

LAXTON AND MOORHOUSE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 7.30 pm on Tuesday 26 November 2024 at Laxton Visitor Centre, Laxton, Nottinghamshire

Present: Councillors:

S.Hill (chair)
J.Hill
M.Hennell
S. Rose
D. Sheard
A. Moorhouse
R. Creighton

In attendance at parish council meeting

C. Wilson (Clerk)
S. Michael (district councillor)
O. Scott (NSDC conservation and planning team)
Members of the public (x3)

		ACTION
LMPC/131/24	Apologies for absence: Mr Pringle's apologies were noted.	
LMPC/132/24	Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest, direct or indirect, in any items of business on the agenda.	
LMPC/133/24	Dispensations: None required.	
LMPC/134/24	<p>10 Minutes public speaking: Councillors were addressed by a representative of Carlton Parish Council. In the course of this councillors noted the following in particular:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. She had attended the recent JPAG meeting which had discussed retaining a consultant and parish council contributions to the associated costs.2. Her view of the complex issues raised by the proposed project, of the consequent need to consider and address planning policies and that working together would bring better prospects of success.3. The qualified local resident who had offered his services for the initial stages at no cost recommended that:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Residents focus on how the impact might be mitigated in their locality rather than on whether they supported or opposed the overall proposal andb. Highways, watercourse, food production, heritage assets and the East Coast mainline implications be considered.	
LMPC/135/24	<p>NSDC – Planning and conservation officer presentation and Q&A session: The chair welcomed Oliver Scott to the meeting and thanked him for his attendance. In relation to the GNR solar farm project, Mr Scott explained the following in particular:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. NSDC's role in the Development Consent Order (DCO) process2. Although NSDC is the local planning authority and determines most applications, it does not determine all applications, such as waste and national infrastructure projects (NIPs). In national infrastructure projects, NSDC is a consultee only and not a decision maker.3. It is clear from the early days of this government that	

increasing the UK's renewable energy capacity is of national importance.

4. Any solar farm project generating more than 49 megawatts is deemed to be a national infrastructure project. The current proposal will generate 800 megawatts so constitutes a national infrastructure project. It will cover a huge area of land
5. In terms of the weight attached to NSDC as a statutory consultee, it is regarded as an expert consultee.
6. The proposed development of the A46 at Newark is an example of a current DCO process in the local area and an illustrative example of the process and consultation in operation. The One Earth scheme is also the basis of a current DCO process.
7. NSDC has not yet formed a view on the GNR solar farm proposal
8. He encouraged everyone to make representations to NSDC who would, in time, be seeking parish council views.
9. The core areas on which he advised local residents to focus were the specific landscape impacts for their locality including listed buildings, loss of productive agricultural land and highways with concerns and objections based on local knowledge rather than more generally.
10. Update reports were being submitted to the Planning Committee in relation to the GNR and One Earth DCOs at the next meeting on 5 December 2024.
11. Parish meetings should also be consulted by NSDC as well as parish councils.
12. It was clear that the project would have a significant impact on the local community and landscape.
13. In deciding upon its response to the consultation, the Planning Committee will take account of its professional officers' appraisal which will be supplemented by local views.
14. Any DCO will invariably involve hundreds of reports often over a hundred pages long with many relating to highly technical content.
15. Although the process is for the Planning Inspector to produce a written report, the decision is for the Secretary of State to make.
16. Any consultant report will take account of material considerations. These would include impact on a landscape view. They would not include any right to a view or impact on property prices or other immaterial considerations.
17. Those who live in a locality already have this local landscape knowledge and knowledge in relation to the core areas referred to at sub paragraph 8 above without a consultant report. It is the residents who know the locality and understand the specific impacts in that locality.
18. The Planning Inspector will be looking at how the applicant has responded to the material considerations raised.
19. Mr Scott would be happy to provide links to online resources to support residents to identify and raise their local material considerations themselves. He will forward these to the clerk who will share them on the website and Facebook page.
20. He urged residents to look at the A46 documentation available on line as an example of the process and material considerations.
21. The Government also intends to consult on new national development policies which has potential implications for the local plan.
22. NSDC will take all views it receives into account.
23. Stage 1 of the process is consultation and mitigation. In this respect, residents were recommended to look at the specifics

**OS/
Clerk**

	<p>of the plans such as the fields or particular part of the landscape on which the development would have most impact and what could be done to mitigate that impact, including the removal of particular fields from the proposal.</p> <p>24. Stage 2 is the objection/approval stage.</p> <p>25. Listed status is important in the process. In terms of specific parts of the landscape, Moorhouse Church is a grade II listed chapel meaning that it is a very special building.</p> <p>26. Land around conservation areas is not specifically protected.</p> <p>27. Residents might consider the impact Moorhouse’s proximity to Laxton might have on the overall parish setting</p> <p>28. NSDC is working with NCC to produce a definitive map of solar panel locations.</p> <p>The following were also raised during Mr Scott’s presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The tension between national energy security and national food security. b. The existing power station and energy infrastructure which already exists in the area. <p>In relation to A46 improvements, Mr Scott confirmed that funding had not been withdrawn.</p> <p>He was also asked about Laxton as a conservation area and its protections in a context where there were a lot of empty farms and a parliamentary undertaking. Concern was expressed that these empty farms might be developed in a way which does not support working farms undermining the open field system. Mr Scott referred to the following in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Conservation area status controls matters such as demolition and trees and is a significant factor in any planning application. It carries great weight in the decision-making process and the planning authority must pay “special attention” as a result. ii. A conservation area is not a tool to refuse applications. The designation exists to manage the impact of applications. iii. Laxton is significant because of the relationship between its buildings and the open fields but the conservation area designation is not concerned with land ownership, civil or legal matters iv. The parliamentary undertaking is a civil matter. That said, that does not mean that is of no importance to members. Both they and NSDC officers understand the relationship and are open to discussion surrounding the unique qualities of Laxton and the open fields. NSDC has previously put ideas to the Estate. <p>The meeting noted the concern expressed at the risk of an incremental chipping away at the fundamental structure of the open field system.</p> <p>Mr Scott explained that a parish plan is the same as a neighbourhood plan and that such plans are not tools for stopping development.</p> <p>He also confirmed that the open field strips themselves are not protected by the conservation area status. However, the importance of the designation lies in its status as a significant consideration in any planning application.</p> <p>The chair thanked Mr Scott for his attendance and information provided. Mr Scott left the meeting at 9 pm.</p>	
<p>LMPC/136/24</p>	<p>Thoresby Estate report (if any): No report.</p>	

LMPC/137/24	Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 24 September 2024: The minutes of the parish council meeting held on 24 September 2024 were agreed as a true record and signed by the chair.	
LMPC/138/24	Matters arising: There were no matters arising.	
LMPC/139/24	<p>Reports from district and county councillors: Mr Pringle was absent.</p> <p>In her report, Mrs Michael referred to the following in particular:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A number of senior planners will be leaving NSDC before the end of the year 2. 200 Afghan military supporters are to be housed in the district 3. 50 asylum seekers are to be rehoused in the district 4. NSD is under a requirement to rehouse offenders on release from prison 5. The glass recycling collection scheme is up and running/ 	
LMPC/140/24	Reports from councillors: There were no reports.	
LMPC/141/24	2025 meeting schedule: Councillors approved the 2025 meeting dates and a new start time of 7.00 pm for the January 2025 meeting onwards.	
LMPC/142/24	Property matters including sports field, condition report and Glebe Field matters (if any): The clerk had contacted the Estate to explore the possibility of a smaller contribution. In response the Estate had suggested that the council make an application for funding to the Thoresby Charitable Trust. The application had been made and a decision was awaited.	
LMPC/143/24	<p>Planning matters:</p> <p>a. Applications: 24/01887/CPRIOR Application to determine if prior approval is required for change of use of existing steel portal framed agricultural building to storage unit, under Schedule 2, Part 3 Class R: : Councillors considered the application and agreed that the issues were for NSDC to determine.</p> <p>b. To note planning decisions by NSDC:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. 24/01535/LDCP – School Farm, High Street, Laxton, NG22 ONX – Certificate of lawful development issued – Decision noted. ii. 24/00690/FUL – Excavate ground and remove concrete and earth to lowr ground to original level – Steps farm, Main Street, Laxton, NG22 ONU – Approval noted. <p>c. Great North Road Solar Park – Update and consider contribution to planning consultant report to be commissioned by the local Joint Parish Council Action Group (JPAG): Councillors discussed the JPAG’s minutes and emails, NALC advice and council financial summary which had been previously circulated. They noted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The limited funds available to the parish council 2. NALC’s advice that, since councillors were not decision makers in the application process, issues of pre-judgment did not arise 3. NALC’s advice that the council was permitted to crowd fund 4. The information received from Mr Scott above 5. That Moorhouse has a group looking at the issues for Moorhouse 6. The Moorhouse resident leading that group was happy to liaise 	

	<p>with the local resident specialist who had volunteered his services to JPAG as referred to at item LMPC/134/24 above (10 minutes public speaking).</p> <p>Councillors agreed that residents' views on specific impacts should be sought using the website and Facebook and passed on to the volunteer specialist. The chair will liaise with the specialist. Councillors also agreed that they should have the opportunity to read and review the contents of the volunteer specialist's report as it relates to the parish before it is submitted.</p> <p>d. Compliance: Councillors reviewed the position in relation to the fence at Croftways, noting the planning implications in relation to height. The clerk was asked to raise the matter with NSDC. Concerns were also raised regarding a static van located on Weston Road at Moorhouse. It was noted that this was believed to be a site where residential planning permission had previously been refused. The chair will send photos to the clerk who will then raise the matter with NSDC.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Chair Clerk</p>
LMPC/144/24	<p>Defibrillator:</p> <p>a. Inspection report: Pad expiry and battery use by dates to be confirmed. Mrs Michael left the meeting at 9.30 pm</p> <p>b. Replacement defibrillator and funding: Deferred to January 2025.</p> <p>c. Provision of first aid kit: Deferred to January 2025. The clerk will circulate information regarding the first aid training.</p>	<p>Agenda</p> <p>Clerk</p>
LMPC/145/24	<p>Flood resilience working party – Report and any associated decisions: Mr Sheard reported that he had been in touch with Mr Marshall of NCC flood management team. NCC did not regard the parish as high priority but a member of the team would look into a natural flood management report. The working party has plans which it had been suggested might usefully be brought to the Court Leet. The Internal Drainage Board had also stated that the locality was not a priority area.</p>	
LMPC/146/24	<p>Christmas event 2024 – Parish council Christmas event group – Consider and approve:</p> <p>a. Final plans for the event: Councillors noted that the room and band had been booked, the plans for the tree to be erected and catering arrangements. Having considered the up to date plans, councillors approved the arrangements.</p> <p>b. Risk assessment approval: The risk assessment had been circulated and was approved.</p>	
LMPC/147/24	<p>Parish environment and appearance, including:</p> <p>a. Mowing of verges: Not required as an agenda item. Remove.</p> <p>b. Parish roads and pavements: The clerk will contact the NCC officer dealing with the matter with regard to the pavement surface between Bottom Farm and Moorgate Farm. Councillors noted that a concern had been raised regarding a shrub between the pub and the Bar which restricted visibility when in leaf. Councillors will inspect the issue when the hedge is in leaf.</p> <p>c. WWI and WWII remembrance memorial on the Green: Deferred to January 2025.</p> <p>d. Parish environment enhancement in recognition of previous serving parish council members: The chair will circulate a photo of the proposed location for the proposed bench.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllrs</p> <p>SH</p>
LMPC/148/24	<p>Financial matters:</p> <p>a. Financial position as at 31 October 2024: Councillors considered and noted the clerk's report showing the precise financial position at 31 October 2024 (incorporating the 2024-25</p>	

	<p>budget figures) which the chair cross referred to the bank statements.</p> <p>b. Accounts for payment: Councillors unanimously approved ten payments totalling £487.92. Councillors noted that the signatories issue continued.</p> <p>c. Open Field donation: Councillors discussed a donation and agreed that a donation in the sum of £80 should be made to be paid in January 2025 as part of that month's accounts for payment.</p> <p>d. Appointment of internal auditor: Councillors agreed that Halam parish clerk should be asked whether she would be prepared to undertake the role for a further year.</p> <p>e. Review system of internal control: Councillors discussed the operation of the system of internal control and agreed that it was adequate for the size and needs of the council and continued to operate effectively, subject to the appointment of an internal auditor which was in hand.</p> <p>f. Consider need for interim internal audit: The clerk advised councillors as to the on-going nature of the internal audit process. Councillors considered their financial affairs for the financial year to date. They decided that an interim internal audit would be disproportionate and was not justified.</p>	
LMPC/150/24	Service faults: Mr J Hill will provide the clerk with details of a lamp which is not working properly.	JH
LMPC/151/24	Correspondence: All items of correspondence noted including the Aqusacs offer from NSDC.	
LMPC/152/24	5 minutes public speaking time: A member of the public referred to first aid training.	
LMPC/153/24	Agenda items for next meeting: See above.	
LMPC/154/24	Date of next meeting: 7.00 pm Tuesday 28 January 2025 at the Visitor Centre.	

The meeting closed at 10.05 pm