

Minutes of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **WEDNESDAY, 5<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2012 at 7.15 p.m.**

**PRESENT**                    **Councillor V Crosby** (Chairman) and  
Councillors W.M. Blenkinsopp, Mrs. D. Bowman, T.R. Bowman, Mrs. B.A. Clare, J.D. Clare, Mrs. M. Dalton, R.S. Fleming, P. Gittins, G.C. Gray, I. Gray, Mrs. J. Gray, B. Haigh, Mrs. S. Haigh, B. Hall, K. Henderson, Mrs. W.P. Hilliary, Mrs. K. Hopper, M. Iveson, Mrs. S.J. Iveson, W. Iveson, Mrs. A. Palmer, Mrs. V.M. Raw and A. Warburton.

**OFFICIALS**                Mrs. C. Walton (Corporate and Policy Officer)  
Mr. S. Cooper (Environment Officer)  
Miss J. Simpson (Leisure Manager)  
Mr. D. Thompson (Works Manager)  
Miss C. Ryder (Senior Admin Officer)

19.    **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors W. Curtis and Mrs. E.M. Paylor.

20.    **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**Declarations of personal interests were submitted by Councillors Mrs. J. Gray, P. Gittins and Mrs. S.J. Iveson on Agenda Item No. 10 (Planning Applications) as they are members of Durham County Council.**

**A Declaration of personal interest was declared by Councillor M. Iveson on Agenda Item No. 10 (1)(d) (Planning Application) as he is a member of Moore Lane Sports Club.**

21.    **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no questions from members of the public.

22.    **MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor R.S. Fleming, seconded by Councillor Mrs. M. Dalton and

**RESOLVED** - that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee held on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

23.    **ALLOTMENTS REPORT**

The Works Manager submitted his report for the nine weeks ended the 26<sup>th</sup> August 2012. The report detailed inspections and general maintenance to the allotments together with the current waiting list for an allocation.

**RESOLVED** - that it be recommended that the information be received.

24. **ENVIRONMENT REPORT**

The Environment Officer and Works Manager submitted their report for the nine weeks ended the 26<sup>th</sup> August 2012. The report set out details of the volunteers' activities together with public events and work carried out by the Schools.

Information on burials, and vandalism was also set out in the report and the Works Manager informed the Committee that the Police had apprehended the persons responsible for the damage to St. Oswald's Park and proceedings were in hand.

**RESOLVED** - that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That staff be complimented on their assistance in the apprehension of the persons responsible for the vandalism at St. Oswald's Park.

25. **GRANTS OF GRAVE SPACE**

**RESOLVED** - that it be noted that the undermentioned grants of grave space have been issued:

West Cemetery

Grave No. K 103	Joseph Minnes
Grave No. I 206	Angela Weston
Grave No. I 241	Lorraine Elliott
Grave No. N 78	Paul Simmons
Grave No. J 120	Shaun Ridley
Grave No. J 146	Angela Guy-Fisher
Grave No. K 96	Valerie Talbot

Stephenson Way Cemetery

Grave No. F 121	Elizabeth Hare
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26. **THE ISLES WIND FARM – PROPOSAL**

Information had been circulated on the Stage Two proposals. Public consultation events had been organised throughout the area. E-On were seeking the views of the public on four questions:

- Stage Two layout.
- Electrical connection, including the proposed locations of substations.
- Site access and plans to manage traffic around the site.
- A final question to cover any other comments on the updated proposal.

Members considered the aspects of the installation of the wind farm and wished to comment on the four questions as a corporate decision, although individuals could still make their comments known direct to E-On.

The following responses to the questions were made and agreed to be forwarded as the corporate response from this Council:-

#### Question 1 – ‘The Stage Two Layout’

County Durham has substantially more wind turbines than any other area in England. Reducing the number of turbines to 24 would still not be acceptable. Data we have been given, supplied from Renewables UK, would appear to indicate that, if all the turbines already operating, consented and submitted are taken into account, County Durham would have a density of one turbine to every 6 sq.miles, and of 1MW of wind power every 3 sq.miles. For comparison, Sussex would have a density of one turbine every 1,458 sq.miles, and Surrey would have none at all.

The Isles is an area of unique environment and this should be maintained. The negative impact of the Wind Farm will far outweigh any positive impact.

#### Question 2 – ‘Electrical Connection, including the Proposed Sub-Station Locations’

Underground cables will have a major negative impact on an area with a unique environment habitat. These construction proposals will be unacceptable.

#### Question 3 – ‘Proposed Access to the Site’

The ecological damage in all areas where traffic management is proposed will be huge and irreversible for many many years. Local environmental damage will be too great for this proposal to proceed in this location.

#### Question 4 – ‘Other comments on the proposed Stage Two Consultation’

This is an environmentally sensitive area and the flora and fauna are unique. As stated previously the negative impact of this proposal far outweighs any positives which may be achieved. Therefore, Great Aycliffe Town Council are categorically and unanimously against this proposal or, indeed, any future proposal for a Wind Farm in County Durham.

**RESOLVED** – that it be recommended:

- (i) That the four responses to the Stage Two Community Consultation questionnaire be as stated above be forwarded to E-On as our unanimously agreed Corporate response.
- (ii) That individual comments be made by Councillors if they so wished direct to E-On.

## 27. **TRAIN STATION ADOPTION**

The Works Manager submitted a report to give members an update on the Train Station Adoption .

**RESOLVED** – that it be recommended that the information be received.

## 28. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Declarations of personal interests were submitted by Councillors Mrs. J. Gray, P. Gittins and Mrs. S.J. Iveson on this item as they are members of Durham County Council, however, they remained in the meeting during the discussion thereon.

A Declaration of personal interest was declared by Councillor M. Iveson on Item No. (1)(d) as he is a member of Moore Lane Sports Club, however, he remained in the meeting during the discussions thereon.

**(1) The Committee considered the undermentioned planning applications:-**

- (a) Installation of new shop front and ATM machine – Simpasture Convenience Store – 3-5 Simpasture Gate, Newton Aycliffe.
- (b) Erection of conservatory to rear of property – 10 Cowdray Close, Woodham, Newton Aycliffe.
- (c) Single storey side/rear extension and pitched roof over existing garage – 29 Bede Crescent, Newton Aycliffe.
- (d) Erection of Portacabin building measuring 8m x 3.8m – Newton Aycliffe Football Club, Moore Lane, Newton Aycliffe.

**(2) To receive for information the undermentioned planning applications, prior notice of which had been circulated to all Members of the Council. Durham County Council have been notified of the listed comments on each application:-**

- (a) Erection of 2 No. dwellings, land adjoining 10 Heighington Street, Aycliffe Village.  
*Although there are some concerns over the rear elevation being 3 stories and overdevelopment of the site, with a view that perhaps 1 dwelling would be more appropriate in this location. In this instance the Town Council would have no objection to the proposal providing the appropriate conditions are put in place regarding the materials to be used.*
- (b) Installation of front access ramp – 72 Bewick Crescent, Newton Aycliffe.  
*No objections*
- (c) Erection of single storey side and rear extension – 14 Kirkham Close, Newton Aycliffe.  
*The Town Council would have concerns over the loss of privacy if the side and velux windows to the side of the property were permitted. However, would have no objections to the remaining proposal.*
- (d) Change of use from A1 (retail) to class A5 (hot food takeaway) and installation of associated extraction equipment at – 1 Simpasture Gate, Newton Aycliffe.  
*No objections.*

- (e) Install 2 No. new external lights and erection of external steel access stair to the rear of Barclays Bank PLC – 45 Beveridge Way, Newton Aycliffe.  
*No objections*
- (f) Removal of existing conservatory and erection of single storey and double storey extension to the rear with Juliette Balcony along with first floor extension to the front of the property – 7 Wynyard Court, Newton Aycliffe.  
*The Town Council would object to the proposal in its current format as the overall increase in property volume is well over 50% and taking into account the property has previously been extended.  
In addition the forward extension would be detrimental to the existing street scene and character of the area and would set a precedent for other similar applications in this area.*
- (g) Remove existing signage, new illuminated fascia, new illuminated projecting sign, new blue housing to existing ATM machines, new branch name plate, new frosted vinyl to windows and new manifestations at Barclays Bank PLC – 45 Beveridge Way, Newton Aycliffe.  
*The Town Council would object to the covering of the windows with a frosted vinyl as it would give an abandoned feel to the building but would support and encourage the other proposals within this application.*
- (h) Retrospective application for 320mm trellis on top of 2 metre high fence to the rear of – 34 Westmorland Way, Newton Aycliffe.  
*No objections.*
- (i) Erection and display of internally illuminated fascia sign and projecting signage at McColls - 5 Simpasture Gate, Newton Aycliffe.  
*No objections.*

**RESOLVED** - that it be recommended that:

- (i) **Applications 1 (a) (b) and (c)** – no objections.
- (ii) **Application 1 (d)** – that the following objection be made:

Erection of Portacabin

*The Town Council would consider the location of the portacabin unsuitable and feel there is not sufficient information provided within the application to offer anything other than an objection to the planning application on the grounds of:*

- Location of the Portacabin.
  - Lack of sufficient information.
  - Proximity to habitable dwellings.
  - No proposed foul sewage disposal.
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- (iii) The comments previously made on items 2 (a) to 2 (i) be noted.

**CHAIRMAN.**