

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

8 JULY 2014

ENVIRONMENT

AMENDMENT SHEET

SECTION A – MATTERS FOR DECISION

1. APPLICATION DEFERRED TO PLANNING (SITE VISITS) SUB COMMITTEE

(NOTE: to be read in conjunction with the minutes of the sub-committee meeting)

1.1	APP NO: P/2013/1087	TYPE: Full Plans	Page Nos: 3 - 33	Wards Affected: Bryn & Cwmavon Baglan
PROPOSAL:	Installation of a ground mounted photovoltaic (solar electricity) plant, including the erection of a control room, switching room, inverter stations and other equipment, tracks, drainage, fencing, landscaping and all associated building and engineering operations, for use for a period of up to 25 years			
LOCATION:	Tyle'r Fedwen Farm, Tyle'r Fedwen Farm Access Road, Cwmavon, Port Talbot, SA12 9YA			

The applicants have written in, noting that although there have been no objections on that basis, nevertheless, the transport arrangements during the construction phase are an issue where members have some concerns.

In response they advise as follows: -

- They have been happy to agree to a further condition, which prevents construction deliveries on Saturdays.
- This is in addition to the existing conditions that prevent deliveries on Sundays or during the 'school gate' hours for Cwmafan Primary School during the week.

- There are also conditions already agreed to restrict lorries to 11m in length, the same size or smaller than the existing buses on the route.
- They have also agreed to undertake 'before and after' road condition surveys and to make any necessary repairs to the local road network arising from the construction traffic.

As a consequence, they hope that members will be reassured and able to agree with the officer advice that the proposals are safe and satisfactory.

Councillor Stephen Hunt has written in to advise that he is unable to attend the meeting for personal reasons. He does, however, ask that the following submissions are reported on his behalf:

“I was present on the recent site visit, where we were there to look at the highways safety element of the report requested by Local Member Councillor David Williams.

I am sure each and every member of the planning committee will agree that highway safety is a priority in every application and of course there is nothing different about this one today. Having visited the site and listened to the Local Member views and seen his concerns on site, however, I concluded that while there may be matters currently for the local member to speak to the highways section of this authority about, there was nothing in my opinion to suggest that this planning application should be refused on highway safety grounds. In particular, there would be a comparatively small increase in traffic spread over 14 weeks during the construction period, where the size of the lorries are actually smaller and would be less frequent as shown in the report than the existing use of this site access road by Buses and coaches, and in fact the school coach is 0.2M wider than the proposed Lorries.

It is very important and I am pleased to see that the Applicants have provided a Transport Construction Method Statement which members can see in detail in the report.

I know it is unusual and not normal practice to overturn the sub committee's recommendations back to the full Planning Committee, but I feel in this instance that it is only proper to do just that and go with the officers recommendation here today in conjunction with the amendment sheet which seeks to restrict the construction deliveries/movements to weekdays in order to avoid Saturdays.

The Report is an excellent report and in conjunction with the amendments is a credit to our planning department and officers who in my opinion are the best in all of the Welsh Authorities.

I would ask members today after reading the report in full, and with any amendments to the said report, to fully support our Officers recommendations as I feel that in my opinion and without prejudice that there is no real evidence to suggest that there is a highways safety problem to support refusal of this application.

I would also conclude that if this Application was turned down and went to appeal it would be very difficult for NPTCBC to defend our refusal at that Appeal and ultimately cost our Authority substantial costs”.