



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON Wednesday 9th September 2015 at THE CHILTERN CONSERVATION BOARD OFFICE, STATION ROAD, CHINNOR, COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.22 PM

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Member	Appointing Body
Appointed by Local Authorities	
Cllr Lynn Lloyd	South Oxfordshire District Council
Cllr Nick Rose	Chiltern District Council

Appointed by the Secretary of State	
Gill Gowing	Secretary of State, Chair
Helen Tuffs	Secretary of State
Elizabeth Wilson	Secretary of State

Elected by Parish Councils	
Cllr Tony Penn	Buckinghamshire

Others present-	
Lucy Murfett	CCB Planning Officer
Mike Stubbs	Planning Advisor for the CCB
Others	
Deirdre Hansen	Minute taker

210. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs David Barnard (North Herts District Council) and David Collins (Dacorum District Council)

211. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

212. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held 30th July 2015 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman after the following amendments were made:

- 206.2: 2nd sentence, a major development site was changed to a major “*developed*” site.
- 206.3: at the start of the sentence “*The developer argued that*” was added.
- 207: Cllr Lynn Lloyd was changed to “*the Planning Officer*”
- 208. “*and Heathrow airport* “ was added to the sentence.

213. Matters Arising from the minutes

- Re 200- 190.i. Events: The Planning Officer reported that 22nd October had been set for the Planning Forum at the Board’s offices in Chinnor. Depending on the take up the location may need to be changed.
- Re 206- the decision on the Molins Planning Application has been deferred again. The Board has been invited to a public meeting of the WDC Task and Finish Group on 7th October at the Clare Foundation about the site.
- Re 207- Crowmarsh Gifford. The Chair reported that the Planning Officer had drafted an excellent letter of comment, which has been sent.

214. Public Question time

No members of the public were present.

215. High Speed 2 update

The Planning Officer provided a detailed report updating the Committee about the latest developments regarding HS2 and the Select Committee (SC) hearings.

1. The Chairman of the SC made a statement on 21st July informing that in the SC’s view the case for a long tunnel was not made out and the northern extension of the South Heath green tunnel had yet to be agreed, this had been noted at the previous Planning Committee meeting.
2. The CCB and the other statutory bodies had written to the Chairman of the SC asking for a more detailed statement setting out the basis for the conclusions reached in the statement. A negative response had been received.
3. The SC statement has implications for the Board in terms of what HS2 will publish and any supplementary ES consultation.
4. The Board is provisionally scheduled to appear on 29th October on non-tunnel mitigation. Further Additional Provisions and an Environmental Statement are now expected in relation the changes announced (if agreed). This could result in the Board and Local Authorities submitting a further petition. The above letter also made a request for deferral of any further SC appearances until after submission of further petitions. The response from the Chair, Robert Symes, does not appear to agree to this.
5. A meeting was held 5th August with local groups, who have presented to the SC in favour of the Chiltern Long Tunnel and a number of local actions were agreed. Nick

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Rose further reported on the meeting, the thoughts discussed and other subsequent information that is emerging. The SC process was briefly discussed.

6. Nick Rose would undertake to get more information on;
 - Inclusion of the Board in the design group; it had been agreed that there would be local consultation on the design of buildings relating to HS2;
 - Mitigation that goes beyond the Bill;
 - Including the Board in the ministerial roundtable discussions and
 - That the Community Mitigation fund of £30m is not enough for all the mitigation that HS2 is promising.

The Chair thanked Nick Rose for his report.

7. The Board had met with HS2 on 11th August to discuss non-tunnel mitigation and other matters.

The Committee discussed the above points and some of the wider HS2 issues.

1. The Committee NOTED the update.

216. Great Western Mainline Rail Electrification

The Planning Officer gave a presentation to the Committee on a substantial project being undertaken by Network Rail to electrify the Great Western Mainline, part of which runs through the Chilterns AONB.

1. The installation work of the electrification was started in the spring and is progressing. Much of the work is being carried out under permitted development rights; some of the work to bridges requires a prior notification process/permission. This means that the use of planning conditions to safeguard and mitigate have not been applied in the normal way.
2. The Reading to Didcot stretch of the railway line is being used as a test track, running through the AONB.
3. The issue is whether the design conserves and enhances the natural beauty of the AONBs, to what extent Network Rail has considered the AONB as part of the specification and design process, and whether Network Rail has breached its duty under S85 of the CROW Act. In particular:
 - Its failure to test alternative designs
 - Its failure to consult with the CCB over detailed designs
 - Its failure to mitigate harm to AONB landscape on or off site.
4. Network Rail Environmental Statement has already concluded that “significant effects would be generated by the permanent presence of additional infrastructure”.
5. The installation of electrification will not only affect the Chilterns AONB, but also the North Downs and the Cotswolds AONBs.
6. The Board has written to Network Rail expressing its concerns, asking for the equipment to be removed and replaced, and the Planning Officer is setting up a meeting with Network Rail.

The Committee discussed the issues, looked at alternative designs and mitigation and provided a steer to the Planning Officer.

The Chair commended the Planning Officer for picking up on this issue. The Planning Officer was advised to contact the National Trust, Natural England, Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council. Off-site mitigation needs looking into.

- 1. The Committee NOTED the report and provided steer on next steps including approach to mitigation.**

217. Undergrounding of Overhead Electricity Wires-Turville example

The Planning Advisor informed the Committee about attempts to resolve a current issue at Turville about the planned location of a switching station and to learn lessons for future undergrounding projects. The Committee was provided with a powerpoint presentation of the visual impact and location of the switching station.

1. The previous Planning Officer had been fully engaged and supportive of the work to underground overhead electricity transmission lines in protective landscapes. This could bring significant landscape improvements for AONBs and represents a valuable opportunity.
2. There are some trade-off to consider when undergrounding wires, such as the need for installing an above ground switching station, to excavate a trench for the underground wires and disturbances to communities and habitats.
3. The previous Planning Officer had supported a location for the switching station, which had raised concerns with the Parish Council and some local residents.
4. An alternative location had been offered, which the Committee was asked to consider. The alternative location is at the rear of Turfelde Lane and faces open countryside next to a permissive right of way footpath, just outside the conservation area.
5. Scottish and Southern Energy, who are running the project, have confirmed that they propose a close boarded dark stained fencing enclosure for the switching station and will agree to suitable hedgerow planting.
6. Whilst the new location is more prominent, it would be very modest in size and with planting would be readily shielded from any wider visual impacts.
7. Were the Committee in agreement with the new location for the switching station SSE will progress further discussion with the parish council and community. The wider benefits of taking overhead lines out of the landscape provide a strong rationale for the Board to support this scheme. Removing the visual clutter of these lines enhances the relationship between Turville and the AONB.
8. Useful lessons for future project about assessing positive and negative impacts of undergrounding and making sure the community is fully consulted and engaged have emerged.

The Committee discussed the revised proposal, the wider benefits to the AONB and community engagement issues that had come forward.

- 1. The Committee AGREED that they were content with the new location for the switching station, subject to appropriate planting and dark staining of the close boarded fencing.**

218. AONB Management Plan-LPA endorsement

The Planning Officer updated the Committee about which Local Planning Authorities had endorsed the Chilterns AONB Management Plan as a material consideration in the exercise of their planning powers.

1. In December 2014 all thirteen planning authorities were asked to endorse the Chilterns AONB Management plan 2014-19.
2. To date Chilterns District Council and Dacorum Borough Council have endorsed the Management Plan. South Oxfordshire District Council are in the process of doing so.
3. Wycombe District Council determined on 27th July to acknowledge the Management Plan. The CCB have asked WDC to reconsider.
4. Arrangements have been set up for a CCB Planning Forum on 22nd October for officer representatives from all local planning authorities.
5. A training session for WDC Planning Officers has been arranged for 23rd September.

The Committee discussed the best way to progress the endorsement of the Chilterns AONB Management Plan. Raising the matter at the Planning Forum and at individual training sessions was considered. Local Authorities duty to co-operate was considered.

- 1. The Committee discussed the best way to progress the issue of endorsement of the Chiltern AONB Management Plan and provided a steer for the Planning Officer.**

219. Development Plan Responses

The Planning Officer informed the Committee that no deadlines had fallen since the last Planning Committee meeting on 30th July and no responses had been sent in connection with the public consultation exercises on development plan documents.

- 1. The Committee NOTED that no responses had been sent.**

220. Planning Applications Update

The Planning Advisor informed the Committee about and sought approval for, the responses that have been made under delegated powers in connection with planning applications as detailed in the appendix to the agenda

1. Since the last Planning Committee meeting 30th July 2015 the Board has made 10 formal representations on planning applications of which 4 were objections and 6 were a comment.

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2. A suggestion was tabled for a change to the format of presentation of the planning applications listed with the agenda. The current layout is not easily compatible with tablet layout. Following brief discussion the Planning Advisor could implement the suggested changes.

The responses were discussed and where available updates were provided.

1. **The Committee NOTED and APPROVED the responses made in connection with the applications as listed.**

221. Any Urgent Business

- The Planning Officer asked the Committee if the use of asbestos waste for infill was a planning matter for the CCB. The Chair commented that any impact on the aquifer would be a CCB issue, but otherwise it was a safeguarding issue.
- Reminder that the 50th Anniversary will be celebrated on 25th November.

222. Date of the next meeting Wednesday 2nd December 2015, 10.00am at the Lodge, 90 Station Road, Chinnor OX39 4HA.

The Chairman.....Gill Gowing.....

Date...02/12/2015