

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 24/09/2020
REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT	

**Number: 2**

**Application Number: C20/0222/20/LL**

**Date Registered: 05/03/2020**

**Application Type: Full**

**Community: Y Felinheli**

**Ward: Y Felinheli**

**Proposal: Demolition of existing stables and erection of new stables along with the erection of an indoor riding school building, manège and associated infrastructure (including relocating the access and parking arrangements)**

**Location: Sŵn y Môr, Caernarfon, LL55 1UE**

**Summary of the Recommendation: To approve with conditions**

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## 1. Description:

- 1.1 This is a full application for the demolition of the existing stables and erection of new stables in their place along with the erection of an indoor riding school building, riding manège and associated infrastructure (including rearranging the existing access and parking arrangements) on a site near the banks of the Menai Straits at Llanfair Is Gaer which lies to the north of Caernarfon and to the south of Felinheli. The application can be split into several different elements, which include:-
- Demolition of the existing stables for the applicant's private use and erection of new stables measuring 36.5m long, 12.2m wide with a height of 5.9m to the roof ridge, along with the erection of an indoor riding school measuring 61m long, 30m wide with a height of 8.2m to the ridge with a total floor surface area of 2,275m<sup>2</sup>.
  - A small corner of the riding school will include toilets and a viewing area/coffee place.
  - Undertaking associated infrastructure work to include a provision for treating rainwater and foul water, walking paths and vehicle paths around the site and new fencing.
  - Extending the surface area of the existing manège from 72m x 28m to 60m x 60m.
  - Making occasional use of the nearby fields as an overflow car park.
  - Altering the location and design of the existing access off the nearby unclassified county road along with the provision of 20 parking spaces within the site.
  - Undertaking landscaping and tree planting work in accordance with the recommendations of the Visual and Landscape Impact Assessment submitted as part of the application.
  - There will be an element of excavating and filling the existing land surface in order to accommodate the riding school and stables below.
  - Extending the eastern boundary of the site from 120m to 130m long.
- 1.2 The 0.17ha site lies adjacent to the applicant's property known as Sŵn y Môr with the existing driveway and access off an unclassified county road which also serves St Mary's Church and Plas Menai national water-sports centre. The site currently includes stables and the manège that are located immediately behind Sŵn y Môr. The access is set on an angle to the nearby county road with parking spaces located between the access itself and the stables. The site is extensively screened with a thick *clawdd* which is approximately 2m high and this forms the northern boundary of the site.
- 1.3 To the north of the site, the unclassified county road is located, along with St Mary's Church (grade II listed building), a cemetery and the Plas Menai national water-sports centre; located to the east is agricultural land and a woodland, along with Lôn Las Menai/Wales Coast Path and the A487 trunk road lies further afield. To the east, there is agricultural land and a woodland and the Griffiths Crossing Industrial Estate lies further afield and the applicant's property situated on the banks of the Menai Straits is located to the west.
- 1.4 The site lies in open countryside and the Anglesey Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is situated approximately 80m to the west and the Menai Straits and Conwy Bay Special Conservation Area is located approximately 200m to the north. According to LANDMAP (the Welsh landscape baseline), the area around Plas

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Menai is identified as an area of low sensory and visual surfaces considering the nearby modern, mixed and discordant developments.

- 1.5 In order to support the application, the following documents were submitted - Design and Access Statement, Business Plan, Planning Statement, Report on the Pre-application Consultation (PAC), Preliminary Ecology Report along with a Visual and Landscape Impact Assessment Report.
- 1.6 It was confirmed that the applicant had undertaken a pre-application consultation in accordance with Article 1 of the Town and Country Planning Act (Development Control Procedure) (Wales) (Amendment) 2016, as the proposal is a development that is defined as a *major development*. A Pre-application Consultation Report (PAC) has been included with the application in order to reflect this consultation. Although the development is one that is described as a *major development*, there is no need for an Environmental Impact Assessment in relation to this development as this type of development is not included within Schedule 2, Regulation 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning Regulations (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) 2017.

## 2. Relevant Policies:

- 2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and 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 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 seven 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 **Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan 2011-2026 (LDP) adopted 31 July 2017:-**

ISA1: Infrastructure provision

ISA4: Safeguarding existing open spaces

PCYFF1: Development Boundaries

PCYFF2: Development criteria

PCYFF3: Design and place shaping

PCYFF4: Design and landscaping

PCYFF5: Carbon management

PCYFF6: Water conservation

PS5: Sustainable development

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PS6: Mitigating the Effect of Climate Change and adapting to them

AMG1: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans

AMG5: Local Biodiversity Conservation

PS1: The Welsh Language and Culture

PS4: Sustainable Transport, Development and Accessibility

TRA2: Parking standards

TRA4: Managing transport impacts

CYF6: Re-use and adapt rural buildings or a residential unit for business use or construct new units for business/industry

PS19: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

PS20: Preserving and where appropriate enhancing heritage assets

Gwynedd Design Guidance (2003)

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG): Maintaining and Creating Distinctive and Sustainable Communities

SPG: Character of the landscape

SPG: Planning for Sustainable Building

#### 2.4 **National Policies:**

Planning Policy Wales (PPW), Edition 10, November 2018

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design

TAN16: Sports, Leisure and Open Spaces

TAN 18: Transport

NCT23: Economic Development

TAN24: The Historic Environment

TAN6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities

### 3. **Relevant Planning History:**

- 3.1 Pre-application enquiry, application number Y19/001172 - demolition of existing stables and erection of new stables along with the erection of an indoor riding school building and manège. The response stated whilst the principle of developing and extending the business on this site is acceptable under the policies of the Joint Local

Development Plan, the success of any planning application would depend to a vast degree on an assessment of the visual impact of the development and the possible harm to the landscape. In addition, it will be essential to establish the exact nature of the activities that will take place on the site so that the potential impacts on the area's amenities and any broader side-effects on considerations such as transport, can be assessed.

- 3.2 Application number C12/0995/20/LL – retrospective application to erect a stable, along with the provision of a hardstanding. Approved in August 2012.
- 3.3 Application number C10A/0310/20/LL – erection of stables, new access, driveway and riding area approved in August, 2010.

#### 4. Consultations:

Community/Town Council:	Object - the size and height of the building affects the character and conservation of the area, in particular as the ancient Church and a cemetery are located in the area. The tranquil experience and atmosphere of the cemeteries will be affected by the noise created by the enterprise.
Transportation Unit:	No objection to the proposal on the grounds of road safety and parking, but recommend including relevant conditions/notes if the application is approved.
Natural Resources Wales:	<p>No objection to the application, but note the following observations:</p> <p>Protected Sites - This site is within 200 metres of the Menai Straits and Conwy Bay Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Natural Resources Wales has noted the potential impact routes of pollution for the features of this site.</p> <p>The above pollution routes might not lead to a substantial impact if the developer adheres to the pollution prevention guidelines (within the Advice to Developer section below).</p> <p>Landscape - Agree with the mitigation proposals noted in the Visual and Landscape Impact Assessment (Siân Griffiths, LVIA, January 2020) in paragraph 1.15 and we do not have any additional requirements. No proposals have been included for exterior lighting. If the manège, car park, access to buildings, and external spaces will need to be lit, we recommend that a lighting plan is stipulated as a condition of any permission. The lighting units selected, and their location, would need to be confirmed and show the night sky and side lighting and the visibility of the lighting source would be avoided within views of the AONB.</p> <p>Protected Species - It is noted that the bat report submitted to support the above application (<i>Cambrian Ecology</i>, 15 November 2019), has noted that no bats were using the application site. Therefore, there are no further species observations to make on the application as submitted.</p>

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	<p>Other matters - The above observations only relate specifically to matters on the check-list, Advice Service on Development Plans: consultation subjects (September 2018). No consideration has been given to the possible impacts on other matters and we cannot disregard the possibility that the proposed development can impact the interests of others. The applicant is reminded of the fact that it is their responsibility to ensure that all other licences/permissions are relevant to the development, as well as planning permission.</p>
Welsh Water:	<p>Recommends that the applicant contacts Natural Resources Wales as the proposal involves using a septic tank.</p>
Public Protection Unit:	<p>No response.</p>
Biodiversity Unit:	<p>The report of Cambrian Ecology showed that the development would not impact biodiversity. In accordance with the report, the recommendations in section 10 should be realised (<i>Biodiversity Gain</i>) by planting indigenous trees. A condition should be imposed that the developer presents a planting scheme for approval by the Authority.</p> <p>Following NRW's observations above, Gwynedd Council, as the Competent Authority must undertake a Test of Likely Significant Effect under Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) before determining the application.</p> <p>The first step is to undertake a Test of Likely Significant Effect:</p> <p>There is a small risk for some polluted material to escape from the site after the demolition of the building and the building work and impact the features of the Menai Straits and Conwy Bay SCA European Site. The developer will be required to follow recognised good practice for this type of development. These have been detailed in the observations from Natural Resources Wales and there should be a condition.</p> <p>The developer is advised to follow the directions within Advice Note Pollution Prevention 5 "Maintenance work in water or close to water":</p> <p>Due to the above details and the size of the development, its distance from the European site (185 metres), Gwynedd Council can be confident that the development will not lead to a Significantly Negative Impact on the features or processes of the Menai Straits and Conwy Bay SAC.</p>

Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service:	Despite the restricted footprint of the development, potential exists of identifying archaeological materials from the middle ages and, in this respect, there will be a need to undertake archaeological mitigation measures in the form of a relevant planning condition should the application be approved.
Water and Environment Unit:	<p>From January 7 2019, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) will be required to control surface water for every new development of more than one dwelling or where the building area with drainage implications is 100m<sup>2</sup> or more. Drainage systems must be designed and constructed in accordance with the minimum standards for sustainable drainage as published by Welsh Ministers. These systems must be approved by Gwynedd Council in its role as the SuDS Approval Body prior to the commencement of the construction work.</p> <p>Due to the size and nature of the development, it is likely that an application will need to be provided to the SuDS Approval Body for approval before construction work commences. No drainage materials have been submitted to date, and until an application is made to the SuDS Approval Body, there is no assurance that the site plan would enable compliance with the full suite of national NDS standards.</p>
Isle of Anglesey County Council, Built and Natural Environment Unit	The Built and Natural Environment Unit comes to the conclusion that the Landscape Impact Assessment submitted with the application notes small detrimental impacts, the natural beauty of the AONB would be protected (there would be no direct impact on the landscape of Anglesey AONB). There would be a minor detrimental impact on the special quality of the vast views/character of the seascape of a number of open views within Anglesey AONB. The Assessment underlines several matters that are associated with design and landscaping in order to reduce impacts. We consider that additional information would be needed regarding some of them by means of a planning condition, should you intend to approve. The impacts on other landscape features of the Menai Straits that are local to the area are not being assessed here. The condition recommended is to present landscaping details before commencing and implementing after completing the construction work. In addition, it is recommended that the Local Planning Authority considers whether the cladding details can be improved further to reduce how much light would be lost - in particular on the Menai Straits side or other sensitive elevations, location and lighting of any exterior lights used and how long they will be on for.
Welsh Government (Economy and Infrastructure Department):	No instructions.

North Wales Police:	No response.
Language Advisor, Corporate Support Unit:	After receiving additional information from the applicant, the Unit is happy that there is an intention to work bilingually as well as erecting bilingual signs within the site. Once the business will be ready to open to the public, the applicant can then collaborate with the Unit/Language Initiative.

### Public Consultation:

A notice was placed in the press, on the site and nearby residents were informed. The notification period has already ended but no objections had been received from the public to the proposal following the statutory advertisement period.

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

#### The principle of the development

5.1 The principle of constructing new stables, along with erecting an indoor riding school building and associated riding manège is grounded in Policy PCYFF1 and CYF6 of the LDP. Policy PCYFF1 states that outside the development boundaries, proposals will be refused unless they are in accordance with specific policies in the Plan or national planning policies or that the proposals show that its location in the countryside is essential. Policy CYF 6 states that proposals to convert rural buildings for business use or to adapt a residential unit in order to allow home working or new units for industry or business will be approved, provided that the following criteria can be met:-

1. That the scale and nature of the development is acceptable given its location and size of the building in question.
2. That the development would not lead to a use that conflicts with nearby uses or has an impact on the viability of similar uses nearby.

The third criterion is irrelevant to this particular application as it does not relate to the use of an existing building.

5.2 **That the scale and nature of the development is acceptable given its location and size of the building in question** - The proposal involves erecting two relatively substantially sized structures with a combined floor area of 2,275m<sup>2</sup>. The stables are located in the north-western corner of the site on a right angle to the applicant's house, facing the nearby unclassified county road, with the cemeteries located further to the north. The largest building, namely the riding school, stands approximately 16m to the east of the stables and it is laid out so that it runs parallel with the existing *clawdd* which defines the northern boundary of the site. Considering that the land drops from 13m (Above Ordnance Datum) on the eastern boundary of the site down to 10m to the western boundary of the site,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the riding school's floor area will be set into the landscape by undertaking excavation and filling work. The highest section of the building will be set approximately 2.3m below the existing surface of the land. However,  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the floor area of the stables will be set at approximately 0.35m above the existing land level, but on a plot of land that is lower than the eastern part where the riding school is located. It is intended to locate a manège 7m to the south of the



riding school with a path around it, parking spaces in the north-western corner of the site in between the proposed stables and the existing *clawdd*, along with landscaping work.

5.3 As referred to above, the application site lies in open countryside and the Anglesey Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is situated approximately 800m to the west and the Menai Straits and Conwy Bay Special Conservation Area is located approximately 200m to the north. According to *LANDMAP* (the Welsh landscape baseline), the area around Plas Menai is identified as an area of low *sensory* and *visual* surface, considering the modern, mixed and incompatible developments located nearby. Despite the *LANDMAP* description of the nearby area, any new development on this plot of land must be considerate of its visual impact on views in and out of the Anglesey AONB, along with views of it from local public areas and to this end a Visual and Landscape Impact Assessment Report was submitted with the application.

5.4 The Visual and Landscape Impact Assessment concludes as follows:-

- Anglesey AONB is located approximately 800m to the west of the site but only intermittent and fragmented views can be seen of the application site from the direction of the AONB itself, with the Griffiths Crossing Industrial Estate creating a more intrusive feature within the broader landscape. It is also confirmed that only minor detrimental impacts would be caused to the natural beauty of the AONB and that there would be no direct impact on the landscape of the AONB itself or on the integrity of the Llanidan Registered Historical Park and Garden, which is located to the north of the AONB itself.
- The impact of the proposal would be more prominent during the winter season, on the grounds of internal light, considering the nearby deciduous vegetation. Although no details of the interior lighting provision were received with the application, this element of the development can be conditioned by asking the applicant to submit a comprehensive lighting plan for approval by the LPA. The applicant confirmed that there is no intention to install exterior floodlights in this proposal.
- The cumulative impact of agricultural type construction was considered within the local landscape but it is believed that there is sufficient space between these buildings so that they would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the landscape based on numbers and density, particularly when looking at the site from Anglesey AONB.
- A nearby residential property is located to the east of the application site, however, it is not believe that the general amenities of the occupants of this property will be undermined on the grounds of visual amenities.
- Plas Menai and St Mary's Church are located to the north of the site; however, it is believed that the development would have a low to medium impact on the setting of this property.
- Although the site is of a general quality, it is also acknowledged that it is of a medium sensitivity, due to its location near the Menai Straits, Anglesey AONB and St Mary's Church. When assessing the impact of the development on the landscape and its visual impact collectively, it is believed that the proposal would have a minor detrimental impact on the landscape during the post-construction period (the first year) and within the long-term (15 years). Although it would not be possible to screen the development 100%, considering that broader views of the site can be seen from all four directions, undertaking planting and landscaping work, as well as retaining the existing vegetation, would be a way of reducing the development's impact on visual amenities. The response of Anglesey Council's Built and Natural Environment Unit is in agreement with the results of the Visual and Landscape Impact Assessment based on the impact of the proposed development on the setting of the AONB.

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5.5 **That the development would not lead to a use that conflicts with nearby uses or has an impact on the viability of similar uses nearby** - in response to the pre-application consultation, the LPA expressed the importance of establishing the exact nature of the activities that will take place on the site, so that it is possible to assess the potential impacts on the area's amenities and to this end, there would be a need to submit a business plan, considering the numerous sensitive uses near the site, including residential dwellings, a church and a water-sports activities centre. In acknowledging the above advice, the applicant has submitted *Sŵn y Môr Riding Centre Business Plan* in order to show sustainability and the scale of the development with the main points of the Plan relating to:-

- The applicant's vision is to develop a renowned sustainable riding centre to encourage children, young people and adults in north Wales and Anglesey to nurture and develop their riding skills in a homely, wholesome and safe environment.
- The aim will be to have up to 2,500 to 2,700 customers per annum and it is anticipated that the level of transport in and out of the site will vary between as little as two movements per day in the middle of winter and up to 20 movements during the summer. It is likely that these numbers will increase to up to 60 movements when events are held; however, these will only be occasional.
- It is not intended to propose facilities to accommodate horses from outside as the applicant already has 11 horses in her ownership on the 8ha holding.
- The Business Plan forecasts that the venture will be financially sustainable within 3 years, when assessing factors such as the development period, the operational period, the offer itself (*product*), locals, the local market. After conducting research, it is suggested that there is a substantial hidden interest and demand for horse-riding and horse-jumping in the local area and beyond.

5.6 As has already been referred to, a number of various land uses are located in the catchment area of the application site, including residential dwellings (Bwthyn Griffiths Crossing and Bwthyn Groeslon) approximately 148m to the east, Plas Menai water-sports centre and associated accommodation, along with St Mary's Church and cemeteries to the north. The applicant's dwelling (Sŵn y Môr), stands immediately adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. It is also noted that the site is already used for horse-riding use, but this use is restricted to the applicant's personal use and to friends of the family.

5.7 Considering the nature and scale of the proposal, it is not believed that it would conflict with nearby uses based on the distance between the application site and the location of the nearest residential dwellings, that outdoor leisure use is already established nearby, which attracts people to the area, and it is anticipated that commercial horse-riding use will not substantially disrupt the use of activities of the nearby church/cemeteries as this use will be self-contained and located separately to these uses. It is not believed that the use will undermine the viability of nearby uses on the grounds that these properties are residential dwellings and a church and that the water-sport centre use is a corresponding attraction to this proposed attraction.

5.8 Considering the assessment above, it is believed that the proposal is acceptable on the basis of the principles and matters assessed above. However, it is also required that the proposal complies with other relevant policies and these will be discussed below.

#### **Visual amenities**

5.9 The site is located within a site that is sensitive in terms of the landscape, with statutory designations located near the site itself. This sensitivity has been acknowledged in the

Visual and Landscape Impact Assessment document submitted to support this application, with the document recommending mitigation measures in order to reduce the impact of the development on the landscape. The effect of the development on the landscape can be assessed by responding to the following aspects:-

- Setting - the proposed buildings are located in a way that will reduce their visual impact, not just on the local landscape but also on the broader views of it. The stables and riding school will be located close together and near existing buildings and structures, including the applicant's dwelling, the nearby unclassified county road and the Plas Menai structures, which appear as a group of buildings, rather than as separate buildings. Existing vegetation such as the 2m high *clawdd*/dense privets that run along the northern boundary of the site, as well as numerous trees planted in the applicant's garden assist to reduce the visual impact of the proposed buildings, and undertakes additional planting and landscaping around the site.
- Size and scale - the proposed buildings are of a common size and scale for agricultural buildings in the countryside and their scale will be reduced by using different materials on the exterior elevations and *by sinking* the vast majority of the main building (the riding school) into the surface of the land. The manège will be constructed in sand and will be set on the same level as the existing land and the only visible element of this part of the attraction will be the timber fence around it.
- Design and appearance - the design and appearance of the buildings are standard for agricultural buildings and are constructed of grey-blue coloured cement corrugated sheets coverings on the roofs, the highest levels of the walls will be constructed of timber boards and the lowest levels will be clean concrete panels. Various materials will be used on the site's surfaces, including tarmac for the parking spaces, concrete in between the two buildings, natural sand to surface the manège and a timber fence around it, along with a path of *grasscrete* or similar to the nearby field. The construction has been designed in order to reduce any light pollution that could derive from using the site as a riding school. The Planning Statement states that it is not intended to install exterior floodlights and the use of interior lighting will be kept to the minimum required to operate effectively within the construction itself. Nevertheless, any light pollution impacts will be most prominent during the winter months, and in order to reduce this impact it is intended to plant vegetation between the construction and the Menai Straits in accordance with the recommendations of the Visual and Landscape Impact Assessment submitted as part of the application. It can be ensured that any light impact is kept to a minimum by including a relevant condition.

- 5.10 The grade II listed building of St Mary's Church is located approximately 70m to the north-west of the application site. Considering the distance between them, the vegetation around the periphery of the church and the content of the Visual and Landscape Impact Assessment document, any impact on the setting and character of the church will be low to medium, considering also that buildings already exist not too far from the church's location. When considering the above aspects of the development, it is believed to be acceptable on the grounds of its impact within the landscape and its impact on nearby statutory landscape and historical designations. Therefore, to this end, it is believed that the proposal as submitted is acceptable based on the requirements of Policy PCYFF3, CYF6, AMG1, PS19 and PS20 of the LDP.

### **General and residential amenities**

- 5.11 Apart from the applicant's property, the nearest residential dwellings are located approximately 148m to the east of the application site and these dwellings are known as Bwthyn Griffiths Crossing and Bwthyn Groeslon. The two dwellings are located adjacent to the junction with the A487 trunk road and they are set back from the

unclassified county road that serves the site. Although it would be inevitable for an element of noise disturbance to disrupt the residential and general amenities of the occupants of these dwellings, it would not be an all-year occurrence as this cause would only be for specific periods during the year, when occasional events would be held on the application site. It is also noted that the source of permanent noise derives from the traffic using the nearby trunk road and it is anticipated that quite a non-significant increase in noise nuisance would derive from the proposed development, compared to the noise deriving from the users of the trunk road itself. Accommodation (Llys y Môr) that is associated with the Plas Menai use is located to the north of the application site; however, considering that visitors to the centre will only reside at this accommodation for a temporary period, it is not believed that it would have a substantial detrimental impact on the visitors themselves. To this end, therefore, it is believed that the proposal is acceptable based on the requirements of Policy PCYFF2 and CYF6 of the LDP.

### **Transport and access matters**

- 5.12 The site and other nearby properties are served by an unclassified county road with a junction to the A487 trunk road located nearby, further to the east. It is intended to improve and adapt the existing access by widening the opening to 6m, re-set the opening so that it is on a right-angle to the unclassified county road, along with the creation of 5m radius walls. It is proposed to provide parking spaces for 20 cars within the site along with further parking provision, if needed, in the field located adjacent to the main building, when occasional events are held. As part of the statutory consultation process, the Council's Transportation Unit was consulted and it was confirmed that they did not have an objection to the proposal, subject to the inclusion of relevant conditions/design notes. It is therefore believed that the proposal is acceptable based on the requirements of Policy TRA2 and TRA4 of the LDP.

### **Sustainability matters**

- 5.13 There are several policies within the LDP that promote sustainability in new developments within the County. Policy PS5 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 4.*
- 5.14 PPW (2018) states:
- In rural areas the majority of new development should be located in those settlements which have relatively good accessibility by non-car modes when compared with the rural area as a whole. Development in these areas should embrace the national sustainable placemaking outcomes and, where possible, offer good active travel connections to the centres of settlements to reduce the need to travel by car for local journeys."*
- 5.15 This is supported by Technical Advice Note 18: Transport, 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 development should be located in places accessible by a range of travel modes."*

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- 5.16 The application site lies 293m to the west of the roundabout on the A487 trunk road and 398m away from a public bus stop. In addition, the site is within convenient walking distance to another public bus stop near *Griffiths Crossing* which is used by a number of bus services. A network of public footpaths are located nearby, along with Lôn Las Menai which is a part of the Wales Coastal Path.
- 5.17 In addition to the above elements, it is believed that the proposal is accessible and inclusive, which allows access to all and offers a full provision for people with disabilities, and uses land that could be described as previously used land. It is also noted that the proposal would involve using equipment to reduce electricity use and energy-efficient lamps will be installed throughout the buildings. There is also provision for the removal of waste produced within the site and a bin storage area is located near the main entrance. Considering these proposals, it is believed that the development is acceptable on the grounds of the requirements of Policy PS4 and PS5 of the LDP.

### **Linguistic matters**

- 5.18 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 10, 2018), along with TAN20. The SPG 'Maintaining and Creating Unique 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.
- 5.19 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 a Welsh Language Impact Assessment. The thresholds in terms of when it will be expected to submit a Statement/Report has been highlighted in Policy PS1 of the LDP, along with Diagram 5 of the SPG. The proposal does not reach these thresholds.
- 5.20 Excluding the developments that meet the thresholds for submitting a Welsh Language Impact Statement / Assessment noted in Policy PS1, guidance is provided in terms of the type of relevant applications where it is needed to give consideration to the Welsh language in Appendix 5 (The Screening Procedure) of the SPG (section Ch to Dd). The guidance included within Appendix 5 notes that every retail, commercial or industrial development where there is no need to submit a Welsh Language Impact Statement / Assessment shows how consideration has been given to the language.
- 5.21 On the grounds of this requirement, information was submitted by the applicant, stating the following:-
- (i) Signage - in accordance with guideline number 4 of Policy PS1 of the LDP, it is intended to install operational signage, along with bilingual instruction/warning signs within the site and in accordance with guideline number 5 of this Policy, Welsh names will be used for this development. This element of the development can be conditioned if the application is approved.
- (ii) Employment - the Sŵn y Môr Riding Centre will be a family business and, therefore, the element of local ownership is important to underline. On the contrary to other similar centres, there is an opportunity to emphasise the Welsh feel of the service as the applicant and her children are fluent Welsh-speakers and there is an opportunity to emphasise this element in the work. The information and research suggests that there



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is hidden interest and demand for this type of attraction and it is estimated that the main customers of the attraction will derive from the local market.

- 5.22 To this end, therefore, it is considered that the proposal complies with relevant guidelines within Policy PS1 of the LDP, along with the requirements of the relevant SPG.

### **Biodiversity matters**

- 5.23 As part of the application, an Initial Ecological Report was submitted, stating that there are no protected species within the area of the application site which could be affected by the proposed development. However, PPW states that planning authorities will need to attempt to retain and enhance biodiversity when exercising their functions and the Report recommends mitigation measures including installing bird boxes on the exterior elevations of the buildings, as well as planting indigenous trees and this can be ensured by including appropriate conditions on any planning permission. It is also noted that the response of the Biodiversity Unit to the statutory consultation process confirms that the development will not lead to a Significant Negative Impact on the features or processes of the Menai Straits and Conwy Bay Special Conservation Area. To this end, therefore, it is believed that the proposal is acceptable based on the requirements of Policy AMG5 of the LDP.

### **Archaeological Matters**

- 5.24 The application site has an agricultural history dating back to the 19th century, and considering the location of the nearby church, there is potential to uncover remains from the middle-ages, along with pre-historic remains, and this is following recent findings when constructing the nearby bypass. As a result, the Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service states that archaeological mitigation measures will need to be carried out in the form of including a relevant planning condition, if the application is approved. To this end, therefore, it is believed that the proposal is acceptable based on the requirements of Policy PS20 of the LDP.

## **6. Conclusions:**

- 6.1 Based on the above assessment, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with local and national policies, and that there are no other material planning considerations that outweigh these policy considerations. To this end, therefore, it is believed that this proposal is acceptable subject to the inclusion of the following conditions:-

## **7. Recommendation:**

- 7.1 To delegate powers to the Assistant Head of the Environment Department to approve the application, subject to the following conditions:-

### Conditions

1. Five years.
2. In accordance with the plans.
3. Landscaping matters.
4. Submission of a lighting plan for the buildings and the exterior areas, including their type and the time when they will be on.
5. Comply with the mitigation measures of the Preliminary Ecological Report.
6. Present archaeological mitigation measures.
7. Present the details of the bilingual signs within the site.

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8. Parking spaces to be completed before the development is used for any purpose.

A note drawing the applicant's attention to the Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS).