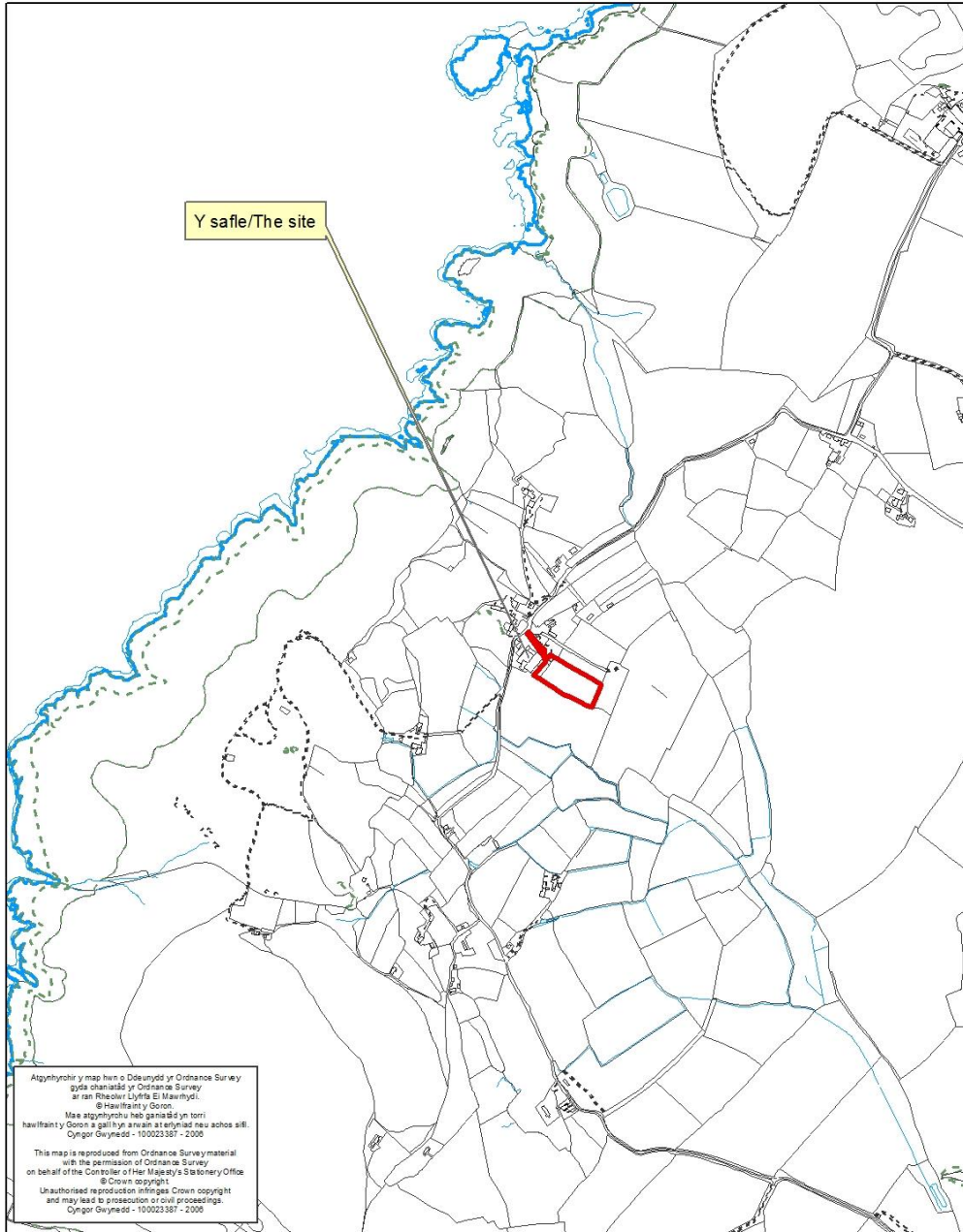


Number: 2



Rhif y Cais / Application Number : C14/1222/30/LL

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



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Application Number: C14/1222/30/LL
Date Registered: 31/12/2014
Application Type: Full - Planning
Community: Aberdaron
Ward: Aberdaron

Proposal: USE OF EXEMPTED CAMPING AND CARAVANNING CLUB AS AN INDEPENDENT SITE FOR TEN SEASONAL TOURING CARAVANS AND FIVE TENTS
Location: BRYN GWYNT, ANELOG, ABERDARON, PWLLHELI, LL538BT

Summary of the Recommendation: TO REFUSE

1. Description:

- 1.1 This is a retrospective application for the use of the site of five caravans and ten tents under an exempted Camping and Caravanning Club certificate as an independent site to locate ten seasonal touring caravans and five tents. It is also proposed to add two hard standings to the eight existing hard standings to create ten hard standings in total. The tents and caravans are located in a field to the south-east of the farm's existing buildings. The applicant states that the existing toilet block contains two toilets, two showers and three basins for men and women, and the toilet is linked to a septic tank. Following discussing the application with the applicant, he confirmed his willingness to amend the application by deleting the 'seasonal' element from the proposal. The applicant has planted trees along the south-western and north-eastern boundaries of the site. The existing access road is used, which leads past the farmyard to link the caravan and camping site with a parallel class III county road. Planning permission was granted for the storage of touring caravans on land at Bryn Gwynt, located around 130 metres from the site of the application, and that permission is listed in paragraph 3 below.
- 1.2 The site is situated in the countryside and lies within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The class 3 road that serves the site also serves private residential properties and farms in the site's vicinity.
- 1.3 A Design and Access Statement was submitted with the application. The Language and Community Statement was received late, and the observations of the Joint Policy Unit on its content are awaited.
- 1.4 The application is submitted to committee as it involves ten caravans.

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 (GUDP)

POLICY A2 – PROTECT THE SOCIAL, LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL FABRIC OF COMMUNITIES - Safeguard the social, linguistic or cultural cohesion of communities against significant harm due to the size, scale or location of proposals.

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POLICY B8 – THE LLŶN AND ANGLESEY AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB) - Safeguard, maintain and enhance the character of the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty by ensuring that proposals conform to a series of criteria aimed at protecting the recognised features of the site.

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 B27 – LANDSCAPING SCHEMES

Ensure that permitted proposals incorporate high quality soft/hard landscaping which is appropriate to the site and which takes into consideration a series of factors aimed at avoiding damage to recognised features.

POLICY CH18 – AVAILABILITY OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Development proposals will be refused if there is no adequate provision of necessary infrastructure for the development, unless they can conform to one of two specific criteria which require that appropriate arrangements are made to ensure adequate provision, or that the development is carried out in phases in order to conform to any proposed scheme for the provision of infrastructure.

POLICY CH33 – SAFETY ON ROADS AND STREETS

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

POLICY D19 - NEW SITES FOR TOURING CARAVANS, CAMPING AND TOURING UNITS

Proposals for developing new touring caravan, camping, or touring unit sites will be permitted provided they conform to specific criteria regarding the design, layout, appearance and location of the development, traffic issues, and restrictions on the use of the units and the accumulative impact on the local area.

Supplementary Planning Guidance:- Planning and the Welsh Language (2009)
Holiday Accommodation (July 2011)

2.3 National Policies:

Planning Policy Wales – Edition 7 (July 2014)

Chapter 5 - Conserving and Improving Natural Heritage and the Coast

Chapter 8 - Transport

Chapter 11 - Tourism, Sport and Recreation

Technical Advice Note 12 - Design

Technical Advice Note 13 – Tourism

Technical Advice Note 18 - Transport

Technical Advice Note 20 – Planning and the Welsh Language

Technical Advice Note 23 - Economic Development

3. Relevant Planning History:

3.1 No previous planning applications have been submitted to the Council for the caravan and camping site. The application was submitted to the Council as a result of

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the enforcement officers investigating the site and confirming that the number of units located on the site at present is more than the approved number under the exempted Camping and Caravanning Club certificate.

- 3.2 Application number C02D/0385/30/LL - Full application - Storage of five touring caravans - Bryn Gwynt, Anelog - Approved on 13 November 2002 - Amongst other conditions, condition 2 restricts caravan storage during the winter period.
- 3.3 Application number C03D/0608/30/LL - Full application - Application to continue the use of land for the storage of caravans without complying with conditions 2 and 3 (storage period and number of caravans) on permission number C02D/0385/30/LL Bryn Gwynt, Anelog - Approved on 27 May 2004 - Amongst other conditions, condition 7 restricts caravan storage during the winter period.
- 3.4 Application number C04D/0712/30/LL - Full application - Storage of ten additional touring caravans on land with existing permission for the storage of ten touring caravans - Bryn Gwynt, Anelog - Approved on 26 January 2006 - Amongst other conditions, condition 6 restricts caravan storage during the winter period.
- 3.5 Application number C07D/0308/30/LL - Full application - Amend condition 6 on permission C04D/0712/30/LL (restricting touring caravan storage use between 1 Sept to 1 May of the following year) to provide all year round storage. Bryn Gwynt, Anelog - Approved on 13 November 2007. Amongst other conditions, condition 5 restricts the storage of caravans to 20 during the winter period and condition 6 restricts the storage of caravans to five during the summer.
- 3.6 Application number C07D/0326/30/LL - Full application - Convert outbuilding to holiday accommodation - Bryn Mawr, opposite Bryn Gwynt, Anelog - Approved on 10 December 2007.
- 3.7 Application number C10/0006/30/LL - Full application - Convert stone outbuilding to create holiday bunkhouse including erection of a rear extension and widen existing gateway - Bryn Mawr, opposite Bryn Gwynt, Anelog - Approved on 28 April 2010.
- 3.8 Retrospective application to retain holiday bunkhouse construction work, differing from what was approved in application C10D/0006/30/LL - Bryn Mawr, opposite Bryn Gwynt, Anelog - The application was refused by the Council on 31 July 2012 but it was approved on appeal by the Inspectorate on 5 July 2013.

4. Consultations:

Community/Town Council: Support.

Transportation Unit: Refuse the proposal due to the fact that the roads which serve the site are unsuitable for transportation generated by a seasonal touring caravan site.

AONB Officer: A moderately level site is being used to site five touring caravans and ten tents under Camping and Caravanning Club management. Although the Anelog area is fairly open, the site is not very prominent in the landscape. Also, the applicant has planted willow trees to landscape the site. It is not considered that the site would impact the AONB if an additional landscaping plan is implemented, if the units are restricted to the highest part of the land, and if it can

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be ensured that the units are moved away from the site and stored in the appropriate locations.

Public Protection Unit: No objection to the proposal. The details of the application confirm that the number of toilets and washing facilities together with the density of units on-site comply with the Model Standards 1983. Need to separate the caravan site from the farmyard.

Natural Resources Wales: No objection to the proposal. In relation to the landscape, the Council is reminded that the site is located within an AONB where the authority has a duty under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to give due consideration to safeguarding and improving the natural beauty of the AONB. NRW does not consider that the proposal in its current form would impact the value of the area's landscape including the purpose of the AONB.

Biodiversity No concerns.

Public Consultation: A notice was posted on the site and nearby residents were notified. The advertising period has ended and no responses were received.

5. Assessment of the material planning considerations:

Principle of the development:

- 5.1 Policy D19 states that proposals to develop new touring caravans, camping or touring unit sites will be permitted provided that they comply with the criteria within the policy. These criteria state as follows: 1. That the site is unobtrusive and would not cause significant harm to the visual quality of the landscape; 2. That the site is in close proximity to the highways network and that adequate access can be provided without causing significant harm to the character and features of the landscape; 3. That the site is for touring purposes only, and 4. The cumulative effect of touring caravan sites. These aspects are considered in the body of the report.
- 5.2 Regarding clause 3 of the policy, note that the application was originally submitted to the Council for the use of the land as a site to locate seasonal touring units. Following discussing the proposal with the applicant, he stated that current users would occupy the site and that the caravans/tents would be kept in the existing storage area in Bryn Gwynt, he also confirmed his willingness to amend the proposal to locate touring units on the site only. This means that the applicant has expressed his willingness to move the touring units away from the site when they are not occupied, and that changing this aspect of the proposal complies with clause 3.
- 5.3 The application involves establishing a new touring caravan site to replace the existing exempted camping use (as part of the Camping and Caravanning Club). Establishing a site as part of the Camping and Caravanning Club means that up to five touring units can be located on-site without planning permission. The applicant stated, as additional information, that the site has been used as a touring caravan site since 2007. It is considered that such information is an important Planning consideration in assessing the proposal. The Pen Llŷn area has a variety of similar exempted sites and approving the application could lead to creating a precedent for those sites with the possibility of receiving more applications for dual purpose sites for the caravan club in an area which is already under pressure from touring caravans.

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Visual amenities

- 5.4 The site lies within the Llŷn AONB. The site is located near existing farm buildings and the applicant has planted trees along the south-western and north-eastern boundaries of the site. Although the site is visible from the parallel county road, the existing planting work reduces the site's prominence in the landscape.
- 5.5 The beauty of the landscape is one of the area's main attractions for visitors and it is extremely important to protect these resources which are vital to the prosperity of the tourism industry. Touring caravan sites which are located in open areas have a significant harmful impact on this sensitive landscape. Policy D19 of the GUDP only approves new touring caravan sites in unobtrusive locations which are hidden by the existing features of the landscape and / or where touring units can be easily assimilated into the landscape in a way that does not have an unacceptable impact on the visible quality and character of the landscape. It is acknowledged that the applicant has made an effort to landscape the site by planting trees along the site's boundaries. However, a landscaping plan has not been submitted indicating exactly which trees and hedges have been planted and where they are located. However, recently a further plan was received which indicated the location of additional tree planting between the caravan and tent site and the county road; no details were received with this plan. Criterion 1 of policy D19 acknowledges the elements that will need to be concentrated on well before any planning application is submitted to create a new high quality site. As part of the application, the applicant will be expected to submit details showing how their proposal will meet the requirements of criterion 1, policy D19.
- 5.6 The AONB Officer has stated that he does not think the proposal would impact the AONB if an additional landscaping plan is implemented, if the units are restricted to the highest part of the field and if it can be ensured that the units are moved off the site and stored in the appropriate locations. While the officer's observations are appreciated, it is considered that the number of units means that they would expand towards the field's south-eastern boundary and would therefore create a prominent development in the landscape which is contrary to policy D19 of the GUDP, together with policy B8 of the GUDP, which amongst other things required the assurance that developments will not harm the AONB landscape.

General and residential amenities

- 5.7 The site is located outside any village boundary and approximately 50m from a nearby house which lies to the north of the site. The site is currently used as a touring caravan site under the management of the Camping Club, and although it is intended to add to the number of caravans on the site, there will be no increase in the overall number of units. It is therefore felt that the proposed camping use will not create more noise and activities than the current use. It is not considered that the proposal would have a substantial detrimental impact on nearby residents and therefore it is not considered that the proposal is significantly contrary to Policy B23.

Transport and access matters

- 5.8 Criterion 2 of Policy D19 requires that new caravan sites are located in close proximity to a highways network, and that adequate access can be provided without causing significant harm to the character and features of the landscape. Policy CH33 relates to road safety. Criterion 1 of Policy CH33 requests that vehicular access to the site is provided which is safe and in keeping with the local area, and Criterion 2

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states that the existing road network must be of an adequate standard to deal with the flow of traffic that will derive from the development. An existing entrance which serves the site together with the farmyard and building is used at present. The entrance is located to the north of the site where visibility splays measure around 30m to the east and around 70m to the west. The location of the site is outside the 30mph speed limit area, where theoretical speed is 60mph. Technical Advice Note 18 - Transportation sets guidelines for visibility standards. Table A in Annex B states that a stopping distance of 215m is required for a speed of 60mph. These matters were discussed with the Senior Development Control Officer (Roads) and given that vehicles along the road travel at a speed of no more than 40mph, and that the entrance serves a farmyard and an existing caravan site (although this is outside Planning control) it is felt that the entrance's current visibility is therefore acceptable.

- 5.9 The applicant states that the application involves establishing a touring caravan site and that existing users will occupy the site, that they will keep their caravans/tents in the existing storage area in Bryn Gwynt and will therefore reduce transportation on local roads. However, the use and location of the site means that caravans would be likely to travel around 3.4km along the class 3 road before joining with the class 2 road, B4413, which is located to the east of the site. Criterion 2 of Policy D19 requests, amongst other things, that the site is near the highway network. The Council's Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance – 'Holiday Accommodation' elaborates on this and it is noted in paragraph 34 that it is important that new sites are located as near as possible to the main highways network i.e. class A and B. It is not considered that the proposal meets these requirements.
- 5.10 It is given to understand that the site has been used as a caravan and camping site under an exempted Camping and Caravanning Club certificate since 2007, and it is likely that this use existed before implementing the rights to adapt the buildings for holiday use. It is also likely that the traffic along the class 3 roads which lead to the site has increased since establishing the site as an exempted caravan and camping site as a result of converting the buildings for holiday use.
- 5.11 The formal observations of the Senior Development Control Manager (Roads) were received, which confirmed that the local area's roads network is unsuitable for the additional transportation that the proposal would generate and therefore it is considered that the policy is contrary to criterion two of policy D19 and policy CH33.

Biodiversity Matters

- 5.12 Observations were received from NRW and the Council's Biodiversity Unit which stated that they did not object to the proposal. NRW has also noted that the use in its current form does not have a harmful impact on the value of the landscape. The applicant states in the Design and Access Statement that the layout of the existing development of the site or visitors' ancillary use does not impact the trees and hedges that have already been planted and that he had allocated 2.5 acres of land near the site to create a bird habitat.

Relevant planning history

- 5.13 No formal planning right exists on the site at present, apart from the exempted certificate that has been provided by the Camping and Caravanning Club for five caravans and ten tents. The applicant states that the site has been used as an exempted touring caravan site since 2007 under Camping and Caravanning Club management.

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- 5.14 Planning permission has already been approved and implemented to establish a holiday accommodation business and caravan storage within 130m of the site of the application.

The economy

- 5.15 The Council recognises the importance of maintaining a flourishing tourism industry that creates job opportunities for the local community while also contributing to the efforts of farmers to diversify. The applicant states that new businesses in rural areas are crucial to maintaining and improving rural communities. He also stated that the existing farm was not viable as an active farm; that he was giving up his permanent job to focus on his business initiative full-time and that diversifying to tourism with the holiday accommodation and bunkhouse provided another source of income to ensure the viability of the agricultural holding. At present, the tourism side of the business (in its entirety) employs 3.5 people. The applicant states that the tourism business including the caravan site adds to the business' variety, supports other local tourism businesses by contributing to the local economy and providing jobs for local employees. The applicant states that this is in line with Planning Policy Wales which notes the need to secure a local economy and Technical Advice Note 6: Planning for Sustainable Communities which supports diversification in the rural economy as a way of providing local employment opportunities. The site is already used as a touring caravans and tents site and because of this makes a contribution to the local economy under the conditions of an exempted club. The proposal involves establishing a touring caravan site in a sensitive area, which is visible and prominent within the AONB, and where local and national planning policies presume against developments that have a significant detrimental impact on the area including an impact on the roads network. It is not considered that the potential of profit for the local economy outweighs the other relevant planning considerations noted and justifies permitting this application.

Infrastructure matters

- 5.16 It is not considered that the proposal is contrary to policy CH18 as no objection has been received regarding water supply, power and the method of disposing of sewage and water.

Language and Community Matters

- 5.17 In terms of an impact on the language and community, Supplementary Planning Guidance - Planning and the Welsh Language, requires a Linguistic and Community Statement as part of an application for any tourism development which will create ten or more holiday units. The proposal involves establishing a campsite for locating ten caravans and five tents. A Linguistic Statement was received late, and the response of the Joint Planning Policy Unit on its content is awaited and it is thought that the findings can be reported back to the Committee, along with whether the Statement submitted is in line with Policy A2 of the UDP, the SPG and TAN 20

Any other consideration

- 5.18 The applicant states that he is in the process of buying the old mill in Aberdaron which is a grade 2 listed building, with the intention of restoring it, and the profit from this proposal would be set against the cost of restoring the old mill. Therefore, the applicant considers that this proposal is an 'enabling development' i.e. the applicant will invest the profit made from the proposal to restore the mill.

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5.19 A 'Conservation Management Plan, Archaeological Assessment' report and an Archaeological Survey of the old mill were submitted as part of the application. No financial details were submitted with the application to assess whether there was any justification here to consider the application an 'enabling development'. However, it is not considered that this information is necessary to assess the principle of an 'enabling development' as establishing a new touring caravan site on this site would not be a development that would be considered acceptable to justify funding the restoration work of a grade 2 old mill, which is located in the village of Aberdaron around 2.5 kilometres away from the site of the application and it would not outweigh the other relevant policy considerations assessed in this report.

6. Conclusions:

6.1 It is considered that the proposal would have an impact on the area's visual amenities and although the applicant has undertaken some landscaping work to try to alleviate the visual impact on the landscape, it is not considered that it is adequate in this case given the location of the site in a sensitive area within the AONB. It is not considered that the class 3 road which serves the site is sufficient for the additional information that is likely to be generated by the development, and the observations of the Transportation Unit confirming this were received.

7. Recommendation:

7.1 To Refuse

1. The road that serves this site is substandard for the transportation that would be generated by the development, as well as significant harm to road safety. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies CH33 and D19 of the GUDP.
2. It is considered that the proposal, due to its location in the sensitive landscape, would likely create an obtrusive feature within the AONB which is contrary to the objective of safeguarding, maintaining and improving the character of the AONB. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal is contrary to policies B8 and D19 of the GUDP.