

## Zoe Wangler

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**From:** Alison [backyardlarder@tiscali.co.uk]  
**Sent:** 12 November 2012 01:17  
**To:** Team P13  
**Subject:** 2181807, 2181808 and 2181821 (Greenham Reach)

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write in support of planning applications 2181807, 2181808 and 2181821 (Greenham Reach).

I am an individual with a life-long interest in environmental matters and have recently started my own horticultural business selling perennial vegetable plants and herbs.

Firstly, I understand that the planning committee did not consider that the applications met the criteria for "special circumstances" required to allow temporary residential dwellings to be built on the land. The applications set out in detail why there is a functional need for the workers to live on site, cited numerous examples of similar concerns where it has been judged that the criteria for functional need has been met and were backed by compelling evidence from experts. I believe that these documents should be reappraised especially in the apparent absence of detailed minutes explaining why the advice of experts was not heeded and the applications refused.

However I believe that there are additional special circumstances to these applications when considered in the context of the Green Food Project Conclusions (Defra July 2012):

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/2012/07/10/pb13794-green-food-project/>

“A growing, and in some cases increasingly affluent global population, alongside the increasing demand for limited resources such as water, energy, land and the pressing need to address key environmental challenges such as climate change, water availability, soil degradation and biodiversity loss, means that food security is seriously and increasingly threatened. This is a significant enough challenge in itself, but even more so starting from a point where there is already environmental damage, and pressures that will only intensify going forward.”

The applications under consideration have special justification because they require the prospective residents to sign up to a strict low impact management plan drawn up by the Ecological Land Co-operative, a group of environmentalists who have invested years of time and effort into considering how we can practically meet such challenges as those listed above (long before how to feed people in the face of climate change and limited resources became the subject of numerous government reports). Allowing people to live at the place where they work is a vital component of these ground-breaking projects, because they seek to radically reduce carbon footprints and integrate rather than segregate the needs of the people and the needs of their environment.

Whilst it is probably true to say that the solutions currently favoured by government favour large-scale and hi-tech agri-environmental approaches to our problems rather than small scale, low-tech approaches favoured by the green movement, it is vital that all approaches are trialled and tested and that people with relevant knowledge, experience and commitment are given the chance to demonstrate innovation.

A lack of trust between people with radically different outlooks can prevail but it is worth pointing out that the aims of the Ecological Land Co-operative:

<http://ecologicaland.coop/about-us-our-mission>

"We believe that the creation of sustainable rural livelihoods is one of the best solutions to our most pressing environmental and social problems.

Small-scale production using, for example, agro-forestry or Permaculture methods, maximises yields, protects the environment and reduces greenhouse gas emissions by reducing fossil fuel use. Such businesses help build a vibrant, living countryside in which humans flourish alongside our cherished landscapes and natural biodiversity. These sustainable projects have a crucial role to play in ensuring food and energy security. They also provide employment, access to local, sustainable food and crafts and educational opportunities for urban visitors, helping to maintain rural skills and to improve ecological literacy. These small scale enterprises also allow residents to be rooted in their rural locality, helping maintain and regenerate rural communities and the services upon which they depend such as local schools and shops. Ecological foot-print analysis show that residents of ecological land based businesses use less than half the natural resources used by the average UK resident and are currently the only form of development in the UK which comes close to achieving One Planet Living."

are markedly similar to those voiced by Matthew Taylor in "The Rural Challenge. Achieving sustainable rural communities for the 21st century" CPRE 2010

<http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/housing-and-planning/planning/item/1883>

"The overriding objective of this report is to help achieve a positive, lasting legacy of sustainable rural communities in which people enjoy living and working; which are vibrant, distinctive and in keeping with the character of their surroundings, with a full range of good-quality local services; and which enhance local landscapes, heritage and biodiversity while meeting the challenges of climate and economic change."

Finally, the committee refused the applications on the grounds that they would set a precedent for further dwellings in association with permaculture and agroforestry proposals which would be hard to refuse. But a precedent is being set only for proposals which have to conform to a strict management plan which prevents the negative effects that the restriction on development in the countryside seeks to avoid.

I trust that these special developments will go ahead. Granting such permission may be a radical step but radical steps are what are needed in this challenging era.

Yours faithfully,

Alison Tindale

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