

BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
PLANNING, ACCESS AND RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL RELATED MATTER – UPDATE FOR NOTING

13/08962/FRI - Proposal: “Circuit of Wales motorsports facility (comprising : high performance circuit; motocross circuit; karting circuit; four-wheel drive circuit; riding academy; innovation centre; hotels; retail showrooms; ancillary retail; industrial and business uses; driver training area; solar park; camping; parking; landscaping and associated uses)”

Address: Circuit of Wales, Rassau, Ebbw Vale

Rhodri Davies, Principal Planning Officer

Further to a presentation by The Urbanists at the 4th March, 2014 PAROW meeting, the agent has provided further updates on the current state of the Circuit of Wales scheme as follows:

- I. **Section 16 Application** - The developer, the Heads of the Valleys Development Company, had applied to the Welsh ministers for consent to carry out preparatory works on the common land (haul roads, trenches and drains, stockpiles of excavated material and fencing), under section 38 of the Commons Act 2006.

The Planning Inspectorate called a public inquiry into these works which are proposed ahead of the race track development itself.

Following objections to the section 38 application from Natural Resources Wales, Gwent Wildlife Trust, Brecon Beacons Park Society, the Duke of Beaufort’s Breconshire Estate Commoners’ Association, Llangynidr Community Council and the Open Spaces Society, the developer withdrew the section 38 application for the reason that Natural Resources Wales would not have the resources to ‘progress matters relating to the submission of information required to discharge conditions attached to the (Outline) planning permission if they were having, at the same time, to prepare for a section 38 inquiry’.

The developer was also in the process of identifying land to offer in exchange for the 340 hectares of common land which is required for the development. Ministers’ consent is required to deregister the common and to register suitable land in exchange, under section 16 of the Commons Act 2006.

As the section 38 application has been withdrawn, all of the matters will now be considered during a subsequent public inquiry into the application for the exchange of common land under section 16 of the Commons Act 2006.

The Open Spaces Society have stated in the press that they would be surprised if the developer can find sufficient land nearby where the public does not already have access to it.

ENCLOSURE 6 ITEM X

The section 16 application has been prepared and submitted to each of the landowners who have agreed to include land in the application for review prior to the application being submitted to the Welsh Government.

The landowners include Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (providing circa 450 acres) and the Somerset Trust (providing circa 250 acres).

The Welsh Government will also be a signatory on the application as they are a tenant of the land owned by the Somerset Trust. Blaenau Gwent CBC were due to sign the application during the week commencing 30th June, 2014 and a response is due from the Somerset Trust and the Welsh Government.

The works for the Circuit of Wales cannot start until the process of de-registering common land is complete.

2. **Planning Conditions** - Work on the planning conditions attached to the Outline consent continues but the preparation of a section 16 application is the main priority for the developer.

Following submission of the section 16 application the focus will return to progressing the Outline planning conditions and the agent will continue to engage with the BBNPA on the ones that were identified as being of most relevance to the National Park (i.e. noise, lighting and biodiversity etc.).

The agent will continue to let Officers of this Authority know when the required details to discharge conditions have been submitted such as the construction traffic noise management plan (Condition 34) which was formally submitted to Blaenau Gwent CBC on the 4th July, 2014.

3. **Reserved Matters application(s)** – The submission of the Reserved Matters applications is on track and in line with the timescales and deadlines stipulated in the Outline planning conditions.
4. **Footpath Diversion Application** - An application to divert a footpath that currently dissects the site has been prepared and will be submitted shortly.

A letter to statutory consultees notifying them of the impending application was sent out recently and the agents for the scheme aim to meet with the local ramblers association shortly to discuss the application.

Although they are not a statutory consultee, the agents have advised that they will also forward the application to the Brecon Beacons Park Society.

Proposal

That Members note the content of the report