

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 24/04/2017
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	FRONDEG, PWLLHELI

**Number: 7**

**Application Number: C17/0112/42/LL**

**Date Registered: 10/02/2017**

**Application Type: Full - Planning**

**Community: Nefyn**

**Ward: Morfa Nefyn**

**Proposal: Increase number of touring caravans from 25 to 35 along with environmental improvements**

**Location: Gwynant, Lôn Cae Glas, Edern, Pwllheli, Gwynedd, LL538YT**

**Summary of the Recommendation: TO APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS**

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**Description:**

- 1.1 This is an application to carry out improvements to an existing touring caravan site and to increase the number of touring caravans on the site from 25 to 35. The caravans would be located at the centre of the site and among the existing units. As part of the proposal, six existing pitches would be relocated a little. Improvements would include additional landscaping along the southern and eastern boundaries. This landscaping would be a mix of indigenous trees including blackthorn, hawthorn and ash.
- 1.2 The site is located approximately 350 metres outside the development boundary of Edern and within a Landscape Conservation Area. The site is fairly level with a *clawdd* and hedge running along the western boundary and buildings to the north of the caravans. The current access serves the existing caravan site as well as private property. An unclassified county road serves the site and a number of other properties including farms.
- 1.3 A Design and Access Statement and a Language and Community Statement were received as part of the application.
- 1.4 The application is brought to Committee as it involves more than five caravans.

**2. Relevant Policies:**

- 2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and paragraph 2.1.2 of Planning Policy Wales emphasise that planning decisions should be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning considerations include National Planning Policy and the Unitary Development Plan.
- 2.2 The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 places a duty on the Council to take reasonable steps in exercising its functions to meet the 7 well-being goals within the Act. This report has been prepared in consideration of the Council's duty and the "sustainable development principle", as set out in the 2015 Act. In reaching the recommendation set out below, the Council has sought to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**2.3 Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan 2009:**

POLICY A2 - PROTECT THE SOCIAL, LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL FABRIC OF COMMUNITIES - Safeguard the social, linguistic or cultural cohesion of communities against significant harm due to the size, scale or location of proposals.

POLICY B10 – PROTECTING AND ENHANCING LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION AREAS – Protect and enhance Landscape Conservation Areas by ensuring that proposals conform to a series of criteria aimed at avoiding significant damage to recognised features.

POLICY B12 – PROTECTING HISTORICAL LANDSCAPES, PARKS AND GARDENS - Safeguard landscapes, parks and gardens of special historical interest in Wales from developments which would cause significant damage to their character, their appearance or their setting.

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POLICY B23 – AMENITIES - Safeguard the amenities of the local neighbourhood by ensuring that proposals conform to a series of criteria aimed at safeguarding the recognised features and amenities of the local area.

POLICY B27 - LANDSCAPING SCHEMES - Ensure that permitted proposals incorporate soft/hard landscaping of a high standard which is appropriate for the site and which takes into consideration a series of factors aimed at avoiding damage to recognised features.

POLICY CH33 – SAFETY ON ROADS AND STREETS - Development proposals will be approved provided they can conform to specific criteria relating to the vehicular entrance, the standard of the existing roads network and traffic calming measures.

POLICY D20 – SITES FOR TOURING CARAVANS, CAMPING AND TOURING UNITS – EXTENSIONS, ADDITIONAL PITCHES, RELOCATION AND EXCHANGE - Proposals for increasing the number of pitches, extensions to sites, relocation or exchange of sites will be approved if the proposal includes a plan to ensure environmental and visual improvements, and meets other criteria regarding the impact of the development on the local area.

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Holiday Accommodation (July 2011)

Supplementary Planning Guidance, Gwynedd Council: Planning and the Welsh Language (November 2009)

2.4 **Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Local Development Plan. (Composite Version including Matters Arising Changes, January 2017)**

PS 1: The Welsh Language and Culture

TRA 2: Parking standards

TRA 4: Managing Transport Impacts

PCYFF 1: Development criteria

PCYFF 3: Design and landscaping

TWR 5: Touring caravan, camping and temporary alternative camping accommodation

PS 16: Protect and/or enhance natural environment

AMG 1 Special Landscape Areas

PS 17: Safeguarding and/or enhancing heritage assets

AT 1: Conservation areas, world heritage sites and landscapes, parks and registered historic gardens

2.5 **National Policies:**

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 9, November 2016)

Technical Advice Note 13 – Tourism

Technical Advice Note 18 – Transport

Technical Advice Note 20 – Planning and the Welsh Language

3. **Relevant Planning History:**

- 3.1 C09D/0079/42/LL - INCREASE THE NUMBER OF TOURING CARAVANS FROM 15 TO 25 AND CREATE TRACK AND 10 HARD STANDINGS WITHIN THE EXISTING SITE - Approved 11/06/2009.

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C07D/0387/42/LL - STORE 12 TOURING CARAVANS WITHIN EXISTING BUILDINGS DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS AND CREATE 15 HARDSTANDINGS TO SITE TOURING CARAVANS Approved 04/08/2009

C06D/0108/42/LL - SITE 15 TOURING CARAVANS ON AN EXISTING EXEMPT TOURING CARAVAN SITE ALONG WITH PROVISION OF CAMPING SITE AND INDOOR STORAGE OF 10 TOURING CARAVANS DURING WINTER MONTHS - Approved 13/06/2006.

#### 4. Consultations:

- Community/Town Council: Support.
- Transportation Unit: The Transportation Unit has no objection to the proposal. It is assumed that the increase in the numbers is unlikely to have a harmful impact on the local roads network, as a number of parking spaces exist on the road to the site, from the village.
- Welsh Water: Not received.
- Caravans Officer: Submit observations referring to the need to provide one additional washing basin and ensure that caravans have three metres of space between them to prevent the spread of fire.
- Fire Officer: No observations given on the access for fire engines and water supply.
- Public Consultation: A notice was posted on the site and nearby residents were notified. The advertising period ended and no observations were received.

#### 5. Assessment of the material planning considerations:

##### The principle of the development and visual amenities

- 5.1 Policy D20 of the GUDP approves proposals to increase the number of pitches on existing touring caravan sites provided the proposal forms part of a plan that will secure environmental and visual improvements in terms of the location, layout, design and appearance of the site, and its position in the surrounding landscape. Furthermore, it is a requirement that the proposed development will not exceed the reasonable capacity of the immediate locality to accommodate such a development, taking into account the cumulative impact of existing touring caravan sites.
- 5.2 The proposal in question involves increasing the number of touring caravans on the existing site and proposes landscaping two boundaries as improvements.
- 5.3 An increase of 10 units would be a relatively large addition to the total. However, it is not considered that the site is prominent or obtrusive in the landscape, as it is fairly concealed from the county road running to the site and from other roads within the area. Currently, there are some specific areas on the southern and eastern boundaries where existing landscaping could be reinforced. As part of the application, it is proposed to plant along these boundaries with blackthorn, hawthorn and ash. It is, therefore, not considered that the proposal would cause significant harm to the visual quality of the landscape. Strengthening the existing landscape is welcomed and

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considered to be in line with Policy B27 of the GUDP. It is not considered that the proposal to increase the number of units is likely to create an obtrusive and prominent feature in the landscape that is within the Landscape Conservation Area.

- 5.4 The existing site operates between 1 March and 31 October of any given year and the same period would apply to the new units.
- 5.5 Having assessed the proposal against the requirements of policy D20, it is believed that the proposal is likely to integrate and blend in with the site and its landscape. The site is neither prominent nor intrusive in the landscape; it is believed that it would not have a detrimental impact on the visual amenities of the vicinity or the Landscape Conservation Area. The proposed landscaping would be an environmental improvement that would improve the appearance of the site in its entirety. This site is also considered to be close to and convenient for the roads network as it is located approximately 400 metres off a class two county road. Although there are a few other touring caravan sites nearby, the proposal does not go beyond the locality's reasonable capacity to accommodate such a development when considering the cumulative impact of existing sites within the area. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal complies with the requirements of policies B10, B27 and D20 of the GUDP.
- 5.6 The site lies within the Llŷn and Bardsey Island Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest. Policy B12 states that consideration will be given to the information about the historic landscapes if the impact of proposals is on such a large scale that their impact would be greater than merely a local impact. It is considered that impact of its location and size would be local and it would not have a wider impact on the historic landscape. Therefore, the proposal is not considered to be contrary to Policy B12 of the GUDP.
- 5.7 It is a requirement that planning applications be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless other material planning considerations state otherwise. The current 'Development Plan' is the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan (2001-2016) and the Joint Local Development Plan for Gwynedd and Anglesey (JLDP) will replace the UDP as the 'development plan' once it is adopted. It is hoped that the JLDP will be adopted during July 2017.
- 5.8 When dealing with any planning application the statutory test should be the first consideration at all times, i.e. it is necessary to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan, unless other relevant considerations state otherwise. The JLDP is now a material planning consideration for the purposes of development control - see paragraph 3.1.3 Planning Policy Wales that states:  
*"Material considerations could include current circumstances, policies in an emerging development plan and planning policies of the Welsh Government. All applications should be considered in relation to up-to-date policies ..."*
- 5.9 Although a number of policies have been discussed in detail during the Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Local Development Plan Hearings, we will not know the contents of the Plan for certain until the Inspector presents his binding report.
- 5.10 Paragraph 2.14.1 of Planning Policy Wales states:  
*"...thus in considering what weight to give to the specific policies in an emerging LDP that apply to a particular proposal, local planning authorities will need to consider carefully the underlying evidence and background to the policies. National planning policy can also be a material consideration in these circumstances."*

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- 5.11 In this case, the JLDP policies as noted in 2.4 above are material and, as these policies are consistent with the policies of the Unitary Development Plan, the recommendation of this report is considered to be consistent with the emerging policy.

### **General and residential amenities**

- 5.12 The application was advertised at the site and nearby residents were notified. No response was received. The site is surrounded by *cloddiau* with hedges along the western *clawdd*. The site's buildings are located along the northern half of the eastern boundary and a *clawdd* along the remaining length of the boundary. There is a house located beyond the eastern boundary of the site; however it is proposed to site the proposed caravans on the other side of existing sheds. Therefore, it is unlikely that they would have any significantly greater impact on that property. The application also includes new landscaping along the eastern boundary and this would reduce the impact of the site in general on the landscape along with nearby residents. It is not considered that increasing the numbers from 25 to 35 would lead to an over-development of the site and it would not lead to additional traffic to an extent that would significantly harm local amenities. The caravan site would have seasonal use, and it would remain as it currently operates between 1 March and 31 October. As a result, the site would be used on a seasonal basis and the caravans would not be on the land throughout the year. This would mean no change to local residents' amenities outside the occupancy season. The applicant's property is located near the site; therefore, the owner would be living nearby, and would be available to manage the site and any potential incidents in respect of safety, noise, litter, antisocial behaviour etc. Therefore, although the site is close to dwellings, it is not considered that the proposal would cause significant harm to the amenities of the local neighbourhood, and the proposal is considered acceptable in respect of Policy B23 of the GUDP.

### **Transport and access matters**

- 5.13 There is no need to alter the existing vehicular access, and the site is located approximately 400 metres from a class two county road. The Transportation Unit has no concerns regarding the proposal to increase the numbers. It is not considered that the proposal is likely to have a detrimental impact on road safety and the proposal is, therefore, considered acceptable in respect of policy CH33.

### **Linguistic Matters**

- 5.14 Policy A2 of the GUDP states that proposals that would cause significant harm to the social, linguistic or cultural cohesion of communities, because of their size, scale or location, will be refused. As the proposal involves a tourism development which will create ten or more holiday units, a Language and Community Statement is required to comply with the Supplementary Planning Guidance: Planning and the Welsh Language. A Language and Community Statement was received as part of the application and the Joint Planning Policy Unit was consulted. The Joint Planning Policy Unit's observations state, as this is proposal is solely for touring unit pitches, and on a site that already exists, without permanent pitches; it is not believed that the nature or scale of the proposed development are likely to have a detrimental impact on the Welsh language. It is considered that the proposal is likely to have a positive impact on the area's economy and will, therefore, be of benefit to the Welsh language; and the development is also likely to create or contribute to economic opportunities for local people e.g. on site, in local shops and eateries, local attractions. In order to maximise potential positive effects, it is suggested that positive mitigation measures be considered in order to protect and promote the Welsh language. These can include

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erecting bilingual signs on site and providing information about the history and culture of the area. It is suggested that the site manager contact the Local Language Initiative (Hunaniaith) to discuss measures that could add value to the business, e.g. use of the Welsh language when advertising the site, practical assistance from the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office for businesses. Therefore, it is not considered that the proposal would cause significant harm to the social, linguistic or cultural fabric of the community, and is, therefore, deemed acceptable in respect of Policy A2 of the GUDP.

**6. Conclusions:**

- 6.1 Due of the scale and location of the application together with existing natural features the site is not considered to be obtrusive in the landscape, or that it is likely to have a significantly harmful impact on the visual amenities of the Landscape Conservation Area. It is not considered that it would have any effect on road safety or have a detrimental impact on the amenities of the local neighbourhood. It is considered that the site can be correctly managed by imposing relevant conditions.

**7. Recommendation:**

- 7.1 To approve – conditions:

1. Commencement within five years.
2. In accordance with submitted plans.
3. The number of touring units on the site at any one time to be restricted to 35.
4. Restrict the season to between 1 March and 31 October.
5. Holiday use only.
6. Keeping a register.
7. No storing of touring caravans on the site.
8. Carry out the landscaping plan.