

RADLEY LOCAL LIAISON GROUP (RWE NPOWER)

NOTES OF MEETING AT DIDCOT 'A' POWER STATION MONDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 2009, AT 7.30PM

PRESENT: Mr Phil Noake) RWE Npower
 Dr Steve Waygood)

 Mr Harry Barton) Northmoor Trust

 Dr B Crowley)
 Mr C Henderson)
 Ms L Pasquire)
 Mrs J Standen) Radley Parish Council
 Miss S E Raven)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr John Rainford and Cr Rogers.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETINGS ON 2 MARCH 2009 AND 16 APRIL 2009

NIL

3. DIDCOT POWER STATION – RADLEY OPERATIONAL UPDATE

- 3.1 It was confirmed that no ash had gone to the site since the last meeting, or indeed since the end of 2007.
- 3.2 Phase I: A planning application had been put in for the erection of a security fence with gates between Lake A and the settling pond and discharge pond and for the construction of a new surface water drain. The Parish Council confirmed that it had been consulted on this and had indicated that it had no objections on the basis that the work was necessary to allow the Waste Management Licence to be surrendered. The Parish Council comments had indicated that a recent botanical survey of this area had revealed a number of plant species that were rare or uncommon in Oxfordshire. Ecological surveys (as proposed) should look for where these species may be growing in the areas to be affected by the works, and measures put in place to prevent unnecessary harm.

- 3.3 Phase II: RWE had been discussing the possibility of putting in a new planning application, which would cover the whole area setting out a conservation led restoration. It was considered that, by trying to look at the whole area, they should come up with something much better, but it was important to get all the landowners on board. The OCC were amenable to the idea, and the Environment Agency thought it would be better if there was one plan covering the whole area, especially in relation to drainage plans. Discussions had taken place with Tuckwells who had agreed to this approach. They would be discussing Lakes H/I with Mr John Curtis, then involve the other land owners. Future stewardship was an important aspect of the whole area, and ideally RWE would like Mr Curtis to come on board with the idea.

RWE indicated that they still had to restore the levels on Lakes H/I and when it was restored it would be contoured. The main problem was the limited amount of top soil on site - the only source was that which formed the mound and it was not possible to import further top soil to the site.

There was discussion on the possibility of a watch tower or hide between Lakes I and G. The plan to flatten Lake G would take away the wetland, and RWE now think it should be left as it was to attract wildlife to the area.

In view of these considerations, RWE considered that it was better to start with a fresh sheet because this would give more opportunity to develop the area in the way the various groups would like. However, one must not lose sight of the fact that these different areas were in different ownership and it was important to get the land owners involved and on board with the idea of a conservation-led restoration.

4. THRUPP LAKE

- 4.1 RWE was just about to finalize the agreement with Northmoor Trust. This would be for three months until the end of 2009 and would allow fact finding/background work to be undertaken. At the end of this period it was hoped that it would be possible to give the Northmoor Trust a 25 year lease for the site backed with a five year management agreement. The details would emerge from the process under current discussion.
- 4.2 Harry Barton reported that the Trust would have someone on site a minimum of one or two days a week - Alison Vallance. It was appreciated that there were lots of people who were keen to get involved in Radley and Abingdon and, as Alison was very good at working with volunteers, it should be possible to get started with some of the worthwhile surveillance work.

- 4.3 There were two other important areas to cover:
- Future of Sandles: A surveyor/architect would look at the building shortly to decide if this was a good starting point for a centre or whether it was necessary to look at other options. By Christmas, some recommendations should be available for consideration.
 - Access – to consider where bird hides/board-walks should be provided. Prioritizing of work to be undertaken would be necessary and this would not be an easy task. It was hoped to go down the route of involving more land, but this would involve discussions with land owners.
- 4.4 Harry Barton reported that he was going to meet Abingdon Town Council on the 30 September 2009 to determine its interest in the project.
- 4.5 It would be necessary to get a group together to look at all the various aspects of work being undertaken, and how this would be constituted would need to be worked out. The Parish Council is likely to be represented on the group and it was hoped to get details finalized by the end of the year. The current thinking was that there would be:
- (a) Project Management Group
 - (b) A group that would be more creative which would look at suggestions which could then be funneled to the Project Management Group.

The Power Station indicated that they would be guided by Northmoor Trust.

5. RADLEY PARISH COUNCIL – UPDATE

- 5.1 Arrangements had been made for Harry Barton to meet Radley Parish Council at 7 pm on Thursday, 26 November 2009. It was also hoped that Alison Vallance could attend at this time.
- 5.2 It was reported that Jenny and Denis Standen had a walk around the site with Harry Barton to have a look at the new fencing. The Parish Council questioned whether it was too far back into the isthmus but it was agreed that it was very difficult to find places to put poles. It was understood that the fencing followed a line agreed by RWE and Mr Curtis. Some areas looked unfinished, and Dr Waygood agreed to look into this. It was reported that there had been some complaints already about the lack of access through the new fencing. The common complaint was that there should be access to the shore at the south-east corner of Thrupp Lake, but the fencing marked the ownership boundary. It was suggested by Harry Barton that as this was one of the few accessible bits of dry land on the site, it should be put to good purpose, such as siting of a hide or observation area, but that it would need to be thought about carefully. At the north-east corner it was very difficult as the circuit around comes out in Mr Curtis' and Mr Paddy Dockar-Drysdale's land.

- 5.3 There was talk about applying for modifications to the designated footpath map for the routes people had been using for years. It had been ascertained that any person who had been walking in this area would need to complete a statement and mark on a map where they had been walking. This was a sensitive issue at the current time when discussions were taking place with land owners in the area about their involvement in the conservation area idea. It was hoped that the land owners would request that those paths mentioned in the Inspectors Report on the Public Enquiry into the Village Green Application be included on the designated footpath map rather than for a formal application to be made either by the Parish Council or some other organisation.
- 5.4 Longmead Lake: It was understood that this had been sold to a construction company. Although Save Radley Lakes had expressed an interest, it was a very difficult time, over the summer holiday period, to put forward a structured bid to purchase.
- 5.5 The Parish Council raised the question of a dog bin being situated somewhere near Sandles. It was understood that RWE and Northmoor Trust were in discussion about where this should be put. The Parish Council suggested it could be installed at the end of Footpath 9 at the junction with Thrupp Lane so that it did not cause any problem in the wildlife area.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

NIL

7. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT LIAISON GROUP

It was agreed that the next meeting should be held in January 2010, with a walk around the site in April 2010.