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## STRATEGIC AND TECHNICAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 4 NOVEMBER 2022

**Present:** Cllrs Robin Cook (Chairman), John Worth (Vice-Chairman), Shane Bartlett, Dave Bolwell, Alex Brenton, Kelvin Clayton, Jean Dunseith, Mike Dyer, Sherry Jespersen, Mary Penfold and Belinda Ridout

**Apologies:** Cllrs David Tooke

**Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):**

Ann Collins (Area Manager – Western and Southern Team), Philip Crowther (Legal Business Partner - Regulatory), Mike Garrity (Head of Planning), Anna Lee (Service Manager for Development Management and Enforcement), Elaine Tibble (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and Sarah Barber (Senior Landscape Architect)

**58. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2022 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**59. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting.

**60. Application Number P/FUL/2021/01920 - Land at Cruxton Farm  
Cruxton Lane Cruxton DT2 0EB**

The application had been the subject of a member site visit on the morning of the committee meeting.

The Development Management Area Manager S/W introduced the report for the installation of ground-mounted solar panel photovoltaic solar arrays, substations, inverter stations, security fencing, access tracks, landscaping and other ancillary infrastructure. The application site consisted of 17.66 hectares of land to provide 11.8 megawatts of electricity which would power 4,781 homes.

Members were shown maps for the main road and access points for construction vehicles and workers, an aerial view of Cruxton and the two fields of the application proposal.

Details of the perimeter 2.2m security fence with additional tree planting proposals and the orientation of the solar panels were highlighted. The application site was within the AONB and the Development Management Area Manager S/W put into context the

terms of other solar farms in close proximity. The Officer's report made reference to the listed buildings, the two bowl barrows and the MacMillan Way which was over 200 miles in length and ran through the site.

The Key Planning Issues were explained with great weight given to the AONB and the visual amenity and views from the MacMillan Way.

Members were reminded of the recommendation and reason for recommendation.

Oral representation was received from Mr Guy Dickinson on behalf of Dorset CPRE and Mr Richard Brown Landscape Planning Officer for the Dorset AONB Team – in objection to the application. Mr Mark Harding addressed the committee on behalf of the applicant in support of the application.

In response to member questions the Development Management Area Manager S/W advised that the assumption was that most cabling would go underground or at an appropriate height and this could be conditioned if members were minded to approve the application.

In their discussion the committee felt that the application would have a huge impact on the area and that the benefits it would bring were not sufficient to outweigh the harm to the landscape in the AONB. Although supportive of solar arrays and sustainable sources of energy they did not feel it was the right location for this facility. The MacMillan route was considered a very important national walk with an open vista which would be lost within the tunnel effect of additional fencing and proposed planting. There were numerous alternative sites where this facility could be located. Although there was some member support to approve the application, most found the arguments for refusal more compelling

Proposed by Cllr Jespersen, seconded by Cllr Penfold.

**Decision: That the application be refused for the reasons outlined in the appendix to these minutes.**

**61. Urgent items**

There were no urgent items

**62. Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

**Appendix**

## **Update Sheet**

**Duration of meeting:** 2.00 - 3.05 pm

**Chairman**

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## Strategic and Technical Planning Committee 04 November 2022 Decision List

**Application Reference:** P/FUL/2021/01920

**Application Site** Land at Cruyton Farm Cruyton Lane Cruyton DT2 0EB

**Proposal:** Install ground-mounted solar panel photovoltaic solar arrays, substations, inverter stations, security fencing, access tracks, landscaping and other ancillary infrastructure.

**Recommendation:** Refuse.

The proposed development, by reason of its appearance, scale and positioning would have a detrimental impact upon the character, landscape and visual quality of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) contrary to policy ENV 1 and ENV 10 of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan (2015). The proposal would also fail to meet the test for major development in the AONB as set out in National Planning Policy Framework para 177 and the public benefits of the development, predominantly its contribution towards renewable energy are not considered to significantly outweigh the harm to the AONB, failing to comply with local plan policy COM 11 and policy C1.a) of the Dorset AONB Management Plan 2019-2024.

**Decision: that the application be refused.**

**Reason for refusal:**

The proposed development by reason of its appearance, scale and positioning would have a detrimental impact upon the character, landscape and visual quality of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) contrary to policies ENV1 and ENV10 of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan (2015). The proposal would also fail to meet the test for major development in the AONB as set out in National Planning Policy Framework para 177 and the public benefits of the development, predominantly its contribution towards renewable energy are not considered to significantly outweigh the harm to the AONB, failing to comply with local plan policy COM11 and policy C1.a) of the Dorset AONB Management Plan 2019-2024.

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**Strategic and Technical Planning Committee – Update Sheet  
Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

**Planning Applications**

<b>Application Ref.</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Agenda ref.</b>	<b>Page no.</b>
P/FUL/2021/01920	Land at Crupton Farm, Crupton Lane, Crupton DT2 0EB	5	7-30
<p>Additional comment from Maiden Newton Parish Council:</p> <p><i>Maiden Newton Parish Council are not attending the meeting but may watch on other platforms.</i></p> <p><i>Please see this comment to support the proposals:</i></p> <p><i>Maiden Newton Parish Council supports the proposal for the Solar Farm at Crupton, given the current cost of living crisis and escalating electricity costs this proposal will go some way to negate this by providing electricity to 4800 homes per year. We hope that the planning committee will share our views.</i></p>			

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