

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 28TH OCTOBER, 2013

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

ITEM 1 - SWAFFHAM: Great Friars Farm, Silver Drift: Anaerobic digestion renewable energy facility and associated landscaping works Reference: 3PL/2013/0623/F

Photographs have been submitted of existing plants to give an indication of the colour and appearance of the proposal.

A plan has been submitted demonstrating where the plant would be connected to the national grid. The Highway Authority is satisfied the proposed cable route does not cross or impact upon a Norfolk County Council adopted road.

ITEMS 3-9 - STOW BEDON: Breckles Farm, Land near Breckles Heath: Retain Spanish type poly tunnel, feed silos, water tank, access and turning area (retrospective) References: 3PL/2013/0733/F, 3PL/2013/0736/F and 3PL/2013/0730/F Poultry arcs in movable locations within area and feed silos: References: 3PL/2013/0730/F, 3PL/2013/0731/F, 3PL/2013/0732/F and 3PL/2013/0734/F

The applicant has amended the three applications for the three large poly tunnels. The poly tunnels are to be used for seasonal turkeys only between mid August and mid December. For the remaining part of the year they would remain empty. The remaining four applications covering the ten mobile arcs remain unchanged and they would be used all year round for chickens.

The amendment would result in a 45% decrease in vehicular movements in connection with the production of chickens; from 400 vehicular movements per 8 week cycle to 222 vehicular movements per 8 week cycle. The use of the poly tunnels for turkey production would result in 82 vehicle movements over the 4 months period.

The Highway Authority has considered the amendment and maintain their objection.

The following comments have been received:

THOMPSON PARISH COUNCIL (in relation to original scheme)

Although not within the Parish of Thompson, Thompson Parish Council is sufficiently concerned about the impact of them on the local area it was felt necessary to discuss them at a Parish Council meeting held on Monday 16 September 2013. As a result of the discussion of these applications the members present were unanimously against all of these applications and directed the Clerk to inform Breckland District Council of the concern regarding them.

The Council is concerned that the only apparent access to the site is via the Peddars Way National Trail. This track is not designed to take the size and volume of traffic generated by these applications and is detracting from and to some extent dangerous for its use by other users such as walkers, cyclists, visitors to Breckland etc.

The Council is also concerned about potential environmental damage to Thompson Water and the adjacent SSSI which extends into this Parish and has great amenity value to anyone interested in wildlife and the countryside.

This Council's final concern is that the site has been allowed to operate for many months without planning permission being in place.

Thompson Parish Council trusts that note will be taken of its views when discussing these applications

STOW BEDON AND BRECKLES PARISH COUNCIL (in relation to amended scheme)

My Council considered the amendments to these applications contained in Viv Bebbington's email dated 10 October, and has the following comments.

The Council agrees with the comments expressed in the recent letter from Wretham Parish Council commenting on these amendments, and would add the following.

The amendments make no noticeable difference to the Council's three main objections, which are:

1. The damage to the environment on this site which is surrounded by SSSIs, SACs and SPAs and includes a County Wildlife Site;
2. The location, being literally on the Peddars Way National Trail, and
3. The precedent being set. If permission were regrettably to be given, the TNP method of obtaining planning permission, i.e. ignore the planning process, plough up land, and , fill it with concrete, will become the standard method for land owners to get their developments through. If you can be certain that the Planning Authority will not have the courage to force a reversal, and you will be able to avoid any claims about the environment that used to exist on the site by eradicating it first, there is no incentive to obtain permission before developing.

Additionally, the Council would make the following detailed points.

1. Several local businesses in the area which are involved in developing the fledgling tourism industry in this part of Breckland have commented that since the unauthorised developments on Peddars Way their business has dropped off this year, despite the weather this summer being so much better than last. There are accounts of regular customers who visited in 2012 but said that they would not return again, as the pleasure they derived from walking the Peddars Way has gone now that it has become simply the access route to a commercial poultry farm.
2. TNP has admitted that their third attempt to provide accurate vehicle movement numbers is inaccurate, as it fails to include the movements of the gamekeeper employed for control of foxes. If traps are being set, these must be checked daily, but even control by shooting must involve vehicle movements, unless the gamekeeper enjoys walking.
3. As evidence of how foxes are being drawn to the area I attach photographs of dead chickens outside the site, and one of the holes under the site perimeter fence. We understand that the gamekeeper who was patrolling the site sadly died before the applications were actually submitted, and that nobody has actually been appointed to replace him, so it is questionable as to whether this is actually taking place.

My Council reiterates its request that permission for these retrospective applications is refused.

RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION (in relation to amended scheme)

The revised information seems to add up to a weekly average of 25 movements plus an overall average from late August to mid December of about 5. These do represent a reduction but not "significant". Concerns remain, reduced to some degree, especially in relation to seasonal HGV movements, as these are the ones which will create the greatest conflict. If it was possible to restrict these movements to times when walkers, cyclists and horse rides are less likely to be using the route, that would be welcome. Comments regarding fencing and notices are unchanged.

NORFOLK WILDLIFE TRUST (in relation to amended scheme)

Concerns raised in relation to unfenced area used for foraging; approximately 65% of the CWS. Restriction required in respect of area of foraging.

ELIZABETH TRUSS MP

I have been contacted by my constituent Mark Gorton from Traditional Norfolk Poultry in relation to the following planning applications -/2013/0730; 3PL/2013/0731; 3PL/2013/0732; 3PL/2013/0733; 3PL/2013/0734; 3PL/2013/0736 and 3PL/2013/0737.

I know that TNP has had ongoing dialogue with Breckland Council as to the most appropriate way to progress their planning applications in line with local and national planning guidelines. I therefore hope that Breckland Council will fully consider the job opportunities and value to the local economy when determining these planning submissions.

21-10-2013

Last week I met parish councillors from Stow Bedon & Breckles, Wretham and Hockham to hear their concerns in relation to the above planning applications submitted by Traditional Norfolk Poultry. Particular concern has been raised by the councillors about the HGV and other traffic movements along the Peddars Way to access the location. The caravan site operating very close to this route has reported a significant drop in trade since TNP established their operations and for such a well known walking, cycling and horse riding route, the councillors highlighted the possible impact on tourism and leisure pursuits as a result of the TNP development. In any planning applications of this nature, I am always keen to see that full consideration is given to the job opportunities and value to the local economy that a development might make. However, I believe the impact on existing businesses and the environment should also be taken into account.

**ITEM 10: HARLING: Thorpe Woodlands, West Harling Road: Replacement of camping and caravanning with 70 no. timber cabins and associated buildings to be used for holiday accommodation:
Reference: 3PL/2013/0735/F**

The following comments have been received

REPRESENTATIONS

A letter of support from Visit England highlights the applicant's successful schemes in other locations; the product offered is well suited to the current market; project supports the national growth agenda as identified in the Strategic Framework for Tourism; contribution to local economy.