

**MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF LITLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING  
MEETING HELD IN LITLINGTON VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 5<sup>th</sup> MAY 2015**

PRESENT: Cllr Pipe (Chairman), Cllr Wiltshire, Cllr Jones, Cllr Baker, Cllr Williams, Cllr Bathmaker, Cllr Sharp

District Cllr Cathcart, District Cllr McCraith

Mr Collins (REG Bio Power), Mr Allan Gulver (Finning Clean Power Contracting & Technologies)

Members of the Public: 75

### **7.30pm PLANNING MEETING**

**01. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Pledger, Cllr McClelland, Mrs Walmesley (Clerk)

**02. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS AND PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations made.

**03. OPEN FORUM**

3.1 Planning Application S/0400/15/FL –Highfield Farm

The Chairman introduced Mr Collins REG Bio Power and Allan Gulver – Manufacturer and builder of the plant.

Mr Collins explained to the meeting the process of acquiring and distilling waste catering oil which is then used to power generators for the production of Short Term Operating Reserve electrical power, the company currently have 4 plants doing this very successfully. The proposed installation in Litlington would be at low level and screened by the existing vegetation and include the refurbishment of the existing barn with a new sub station.

A Presentation pack was supplied for people to refer to by REG Bio Power

Mr Collins agreed to try and answer questions from the parishioners, as follows.

- Size of tankers coming to village-35,000 litre
- Cllr Sharp explained these will not be any worse than the lorries and tankards which travel through the village at this moment
- Lorries - How often -3 times every 2 weeks
- Operating hours 1.5/2 hours between 7.30am-10.30pm. maximum of 600 /year
- Local companies will be used in maintaining the site
- Can this increase in size- no limited by the planning department
- Junction and road from A505 to the Sub Station suitable for the tankards - will be explored by Highways when going to planning
- Tankers will travel 130 mile round trip
- National Grid will monitor station and regulate it and its permitted working hours.
- This site was chosen as it is located on a site which has an ideal grid connection for the South East England
- 8 generating engines on site
- Acceptable noise by their experts
- Acceptable pollution /Air quality by their experts

- Independent group of experts
- Environmental agency will be involved and have to monitor emissions
- Hazard plan organised around site
- Company is monitored 24/7 remote monitors

The Chairman then asked parishioners to vote on how they would like the Parish Council to respond to the consultation. A vote was taken which was firmly in favour of rejection of the proposal.

#### **04. TO AGREE RESPONSE TO FOLLOWING APPLICATION**

##### 4.1 Ref No. S/0400/15/FL

Highfield House, Highfield Farm, Royston Road –Installation of bio-fuelled power generation and refurbishment of existing barn and new sub-station

(REG Bio-Power)

The application had been discussed at great length under Item 3.1 during Open Forum.

Cllr Jones explained that in his view, the application should neither be rejected or accepted at the current time as there remained insufficient robust evidence about the noise and air pollution impact. He sought to remind those present that the Parish Council were considering this application on its individual merits, and that people needed to accept that the proposal to site the bio-fuel power plant here was a commercial decision as much as an environmental one. A site had become available, and in the view of RegBioFuel, it would be commercially viable to operate a plant from here. In his view, the conversation needed to shift from discussing why the plant should be here, to what the impact would be of it being here. So points about where the fuel was being transported from, the specific site location, the design and efficiency of the instalment, the grants and profits that RegBioFuel and others would make etc were largely irrelevant for planning purposes. To the extent that there were planning policies to be considered, SCDC Planning department would be considering them. Cllr Jones considered that many of the issues raised had been addressed by the applicants. The applicants had explained that the power plant could not be expanded beyond the proposed size due to capacity of the National Grid local infrastructure. And any plans to further extend would, of course, require an additional planning application (that could be refused). It was confirmed that no diesel was to be burned on site, and in the applicant's view, there would be no visual, noise or air pollution to local residents (although this should be explored by District Council specialists). Many of the arguments raised would apply to any renewable energy application on site. Cllr Jones did not consider the additional traffic (3 lorries every two weeks) would cause a specific problem to the local infrastructure, although he agreed SCDC Planning department/ Highways should consider the point specifically. He was however, keen that the Parish Council/ SCDC explore with RegBioFuel the scope for including as part of their application, the making of a financial contribution to the village in order for investment to be made in local community projects. This would serve as providing the village with some tangible benefit, to counter-balance the dis-benefits that were anticipated.

From the chair it was pointed out that, there being an excellent large connection to the National Grid, which are understood to be in short supply in the south of England, there would be continuing pressure to take advantage of this commercial opportunity. Those other possible proposals could very well be far more detrimental to the village than this current proposal. Villagers should not therefore be surprised if the District Council, working on planning regulation, should decide to accept the application.

After further discussion it was proposed by Cllr Bathmaker, seconded by Cllr Williams that the Parish Council recommend refusal with conditions. A vote was taken with four Councillors in agreement and two abstentions.

##### ***Recommendation Refusal***

- 1. Out of character with locale- currently a farmyard. Proposal would create an industrial facility in the middle of a field***
- 2. Loss of amenity of Clunch pit and surrounding tracks used by walkers and dog owners***
- 3. Decrease in air quality in local area- introduction of a facility producing greenhouse gas emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>, NO, benzene) where there is currently fresh air***
- 4. Concern over detrimental air quality and noise impact of installation***

*Should S Cambs district council choose to approve this application, the village of Litlington requests that the following conditions be met:*

- 1. Full, independent review of impact on air quality, noise on the locale to be published*
- 2. Confirmation that approval of this application does not set a precedent for further industrial development in this locale*
- 3. On going contribution to the community by REG BIO per their community page:*

*"REG strives to be a good neighbour to the communities surrounding our projects. We always aim to work closely with local stakeholders to ensure that communities hosting our renewable energy schemes share in the financial benefits"*

**05. OTHER**

There were no other issues raised.

There was no other business and the meeting was closed at 9.00pm

Chairman

Date