

WESTBURY-ON-SEVERN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 10 August 2011 in Westbury Parish Hall.

PRESENT: Councillors - P Brooke
P Ensor
M Green
C Evers - Vice
D Landon
S Phelps
P Radley
N Stephens – Chairman
M Townsend
Mrs Fiona Wallbank - Clerk

Parishioners: 25 parishioners (partial attendance)

1 APOLOGIES: None

2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST: The Chairman stated that he would Chair the meeting however as he is a member of the FODDC Planning Committee he would not be voting on any of the planning applications and has the “right” to change his mind.

3 PUBLIC COMMENT (Max 10 minutes)

4 PLANNING MATTERS:

a) Applications & Site Inspections Reports:

P1340/11/FUL The Lodge, Upper Rodley Road, Bollow: Erection of a replacement dwelling and change of use of land from agricultural to residential use

Decision by 10.8.11

Comments to the Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council **supports** this application

P1406/11/FUL Cotshill Farm Caravan Lower Ley Lane, Minsterworth: Erection of replacement dwelling and amendment to existing vehicular access

Decision by 12.8.11

Comments to the Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council has **no objections** to this application.

The Chairman said before the Parish Council decided on their response to the FODDC regarding the planning applications at the Severn & Wye Smokery if the public wanted to raise any points they could do so now. Councillor Evers read out his briefing paper regarding these applications. This had been prepared following the Councillors site meeting (see attached). The Chairman said that the document laid it out very well and opened the floor up for questions.

Richard Cook said that Odournet had acted independently in their assessment and due to the lack of possible odour they overstated what potential could be expelled.

The Chairman said that when he was on site a bucket had been dipped out of the underground bank and confirmed there were no bits of fish found and it was not an offensive smell. When Richard Cook submitted the previous application for the lagoons it was the Parish Council’s recommendation to more the lagoons West closed to the applicant’s own property and the Smokery.

Q If the output from the toilets etc is around 45/50 cubic metres why is the applicant putting in a system to cater for 180 cubic metres.

A Needs the system to be robust – he has spent a lot of time cutting down water usage on site by using certain equipment that uses less water but would prefer to use other equipment that uses more water. Water is a very valuable resource.

One parishioner commented that the large capacity was for the applicant to expand his business and double the throughput of fish. He would like the FODDC to employ an independent firm who fully understands the proposed systems. If planning permission is granted the residents are fearful that once the lagoons are up and running and there is a smell factor then it is too late and the parishioners in Chaxhill will suffer – Richard Cook replied that in reality he could not double the throughput and he wants the Smokery to be an International Flagship Operation so is not prepared to do anything that will be detrimental to the site

Severn & Wye Smokery:

P1302/11/FUL Proposed waste water treatment plant, provision of access track, underground piping and tanks, and associated landscaping.

Decision by 27.7.11 (extension to 12.8.11)

Comments to the Forest of Dean District Council:

The Parish Council **objects** to this application. In this instance the Parish Council cannot justify the proposed system against standard sewerage treatment technology. The Parish Council has concern over the excessive loss of agricultural land to "brownfield" that would result from the applicant's intended use of such a low density technology for the treatment of 5 cubic metres of human waste effluent per day.

P1303/11/FUL Creation of wash water treatment plant and water store, new hedgerows, hardcored service tracks, underground piping and tanks.

Decision by 27.7.11 (extension to 12.8.11)

Comments to the Forest of Dean District Council:

Subject to satisfactory standard practice assessments, and the implementation of the following conditions, the Parish Council has **no objections** to this planning application:

- Subject to ensuring the public footpath remains unimpeded, once the treatment plant cells have been constructed and completed all hard surface tracks (for construction or otherwise) shall be removed.
- The landscaping proposals shall be improved by the provision of more native trees and shrubs to provide better screening, particularly on the south and east of the site.

P2414/10/FUL Change of use and extensions of former agricultural buildings and land, provision of staff welfare facilities and siting of containers, yard office and generator, extensions to Smokery and re-arrangement of car parking areas to separate staff and customers, provision of improved drainage facilities, underground fish store and water tanks together with associated landscaping, CCTV pole and extension to existing restaurant opening hours to 21:00 on Fridays (Retrospective).

Decision by 27.7.11 (extension to 12.8.11)

Comments to the Forest of Dean District Council:

Subject to satisfactory standard practice assessments, and the implementation of the following conditions, the Parish Council has **no objections** to this planning application:

- The accumulation or storage of goods, materials, or wastes external to buildings on the site shall be stopped and existing accumulations cleared away.

- Changes and ameliorating landscape features shall be incorporated to provide a general reduction in the visual impact of the facilities upon the surrounding countryside and upon local residents.
- Changes shall be made to both existing and any new facilities and practices to provide a reduction in light pollution and sound levels emanating from the site throughout the “small hours”.

5 PROPOSAL RE ADOPTING THE TELEPHONE KIOSK IN NORTHWOOD GREEN

The Clerk reported that the deadline for adopting this kiosk had been extended until the end of August. Councillor Townsend reported that the kiosk does require some attention which he was happy to carry out and keep it tidy. Councillor Brooke said that the Parish Council needed to consult with the residents of Northwood Green to find out what they would like see done with the kiosk. The Councillors agreed to adopt the kiosk for the sum of £1. Clerk to action.

6 FOD LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND CINDERFORD NORTHERN QUARTER AREA ACTION PLAN

Councillor Evers reported that The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government had appointed Nigel Payne BSC(HONS) DIPTP MRTPI MCMI as the Inspector to conduct an examination to determine whether the above named document is sound. A Pre-Hearing meeting will take place at 2pm on Tuesday 6th September 2011 at the FODDC offices to discuss the administrative arrangements for the examination. The Hearing sessions for the Core Strategy examination will commence on Wednesday 12th October 2011 at the Council Offices, Coleford, it will be followed by the Hearing Sessions for the Cinderford Northern Quarter Area Action Plan which will commence Tuesday 18th October 2011 at the Council Offices, Coleford, unless an alternative date and place are announced by the Inspector at the Pre-Hearing meeting.

7 CLOSE OF MEETING Meeting closed at 9.20pm

Westbury-on-Severn Parish Council
Briefing Note for 10th August 2011 Planning Meeting

Planning Application: P2414/10/FUL

Severn and Wye Smokery Chaxhill Westbury On Severn, Glos. GL14 1QW
Change of use and extensions of former agricultural buildings, provision of staff welfare facilities and siting of containers and generator, extensions to smokery and provision of additional car parking areas and drainage facilities, all in connection with existing smokery. Extension of existing restaurant opening hours to 21:00 hours on Fridays (Retrospective)

Planning Application: P1302/11/FUL

Severn and Wye Smokery Chaxhill Westbury On Severn, Glos. GL14 1QW
Proposed waste water treatment plant, provision of access track, underground piping and tanks, and associated landscaping

Planning Application: P1303/11/FUL

Severn and Wye Smokery Chaxhill Westbury On Severn, Glos. GL14 1QW
Creation of wash water treatment plant and water store, new hedgerows, hardcored service tracks, underground piping and tanks

Many of the features proposed via these applications are essentially adjuncts and additions to those for which planning permission was sought via application P2414/10/FUL. We tabled our objection to that planning application in March 2011. Keys to our objection at that time were the extent of retrospective planning permission that was being sought for extensions and modifications that the applicant must have known required planning permission when they were made, and uncertainties over the impact of proposed new facilities, principally two large effluent treatment lagoons and associated equipment. We noted that with a normal planning application, to ensure FOD Local Plan Policy (R)FBE.22 (Environmental Pollution) is not being breached, or is not likely to be breached in the foreseeable future, current FODDC practice is to withhold planning permission until an adequate scheme has been demonstrated as to how drainage arisings will be dealt with in an appropriate manner. We did not feel that sufficient evidence had been provided with the application.

We also noted that there are a range of classes and types of use to which the establishment is now being put that appear to exceed current B1 activities permission for the site, and since the employment site is outside a defined settlement boundary in open countryside, the without planning permission expansion which has occurred does not comply with Policy (R)FE.4. We further felt that the installation as is now (and/or it is the applicant's stated intention to expand to) does not adequately fulfil the intentions of Policies (R)FE.2 (Development of established employment sites) or (R)FE.5 (Employment in the countryside) and lacks conformity with several of the required elements needed to satisfy Policy (R)FBE.6 (Non residential re-use of buildings in the the countryside). We were not satisfied that, compared with the extent of the facilities on the site for which due planning permission was granted in the past, the applicant had sufficiently demonstrated via P2414/10/FUL an intention to ensure that compliance with Natural Environment Policies (R)FNE.1, (R)FNE.2, (R)FNE.3, (R)FNE.5, (R)FNE.10 or (R)FNE.12 is being met, or will continue to be met.

P2414/10/FUL has still to be determined by FODDC, and WOSPC's concerns regarding that submission remain, but a number of proposals in the applicant's 2010 submission have now been superseded. Probably most significant of the changes (shown in a revised drawing now contained in the P2414/10/FUL file, dated 6th July 2011) is an intention to move the site of the two large effluent treatment lagoons over 200 metres south west, to a position much closer to the existing Smokery buildings, and to construct a third smaller split cell lagoon at the northern end of the site, near to where

the two large lagoons were originally going to be. Via these changes it is the applicant's intention to limit the large lagoons to the treatment of fish processing waste effluent and to use the new smaller split cell lagoon to treat the site's human foul water arisings (sewage and personal hygiene wash water). Most of the amendments and proposed further additions have been made the topics of two further planning applications P1302/11/FUL and P1303/11/FUL.

As well as the physical alterations and additions proposed, odour assessment information has been provided dealing with gaseous arisings from both the treatment of fish processing and domestic waste effluents. Associated computer modelled odour contour maps have also been provided showing that the highest odour concentration will be local to the fish process wastewater treatment lagoons. It is unfortunate that no scale is provided with the contour map, but it is clear from the predicted values shown around the site that the odour concentration local to the fish waste water lagoons will be considerable higher than the 3.7 (98th percentile 3OU_E/m³) odour exposure level that is predicted at the front entrance to the Smokery. It is however worth noting that the dispersion modelling is based upon Gloucestershire Airport windrose data, rather than data obtained local to the Smokery. This calls into question its accuracy.

Nevertheless, the odour assessment itself does appear to have merit. Comparative information between the odour emissions from fish waste water and domestic waste effluent arisings is provided along with real odour data from the Holkham facility in Norfolk. The assessment findings are that the odour concentration emanating from the Holkham facility is a tiny fraction of that from a typical similar capacity conventional domestic sewage treatment facility. It is noteworthy, however, with one exception, the Smokery planning applications show appear to the Aero-Fac system proposed, whereas the Holkham facility is an Accel-o-Fac installation. While both systems operate on a similar principle, in several respects they are different, and the matter needs to be resolved.

The odour assessments also omit to mention that there will be non-aqueous fish oils present in the Smokery wash water arisings. Nevertheless, they do note that fish processing wastes do present the main challenge and that further benefit in reducing odour impact from that source could be achieved by relocating into the main Smokery the arrangements for waste screening would be beneficial. As a further precaution, an oil separator incorporated in-line with the solids separator would also seem warranted. The odour assessments indicate it is inaccurate for the applicant to claim FOD Policy RFBE.22 compliance on grounds of the the process being odour free.

P1303/11/FUL provides the latest detailed planning application proposals in respect of the fish processing waste treatment facilities. The approach to processing this type of waste arising is without known provenance, not even via laboratory studies. No evidence of the system's resilience to seasonal variations or extreme weather conditions has been provided and there remain significant uncertainties over use, particularly in the medium to long term. Without this information, for the present there remains the threat that biochemical changes in degrading sludge, or unwanted algal bloom effects could occur, with the risk of creating at present unforeseen odours, unwanted invertebrates, and/or the production of toxic substances. This calls into question the validity of the claims made for the proposed facility, not least, the predicted odour levels assessment, and gives rise to significant risks when determining whether planning permission should be granted.

The applicant's expressed intention to recycle treated water from the fish processing effluent lagoons system and provide specialist equipment to do this is noted and commended. However, other than a pipeline route shown on a drawing, no details appear to be provided of the positioning and size of the additional facilities that will be needed to enable this. Also, other than mention of some reclaimed water being routed to toilets and washroom facilities (and then for non-recycled treatment and disposal to the soakaway on the other side of the A48 road), the fate of the water when it is no longer possible

to recycle it (*e.g.* due to chemicals build-up) appears unaddressed.

It is noteworthy that in the original P2414/10/FUL submission it was claimed that the current daily arisings of waste water from the Smokery amount to approx. 90 m³ and that as a safeguard for the future the treatment facilities were being sized for a 180 m³ daily throughput rate. However, we have now been advised by the applicant's agent (submission to FDDC 21st June 2011) that the Smokery is currently using 50 m³ of water per day, of which 45 m³ is used for fish processing, and 5 m³ for toilets and washroom facilities. So constructing the fish waste water treatment facilities for a daily throughput of 180 m³ does appear unwarranted overkill. Also, set against the installation marketer's claim that the intended treatment system is robust against throughput variation rates and process outages, and that other than having some means to recirculate water, the only other in-line items are the wind powered aerators, the back-up air pumps, and any other "head end" facilities in the Smokery, it seems strange that the applicant is claiming the lagoons need to be so large, to provide sufficient emergency water storage for the site.

The subject of planning application P1302/11/FUL, the situation regarding the treatment of domestic foul waste using both the Accel-o-Fac and Aero-Fac enhanced facultative lagoons system can be backed by provenance. There is medium term experience of these systems in the UK, where at least six installations are operational, and longer term experience abroad. In all instances reported experience to date appears favourable, on a par with best practice using other treatment methods. However, all have been installed to cope with much greater daily throughputs than the 5 m³ said to be the Smokery arisings. In comparison with other latest technology passive methods that could be utilised to deal with the Smokery's daily volume of arisings, whether such a low density system as a facultative lagoons system is warranted, considering the loss of agricultural land, environmental impact *etc.*, is debatable. It is also noteworthy that while the wind powered aerators used by the process are quiet, unlike the applicant's claim, they are not entirely sound emission free, particularly when operating during medium to high wind conditions.

The intention to plant additional and replacement hedgerows does not appear contentious, nor does the intention to fence around the lagoons. The revised positioning of the large lagoon complex means that the height of the proposed mounding around them will be less than originally planned. However, with the lagoons and associated equipment claimed to require such low maintenance, it is difficult to see why a complex arrangement of access and service tracks is required once construction is complete. They are simply creating more of a "brownfield" look to the site, and instead, there would appear merit in simply utilising the intended "green lane", which follows the route of the existing public foot path, as the only permanent access route to the two large lagoon cells. A permanent gravel track access route to the intended smaller lagoon complex to the north of the site also seems unnecessary. To provide further amelioration landscaping, the planting of additional trees around both the intended lagoons complexes would not seem amiss, particularly to the south, and to the east of the large lagoons.

Leaving aside additional underground tanks and pipework, the only other significant new item yet to be constructed at the Smokery is the proposed underground fish store. Virtually nothing is provided as to its features, but in principle, provided appropriate safeguards are incorporated against odour formation and release it should not prove contentious.

Undoubtedly, the applicant has made a number of alterations and amendments to the earlier submitted planning application. For a number of reasons outlined above, whether those changes go far enough to make recommending support for the planning applications a possibility seems to remain somewhat uncertain.

CSE - 7th August 2011

