

PETERSTOW PARISH COUNCIL

Re: Planning Applications 173774, 173775, 1173776, 173777, 173778, 173779 & 173780
Biddlestone Orchard, Llangarron

Following an extension on the consultation period to allow appropriate consideration and due diligence Peterstow PC, as the adjoining Parish, would make the following comments on the application:

Peterstow PC are fully supportive of the Core Strategy for sustainable, proportionate and appropriate development, supporting communities, parishioners and rural businesses and reflected in our draft Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) policies (including a Policy on Polytunnels) [N.B. Our NDP is currently at Reg 14 consultation stage]

We are aware that a previous application was made by the applicant which was rejected with numerous recommendations on mitigation changes that would be required (such as planting/screening, wildlife buffer zones/set aside land, rotation etc.) – it is our interpretation that the current application has not taken any heed of these recommendations.

The applications should be treated together as one, as refusal of one materially affects the implementation of the others and also because of the cumulative impact of the applications together.

The outcome of this application will set a precedent – Peterstow PC has already received a letter of intent from a neighbouring landowner (on the opposite side of the road to the applicant, and within Peterstow Parish boundary) for the submission of an application for a further 17 acres of poly-tunnels should this application be successful. The cumulative impact of such proposed developments is of great concern.

Visual – The development is not of a scale that is commensurate to the location and rural setting. It is not commensurate on the basis of its size or impact on the local visual environment, both in absolute terms and in relation to other features. The application only appears to deal with the immediate boundary of the proposed development, which sits in open, rolling countryside. The landscape will be adversely affected by the construction of the polytunnels, which are an alien feature to the countryside. The size of this development will make it highly visible from both nearby locations and from further afar. The location of the development in then wider landscape will make it more visible from middle / longer distance locations.

Environmental – we are concerned over waste management and the need to replace the tunnel polythene on a three year cycle. The recycling of this material is increasingly problematic. In our opinion, the local wildlife and bio-diversity has not been accurately assessed or taken into account and the proposed development would have a huge impact.

Traffic – The traffic survey stops short of key road junctions such as the uncontrolled cross roads at St Owens Cross – an historical accident blackspot. Despite the applicant stating that the workforce will be bussed to and from the site the workforce will bring additional private vehicle traffic to and from the site, increasing the traffic count. There are also no pavements, pedestrian crossings or lighting in the vicinity, that would provide safe passage of pedestrians/cyclists likely to be accessing the site.

Local community/infrastructure – The impact it would have on local residents of Peterstow would also be significant, as a result of the number of additional workers/residents who would be entered into the vicinity – a small rural parish. The changes that these applications would impose on the local community would reduce that amenity of the Peterstow parishioners. Additional load would be put on already strained infrastructure and services (hospitals, doctors, schools etc.). The majority of the anticipated workforce would appear to be seasonal, foreign workers – whilst paying UK Tax during their short stay in the UK this Tax would likely be reclaimed on exit so not funding the use of local services for the duration of stay.

Tourism – There will be a negative impact on tourism from this development, again exacerbated by the scale of the proposal, and the visual impact on the scenic landscape of the countryside and the adjoining AONB. This development has potential to harm the tourism in the local economy and have an adverse impact on the local tourism income.

We would therefore object to the application.