

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF RADLEY PARISH
COUNCIL HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY, 4 AUGUST 2005,
AT 7.30PM**

PRESENT: Cr B Mott (in the Chair)
Crs Crowley, Henderson, Nutt, D Standen, J Standen, Wren, Wyatt
Joanna Freyther, Oxfordshire County Council
36 members of the public

116/05 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Crs Johnston and Wilson.

117/05 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cr Crowley declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest as set out in the Standards Board for England lobby group, dual-hatted members and the Code of Conduct, top paragraph, page 7.

118/05

- (a) Planning Application from RWE npower for the Construction of new ash lagoon in existing void space (Lakes E/F), filling the same with pulverized fuel ash, winning of clay from the base of the void space and its use to raise and restore adjacent land, Radley Lakes, Thrupp Lane

The Chairman indicated that the Parish Council would go into public session to hear the views of the public attending the meeting and any information which Joanna Freyther, the Planning Officer at the Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), who was dealing with the application. The Parish Council would then meet, when the public could remain but would not be able to take part in the discussion.

Cr Mott indicated that Abingdon Town Council would be considering the planning application on the 8 August 2005, and the Vale of White Horse DC would be making its representations to the OCC following officer discussion with the Chairman.

It was stressed that the Parish Council was being consulted on this planning application by the OCC, who was the decision making body.

Joanna Freyther introduced herself, but indicated that she would only be able to advise on procedural matters and would not be able to make comments on any objections people raised. She did indicate that in view of the interest in this planning application the deadline for comments had been extended to the 30 August 2005. However, she had to investigate all points put to the OCC and

earlier replies would be welcomed. She had already received in the region of 60-80 objections.

Cr Mott asked if anyone at the meeting was in agreement with the application, and at that time all the public in attendance were strongly against it. The meeting was opened for public discussion, and the following points were made:

- The OCC could not delay its decision until RWE npower had obtained a Pollution Prevention Control licence as planning permission was required before this could be applied for.
- A legal team within the OCC advises the Oxfordshire County Council. Any decisions it made were available to the public.
- The OCC should do some work on determining what dangerous substances were going into the ground at the present time.
- The Lakes were an important habitat for many forms of fauna and flora, and all efforts must be taken to protect these.
- The filling of these lakes would be an important loss in the area's character. Sufficient lakes had been filled already, and it would be the loss of a civil amenity to fill the last two lakes. They should be left alone.
- Lakes H and I were filled above the natural land height and in a wet season there was flooding in this area.
- Account must be taken of flooding and global warming. The risk of flooding is raised and the flood plan should be guarded with vigor. This application will result in another area being plugged with pulverized fuel ash (PFA), and this should not happen.
- RWE npower has indicated that it sells 45% of the PFA. The OCC should tell them to sell the other 55%.
- The PFA is classified as Non-Hazardous Waste. People do not want waste, and the OCC is being told to reduce waste.
- People in the Parish were under the impression that the land was going to be restored to farming land, and this has not happened. In addition, it has been demonstrated that the sites have been overfilled so that the flood plain has been altered.
- In this application RWE npower were seeking an amendment to allow it to restore the lakes but not to agricultural level. The Station Manager had indicated that RWE npower would like to restore this area to a nature reserve for the use of the people. How long would this take – some 20 years? The feeling

of the meeting was that it should be left as it was and people should be allowed to use it as a nature reserve.

- If Didcot Power Station had to find somewhere to dump its PFA it might mean increased lorry movements on the road to another site - at least it was being piped into the lakes.
- The lakes which were the subject of the planning application were the ones which were dug early on in the excavation of gravel, and they had been allowed to develop in a unique way.
- Surely RWE npower must have alternative plans if this application is not successful but they have not admitted this.
- Bullfield was illegally dug. Can it now be filled legally?
- There were about 1000 mature trees on the site, and there would be an impact on these. Even if they had Tree Preservation Orders they could be affected by the nature of the work to be undertaken before the lakes could be filled.
- How much ash will the lakes take? Lakes H and I were filled much quicker than expected. Is it certain that the remaining lakes will take ash until Didcot Power Station closes in 2015?
- The housing along Audlett Drive was not in existence when the initial planning permission was given in 1982. The OCC should take into account that some of this housing is 400 yards away from the lakes in question. It was noted that the DC was away of the nearby lakes when agreeing the development in Audlett Drive.
- Is the OCC happy that RWE npower has carried out the conditions of the original planning permission? The work carried out should be investigated fully.

The public were thanked for their comments. Joanna Freyther was thanked for attending the meeting.

The majority of the public left the meeting, and the Parish Council continued its meeting.

The Parish Council **AGREED** that it objected strongly to the planning application and that the following points should be made to the OCC:

1. It was strongly felt that enough lakes in the pits have been filled, and the remaining lakes should be left as a public amenity.
2. This was one of the most important wildlife areas in the County, and there was a need to protect the fauna and flora on the site. It was essential that the area was

preserved under EU wild life legislation, and this took precedence over planning permission.

3. The Parish Council was concerned that another area filled with pulverized fuel ash would affect the natural flood plain, particularly as the pits now had to be lined with clay. The area around Audlett Drive, which was not built up in 1982 and, as this area starts about 400 yards from Lake E, could be affected by flooding.
4. The Parish Council felt that RWE Npower must have an alternative plan before submitting the current application. As Lakes E and F did not have sufficient capacity to last Didcot Power Station until it closed in 2015.
5. The OCC should be asked to delay its decision until a comprehensive Pollution Prevention Control application had been received.

The Chairman indicated that he and the Clerk would draft a letter and circulate it to all Councillors for comments before it was sent.

Date:

Chair