
PLANNING COMMITTEE 11/12/23

Present: Councillor Edgar Owen (Chair)
Councillor Elwyn Edwards (Vice-chair)

Councillors: Delyth Lloyd Griffiths, Louise Hughes Gareth T Jones, Huw Wyn Jones, Cai Larsen, Anne Lloyd Jones, Gareth Coj Parry, John Pughe Roberts, Huw Rowlands and Gruffydd Williams

Officers: Gareth Jones (Assistant Head of Planning and the Environment), Miriam Williams (Legal Services), Gwawr Hughes (Development Control Team Leader), Elan Mared Lloyd (Planning Officer) and Lowri Haf Evans (Democracy Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Elin Hywel, Elwyn Jones and Gareth Roberts

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND PROTOCOL MATTERS

- a) The following member declared that he had an interest in relation to the item noted:

Councillor Cai Larsen (a member of this Planning Committee), in item 5.1 (C22/0657/18/LL) on the agenda as he was a Member of the Adra Management Board.

3. URGENT ITEMS

None to note

4. MINUTES

The Chair accepted the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee, held on 20 November 2023, as a true record.

5. 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 policy aspects.

6. APPLICATION NO C23/0657/18/LL LAND OPPOSITE STAD CREMLYN, BETHEL, CAERNARFON, LL55 1AX

Full planning application to erect 30 affordable dwellings with a new access, internal

access road and associated works.

Attention was drawn to the late observations form that proposed additional information regarding Educational Contribution matters, Linguistic Matters, Biodiversity, Trees, and Archaeology matters.

- a) The Development Control Team Leader highlighted, that it was a full application to erect 30 affordable dwellings with associated works on the site designated under T57 as a site for housing within the Bethel Service Village development boundary as defined by the Local Development Plan (LDP). It was explained that the site was located within the Dinorwig Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest and abutted the Pen-yr-Orsedd designated Wildlife Site which was distinctive for its acidic grassland, marshy grassland, and acid/neutral wetland. The proposal included erecting the houses, providing new access to the B4366 (which is a class 2 road), creating an internal access road, landscaped areas and associated drainage work; the proposal would include a housing mix:
- 3 two-bedroom bungalows
 - 1 three-bedroom wheelchair-accessible bungalow
 - 8 two-bedroom houses
 - 12 three-bedroom houses
 - 2 four-bedroom houses
 - 4 one-bedroom flats

In the context of the development's principle, it was noted, in accordance with Policy PCYFF 1 ('Development Boundaries') that proposals would be approved within development boundaries in accordance with the other policies and proposals in the Plan, national planning policies and other material planning considerations. It was highlighted that Bethel, in the LDP, was identified as a Service Village under policy TAI 4 which supported housing to meet the Plan's strategy through housing allocations and suitable unallocated sites within the development boundary based on the indicative provision within the Policy.

It was reported, in accordance with Policy TAI 8, that consideration should be given to the proposed development and whether it met the demand for housing recorded in a Market Housing Assessment and other relevant local sources of evidence. It was noted that a Housing Mix Statement was submitted with the application noting the reasoning behind the housing mix proposed, and confirmation was received from the Housing Strategic Unit confirming that the development met the recognised local community needs. It was reiterated that Policy TAI 15 of the LDP stated that Councils would attempt to ensure an appropriate level of affordable houses in the plan area. In Bethel, the threshold was two or more housing units, but as the proposal prepared 100% affordable units and that the Housing Strategic Unit confirmed that the proposal met the need in the area, the application satisfied policy TAI 15. As a result, it was considered that there was justification and need for the proposal and that it would address the needs of the local community and realise the objectives of the LDP housing policies.

In the context of the location, design and visual impact of the proposal, it was noted that it would form a logical extension to the village, and that the layout, design and materials of the proposed development would be in-keeping with the location in an appropriate way. It was considered that the houses had been designed to a standard quality that suited the nature of the village without causing significant harm to the site's-built quality or the local neighbourhood. As a result, it was considered that the development was acceptable under Policies PCYFF 2 and

PCYFF 3 of the LDP. In addition, although the site was located within the Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest, it was not considered that the proposed development would have any detrimental effect on the wider historic landscape; the application therefore was consistent with the objectives of policy AT1 in the LDP.

In the context of transportation and access, subject to appropriate conditions, the parking and vehicular access were acceptable by the Transportation Unit, and it was not considered that the traffic caused by the new development would increase the risk for road users in a significant manner. In terms of biodiversity and tree matters, an initial Ecological Assessment and Arboriculture Assessment of the site were submitted. It was noted that the reports were acceptable by the Biodiversity Unit and were subject to the acceptable appropriate conditions of the development under PolicyPS19 of the LDP.

In the context of open spaces, it was highlighted that the applicant had noted that the area designated as an open space, was proposed to be used for dealing with sustainable drainage requirements and therefore wasn't suitable for play equipment. It was reiterated that another area was also considered unsuitable due to high voltage electricity cables running above the site and in close proximity to a neighbouring house. It was highlighted that the current play area was within 60m of the site and the applicant was willing to contribute a sum of £5240.00 for improving the facilities and access to that area, with a planning obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

In the context of financial matters, it was noted that there was not enough space in the local Secondary School to cope with the proposal, therefore, in accordance with policy ISA 1 the financial contribution of £123,028.50 was proposed, through agreement 106, to improve secondary education provision.

When discussing linguistic matters, it was noted that a Language Statement was submitted with the application which concluded that the proposed development would generally have a neutral impact on the Welsh language and the community in Bethel, by providing 100% affordable housing which meets the needs found, at a price that was affordable for local people.

It was considered that the proposal for developing affordable housing was designed to meet the local housing market needs and located on a site designated for housing within the village's development boundary; the plan was acceptable on the grounds of principle and that it complied with relevant local and national planning policies.

- b) Taking advantage of the right to speak, the applicant's agent made the following observations;
- That the site was designated for 28 houses, but the developer's intention was to build 30 which made better use of the land
 - That all the homes were affordable housing - this was a higher offer than the Policy requirements
 - Local Need for 2, 3 and 4 bed housing had been evidenced
 - Suitable mixture of housing within the plan that responded to the need
 - Language Statement submitted with the application
 - Although there was a request for internal bird nesting boxes, it was noted that providing external ones was sufficient
 - Despite the request from the Ecology Department to install an ecology buffer of 10m, that 3m was sufficient or some plots would lose garden

space

- The additional archaeology work was provided and that trial trenching work had been undertaken on the site
- A contribution was agreed for the secondary school provision
- The proposal was acceptable and complied with local and national policies

c) It was proposed and seconded to approve the application

ch) During the ensuing discussion, the following observations were made by members:

- The Community Council's observation for assurance that local, Welsh families would be allowed to live in the houses in order to protect the language in the village was supported
- That the development was a large one
- That lack of response from six consultees was concerning in considering the size of the proposal
- That there was a need to keep an eye on Welsh Water's observation
- That the amount for the open space equipment seemed low
- Welcomed affordable houses and homes for the people of Gwynedd
- That the development was a very important one - which met the need for local housing

In response to the observations, the Assistant Head of Planning noted that the plot of land was designated for housing in the LDP and therefore the principle was already established. It was reiterated that the policies try and ensure that the appropriate level of affordable housing is built in the plan area; here we can see 100% of affordable housing (not 30% as expected) being built which also corresponded with one of the Council's main priorities. It was noted that neither Welsh Water nor the Transportation Unit had objected to the application and that the contribution to provide play equipment was made by using the Fields in Trust benchmark standard (formula).

In response to an observation that work had previously commenced on the site, the Assistant Head of Planning noted that machinery was on the field as trial trenching work was being undertaken to identify any archaeological interest on the site. In terms of commencing the work, a standard condition would note the need for the work to commence within 5 years and it was presumed that the development would be bound by grant requirements.

RESOLVED: To delegate powers to the Head of Environment Department to approve the application, subject to ensuring an acceptable solution regarding archaeological matters and a 106 agreement for a play area and an educational contribution and conditions relating to the following:

1. Commencement within five years
2. Development to comply with the approved plans
3. Affordable homes provision programme must be submitted and agreed
4. External materials, including the roofing slates, must be agreed
5. Removal of permitted development rights
6. Welsh Water condition
7. Highways conditions
8. Biodiversity conditions
9. A Construction Environmental Management Plan needed to be submitted prior to the development work commencing

10. A Welsh name for the housing estate and individual houses

11. Restrict the use to C3 use class only

12. Archaeology conditions

**Note - Welsh Water
Land Drainage Unit
Transportation Unit
Major development**

7. APPLICATION NO C22/0705/33/LL TY CYNAN, RHYDYCLAFDY, PWLLHELI, GWYNEDD, LL53 7YL

An application for the creation of a pick-your-own fruit enterprise, including alterations to the existing vehicular access, provision of customer car park, installation of a polytunnel and shelter with solar panels above, provision of a container for the installation of irrigation equipment and associated equipment with solar panels and a container to be used for weighing the fruit and sale of refreshments, installation of water collection tanks, and installation of a building to provide toilets.

- a) The Development Control Team Leader highlighted that this was a full application to create a pick-your-own fruit enterprise on a site located on the outskirts of the village of Rhydyclafdy in open countryside and within the Llŷn and Bardsey Island Area of Outstanding Historic Interest.

It was explained that the principle of a pick-your-own fruit enterprise was an agricultural use as it involved using the land to grow produce. Reference was made to part 3.8 of Technical Advice Note 6 which confirmed if a farm shop was used only for the sale of goods produced on that farm, with a minimal quantity of other goods from elsewhere, therefore it was a use which was ancillary to its use as a farm and did not require specific planning permission (namely using the current farm buildings to sell the produce). However, in this case, the proposal involved the provision of a new construction and development specifically for the enterprise which was subject to planning consent. It was explained that the provision of a shop in the context of this proposal was in the form of a cabin in order to weigh the produce as well as the sale of refreshments to customers, such as tea, coffee and cakes, etc. The cabin would be small, and it was not considered large enough to sell a large number of goods sourced elsewhere; this element of the proposal was acceptable and in accordance with the objectives of TAN objectives for sustainable rural communities.

In terms of visual, general and residential amenities, it was noted that the site, despite being on the outskirts of the village, was relatively concealed since the land gradually drops away from the village, and although a class 3 road (Lôn Pin) runs past the site, there were only intermittent views through the high hedges along the road leading from the site.

Attention was also drawn to the shelter frame above the produce growing boards which were substantial in terms of height and included solar panels and clear panels above. This equated to a 3.1m high building with a ridge roof and curves and valleys alternately. Despite being substantial, its height and location means that it would be unlikely to have a substantial detrimental impact on the landscape, including the Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest. It was reiterated that it was proposed to provide a polytunnel on the site alongside the

shelter frames, therefore it was not considered that it would have an additional impact on the landscape in comparison with the nearby shelter frames.

In the context of transportation and access matters, it was noted that the proposal included making alterations to the existing access, as well as the provision of two passing places on the existing access track (the entrance and the track were currently used by the caravan park on the site), and subject to conditions, the Highways Unit did not have an objection to the proposal. In the context of Biodiversity matters, it was noted that the site, which was located on hard standings and current agricultural fields and was being used for grazing, was not designated for any biodiversity value. It was reiterated that the proposal, despite including a construction of a substantial surface area, facilitated agricultural use of the site and enabled the sale of produce being grown on the site.

This development would offer a resource for local people as well as tourists to the area and would offer employment for up to 3 full-time and 9 part-time employees. It was considered that the proposal was acceptable with conditions as it would not have a significant visual impact on the landscape, the amenities of nearby residents, road safety, biodiversity or the Welsh language.

- b) Taking advantage of the right to speak, the applicant made the following observations;
- That he asked the Committee to support officers' recommendations to grant this exciting project – which was sustainable and innovative
 - It used crop growing methods that maximises land use - use of hydroponics
 - Rainwater would be harvested
 - Sheep wool from local farmers would be used in the process
 - There was an intention to establish a market with weekly boxes for local residents, visitors and restaurants
 - The cafe would provide local produce
 - Training / visits would be arranged for schools / visitors - all to promote sustainable farming
 - The enterprise would support the local community
- c) It was proposed and seconded to approve the application
- ch) During the ensuing discussion, the following observations were made by members:
- They congratulated the enterprise
 - It was pleasing to see a young person leading the enterprise
 - Growing produce locally - selling locally. What could be better?

RESOLVED: To approve – conditions

- 1. Five years**
- 2. In accordance with the plans**
- 3. Highways conditions**
- 4. Welsh Water condition**
- 5. Welsh language advertisements**
- 6. Anti-glare cover on the PV panels**
- 7. The PV solar equipment must be disconnected and moved from the site after a continuous period of not producing energy**
- 8. The buildings approved here must only be used for agricultural purposes or as ancillary to agricultural use of the site and if their use**

for agricultural purposes within this unit ends permanently within 10 years of the date of material completion of the development, unless the local planning authority approves an alternative use, the building must be demolished and moved away from the land and the land restored to its previous condition prior to the development taking place

- 9. Biodiversity enhancements**
- 10. Details of electric car charging points**

Notes:

SUDS

Major development

Refer the developer to the website of the Welsh Language Commissioner and the Welsh Language Offer in order to assist them to create a Language Plan and identify the development steps in terms of promoting the Welsh language.

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm and concluded at 1.45 pm

CHAIRMAN