

EASTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Email: eastingtonparishcouncil@gmail.com

Minutes of the meeting held on 9th February 2016 at 7.00pm in Eastington Methodist Hall

- 1 Attendance and apologies for absence** In attendance Cllrs Bullock (Chair), Corrie, Simmons, Bomberg, and Loveridge. There were 39 members of the public. Apologies were received from Cllrs Allen, Evans and Edis-Bates. Also present: County Councillor Lesley Williams, District Councillor Stephen Davies; and representatives of Ecotricity and Forest Green Rovers. Absent: Cllr Cozens.
- 2 Declarations of interest in items on the agenda.** None.
- 3 Chairman's Announcements.** None.
- 4 Approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2016.** RESOLVED to accept the minutes of 12th January 2016.
- 5 To review outstanding actions from previous meeting.** Item 10.6 from 10th November 2015 (councillor briefing on the Solar Farm Fund) still to be completed.
- 6 To consider changes to the order of business.** None.

The meeting was adjourned at this point for Ecotricity to give a presentation on planning and transport proposals and for members of the public to address the meeting.

Questions raised by the Public:

Q. Why does the simulation not show the traffic backing up to the motorway?

A. The simulation shows the WoS improvements in place which is a dualled carriageway.

Q. No surveys east of Chipman's Platt? Simulation assumes that traffic flows from Chipman's Platt are unbroken, but it backs up all the way to Stroud.

A. Simulation shows the County Council's SEP improvements to the junctions.

Q. The Atkins report on transport says that the Cainscross Roundabout needs to be improved for improvements to be realised at the other roundabouts.

A. Through this area traffic will run better than it does at the moment.

Q. Saturated road during peak hours already, how will it cope with an additional 1000 car journeys?

A. Our model doesn't go beyond Chipman's Platt.

Q. The point is we have a big bath being filled with 3 taps and only one plughole, there is more water piling in but it can't get out.

A. That's why the County Council has its own SEP scheme.

Q. What plans put in place to prevent excess run-off water affecting the lower areas?

A. The development is going to have SuDS, it will have drainage filtering throughout the development ensuring no extra pressure on the surrounding area.

Q. Have the surveyors visited the area and taken note of the water lying on the ground?

A. Not certain.

Q. Would like to see how they arrived at the survey point; land is designed as a soakaway and any excess water will become run-off.

A. Water drainage within the development is designed as a soakaway, so that the development water soaks away on site.

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Q. Will the drainage scheme be better than natural grassland?

A. Potentially bits of it will be; it's a mixture of swales and other systems.

Q. At the drop-in event at the village hall, Ecotricity representatives asked people to think about having the sports facilities otherwise housing will be built there; is it a strategy of Ecotricity to scare-monger?

A. Not a strategy.

Q. How is this Eco friendly? Why is the water not being recycled into the development? What is happening about the sewerage side?

A. Business Park will be constructed to high sustainable standards, re-using grey water, water capture facilities, ponds as part of the SuDs and dual purpose to attract wildlife. Sewerage will be connected to the mains drainage. But Ecotricity may look at alternatives, this will be directed by the statutory undertakers (Severn Trent Water).

Q. Why weren't there any Ecotricity people at the Local Plan Examination in Public? Why not bring it forward before? Why do you think an inspector wouldn't throw it out because of the Local Plan.

A. This is a relatively new proposal that has come forward fairly quickly.

Q. Nothing that has been said is in the Local Plan. The Local Plan allocates 58Ha of business land which the Inspector said is very ambitious but achievable by 2031.

A. Earliest the stadium could be built is within 3-5 years; the eco park will also take some time. Forest Green Rovers is looking to the future.

Q. At what point were Ecotricity going to discuss with Eastington NDP?

A. We're here now.

Q. Are you going to invite a meeting and adjust the plans in light of what the parish working groups say?

A. We are listening to the feedback in the consultations. We're happy to meet with groups if that's constructive but the scheme is not going to be withdrawn. (The Parish Council will take this forward.)

Q. On the subject of traffic, how much thought has been given to Grove Lane becoming a rat run? Also, with the traffic light control junction at Claypits.

A. People tend to look for the quickest way through; Ecotricity believe that dualling the section of A419 will make it more attractive along with changes to Grove Lane priority at WoS. The developer is open to traffic calming through Grove Lane and Ecotricity willing to put in traffic calming through Eastington.

Q. When the WoS application was discussed at SDC, there was a 30mph limit proposed from the new junction on Grove Lane to the motorway bridge. Suggested this should be extended to Whitminster cross-roads but this wasn't taken up by County Highways, request that Ecotricity look at this.

Q. Warehousing and distribution uses for Eco Park which expands hours of operation; also the traffic simulation does not seem to reflect this. Why has Ecotricity included those businesses that don't fit in with their ethos? Noise assessment deemed broadly acceptable based purely on the sports centre activities. This won't be short periods of noise, it will be persistent periods. Impact assessment doesn't seem to reflect that.

A. EIA has to make assumptions at the outline stage which then feed into the transport model. If Outline permission granted then this will be gone into in more detail. There are wide bands of no noise (bunds, landscaping etc). The heights of the proposed buildings will also restrict the types of businesses.

Q. Could Ecotricity make a commitment to expand their transport study to beyond Chipman's Platt?

A. If the advice from traffic consultant, then we will do this. But only based on need for the application.

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Q. Are Highways supporting the proposals? Is the Environment Agency happy with modelling? Football match overflow parking on the Eco-Park, is there a footbridge over the A419?

A. Highways Authorities have not yet expressed a view. The EA has been consulted. All the built development is within Flood Zone 1. Traffic signals rather than bridge or subway. From experience people do not use bridges or subways, they take quickest option therefore traffic signals and islands will ensure a safe route.

Q. It is proposed that 4000 people will be working on Eco Park at full capacity. How many car parking spaces on the business side?

A. Refer to Transport Assessment but complies with Government's parking standards.

Q. The historic employment growth in Stroud is about 200 jobs per year, SDC said 600 jobs per year to justify employment land allocations in the Local Plan. Ecotricity is saying employment will be 900 jobs per year with 50% estimated to be commuters. How have Ecotricity come to the conclusion that jobs are growing faster?

A. Based on a report from Hunter Page Planning; it highlights that there is going to be a massive shortfall because the allocated employment sites are not going to come forward during the Local Plan period.

Q. But you're suggesting the growth in jobs is going up 400%

A. Ecotricity is working on supplementing the HPP report with a Needs Assessment to show a demand for this type of employment in this location.

Q. This development relies so heavily on the motorcar, where is the sustainable transport? Why not regenerate existing brownfield sites where services and infrastructure already in place?

A. There will be sustainable transport with a park and ride hub and cycleways into Stroud.

Q. We have traffic calming and we still have a problem with speeding cars. The only option is enforcement with cameras.

A. The right traffic calming is self-enforcing.

Q. No innovative solutions. Where is the eco bit of this Eco Park?

A. There are several mentions in the Environment Statement of the measures that will be included in the planning application but don't yet know the details for the outline application.

Q. Most modern buildings have to be built to those standards anyway, can they not be more Eco?

A. It's all in the Environment Statement confirming the commitments that Ecotricity will be making in the Reserved matters applications.

Q. Why choose to develop a green field site rather than brownfield sites around Stroud?

A. Ecotricity has been trying to buy brownfield sites for a number of years. Many brownfield sites looked at are highly constrained, and due to environmental changes are no longer available for this type of development. SDC set aside £5m to look at how brownfield sites could be released for future development, but this study needs to be completed before the sites can come forward.

Q. Site SA1 in the Local Plan would be suitable for this development and has good public transport links. Ecotricity should provide evidence of why it hasn't looked at other sites.

Q. At the drop in event at the village hall exhibition it showed that traffic flow from the Shell roundabout to M5 junction would be improved by the dual carriageway. Please explain the decision making process and logic of the traffic lights?

A. Still discussing with Highways England whether such method of control at the motorway junction is

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going to be required. Currently in the model, where the traffic queues at the new eco park junction start to back-up to the motorway junction it releases the traffic through to prevent it backing up.

Q. Anyone can see Ecotricity will want 1000 or 2000 additional parking spaces, which area will be bulldozed to make way for additional car parking?

A. Parking area will be dependent on size and nature of the business units.

Q. Parking on stadium site being used for park and ride, what happens on match day?

A. Park & ride facility will still be available with 150-200 car parking spaces set aside.

Q. Won't there be a conflict on Saturdays?

A. Most people use park and ride for commuter trips, not so much for shopping trips.

Q. Along with Employment growth Ecotricity say that match attendance figures will be 5000, where are these people all coming for? Isn't this a big gamble?

A. 2000 currently attend, but if Forest Green Rovers go up to Division 2 it will draw a bigger crowd. Historically the crowd has grown quite quickly.

Q. Are you going to supplement with concerts?

A. No, it's a football stadium

Q. Is Forest Green Rovers likely to change its name to reflect new location?

A. No, 20 years ago it changed to Stroud FC and was a mistake.

Q. What happens if Ecotricity walk off into the sunset with their £5m deficit?

A. Ecotricity is a Stroud-based company and not the type of business that could be off-shored. It is a local company.

Q. What if you drop down the league?

A. Some supporters do get put off because of problems with parking and access. On a busy match Saturday, own supporters will have to park in the industrial parks and be bussed in if needed. Cannot sustain the club in Forest Green. Every team is subsidised to a certain extent.

The Chair drew this section of the meeting to a stop, and asked if anyone wanted to be involved in a small group that meets with the NDP group and Ecotricity to leave names and contact details.

The Clerk read out the exit poll figures from drop-in event. 150 responses recorded of which 124 residents and 26 non-residents. In total 117 not in favour of the proposals, 23 in favour, 10 didn't know.

District Councillor's Report: The West of Stonehouse outline planning application approved and transport plan agreed. The outline plan didn't decide the width of the landscape buffer zones, there will be zones but doesn't decide how wide. It also didn't say anything about the design of the buildings; this is to be covered in Reserved matters. There is land for a health facility, and land for an access bridge to Stonehouse (but no money to build it). Drainage continues to be a discussion. Detailed plans will come back to DCC.

The new waste collection process is starting. The budget for 2016/17 agreed with SDC Council Tax set to increase by 1.99%

Mr Low asked who would be paying for £4.5million transport improvements on the A419? Cllr Davies responded that money will come from the developer Hitchins to accelerate the scheme and refunded back

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from LEP.

County Councillor's Report: Cllr Williams remains concerned that there are no links between the WoS development and Stonehouse and was disappointed that SDC has not been more dogmatic about resolving this. Cllr Williams also expressed concern that the Planning Officer did not sound impartial. GCC budget meeting next week, it's looking like it could be 1.99% council tax and 2% levy for adult services. There are cuts of considerable measure, for example £2.5m out of Highways budget.

Cllr Bullock noted that there have been lots of complaints received by the Parish on the state of roads. Cllr Williams suggests we write to Mark Hawthorne leader of the county council. Unless it's a safety defective it won't be addressed. Cllr Vernon Smith is the cabinet member for highways. Also suggest use of social media to report issues.

7 Receive analysis of the exit poll from the Ecotricity drop-in event 4th February and decide on public meeting – already covered under item 6.

8 The Council considered the following planning application:

S.16/0117/FUL – Millend Mill – split pair of approved semi-detached houses into two detached cottages. The Chair invited comments from Mr Low and Mr Jones. The plan shows a car parking layout that hasn't been implemented. The footpath hasn't been put in place either as part of the planning conditions. There is no objection to the splitting of the semi-detached houses but should be subject to the original planning conditions. There was also concern raised that the 9th car parking space has been sold with the house next door which means the parking conditions cannot be met. The Chair suggested that the Council now refer for enforcement; the Clerk noted that this has already been requested therefore it will be followed up and escalated to John Longmuir.

Mr Low also mentioned that the house that is being built on the lane is proposing to cut down the Elm tree which is protected as it is in a Conservation area. Mr Low requested that the Parish Council find out if it can take a legal case against the person planning to cut down the tree.

Action: Clerk to make enquiries.

9 Groups

9.1 The Council received a report from the Resources Committee circulated prior to the meeting.

9.2 The Council received the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 26th January for information.

10 Finance

10.1 The Clerk circulated an update on 2015/16 budget versus spend, and bank reconciliation.

10.2 Council RESOLVED to pay the Clerk's expenses for January 2016 at £85.73 and these will be paid with the February payroll.

10.3 The Council approved the accounts for payment, schedule circulated prior to meeting:

Payee	Details	Chq No	Amount	Budget
Salaries & Expenses	December 2015 Expenses agreed 12/01/16 processed through Payroll plus January 2016 Salary	1701	£1374.13	Parish Admin
Post Office Ltd	PAYE & NI payments to HMRC for January 2016	1702	£353.86	Parish Admin
Zeta Printing Services	NDP Printing for Public Consultation	1703	£159.00	NDP
Veale Wasbrough Vizards LLP	Faculty for tree work at Churchyard	1704	£254.40	Burial Ground

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Troy Hayes Planning Ltd	Basic Conditions Statement for NDP	1705	£840.00	NDP
Eastington Methodist Church	Council meeting room hire – January 2016	1706	£22.50	Parish Admin
NEST	Pensions for January 2016	DD (20/01/16)	£127.33	Parish Admin
Vodafone	Parish Mobile	DD (12/01/16)	£48.99	Parish Admin
		TOTAL	£3180.21	

10.4 The Council noted the Clerk's timesheet for January 2016.

10.5 The Council noted that a planning consultant has been contracted to prepare written representation on the Ecotricity planning proposals at a cost of £2050+VAT (as per Council's decision 8/9/15) and agreed to the inclusion of a site visit and meeting with transport consultants at a further cost of £500+VAT. **Action: Clerk.**

Cllr Bomberg noted that he didn't get the opportunity ask questions of Ecotricity during the public session and would like a further public meeting be held. It has been agreed that a small working group of residents and NDP will meet with Ecotricity to explore matters further. Once results of our Planning Consultant and Traffic Consultants' work are known the Parish Council could hold a public meeting so that we could feedback our findings.

Cllr Bomberg raised concern about Ecotricity's publicity and saying things like "if it's not this, it'll be housing" and "the development will create up to 4000 jobs"; it is not job creation, it is relocation. Cllr Bomberg suggests the Parish Council write to Ecotricity and request this be removed from their publicity. Another suggestion would be for the Parish Council to issue a press statement; this was agreed. **Action: Clerk** to gather evidence to support a press statement regarding transport etc.

11 Correspondence

11.1 Council received a list of correspondence received since the last meeting for information.

Any other business for the next meeting.

Alkerton Cross ownership/safety.
Village Fete.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Notice: The next meeting of Eastington Parish Council will be on Tuesday 8th March 2016. Anybody with an item they wish to bring to the attention of the Council, should forward details, in writing, to the Clerk to the Parish Council, no later than Monday 29th February 2016.

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