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## PLANNING COMMITTEE 19.05.14

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**Present:**

**Councillors:** Councillors: Endaf Cooke, Elwyn Edwards, Gwen Griffith, Louise Hughes, Anne Lloyd Jones, Eric Merfyn Jones (Substitute), June Marshall, Dafydd Meurig, Michael Sol Owen, Eirwyn Williams, Gruffydd Williams (Substitute), Hefin Williams and Eurig Wyn.

**Others invited:** Councillors Aled Evans, Llywarch Bowen Jones, Mike Stevens, R H Wyn Williams (Local members).

**Also present:** Aled Davies (Head of Regulatory Department), Gareth Jones, (Senior Planning Service Manager), Cara Owen (Development Control Manager), Eirion John (Senior Manager Development Control), Rhun ap Gareth (Senior Solicitor), Gareth Roberts (Senior Manager Transport Development) and Glynda O'Brien (Members' Support and Scrutiny Officer).

**Apologies:** Councillors W. Tudor Owen, John Pugh Roberts, Owain Williams, Ann Williams (Local Member).

### 1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

**Resolved:** To elect Councillor Michael Sol Owen as Chairman of this Planning Committee for 2014/15.

The Chairman thanked his fellow members for electing him and he took the opportunity to thank the former Chair, namely Cllr Gwen Griffith, for her work over the last two years.

### 2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

**Resolved:** To elect Councillor Anne Lloyd Jones as Vice-chair of the Planning Committee for 2014/15.

### 3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

(a) The following members declared a personal interest for the reasons noted:

- Councillor Gruffydd Williams in Item 7 on the agenda – Planning Applications – Application No. C14/0118/43/CR as he was the applicant's son.
- Councillor Dafydd Meurig in Item 7 on the agenda – Planning Applications – Application No. C14/0002/16/LL as he was a friend of the applicant
- Councillor Anne Lloyd Jones in Item 7 on the agenda – Planning Applications – Application No. C14/0330/HY as she was a member of CTC
- Councillor Mike Stevens in Item 7 on the agenda – Planning Applications – Application No. C14/0330/09/HY as he was the applicant and had submitted the application.

The members were of the opinion that they were prejudicial interests, and they withdrew from the Chamber during the discussions on the items noted.

(b) The following members declared that they were local members in relation to the items noted:

- Councillor R. H. Wyn Williams (not a member of this Planning Committee) in relation to item 7 on the agenda, (planning application no. C13/0403/39/LL)
- Councillor Gwen Griffith (a member of this Planning Committee) in relation to item 7 on the agenda (planning application no. C14/0002/16/LL).
- Councillor Eirwyn Williams (a member of this Planning Committee) in relation to item 7 on the agenda (planning application no. C14/0038/35/LL);
- Councillor Aled Evans (not a member of this Planning Committee) in relation to item 7 on the agenda (planning application no. C14/0061/41/AM)
- Councillor Llywarch Bowen Jones (not a member of this Planning Committee) in relation to item 7 on the agenda (planning application no. C14/0118/43/CR).
- Councillor Dafydd Meurig (a member of this Planning Committee) in relation to item 7 on the agenda, (planning application no. C14/0205/16/LL);
- Councillor Gruffydd Williams (a member of this Planning Committee), in item 7 on the agenda, (planning application no. C14/0308/42/LL)

The members withdrew to the other side of the Chamber during the discussions on the applications in question and they did not vote on these matters.

## 2. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 28 April 2014, as a true record.

## 3. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee considered the following applications for development.

Details of the applications were expanded upon and questions were answered in relation to the plans and aspects of the policies.

### 1. Application No. C13/0268/34/LL – Llwyngwnadl Uchaf, Clynnogfawr, Caernarfon

Amended application for the erection of a 50kw wind turbine on a 24.6m tower, total height of 34.2m to tip of blades and siting of a control cabinet in lieu of a turbine on a 36.7m tower with a total height of 46.3m.

It was reported that the above application had been withdrawn by the applicant.

**Resolved: To accept and note the above.**

### 2. Application No. C13/0403/39/LL – White House Hotel, Abersoch

(a) A report was submitted on a full planning application for the demolition of existing hotel, construction of a mixed use structure incorporating a 42 bedroom hotel and spa facility, a restaurant/bar and 18 residential apartments drawing attention to the recommendation of the planning officers to refuse the application on the grounds of policy.

(b) Additional observations had been received from the Joint Planning Policy Unit, Strategic Housing Unit, Community Council and Economy and Community Department.

(c) The Senior Planning Service Manager elaborated that the development was provided over five floors and made use of land range, with a contemporary design, suitable and appropriate for the location. It was noted that there were several planning considerations relevant to the application and attention was drawn to the two main considerations namely, benefit to the economy and the provision of affordable housing. The proposed development would be an investment of approximately £8m to the local economy as a result of the building period, period to implement the use of the development together with creating indirect posts by using local suppliers and produce. There was no doubt that the proposed development would create employment for the area with the Council's Economy and Community Department supporting the development because of the economic benefit. On the other hand, in terms of affordable housing, it was noted that the development included 18 living units that would be sold on the open market. Therefore, it was necessary to consider if the development could provide affordable housing as part of the development package. To this end, it was noted that the developer has submitted a detailed financial assessment regarding the viability of providing affordable housing as part of the development. However, following the receipt of expert opinion, the planning officers were of the view that the case for viability had not been proven. Stemming from discussions between the developer and the planning authority the applicant offered £150,000 towards providing affordable housing off the site. Having considered the economic benefit against the affordable housing provision the planning officers were of the opinion that the need for affordable housing outweighed the economic benefit and a contribution of £150,000 would be insufficient to satisfy the need for affordable housing in the Abersoch and Llŷn area and therefore did not meet the relevant policies and consequently the recommendation was to refuse the application.

(ch) Specific attention was given to the following matters:-

(i) The Applicant – Various points were made in favour of the application including that the principle for development use was acceptable to the planning officers in terms of design, materials, scale, size, shape, height and general appearance of the development. No objections were received in terms of the plan or the access. The importance was noted that the application complied with the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan policies except for the element that deals with affordable housing. Despite the risks and obvious restrictions stemming from the development, attention was drawn to the contribution of £150,000 towards an affordable housing provision off the site. If the application was not approved then the local community would not benefit from the following benefits:

- £7.8m investment in construction
- 65 full time building posts
- 65 full time posts in the hotel and between 120 – 150 at peak times
- Use of local produce and services that meant an expenditure of £1.5m per annum
- Expenditure in the area of £130,000 per annum by guests
- Increase of 25% in high quality bed stock
- Offering work and training for local people

(ii) Local Member – (who was not a Member of this Planning Committee)—He noted that the hotel site was in an excellent position and this type of investment to create jobs and promote the local economy were not submitted often. It would be necessary for the hotel provision itself to be viable against the risk element of an investment in the enterprise. Members were referred to a section of the Council's Strategic Plan adopted on 1 May this year, regarding the priority of the economy in

Gwynedd and certainly the proposed development would promote and raise the profile of the area and the County. Attention was drawn to the fact that there was no objection to the development. It was noted that the Community Council together with other local bodies were fairly happy with the development and it would be a resource to promote the tourist industry, annual festivals such as a Jazz Festival, golf activities, offering training and cooperation with the local College.

(d) It was proposed and seconded to refuse the officers' recommendation and to approve the application and the following observations were made in favour and against the proposal:

In favour of approval:

- That the economic benefits outweighed the arguments for affordable housing
- Those opportunities did not appear often in Gwynedd with a standard and prestigious provision.
- That the development was a means of creating work that was really needed in the area
- Refusing the application would deprive the opportunity to have affordable housing stemming from the applicant's contribution and in turn this would mean more harm to the Welsh language and young people in the area would have to move from their communities due to the lack of opportunities and work locally.
- An excellent opportunity to develop Pen Llŷn and attract tourists to the area and strengthen the local economy.

Against approval:

- Concern regarding the viability of the Welsh Language as a result of such a development and that the future of the Welsh Language in rural communities had to be considered.
- That the development was too big for a community such as Abersoch
- Whilst accepting that training would be offered in the catering field at the Hotel, that local colleges offered such training as well
- That such tourist resources had an impact on the Welsh language and was contrary to policy A2.

(dd) An amendment was proposed and seconded to the above proposal namely to defer a decision on the application in order to enable officers to ask the applicant to increase the financial contribution for the affordable housing provision off the site.

(e) In response to the above, the Senior Planning Service Manager noted that discussions had been conducted with the applicant for over two years by now and that £150,000 was the offer made and even following deferral of the application for further discussions, it was possible that the exact same offer would be before them again.

(f) A vote was taken on the amendment to defer the decision on the application and the original proposal to approve the application fell.

**Resolved: To defer the decision on the application for planning officers to ask the applicant to increase the financial contribution for affordable housing provision.**

**3. Application No. C14/0002/16/LL – Ysgubor y Gelli, Lôn y Wern, Tregarth, Bangor.**

**Resolved: To defer consideration of the above application.**

**4. Application No. C14/0038/35/LL – Garages and Land, Lôn Dinas, Cricieth.**

- (a) A report was presented on the full planning application to demolish garages and erect one dwelling house, drawing attention to the recommendation of the planning officers to approve as it met with planning principles and relevant planning policies.
- (b) The Local Member noted (who was a Member of this Planning Committee) that he supported the application with a modern design for local people.
- (c) It was proposed, seconded and voted unanimously to approve the application.

**Resolved: To approve the application in accordance with the following conditions:**

- (1) Work to commence within five years**
- (2) Work in accordance with the plans**
- (3) Natural slate**
- (4) Agree on materials**
- (5) Level 3 of the sustainable code**
- (6) Landscaping and trees**
- (7) Highways**
- (8) Water**

**5. Application No. C14/0061/41/AM – Land to the rear of Madryn Arms, Madryn Terrace, Chwilog**

- (a) A report was submitted for outline planning permission to erect 15 dwelling houses with access from the B5234 and all other reserved matters, drawing attention to the recommendation of the planning officers to approve the application.
- (b) The Development Control Manager noted that officers had been part of extensive discussions with the agent prior to submission of the above outline application and Members' attention was drawn to the fact that the site had been designated within the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan for new housing development for the general market. The development brief notes that the site could cope with approximately 14 residential units with approximately 35 being affordable houses. It was stressed that the application was in compliance with policy C1 that states that new developments should be within the development boundaries of towns and villages together with CH1 that allows the building of houses on allocated sites. This land was allocated in the Unitary Development Plan not only to meet the housing needs of the village Chwilog itself, but also because it was an accessible and sustainable site for satisfying the wider needs of the Llŷn Dependency Catchment Area. The percentage of affordable housing is in accordance with policy CH6 and it is considered that 5 out of 15 that are affordable is an acceptable proposal and in accordance with the information received regarding the need for these affordable units. The capacity of the local primary school was considered to take on the likely increase in pupils that may stem from the proposed application, and on this basis it was noted that the applicant had stated a willingness to contribute £6,240 in accordance with the analysis outlined in the planning officers' report.
- (c) Specific attention was given to the following matters:-
  - (i) Applicant's Agent – Various points were made in favour of the application including that the development would produce income to support the viability of the public house in the village. In addition, the applicant was glad to be able to offer affordable housing and also make an educational financial contribution. The

development would create local employment and it was emphasised that it was in accordance with the Unitary Development Plan.

- (ii) Local Member (who was not a Member of this Planning Committee) – It was noted that the local need was very important but he expressed concern regarding the interpretation and evidence of the need for local housing. It was questioned if there was evidence as stated in a report of the local need by the applicant that stated in accordance with the quantitative analysis that the population of Gwynedd had increased between 2001-2011 on the basis of people moving into the area rather than a natural increase. In addition, it was noted in anecdotal evidence from estate agents that there was a demand for smaller houses in Chwilog. It seemed that there were 4 applicants on the Tai Teg register for housing in Chwilog and in the opinion of the local member this was a very small number. It was understood that the Housing Association was not in partnership as part of the proposed development and should this not be considered prior to making a recommendation. There was further concern regarding other developments that had been designated within the Unitary Development Plan for Chwilog and the language assessment stated the high percentage of Welsh speakers in Chwilog that gave the impression that the village could easily cope with approximately 25% growth in the size of the village. It was noted that the Community Council and local residents had concerns regarding the local need. An appeal was made to the Committee to defer the decision on the application in order to undertake more research work on local need.

(ch) In response to comments regarding local need, the Senior Planning Service Manager stressed that the site had been allocated for housing in the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan which created a spatial framework to create sustainable communities based on 8 catchment dependency areas. In terms of the specific site above, it was noted that it had been allocated to contribute to meet the need in the Llŷn catchment dependency area and not to specifically meet the need in Chwilog. It was stressed that the contribution of 35% of affordable housing was in accordance with policy and this could be discussed further with the developers regarding how to achieve this and if it was possible through a Housing Association. Reference was made to the comment of the Joint Planning Policy Unit that states that there would be no negative impact to the Welsh language stemming from the proposed development. It was also ensured that the Planning Department would consider a cumulative impact assessment when dealing with other applications in Chwilog at the appropriate time.

(d) It was proposed and seconded to approve the application as it would be difficult to refuse as the application complies with the relevant policies, however, it was trusted that the developer could be persuaded to work jointly with the Housing Association.

**Resolved: To delegate the power to the Senior Planning Manager to approve the application subject to the applicant signing a Section 106 Agreement relating to the educational financial contribution and to ensuring that five of the 15 houses are affordable houses for general local need and to relevant conditions relating to:**

1. **Commencement the development and submitting reserved matters**
2. **Materials**
3. **Slates**
4. **Code for sustainable homes**
5. **Water/Sewerage/Drainage**
6. **Highway conditions**
7. **Biodiversity conditions**
8. **Removal of permitted general rights from the affordable units**

- 9. Landscaping
- 10. Tree protection plan.

**6. Application No. C14/0118/43/CR – Gwynus, Pistyll, Pwllheli**

- (a) A report was submitted regarding a listed building consent for alterations to a dwelling-house to include internal alterations, installation of 5 new rooflights and replace 3 upvc windows with timber ones, drawing attention to the recommendation of the planning officers to approve the application in accordance with the relevant conditions.
- (b) The Local Member noted (who was not a Member of this Planning Committee) that he supported the application and it complied with the relevant standards.

It was proposed and seconded to approve the application.

**Resolved: To approve in accordance with the following conditions:-**

- 1. 5 years
- 2. In accordance with the plans
- 3. Create a photographic record prior to commencing the work and submit a copy to the LPA
- 4. Rooflights of conservation type that are installed level with the roof
- 5. New timber framed windows;
- 6. Slimlite (or similar) double glazed windows

**7. Application No. C14/0155/11/LL – 2-4 Lower Street, Cae Llepa, Bangor**

- (a) A full planning application was submitted to remove planning conditions 6 and 7 of planning permission reference C03A/0001/11/AM in relation to parking, drawing attention to the recommendation of the planning officers to approve the application unconditionally.
- (b) The Development Control Manager elaborated that the original application concerned the demolition of 2 residential dwellings together with erecting 2 houses in their place. Conditions 6 and 7 had been attached in order to ensure parking areas, however, providing parking areas would be impractical and create a hazard to site users and the nearby road. It was confirmed that the Transportation Unit had no objection to the proposal to remove the conditions.
- (c) In response to a query regarding removing the yellow lines on the street in question, the Senior Transportation Development Control Officer stated that there was no intention to remove them as they facilitated emergency services and refuse lorries to gain access to the street.

**Resolved: To approve the application unconditionally.**

**8. Application No. C14/0205/16/LL - Plas y Coed, Bangor**

- (a) A report was submitted on a full application to relocate the access and 3 dwellings previously approved under C11/1077/16/LL.
- (b) The Development Control Manager elaborated on the background to this application and noted that the intention was to relocate three of the living units by moving their location slightly and turning them entirely from their approved setting, with the rear of the

houses now being the front of the houses, which also meant that the gardens must also be moved. By so doing it would be possible to improve the visibility distance from the access by reducing the height of the nearby wall as well as noting that speed humps would be placed near the access into the Plas y Coed site. It was noted that the principle of the above application had already been accepted and no objection had been received from the Transportation Unit. On the grounds that there was no amendment to the detriment of the original application and that the change was considered reasonable and it would not be unacceptable in terms of compliance with the amenities policy, it was recommended to be approved in accordance with relevant conditions.

(c) Attention was drawn to the additional information received with the application.

(ch) Specific attention was given to the following matters:-

- (i) Applicant's Agent – members were reminded that they had supported the application in June 2013 to re-develop Plas y Coed into 12 flats and erect 17 houses on land nearby. As part of his report last year the Local Member requested if it was possible to improve the access road and create a footpath to the new site. Since it was a private road the Transportation Unit could not demand any improvements to the road and therefore the application before them stemmed from those observations. Discussions had been conducted between the developer and the Penrhyn Estate owners regarding improvements to the road that gives access to the site and by now they had agreed on plans to improve the road and also to re-create the footway that leads to the Plas y Coed. The Estate had agreed to move the location of the new access in order not to cut through a listed wall and to move it further from the access from the Gatehouse to the Castle. Whilst understanding that this would have an impact on neighbours in the Gatehouse as they had had a very quiet time since the Council had closed Plas y Coed in 2006, however, previously it was a busy place with a residential home for the elderly, day centre, plant nursery that meant considerable traffic every day. Although the access had moved and 3 of the houses had been re-orientated it was proposed to have structural planting that would safeguard the privacy of the family who live there and also fewer windows faced the Gatehouse. It was noted that the Penrhyn Estate did not object to the application as it was seen as an improvement on the previous consent and had less impact on listed walls. To conclude, it was noted that the planning officers had assessed the application and judged it to be acceptable. An appeal was made to the Committee to support the professional views of the planning officers by approving the application.
- (ii) Local Member (who was a Member of this Planning Committee)—It was noted that he objected the approval of the application due to the impact on the amenities of the Gatehouse residents. There was an empty field in front of the house and the compromise agreed when the original application was approved was that the access would be as far as possible from the house. The Member was of the view that turning the three houses would have an impact as a result of the access road to the 17 houses closest to Plas y Coed where traffic would go backwards and forwards as well as cars parking. The original application meant that the back gardens would face Plas y Coed and was an acceptable compromise. The only difference between this application and the original was that Penrhyn Estate objected the location of the new access, however, there was no objection to the original application. In the planning officers' report there was reference to the wish of the Penrhyn Estate to re-locate the access in order not to impair on the existing access into the castle. The Local Member was of the view that this referred to the back door of the castle. In conclusion, the Member did not comprehend why the original application could not proceed as was originally agreed.



(d) In response to the observations, the Senior Planning Service Manager stressed that planning permission already existed in its entirety for the three houses that were part of a larger estate (however there was no intention to change the remainder of the estate). Whilst accepting that there was a change in terms of residential amenities, impact on trees, biodiversity etc., it had to be considered if the change was likely to have more of an impact on the residential amenities of the Gatehouse, there were more problems in terms of road use etc. In the opinion of the planning officers having considered everything the situation would not be worse and to a great extent the proposed application would bring improvements compared to the approved application. It was noted that it was proposed to undertake landscaping that would create a natural buffer in terms of safeguarding residential amenities.

(dd) The Senior Transportation Development Control Manager added that in terms of the design of the Estate road the design of the original application and the one before them were acceptable and the only difference was that the one before them reduced the height of the wall and ensured visibility back towards the Plas y Coed.

(e) It was proposed and seconded to refuse permission for this application as it would have more of an impact on the residential amenities of the Gatehouse residents.

The members voted unanimously to refuse the application.

**Resolved: To refuse approval of the application as it would impair on the residential amenities of the Gatehouse residents.**

**9. Application No. C14/0226/13/LL - Land near Plas Ffrancon Sport Centre, Lôn Newydd Coetmor, Bethesda**

(a) A report was submitted on the re-submission of a previously refused application for the erection of 24 residential units comprising of semi-detached houses and flats, creation of a new vehicular access and estate road, drawing attention to the recommendation of the planning officers to refuse the application as it was contrary to relevant policies.

(b) The Development Control Manager elaborated that part of the land already had consent for 8 houses with 2 of these being affordable housing and within the development boundary. It was noted that the layout of the site indicated 11/12 units within the development boundary and 12/13 were on part of the site outside the boundary. It was noted that an appeal had been submitted for the application refused in January. The relevant planning policy and guidance clearly state that the aim is to supply affordable housing on sites designated for housing or other sites that become available unexpectedly within development boundaries. Therefore it is seen that only when there are no such sites available that rural exception sites are approved, and even then only small sites would be supported. From the appeals received recently by the Planning Department small meant approximately 4/5/6 units. When considering the application in its entirety it was noted that part of the site within the boundary was acceptable in principle, however, the section outside the boundary was not acceptable. As it was one application the only option was to refuse it as it did not conform to policies C1 and CH7 or relevant guidance in the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing.

(c) Attention was drawn to the additional observations received.

(ch) Specific attention was given to the following matters:

- (i) Applicant's Agent – Various points were made in favour of the application and in response to the comments made by the Development Control Manager as follows:
- Reference was made to appeals concerning small developments for 4/5/6 houses but it was noted that these appeals were linked to much smaller villages than Bethesda.
  - That the application only meant 10-12 houses outside the development boundary
  - That there was no green land on the site in question and the development boundary went straight through the land
  - That the site had been developed previously
  - Affordable housing – in this case prior to the refusal of the previous application that North Wales Housing Association had already expressed an interest as well as Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd and a grant of approximately £630,000 was available for this purpose if the development proceeded.
  - That there are no other developments in Bethesda
  - That a statement from the Housing Unit noted the need for housing and it was noted that Tai Teg had 45 people on the waiting list.
- (ii) The Local Member was not present and had apologised and had declared a personal interest as her sister lived opposite the site and had objected to the development.
- (d) In response to the Agent's observations the Senior Manager Planning Services that the Planning Committee had refused an application that was exactly the same in January and there had been no change in the relevant planning circumstances and therefore the recommendation for refusal was consistent with the decision on this application in January. It was accepted that there was a need for affordable housing and housing on the open market that would address the need within the Bangor dependency area, but these had to be offered on appropriate sites.
- (dd) It was proposed and seconded that the Planning Committee should defer the decision on the application and visit the site because:
- Every application had to be treated according to its merit
  - That it would be an improvement on what was there already
  - That more affordable housing needed to be built in Bethesda and this was an opportunity for young people to buy houses.
- (e) A vote was taken on the above proposal and the proposal fell.
- (f) It was proposed, seconded and voted to agree with the officers' recommendation to refuse the application.

**Resolved:** To refuse the application as part of the proposal involved developing a rural exception site which was not acceptable due to its scale and lack of justification of the need to develop a rural exception site in Bethesda. Therefore it was considered that the proposal was contrary to policies C1, C3, CH4 and CH7 of the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan as well as the Supplementary Planning Guidance: Affordable Housing, Planning Policy Wales, Chapter 9 (Edition 6, 2014) and Technical Advice Note 2: Planning and Affordable Housing as the site was outside the Bethesda development boundary and no evidence had been submitted that justified approving the application to develop the rural exception site in order to provide affordable housing for local need.

**10. Application No. C14/0308/42/LL – Aberafon Holiday Park, Nefyn, Pwllheli**

- (a) A report was submitted on a full planning application to vary condition 2 on planning permission C06D/0118/42/LL to be able to use the site all year for holiday purposes.
- (b) The Development Control Manager elaborated on the background to the application and drew attention that it was not proposed to extend the number of caravans on the site but rather to extend the use from 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> months to 12 months for Holiday use only. Reference was made to the relevant planning policies and it was noted that the consultation period had expired and rather than delegate the right to approve it was recommended that it should be approved in accordance with the relevant planning conditions noted in the report. Attention was drawn to references in the report to recent appeals where the Inspector had granted the extension of all year use of caravan sites and more relevant to Gwynedd a decision to extend the holiday period for Ocean Heights, Chwilog, with a condition to limit the use to holiday use only. It was further noted that the Inspector had concluded that the development would not have a significant detrimental impact on the Welsh Language and that it was not contrary to revised Technical Advice Note 20 or policy A2 in the Unitary Development Plan. The Inspector also noted that it was possible to attach a condition to ensure that the proposal satisfied the aim of policy D18 in the Unitary Development Plan and the condition was sufficient to ensure occupation for Holiday purposes only and prevented permanent occupation of the units.
- (c) Reference was made to the additional observations that were received with the application.
- (ch) Specific attention was given to the following matters:-
- (i) Applicant's Agent – It was noted that the reason for the application was to enable visitors to attend the holiday park during school half term in February. It would also respond to the continuous demand for short breaks that would maximise the revenue benefit as well as the benefit for the local economy during quiet periods. An all year holiday season would assist to reduce the disadvantages of seasonal employment including the difficulty of retaining experienced staff in the field. It was ensured that the applicant would not allow the caravans to be used as residential property as strict measures were used to ensure that this did not occur. The park owner kept detailed data on caravan owners who include many Welsh speaking families. To conclude, the Committee was reminded, as outlined in the planning officers' report that the application conforms to planning policies.
- (ii) Local Member (who was a Member of this Planning Committee as a Substitute) – He requested that the officers should commission an independent assessment on the impact on the Welsh Language as he was of the view that if the application was approved then this would have a detrimental impact on the Welsh Language in Nefyn, bearing in mind that it was one of the strongholds of the Language. He referred to evidence collected in 2001 (Welcome to Wales) stemming from an assessment of the tourist industry on the Welsh Language and reference was made to examples of towns where there had been an impact on the Language.
- (d) In response, the Senior Planning Service Manager stressed the Inspector's judgement to approve the Ocean Heights, Chwilog application against the resolution of the Planning Committee to refuse this application that had meant costs of £15,000 to the Council as there was insufficient evidence to support the reasons for refusing the application. He emphasised that there were huge risks to the Council to refuse the application before them considering the decision of the recent appeal in Gwynedd, as well as other appeal

decisions across Wales. In terms of the impact on the Welsh Language, the officer gave an assurance that the matter had received detailed and thorough consideration. It was stressed that the application dealt with extending the holiday season for an additional 6 weeks every year and on the grounds of the application before them the nature and scale of the proposed development did not justify requesting a community and linguistic statement.

(dd) It was proposed and seconded to approve the application and to add a condition that the caravan site should be controlled and the following observations were made in favour and against the proposal for approval:

In favour of approval:

- That the recent appeal on the Ocean Heights application was an additional cost to the Council without taking into consideration officers' time and especially bearing in mind that the Council had to find substantial financial savings.
- If the application was refused, the likelihood was that the applicant would appeal and the appeal would be lost.

Against approval:

- Concern regarding this type of development and a clear statement should go from the Council to the Welsh Government stating that protecting the Welsh Language was a sustainable point of view and sustainability should be part of planning conditions in Welsh speaking areas. It was felt that the Welsh Language was in a very fragile position and it was necessary to bring pressure to bear on the Welsh Government to include this in the Planning Bill to ensure the right to refuse these types of developments.
- That a language assessment had been submitted with the Ocean Heights application and it was therefore different to the application before them.
- How could the site be policed to ensure that the owners do not live on the site throughout the year?
- That it was necessary to keep an eye on similar sites as on a recent site visit to a caravan park a sign was seen with the words 'Ideal Starter Homes'.

(e) In response to some of the above observations, the Senior Planning Service Manager noted that:-

- The consultation on the Planning Bill had expired and the Council had responded. It was accepted that the Welsh Language was a relevant planning consideration and the pressure placed on the Language had to be considered when dealing with planning applications. In the above case, an application had been submitted for an additional 6 weeks only and on the basis of the information before them there was no evidence to confirm that approving the application would have an impact on the Welsh Language.
- The Planning Department did not have sufficient resources to go around every site to police them, however, enforcement arrangements were in place for pro-active monitoring. The intention over the next few months would be to visit sites that have received approval for 12 month use. It was further noted that the Department was dependent on Elected Members and Community Councils to draw attention to any issues of concern within their communities.

In accordance with Procedural Rule 22(6), the following vote was recorded to **approve the application**:

**In favour of the proposal to approve the application, (7)** Councillors Endaf Cooke, Gwen Griffith Anne Lloyd Jones, Dafydd Meurig, Michael Sol Owen, Eirwyn Williams, Hefin Williams.

**Against the proposal to approve (2)** Councillors Elwyn Edwards, Eurig Wyn

**Abstaining, (2)** Councillors Louise Hughes, Eric Merfyn Jones

**Resolved: To approve the application to remove the relevant condition in order to allow a 12 month holiday period subject to a relevant condition stating:**

**‘The caravans will be used for holiday purposes only and they will not be occupied as the sole or main residence of an individual. The owners/operators of the caravan park will keep an up-to-date register, record and licence agreements of all the names of owners/occupiers of the caravans on the site and the addresses of their main residences and they will ensure that the information is available at all reasonable times to the Local Planning Authority.’**

**11. Application No C14/0330/09/HY – Railway Corner, Station Road and Neptune Road, Tywyn**

- (a) A report was submitted on a planning application to erect a non-illuminated sign, drawing attention to the recommendation of the planning officers to delegate the right to the Senior Planning Manager to approve the application.
- (b) The Senior Development Control Officer elaborated and stated that this was a sign to direct visitors to the beach on the Neptune Road crossroads. Reference was made to the relevant planning policies and late observations had been received stating that the Town Council had no objection but were concerned about the size and location on the dangerous crossroads. Natural Resources Wales stated that there was a low risk. One letter of objection had been received in relation to questioning the ownership and the right to use the land as well as concern regarding road safety. It was noted that the two criteria for consideration were amenities and transport issues and it was confirmed that the proposal was in compliance with planning policies B23, CH21 and CH33.
- (c) Taking advantage of the right to speak, the applicant noted (although he was not personally the applicant but this was part of an enterprise by the Council to identify sites for improvement) that the sign would be useful to direct traffic travelling from the south of Gwynedd to the beach and it was a simple sign that would be beneficial in terms of road safety in the town.

It was proposed, seconded and voted to approve the application.

**Resolved: To delegate powers to the Planning Manager to approve the application, subject to the end of the consultation period and the following conditions -**

- 1. The development to be completed in accordance with the submitted plans.**
- 2. Advertisements must be maintained and they must be in a safe, clean and in an orderly condition to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.**

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm and concluded at 4.30 pm.

