

**Minutes of East Down Parish Council Meeting
at 8.00 p.m. on Monday 15th July 2013 at East Down Village Hall**

Attendance: Cllrs. R. Tarr (Chair), Mrs S. Black, R. Fry, Mrs E. Kempf, K. Phillips, M. Smith, M. Wright, District Cllr J. Tucker and Mrs M. Done (Clerk).

County Councillor Andrea Davis handed in her report and left.

Cllr Mr. Richard Tarr welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies: none

2. Co-option of Councillor.

Resolution: To Co-opt Mr Malcolm Smith of Wayside Farm to the casual vacancy. Proposed, seconded. Unanimous vote of approval. Cllr Mr M. Smith then signed all the relevant forms.

3. Declarations of interest from members/Dispensation requests.

Planning Application 55734 Proposed erection of wind turbine at Hartland View Farm.

Cllrs R. Fry, K. Phillips and R. Tarr already had approved dispensations. Cllr M. Wright's completed dispensation request and Cllr. M. Smith's completed dispensation request were approved. The Interests Book was also completed.

4. Public Participation.

Mrs R. Baxter, Mrs A. Mant, Mr. M. Mant, Mrs E. McClenaghan, Mr. T. McClenaghan, Mrs J. Parker, Mrs D. Robertson-Bond, Mrs P. Shaw, Mr. B. Sherwin, Mrs M. Smith, Mr. J. Stout, Mrs P. Stout.

The members of the public were invited to address the meeting in turn. They expressed concerns about the planning application for the wind turbine at Hartland View Farm

- noise funnelling down the valley;
- environmental impact on tourism economy in a rural area;
- 20-25 years is not short-term;
- An undesirable of this might set a precedent;
- only a fraction of the power generated would be needed for the farm.
- negative impact on the settings of several designated heritage assets including St Peters Church, Shirwell; The Castle earthworks; and Youlston Park

Council agreed to move Agenda Item 10 Planning forward for discussion.

10. Planning Application 55734. Erection of One wind turbine (height 61 metres, height to hub 35m, blade diameter 52m) at Hartland View Farm (land at OS 258550,139000), Shirwell, Barnstaple.

District Cllr Tucker stated that he would not take part in the discussion owing to the possibility that the application may be brought to a District Planning Meeting.

Cllr Tarr read out the letter received from the applicants which they had requested be read out at the meeting. The current and immediate past Chairpersons stated that they had not spoken with Mr & Mrs Lewis regarding this application as stated in their letter. The Clerk had spoken with Mrs Lewis in November 2012 when this proposal was first recorded requesting that they attend the meeting when this would be discussed. Mrs Lewis' reply was that they would be pleased to attend but would prefer to wait until the application was lodged.

Members expressed concerns over detrimental impact on surrounding landscape, wildlife and the noise. Proposed and seconded to recommend refusal of this application. The vote was unanimous to recommend refusal of this application.

Material reasons:

- The turbine would be located in type 5C Downland whose valued characteristics include “dramatic and far reaching views” and “smooth rolling skylines”- any turbine of this size and shape would dominate the landscape and significantly damage these characteristics.
- The siting is next to farm buildings which should dictate the height of the turbine, this is totally the wrong scale, far too large.
- This would be the fastest rotating turbine in Devon at up to 31rpm compared to Fullabrook turbines which rotate at 18rpm. Local Planning Guidance recommendation is to reduce visual impact therefore the speed of blades should be kept as low as possible.
- The turbine would bring the extent of the area influenced by turbines well to the east – across an Area of Great Landscape Value.
- Fullabrook appears as a single development, all the turbines are closely grouped and of the same design. This turbine would be a separate development adding to the impression of a landscape where wind energy is a prominent characteristic.
- Policy ENV1 of The Local Plan would be breached. This application offers no social or economic benefits to the local community.
- There are several thriving tourist based businesses which are likely to be affected by this proposed turbine. These businesses would all have direct views of the turbine from their cottages and surrounding footpaths.
- The proposed turbine would have a negative impact on the settings of several designated heritage assets, including a Grade I listed house.
- The application does not define a specific turbine model; the dimensions specified suggest it will be similar to a turbine at Melbur Blockworks in Cornwall. It was found that the noise levels at properties at a similar distance from that turbine were excessive.
- The applicant suggests the turbine is to offset farm energy costs; the scale of the turbine suggests that the primary motivation is to maximize feed-in tariffs. This income will only benefit the applicant.

Consents and refusals by North Devon Council (for information only)

Application 55683. Erection of single wind turbine, height 61m, together with associated works at Honeywell Farm, Muddiford, Barnstaple. Permission refused 2nd July 2013 by ND Council Planning Department.

(The Case Officer had received a request from the applicant’s agent that the Parish Council’s consultation response would not be published or considered as part of the determination of this planning application. The Case Officer had replied to the agent with a copy to the Monitoring Officer and East Down Parish Council.)

Part ‘A’

5. County/District Councillors’ Reports

County Councillor Andrea Davis’ report covered:

- Devon County Council is backing a call for the Government to provide more funding for road repairs
- Mobile Phone Coverage - As rural residents we are at a disadvantage with mobile phone coverage, there is now a growing demand from residents to get the service improved, but local people can help by downloading an “app” and using it both at home and when out and about. The app tests the strength of the signal and automatically records the result. It can also check which company provides the best service in a given area. Information collected could be used to lobby phone companies and the government to improve rural reception. For further information on how to use the app and to see results so far, visit www.rootmetrics.com/uk/

District Councillor Joe Tucker reported on:

- leader has co-signed a letter to government on funding cuts to district councils
- Planning meeting committee discussed the Shapland & Petter site.
- Law courts are under pressure – NDC are fighting to retain them in Barnstaple
- £2000 donation towards the Memorial garden at Chivenor

6. Minutes of Parish Council Meeting, 17th June 2013.

Amendments to minutes:

Minutes of Annual Parish Council Meeting, 20th May 2013 proposed, seconded. Resolved to accept. Minutes then signed

June Parish Council minutes – Cllr M. Wright was omitted from list of attendees.

District Councillor's report should read: “Atlantic Array application...should be submitted to Bristol Planning *Inspectorate*”.

With these amendments the minutes were proposed, seconded and resolved to accept: minutes then signed.

7. Matters arising from the minutes, not on the agenda.

Reply from County Councillor A. Davis about warning signs at Village Hall is that no new signs available. Owing to financial pressure only existing signs that are damaged irreparably will be considered for replacement.

It was resolved to send a Thank-you card to Mrs Sandra Price for her work on the Council and as our representative on the Village Hall Committee

8. Financial statement of accounts for the year to date and payments.

Bank balances on 17th July 2013 Parish Council Account £3851.62 (includes 80% of TAP fund £250.80) and P3 Account £619.87. Cheque No.000265 for £236.04 to M. Done reimbursement for purchase of strimmer and oil was signed. Clerk advised on the shortfall and Cllr Tucker offered to cover this from his Councillor's grant – Clerk to apply to Jo Ash for this.

9. TAP Fund. This fund is available again this year. East Down are entitled to bid for £205.70 and Arlington £102.30. It was resolved to ask Arlington to join with us for the purchase of a second strimmer.

11. Chairman's items.

Lengthsman – potholes to be reported:

Dudmoor lane near the mast

Between Village Hall and Pyne Arms

Up zig zag before Woolley Lodge

Verge cutting – comments on the untidy state of the verges and Barnstaple town centre. Cllr Davis to be asked to clarify who is responsible for verge cutting etc.

12. Correspondence.

Notification of TAP Fund

Lloyds Bank Statement

Barnstaple Town Council Environment and Planning School – it was agreed to suggest a list of topics appropriate to rural parishes be compiled, one suggestion wind turbines.

Magazines and Leaflets

Clerks & Councils Direct

Members Services Notices now received and forwarded by email

Part 'B' (Confidential Restricted information) None

13. Date of next meeting.

It was agreed the next meeting would be on Monday 16th September 2013 unless any urgent matters were received.

Agenda Items:

Election of Vice Chair

P3 Co-ordinator vacancy

The meeting closed at 09.40 p.m.