

Meeting of THORNEY PARISH COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber, Tank Yard,  
Thorney on Monday 8 April 2013 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Chair: Councillor: J E G Bartlett

Councillors: R Bevington, Mrs. D Halfhide, Mrs. L Sheldrake, Mrs. M Long  
J Brooks, P Rands, Mrs. S Selby, J Rowe, E. Gee

Peterborough City Councillors D McKean, D Sanders and D Harrington,  
PCSO Mary Webber,  
120 members of the public

**215/13-14 To receive and approve apologies for absence**

D. J Buddle,

**216/13-14 To receive Disclosable Pecuniary Interests Declarations**

To receive Disclosable Pecuniary Interests Declarations in any items on the agenda  
– none declared

**217/13-14 To approve minutes of the meeting of 11 March 2013**

Minutes of the Council meeting held on 11 March were confirmed and signed

**218/13-14 Matters arising from minutes**

1. Response from Stagecoach concerning Park Crescent – Councillor Brooks – no response from MD of Stagecoach
2. Police Commissioner – no reply to second letter concerning the loss of a PCSO.

**219/13-14 Public Participation**

**Mr. Steve Salt Planning Director of West Coast Energy and Neil Foxall the Project Manager, Gores Farm Wind Farm**

West Coast Energy is an independent developer. Project will be by Peterborough Wind Energy Ltd. Mr. Salt outlined risk to future energy supplies and targets for UK wind energy generation. There were expectations that there would be 1000 X 2mw machines across the country.

Gores Farm will have 8 turbines 126.5m to tip and be 3mw machines. West Coast Energy wished to share benefits in local community. 10% of profit from wind farm will be invested in local community will is estimated to be £96000 per annum (or 10% of profits if this is greater). West Coast Energy is committed to this for the local community.

Planning application has been submitted and construction is likely to start in 2015.

If Thorney Parish Council voices the opinions of the meeting and votes against the application the fund will still come to the local community. Representatives are needed to take the constitution of the fund forward.

One resident from Sandpit Road said that we should take positives from this development and use the community fund to better facilities in the village

Mr. Campbell. Ash Close, asked if the planning application was a done deal – rejected by Mr. Salt

Mr. Bothamly, Church Street – Government claim wind turbines are ineffective - rejected by Mr. Salt

Mr. Davis, Northside – gas powered generating station in Peterborough provides more energy than 26 wind turbines that only produce when its windy – Mr. Salt said that wind generation had a role to play in energy supply

Mrs. Fuller had moved away from Thorney because of wind turbine proposals. She believed that the erection of thee turbines would happen no matter what the objection

Other resident's comments were:

Planning process does not look at efficiency of effectiveness

Wind turbines are unsightly and the ground mass of concrete could raise water table levels  
Whole village will soon be surrounded by turbines. Present proposals are for 74 in the area surrounding the village

Peterborough City Council should investigate other energy sources. Planning objections can be found on the website [www.newboroughlandscapeprotection.co.uk](http://www.newboroughlandscapeprotection.co.uk)

This company makes profits that we all pay for. Implore Thorney Parish Council to use some of the precept money to oppose this development and obtain professional advice.

Councillor Bevington said that Thorney Parish Council could not mount a campaign.

Mr. Salt said the community fund has provided energy efficiency to homes, solar panels and alleviation of fuel poverty in other areas.

Mr. Thornton Holmes deplored the use of a community fund as a bribe and asked if the cost of building and installing the turbines outweighs the energy provided. These are detrimental to the environment, birds and vista. Mr. Salt said the payback was around 9 months of operation

Shadow flicker can occur but is predictable and the turbine electronics can automatically turn them off when flicker is likely to occur. The nearest properties will be 10 rotor diameters away – the closest property being 800 metres

Mrs. Clipston, Chair of Newborough Landscape Protection Group, ([www.newboroughlandscapeprotection.co.uk](http://www.newboroughlandscapeprotection.co.uk)) asked why this area is targeted.

Mr. Salt explained that areas where consistent wind speeds were needed, discussions with sympathetic landowners, planning officers and environmental groups were determined where suitable locations would be. This area is suitable because of ecology, hydrology, access, land owners agreement. All of the UK has been investigated for wind farm potential.

One resident asked if a site was chosen on cost or politics. Mr. Salt said that land owner agreements were confidential

Owner of Pigeons Farm asked how much money West Coast Energy and local farmers were making. Again Mr. Salt said that land owner agreements were confidential

Peterborough City Councillor David Sanders was against energy generation by wind turbines and urged residents to write to Peterborough City Council with their objections

Peterborough City Councillor Dale McKean was in favour of Peterborough City Council proposals for energy generation. Objection to planning applications must be made on planning grounds. Objections should be made by groups and by individuals.

It was suggested that one planning reason for objection was that The Fens are a beautiful landscape and should be classed as an area of outstanding natural beauty.

#### **220/13-14 Matters for Information and Reports**

1. Crime report – 23 reported incidents and 8 crimes (burglary, speed camera damage, criminal damage, theft, arson. Many rural burglaries in past weeks – some arrests made.

Two murders linked to body found at Newborough – arrests made.

2. Bedford Hall Management Committee – clarification of bar lease sought. Any new lease should be all encompassing for Bedford Hall, museum and parish room

3. Report from Parish Council Liaison – Local Government Boundary Commission – to be discussed at next meeting

Police Commissioner at Eye Parish Council meeting in Leeds Hall on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April – invited to attend

#### **221/13-14 Report from City Councillors**

Tank Yard consultation completed. Police Commissioner told of loss of PCSO

Eye and Thorney has seen a recent increase in crime  
Discussed North Bank gypsy planning application for caravans

#### **222/13-14 Finance**

1. To note income and approve Payments

The following Cheques were drawn and signed:-

| <u>Payee</u>                            | <u>Reason</u>                   | <u>Cheque</u> | <u>Amount</u> |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Mr. A E Hovell<br>Columbaria<br>Company | Postage, travel, telephone      | 001921        | £35.90        |
| North Level IDB                         | Inscription Mr and Mrs Peasnell | 001922        | £90.00        |
| Mr. A E Hovell                          | Drainage charges allotments     | 001923        | £20.15        |
| NFU                                     | Anti-virus software             | 001924        | £69.99        |
|   | Lawnmower Insurance             | 001925        | £190.60       |

2. Monthly bank reconciliation – signed
3. End of year Account and audit signing

A Risk Assessment Audit had been carried out and Members of Thorney Parish Council acknowledged their responsibility and confirmed to the best of their knowledge and belief that the accounts had been prepared in accordance with Section 2 Statement of Annual Governance for the Annual Return year ended 31 March 2013. It was proposed by Councillor Bevington, seconded by Councillor Gee and unanimously agreed that the accounts should be signed as a true record.

The Chairman signed the accounts on behalf of Thorney Parish Council.

#### **223/13-14 Planning Approvals and Refusals**

- 13/00130 154 Wisbech Road – reduce height of chimney, rebuild remaining chimney – approved
- 12/02926 Rose and Crown, 2 Wisbech Road – construction 11 properties and conversion of tap room and garages into 2 dwellings – approved
- 13/00145 Ratcliff Land Surveys, 10a Whittlesey Road – change of use – application withdrawn

#### **224/13-14 Planning Applications and other matters**

1. Planning applications

13/00212/LBC for Replacement ground floor front windows at The White House 87 Station Road – no objections

13/00384 Land to north Barsby Meats, Northey Road – change of use to include 1 static caravan and 2 touring caravans and erection of facilities block – Thorney Parish Council object to this proposal. Works may interfere with archaeological remains, that this is in a flood area and note to be taken of past planning refusals for similar developments in this area. Development would be against standard CS9 of the Core Strategy as it is not close to shops or schools.

12/01905/R3FUL Morris Fen - Consultation on Reg 3 City Council Application (Full)  
Installation of a solar farm with an installed power capacity of up to 26MW, comprising the installation of photovoltaic panels, associated boundary fencing, security and CCTV cameras, site access and associated electrical infrastructure including inverter units; transformer and temporary construction compounds, electricity substation and 2no. terminal towers at Land To The East And West Of Black Drove Thorney.

Thorney Parish Council objects to this application because:

a: The Peterborough City Council plans to use Grade 2 agricultural land for the solar farms. This is the most productive arable land in the country and the Peterborough City Council plan to turn it into an industrial site. This is unethical and proves these plans should be looked at by central government rather than Peterborough City Council own planning department to ensure an unbiased decision.

b: Threat to Wildlife: This solar farm threatens this areas diverse ecosystem. Hedgerows and trees used as habitation will be destroyed. Solar panels emit electrical noise and waves and on this large scale could disrupt insect and animal populations. We would consider any threat to the welfare of birds to be further reason to for approving this application

The vast area of solar panelling over the site will resemble water from the air and be a danger to waterfowl trying to land as well as reflections affecting aircraft. This could result in death or serious injury.

c: Visual impact: 200 acres of prime grade 2 agricultural land will be covered in thousands of solar panels – this will destroy the unique fen countryside. This is an area of outstanding natural beauty

d: Traffic The construction of this solar farm will require heavy traffic which will damage local roads and disrupt local quality of life.

e: Health and safety: The largest solar farm in Britain will attract criminals and thieves to the area who would want to steal metal or lucrative materials. The stress and worry which comes with an increase in crime will severely affect the lives of local people. To protect the project the proposal for a 2.4 meter fence is totally out of keeping with a countryside environment and more suited to an industrial area. The change of use for the land should not be allowed.

f: Local History: The loss of rich farming heritage for which this area is particularly valued going back to the model of Duke of Bedford estate principle 200 years ago.

g: Consistency with the development plan for the areas – new homes are not allowed to be built in the area proposed for the solar park so an industrial area should not be allowed in the area. Allowing this application to go forward would set precedence for other fields that would directly affect the amount of food produced in this country.

h: Flooding: The drainage of land that will no longer be maintained by farmers. Solar panel run off could lead to an increased flooding risk in the area. The area between the panels is to have chemicals applied to stop/control foliage. Councillor McKean has stated that in other areas heavy chemicals are used that affect the soil. The increased run off of water will leach the chemicals into nearby drains causing pollution and damage to surrounding areas

i: Future implication: Once this area of prime agricultural land is allowed to be reclassified it will be easy for developers to buy huge areas of farmland which should be protected. The purported use of the land between the solar panels cannot be used for agriculture – it is economically untenable

j: There are grave concerns about the economic viability of the project. Peterborough City Council are hiding under the cloak of Freedom of Information to suppress the purported economics of the project. Their own guidelines of Local Government transparency are not being followed

Woburn Estate development. In answer to questions from Councillor Bevington, Mr. Harding Group Manager – Development Management, Planning Services, Peterborough City Council replied:  
“1. Suitability of Woburn Drive. At the time of the site allocation first coming forward the principle of whether a development was looked at by highway officers and this did not identify that serving the existing and proposed developments from a single point of access would be unsafe. As an integral part of the consideration of any planning application, an assessment will be made of the suitability of the width and other characteristics of the existing highway to accommodate the additional traffic arising as a result of the proposed development. With Woburn Drive being an adopted Highway it is for the City Council to ensure that it is in a usable and safe condition and we could not reasonably refuse planning permission for development because of the fear of potential damage to the highway. Naturally, if highway officers consider that special measures are justified in order to safeguard the condition of the highway (which is not often the case) then these would be conditioned as part of any planning permission. It would not be appropriate for S106 monies to be used for road repairs as S106 should be spent on capital rather than revenue based projects.

2. Surface / Foul Drainage. Any planning application for the development would have to be submitted with a surface water disposal scheme. This would be assessed by the City Council’s dedicated

drainage officers. We currently have had no details of how the surface water would be dealt and we would not wish to speculate on what the options for dealing with the surface water might be. In terms of foul water disposal, Anglian Water has not indicated that there are any capacity issues in the locality”.

Repairs have been ongoing to the roofs of two of the DOB cottages between the Village Shop and the Chinese Takeaway - numbers 12 and 14.

It is believed that the cottages belong to Cross Keys. Complaints have been made about these works as to whether slate tiles of the correct material and/or size are being used. Peterborough City Council is investigating as approval may have been given in error.

Station Road site – owner now discussing with new developer

#### **225/13-14 Burial Authority**

Cremated remains units delivered awaiting installation

#### **226/13-14 Roads and Footpaths**

1. Street lighting – faults reported by Councillor Bartlett.
2. Village “walkabout” with Lee Moore 16 April. Councillors Bartlett, Brooks and Selby to attend
3. Much debris and rubbish on grass verges of old A47 east of Pigeons Farm. Also a triangular area where the gates have been stolen is now a target for fly tipping. Recent tree planting in this area by Highways Agency
4. French Drove towards Wryde Station – un-adopted lay-bys have much rubbish dumped that is now extending to ditch side
5. Wallace Drove and Scolding Drove – road surface very poor

#### **227/13-14 Allotments**

Access road to be levelled across field. Gate to be placed on barrier

#### **228/13-14 Village Matters**

#### **229/13-14 Correspondence**

Local Government Boundary Commission – to be discussed at meeting 17 April

Letter from Mr. Shuster concerning Park pavilion - to be discussed at meeting 17 April

Proposed Tenancy at Will, Tank Yard Bar extension – plan attached to document is marked incorrectly and a new plan requested

#### **230/13-14 Matters as agenda items for future consideration**

Partnership with Community Fund by Wind Farm Developers

#### **231/13-14 Any other business**

40mph signs now erected in French Drove

Pode Hole Quarry meeting Thursday 11 April at 5pm

#### **232/13-14 Date of next meeting**

Meeting of the Parish Council 13<sup>th</sup> May 2013.

The meeting closed at 9.21pm

