

19/02516/FUL – Twelve Acre Farm, Chilbridge Road, Eynsham

Nicky Brooks – South Leigh Parish Council

Nicky Brooks addressed members as the Chairman of South Leigh Parish Council. She advised that many questions had been raised regarding the application and the report did not provide enough information. For example, Condition 3 related to planting but no idea had been given as to a planting scheme - there was no plan. She also felt it was important that Members understood the height of the site geographically.

She raised concerns about the entrance onto the A40 – was this original, temporary or permanent? Also concerns had been raised about the development resulting in an urbanisation of rural space.

In summary, she did not feel there was enough detail provided and suggested delaying any decision until the next meeting when all reports would be available. With regard to Community Benefit, she felt there would be none for South Leigh and the parish were now against the development.

Lowlands Planning Committee – 10th February 2020

19/02516/FUL Aurora Solar Farm Application

Instinctively this is an application that we would like to support. Additional information has trickled in during the consultation period and we have already sent you an update on our original comments. However, there still remain four points on which we have concerns:-

1. A40. The proposed change to allow access to the site via the A40 are to be welcomed. However, we have little faith, based on our experience at Thornbury Green, that the left turn only will be enforced and fear that this condition will get slowly watered down.

It would seem to us that a physical barrier, say 50 yards each side of the entrance, will be required. We have seen various examples of how this could be achieved but we will then need to work out how lorries will not be able to turn in the two adjacent laybys, which would still mean right turns across this notorious stretch of the A40. We feel that this requires extra work by OCC and WODC before this application is approved, as again our experience of dealing with matters such as this after approval are not reassuring.

2. We have now seen pictures of the applicants proposed seven foot fence to protect the site, as requested by the Police. It appears to us that the fence will create a considerable eye sore at that height particularly as it appears that cameras or similar are to be installed.
3. Bio-diversity. We have read with interest the comments from the Officer involved. These initially appeared to make sense but our reading of the latest document appears to water down the concerns and not address the issues originally raised. We would certainly seek clarification on what is now proposed and feel that a detailed bio-diversity report should be prepared and submitted for consultation before approval is granted.
4. That brings us to the "Community Benefit". We have seen correspondence regarding this proposal which clearly is currently still being worked up. At present we do not see the proposal gives any certainty of community benefit and whilst this may eventually be achieved, at this stage we would wish to continue with our request under the normal Section 106 system. It is a great shame that this is all coming at the last moment but without a legal framework which looks someway off, our position remains as originally submitted to you and for the reasons stated.

At this stage we feel unable to give this application the support that it may well deserve. Too much information is still incomplete and we would have no faith in some of these matters being resolved after approval.

Thank you.

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Councillor Dan Levy – Local Member

Councillor Levy reminded Members of the Council's recent commitment to the Climate Emergency and how developing "green energies" was a positive move. He highlighted the high volume of development in and around Eynsham and listed the newly built and proposed sites for development in the area. He stated that bearing this level of development in mind, the population of Eynsham was due to double.

He felt strongly that this application would result in a loss of amenity space, green space and a well-used leisure facility. He raised a concern regarding "end of life" of the business and suggested that a condition should be considered to avoid the District Council having to pick up any resulting costs. He urged members to reject the application.

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James Hartley-Bond – obo applicant

Mr Hartley Bond addressed Members on behalf of the applicant and reminded them of the urgent need to tackle the climate emergency. It was accepted that there would be some visual impacts and further planting had been proposed to mitigate this. He advised that the fences would be constructed using post and wire and would be of a standard height.

With regard to the site access, the Childbridge Road access would be the site's permanent access and the A40 would be used temporarily for construction traffic. He had noted the concerns raised by speakers and the applicant was happy to restrict construction traffic to a left hand turn out of the site and would be installing temporary bollards down the centre of the road. The company managed 20% of similar sites across the country and believed in working for the benefit of local communities. He felt there would be a biodiversity net gain and the significant benefits of the development outweighed the concerns.

19/03242/HHD & 19/03243/LBC – Ivydene, Delly End, Hailey

Mr Peter Smith – obo applicant

Peter Smith addressed Members on behalf of the applicant and advised that there was an anomaly with the boundary. The cottage was small in size and had been extended over the years, cascading over the site, however, internally this had caused problems.

He explained the first plan which had included a stone parapet wall with the extension round the back.

They had now designed a lighter weight extension which was smaller in scale but lighter in materials. This would give the client a downstairs toilet, utility room and linked the kitchen and dining room.

19/03376/FUL – Land adjacent Westfield House, Bampton Road, Aston

Mr Stephen Broadley – obo applicant

Mr Broadley addressed Members on behalf of the applicant and reminded them that approval had previously been received for the erection of three houses to the rear of the site, leaving the area at the front redundant. The previous application had been withdrawn and newly submitted with improvements being made to the native hedgerow.