A meeting of Lowick Parish Council was held on Thursday 16th January 2014 at 7.30pm in Lowick CofE First School

Present: JA Huddart, Mrs A Worlock, Mrs F Burn, Mrs MA Bell, Mrs LA Bradbury, Mrs S Graham, SA Mather, P Hanson, Councillor RJD Watkin, D Butterworth (Force 9 Energy) PC G Perry and 18 members of the public

1. The Chairman welcomed all present and opened the meeting

2. Apologies for absence were received from W Perks

3. Minutes of previous meeting – these were agreed as being correct

4. Matters Arising
   - The ivy has been cut back
   - JA Huddart is waiting to hear more about a possible merger with Fenwick Parish Council, and he has left a message with Liam Henry at County Hall regarding this possibility
   - DF15 Speed sign to be ordered and the Parish Council will accept responsibility for maintenance
   - P Hanson had produced a report on the war memorial which was circulated with the minutes, RJD Watkin pointed out that the Barmoor war memorial is on County Council land
   - No reply has been received regarding the school transport

5. Planning Applications
   Application No: Ref: 13/03867/FUL : Demolition of an existing public house for a residential scheme comprising 4 no. dwellings and detached car ports : The Black Bull, 2-4 Main Street, Lowick
   - JA Huddart said that the application had just been received by the Parish Council and the plans were on tables for anyone who would like to view them. RJD Watkin declared an interest saying that he was Vice-Chairman of the North Area Planning Committee, he said he could listen to the discussion but couldn’t make any comments.

   JA Huddart asked members of the public present at the meeting if they had any comments, these are summarised as
   - Serious flooding concerns as this site has been badly flooded twice in the last 10/12 years which has resulted in the pub being temporarily shut, the last time being in 2010. It was not thought that the proposed underground water collection tanks would be big enough to store all the rain water which runs onto the site. Also the heavy vehicles which would be involved in the proposed development could damage the canalisation under the car park which in turn could cause flooding to the properties on South Road, this does not appear to be in keeping with recent government guidelines saying developments should not be built where there is a flood risk. RJD Watkin said the planning authority would take advice from the Environment Agency
   - Because of the history of flooding questions were asked as to whether the houses would be saleable of insurable
   - Water voles have recently been seen nearby
   - Heritage issues, there does not seem to have been any historical research by the applicants – the Black Bull is in an historic part of the village – with neighbouring properties being listed and. The road originally went through the village near the wall at Lowick Hall and the burn was used as a wash area for vehicles. Maps show that there has been a building there since the 1700s and it is an important building within the village.
   - There is no archaeological report
   - Neglect of maintenance is not considered a reason to knock the building down, the pub is trading successfully and is a vital amenity for tourism. The restaurant is popular and the accommodation provided is regularly fully booked, the planning application totally ignores the restaurant and accommodation side of the business. Closing the business would also mean loss of employment for a number of local people
   - There is no provision for low cost housing which is required in the village
   - RJD Watkin said it was difficult to argue against houses on one site vs another within the village as there are no priority areas, but the Black Bull is within the village envelope

JA Huddart summarised by saying that everyone is trying to save the pub, the Parish Council is only a consultee and have to put forward points which would convince the planners to refuse the application.

Discussion followed on ways the pub might be saved, it was suggested that if the pub was registered as a community asset it would give 6 months leeway to see how things could move forward. JA Huddart said he thought that was
something he thought the community would like to do. Mrs A Worlock asked if the planning committee would accept an independent assessment, RJD Watkin confirmed it would.

Application No: Ref: 13/03864/FUL : Revision to internal access track between turbine no1 and turbine no2 and associated underground cabling and relocation of the temporary construction compound relating to the consented Barmoor Wind Farm (application ref. 06/B/0148)

It was felt there should be more time to consider this application and to request a site visit. D Butterworth explained that the reason for the change was to prevent the site traffic leaving the construction site, using a small road and then going back onto the site.

Discharge of planning conditions with regard to the Barmoor wind farm. Mrs A Worlock expressed concerns as during the 9 month construction period the traffic will be travelling from the A1 along the B6525 through the village between 7am and 7pm. Mrs Worlock questioned why the Parish Council hadn’t been consulted and why there hadn’t been a transport survey. RJD Watkin said that it was not normal procedure to consult on discharge of conditions.

Mrs Worlock said at the time of the public enquiry a request was made that the route through Lowick was not used for construction traffic. She also said that a request is going to be made that all cars are parked on the same side of the road. She said Mr Joe Nugent from the planning department will receive comments and pass them to the relevant people. She also said she was taking legal advice regarding the fact that the Council felt it was not necessary to consult with the Parish Council.

RJD Watkin said that as it was a B road and open to all traffic it must be deemed suitable for heavy loads. D Butterworth said anyone could write to him with their concerns and he would try and address them. JA Huddart pointed out that the development can’t be stopped but everyone should try and make it liveable with. In answer to a query regarding the use of the A697 as an alternative route it was stated that there was a weight restriction on that road.

6. D Butterworth, Force 9 Energy. D Butterworth outlined the proposed timetable for the construction of the Barmoor Wind Farm, the plan was to start work in April and to finish in October/November. He said initially Force 9 were working with Catamount Energy who were subsequently bought by Stadcraft and Duke Energy. Duke is no longer in the UK and Stadcraft now look at larger projects and they are now working with EDF Energy and ownership of the project will pass to them within the next 2 weeks. D Butterworth said his interest remained the same and he looked forward to a good working relationship.

D Butterworth then went on to explain the proposed Community Fund and he said he wanted to find out who the Parish Council thought should benefit and how the fund would be administered. It was felt that Lowick would be the main beneficiaries but neighbouring parishes should also benefit. He said £24,000 - £28,000 index linked would be made available annually and this would not be linked to output from the turbines. His preference was for the fund to be administered by the Community Foundation, and if they did administer it the administration costs would not come out of the community pot.

It was felt that there should be a group of local people to decide how the money is spent, it could be the Parish Council or it could be a separate body. JA Huddart suggested that members from Bowsden, Ford and Fenwick should be involved. D Butterworth said he could help set up a local trust and could offer funding for legal advice etc. He thought the first money could be available by the end of the year. RJD Watkin asked whether the Glendale Gateway Trust would be better placed to administer the fund rather than the Community Foundation, match funding could also be possible.

It was suggested that it could be possible to convene a meeting of neighbouring parishes for D Butterworth to talk to. The Chairman thanked Mr Butterworth for attending the meeting and he left.

7. Peregrini Project. P Hanson circulated some information from the meeting he attended. He explained that there are no projects in Lowick Parish, there are a few in Fenwick. The hope is that it could bring footfall and visitors to the area, however Natural England have withdrawn immediate support so the project could be on hold but they are trying to overcome it. He also said that the Parish Councils could become liable if the project fails. The harbour project on Holy Island is currently in jeopardy because of the withdrawal of funding.
8. Matters to report on potholes, repairs/maintenance to highways, street lights etc – The clerk reported that she had reported the water running down the road from the silos. Road surface at the Black Heddons in poor state and a request made for a sign to Holburn Grange

9. County Councillor’s Report – RJD Watkin said discussions are taking place regarding the possibility of charging 16+ pupils £450pa for school transport, it was felt that this possible charge discriminates against children living in rural communities. RJD Watkin also said that Ashington Tech is trying to make the courses more attractive to encourage more people to attend them but he commented that Ashington is a difficult place to get to from Berwick or the west of the county.

10. Any other business –
   - Lowick Common - JA Huddart reported that legal proceedings are continuing, the court came to Lowick as it was too onerous to take it to court and the adjudicator might come here too.
   - Mrs A Worlock asked if the school was aware of the construction traffic coming through the village, Mrs LA Bradbury said she would mention it
   - Churchyard – many people had been upset to see Mr A Colgan buried there as they believed the churchyard to be closed and knew of people who had seen their request to be buried in Lowick refused. J Daniels from the PCC said he thought it had been Rev Dickinson’s decision and he thought it was not necessary for anyone to be consulted. Mr Daniels also commented that he thought the current situation was untenable and he thought the PCC would have to come up with a set criteria and he said the PCC would inform and discuss the situation further following a meeting of the PCC. Questions were also asked as to who is responsible for the upkeep of the churchyard if it is still being used for burials.
   - S Mather asked if anything could be done regarding school transport from Holburn Village and as it is not free for children attending schools in Berwick, although the village is in the catchment area for Lowick First School when the children leave they can’t have free transport to Berwick. This raises concerns that parents might not choose Lowick as the school to send their children to. The clerk to contact the County Council

11. Date of next meeting – 20\textsuperscript{th} February 2014

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.55pm