

ATISN 20778 - ITEM 008

Iles, Nicholas (LGHCCRA - Planning - Planning)

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 03 June 2021 11:39  
**To:** Decisions Branch - Ministerials/Gweinidogol - Cangen Benderfyniadau  
**Subject:** FW: 76/2021 Request for call-in - Planning Application A200773, Ceredigion

**Categories:** Green Category

Please see the email below which has been sent to the Planning Directorate Mailbox. Could you please deal with the query or pass to a relevant colleague for action.

**I would be grateful if you could notify me when the correspondence has been replied to so that it can be recorded in the correspondence log.**

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]  
Implementation and Performance Branch  
Planning Directorate  
Welsh Government  
Tel : [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 02 June 2021 16:36  
**To:** Planning Directorate Mailbox <Planning.Directorate@gov.wales>  
**Subject:** 76/2021 Request for call-in - Planning Application A200773, Ceredigion

**Re: Planning Application A200773, Ceredigion**

Dear Minister,

I wish to request that you call in the above planning application.

Having witnessed the committee meeting (19<sup>th</sup> May '21) I'm extremely confused. The councillors showed little regard for policy, and there was no discussion whatsoever about the misleading and missing elements of the application. Several neighbours were listed as supportive without consultation. There was no environmental impact assessment even though the proposed site is in an area of land, a large proportion of which is or recently has been under environmental management schemes. Most pointedly, it is in open countryside. Paragraph 4.2.34 of PPW Edition 10 and paragraph 10.13 of TAN 2 reiterate that rural exception sites for affordable housing (the measurements for which the proposed house does not conform to) should be on land within or adjoining existing rural settlements.

In the meeting, the councillors repeatedly took it upon themselves to define "settlement" on their own terms and kept adding houses in around the site (from, wrongly, 9, to 12 at one point. It would require a very large catchment indeed to gather that many houses in this area.) There is at least a field and / or road between all of the dwellings here. It doesn't even conform to the definition of a cluster, let alone a settlement.

Even so, the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] stated the application had only two objections and 'many letters of support'. This is another absolute untruth and shocking to hear stated so blatantly. Despite some of us being misleadingly listed as so, none of the people in the vicinity of the proposed site support the application other than family members (– a fact the planning department were informed of as soon as we were aware we had been co-opted without our permission on the application form). At the deadline for representations, there were 5 objections and 1 short note of support from the [REDACTED]. The planning report states there are now three letters of support, but all from family. It is disappointing there is no way of interjecting in these meetings to correct these falsehoods.

It is also disappointing there is no way to draw the [REDACTED] attention to other misleading elements of the case. For example, the agent's statement that the applicants are unable to find a suitable house in the locality. The application is for a 3-bedroom house, and it has already been admitted they intend to make it into a 5-bedroom house. However, the agent's claim there are no suitable houses on the market was based on figures for 4-bedroom houses.

This sleight of hand on the agent's part is characteristic of the application. Given he is a professional, these cannot be put down as oversights. Listing neighbours as supportive when we were given no chance to know what was being proposed; misleading both neighbours and his clients as to the size and placement of the house; implying the property will be on the site of a previous dwelling which was actually not in this location nor has been in any way visible for generations. The [REDACTED] with a poorly executed overlay of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This was his attempt to dismiss concerns over access, which, if Highways recommendations stand, will not only require the gifting of council land, but also the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] However, more worryingly, they explicitly state (in writing) that they will get round this by ignoring the Highways recommendation. As a final ridiculous argument, the agent's claim that approving the application would 'halve mileage' for the family, and that they would be able to walk in and out of Aberaeron is patent nonsense. I live here. I know how much we have to rely on vehicles.

The argument that the house becomes affordable because the family will not have to pay for the plot does not make the house affordable for subsequent occupiers. As per Paragraph 4.2.25 of PPW (IR 58), it is my understanding that developments proposing affordable housing are required to provide sufficient information to determine the value of the unit at completion (IR 57). It is also of note that there are somewhere in the region of 900 stamped permissions locally, within or adjacent to settlements, so there are ample opportunities for someone to obtain a plot and build the house they need, particularly a couple in secure employment with the council.

The [REDACTED] was unequivocal that the only real option the committee had was to refuse permission and yet they dismissed policy and redefined key terms so they could approve it. The guidelines make it clear that statements submitted for consideration during the committee meeting must be based on policy and not personal and emotive, however, the applicants' statement was entirely designed to tug heartstrings and the councillors' decision seemed made on a purely personal basis. This is clearly shown by the fact they had to discuss finding a technical reason to approve the application *after* voting it through.

I believe that allowing councillors to abuse the system in this way, favouring specific individuals' personal circumstances over and above policy which is designed to protect the *wider* community, not only undermines national policy but might also lead to an eventual removal of local committees from decision making. Therefore, this case has considerable impact beyond the locality.

[REDACTED] and can appreciate people might want to establish themselves on family land even if they have been away from it for many years. However, this cannot be done by abusing the application process and policies so blatantly. Areas of tyddyn or dispersed homesteads are an important part of the cultural landscape across Wales which surely need to be preserved and protected and not seen simply as opportunities for 'infill'. To build on family land is a current topic but the simple fact you own land should not mean you can build any house anywhere. The applicants have other options. They state they are a very close-knit family. The [REDACTED] in their [REDACTED] and there is surely a more valid opportunity for them to develop on this brownfield site. Supporting *this* sort of building on [REDACTED] land *would* benefit the rural community as rather than allowing family farms to fall into disrepair they could be regenerated in a positive way for future generations. Building would also happen where there was *already* building, without impacting open countryside.

I understand that decisions have to be based on policy and hope therefore you will agree to call in this application. If you should do so I would encourage you to look into this case in detail so that existing residents here can be sure, should an exception ultimately be made, that it will not be based on the untruths and misleading statements that have dominated this application and process throughout, and have greatly affected us all who already cherish this place.

Thank you in advance for your time on this matter,

[REDACTED]

