I would like to object to these proposals because they are contrary to boththe current and proposed development plans. The land is currently zoned as green wedge land and therefore housing should not be permitted on this site as it is contrary to policy ENV 1 of the UDP. Without the very profitable housing development the rest of the proposals are not financially viable. The recreational provision appears subsidiary to the main motive which is to develop housing on the site, so therefore the application should be refused.

The landscape assessment whilst acknowledging that the site is part of the green wedge implies that it is in a poor and degraded condition. This is largely down to maintenance, the long unkempt grass visible the site photographs has now been close mown, likewise the quality of the tree screen by the existing caravan park is due to poor and ignorant maintenance in the past. Again now that the planning application has been lodged efforts are being made to remove the extensive brambles along this boundary. The poor views of the existing buildings from South road is entirely due to the site managers removing a conifer screen along this boundary about a year ago. A cynic would argue that this was done to help downgrade the site in anticipation of this planning application!

The Vale of Glamorgan’s ‘Designation of Landscape Character Areas’ background paper identified the overall evaluation of this area as ‘high’. Management issues identified concern over poor development adjacent to the coast and poor access management and recommended improved development control. Permitting this development would not accord with that assessment. The proposal is also contrary to policy ENV6 of the UDP as it is within the undeveloped coastal zone. The proposed LDP policy MG42(2) requires the coastal zone to be preserved requiring development to be for non residential purposes. If the proposal was approved, the council would look very foolish contradicting its own recently formulated policy and could possibly be open to accusations of maladministration.

The proposal would also cause a significant loss of incidental open space to Sully. The coast path across the field is very well used by local residents. Crossing the site in June I counted 12 other users on the coast path and field. Part of the attraction of this route is the expansive fields on the landward side. The application site is the largest area of open space within Sully and has been enjoyed by residents without objection for well over 20 years. Besides the Jubilee field, the only other major area of open space is adjacent to the illegal traveller site in Hayes Road. This has effectively ceased to be safe for recreation by residents. In addition the new LDP proposes 600 new homes in Sully with no major area of usable open space for the use of existing residents. So the effect of this development will be to remove yet more open space from the local community. The community has relatively little open space already, the proposed new development at Cog will place a great deal of pressure on the remaining open space, losing this, the largest area of incidental space in Sully, will make matters far worse. I am sure you are aware of the growing understanding within the landscape and planning professions, of the importance of open space for the physical and mental health of local residents.

The Welsh Government document ‘Creating an Active Wales’ aims to encourage people to become more physically active. Reducing the informal open space within Sully would run counter to this policy. The sports provision within the proposals would only be for paying customers discriminating against the less well off. It would upgrade existing sports facilities but at the same time reduce informal activity on the site.

With 350 additional houses already approved for Cog out of a total of 500 houses proposed in the LDP at Cog, an additional 200 units at this site will cause severe congestion of the highway infrastructure. At peak times it is already difficult to join South Road. Commuting into Cardiff via either Penarth or Dinas Powis is already very congested taking at least 30 minutes. From Sully there is no practical alternative to commuting by car into Cardiff on reasonable timescales.

This overall increase in the size of the village would put inordinate strain on the community facilities such as the local primary school, highways and doctor’s surgery. The cost of upgrading some of these facilities would fall on already overstretched Local Authority budgets.

The proposals for the recreation side of the development will also dramatically change the character of the area. All-weather playing fields are very urban in nature. The floodlighting and high fencing will further detracting from the current ambience of the site, as well as spoiling the rural character of Swanbridge Road. The general public will be excluded from the playing field area effectively removing the whole of the BP sports ground from informal use by residents. It is also worth noting that the majority of sports users are not from Sully, therefore, an all-weather facilities will attract more people from outside the area, further increasing local traffic.

The proposal will also be detrimental to the all Wales coast path which runs along the coast at this point. Much of the path running through both Cardiff and Barry passes through urban areas. There are few sections passing through relatively attractive landscapes. The effect of this development would be to urbanise another section of the path. The proposals show the path with a wide landscape buffer however please note that the path currently runs 10 m or more from the clifftop along the coast (some 5m to the landward side of the strip owned by the community council) and at least 10 m from the caravan park along the section to Swanbridge Road. I note that the plan shows a generous buffer zone between the housing and the coast path. Who would be responsible for the maintenance of this area? In practice this would probably be reduced during the course of development as it is widely known by developers that local authorities rarely if ever take legal action for a breach of landscape conditions. The plans also indicate that there would be no fence between the proposed caravan park and the footpaths adjacent to the existing caravan park, giving the impression that this boundary would be open. I fear that very quickly, it would be deemed necessary to fence this boundary off, which would be very detrimental to the quality of the footpath at this point. As this footpath is a public right of way, if planning consent was granted, I trust that planning conditions will be applied to ensure that the footpath is not moved from its current location.

The overall effect of the development will totally destroy the open character of this section of the Coast path. The eastern end in particular will become a nasty little path hemmed in on both sides by high fencing. This section could easily be perceived as unsafe by users limiting further casual use of the site.

With sea level rise, over the next 50 years, the low cliff adjacent to the path will retreat inland. What provision can be made to maintain this access if the footpath collapses into the sea as happened to the east of the site about 25 years ago?

The proposal will also reduce roosting areas for waders and seabirds that currently use the site at high tide. There are few suitable roosting sites between Lavernock Point and Barry. The development would also be contrary tto the Vale’s Local Biodiversity Plan. Presumably National Resources Wales will be consulted over this issue and the effect of the proposals on the All Wales Coast path.

Judging by the proliferation of ‘No Housing on Sully Sports Field’ posters that have appeared in Sully and public meetings which have been overwhelmingly opposed to the development, it is clear that this proposal is very unpopular with the local community. Surely the views of the local community should weigh heavily in assessing this application.