

## MINUTES OF DEVAUDEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

TUESDAY 30 March 2010 AT DEVAUDEN VILLAGE HALL

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** J Williams (chair), A Duffield, E Hall, C Knight, N Knowland, M Powell, K Reece, A Cooke, CC Bob Greenland

**APOLOGIES:** PC Cowburn

**IN ATTENDANCE:** C Martin (clerk). Members of the public (see list attached to file copy minutes)

### 1) OPEN SESSION

Cllr Williams welcomed the public and ascertained that they were attending regarding several planning applications. JW gained agreement of all the councillors present that these plans could be discussed out of order;

#### DC/2009/ 00896 - Alteration of existing access and creation of new track to serve proposed stud farm at Llanvihangel Court

Cllr Knight began the discussion by stating that the overall planning application for this development had been refused at MCC planning committee earlier today. However this plan is for a revised access route which starts half way down Star Hill opposite Rock Road. County Cllr Greenland said that if the application goes to enquiry the issues of access will have to be looked at again by the planning inspectorate. However this is a separate plan and it has to be looked at and a recommendation made by DCC. Mr Paul Williams spoke for the members of the public present regarding this application by stating that there were 4 fundamental objections to this access;

- 1) The track will have a huge visual impact and will be easily seen across the landscape.
- 2) Where the proposed access meets the main road is opposite Rock Lane so will create a cross roads where access from Rock Lane is already difficult because of visibility issues.
- 3) Vehicles travel down Star Hill at speed and so wide visibility splays will be required which would mean taking out existing hedgerows that are part of a special landscape.
- 4) Agricultural access to fields at this site is acceptable but more than that is dangerous.

Cllr Knight said that another aspect to this is that during the winter there will be several vehicles travelling on the track in the dark with headlights which will shine straight into the bedroom windows of the two properties opposite the track. Cllr Knight proposed that DCC recommends that the application is refused by objecting on the grounds that 1) There is a major impact on the environment, 2) there will be an impact on the properties opposite, 3) This is a dangerous location for access off Star Hill, and 4) Precedent – 200mtrs further down Star Hill a similar application for access was turned down by MCC. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Williams. At voting the proposal was agreed unanimously – recommend refusal.

DC/2010/00003 Construction of a 12,000 bird free range egg production, Croes Bleddyn Farm, Itton. Cllr Williams introduced the plan explaining that she and some other councillors had visited a virtually identical poultry unit operated by Mr Prewitt at Trellech Grange. Cllr Powell stated that he understood that most of the objections were about the potential noise, smell and flies that a poultry unit would have. He said that when the unit was visited at Trellech Grange there was no smell, noise or dust or flies, although it was a March day not the height of summer. He said that he was only aware of the noise of the fans when they were switched off as it was a quite unobtrusive noise. Mr Veersteeg said that while there was no problem at this time of year when the temperature is higher it could change so this was not a good time of year to check. It is not clear in the plans what can be expected. Cllr Williams referred to the management practices of these units as outlined in the application which included these issues in particular the introduction of a special beetle to the poultry litter which keeps the fly larvae down. Cllr Hall said that this is a big development and she suggested that DCC had a site visit to assess the impact especially in relation to the effects on water and drainage. Cllr Williams read out the conditions that Welsh Water have put on the application. The applicant Mr Cavill said that the mains water supply does not go to the farm and they use their own water supply.

Cllr Williams said there had been 12 letters regarding the application, some are sympathetic, some had reservations and there were 6 people actively objecting on the grounds of the smell, flies, and how efficiently it would be run. Mr Veersteeg mentioned the flooding that occurs when water runs down from the farm. Mr Cavill stated that the water comes from springs not the farm. He said that in order to run an efficient egg production business they would have to address some of these issues of water runoff and surface drainage as part of the development. Cllr Powell asked if the unit would be visible from Itton Village Hall. Mr Cavill said the plan was to site the unit behind the farmhouse and to ensure it was as unobtrusive as possible by building it into the bank. Cllr Duffield asked if it would employ anyone. Mr Cavill said it would take one full time worker to manage the unit who would be a family member. Cllr Williams asked the individual councillors their opinions; Cllr Hall reiterated that she felt a site visit was required to see in more detail what was going to be done. Cllr Reece said he was not opposed to a visit but said he was aware of the unit in Trellech Grange and several others in the vicinity (at the Veddw and over at Abergavenny). He said he was not aware of any problems with these as they were subject to strict regulations. Cllr Knowland supported Cllr Reece's view saying that the DEFRA regulations are strong. Cllr Cooke agreed that this is a countryside development so didn't see the need for a visit. Cllr Knight also felt a site meeting was not necessary but that should raise issues discussed tonight in any reply to MCC. Cllr Powell wanted to address the issue of where the chickens are going to range. Mr Cavill said this would be at the rear of the unit stretching out to the East.

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Ms Veersteeg said she lives down wind of the proposed development and is concerned about the closeness and questions how much space each of the chickens would have if 12,000 chickens in an 85 metre building. Cllr Williams said she had been pleasantly surprised by how much space the chickens she visited had. Mr Cavill said they had chosen this method of egg production and unit supplier as there is lots of support for the farmer to manage the unit well. He also said that he and his extended family live at the farm and so it is not in their interests to cause distress to any of the neighbours. Cllr Williams asked those who were objecting that if there was no smell and flies were dealt with would they object to the unit per se. Mr Veersteeg said no as long as there was no environmental impact. County councillor Greenland said that the Environment Agency had not yet replied to MCC and will look at all the potential issues. So until MCC get the report they will not be making a decision, and will look at all these issues very carefully. Cllr Powell proposed that recommend approval of the application subject to satisfactory environmental report and consideration of the issues such as smell, noise, flies and surface water drainage. Cllr Williams offered a counter proposal that had an addition to the original proposal as follows: recommend approval of the application subject to satisfactory environmental report and consideration of the issues such as smell, noise, flies and surface water drainage, which are very important to local residents. Seconded by Cllr Knight. On voting 7 councillors agreed the proposal and Cllr Hall abstained.

Most of the members of the public left the meeting. Mrs Howells said she was here about her planning application DC/20101/00108 Erection of workshop and garage store, Bryn Heulog, Llanvihangel to y Myndd, Chepstow. Cllr Knight declared an interest as his company has been engaged to provide the new buildings. He left the room, completed a declaration of interest form and did not participate in the discussion or vote. Cllr Powell proposed recommend the application be approved subject to the Green lane/footpath being maintained at all times. Seconded by Cllr Reece. On voting 6 agreed the proposal and one abstained.

All members of the public left the meeting and Cllr Knight returned.

PC Cowburn was unable to attend the meeting but his incident report is at the end of the minutes.

## **2) CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

Minutes from meeting of 23 February 2010 were agreed and signed by JW and CM.

## **3) MATTERS ARISING**

**3.1** MCC highways form from 28 January returned. File

**3.2** Confirmation from Nick Ramsay's office that he will be attending the July meeting at Itton. Notices of this meeting will be put up and on website nearer the time.

## **4) FINANCE**

*Balances at 23/02/10 Current; £ 563.75 Notice: £3378.83*

**4.1** Agreed for payment by JW and MP;

C.Martin, clerk's salary and expense, £300.21 cheque no. 101164

One Voice Wales – annual subscription, £106, cheque no 101165

St Michael's church Llanvihangel, £50 donation towards grass cutting for 2009/10 financial year, cheque no.101166

**4.2** The annual return documentation has been received from Mazars. CM will enquire whether Christine Alway can do the internal audit again.

**4.3** Cheques for £20 each have been received from Mr F Richards and Mr P Maggs in payment of their 2010 allotment rental fees. CM will pay the cheques into the bank.

## **5) CORRESPONDENCE**

**5.1** Mor Hafren area committee agenda. File 2 months.

**5.2** MCC – Rural development plan for Wales Axis 3 projects – newsletter. Passed to JW.

**5.3** MCC – Monmouthshire Schools Showcase 21 April. Passed to JW.

**5.4** MCC – updates to electoral register for MP, JW, KR, EH and AD. Distributed.

**5.5** MCC – letter of thanks for the donation to the Chepstow summer play scheme. File.

**5.6** WAG – update on town and community councils. File.

**5.7** Wye Valley AONB newsletter. Distributed.

## **6) PLANNING**

**6.1** Planning committee agenda 2 and 16 March. File 2 months.

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- 6.2** Planning lists and decisions lists for period 26.2.10 to 23.3.10. File 2 months.
- 6.3** Planning enforcement weekly list February. File.
- 6.4** The following plans were approved by MCC or acceptable delegated decisions;
- 6.4.1** DC/2010/00025 Steel clad office container, Forestry Commission, Itton
- 6.4.2** DC/2009/01165 – Portal steel frame extension to agricultural building to enable storage of feed and machinery, Tyn y Groes, Old Uplands Road, Gear Fawr, Usk.
- 6.5** DC/2010/00003 Construction of a 12,000 bird free range egg production, Croes Bleddyn Farm, Itton. See open session above.
- 6.6** DC/20101/00108 Erection of workshop and garage store, Bryn Heulog, Llanvihangel tor y Myndd, Chepstow. See open session above.
- 6.7** DC/2009/00896 - Alteration of existing access and creation of new track to serve proposed stud farm at Llanvihangel Court. See open session above.
- 6.8** DC/2010/00186 Hay barn, Stonehouse Farm Newchurch West, Chepstow. No objections. Recommend approval.
- 6.9** DC/2009/00742 Occasional courses of bush craft and survival and charcoal making. Construction of temporary overnight shelter. Lock up container for tools and materials, Tredean Woods. County Cllr Greenland reported that he had an answer machine message from Mrs G Hancock objecting to this application. KR proposed recommend approve the application providing no water courses are interfered with and there is no permanent overnight accommodation. Seconded by JW. On voting the proposal was agreed unanimously. Recommend approval.
- 6.10** DC/2010/00170 Extension to conservatory and double garage and tractor shed, built into adjacent field, Nightingale Cottage, Devauden. Cllr Reece declared an interest as this is his property. He left the room and completed a declaration of interest form. Cllr Duffield also declared an interest as her husband is a relative of Cllr Reece; she also left the room and completed a declaration of interest form. No objections. Recommend approval. Cllr Reece and Duffield returned.
- 6.11** DC/2010/00164 Conversion of loft to provide 2 no. additional bedrooms for adults with severe learning difficulties. The Dorlands, Kilgwrrwg, Devuaden. Cllr Knowland proposed recommend approval provided that the conditions of the original application are not varied. Seconded by AC. On voting the proposal was agreed unanimously.

## **7) COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

CC Greenland stated the MCC remained the lowest funded council in Wales and that the WAG settlement was £230,000 less than the preliminary settlement figure. This causes budgeting difficulties and challenges for next year. The council staff have been told not to expect a pay rise apart from teachers who had a 3 year deal. Adverse weather has affected the highways budget and it is likely to be worse next year. Members' allowances will be frozen for the forthcoming year. MCC is still going to produce Community Spirit Magazine as a joint venture with the local service board covering some of the costs. Unfortunately due to Torfaen withdrawing funding, and changing respite care needs it is likely that a respite care home in Caldicot may have to close. There will be a consultation on this and tailored alternatives will be found for those currently using the service. There is going to be a review of the Local Area Committees and it is likely meetings will start to take place in the evening. As Llangwm CCs meeting is also on a Tuesday it is likely that the CC will not be able to attend all of DCCs meetings.

## **8) ONE VOICE WALES (OVW)**

No correspondence other than subscription documents – see finance above.

## **9) WARD REPORTS**

**CK-** informed the meeting that because of his new business venture he will be standing down a soon as is practicable. CM will contact MCC electoral office to check arrangements for filling the vacant post

**AC** – Pot hole on the Route 82, on a sharp left hand bend from Devauden by the Kilgwrrwg village sign.

**JW** – there is a lot of ivy on the bus shelters that is wrecking the roof. NK will go and review what is required and report back to the next meeting. The Devauden Village Hall committee have organised a family fun afternoon on 29 May from 3pm to 9pm but it is not a large scale music festival.

**Meeting closed 10.10pm**

**Next Meeting:** 27 April at Devauden Village Hall

**Meeting dates 2010**

May 25, Jun 29, Jul 27, Aug 31, (all Itton) Sept 28, Oct 26, Nov 30, Dec tbc (all Devauden).

## **PC Cowburn's Police Report**

Devauden & Itton incidents 22nd February to 22nd March

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25/2 Alarm set off at Devauden - fault.  
26/2 Tree down in Well Lane.  
27/2 Report of the theft of a spare 5 bar gate sometime over a 6 month period - near  
Deavauden.  
28/2 Theft of red diesel from a tank at Llansoy.  
3/3 Possible attempt theft of red diesel near Llansoy.  
6/3 Broken down trailer carrying hay on the B4293 near Itton.  
6/3 Deliberate damage to small trees and a gate post near Devauden.  
8/3 A Dog was worrying sheep near Devauden.  
9/3 Two car accident on the B4293 near Devauden. Non injury.  
21/3 Daffodils disturbed and a For sale sign removed at Itton.  
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