

16 September, 2019

LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL

Minute Nos: 166 - 174

At a Meeting of the **PLANNING AND LIAISON COMMITTEE** of the Llanelli Rural Council held at the Council Chamber, Vauxhall Buildings, Vauxhall, Llanelli, on Monday, 16 September, 2019, at 4.45 p.m.

Present:

Cllrs.

S. M. Caiach	J. P. Hart
M. V. Davies	A. G. Morgan
S. M. Donoghue	W. V. Thomas

166. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN PRO-TEMPORE

RESOLVED that Cllr. S. M. Donoghue be appointed Chairman pro-tempore.

167. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. F. Akhtar, S. L. Davies, T. Devichand (Cllr. W. V. Thomas deputising), T. M. Donoghue (Cllr. S. M. Donoghue deputising), H. J. Evans, T. J. Jones (Cllr. A. G. Morgan deputising), R. L. Najmi (Cllr. J. P. Hart deputising), J. S. Randall and A. J. Rogers.

168. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

169. PENDERI SOLAR FARM, LLANGENNECH PROJECT

The Chairman welcomed Mr Simon Holt, UK Country Manager, Voltalia Ltd to the meeting and invited him to update Members regarding the Penderi Solar Farm Project. The project had been four years in the offing which took in the shaping and design of the site, birdlife and feasibility of the site and the Developments of National Significance (DNS) process. It was ultimately up to the Welsh Government and the Planning Inspectorate to decide the outcome of the development proposal but this was the formal pre-application stage of the DNS process.

Members were informed consultation events had already taken place encouraging local people to ask questions about the project and which also encouraged feedback to the company's nominated planning agents; namely the Pegasus Group. Mr Holt stated the name of the project would change as there was another property locally known as Penderi Farm.

16 September, 2019

Members were taken through the development proposal during which Mr Holt responded to a number of questions.

Mr Holt stated the next stage of the process was the formal submission of the application and all reports including the draft Environmental Statements were available on line. It would take thirty-six weeks for Welsh Ministers to determine the proposal once the formal application had been submitted.

In response to a question about local community benefits to be derived from the scheme, Mr Holt explained this was a subsidy free project and caution had to be exercised in promising anything to the community as budgets were tight. However, the applicants wanted to be good neighbours to the community and could possibly work to install solar panels on the roofs of local community halls and were open to discuss as to what else could be done for the community. He went on to add there was a growth in the renewables market and the project was worth £80,000.000 to Voltalia (which is a French based multi-faceted organisation). There was no funding expected from the Welsh Government.

The site had a life-span of 35 years and there was a commitment to return the area to the natural landscape and to completely restore the site after that time.

Members were keen to learn about the economic benefit to the area and Mr Holt responded that jobs would come with the construction of the site and the monitoring of the ecology. Furthermore, when the project was up and running there would be one full time post as caretaker.

Mr Holt reassured Members there was no solar glare from the site and modern solar panels had dimpled surfaces to absorb rather than reflect the sun's rays. Glare had not been an issue in any of the other projects commissioned by Voltalia Ltd.

The impact on the flora and fauna was a concern especially as there was little economic return on the project locally with the energy produced being fed into the National Grid. Members felt there was no direct trade off to justify contemplating developing the site given the site benefitted from prime agricultural land. Furthermore it was felt pasture would decay beneath the panels and a potent greenhouse gas would be generated and members enquired why a brownfield site couldn't be considered instead.

Mr Holt explained that the Penderi Project ticked the boxes for access to the National Grid availability and addressed environmental concerns.

Attention then turned to site access from Llannon Road – deliveries would be made via Llannon Road with smaller vehicles using the Northern point of the site.

The Chairman then asked if the observers attending the meeting wished to ask any questions.

One member of the local community said that the farmer who owned the land did not live there any longer. He went on to state that his house looked out onto green fields but he would see nothing but glass if the project was to go ahead. He was concerned that the land was good land for dairy farming and that it should not be regarded as low grade land. He felt that opencast sites had been overlooked and could not understand why the development proposal was earmarked for this site which benefitted from prime agricultural land.

16 September, 2019

In concluding his presentation Mr Holt stated there was a further consultation meeting organised for later in September at Llangennech Community Hall and he would let the Council know the date and time and that all documentation could be found on the website www.penderisolarfarm.co.uk.

Mr Holt then withdrew from the meeting.

Following general discussion about the next steps it was

RESOLVED as follows:-

1. In preparation of the formal submission stage of the DNS process, the views of Carmarthenshire County Council's planning authority be obtained given the authority will probably respond as a statutory consultee in view of the application being determined at national level by the Planning Inspectorate.
2. Llannon and Llangennech Community Councils had an interest in the application given the site overlapped into both councils' administrative areas, therefore enquiries be made with the clerks of the councils to ascertain whether it is mutually worthwhile to consider holding a joint meeting with a view to drafting a collective response at the formal application stage of the DNS process; and in the meantime
3. Members initial views about the development proposal be forwarded to the planning consultants, Pegasus Group who were acting on behalf of the applicant Votalia UK Ltd setting out the following points and observations:

"As things currently stand the council is pre-disposed to object to the application at the formal submission stage of the DNS process. The main issues hinge around:

The perceived environmental impact the proposal will have on the local countryside and the negative affect on biodiversity.

The land the site occupies is deemed to be good quality arable land and as demonstrated by the fields historical use – the farm was a dairy farm.

There are concerns over the scale and footprint of the proposal occupying a large area of land and the visual impact this will have not only for local residents but also the local community and road users travelling along the main highway, Llannon Road. The proposal will have a detrimental impact on aesthetics and the natural beauty of the open countryside.

Highway access is a concern and the number of perceived daily traffic movements along the access route to service the construction of the solar farm and ongoing upkeep and maintenance of the site thereafter is considered to be detrimental to highway safety. The local road infrastructure is substandard to support this major development proposal.

Despite assurances provided by Mr Holt that there will be no solar glare and reflection generated from the panels this is still a concern for the council given the scale and number of panels proposed for the site especially given the site topography and the fact that the panels will be located near the top of hillsides in some instances. The land undulates considerably in various locations across the site and the council is of the view that the panels cannot be hidden from public view.

16 September, 2019

The council is not convinced about the scheme returning any substantial local community benefit by locating the proposal in this unspoilt part of Carmarthenshire. Moreover, the power generated from the site will be fed into the National Grid with no direct benefit for nearby villages, particularly Llangennech, Llannon, the Swiss Valley community of Llanelli Rural and Llanelli Town and district. These areas will not be able to take advantage of the clean energy generated by the site.

In terms of site construction it was revealed during Mr Holt's presentation that during this phase there will be a fair degree of piling to be performed which is a noisy operation. This will have a detrimental impact on the general amenity of the surrounding area and will be unbearable for local neighbours living in close proximity to the site for them to endure.

While the council is a firm supporter of green energy projects it feels in this instance that other brownfield sites should be considered for this facility especially given the lack of direct community benefit.

As the application is now categorised as a DNS proposal, the council understands that the local planning authority will not be determining the application and instead this will now be decided by The Planning Inspectorate on behalf of Welsh Government Ministers. The council positively assumes, that its initial pre-application observations will be fully and accurately reported and communicated to The Planning Inspectorate when the Pegasus Group is in a position to submit its Pre- Application Consultation (PAC) report to Welsh Government? To this end and given this is the first DNS application the council has encountered, the council is unclear about the right to be formally consulted at the formal submission stage and whether a specific request needs to be submitted by the council to The Planning Inspectorate in the first instance or whether the council will be automatically consulted by them in any event as a local stakeholder consultee. Given the element of doubt the council asks that its request to be consulted is highlighted in the PAC report.

On a general point concerning the information bundle supporting the pre-application. The council understands the requirement to produce detailed supporting assessments and reports but by design these documents are not an easy read especially for members of the public to digest quickly in order to be well placed to dissect key issues and findings, notwithstanding the non-technical summary. This by its very nature will put many local people off from actively participating in the consultation both now and more than likely at the formal submission stage. However, this is not intended as a criticism it's an observation to see whether brevity can be improved further still to encourage a wider range of consultation responses."

**170. PLANNING APPLICATIONS
TOWN AND COUNTRY GENERAL
DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURE ORDER 1995**

Consideration having been given to planning applications received, it was

RESOLVED as follows:-

16 September, 2019

Application No.	Location	Development
S/39344	Ms. B. Morgan 154A Sandy Road Llanelli	Change of use from laundrette to café.
<p>Recommendation – objection. The council was of the view that the change of use was inappropriate in this particular location. The main issues being:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The increased traffic volume along one of the busiest highways in Carmarthenshire.2. There were concerns over the number of vehicles accessing and egressing the premises and the detrimental impact this would have on highway safety.3. The proposed development would have a detrimental impact on the residential amenity and living conditions particularly at the adjoining dwelling.		
S/39345	Mr L. Cavender 4 Isfryn Pwll Road Pwll	Single storey side and rear extension. Internal alterations and external decking.
<p>Recommendation – no objection provided there was no detrimental impact on the amenity and privacy of neighbouring dwellings and the drainage from the additional development did not increase the hydraulic load on the public sewer.</p>		
S/39350	Mr & Mrs Thomas 9 Morawel Cefncaeau Llanelli	Proposed rear extension to include a disabled accessible wet room and lobby area.
<p>Recommendation – no objection provided there was no detrimental impact on the amenity and privacy of neighbouring dwellings.</p>		
S/39351	Mr J. Adams 120 Heol Pennant Llanelli	Demolition of existing garage and construction of single storey side/rear extension and associated fenestration.
<p>Recommendation – objection. While the council supported in principle the property being extended it was of the opinion that any extension ought to be subordinate to the scale of the original dwelling. From an examination of the plans the length of the proposed extension appeared to be longer than the original bungalow. In the council's opinion this would have a detrimental impact on the character of the property and surrounding neighbourhood.</p>		
S/39357	Mr C. Morris Swiss Valley CP School Heol Beili Glas Llanelli	Installation of two no steel framed canopies with pet sheet roof for provision of external play area.

Recommendation – no objection.

16 September, 2019

Application No.	Location	Development
S/39358	Freshstart Care Ltd 2 Erw Las Llwynhendy	Change of use of the property from a Class C3 residential dwelling to a Class C2 Children's Residential Home.
<p>Recommendation – objection. The council was of the view the proposed change of use was inappropriate in this particular location. The main issues being:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. There were concerns over the number of vehicles accessing or egressing the premises and the potential detrimental impact on highway safety.2. Parking provision at the property was insufficient to accommodate the proposed change of use to facilitate the number of staff and visitors attending the property.3. The proposed change of use did not complement the use of the adjoining residential dwelling. The change of use was therefore incompatible and would have a detrimental impact on the residential amenity of this property and other neighbouring dwellings in that it would adversely affect the living conditions of the adjoining property as well as the general enjoyment of the dwelling.4. The council welcomed the opportunity of restating its views and objections at a site visit if one was likely to be arranged prior to the planning authority determining the application.		
S/39377	Mr K. Strelley Gateway Holiday Park Dyffryn Road Bynea	Single storey extension 21.6 x 6.7m wide with changing facilities. Single storey building 7.1 x 4.1m as a plant room for pool equipment. Promenade around pool. Hit and miss timber fencing 2.1m high.
<p>Recommendation – no objection provided the applicant complied with the recommendations set out in the Coal Mining Report accompanying the planning application.</p>		
S/39379	Mr & Mrs C. Walters 35 Millfield Road Llanelli	Proposed first floor side extension over existing garage.
<p>Recommendation – no objection provided there was no detrimental impact on the amenity and privacy of neighbouring dwellings.</p>		
S/39383	Mr G. Hughes 52 Swiss Valley Llanelli	Proposed rear single storey family room extension and utility room/wc extension.
<p>Recommendation – no objection.</p>		
S/39386	Mrs C. Oliver 83 Maes yr Haf Pwll	Proposed raised walkway between existing raised parking area and principal elevation of the dwelling-house.

Recommendation – no objection.

16 September, 2019

Application No.	Location	Development
S/39396	Mr P. Davies Land adjacent to 47 Parc Gitto Llanelli	Proposed outline application for a single detached dwelling.

Recommendation – no objection provided there was no detrimental impact on highway safety with the increased traffic movements along the access lane to the minor road.

S/39420	Llanelli Rural Council Dafen Park Maescanner Road Llanelli	Replacement of existing artificial sports pitch surface, upgrading existing retaining walls, replacement of existing boundary fencing, new access ramp, new floodlighting and relocation of existing play equipment.
----------------	---	--

Recommendation – the submission of the planning application was noted for information.

171. PLANNING APPLICATIONS DETERMINED UNDER THE CLERK'S DELEGATED POWERS.

Members were informed that the Clerk had dealt with the following planning applications under the scheme of delegated powers.

Application No.	Location	Development
S/39314	Llanelli Wanderers RFC Stradey Park Avenue Llanelli	Side extension to club house for house lift.

Recommendation – the Council had no objection to the proposed development.

S/39315	Mrs A. M. White 26 Denham Avenue Llanelli	(A) Proposed two storey side extension; (B) Demolition of existing sub-standard garage; (C) Erection of new garage at rear of property (Note – application for new dropped kerb from Iscoed to be submitted if new garage was approved, garage required to eliminate on-street parking to Denham Avenue)
----------------	---	--

Recommendation – the Council had no objection to the proposed development.

16 September, 2019

Application No.	Location	Development
S/39330	Mr C. Davies 52D Tanygraig Road Bynea	Domestic garage.
S/39343	Mr & Mrs Williams Land at 6-8 Pendderi Road Bynea	Demolition of existing semi-detached properties to accommodate the construction of a single dwelling with attached three car garage and associated infrastructure and external works.

Recommendation – the Council had no objection to the proposed development.

Recommendation – the Council had no objection to the proposed development.

172. STATUTORY PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION – PA/16882 – 37 OAKLANDS, LLANELLI

Members received correspondence from the Environment Department, Carmarthenshire County Council in respect of a statutory pre-application consultation for the removal of existing roof structure and replacing with proprietary manufactured attic to provide two bedrooms, bathroom and en-suite to the first floor. Existing garage, utility room and shed to be demolished and replaced with a new ground floor extension to provide new kitchen/dining room and utility room. Existing side entrance porch to be demolished and replaced with new entrance porch.

RESOLVED that the Council was pre-disposed to object to the development based on the current set of proposals should a formal planning application be submitted because of the incongruous nature of the development and given the Oaklands estate was dominated by traditional bungalows.

173. STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING – DEVELOPMENT AT LAND ADJACENT TO DYLAN, LLANELLI

Members received correspondence from Carmarthenshire County Council in respect of the naming and numbering of the development at land adjacent to Dylan, Llanelli, to be known as either Heol Cae Clyd or Clos Wern Las.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED that the Council's preference for naming the site was Clos Wern Las.

16 September, 2019

174. REVOCATION OF PROHIBITION OF WAITING AT ANY TIME

Correspondence was received from the Environment Department, Carmarthenshire County Council in regard to the possible revocation of prohibition of waiting at any time, Cwmfelin Road, Bynea. The effect of the proposal was to reduce the existing prohibition of waiting by 5 metres.

REVOLVED that the Council objects to the revocation because it is likely to result in vehicles parking closer to the entrance of the Old People's Home and it is felt that access/egress to the property will be hampered because of the perceived encroachment. This is considered to have a detrimental impact on the visibility along Cwmfelin Road and so cannot be supported in the interests of highway safety.

.....

The Meeting concluded at 6.05 p.m.

.....

The afore-mentioned Minutes were declared to be a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman presiding thereat and were, on 8 October, 2019, adopted by the Council.