

REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES

REPORT FOR INFORMATION

**PROGRESS REPORT FORMER DENBIGH HOSPITAL,
DENBIGH**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:

- 1.1 To update Members concerning applications received in respect of the above site.
- 1.2 The report has been prompted by a recent Press Release criticising one of my officers. The report seeks to give at best a factual account of key stages since the original set of applications was submitted last August.

2. PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

- 2.1 In August last year the Authority received 4 applications for:
 - a) Conversion of chapel to dwelling - planning and listed building applications
 - b) Erection of 21 dwellings on the Nurses Home site
 - c) Listed Building application for demolition of the Nurses Home
 - d) Listed Building application for demolition of buildings to the side of main range.
- 2.2 On the 12th November 1999 a letter was sent to Mr Connell seeking further information in respect of each application.
- 2.3 On the 2nd December officers met the applicant Mr Hitman and his agent Mr G Connell. This meeting had been requested by Mr Hitman/Mr Connell to clarify the situation relating to the series of planning applications submitted and to the UDP.
- 2.4 The outcome of the meeting was that the applicant requested we did not proceed any further with the processing of any of the applications until we received further instructions from him.
- 2.5 Officers offered to meet the applicant/agent prior to the submission of any revised/new applications to assist and to ensure that the information required to process the application(s) was submitted.
- 2.6 On the 14th February 2000 we received 5 new planning applications for:
 - a) Change of use of Erddig Ward to Adult Education Unit
 - b) Change of use of Isolation Ward to Workshop/Training facility
 - c) Use of Nurses Home and adjacent land for educational purposes
 - d) Development of 2.7 hectares of land (6.7 acres) for residential purposes (21 dwellings) land between Erddig Ward and Nurses Home
 - e) Change of use of Chapel to dwelling

The applicant also withdrew 3 applications submitted in August - applications b) c) and d).

- 2.7 On the 18th February 2000 officers requested further information and sought advice as to how the applicant wished to proceed. This letter is appended in Appendix 1.
- 2.8 The applicant responded by publishing an "open letter" in the Press on the 24th February. The announcement openly criticised Mr Weaver, my Principal Planning Officer.
- 2.9 On the 1st March I sent a letter to Mr Hitman expressing my disappointment with the approach taken. This letter is appended in Appendix 2.
- 2.10 On the 7th March officers issued a Direction to supply the Authority with additional information in connection with the applications. Three applications b) c) and d) submitted in August were returned as being invalid. This letter is appended in Appendix 3.
- 2.11 On the 23rd March I received a letter from the applicant requesting the return of the applications submitted in February together with the planning fee. The letter also alleged lack of positive dialogue and support from officers.
- 2.12 My response, a letter dated 6th April, is appended in Appendix 4.
- 2.13 Officers in Development Control and Development Plan have spent considerable time and energy in processing the applications and in preparing proposals for inclusion in the UDP etc., In the meantime three applications submitted in August have been returned together with the planning fee because they were grossly inadequate and considered to be invalid. The applications submitted in February were also found to be inadequate in detail and a Direction seeking further information has been issued.

3. RECOMMENDATION:

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That Members support the approach and procedural steps taken by officers in processing the applications.

REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES

**DEVELOPMENT OF A WINDFARM
COMPRISING ERECTION OF 33 WIND TURBINES
(SOME 50 METRES IN HEIGHT, 48 METRES TOTAL
DIAMETER) SUBSTATION BUILDING, 2 WIND MONITORING
MASTS (40 METRES IN HEIGHT)
CONSTRUCTION OF ACCESS TRACKS, ALTERATION TO
EXISTING ACCESS AND TEMPORARY SITE COMPOUND**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:

- 1.1 To seek Members views about the possibility of visiting other windfarm sites and the application site itself.

2. BACKGROUND:

- 2.1 Last September we received a planning application for the erection of 33 wind turbines on land to the east of Llyn Brenig.
- 2.2 The application has received extensive publicity and there is significant public interest in the proposal.
- 2.3 The application is the subject of an Environmental Impact Assessment and officers are currently engaged in appraising the proposal.
- 2.4 The application may be reported to Members for determination later on this year - possibly in July. This will be the first windfarm proposal considered by the Council.

3. SITE VISIT:

- 3.1 Given the background Members may wish the opportunity to visit an existing windfarm site and/or to visit the application site itself prior to the determination of the application.
- 3.2 In my opinion Members should visit the application site prior to determination. Some Members may benefit from a visit to an existing windfarm site.
- 3.3 Members views are sought.

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES

DEVELOPMENT OF SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY PARK (B1) LAND TO THE WEST OF TROON WAY BETWEEN THE A55 AND A547 ABERGELE

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members about a planning application recently considered by Conwy County Borough Council and to recommend a course of action following the resolution of that Council to grant planning permission subject to a legal agreement.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In August 1999 an outline planning application was received by Conwy Borough Council for development of 14.8 ha. of land as a Science Technology Park (B1). The application site comprises of an area of land between the A55 and A547 immediately to the west of the built up area of Abergele. The land is a greenfield site and outside the development boundary in the development plan.
- 2.2 This Council were consulted as a neighbouring planning authority. Following liason with the Head of Economic Development a response was sent to the Director of Planning of Conwy objecting to the application on behalf of the Council as neighbouring local planning authority. The objection was based on the proposal not being in accord with the development plan for the area and that future strategic employment sites should be identified through the Unitary Development Plan process and a collaborative approach involving North Wales Authorities, the Economic Forum, and the WDA. The point was made that the proposal appears to have come forward outside of this important strategic context. In addition concern was expressed that the proposal could harm the continued development of the St. Asaph Business Park, a strategic site which has been identified through the development plan process and which has the necessary infrastructure and access already in place.
- 2.3 Since making the representations in October 1999 I have been advised that in late March Conwy resolved to grant planning permission for the development subject to a legal agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act. I am concerned that such a decision has been taken given the context outlined above and feel it is important the matter is brought before Members.
- 2.4 The application (in my view) goes against the thrust of Government policy to steer development to brownfield sites and regenerate urban areas, and undermines collaborative working on strategic Planning Issues. I understand that the decision to grant was based on the view that job creation prospects outweighed landscape objections.
The National Assembly has declined to call-in the application.

3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 I recommend that:

- (i) Conwy County Borough Council are advised of the strong concerns of Denbighshire County Council about the decision to resolve to grant planning permission for the development.

md/mr/4/03/2000

A REPORT BY THE HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES

DATE OF SITE VISITS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members of the likely date of any Site Visits requested by the Planning Committee.

2. DATE OF THE SITE VISITS

- 2.1 In consultation with Legal and Administration, it has been decided that the **Morning of Wednesday 26rd April 2000** is most suitable. This date has been provisionally booked.
- 2.2 You are advised, therefore that any site visits arranged today will take place **On Wednesday 26th April 2000 (morning - times to be advised).**

3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE SITE VISIT PANEL

- 3.1 This will depend on Political Balance and will include the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee Councillors F.D. Jones and R. Hughes together with the relevant Local Member(s)
Three (3) further Independent Councillors
Three (3) further Labour Group Members
Two (2) Councillors from the Plaid Cymru Group
One (1) Conservative Councillor
One (1) Member of the Democratic Alliance of Wales Group

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 That Members agree to the Site Visits being held on the morning of **Wednesday 26th April 2000**