

Vale of Grwyney Community Council
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Notes on a Meeting held in Glangrwyney Village Hall on the 15th December concerning Proposed Development at Cwrt y Gollen

PRESENT

Over 100 people attended [102 signed in - estimate 120 about half from Glangrwyney/Cwrt y Gollen] See attached signature sheets for list of people who signed in.

APOLOGIES

Tony Carrington, Bridget Barnes, Mary Taylor, and Nick Bourne

PROCEEDINGS

WELCOME

John Morris, Chairman, VoGCC

INTRODUCTION

Graham Blackburn, chairman of the meeting

PRESENTATION

Overview of Proposals by David Thomas, Councillor VoGCC
(Copy of slide presentation attached.)

STATEMENTS BY INVITED REPRESENTATIVES

John Morris, Chairman VoGCC: - The Vale of Grwyney is at the entrance to the BBNP and it is vital that the tone of the Park is maintained. We need small-scale housing to accompany local employment and a development, which does not overbalance the VoG community.

John G Morris - County Councillor and Member BBNPA for Powys:- Emphasised that 222 houses is a number which came up during discussion with the UDP Inquiry Inspector but is not a figure which has been agreed by the BBNPA. There will be supplementary planning guidance for the site and houses need to suit old and young. Planning gain could provide facilities for the community.

Kirsty Williams AM: - We require a clear message from the community which BBNPA should heed. Any development should be proportional and should not dominate the area; we need to be aware of other smaller communities, which need some development, or they will wither away. Local communities are unique and should be sustained. Have alternative uses been looked at?

Roger Williams MP: - Said that his main concern was that all the National Park should be considered for housing and not just a concentration at this site. Organic growth in small communities was essential. We should continue investigating alternative uses of the site e.g. National Centre of Excellence for Welsh Rugby Union.

Eric Bowles Head of Conservation and Community BBNPA: - explained that the BBNPA was required to build a set number of houses and that existing communities had been arranged in a hierarchy according to their facilities. For those that are constrained affordable housing would be allowed on an exceptional basis. Affordable housing would be a minimum of 20% unless the Local Housing Needs Survey indicated otherwise. A sporting resource centre had been looked at, but was unlikely as no-one had come forward.

DISCUSSION

The Chairman asked for questions and statements from the floor. No one spoke in favour of the development of 222 houses on this site. Examples of points made:

- David Cutting -Dan y Gollen: 50 houses yes but 200 no way. Current services are overloaded, what about traffic etc? A smaller development could be sustained and why is development not allowed in the villages?
- Garry Samuels - Crickhowell: Is there a proven need for 222 houses? The number came from the developers. Why cannot the houses be spread over the community? Is Planning Gain the reason and would it be spread locally?
- James Pettifer -Tysoe: Housing land is worth a lot of money and, if developed, the community should expect a benefit. Surely 75 houses already there is enough? Villages should be allowed to grow organically.
- Duncan Ford - Llangenny: The reality is that this is out of the community's hands. Need to maximise the planning gain and improve infrastructure. A sports facility would generate too much traffic.
- Sophie Price - Llanbedr: Why not build a new high school plus sports facilities on the site and develop the existing High School site in Crickhowell for housing?
- ?? James - Glangrwyney. Traffic congestion/problems will be a consequence of a large development. Why was the Highways Department not invited?
- Gwynfa Lilly - Llanbedr School: The school needs development in all the villages of the VoG to maintain viable numbers. The area could benefit from a swimming pool instead of going all the way to Brecon.
- Tony D'Anna - Crickhowell District Forum. What happened to the plan of 1999? This talked about 750 houses it is now 2000. How many in the Powys part of the Park? Reply by Eric Bowles that we had moved on from that.
- Robert Lewis - Millbrook. When was the site designated as brownfield and how would planning gain be negotiated? Surely this means they could build all over Salisbury Plain?!
- Rob Kersey - Pencelli: What was the consultation process? We need better consultation on BBNPA plans
- Roger Llewellyn - Glangrwyney. We are 6 years too late in opposing this scheme. Will the sewage overflow into the river at times of flooding?
- Tim Evans - Llanganydir. Planning gain needs to be a pre-requisite.
- Sue Fair - Llanbedr {VoG councillor} Residents have reasons to be sceptical about the BBNPA which did not respond to VoGCC's request for some affordable local housing and fewer houses overall when the new houses were built at Dan y Gollen and does not explain planning decisions.

- Joan Elliott - Crickhowell: Has consideration been given to additional traffic over Crickhowell Bridge? There are already substantial queues morning and evening.
- Nick Gannon - Llangenny. I have 4 children and would like to buy a house in Llangenny, where I am renting a house temporarily, but no new housing is planned for Llangenny. Benefit to children from attending Llanbedr School is enormous.
- Roger Austin - Glangrwyney Clerk to VoGCC: This will make it just like a dormitory town I left the south east to avoid.
- Niel Bally - Talgarth. What is the proven need for houses here? Why are other places such as Talgarth, Brecon and Hay not down for housing development in the UDP? Has the search sequence been followed? The process is fundamentally wrong.
- Duncan Forbes - Llangenny. The first battle is to oppose this large development but if that fails it is imperative that substantial planning gain for the community is obtained. The BBNPA will have sufficient power to negotiate terms.
- Wally Elliott - Llangattock: This will not affect Llangattock directly but we will feel the waves. A large number of people can make a difference.
- Clive Bush - Glangrwyney: Will this a precedent for the development of ex military sites? What about Sennybridge?

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

- EB/JGM/DT: The BBNPA does not have to accept the Inspector's recommendations.
- EB: DyG was a replacement for existing houses. BBNPA asked Welsh Water about sewage and was told there is no constraint, but if there was a problem it would have to be sorted out before development began. Planning gain would be discussed but we will have to await the Inspectors report and cannot discuss this in advance.
- RW: pointed out he meant a sports facility for training not a big sports arena.
- KW: The BBNPA must respond adequately to community concerns and must remember that it is their duty to protect the Park. Nothing should be done on the site that is detrimental to existing schools.
- JGM: Houses should be built to meet a proven local need as in the Lake District NP. Powys have a 35% affordable limit - why not the Parks? Houses should be built where they are needed.
- Margaret Morris -Chair BBNPA: Communication is my current theme and I apologise for any lack of communication in the past. I have the impression that members of the public are not confident about the decisions of the BBNPA and I will do my best to remedy this.

MEETING CLOSURE

There was a brief debate as to whether a vote should be taken but it was decided not to go ahead with one. Graham Blackburn closed the meeting with the thought that we need much more imagination regarding this site and must not forget the needs of the local villages.