

Planning Application, St Bees Golf Club Green keeper Accommodation Justification.

The maintenance & upkeep of the golf course is a pre-requisite to enable the club to continue to provide affordable golf in Copeland for its members and the local general public who don't have to be members but can turn up and "pay & play" throughout the year.

This also provides for visitors and tourists to the area as well which helps support the general economic diversity of the area & West Cumbria.

-

The club provides affordable leisure activity to over 200 members plus visitors which in turn meets with the general Government & NHS initiatives in supporting physical & mental health of individuals & their general well being. At a time when we hear that the needs of physical & mental health should be being given high priority we see the club meeting these needs albeit being a small cog in a much larger machine.

-

This aspect is especially important given the age demographics of the members, the majority being in the over 55 age group. But the club also provides for leisure activity for all genders & age ranges having looked to promote and increase participation from ladies and juniors.

-

Although we are not sure if the greenkeeper meets the requirements of the definition of an agricultural worker his role is no doubt similar. He also faces the same economical issues of low wages & associated high living costs especially in a tourist area like St Bees. Being on minimum wage ,rental costs in the area are beyond his financial limits & there are very limited options given this is a tourist area. But if the course is to be maintained to meet general standards (in order to maintain & attract members) there is a need to have expert knowledge of the land & maintenance of machinery etc which he is qualified to provide. It is not simply a matter of cutting the grass every week.

-

An additional benefit the Greenkeeper voluntarily provides is some care and maintenance of the recently installed 'Round England Coastal Path' (2021) which benefits the safety of a very large number of locals and visitors alike. The path circles the perimeter of the golf course. The golf club, at its own expense installed a defibrillator for use by all , the greenkeepers all day availability could be critical in rendering assistance being able to use the clubs all terrain transport to access the difficult to reach areas.

-

An important aspect we would like to be considered is general security. We have been subject to vandalism and minor thefts in recent years. Being allowed to "live on site" provides for full security for all the equipment & buildings and most importantly the course itself , given the rural location. This in turn reduces the needs for police involvement in the event of the club & its machinery being targeted by thieves. Again, rural crime is a real issue & a cost to the local police authority if required to investigate & resolve.

-

We anticipate the provision of accommodation for greenkeepers to be an ongoing issue but would like to request permission be given to maintain an accommodation unit at the club for

the foreseeable future in order to support future ongoing needs if the golf course is to be maintained in order to provide a public facility & local asset.

The Green keeper has been in our employment since April 2017. He is a single person, now 30 yrs old, he was recruited from Falkirk , Scotland. His family home is in Falkirk. He has been fortunate to have been able to live in his families holiday accommodation local to the golf course, however due to family illness this property is having to be sold. The greenkeeper will be homeless by spring ,early summer this year.

Bill Douglas.
(Secretary St.Beas Golf Club)