/029: Declaration of interest:

LM declared an interest in item 11.i –the recipient is a family member.

23/030: Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 19th June 2023 were approved as a fair and true record: Proposer AP, seconder SL.

23/031: Matters arising from the June meeting:

- i. Dog Poo Bin Jubilee Gardens: Matter still outstanding, CC is waiting for Ubico/WODC to fulfil their promise. Rachel Strachen asked that Ubico be asked to remove and dispose of the bin currently being used as a poo bin.
- ii. Graveyard update: this item is still outstanding and a working group meeting to be arranged by AL, hopefully now SL is on the PC this can be driven forward.
- iii. Harborne Road Land: CC to chase Kelly Murray, she has received no further information at this point.
- iv. Dead Rowan tree Chaundy Road: Nicholson's are checking the date of planting, if within a 24 month period they will replace the dead tree.
- v. Section 106: Christine Stevenson of OCC is dealing with the allocation of S106 money. CC has requested the draw down for the VAS signs.
- vi. Railings on Nethercote Road: Kelly Murray had a site visit on the 4th July regarding the CC has requested the feedback regarding the railings compliance.
- vii. Tree survey: Boward Trees have been instructed to undertake the bi-annual tree survey, Rachel Strachen asked if the trees on the Heath's core paths could be included.

23/032: To consider District Council Matters: Tim Sumner updated on the following;

- i. He is keeping up to date with Crossing issue and is in contact with TRAC, he has offered in help in any way possible.
- ii. He attended the Community Group meeting regarding the Gardiner Arms on the 11th July, he advised he will get involved in the representation and the Conservation enforcement at WODC.
- iii. Community Grants: he noted that WODC have grants available for the investment in community infrastructure and properties, these are available to community groups and parish councils for building repairs and construction.

23/033: To consider County Council Matters: AG had circulated his report, there were no questions from the floor to TS.

23/034: To Ratify and note the PC's response to Botley West Scoping Report: LM read aloud the PC's response letter sent to the Planning Inspectorate regarding the report. The members noted and ratified the response. It was agreed that this would be published in the newsletter and put on the website.

Dear Sirs,

Scoping consultation response in respect of:

Planning Act 2008 (as amended) and The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations) – Regulations 10 and 11

Application by SolarFive Ltd. (the Applicant) for an Order granting Development Consent for the Botley West Solar Farm (the Proposed Development)

Thank-you for your letter dated 15 June 2023 inviting Tackley Parish Council (TPC) to provide details of the information we consider should be included in the Applicant's Environmental Statement (ES). TPC consider that the following elements should be included in the Applicants' Environmental Statement:

- 1. The impact on biodiversity. We note the opportunity to increase the natural biodiversity of the land in Tackley Parish that will be impacted by the Proposed Development. Therefore, at the very least, we expect the ES to cover all of the elements of biodiversity, to set out how the design of the Proposed Development provides an opportunity for an increase in natural biodiversity, and to set out the measures that will be put in place to ensure that this is achieved. We would expect the ES to consider the entirety of the "Natural Capital Best Practice Guidance – Increasing biodiversity at all stages of a solar farm's lifecycle" as published by the Solar Trade Associate (aka Solar Energy UK) in 2022, and to refer to the evidence provided to the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee regarding technological innovations and climate change: onshore solar energy, HC 856. 11 January 2023.*
- 2. The impact on food security. Within a national context, the ES should consider the environmental impact of the off-shoring of the equivalent acreage of food producing farmland, including: i) transportation of the equivalent tonnage from the most likely suppliers ii) impact of the creation of new arable farmland/deforestation to meet new production. Where it is considered that mitigations to this are achieved through increased productivity in other farmland within the UK, innovation and/or changes in consumer habits, the ES should provide robust, credible, peer-reviewed evidence of the achievability and the economic reality of this.*
- 3. The net benefit of the Proposed Development on carbon emissions. The ES should consider the level of embedded carbon in the Proposed Development (i.e. the asset and the construction activity), in particular providing robust evidence that the use of any imported solar panels (instead of solar panels produced in the UK) is not significantly detrimental to the carbon emissions abatement provided.*
- 4. (10.2¹) Whether any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the site, e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or migration, be affected by the project?*
- 5. (12.1) Whether there any areas or features (whether designated or not) which may have archaeological value on or around the location which could be affected by the project?*
- 6. (8.1) Will there be any risk of major accidents (including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge) during construction, operation or decommissioning?*
- 7. (8.2) Will the project present a risk to the population (having regard to population density) and their human health during construction, operation or decommissioning? (For example, due to water contamination or air pollution.)*
- 8. (6.1) Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning? How will these wastes be handled/disposed of?*
- 9. (7.1) Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?*
- 10. (7.2) Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?*
- 11. (7.3) Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?*
- 12. (13.1) Are there any routes on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?*

This last point also gives rise to TPC to require the ES to specifically state if and how access to an enjoyment of Dornford Lane will be impacted by the Proposed Development (across the its lifecycle of construction, operation and decommissioning). Whilst Dornford Lane is not within Tackley Parish, it is enjoyed by many of Tackley's residents.

TPC have received a request from a parishioner to request that the ES also specifically consider the impact on Long Mead meadow – a Local Wildlife Site near Eynsham. Again, whilst not in Tackley Parish, it is clearly of interest. We would expect the ES to consider this site specifically but also within the analysis indicated in point (1) above.

Many thanks for the invitation to respond to your request. We do hope the above matters can be included in your Scoping Opinion and that the matters will be covered by the Applicants ES.

¹ *Numbers in brackets refer to points provided by the Stop Botley West campaign.*

23/035: To Ratify and note the PC's response to Networks Rail's crossing consultation: LM read aloud the PC's response sent to Network Rail in regard to the consultation. The members noted and ratified the response. It was agreed that this would be published in the newsletter and put on the website.

We are writing to formally object to your proposed plan for the crossing at Tackley.

We were told in 2019 at a meeting in Tackley Village Hall that the village could have an underpass which would accommodate both horses and pedestrians. The finances were available and this option was welcomed by all residents at the meeting as well as your very own Mike Gallop, who went on record in April 2020 with a press release saying "We thank the community in Tackley for their support and look forward to working with them on the permanent subway."

Since then, the crossing has closed by way of a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order and a temporary bridge has been installed. There is no provision for horse riders. The residents were not happy about it but were assured that it was temporary only and permission was granted by the highway authorities on the understanding that it was temporary. At this point, the village was still under the impression that an underpass would be built, however a potential alternative option was available to Network Rail further north, the "Barwood Bridge" option. To facilitate this option, a portion of land was kept back by the landowner rather than being developed for housing. The portion of land would accommodate a small car park and a bridge over the rail cutting which could connect to both the station and the public right of way via a new bridleway on the east side of the line. The landowner on the east side of the line - Tackley Estate - has recently reconfirmed their preference for this option to us.

In 2021 Network Rail informed us that a new study would be done to assess the different options and were told that the underpass was no longer viable. While we were told that this was due to flooding issues, this seemed odd as in 2001/2 Network Rail had planning permission to build an underpass and flooding was not flagged up as a problem. The new study also did not include the Barwood bridge option.

During the whole consultation period over the last two years, not only have we had numerous changes in Network Rail employees to deal with, it has never felt like a consultation. No matter what is discussed, Network Rail come back with the same foot bridge option behind the houses on Nethercote Road and a re-route of the bridleway.

The proposed bridleway introduces significant safety concerns, and these issues are being ignored. Local riders, the British Horse Society and the landowner of the field – Tackley Estate - all say that.

this proposal is dangerous. Given its length, the frequency and speed of trains and the popularity of horse-riding in the local area, there would be a significant risk of a horse bolting and injuring or killing multiple pedestrians. It is possibly even more dangerous than the original level crossing that it is intended to address. A resident was told at the consultation in the village hall by Network Rail staff that any accidents which happened on the bridleway would be the liability of the rider. We are now aware that this is not true and Network Rail, as the landowner, would be liable.

We are also now being told that the current Public Right of Way from the station on the east side is to be closed. This route has been used by residents for centuries, if not millennia and is part of a very popular circular route from the village, particularly during winter when other paths are not accessible. It is also a key right of way to access the station from Kirtlington.

The issue of crossing the line to get to the east platform and the Public Right of Way/bridleway need to be considered together, not separately, and we request that the Barwood bridge option is formerly examined and costed. We understand that this will not be the cheapest option, but it is one which solves the problem of the PRoW, providing safe provision for horses and pedestrians, as well as station access with a single bridge. As a village we must live with what is built forever and we must have what most suits the village, not just the cheapest option for Network Rail. In the grand scheme of your spending, it is a small price to pay for you.

Anne Gwinnet suggested that that the PC could flag safety issues and risk regarding the closure of the bridleway, she asked if the PC could obtain data, evidence and quantify this. She also mentioned getting evidence and figures of actual use, possible survey and questionnaire.

23/036 Parish amenities:

- i. Heath update: Rachel Strachen prosed the PC purchase a shed to store the Heath equipment and locate it on the allotment site. The PC agreed this is a good idea, the purchase of the shed will be added to Septembers agenda for approval.
10 Volunteers had attended the working party, where the core paths had been cleared of bracken.
She advised that a management plan was being drawn up for the Heath, and asked if the fallen Ash tree can be cleared from the path.
She requested the PC write to Network Rail and ask they remove the ragwort along the line at Crecy Hill, this will stop the seeds blowing further up the hill onto the main area of the reserve.
- ii. Dog poo bin Jubilee Gardens: updated under minute ref 23/031 i.
- iii. Playground: CC updated that a damaged item of equipment had been reported. RJ has asked Trevor Stewart to fix the area, which has been carried out.

23/037: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**

Gross Amount (£)	VAT Value (£)	Payee	Details	Power
797.33		Clerks Pay	June Salary	LGA 1972 S111
50.00		A Marshall	June Bin Emptying	LGA 1972 S112

TACKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Page 23/013

23/038: To consider other matters:

- i. New Graveyard: Julian Whitehead had chased for an update on progress. CC and SL confirmed that a Working Party would be called in September after the summer recess.
- ii. White Lines enquiry: CC asked who had painted the white lines at the village hall car park, the church and enquired for the details for possible use at the church car park. CC to look back in the minutes.
- iii. Footpath Fortnight: AP had issued routes to volunteers; this will be reported at Septembers meeting.
- iv. French Drain: Alan James and Greenscythe had been instructed to proceed, these needs chasing up for the start date of works.
- v. VAS Signs: RHO asked if the PC had received any feedback, CC said we had not. It was formally noted that RHO will keep the keys and Bluetooth passwords along with the instructions for the VAS signs.
- vi. Councillor Biographies: LM asked that the Cllr's send into Mary McIntyre their biographies for the website.
- vii. Councillor Vacancy: It was agreed that the deadline for Martin McMahon's vacant seat be extended to September 2023. This is due to the close timing of the advertised vacancy for June Collier's seat, and therefore somewhat unclear to the public.

Next meeting: 18th September at 7pm

Meeting closed at 20:50pm.

Signed as a true record of the Tackley Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 17th July 2023.

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Date.....