

Radley Focus

Incorporating the Horner Herald

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The Radley Lakes Saga

Cllr Bob Johnston writes.

There are now two strands to this story. The first is the attempt by the Radley Parish council to take the county to Judicial Review over its failure to declare the site of the Radley Lakes a Village Green. The process has now started, and could take some time. One aspect of this which may have escaped people notice is that time is precious. Because of an EU directive (relating to large scale carbon dioxide producers such as power stations, Didcot A has less than 12,000 hours to run, and at the present rate could have to close by 2012. This would mean that a Judicial Review lasting two years plus could take us quite close to that, and clearly if the power station closed, there would be no need to dump ash at Radley.



One unusual feature of this process is that the county has appointed a Queen's Council to fight its corner. I have asked a number of questions about this, because to the best of my recollection this is the first time the County has used the services of a QC for a very long time. I find it surprising because a QC is very expensive, and at the end of the day it is really RWE's interests which are at stake, not the County's.

The other strand to the story is that RWE have not dumped ash at Radley for some time. They appear to have been able to dispose of all the ash they have produced to the construction industry. It would appear that as an insurance policy they are now seek to dispose of any surplus ash at Sutton Courtenay! If this is true why are they still trying so hard to keep their positions open with respect to the Radley Lakes? I will keep you informed in future editions of the Radley Focus.

Thrupp Lane

This renewed application by Tuckwell's to extract aggregate at their site in Thrupp Lane continues to bubble along. The latest twist is that the application was pulled at the last moment from the County's Planning and Regulation Committee in May, and will now be dealt with on July the 21st.



This picture is reproduced by kind permission of the Thrupp Lane Residents Association

"I hope to be present and speak," promises Cllr Bob Johnston. "I am concerned about two things: Firstly the failure to enforce previous conditions relating to the site e.g. boundary treatments. Secondly the remaining aggregate is under the concrete batching plant, so how can it ever be extracted?"

Therefore many of us have the concern that any renewal of the permission could in effect be in perpetuity, allowing all the other activities on the site, which help to cause such chaos on the Lane, likewise to continue.

SERVICE AND ACTION ALL THE YEAR ROUND

Tory come lately

The Conservatives are trying to pose as the champions of low income earners hit by the doubling of the 10p income tax starter rate, **but they refused to support a compensation package** when one was proposed last year.

Where were the Conservatives when the Liberal Democrats and a small group of Labour backbenchers proposed an amendment to the Government's Finance Bill? "We cannot support it," said Conservative spokesperson Theresa Villiers MP during the parliamentary debate. Only one Conservative MP voted for compensation, and he has since resigned from the party. The truth is that the Conservatives only woke up to this issue after the changes came in and when they saw the press were interested in it. This was **more than a year after the Liberal Democrats first raised the matter.**

Dr Evan Harris, MP supports the Lib Dem argument that for the poorest to pay a high proportion of their income in tax than the richest is an immoral use of taxation against those who can afford it least.

Liberal Democrats would focus attention on cutting taxes from the bottom, a policy endorsed by Vince Cable, MP, the most respected politician on financial matters in the country. 'David Cameron cannot credibly say that he wants to cut taxes and improve public services unless he says how he will do this', says Lib Dem leader Nick Clegg. 'Tory tax policies are smoke and mirrors. He has asked us to trust him, but on the basis of his party's showing on the 10p tax rate, why on earth should we?'



Local Development Framework

In previous newsletters your local Lib Dem Focus team have made much of the importance of the Vale's Local Plan, which will run until 2011 and which sets out how development will take place until then.

This is now set to be overtaken by the Local Development Framework. This will supercede the Local Plan and possibly run until 2028, a very long time ahead. Clearly this will be very important to anyone living in the Vale during that time.

The Local Development Framework will have to conform to the South East Plan, but within that will set out site allocations for development, and will have detailed policies for smaller sites.

No major developments are likely to be proposed for the North East part of the Vale, and will therefor be confined to Grove, the Didcot area and Faringdon. This is because there are no proposals to build on the Oxford Green Belt.

The Framework will also not propose development on the flood plain, and will seek to retain the existing gaps between present settlements.

The Framework will be subject to an independent examination in public by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. His report will be legally binding.

The Vale's proposals for its Local Development Framework are likely to be out for public consultation at a number of local meetings in the autumn. Watch out for this, and be prepared to have your say.

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and www.oxwabl.libdems.org.uk

Feedback

If you have any comments, complaints or suggestions, or you would you like to know more about the Lib Dems please contact your County and Vale District Councillor:

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