

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF EAST STOKE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
THURSDAY 4 MARCH 2010**

PRESENT Cllr Karen Barnes, Vice Chairman
Cllr Tib Axon
Cllr Barry Quinn (District Councillor)
Cllr Damian Cullinane
Cllr Neill Child

APOLOGIES Cllr Rebecca Cady, Chairman

PRESENT PCSO's Stuart Hann & Debbie Oswald-Watson 48 Members of the Public, and Sharon Sheppard Parish Clerk

1 Public Participation Time & Correspondence Received relating to issues on this agenda 6:30-7:10pm

Cllr Karen Barnes, opened the meeting, welcomed those present and confirmed that she would be Chairing the meeting in the absence of Cllr Cady. Fire exits were detailed. Cllr Barnes advised that there were seven planning applications to be considered and that 40 minutes had been allocated for the public to speak, this would be followed by presentations and clarification from the Planning applicants. The Parish Council would then consider each of the applications. No members of the public wished to raise any issues apart from the planning.

Cllr Barnes invited questions and comments regarding any application apart from Masters Pit.

West Mills Farm, Concerns were expressed that the work is being carried out 200 yards from properties, that the bund will be only 28cm below level of properties and that the conditions being created are not ideal for wading birds. It was also questioned as to whether the modelling is accurate and why the sluice gates in the area are currently open; it was considered that they should be shut. It was noted that water levels appear to be higher than in previous years and that this is affecting septic tanks, culverts and ditches.

Masters Pit, Members of the public objecting to this application raised the following points, the height of the turbines, 410feet and only 560m from properties, higher than Salisbury Cathedral and visible from Dorchester, Isle of Wight and Cranborne, they will dominate the AONB. Noise levels and effect on quality of life for those living nearby, that they will be heard from ½ mile away .70 properties are within 1kilometre. Why has data from meta mast not been provided in support of application. That montages do not show the turbines accurately. Wind farms are considered to be inefficient. Suggestions were made that other methods, such as hydro electricity/ sea, tidal power should be explored. Comment was made that in another area the valuation band for Council Tax purposes were down for graded following the installation of turbines. The effects on local wildlife were raised. If the current policy to introduce FIT is successful the wind farm could become redundant, who will be responsible for decommissioning?

Members of the public in support of the application offered the following points, that people have to look beyond the immediate situation, that renewable energy is desperately needed. Comment was made that there are already high noise levels in East Stoke, the army, trains and a main road. Hydro electricity may lead to flooding , creates carbon dioxide and affects large amounts of birds. It was identified that wind is free, and that people become used to noise very quickly. Turbines considered beautiful structures compared to electricity pylons

**2 Presentations and Clarification from Planning Applicants
West Mills Farm, Judith Baker, Purbeck Keystone Project**

The application is to improve habitats along the flood plain and to manage water level, the project has received support from Environment Agency, Natural England and local landowners. The highest point of the bund will be 20cm. The object is to hold the water levels for a longer period. All flood risks issues have been looked at. Alongside this scheme ditch restoration work is being undertaken.

Infinergy, Will Bond, Landowner

Mr Bond stated that the alternatives were viable and sensible but would not make the contribution towards providing local energy that the wind farm would. With regard to noise levels, visits to another farm had indicated that the turbines could not be heard beyond approx 420m. For this application this would be just outside the quarry boundary. Buddens Farm is closer and the noise impact is being

handled separately. 75% of wind is from the south west sector, with wind blowing approx 70% of the time. A survey of house prices in the area indicates that the wind farm proposal appear to have no effect on house prices. The effect on wildlife has been considered very seriously, being very large there is greater clearance between bottom of blade and heath land (40m). Ecological monitoring suggests that nothing is recorded as flying at above 20m. It is thought that the impact on sand lizards will be minimal in that they currently cope with living in an active quarry, with associated noise and vibrations.

3 To receive apologies for absence from Councillors

Apologies were received from Cllr Rebecca Cady

4 Declarations of interest-to record declarations of personal or prejudicial interest in any items on the agenda

None Received

The Chairman revised the order of Agenda.

5 New Planning Application(s)

The following applications were considered and the Parish Councils comments are noted

6/2010/0075, Longthorns, Monkey World, Replace and improve existing Capuchin enclosure building

No Objections

6/2010/0076, Longthorns, Monkey World, Erection of fence to subdivide existing Orang-utan enclosure

No Objections

6/2010/0077, Longthorns, Monkey World, Erect replacement Malagasy enclosure

No Objections

6/2010/0078, Longthorns, Monkey World, Erect buggy store/ mobility scooter shelter

No objections

6/2010/0082, Master pit, Puddletown Road, Erection of 4 wind turbines

The Parish Council considered various aspects of this application:

Visual Impact

The overriding effect of the proposed application for 4 wind turbines at 125metres high is the enormous visual impact will have on the open countryside within the Parish and particularly the AONB which covers the all of the area to the south of the A352 within East Stoke.

Development in the countryside

PPS7 and LPP QL4 both state that the quality and character of the wider countryside, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife and the wealth of its natural resources should be protected and enjoyed by all and that any development in these areas should be strictly controlled.

Noise

Concerns were expressed that the noise levels may have a detrimental effect on residents and their quality of life.

Wildlife

New evidence suggests that wind farms affect bird breeding density for up to 2 sq miles from any turbine (journal of applied Ecology- James Pearce-Higgins)

Construction

Councillors expressed concerns over the impact on the rural area during construction

Other Issues of Concern:

The Parish Council cannot be sure that the responses/ statements in respect of noise and shadow flicker are accurate as the turbine manufacturer / specification has not yet been decided and because it is very much dependent on prevalent meteorological conditions (wind speed/direction, time of day and sunlight).

The Parish Council are concerned that the supporting documentation is misleading and contradictory. Drawings of the 'met' mast and turbine in the Planning Application and Drawings booklet are given to a scale – the wrong scale for the size of drawing given, and the drawings in the Environment Statement (ES) have no scale. The 'met' mast is shown in all drawings to be taller than the hub height of the turbine, giving the false impression that the turbine is not so tall. The specifications of the wind turbine in the Design & Access Statement differ from those given in the E.S.

The Parish Council are concerned that the data from the current and previous met mast was not being made available to support the application.

The Parish Council would wish for the local gliding club, military, coastguard and the police, who all fly at low level within the area to be consulted and for their opinions to be taken into account in respect of safety issues.

The Parish Council were unanimous in their objections to this application

6/2010/0069, West Mills Farm (Area of Frome floodplain, upstream of Holmebridge and below Rushton, Install 3 water level control structures and low soil bunds on agricultural floodplain lane
The Parish Councillors do not have the depth of technical knowledge to allow them to assess the Planning application fully; however the following comments are made:

The application refers to hydraulic modelling provided by the Environment Agency has this been referred to PDC's District Engineer for independent assessment?

The spot height levels for the bund and the properties at Holmebridge appear to have a very marginal differential.

It is noted that Natural England are being contacted and responding as consultees and that they are also referred to as co-funders for the project. Similarly the Environment Agency is also a key stakeholder through their Floodplain Management Plan for the Frome. The Parish Council are concerned that these apparently independent assurers of the scheme are in effect "marking their own homework".

The Risk Assessment Annex to the application uses a pro forma unsuitable for this type of project and does not address the risks perceived by the community and raised at the meeting by members of the Parish.

The Parish Council cannot support an application that raises so many technical queries and may create a real risk of flooding to properties within the Parish

6/2010/0090, Sunny Down, Holmebridge, Erect two storey side extension, single storey rear extension, detached garage and garden wall.

The Parish Council considered the revised application.

There were no objections to the house extensions; however the Parish Council are concerned at the building of a long wall which is out of keeping in this area of open countryside.

They would prefer to see a fence, fronted by the existing hedging, which would provide the security and screening required.

6 Helthfelton Woods

PCSO Hann introduced PCSO Debbie Oswald-Watson. He advised that the Camera safety partnership have returned to East Stoke, PCSO Dave Brown has been active in this and will be seeking feedback. SID, currently DCC have no funding for new devices, and monitoring staff are at full stretch. East Stoke did not meet the criteria previously, they may consider installing an Automatic Traffic Count. (ATC). Hethfelton, Forestry Commission continues to work towards the eviction, it is understood that 8 people are permanently living on the site. Sarers wood eviction is being progressed

Speeding in Bindon Lane, Parish Council to send request for reduction of speed limit to Les Evans, Police cannot make request as there are no statistics for collisions. The Police will support the request. Police Surgeries at Middlefield, residents do not attend in winter, but the Police are pleased that the contacts made via the Surgery have made for closer working and a network of contacts. Police leaflets to be included with Spring Newsletter deliveries

7 County & District Councillors Reports

Apologies were received from Cllr Mike Lovell, Cllr Quinn advised that there were no updates from PDC

8 To approve the minutes of the Meetings 4th & 11th February 2010

The minutes, as previously circulated were approved

9 Matters Arising from the above minutes

None

10 Opening and Consideration of Tenders for Grass Cutting Tender

The one tender received was opened, Councillors did not consider that this provided an adequate response to the tender; the Clerk was requested to put the invitation in local shops and to contact Mr Cragg to establish if he would like to re-tender.

11) Matters for discussion or inclusion on agenda for 1st April 2010.

None

12) Finance

- a. Financial Update for Approval
This was reviewed and signed by the Chairman of the meeting
- b. Monies Received
None
- c. It was **resolved** to approve the following expenditures
 - Vitalise (Donation) £40.00 Chq No.278
 - Victim Support (Donation) £30.00 Chq No.279
 - C J Baker Quarterly Account £349.00 Chq No.280
 - AVG Licence Renewal, (Re-imbursement to Clerk) Chq No.281
 - Bristol & West Billing Services £10.93 (approval of Direct Debit Payment)

13 Dates of Next Meetings, 11th March 2010 & 1 April 2010

CHAIRMAN

1 APRIL 2010