

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 19/12/2016
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

Number: 9

Application Number: C16/1367/25/LL

Date Registered: 03/11/2016

Application Type: Full - Planning

Community: Pentir

Ward: Pentir

Proposal: Erection of a four-storey side extension, side and rear extension to the basement level and construction of a new car park

Location: Woodlands House, Parc Menai, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL574FA

Summary of the Recommendation:

TO APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 19/12/2016
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

1. Description:

- 1.1 This is a full application to extend the existing building to provide a warehouse, expand the existing offices, create meeting facilities and an equipment room to enable the current business to expand on site rather than relocating. The proposal would involve erecting a four storey side extension, side and rear extension to the basement level and construction of a new car park. The application documents shows that the plan would create up to 15 new jobs within the business.
- 1.2 The below documents were submitted as part of the planning application:
- Design Statement
 - Traffic Statement.
 - Trees Report
 - Botanical and Protected Species Assessment
- 1.3 To the north and west of the site is a copse known as the Warren along with a 'Masonic' hall; to the north-east is a builders merchant and then a residential dwelling known as Capel y Graig Lodge, also a listed building; to the south-east, the registered wall of the Faenol Estate with the A487 trunk road behind it; to the south is the 'Bookpeople' warehouse and beyond it lies the parkland of the Faenol Estate which includes an open pasture and copses.
- 1.4 The site of the application has been designated within the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan (GUDP) as a Safeguarded Employment Site. The site is within a Landscape Conservation Area and a Registered Historic Landscape. In addition to this, the Faenol Estate Conservation Site is located approximately 400m south-west of the western boundary of the application site.

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 considerations indicate otherwise. Planning considerations include National Planning Policy and the Unitary 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; in making the recommendation the Council has sought to ensure that present needs 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 Unitary Development Plan 2009:**

POLICY B3 – DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING THE SETTING OF LISTED BUILDINGS

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 19/12/2016
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

Ensure that proposals have no effect on the setting of Listed Buildings and that they conform to a series of criteria aimed at safeguarding the special character of the Listed Building and the local environment.

POLICY B4 – DEVELOPMENTS IN OR AFFECTING THE SETTING OF CONSERVATION AREAS

Ensure that proposals within conservation areas, or proposals that affect their setting, are refused unless they aim to maintain or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area and its setting.

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 B20 – SPECIES AND THEIR HABITATS THAT ARE INTERNATIONALLY AND NATIONALLY IMPORTANT

Refuse proposals that are likely to cause unacceptable disturbance or harm to protected species and their habitats unless they can conform to a series of criteria aimed at safeguarding the recognised features of the site.

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 B24 - ALTERATIONS AND BUILDING EXTENSIONS WITHIN DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES, RURAL VILLAGES AND THE COUNTRYSIDE

Ensure that proposals for alterations or extensions to buildings conform to a series of criteria aimed at protecting the character and amenity value 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.

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.

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 19/12/2016
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

POLICY D1 – HIGH VALUE EMPLOYMENT SITES

Protect land and units on High Value Employment Sites. In extreme cases, small-scale ancillary support facilities will be approved if a series of criteria relating to preponderant justification; symmetry and the function of the site in question, can be met.

POLICY D8 – EXPANSION OF EXISTING ENTERPRISES

Proposals to extend/expand/intensify industrial enterprises and existing businesses or other enterprises will be approved if they conform with specific criteria regarding the appropriateness of the existing use in relation to the surrounding area and adjacent uses and how relevant it is to the existing work.

The Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Local Development Plan which is currently being prepared is subject to an ongoing Public Inquiry. At present, it is not a relevant planning consideration for determining planning applications.

2.4 National Policies:

Planning Policy Wales, Edition 9 (2016).

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 5 Nature Conservation and Planning (2009).

TAN 12 Design (2016).

TAN 23 Economic Development (2014).

Welsh Office Circular 61/96 Planning and the Historic Environment.

3. Relevant Planning History:

3.1 C03A/0828/25/LL - Construction of offices, parking spaces and landscaping. Approved 12/04/04

3.2 C98A/0360/25/AM – Outline application to develop offices. Approved 02/09/98

3.3 C98A/0338/25/LL - Erecting two buildings including hotel, restaurant, conference centre, car park, entrance and landscaping. Approved 29/07/98

3.4 C97A/0464/25/CL – Construction of hotel/conference centre and car park (renewal of outline planning application number 3/25/356E. Approved 01/10/97

4. Consultations:

Community/Town Council: Not received

Transportation Unit: No objection.

Natural Resources Wales: No objection

Welsh Water: No objection - standard advice.

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 19/12/2016
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

The Welsh Government's Transportation Unit:	No objection
CADW:	No objection - no impact on the setting of the registered historic park and gardens as there are no views from the park in this direction.
Welsh Historic Gardens Trust:	Not received.
Biodiversity Unit/Trees:	No objection - conditions required - complete the work in accordance with the ecological report, tree report, and the tree planting scheme.
Public Consultation:	A notice was posted on the site and nearby residents were notified. The advertising period ends on 14/12/16 but no observations had been received at the time of writing the report.

5. Assessment of the material planning considerations:

The principle of the development

- 5.1 In addition, Policy D1 protects land and units on High Quality Employment Sites (including Parc Menai) for employment initiatives/business included in the B1 class. It is considered that the proposal complies with this policy by expanding the use of the existing B1 unit.
- 5.2 The principle of expanding existing enterprises is based on Policy D8 of the GUDP, which states that such proposals will be approved subject to compliance with a number of guidelines which state that the existing use does not cause significant harm to the surrounding area; that the proposal is located within the existing development; that the proposal is ancillary to the work that exists there already, and that the scale of the proposal will not significantly impact environmental amenities and the local roads network. The policy also acknowledges the importance of existing enterprises to the the local economy and that they can add to the viability of existing centres and villages. The aim of the policy is to facilitate their development and proposals to expand, extend and intensify should not pose any difficulty to High Quality Employment Sites of Industrial Sites.
- 5.3 The national advice and guidelines included in TAN 23 and Planning Policy Wales, Chapter 7 also reflect the policies of the GUDP by emphasising that local planning authorities should seek to ensure that economic developments are undertaken in the most appropriate and sustainable locations (such as high quality employment sites in this case) rather than preventing or discouraging such developments. The council also states that authorities should deal with economic development applications in a positive and constructive way.
- 5.4 Considering the proposal, relevant policies, land designations and the site's existing use, it is believed that the proposal, as submitted, is acceptable in principle subject to its compliance with the other relevant policies discussed below.

Visual amenities

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 19/12/2016
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

- 5.5 The application site is located on land to the rear and to the side of the existing building. Parts of the site form part of the existing curtilage, but the four-storey extension and new car park would extend into the woodland that runs parallel to the site. The existing site is located on land that is lower than the nearby builders merchant, the estate roads and the adjacent Bookpeople site. Although the existing site is quite substantial as it is, due to the topography and natural woodland that surround the site, it is not prominent in the business park or from the surrounding landscape.
- 5.6 The northern side extension and the rear extension reflect the existing building (based on design, form and exterior materials). Nevertheless, the southern side extension will be of a modern design with use of glass, flat roof, and small equipment room on top of it.
- 5.7 A design statement explains the rationale behind the extension by stating that the site's footprint is confined to the site's boundaries, the trees and parking requirements. The internal structure and layout means that the extension can be adapted as the needs of the business change. The use of glass maximises the natural lighting into the building on a site that is surrounded by trees. The glass will lighten the look of the building by reflecting light and its natural surroundings.
- 5.8 The four-storey extension which is higher than the existing building is not considered to be a completely natural extension of the existing building. Nevertheless, it is not considered that the extension would have a detrimental impact on the existing building as the building has no special architectural features that would be lost or damaged. The existing building is not visible in the wider landscape and, consequently, it is considered that the main impact of the development would be confined to areas within the business park itself rather than to more distant vistas. Due to the height of the building, it is possible that some higher parts of the building would be seen from a distance but it would be among trees or would have other buildings within the business park as a backdrop (e.g. Bookpeople building).
- 5.9 In order to reduce the impact of the proposal and also to mitigate the loss of trees the application has included landscaping and re-planting. This is considered to be essential in order to ensure that neither the new development nor the existing building have an unacceptable effect on the local landscape and the appearance of the business park.
- 5.10 It is also noted that the site is located within a Landscape Conservation Area as designated in the GUDP as well as being within a Registered Landscape of Historic Interest, the priority within such designations is to protect and enrich the positive characteristics of the landscape and reject proposals if they have a detrimental impact on the character, appearance and setting of the historic landscape. Considering the above assessment, it is not believed that this proposal would have a substantial or significant impact on the setting and character of this part of the historic landscape.
- 5.11 The proposal is also close to the Vaynol Estate conservation area and the grade II registered boundary wall of the Estate which is located to the east of the application site and a registered dwelling. Despite these statutory designations it is believed that there will be no significant negative impact on the setting of the conservation area or on the registered structures considering the topography, location and design of the extension along with the screening and landscaping that reduces its impact on the local environment.

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 19/12/2016
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

- 5.12 It is considered that the design and materials have been justified in the design statement and that it is appropriate for its location on a high quality employment site and, as such, meets the requirements of policies B3, B4, B12, B22, B23, B24, B25 of the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan.

General and residential amenities

- 5.13 As referred to above, the extension is located within a site that has been designated specifically for high quality industrial/commercial use and this part of Parc Menai has already been developed for this kind of use. The nearest residential dwelling is located approximately 100m to the east with a copse and a builders merchant building located between them.
- 5.14 As business/employment use on a large scale has already been established on the site, and considering the location of the extension at the rear and side of the existing building it is believed that the residential and general amenities of the occupants of this property would not be significantly undermined should the application be approved. It is not believed that the proposal would cause a substantial increase in traffic/movement in and out of the site thus having a negative impact on the property's residential amenities.
- 5.15 Consideration has also been given to the fact that, whilst preparing this report, no response to the proposal has so far been received from the public during the statutory notification period. To this end, it is believed that the proposal is acceptable based on the requirements of Policies B23 of the GUDP.

Transport and access matters

- 5.16 Policy CH33 of the Unitary Development Plan relates to ensuring safety on roads and streets, and it permits development proposals provided they can conform to specific criteria relating to the vehicular entrance, the standard of the existing roads network and traffic calming measures. Policy CH36 relates to private car parking facilities. The proposal would provide a new car park with 10 new parking spaces and a transportation statement was received as part of the application in order to assess the possible impact of the development. Based on the information received, neither the Transportation Unit nor the Welsh Government Highways unit had any objections to the proposal. It is considered that the proposal complies with all the requirements of policies CH33 and CH36 of the Unitary Development Plan.

Trees and Biodiversity Matters

- 5.17 Policy B20 of the UDP safeguards species and their habitats of international and national importance and refuses proposals which are likely to cause unacceptable disturbance or harm to protected species and their habitats unless they conform to a series of criteria aimed at safeguarding the recognised features of such sites.
- 5.18 The proposal will result in the loss of part of the existing copse to the southern side of the site in order to erect the extension and provide a new car park. A trees report was received for the site as well as a botanical and protected species report. The Biodiversity Unit had no objection to the proposal on condition that the measures included in the ecological and tree report are followed and that the planting scheme is

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 19/12/2016
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

implemented. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal complies with the requirements of Policy B20 of the UDP.

6. Conclusions:

- 6.1 The site of the application has been designated within the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan (GUDP) as a Safeguarded Employment Site. The local and national policies also acknowledge the importance of existing enterprises to the the local economy and that they can add to the viability of existing centres and villages. The aim of the policies is to facilitate development and, in general, proposals to expand, extend and intensify existing businesses should not be problematic for High Quality Employment Sites or Industrial Sites.
- 6.2 In light of the above, and having given full consideration to all relevant planning matters and the submitted observations, it is considered that this proposal is acceptable and that it complies with the requirements of local and national policies and guidance.

7. Recommendation:

To approve – with conditions

1. Time
2. In accordance with the conditions.
3. Materials
4. Biodiversity conditions - complete the work in accordance with the ecological report, tree report, and the tree planting scheme.
5. Completion of new car park prior to using the extension.