

Beswick Parish Council

Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held at 7 pm on Tuesday, 4 February 2025 at Kilnwick Village Hall

Minutes

1 Apologies for Absence:

Four parishioners sent apologies.

Present:

Beswick Parish Councillors Sarah Beachell (Chair), Sarah Duncan (Vice Chair), Tony Corscadden, Chris Hill, Ben Jeffrey, Ward Councillor Jeremy Wilcock, Julia Bugg (Clerk) and 13 parishioners (four Beswick and nine Kilnwick).

2 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests:

Sarah Beachell.

3 Proposed Dalton Estate Solar Farm and effects on Parishioners:

The Chair opened the meeting and passed the running to the Clerk who summarised the understanding of the proposal to date, distributed maps and information provided by Kingfisher/Orsted and invited parishioners to present any further knowledge they may have. A number of parishioners, some very much affected by the proposal and others not at all, gave their views and reasons for opposition or acceptance. It was clear that whilst the location of the proposed solar farm is not wanted, many parishioners are accepting of it as it is not likely to affect them directly. The residents of the BPC and the other parishes affected (Watton, Lockington, Hutton Cranswick and Leconfield) who will be surrounded by solar panels, have to be disturbed by their installation and lose their means of livelihood and perhaps homes as well as all associated with that the real ones to be supported. It was reported that the Dalton Estate, Orsted and those who own their own land are the beneficiaries but tenants are being omitted from the considerations. The East Yorkshire Council do not need to give planning permission and the current government are supporting these projects so it is unlikely to not go ahead.

Parishioners noted that the proposed installation was not the first in the UK or abroad and that the PC should learn from the experiences of others. Councillors responded with the details of other proposals they have researched and how it can use the strengths of these to its advantage.

Cllr Corscadden and a number of parishioners were very keen to detail that the habitat, flora and fauna would be devastated by the proposal with 15 years plus of environmental stewardship meaning that there was no requirement to rewild as it has already been done.

It was generally agreed that the documentation received from Orsted and Kingfisher Solar is too vague and at too low a level to allow for individuals to assess the true effects on their homes and businesses. As a result a parishioner provided the PC with an OS map with the proposed area mapped onto it (see below). It was agreed that the cable Orsted has permission to run through the area to bring power from Hornsea 4 to its storage facilities at Jock's Lodge (located south of Beverley) is to cause disruption, but their reduction in wind turbines being installed off-shore should not mean that good agricultural land is lost. The question relating to how will the populous of the UK be fed if all of the agricultural land is covered with solar panels was raised and discussed. It was noted that this proposal amounts to a tiny percentage of the farmland of the East Riding by one resident but others noted that when you add the other public and private proposed and already installed solar developments to it, it amounts to a great deal.

Questions were posed as to who would manage the land in terms of ditches and dykes being cleared and other land management which affects flooding lower down the River Hull, if public rights of way would be maintained and managed, what would be done to make roadways and access onto the A164 suitable for the number and weight of vehicles moving on them, what would be necessary to connect the solar panels to the already permitted cables and why these cables are DC when rotary devices (wind turbines) create AC power? It was suggested that the proposed development be moved closer to the intended recipients of the power and leave the agricultural land to be used for feeding the nation.

Claims by Orsted/Kingfisher relating to employment for the area are seen as too vague to be of issue but who will manage the land in and around the solar panels was raised as a query as to if this could result in income for the farmers who lose their tenanted land.

Questions were raised as to the legacy the installation could result in; what can the affected parishes get for this imposition? A percentage of the profit to be given yearly, following initial donations. It was agreed that the benefits should be made directly to the PCs and not given to ERYC to be distributed widely and to parishes not affected. Compensation to be paid directly to tenant farmers who lose their land and not to landlords to further increase their income.

Following extensive discussion and input from many parishioners as well as the Ward and Parish Councillors, the meeting was brought to a close in order to allow the parish councillors to discuss their meeting with Kingfisher on 6 February 2025.

Actions:

1. Create a separate WhatsApp group for all parishioners, purely to communicate information regarding the proposal.
2. Research information relating to other solar installations to use in the fight.
3. Request Environmental and any other useful reports from Kingfisher.
4. Determine the grade of the land proposed in order to request that Grade 3B, 4 and 5 only be used.
5. Share information relating to the Kingfisher meeting via the parish website in addition to the BPC meeting minutes.
6. Parishioners to attend Parish Council Meetings for further updates.
7. Attend Kingfisher meetings at Lockington/Hutton Cranswick/Cottingham and Beverley to ask questions directly and get more in-depth information.
8. Ascertain the benefits to the parish to be received as a result of the proposal being permitted.

Meeting became CLOSED to parishioners at this point, and they left the meeting.

4. Councillors and representatives to formulate questions to be presented at the meeting with Kingfisher Solar on 6 February 2025.

Following discussion, it was agreed to listen to what Kingfisher has to say and to ask questions at the end and to include those below if not already answered:

1. When will the work start and by when will it be finished and operational.
2. Deer fencing – type and height.
3. PROW – footpaths and bridleways how be assured will remain and how will we ensure they are safe to use; clear fencing and wider than the designated width.
4. Stewardship of the land.
5. How will wildlife benefit given the work already being done.
6. Water removal and water management.
7. Use of land under/around solar panels.
8. How close to housing and what will be done to improve visual aspect.
9. What benefits to the parishes.
10. Financial compensation to tenant farmers.
11. Wellbeing and mental health of parishioners, particularly those directly affected.
12. When will the actual land usage be known and will this be subject to change once declared.

Any other relevant questions as determined.

Meeting Closed at 8.50 pm.

