

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 18/12/2017
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION MANAGER	CAERNARFON

Rhif: 2

Application Number: C17/0982/03/LL

Dyddiad Cofrestru: 04/10/2017

Math y Cais: Full - Planning

Community: Ffestiniog

Ward: Bowydd and Rhiw

Proposal: Provide six glamping units of a safari type along with additional developments including engineering work

Lleoliad: Llechwedd Slate Mines, Talywaenydd, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd, LL41 3NB

Summary of the Recommendation: APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 18/12/2017
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION MANAGER	CAERNARFON

1. Description:

1 Full application to provide six glamping units along with additional works including engineering work. It can be seen that the plan displays a site which would include the following:

- Access road into and around the site with turning spaces, surfaced with finely crushed slate.
- Safari tents measuring 8.8m in length by 4m in width for four people with finely crushed slate surrounding the tents
- Scattered landscaping within the site to include indigenous trees such as oak, mountain ash, birch, hawthorn hedge

The following information was submitted with the application:

- Design and Access Statement
- Pollution Prevention Plan
- Drainage Plan
- Ecological Evaluation

1.2 The site is located on high and mountainous land within the larger Llechwedd site which obviously includes the historical slate workings and quarry, and most recently leisure developments such as the Zip World attractions and the Antur Stiniog mountain bike routes.

1.3 The existing site is open mountainous land on a relatively steep slope with a disused quarry hole nearby. Due to the steep nature of the land, the proposal entails completing preparatory work in order to erect the tents. This would entail cutting into the land in some places and then using the surplus soil to create levelled terraces on which erect the six tents.

1.4 According to the information submitted, visitors to the site would use the existing car parks within the main Llechwedd area and then be transported to the tents by small vehicles; other vehicles would not be permitted on the site. It is proposed to connect the tents with water and sewage pipes which feed into the site's existing system.

1.5 The application is submitted to the committee as it involves five or more holiday units.

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 Local 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 seven 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, 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.

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 18/12/2017
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION MANAGER	CAERNARFON

2.3 Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Local Development Plan 2011-26 adopted 31 July 2017

TRA 2: Parking standards
 TRA 4: Managing transport impacts
 PCYFF 2: Development criteria
 PCYFF 3: Design and place shaping
 PCYFF 4: Design and landscaping
 TWR 3: Permanent alternative static caravan and chalet and camping site
 PS 14: The visitors' economy
 PS 19: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
 AMG 5: Local Biodiversity Conservation
 AMG 6: Protection of Sites of Local or Regional Significance
 MWYN 5: Buffer Zones of Mineral Sites

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Holiday accommodation

2.4 National Policies:

Planning Policy Wales Edition 9 2016

Technical Advice Note 12: Design

Technical Advice Note 13: Tourism

Technical Advice Note 18: Transportation

Technical Advice Note 1 Minerals: Aggregates

3. Hanes Cynllunio Perthnasol:

3.1 This vast site has a varied planning history, including the Zip World leisure developments and nearby Antur Stiniog mountain biking routes.

4. Consultations:

Community/Town Council: No objection

Transportation Unit: No impact on the local county roads network

Natural Resources Wales: Observations and standard advice in relation to the proposal.

Welsh Water: Not received

Public Protection Unit - Caravans Officer: Not received

Rights of Way Unit: No impact on the area's public footpaths network, it is recommended that a connection be created from the development to the existing public footpaths network.

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 18/12/2017
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION MANAGER	CAERNARFON

Biodiversity Unit/Trees:	No objection, recommend including relevant conditions.
National Park:	Not received
Trunk Roads Transportation:	No observations
Minerals Service:	Observations in regards to the proposal and the site's planning history including quarrying rights for the future, this matter is discussed further in the report.
Fire Service:	Not received
Public Consultation:	A notice was posted on the site. The advertising period has ended and no letter / correspondence of objection has been received.

5. Assessment of the material planning considerations:

The principle of the development

- 5.1 The application proposes to establish a glamping site that would include six safari tents. Due to the nature of construction and form of the units, this type of development is considered as a permanent alternative camping accommodation and as such, it is considered under the relevant requirements of Policy TWR 3 of the Local Development Plan. This policy refuses proposals to develop static caravan sites, new holiday chalets sites and permanent alternative camping accommodations within the Llŷn AONB and Special Landscape Areas. Static caravan sites, chalets or permanent alternative camping accommodations are permitted in other locations, but only:
- i. Where it can be proven that it would not lead to an excess of static caravan sites or chalet site or permanent alternative camping accommodation site in the local area;
 - ii. That the proposed development is of a high quality in terms of design, layout and appearance, and is sited in an unobtrusive location which is well screened by existing landscape features and/or where units can be readily assimilated into the landscape in a way which does not significantly harm the visual quality of the landscape;
 - iii. That the site is close to the main highway network and that adequate access can be provided without significantly impairing the character and features of the landscape.
- 5.2 In this case, the location of the proposed development is clearly outside of the AONB, and it is not near any designation of a Special Landscape area. Therefore, it is considered that a development like this would be supported in principle by relevant requirements of policy TWR 3 subject to the above.
- 5.3 It is believed that this is the first application for this type of alternative camping development in the surrounding area, therefore it is not considered to be contrary to point **i.** above.
- 5.4 The site in question is located in open countryside and it more or less adjacent to the quarry works including what is known as Twll Bôn Llechwedd. It is seen that the site

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 18/12/2017
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION MANAGER	CAERNARFON

would be serviced through a part of the larger Llechwedd site, including the existing access from the nearest public road and then along the existing road towards the edge of the application site, and the existing car park nearby would be used for the intended users of the site. The six units would be dispersed within the site which measures a total of 0.40 hectares. A wire fence and post currently define the boundaries of the site, and it is seen from the plan that this would continue. Although no amenity area has been shown as part of the proposal, it is likely that there would be sufficient space within the site for such a provision. The plans submitted as part of the application includes additional landscaping within the site and this is intended to be done in a way that would keep the site as natural as possible by not retaining areas without intervention whilst creating other areas by recolonising grassland with the existing vegetation. This has been included as mitigation measures for the proposed development and would reinforce the existing growth and strengthen it. The proposed units are sizeable tents with a wooden frame with an external finish of a neutral colour canvas. The type of tent proposed are relatively insignificant compared with caravans as they have a finish and colour that are less prominent in the landscape. It is considered that the design, layout and appearance of the proposal are acceptable and they would not cause substantial harm to the visual quality of the landscape.

- 5.5 The majority of the land would remain with natural vegetation and therefore, the number of obvious permanent developments associated with the proposal would not be excessive.
- 5.6 In respect of proximity to the road network, the main entrance into the Llechwedd site is from the A470 trunk road. There is then a network of roads within the site including one route which leads past the bottom of the site. The Transportation Unit or the Assembly's Transportation Unit has no concerns regarding the proposal. As this is a proposal for a glamping site, visitors to the site would not tow a caravan behind any vehicle they use to come and go from the site and therefore, it is considered that the intention is acceptable in terms of the roads serving the proposal.
- 5.7 It is, therefore, considered that the proposal is acceptable in relation points **ii.** and **iii.** above.
- 5.8 As a result of the above assessment, it is considered that the principle of the proposal is acceptable and complies with the relevant requirements of policy TWR 3 of the LDP.

Visual amenities

- 5.9 This site is in an elevated location, and therefore inevitably will be partly visible from sites within and beyond the site. The impact would be mitigated as a result of the proposed landscaping plan submitted with the application.
- 5.10 The relevant requirements of policy TWR 3 states that a development must be sited in an unobtrusive location which is well screened by existing landscape features and/or where the units can be readily assimilated into the landscape in a way which does not significantly harm the visual quality of the landscape. Similarly, policies PCYFF 2, PCYFF 3 and PCYFF 4 refer to amenity issues, design and landscaping.
- 5.11 It must be borne in mind that the location of this development is on the periphery of a substantial slate quarry, and therefore it can be argued that landscape has already been altered and shaped by man. More recent developments can be seen in the area, such as Zip World's zip lines and Antur Stiniog's mountain biking routes. This is no justification for approving further development that would have a detrimental impact

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 18/12/2017
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION MANAGER	CAERNARFON

on the visual amenities to an unacceptable degree. However, in the case of this particular application, it is believed that the proposal, when considering the broader context of the site, its appearance and the mitigating measures in the form of appropriate landscaping for the site which is recognised as being relatively open and elevated, is acceptable, and within the context of the surrounding area, would not appear as an intrusive feature or unacceptable within the landscape. However, it is considered that there is justification for requesting additional landscaping, especially to run with the main access road which would lead up to the site. It is possible through a standard condition and by doing so, it is considered that further measures would be imposed to protect the site and areas beyond in terms of visual amenities.

- 5.12 Therefore, it is believed that the proposal is acceptable in respect of the relevant requirements of policies TWR 3, PCYFF 2, PCYFF 3 and PCYFF 5.

General and residential amenities

- 5.13 The site is located within a open area without any residential dwellings nearby. A relatively small site in proposed in this case, and because of that, the nature of the development and the distances between it and the nearest residential dwellings, it is not considered that the it would have a detrimental impact of the general or residential amenities of local residents, and therefore, it is not considered contrary to the relevant requirements of policy PCYFF2.

Transport and access matters

- 5.14 As noted above, the Council's Transportation Unit was fully consulted in regards to the proposal, and with the Assembly's Transportation Unit as the main entrance into the Llechwedd site itself is off on the A470. There is no objection to the proposal in terms of transportation from these two bodies, and therefore the proposal is not considered unacceptable in terms of the relevant requirements of policies TRA 2 and TRA 4.

Biodiversity matters

- 5.15 The Biodiversity Unit submitted thorough observations about the proposal, and conform that they have no objection to the proposal as the land lost here has a moderate biodiversity value. Nevertheless, there is a need to protect, improve and mitigate the impact of the development on the local area and protected species, by doing this, it is considered that it would be possible to ensure that the development would be acceptable. Therefore, it is possible to include relevant conditions to ensure that there is appropriate control in place, and that the recommendations of the Ecological Evaluation report submitted with the application are followed.
- 5.16 In doing so, therefore, it is considered that the relevant requirements of policies PS19, AMG 5 and AMG6 of the LDP are satisfied.

The economy

- 5.17 The presence and success of the nearby Zip World and Antur Stiniog attractions indicates that demand has been highlighted for overnight stay facilities in the area. It is considered that providing 'new' or alternative facilities, as in seen here, would add to the variety of overnight stay facilities available in the area. Strategic policy PS14 states that to "manage and improve the provision of high quality tourism accommodation in the form of ... alternative luxury camping ... " is a requirement. Therefore, it is considered that this proposal positively adds to the local economy by providing a new

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 18/12/2017
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION MANAGER	CAERNARFON

accommodation provision in comparison with the traditional type of accommodation generally found in the area. It can be seen from the above that this is supported by the Council's adopted policies.

Mineral Matters

- 5.18 Observations regarding this proposal were received by the Minerals Service. It is noted in the observations that the Llechwedd quarry mineral development is being implemented to a large extent under the terms of planning permission 5/14/521 approved on 20 November 1997, to rationalise and extend the surfacework, mining and tipping of slate. In relation to this latest proposal, it must be recognised that permission 5/14/521 is valid, and although there has not been any recent activity at the Llechwedd mine, there is permission to quarry within 20 metres of the boundary of the development and certainly within the minimum distance of 200m detailed for mineral works and sensitive developments within Planning Policy Wales and Minerals Technical Advice Note 1: Aggregates.
- 5.19 The requirements of policy MWYN 5 of the LDP must be considered in regards to establishing Mineral Site Buffer Zones as can be seen here. Policy MWYN 5 further states; “... *applications for sensitive developments (specifically houses, hospitals and schools) will be refused in accordance with what is defined in NCTM 1: Aggregates, within the buffer zones noted on the application map, unless a clear and justifiable reason is given for doing so, and it can be shown that there will be no adverse effects or conflicts with mineral work*”.
- 5.20 In terms of this proposed development, it must be noted that the structures as found here are not listed as a sensitive development in NCTM 1: Aggregates. It is considered that the nearby mine, namely Llechwedd, is under the control of the applicant, and it is therefore unlikely to be worked whilst the peripheries of the quarry are used for camping purposes. Nevertheless, it is considered in this case that it would be possible to protect the site and its users by imposing a relevant condition that would restrict the use of the tents if any quarry work was to happen nearby.
- 5.21 It was also noted in the observations received by the Minerals Service, that a provision is required to keep users of the glamping attraction separate to the transportation to the quarry / waste transfer station. As previously mentioned above, access to the site itself will not be permitted by visitors' cars, and they will be transported to the site by a specific vehicle under the supervision of staff and they are expected to be completely aware of the site's safety system and requirements. Similarly, it is expected that a detailed explanation would be given to site users in terms of safety matters and that this would be a site management matter.
- 5.22 A concern was noted about the impact of dust on the site as a result of the movement of heavy vehicles on the quarry's existing routes, and that a wheel washing system should be available nearby. It is possible to condition such a matter in order to discover the site's likely arrangements in order to control this element.
- 5.23 It is believed that the recommendation noted above would be sufficient to safeguard the site and its users, and as a result, it is not believed that the proposal in contrary to the relevant requirements of policy MWYN 5 and therefore there is no concern about the proposal in respect of mineral matters.

6. Conclusions:

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 18/12/2017
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION MANAGER	CAERNARFON

- 6.1 Having considered the above and all the material planning matters including the local and national policies and guidance, together with the observations received, it is considered that this proposal is acceptable in terms of compliance with the requirements of the relevant policies as noted above subject to relevant conditions.

7. Recommendation:

7.1 Approve - conditions

1. Time
2. Comply with plans
3. Colour of the canvas to be agreed
4. Landscaping
5. Biodiversity
6. Restrict the number of units on the site to six at any given time
7. Seasonal holiday/use restriction
8. Holiday use only.
9. Keep a register
10. No use of the tents if work commences related to Twll Bôn Llechwedd
11. To submit and agree on a management plan in regards to dust
12. Boundary treatments to be agreed before occupation
13. To submit and agree on a parking management plan