

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 20/05/2019
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

Number: 3

Application Number: C19/0087/25/R3

Date Registered: 30/01/2019

Application Type: Regulation 3

Community: Pentir

Ward: Pentir

Proposal: Demolish Penrhosgarnedd Centre and erect a new community centre and extend Ysgol y Faenol, new access road together with car parking

Location: Ysgol y Faenol, Penrhos Road, Penrhosgarnedd, Bangor, LL57 2NN

Summary of the Recommendation: TO APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS

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1. Description:

1.1 This is an application for the re-organisation and merger of Ysgol y Faenol and the Community Centre sites in Penrhosgarnedd. The site lies in a residential area, with the majority within the development boundary of Bangor Sub-regional Centre as defined by the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan. The proposal involves:

- demolishing the existing community centre,
- creating a new car park on the site of the community centre - the school's main vehicular entrance will move to the entrance of the car park, which will include 60 parking spaces and seven drop-off spaces.
- creating a new link road leading from the car park to the existing school site (this would be outside the city's development boundary) - there will be four disabled parking spaces near the building,
- closing the main entrance to pedestrians, and creating a new entrance 55m to the west,
- demolishing the external buildings to the rear of the school, and
- constructing extensions to the existing building, to include extra space for a new community centre.

1.2 The new school will be formed in a square shape with a yard at its centre. The roof levels of the various blocks will vary, but the building will continue to be mainly single-storey, with a two-storey block to the rear of the building with a height of 7m. The roofs will comprise of various materials, with pitched natural slate roofs at the front, and a mix of felt flat roofs and pitched grey metal layered roofs to the rear. On the whole, there will be a 754m² increase in the floor surface of the buildings, from the current total of 1420m² to 2174m².

1.3 The school will include:

- Classrooms
- Hall
- Commercial kitchen
- Domestic kitchen
- Administrative Rooms
- Store rooms
- Offices
- Toilets, and
- Cylch Meithrin and After-school Club facilities.

1.4 The Community Centre's facilities will include:

- Studio
- Meeting Rooms
- Domestic kitchen
- Office, and
- Toilets

1.4 It is intended that the site's facilities will be available for use between 07:00 and 22:00 according to demand.

1.5 The new car park and the link road to the school will be made of tarmacadam with a permeable brick pavement. The link road will be used solely by vehicles for disabled people, with pedestrians using the pavements to the sides. The car park and the access road will be lit by LED column lamps and the paths lit by a series of LED bollards. It

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is intended to use equipment that minimises light pollution. The link road will lead across the school's existing playing field, with the pavement approximately 1m to the north of the garden boundaries of the houses in the Llys y Garnedd small housing estate.

1.6 An Ecological Survey has been submitted in support of the application.

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 Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 the Council has a duty not only to carry out sustainable development, but also to take reasonable steps in exercising its functions to meet its sustainable development (or well-being) objectives. This report has been prepared in consideration of the Council's duty and the 'sustainable development principle', as set out in the 2015 Act, and in making 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. It is considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable impact upon the achievement of well-being objectives as a result of the proposed recommendation.

2.3 Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Local Development Plan. (July 2017)

ISA 2: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

PS 4: SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT, DEVELOPMENT AND ACCESSIBILITY

TRA 2: PARKING STANDARDS

TRA 4: MANAGING TRANSPORT IMPACTS

PCYFF 1: DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES

PCYFF 2: DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA

PCYFF 3: DESIGN AND PLACE SHAPING

PS 19: CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

AMG 5: LOCAL BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

AT 4: PROTECTION OF NON-DESIGNATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND THEIR SETTING

2.4 National Policies:

Planning Policy Wales, Edition 10 (2018)

Technical Advice Note 12: Design (2016)

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3. Relevant Planning History:

C13/0914/25/R3: INSTALLATION OF SOLAR PANELS ON THE SCHOOL ROOF - Approved 22/10/13

C08A/0267/25/R3: ERECTION OF SHELTER AT THE REAR OF THE SCHOOL – Approved 04/01/08

C02A/0765/25/R3 - PROVISION OF MOBILE CLASSROOM IN ORDER TO EXTEND THE SCHOOL TO PROVIDE FOR 'NEW FLOW' INTO THE SCHOOL – 05/02/03

C01A/0314/25/R3 –PORTACABIN CLASSROOM AND ENLARGEMENT OF SCHOOL YARD – Approved 04/07/01

C99A/0325/25/R3 - PORTABLE CLASSROOM – Approved 28/07/99

4. Consultations:

Community/Town Council: Not received

Transportation Unit: No objection - the proposal is likely to improve the existing situation in relation to safety and convenience on the highway. Conditions are required in order to ensure appropriate arrangements for the relocated crossing and the parking arrangements on the site

Footpaths Unit: Not received

Natural Resources Wales: No objection – standard observations for the applicant

CADW : Not received

Biodiversity Unit: The ecological report noted that there were no protected species on the site. Recommend a condition to adhere to the recommendations of the ecological report.

Public Protection: Not received

Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service: It is possible that there are archaeological remains on the site. Request a condition to ensure that an archaeological inspection is completed prior to commencing any development.

Welsh Water: No objection provided the scheme complies with SUDS requirements. Standard guidance for the applicant.

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Public Consultation: A notice was posted on the site and nearby residents were notified. The advertising period for the planning application has ended and the following observations were received objecting to the development:

- Concern about controlling the traffic travelling along the link road, especially outside school hours.
- Concern that users will not adhere to the "Blue Badge" only rule
- Concern about the impact on the privacy of the Llys y Garnedd's residents
- There will be additional noise from the traffic using the link road
- The lights from the car park and road will have a detrimental impact on the amenities of neighbours.
- This is an over-development - the new road is not needed in order to create a pedestrian access to the school site, and disabled parking could be provided in front of the school.
- The road will have a detrimental impact on visual amenities as it cuts across greenfield land.

The following observations were also received which are not material planning considerations:

- There are already problems arising from the misuse of the car park near the existing community centre.
- The new road could pose a danger to pets in nearby houses
- It is not appropriate that the planning application form is only available in Welsh
- Concern that drivers would continue to stop on the road outside the school, even in areas with double yellow lines
- Concern about the lack of use of alternative energy
- Concern about the loss of play areas in the school

Observations were also received supporting the development as an improvement to the existing traffic situation.

5. Assessment of the material planning considerations:

The Principle of the Development

- 5.1 It is a requirement that planning applications be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless other material planning considerations state otherwise. The Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (LDP) is the adopted 'Development Plan' in this case. The application site is located within the development boundary of the Sub-regional Centre of Bangor and the entire application site is already in D1 Class Use – Non-residential Institutions.

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- 5.2 The main planning policy that relates to this application is policy ISA 2 of the LDP. This policy supports the provision of new community facilities provided they meet with five criteria. The development is assessed in the context of these criteria below:
1. The first criterion requires that a site is located within or adjacent to development boundaries and given that this site is within the Bangor development boundary and that the link road is adjacent to the boundary, the proposal satisfies this criterion. This is also consistent with the requirements of Policy PCYFF 1 of the LDP that encourages new developments in areas within development boundaries.
 2. Secondly, proposals should first look at making dual use of existing facilities or converting existing buildings. Given that the purpose of this application is to provide better dual facilities by adapting an existing building, and in considering the sub-standard condition and nature of the existing school and community centre, it is believed that it is reasonable to seek to adapt the site in a manner that will better meet modern educational, community and environmental requirements.
 3. The third criterion requires, if the proposal is to relocate a facility, that it can be shown that the original site is no longer suitable for this use. Given that the land use would not change as a result of this development it is considered that this development essentially relocates the same facilities within a single large site.
 4. The fourth criterion means that the scale and type of the proposal is appropriate to the settlement in question. Given that this proposal derives from concern about the suitability of the existing facilities, and that they are designed to meet a need that has been identified by the Education Authority, it is believed that the scale of this development is entirely appropriate for its location.
 5. The last criterion requires that the proposal is accessible to alternative modes of transport, and given its location in the centre of the community of Penrhosgarnedd it is considered that the site is very convenient for parents who wish to walk, cycle or use public transport to reach school.
- 5.3 Given the above discussion it is believed that this proposal meets with all the criteria of Policy ISA 2 of the LDP.

General and residential amenities

- 5.4 Generally, policies PCYFF 2 and PCYFF 3 of the Joint Local Development Plan encourage the approval of proposals for new developments provided they do not have a detrimental impact on health, safety or the amenities of the residents of local properties or on the overall area.
- 5.5 The building would mainly be single-storey, with a variety of roof shapes and materials to vary the uniformity of the elevations. The external elevations would include rendered walls in a variety of colours, coloured metal composite panels and dark blue brickwork. The roofs would also be made of variety of materials, with natural slate used on the front roofs.
- 5.6 Although the footprint of the new building would be approximately a third larger than the existing buildings, it would be a low profile building, in a fairly concealed location with the design and materials in keeping with the site, and it is not considered that the view of the school will be more prominent from public spaces than the existing building. In fact, it is considered than the proposed design is an architectural improvement to the existing unremarkable buildings. The design of the building, with its variety of materials and roof shapes would create an urban development pattern that

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would be in-keeping with the scale and design of the surrounding mixed area and the residential buildings on Penrhos Road. It is therefore considered that the proposed design for the new building blends in with its edge-of-town site.

- 5.7 The form of the development with its square shape will help to retain noise and disturbance emanating from the school's day-to-day activities in the proximity of the building. However, it is inevitable that the creation of a new separate access road from the car park will add somewhat to the disturbance to the owners of the properties on the small estate of Llys Garnedd. Having said that, it is important to bear in mind that the land where it is intended to create the road is already a school playing field, and therefore the potential for noise and disturbance already exists on the site. The houses are also within the city's development boundary with a busy road passing to the front. Consideration must therefore be given to whether the impact of the additional amenities from the new development would have a significant detrimental impact on the amenities of the residents of Llys Garnedd.
- 5.8 This development could potentially affect a number of aspects in relation to the amenities of nearby residents:

Noise – given the nature of the use of the existing site and the other surrounding developments, and the intention for the site's facilities to be available until 10pm, this is not unexpected in this type of urban area. As such, it is intended that only vehicles for disabled people will have access along the road to the rear of the houses, and therefore it is not expected that there will be a significant increase in traffic noise. It is accepted that the voices of pedestrians could disturb the amenities of residents, but given the urban context of the site, this is not unexpected either in this type of urban area.

Privacy - a concern has been raised that the use of the access road by pedestrians will affect the residents' privacy. Although the site is already used as a school playing field, it is accepted that, by creating a road near the boundary of the houses' gardens, activity is likely to accumulate closer to the boundary with the houses. There is currently a fairly low timber fence along the rear of the houses, which offers some privacy, while also retaining views from the rear of the houses. It is considered that it would be possible, either by erecting a higher fence or planting a hedge (or a combination of both), to secure an arrangement that would protect the privacy of residents while allowing the development to proceed. It is suggested that this could be flexible, dependent on the wishes of individual residents. It is therefore considered that it would be reasonable to include a condition on any planning permission to agree a plan for the site boundaries, to enable the developer to form a solution that would be acceptable for each property.

Light pollution – it is intended to install LED lighting on lamp-posts and bollards, and the developer has stated an intention to ensure that they are designed to minimise light pollution. Light pollution could potentially disturb residents and also harm wildlife. It is considered that it would be reasonable to impose a condition on any planning permission that a detailed lighting plan must be submitted to ensure that there would be no unacceptable detrimental impact arising from this aspect.

- 5.9 The applicant was asked for further information about the management of the site, but no response had been received at the time of writing the report, and a further update will be provided at the Committee meeting.
- 5.10 Generally, due to the urban nature of the site, it is not believed that this development would cause significant detrimental harm to the amenities of the local area or its

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residents although, inevitably, there would be some increase in noise and disturbance. It is considered, by imposing appropriate conditions in relation to protecting privacy and controlling lights, that it could be ensured that the development's impact on amenities is acceptable from a planning perspective. By implementing the above, it is believed that the development would be acceptable under policies PCYFF 2 and PCYFF 3 of the LDP.

Biodiversity

- 5.11 An Ecological Report was submitted with the application to assess the potential impact on wildlife and habitats. The report concluded that there would be no harm to protected species or habitats deriving from the development and it suggested mitigation measures to ensure that there would be no future harm. The report was acceptable to the Biodiversity Unit and a condition was suggested to ensure that the recommendations in part 9.0 of the Ecological Review (Mitigation and Recommendations) are fully implemented.
- 5.12 The original application included the levelling of a piece of sloping ground in the north-western end of the site (outside the existing metal fence). However, it was noted that this part of the site lies within designated Wildlife Site and it was therefore decided not to develop this part of the site. As this location remains within the red outline of the application, it is suggested that a condition should be imposed to prevent any development in this zone without further approval from the Planning Authority.
- 5.13 By ensuring that appropriate conditions are imposed on the development, it is believed that this development meets with the requirements of Policies PS19 and AMG 5 of the LDP which encourages proposals to protect, and where appropriate, to enhance the area's biodiversity.

Highways matters

- 5.14 The development includes a number of elements that affect Penrhos Road, including the closure of the lay-by outside the school, and reducing the size of the other lay-by, relocating the bus stop, relocating the pedestrian crossing, adding yellow lines on the road opposite the school and changing the site access arrangements for pedestrians and vehicles. The Transportation Unit has noted that the proposal is acceptable, and agrees that it is an improvement to the existing situation in terms of road safety. It requested that conditions be imposed to ensure an appropriate design for the new pedestrian crossing, and to agree the parking arrangements prior to the commencement of the development.
- 5.15 By acting in accordance with the Transportation Unit's recommendations it is believed that the scheme complies with the requirements of policies PS 4, TRA 2 and TRA 4 which aim to ensure transportation provision that is sustainable and safe for all users.

Archaeological Matters

- 5.16 Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service reports that evidence suggests that there could be archaeological remains on the site. Therefore, in accordance with Policy AT4 of the LDP, Planning Policy Wales and TAN 24 The Historic Environment, the Archaeological Planning Service has requested a condition to ensure that a programme of archaeological work is completed prior to the commencement of the development.

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Therefore, it is considered that the application meets the requirements of policies AT 4 of the LDP relating to protecting sites of archaeological importance from harm.

6. Conclusions:

- 6.1 Given the relevant planning matters in this case, the proposed development meets with many objectives in the Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Local Development Plan and proposes a development with a high quality, modern and suitable design for its location, that will contribute to meeting the need for local educational places, and will expand and improve the current provision of facilities for the local community. Consideration was given to all material planning issues, including all matters raised by objectors, and it is not believed that the proposal is likely to cause any long-term unacceptable detrimental impact on nearby residents or the community in general and that it will be possible to manage any detrimental impacts by imposing appropriate conditions on the development.

7. Recommendation:

- 7.1 To approve the application subject to the following conditions:

1. Time (five years)
2. In accordance with the plans
3. Agree on final materials and colours
4. Transport conditions
5. Submit and agree a detailed Environmental Construction Method Statement for the period of developing the site, to include site working hour restrictions.
6. Submit and agree a detailed Boundaries Plan
7. Must adhere to the Ecological Survey recommendations
8. Before the new school becomes operational a Demolition Plan must be submitted and agreed for the existing community centre that will include a timetable for the demolition work and for restoring the land.
9. Archaeological condition
10. No development within the designated Wildlife Site without prior permission from the Local Planning Authority.

Notes

1. Welsh Water
2. Highways
3. Natural Resources Wales
4. Standard advice regarding SUDS