

**Isle of Wight AONB Partnership - Development Control & Planning Work Group**  
**Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 25 January 2005**  
**1.00 p.m. Seaclose Offices, Newport**

**In Attendance**

Denis Russell	IW AONB Steering Committee Vice-Chairman/Community & Parish Portfolio
David Court	IW AONB Steering Committee Coastal Portfolio
Vicky Basford	IW AONB Steering Committee Historic Environment Portfolio
Dennis Russell	Chairman CPRE
John Brownscombe	AONB Officer
Marijke Ransom	AONB Planning & Information Officer
Carrie McDowell	AONB Administration Assistant

**1) Apologies**

Richard Grogan	IW AONB Steering Committee Nature Conservation Portfolio (Chair)
Tony Tutton	IW AONB Steering Committee Chairman

In the absence of RG, or TT, it was agreed that DR would chair the meeting.

**2) Minutes of previous meeting & Matters Arising**

JB advised that the wind farm application at Wellow had still not been received, but we had been informed that there will be a reduction from seven turbines to six, the likely reason is that this was a result of their visual impact assessment. The consultants (Halcrow) employed by the Local Authority to manage this application have stated in a briefing to key stakeholders that the impact on the landscape and the AONB will be a key consideration.

Concern was expressed about the long-term financial viability of the proposed wind farm, and the enforcement of any decommissioning should it prove not to be viable. In response, it was noted that there is a Government requirement for energy providers to buy energy from renewable sources, and that the responsibility for de-commissioning could be transferred to any liquidating company.

Regarding the turbine at Cheverton Down, the ground has been broken but no actual construction has yet commenced. If they wish to increase the height above 55m (to improve the viability of the scheme), an Environmental Assessment Impact will be required.

**3) Development Control**

**3.1 Additional information submitted with re-advertised application for Undercliff Drive Highway Stabilisation Works**

The application has been re-advertised with additional information, based on the requests from the Local Planning Authority by consultees. More detailed artists impressions have been received, but JB suggested that further information may still be required. JB provided an overview of the proposed works in each of the four areas, and the work group discussed the implications. It was agreed that the greatest potential impact is Area 3: Woodington in particular the extent of the cutting and the level of tree clearance. It was considered necessary to request further visual details of the scheme at road level, and details of the design of gabion baskets and rock netting. With regards to Area 4: Woodlands it was suggested that wooden bollards as used in Newtown would be more appropriate. Other concerns regarding the whole scheme, were the creation of wide verges, the landscaping and ongoing maintenance. There were concerns that the proposal would appear overly 'manicured' and would detract from the character of the Undercliff.

With regard to the proposed drainage works, it was felt that it was inappropriate for us to comment on the 'engineering' side of the scheme. The group was generally supportive of the downgrading of the existing road to a footpath and the reinstatement of other footpaths affected by the landslip, although disappointed that Cripple Path would not be re-opened.

In response to DC's question regarding the position of English Nature, JB said that EN were originally unhappy that there was no proper assessment of nature conservation interests, and considered the visual impact was a secondary issue. They are now generally supportive of the new application, and feel it will be good for nature conservation to have an open area to increase biodiversity. Our view is obviously that landscape is a primary issue, and we do not necessarily have to concur with English Nature's view.

Regarding the AONB Unit's current objection, the work group were concerned if we removed our objection, we would have to rely on conditions to resolve our outstanding concerns. Based on the experience of other major capital schemes, the work group did not feel confident about conditions being properly enforced.

The application will be going to committee on 15 February 2005. It was noted that timescales were an issue, as there could be some logistical problems in carrying out the proposed works, particularly regarding removal of trees during the season when birds will be nesting.

The point was also raised about whether a separate paper could be sent to committee that was not part of the Case Officer's report, outlining our views. JB will see if this approach will be acceptable. It was delegated to the AONB Officer to compile final comments and submit these to the Local Planning Authority, based on further information received from the applicant's agent. ***See final response attached.***

### **3.2 Development Control Monitoring update**

MR circulated a paper detailing applications in the AONB between October and December 2004. This is the first year we have been able to provide a quarterly comparison on similar trends. There were more delegated decisions compared with 2003, and approximately 70% of all development within the AONB was classed under Department of Environment categorisation as minor. Of minor developments, more applications were refused than during the same period in 2003, which may be attributed to a new specialist householder team within DC.

Approximately 70% of planning applications objected to by the Unit were refused during this quarter, compared with 60% during the previous year. Regarding our 'other' comments including comments on design and siting, refusals were up from 25% last year to 40% this year. This indicates there is a need for us to further analyse our 'other' category.

Updates on the following Planning Applications were requested by the meeting:-

- a) Roller Coaster Ride, Robin Hill Country Park (**no decision yet**).
- b) Wight Leisure Promotional Signs (**these were granted temporary permission to 2007, but restricted to display between the months of May and June, and must be removed within seven days of date of last event**).

**Action:**

**M Ransom**

#### 4) Planning Policy

##### 4.1 South East Regional Spatial Strategy (SE Plan)

This is a very important document, which is part of the new planning system. Policies agreed at a higher level cannot be challenged at local level. Three representatives for the Isle of Wight form part of SEERA, and they also have a representative from the CPRE. MR will prepare draft comments by early March for circulation to members of the DCPWG, and suggests a further meeting of the Group at the end of March to make any necessary amendments to the draft comments. It was also suggested that circulation of the draft comments could be widened through the Partnership Update and our website.

The Isle of Wight has been designated as a Special Policy Area, and it was felt we should put forward a strongly worded concern regarding the capacity for suggested growth.

##### 4.2 Equestrian SPG

This will be an AONB guidance note rather than an SPG. A revised consultation draft is being prepared reflecting this change. The draft will include illustrations of good and bad practice derived from photographs. A list of consultees including local horse clubs is being drawn up to provide comment on the consultation draft.

#### 5) Regional Meetings

##### 5.1 Chilterns AONB Planning Conference, September 2004

This conference was very interesting, with details about the pressure on another AONB. The Chilterns has to work with 18 different Local Authorities, and has a large team containing a dedicated Planning Officer, and an AONB Officer who wields considerable political influence.

##### 5.2 Local Development Framework Seminar, Guildford January 2005

The Regional Spatial Strategy has an important emphasis on the development plan process. It involves not just land use but also health, education, employment and culture linking to create a sustainable community. MR provided a slide presentation giving an overview of all the relevant information.

#### 6) Any Other Business

VB asked about a hedge removal at Sandford Farm, but this is not in the AONB.

DR asked about the Unit's relocation to the Innovation Centre. JB confirmed this would be taking place, but no timetable had yet been decided. The offices are bigger, but will also house the LDF consultants working for the Local Authority, and rooms are available for meetings.

JB will be giving a presentation this evening to RIBA, who have representation on the Partnership via Mr P Kilby.

Regarding posts on the road from Whitwell to Ventnor and the possible hedge removal, JB will provide a view to the Highway Authority on the impact of these works.

**Action:**

**J Brownscombe**

Regarding Gore Basin, the permission erroneously granted by the Local Authority has now been withdrawn. It has been decided that enforcement action will be taken, but there is some confusion as to who should receive the notice. There is an event planned for April/May which has not been advertised, and it is understood the issue will be discussed as a matter of urgency by the next Isle of Wight Development Control Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 3.30 pm

cdm  
10 February 2005