

SADBERGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday 1st December 2009 in Sadberge Village Hall

Present: Councillor Scaife [Chair]
Councillors Best, Brown, Heywood, Schott and Vickers

In attendance: Councillor Brian Jones Alastair Mackenzie – Clerk

1. Apologies

Apologies were accepted from Councillor Glew, and the reason for his absence was approved.

2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda

Councillor Schott declared an interest in item 11 – Planning application 09/00762/FUL.

3. Moor House Wind Farm planning application

3.1 On 9-Nov-2009 Councillor Scaife and the Clerk met representatives of Banks Developments to discuss possible ways of protecting residents against possible aerodynamic modulation of noise from the Moor House wind farm.

Banks Developments intends to amend its Environmental Management Plan (EMP) to take account of aerodynamic modulation of wind turbine noise.

3.2 On 1-Dec-2009 Councillor Scaife and the Clerk met Darlington Borough Council planning officers to discuss policy implications of (a) Saved Policy E26 of the Darlington Local Plan 1997 and (b) the recently issued Addendum to Arup's report on Landscape Capacity Studies.

3.3 The Council agreed to allow inputs from members of the public during the discussion of the Moor House Wind Farm planning application. [Including the Parish Councillors and visitors from outside Sadberge, there were a total of 34 people present.]

3.4 The following points were made during the discussion:-

- Saved Policy E26 of the Darlington Local Plan states that wind farm proposals must not "significantly affect landscape character or visual amenity" and must not "adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring properties or the character and setting of settlements by reason of noise, shadow-flicker, visual dominance or electro-magnetic interference". In the Moor House Environmental Impact Statement, Banks Developments acknowledges that it would be almost impossible for any wind farm in this area to satisfy those conditions.
- The Addendum to the Arup report clearly states that the level of development proposed at Moor House "exceeds the capacity of the landscape".
- The original Arup report states that the largest wind farm typology potentially acceptable in the zone including Moor House is about 4 - 6 turbines.
- It is likely that permission will be granted for some wind turbines in the area near Sadberge.
- Arup's report says that ten wind turbines at Moor House would have a 'Severe' impact on Sadberge. Wouldn't a smaller number of turbines – e.g. six – also have a 'Severe' impact?
- Banks Developments' main objective is to make money.
- Discussing the issues with the developer gives them advance warning of the grounds for objection. Is this a good idea?
- During an Airport Consultative Committee meeting, the Chief Engineer of Durham Tees Valley Airport expressed a concern about the impact of wind turbines.
- The Seven Parishes Action Group (SPAG) has produced five sample objection letters.

3.5 In a show of hands nearly all the Sadberge residents present indicated that they wish to oppose the Moor House Wind Farm planning application.

3.6 The Parish Council decided to object to the Moor House Wind Farm planning application (09/00741/FUL) on the following grounds:-

- Commercial-scale wind turbines should not be situated amongst the settlements on the Tees Plain to the north-east of Darlington
 - The proposed development would be contrary to Saved Policy E26 from the Darlington Local Plan, which states that:-
 - The Addendum to Arup's report on "Wind Farm Development and Landscape Capacity Studies: East Durham Limestone and Tees" states that *"overall the level of development proposed at [Moor House] exceeds the capacity of the landscape"*.
 - No permission should be given for any wind farm on the Tees Plain until and unless Durham Tees Valley Airport makes a formal, public statement that it is satisfied that aircraft safety will not be compromised.
 - There is no reliable assurance that noise from the proposed Moor House Wind Farm will not cause harm and annoyance to residents of individual properties and/or settlements in the surrounding countryside.
- In particular, the Government guidance in ETSU-R-97 takes no account of – and provides no protection against – the phenomenon of aerodynamic modulation.
- There is no proper mechanism for addressing the issue of cumulative impact of wind farms in the area to the north-east of Darlington.

Development of the Moor House Wind Farm in combination with either the A1 Wind Farm or the East Newbiggin Wind Farm would be contrary to the conclusions of Arup's Landscape Capacity Studies report.

Also, although it realises that this is not classed as a material planning consideration, the Parish Council is also concerned that the proposed development would be likely to have a detrimental effect on property prices in the surrounding area, including Sadberge.

The Clerk will communicate the Parish Council's objection to Darlington Borough Council.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

3.7 It was agreed that, after the Council's January meeting, the Council will send out a flyer asking Sadberge residents to register their objections to the Moor House Wind Farm planning application. The flyer will include a tear-off slip and an example letter of objection.

The Clerk will prepare a draft flyer for the Council to consider at its January meeting.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

4. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 3rd November 2009 were agreed to be a true record of the meeting.

5. Matters arising

5.1 The storage facility on the bank at Middleton-One-Row should be ready by Christmas. There will be no rates to pay.

The Clerk will check the situation regarding insurance for Sadberge Parish Council property left in the storage facility.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

5.2 The Clerk has still to arrange for various items of Council information to be added to the Sadberge web site.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

5.3 There was no news of Yvonne Ramage's progress on marking up the map of the footpaths around Sadberge.

5.4 On 27-Nov-2009, Councillors Scaife and Schott joined representatives from Darlington Borough Council, Reiver Homes and Disability Access for a site visit to the playing field north of St. Andrew's Park.

It appears that there may have been a mis-communication between Reiver Homes and Darlington Borough Council about the acceptability of installing a viewing platform instead of an access ramp.

It should be possible to install a zig-zag ramp down the left hand side of the slope without needing to cut down any trees. Dave Charlton (Reiver Homes) will draw up plans and present them to Dave McGaughey (Darlington Borough Council Planning Officer). Dave McGaughey will keep Sadberge Parish Council informed.

It was noted that the playing field itself looks in reasonable condition.

- 5.5 The Festival Committee has decided to run the Sadberge Summer Festivals independently of the Parish Council.
- 5.6 Darlington Borough Council has still to plant three new trees on the section of village green near Tithe House.
The Clerk will send a letter to residents of houses near that part of the village green to let them know what is happening. **ACTION:** A Mackenzie
- 5.7 The trees on the south side of Darlington Road opposite Berry Court are the responsibility of whoever owns the land. At present, it is not know who owns that piece of land.
- 5.8 The Christmas tree is up on the village green. The Clerk will put the lights on the tree within the next couple of days. **ACTION:** A Mackenzie
- 5.9 There was no news of the new road sign for Beacon Hill.
- 5.10 Councillor Brian Jones will organise a Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meeting after Christmas.
- 5.11 The police have indicated that they will start issuing parking tickets to vehicles causing an obstruction in East Close. This issue will be included on the agenda for the PACT meeting.
- 5.12 There was no news about the possibility of additional parking in The Orchard.
- 5.13 There was no news about the request for Darlington Borough Council to extend the lay-by beside the telephone phone box on the village green.
- 5.14 As discussed at the Parish Council meeting on 3-Nov-2009, the Clerk had contacted Dave Winstanley to (a) support Darlington Borough Council Highways Department's proposals to provide an improved cycle and pedestrian route between Sadberge and Darlington along the edge of the A66 and (b) request that consideration also be given to providing an improved cycle and pedestrian route along the north side of the A66 between Sadberge and Long Newton, where it could cross the A66 using the new flyover to link up with National Cycle Route 14 in Long Newton.
- 5.15 There was no news about Sadberge's entry for the Northumbria in Bloom competition. The Clerk will chase this up. **ACTION:** A Mackenzie
Brian Graham (Head of Street Scene in Darlington Borough Council) has offered support for any village entering the Northumbria in Bloom competition.
- 5.16 Darlington Borough Council believes that the verge below 8 East Close belongs to the householder, who is therefore responsible for cutting the grass on the verge. The Clerk reported that his earlier investigation via the Land Registry records suggested that the ownership of the verge was not clear cut.
- 5.17 Darlington Borough Council had strimmed the bank on the west side of Middleton Road in front of Richmond Cottages.
- 5.18 A grit bin has been installed on Hill House Lane.
- 5.19 There was no news of progress on painting the bus shelter in front of Mayfield House.

6. Darlington Association of Parish Councils (DAPC)

- 6.1 A DAPC meeting was held on 25-Nov-2009.
- There was a presentation by Brian Graham (Head of Street Scene).
 - Ward Councillor Brian Jones had visited the Durham Constabulary South Communications Room at Bishop Auckland. He reported that the visit gives a real insight into the way that the police go about their tasks.

- It has been suggested that training for Borough Councillors should also be made available to Parish Councillors.
- There will be no increase in the Borough Council's grants to Parish Councils.

7. Partners And Communities Together (PACT)

A PACT meeting will be organised after Christmas.

ACTION: Ward Councillor Brian Jones

8. Wind Farms near Sadberge

8.1 There was no news of the proposed A1 Wind Farm.

8.2 There was no news of the proposed wind farm at East Newbiggin.

8.3 The Seven Parishes Action Group (SPAG) has issued a DVD illustrating reasons to oppose wind farms.

SPAG has also distributed a flyer asking local residents to oppose the Moor House Wind Farm planning application. This flyer was not distributed in Sadberge because Sadberge Parish Council is making its own arrangements to communicate with village residents on this issue.

9. Low Carbon Communities Challenge

9.1 The application for Sadberge to participate in the Low Carbon Communities Challenge needs to be submitted by 30-Dec-2009, which is before the next meeting of the Council.

The Council authorised the Clerk to approve the final version of the application, after consultation with Councillor Scaife.

ACTION: A Mackenzie /
Councillor Scaife

9.2 Ward Councillor Brian Jones has nominated Sadberge Parish Council for the 'Contribution to the Environment' award in the Best of Darlington Awards.

Ward Councillor Brian Jones left the meeting.

10. Diversion of Footpath No. 10

It was agreed that the Council has no objection to the proposed diversion of Footpath No. 10.

11. Planning

The Council approved the following planning applications without comment:-

- 09/00766/FUL Erection of a single storey building comprising 4 stables and tack room at 3 Sadberge Hall Farm.
- 09/00709/CU Conversion of an existing redundant building to form a residential dwelling at Spring House Farm, Sadberge Road.
- 09/00762/FUL Erection of a rear conservatory at 3 Dale Road.

Note: Councillor Schott left the meeting during consideration of planning application 09/00762/FUL.

12. Payments

The Council approved the following payment:-

- SLCC membership subscription for the Clerk £61.00

13. Next meeting

The next meeting of Sadberge Parish Council will be held in Sadberge Village Hall at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday 12th January 2010.

Alastair Mackenzie
Clerk

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1st DECEMBER 2009

I hereby certify that these minutes are a true record of the meeting.

Signed: Councillor M Scaife _____ Date _____