

## **St Florence Community Council Extraordinary Meeting**

### **Auto Grass Track**

**20<sup>th</sup> March 2013**

The following members of the public were present at the meeting:

J Bevans on behalf of the Auto Grass Association

B Neale on behalf of the Auto Grass Association

J Richards

Gil Richards

D Bentall

D Proctor

J Evans

D Evans

W Parish

R Parish

R Hughes

G Harries

E Taylor

T Morgan

P Quinn

GW Aston

The meeting is opened by Chairman Cllr Griffiths. Mr Neale apologizes for representatives not being present at the previous meeting in August 2012 when the plans were discussed. He says they have no intention to upset the community or cause a nuisance. There would be 6 race meetings not 8 as originally reported. The highway department at Pembrokeshire County Council has been contacted regarding extra signage to the meets so the narrow lanes would not be used. They dispute the fact there would be 200 cars, maximum would be 50-60 cars racing at these meets. Every car category is under 102 decibels and if they are over they are barred from racing as it shows in the association rules, all exhausts have to face downwards. Mr Neale says they intend to put straw bales to reduce noise. They raced in Lamphey for 4 years and only had 1-2 complaints. Council has undertaken a noise check and no breach of noise pollution. The association is all local people who race all over the county and it is well policed. They are governed by NASA National Auto grass Sport Association. They need an event permit for the 6 meetings planned but those are weather dependent.

Cllr Griffiths asks about the problems with traffic, Mr Neale explained if a vehicle came to the lane a no right turn would be allowed. All literature, internet and adverts would state to follow the road to Sageston. J Bevans from the association explains there would be no more than 100 vehicles' public and participants with an age range of 12-80. Cllr Griffiths asks if there would be a loud speaker. Mr Neale explained it was their intention to use a loud speaker with one in the pits for control, the intention is to keep it low and point it to the floor. They will be evenly spread out.

Cllr Griffiths asks about dust clouds and the effects on local businesses. Mr Neale says they will not race in muddy conditions. In excessively dusty conditions hardcore will be put down at entrance. They will also use a water car.

Cllr Buckmaster asks if there is a female race, J Bevans explains there are all gender traces which have received recognition from Simon Hart MP and that it's good for youngsters.

Cllr Griffiths states that with 10-11 auto grass races sound will travel. Mr Neale says 102 decibels is standard and main road cars are a lot noisier. 1000cc is the engine to go up to 3000cc is incorrect. Cllr Griffiths asks about the complaints when races were held in Lamphey. Mr Neale says Pembroke County Council has no record of complaint. Lamphey was attended twice by Environment Officers Matthew Mile and Sarah Johns, they took lower readings but did not record them.

Cllr Griffiths asks about the rare breed animals close to the site, J Bevans states they have had no objections from that business. Cllr Griffiths mentions pollution, Mr Neale explains the officials of the course are responsible for cleaning up and ensuring no overnight parking. Nothing will be left on the field. There is currently a bus on the field which is temporary. Mr Morgan asks if it is only cars racing, Mr Neale responds that yes it is just cars, no bikes, but have motorbike engines. Mr Morgan asks if there will be temporary caravans, Mr Neale says yes overnight Saturday to Sunday. J Aston asks if all the people involved are local why are there caravans travelling to the event. You need to know who is who. Mr Neale says they know not to travel to the field via the country lanes and to do to the sageston roundabout. It is asked who will manage the traffic and how the vehicles will be controlled? Mr Neale informs the association will speak to Highways. Will there be anyone on the road directing traffic? Mr Neale says a sign will be put up in Redberth directing traffic onwards not to turn right. Is the Highways Authority happy with this? They have been asked for signs to show to turn left into field.

D Evans says that when the planning first came up it was viewed as a dangerous junction. Mr Neale explains there have been 5 accidents from Gumfreyston to the sageston roundabout. D Evans disputes this number and says she has heard screeching brakes on many occasions. Cllr Griffiths states that anti skid service would identify it as a dangerous area. Cllr Buckmaster says that if it is a dangerous area that is not a matter for the Auto Grass. Cllr Griffiths states that if it's now been identified as a dangerous area then surely the Auto Grass should address that. Mr Neale says they've spoken to Highways and agreed not to run meetings over the summer holidays when traffic is at the majority. Mr Quinn explains the road is going to a junction and his concern is it's dangerous as there could be a buildup of 60 competitors. Mr Neale says they will not all arrive at the same time.

For sponsorship trade stands would an events license be required? J Bevans says yes they are to look at a license, all caterers have their own insurance. E Taylor says it is a Greenfield site, why not look for a brown field site. There is no noise at present and noise will be created regardless of whether the cars are less than 102 decibels there will still be noise from PA system. The soil on the field will be degraded, used for agriculture now the auto grass will impact on the soil structure. What will happen to the waste and oil?

Cllr Griffiths explains the 14 day rule to the public. 28 days storage on the field and 14 days events, 14 out of 28 can be used for racing. If the event needs an event license that would have to be actioned. Mr Neale explains planning is for a permanent safety barrier as they are an amateur sport and want something safe. Without that they could not race, it has to be put in the ground properly for members of

the public and drivers safety. Cllr Griffiths says they have been than reasonable, they could have just put up temporary barriers.

A member of the public states that they were taught to respect my neighbors and in general the village is against, there has been auto grass in other areas of the county why have they left those? The natural beauty will be destroyed and house prices will drop. If they will not be good neighbors we will have an action group. Mr Neale states they have raced in Devonshire Drive in a local field before. It is believed there is a petition of support in a local pub. J Bevans advised the prices of the houses in Lamphey did not go down and they have given £2000.00 to local charities there.

Cllr Buckmaster states there was point to point racing on New Inn 40 years ago were there any complaints then? And did anyone have any evidence of persistent noise? Members of the public stated that persistent vehicle noise is very distressing and continuous noise from the PA system will be as well. Cllr Buckmaster states demographic point of room, no one after 40, should not turn this into Gods own country. Cllr Griffiths advises Cllr Buckmaster he has a conflict of interests at this point.

D Bentall asks how many hours it is for? Will people be able to access church with traffic issues is another query. Mr Neale states 12-5pm so yes church would be accessible. As most meetings are at the weekend who is contactable? Mr Neale says he is contactable during or before meetings the officials will do all they can to help. Cllr Griffiths also explains the county council environmental department number is open 24 hours. It was asked why the auto grass moved from previous site. Mr Neale explains the field was sold by the farmer but they had been there 10 years and this field is flatter. Police rep states they wish to thank the auto grass and merits what they are trying to do. Their concerns are the junction and the danger is presents. Also anything that causes a distraction from the roadway is dangerous. Mr Neale again says there will be hay bales to barrier the event. Cllr Griffiths states that if planning is accepted that will be up to Highways to do something at the crossroads.

Meeting concluded.