

**DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
(Site Inspections)**

24 August 2015

Present: Mr A Archer, Councillor P Harries, Councillor S Hudson, Councillor M James, Councillor L Jenkins, Councillor R Kilmister, Councillor RM Lewis, Councillor PJ Morgan and Councillor D Rees.

[Mrs G Hayward (Chair) only attended the visit to Coedwynog]
[Mr D Ellis only attended the visit to Feidr Eglwys]

(Site Inspection: Coedwynog 10.45 a.m. – 11.45 a.m.
Feidr Eglwys 12pm – 12.50pm)

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor ML Evans, Ms C Gwyther, Councillor R Owens, Mr AE Sangster, Mrs M Thomas, Councillor A Wilcox and Councillor M Williams.

2. NP/15/0315 – Installation of 500kw anaerobic digester in connection with existing farming operation – Coedwynog, Felindre Farchog

The Chairman welcomed Members to the meeting and reminded them that the purpose of the visits that day was purely to enable Members to acquaint themselves with the application sites and the surrounding area. No decision would be made until the planning applications were considered at a future meeting of the Development Management Committee.

Members were given a tour of the farmyard and then walked onto the site where the anaerobic digester would be located. The agent explained that the location had been chosen to provide a logical addition to the farmyard and to allow the inputs to the digester to be easily transported. The site was well screened and as it would be excavated into the bank to the same depth as the existing farmyard, would not be particularly visible. Members asked about the use of the excavated material, and the agent replied that the topsoil would be spread on land elsewhere on the farm, while the hardcore would be used to repair gateways and lanes within the site. The remaining material would be used in the construction of earth bunds.

Another Member asked about noise and odour emanating from the plant, as these concerns had been raised by local residents. The agent replied that the Combined Heat and Power Plant was within an acoustically insulated unit and would have a sound level of approximately 75db at 1 metre from the plant; given that this was a working farm, he believed that the noise would be no greater, and probably less than that produced by



the current farming operations. With regard to odour, this should also be reduced as the process of anaerobic digestion broke down waste matter in a contained environment with the resultant gases used as fuel, rather than being released into the atmosphere. It was anticipated that about £12,000 per year would be saved in energy usage by the farm.

In order for Members to understand the changes that would take place on the farm if planning permission were granted, the Director of Park Direction and Planning asked the applicant to outline the current slurry regime on the farm and how this would change. The applicant explained that the farm currently had 6 weeks storage in the lagoon nearest the dairy and then this was pumped to a bigger lagoon and this was then spread on the fields when conditions allowed. Most of the land was accessible across country without the need for tractors to travel by road. If permission for the digester was granted, the main benefit would be a greater flexibility of when the digestate (liquid residue) could be spread and the lack of odour when this took place.

Members then walked to the top of the site, to the boundary with its nearest neighbour. The approximate height and distance of the tanks had been marked on the ground and it was noted that the near distant view from the garden of that property would change, the dwelling itself had no windows looking in this direction.

3. NP/15/0194 – Residential development of 35 dwellings (including 14 affordable units) incorporating open space and new access points of Feidr Eglwys and Feidr Bentinck – Land off Feidr Eglwys, Newport

The Chair of the Committee was not present at this site visit as she had previously disclosed an interest in the application; the Deputy Chair therefore took the Chair. Members were led into the site through a pedestrian gate on Goat Street which would be retained for the use of all residents. The agent explained that the wildlife area adjoining this entrance, together with hedges within the site, would be maintained by the West Wales Wildlife Trust which was already involved with the management of a number of nature conservation sites including the church yard. The majority of hedgerows within the site would be retained, and the position of new vehicular and pedestrian access was pointed out. Members also noted the proximity to the church and the churchyard.

As Members proceeded up through the site, the Agent explained that the development would comprise a mix of one, two, three and four bed units. Turning to the affordable housing element, the agent explained that this would be located in a self-contained portion of the site with a separate access onto Feidr Eglwys. He anticipated that this would be brought forward for development by a Registered Social Landlord within 6 to 18 months of any permission; it would not have to wait for the market



housing to be developed. He added that the market housing itself could be developed in phases once the main road had been constructed as the site was naturally split into smaller areas. One Member questioned the model on which the housing need had been based. Officers replied that it was based on the housing register kept by Pembrokeshire County Council and that the need for a majority of one bed units was well recognised due to demographic changes in the population.

Finally Members walked around the perimeter roads of the site and the locations of new access points and the proposed road improvement at the junction of Kings Terrace were pointed out.

