

MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF LEWANNICK PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY **12** JULY 2006. THE MEETING COMMENCED AT 19.30HRS.

ATTENDANCE:

COUNCILLORS:

	Tim Ellis
	Ken White
	John Panter
	David Eno
	Jenny Potter
Chainnan	Iris Curley
Vice Chainnan	Dave Pamall
Clerk	ElaineCook

APOLOGIES

COUNCILLORS

John Newbery  
Chris Beckly

COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Graham Facks-Martin  
Neil Burden.

Members of the public (38) and the applicants Mr and Mrs D Cash.

The meeting was called to discuss planning application 2006/0120I Erection of Eleven two storey houses to provide 9 three bed and **2** two bed houses for key workers at Bowden Derra. BOWDEN **DERRA**, POLYPHANT.

The Chainnan welcomed everyone and was pleased to see so many people. It was explained that this special meeting was called in the light of the 21-day deadline as of the 26 June. The application had been received **after** our last meeting and the Council did not wish to miss this deadline.

The background to the planning application was briefly commented on by the Chair. An outline planning application was put in in December 2004 for ten affordable dwellings, eight for rent and two for sale to local people or for persons employed by Bowden Derra. This was sited on the top road to Camelford, and was adjacent to Serpells Meadow. The Parish Council did not support **this** application on the grounds of: access to site, hedgerow destruction, sewage, water tables, two-storey properties not in keeping with area of Serpells Meadow and not in line with policy ENVI. ENVI protects areas of outstanding natural beauty. The NCDC Planning Department turned down the application. We have just received notice of an appeal against this decision, to be held on 5.9.06 in The Guildhall, Launceston at 10.00a.m.

It would be helpful if we could see the grounds for the appeal.

The new application is sited below the main house at Bowden Derra, above Medrow.

It is unclear whether this new application is in addition to, or in place of, the application which is being appealed.

It has been confirmed, in writing with South West Water that there is a problem with the sewage treatment at Lewannick as it is working to capacity. Although Bowden Derra has a holding tank and only pumps sewage into the system during the **night**, the volume is still going through the treatment works.

The North Cornwall District Local Plan, which is our bible on planning, designates Polyphant as a minor village and policy HSG2, 3.34, gives guidelines on development allowed. The policy states - "these minor villages do not have the services or status to support or warrant significant levels of development". **It** does allow infilling of small gaps for one or two houses.

The Chainnan then opened the meeting for general discussion. It was hoped that residents present would ask questions. The PC needed the support of the parish in order that the PC could represent all residents.

A resident questioned the application adjacent to Serpells Meadow. The Chair explained that this was a different application and we were here to discuss the application for key workers at Bowden Derra. Residents asked if both applications could go through?

The applicants, present, explained that it was possible that if this application was approved and they won the application going to appeal it maybe that both areas would be developed. It was important to note that the Government strongly supported housing nursing staff near to their workplace. This application is for key personnel who were finding it difficult to obtain suitable long-term accommodation.

A resident questioned the staffing background. The resident stated that he had over twelve years of medical background. Would the personnel be trained or untrained? Local or from abroad? Would the wages be less because they came from abroad?

The applicant stated that approximately 1 in 5 of his workforce came from abroad. The majority of their employees were longstanding and local. They were obliged to take on staff from all cultures and abroad.

At this point dialogue between a resident/applicant became vocal the applicant became agitated with the resident. The applicant told the resident that he would discuss the matter outside if he preferred.

The Chairman stressed **that** unless questions were put through the Chair the meeting would be brought to a close.

A resident stated that the Statement **"If** supported the appeal in relation to a previous application on another site would be re-considered" unhelpful.

- a) Although this more recent application addressed some of the aspects of the 2004 proposal that would have adversely affected residents and the character of Polyphant, by not withdrawing the appeal it remains as a concern and possible influence in some peoples minds.
- b) The housing was being asked for is on a different basis and on different sites.
- c) While the present application was on behalf of Bowden Derra Ltd the previous one was by Mr and Mrs Cash. Are the sites in different ownership? Was the previous application speculative?
- d) In suggesting that we could make a comparison and look favourably on one as opposed to another between two controversial applications, to say the least is not a good basis for a planning decision.

This application must stand or fall on its own and on that basis the resident makes the following observations.

- 1) Planning states that **"in** rural areas, development should be concentrated in those villages which have the services and facilities to meet the criteria of Structure Plan Policy" we have none of these facilities other than a Chapel/Community Centre and a phone box.
- 2) In the Nursing and Care Homes Directory Bowden Derra is reported to be near shops and public transport. We have no shops and at present one bus a day except on Sundays.
- 3) Concerns for those who might occupy these houses. Being mainly 3 bedroom houses suggests family occupation in which case activities being close to Bowden Derra would be restrictive. If a mix with multiple single occupancy then this again may not be suitable to families especially if shift work is involved. **If** for young single workers then the design needs reviewing.
- 4) Planning **has** provided opportunities for affordable housing in Launceston within the development that is at present taking place with all facilities close to hand. Assistance from Bowden Derra Ltd to establish key workers here would encourage more permanent employment as well as normal social opportunities for its employees.

Another resident asked if they would increase their workforce?

The applicant explained that the Key Workers have worked for Bowden Derra for 6, 12, 15 years. The Government advises that their staff should be no more than 6 - 8 miles away. He could not say if his staffing would increase.

A resident asked how many houses constituted an estate? Does 10/11?

The applicant explained how he had worked with the developers for Serpells Meadow more than twenty years ago and had helped to develop affordable housing at that time.

The Chairman redressed that this application is for the site at Medrow. We are here to discuss one application.

A resident considered the Medrow corner very dangerous. He had lived within the parish for a number of years and had witnessed many near misses. The traffic was increasing and his concerns were this corner. If these houses were developed there would be an increase in traffic with possibly an additional 30 - 40 vehicles for these dwellings. The corner at Medrow was he reiterated a danger and an increasing danger.

Another resident explained that she lived near North Lodge and had witnessed many problems there with traffic having to daily reverse back on the narrow Camelford road. She voiced that this was happening all day long and was an accident waiting to happen.

The applicants explained that currently they had to use taxis to bring their employees into work. If workers were on site that would reduce the problem.

Residents argued that because there were no amenities the employees would make more trips not less. The applicants stated that 18 months ago they had implemented a one-way system to help the traffic problem. However the world changes... We cannot be cocooned in Polyphant. At one time you could drive a herd (flock) of sheep down the A30.

Residents continued to say that there are no facilities within the village. No Doctor, no shop, for everything they had to travel.

A resident stated that there was already affordable housing in Launceston with lots of facilities. Housing that was suitable for single occupancy rather than families. There were small apartments being developed for individual people. There were more opportunities for younger people within the town. It is understood that employees of Bowden **Derra**, who currently live in Polyphant, had been told they were coming to a town. There was nothing for them to do.

The applicant stated that their first application was up for appeal. They had barristers, solicitors and architects who were working on the case and he was confident that it would go through on appeal. He could not say that one application may not go ahead if both were approved.

The Chair explained that we had no teeth. NCDC decided the applications. All we could do was put all our points forward as per the Local Plan. The Chair said that we would ask Highways to paint double white lines on the exit from Bowden Derra onto Polyphant Green.

The applicants agreed that their one-way system was not yet in a full-blown state. It was their intention to have an automatic gate at the top entrance and also to Medrow and onto Polyphant Green. This would stop reckless driving by their employees and also provide security for their patients.

A final statement from one resident was that he would prefer the proposed new dwellings not to be at Serpells Meadow because it would be less than 12' from **his** home. He would prefer the dwellings to be sited above Medrow.

There were no further questions from the residents/applicants in attendance. The Chairman said that the Council would now go into committee. At this stage no further questions could be asked. However, residents were welcome to stay. The majority of residents at this juncture adjourned the meeting and the Chair thanked them all for their attendance.

## CLOSED COUNCIL MEETING

The Cllrs examined the Local Plan and relevant paragraphs applicable to this application, namely:-

ECN2 P36. 4.25 of the local plan states - Expansion of rural businesses will be carefully assessed to ensure that the scale of development and operations remains compatible with the character and amenities of the surrounding area.

The applicants are suggesting that this development could come under Affordable Housing in the Local Plan. Specifically Paragraph 3.68 states 'people employed in the local area who need to live closer to their employment or the local community' and 'people offered a job in the locality but who cannot take it due to the lack of affordable housing', but the ensuing policy numbers still predominantly mention 'local needs'.

The only restrictions on occupancy actually covered by the Local Plan deals only with agricultural workers (HSG 4).

The Report **to the Secretary of State** for **the** Environment dated 13.2.01 covering a public **enquiry** into planning applications on the Bowden Derra site stated:

Par. 52 ... **the** cumulative effect of the proposals (for new living units) in addition to the new development that has already taken place and under construction, would be a significant spreading of built development at the site that would be out of scale with the surrounding landscape and a major intrusion into the AGLV.

Par 69 ... the application sites are in the open **countryside** where PPG 7 advises **that** building should be strictly controlled.

These two paragraphs could apply to the new application.

The Chair explained that a number of phone calls had been received from concerned residents. Calls in particular regarding the current volume of traffic and the increase in traffic that this application would generate.

There was queries about the water levels into Medrow if the drainage came from a septic tank. It is known that the sewage is pumped at the moment into the main sewer and is released at night. If any soakaway were installed South West Water would need to investigate how this could effect properties/water levels that were downstream i.e., Medrow.

Bowden Derra is already a large business. There are also currently three houses on the green that belong to them. At the end of Medrow staff7residents already live within the village. There is concern about the business being overheavy for the village. Our Electorate is 181 and Bowden Derra **at** least 130.

Concern about other possible sites, which would be prejudiced if this site went ahead. There are no amenities within the village.

The applicants had **stated** that their key workers had difficulty in obtaining rental accommodation. Their staff were being moved out of accommodation during the summer months. Research proves that it is fact that landlords are keen to have long-term tenants and there are always a number of rental properties available in and around the Launceston area. This has been confirmed by local **estate** agents. At the time of this meeting there were 23 properties available through one agent commencing at £400 per calendar month for a two bedroom dwelling in the heart of Launceston. Launceston, because of its geographical nature does not command a high volume of holiday let potential, therefore, landlords continually request long-term lets. This is based on proven long-term facts from estate agents locally.

The Chair read out a letter from a resident. It was proposed by KW 2<sup>nd</sup> J Potter that a copy of this letter is sent to NCDC.

The Clerk asked if there were any Cllrs who needed to declare an interest. There were none.

It was proposed by KW 2<sup>nd</sup> by J Potter. all were in favour, that we could not support this application for the above-named grounds.

It was further proposed that a copy of the above full minutes be forwarded to NCDC pro DE 2<sup>nd</sup> IC all in favour.

Our Ordinary Meeting will be held at Polyphant on Wednesday 19 July commencing 20.00hrs. Members are asked to meet on the Green in order **that** a review of this area could be taken into account prior **to** the meeting.

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21.18hrs.