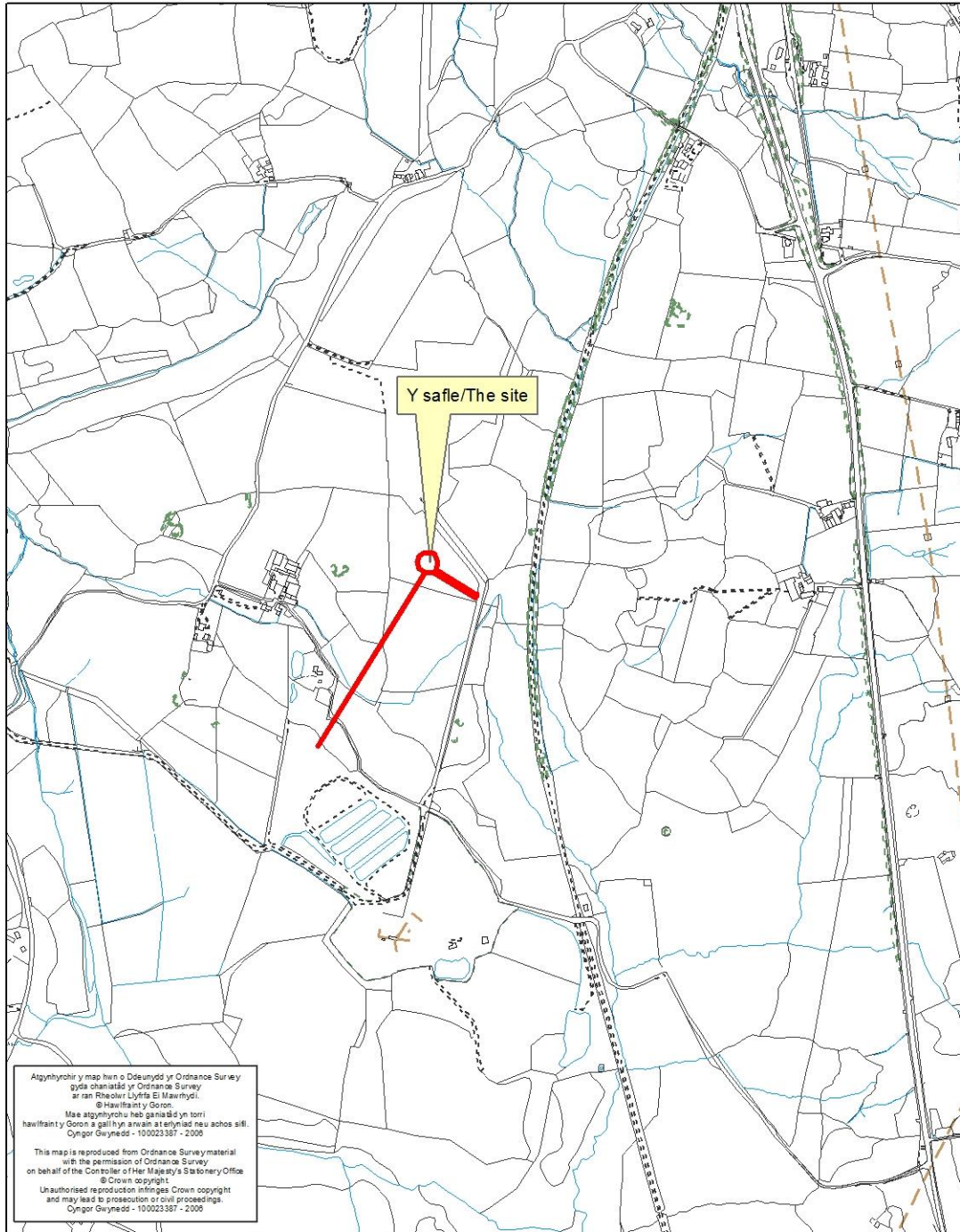


Number: 7



Rhif y Cais / Application Number : C15-0769-34-LL

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



PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

Application Number: C15/0769/34/LL
Date Registered: 14/09/2015
Application Type: Full - Planning
Community: Clynnog
Ward: Clynnog

Proposal: ERECTION OF A WIND TURBINE, 24.8M TO THE HUB AND 36.6M TO BLADE TIP AND THE INSTALLATION OF A CONTROL BOX AND ASSOCIATED WORKS.
Location: GRAIANOG, LLANLLYFNI, CAERNARFON, LL54 6SY

Summary of the Recommendation: TO APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

1. Description:

- 1.1 The purpose of this application is to erect an 85kw wind turbine which will measure 24.8m to the hub and 34.5m to the tip of the blade. There would be a shed to keep the associated machinery measuring 1.75m x 1m x 1.8m near the bottom together with grid connections. A new access would be created which would lead to the turbine from the existing quarry access track.
- 1.2 The site is approximately 1.4km to the north east of the village of Nasareth. The turbine would be located on a small plateau of land in a field which is used as grazing land, and was previously part of the Graianog quarry. The site is located between the existing operational quarry and the processing / storage yard. Apart from the quarry, the site is a rolling agricultural landscape which gradually rises to the direction of Bwlch Mawr which is approximately 2.5km to the south west. Snowdonia National Park is approximately 2km to the east.
- 1.3 The area has a dispersed population with two houses, which are not in the applicant's ownership, approximately 275m and 425m from the site, while other houses are over 600m away.
- 1.4 The following land designations exist around the site:
 - The site lies approximately 360m to the west of the Llŷn AONB.
 - The Heritage Coast is located approximately 4.1km to the north-west.
 - Snowdonia National Park's boundary lies approximately 2km to the east of the site.
 - The Cors Cyfeiliog SSSI lies 1km to the south, the Cors y Wlad SSSI lies 2.5km to the south west and the Cors Llanllyfni SSSI lies 1.8km to the north. These three sites form part of the Corsydd Eifionydd Special Area of Conservation (SAC). In addition, the Ceauau Tan y Bwlch SSSI lies 2.6km to the west.
 - The Maen Hir and Carneddau Crwn Graianog Scheduled Ancient Monument lies 480m to the south west, while the Gwersyll y Foel monuments lie 1.5km to the north west and the Ancient Village of Caerau lies 890m to the east.
 - The Nantlle Valley Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest is located 1.6km to the north.
 - Local Listed Buildings include Carreg Filltir (870m) to the east and there are several other listed buildings within 3km of the site.
 - The site is within a Minerals Consultation Area as defined in the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan.

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

- The A487 Trunk road is located 800m to the east of the site while the A499 Class I Highway lies 3.8km to the north west.
- Lôn Eifion (a multi-purpose public path) lies 190m to the east.

1.5 The applicant has submitted the following documents to support the application:

- A Planning Statement - including:
 - Description of the proposal
 - Report on the construction methodology
 - Context analysis
 - Benefits and mitigating measures
 - Analysis of the impact on the landscape and amenities (including maps and photographs indicating the visual impact of the turbine from various viewpoints, together with the impact of noise and moving shadows).
 - Policy Context
 - Ecology and Cultural Heritage
 - A Design and Access Statement
 - Noise assessment

1.6 LANDMAP information gives medium value to the landscape in terms of visual and rational considerations and in terms of habitats, but with a higher value in terms of the historical landscape and the cultural landscape and exceptional in terms of geology.

1.7 The application has been screened for an Environmental Impact Assessment under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 (as amended). The proposal does not fall within any development criteria in Schedule 1 but it does fall within the development description under Part 3(I) to Schedule 2, Installations to use wind energy in order to generate energy (wind farms), in that the development includes the installation of more than two wind turbines; or that the height of any wind turbine or the height of any other structure is greater than 15 metres.

1.8 Having assessed the likely impact of the proposal on the environment using the selected criteria in Schedule 3 as well as the guidelines in the Welsh Office Circular 11/99, it is considered that the impact of the development on the environment is insufficient to justify submitting an environmental statement with the planning application.

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:

STRATEGIC POLICY 1 - A PRECAUTIONARY APPROACH

Development proposals that would have an adverse or uncertain impact on the environment, the economy or cultural character (including the Welsh language) of the Plan area will be refused unless

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

it can be conclusively shown by an appropriate impact assessment that this can be negated or mitigated in a manner acceptable to the Planning Authority.

STRATEGIC POLICY 2 – THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The area's natural environment and its landscape character, and views in and out of the Snowdonia National Park and the Anglesey and Llŷn Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be maintained or improved by refusing development proposals that will significantly harm them.

STRATEGIC POLICY 3 – BUILT AND HISTORIC HERITAGE

The area's built and historic heritage will be protected from development that would significantly harm it, and new developments in historic areas will be expected to conform to particularly high design standards which will maintain or improve their special character.

DESIGN STANDARDS – STRATEGIC POLICY 5

Development will be expected to be of a good design in order to ensure that it makes a positive contribution, wherever possible, to the landscape, built environment and sustainable development.

DEVELOPMENTS WHICH CREATE RISK – STRATEGIC POLICY 5

Developments that are inconsistent with the need to safeguard floodplains or to minimise flood risk and developments that create a risk of unacceptable damage to health, property or the environment, will be refused.

STRATEGIC POLICY 9 – ENERGY

Development proposals to provide energy from renewable sources will be approved provided they do not significantly harm the environment or the amenities of nearby residents.

POLICY A1 – ENVIRONMENTAL OR OTHER IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Ensure that sufficient information is provided with the planning application regarding any environmental impacts or other likely and substantial impact in the form of an environmental assessment or assessments of other impacts.

POLICY A2 – PROTECTING 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.

POLICY A3 – PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE

Refuse proposals if there is any possibility of serious or irreversible damage to the environment or the community unless it can be shown conclusively at the end of an appropriate impact assessment that the impact can be negated or mitigated.

POLICY B7 – SITES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE

Refuse proposals which will damage or destroy archaeological remains of national importance (whether scheduled or not) or their setting. It also refuses any development that will affect other archaeological remains unless the need for the development overrides the significance of the archaeological remains.

POLICY B3 – DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING THE SETTING OF LISTED BUILDINGS

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

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

POLICY B8 – THE LLŶN AND ANGLESEY AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY
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 recognised features.

POLICY B12 – PROTECTING HISTORIC LANDSCAPES, PARKS AND GARDENS
Protect landscapes, parks and gardens of special historic interest in Wales from developments that would cause significant harm to their character, appearance or setting.

POLICY B14 – PROTECTING THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF SNOWDONIA NATIONAL PARK
Protect the landscape character of Snowdonia National Park by refusing proposals that are visually obtrusive and/or are located insensitively and unsympathetically within the landscape.

POLICY B15 – PROTECTION OF INTERNATIONAL NATURE CONSERVATION SITES
Proposals that are likely to cause significant harm to nature conservation sites of national importance will be refused unless they conform to a series of criteria aimed at protecting, enhancing and managing recognised features within the sites.

POLICY B16 – PROTECTING NATIONALLY IMPORTANT NATURE CONSERVATION SITES
Proposals that are likely to cause significant harm to nature conservation sites of national importance will be refused unless they conform to a series of criteria aimed at protecting, enhancing and managing recognised features within the sites.

POLICY B20 – SPECIES AND THEIR HABITATS THAT ARE INTERNATIONALLY AND NATIONALLY IMPORTANT
Proposals that are likely to cause unacceptable disturbance or harm to protected species and their habitats will be refused unless they can conform to a series of criteria aimed at safeguarding the recognised features of the site.

POLICY B22 – BUILDING DESIGN
Promote good building design by ensuring that proposals conform to a series of criteria aimed at safeguarding the recognised features and character of the local landscape and environment.

POLICY B23 - AMENITIES
Safeguard the amenities of the local area by ensuring that proposals conform to a series of criteria aimed at protecting 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 B33 – DEVELOPMENT THAT CREATES POLLUTION OR NUISANCE
Protect public health, safety or amenities, or the quality of the built or natural environment as a result of higher levels of pollution.

POLICY C1 – LOCATING NEW DEVELOPMENT
Land within the development boundaries of towns and villages and the developed form of rural villages will be the main focus for new developments. New buildings, structures and ancillary

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

facilities in the countryside will be refused with the exception of a development that is permitted by another policy of the Plan.

POLICY C26 – WIND TURBINE DEVELOPMENTS

Proposals for wind turbine developments on sites within the Llŷn AONB will be refused. In other locations, only proposals for small-scale or community or domestic based wind turbine developments will be approved provided that a series of criteria can be met that relate to the effect on the visual quality of the landscape and environmental and social factors.

POLICY C11 – SAFEGUARDING MINERAL RESOURCES

Mineral resources are safeguarded for the future through the conservation of the Area of Mineral Consultation. Need to ensure that any development within the AMC would be likely to have an unacceptable impact on mineral resources.

POLICY CH22 – CYCLING NETWORK, PATHS AND RIGHTS OF WAY

All parts of the cycling network, footpaths and rights of way will be protected by encouraging proposals which will incorporate them satisfactorily within the development and by prohibiting 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 can conform to specific criteria relating to a safe vehicular entrance, the standard of the existing roads network to cope with the traffic flow from the development and traffic calming measures.

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Onshore Wind Energy (June 2014)
 Supplementary Planning Guidance: Landscape Character (November 2009)
 Llŷn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan

2.3 National Policies:

Planning Policy Wales, Welsh Government (Seventh Edition, July 2014)

Technical Advice Note (Wales) 5, Welsh Government: Nature Conservation and Planning

Technical Advice Note (Wales) 8, Welsh Government: Renewable Energy

Technical Advice Note (Wales) 11, Welsh Government: Noise

Technical Advice Note (Wales) 12, Welsh Government: Design and Access Statements

Circular 60/96 *Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology*

Circular 61/96 *Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas*

2.4 Other Material Considerations:

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

LANDMAP Information Guidance Note, Countryside Council for Wales, Number 3 – ‘Using LANDMAP for Visual Assessment of Onshore Wind Turbines’ (June 2010).

Gwynedd and Snowdonia National Park Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment Gillespies, March 2014.

3. Relevant Planning History:

There is broad planning history relating to the quarry.

4. Consultations:

Arqiva (BBC & ITV Network) No objection

Flood Risk and Coastal Erosion Management Unit No objection, standard advice and observations.

Atkins Global on behalf of Welsh Water Telecoms Not received

BBC Spectrum Planning Not received

Scottish Power: Not received

Gas: Not received

CADW

Initial Response:

Several scheduled ancient monuments in the area. The area is rich pre-historic landscape, which has had significant archaeological inspections in the past years. Despite the limited height of the proposals it is likely that the turbine would be visible from many of the scheduled monuments identified and would be a distraction in views to and from many of these sites. However, given the number of other distracting elements in the locality, including roads and an active quarry, this impact is unlikely to be considered significant. The proposal is situated outside the Nantlle Valley and is not of a scale which would be considered to have a more than local impact on the historic landscape.

Second Response:

Given the number of other distracting elements in the locality, including roads and an active quarry, this impact is unlikely to be considered significant. The proposal is situated outside the Nantlle Valley and is not of a scale which would be considered to have a more than local impact on the historic landscape.

The additional photomontage submitted illustrates that the turbine

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

will be clearly visible in the locality and will adversely impact on the settings of some monuments and this impact needs weight in the determination of the application but is unlikely to be considered a significant impact in this case.

Third Response:

No further observations to offer.

Crown Castle Not received

Defence Infrastructure Organisation No objection

Welsh Water No objection

Natural Resources Wales: **Initial Response:**

Object on the grounds of a lack of information and the assessment of the possible impact on the AONB. Need more information. No objection based on ecology. Standard advice relating to pollution management and waste management matters.

Second Response:

Based on the additional information, withdraw the previous objection. The impact of the development and views from the AONB and the perception of its natural beauty would be insignificant and there is no concern about the impact on the National Park.

Community Council Not received

Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service The site is on land which is/was part of the quarry and has been restored and therefore there is no direct impact on archaeological remains. But we would have liked to see photomontages of the monuments which are in view from the turbine.

North Wales Planning, Minerals and Waste Service: The location of the turbine is on land which has been previously restored in line with conditions relating to planning permission 2/16/12G and C00D/0005/34/MW, where the mineral planning authority has already submitted a certificate in line with Paragraph 5 of Schedule 5 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. No objection to the proposal as it would not impact the quarry's activities.

JRC on behalf of Scottish Power No objection

NATS Safeguarding No objection

Snowdonia National Park **Initial Response:**

Due to the location of the application, I consider that the cumulative impact of the turbine, and other proposed turbines in the area between the Park and the boundary of the AONB, will be detrimental to amenities and views out of the Park. There are concerns regarding the area's capacity to accommodate more

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

vertical elements (e.g turbines and pylons) in this landscape without impacting on the setting of the two designated areas.

Second Response:

No additional observations on the new information.

Spectrum Licensing
on behalf of Ofcom

No objection

AONB Unit

General observations relating to the importance of the AONB and the policy considerations. The observations cause concerns about some elements of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, including:

- The assessment method in terms of the impact on the Landscape Character and the findings relating to the likely impact
- Some expected vantage points have not been included in the study
- Doubt regarding the conclusions in terms of the impact from some locations e.g. nearby back roads
- There is a concern about the focus placed on the AONB in Section 9.5.3 - and the (incorrect) statement which notes that the views in and out of the AONB are safeguarded in the same manner as those of the National Park.

A turbine of this type would generate a substantial amount of renewable electricity and it is agreed that this could benefit the agricultural business. Also, the development could lead to a reduction in carbon emissions into the environment, although energy and materials will be used to manufacture the turbine.

The turbine would be of significant height and the fact that the blades of the wind turbine will be in motion means that the visual impact will be greater than that of a stationary structure, and this cannot be conveyed in images or photomontages. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment was submitted but there are concerns about some of the study's findings.

The area where it is proposed to locate the turbine is in close proximity to the boundary of the AONB and the turbine would be visible from some locations in the AONB and from other nearby places (including Lôn Eifion) which have views looking in the direction of the AONB. Local and national policies note the importance of protecting the AONB and this includes the views into and out of the designated area.

There is concern that the proposed development will be an alien and intrusive element in a rural and historic landscape in this part of Llŷn which is in close proximity to the boundary of the AONB and the turbine will have a detrimental effect on the setting of the AONB and views into and out of the protected area.

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

Llyn AONB Joint Advisory Committee - Following a discussion on wind turbines, the Joint Committee adopted the following statement:

“Every application for a wind turbine within the Llyn AONB should be refused, in accordance with policy – C26 (Wind Turbine Developments) – “Proposals for wind turbine developments on sites within the Llyn AONB will be refused”.”

“Every application for a wind turbine greater than 11 metres within the boundary and views of the Llyn and Bardsey Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest should be refused to prevent significant harm to the setting and views of the Llyn AONB”.

Biodiversity Unit	No objection.
Public Protection Unit	<p>Initial Observations: A full ETSU-R-97 noise study is necessary to ensure that there would be no noise impact on local residents.</p> <p>Second observations: No objection subject to noise management conditions.</p>
Transportation Unit	It is assumed that the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on any road or proposed road.
The Welsh Government’s Transportation Unit	No objection
Public Consultation:	A notice was placed in the press and on the site and nearby residents were informed. The advertising period has ended.

Other correspondences were received objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- Proximity to the National Park and the AONB.
- Contrary to Gillespies' policy and assessment.
- The noise impact would be disadvantageous to residents and tourists.
- The cumulative impact of noise with other developments.
- The quarry is not noisy at night.
- A lack of assessment of high locations within the AONB.
- In a sensitive area between the AONB and the National Park.
- Proximity to Lôn Eifion.
- Contrary to the SPG.
- Lack of an assessment of the cumulative impact.
- Unsuitable colour.
- Lack of an assessment of the visual impact.
- The turbine's proximity to designated landscapes would be damaging.
- Difficult to assess the real impact of this type of development.
- The landscape’s topography would worsen the noise

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

impact.

Letters / correspondences were received supporting the application on the following grounds:

- The development would create clean sustainable renewable energy.
- The proposal corresponds with local policies and targets to increase the generation of renewable energy and to reduce carbon emissions.
- The area in question is already industrial in nature given the development of the anaerobic processor and the sand and gravel quarry and high electricity pylons. All these elements mean that installing a wind turbine would not have a harmful impact on the area.
- This application is part of the diversification scheme of an existing farm which needs support.
- Suitable location.
- Land has previously been excavated.
- No negative impact on ecology by using the existing access track.
- The proposal is in line with policy.

5. Assessment of the material planning considerations:

The principle of the development

- 5.1 The national planning policy involving renewable energy developments is illustrated in Planning Policy Wales, Edition 7 and the associated Technical Advice Note 8: Planning for Renewable Energy (Technical Advice Note 8). Further guidelines can be found in the Practice Guidelines. Planning Implications for Low Carbon and Renewable Energy, February 2011 (Practice Guideline).
- 5.2 The national policy reflects Welsh Government's central principle of sustainable development and the role that renewable energy, and especially wind energy, could play in reducing climate change with the aim of achieving a decrease of greenhouse gases by 40% by 2020.
- 5.3 The site is outside any Strategic Search Areas noted in Technical Advice Note 8. Beyond the Strategic Search Areas, balance is necessary between the desirability of renewable energy and landscape conservation. Paragraph 8.4 of Appendix D, Technical Advice Note 8, refers to the specific objective, beyond Strategic Search Areas, to maintain the landscape's character (i.e. no significant change to the landscape's character as a result of wind turbine developments. It also states, in order to maintain the integrity and quality of the landscape within Wales' National Parks / AONBs, wind turbine developments should not cause any change to the landscape's character.
- 5.4 In accordance with the objectives of Strategic Policy 9 of the UDP, the Local Planning Authority is supportive in principle of the proposal to generate renewable energy with wind turbines, subject to consideration of, and compliance with, all relevant planning issues. As noted above, a number of policies within the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan are relevant when determining an individual application for a wind turbine.

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

- 5.5 Policy C1 of the Unitary Development Plan refers to the location of new developments, and states that land within town and village development boundaries and the developed form of rural villages will be the main focus for new developments. New buildings, structures and ancillary facilities in open countryside will be refused with the exception of a development which is permitted under another policy within the Plan. Developments to generate renewable energy that use natural resources are specifically noted as developments that could be suitable if approved by another policy in the Plan; therefore, it is considered that the proposal complies with the requirements of the policy in this way. However, the policy also states that new buildings, structures and ancillary facilities in the countryside will be strictly controlled and it should be ensured that there is a good visible relationship between them and developments which already exist wherever possible.
- 5.6 The main policy to consider when assessing the principle of the development is policy C26 of the Unitary Development Plan. Policy C26 deals specifically with wind turbine developments and reflects National Planning Policy and Guidelines. The policy states that ‘proposals for wind developments within Llyn AONB will be refused. In other locations, only proposals for small-scale or community or domestic based wind turbine developments will be approved, provided that all of the noted criteria are met.’ The criteria state:
- 1) that the development would not have a significantly harmful impact on the setting of the Llŷn & Anglesey AONB or Snowdonia National Park;
 - 2) that any associated ancillary developments are designed and, where possible, sited so as to alleviate their potential visual impact;
 - 3) that the development (either individually or combined with other wind turbine developments) will not have a significant detrimental impact on the landscape or nature conservation resources;
 - 4) that the wind turbines would not cause any possible unacceptable environmental impact or damage to amenities, including noise, light reflection and shadow flicker;
 - 5) that the development would not create significant electromagnetic interference to existing transmitting or receiving systems that cannot be adequately mitigated;
 - 6) that adequate provision has been included in the plan in relation to decommissioning the land, restoring the land and land aftercare.
 - 7) that the development will not cause significant harm to areas of archaeological importance, particularly within or near designated areas.
- 5.7 Policy C26 identifies small-scale and community based wind turbine developments as developments that have a generating capacity of less than 5MW. In terms of generating capacity, this plan complies with this element of the policy. It is considered that all criteria in policy C26 are relevant and they are focused on below, together with the relevant planning policies in this report. In addition, the Supplementary Planning Guidance 'Onshore Wind Energy' was adopted by Gwynedd Council in June 2014. The Guidance emphasises, when dealing with wind turbine applications, that a balance must be struck between the contribution of this technology towards national targets for renewable energy and any detrimental impact that the development could have on local environmental and social factors.
- 5.8 The Guidance also refers to a commissioned study into landscape sensitivity and capacity assessment for some developments which was conducted by Gillespies. It states that, within the AONB or within areas that contribute towards its setting and the setting of the national park, there is actually no room for wind energy developments (except for, very infrequently, developments on a domestic scale which could link well with existing settlements / buildings). Outside these areas, it is possible that there would be limited capacity for micro-developments up to 20m to the tip of the blades but any new development must be carefully located to avoid cumulative impact with existing modern vertical developments.

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

- 5.9 It is considered that the main matters when assessing this application are the impact of the proposed development in terms of:

Ancillary Developments and Decommissioning

- 5.10 Criterion 2 of Policy C26 relates to associated ancillary developments such as buildings, roads, etc., and states that they should be designed and installed in a way that mitigates their visual impact wherever possible. Criterion 6 of the policy relates to decommissioning, land restoration and aftercare when the use would cease.
- 5.11 The proposal makes use of existing access tracks and roads, therefore there will be no additional impact on the landscape based on access to the site. The proposal also includes installing a control unit measuring 1.75m x 1m x 1.8m near the bottom of the turbine. Due to the small size of the unit against the turbine and the capacity to condition the colour and finish of the unit, it is not considered that this element of the application would be damaging to the landscape.
- 5.12 If the application is approved, it is possible to manage matters involving decommissioning, land restoration and aftercare with appropriate conditions when the use comes to an end. The planning statement acknowledges that there is no objection to such conditions. It is considered that these ancillary elements could be acceptable and that there is a reasonable justification for them (with appropriate conditions) in terms of policies B22, B23, B25 and criteria 2 and 6 of policy C26 if the location of the wind turbine is otherwise acceptable.

General and residential amenities

- 5.13 In addition to visual amenities, Policy B23 stresses the requirement to assess the impact of the proposal on the amenities of nearby residents. The policy states that proposals which would cause significant harm to the amenities of the local neighbourhood should be refused. Similarly, Policy B33 states that proposals will be refused if they 'cause significant harm to the quality of health, safety or human amenities...due to higher levels of pollution...noise...if they cannot be controlled sufficiently through planning conditions.'
- 5.14 The area has a dispersed population with two houses, which are not in the applicant's ownership, approximately 275m and 425m from the site, while other houses are over 600m away. Given the separation distance, the direction that the dwellings face, the natural form of the land and vegetation, it is not considered that the turbine would have a detrimental impact on residential amenities. The cumulative impact of this development is also relevant when considering the impact of the turbine on amenities, but in this case it is not considered that there would be a detrimental impact and that the turbine would create an impact of felling like someone was surrounded by turbines.
- 5.15 Following the initial observations of the Public Protection Unit objecting to the application, a noise assessment was submitted in line with the ETSU-R-97. In response to the assessment and subject to appropriate conditions, the Public Protection Unit had no objection to the application. The turbine has also been located to ensure that it would not cause an unacceptable impact of flickering shadows.
- 5.16 Despite the objections received it is considered that the impact of the development meets the requirements of policies B23, B33 and criterion 4 of policy C26.

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

Transport and access matters

- 5.17 Policy CH33 is relevant to this element of the application which involves road and street safety. Access to the site will be obtained off the A487 trunk road, down an unclassified road and then down an existing access track which serves the quarry. Neither the Council's Transportation Unit nor Welsh Government's Transportation Unit had any objection to the proposal. It is considered that this element of the application is in line with policy CH33.

Biodiversity Matters

- 5.18 No evidence was submitted which indicated that the development would be damaging to any protected species or sites which are protected for nature conservation reasons and therefore it is considered that the development is acceptable in terms of policies B15, B16 and B20 of the GUDP.

Visual amenities

- 5.19 Although the application site is outside the area statutorily designated the site is surrounded to all intents and purposes by similar areas, with the AONB within 360m west and the National Park 2km east and therefore it is necessary to consider the impact of the proposal on the setting and the views into, out of and across the AONB and Snowdonia National Park. The objectives in policies B8, B14 and C26 of the GUDP state that the landscape should be protected, maintained and safeguarded from developments that would cause significant harm to scenery and to the landscape. Therefore, the benefits of renewable energy must be balanced against the implications of the turbine on the local environment in its entirety.
- 5.20 The site is located between the existing operational quarry and the processing / storage yard to the south and north. The Llwyn Isaf recycling site is located approximately 950m to the south west of the site. To the east lies the A487 trunk road, electricity pylons and the Nebo mast, between all these elements, human impact is obvious on the landscape. Apart from these characteristics, the landscape is a rolling agricultural landscape which gradually rises to the direction of Bwlch Mawr which is approximately 3.5km to the south west and Moel y Gamp which is approximately 1.5km to the north west. There are hedgerows and banks along the field boundaries and there are areas of trees here and there.
- 5.21 The *LANDMAP* database (which assesses the value and character of the landscape), as outlined in the Supplementary Planning Guidance: Landscape Character, sets the site in the "Midland Llŷn" character area and it emphasises the importance of the area as a setting for the western boundary of Snowdonia National Park and the northern and eastern parts of the Llŷn AONB. The document stresses that any development proposals should reflect the landscape character identified. It stresses that views into and out of the two designated areas are very important and that this should affect the location, scale, form and materials of developments in the area.
- 5.22 The Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment: Anglesey, Gwynedd and Snowdonia National Park (March 2014) is work undertaken by Gillespies on behalf of the Local Authorities of north west Wales. The document assesses the sensitivity and capacity of the landscape to cope with specific types of development. According to the work undertaken, the application site is located within Landscape Character Area G10 Midland Llŷn, and the work proceeds to state that the capacity within this area (outside the AONB) is for wind turbine micro developments (i.e. individual turbines under 20m high) only. However, it is important to note that this assessment also highlights that sensitivity varies locally within the Landscape

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

Character Area and that consideration should be given to the evidence submitted to support the application along with the case officer's assessment following a site visit, before deciding whether or not the nature of this specific site means that a development on a larger scale than what is recommended in the work carried out by Gillespies can be accommodated.

- 5.23 A photomontage and wireframe landscape assessment was submitted as part of the application with photographs taken of various locations surrounding the site. The turbine is shown finished in white. Such photographs do not always convey the actual impact of wind turbine developments on the wider landscape, bearing in mind that the blades of a wind turbine are in motion which entails a greater visual impact and different to that of a static structure. As far as the impact of the proposed turbine on the local landscape is concerned, the photographs give a comparative idea of the appearance of the structure in its surroundings and this is material when considering the application.
- 5.24 The AONB Officer is concerned that the turbine would be prominent from some locations in the AONB and Lôn Eifion. There is concern that the proposed development would be an alien and intrusive feature in the rural and historic landscape and that the turbine would disrupt the setting of the AONB along with the views into and out of the protected area.
- 5.25 An objection to the application was also received from Snowdonia National Park Authority and the observations raise concerns about the cumulative impact of the turbine, and other turbines which already exist in the area between the Park boundary and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty boundary, having a detrimental impact on the amenities and views out of the Park. They also raise concerns regarding the area's capacity to accommodate more vertical elements (e.g turbines and pylons) in this landscape without impacting on the setting of the two designated areas.
- 5.26 Despite the objections of Snowdonia National Park, the Llŷn AONB Joint-Committee and the AONB Officer, following receiving a further assessment, Natural Resources Wales did not object to the proposal and stated, *'Due to lowland plateau landform to the west and minor landform undulations to the east of the site; vegetation lining lanes and much of the Sustrans cycle path, distribution of small plantations and willow scrub across the Bwlch Derwin area – visibility is very limited with few public views of the proposed wind turbine likely. There are some open wide-ranging views from slightly elevated ground to the north, east and west of the site. The proposed turbine where visible, would be seen largely with some spatial separation from the AONB Hills and avoid interrupting focussed views of the designated landscape's principle peaks. A section of Sustrans Cycle Path (Viewpoint 1 submitted with the original application and extending northwards for some 50m) would however have open views of the proposed turbine within the same angle of view as the AONB (Bwlch Mawr and Pen y Gaer). The magnitude of change to landscape perceptions as a result of the turbine would however be moderated by existing industrial influences at Cefn Graianog sand and gravel quarry, which comprise aggregate heaps, structures, conveyor belt, earth moving machines, movement and noise. There would be some visual association between land use and the proposed turbine. In addition due to the parallel orientation of the cycle route and Bwlch Mawr/Pen y Gaer, cyclists focussed upon the activity of cycling are less likely to experience the AONB hills, which here contribute the edges of the landscape context rather than being a key focus.'*
- 5.27 The observations of the National Park also raise concern about the cumulative impact of wind turbine developments in this area. From the application site, it is possible to see the blades of one of the three wind turbines previously approved in Derwin Fawr which is approximately 3.5km to the south east. The presence of similar-sized turbines in another place is not a consideration which would suggest that the application should be approved and every

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

application must be considered on its own merit. However, consideration must be given to whether the presence of the existing turbines along with the turbine of this application would create an unacceptable cumulative impact. When visiting the site and the surrounding area, the Derwin Fawr turbines are in a landscape which has a different character to that of the application site and therefore the circumstances are clearly different. It is not considered that this proposal would cause a significant change to the character of the landscape nor create a landscape dominated by wind turbines and they would be seen in a different context.

- 5.28 Having visited the site and weighed up the observations received along with the application documents, it is not considered that the turbine would cause significant harm to views into and out of the AONB and the National Park or on the local landscape. The results of the Gillespies assessment are acknowledged; however, the circumstances and sensitivity of this site are different from the findings of the assessment and it is considered that the landscape can deal with this development. The policy clearly states that such applications should only be refused should the visual impact of the turbine cause significant harm. The observations received acknowledge that there will be an impact from the turbine; however the observations do not identify significant harm. It is therefore considered that the application satisfies the requirements of Policies B8, B12, B14, C26 (criteria 1 and 3) and Strategic Policy 2 of the GUDP.

Historic Environment

- 5.29 Policy B3 safeguards the setting of listed buildings. It states that applications which cause significant harm to important views of the building and out of it should be refused. The Policy also states that the addition of intrusive elements would be unacceptable. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act states that Local Planning Authorities shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving/safeguarding the setting of a listed building. Due to the location and setting of listed buildings in the area and their distance from the site, it is not considered that the turbine is likely to cause significant harm to the setting of the listed buildings and it is therefore considered that the proposal complies with the requirements of policy B3 of the GUDP, circular 61/96, Chapter 6 Planning Policy Wales and Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act.
- 5.30 Policy B7 is clear in its advice and states that proposals which damage or destroy archaeological remains of national importance (whether scheduled or not) or their setting will be refused. Point 7 of policy C26 also requires that the development will not cause a significant harm to areas of archaeological importance, particularly within or near designated areas. Paragraph 6.5.1 of Planning Policy Wales reflects the balance that TAN 8 notes between the need to provide renewable energy and protecting the landscape.
- 5.31 The Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service acknowledges that there is no concern regarding the impact on archaeological remains as the site is on land which was part of the quarry and has already been restored to agricultural use. The observations are concerned about the impact of the development on the setting of listed ancient monuments in the area and requests further photomontages in order to assess the potential impact on listed ancient monuments.
- 5.32 In its response, CADW recognises several elements (roads and operational quarry) which currently conflict and consequently it is unlikely that the impact of the proposal would be significant. The proposal is situated outside the historic landscape of the Nantlle Valley and is not of a scale which would be considered to have a more than local impact on the historic landscape. The observations also recognise from the additional photomontage submitted, that the turbine will be clearly visible and will adversely impact on the settings of some

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

monuments and this impact needs weight in the determination of the application but is unlikely to be considered a significant impact in this case.

- 5.33 Having weighed up the observations received along with the policy context it is not considered that the proposal is contrary to the requirements of policy B7 or B12 as the turbine will not have a significant detrimental impact on the Settings of Listed Ancient Monuments in the area or on the historic landscape of the Nantlle Valley.

Other matters

- 5.34 The proposal is packaged as one that would provide electricity for the agricultural business and would be a diversification enterprise that would assist to secure the future of the venture. TAN 6 also refers to diversification schemes. The Supplementary Planning Guidance “Onshore Wind Turbines” states that diversification schemes must comply with a series of specific criteria. From the information submitted, it is likely that the turbine will generate more energy than required by the holding and also due to the distance of the turbine from the farm unit there will not be a physical correlation between the turbine and the farm buildings. It is considered that the application does not entirely comply with the requirements of the SPG.
- 5.35 Neither the economic benefits nor the contribution to national targets justify the development and full consideration must be given to the unitary plan and the relevant policies. TAN 8 refers to the balance which must be ensured between the desirability of renewable energy and protecting the landscape. Nonetheless, if the application is otherwise acceptable and in accordance with policy (involving protecting the landscape) it is not considered that the application deserves to be refused on the basis of the SPG requirements alone as the turbine will contribute towards the national renewable energy targets.
- 5.36 The site is located in an area which is protected in the GUDP as a Mineral Consultation Area (MCA). Policy C11 protects these areas in order to ensure that known mineral resources are safeguarded for the future by ensuring that any development within MCAs would not be likely to have an unacceptable impact on mineral resources. The North Wales Minerals and Waste Planning Service recognises that the site's mineral resources have already been used and the land has been restored and that there is no objection to the proposal as it would not affect the activities of the quarry. The application is therefore not contrary to policy C11.

6. Conclusion:

- 6.1 Due to the nature of these types of development it is very difficult to integrate them into the landscape. It is therefore necessary to carefully weigh up any impact on the landscape against the local and national aim of promoting developments that generate renewable energy.
- 6.2 It is believed that the chosen site is one that reduces the visual impact as much as is practicable with this type of development. In order to further mitigate the turbine's effect it is believed that a condition to ensure that the turbine is the same colour as the other turbines in the area is suitable and relevant and this will ensure that it will blend in better in the landscape.
- 6.3 Due to concerns about the cumulative nature of this kind of development within one specific area, it is also deemed suitable and appropriate to impose a condition on the permission to commence work within 2 years. This will enable the Local Planning Authority to better assess the cumulative effect and enable it to determine what is likely or not likely to be developed within a relatively short (but reasonable) period.

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 09/11/2015
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	CAERNARFON

6.4 Having considered the observations received, all the policies and relevant planning matters it is not believed that the development will have a substantial negative effect on the landscape generally, the AONB, or on the National Park and in the context of national policies relating to renewable energy and local policies relating to the landscape, amenities and renewable energy it is not believed that the proposal is contrary to these relevant policies.

7. Recommendation:

7.1 To approve – Conditions

1. Commence work within two years.
2. Permission for a period of 25 years
3. In accordance with the plans.
4. Turbine to be grey in colour and the control unit to be in keeping
5. Noise.
6. Decommissioning
7. Agree details and appearance of any equipment/machinery on the site
8. Underground cables