

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE 04/07/22
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING SERVICE AND PUBLIC PROTECTION MANAGER	

Number: 6

Application Number: C21/0573/33/LL

Date Registered: 12/07/2021

Application Type: Full

Community: Buan

Ward: Efailnewydd/Buan

Proposal: Siting of 5 seasonal wooden camping pods, erection of shower / toilet unit, installation of a domestic sewage treatment plant and landscaping works.

Location: Nant, Boduan, Pwllheli, Gwynedd, LL53 8YE

Summary of the Recommendation: TO APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

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1. Description:

- 1.1 This is an application to site 5 seasonal wooden camping pods on a plot of wooded land near Boduan. The work would include:
- Erecting a building for showers / toilets.
 - Installation of sewage treatment works
 - Landscaping work
- 1.2 All structures would have timber frames and they would be finished with larch cladding. It is proposed to move the pods from the site while the site is closed during the winter and store them in an unoccupied agricultural building nearby.
- 1.3 The site lies in open countryside approximately 1.7km to the south of the Nefyn development boundary as defined by the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan. It is located near the A497 highway leading from Pwllheli to Nefyn. The site is in a young forest near the Nant farm building, which is a Grade II Listed Building also located within the Special Landscape Area designated by the LDP and the Llŷn and Bardsey Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest.
- 1.4 The following additional information was submitted in support of the application:
- Design and Access Statement
 - Consideration of Conservation Areas
 - Response to concerns regarding pollution prevention
- 1.5 The application is submitted to the Planning Committee as the site is more than 0.5 ha in size.
- 1.6 The application was submitted to the Committee meetings held on 22 November, 2021 and 21 March 2022 when the decision was deferred at the request of the applicants to allow them to submit further information to support their application.-By now, the following information has been added to the application:
- Amended site plans including plans for an alternative access
 - Preliminary Ecological Assessment
 - Tree Quality Survey
 - Tree Protection Plan

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 (Wales) Act 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.

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

TRA 2 – Parking standards

TRA 4 – Managing transport impacts

PCYFF 1 – Development Boundaries

PCYFF 2 – Development criteria

PCYFF 3 – Design and place shaping

PCYFF 4 - Design and landscaping

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

PS 19 - Conserving and where appropriate enhancing the natural environment

AT 1 - Conservation areas, World Heritage Sites and Landscapes, Parks and Registered Historic Gardens

Supplementary Planning Guidance – Tourist Facilities and Accommodation

Supplementary Planning Guidance - Maintaining and Creating Distinctive and Sustainable Communities

2.4 National Policies:

Planning Policy Wales (February 2021)

Technical Advice Note 13 – Tourism

Technical Advice Note 18 – Transport

3. Relevant Planning History:

None.

4. Consultations

Community/Town Council: No objection

Welsh Water No observations to offer

Biodiversity Unit Recommend including the following planning conditions:

- A planning condition to ensure that lighting does not affect bats
- Planning condition to protect the watercourse from pollution
- Planning condition to improve biodiversity
- Planning condition to protect nesting birds
- Planning condition to monitor the quality of the water discharged

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	into ditches to be submitted annually to the LPA.
Trees Officer	No observations received after receiving the tree quality survey and the tree preservation plan
Licensing Officer:	Not received
Fire Service	Guidance for the applicant
CADW	No objection
Land Drainage Unit	A watercourse runs along the boundary of the site - standard advice for the applicant
Highways Unit	Significant concerns regarding the lack of visibility in the vehicular access to the A497
AONB Unit	The site is slightly outside the boundary of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and considering the wider landscape, the site is not prominent and, therefore, it does not appear that the proposal is contrary to the policies in the AONB Management Plan. Suggest a landscaping condition
Natural Resources Wales	After receiving further information regarding the sewerage system, NRW no longer objects to the proposal. Propose guidelines for the applicants.
Public Consultation:	A notice was posted on the site and the advertising period has expired. No observations were received from the public during the consultation period.

5. Material Planning Considerations:

- 5.1 As this is a site for alternative camping accommodation, the application has to be considered under Policy TWR 5 of the LDP that sets out a series of criteria to approve such developments.
- 5.2 Criterion 1 in policy TWR 5 states that any proposed development should be of a high quality in terms of design, layout and appearance, and should also be well screened by existing landscape features and / or where the touring units can be readily assimilated into the landscape in a way that does not significantly harm the visual quality of the landscape.
- 5.3 The proposed development is located in a site that is hidden from most public vantage points. Approximately 1000 trees have already been planted on the site and it is intended to manage the trees by coppicing. The site is not within the AONB but it is located within the Special Landscape Area. Due to the formation of the land and the wooded nature of the site, it is not believed that the development would cause significant harm to the quality of the designated landscapes. Also, the site lies within the Llŷn and Bardsey Island Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest. Again, due to its location and size, it is considered that the impact of the proposal would only be local and it would not have a broader impact on the historic landscape. It is therefore considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of Policy AT 1 of the LDP.

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- 5.4 Policy PCYFF 4 of the LDP requires that every proposal should assimilate with their surroundings and will refuse proposals that do not show how consideration has been given to landscaping matters from the outset as part of the design proposal. When considering the trees that are already planted on the site and the possibility of adding to this landscape by means of a planning condition, it is believed that the proposal also meets the objectives of this policy.
- 5.5 The second criteria of Policy TWR 5 asks to avoid excessive areas of hard standing. In this case, it is proposed to site the pods on grass and it is intended to move them around the copse to correspond with management of the trees. No additional hard standing would be created.
- 5.6 The third criterion asks for assurance that the site would only accommodate mobile units - this can be managed with a suitable planning condition.
- 5.7 The fourth criterion requires assurance that any ancillary facilities should be located in an existing building, or should this not be possible, that any new facility is commensurate to the scale of the development. There is no suitable building to convert for this use; however, it is proposed to erect a small building, 9.75m x 3.05m, in an unobtrusive location and it is believed that this would be commensurate to the scale of the development.
- 5.8 Under the fifth criterion, the policy requires the site to be located close to the main roads network and that adequate access can be provided without significantly harming landscape characteristics and features - highway matters are discussed below.
- 5.9 The sixth criterion requires assurance that occupancy is restricted to holiday use only - this can be ensured with a suitable planning condition.
- 5.10 The seventh, and the last of the criteria, requires assurance that the site is used for touring purposes only and that the units are removed from the site during periods when not in use - again, this is a matter of imposing a suitable planning condition.
- 5.11 Overall therefore, it is believed that this proposal meets the requirements of the criteria set by Policy TWR 5, however, there are several specific aspects to the application that have received further consideration when assessing the proposal.

Transport and access matters

- 5.12 In response to the original observations of the Transportation Unit and further discussions with the applicants, a proposal was made to use an alternative access along an agricultural track that leads to the east of the site and links directly with a class 3 road near existing agricultural buildings rather than the direct access with the A497. The access track would be approximately 150m long and 2.5m wide. It would be formed by applying a layer of gravel on the existing agricultural track. This access leads to a road that is much quieter than the main access and there is good visibility to both directions and it is believed, by imposing a condition preventing the use of the direct access with the A497, that this access would be acceptable given the relatively low level of transport that would use it. Therefore, it is believed that the proposal is now acceptable under Criterion 5 Policy TWR 5 along with policy TRA 4 as it involves protecting the safety of the highway.

General and residential amenities

- 5.13 There are no residential homes near the application site and although there is some potential for activity to occasionally disrupt the general amenities of the area, there are doubts whether it would be to such an extent where it would have a significant detrimental impact, therefore, it is not considered that the proposal is contrary to policy PCYFF 2 in terms of safeguarding the amenities of neighbours and the area in general.

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Biodiversity matters

- 5.15 A "Preliminary Ecological Assessment" was submitted and this was undertaken to an acceptable standard by the Biodiversity Unit. However, the proposed development is within 90 metres of the Llŷn Fens Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the Anglesey and Llŷn RAMSAR site, the Cors Geirch Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a National Nature Reserve (NNR). There is concern that the treated sewage will be discharged to the open watercourse that flows directly to Cors Geirch which is a habitat that is sensitive to nutrients and pollution.
- 5.16 Natural Resources Wales did not consider that this proposal would have a significant impact on the designated sites listed above. However, they recommended that the treated discharge would be channelled to the ground and not to the open watercourse. Under Regulation 63 of the Habitats and Species Conservation Regulations 2017 and planning policy, Gwynedd Council, as a competent authority, it required to assess any likely significant impact of the proposed development on the SAC and Ramsar.
- 5.17 Having considered the nature of the proposed sewage treatment system, the Biodiversity Unit recommends a planning condition to monitor the water discharge four times a year while the camp-site is in operation. Additionally, before construction work commences, a pollution prevention plan should be submitted that follows recognised methodology. The Biodiversity Unit also asked for conditions so protect specific features such as bats and birds to improve biodiversity and to ensure compliance with Policy PS 19 of the LDP.

The Welsh Language

- 5.18 Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 'Maintaining and Creating Unique and Sustainable Communities' (adopted July 2019), provides further guidance on how it is expected for Welsh language considerations to be incorporated in each relevant development. The proposal does not reach the thresholds to submit a Welsh Language Statement or a Report on a Welsh Language Impact Assessment; however, the guidance included within Appendix 5 notes that every retail, commercial or industrial development where there is no need to submit a Welsh Language Impact Statement/Assessment should show how consideration has been given to the language.
- 5.19 No information was received to show what consideration had been given to the Welsh language when drawing up this plan although the Design and Access Statement noted that it is proposed to create a sustainable business that will enable local people to continue to live in their community by supporting the rural economy. When considering the fundamental objection to the plan in terms of the safety of the access, no further information was sought regarding this matter; however, when considering the small nature of the development, it is unlikely that an additional significant impact on the linguistic character of the community would derive from it.

6. Conclusions:

This proposal meets the requirements for developing a new seasonal camping site as noted in Policy TWR 5 of the LDP and by imposing appropriate conditions in order to ensure the highway access towards the north (to the A497) is not used under any circumstances for business purposes along with mitigation steps to protect from pollution and safeguard biodiversity, it is believed that the development would meet the requirements of the relevant policies in the LDP.

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7. Recommendation:

To approve the application subject to the following conditions:

1. Commence within five years.
2. In accordance with submitted plans.
3. The access to the north that directly connects to the A497 shall not under any circumstances be used for business purposes.
4. The number of units on the site at any one time to be restricted to 5.
5. Restrict the season to between 1 March and 31 October.
6. Holiday use only.
7. Maintain a register of users
8. No units to be stored on the site outside the season
9. All internal and external signs to be in Welsh only or bilingual with a priority given to the Welsh language.
10. The recommendations of the Ecological Assessment Report must be observed.
11. A Pollution Prevention Plan must be submitted to include details for monitoring the quality of the water discharged into ditches.

Note - Fire Service, Natural Resources Wales, Land Drainage Unit