

Draft Minutes

The Annual Parish Meeting Held on 9th May 2023 In The Congregational Chapel, Hall Rd, Oulton

1. The Chair thanked everyone for coming
2. The minutes of the last meeting held on 17th May 2022 were agreed and signed
3. Apologies for absence - Cllr. Sue Catchpole
4. Chairs report:-

Oulton Parish Council held 7 meetings for 2022-23

28th June 2022
2nd August 2022
6th September 2022
25th October 2022
6th December 2022
24th January 2023
7th March 2023

Local Authority Planning Applications

Solar Farm on land at the southern end of The Street.

The original solar farm application (**BDC 20201776**), having been refused permission, was submitted by the applicants to the planning inspectorate for appeal in 2022.

Oulton Parish Council attended and participated in the Hearing of the appeal. The planning inspectorate having looked at the evidence dismissed the appeal in June 2022.

However the revised solar farm application submitted to **Broadland District Council (20211249/20211288)** was approved prior to the appeal outcome, but has yet to be constructed.

Currently the developers are in the process of the discharge of planning conditions ahead of construction, these conditions have now been discharged and approved.

Survey work carried out by the applicants was carried out at the beginning of the year.

A recent informal conversation with the landowner indicates there may be a delay in construction, this is due to grid connection complications and capacity restraints.

OPC has not had any confirmation on this from the developer, however recent articles in the media seem to suggest this is a national problem and renewable developers waiting to connect projects are having to wait until they move up the queue.

The proposed poultry unit submitted to **Broadland District Council (20210429) & North Norfolk District Council (PF/21/0317)** is seeking permission to build on the Parish boundaries of Corpusty with Saxthorpe, Heydon & Oulton, is still awaiting a decision. OPC has been informed by residents that poultry are currently on site, OPC are looking into

whether this is permitted development as well as requesting an update on the applications current status.

BDC 20221964 Church farm application to install fertiliser tanks and storage was submitted in January. There was a need for some modifications to the application and the application was approved with conditions, which will require a retaining wall and replanting of a hedgerow.

The Airfield Solar Farm..

At the last round of the contract for difference auction which is the mechanism whereby renewable projects can bid for a strike price for electricity generated, saw the Airfield Solar Farm Phase 2 apply and win. It is therefore assumed that the second phase will be built in the near future. OPC have not had any communication from the developers to inform us of this.

Given the current queuing for connections to the grid this may also be delayed.

Offshore wind

Hornsea Three and Norfolk Boreas were granted their Contract for Difference (CfD), **which gives them their access to government subsidy** and therefore could proceed with their construction. Norfolk Vanguard would apply for their CfD in this years round, as the government have changed to annual bids.

Orsted have been very active in Oulton. Their Main Construction Compound has been set up on the old runways and the Highway Intervention Scheme at the southern end of The Street was installed in January/February of this year. However it has not been without issues. The signs went in late, with more permanent signs yet to arrive and the passing places still needing final finishing off along The Street. Further work was carried out to some of the passing places in the last few weeks.

OPC has had several meetings with Orsted and their contractors Volkerfitzpatrick to iron out these issues. Orsted and Volkerfitzpatrick are assuring us that going forward they are reachable if there are any local concerns. Contact details are available on the OPC website and we encourage residents to contact Orsted's Community Liaison Officer immediately if you have any concerns.

Vattenfall's contractors J Murphy & Son have set up their compound at the Hangar Farmyard in the last few weeks.

OPC have had a meeting with representatives from Murphy's and Vattenfall to voice several serious concerns OPC has had, as well as queries from residents about traffic going through Oulton Street. These issues have been raised by OPC as some aspects of Vattenfall's interpretation of their DCO, It is hoped that these issues have now been resolved.

Vattenfall are at the early stages of their pre-construction phase and have yet to have their planning conditions discharged with Broadland District Council/South Norfolk. They propose to commence construction work in September.

Norfolk Vanguard & Boreas will be known collectively as the **Norfolk Offshore Wind Zone**.

The cable construction for Orsted and Vattenfall projects will differ in construction method.....

Orsted propose starting at one end, Weybourne and progressing along the cable route through to Norwich Main. The Main Construction compound will therefore be operational until construction work stops, so probably for the next 4 years..

Vattenfall are proposing several work fronts, dividing the cable route into sections and work carried out along those sections at the same time. We are still awaiting confirmation as to exactly how long they will be keeping a **second** construction compound in this parish active. This has yet to be constructed on the old Heydon Road, beyond the Hangar, adjacent to the track across the field to Marriott's Way - and will be quite large.

Equinor Sheringham & Dudgeon Extension Project

Having carried out their statutory consultations last year, Equinor submitted their application to the Planning Inspectorate Infrastructure and the Examination commenced on 17th January 2023, and will continue for 6 months.

Alison Shaw and myself have attended Open Floor Hearings & Issue Specific Hearings relating to matters of concern in Oulton.

Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) being a main issue. Equinor are proposing more HDD than the other three projects.

Two major sections of HDD work in Oulton are under the River Bure at Irmingland as well as the proposed Solar Farm at the southern end of The Street.

Our concerns relate to the duration of works and whether there will be a need for night time as well as any associated Noise & Vibration issues from the HDD work.

This as well as cumulative impacts at the southern end of The Street from all projects.

The Planning Inspectorate have carried out two site visits in Oulton, one unaccompanied visit to the River Bure/Blickling Rd section and an accompanied site visit to the southern end of The Street and an access from the B1149 which is where the proposed HDD work would be under the proposed solar farm and its potential impacts on two properties.

The Parish Council were in attendance.

The Examination is due to close on 17th July 2023, the ExA then has three months to write their recommendations to the Secretary of State, who then has three months to make a decision on whether to grant Equinor with their Development Consent Order.

The Norfolk Parishes Movement for an Offshore Transmission Network - of which Oulton Parish Council, along with 95 other Parish and Town Councils in Norfolk, is a member - is actively engaging with this Examination process, and is promoting to the Panel of Inspectors the viability and justification of an entirely different method of joining Equinor's offshore wind farms to the onshore grid - namely laying a cable along the seabed from the wind farms directly into The Wash and connecting to the major substation at Walpole. Such a simple solution would remove at a stroke the need for the entire 60 kilometres of the currently proposed cable route to Norwich Main - with all its attendant disruptions to the environment, businesses and communities along the way. This suggestion is attracting significant interest from the Panel - who are now asking serious questions about it to National Grid.

Orsted and Vattenfall Community Benefit Funds.

Vattenfall held a meeting setting out their plans for their **Norfolk Offshore Wind Zone Community Benefit Fund** in 2022 this was held in **Reepham in May 2022** and then in **Aylsham in July 2022**. OPC attended both meetings. Vattenfall set out the criteria for those wishing to apply for funding. The fund is not open and will come into effect once constructions starts in September this year (2023).

Orsted Hornsea Three held their community fund information days also in Reepham and OPC and the church attended to find out about the criteria for **Orsted Hornsea Three Community Fund**.

The criteria included communities along the Norfolk coastline to Gt Yarmouth as well as the cable route to Norwich and including Oulton as host of the Main Construction Compound. It is hoped the Church will be able to apply for some funding to add a toilet and Served, opening up and extending the uses as a community space for Oulton. The Parish Council is fully supportive of this bid.

Grantscape the company who will oversee the funding for Orsted sent a representative to attend a Parish Council meeting in March this year to explain the community funding and answered questions

Tree Planting

Alison Shaw organised the tree planting for the playground, as part of Norfolk County Councils Jubilee Trees for Norfolk Scheme. This was made possible by funding from Cllr Steve Riley; OPC and the community of Oulton would like to thank him for help with this project.

Alison persuaded several of the community to come along to the playground in January, once the weather had improved enough for us to get a spade in the ground. The National Trust (NT) and the National Trust volunteers came along to help clear the areas to be planted.

'Many hands make light work' or so the saying goes and in this case it was very much the case.

The area was cleared and waste vegetation shredded to be used later on as mulch, in preparation of planting over 500 native hedgerow plants and trees.

Alison collected the hedgerow plants and trees, and once more with the help of the NT and the community of Oulton planted and place protective guards around the new plants, this was done in rather changeable weather conditions, but a job well done.

Thank you to all who helped with this, Alison for organising and the NT for their knowledge and help.

The piece of Oak the NT kindly donated last year is going to be made into a bench in the playground, a good finishing touch, and many thanks to Paul Killingback for constructing the bench and volunteering to install it, Thank you.

Cost of Living

This year has been a tough one for us all and there has been plenty of information produced nationally and locally to help anyone who needed help and support. This was the first time that OPC saw the need to collate information and produced a leaflet, with help available from district and county councils, this was hand delivered to residents. It is hoped this proved useful. As energy and food cost continue to rise help is still available if needed. If anyone feels there is a need for more to be done locally, please let the Parish Council know.

Avian Flu

This year saw Oulton impacted by avian flu.

DEFRA sending out information on how poultry needed to be housed to protect from wild birds. This saw all who kept poultry no matter how few having to construct suitable housing.

Also locally saw visits from DEFRA to do inspections.

The biggest impact was the commercial premises who were hit with an outbreak just before Christmas and the flock having to be humanely destroyed.

The implications of which are still evident with the demolition of some of the older poultry sheds.

Covid Plaque

The covid plaque which was presented to Oulton has finally been installed in the Church Yard, along side the footpath in the newest part of the churchyard. I would like to thank Paul Killingback for making the post and plinth and installing it and for the Church for finding a suitable location.

This Years events....

Box day

Unfortunately no one came forward to offer help organise Box Day this year.

However, we can still have a pared back version of Box day.

The suggestion is that we still have the games...tug o war, rounders and children games if needed, and we all bring a picnic to have on what we hope will be a fine afternoon and evening. It would still be a community get together.

Veterans Weekend 100 Group

This year the 100 Group will be holding their weekend of events on 20th & 21st May.

Oulton will be hosting an act of remembrance at the RAF Oulton Memorial on Saturday 20th May at 12 noon. All are welcome to come along and join residents and the Veterans families. Chris Lambert will be leading the ceremony this year.

5. Cllr Sue Catchpole Statement included in her absence....

There were successes for the Liberal democrats at the recent local council elections on the 4th May 2023.

The Broadland and South Norfolk District council have now moved to the Horizon Building, but some staff are still operating out of Thorpe Lodge.

National Trust

Blickling Hall

There is a new role at the Blickling Estate which is a Property Curator - Megan Downes

This is needed due to the significant collection at Blickling.

There is to be a forward Plan for the Estate, including looking into the Social History of the area surrounding the Estate. This would include community History of Oulton.

There is a new Volunteer Group, who will looking into the Archeology on the Blickling Estate, looking at maps and crop marks.

Currently they will look at the census records for 1921. The NT are also looking for oral Histories of past residents, it was pointed out that there were recordings submitted to the Norfolk Records office.

Blickling Hall will be assessed for any structural damage and for storage facilities.

NT Estate - Deer Management - Adam Curtis

It is not NT policy to cull deer, deer on local land owners property can be culled with appropriate licenses and safeguards.

The NT will monitor the situation going forward.

Oulton Church - Rev Andrew Whitehead, Sue Hall

Coronation Tea - 30 people attended, special thanks to Paul, Carolann and Helen who helped set up the event.

There was a church tidy up session along with the churchyard spruce up, volunteers needed.

The Church **Toilet and Servery**, The church are looking towards applying for grants as well as fund raising.

The architect appointed will look at what is appropriate for Oulton.

Fundraising:- The Fete will be held on 3rd September, volunteers needed, Teas, Stalls, items to sell.

Vanessa is hosting a monthly Coffee Morning at the Church on the first Wednesday of the month.

Oulton Hall National Garden Scheme is on 4th June, the Church will be doing the Teas and is another main fundraising event, Cakes and Volunteers needed.

There will be Two Art Exhibitions in the Church on 5th/6th June and then on 17th/21st June.

Residents

Still concerns about courier deliveries being left in Oulton Street when they are intended for Orsted at the Main Compound.

Request that they use 'What3Words' to find the exact location

The Community Liaison officer is hard to contact, OPC will look into this.