

## APPLETON WITH EATON PARISH COUNCIL

c/o 26 Eaton Village, Eaton, Oxfordshire OX13 5PR

E-mail: parishclerk.appletonwitheaton@gmail.com www.appleton-eaton.org

### **Appleton with Eaton Parish Council (AWE PC) Meeting held in the Village Hall Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023, 7:15pm**

Allison Leigh – Parish Clerk

#### **Minutes**

**Councillors present:** Liz Gilkes (Chairman), Teresa Bennett (TB), Stephen Day (SD), Sue Sternberg (SS) and Andy Salmon (AS)

**In attendance:** Allison Leigh (the Clerk) and District Councillor Jerry Avery (J. Avery)

**22/190: Apologies for Absence:** Mary Carey (Vice Chairman) and John Adams (JA)

LG reported she will not be in attendance for the next 2 months. MC and SS will alternate the role of Chairman at the February and March meetings. The April date will need to be changed due to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday in April being Easter Monday. The Clerk will circulate dates. The Clerk will also advise as to the Annual Parish Council meeting in May and how it may be affected by elections and the Coronation.

**22/191: Declarations of interest:** SD declared an interest in agenda item 22/197: Grass cutting of footpath between the church and Long Close

**22/192: Public questions and statements:** No members of the public were in attendance.

#### **22/193: Reports from District and County Councillors**

##### **Vale of White Horse District Council (VoWHDC)**

J. Avery reported that the Lion Court planning application which is on farm land within Fyfield parish is due to be considered again in February. No decision has been made yet by VoWHDC.

The application is a major scheme which is likely to create a lot more local traffic. There is strong local opposition due to the scale of the scheme and the need for new infrastructure to service those moving to the proposed housing.

J. Avery reported he attended a very good presentation given by Cumnor Parish Council in relation to Botley West Solar Farm and has sent the presentation to the Clerk for circulation.

J. Avery also sent a report on Botley West Solar Farm. See Attachment 1.

LG raised the issue of the planning application at Parklands.

The Council resolved to move the planning discussion to this part of the agenda.

**APPLETON WITH EATON PARISH COUNCIL**

c/o 26 Eaton Village, Eaton, Oxford shire OX13 5PR

E-mail: parishclerk.appletonwitheaton@gmail.com www.appleton-eaton.org

**22/200: Planning applications:**

**Planning Amendments**

<u>Application number</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Details</u>	
P22/V1573/HH	25 Parklands Besselsleigh Abingdon OX13 5PN	Single storey side and rear extension to an existing dwelling, erection of timber fencing and extension of the existing driveway in permeable gravel (As amended by plans and information received 05/12/22)	<p>AWE PC objects to this planning application.</p> <p>Parklands and this property are located in the green belt and surrounded by farmland and ancient woodland and this application is entirely unsuitable for such a location.</p> <p>The Council believes this to be overdevelopment as the current plans alter the feel of one corner of Parklands and go against the overall design and the Council sees no justification for changing the conditions of the original grant of planning permission for the development. The Council also believes any new building on this plot could damage the roots of the existing trees which adjoin the land behind this property. Besselsleigh Woods and Colliers Copse (the southern side of this ancient woodland) is a dense woodland with mature trees which could be damaged by further building if the proposed extensions to this property are allowed.</p> <p>The Parish Council requests that this planning application be brought to the Planning Committee.</p>

**22/193: Reports from District and County Councillors**

**Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)**

The County Councillor was not in attendance and no report was received at the time of the meeting.

## APPLETON WITH EATON PARISH COUNCIL

c/o 26 Eaton Village, Eaton, Oxfordshire OX13 5PR

E-mail: parishclerk.appletonwitheaton@gmail.com www.appleton-eaton.org

**22/194: Minutes of the last meeting:** The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022 were approved and signed as a true record.

**22/195: Matters arising from the previous meetings and not appearing elsewhere on the agenda:** None

**22/196: Clerk's report:** The Council acknowledged the Clerk's Report. The Council asked the Clerk to do a shout out and put a notice up about the Pop-Up Café on Thursday the 12<sup>th</sup> January.

**22/197: Finance:**

- **Finance Report:**

### *Payments authorised*

<u>Payee</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Payment Method</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Date</u>
Lloyds	Google, Table tennis bats, key box for the sportsfield, ink, tablecloths for Pop Up Café, ribbon for Pop Up Café Christmas, flood signs, monthly fee	Direct Debit	290.14	2/12/22
SSE Southern Electric	Electricity for the sportsfield	Online payment	297.06	12/12/2022
Staff costs	Staff costs	Online payment	616.87	31/1/2023
Allison Leigh	Clerk expenses	Online payment	26.00	9/1/2023
Dark White Digital	Website hosting and WordPress updates	Online payment	30.00	9/1/2023
A H Cornish	Rent of the land for Jubilee Park	Online payment	996.07	9/1/2023
FCC Recycling (UK) Ltd	Appleton Village Hall - Main Hall Roof Insulation	Online payment	1,244.59	9/1/2023

## APPLETON WITH EATON PARISH COUNCIL

c/o 26 Eaton Village, Eaton, Oxfordshire OX13 5PR

E-mail: parishclerk.appletonwitheaton@gmail.com www.appleton-eaton.org

HMRC	PAYE – Q3	Online payment	85.18	9/1/2023
Appleton Community Shop	Pop Up Café refreshments	Online payment	6.44	9/1/2023
Appleton Parochial Church Council	Payment towards grass cutting of footpath between the church and Long Close	Online payment	850.00	9/1/2023

### ***Receipts since the last meeting***

- There have been no receipts since the last meeting.

### ***Bank Reconciliation***

Opening balance as of 1/4/2022	41,439.44
Receipts	35,420.28
Payments	21,683.58
<b>Cash book balance 31/12/2022</b>	<b>55,176.14</b>
Bank balance as of 31/12/2022	<b>55,176.14</b>
Unpresented cheques	0.00
unpresented receipts	0.00
<b>Reconciled balance as of 31/12/2022</b>	<b>55,176.14</b>

- **Grass cutting of footpath between the church and Long Close:** The Council resolved to pay £850 towards the grass cutting of the footpath between the church and Long Close
- **Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) Membership:** The Council resolved to renew the CFO membership at a cost of £55. This is for the 2023/2024 membership.
- **Leisure and Recreation Committee:**
  - **Fire alarm and emergency lights:** The Council reviewed the quotes received and resolved to proceed with Executive Alarms.
  - **Intruder alarm annual service:** The Council reviewed the quotes received and resolved to proceed with Executive Alarms

## APPLETON WITH EATON PARISH COUNCIL

c/o 26 Eaton Village, Eaton, Oxfordshire OX13 5PR

E-mail: parishclerk.appletonwitheaton@gmail.com www.appleton-eaton.org

**22/198: Bus Shelter:** The Clerk noted that the resident who raised the issue of a bus shelter was unable to attend the meeting. The Council agreed to re-visit the issue if residents raise it again.

**22/199: King's Coronation:** LG reported that the Dick family has offered South Lawn for a celebration in honour of the King's Coronation in May. The Clerk will work with Felicity Dick to arrange a kick off meeting for Tuesday the 7<sup>th</sup> of February. The Clerk will invite village organisations as well as those who helped with the Jubilee.

The Council will contribute £2000 to the event.

**22/201: Publications and correspondence:** The Council reviewed the correspondence received since the December meeting. LG reported that the Village Hall Committee and Pre School Working Group will be meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> January.

**22/202: Website and Advertiser:** The Council asked for the following to be placed in the February Advertiser:

- King's Coronation
- Pop Up Café date for February
- Advertise May elections for the Parish Council for anyone interested in standing for election

### **22/203: Matters for report:**

LG reported that MC and 2 other residents will be meeting with Admiral Taverns on the 12<sup>th</sup> January to discuss the future of The Plough Inn.

LG asked the Clerk if she has heard from Sheehan regarding the correspondence sent in November. The Clerk has not and the Council asked her to check with MC as to next steps.

AS reported he has noticed there is a pipe going into the pond from Pond Farm building. The issue of the ownership of the pond was raised.

The Council asked the Clerk to follow up with the History Group with regards to an update on the Village map and whether they have applied for planning permission.

**22/204: Date of the next meeting:** The next Parish Council meeting will be held on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023 at 7:15pm in the Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 8:20pm

## APPLETON WITH EATON PARISH COUNCIL

c/o 26 Eaton Village, Eaton, Oxfordshire OX13 5PR

E-mail: parishclerk.appletonwitheaton@gmail.com www.appleton-eaton.org

### Attachment 1

#### Vale of White Horse District Council report received from Jerry Avery (unedited)

##### **Botley Solar Farm Proposal - Oxfordshire**

On the plus side, the creation of the solar farm as envisaged could provide clean power to some 300,000 homes. On the other hand, among other organisations, the CPRE is very rightly concerned about the negative impact that such a large installation will have on the green belt and on fertile land. Wrt the effect on Thames Ward, the southern part of the farm as proposed directly affects an area of land just to the southeast of Farmoor Reservoir and hence the ward is not directly affected. However, as always with any large construction project like this I foresee that there will inevitably be a significant increase in road traffic and that will affect surrounding areas. Further to such concerns, it must be noted that solar farms in these latitudes are usually only 10% efficient; even in sunnier parts of the world such as the USA solar farms are only 25% efficient and hence the conclusion to be drawn is that the scheme here would only produce enough power for some 30,000 homes and that is a point that seems to have been glossed over. It is also arguable that solar farms should be built on brownfield sites and there are plenty of those in the north of the UK.

The solar farm as envisaged will cover three areas; one is to the north of Woodstock, a second covers large areas in Kidlington and the third covers land to the south of Farmoor Reservoir. In addition to the third component is a fourth which would cover land on the south side of the

Beacon, namely the Hurst to the south of Elms Rise, Botley and I will focus on that particular aspect for the moment and to that end will use the detailed information provided in the report produced by Cumnor Parish Council, in October 2021, a company called Solar 2 Ltd presented proposals to the PC for a 'solar farm' near The Hurst, comprising 3.5m (11.5 ft) high solar panels and covering the equivalent of 45 football pitches of green belt farmland mainly owned by All Souls College. At the end of November 21, Cumnor PC discovered that another company, Cumnor Solar Farm Ltd had applied to the Vale of the White Horse District Council for what is referred to as an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening opinion. In other words, they were asking the VWHDC to agree that a full EIA was not required for what was now referred to as an "industrial installation for the production of electricity." For whatever reason, VWHDC did not notify Cumnor PC that this request had been made by the developer. When Cumnor PC found out that this had happened a request to carry out an EIA was made to the Vale and both North Hinksey PC and the Oxford Preservation Trust (OPT) followed suit. Shortly afterwards, Cumnor PC discovered that the VWHDC had agreed with the developer that an EIA was not needed. Further to that, the VWHDC did not list key environmental issues highlighted by the OPT, namely:-

- The authoritative 2015 OPT and Historic England 'Oxford Views Study' which assessed the 'dreaming spires' views of Oxford (there are expansive views from the proposed site across Oxford and so conversely of the site from Oxford and beyond).
- The severe adverse impact on the parish's Neighbourhood Plan 'Important View 12' (the protected view from the Millennium Beacon that would be lost

## APPLETON WITH EATON PARISH COUNCIL

c/o 26 Eaton Village, Eaton, Oxfordshire OX13 5PR

E-mail: parishclerk.appletonwitheaton@gmail.com www.appleton-eaton.org

by the erection of 90 acres of 3.5m high solar panels, buildings etc. all surrounded by a 2m high security fence topped with CCTV).

- Issues raised by OPT about impacts beyond the immediate area (e.g. laying high voltage cables from the site to the national grid in Osney).
- Concerns raised by CPC drawing on extensive international scientific evidence about impacts on birds and invertebrates (e.g. issues for ground nesting birds such as skylarks; the so-called 'lake effect' where birds heading for e.g. Farmoor would mistake solar panels for water; and polarized light reflected from the panels disorienting invertebrates). VWHDC believes there are only a 'limited' number of uses of the adjacent bridleway, footpaths and Oxford Green Belt Way (not what the 2018 parish wide 'Big Survey' found), and that there would be no waste produced by the 4+ month construction period (requiring about 150+ HGV loads), the 40 years of operation (the electrical inverters need replacing every 12 years or so) or by the site's proposed decommissioning in the 2060's.

VWHDC also believes that badgers 'could use the site during operation'. However, this would arguably be challenging for Cumnor's badgers since in evidence supplied to VWHDC at their request, the developer stated that 'typically there will be a 6ft fence with stock proof mesh and where applicable badger-proof mesh at the lower half.'

An important question that evidently needed answering was in relation to just how the underground high voltage cables (typically 33,000 volts) would get from the Hurst to the national grid in Osney Mead. When this was put to the developer, it was stated that Scottish and Southern Energy has offered the company a route to Osney 'via Cumnor Hill, the B4044, under the A34 (overbridge) and onto Botley Road'. The developer also informed Cumnor PC that their preferred route 'would be via Harcourt Hill and then over private land'. This was understood to mean that the route would be via North Hinksey village and Oxford Preservation Trust fields.

Investigations by Cumnor PC with respect to the proposed developer, Cumnor Solar Farm Ltd, reveals that the company was created just one day prior to day before it made its application to the VWHDC. The application makes clear that Cumnor Solar Farm Ltd is owned by Solar 2 Ltd. Interestingly, that company's most recent accounts (17<sup>th</sup> December 2021) show they have 0 employees and net liabilities of £176,940. Further to that, Solar 2 Ltd is 100% owned by Wind 2 Ltd; a company with 6 employees and with liabilities exceeding assets. It owes its creditors nearly £4m and that gives rise to real concern in view of the fact that All Souls College is reckoned to be worth about £420k. Inevitably the question to be asked is what happens now? Cumnor PC argues that one of the companies referred to or one of the many set up by the same directors will launch a PR (public Relations) campaign and then apply for planning permission in the same way as have done before in other parts of the country.

Finally, Cumnor Parish Council has made it abundantly clear that it will continue to ask questions and keep the parish informed. The PC also continues to emphasise that it remains committed to sustainable development, as enshrined in the parish's Neighbourhood Plan and our Cumnor Fit for the Future initiatives. Cumnor PC has

**APPLETON WITH EATON PARISH COUNCIL**

c/o 26 Eaton Village, Eaton, Oxford shire OX13 5PR

E-mail: [parishclerk.appletonwitheaton@gmail.com](mailto:parishclerk.appletonwitheaton@gmail.com) [www.appleton-eaton.org](http://www.appleton-eaton.org)

stated in no uncertain terms that it will continue to oppose this particular solar farm application because they believe that "it's the wrong solution, in the wrong place for the wrong reasons".