

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 15/06/2026
REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF DEPARTMENT	

Number: 4

Application Number: C25/0777/39/LL

Date Registered: 18/03/2025

Application Type: Full

Community: Abersoch

Ward: Abersoch with Llanengan

Proposal: Full application to demolish an existing dwelling (C3 use) and construction of a new replacement dwelling (C3 use) with improvements to an existing access

Location: Fferm Sarn, Lôn Sarn Bach, Sarn Bach, Pwllheli, Gwynedd, LL53 7BG

Summary of the Recommendation: TO REFUSE

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1. Description:

- 1.1 This is a full planning application to demolish the existing dwelling (C3 use) and construct a new (C3 use) dwelling in its place.
- 1.2 The proposal involves demolishing the existing building which is currently empty but has obviously retained its status as a residential property.
- 1.3 Specifically, the proposal involves the demolition of the existing property and adjacent outbuildings and the erection of a two-storey building partly over the footprint of the existing property which would be slightly higher than the existing building. The internal area of the existing building measures 109m² and it is proposed to create a new building with an internal area of 197m². The internal layout would be as follows:
- Ground floor - porch, entrance, study, living room, utility room, shower room, kitchen/dining room/lounge
 - First floor – 4 bedrooms (1 en-suite), bathroom
- 1.4 The site is situated within the existing development boundary of the village of Sarn Bach with a third class public road running parallel to a public footpath leading off the road through the site. The existing vehicular access leads past the gable of the property serving the site and is access to an established camping and touring caravan site attached to the property to the rear of the main building. There are a number of various outbuildings within the yard of the site with a garden attached to the property to the side.
- 1.5 The site of the application forms part of an established streetscape when approaching the village from a northerly direction. Neighbouring buildings are to some extent a mix of design and finishes but all have common features in form and finishes such as slate roofs and a finish of natural stone and render.
- 1.6 The following information was submitted in support of the application:
- Design and Access Statement
 - Feasibility/Valuation Report (confidential)
 - Supporting Planning Statement
 - Drainage Statement
 - Bat survey
 - Structural survey
 - Green Infrastructure Statement
- 1.7 The application is submitted to the planning committee for a decision at the local member's request.
- 1.8 The application has been amended from its original submission by adding stone elements to the elevation facing the road and swapping the windows of this elevation to convey what is claimed to be the form of existing windows.

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 in accordance with the Development

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

PS 1: The Welsh Language and Culture

TRA 2: Parking Standards

TRA 4: Managing Transport Impacts

PS 5: Sustainable Development

PS 6: Alleviating and Adapting to the Effects of Climate Change

PCYFF 1: Development Boundaries

PCYFF 2: Development Criteria

PCYFF 3: Design and Place Shaping

PCYFF 4: Design and Landscaping

PS 17: Settlement Strategy

TAI 5: Local Market Housing

TAI 13: Rebuilding of Residential Dwellings

AMG 1: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans

AMG 5: Local Biodiversity Conservation

PS 20: Preserving and where Appropriate Enhancing Heritage Assets

AT 1: Conservation Areas, World Heritage Sites and Scheduled Historic Landscapes, Parks and Gardens

2.4 **National Policies:**

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12 - February 2024)

Technical Advice Note (TAN)12: Design

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TAN 24: The historic environment

3. Relevant Planning History:

3.1 Application C21/0914/39/DT - Application for refurbishment of existing cottage, demolition of outbuildings and erection of new side extension – Rejected 27/10/21

3.2 A pre-application enquiry was submitted under reference Y23/0161 for the demolition of the existing property and the erection of a new house. It was noted that there was concern about the development as submitted on the basis of a proposed size of 238m² and that it was essential to ensure that proposals complied with the requirements of current policies. It was confirmed that if it was proposed to proceed with the submission of a formal planning application then significant revisions would be expected to the proposal in terms of not only the size but also its design and exterior elevations. For information, the design, form and finish of what is proposed on the current planning application corresponds more or less to that submitted as a pre-application enquiry but it is acknowledged that a reduction has been made in terms of the internal area.

4. Consultations:

Community/Town Council: Support

Transportation Unit: Not received

Natural Resources Wales: We do not oppose the proposed development as submitted and we provide standard advice relating to Protected Species and Landscape.

Welsh Water: Standard response and advice

Rights of Way Unit: Not received

Biodiversity Unit: The applicant has provided a report from Moseley (March 2025). According to the report, there was no evidence of bats or birds nesting. Therefore, there are no ecological concerns.

AONB Unit: Fferm Sarn Bach is situated in the centre of the village and in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The house is prominently located on the side of the public road that passes through Sarn Bach. It is a historic farmhouse with a slate roof and three chimneys. There are old agricultural buildings nearby. Although some alterations have

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been made, such as rendering and replacing the original windows, the building retains the look of a farmhouse that is characteristic of Pen Llŷn. There are similar historic two-storey houses nearby. Plans for a new house on the site were submitted. This building would be considerably larger than the original house, laid out differently and of a more urban and modern character due to the design and materials. There is concern that it would not be a good fit for this site in the village of Sarn Bach. As a whole it appears that the proposed development would be contrary to policies in the AONB Management Plan relating to the protection of historic assets and ensuring that new developments suit the surrounding area.

Archaeological Service:

I have reviewed the details provided against the regional Historic Environment Record (HER) and write to advise that the building proposed for demolition is of local historic interest. Fferm Sarn has been entered onto the HER as part of a high level thematic register of historic farmsteads, intended to inform future rural land management (PRN 102046). It is recorded on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1889, illustrating the building that is the subject of this application in its current arrangement. The building proposed for demolition is typical of a late 19th century/ early 20th century farmstead for this region. The building appears to be largely unaltered, retaining its original fabric and character as a farmhouse. The proposed demolition will be a loss to the historic environment. Accordingly, it is considered appropriate, where the original building substantially retains its historic integrity, to create an archive record prior to demolition, to document the change and mitigate the impact on local built heritage. In order to secure such a record it is recommended that a suitable condition should be attached, should planning consent be granted.

Land Drainage Unit:

There is no drainage strategy for this application, therefore we propose a temporary objection until one is provided.

Re-consultation

We have no objections to the planning application. Note that the approval of the CCS will be subject to a full assessment during the formal application process for the CCS.

Public Consultation:

A notice was posted on the site and nearby residents were notified. The advertising period has expired and no letter / correspondence of objection have been received.

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5. Assessment of the material planning considerations:

The principle of the development

- 5.1 It is a requirement that planning applications are 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.
- 5.2 The site is located within the development boundary of the village of Sarn Bach and makes use of a previously developed site. In this respect, the principle of the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of the general requirements of policies PS 5 and PCYFF 1 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (JLDP). There is also no doubt that residential use has been established on this site and it is intended to continue with similar residential use, therefore consideration must be given to the current housing policies contained in the LDP. Confirmation has been received that the dwelling is currently used as a main residential home (C3), and that it is proposed to retain this C3 use for the new house. To this end policy TAI 13 relating to the reconstruction of houses is the primary consideration due to its location and the existing established residential use is on the site which is relevant.
- 5.3 Policy TAI 13 contains a set of criteria that apply to proposals within and outside development boundaries. In this case, the location of the site is within the current boundary and not within an area at risk of flooding and therefore criteria 1, 4, 5, 7 or 8 do not apply. In relation to the remaining criteria of this policy, the existing building is not listed and is not of special architectural and/or historical and/or visual value that would merit its retention and therefore the proposal is not unacceptable on the basis of criteria 2 and 3. Criterion 6 states that outside the coastal change control area, the house to be built should be located partly within the same footprint as the existing house. It can be seen that the new house would be erected over the footprint of the existing building and therefore it is believed that this criterion is met. Criterion 9 does not apply as the existing house does not replace a house destroyed by accident. Criterion 10 would require the demolition of the original building when the new house is completed but as the proposal would be to build over the footprint of the existing building, this would not apply. Finally, criterion 11 states that it would be possible to include a condition on any permission to withdraw permitted development rights and this is considered appropriate. It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with the requirements of policy TAI 13.
- 5.4 Note that policy TAI 5 applies to the erection of new residential housing in Sarn Bach, and restricts those units to units that would be within reach of the local market. Policy TAI 5 can be applicable in cases where proposals for the demolition and erection of permanent residential housing mean that properties that fall within the size and use requirements of the policy ultimately go beyond the reach of the local market, each case needs to be considered individually. It is noted that recent appeals in this area have confirmed that policy TAI 5 applies to the demolition of existing dwellings and the re-erection of new dwellings (CAS-02877-J4D1Y6 C23/0004/39/LL Demolition and re-construction of Tawelfa dwelling, Llwyn Onn Estate, Abersoch) and that any other relevant considerations need to be taken into account including any planning permission for the erection of extensions together with permitted development rights for the erection of extensions without the need for planning permission (CAS-02998-HOP7P8 C23/0016/39/LL Demolition of existing dwelling and garage and replacement of new dwelling and garage The Ferns, Lôn Traeth, Abersoch).
- 5.5 The plans submitted show a new dwelling over 2 storeys comprising 4 bedrooms. The current size of the property is approximately 109m² and provides 4 bedrooms. A plan has been provided as part

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of the application which shows what would be the extent of the extension of the property under permitted development rights on the ground floor only, and extending the property in this way would provide an additional 118m² without the need for planning permission, giving a total floor area of 227m², which exceeds the 197m² proposed as part of this application. It is noted that this information is not entirely accurate, as the property is located in the AONB, it will not be possible to extend out to the side more than 3m without the need for planning permission. This means that the 118m² figure would fall to 76m² and the total floor surface area of 227m² would fall to 185m². However, it is relatively similar to what is proposed as part of this application and is considered relevant. It is also noted that an independent valuation has been submitted as part of the application which indicates that the value of the existing property in its current condition is high. The above-mentioned appeal decision CAS-02998-HOP7P8 on application C23/0016/39/LL confirms that additional issues including permitted development rights and the value of the property need to be considered. The maximum size of a two-storey house or more with 4 bedrooms as set out in Policy TAI 5 is stated as 130m³ and therefore the existing property here, subject to additional issues, is already beyond what policy TAI 5 seeks to provide and manage for the local housing market. As its floor surface area as a result of permitted development rights and its present value is beyond what is controlled under policy TAI 5, it is therefore considered that the demolition of the existing property would not entail a loss of an existing unit that would be within reach of the local market and therefore the proposal cannot be considered contrary to the requirements of policy TAI 5 of the LDP.

Visual amenities

- 5.6 Generally, policies PCYFF 2 and PCYFF 3 of the Joint Local Development Plan support proposals for new developments provided they do not have a detrimental impact on the health, safety or the amenities of the residents of local properties or on the area in general. In addition, developments are required to:
- Contribute to, and enhance the character and appearance of the site
 - Respect the site and its surroundings in terms of its position in the local landscape
 - Use appropriate materials
- 5.7 The existing property forms an established part of the built form of the village of Sarn Bach. It is believed that the proposed property, due to its design, finishes and scale, would completely change the character of the site and draw the eye to an unacceptable degree. The proposal would not respect its site context or placing within the village. It is recognised that there are examples of permitted developments within the area that vary and include relatively modern finishes or form. However, each application must be considered on its own merit and in this case, it is not believed that the proposal has succeeded wholly in improving the character and appearance of the site as the design would create a much more prominent feature that would not integrate or contribute positively to the local streetscape and the development pattern of the surrounding area.
- 5.8 As can be seen from the response of the Archaeological Service and the AONB Unit, the contribution of the existing property to the appearance and character of the local area is positive and important. Demolishing the property would be a loss to the local historic environment. However, the principle of the proposal to demolish it is not wholly unacceptable as long as a building to take up its place would be suitable in size, design and finish. It is considered that the proposal would stand out as an incompatible and oppressive feature at this location and significantly contrary to the current character of the site and to the majority of the development

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pattern seen nearby. It is not considered that it would add to or enhance the character and appearance of the site or the surrounding area in terms of its appearance and scale creating an intrusive, dominant and alien development in the landscape and streetscape. The explanation of Policy PCYFF 3 states: *'the setting and design of new developments must be based on a thorough understanding of the site itself and of its broader background, and seek to obtain as much benefit as possible from the site's features. This will require careful consideration of the site layout. No two sites share the same landscapes, contours, relationship with surrounding buildings, street pattern, and features. The proximity of poor quality or indistinct development is not a justification for standard or poor design solutions. New development should integrate into its surrounding whilst seeking to enhance the overall character of the locality'*.

- 5.9 Paragraph 4.3 of Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design, states, *"The local context includes the characteristics of the area where the development is located and also the location of that area. This includes the natural and human history of the area, the types of settlements, buildings..... Providing a meaningful and sustainable design response depends on an understanding of the site and its immediate and wider context."* Then, paragraph 4.5 states *"In many cases, an appraisal of the local context will highlight particular development or landscape patterns, and the intention will be to maintain that character"*.
- 5.10 Discussions have taken place between officers and the agent representing the applicant, at which point concerns have been raised about the design and size of the proposal as submitted. It was specifically noted that the proposed building would not be a good fit with the surrounding area as it would be a dominant and excessive building within the local landscape. As such, it was confirmed that the design and size of the proposal as submitted was not acceptable.
- 5.11 In response to this, elements of the application were amended in terms of the elevation that faces the road but it was confirmed that there was no intention to reduce the surface area of the building.
- 5.12 It is believed that the proposed building would appear incompatible within the location, it is not considered that the proposed development in its current form is acceptable because the proposed development would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the area and that it conflicts with the relevant requirements of policies PCYFF 2 and PCYFF 3 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (LDP) and the advice given within TAN 12 as set out above together with paragraph 2.6 which states *"design that is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to grasp opportunities to enhance the character, quality and function of an area, should not be accepted, as these have detrimental effects on existing communities."*
- 5.13 The site and wider area is situated within the Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest and the Llŷn AONB. It is not believed that the proposed development would have a detrimental effect on the broad historic designation and therefore it is believed that the proposal is in line with the relevant requirements of AT1 of the LDP.
- 5.14 However, it can be seen from the observations of the AONB Unit that there are concerns about the proposal as submitted. It is noted that the house is in a prominent location on the side of the public road that runs through Sarn Bach and is a historic farmhouse that has retained the look of a farmhouse which is characteristic of Pen Llŷn. It is said that the proposed building would be *"considerably larger than the original house and laid out differently and of a more urban and modern character due to the design and materials"*. As a result, there is concern that it would not be a good fit for the site and *"would be contrary to policies in the AONB Management Plan relating to the protection of historic assets and ensuring that new developments suit the surrounding area"*.

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- 5.15 Due to these concerns as highlighted by the AONB Unit, it is not believed that the the proposal would add to maintaining, enhancing or restoring the recognised character of the Llŷn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to the relevant requirements of Policy AMG 1 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan.

General and residential amenities

- 5.16 Due to the location of the proposed property, it is not considered that this development would have a significant adverse impact on private amenities. It is believed that there would be sufficient distance between the new house and existing houses nearby and it is not believed that any harmful over-looking of any existing properties will result from the development. There would be no harm either in terms of impacts such as shadowing or dominating any other property.
- 5.17 In view of the above discussion, it is considered that the development is acceptable under Policies PCYFF 2 and PCYFF 3 of the LDP in terms of its impacts on private amenities.

The Welsh Language

- 5.18 In accordance with criterion 1b of Policy PS1 ('The Welsh Language and Welsh Culture') it is not necessary to submit a Welsh Language Statement in relation to the requirements of this criterion as the purpose of the proposal is to exchange one residential property for another residential property.
- 5.19 Therefore on the basis of relevant requirements, the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the development would not cause substantial harm to the character and balance of the Welsh language in the community and therefore the application is in accordance with the requirements of policy PS1 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan.

Transport and access matters

- 5.20 Although the Transportation Unit has not submitted any observations on the proposal at the time of writing this report, it is generally thought that it would be possible to include appropriate conditions to agree on standard parking and access matters for the development. Given the established use of the site, the parking provision as shown and the accessible location of the site parallel to the public road network, it is not believed that harm would arise from the new development to an extent that would disrupt the movements of the local road network.
- 5.21 The proposal is therefore not considered unacceptable on the basis of transport and access considerations and that it complies with the relevant requirements and criteria of policies TRA 2 and TRA 4 which set out the need to ensure that new developments are in line with parking standards and the safe and efficient operation of the highway.

Biodiversity matters

- 5.22 The Biodiversity Unit has not raised any concerns in terms of a detrimental impact on local biodiversity or the measures proposed to improve the biodiversity and ecology of the local area.
- 5.23 Information was presented in the form of a bat assessment and a green infrastructure statement which included details of suitable improvements and measures to improve the biodiversity of the site. It is therefore believed that the proposal is acceptable on the basis of compliance with the relevant requirements of policies PS 19 and AMG 5 of the LDP in relation to impact on biodiversity together with Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales which relates to the phased approach and green infrastructure.

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6. Conclusions:

- 6.1 This is a proposal to demolish an existing building and erect a new building in its place. Whilst elements of the proposal are acceptable, such as the provision of a more energy efficient building, it is not considered that the proposal has succeeded in this case in securing a building of acceptable design, scale and appearance as it would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the local area and the context of the site and its location within the AONB.
- 6.2 In view of the above and having regard to all relevant planning issues including local and national policies and guidance as well as all the observations received, it is believed that this proposal is unacceptable in the form submitted as it fails to meet the requirements of the relevant policies and guidance as set out above.

7. Recommendation:

7.1 To Refuse – reasons

1. It is not considered that the design of the proposal, in terms of its siting, scale and massing would add to or enhance the character and appearance of its site context nor fully integrate into the context of the immediate streetscene and its prominent location in this part of the village of Sarn Bach. The proposal is therefore contrary to the relevant requirements of policies PCYFF 2 and PCYFF 3 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan, 2017 and part 2.6 of Technical Advice Note 12: Design which states that design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to grasp opportunities to enhance the character, quality and function of an area, should not be accepted, as these have detrimental effects on existing communities.

2. The proposal would not contribute to the maintenance, enhancement or restoration of the recognised character of the Llŷn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal is contrary to the relevant requirements of Policy AMG 1 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan.