

Draft Minutes of Parish of Stow Community Council meeting held on Monday January 10th on zoom at 7.30pm

Those present: C.Hendry (chair), A. McNeilly, S.Jeffrey, G.Stewart, Rosemary Chambers (Coriolis), Sam McMillan (Coriolis), Cllr Scott, Cllr Anderson, J.Williams (Chair Heriot Community Council,)G. Murray, G.Saunders, F. Walters, B.Preston, C. Bolling ,LC

Apologies: Cllr Aitchison, A.Riddell

Rosemary Chambers gave a presentation about Greystone Knowe wind farm. Coriolis Energy are an independent UK- based wind energy development company, with 100 MW of consented projects and a further 400MW in development. They have delivered 15 wind farms around the UK. They partner ESB, Ireland's premier energy company on wind farm projects.

Ms Chambers showed a location map for Greystone Knowe wind farm. It is located 2km south of Heriot and 2.5km west of Fountainhall. The site is currently used as upland grazing land with small blocks of plantation forestry.

The application was submitted to Energy Consents Unit October 2021 and is for 14 turbines, with a maximum tip height of up to 180m. It will generate 56MW-70MW

The development timeline is as follows:

2018 Public introduction of proposals/site studies
May 2020 Scoping Request submitted to Scottish Government
Oct/Nov 2020 Online Exhibitions (due to Covid-19)
Quarter 4 2021 Application Submission
Quarter 1 2022/ Quarter 2 2022 Scottish Borders Council provide a view
2022- 2023 Scottish Government Decision
2025 If consented construction starts

Next Steps

Section 36 Process

A Section 36 (S36) application has been made to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit

Scottish Borders Council is a key consultee in the process and the S36 application will be presented to the SBC's Planning and Building Services Committee for a planning decision.

Once SBC and other consultees have provided their opinions to the ECU, a final planning decision will be made by the Scottish Government.

Where can you review the planning documents

Available to view online on the Energy Consents Unit website (www.energyconsents.scot) by searching for “ Greystone Knowe”. Application Reference ECU00003341

Documentation is also available to view on the project website <http://www.greystoneknowewindfarm.co.uk/>

How to Make a Representation
. Energy Consents Unit Website
(www.energyconsents.scot/register.aspx)

Email to: representations@gov.scot

Post to:
Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit
4th Floor
Atlantic Quay
150 Broomielaw
Glasgow
G2 8LU

There was a great deal of concern regarding the proposed access to the wind farm via the A7 and Old Stage Road, with a turning point being made near Pirntaton Road End (too close to the village).

The question was raised whether it is possible to widen Old Stage Road from the new road without closure and the view taken that the existing road is too narrow for windfarm traffic and is also a busy road, as well as the only road from the village to the bus on the A7. R. Chambers replied that traffic consultants had traffic counters to measure the volume of traffic and the traffic management plan would be agreed with SBC and the Community Council. However nothing would be done regarding exactly how the traffic would be until after consent had been granted. This was considered completely unacceptable. If this is not part of the initial application, the time will have passed for objections and the community will have no say in a crucial part of the application.

If consented there will be traditional community benefit paid out to communities. There will also be a shared ownership model. There will be 10% for members of the community to invest in.

Local Energy Scotland give independent advice to communities. They also provide grants for legal advice

The deadline in the planning process was in December 2021. The time for members of the community to comment has passed. However, the Energy Consents Unit will still accept representations. The lack of effort to consult the community was much commented on. The newsletter has just come out, with the community unaware of the consultation process. The question was raised regarding what requirement exists to fully consult the community. There was an online consultation instead of the normal public presentation, but the community was completely unaware of it. R. Chambers stated that leaflets had been posted at the time to all households in the area. No one present from either Fountainhall or Stow could recall receiving one. The communication with the Fountainhall community has been very poor. How can we publicise this around the community? Can R. Chambers give an indication of how the community will be informed in the future? There needs to be two-way communication. A communication plan would be a good idea.

An extension has been granted for the Community Council response until the end of January. There will be a joint response from Heriot and Stow Community Council.

SBC have stated that their likely response time is July 2022.

A question was asked regarding business opportunities both during the construction phase and the running of the wind farm. There will be a local suppliers database where local businesses can register their interest. Business benefits to the community are important.

R. Chambers stated that she will do a breakdown of other windfarms and how other windfarms involve local business. An example in the Highlands shows that 51% of business goes to Highland businesses and 49% to the rest of Scotland.

There are no road plans. It is important to get the road plans to the Fountainhall community sooner rather than later.

Concerns were raised regarding such large turbines so close to the village. They will be 1000 ft above sea level. There should have been a residential amenity impact assessment for Fountainhall, as there was for Heriot. The question was raised as to why there was not one and a request was made for one to be done now. Noise is a consideration as the prevailing wind to Fountainhall comes from the turbines.

With energy prices soaring, the question was asked whether the area could get cheaper electricity if the project goes ahead. Projects in Aberdeenshire decided

that their community benefit could be used to take £200 p.a off electricity bills for households within 10km. It was irrelevant who the supplier was.

There are hill forts in the area . There has been a Cultural Heritage assessment and all efforts will be made to protect everything. There will be no direct impact on Haltree Rings

R.Chambers, S.McMillan, J.Williams , G. Saunders. C.Bolling, B. Preston, F.Walters, LC left the meeting

Minutes and Matters Arising

Amendments to the previous minutes:

It was agreed to get rid of three old planters at the Crossroads.

Cllr Anderson's report was erroneous and should get written in full as follows:

"I note that the dog education officer has contacted cc's to offer sessions. I did ask for this way back. So glad to see that something is finally moving on this.

However, I still have not had any signs supplied by SBC and will be chasing this up (first request was in March but HQ printing was apparently not available then or upon repeated requests since then – time to ask again as I have run out of printer ink here!)

I did raise the speed of some traffic through Stow with Philippa at a meeting with her team and other Ward colleagues a few weeks ago but it would appear that the data they have overrules my personal observation over the last several months.....I agree that the 20mph signs are too far apart. I asked for trees to be cut back to allow better visibility of the flashing sign going north by the park – not done either. I have a meeting with Craig Blackie next week on another issue and will be raising it again."

It was agreed that Philippa Gilhooley should be asked to attend a meeting with the Community Council.

The Station House has won the Network Rail Community Award

Matters Arising -

The date of the AGM of Stow Community Trust has been changed to 3rd February.

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by S. Jeffrey, seconded A. McNeilly

Queens Platinum Jubilee – N. Miller has been very helpful and given a piece of land on the back road overlooking the village, where people can sit . There will be a horseshoe shaped drystone dyke with seats. £2500 can be applied for from the Platinum Jubilee fund. The project is moving. There is a dyker and a fencer. Costing needs to be done for rough cast per sq metre and the cost of a bench in the drystone dyke.

Applications are now open for the Platinum Fund. Information Boards should also be located there.

G. Murray and G. Stewart will meet to discuss the website. They will have something to report at the next meeting

G. Stewart is working on an emblem for the valley and will draft something for the next meeting.

Police Report

The number of people caught urinating by the police in Galashiels was noted. The toilets in Stow are currently closed and if permanently closed, urinating in the street will become a greater problem. The provision of toilets in the Borders is really poor.

Speeding at Killochryett. People locally stick to the speed limit but others speed through. Police enforcement is needed. Even a speed camera now and then

Cllr Scott stated that SBC has no direct influence, and he is not a member of the Oversight Group. Cllr Turnbull is Chair of Community Safety and on COSLA. Transport Scotland do enforcement of speed limits.

The Community Council needs to invite an MSP to the Community Council meeting as nothing can be done on a local level. It was agreed to invite all South of Scotland MSPs to the next Community Council meeting, including Christine Grahame. The subjects should be both Road Safety in Stow and Greystone Knowe Wind Farm. A list of questions should be prepared and sent in advance.

Proposed Amendments to the Community Council Scheme

The proposed amendment states that coopted members should not be office bearers. An objection was raised to this. This creates two classes of community councillors. At the point that a coopted member can vote, they should be able to

become office bearers. In practice it is difficult to find people who are prepared to be office bearers.

It is proposed that, if the secretary or treasurer are not elected members, they should only be able to speak regarding their duties. Members of the public are allowed to contribute to community council meetings. This is treating the secretary and treasurer less fairly than members of the public. They should be able to contribute in the same way as everyone else.

A definition was requested as to what is classed as heritable property.

It was also unclear what was meant by disestablishment or dissolution. If there are not enough people for a community council to be formed, does that count as disestablishment.? Especially as a few months later more people might come forward to form the community council.

It was felt that there should be 9 Stow members and 2 Fountainhall members with the possibility of one member coming from either Fountainhall or Stow. The provision of 2 members for Fountainhall was to ensure Fountainhall representation. However it means that there cannot be more than 2 people from Fountainhall. Having one which can be either Fountainhall or Stow means that Fountainhall can have greater representation without Stow definitely having reduced representation.

Stow Community Trust have organised a meeting with an organisation on 19th January who can provide community development workers. The funding is in place for this ,. The workers will have to do a great deal of consultation.

Treasurers Report

The defibrillator grant has been spent. It has been topped up with a microgrant for the Fountainhall defibrillator

The Bishop's Palace grant is completed

£578 in the collection fund. It would be good if this went towards Robin McMillan and the bridge. A windfarm grant is needed for this.

There are still funds in the Speed Camera Grant and Covid Hardship and Resilience Fund

Planters - £880 is in the kitty. 3 people have offered to maintain planters but there is a great deal of work involved watering every week. Another community grows fresh herbs in planters. This might be an idea. Someone did empty out the

old plants. The school is keen on environmental issues. A. McNeilly will contact Debbie Matthewson to see if they might take over the planters

Microgrants -

EDF £3200

SSE 1470

Unrestricted funds - £500.03

Funds have been awarded by SSE for the community garden. They have not yet been received

Concern was raised at the lack of community action in Stow during Storm Arwen. There was a 37-hour power cut. Many contacts are digital which could not be used. It was felt that Stow needs to get an emergency store. Community Resilience needs to be revived. Cllr Anderson will take this up. J, Mushlin will get in touch with the current coordinator.

Councillors Reports

Cllr Anderson will get in touch with Rose Hogg, Dog Education Officer, to ask for a supply of posters. He will speak to Donald Scott about roads. Road markings are, as usual, needed. He is also chasing up a 40mph speed limit for Galabank.

Cllr Scott stated that Berwickshire was the worst hit by the electricity cuts during Storm Arwen. There was a great deal of misinformation given which is being taken up nationally.

He wonders whether the urinating offences were late at night when toilets are closed.

The meeting in February will be on zoom. The zoom licence runs out on 17th February but should be renewed.

The next meeting is on February 7th, 2022, at 7.30pm on zoom

AGENDA

1 QUESTIONS TO MSP'S ABOUT ROAD SAFETY AND GREYSTONE KNOWE WINDFARM

PLEASE NOTE: ALL QUESTIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN ADVANCE TO THE SECRETARY BY NOON MONDAY 31ST JANUARY AT THE LATEST. QUESTIONS ARE

WELCOMED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC. THEY MAY BE COMBINED WITH OTHER SIMILAR QUESTIONS WHEN SENT TO THE MSPs

- 2 APOLOGIES
- 3 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING
- 4 POLICE REPORT
- 5 GENERAL MATTERS
- 6 TREASURER'S REPORT
- 7 COUNCILLORS REPORT
- 8 PLANNING
- 9 CORRESPONDENCE
- 10 AOCB

ALL WELCOME

PLEASE CONTACT THE SECRETARY IF YOU WISH A LINK AT jjmushlin@gmail.com