

GREYWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Greywell Parish Council meeting held remotely at 6.00pm on 10 February 2021

**In attendance: - In attendance: - Cllr D Millard, Cllr M Barter, Cllr Lord J Malmesbury
Cllr H Mogg and Cllr S O'Neill,
Also in attendance-Beverley Bridgman (Parish Clerk) and District Councillor K.
Crookes**

Draft minutes subject to confirmation

1. Receive and accept apologies for absence

All Parish Councillors present. Apologies received from District Councillor C Dorn, District Councillor J Kennett and County Councillor J Glen

2. Receive and note any declarations of interest relevant to the Agenda

None

3. The Chairman to approve as a correct record the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7 December 2020

Approved-The Chairman approved as a correct record the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7 December 2020. These will be physically signed at the next available opportunity

4. Open the meeting to members of the public

10 members of the public attended the meeting remotely

5. Receive reports

A written report was received from County Cllr Glen. Verbal reports were provided by District Cllr Crookes and the Parish Clerk, these can be found in Appendix A

6. Discuss planning applications

a) Erection of a Solar Photovoltaic Farm with an output capacity not to exceed 49.9 MW of energy, with associated battery storage and supporting infrastructure including inverters and a transformer, fencing, CCTV installation and landscaping works

Chosley Farm, Bidden Road, North Warnborough, RG29 1BW

Reference 20/03185/FUL

Cllr Millard provided the background to the application.

Comments raised by members of the public:

- **Object-**There are better places for this to be placed. We are surprised that more objections haven't been raised by villagers

- **Support-**We should perhaps concentrate on the effect to the Greywell parish. This application isn't in our eye-line: if the application is turned down a further application may include 100 Acre Field. We would prefer this solar farm application to a housing estate which would generate more traffic.

- **Object**-This is an inappropriate site. Brownfield sites and fields along side motorways or rail tracks would be more appropriate and there would be less effect on the rural countryside
- **Object**-There are 2 individually owned cottages on the proposed site. The supporting documents state 'Chosley Farm' isn't included within the solar farm application but these cottages will be surrounded on all sides by both the solar panels and CCTV cameras.

It was noted that this comment was from a resident within the North Warnborough/ Odiham Parish Council area. The Chairman advised that whilst Greywell Parish Council could listen to these views they would need to voice concerns to their own Parish Council and send individual comments to Hart District Council.

Agreed to submit a comment of **objection** from the Parish Council. Cllrs Millard & Barter will prepare a response to Hart District Council; once approved by all Councillors this will be submitted by the Parish Clerk

(a response has now been sent by the Parish Council and can be found in Appendix C)

7. Update on previous planning applications

Since the last Parish Council meeting on 7 December 2020 Hart District Council have made the following decision:

20/02632/EIA Ford Farm (Long Sutton Solar Farm) Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required

8. To consider renewal of the membership of the Whitewater Valley Preservation Society

Agreed to renew at a contribution of £30.00

9. Approve the Electronic Payment request for February

Approved-The Electronic Payment request for February, as shown below will be physically signed at the next available opportunity:

Greywell Parish Council February 2021 Electronic Payment Request

To	Item	Amount	Invoice number
Staff	Salary February	£266.08	02/21
Staff	Expenses February	£14.39	02/21
White Water Valley Preservation Society	Renewal Invoice 2021	£30.00	Renewal 21
Premier Grounds & Garden Maintenance	4x black bag non green waste removal to off site skip	£24.00	848
Chairmans Signature and date:			

10. Note the current financial situation and approve bank statements

The current financial situation was noted and can be found in Appendix B. The bank statements will be physically signed at the next available opportunity. The current balances are:

Current Account: £6499.74

Savings Account: £12.26

11. Discuss damaged and broken anti-slip mesh on the boardwalk

Cllr Millard had previously informed the Parish Clerk that the anti-slip mesh on the boardwalk was damaged and broken. The Parish Clerk confirmed that maintenance of the boardwalk is the responsibility of Hampshire County Council (HCC) and she had therefore reported this issue to HCC, reference PROW212245

12. Update from Cllr Mogg regarding Rural Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme

Cllr Mogg confirmed that out of approx 70 houses 50 have registered their interest in the scheme. It was noted that out of these 50 addresses only one has confirmed that a business is registered at the address. Business use qualifies an address for a higher grant of £3500 opposed to £3000 for non-business addresses

Agreed Cllr Mogg will circulate a final email to the village to clarify business use. Further contact will then be made with Openreach to take the scheme further

13. Update from Cllr Mogg regarding parking on The Street

Cllr Mogg had received no response to 2 different emails sent to Infrastructure at Hart District Council

Agreed Cllr Mogg will contact the District Councillors for advice

14. Update from Cllr O'Neill regarding the VETS scheme

Cllr O'Neill has spoken to Meon Valley Heart Start regarding further training for the VETS scheme. Training from the Community Heartbeat Trust would be over £100, training from Meon Valley Heart Start is considerably cheaper. There are no live courses at the moment however there is an on line course which any member of the public can attend. This course is free although, as they are a charity, Heart Start would like a donation.

Agreed Cllr O'Neill will email VETS volunteers to suggest they try the on line course. Face to face training will be discussed when things get back to 'normal'

15. Confirm the date and time of the next meeting

Agreed the next meeting will be held on Monday 26 April 2021 at 6pm

There being no other business the meeting finished at 7.19pm

Appendix A

County Councillor Jonathan Glen February Report

Member for Hook, Odiham & The Western Parishes

COMING SOON TO A ROAD NEAR YOU...

CARRIAGEWAY REPAIRS ARRIVE IN HOOK

As part of the annual programme of works being undertaken by Operation Resilience, Hampshire County Council will shortly be undertaking carriageway surface repairs in localised areas along Rectory Road from Station Road to end of road (cul-de-sac estate).

This is in preparation for a proposed surface treatment, which if undertaken, will be carried out during 2021. Residents will receive separate notification for this work.

The repairs are currently programmed to start on 1 February 2021 and are expected to last for up to 2 days, during which time the road will be closed to through traffic from approximately 09:00 to 16:30hrs. The road will be open outside of these hours. For more information – <https://one.network/?tm=GB118483723>

As you might have noticed, inclement weather is becoming more of an issue and works programmes are more susceptible to change. Whilst there is an allowance within the time periods shown above for delays, there may be times when we have to postpone works at very short notice; based on the latest weather forecasts, this can occur just prior to works commencing. We will always look to provide up to date information wherever we can, but sometimes these last minute decisions can be difficult to relay to the travelling public in a timely manner.

Due to the current COVID-19 situation, works will be carried out ensuring safe working practices, and social distancing between site operatives and members of the public are maintained at all times. The appropriate traffic management will be in place to prevent any interaction.

In order to help us to complete the work as quickly as possible, NO vehicles should be remain on the road whilst the work is underway. **Please be aware any vehicles left parked on the road that prevent the works taking place face the risk of being removed.**

For your safety and that of our workforce, we are unable to guarantee vehicular access to and from your property during working hours. Should you need to make an essential journey during the periods of closure, please contact a member of the workforce in advance and they will be able to advise if they can accommodate your request. Pedestrian access will be available at all times.

Appendix A

In order to avoid potential injury or damage, please do not walk across the carriageway during the works unless directed by a member of the workforce.

Thank you for your co-operation and if you need more information regarding these works, you can using any of the following options:

web - <https://one.network/?tm=GB118483723>

email - roads@hants.gov.uk

call - 0300 555 1388

In the meantime, the day-to-day administration of the County Council continues at full pace, with all meetings and decision days taking place on-line. Positive action includes the authorisation of several programmes designed to help Hampshire residents cope with the fallout from the extended lockdown.

Supporting Hampshire's vulnerable children and families during this February Half Term

Hampshire County Council has confirmed that vulnerable children and those eligible for Free School Meals should not go hungry during the February Half Term as funding has been provided for food vouchers for families.

Help for people whose income has been affected by COVID-19

Families and individuals struggling to cope financially, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns, are being reminded that help to pay for food and energy, as well as essential items, is available from the County Council's connect4communities programme via the Citizens Advice Service and local community groups across Hampshire.

Walking and cycling towards a greener future for Hampshire

Hampshire County Council is securing its commitment to a healthier and greener future by providing more walking and cycling projects across the county.

Any queries on these or any other county council matters please contact Jonathan on jonathan.glen@hants.gov.uk.

Appendix A

District Councillor K. Crookes Report February 2021

Hart District Council has suffered quite a few losses of income during the current financial year. Principally this is around income which would usually come from the leisure centre (7 figure sum per annum) and loss of car parking income.

Additional costs have been incurred due to the COVID pandemic however a large proportion of this is being reimbursed by the Government but has left a shortfall.

The budget for 21-22 has been considered by the Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet. Both parties are concerned about the lack of detail in the budget proposal, which shows a significant shortfall for the coming year which would be met by drawing money from reserves.

The budget will be reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee again in February & by Full Council at the end of the month. However there are already concerns about the lack of transparency in the short term budget and a serious concern regarding future years in terms of quite significant shortfalls. It is very clear the Council has to find a way of reducing its expenditure to enable balancing of the budget in future years.

The Shapley Heath Garden Community had a meeting of the interested parties recently. As a result of the meeting sub groups have been formed and memberships of these sub groups are currently being put together.

The Overarching Committee which manages this project has not been able to meet since February 2020.

Since this time the District Council has made a bid for significant additional funding (over 400k) to take this project forward.

The District Council has not heard back from the government regarding this application; so one of the key issues to be raised is will the district use 400k from residents money to take this project forward if the funding application isn't successful?

The Shapely Heath Garden Community is the idea for a very large new settlement (initial concept is for 5k houses) between Hartley Wintney, Winchfield and Hook. It is worth noting that the Governments White Paper on planning reforms will probably give Hart District Council a lower target for housing development than it has in its current plan. This would be good news for the current plan period and to some extent would impact on the need for a development such as the Shapley Heath Garden Community.

Appendix A

Parish Clerk Report February 2021

Road signs and bollards on the bridge at Deptford Lane reported to Hampshire Highways in December.

The road signs have been removed and the job of removing the bollards has been passed to a contractor.

Reference: 21530068

Clearance of three drains near to the pumping station reported to Hampshire Highways.

This work has now been completed.

Reference 21509276

Blocked pipe opposite Pound Cottage on Hook Road reported to Hampshire Highways in January 2021.

Reference 21536541

A request by the Parish Council to install steps at the junction of footpaths 7 and 6 has been actioned by Hampshire Countryside Services

Reference PROW305718

Councillors have reported that the anti-slip wiring on the boardwalk needs replacing/repairing.

Reported to Hampshire County Council in January 2021

References PROW445974 & PROW212245

In September 2013 planning permission was given to South East Water for the temporary installation of two containers housing ultraviolet (UV) disinfection at the Greywell Water Treatment Works. The Environment Agency has granted an extension to this abstract licence and therefore the equipment will remain on site and be utilised until 31 March 2023. South East Water is in the process of applying for planning permission from Hart District Council for these containers

Greywell Parish Council Monthly Sheet for February 2021 (Appendix B)

Lloyds Current Account

Balance as at 1 December 2020

£7051.98 (agrees statement dated 31 December 2020)

Payments

Date	To	Amount
8 December 2020	Staff Expenses December	£20.08
30 December 2020	Staff Salary December	£266.08
1 February 2021	Staff Salary January	£266.08

Receipts

Date	From	Amount
		Nil

Balance as at 4 February 2021

£6499.74 (agrees on line statement dated 4 February 2021)

Lloyds Savings Account

Balance as at 1 December 2020

£12.26 (no statement received)

Receipts

Date	From	Amount
		Nil

Balance as at 4 February 2021

£12.26 (agrees on line statement dated 4 February 2021)

Total Balance as at 4 February 2021

Lloyds Current Account	£6499.74
Lloyds Savings Account	£12.26
Unpresented cheques	Nil
Cancelled cheques	Nil
Net Bank Balance	£6512.00

Chairmans Signature and date:

Greywell Parish Council – Comments on Planning Application 20/03185/FUL - Solar Photovoltaic Farm at Chosley Farm

Introduction

These comments represent the views of Greywell Parish Council (GPC) on the Planning Application to construct a solar farm on the land surrounding Chosley Farm. They address our general observations and concerns about developments of this kind taking place in the countryside, and the particular issues that we believe may adversely affect Greywell.

General concerns

GPC is in favour of green energy and would, in principle, support schemes that promote the production of clean, sustainable power including photovoltaic solar farms. However, the issues with this proposal are its size and where it is to be sited.

The NPPF implies that large-scale solar farms are best located on land which has limited alternative use and where the arrays are least conspicuous in terms of their visual impact. The Chosley site meets neither of these criteria:

- the land is good quality agricultural land (Grade 3) and has been continuously farmed every year;
- the surrounding undulating landscape means that the arrays and associated infrastructure will be visible for miles around and will have an adverse impact on the views and the character of the open countryside.

In specific planning terms, the comments submitted by the Whitewater Valley Preservation Society (WVPS) to this application and the previous Screening application accurately reflect the views of GPC, and need not be repeated in detail here.

They relate to the application of policies contained in the NPPF, Hart Local Plan and Odiham and North Warnborough Neighbourhood Plan regarding the impact of the proposals on:

- Countryside and landscape character
- Visual impact
- Heritage assets
- Ecology and biodiversity
- Public rights of way
- Flooding.

We also agree with WVPS's comments regarding the inconsistencies in the way Hart addressed the requirement for Environmental Impact Assessments in the Chosley application and a similar scale solar farm proposed at Ford Farm, Long Sutton (20/02632/EIA).

Specific Issues directly affecting Greywell

GPC believes the adverse impact on the visual amenity and scenic quality of the landscape around Greywell will be considerable. Regrettably, the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) report does not, in our view, present a balanced and objective

assessment of the Greywell setting or the overall visual effect of the proposed development. The overall tone is set in the LVIA when describing the ‘Settlement and Land Use’¹ in the introductory ‘Landscape Setting’ section (2.1), when all of the villages surrounding the site except Greywell are mentioned. This is surprising as Greywell village has arguably the greatest number of residential properties with a line of sight to various parts of the proposed site.

GPC has specific concerns regarding the LVIA’s selection, weighting and pictorial presentation of the Greywell Site Context viewpoints (SCV) and the resultant Principal Viewpoint. Our observations are as follows:

- The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (6.2.1)² is rightly described as ‘theoretical’ as the resultant zone – despite an alleged ‘field survey to refine the viewshed’ - does not include any of the Greywell properties with a direct (albeit sometimes limited) view of the proposed development.
- There is no explanation as to the criteria underpinning the selection of the 4 SVCs around Greywell, and the selection of SC1 in Greywell as one the LVIA’s 9 Principal Viewpoints does not (particularly at this time of year) represent the best example of the effect on the Greywell’s visual amenity.
- Appendix 3 (Site context Photographs) only contains panoramic photographs which produce a view which is extremely wide in azimuth and tiny in elevation. The result is wholly unrepresentative of the scope and size of view experienced by the human eye. Moreover, all of the views are in the Summer with trees in full leaf.
- Appendix 5 (Visual Effects Table) misrepresents the Greywell Site Context Viewpoints. All 4 of the Greywell Viewpoints are correctly graded as ‘High Sensitivity’; however, the expression ‘glimpsed’ is often used when we would argue ‘seen clearly’ would be a more accurate description. Of serious concern is that SC 3 (The Street) is classed as ‘**No View**’ and ‘**None**’ in terms of Magnitude of Effect. This is patently wrong! The proposed site can be clearly seen in winter and is still visible (albeit restricted) in summer. In fact, elements of the site can be seen clearly from a number of ground level vantage points along The Street. At these points the magnitude of effect clearly increases when viewed from the first and in one case the second floor of associated residential properties. SC 4 is classed as having a limited view and a small Magnitude of Effect in year one. This is not at all accurate as a large part of the development would be clearly seen and the supporting text goes on to compound this inaccuracy.
- Appendix 6 (Principal Viewpoints (PV) and Photomontages). The photographs of PV1 (Greywell) are again panoramic, shot in summer and not representative of the view experienced by the human eye. For some reason the Photomontages only cover year one – all the other PVs around the site have views depicting year 15.

The LPA should instruct Officers to visit the Greywell SCVs in person before the end of March so they can put the visual impact of the proposed development into context.

Construction traffic

Should planning consent be granted for the development, the issue of construction traffic will be a critical one for Greywell. We note that the Transport Statement (TS) recommends

¹ CHOSLEY FARM SOLAR FARM – Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Revision C, Dated Nov 20 – Page 9

² CHOSLEY FARM SOLAR FARM – Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Revision C, Dated Nov 20 – Page 31

construction traffic be routed away from The Street in North Warnborough; the preferred route for construction traffic being via West Street in Odiham. However, the Construction Route Appraisal in the TS makes no mention of potential access to the site via Greywell, which could easily be seen as a convenient shortcut for trucks going to and from the site from the M3 and the direction of Hook, via the A287. This would be unacceptable as Hook Road and Deptford Lane in particular (carriageway width as little as 4.5M in parts) would be entirely unsuitable for construction traffic for the same reasons as The Street in North Warnborough.

Therefore, following any consent, a full Construction Traffic Management Plan must be provided by the developer and this should include a specific condition for construction traffic to avoid Greywell.

Cumulative developments

The NPPF and DCLG Guidance both state that the LPA should consider the cumulative effect of developments of solar and wind farms on the environment and landscape. Since the PreApp for Chosley Farm was lodged just over a year ago, two other major solar farm developments have been proposed in the locality: Ford Farm at Long Sutton and Bunkers Hill, Rotherwick. The cumulative impact, if all these sites were to be developed, would be devastating. Swathes of beautiful open countryside would be blighted for decades, with the concomitant loss of good agricultural land and huge damage to visual amenity and enjoyment of the landscape.

GPC notes that none of the proposals indicate the size and location of any required overland power cables to make the connection to the 'entry point' at National Grid's Fleet Substation. GPC believes that consent for this type of infrastructure is regulated by the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy; however, it would be helpful to understand from the developer the scope of these works as they may have a significant visual impact on adjacent communities.

The LPA must take into account other proposed (and future) solar developments when deciding on the Chosley Farm application.

Redundancy

The usable life of solar arrays is not mentioned by the developer. It is understood that the performance of the current generation of solar panels severely degrades after 25 years and they are no longer viable. Given that the Application seeks consent for a 40-year term for the solar farm, it is reasonable to ask what happens when the arrays due to be installed are redundant and need to be replaced. Quite apart from recycling and environmental issues, will the developers be prepared to consider making the huge investment required to replace the panels with, say, only 15 years remaining of the term of the planning consent? Or, more likely, will there be an application to extend the term beyond the 40 years originally granted?

The LPA must take independent advice on the future of photo-voltaic electricity generation before committing to a 40-year term for the development.

Conclusion

GPC, having weighed the benefits of green energy against the issues associated with these proposals, objects to the application. The land around Chosley Farm is far from ideal as a site for such a large-scale development. The location is in the Whitewater Valley, on good arable land, and surrounded by open countryside. The River Whitewater is one of only around 200 hundred chalk streams globally which, combined with its proximity to the Greywell Fen SSSI, makes the location totally inappropriate. **The solar farm would have significant impact on the beauty of our local countryside which is currently enjoyed and used by so many.**

Should planning permission be granted then further protections and mitigations must be put in place, including limiting size, term, screening and the access routes for construction traffic.