



Campaign to Protect
Rural England
OXFORDSHIRE



CPRE Oxfordshire Campaign Briefing February 2011

Happy Birthday to CPRE Oxfordshire! The Branch was founded 80 years ago this month – it was inaugurated on 7th March 1931, with John Buchan as its first chairman.

The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) finally announced the decision on the Thames Water Draft Water Resources Management Plan on Friday 4th March, following the two month public inquiry in Oxford in 2010. CPRE Oxfordshire is delighted that the Secretary of State has decided that as part of Thames Water's future plans the controversial £1bn reservoir near Abingdon should not go ahead.

Partnership for Renewable submitted a planning application to Oxford City Council for a temporary wind monitoring mast on 28th February. CPRE Oxfordshire will be objecting to the mast.

On 28th February, Transport Secretary Philip Hammond launched a five month consultation into the proposals for the HS2 line.

Responding to the announcement CPRE Oxfordshire's Chairman, Alan Jones, said 'We are very disappointed at this "take it or leave it" style of consultation on something as important to the whole country as high speed rail travel.'

South Oxfordshire District Council has decided to continue with commercial advertising on roundabouts and CPRE Oxfordshire is looking into taking legal action against SODC for not abiding by its own policies.

CPRE Oxfordshire has responded to the first planning application for the NW Bicester Eco-Development, expressing its concern about the desire to push for the Exemplar site to get approval prior to the overall Master Plan being adopted within the Core Strategy and Local Development Scheme.

For more information about these and other issues see: [CPRE Oxfordshire website](#).

In this Campaign Briefing:

CPRE Oxfordshire Branch News

CPRE Oxfordshire Campaigns:

1. **Green Belt**
2. **Reservoir**
3. **Energy**
4. **Transport**

Other Oxfordshire News:

1. **Waste**
2. **Landscape and Environment**
3. **Housing**

South East News

CPRE National Office News

Diary

CPRE Oxfordshire Branch News

New post of Branch Director agreed - Following a major review of the operations and structure of the Oxfordshire branch, the Branch Executive Committee agreed on 3rd March to create a new part-time paid post of Branch Director to strengthen resources and enable the branch to continue as an effective campaigning organisation.

The post - which will be initially for a term of two years - will report to the Branch Chairman and be responsible for leading and managing the Branch's activities, including high profile campaigning, assisting local groups and volunteers, and increasing membership and income. The post is to be advertised shortly on the branch website.

CPRE Oxfordshire Campaigns:

1. Green Belt.

-Slurry lagoon in Green Belt at Yarnton likely to be approved. On 7th March, officers at Oxfordshire County Council approved a scheme for a giant slurry lagoon in the Green Belt near Yarnton, on the condition that Waste management company Agrivert contributes £17,746 to create public footpaths and cycle routes.

Agrivert wants to create a 172-metre by 60-metre basin to store waste from its £9m anaerobic digester, opened at the site last October.

The plant turns waste food into enough energy to power up to 4,500 homes and the lagoon will store the by-product to be used as fertiliser.

CPRE Oxfordshire objected to the scheme on the grounds that the site lies within the Oxford Green Belt and we believe it is inappropriate in policy terms unless there are very special circumstances. The lagoon development is large and somewhat industrial in appearance with an artificial bank and a security fence. In our view this can only reduce the openness of the Green Belt and is contrary to planning policy.

Cherwell District Council's planning committee told the county it is opposed to the plans, warning the proposed lagoon was too close to two sites of Special Scientific Interest - Pixey and Yarnton Meads and Cassington Meadows.

Local residents also raised concerns the development could harm the Green Belt and local wildlife, as well as creating unpleasant smells.

For more information see:

http://www.cpreoxon.org.uk/campaigns/green_belt/green_belt_news.htm

-Oxford Core Strategy

The Oxford Core Strategy is expected to be adopted at the City's Full Council meeting on March 14th.

The Core Strategy was finally approved late in December and CPRE Oxfordshire has expressed its disappointment that the Northern Gateway development at Pear Tree has been given the go-ahead, particularly because it involves the potential loss of two areas of Green Belt.

2. Reservoir

CPRE Oxfordshire is delighted with Government's decision to reject the Abingdon Reservoir. The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) finally announced the decision on the Thames Water Draft Water Resources Management Plan on Friday 4th March, following the two month public inquiry in Oxford in 2010. The Secretary of State has decided that as part of Thames Water's future plans the controversial £1bn reservoir near Abingdon should not go ahead. The report calls for further detailed work on the other technical options for increasing water supplies in the South East, including the option of a smaller reservoir.

In a Press Release, issued on 8th March, Bruce Tremayne, Vice Chairman of CPRE Oxfordshire, and one of the key campaigners, commented:

"We are delighted with this decision and trust that this is, in effect, the end of the road for the enormous reservoir proposed for Abingdon. CPRE has always argued that the case for the reservoir, which would have covered 5,000 acres of productive farmland, has not been made and that it is not needed. We showed at the inquiry that it would destroy homes, farms and a landscape created over many hundreds of years - and a heritage and setting that is of great value to us all."

Bruce Tremayne continued: "We are very pleased that the Planning Inspector listened to the concerns of local residents and accepted many of our arguments, and that the Secretary of State has agreed that alternatives to the reservoir need to be examined further. This is the result of tremendous work by local campaigners - notably by GARD, who mounted a long and vigorous campaign against the reservoir."

He concluded: "We firmly believe there are other, much better ways to increase water supplies for the South East of England that do not destroy our landscape and heritage. And we have argued strongly that there may not even be a need for increased water supplies if Thames Water can fix the leaks in the mains and everyone has been helped to use less water, by more metering and water saving devices.

We look forward to seeing Thames Water's revised plan and to working with them to find sustainable solutions to managing water in the South East, which does not involve blighting our treasured countryside for future generations."

For more information see:

http://www.cpreoxon.org.uk/campaigns/reservoir/reservoir_news.htm

3. Energy

-Wind Farms

PfR submits planning application for wind monitoring mast. Partnership for Renewable submitted a planning application to Oxford City Council for a temporary wind monitoring mast on 28th February.

According to PfR, 'this will allow us to learn more about the behaviour of the wind on site and will feed into our ongoing technical investigations to determine if the development is appropriate.'

If PfR gains planning approval for the mast it will be installing the 70 meter high structure (approximately 20cm in diameter) in the southern corner of the area of land owned by Oxford City Council which is hard up against the BMW plant and not in the Green Belt.

According to PfR 'This is not indicative of the proposed turbine location, it is being erected there to avoid disrupting the farming of the land while we gather wind and noise data.'

PfR will be holding a community surgery on Thursday 21 April to discuss project progress and gather feedback in relation to the monitoring mast or any other aspect of the proposal. This will be an informal opportunity for anyone interested in the project to drop in, view plans so far and talk to the project team.

There will also be a to-scale photo montage available from a recognised viewpoint in Horspath village. This will allow community members to gain a better understanding of what the turbine might look like from the village, using an indicative location.

CPRE Oxfordshire will be objecting to the mast.

For more information see:

http://www.cpreoxon.org.uk/campaigns/energy/horspath_news.htm

What you can do

The community surgery will be held at: The Pavilion, Horspath Youth Football Club, Oxford Road, Oxford, OX4 2RR from 3pm to 7pm.

If you would like to see more details on the proposed wind turbine please visit:

www.pfr.co.uk/horspath

-Solar Farms

Solar farm plans rejected by West Oxfordshire District Council. West Oxfordshire District Council has rejected the first of a series of projects for solar farms in West Oxfordshire on the grounds it will set a precedent.

They have thrown out a bid for 14,500 solar panels on about 15 acres at Sturt Farm in Oxford Road, near Burford, ahead of 12 other plans they will have to decide on.

The spate of applications comes as the Government prepares to end a taxpayer funded cash-back scheme for large solar farms.

The committee rejected the plan over its impact on roads, nearby listed buildings and its "urbanising impact".

The council will also consider a 27,000-panel site on 38-acres at Cornbury Park, near Charlbury, and an application for 22,000 panels over 30 acres at Homeleaze Farm, Grafton, near Bampton.

It is currently in discussions with other developers, though formal applications have not been submitted.

The application for a solar farm at Watchfield in the Vale has recently been submitted and there are several similar applications pending in the Bicester District.

CPRE Oxfordshire will be keeping a close eye on the proliferation of solar farms applications and responding accordingly.

4. Transport

HS2 consultation. On 28th February, Transport Secretary Philip Hammond launched a five month consultation into the proposals for the HS2 line.

Responding to the announcement CPRE Oxfordshire's Chairman, Alan Jones, said 'We are very disappointed at this "take it or leave it" style of consultation on something as important to the whole country as high speed rail travel.'

In its Press Release, the National Office of CPRE labeled the consultation process for High Speed 2 as a "complete train wreck". CPRE described the consultation as a head-on collision between Government plans to develop national infrastructure and its proposals to give power back to people.

Ralph Smyth, Senior Transport Campaigner at CPRE, said: "The Government has been so focused on trying to catch up and overtake the French on High Speed Rail, that they have failed to ensure the public get their fair say."

He added that the consultation amounted to "a single route option, which the Government has already made up its mind to favour", that would be followed "by a Parliamentary petitioning procedure that has changed little since the days of 19th century railway barons".

For more information see:

http://www.cpreoxon.org.uk/campaigns/transport/high_speed_2_news.htm

Other Oxfordshire News:

1.Waste

-Incinerator for Calvert, Bucks. Waste firm Waste Recycling Group (WRG) has submitted its planning application (11/20000/AWD) to build a 300,000 tonne annual capacity incinerator just nine miles from Bicester at Calvert in Buckinghamshire.

Its development control committee will now decide whether to approve the application, but it is unlikely to be heard before autumn this year.

If approved the incinerator is expected to be operating by 2014 under a 30-year contract.

A final decision on planning permission for the Ardley incinerator is expected shortly.

For more information see:

http://www.cpreoxon.org.uk/campaigns/minerals_waste/waste_news.htm

- Incinerator at Ardley. The County Council was notified on 18th February of the appeal decision in relation to Viridor's original application for an Energy from Waste facility at Ardley. The Secretary of State has allowed this appeal, in addition to not calling in the second application for Viridor.

- Mechanical Biological Treatment plant on Sutton Courtenay Landfill Site. Waste Recycling Group's application to build a Mechanical Biological Treatment plant on Sutton Courtenay Landfill Site, which was expected to be considered by the Oxfordshire County Council Planning Committee on 7th March, has been put back to April 11th, whilst awaiting more submissions from WRG.

2. Landscape and Environment

CPRE deplores South Oxfordshire decision to continue with commercial advertising on roundabouts. Responding to SODC's decision at its Cabinet Meeting on 14th February, to sign up for another five years to its contentious roundabout advertising scheme, Michael Tyce, CPRE Chairman for Thame District, said in a Press Release, issued on 16th February:

"We deplore what South Oxfordshire is doing. The spread of commercial advertising into rural areas was one of the threats which led to the foundation of CPRE in Oxfordshire eighty years ago.

In a St Valentine's Day Massacre South Oxfordshire District Council has blown away its own policies to protect the environment, the concept of Localism, road safety, and the interest of taxpayers in getting the best deal.

This at a time when other Councils are acting to remove unlawful roundabout advertising which blights the environment, and responding to Government requests that they should be cracking down on advertising clutter".

CPRE Oxfordshire is looking into taking legal action against SODC for not abiding by its own policies.

For more information see:

http://www.cpreoxon.org.uk/campaigns/landscape/advert_rbouts_news.htm

4. Housing

CPRE responds to planning application for NW Bicester Eco-Development.

CPRE Bicester/Ploughley District has submitted its response to Cherwell District Council's consultation on Phase One North-West Bicester Eco-town, (Planning Application 10/01780/HYBRID).

The application by P3Eco and A2Dominion is for the 'Exemplar' - the very first eco settlement of homes and community facilities in the NW Bicester Eco Development.

CPRE has expressed its concern about the haste in pushing for the Exemplar site to get approval prior to the overall Master Plan being adopted within Cherwell's Core Strategy and Local Development Scheme, and while there are still uncertainties over the viability of the Eco town and the provision of infrastructure.

For more information see:

http://www.cpreoxon.org.uk/campaigns/housing/nw_bicester_news.htm

South East News.

The February issue of the CPRE South East eBulletin is now available and there is also a special issue examining the Localism Bill.

CPRE South East eBulletin is on the 'News' webpage:

<http://www.cprese.org.uk/news/eBulletin/index.htm>

CPRE National Office News.

For more information see the CPRE National Office news here:

<http://www.cpre.org.uk/home>

Diary

Saturday 30th April. CPRE Bicester and Ploughley District Spring Walk. Join us in a morning walk through the glorious countryside of the Heyfords.

Start at 10.30am from the Bell Inn Lower Heyford, OX25 5NY. Circular walk of about 4 miles, returning to the Bell Inn for lunch (for those that wish).

Parking available in Lower Heyford. Children and dogs (on leads) most welcome.

For more information contact Bruce Tremayne, CPRE Bicester and Ploughley Chairman: telephone 01865 331289 or e-mail: bruce.tremayne@trek.demon.co.uk

Saturday 14 May. The CPRE 2011 AGM will be held on Saturday 14th May 2011 at 3.00 pm, at Towersey Manor near Thame. The AGM meeting will be followed by a talk to be given by Dr Sarah Rutherford. The title of her talk is 'Scholars, Soldiers and Sculpture - Oxfordshire's Historic Parks and Gardens Revealed'. Afternoon tea will be served and guests will be able to walk in the garden.

For more information contact [Mary Isaac](#), CPRE Thame District Secretary.

CPRE Oxfordshire Campaign Briefing is a free service. [Subscribe](#). You can unsubscribe at any time.

| [Forward](#) | [Unsubscribe](#) | [PDF Version](#) |

Published by [CPRE Oxfordshire](#). Editor: Dr Helena Whall. The information in this Briefing is gathered from a wide range of sources and views expressed are not necessarily those of CPRE Oxfordshire. CPRE Oxfordshire, Punches Barn, Waterperry Road, Holton, Oxford OX33 1PP.

[Email](#) / [Website](#) / Phone 01865 874780.

CPRE also publishes a national [Campaigns Update](#).

Join the Debate. Join the Campaign. [Join CPRE](#)
