

Sherston Parish Council is making a submission in response to question SE2.3.

This question deals with the consideration of a community facility compensation scheme to prevent the closure of such facilities resulting from a lack of bookings during the construction, maintenance and decommissioning phases.

Sherston Parish Council wishes to reiterate its most strong objection to the applicant's plans to build an industrial power project on an area of beautiful agricultural land that lies close to the boundary of Sherston village. Please note that the following response in no way represents an acceptance of the applicant's plan, nor a weakening of our negative assessment of the scheme, as set out in our previous representations.

Sherston has a number of community facilities and community run events that depend on outside patrons as well as local residents. Construction and decommissioning phases in particular will lead to such an increase in HGV traffic that access to Sherston via lanes from the M4 and Chippenham, via Norton as well as Grittleton, will be next to impossible. This will inevitably lead to fewer people coming into Sherston, both to use its facilities and to support its community events. Without compensation there would, without doubt, be some facilities and events that would not survive.

Notable facilities that would be impacted include:

The Village Hall - this has recently obtained a wedding licence with the aim of increasing its income, and frequently hosts other parties and events as well as exercise classes and theatrical performances. The space outside hosts a small weekly market.

The North Building - yoga classes, drama groups etc.

British School Rooms- baby and toddler groups, choir rehearsals and other group activities.

Holy Cross Sherston - a popular venue for wedding services and part of Gauzebrook group. Regular services are held at alternating churches within the group, and this depends on worshippers being able to move easily between the different village churches.

Tolsey surgery - this is widely used by residents whose villages do not have surgeries including Hullavington and Grittleton. Access to the Tolsey from these villages will be exceptionally difficult when lanes are blocked or being used by HGVs during the construction and decommissioning phases.

Notable community events that would be impacted include:

Boules weekend - an annual event that typically brings many visitors from all parts of the UK and also France. Please refer to the oral representation made at the last open hearing by a member of the Boules committee to understand how badly the applicant's proposed project would impact on this event and its future viability.

Remembrance Sunday - this is attended by many more than purely Sherston residents and many of the military who attend would come at present through Norton or Grittleton.

It should be noted that events such as Boules and Remembrance Sunday are active community builders for Sherston and part of what makes it such a wonderful place to live. Monetary compensation will in no way properly compensate the Sherston community for the potential harm to such events.