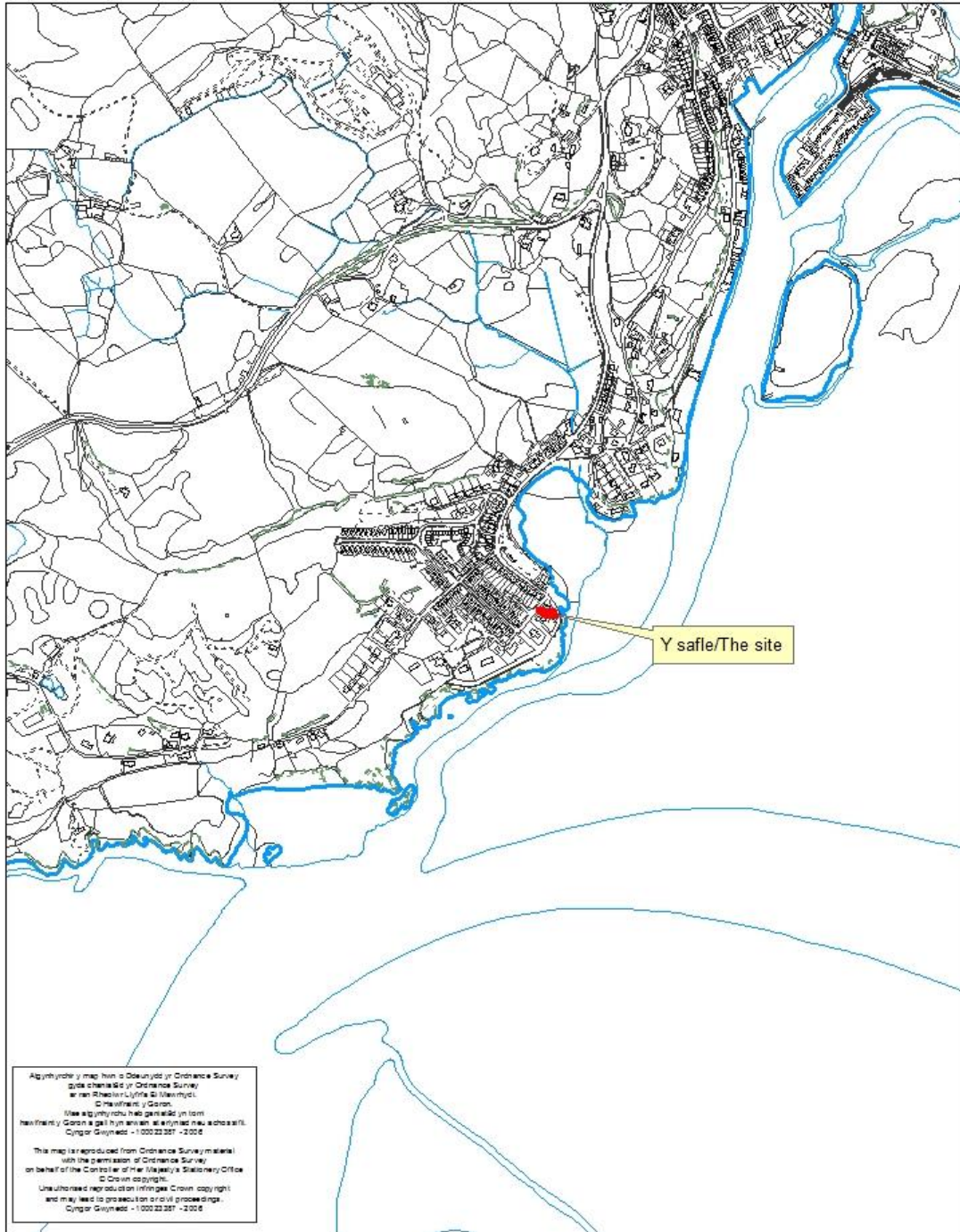


Number: 7



Rhif y Cais / Application Number : C15-0375-44-LL

Cynllun lleoliad ar gyfer adnabod y safle yn unig. Dim i raddfa.  
Location Plan for identification purposes only. Not to scale.



<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>	<b>DATE: 06/07/2015</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER</b>	<b>PWLLHELI</b>

Application Number: C15/0375/44/LL  
Date Registered: 23/04/2015  
Application Type: Full - Planning  
Community: Porthmadog  
Ward: Porthmadog West

Proposal: ERECTION OF A DOMESTIC GARAGE AND ALTERATIONS TO THE PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

Location: Tŷ SAMSON, BORTH Y GEST, PORTHMADOG, GWYNEDD, LL49 9TU

**Summary of the Recommendation:** TO REFUSE

**1. Description:**

- 1.1 This is an application to demolish the current 13m boundary wall and excavate the sloping garden in order to construct a double garage and provide off-road parking. The garage would be partially sunk into the slope in front of Tŷ Samson, Borth y Gest, with a terrace on top, forming an extension to the existing front terrace. The garage would be set back 2.5m from the road, with space in front to park or to pull off the road.
- 1.2 The site is situated in a residential area near an unclassified coastal road which links to the south with Porthmadog Community Public Footpath Number 17. The road is a "cul de sac" and forms part of the Wales Coastal Path. The site is near the estuary of the river Glaslyn which is a Special Conservation Area and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and also lies within the Aberglaslyn Historical Landscape.
- 1.3 The application is submitted to Planning Committee as three or more observations have been received contrary to the officers' recommendation.

**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 Plan, unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. Planning considerations include National Planning Policy and the Unitary Development Plan.

**2.2 Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan 2009:**

**POLICY B12 – PROTECTING HISTORIC LANDSCAPES, PARKS AND GARDENS**

Protect landscapes, parks and gardens of special historic interest in Wales from developments that would cause significant harm to their character, appearance or setting.

**POLICY B22 – BUILDING DESIGN**

Promote good building design by ensuring that proposals conform to a series of criteria aimed at safeguarding the recognised features and character of the local landscape and environment.

**POLICY B23 – AMENITIES**

Safeguard the amenities of the local neighbourhood by ensuring that proposals conform to a series of criteria aimed at protecting the recognised features and amenities of the local area.

**POLICY B25 – BUILDING MATERIALS**

Safeguard the visual character by ensuring that building materials are of a high standard and are in keeping with the character and appearance of the local area.

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**POLICY CH33 – SAFETY ON ROADS AND STREETS**

Development proposals will be approved provided they conform to specific criteria relating to the vehicular entrance, the standard of the existing roads network and traffic calming measures.

**POLICY CH36 – PRIVATE CAR PARKING FACILITIES**

Proposals for new developments, extensions to existing developments or change of use will be refused unless off-street parking is provided in accordance with the Council’s current parking guidelines, and having given due consideration to the accessibility of public transport, the possibility of walking or cycling from the site and the proximity of the site to a public car park.

**2.3 National Policies:**

Planning Policy Wales, Edition 7, July 2014

**3. Relevant Planning History:**

C14/1205/44/LL : Conversion of one dwelling into two dwellings together with first floor extension – Approved 20/01/15

**4. Consultations:**

Community/Town Council: Object - The development is not in keeping with the rest of the village. Concerns regarding the safety of pedestrians.

Transportation Unit: No objection

Welsh Water: Not received

Public Consultation: A notice was posted on the site and nearby residents were notified. The advertising period has ended and a number of letters of objection and in support of the plan were received.

The objections on the grounds of material planning matters include:

- The development is not in keeping with the coastal location and does not correspond to the area’s built character.
- The development will pose a risk to users of the Coastal Path, including groups of school children and people with physical difficulties, who use this accessible part of the path.
- The access is near a junction between two popular walking routes, and many walkers pause here – vehicular movements back and forth from the site would pose a danger to these pedestrians.
- The development would be detrimental to the landscape in an important coastal location.

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- The development would have a negative impact on the setting to the front of the seaside houses, and would harm the environment of the Coastal Path for its users.

In addition to the above objections, objections were received that were not valid planning objections which included:

- There is no existing vehicular entrance along this unclassified road, and this development could set a precedent for further developments.
- The owners have erected an extension on land to the rear of the property that could have been used for a garage.

Other correspondences were received supporting the application on the following grounds:

- The development would reduce the parking pressures on other surrounding streets
- The development would be unremarkable and would not be harmful to the townscape.
- The owners have improved the existing house so that it complements the village's architectural features, and they will do the same with this development.
- Due to the width of the coastal road and the fact that it is used by so few vehicles, there will be no significant risk of a collision between vehicles and the public.

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

### **Visual amenities**

- 5.1 While accepting that the size of the development is not especially large, with the garage's floor space being 30m<sup>2</sup>, and that it would be concealed from many public viewpoints, the nature of the landscape of this part of Borth y Gest is of an extremely high quality. This is reflected by its inclusion in the Glaslyn Landscape of Outstanding Historical Interest as defined by Cadw and Natural Resources Wales. It is a seaside site near the Glaslyn estuary, with exceptional views across the estuary. Tŷ Samson itself forms an important part of Borth y Gest's striking townscape, reflecting the local Victorian seaside architecture.
- 5.2 The road near the site forms an accessible part of the Llŷn Coastal Path and the Wales Coastal Path, which means that it is a very important area in terms of public access to the coast.
- 5.3 Policies B22, B23 and B25 of the Unitary Development Plan require that the quality of the design and materials of new developments respect the site and its surroundings and that there is no detrimental impact on the visual amenities of the locality as a result of the development. In addition, Policy B12 seeks to ensure that landscapes on the Register of Special Historic Landscapes are protected and enhanced.
- 5.4 The existing site is a sloping garden, which descends from the house to the road level with stone retaining walls and steps running down the middle, providing pedestrian access to the coastal road. There are no buildings in front of the houses along this road, and it is characterised by its peaceful and development-free nature. The road is very popular as a location for local residents to enjoy the seaside, and the traffic-free and development-free aspects add to its quiet and peaceful qualities. It is considered that safeguarding this part of the village from inappropriate development is important for the amenities of the local people.

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5.5 If this development were to be completed in accordance with the plans, a double garage measuring 3.4m in height and 5.8m in width would face the road. It would have timber doors with rendered walls set within a new stone wall. The route of the steps would be altered with the surrounding garden re-created.

5.6 In considering the proposal in its environmental context, and with regard to the above policies, it is considered that the garage would be a feature which is out of character with the local environment. It would not be in keeping with the open and development-free nature of the surrounding area, and would have a detrimental impact on the seaside character of the area which is an important location for public access and for the amenities of local residents, and is also part of a designated Landscape of Special Historical Interest. For these reasons it is not considered that the application meets the requirements of policies B12, B22, B23 and B25 of the UDP.

**Transport and access matters**

5.7 Objectors expressed concerns that the development would pose a danger to the users of the coastal road. The application was assessed by the Transportation Unit, and it accepts, with the appropriate conditions, that the development would be appropriate with regards to road safety, and it is therefore considered that the application meets the requirements of policies CH33 and CH36 of the Development Plan.

5.8 However, in relation to planning application C14/1205/44/LL for the conversion of Tŷ Samson into two houses which was approved this January, it is noted that the application relied upon public parking on the street and in the nearby car park, and that the Transportation Unit approved this arrangement. It is therefore not considered that new parking arrangements for this site are essential for highway safety, and that there is no justification as regards insufficient local parking for allowing a development that is likely to have a negative impact on the public's enjoyment of an area, and a detrimental impact on the urban environment.

**Response to the public consultation**

5.9 It is considered that the matters that have arisen in the objections and the supporting correspondence, including the impact on amenities and road safety, have received consideration within the above assessment. No other matters have arisen that suggest that the recommendation should be changed.

**6. Conclusions:**

6.1 It is considered that the proposal to erect a garage and create a parking space in this location is acceptable in terms of road safety. However, in considering the quality of the local environment and its importance in terms of public access and enjoyment of this area, it is not considered that the proposal meets the requirements of the Unitary Development Plan, relating to the safeguarding of these features.

**7. Recommendation:**

7.1 To refuse – Reason

1. The construction of a garage and an off-road parking space in this location would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the townscape of this part of Borth y Gest, and to the public's enjoyment of this area which is near the Wales Coastal Path and which forms part of Aberglaslyn Landscape of Special Historical Interest. The development is therefore contrary to policies B12, B22, B23 and B25 of the Gwynedd Unitary Plan.