

Review of Planning application 18/00355/PP (Graeme and Wendy Bruce) by PPSL

Ellenabeich is a conservation area. Its conservation status must not preclude development to the area. Ellenabeich along with many other small rural and coastal communities require business opportunities and a young vibrant community if they are to survive and succeed. Along with many similar communities in Argyll Ellenabeich relies on tourism. The influx of visitors, irrespective of their reason to visit, is essential to the local economy.

The Slate Industry which was the cornerstone of this area is well past but its legacy remains and is reason Ellenabeich obtained its conservation status. Part of the village is listed by Historic and Environmental Scotland. These listings can be a positive gain to the area but can also have a negative influence in and on the area. Common sense should be applied.

In the most part, the outward appearance to Ellenabeich as viewed from public areas is considerably more important than any development to the rear of a property. It is with this in mind that the PPSL should gather information appropriate to reaching its decision.

The information supplied in this appeal relating to areas outwith Ellenabeich is irrelevant.

Ellenabeich is a former slate village and this has to be the criteria from which a decision is reached. The photographs supplied in the appeal document of Ellenabeich whilst accurate, have been carefully selected and is perhaps not a true representation of the area. The B844 is the only road to Ellenabeich. The Old Coach House is at the far end of the village still on the B844 and at the entrance to the public car park. Many of the supporting photographs of the village are taken in areas away from this main public thoroughfare. Appendix A is a series of photographs from the start of the conservation area to the public car park. It is for the PPSL to conclude whether there is a predominance of white rendered walls or stone walls. It should be noted there is a high correlation between supporters of the white rendered walls for this application and those insisting on a drystone wall for the adjacent Seafari fuel store.

Specific mention is made of Seafari and its fuel storage facility. The photograph presented was carefully taken so as not to include the adjacent drystone wall and the stone garage also on the site. Appendix B shows the full view for those entering the car park area either by foot or vehicle and includes these features. This may be considered a more accurate representation .

Mrs Bruce has also carefully selected and quoted early correspondence with A&BC's then Conservation Officer Ms Lynda Robertson. Reference is also made to the internal wall of the site. The quotation does not reflect the final outcome of discussions between Seafari, Planning, Building Control and Ms Robertson. The statement with respect to the view of the internal wall by the public entering the car park similarly requires clarification.

It is accurate that Ms Robertson requested a drystone wall without mortar to be placed around the fuel site. The wall height stipulated by Planning was 1.8m high. Planners and Building Control also stipulated that the boundary wall to this site had to be a fully engineered wall. Ms Robertson was advised this was not be possible as drystone without mortar. She did not appreciate the engineering constraints. A compromise was necessary and agreed. Appendix C shows the finished wall.

Unfortunately Ms Robertson is no longer employed by A&BC so is unable to comment on whether, in her opinion, the compromise was successful. Planners and the current Conservation Team may offer opinion.

Addressing the issue of the internal wall of the site Seafari were not required to either render or finish the internal wall in drystone. Both were possible. Access gates must remain locked unless the site is in use. Considerable flexibility is required in the use of the site. Seafari does attempt a general routine. It is accepted we cannot always follow this routine. Seafari will draw fuel from the site less than 300 times a year. Staff are allocated 40 minutes for this procedure. Site gates are open for perhaps less than 30 minutes per load. During the low season fuel is generally drawn at 0930. Occasionally a second load may be taken. During high season it is generally 3 loads during a working day, 4 loads when busy. The high season timings being circa 0815, 0930, 1330 and 1545. Many

visitors do not arrive in the area and park in the public car park before 1030. Similarly few arrive after 1500. The appeal document intimates the gates are open throughout the day for all visitors to see inside. This is not the case.

The decision made by the PPSL in respect of this appeal will set a precedent in the area for all future developments. The lack of a conservation officer at A&BC must not be a reason for stopping or delaying any development. Interpretation by post holders must remain consistent and not be one of subjective opinion. Rules regulations and policies do change or require updating. Should this appeal be successful A&B Planners must be seen to adopt a level playing field approach to all future development applications in this area.

#### Appendix A – the B844 start of the conservation area



The approach showing the high wall at An Cala Gardens, date of construction unknown



Inshaig house



Beyond Inshaig House



Approach to the village – development circa 25 years old to left



B844 entering the older section of Ellenabeich



Prior to village square



Village square 1



Village square 2



Village square 3



Village square 4 Road to and including Old Coach House



Approach to old coach house





General view from approach road



Appendix B – The car park entrance



Appendix C – The boundary wall Seafari fuel store



View from inside the car park back towards car park entrance

