

# DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

21 April 2021

Present: Councillor R Owens (Chair)

Councillor P Baker BEM, Mrs D Clements, Councillor K Doolin, Councillor P Harries, Dr M Havard, Dr R Heath-Davies, Mrs S Hoss, Mrs J James, Councillor M James, Mr GA Jones, Councillor P Kidney, Councillor PJ Morgan, Dr RM Plummer, Councillor A Wilcox, Councillor M Williams.

Councillor M Evans arrived following approval of the minutes (Minute 4 refers)

[Virtual Meeting 10.00am – 12.15pm; 12.25pm – 2.10pm]

## 1. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor S Yelland.

## 2. Disclosures of interest

The following Member(s)/Officer(s) disclosed an interest in the application(s) and/or matter(s) referred to below:

<b>Application and Reference</b>	<b>Member(s)/Officer(s)</b>	<b>Action taken</b>
<i>Minutes 7(c)below</i> NP/21/0060/FUL Morwennau, Poppit, Cardigan	Councillor M James	Personal interest only so remained in the meeting and played a full part in the discussion and voting
<i>Minutes 7(d)below</i> NP/21/0137/FUL Bluestone National Park Resort, Canaston Wood, Narberth	Councillor A Wilcox  Dr M Havard	Withdrew from the meeting while the application was discussed  Personal interest only so remained in the meeting and played a full part in the discussion and voting
<i>Minutes 7(e)below</i> NP/21/0172/TPO	Councillor P Baker	Personal interest only so remained in the meeting and



Beach Court, The  
Strand, Saundersfoot

played a full part in  
the discussion and  
voting

### 3. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on the 10 March 2021 and 12 April 2021 were presented for confirmation and authentication.

In respect of the Minutes of the Site Inspection held on 12 April 2021, it was requested, in the interests of openness and transparency, that in future the names of officers in attendance be also included. This would demonstrate that Members were escorted around the site and relevant features highlighted.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) the minutes of the meetings held on the 10 March 2021 and 12 April 2021 be confirmed and authenticated.
- b) at future Site Inspections, the names of officers in attendance be also included.

Some Members then asked that the procedure in respect of public speaking be revised so that any speakers who had addressed the Committee on an application that was subsequently deferred could have the opportunity to speak again when the application was reconsidered by the Committee. They expressed concern that no debate had taken place in respect of one particular application at the previous meeting, although it was acknowledged that Members were given every opportunity to speak on this item. The Monitoring Officer advised that he did not believe there had been any miscarriage of justice in respect of the application referred to, and that a workshop would be arranged for Members to discuss the public speaking policy.

**NOTED.**

### 4. Right to speak at Committee

The Chairman informed Members that due notification (prior to the stipulated deadline) had been received from interested parties who wished to exercise their right to speak at the meeting that day. In accordance with the decision of the National Park Authority of 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011, speakers would have 5 minutes to speak (*the interested parties are listed below against their respective application(s), and in the order in which they addressed the Committee*):



<b>Reference number</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Speaker</b>
NP/19/0328/S73 Minute 7(a) refers	Variation of condition no.2 of NP/14/0014 – Residential Development Plot adjoining D, Plots adjoining Devon Court, 5, Freshwater East, Pembroke	Jenny Vince – Lamphey Community Council Cllr Tessa Hodgson – Local Councillor Rebecca Morris – FEDRHA - objector Victoria Tomlinson – Objector Steve Hole – Agent
NP/20/0026/FUL Minute 7(b) refers	One Planet Development for a single dwelling, the reconstruction and extension of one existing barn, alterations to another existing building and a temporary caravan in the form of a shepherds hut in addition to a static caravan – Land at Jason Road, Freshwater East	Bruce Woodhall – Objector James Hamilton – Applicant
NP/21/0060/FUL Minute 7(c) refers	Replacement dwelling – Morwennau, Poppit, Cardigan, Pembrokeshire, SA43 3LP	Brian Francis – Objector Gavin Oliver - Agent
NP/21/0137/FUL Minute7(d) Refers	Removal of a timber structure, installation of holiday lodges, welcome lodge, communal hub structures, buggy park and photo-voltaic shelter and guest car park, with associated infrastructure including internal circulation roads, hard and soft landscaping, drainage infrastructure, retaining walls and earth bunding. This forms the main part of a wider development proposal that is otherwise located	Liz Weedon – Applicant Helen Ashby- Ridgway – Agent



within Pembrokeshire  
County Council – Bluestone  
National Park Resort,  
Canaston Wood, Narberth

## 5. **Members' Duties in Determining Applications**

The Solicitor's report summarised the role of the Committee within the planning system, with particular focus on the purposes and duty of the National Park. It went on to outline the purpose of the planning system and relevant considerations in decision making, the Authority's duty to carry out sustainable development, ecological considerations which included the role of the Environment Wales Act 2016, human rights considerations, the Authority's guidance to members on decision-making in committee and also set out some circumstances where costs might be awarded against the Authority on appeal.

**NOTED.**

## 6. **Report of Planning Applications**

The Committee considered the detailed reports of the Development Management Team Leader, together with any updates reported verbally on the day and recorded below. The Committee determined the applications as follows (*the decision reached on each follows the details of the relevant application*):

- (a) REFERENCE: NP/19/0328/S73  
APPLICANT: Mr G Perfect  
PROPOSAL: Variation of condition no.2 of NP/14/0014  
LOCATION: Residential Development Plot adjoining D, Plots adjoining Devon Court, 5 , Freshwater East, Pembroke, Pembrokeshire

It was reported that this application was before the Committee as the officer recommendation of approval was contrary to the views of Lamphey Community Council. Twenty eight letters of concern had also been received from members of the public and the matters raised were outlined and considered in the report.

Members were reminded that, although on the agenda, this application had not been considered at the previous meeting of the Committee due to a procedural issue regarding ownership of land. It was reported that the relevant certificates had now been served and the issue rectified. No additional comments had been received.

It was reported that the site had a long planning history, and that a material start had been made in respect of NP/14/0014 for a new



detached dwelling with basement level and associated external balcony and covered veranda. The application before the Committee sought approval for the variation of condition no 2 of this permission to allow the building design to be amended and to include an increase in height. The amended design included a two storey four bedroom dwelling to be provided in two main blocks running parallel which both had a pitched roof over and in between there was a two storey link aspect with a flat roof.

The officer concluded that the principle of residential development on this site had already been accepted and it was considered that the proposed dwelling had a scale, form, mass and detailing which was acceptable. The dwelling was also considered to sit comfortably within the plot and had an acceptable context with the surrounding area. The access was considered to be acceptable and sought to retain existing trees to the site frontage. The external appearance of the development was considered appropriate to the setting of the site within the Freshwater East Burrows (within which there was a variety of architectural designs and detailing) and was not considered to adversely harm physical and visual amenity or privacy to neighbouring dwellings.

The two-storey proposal was considered to retain the overall character of the area, and also protect the special qualities of this area of the National Park. The development also incorporated a proposed floor level which would ensure the mass of the development utilised the existing site topography in a positive way to screen from the immediate and wider landscape. As such, and subject to a schedule of suitable conditions, the development was considered to be acceptable and complied with the requirements of policies of the adopted Local Development Plan 2.

Members asked a number of questions, in respect of disabled access to the first floor, impact of the proposed development on properties to the rear of the site and the importance of adherence to the levels set out in the plans. The officer advised that properties to the rear were elevated above the site due to the slope of the land and that the increase in height from the existing permission was nominal. He noted that there was no right to a view. He also confirmed that no disabled access provision was made to the first floor. In respect of levels, a detailed survey and finished floor levels had been included within the submission and a condition was not necessary as any permission would require the dwelling to be built in accordance with those plans.

Members also noted that one of the issues of concern expressed by objectors related to access and the impact of the development on the deeded rights of way. The officer replied that these were third party matters and were not material to consideration of the planning application. The Solicitor confirmed that they were private, civil matters.



There were a number of speakers on the application, the first of which was Jenny Vince, speaking on behalf of Lamphey Community Council. She stated that the planning history set out in the report was misleading as application NP/14/0014 was not described as per the decision notice which gave permission for a bungalow with a basement not a 2 storey house. She questioned why a variation, rather than a new application, had been submitted and also whether the procedural irregularity regarding the ownership of land had affected the previous application and therefore whether it could be considered to have been implemented.

Ms Vince stated that the Community Council did not object to residential development of the site, but asked that account be taken of the widely used deeded rights of way which crossed the site. She noted that the dashed lines on the amended site plan did not show these rights of way correctly, if that is what they were intended to show, with the main thoroughfare being wider and closer to the dwelling; the plan also showed that the dwelling would be built over the right of way to Greenham. Although the officer stated that this was a civil matter, the Community Council believed it should be taken into consideration, especially the main track which was well used and a permissive path. She asked that if planning permission was granted, an informative note be included drawing attention to their existence. It was further noted that the constraints of the deeded rights of way restricted the position of the dwelling to one corner of the site, and it was in this context that the Community Council believed it was excessive in scale and an overdevelopment of the site. The proposed dwelling was larger in every respect than that previously approved, including height and floor area; it extended right up to the northern boundary and would be built over one of the rights of way to the south. The bunds previously included to remove the impact of the height had been removed in the current application. The officer had confirmed that most properties in Freshwater East were either single or 1.5 storey. The Community Council also believed that the parking and turning area would obstruct the right of way and they had concerns regarding vehicle and pedestrian safety. It was contended that the proposed condition limiting the use of the parking area could not be implemented as the area was on the right of way and the current trackway. A further concern related to light pollution resulting from the first floor glazing and it was noted that this was not addressed by the condition relating to exterior lighting. It was noted that in 2005, permission had been granted for a single storey dwelling 4m high, in 2014 for a bungalow with a basement 6.8m high and the current application sought permission for a building 7.5m high. Should permission be granted, an additional condition to tie the floor level of the dwelling to sea level was also requested. Ms Vince concluded by asking Members to visit the site to better appreciate the points she had made and to see how the track constrained the proposal.



Councillor Tessa Hodgson was due to speak next, however she had connectivity problems, so the Chair invited Rebecca Morris, an objector to speak. She shared the 5 minutes allocated with Vicky Tomlinson, each having 2.5 minutes.

Rebecca Morris had three points she wished to make. Firstly she believed that the deeded rights of way affected the plot and were drawn incorrectly on the submitted plans. She noted that the rights of way had been in existence for over 100 years and had become prescriptive rights of way held in common by over 40 dwellings and used by residents, delivery drivers, National Park staff and the postman; many people would be impacted and this should not be dismissed as a civil matter. Secondly she asked Members to visit the site. Ms Morris noted that no new build dwellings had been permitted in Freshwater East in the last 21 years due to various LDP policies, other than in this area where dwellings had been approved in 2005 and again in 2014. She questioned how moving soil could be deemed extensive excavation and constitute a material start. She believed that the previous application should have lapsed and this should have been treated as a new application. Finally it was noted that a letter from Govan Davies Estates in March 2014 referred to four plots having been set aside for residential purposes in the Tomlin Order. Gary Meopham, the Authority's Estates Officer had advised that this was a confidential document, however Ms Morris believed that the public should be made aware of any closed doors agreement by the Authority to grant planning permission, particularly when Members were bound by the Nolan principle and Code of Conduct. She questioned whether these had been followed and advised she would be taking this matter forward to the Monitoring Officer on behalf of the deed holders and the community in her role as Chair of the Freshwater East Deeded Right Holders Association.

County Councillor Tessa Hodgson then addressed the Committee. She referred to the long planning history on the site, the most recent being the granting of approval in January 2014 for a 3-bed single storey detached property with a footprint of 81m<sup>2</sup>. The application before the Committee was for a larger property – a 2 storey 4-bed property with a footprint of 134m<sup>2</sup> – this was 70% bigger than that previously approved. She stated that this was a small site that was constrained by the deeded rights of way which gave access to The Burrows and to the boundaries of neighbouring properties. She did not believe the current application was a variation from the 2014 plan as it was different in design, height and scale – a larger proposition altogether. Councillor Hodgson drew Members attention to the wording on the 2014 Decision Notice which permitted development in accordance with the deposited plans to ensure a proper standard of development and appearance in the interest of conserving the amenity and architecture of the area. She believed that this plot had been subject to 'development creep', with permission for a bungalow, then for a



building with a basement and now a proposal for a 2 storey dwelling. She stated that Freshwater East was a special place that was deserving of protection through sensitive and proportionate development; she believed that this overdevelopment would erode that special quality. Over the years there had been a range of development in the village, some of innovative design with modern materials, but mainly of 1 or 1.5 storeys. Councillor Hodgson also drew Members' attention to the model view submitted by the applicant and which could be found in the online files, and she believed that this would give an indication of the impact on the right of way which would be a matter of feet away from the proposed property. She suggested that for Members to see the impact of the proposals on neighbouring property and the community and village as a whole, it would be beneficial for a site inspection to be undertaken.

*[During Councillor Hodgson's presentation, the Chair lost connection to the meeting, and the Deputy Chair took the Chair for the remainder of this application.]*

Vicky Tomlinson then addressed the Committee as a member of the village Community Association and said that she agreed with all the points made by the objectors so far. She stated there were three aspects of the officer's report that she wanted to query and recommended that Members visit the site. The first aspect related to siting and design, where the report said that the scale was not excessive, however it omitted to mention that the 2 storey house would not be sunk with a basement as had been the case in 2014 and suggested that the difference in height would be greater than the 0.65m advised. There would be a 70% increase in the floorplan which the officer believed was acceptable as it only consisted of a quarter of the overall plot size; however she stated that this ignored the fact that over half the plot could not be developed due to the impact of the roadway on the frontage, as demonstrated in the model view found on the website. Secondly in relation to amenity and privacy, she believed that the property would be visually intrusive as there was no screening proposed between the house and the roadway. She stated that the trees near the property had ash dieback, and she was unsure how the conifer hedge at the rear would survive given its proximity to the proposed dwelling and the impact of building works. Finally in respect of highway safety and access, the statement that no details had been submitted to support the claim that the site was not fully within the applicant's ownership was incorrect as a land registry plan had been made available to officers. This showed that one parking space was outside of the applicant's title and another was one the roadway. She concluded by saying that the proposed dwelling was unsuitable for the location and believed that a site visit would make this clear.





The final speaker was Steve Hole, the agent. Responding to the points made by the objectors, he noted that there had been a transition from the earlier consent for a bungalow to the 2014 consent for a bungalow with basement, with the elevation drawn as if it was buried into the ground. The elevations in the officer's slideshow clearly showed that this was a two storey dwelling and he stated there was very little difference to the present proposal. In terms of concerns regarding overdevelopment, he noted that the footprint used only 22% of the site area, not including those areas outside his client's ownership which was driveway over which he had a right of way – this could therefore not be used for anything else. He said that this could hardly be described as overdevelopment, and in the context of national advice on density which recommended 30 dwellings per hectare, the density on this site would be equivalent to 17 units per hectare – about half that recommended. Such low density and low impact was due to the renewal of the historic consent which had been carried forward, and it was no longer possible to develop at such low density. Turning to the remark by the objector that the proposed dwelling would be feet away from the right of way, this was misleading as it would in fact be 8m away. Equally the reference to survival of the conifers to the north failed to recognise that conifers had a very restricted root system and the building was 3m away and therefore outside root protection zones. The third issue mentioned by the objectors related to the deeded rights of way, and they had suggested that these were incorrectly shown on the plans. However he pointed out that the plans did not show the deeded rights of way, but the accurate position of the track that ran through the site. He said that to claim the position of the track reflected that of the deeded right of way was incorrect. In drawing the plans, he had referred to the surveyors report from the 2005 court case. Finally he noted that the scheme didn't seek to vary the previous consent, but as a S73 application it sought to alter condition 2 to substitute the design with a scheme which he believed was far better.

On a more positive note, the agent noted that the previous consent had been implemented and his client could continue to build that development, however he did not believe this did justice to the site. He believed the current proposals were more interesting, of a better scale to other buildings in the national park and architecturally more adventurous.

In response to the earlier question regarding disabled access to the upper floor, the agent replied that domestic dwellings had no requirement for disabled access other than an entry level toilet, and this was satisfied by the level entry on the lower ground floor.

The Solicitor, Mr Felgate, then advised the Committee that he was not aware of the content of the Tomlin Order, although he was aware that there was considerable history in respect of the site. He believed that the



issues were civil matters that Members did not need to take account of in making the planning decision. He believed that the objectors were asking the Committee to take a position with regard to the rights of way, and it was not able to do this as it was a matter of law for a court to determine. Other issues raised included the suitability of imposing a condition relating to 3<sup>rd</sup> party land and he advised that the Authority could do this, however the applicant would have to resolve any issues before the permission could be implemented, otherwise they would be in breach of condition and subject to enforcement action. Finally in respect of concerns regarding vehicle/pedestrian safety, he advised that, even if these involved civil rights of way, these were relevant and had to be taken into consideration.

The Chair thanked Mr Felgate and hoped that Members could be appraised fully on these matters before the application came back before the Committee. Also Members wished to understand the concerns regarding lack of disclosure of documents. The Director advised that additional information could be included in the report to a future Committee.

It was moved and seconded that Members visit the site and it was requested that further information regarding the rights of way be provided to the Committee prior to that visit, as well as information regarding trees in the vicinity of the site with ash dieback.

**DECISION: That the application be deferred to allow the Committee to undertake a site inspection.**

- (b) REFERENCE: NP/20/0026/FUL  
APPLICANT: Mr J Hamilton  
PROPOSAL: One Planet Development for a single dwelling, the reconstruction and extension of one existing barn, alterations to another existing building and a temporary caravan in the form of a shepherds hut  
LOCATION: Land at Jason Road, Freshwater East

It was reported that the site for this proposed One Planet Development (OPD) was located on an unclassified road near to Manorbier. The total site area was in the region of 5.1 acres. There were three pre-existing buildings on the site – a poly-tunnel, a barn and a tool shed. There was also an existing pump house which it was proposed to replace as part of this application. The tool shed was in the process of being moved and rebuilt under a separate earlier planning permission and the polytunnel was proposed to be removed and replaced with two smaller polytunnels in approximately the same location. A single one-bedroom dwelling was proposed.



It was reported at the meeting that the application had been amended since it was first submitted and since comments had been received on the Management Plan, with the proposed wildlife tower and windmill removed and other things added. The Shepherds Hut had been included to regularise the development – it was used for amenity and therefore did not currently require planning permission. It was also requested that additional conditions be included regarding the access gate, parking and turning, as requested by the Highway Authority.

The Director of Planning and Park Direction informed Members that the Authority had commissioned an independent assessment of the extent to which the revised Management Plan and Ecological Footprint Analysis submitted in support of the application met the tests set out in Welsh Government policy and guidance relating to OPD. This had been undertaken by Mr Allan Archer, a former Member of the Authority. However before engaging him, checks had been undertaken to ensure that this was appropriate and did not lead to any conflicts of interest. One Member hoped that, in the interests of transparency, the appointment had also been made in accordance with the Authority's procurement procedures.

Officers considered that the applicant had evidenced that sufficient produce could be generated from the land to meet the requirements of OPD development, whilst the siting and design of the proposed dwelling were not considered to harm the special qualities of the National Park. The Land Management proposals, and the biodiversity enhancements were considered sufficient to support the proposal, while the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment demonstrated that there would be very limited views of that part of the site proposed to be used for domestic purposes. It was therefore recommended that the application be delegated for approval, subject to conditions and the receipt of the final legal agreement (currently received in draft).

Noting that the design of the proposed dwelling was on stilts to accommodate the sloping land, one Member asked, whether there was a need for a condition regarding its level. The officer replied that a condition could be included to ensure the building was not raised in an unnatural way. A question regarding assessment of biodiversity was also asked and the officer replied that an ecological report had been received, which had been assessed by the Authority's Ecologist and that the applicant had offered to undertake annual surveys and include these in his monitoring reports.

Officers also reassured the Committee that due to the complex nature of OPD applications, annual monitoring reports were submitted and the Authority was currently looking to engage someone to look at these



reports and to provide specialist advice. If the OPD was not successful an exit strategy was included within the Management Plan which would require the land to be restored to its previous use; this was enforceable through legal action.

The first of two speakers was Bruce Woodhall. He explained that his family had owned property opposite the site for 70 years. Having studied the policy regarding OPD, he believed the principals of encouraging young people to work the land and build businesses was not a problem. However he believed that it was a back door route to gaining planning permission on greenfield sites when this would not normally be possible. His concerns were amplified by his knowledge that two farmers living in close proximity had been refused permission for new dwellings which would allow the next generation to take on the farm and move into the farmhouse. Mr Woodhall explained that he was from a farming background and had qualifications in agriculture and having studied the management plan, he couldn't see how it would be self sustaining as it would not even meet the minimum living wage, particularly if more than one person lived on the land. His main concern, however, related to highways and access as he believed that the levels of traffic on the road had increased in recent years and were greater than the Highway Authority appreciated, particularly in the summer months when the road was used by visitors using SatNav to travel from Freshwater East to Tenby. At this time of the year the road was also used by farmers, in addition to cyclists and walkers, and as the road had no passing places, accidents were waiting to happen. The visibility splays onto the A4139 were also inadequate as cars travelled at speed along it. Mr Woodhall was particularly concerned that the applicant would hold seminars on cider making and bee keeping and these together with farm gate sales, would exacerbate the problem.

The applicant, James Hamilton, then addressed the Committee. He stated that the proposal had taken two years to get to this point and he had undertaken both pre-application discussions and community consultation to the satisfaction of officers. He believed the application was now complete and he thanked those who had commented on and influenced the application which had improved in detail and clarity. He went on to explain that he had grown up in the National Park and he continued to have strong family connections in the area. The landscape was important to him and it had been the backdrop to his childhood, personal interests and work in environmental history and the connection between animals and the landscape. He had found the 1996 Sea Empress disaster to be a defining moment, providing a brutal awakening to the fragility and vulnerability of nature. He was grateful for the protection afforded by the National Park which would preserve the



landscape for the future, and he believed that the proposals before the Committee respected those goals.

Mr Hamilton believed that the value of OPD policy was in empowering individuals to play an active role in developing solutions to the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and habitat destruction, which were the most important to be faced in generations. The proposals accounted for the range of roles that projects had to play if they wanted to make a contribution to caring for the environment, local habitat and in playing an active role in the local community. He believed that meeting the requirements of OPD was achievable with land-based activity, and he had scaled the activities by his experience in working the site. He had already planted 80 new trees, both fruit trees and broadleaf, in order to balance the habitat and landscape. He concluded by saying that his commitment to OPD was not to gain a house, but to undertake a sustainable and environmentally responsible way of life as part of his drive to pursue his political commitment to it, and for the love of a unique landscape.

One Member asked Mr Hamilton about water usage on the site, noting that there was a borehole. He replied that the figures in the Plan were based on both standardised figures and his usage on site to date. Rainwater would also be collected, and the borehole would be limited to his own domestic use.

One Member felt that this was a well-constructed application and was impressed by the clarity and thoroughness of the external assessment. The recommendation of delegated approval was moved and seconded.

One Member however was concerned about the highway and the additional traffic that any gate sales could create, and moved that a site inspection take place. The officer advised that highways had been re-consulted on the application and had advised that the site currently had unfettered agricultural use by any number of tractors, and the proposal would use the land in more sensitive ways. It was noted that the applicant proposed to deliver vegetable boxes by bicycle. Nevertheless the motion was seconded, however the vote was lost.

The Committee then voted to delegate approval to officers, subject to the additional conditions in relation to levels, access gate, parking and turning and submission of a finalised S106 Agreement, and this was won.

**DECISION: That the application be delegated to the Head of Park Direction to approve subject to negotiation and receipt within a 3 month period of a suitably worded S106 agreement and conditions in respect of accordance with plans and document including the Management Plan, occupation, submission of an annual Monitoring**



**Report, external lighting, removal of permitted development rights, produce to be sourced from the land, ecological recommendations, levels, access, parking and turning and removal of the temporary static caravan and shepherds hut within 3 months of occupation of the dwelling.**

*[The Committee adjourned between 12.15 and 12.25pm]*

- (c) REFERENCE: NP/21/0060/FUL  
APPLICANT: Mr and Mrs Saber  
PROPOSAL: Replacement dwelling  
LOCATION: Morwennau, Poppit, Cardigan, Pembrokeshire, SA43 3LP

It was reported that the site consisted of a single storey dwelling of a prefab asbestos construction and featured two bedrooms and two reception rooms. The current proposal, which had been subject to a number of design iterations at pre-application stage, featured four bedrooms at ground floor level and an upstairs kitchen and dining/living area. It was proposed to lower the levels of the existing dwelling to allow for an additional floor.

The application was before the Committee as St Dogmaels Community Council had objected to it, contrary to the officer recommendation. Their principal concern related to the proposed dormer style window to the south east elevation which would be detrimental to the privacy of a nearby property.

Officers considered that the increase in overlooking was not sufficient to refuse the application, which was considered to comply with all relevant Local Development Plan 2 policies, and the application was therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Noting that condition 6 related to external lighting, one Member asked about light spillage from windows at the proposed property. The officer replied that the volume of glazing had been reduced during the course of discussions with the applicant, and as the window was set back within the dwelling, light spillage would be similar to that at a nearby property a little further up the hill.

There were two speakers on the application, however before they spoke, the Chair permitted a motion for a site visit, which was seconded. However the vote was lost.

The first speaker, Brian Francis, then addressed the Committee. He said that he was disappointed to have to attend the Committee in order to



argue for a site visit when the decision had already been made before he could speak as both the Community Council and the local County Councillor had agreed this was an issue that Members needed to see in person. His concerns related to the large dormer window overlooking Briar Bank which was very intrusive. He believed that the perception of overlooking was different depending on whether you were looking down or looking up and this could only be appreciated on site. The rear elevation of his property accommodated the kitchen, conservatory, bedroom dining room and patio area and the proposed development would afford him no privacy. He believed that the Architect should have looked more carefully at the design and suggested that velux window could have been included to increase light levels. A dormer window on the north west side would provide views of the beach, sea and Cemais Head, and he questioned why the window could not be located on that side. He understood that electricity cables to the north west would soon be undergrounded. He pleaded with Members to view the situation on site and concluded by saying that drone cameras were monitored by law, however the proposals would amount to a permanent drone and would seriously affect his privacy.

Having heard from the objector, the Solicitor was concerned that he had been disadvantaged by the earlier vote not to visit the site as Members had not had the opportunity to hear his comments before reaching their decision. It was suggested that, once the Committee had heard from the other speaker, the vote on the site inspection should be retaken.

Gavin Oliver from Billy Studio Architects, the Agent, then addressed the Committee. He stated that the proposal was to replace the deteriorating bungalow with a new dwelling, and explained that the existing dwelling was elevated above ground level by about 1m with a large floor void. From an environmental perspective, the existing dwelling was poor with very limited parking and a concrete cesspit. Through extensive pre-application consultations, the design had evolved, becoming more traditional. There had been a need to provide better parking and systems for dealing with waste, and this had determined the area of the site it was possible to build on. There would now be two parking spaces, and a pull-in area, which was welcomed by the Highway Authority. The proposed property would have 4 bedrooms on the ground floor and a living area in the roof above. To gain the extra level, the base level would be 0.5m lower, with the first floor being 0.7m above the existing ground floor, with the entrance opening onto a split level landing. The footprint of the building was largely the same, the form was traditional, in keeping with the character of Poppit and the materials would blend well with the surrounding properties. The glazing proposed was well balanced with solid form while at the same time providing meaningful views of Poppit. With regard to the dormer window to the south east which was the subject



of objection, this would provide direct sunlight into the property and would provide a similar outlook to the existing dwelling, with the change in eye level being only 1.07m. Overall the Agent believed that the proposals would enhance the site, improve waste management and parking and would incorporate renewable technology for space and water heating. The dwelling would provide sustainable development in the broadest sense and was respectful to the character of Poppit.

One Member noted that the proposed dwelling was 46m away from the development and noted that in an urban setting 20m was considered sufficient. Another Member believed that the slope of the land was an influencing factor, and again proposed that the Committee carry out a site inspection. This was seconded.

**DECISION: That the application be deferred and the site inspected by the Committee.**

*Having disclosed an interest, Councillor A Wilcox withdrew from the meeting while the following application was considered.*

- (d) REFERENCE: NP/21/0137/FUL  
APPLICANT: Bluestone Resorts Ltd  
PROPOSAL: Removal of a timber structure, installation of holiday lodges, welcome lodge, communal hub structures, buggy park and photo-voltaic shelter and guest car park, with associated infrastructure including internal circulation roads, hard and soft landscaping, drainage infrastructure, retaining walls and earth bunding. This forms the main part of a wider development proposal that is otherwise located within Pembrokeshire County Council  
LOCATION: Bluestone National Park Resort, Canaston Wood, Narberth, Pembrokeshire, SA67 8DE

It was reported that the application was before the Committee as it was a major application and formed a departure from the Authority's Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2). It was for a substantial extension to the existing Bluestone Resort site and currently comprised a series of green open spaces with scattered structures and paths, some mounding, an attenuation pond and hardstanding with some aggregate storage and rough land with scrub. The majority of the site lay within the boundary of the National Park with the south eastern part including hardstanding and bunds within the Pembrokeshire County Council planning area.

The overall proposed development comprised of 65 two-storey and 15 one-storey lodges, with 77 of the lodges located within the National Park





and 3 partly within. The proposed lodges would increase the number of units on the wider Bluestone site by just over 23% from 344 to 424 accommodating approximately 508 guests within the application accommodation.

The proposed lodges would be centred around outdoor hubs which varied in size, with the medium and central hubs including open sided wooden and glass structures with communal seating, playing and outdoor BBQ areas to provide all weather outside space. In respect of landscaping, most hedgerows were proposed to be retained and the quantity of new planting proposed was greater than that to be removed.

Officers considered that the proposal would not give rise to significant or unacceptable landscape and visual impact and the Authority's consultant considered that with appropriate landscape mitigation as proposed, impacts would be acceptable in year 10 following development. The proposal was located in an isolated location and to be acceptable and form a sustainable development, a travel plan would need to be secured that ensured the most sustainable forms of transport. The proposal would have a heritage impact and Cadw had identified the potential impact on Newton North Church; mitigation of this impact would require the use of a section 106 agreement.

Notwithstanding the lack of any unacceptable visual impact, the proposal had been identified as a departure from LDP2 which was the Development Plan for the purposes of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This was due to Policies 38 and 40 containing a prohibition against this form of development in the countryside.

However there were material considerations in favour of this development, in particular a refusal of planning permission would likely prevent the benefits of the scheme. These would primarily arise through the provision of socio-economic benefit from the development. If permitted, the proposal would allow for a development that would be adequately mitigated and not give rise to residual planning harm and form a sustainable development in line with the requirements of Planning Policy Wales. The proposal was considered to be in accordance with other LDP policies.

The report noted that there was not considered to be an adverse impact on the integrity of European Protected Sites subject to securing appropriate mitigation through planning conditions. It was reported at the meeting that Natural Resources Wales had agreed the Authority's response in this respect and the officer asked that the recommendation be amended to remove the second criteria that was to be the subject of



delegation. On balance, taking into account the benefits of the development it was considered that the proposal would amount to an acceptable departure from the development plan and was recommended for approval on that basis, subject to agreement of a S106 Agreement and conditions as set out in the report.

It was also noted at the meeting that late responses had been received from Martletwy Community Council and the Friends of Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. The Community Council were objecting as the development did not comply with Policy 40 which required self-catering accommodation to be on brownfield sites and as this had recently been adopted, suggested that to go against the Plan would imply that it was not fit for purpose. They were also concerned about the high density of the development, believing that despite landscaping, it would be visible from the A40; that the development was not well related to an existing settlement; and that the impact of lighting would have a detrimental effect on wildlife. The Friends of PCNP, while supporting the proposed S106 contribution to rights of way and the lighting strategy, were concerned about impacts on the Special Area of Conservation by the firewater system and other matters. All of these issues had been addressed in the report. The officer also reported that he understood that an application for the element of the proposals that were within Pembrokeshire County Council had been approved the previous day.

The officer then took Members through a comprehensive slideshow showing a range of viewpoints of the site. The viewpoint closest to the A40 was highlighted at Members' request.

There were two speakers on behalf of Bluestone, and the Committee was advised that they would be splitting the 5 minutes allocated time between them. The first was Liz Weedon, Head of Projects, who stated that Bluestone attracted 155,000 staying guests annually and had an occupancy rate of 97%. It was open for 12 months of the year for short breaks and contained no owner occupied properties. The proposed development would exceed the highest standards already provided on site with a VIP concierge service, digital check-in and provision of golf buggies. The business was centred on three pillars - people, planet and product. All staff were paid above the National Living Wage and none were on zero hours contracts, with employees owning 30% of the company. Bluestone's hospitality academy aimed to raise standards of the tourism industry in Pembrokeshire and it held Green Key accreditation, one of only a few companies in Wales holding this international award which recognised its sustainability. She also noted that the company had given over £200,000 for footpath improvements across Pembrokeshire; its outward looking ethos encouraged guests to visit local towns and attractions, spending money with local businesses.



Its charitable Foundation supported projects locally, and it was anticipated that these premier lodges would increase Foundation revenue. Annually the company spent £5 million in the local supply chain and £1.7 million in marketing, showcasing the National Park, Welsh culture and the warm welcome of local people. As a unique world class destination, Bluestone was committed to investing in people, focussing on innovation and protecting the environment in order to deliver a quality product.

Helen Ashby-Ridgway, the Agent, then addressed the Committee. She explained that in setting the project brief, Bluestone had been adamant that the proposal avoid, minimise or mitigate the impact of the development to ensure compatibility with National Park purposes. Every aspect of the design had been considered, focussing on low energy demand and biophilic principles. It was recognised that Bluestone did not operate in a bubble, with Pembrokeshire's population of 114,000 being dwarfed by 4.5million visitors, and the importance of tourism was therefore integral to Pembrokeshire and there was a need for the county, and the National Park, to facilitate investment in the offer, protecting and enhancing the economy to encourage visitors to return. The county's Destination Management Plan recognised the variability in quality of accommodation and aspired to develop the high value family market, with Bluestone used as an example of this. The development would provide additional capacity for visitors who were currently unable to book accommodation at the resort with the enhanced service proposed usually only available in 5 star hotels. The development would create 88 new jobs on site plus approximately 300 during construction and produce an estimated £3.5 million GVA. Following confirmation that the environmental impact assessment was acceptable, these were considered to be important considerations in determining the application, falling within the duty to foster the social and economic wellbeing of the National Park. The agent noted that they were disappointed by Martletwy Community Council's late objection which failed to recognise the economic benefits of the proposals, however there had been no other objections. By approving the application, the Authority would support investment in a quality tourism business in Pembrokeshire in line with the Local Development Plan and Destination Management Plan and she asked that Members approve the application.

Members asked a number of questions regarding electric charging points for vehicles and also dimmable lighting in the car parking area in order to protect bats. The Agent replied that both electric charging points and dimmable lighting were already included in the proposals. They were also concerned that the previous S106 Agreement in respect of Newton Church had not been adhered to and sought assurance that this would be adhered to. The Agent confirmed that Bluestone had only taken ownership of the Church in April 2020 and due to Covid restrictions



progress had been slow. In response to the comments by Cadw, a timetable had been provided to officers for taking this work forward. An interesting archaeological discovery had also been made during early investigations of the site, however Dyfed Archaeological Trust, which had overseen evaluation trenching, did not believe that this was of national significance and there were no remarkable finds which could be used to date it. Nevertheless Bluestone had taken the decision to avoid development on that element of the site. Liz Weedon added that discussions regarding the future of Newton North Church were currently taking place with the Authority's Building Conservation Officer and it was likely that an application would be submitted to roof the building and for it to be used as a natural and cultural heritage centre.

Members who had visited the site had been impressed with the improved tree cover and how the site had been developed over the years. They also looked forward to the additional employment that would be provided. The recommendation of delegated approval was moved and seconded.

**DECISION: that the application be delegated for approval subject to the submission of a Section 106 agreed to secure contributions to Active Travel and Public Rights of Way and the appropriate restoration of the Scheduled Ancient Monument Newton North Church and subject to conditions in relation to timing of the development, accordance with plans and documents, schedule of materials, lighting, accordance with Ecological Appraisal, Construction Environmental Management Plan, landscaping scheme, Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, Arboricultural Method Statement, Travel Plan, Construction Traffic Management Plan, archaeology, holiday occupancy restriction, foul drainage and a management and maintenance plan for the private wastewater treatment system.**

- (e) REFERENCE: NP/21/0172/TPO  
APPLICANT: Mr Hopkinson, The Beach Court (Saundersfoot) Management Co Ltd  
PROPOSAL: Fell 1x Monterey cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) to ground level, leaving stump in situ. (T12 on TPO 33, wrongly identified as a Douglas Fir)  
LOCATION: Beach Court, The Strand, Saundersfoot, Pembrokeshire, SA69 9EU

It was reported that an application had been submitted to fell the tree opposite Beach Court Saundersfoot, and due to the significant level of public interest generated, it was recommended that Members visit the site and its surroundings. A full report on the application would be considered by a future meeting of the Committee.



**DECISION: That the application be deferred and the site visited by the Committee.**

## **7. Appeals**

The Development Management Team Leader reported on 4 appeals (against planning decisions made by the Authority) that were currently lodged with the Welsh Government, and detailed which stage of the appeal process had been reached to date in every case.

The Inspector's decision in respect of three appeals were attached to the report. Those in respect of NP/20/0129/FUL Proposed erection of first floor extension above existing utility space to side of dwelling & modest single storey rear extension & all associated works. Also, formation of new/reconfigured stepped pedestrian access up to the dwelling to front – 133 Castle Way, Dale; and NP/20/0150/FUL Reserved matters application following NP/18/0342/OUT for a single dwelling – Penfeidr Uchaf, Newport had been dismissed, while NP/20/0379/FUL Proposed balcony to rear, new roof to conservatory, with window and door alterations – 23 Scandinavia Heights, Saundersfoot had been allowed.

It was noted that two further appeals had been made since writing the report and details would be provided at the next Committee.

**NOTED.**

