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CONTROVERSIAL: Newport Town Council discussed the new plans for Bettws Newydd last week.

Council torn over plans for building

BY ANWEN HUMFREY

COUNCILLORS were torn between planning principles and environmental concerns when they considered the latest application for a controversial building.

Newport Town Council discussed the new plans for Bettws Newydd, a large development on the Parrog, at last Monday's meeting.

The long-running saga surrounding a replacement dwelling, built bigger than approved plans and in a different place, has so far cost the National Park Authority £17,500 in consultants' fees and legal advice.

If the application is refused by the authority, the house could be pulled down and rebuilt in keeping with the approved 2006 plans.

The fresh retrospective application to 'modify the harm to amenity' has reignited uproar in the community.

Chairman Byron James told the meeting that a local farmer was made to take down his barn because it had been built bigger than approved plans, and the same should apply in this case.

Councillor Paul Harries said: "I believe this application totally contravenes our retrospective policy and several JUDP policies.

"I think we should turn

it down."

Cllr James Davies added: "In my opinion, it's a monumental mess-up by the national park, it should have been monitored closely while it was going up."

Cllr James replied: "The park's advice at the time was let it go up and see how it looks when it's finished."

Councillors referred to a large amount of concrete used for the base of the existing house, and were concerned the same amount would be used if the house approved in 2006 was built.

Cllr Dilys Evans said: "Environmentally, it would be a disaster to start again."

Cllr James Davies added: "It could be a tremendous waste for no achievement. Basically, whatever we do, the building will be there.

"If the owner goes back to the original permission, he won't be obliged to do any landscaping at all. We could end up with a bigger eyesore."

Councillors voted five to one to send comments recommending refusal, with three abstentions.

The authority's development management committee will consider the application this month.