

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

OF

FINMERE PARISH COUNCIL

(Meeting of Council to pass resolution to oppose High Speed 2 Bill)

Minutes of meeting held on 11TH of April 2014 in Finmere Village Hall

Present:- Councillors, Mike Kerford-Byrnes (MKB) (Chairman), Barbara Cunningham (BC), Mike Kirby (MK) and Amanda Hodgkins (AH)

In attendance:- Sharron Chalcraft (Parish Clerk and RFO) and seven members of the public

Apologies:- No apologies were received

The law requires the PC to advertise and post agendas for a meeting 10 days in advance and to have 4 councillors present at that meeting in order to pass a motion to petition to oppose the Hybrid Bill. There is a process to filter out 'time wasters' among objectors and thus to object you need to 'jump through hoops'. The petition will need to be delivered in person and a fee of £20 will be payable. The validity of the petition will be scrutinised.

The PC has called this meeting as the HS2 Bill will impact on the local environment, not least during the building phase when traffic will move onto minor roads in order to avoid the 1100 to 1200 vehicle movements per day of construction traffic. Controls are needed. The proposed raising of the A421 will also affect the village, in particular the Warren Farm area which will have its entrance moved, to a location which was deemed in the past to be too dangerous.

The PC resolve to oppose the Hybrid Bill on HS2 pursuant to Section 239 of the Local Government Act 1972 as a necessary pre-requisite to formal petitioning.

Proposed – MKB, seconded – BC, carried unanimously.

The PC must resolve who is to present the petition and who can negotiate on behalf of the PC if such procedure is required. The petitioning process will take place after the election and so it is best to nominate by office rather than individual name.

The Chairman of the PC is to present the petition with no constraints.

Proposed – MKB, seconded – AH, carried unanimously.

The PC must resolve who is to negotiate on behalf of the PC if it is necessary. The urgent business procedure would be used to circulate information and receive feedback from all councillors but the PC has been advised to formally appoint two individuals in case.

The Chairman of the PC and the Clerk/RFO are to negotiate with no constraints on behalf of the PC if necessary.

Proposed – MKB, seconded – MK, carried unanimously.

Members of the public present request clarification of the proposals for the area:

The A421 is to be raised by 2.9 metres. There will be no safe entrance/exit location for Warren Farm. It is to be relocated to its former position, which was deemed unsafe when the development took place. This location will now be even more unsafe as it will be hidden by the rise in the road. This proposal will raise the road to above the hedge line and pollution and noise during the building phase will be severe, with vehicle movements as frequent as every 100 seconds. The PC is to argue for the provision of a bund/noise barrier or see whether the train line could be lowered into a cutting rather than raising the road. Featherbed Lane (referred to as Westbury Lane) is to be closed for 18 months of the building period. There will be a 7-8 mile diversion through Finmere. The impact of this is categorised by HS2 as moderate adverse impact. The total construction time is likely to be 3 yrs. All barn owls living 1.5km on either side of the line will be lost. Landowners just beyond the 1.5km mark are being encouraged to place nest boxes to replenish the population at a safe distance.

Those living within 300 metres of the track will be eligible for some compensation payments, those further away are entitled to nothing. It has been pointed out that owls up to 1.5km away are getting a new house, humans over 300m from the track get nothing. To give some perspective Hill Leys, MKB's house on the HS2 side of the village, is 750 metres from the track and the centre of the village is 1100 metres away.

In summing up, the PC will continue its work to get this petitioning process right in order to be able to submit a petition. It took 2.5 years to process the 389 petitions raised against Crossrail, there are likely to be significantly more petitions against HS2.

The meeting closed at 8.05 p.m.