

DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of Dodford with Grafton Planning Committee held on 2 October 2023 at 7.30pm in Dodford Village Hall, Priory Road

Present: Cllrs Rachel Jennings (Chair), Rory Lydon (Vice Chairman), Scottie Sanderson and Jonathan Shapiro

In attendance – Clerk Kay Stone and 15 residents

1. Apologies for absence

County Cllr Shirley Webb
Cllr Lynne Griffiths
Cllr Scott Fuller
Cllr Jenni Schuett

2. Declarations of interest

- i. None
- ii. None

The meeting was adjourned to allow members of the public attending the meeting to speak on the following planning application.

Cllr Jennings wished it to be included in the minutes that she appreciated the Clerk's efforts in ensuring the Parish Council had received the most relevant planning documents. The Clerk had also sent the Parish Council all comments from the Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) website and comments she had received by email.

Residents addressed the Parish Council comprehensively with their concerns about safety, health, and noise issues, not only during the set-up process for the Solar Farm but also the ongoing issues. One resident addressed the Parish Council who was in favour of the Solar Farm.

The meeting continued as follows:

3. To consider planning application consultation:

23/00896/FUL – Foxwalks Farm, Grafton Lane – Proposed solar farm development comprising solar arrays, equipment housing, sub-station, fencing, CCTV, ancillary equipment, landscape, and biodiversity enhancements.

The Parish Council has two main concerns regarding this application: on the one hand, the urgent need for renewable energy; on the other hand, the need to preserve the green belt. Whatever the outcome of the application, the Parish Council would not wish it to set a precedent for other developments in the green belt and would ask that Bromsgrove District Council emphasise this, so that each application is explicitly reviewed on its own merits.

There is also a great deal of local history in and around the proposed site which the Parish Council is keen to be preserved.

Having reviewed the papers that had been made available, the Parish Council felt they were not qualified to make an informed decision, as the information provided was incomplete and sometimes inaccurate, with occasional contradictions. The issues concerned almost all aspects of the bid including (but not confined to) its scope, the amount of energy predicted to be produced, the impact on local residents (in terms of disruption and safety) throughout the lifetime of the project (which was itself unclear), and the 'guardianship' of all the promised standards. This gap in information was heightened by the fact that at the time of the Parish Council's planning committee meeting, only three consultee submissions had been deposited on the

District Council web site, leaving huge holes in the Parish Council's ability to make an informed judgement.

4. To consider planning appeal consultations received - None.

5. To note any planning decisions and appeal decisions received

Approval granted for the removal of the front conservatory extension and rear lean-to extension, construct single storey extension, internal alterations to create additional bedroom and bathrooms, replacement septic tank, demolition of outbuildings and erection of 3-bay garage and workshop at Hartley House, Priory Road.

6. Enforcement/Environmental issues

None

7. Any other planning issues

None

The meeting closed at 8.59pm.

Signed..... Chair