

ASHCHURCH RURAL PARISH COUNCIL

held on Monday 25th APRIL 2016 at 7.30pm at ASHCHURCH VILLAGE HALL

Present:- Cllr G Shurmer, Cllr D Cook, Cllr A Brown, Cllr J Hargreaves, Cllr D Garnett, Cllr B Cook, Cllr J Ward. Mrs C Reid (Clerk) County Cllr V Smith, 46 Parishioners and 5 visitors from neighbouring parishes

- 1 Public Participation - A maximum of 45 mins will be set aside for this item** – This well attended meeting allowed members of the public to express their concerns to application 16/00241/FUL. Many questions were asked and a series of concerns were discussed. Mainly road safety and traffic issues. 'Save our Lanes' petition group presented the attached report. The proposed traffic (tractors) were to on average make 17,000 vehicle movements per year and too large for two vehicles to pass in the narrow lanes. The application had insufficient traffic data which was gained during autumn school holidays (which is well known traffic is less) and would only report on vehicle movements and not include cyclists and pedestrians who regularly use the lanes. Concern was also for the concentration of vehicle emissions to residents of the lane as well as surrounding hedgerows, vegetation and wildlife. Parishioner advised that their application in 2014 for 10 stables for horses had been refused to the increase of traffic. What will happen during times of flood? The proposed site is only 1.5m above the water table. Concern was also for residents of Walton Cardiff safety who use this lane as an exit to the village in times of flood which can be for 2-3 weeks at a time. Concern for light pollution, there is currently no artificial light in that area at all.
- 2 To receive apologies:-** TBC Planning/Case Officer, Mr Ciaran Power (Declined) GCC Highways Officer Mr Oliver Eden (Declined), Borough Cllr J Hesketh
- 3 Declarations of interest** – There were no declarations of interest, however Cllr J Hargreaves would not take part in the ARPC decision to application 16/00241/FUL
- 4 To agree and confirm the minutes of the last planning meeting** – The minutes of the planning meeting held on 29th February 2016 were agreed by all and signed as a true record.
- 5 Planning:- To discuss the following applications.**

NEW APPLICATION – 16/00241/FUL - Erection of biomass-based anaerobic digestion facility and associated works. - Land Parcels 7946 And 9067, 300087 **Walton Cardiff Road To Fiddington Lane** – Discussion took place and concern was for traffic size and volume giving detrimental impact to residents and users, including impact to surrounding roads and A46 which is well known to be gridlocked at least twice a day, Lack of traffic data (which also does not include the permitted garden Centre application or cyclists, pedestrians or Horses), Visibility splays – ARPC had drawings of the splays and it was agreed to submit these with the ARPC response, Lack of Environmental Statement, Flooding, both surface and the potential of pollution, Health implications and Impact on wildlife.

It was agreed to **OBJECT** to this application and submit the following:-

It was agreed by all at the ARPC Planning Meeting that the impact on the rural location, including the harm to the landscape, the impact on all of the adjacent resident properties in the area, flooding, and the impact on local wildlife to this greenfield site, would be significant and highly detrimental.

The development is too large and out of scale with the surrounding countryside location, and would have a serious and negative visual impact upon to the immediate locality and wider area. Increased heavy vehicle traffic would inevitably result in an increased hazard and likely to be dangerous to those who already live and run businesses in the area and other road users, whether that be vehicular, equine, those who use pedal cycles or are pedestrians. - There would be a serious impact on the road surface, verges and neighbouring properties. - Based on evidence from other sites, serious impact from odour, noise and lighting resulting from the development, is highly likely.

Vehicular Access to and from the site

The proposed access to the site and surrounding highway network is not designed to accommodate the type of traffic that is likely to be generated by the development and would cause significant detriment to the character of the area, the amenity of nearby occupiers, or highway safety.

The road itself has a 'unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles' sign and is mostly single track. - The types of vehicles and trailers proposed are thought to weigh around 31 tonnes and are likely to be of such a size that two could not pass within the lanes or individually would cause an unnecessary and unsafe obstruction when waiting or turning from Fiddington Lane into Walton Cardiff Lane to access the site. Should the vehicles be smaller, the inevitable consequence would be a higher number of journeys to and from the development than those estimated in the data provided by the applicant.

The surrounding area is rural with narrow roads with a number of 90 degree sharp blind bends coming from the A46 and approx 5 x 90 degree sharp blind bends from the A38. Both routes have no respite or passing bays, no footway, and, even now, will not in most places accommodate 2 passing tractors without impinging onto the verges. This Ecotricity proposal is forecasting up to 90 tractors and trailers per day, which is on average one every 7 minutes. ARPC have serious concern of how these lanes will be negotiated with the size and volume of traffic proposed. This will severely affect any leisure activities en route, an area that is well used recreationally by horse riders, cyclists, runners and walkers. This development will grossly impact and have a detrimental effect on the road and the residents. ARPC have concern regarding the safety and volume of traffic for other road users. It is also well known the A46 is gridlocked at Ashchurch at least twice a day and this will inevitably have an affect on the proposed frequency of deliveries and collections predicted by the applicant and the route's chosen by those delivering and collecting, causing tractor convoys to and from the site.

The Junctions at the Odessa and A46 Ashchurch are not suitable for turning into or out of with 12.5m long vehicles and can be dangerous for the drivers of regularly sized vehicles when turning east towards Ashchurch from Fiddington Lane onto the A46, let alone slow moving tractors and loads. There is also insufficient space for tractors and trailers to 'stack' on the A46 when seeking to turn left into Fiddington Lane from the A46 when travelling from the west (J9 M5).

ARPC would like to inform that the traffic survey presented with the application took place on a week of school holidays where it is known nationwide that traffic movements in general are less. The traffic data does not include cycles, horses or pedestrians.

The visibility splays on junctions are also of concern for the size and volume of traffic proposed - the vehicles proposed by Ecotricity are around 12.5m long so exiting these junctions means visibility is essential to avoid incident. (professional drawings attached illustrating inadequate junction splays)

ARPC is concerned that traffic from Walton Cardiff village, (which is often flooded for sometimes up to 2-3 weeks at a time, causing access from A438, Newtown, to become impossible and is, thereby, forced to gain access or egress through Fiddington Lane), will be unnecessarily inconvenienced and endangered by delivery and collection traffic entering and leaving the site.

Environmental Impact

ARPC is disappointed there is no Environmental Impact Statement and would like to question why that is when one has been required for similar developments and schemes of a lesser impact and size and which are located in a less sensitive environment within the Tewkesbury Borough area and other locations throughout the Country?

ARPC has concerns for health implications related to this site. The area will be on average from the proposed figures receiving tractor deliveries every 7 minutes, what affect will these, (most probably diesel) emissions have on the health of the residents, recreational users of the lanes, animals, plants and hedgerows etc?

ARPC would like to advise that this land/area floods. - ARPC is concerned about the potential pollution into local water courses and eventually, the Severn, from effluent, (silage) if flooding occurs, especially because the applicant is proposing to sink the digesters and tanks into the ground by 3 metres below the present surface when the water table locally sits at 1.5 metres or the tank/pond to hold excess liquids for release into the water courses in due time, is over-topped.

ARPC has concerns for local wildlife including the increased danger to deer in the area and the disruption or destruction of the bat colonies and great crested newts living in the direct area of the site and nearby. Great Crested Newts are a European Protected Species. ARPC inform that the bat survey was carried out during the hibernation period.

Wider Implications

ARPC would like to remind interested parties to this application, that the Retail Park and Garden Centre at Ashchurch (application 13/01003/OUT) has been permitted in principle. This information, it's likely impact on the area, the proposed change of the layout of Fiddington Lane and consequent access onto the A46, has not been mentioned in the application.

Ecotricity advise that traffic to the site will be from a 15km radius, Ecotricity advise they are unable at this stage to disclose the location of their potential customers, which would provide ARPC with an indication of where the deliveries were travelling from (and to whence) and allow consideration to be given in relation to the impact of such traffic upon the routes likely to be taken.

ARPC feel that this failure to disclose information, (which cannot be commercially damaging to the company as there is no competition), is unacceptable, however, as this information has not been made available, one could envisage significant disruption and increased pollution to Tewkesbury High Street should deliveries need to be brought from further afield to the north of the Town Centre, perhaps every 7 minutes during working hours. Deliveries could come from anywhere within a 15km radius of the site and therefore Tewkesbury and the surrounding area will not be immune from such impact. Furthermore, however one might 'average out' the journeys, it is a fact that farmers will only cut and deliver in good weather, which will increase the likelihood of many attending the site at the same time.

ARPC believe this proposal is 'hiding' behind the idea it is a green initiative. ARPC believe it is merely a commercial enterprise that will have a detrimental effect upon the availability of animal feedstock in the area, especially for winter, when those who require it for their animals will need to 'ship in' hay and other materials from outside the area, creating further additional vehicle movements unrelated to this enterprise. There will also be increased pollution from the vehicle movements relating to diesel emissions of the vehicles delivering and collecting from the site, an additional cost to farmers who will need to fuel their vehicles with conventional rather than 'red' diesel to allow them to lawfully engage in this enterprise, which will be commercial rather than agricultural, (there also may also be increased costs in relation to farmers' insurance and vehicle excise), and the local council tax payer will be required to 'pick up the bill' for the increased road surface damage to the highways and bye-ways, caused by this additional traffic movement.

Conclusion

ARPC believe that Fiddington is wholly the wrong location for this type of operation and enterprise, which amounts to no more and no less than a factory operation within the countryside, which is unable to properly operate due to the lack of a surrounding safe and suitable road network.

NEW APPLICATION - 16/00355/FUL - Detailed application to vary the alignment of the approved Wheatpieces Southern link Road (amendment to previous application **05/00164/FUL**). - Part Parcel 3400, Columbine Road, **WALTON CARDIFF** – It was agreed by all **NO OBJECTIONS**

NEW APPLICATION 16/00245/OUT - Demolition of existing workshop building and erection of 1 no. detached dwelling and garage, with all matters reserved for future consideration except for access

- Natton Turn Workshop, **NATTON**, Ashchurch – It was agreed by all that ARPC **OBJECT** to this application due to concern for the access route which is known to flood. ARPC request that if development does take place it must be on the exact same footprint.

NEW APPLICATION 16/00314/FUL - Change of use of land from agricultural use to domestic use, provision of vehicular driveway and alterations to vehicular access and associated landscaping and boundary treatments - Chapel Farm, Walton Cardiff Lane, **WALTON CARDIFF** – It was agreed by all to **OBJECT** to this application - ARPC have no concerns with change of use, but ARPC **OBJECT** to this application due to access road and visibility. Traffic approaching from Brook Cottage side may not be visible due to lack of visibility and visibility splay making the access a danger.

6 Date of Next Meeting - Monday 23rd May 2016