

HINTON WALDRIST PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs Allison Leigh, 26 Eaton, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX13 5PR

Telephone: 01865 865 876 [E-mail: pc.hwaldrist@gmail.com](mailto:pc.hwaldrist@gmail.com)

Minutes of Hinton Waldrist Parish Council (HWPC) Meeting held in the Village Hall on 11th January 2023, 7pm

In attendance: Alison Geary (Chairman), David Beckenham (Vice Chairman), Councillors Justin Davenport (JD), Peter Evans (PE), Hugh Hamill (HH), Stephanie Stott (SS) and Judith Willis (JW)

Present: Allison Leigh (Clerk), District Councillor Jerry Avery, Roger Smith from Savills

22/79: Apologies for absence: None

22/80: Declarations of Interest: PE and AS declared an interest in agenda item

22/81: Allotments

22/81: Public questions and statements:

- Roger Smith from Savills was in attendance to discuss the land marked in red on the map attached. See Attachment 1.
- St Guys and St Thomas charity is the charity that owns this land.
- Roger Smith discussed the possibility of having a rural exception site on this land and which would provide affordable housing for local people.
- Roger has spoken to the affordable housing officer at District Council who is supportive of rural exception sites which are appropriate and advised Savills to seek support from PC of principle
- Roger Smith would like to seek views on PC in the principal of the idea of rural exception housing following with a local housing needs survey.
- JD asked if the charity would consider gifting the land to the village to use for the benefit to the village. Roger Smith will convey this to the charity, but expects that wouldn't be accepted as a proposal.
- SS asked if Roger Smith could clarify what "local" refers to in the local housing needs survey. This is a District Council process which starts with the immediate village and then extends out, as needed.
- JW noted that the village doesn't have amenities to support more housing.
- AG raised the issue of using some for housing, some for allotments and some for recreation site.
- HH noted there is a need to have some idea as to what is likely to happen before making any decisions.
- The Council would like Roger Smith to ask the charity if they would be open to the Parish Council purchasing the land agricultural land with covenants for uses that might be of use to the village.
- It was noted that a survey of village had been done and the village wasn't supportive of more housing.
- It was noted that Holly Smith from Savills manages the land for the charity.

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22/82: Minutes of the last meetings: The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of the 7th November 2022 were approved and signed with 2 minor edits.

22/83: Reports from County and District Councillors:

Vale of White Horse District Council (VoWHDC)

Jerry Avery was in attendance and sent a report on Botley West Solar Farm. See Attachment 2.

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)

The Council discussed the possibility of the County Councillor attending virtually.

AL to contact OALC about this.

The County Councillor was not in attendance. No report was received.

22/84: Report from Police Constable Officer: No report was received.

The Council asked the Clerk to find out a situation where a Community Police Officer has been in the village asking for the names of individuals and querying them.

22/85: Matters arising and not appearing elsewhere on the agenda: None.

22/86: Big Lunch/Coronation 2023:

The Clerk reported that OCC will be donating £150 towards the Coronation event.

AG will hire the entertainer for the 7th May 2023.

It was discussed that trees could be given to the children to mark the King's Coronation. JD will research this.

The possibility of a tree being planted in memorial of King's Coronation was discussed. JD will research this.

The possibility of a Hinton Waldrist Coronation tea towel was discussed. JW will research this.

The Clerk will put in a notice about the Coronation event in the Village Voices.

The Clerk will check that the Village Hall is available and booked.

22/87: Financial report:

- Reconciled balance as of 30/11/22: £6,249.62

Payments

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| <u>Payee</u> | <u>Item</u> | <u>Amount</u> | <u>Date</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Allison Leigh | Salary – January | 113.20 | 31/1/23 |
| Allison Leigh | Salary – February | 113.20 | 28/2/23 |
| Allison Leigh | Expenses: Home allowance and mileage | 56.50 | 11/1/23 |
| Hinton Waldrist Village Hall | Room Hire | 20.00 | 11/1/23 |

Receipts

There have been no receipts.

- **Budget 2023/2024:** The Council resolved a budget of £6920.
- **Precept 2023/2024:** The Council resolved a precept of £4000 for 2023/2024.

22/88: Tree planting on Lamb Road: The guards were taken off original trees to help them breathe, but have been eaten by monk jack. The newer trees have guards on and are doing ok.

JD will look into the cost of 30 trees to fill the gaps of where the original trees have not survived.

22/89: Planning:

There are no new planning applications.

22/90: Communication: The item of Mailchimp was deferred to the March meeting.

22/91: Publications and correspondence:

It was reported that the Cedar Club has asked for funding from OCC.

The Council asked the Clerk to publicise pension credit in Village Voices

22/92: Matters for report: The Council asked the Clerk to write a letter to Savills to say the rural exception is not viable in the village, but would like to discuss other ways of using the land to go back to charity and see how to make land useful for village.

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The Council asked the Clerk to put The Big Lunch on the March agenda.

22/93: Date of the next meeting: The date of the next Council meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 22nd March 2023 at 7pm in the Village Hall.

22/94: Resolution to exclude the public for agenda item 22/95: The Council resolved to exclude the public from agenda item 22/95.

22/95: Staff Salary: The Council resolved to increase the Clerk salary per the NALC revised cost of living salary scale for 2022/2023. The Council resolved to the pay amount backdated from April 2022.

Meeting closed at 20:45

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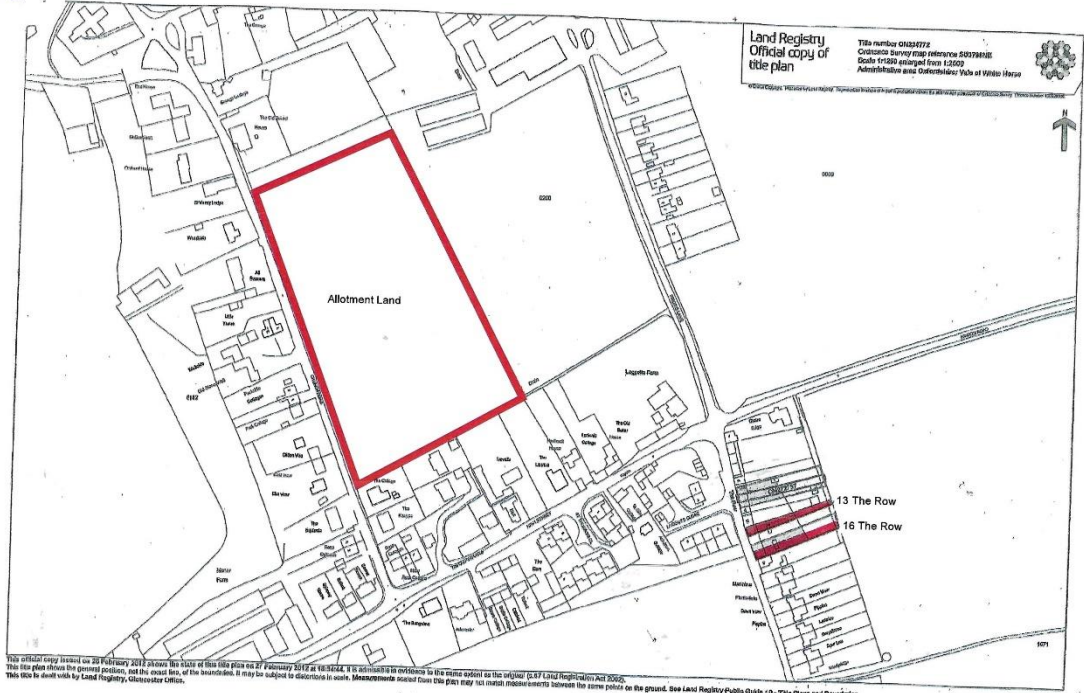
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Attachment 1

n/1/23
Roger Smith
Savills

Estate Plan, Hinton Waldrist



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Attachment 2

Vale of White Horse District Council

Report from District Councillor Jerry Avery

Botley Solar Farm Proposal - Oxfordshire

On the plus side, the creation of the solar farm as envisaged could provide clean power to some 300,000 homes. On the other hand, among other organisations, the CPRE is very rightly concerned about the negative impact that such a large installation will have on the green belt and on fertile land. Wrt the effect on Thames Ward, the southern part of the farm as proposed directly affects an area of land just to the southeast of Farmoor Reservoir and hence the ward is not directly affected. However, as always with any large construction project like this I foresee that there will inevitably be a significant increase in road traffic and that will affect surrounding areas. Further to such concerns, it must be noted that solar farms in these latitudes are usually only 10% efficient; even in sunnier parts of the world such as the USA solar farms are only 25% efficient and hence the conclusion to be drawn is the that scheme here would only produce enough power for some 30,000 homes and that is a point that seems to have been glossed over. It is also arguable that solar farms should be built on brownfield sites and there plenty of those in the north of the UK.

The solar farm as envisaged will cover three areas; one is to the north of Woodstock, a second covers large areas in Kidlington and the third covers land to the south of Farmoor Reservoir. In addition to the third component is a fourth which would cover land on the south side of the

Beacon, namely the Hurst to the south of Elms Rise, Botley and I will focus on that particular aspect for the moment and to that end will use the detailed information provided in the report produced by Cumnor Parish Council, in October 2021, a company called Solar 2 Ltd presented proposals to the PC for a 'solar farm' near The Hurst, comprising 3.5m (11.5 ft) high solar panels and covering the equivalent of 45 football pitches of green belt farmland mainly owned by All Souls College. At the end of November 21, Cumnor PC discovered that another company, Cumnor Solar Farm Ltd had applied to the Vale of the White Horse District Council for what is referred to as an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening opinion. In other words, they were asking the VWHDC to agree that a full EIA was not required for what was now referred to as an "industrial installation for the production of electricity." For whatever reason, VWHDC did not notify Cumnor PC that this request had been made by the developer. When Cumnor PC found out that this had happened a request to carry out an EIA was made to the Vale and both North Hinksey PC and the Oxford Preservation Trust (OPT) followed suit. Shortly afterwards, Cumnor PC discovered that the VWHDC had agreed with the developer that an EIA was not needed. Further to that, the VWHDC did not list key environmental issues highlighted by the OPT, namely:-

- The authoritative 2015 OPT and Historic England 'Oxford Views Study' which assessed the 'dreaming spires' views of Oxford (there are expansive views

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from the proposed site across Oxford and so conversely of the site from Oxford and beyond).

- The severe adverse impact on the parish's Neighbourhood Plan 'Important View 12' (the protected view from the Millennium Beacon that would be lost by the erection of 90 acres of 3.5m high solar panels, buildings etc. all surrounded by a 2m high security fence topped with CCTV).
- Issues raised by OPT about impacts beyond the immediate area (e.g. laying high voltage cables from the site to the national grid in Osney).
- Concerns raised by CPC drawing on extensive international scientific evidence about impacts on birds and invertebrates (e.g. issues for ground nesting birds such as skylarks; the so-called 'lake effect' where birds heading for e.g. Farmoor would mistake solar panels for water; and polarized light reflected from the panels disorienting invertebrates). VWHDC believes there are only a 'limited' number of uses of the adjacent bridleway, footpaths and Oxford Green Belt Way (not what the 2018 parish wide 'Big Survey' found), and that there would be no waste produced by the 4+ month construction period (requiring about 150+ HGV loads), the 40 years of operation (the electrical inverters need replacing every 12 years or so) or by the site's proposed decommissioning in the 2060's.

VWHDC also believes that badgers 'could use the site during operation'. However, this would arguably be challenging for Cumnor's badgers since in evidence supplied to VWHDC at their request, the developer stated that 'typically there will be a 6ft fence with stock proof mesh and where applicable badger-proof mesh at the lower half.'

An important question that evidently needed answering was in relation to just how the underground high voltage cables (typically 33,000 volts) would get from the Hurst to the national grid in Osney Mead. When this was put to the developer, it was stated that Scottish and Southern Energy has offered the company a route to Osney 'via Cumnor Hill, the B4044, under the A34 (overbridge) and onto Botley Road'. The developer also informed Cumnor PC that their preferred route 'would be via Harcourt Hill and then over private land'. This was understood to mean that the route would be via North Hinksey village and Oxford Preservation Trust fields.

Investigations by Cumnor PC with respect to the proposed developer, Cumnor Solar Farm Ltd, reveals that the company was created just one day prior to day before it made its application to the VWHDC. The application makes clear that Cumnor Solar Farm Ltd is owned by Solar 2 Ltd. Interestingly, that company's most recent accounts (17th December 2021) show they have 0 employees and net liabilities of £176,940. Further to that, Solar 2 Ltd is 100% owned by Wind 2 Ltd; a company with 6 employees and with liabilities exceeding assets. It owes its creditors nearly £4m and that gives rise to real concern in view of the fact that All Souls College is reckoned to be worth about £420k. Inevitably the question to be asked is what happens now? Cumnor PC argues that one of the companies referred to or one of the many set up by the same directors will launch a PR (public Relations) campaign

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and then apply for planning permission in the same way as have done before in other parts of the country.

Finally, Cumnor Parish Council has made it abundantly clear that it will continue to ask questions and keep the parish informed. The PC also continues to emphasise that it remains committed to sustainable development, as enshrined in the parish's Neighbourhood Plan and our Cumnor Fit for the Future initiatives. Cumnor PC has stated in no uncertain terms that it will continue to oppose this particular solar farm application because they believe that "it's the wrong solution, in the wrong place for the wrong reasons".