

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

22nd October 2014

Present: Mrs G Hayward (Chair)

Mr A Archer, Mr D Ellis, Councillor P Harries, Councillor M James, Councillor O James, Councillor L Jenkins, Councillor R Kilmister, Councillor RM Lewis, Councillor PJ Morgan, Councillor R Owens, Councillor D Rees, Mr AE Sangster, Mrs M Thomas, Councillor A Wilcox and Councillor M Williams.

[Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock 10.00am – 11.50am]

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Ms C Gwyther and Councillor S Hudson.

2. Disclosures of interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on the 10th September 2014 and 22nd September 2014 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was noted that agenda item 3 which sought to confirm the minutes of the last meeting showed the incorrect date, however the correct minutes had been circulated.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meetings held on the 10th September 2014 and 22nd September 2014 be confirmed and signed.

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 7th 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*):

Reference number	Proposal	Speaker
NP/13/0441	Demolition of existing Motel &	Mr David Smith,



Minute 6(a) refers replace with 40 bed hotel with adjoining restaurant & associated parking & landscaping – Rochgate Motel, Roch

Supporter
Mr Ian Bowie,
Applicant

5. Members' Duties in Determining Applications

The Solicitor's report summarised the role of the Committee within the planning system and stated that planning decisions had to be made in accordance with statutory provisions and the adopted Local Development Plan unless material considerations indicated otherwise. It stressed that non-material considerations had to be disregarded when taking planning decisions and stated that personal circumstances were only very rarely material to planning decisions. Provided members applied the Planning Acts lawfully and in a fair and impartial manner they would also comply with the Authority's duties under the Human Rights Act 1998 insofar as it applies to planning decisions. It was also important that Members applied the guidance contained in the Authority's Planning Code of Good Practice while carrying out their statutory duties.

NOTED

6. Report of Planning Applications

The Committee considered the detailed reports of Planning Officers, 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/13/0441
APPLICANT: Mr I Bowie, Humbergrange Ltd
PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing Motel & replace with 40 bed hotel with adjoining restaurant & associated parking & landscaping
LOCATION: Rochgate Motel, Roch

It was reported that the application site had been the subject of previous applications, the most recent of which had been an approval for refurbishment of the existing motel in 2009. As existing, the site was considered to be having an adverse impact upon the amenity of the area because of the poor state of repair of the existing buildings and officers had requested that works be carried out to remedy the visual impact of the existing buildings. The present application for a complete rebuild has been submitted instead. The built form of the hotel and restaurant proposed would arc around the perimeter of the application site with a central courtyard providing parking to serve the buildings. Additional



landscaping would be provided in addition to two ponds with a new vehicular access point.

While the principle of the development in providing for a new hotel was acceptable, the scheme put forward was not considered to be an appropriate design solution for this visually prominent site on the boundary of the National Park. The building would extend to two storeys, 2m above the existing structures, and through their design and form would result in a prominent addition to the site which was surrounded by unspoilt open countryside to the south and west. The concerns in this instance were the form and appearance of the buildings proposed, particularly the two storey flat roof entrance building, disjointed roof configuration, fragmented elevational treatments and dominance of glazing particularly on the north and west elevations.

It was therefore considered that the development was not acceptable by virtue of the form, design and massing introducing a prominent development which would harm the special qualities of the National Park and it was therefore recommended for refusal.

The planning officer apologised that the photographs taken of the site and its vicinity had been taken twelve months previously and did not show the recently completed housing development, within Pembrokeshire County Council's jurisdiction, which had been built on the opposite side of the main road.

The first of the two speakers was Mr David Smith, Vice Chair of Nolton and Roch Community Council. He pointed out that the first thing people saw when entering the village was a derelict building with broken and boarded up windows and flaking paint; the site was also covered in brambles and graffiti. The Community Council had wished for a long time that something be done about it – the buildings removed and replaced with something better. He stated that in its time the motel had been a popular meeting place and had an important place in the community. The proposals to replace the motel had therefore been eagerly awaited and the Community Council endorsed the design. Mr Smith regretted that Members were unable to see a picture of the adjacent affordable housing scheme of 12 houses, most of which were 2 storey. He did not therefore think that the proposed 2 storey building on the site under consideration would be significantly different. He also stated that he understood that previous schemes on the site had been unsuccessful as they had provided insufficient beds to make them economically viable. The economic benefit of the site was very important as it would provide employment for 20 or more people as well as bringing visitors into the community all year round. He concluded by saying that Roch was not a



picture postcard village and he didn't think that the proposed redevelopment would detract from the village but would remove a dreadful eyesore.

The second speaker was Mr Ian Bowie, the applicant and a Director of Humbergrange Ltd. He had purchased the site 2 years previously and intended to use a local building firm to build what would be a family run hotel which would benefit the whole area. He said that consideration of the application revolved around its design, as the principle of hotel development on the site was accepted. Everyone wanted to see change. He believed that the 2009 permission was of an ultra-modern design and would not fit well and would, in any case, be too small. To be economically viable it had to be of the size proposed and the footprint of the proposed development was virtually the same as the present buildings. Mr Bowie explained that having developed the proposals, he had met with officers who had raised concerns with the design and had suggested that there would be no objection to a three storey hotel on the site. Mr Bowie said that he and his architect had been quite shocked, thinking such a structure would be too much of an imposition, and had decided to retain a 2 storey building. With regard to the reference in the officer's report to roof fragmentation, a single roof had originally been proposed, however a previous planning officer had advised that it would be more acceptable if it were fragmented, so that it resembled a set of farm buildings. This demonstrated that officers had differing opinions. Mr Bowie said that he had done everything he had been asked with changes being made in the design to incorporate a grass roof and to reduce the glazing even though this elevation overlooked a field and would not be visible. The windows at the front of the building were of a conventional size and a hedgebank of 10-12ft screened the hotel in views from the Nolton Haven road. He believed that the current scheme was much better than that which had previously been granted permission.

Responding to the speakers, the officer reminded the Committee that the site opposite was outside of the National Park and consideration should be given to the impact of the development on the National Park, rather than the village itself. He clarified that at the meeting with the applicant and his architect, officers had explained their concerns and had suggested that one option was a 'country house' design. They had advised that three storeys could be acceptable, but it would depend upon the design.

Some Members agreed with the officer, that although the site was currently an eyesore, there was a danger in accepting something that was inappropriate because it would be an improvement. They stressed that details were important and considered that the design of the elevations



was too horizontal. The building did not take account of the surrounding landscape or reflect local distinctiveness and a high quality design was important, given the position of the development at the entrance to the National Park when approached from Haverfordwest.

Other Members, however, considered the two storey design of the proposals to be acceptable, particularly given the two storey houses which had been built opposite, and the fact that the motel was within the village of Roch rather than in an isolated position and would be seen as such in views both near and far. They also stressed that any development had to be of a size that was economically viable. Members also pointed out that the Authority had a responsibility for the economy and noted that the proposed development would provide quality, accessible accommodation as well as jobs in the area and had the support of the local community.

As the officer's photographs did not show the new development opposite the motel, it was proposed and seconded that a site visit take place so that Members could see the site first hand. This was put to the vote, but the motion was not carried.

The recommendation of refusal was then moved and seconded and this motion was not carried. A motion of approval subject to conditions was then moved and seconded, however before a vote could be taken on this, one Member explained that although he was happy with the height of the proposals he was concerned with their design, and having voted against refusal of the application, was unsure he could support a motion of approval. It was therefore proposed and seconded that the application be deferred to allow further discussions to take place to amend the current scheme and the motion of approval was withdrawn. The vote on deferring the application was carried.

DECISION: That the application be deferred to the next possible meeting of the Committee to allow further discussions to take place between the applicant and planning officers regarding improvement of the design of the proposed building.



- (b) REFERENCE: NP/14/0311
APPLICANT: Mr D Harries
PROPOSAL: Proposed cattle accommodation building, associated yard area & slurry lagoon
LOCATION: Velindre, St Nicholas, Goodwick

Members were reminded that this application had been considered by the Development Management Committee at its previous meeting when it had been resolved to undertake a site inspection, the minutes of which had been circulated (Minute 3 refers). In addition, Members had asked that the applicant supply further details on slurry spreading proposals with a management plan as well as information on traffic movements and these were appended to the report together with plans showing additional landscaping supplied by the applicant.

At the site inspection, Members asked about the status of neighbouring properties and the officer informed the Committee that both Pwll Crochan and Velindre West were residential properties with the former having a condition restricting its occupancy between February and November only. The officer also informed Members that further consultation had taken place on the manure management plan with Natural Resources Wales, which advised that they had no grounds to disagree with the figures in the report; while the Highway Authority had considered the additional traffic movement information and advised that whilst confusing, the values were relatively low and capacity was not a problem. They had no objection to the application but recommended that the farm should implement a traffic management plan to control carrying silage when slurry was being moved and suggested that there were places where existing grass verges could be hard surfaced to provide better passing places.

Further objections had been received since the report had been written reiterating concerns that had already been raised, and Members had also received an email from the applicant contending that there were many large herds of cattle already in the National Park, together with several large earth banked agricultural storage areas, and that these had not caused problems. Officers advised that they remained of the opinion that the limited additional economic benefits of the scheme would not outweigh the harm to the special qualities of the National Park; that the cattle accommodation building and slurry lagoon would expand the site's visibility and result in an unacceptable loss of a sense of remoteness and tranquillity, would not protect the pattern and diversity of the landscape, would be insensitively and unsympathetically sited within the landscape, would introduce and intensify a use which was incompatible with its location and would fail to harmonise with or enhance the landform and landscape character of the National Park. In addition to these concerns,



the slurry lagoon by virtue of its form, scale and siting would have an adverse impact upon the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and visitors to the area due to the development consisting of a use inappropriate for where people live and visit, being of a scale incompatible with its surroundings and being visually intrusive. It was therefore recommended for refusal.

The first Member to speak moved that the application be refused due to the industrialised form of the development, the remoteness and tranquillity of the site and the incompatible and visually intrusive nature of the proposals. This was seconded. Greatest concern was expressed over the impact of the slurry lagoon, which would change the landscape of the area and impact upon the amenity of neighbouring properties. One member was of the view and had experience that landscaping could be enhanced to reduce odour, with a banding effect of trees which would effectively block the dispersal of odours. Other Members were concerned by the visual intrusion of the buildings and the effect of the slurry tanker movements on traffic in the small lanes. While Members wanted to support the economy of the area, they did not believe that this should be at any cost and the Authority's priorities should be to protect its primary purposes.

Other Members, however considered that farming had always been an industry but that its needs had changed and larger units were now required. They believed these needed to be accommodated within the National Park and solutions found to ensure their impacts were minimised; it was suggested that additional landscaping could help with this or siting of the slurry lagoon in a different location. The point was made that the landscape had been created through generations of farmers and that the Authority's role was to manage the change that was needed in ways that were acceptable.

A vote was then taken on the motion for refusal and this was not carried. It was then moved and seconded that the application be deferred to allow for the applicant to reconsider the landscaping proposals and submit further details which may be an increase in the landscaping to mitigate the visual impact of the proposals and this vote was carried.

DECISION: That the application be deferred until the next meeting to allow an increased landscaping scheme to be put forward.

7. Appeals

The Director of Park Direction and Planning reported on 5 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. She advised Members that decisions had been received the previous day in respect of the proposed dwellings at Blockett Lane, Little Haven and these had all been dismissed on the grounds of lack of affordable housing on the site.

NOTED.

