

Number: 8

Application Number: C17/0116/08/LL

Date Registered: 06/02/2017

Application Type: Full - Planning

Community: Penrhyndeudraeth

Ward: Penrhyndeudraeth

Proposal: Full application to erect a new services building to include stores, workshops, laundry room and offices as well as planting a new woodland on adjacent land.

Location: Gweithdai Portmeirion, Portmeirion, Penrhyndeudraeth, Gwynedd LL48 6ER

Summary of the Recommendation: APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS

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1. Description:

1.1 A Full application to erect a new services building to include stores, workshops, laundry room and offices as well as planting a new woodland on adjacent land.

1.2 The application site is located on the outskirts of the striking village of Portmeirion in a multi-purpose site that is used to store materials, bins, and includes parking spaces etc., while part of the site is also used to keep various metal storage containers. The existing building constructed to the side of the application site is used for biomass, while the landscaping work has been generally maintained within the adjacent area. There are a number of mature trees within the site and also in the surrounding area. The site is within a Conservation Area and within an area which has been designated as a Landscape Conservation Area

1.3 The building would have a floor area of 999m² and would measure 5.4m to the ridge. It would be finished externally with a combination of corrugated panels and block walls, finished with smooth render. Internally, it would provide space for the following:

- Laundry room
- General depot
- Storage space for the Portmeirion shop, Festival Number 6, Archives, Maintenance
- Office and ancillary resources such as a kitchen and toilets
- Brewery

As a result of the loss of trees due to the development, and the need to safeguard visual amenities, it is intended to plant a new woodland on land to the north of the site. This would mean that over 500 indigenous new trees would be planted.

1.4 Advice was provided prior to the submission of the application, and the application is submitted to committee as an application of this scale cannot be dealt with under the delegated procedure.

2. Relevant Policies:

2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and paragraph 2.1.2 of Planning Policy Wales emphasise that planning decisions should be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning considerations include National Planning Policy and the Unitary 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 set out below, 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 Unitary Development Plan 2009:

POLICY B4 - DEVELOPMENT WITHIN OR THAT AFFECTS THE SETTING OF CONSERVATION AREAS - Ensure that proposals within conservation areas, or which affect their setting, are refused unless they aim to maintain or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area and its setting.

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POLICY B10 - PROTECT AND ENHANCE LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION AREAS - Protect and enhance Landscape Conservation Areas by ensuring that proposals conform to a series of criteria aimed at avoiding significant harm to recognised features.

POLICY B20 - SPECIES AND THEIR HABITATS THAT ARE INTERNATIONALLY AND NATIONALLY IMPORTANT - Refuse proposals which are likely to cause disturbance or unacceptable damage to protected species and their habitats unless they 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 protecting 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 safeguarding 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.

POLICY B27 - LANDSCAPING PLANS - Ensuring that permitted proposals incorporate soft/hard landscaping of high standard which is appropriate for the site and which takes into consideration a series of factors aimed at avoiding damage to recognised features.

POLICY CH22 - CYCLING NETWORK, FOOTPATHS AND RIGHTS OF WAY - All parts of the cycling network, footpaths and rights of way will be protected by encouraging proposals to incorporate them satisfactorily within the development and by refusing proposals which will prohibit plans to extend the cycling network, footpaths or rights of way. Should this not be possible, appropriate provision will have to be made to divert the route or to provide a new and acceptable route.

POLICY CH33 - SAFETY ON ROADS AND STREETS - Development proposals will be approved provided they conform to specific criteria relating to the vehicular access, the standard of the existing roads network and traffic calming measures.

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.

2.4 **Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Local Development Plan. (Composite Version including Matters Arising Changes, January 2017)**

POLICY PCYFF1: Development criteria

POLICY PCYFF 2: Design and place shaping

POLICY PCYFF 3: Design and landscaping

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POLICY CYF 5: Re-use and adapt rural buildings or a residential unit for business use or construct new units for business/industry

POLICY A1: Conservation areas

POLICY AMG: Local biodiversity conservation

POLICY AMG 2: Protecting and improving features and qualities that are unique to the character of the local landscape

2.5 National Policies:

Planning Policy Wales Edition 9 2016
TAN 5: Planning and nature conservation
TAN 12: Design
TAN 23: Economic Developments

Welsh Office Circular 61/96: Historic buildings and conservation areas

3. Relevant Planning History:

3.1 The Portmeirion site as a whole has a considerable planning history; the following are relevant due to the position of Portmeirion which is adjacent to the site of this current application:

Application C15/0040/08/LL - erect a building for biomass use together with associated track and access - approved 14/07/15.

4. Consultations:

Community/Town Council: No objection

Transportation Unit: No objection

Natural Resources Wales: Not received

Welsh Water: No observations

Public Protection Unit: Not received

Biodiversity Unit: General observations and advice and the need to include conditions in relation to landscaping and lighting.

Footpaths Unit: Not received

Conservation Officer: No observations

Public Consultation: A notice was posted on site and advertised in the press, and nearby residents were informed. The advertising period has ended and no correspondence has been received within the statutory period.

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5. Assessment of the material planning considerations:

The principle of the development

- 5.1 Policy D8 of the GLDP is relevant to this application. 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. Since this is an application for a building to serve the current established business it is considered that the principle of the proposal is in accordance with the requirements of policy D8.
- 5.2 It is a requirement that planning applications be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless material considerations state otherwise. The current 'Development Plan' is the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan (2001 - 2016) and the Joint Local Development Plan for Gwynedd and Anglesey (JLDP) will replace the Unitary Plan as the 'development plan' once it is formally adopted. It is likely that the JLDP will be adopted during July 2017.
- 5.3 The statutory test should be the first consideration at all times when dealing with any planning application, i.e. it is necessary to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan, unless other material considerations state otherwise. The JLDP is now a material planning consideration for the purposes of development control. Paragraph 3.1.3 of Planning Policy Wales states:
- "Material considerations could include current circumstances, policies in an emerging development plan and planning policies of the Welsh Government. All applications should be considered in relation to up-to-date policies ..."*
- 5.4 Although a number of policies have been discussed in detail during the Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Local Development Plan Hearings, we will not know the contents of the Plan for certain until the Inspector presents his binding report.
- 5.5 Paragraph 2.14.1 of Planning Policy Wales states:
- "...thus in considering what weight to give to the specific policies in an emerging LDP that apply to a particular proposal, local planning authorities will need to consider carefully the underlying evidence and background to the policies. National planning policy can also be a material consideration in these circumstances."*
- 5.6 In this case, the Joint LDP policies as noted in 2.4 above are material and as these policies are consistent with the policies of the Unitary Development Plan and the relevant National Advice included in PPW, it is considered that the above assessment and the recommendation of this report are consistent with the emerging policy.

Visual, general and residential amenities

- 5.7 The site of the proposed development is located on the periphery of part of the extensive Portmeirion site, and is adjacent to the existing biomass building near to the main car park for day visitors to the village. The surrounding area contains a substantial number of mature trees of varying species.
- 5.8 The existing site houses a number of structure, spaces to store materials, bins and equipment, and it is considered that a new purpose-built building would eradicate the

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present 'untidy' appearance. It is acknowledged that it is a substantially sized building of an 'industrial' appearance within a sensitive area with regard to designations and appearance. However, it is considered that the proposal would be an opportunity to neaten the site as it would include internal space to store equipment, thereby disposing of some existing items such as the various metal containers which are considered to be unacceptable in relation to their appearance and their impact on the area's visual amenities.

- 5.9 The proposed building would be located adjacent to the existing biomass building, and as the site is located on slightly higher ground, the ridge would be approximately 1m higher than the biomass building. However, it is not deemed to be unreasonable in terms of its size or location. It is a standard design for this type of practical building, and therefore it is not considered that the proposal is unacceptable in terms of the requirements B22 of the UDP.
- 5.10 The details of the external finishes will be agreed by a formal condition, which will ensure that this element is acceptable and that it satisfies the requirements of policy B25 of the UDP.
- 5.11 The site is located within a Conservation Area and a Landscape Conservation Area. It is not deemed that the building due to its size, design and finish would impact upon the feature or the character of these protected areas and therefore it is not considered that the proposal is unacceptable in relation to the requirements of policies B4 and B10 of the UDP.
- 5.12 The nearest residential houses are located on higher ground and at a distance of 160 - 240m in a north and north western direction from the application site. Effort has been made to protect the area's visual amenities and the residential amenities of the nearest houses by planting a woodland, and through this, and setting a condition for further landscaping, it is considered that there will be no unacceptable detrimental impact on the residential amenities of the area or the visual amenities. In considering the current use and condition of the site, the intended use, appearance, size etc., it is not considered that the proposal would have an unacceptable detrimental impact on local residents and it is therefore considered that the proposal is acceptable in relation to Policy B23 of the UDP.

Transport and access matters

- 5.13 The location of the proposed development is within the extensive Portmeirion site, and therefore it would not affect any public highway. The aspect of the proposal that involves establishing a laundry within part of the building negates the need for the existing regular deliveries from an external company. This means a reduction in the number of lorries that serve the site from the nearest highway which will be an improvement in relation to reducing the number of movements.
- 5.14 A public footpath runs past part of the site's boundary, but it is not considered that the proposal will affect or have any impact on existing movements along this footpath. It is not believed that the proposal is unacceptable in relation to these matters and, therefore, it complies with the requirements of policies CH22 and CH33 of the UDP.

Biodiversity matters

- 5.15 The proposed development involves felling some existing trees within the site. Observations have been received from the Biodiversity Unit which state that any felling should take place outside the bird nesting season, and when the site is

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completed it should not be lit to any extent that would affect an ancient woodland. It is suggested that relevant conditions should be included to ensure that the above requirements are satisfied, and in doing so, it is considered that the proposal complies with the requirements of Policy B20 of the UDP.

- 5.16 Discussions have taken place between the Biodiversity Unit's Senior Officer and the applicant to agree on appropriate mitigation measures for the loss of trees on the site. It is proposed to plant a woodland of indigenous species on nearby land and further landscaping details will be provided in order to agree upon other areas where trees will be planted. It is considered that these measures are acceptable and, therefore the proposal complies with the requirements of policy B27 of the UDP.

The economy

- 5.17 The proposed building is mainly being developed to improve upon the existing resources to store and keep various goods. It can be seen that there are some associated elements which expand somewhat on Portmeirion's existing enterprises, by locating a new Laundry and Brewery within the building. It is deemed that it is important to support these elements as they have the potential to create additional employment opportunities, thereby expanding and strengthening the established Portmeirion business. It is considered that this is an element that is supported by policy D8 of the UDP.

Any other considerations

- 5.18 A discussion was held prior to the submission of a formal application where it was confirmed that the principle of the proposal was acceptable, subject to submitting comprehensive details through a formal planning application, and giving full consideration to all the responses received from the public consultation and compliance with all the Council's adopted policies.

6. Conclusions:

- 6.1 Having considered the above and all the material planning matters including the local and national policies and guidance, together with the observations received, it is considered that this proposal as shown conforms with the requirements of the relevant policies as noted above, and that it is therefore acceptable for approval.

7. Recommendation:

- 7.1 To approve – conditions
1. Time
 2. Comply with plans
 3. Agree on finishes
 4. Landscaping
 5. Lighting Plan
 6. Protect the public footpath
 7. Welsh Water
 8. Restrict use
 9. Disposal of existing materials/equipment
 10. No external storage of materials