

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (Site Inspections)

31st October 2011

Present: Councillor SL Hancock (Chairman)
Mrs G Hayward, Mr EA Sangster, Councillors ML Evans, RR Evans,
M James, RM Lewis, PJ Morgan and WL Raymond.

(Site Inspection: 11.15a.m. – 11.40a.m.)

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs F Lanc, Ms C Gwyther, Mrs D Ellis, Mr R Howells, Councillors JS Allen-Mirehouse, JA Brinsden, HM George, RN Hancock and M Williams

2. Chairman's Introduction

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He stated that the purpose of the visit that day was purely to enable Members to gather the facts associated with the applications, and to acquaint themselves with the application site. No decision would be made until the application was considered by the meeting of the Development Management Committee, scheduled to be held on the 16th November 2011, when a report of that morning's meeting would be presented to Members.

3. NP/11/327 – New dwelling with approval for access only, Land opposite Y Gorlan, Glanrhyd, Cardigan

The Head of Development Management explained that this was an outline application for a single dwelling with approval for the means of access. Glanrhyd had no settlement limits, therefore the site lay in the open countryside whereby residential development was not permitted except where it was either sensitive infilling or rounding off of the existing hamlet. As the site lay on its own opposite the ribbon development of Glanrhyd which ran along the northern side of the highway, officers considered the proposal to be contrary to these policy requirements. It was also considered to be harmful to the open countryside character of the site and introduce residential development to the southern side of the road, at odds with the settlement pattern of Glanrhyd. This view had been supported at appeal. With regard to the redevelopment of the former garage on the opposite side of the road, the officer explained that this differed from the current application in that it was on the same side of the road as the other properties in the settlement and it was on a brownfield site. The agent handed 4 letters of support for the development from neighbouring properties to the officer.

The Chairman then invited Mr Mike Harries from Pembrokeshire County Council Highway department to speak. He explained that he had



recommended consent subject to conditions as an access onto the site already existed, however he would require the visibility envelope to remain to allow 25m visibility in each direction. He noted that the roadway narrowed in the middle of the frontage and development of the site would provide an opportunity for the carriageway to be widened to 5.5m across the width of the frontage. It would also be necessary to allow adequate parking and turning within the site which would require the property to be set back from the frontage.

Mr Nicholls, the applicant's planning advisor, then addressed the Committee. He stated that the officer's recommendation was based on their interpretation of Policy 7 which supported infilling or rounding off of settlements in certain circumstances. A satellite view of the site showed its unique situation in a 'knuckle', with its boundaries clearly defined by the road, trees and the river; rounding off' in its literal sense could easily happen and the clear definition of its boundaries meant that there was no concern that further development would take place. He also did not consider that the land was part of the 'open countryside' as it had been domesticated, being part of a garden for the previous 20 years. He therefore argued that the interpretation of Policy 7 was a matter of opinion and if Members disagreed with officers that the site did not constitute rounding off, they could approve the application within policy and it would not be a departure. He added that the granting of consent for the new development on the opposite side of the road meant that Glanrhyd had been accepted as a settlement.

Mr Nicholls said that Members might be surprised to learn that the site where they were standing was only 30 feet inside the National Park, with the boundary being the river. All the notable properties within the settlement were therefore outside of the National Park. The proposed development therefore provided an opportunity to create a statement at one of the gateways to the National Park. The applicant was a self employed carpenter and intended to build a traditionally designed property which could be a showcase and redress the balance of the more mundane development which typified much of the rest of the settlement; however he was prepared to work with planning officers with regard to the design.

With regard to highway matters, the road was the necessary width at the extremes of the site and only an additional 8" was needed at its centre point – this would improve the highway for all users. Visibility splays were adequate and the applicant would like to construct traditional hedgerows behind this line which would be a visual improvement. From the road the property would be hidden from view and only visible from the frontage. It would be read within the context of the surrounding properties and in keeping with the nature of the village.



Mr Nicholls noted that the existing domestic use of the site had not been tested through submission of an application for lawful use as this was not necessary – it was clear that the garage had been in situ for at least the 10 years required, and had in fact been there for 20 years. The land was not agricultural and therefore would not constitute development in the open countryside. While the site had not moved since the applicant had lost the appeal twenty years ago, he considered that the fact the land had been in domestic use since that time and further development had occurred across the road both constituted material changes in circumstances. He did not therefore consider that Members should be concerned about going against a twenty year old appeal decision.

Mr Nicholls concluded by saying that his clients were a local Welsh speaking family, with Mr Davies having owned the land since he was 18. He had always hoped to build a home there for his family and believed that circumstances had now changed sufficiently to allow him to do so. The family would be able to contribute to the local community and provide support for the Welsh language.

Councillor Mike James, who was the local Member, was then invited to speak. He reiterated the point that the site was unique and ideal for development for a single dwelling. He believed it constituted rounding off due to the trees and hedgerows surrounding the site which were protected by Tree Preservation Orders and noted that it was not agricultural land. Development of the site would improve the highway and make the road safer. Granting permission for the development would support a local young man.

Representatives from the Community Council then spoke in support of the application noting that it was from a local person and development would support the community. There were also no highway issues.

In response to Members' questions, the applicant stated that he intended to build a three bedroomed house which he hoped would enhance the village.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting, and informed them that their comments would be taken into consideration when the Committee considered the application further, at the meeting scheduled to be held on the 16th November 2011 at Llanion Park. Due to health and safety issues, Members then viewed the site from the minibus which drove past it a number of times so that it could be viewed in context.

