

Tom OKane's Appeal Feb 13th 2013-02-16
The Primary School, Llanon

1) There were seats out for about 40 – I think nearly twice as many people were there.

2) Independent Inspector employed by Welsh Assembly : Clive Nield explained we were there as a planning hearing not a public enquiry. No cross examining but a discussion. However as there were so many people he expected he may have to run it more formally. As it happened everyone seemed to be able to say what they wanted and for the most part it was civilised. He offered for the hearing to have Welsh translation but there was no translator and no-one had asked for one!

3) Tom OKane and Pascale Mesple and Paul Wimbush sat opposite

Vicky Hurst (Development role for Pembs Nat Park) with Martina Dunn Head of park direction and a third person from the park.

4) Other speakers who requested to speak at the beginning:

Katie McEvoy: Real Seed Collection
Phil Stern or Stone : international visitor from Colorado
Tony OKane Tom's father
Huw Edwards steering group objectors with 4 others
David Aston objector
Mr Law or More? objector
David Nicholas objector
Tim Murray objector
John Hargreaves Cosheston : Low Impact (?)
Daffydd Williams Education Initiative
Gerald Miles St Davids local farmer CSA
Chair of Friends of National Park
Cornerwood

Others present included
Councillor Owen James
Tony Wrench
Neighbours for and against
Silvi,Wyc, Erica,Chris Jacqui,Tom, Gwen,Rob

5) Questionnaires sent in November-
Letters (names read out of those who had written something)

6) Conditions Clive Nield explained that the last thing on the agenda was 'conditions' -
If an application was granted - the conditions controlled how it was carried out. Done regardless of any decision.

7) Two aspects to application

Nat Park Auth states that application inadequate because of following 4 areas:

- a) positive environmental impact
- b) all activities are low impact
- d) well integrated (visual impact)

f) sufficient livelihood:

financial projections inadequate, doubts about self sufficiency, community impact assessment inadequate or project doesn't demonstrate positive contribution, little indication about transport, ecological footprint assessment underestimated, over optimistic.

Application must be in accordance with the LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

National Park Issues

Character and appearance of area : conserve and enhance the Nat park
Positive economic impact, create a sufficient livelihood

Management Plan must be in accordance with OPD

See Agenda

a) SOCIAL, EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

Tom O Kane ran through his and Pascale's extensive experience.
Currently employed by City Farms and Gardens, Horticultural Wales

Pembs National Park state this is not enough

Especially refer to lack of reference to numbers of volunteers. How many? When? Who?

Tom suggests 2 seasonal volunteers staying on site but during construction periods for specific jobs there may be up to 12 people on site.

Pembs Nat Prk _ WANT SPECIFIC NUMBERS –
Clive Neild asks – How long do you expect the house to be built?

One of Tom's comments- "Social Benefit of the project is measured against the size of the project."

d) Visual Impact-

Clive Neild asked Tom if he was qualified in presenting architects drawings
He commented that the submitted drawings were not professional, presentation was not what a bigger developer would submit.

He stated that there is a "standard approach of visual assessment"

Tom made the following points:

- Land is on the edge of Nat Park in a hamlet surrounded by other buildings. It is not on virgin land.
- His dwellings would all have green roofs, he will reinstate old hedges.
- Tom asked what is traditional? He points out that the two large fields (as the land is organied now) is not traditionally fitting.
- For there to be a social and educational impact there has to be a development like theirs.

Clive Neild: Did you discuss the location of the building with Nat Park Auth?

Tom stated that the authority: nat park had told him that they wereunable ot advise him as to where the buildings should be located. He stated they were unhelpful.

“continued point of frustration that we couldn’t communicate with Pembs Nat Park”

Vicky Hurst: refuted this. Explaining when and how the authority had offered to visit and visited and what the dialogue had been.

Tom explained that the buildings had been moved from the road to centre East to please
Pascale clarified further that they had had no advice but wanted to respond to complaints.

Paul Wimbush commented that permaculture perspective is that in this instance the dwelling in the centre of the site made the most sense.

Vicky Hurst

NP boundary irrelevant that the land is on the boundary.

Whole site isn’t a traditional vernacular design

Mr Stone from Colorado challenged the term sustainability and stated that mains water and power were available.

This opened up the discussion on solar panels and power.

Tom couldn’t answer some of the questions:

Solar panels were an array – where was his generator inverter and battery going to be? It would mean overhead cables

When he said he wasn’t going to have a battery a neighbour said according to appendix 10 you are. In fact it was an old idea from a previous advisor that had been superseded.

Friends of Nat Park: Can’t do this because a) you are in an iconic setting and b) you will set a precedent.

Sufficient Livelihood- Vicky Hurst thought that the application was flawed in that there was not accurate or convincing figures for a livelihood.

Best Foot Forward Consultant stated that Tom OKane’s figures were implausible

Climate, topography, S Westerly wind, salt water, proximity to Atlantic all made it unlikely that he could grow successfully.

Gerald Miles local organic farmer explained he set up and managed a box scheme. CSA scheme for 40 families is next to a cliff edge

Has poly tunnels and can grow 36/38 varieties of veg

Clive Nield asked how many he had to buy in? Mostly not much depending on time of year

The CSA has meant his son has come home to farm.

Steering Group

Questioned the market research, said Fishguard farmers market was like a ghost town

Local supporter of Tom spoke to say that Tom presented as very sincere but not always professional – he requested that this should not go against him. He knew him to be reliable and pointed out that dealing with planning applications was not his area but his expertise lay in growing.

Small local farmer pointed out that it was very small acreages that were the most productive.

“Best Foot Forward Consultant stated that Tom OKane’s figures were implausible”

Tom responded to this –

He had spoken to them. They based their stats on lg agri business and were working out how they could work with smaller growers

Tom O Kane had also consulted with 4th World Ecological Design. whose report was more favourable (I think it was a report submitted with the application but not something the public had seen?)

In response to the criticism regarding a lack of market research Tom stated that

- a) he had already spoken to Gerald Miles about a partnership and providing soft fruit for veg boxes
- b) anticipating that there was a good tourist market
- c) He had spoken to local pubs who were all very interested in sourcing local ingredients especially high value crop such as salads.
- d) providing seed for 'Real Seed Collection'

It was difficult to be more specific but he felt confident that the way forward was through a cooperative partnerships with local growers and responding to several types of markets.

Clive Nield stated that he could see the market research would depend on the success of the project which could't be predicted yet. He seemed to be in support of not doing exhaustive market research in the abstract.

AGENDA: Second section- Management Plan OPD section by section

Competent person :

Clive Nield explained that this was not specified but usually it referred to someone with a qualification, expertise, a professional. This was not to say Tom OKane wasn't competent.

Tom O Kane commented that he had used professionals and experts and there were number of professional reports that had underpinned the application and been submitted with it.

- Ecological Footprint Analysis
- Energy Analysis from company in Newport
- Ecological Report.

Financial

Pemb NP

How are constructon phases to be met financially?

Timing very important for the Park to be able to monitor how the project I progressing. But no time planning put in place.

Building Regs: aain no timetables for when the site would be seen.

Tom responded: he had given time phases for growing, tree planting, housebuilding etc.

Vicky Hurst Pembs NP had already set a condition and he had already agreed to it (I think)

Volunteer Ecological Footprint

Who holds responsibility for this? New Tan 6 guidance dicussed.

Paul Wimbush suggested that as Tom and families Footprint were well within the guidelines so volunteer footprint wouldn't throw the EFA out.

Non Residential Buildings

COSH assessment

Have you looked into the building reg and how they apply?

Tom's reply:

Architect

Structural Engineer

Llammas

Had all checked

Business Plan for land management

Vicky Hurst stated that this wasn't adequate

Tom explained that a professional ecologist did the report

VH said it was OK but not detailed enough.

Tom Stated that

There were Forestry Commission grants and for this there had to be a planting plan in place.

He pointed out that the tree officer of Pembs (Celia) had put the planting plan in place.

VH said it was not a "**comprehensive**" plan

VH reiterated she used these expressions before for other sections

The application lacked **Robust** ness

Clive Nield asked if she saw it as FATAL to the application?

She fudged an answer and he asked again and she replied YES

The management plan lacked a :

Methodology

Professionalism

Standard terminology

Generally speaking it was not *standardised*

It was lacking because it was not done by a professional.

Mr Moore commented on the education income – he felt it was not merely subsidiary but considerable.

Tom OKane explained that he had covered his basic needs and the income from education only supported that.

Energy and Waste

Sustainability in Newport had done a report for this.

Water

He used a consultant (didn't get name) who used to work at CAT :

See appendix 12

Community Impact assessment – we felt we discussed it early on in enough detail.

Transport

Projected number of trips? What traffic is to be generated?

VH the management plan gives us no *feel* for this

Discussion about 2 volunteers and through put of other volunteers for other activities.
Clive Nield supportive of Tom Okane in that he stated that the success of the project would determine how many volunteers and this was yet to be seen.

VH: wanted a “**robust** travel plan”

Tom stated that travel plan was based on Pemc CC Highways dept information of 10 vehicle trips per day for the average family. He expected that his project would generate less than that.

EFA

More form VH on

Monitoring and timetable

Exit Strategy

VH pointed out that if biodiversity and treeplanting had occurred she didn't want that reversed.

Conditions

This took some time

By now we were well past the end time of 5 pm so weary- what I wrote down making less sense!

The following things were presented.

Unity not split in section off

Temporary accommodation – lack of time frame

General Permitted Development order

Condition would be drawn eg: sheds

Enlargement

Improvement

Fences

Caravan site

28 day rule temporary structures

Micro energy generation prevented

We will know in 6 weeks 25th – 26th March.

Clive Nield ended up staying overnight in the area in order to visit the site in the morning as a) the meeting ran late and b) the site was covered in mist

Tom Okane and VH would join him on the site at 10am the following morning.

(WIRE Women in Rural Enterprises) useful link.

