

| | |
|---|-------------------------|
| PLANNING COMMITTEE | DATE: 29/07/2024 |
| REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF DEPARTMENT | |

Number: 2

Application Number: C24/0083/18/LL

Date Registered: 06/02/2024

Application Type: Full

Community: Llanddeiniolen

Ward: Penisa'r-waun

Proposal: Change of use of care home (C2 Use Class - residential establishments) to a serviced hostel for holiday use (Unique Use) as well as ancillary warden living accommodation (resubmission).

Location: Cartref Nyrsio Penisa'r-waun, Penisa'r-waun, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 3DB

Summary of the Recommendation: TO APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS

| | |
|--|------------------|
| PLANNING COMMITTEE | DATE: 29/07/2024 |
| REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF DEPARTMENT | |

1. Description:

- 1.1 That is a full application for a change of use of a former nursing home (C2 Use Class) to be used as a serviced holiday hostel (Unique Use) together with the provision of living accommodation for a warden. The site, located on the eastern periphery of the settlement of Penisa'r-waun, and the nursing home have been dormant since 2018.
- 1.2 This is a single-storey building and is formed from two main wings that are connected in the centre by a flat roofed structure. The existing building comprises 30 bedrooms; stores; kitchens; sitting rooms; boiler room; bathrooms together with administrative/staff rooms.
- 1.3 The proposal is to convert the building to create as a serviced hostel for visitors, which will also include the provision of a residential unit within the building for a manager/warden; stores and drying rooms; a new small lobby for the main entrance to the building (this is the only addition proposed to be undertaken to the existing building); games room; bath/shower rooms together with a kitchen and dining room. A Planning Statement (including a Green Infrastructure Statement) was submitted with the application and this explains the nature of the development. This includes:
- The hostel would provide 25 bedrooms for holiday accommodation (a total of 60 beds). Every bedroom would include en-suite facilities, some with private showers.
 - The only exterior changes would be the provision of a small, enclosed area near the entrance to the building.
 - The proposal would lead to the employment of one full-time employee as a night warden, with three or four part-time employees for other various roles.
 - Warden living accommodation would be provided within the building, and this accommodation would have a separate exterior entrance.
 - The building would also provide communal showers, toilets, kitchen, dining areas and sitting areas for visitors to use during their stay.
 - No changes would be made to the entrance used to enter and exit the site.
 - 42 parking spaces would be provided on the site, making use of the existing car park serving the property, and extending to the north-west of the site (which previously served as an informal parking area), to provide an additional parking area.
 - It is proposed to provide disabled parking spaces on the site, as well as a bicycle storage area.
- 1.4 The site is located nearby, but outside the boundary of the Penisa'r-waun Local Village as defined in the LDP. The property is located within a 500m of the Penisa'r-waun Camp Registered Monument and within the Dinorwig Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest. Deiniol House Wildlife Site is located adjacent to the site together with dispersed residential dwellings surrounding the application site.
- 1.5 This is a re-submission of a similar plan (application number C21/1028/18/LL) refused in 2023 for three main reasons:
- i. Lack of information regarding the number of beds, creating concerns regarding harmful amenity impacts to local residents.
 - ii. Lack of information regarding the nature and extent of the proposed warden accommodation.
 - iii. Lack of parking provision.
- 1.6 The Planning Statement accompanying the proposed application confirms the following aspects:
- The maximum number of residents in the facility will be 60.
 - The manager's accommodation will be completely separate and subordinate to the visitor accommodation (this is shown on the floor plans).

| | |
|--|------------------|
| PLANNING COMMITTEE | DATE: 29/07/2024 |
| REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF DEPARTMENT | |

- The provision of 42 parking spaces on the site (which have been designed to meet the Welsh Government Parking Standards).

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 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 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 **Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Local Development Plan 2011-2026 adopted 31 July 2017: -**

PS 1 - The Welsh Language and Culture.

PS 5 – Sustainable Development.

PS 6 – Mitigating the effects of climate change and adapting to them.

PS14 - The visitor economy.

PS 19 - Conserving and where appropriate enhancing the natural environment.

PS 20 - Conserving and where appropriate enhancing the natural environment.

TRA 2 - Parking standards.

TRA 4 - Managing transport impacts.

PCYFF 1 - Development boundaries.

PCYFF 2 - Development Criteria

PCYFF 3 - Design and place shaping.

TWR 2 - Holiday accommodation.

AMG 5 - Local biodiversity conservation.

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

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG): Tourist Facilities and Accommodation (2021).

SPG: Maintaining and Creating Unique and Sustainable Communities.

| | |
|--|------------------|
| PLANNING COMMITTEE | DATE: 29/07/2024 |
| REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF DEPARTMENT | |

2.4 National Policies:

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12 - February 2024)

Technical Advice Notes (TAN) 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities.

TAN 11: Noise.

TAN 12: Design.

TAN 13: Tourism.

TAN 18: Transport.

TAN 20: Planning and the Welsh Language.

TAN 23: Economic Development.

TAN 24: The Historic Environment.

3. Relevant Planning History:

3.1 Application C21/1028/18/LL - change of use of care home (C2 Use Class - residential establishments) to a service hostel for holiday use (Unique Use), as well as ancillary warden living accommodation - Refused 06/02/23.

3.2 Application C09A/0468/18/LL - amend condition 9 on planning permission number C08A/0007/18/LL to allow the home to accommodate people over 40 years old rather than restrict the use to elderly care only, approved in 2010.

3.3 Application C08A/0007/18/LL - extend the existing home by creating a 2/3 storey extension, demolishing the existing kitchen, creating a walkway and additional parking spaces as well as landscaping and drainage work, approved in 2009.

4. Consultations:

Community/Town Council:

Object on the following grounds: -

1. Overdevelopment.
2. Sewerage problems in the area already.
3. It would disrupt the amenities of local residents.
4. The roads are much too narrow for so much traffic.
5. There are already too many holiday places and is there a genuine need for such a large site in a small village like

| | |
|--|------------------|
| PLANNING COMMITTEE | DATE: 29/07/2024 |
| REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF DEPARTMENT | |

Penisa'r-waun.

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Transportation Unit: | No objection |
| Land Drainage Unit: | <p>The Council does not have any records that the former home has been affected by flooding and the latest NRW flood maps suggest that the building is not under threat.</p> <p>Observations for the developer</p> |
| Welsh Water: | Request a condition to protect the public sewer as well as offer standard advice. |
| Public Protection Unit: | <p>The original observations note the need to ensure that the septic tank is able to cope with any potential increase in flows as a result of the development and ask for the details of any exterior waste storage area.</p> <p>Following these observations, a report was received by a competent specialist noting that there was sufficient capacity in the septic tank for the development and this was acceptable to the Unit.</p> <p>In addition, an amended site plan was received showing the location of the bin/recycling storage area.</p> |
| CADW: | No response received |
| Public Consultation: | <p>A notice was posted on the site and nearby residents were notified. The advertising period has expired and correspondence was received objecting on the following grounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scale of the proposed development is not appropriate considering the site, the location and the dwelling in question and it will not be able to assimilate and fit comfortably in its environment. • The facility will not have 'opening hours' and therefore could create noise problems and disruption during anti-social hours • It is likely that there will be harmful amenity impacts to nearby residential property due to noise from residents and their cars, which will be of a very different nature to a residential home for the elderly. • Concern about the lack of outdoor area for socialising on the site and the residents will therefore wander to the village and create problems. • Harm to the privacy of neighbours. • There is insufficient information with the application regarding the exterior appearance of the facility. • Vehicular movements will not be similar to the previous use and it is likely that there will be increased traffic on the narrow road, which is already hazardous for users. • Concern regarding the lack of parking spaces and that this |

| | |
|---|-------------------------|
| PLANNING COMMITTEE | DATE: 29/07/2024 |
| REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF DEPARTMENT | |

can cause problems on the street in the village.

- It would be difficult to control the numbers who would be able to use the facility - concern that up to 120 people can stay at the facility at the same time, with over 80 cars
- The facility would be over-reliant on private transport, as there is a lack of public transport in the area.
- Concern regarding the flow of water from the parking areas.
- Concern that the site is at risk of flooding- the home is located directly above a drainage pipe, which deals with a persistent flow of water, all year round.
- There is no appropriate provision for bins / recycling in the plans.
- The proposal to manage the site with one warden is insufficient for a facility of its size.
- Penisa'r-waun is a quiet, remote village and the impact of 60 people at the hostel would be harmful to the character of the village.
- Concern about the harmful impact on the Welsh language from such a large tourism development within a small Welsh community.
- Very little benefit to the village deriving from the development - there is no shop / café which can benefit from the residents.
- Because of the time elapsed since the site was last used, many hedges and trees have grown in the areas shown on the plans that are to be used as a parking area. Extensive work will need to be done to fell trees and hedges before it is brought up to standard.

| | |
|---|-------------------------|
| PLANNING COMMITTEE | DATE: 29/07/2024 |
| REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF DEPARTMENT | |

- Concern regarding the suitability of the sewerage provision to cope with the increased use.
- Lack of information regarding the environmental impact of the development.
- The application does not respond appropriately to the refusal reasons noted on the previous application.
- The information submitted for similar facilities in the area is not correct - there is much more similar accommodation in the area, which will lead to an over-development.
- No business plan has been submitted with the application.
- The facility will employ much fewer local staff than the previous use.

In addition, observations were received which are not material planning matters for this application:

- Questioned whether the genuine intent is to keep numbers below 60.
- Questioned the use class of the development.
- Concern regarding the lack of opportunity to provide observations on the development.
- Concern about the impact on similar businesses in the area.
- Concern about the use of the hostel as a permanent residence.
- Consideration should be given to making alternative use of the building which is beneficial to the local community or use the site to build affordable housing.
- That invasive species have established on the site.
- Questioned the land ownership showed on the site plan and allegations that the application form is incorrect.

5. Assessment of the material planning considerations:

The principle of the development

- 5.1 A number of local and national policies deal with the principle of providing serviced holiday accommodation including Policy PCYFF 1; Policy PS 5, Policy PS 14 and Policy TWR 2 of the LDP together with Supplementary Planning Guidance: Tourist Facilities and Accommodation and the Technical Advice Notes, "Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities" and "Economic Development".
- 5.2 In terms of general policies, Policy PCYFF 1 states that proposals outside development boundaries will be refused unless they are in accordance with specific policies in the plan or national planning policies or that the proposal shows that its location in the countryside is essential. Policy PS 5 encourages giving priority to reusing the previously used land and buildings and Policy PS 14 of the LDP supports the development of a year-round local tourism industry.
- 5.3 In terms of the relevant specific policies, Policy TWR 2 of the LDP aims to facilitate proposals for serviced holiday accommodation, provided that the proposal complies with a number of criteria. The relevant criteria in this particular case are: -

| | |
|--|------------------|
| PLANNING COMMITTEE | DATE: 29/07/2024 |
| REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF DEPARTMENT | |

- (ii) *That the proposed development is appropriate in scale considering the site, location and/or settlement in question and that it is in-keeping and fits comfortably into the environment –*

Comment

The proposal involves the provision of 25 bed/sleeping rooms within the existing building, enabling up to 60 residents at a time, as well as bespoke two-bedroom accommodation for the site's manager. There is no intention to extend the existing infrastructure (except for a small porch near the existing main entrance). The proposal, if approved, means that there would be a provision for up to 62 residents (including the warden accommodation), possibly within the facility at the same time. However, when considering the seasonal nature of the visitor industry as well as the variety in the size of groups and individuals' wishes in terms of the nature of the rooms they choose, it is unlikely that the building would operate at its full capacity all year round, particularly outside the main visitor season.

When considering this application it is important to look at the planning history of the site and the nature of the previous legal use as a care home for the elderly (with a maximum of 30 permanent residents). It is noted from the information submitted with planning application C08A/0007/18/LL for 26 members of staff to be employed on the site at that time (8 full-time and 18 part-time), and indeed, planning permission was provided through that application for a 2/3 storey extension to the building, which would include 40 bedrooms to generate the demand for 56 staff (19 full-time and 37 part-time).

Considering the high level of staffing necessary to care for the residents of the residential home for the elderly, as well as the additional attendees at the site, such as the families of the residents and health services, it is not believed that the development proposed through the current planning application would increase the density of the site's use in a significant way, compared to its use in the past.

It is believed, by imposing a condition restricting the facility to a maximum of 60 paying residents at a time, it can be ensured that there will be no significant change in the density of the site's use or in the scale of the development compared with the previous use. Whilst acknowledging that this is a relatively large development for a village of the size of Penisa'r-waun, it must be accepted that the physical development is already in place and this application is a matter of changing the nature of the use made of the site, whilst retaining the scale of the development relatively similar to the previous use.

It is therefore believed that the development, as described in the application, is acceptable in terms of its scale

- (iv) *That the development is not sited within a primarily residential area, or does not significantly harm the residential character of an area*

Comment

Although the site is located outside the development boundary, a number of residential dwellings are located around the site, including the property known as Talsarnau, which is immediately adjacent. Although there are nearby residential dwellings, due to the site's previous use as a Nursing Home, it must be acknowledged that the character of the area is not solely residential, its use as a home is a single business where the nature of the coming and

| | |
|--|------------------|
| PLANNING COMMITTEE | DATE: 29/07/2024 |
| REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF DEPARTMENT | |

going is different to a typical residential house. Note that the ability to reopen as a nursing home continues without the need for further planning permission.

It is noted that the main entrance of the hostel, as well as 19 parking spaces and bin storage area would be located in the front of the south-east wing which is near the boundary with the Talsarnau property. Having said this, this location was used as a main entrance to the site previously, with the main parking area located there and ultimately it is not believed that the nature of the use in that part of the site will be significantly different to the previous use.

There would be a marked density in the use of the north-west part of the site, with this area being turned into a formal car park, instead of a casual parking facility, however, there are no residential properties immediately adjacent to that part of the site, and ultimately, the development would be a matter of tidying and formalising the previous use, instead of increasing the size or change the use of that location.

It is acknowledged that the nature of the use by casual visitors, that will come and go more often, is different to the previous use. Having said this, by ensuring an appropriate procedure to manage the site, it is not believed that the nature of the new use would inevitably cause different significant harm to the residential character of the area to the previous use.

It is believed, as is customary for student accommodation in the city of Bangor, that appropriate control over the site can be ensured by securing a management plan that would commit the managers to adopt appropriate measures regarding issues such as the management of noise, transport and visitor conduct, as well as ensure that suitable processes are in place to engage and deal with complaints. Ultimately, it is believed, from adopting appropriate management measures, the development can be acceptable under this criterion of policy TWR 2.

- (v) *The development does not lead to an over-concentration of such accommodation.*

Comment

It is noted above that one of the reasons given by local residents for objecting to this application is that an excess of similar holiday accommodation have already been established within the area. In order to meet the needs of criterion (v), the applicant will need to submit evidence of the current provision of the type of serviced holiday accommodation in question (i.e. the hostel) in the Penisa'r-waun area. Nevertheless, since serviced holiday accommodation is in question here, there is no requirement to submit a business plan. The Planning Statement submitted notes that a desk study shows that there are only two other examples of serviced accommodation in the area; namely "Byncws Jesse James" and "Gwesty Llysieuol Graianfryn". There is also a number of self-serviced accommodation in the area, such as Bwthyn Tyddyn Perthi, Lôn Dryll Outdoor Centre, and Mel-y-Beran, but these are not serviced accommodation and therefore they are not a consideration as a part of the over-provision assessment under the policy. Ultimately, it is not believed that approving the proposal will involve an excess of the type of uses within the local area, despite the concerns of objectors regarding this element of the proposal.

| | |
|--|------------------|
| PLANNING COMMITTEE | DATE: 29/07/2024 |
| REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF DEPARTMENT | |

Permanent Residence

- 5.4 TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities states that only one of the few circumstances in which a new residential development in the open countryside can be justified is when accommodation is required to enable a rural enterprise worker (which can include tourism use), to live at, or close to, his workplace. This proposal provides accommodation for the manager/warden of the facility and it is accepted that it is an integral part of the serviced holiday accommodation provision of this type for managers / staff to be available throughout the day and night, which means that the manager either lives on or in the vicinity of the site. From the information submitted with this amended application, it is now noted that the only access to the manager's accommodation would be from the northern elevation of the site through a separate access to the main hostel, without any access to the broader building. In addition, no facilities would be shared between the warden accommodation and the hostel. Therefore, the manager's accommodation would be separate to the main hostel and subservient to the main use of the building. Bearing in mind the nature of the use proposed, it is believed that there is acceptable justification for the creation of a permanent residential unit on the site as a home for an essential worker and that the use of this element can be managed by means of a material planning condition. It is therefore considered that this part of the proposal meets the requirements of PCYFF 1 and TAN 6.

Economic Development

- 5.5 Paragraph 3.2.1 TAN 23: Economic Development notes that the re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings has an important role in meeting the needs of rural areas for commercial and industrial development, and tourism, sport and recreation. It emphasises the need for the building in question to be suitable for the proposed use and paragraph 3.2.1 notes:

"The re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings has an important role in meeting the needs of rural areas for commercial and industrial development, and tourism, sport and recreation. In recognising this, local planning authorities are expected to adopt a positive approach to the conversion of rural buildings for business re-use, especially those buildings that are located within or adjoining farm building complexes, on the basis that:

- *they are suitable for the specific use;*
- *conversion does not lead to dispersal of activity on such scale as to prejudice town and village vitality;*
- *their form, bulk and general design are in keeping with their surroundings;*
- *imposing conditions on a planning permission overcomes any planning objections, for example on environmental or traffic grounds, which would otherwise outweigh the advantage of re-use;*
- *if the buildings are in the open countryside, they are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction;*
- *conversion does not result in unacceptable impacts upon the structure, form, character or setting where the building is of historic and / or architectural interest."*

| | |
|--|------------------|
| PLANNING COMMITTEE | DATE: 29/07/2024 |
| REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF DEPARTMENT | |

5.6 In considering the above points, it is noted

- that this is a building which has been purposefully designed for residential use by a substantial number of people,
- that this would be a plan that would create new tourism activity without taking away from the activity in other tourism-dependent areas,
- there would be no significant change in the form and size of the development on the site, compared with the previous use
- conditions could be imposed on any planning consent to ensure appropriate control of the facility to safeguard the amenities of neighbours
- no substantial construction work would be required
- there would be no significant change to the visual character of the area and no harm would be caused to local heritage features.

Given the above, it is believed that the proposal is consistent with national policy for economic development in rural areas.

Conclusion regarding the principle of the plan

5.7 Considering the above assessment, and in the context of the further discussion below, it is believed, by imposing appropriate conditions, that it can be ensured that the proposal is acceptable under the requirements of Policies PCYFF 1, PS 14 and TWR 2 of the LDP, as well as the advice included within the document, SPG: Tourism Facilities and Accommodation, TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities and TAN 23: Economic Development.

Visual amenities

5.8 The proposal involves installing a flat roof above the main entrance to the building and this will be the only change to the exterior appearance of the building. Most of the change of use work will be carried out in the interior and considering the scale and design of the change to the exterior front elevation of the building, it is not believed that it would have any detrimental impact on the area's visual amenities or on the setting of a nearby monument or on the designation of the area as the Dinorwig Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest. It is therefore deemed that the proposal is acceptable on the grounds of the requirements of Policies PCYFF 3, PS 19, PS 20 and AT 1 of the LDP.

General and residential amenities

5.9 Policy PCYFF 2 of the LDP states that proposals will be refused where the proposed development would have an unacceptable adverse impact on the health, safety or amenity of occupiers of local residencies due to increased activity, disturbance, noise, light pollution or other forms of pollution or nuisance. Policy TWR 2 together with the SPG: Tourist Facilities and Accommodation, support the objectives of this policy by stating that any development for holiday accommodation should protect residential interests together with being a use that would be in-keeping with the uses of adjoining property (residential property in this case) in terms of noise; traffic disturbance and lack of privacy for any adjoining/nearby property.

5.10 As referred to above, residential dwellings are located close to the application site and correspondence has been received from local residents regarding the potential impact of the proposal on residential amenities, particularly on the grounds of disturbance, noise and traffic. It

| | |
|--|------------------|
| PLANNING COMMITTEE | DATE: 29/07/2024 |
| REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF DEPARTMENT | |

is noted that the site's existing character and its surrounding area has a quiet/tranquil feel and that the previous use as a residential home for the elderly, as well as the associated daily activities, were ones that were considered suitable and appropriate for the area's semi-rural character. The Planning Statement submitted with the application notes, when considering the similarity in the numbers using the site if it were to be converted into a hostel, and the intention to secure 24-hour supervision of the facility, that there would be no significant difference in any disturbance deriving from the use of the proposed holiday accommodation.

- 5.11 When noting the above, it must be accepted that the nature of hostel-type holiday accommodation can lead to a substantially different impact to that of a residential home for the elderly, and without appropriate controls, it can cause noise nuisance, either in the form of the movements of people and vehicles, or in the form of outdoor gathering and socialising. However, from accepting the site management plan as noted in 5.3 above and ensuring a restriction on the numbers using the facility at any given time, it is believed that the amenity impacts can be controlled in a satisfactory manner by using appropriate planning conditions and then the development can be acceptable under the requirements of Policy PCYFF 2 and TWR 2 of the LDP, as well as the advice included within the document SPG: Tourist Facilities and Accommodation.

Transport and access matters

- 5.12 The site together with the village is served by a class III county road with a junction with the A4244 main road approximately 520m east with passing places here and there. The site has two entrances together with parking spaces within the site itself. In response to advertising the application, objections were received from local residents regarding the unsuitability of the road to cope with additional traffic that would be created by the proposed holiday accommodation.
- 5.13. In response to the statutory consultation process, the Transportation Unit had no concerns regarding the suitability of the access and parking arrangements and they did not have a concern about the impact on highway safety. The plans submitted show compliance with Welsh Government parking guidance (CSS Cymru, 2014), which recommends that one parking space would be needed for a commercial vehicle; one parking space for each bedroom and one parking space for every 3 members of staff.
- 5.14 When considering the above, despite the objections received regarding this matter, it is not believed that there are grounds to object the application due to transport considerations and it is believed that the proposal is acceptable under the requirements of Policy TRA 2 and TRA 4 of the LDP, as well as the advice included within the document TAN 18: Transport.

Sustainability matters

- 5.15 Policy PS 5 (Sustainable Developments) supports developments which are consistent with sustainable development principles, and where appropriate, developments should:

“Reduce the need to travel by private transport and encourage the opportunities for all users to travel when required as often as possible by means of alternative modes, placing particular emphasis on walking, cycling and using public transport in accordance with Strategic Policy PS 4”.

This is supported by bullet point 4 of PS 14 (The Visitor Economy), which states:

| | |
|--|------------------|
| PLANNING COMMITTEE | DATE: 29/07/2024 |
| REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF DEPARTMENT | |

“Supporting appropriately scaled new tourist provision and initiatives in sustainable locations in the countryside through the reuse of existing buildings, where appropriate, or as part of farm diversification, particularly where these would also benefit local communities and support the local economy and where they are in accordance with sustainable development objectives;”

5.16 The LDP policies are consistent with national planning policies in terms of how they deal with sustainable development principles. This includes paragraph 3.39 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (Edition 12, February 2024) and paragraph 3.11 Technical Advice Note 18: Transportation, which states:

“Development in rural locations should embody sustainability principles, balancing the need to support the rural economy, whilst maintaining and enhancing the environmental, social and cultural quality of rural areas. Most developments should be located in places accessible by a range of travel modes.”

5.17 The details submitted with the application note: -

- That an official bus stop is located directly adjacent the application site to the north-west of the class III county road.
- The site is within close proximity to several popular tourist attractions in Eryri, which are linked together with the road network and good public footpaths and cycle paths.
- Although it is acknowledged that the majority of users of the holiday/hostel accommodation would use a private car to reach the site, there are however various alternative transport options available once they reach the site, including cycling, public transport and on foot.

5.18 It is noted that the site is located near an established village, not on a site in open countryside, and that an existing transport network is already in place to serve the site and nearby village. As a result of the above, it is believed that the proposal is acceptable based on the requirements of Policy PS5 and PS14 of the LDP as well as compliance with the advice included in the documents TAN 18, TAN 23 and Planning Policy Wales, 2021.

The Welsh Language

5.19 In accordance with the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, it is a duty when making a decision on a planning application to consider the Welsh language, where it is relevant to that application. This is reiterated further in para 3.28 of Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, 2024), along with Technical Advice Note 20. The Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 'Maintaining and Creating Distinctive 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.

5.20 It is noted that there are some specific types of developments where it will be required for the proposal to submit a Welsh Language Statement or Report on the Welsh Language Impact Assessment. The thresholds in terms of when it is expected to submit a Statement/Report have been highlighted in Policy PS1 of the Joint LDP, along with Diagram 5 of the SPG. The proposal does not reach the thresholds to submit a Welsh Language Statement or a Report on a Welsh Language Impact Assessment. However, Appendix 5 of the SPG notes that every housing, 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.

5.21 To this end, the Planning Statement submitted as part of the application states: -

| | |
|--|------------------|
| PLANNING COMMITTEE | DATE: 29/07/2024 |
| REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF DEPARTMENT | |

(i) that residents staying in the hostel will stay there for temporary periods only and therefore there will be no permanent impact on the Welsh language in the area;

(ii) the manager/warden will be local and will speak Welsh and will respond bilingually to the residents;

(iii) the attraction would have a Welsh name or a name with a local connection together with bilingual information to advertise local attractions.

Taking this into account, and by imposing a condition to secure a Welsh name for the site and priority to the Welsh language on any signage and promotional material, it is believed that the proposal is acceptable on the grounds of the relevant SPG.

Infrastructure matters

5.22 In their response to the consultation process, the Public Protection Service asked for confirmation that the existing septic tank has the capacity to serve the development in question. A report was received from competent experts who confirmed that the tank was in a satisfactory condition for a capacity of up to 65 persons. This information was acceptable to the Service.

5.23 In addition, observations were received expressing concerns about the potential of surface water flooding on the site. In response, the Land Drainage Unit noted that there was a history of flooding in the area due to the lack of capacity in the culvert which runs under the development site, to cope with the flow of the watercourse during periods of heavy rain, which causes water to accumulate on the adjacent highway and the site before flowing in the direction of the village. The Council does not have any records that the former home was affected by such flood incidents and the latest NRW flood maps suggest that the building is not at threat as the level of the land is most probably slightly higher than the highway. The site owner is responsible for maintaining the culvert described in order to ensure that this situation does not get worse over time, e.g. due to damage or obstruction to the structure.

5.24 It is not clear from the details submitted what type of surface is intended to be installed to provide parking spaces, or what the proposal is to manage rainwater falling onto the site. It is essential that surface water is managed in line with the national standards, so as not to contribute to existing flooding concerns. Therefore, it is believed essential to impose a condition to ensure that the parking areas have a permeable surface so as to avoid contributing to flood problems and to comply with policy PS 6.

Biodiversity Matters

5.25 Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) deals with green infrastructure, net benefit to biodiversity, the protection afforded to Sites of Special Scientific Interest and trees and woodlands. A Green Infrastructure Statement was submitted as part of the Planning Statement and this notes that all detrimental impacts on the green infrastructure would be avoided as the size of the development would be restricted by adapting the existing building and using the existing hard standing areas. It is not intended to carry out any work to the grassed areas or to the boundaries. All existing boundary plants would be retained and a biodiversity enhancement plan can be secured by imposing a planning condition.

5.26 When considering this statement in the context of the content of Chapter 6 PPW, it is believed that there are no biodiversity matters arising which have any material influence on the decision, therefore, by imposing an appropriate condition to secure biodiversity enhancements, it is believed that the application meets the requirements of Policy PS 19 of the LDP.

| | |
|--|------------------|
| PLANNING COMMITTEE | DATE: 29/07/2024 |
| REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF DEPARTMENT | |

6. Conclusions:

- 6.1 Ultimately, it must be borne in mind that the former residential home is a substantial, vacant building, which has been used for decades for residential purposes. The new proposal would not cause a significant change in the number of people who would be able to use the site at a given time, compared to the previous use. In addition, the vehicular access and parking arrangements are acceptable to the Transportation Unit and it is not believed that highway safety would be harmed. In the context of local and national policies to promote the re-use of existing sites for the economic benefit of communities, by imposing appropriate conditions to manage the amenity impacts of the development, it is believed, on the whole, that this amended proposal has overcome the concerns outlined with the previous application and that it is now possible to approve the development.

7. Recommendation: To approve subject to conditions

1. Development to commence within five years
2. Comply with the plans
3. Hostel to be used for holiday purposes only
4. Permanent accommodation to be used by the site manager only
5. A Site Management Plan to be submitted and agreed before the site becomes operational
6. Welsh Water Condition
7. Biodiversity Enhancement Plan to be submitted and approved
8. Any exterior surface installed on the land must be a permeable material
9. Site must be given a Welsh name and the Welsh language to be given priority on signage and on any promotional material