

## Item 5 - Report on Planning Applications

**Application Ref: NP/15/0417/FUL & NP/15/0418/FUL**

<b>Application Ref</b>	NP/15/0417/FUL		
<b>Case Officer</b>	Kate Attrill		
<b>Applicant</b>	Mr M Watkins		
<b>Agent</b>	Mr A Lawrence, Reading Agricultural Consultants		
<b>Proposal</b>	Cattle accommodation buildings, slurry lagoon, silage clamps & open yard areas (part retrospective)		
<b>Site Location</b>	Trewern, Felindre Farchog, Crymych, Pembrokeshire, SA41 3XE		
<b>Grid Ref</b>	SN08863825		
<b>Date Valid</b>	21-Jul-2015	<b>Target Date</b>	14-Sep-2015

<b>Application Ref</b>	NP/15/0418/FUL		
<b>Case Officer</b>	Kate Attrill		
<b>Applicant</b>	Mr M Watkins		
<b>Agent</b>	Mr A Lawrence, Reading Agricultural Consultants		
<b>Proposal</b>	0.5mw anaerobic digestion plant		
<b>Site Location</b>	Trewern, Felindre Farchog, Crymych, Pembrokeshire, SA41 3XE		
<b>Grid Ref</b>	SN08863825		
<b>Date Valid</b>	04-Aug-2015	<b>Target Date</b>	28-Sep-2015

**Briefing Note**

This briefing note is intended to clarify the current planning position with regard to the two planning applications, as above, which have been received at Trewern Farm, Newport.

Application NP/15/0418/FUL is for a 500 kW Anaerobic Digestor and NP/15/0417/FUL for (part) retrospective works including new farm buildings, a silage clamp and slurry lagoons.

Members of the Development Management Committee were asked to undertake a site visit in order to familiarise themselves with the site prior to the applications being formally discussed at Committee. That visit took place on 12 October 2015 at which time members viewed the application site from land at Pentre Ifan and also walked the application site. Subsequent to that visit the Local Planning Authority, as required by the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment)(England and Wales) Regulations 1999, have adopted a Screening Opinion (NP/15/0573/SCR) which concludes that the proposed development is EIA development.

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process aims to ensure that the significant environmental effects of development proposals are properly assessed and, where necessary, measures are included that prevent, reduce or offset adverse effects.

## Item 5 - Report on Planning Applications

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A Screening Opinion is required for categories of development above certain thresholds or criterion set out in the applicable legislation, or if they are within a sensitive area such as an AONB or SSSI if they are considered likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location. The Screening Opinion is the Local Planning Authority's assessment of whether an Environmental Statement should be submitted with the application.

Once a Screening Opinion is adopted, the applicant is given 21 days to write to the Authority to confirm that an Environmental Statement will be prepared. If no response is received within that time then the application is deemed to be refused, by operation of the relevant legislation. If confirmation is received that an Environmental Statement will be submitted, the application is suspended until the Environmental Statement is received. The Environmental Statement, once received is advertised, consulted upon, and the information, including the Statement and consultation responses, is then taken into account in considering the planning application

### **Screening Opinion NP/15/0573/SCR**

Due to the combined impact of the two adjacent applications in proximity to Pentre Ifan, a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) of national and international significance, the two applications were screened together as being EIA development (NP/15/0573/SCR). It was considered that the applications were Schedule 2 development, and in a sensitive location, which would have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as their nature, size or location. When viewed from Pentre Ifan, the farm buildings are prominent in the foreground and the setting of the SAM. When approaching the SAM from the public parking area, the farm at Trewern is the most prominent feature within the wider landscape before arriving at the burial mound. There is also a right of way to the immediate south of the development site from which views would be significantly impacted.

LANDMAP places the site within the Eglwysrwr Historic Landscape Aspect Area PMBRKHL42264. It is evaluated as being of 'outstanding' value as 'a multi-period landscape containing important evidence dating from the prehistoric era onwards, including the Neolithic/early Bronze Age hengiform site of Castell Mawr, a series of probable medieval defensive sites, including Castell Llainfawr, Castell Dyffryn Mawr and Castell Eglwysrwr, and evidence of an early medieval ecclesiastical presence'.

LANDMAP also includes the site within the Lowland Cultural Landscape Aspect Area Preseli Hills PMBRKCL331. This is a large Aspect Area evaluated as of 'outstanding' value because the 'Preseli Hills are a highly significant element in the Pembrokeshire landscape. They have a high historic value, and attract tourists, thus contributing to the economy of Pembrokeshire'.

The archaeological assessment submitted with the application for the AD plant (NP/15/0418/FUL) concluded that there would be a 'moderate adverse'

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**Item 5 - Report on Planning Applications**

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impact on the setting of the SAM whilst the submitted LVIA deemed that there was *'significant visual impacts on short sections of the local footpath network but generally tree and hedgerow cover as well as topography screens the development from view. There will be some significant effects from footpaths and Open Access Land to the south and south east of the site but these will not be significant when mitigation planting becomes established'*. The submitted LVIA contained no reference to the cumulative impacts of the development of the AD plant in conjunction with the part retrospective application also submitted.

The Environmental Statement that is now required to be submitted must contain such information as is reasonably required to assess the effects of the project and which the applicant can reasonably be required to compile, which in this case would include a combined LVIA which accounts for the individual and cumulative impacts of the proposed development. It may consist of one or more documents, but it must constitute a "single and accessible compilation of the relevant environmental information and the summary in non-technical language". Once the Environmental Statement is received, the Local Planning Authority will have 16 weeks in which to advertise, consult on and determine the application.

The 21 days in which the applicant has to confirm whether an EIA will be prepared has not lapsed, at the time of writing this report, and therefore, the applications are currently being held in abeyance. A verbal report of any updates will be provided to members at the Committee meeting.

The agent for the applicant has also requested 2 further Screening Opinions from the Local Planning Authority, one being for the retrospective buildings alone and one for a revised siting to the north west of the main farm complex for the Anaerobic Digester plant, which the Authority are currently in the process of determining.

The Authority must now consider if the (part) retrospective development which has already taken place is EIA development without the combined impact of the Anaerobic Digester plant to the south, and also whether the proposed alternative siting (to the north west of the farm complex) of the AD plant comprises EIA development, either alone or in combination with related development.

**Recommendation**

That Members note the content of the report providing an update on the two planning applications submitted in relation to this site and the EIA process.