

ALCONBURY PARISH COUNCIL - PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 5th January 2011 in the Memorial Hall

Present:

Mr Senior, Mrs Adams Mrs Aylott, Mr Barnes, Mr Boyce, Mr Hardy, Mr Lay, Mr Pickering and Mr Watson and Mrs Williams. Mrs Sharp (Clerk). 1 Member of the public.

Public Forum

Nothing to report.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Mrs Elphick

Councillors' Interests

Mr Lay and Mr Boyce expressed a personal interest in item 124 as allotment holders.

New Planning Applications:

1001741FUL - Application for a 4 turbine Wind Farm at Woolley Hill.

Please note a vote will be taken by Parish Councillors in order to ascertain whether the Parish Council responds in favour of, or against the Wind Farm

The above planning application was discussed by councillors. Mr Senior read comments that he had received from councillors and these were discussed. Points taken into consideration included:

Much thought, time and consideration has been taken over this planning application and the Councillors would like their comments to be held on record.

- Green energy is essential to the community. Many people commented that they would much rather have 4 turbines than a large amount of pylons or a nuclear power plant appearing in the region.

- The turbines would only affect a very small proportion of properties on the very edge of the village.

- Out of approximately 1175 residents, only 15 came to the public meeting to voice their strong objection to the wind farm which is a very small percentage of the village.

- Many people disagreed with the arguments presented by the Wind Farm Action Group. This included that there would be an increase in the number of road traffic accidents.

- Some councillors also felt that the main argument against the Wind Farm was the visual impact on the local landscape and that this was not a sufficient argument to vote against green power which is so obviously required.

- The height of the turbines causes grave concerns. They are proposed to be extremely tall and maybe smaller turbines would get less opposition.

- Councillors expressed their sympathies for the houses and families who will be affected.

- There was concern as to whether or not the electricity sourced from the turbines could

realistically outweigh the costs involved.

Further to the comments above, Mr Watson commented that in his opinion the poor turnout at the public meeting should not be taken as evidence that the village supports the wind farm proposals, Those who had attended voiced strong concerns and opposition. He felt that the proposed turbines would have a significant impact on those residents living closest to them outside of the the main village. He also held more general concerns regarding the landscape impact and advised that as a result he could not support the application. Another councillor raised concern about the size of the turbines and queried whether or not smaller turbines would be better received.

After the short discussion had taken place, a secret ballot took place. All councillors voted whether they were in favour of the wind farm, against the wind farm or had no observations about the wind farm. 9 councillors voted, with the Chairman, Mr Senior, abstaining so that he could cast the deciding vote if necessary. Out of the 9 councillors voting, 6 were in favour of the Wind Farm, 2 were against and 1 had no observations.

Clerk minuted the result and agreed to send a response to HDC based on this, informing them that the Parish Council were voting in favour of the Wind Farm.

Cheques for Signature

£3995 - TMH Water Solutions - Cheque proposed by Mrs Williams and seconded by Mr Barnes.