

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 07/12/2020
THE REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION SERVICE MANAGER	

Number: 2

Application Number: C19/1204/39/LL

Date Registered: 16-07-20

Application Type: Full

Community: Llanengan

Ward: Abersoch

Proposal: Proposal to create six holiday let flats by converting and extending the main building and the demolition of the existing dwelling to the rear of the site and to erect new accommodation blocks in its place.

Location: Venetia, Venetia Lôn Sarn Bach, Abersoch, Pwllheli, Gwynedd, LL53 7EB

Summary of the Recommendation: TO REFUSE

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1. Description:

- 1.1 This is an application to create six self-contained holiday flats. Three self-contained holiday flats would be created by converting and extending the existing hotel/restaurant and the other three units would be created by demolishing the small dwelling at the back of the site and the disposal of a static caravan and erecting a new two-storey and one-storey building in their place. It appears that the static caravan to be removed from the site received permission under application number C07D/0638/39/LL with a condition to limit its use to hotel staff only.
- 1.2 It is proposed to build two-storey extensions at the back and side of the existing property together with the construction of a dormer window in the front and back. A balcony would be created on the first floor and second floor levels on top of flat roofs. The adaptations to the existing property would be finished in a combination of painted pebble-dash, slate and zinc. The adaptations to the existing property would create one holiday unit with three bedrooms on the ground floor, one holiday unit with three bedrooms on the ground / first floor and one holiday unit with four bedrooms on the first / second floor.
- 1.3 Three holiday units would be created by building one two-storey and one single-storey buildings on a site where a small dwelling and a caravan are currently located. These units would be finished externally in a combination of slate, zinc and painted pebble-dash. These three holiday units would have two bedrooms.
- 1.4 As part of this proposal it is also proposed to relocate the access and centralise it on the site's frontage. The site plan indicates that it is proposed to have seven parking spaces within the site.
- 1.5 A Design and Access Statement was submitted as part of the application as well as a statement of how consideration was given to the Welsh Language as part of the proposal, initial ecology report and a bats roosting survey assessment, parking statement and business plan.
- 1.6 The current use of the site includes a five-bedroom hotel and restaurant in a traditional and substantially sized building with a small dwelling and caravan for hotel staff use at the back of the site.
- 1.7 The site is situated within the Abersoch development boundary and within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). It is also within a Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest. The site is served by class three road. There are dwellings situated nearby.
- 1.8 The application is submitted to the Committee as it involves five or more units.

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 considerations indicate otherwise. Planning considerations include National Planning Policy and the Local Development Plan.
- 2.2 The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 places a duty on the Council to take reasonable steps in exercising its functions to meet the 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.

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2.3 Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan 2011-2026, adopted 31 July 2017

PS 1 - The Welsh Language and Culture

PS 4 - Sustainable transport, development and accessibility

TRA 2 - Parking standards

TRA 4 - Managing transport impacts

PS 5 - Sustainable developments

PS 6 – Mitigating the Effects of Climate Change and Adapting to Them

PCYFF 1 - Development Boundaries

PCYFF 2 - Development criteria

PCYFF 3 - Design and place shaping

PS 14 - The Visitors' Economy

TWR 2 - Holiday Accommodation

PS 19 - Conserving and where appropriate enhancing the natural environment

AMG 1 - Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans

AMG 5 – Local Biodiversity Conservation

PS 20 - Conserving and where appropriate enhancing cultural assets

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

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Maintaining and Creating Distinctive and Sustainable Communities (July 2019)

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Holiday Accommodation (July, 2011)

2.4 National Policies:

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 10, December 2018)

Technical Advice Note 12 - Design

Technical Advice Note 13 – Tourism

Technical Advice Note 18 – Transport

Technical Advice Note 20 – Planning and the Welsh Language

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3. Relevant Planning History:

- 3.1 C07D/0638/39/LL - Demolition of rear extension and re-build a larger single-storey rear extension to include toilets and a kitchen, installation of extraction flue, demolish a shed and exchange with a static caravan for staff and an extension to a side shed as additional storage - Tudor Court, Abersoch - Approved 4 February 2008. There is a condition imposed on the permission, which restricts the use of the caravan to Tudor Court staff only.
- 3.2 C07D/0464/39/LL – Intensify the use of the hotel to provide a restaurant for the public - Tudor Court Hotel – Approved 15 October 2007.
- 3.3 C07D/0082/39/LL – Change of use of hotel into a dwelling - Refused 9 May 2007.
- 3.4 2/19/623B – Change of use of hotel into two self-contained flats - Tudor Court Hotel – Approved 26 January 1994.
- 3.5 2/19/623A – Extension to a house – Dalwood Cottage, Tudor Court – Approved 12 January 1989.
- 3.6 2/19/623 – Change of use from a dwelling to a hotel – Tudor Court (Arvonía) – Approved 29 July 1988.
- 3.7 34/66/1245A – Conversion of existing dwelling into two maisonettes - Arvonía - Approved 24 April 1969.
- 3.8 3/4/1245 – Additions and improvements - Arvonía Cottage – Approved 30 November 1966.

4. Consultations:

Community/Town Council: Object due to an over-development and as there are plenty of such places available in the centre of the village, together with setting a precedent of converting nearby houses into flats. Concern was expressed about access to the highway, as it is near a busy junction, particularly during the holiday season. Also, each flat may have two cars (and perhaps boat/jet-ski) on a small site. They could affect neighbours in terms of privacy/over-looking. It would be better to retain it as a hotel, as there are so few within the village.

Transportation Unit: I refer to the above application and specifically to the additional information regarding transportation matters.

I do not totally agree with what is claimed in the Parking Statement, namely that consideration should be given to the previous use of the site, with the possibility of up to 25 vehicles for a restaurant with the capacity for 50. As a site in the centre of the village and within walking distance to the majority of the caravan sites, I assume that many visitors will arrive on foot, as amongst the shops, restaurants and other local attractions it is unlikely that there is a high demand for parking on the nearby streets, and it is unlikely that approximately 31 vehicles there will be related to this site only. The nature of the proposal is also totally different to a restaurant, where it

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is expected that the majority of visitors to a hotel would arrive in a vehicle, but not as many to restaurants in village locations. I will therefore disregard the comparison made with the previous use, and will focus on what is proposed as part of the application in question.

It appears that the parking provision would continue to be below what is expected for the size and number of proposed units. The applicant's parking report suggests that two vehicles can be expected for each of the three large units, with one vehicle for each of the smaller three units, a total of nine vehicles. With seven parking spaces within the curtilage only two will need to park on the nearby streets. The access statement suggests that the parking can be divided for one space per unit, with one extra space for visitors.

My concern is that the large units would attract groups in more than one vehicle, and it is possible that the holiday unit earmarked for the manager would need more than one space if the manager had a partner or family, and owned more than one vehicle.

Consequently, it is assumed that the proposal may attract a number of vehicles at a time, and regularly more than the seven spaces provided, this means that the development would lead to more demand on street parking, in a village where there is already huge pressure on the parking provision during the holiday season.

Natural Resources Wales:

Of the opinion that the proposed development does not affect a matter listed in our Consultation Subjects, Development Planning Advisory Service: Consultation Topics (September 2018). Therefore, we have no observations to make.

Welsh Water:

Having looked at plan ref. 4130 SK 11, it is noted that the foul flow will connect to the combined sewer located in the highway to the front of the site. We have no objection in principle to this connection.

Recommend a surface water condition for any increase in roof area / impermeable surfaces to connect to the public sewer.

Standard advice given to the developer.

AONB Unit:

Venetia is located amongst other houses in the centre of the village of Abersoch and within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is a fairly large two-storey house of an interesting character and prominent on the high street. It is proposed to change the use of the property, make adaptations to the house and erect new buildings at the rear instead of the existing building and caravan - to form a total of seven units for letting. It is noted that there have been some changes since the application was submitted in 2019.

Only minor amendments are proposed to the front elevation and the more intense developments in the back will not be prominent and it is

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deemed that the development would not affect the AONB.

Public Protection:

Demolition and construction may cause a noise and dust problem to nearby residents. Before commencing the work, a detailed plan to manage dust, noise and vibration as a result of demolition and construction should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. The demolition work should be undertaken in accordance with the approved plan. The applicant should contact Gwynedd Council's Buildings Service.

In order to safeguard the area's residents, any demolition and building work should be undertaken between the hours of 09.00 - 18.00 Monday to Friday, 09.00 - 13.00 on Saturday and not at all on Sunday or Bank Holidays.

During the demolition and construction work, 'the best practical methods should be used to reduce noise and vibration from the work and consideration should be given to the recommendations of BS5228: Control of Noise and Vibration on Construction and Open Sites.'

I advise that the applicant notifies the neighbours in the area of the demolition work, working hours, measures to be taken to safeguard amenities (in terms of noise, vibration and dust) with a contact number. A copy of the letter should be sent to the Service for information.

The applicant should install sufficient noise insulation in the building.

Reason: To safeguard the area's residents

Language Unit:

The risk / language impact identified in the Language Statement submitted with the application: Positive - 'Positive impact on the local economy by encouraging families to come on holiday to the local area.'

Language Unit's brief opinion: Disagree - Negative impact is more likely as it is a development of holiday units rather than contributing to the permanent housing stock in an area where the Welsh language is vulnerable.

The application does not offer sufficient information about the units that will be created and how they will be marketed, as the Business Plan referred to in the Design and Access Statement was not available for us to see.

Although we acknowledge the comment that a local building company will receive the work contract, and Welsh names would be

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chosen for the units, the prepared language statement did not show any understanding of the local area's language situation, the threats to the Welsh language as a result of the area's popularity as a holiday destination and second homes, and how this development would contribute to this.

According to the 2011 census, 47.9% of the population of Abersoch did not have any Welsh language skills, and only 35.6% were able to speak, read and write in Welsh. These percentages are much lower than the county average.

The fact that the proposed units are planned as self-contained holiday units means that they would not add to the area's permanent population. Neither does it offer any work opportunities (except for one site manager post). Therefore, we cannot see how the development could have a positive impact on the language in the area.

At the end of the language statement there is a reference to the positive impact on the area's economy by "*encouraging families to go on holiday to the local area and to spend money in the local shops*". There is no reference here to the possible impact on the language and the community.

The comments made in the response to the Joint Planning Policy Unit's comments are also noted:

In accordance with Council Tax figures (October 2019) there is a total of 691 second homes in Llanengan (Community Council area). With the total domestic units for the Community Council at 1634 (including second homes) this means that 42.29% of the domestic units in the Llanengan Community area are second homes.

Furthermore, there are 141 units (7.94%) that are taxed as non-domestic holiday accommodation within the Community Council area.

High numbers of second/holiday homes may have a detrimental impact on the cultural character of those local communities. It is possible that approving further holiday accommodation proposals within communities which already have a high concentration of holiday accommodation can exacerbate the impact on local services and the ability of that community and adjoining communities to support those services.

Having considered the above, and the fact that the proposed units do not contribute in any way to providing for the high percentage of the local population that have been priced out of the market, we cannot see that there is evidence that this development could have a positive impact on the language in the area.

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Biodiversity Unit:

Any planning application must provide a protected species survey (bats and nesting birds) undertaken whilst the bats are active during the summer months (May to September). The report should include a mitigation strategy.

The applicant should provide an Ecological Impact Assessment that follows the guidelines produced by CIEEM in 2016. This report should include a habitats survey, a map of habitats, in particular those listed under section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. Areas (in square metres) of temporary and permanent habitat loss must be provided.

Section 6 of the Environment Act (Wales) sets out a duty on every public authority to protect and improve biodiversity. Public authorities must attempt to maintain and enhance biodiversity when exercising functions in relation to Wales, and promote the resilience of ecosystems, as far as it is consistent with the appropriate practice of those functions. I recommend that the applicant provides a biodiversity improvement plan.

No response was received to the second consultation as a result of receiving an ecology report and a bats survey.

Public Consultation:

A notice was posted on the site and nearby residents were notified. The advertisement period has expired and objections were received on the grounds of:-

- Venetia has been previously extended and therefore another extension is out of proportion.
- Overdevelopment.
- Unsuitable change of use.
- The back extension development will be dominant.
- The materials of the new building at the back comprising of stone and zinc are not sympathetic to the area or the original building.
- Design is out of character.
- Squeezing a bungalow onto a site where a caravan can just barely stand seems bizarre.
- The site was not an eyesore when the site was sold, last year it was an award-winning restaurant with five star rooms and the present owner is responsible for its current condition.
- The proposal is oppressive.
- Proposal would lead to the loss of light and sun to a nearby property.
- The number of balconies within the proposal would create noise and significant loss of privacy.
- Balcony overlooking.
- Concern regarding working hours as Maes Gwydryn have many workers and some were on shift work.

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- Loss of privacy from the extensions and balconies.
- The bin storage is close to adjacent property to serve the number of units in the application and causes concern regarding hygiene, noise and disturbance.
- The proposal backs onto an estate that is mainly occupied by local people who reside there throughout the year, live in the area and have children who attend local schools and the proposal would have a detrimental impact on these.
- The new building at the back of the development would be significantly higher than the existing and would overlook the back gardens of nearby dwellings. It is noted that there are opaque glass windows, however, the gardens are used for leisure and family time and this will affect privacy and will make the residents feel uncomfortable.
- The number of units is excessive for the site and will create a holiday village with high traffic and noise disturbance.
- As a restaurant, parking was not a problem as the majority walked or used a taxi. The proposal in question only offers seven parking spaces for 16 rooms and this may cause parking off the site in places such as Maes Gwydryn, which is already under pressure from parking during the main holiday season.
- Traffic and parking concerns.
- Because cars already park at Maes Gwydryn this causes a problem for access to emergency vehicles, particularly during the summer months.
- Venetia is not a restaurant for 50 persons, the original plans were for 30. All are not seated to eat at the same time, some stay in Venetia and others walk or get a taxi. The majority of the staff are local and do not drive to work and some members of staff would live on site.
- Abersoch needs more local housing and not tourist holiday accommodation that is already well provided for with a multitude of holiday accommodation in the area.
- The caravan is for staff only and has only been used occasionally during the main holiday season.
- Question if there is an affordable element as part of the proposal as other projects in the area have had to include this.
- Raising building control matters.
- Question if the area's water and power supplies are sufficient.
- The numbering of houses in Maes Gwydryn was incorrect on the plan.

5. Assessment of the material planning considerations:

The principle of the development

- 5.1 The site in question is located within the development boundary of Abersoch and makes use of a previously developed site. The proposal; therefore, is acceptable in terms of the requirements of policies PS5 and PCYFF1 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (LDP).
- 5.2 One of the main policies to consider in terms of the principle of the development is policy TWR 2 of the LDP. Policy TWR 2 permits proposals that involve the provision of self-serviced holiday

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accommodation provided the proposal complies with a series of the criteria included in the policy, namely:-

- i. In the case of new build accommodation, that the development is located within a development boundary, or makes use of a suitable previously developed site;*
- ii. That the proposed development is appropriate in scale considering the site, location and/or settlement in question;*
- iii. That the proposal will not result in a loss of permanent housing stock;*
- iv. That the development is not sited within a primarily residential area or does not significantly harm the residential character of an area;*
- v. That the development does not lead to an over-concentration of such accommodation within the area."*

5.3 In terms of the first criterion, the site is located within the development boundary and therefore the development of new permanent holiday accommodation can be permitted. In this case the proposal would make use of a building and a site that was previously developed.

5.4 The proposal in question would add extensively to the built form on the site. It is proposed to make a number of adaptations to the hotel building design by building extensions to it together with the construction of new buildings at the rear of the site. If this development is permitted, the back of the site would be extensively developed and the proposed single-storey building would be squeezed into the north western corner of the site. Also, the view out of the bedroom windows and the bathroom window of this single-storey holiday unit would look towards the gable-end of the proposed two-storey building that is not a good design for quality holiday units. In addition, all the built forms at the rear of the site mean that the amenity area is scarce and limited to the balconies, terraces and where there will be no privacy available between the balconies / terraces in the individual holiday units. Having considered this, it is deemed that the scale of the development would be unacceptable and it would not create a development of a design and setting of high quality and therefore contrary to criterion ii of policy TWR 2 of the LDP.

5.5 The application site includes one existing dwelling situated near the rear of the site. This dwelling would be demolished in order to construct a new building that would include two self-contained holiday units. In this sense, the proposal would entail the loss of one dwelling from the existing permanent housing stock and therefore contrary to criterion iii of Policy TWR 2 of the LDP.

5.6 In accordance with criterion iv of policy TWR 2, no development for holiday accommodation should be located in a residential area, or should not cause substantial harm to the residential character of the area. The property is located within the Abersoch development boundary and looking around the site the surrounding area is mainly residential although it is realised that there are some business units nearby such as a bed and breakfast facility. Although there are some business uses nearby, the surrounding area is mainly considered to be a residential area. Although it is to an extent residential in nature, a holiday unit has different characteristics compared to permanent residential dwellings. Holiday units by their nature involve movements that differ from usual residential units, and these differences could cause a disturbance due to the nature of holiday use, time of movements and noise, etc. Such matters can have an impact on residential dwellings in the vicinity. Consequently, and due to the proximity of the existing

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- residential property nearby, the proposal cannot be considered to be of a high quality in terms of location. The proposal is considered to be contrary to criterion iv of Policy TWR 2 of the LDP.
- 5.7 Criterion 'v' in TWR 2 requires that the development does not lead to an over-concentration of such accommodation in the area, however, the policy does not set specific thresholds to establish what is considered to be an over-concentration. However, there is an explanation in paragraph 6.3.67 of the policy that there is concern about oversupply of self-serviced accommodation in some parts of the Plan area. This could mean that providers and operators may not receive the anticipated return in income from what may be a significant investment. Clearly, neither National Guidance nor the Councils intend for this policy to lead to an excessive concentration of this type of holiday accommodation in a specific location, which could result in businesses failing. Therefore, the policy requires applicants to submit a detailed business case to show the resilience of the proposed plan, for the Council to assess whether the proposal has a realistic hope of being viable, and that the proposal is not speculative. In this case, the applicants have submitted a comprehensive Business Plan with their application, and this includes costs and expected letting figures and is considered to be realistic and indicates viability as a holiday use. It also compares the holiday units that are already available in the area and the demand for high quality units.
- 5.8 As an additional guidance, Supplementary Planning Guidance: Holiday Accommodation (2011) offers further guidance to policies and although they refer to old policies in the previous Unitary Development Plan, their content is very similar to the current TWR 2 policy in the LDP. Paragraph 24 requires that when determining applications for self-catering accommodation consideration is given to the number of second homes in the communities. A threshold is given where 10% or more of the housing stock are second homes then further self-serviced accommodation within the area of that Community Council should not be approved. The threshold is specified to recognise the impact on local services that approving further self-serviced accommodation can have on communities with a significant concentration of second homes. Emphasis was given to this factor by the Planning Inspector in his recent appeal refusal decision for Tŷ'n Pwll, Nefyn APP/Q6810/A/19/3221799, dated 16 May 2019, that the number of second homes in a community are an important consideration when determining applications for self-serviced holiday accommodation. In the case of Nefyn, it was shown that 33.3% of the housing stock is used as second homes and is significantly higher than the 10% threshold noted and granting the appeal would have exacerbated the impact on local services. Similar consideration was given in the appeal decision for Congl y Cae, Llangwnnadr APP/Q6810/A/19/3230249. In that case, there were 14.01% second homes within the community council area and this once again is more than the 10% threshold noted in the adopted Holiday Accommodation SPG. In light of the appeal decision and as the Supplementary Planning Guidance: DRAFT Tourist facilities and accommodation (2018) has not yet been adopted, then the current application will have to be determined on the grounds of the adopted 2011 SPG.
- 5.9 In accordance with Council Tax figures (October 2019) there is a total of 691 second homes in Llanengan Community Council area. With the total domestic units for the Community Council at 1634 (including second homes), this means that 42.29% of the domestic units in the Llanengan Community area are second homes.
- 5.10 Furthermore, there are 141 units (7.94%) that are taxed as non-domestic holiday accommodation within the Community Council area. It is noted that the number of units taxed as non-domestic businesses are likely to be lower than the actual provision of holiday accommodation and this is specifically as the providers have not necessarily transferred over to pay 'Non-domestic Business Rates' and rather continue to pay domestic council tax. Self-catering holiday accommodation providers can only transfer to pay non-domestic business rates when the unit has been available for 140 days and is rented out for at least 70 of those days.

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- 5.11 High numbers of second/holiday homes can have a detrimental impact on the cultural character of those local communities. It is possible that approving further holiday accommodation proposals within communities that already have a high concentration of holiday accommodation can exacerbate the impact on local services and the ability of that community and adjoining communities to support those services. In accordance with the guidance included in the SPG, as there are 42.29% second homes in the Llanengan Community Council area the threshold in terms of numbers of second homes has been reached. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal does not comply with this guidance included in the SPG and the proposal is contrary to the requirements of criterion v of Policy TWR 2 of the LDP.
- 5.12 The proposal is therefore unacceptable due to its scale, loss of a house from the housing stock, location of the site within a residential area and there is an excess of this type of accommodation in the area where 42.29% of the housing stock are second homes. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to criteria ii, iii, iv and v of policy TWR 2 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan and, as a result, it is considered that the proposal would not create a development of high quality design, siting or location and is therefore contrary to the requirements of policy TWR 2 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan and also the Supplementary Planning Guidance: Holiday Accommodation (July, 2011).

Language Matters

- 5.13 In terms of the proposal in question, there is no requirement to submit a Welsh Language Statement under Policy PS1 of the LDP. However, in accordance with the content of Supplementary Planning Guidance: Maintaining and Creating Distinctive and Sustainable Communities, applicants are encouraged to present a record of how consideration was given to the Welsh language when drawing up the planning application. As part of the application, a statement was received from the applicant noting how they had considered the language as part of the planning application.
- 5.14 This statement declares that the Venetia site has been used as bed and breakfast accommodation and a restaurant and visitors who have stayed there have been encouraged to visit the local area and consequently to spend money in the local shops, pubs, cafés etc. and there is no difference between this and what is proposed as self-contained accommodation. A local building company would be used for the building work and this contractor will mainly use local people with many using the Welsh language as their principal language. Also, the contractor uses local suppliers and materials that all assist the local economy. All the building signs will be bilingual with Welsh as the main language. Once the units are in operation it is proposed to use local maintenance contractors and a house caretaker. Although these would not be employed directly by the company, it is more desirable to offer the work to local businesses which will assist their businesses. There may also be a manager's post that would be suitable for a local person with knowledge of the local area. The policy also places weight on the importance that any development is absorbed into the area without harming the community's character. In this respect, there will be no change to the property's front elevation. There is strong demand for holiday accommodation, especially during school holidays, and high quality accommodation is often booked a year in advance. Short stays can be offered and discount offers during quieter periods that would encourage people to come to the area during quiet times to support local businesses. It is proposed to use bilingual signs within the property with Welsh as the main language. This is important to the developer as they are eager to promote the use of the Welsh language. It is proposed to give each unit a Welsh name and the following are under

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consideration - Tywod, Harbwr, Traeth, Tŷ Chwith, Tŷ Lawn, Tŷ Canol. The names would be included in Welsh and spelt phonetically underneath to assist with pronunciation. As a result of Covid-19, it is inevitable that some small businesses will suffer. This and the uncertainty regarding overseas travel will mean that more of the population will holiday within the UK and therefore it is considered that there will be more demand for high quality self-contained holiday accommodation. To summarise, it is considered that the proposal would have a positive impact on the local economy and will encourage families to come on holiday to the local area and to spend money in the local shops. The proposal gives visitors an opportunity to travel around the wider Gwynedd area and Anglesey without the time restrictions that are linked to bed and breakfast accommodation. This would allow visitors to have a taste of Welsh culture by supporting local Welsh businesses together with seeking to direct the 'new normal'.

- 5.15 The Language Unit was consulted regarding the application. These observations recognise the comment that a local building company will receive the work contract, and Welsh names would be chosen for the units, however, the language statement prepared does not show any understanding of the local area's language situation, the threats to the Welsh language as a result of the area's popularity as a holiday destination and second homes, and how this development would contribute to this. According to the 2011 census, 47.9% of the population of Abersoch did not have any Welsh language skills, and only 35.6% were able to speak, read and write in Welsh. These percentages are much lower than the county average. The fact that the proposed units are planned as self-contained holiday units means that they would not add to the area's permanent population. Neither, does it offer any work opportunities (apart from one site manager post) and therefore it cannot be seen how the development could have a positive impact on the language in the area. At the end of the language statement, reference is made to the positive impact to the area's economy by "encouraging families to go on holiday to the local area and to spend money in the local shops". There is no reference here to the possible impact on the language and the community. The Language Unit comments also refer to the observations received on the application from the Joint Planning Policy Unit:-

"In accordance with Council Tax figures (October 2019) there is a total of 691 second homes in Llanengan (Community Council area). With the total domestic units for the Community Council at 1634 (including second homes) this means that 42.29% of the domestic units in the Llanengan Community area are second homes.

Furthermore, there are 141 units (7.94%) that are taxed as non-domestic holiday accommodation within the Community Council area.

High numbers of second/holiday homes can have a detrimental impact on the cultural character of those local communities. It is possible that approving further holiday accommodation proposals within communities which already have a high concentration of holiday accommodation can exacerbate the impact on local services and the ability of that community and adjoining communities to support those services."

- 5.16 Having considered the above, and the fact that the proposed units do not contribute in any way to providing for the high percentage of the local population that have been priced out of the market, the Language Unit concludes that they cannot see that there is evidence that this development could have a positive impact on the language in the area. The Language Unit's summary opinion states that they disagree with the conclusion of the submitted language statement and they state that a negative impact is more likely as it is a development for holiday units rather than contributing to the permanent housing stock in an area where the Welsh language is vulnerable.

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5.17 It is recognised, in accordance with the submitted Language Statement, that a local building company would receive the language contract, there would be Welsh names on the units, that bilingual signs would be erected and holiday units can lead to people supporting local businesses while visiting the area. However, the observations submitted by the Language Unit also recognise that the statement submitted does not show any understanding of the local area's language situation, the threats to the Welsh language as a result of the area's popularity as a holiday destination and second homes, and how the development in question would contribute to this. With the local area already under pressure in terms of the lack of Welsh language skills, and also due to the high percentage of second homes, such units will not contribute to adding to the area's permanent population. High numbers of second/holiday homes in an area can have a detrimental impact on the cultural character of these local communities. It is possible that approving further holiday accommodation proposals within communities which already have a high concentration of holiday accommodation can exacerbate the impact on local services and the ability of that community and adjoining communities to support those services. Therefore, officers are not convinced even with the measures proposed in the application e.g. bilingual signs, Welsh names, on how a development of this type would be a means to improve and contribute positively to the Welsh language and Welsh culture in the area. As there is a fundamental objection to the proposal, officers have not raised these concerns with the applicant's agent as receiving an amended Language Statement in itself would not overcome the concerns of other policies that have been highlighted in this brief assessment. Therefore, based on the information to hand, it is considered that the proposal is contrary to point 3 of policy PS 1 of the LDP as is likely to cause harm to the community's character and the language balance in a way that cannot be avoided or satisfactory mitigated.

Visual amenities

5.18 Policy PCYFF 3 of the LDP states that all proposals should exhibit a design of high quality that gives full consideration to the context of the surrounding natural, historic and built environment. It also emphasises that proposals will only be permitted if they can comply with a series of criteria. Amongst these criteria is a requirement that the development must add to and enhance the character and appearance of the site, the building or the area in terms of setting, appearance, scale, height, mass and elevation treatment. It should also respect the context of the site and its place in the landscape, or make use of appropriate materials for its surroundings and incorporate soft and hard landscaping and screening where appropriate.

5.19 The site currently includes the hotel building facing the county highway and located near the front of the site. This building is two-storey. The hotel building includes back extensions that have been added to over the years. Around the back of the site is a dwelling house that is partly two-storey and single-storey. In addition, in the back is a static caravan that was permitted as a place for hotel workers only to stay. The site is therefore one that has been developed fairly extensively as it currently stands.

5.20 The proposal would entail making adaptations and additions to the hotel building including building a two-storey extension to the back and side, a dormer window in the back and front together with creating balconies on the top of the flat roofs on the rear extensions. These balconies would be located on the first and second floor levels. In addition, it is proposed to create living rooms in the roofspace. With the proposed amendments it is proposed to locate three holiday units within the hotel building. The extensions to the hotel building would have flat roofs. The dormer window in the back would have a flat roof and would be finished in zinc

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and the dormer window in the front would have a slate pitch roof. It is proposed to finish the external walls in painted pebble-dash. In addition to the proposed amendments to the hotel building, it is proposed to demolish the house on the site and to construct a two-storey building that will provide two holiday units. It is also proposed to remove the static caravan from the site and in its place construct a single-storey building that would be used as one holiday unit. It would be a two-storey building with a slate hipped roof and a single-storey building with a slate pitch roof. It is proposed to finish the external walls of these buildings in a painted pebble-dash. There would also be an element of zinc in the exterior materials on the two-storey building. Both two-storey holiday units would include a balcony on the first floor level. It is considered that the materials proposed for the development are acceptable and if the application is approved it would be possible to impose a condition to agree on the exact materials.

- 5.21 The existing site has been extensively developed previously as it currently stands. However, the proposal in question adds extensively to the built form that is on the site. It is proposed to make a number of adaptations to the hotel building design by constructing extensions. Whilst some adaptations to the property can be accepted e.g. front dormer window and the side extension, it is considered that the proposal as submitted will create a dominant form of development to the rear of the existing building. Not only is a back two-storey extension proposed but also the installation of a dormer window in the flat roof at the back as well as using flat roofs as balconies and it is considered that this as a whole would create an incongruous, dominant and intrusive design at the back of the existing building.
- 5.22 In addition, it is proposed to demolish the existing dwelling located to the back of the site. This extension is partly two-storey and single-storey. It measures approximately 13.2m by 8.5m at its maximum, and the two-storey section is approx. 5.2m high and the single-storey is approx. 2.6m high. The proposed building is two-storey in its entirety and is in a square form measuring approximately 9.8m by 7m with a height of approximately 7.3m to the top. The proposed building is greater in bulk and mass than the existing building and because of its more square form it would take more room on the site than the existing building which has been broken up. In addition to this two-storey building it is also proposed to build a new single-storey building to replace the static caravan that is currently on the land. This proposed building is approximately 4.8m by 13.2m with a height to the ridge of approx. 5.2m compared with the caravan that is approx. 3m by 8.8m with a height of approx. 2.7m. This single-storey building appears to have been squeezed into the north-western corner of the site with the bedroom windows and the bathroom window looking out on the gable-end of the proposed two-storey building and only 1.2m at its maximum between both buildings. It is not considered that this type is good design especially considering that it is proposed to market the proposed holiday units as quality units. Also, it is seen that development is taking place along the width of the site and the back section of the site would be full of buildings either as an extension to the existing building or in the form of new buildings. The proposal would add to the built footprint of the site and new buildings would also add to the height of the buildings found at the back of the site. Taking all the proposed developments on the site into consideration, it is deemed that the proposal in question is an over-development by trying to get too much out of the site and all of this leads to a development that does not add or enhance the character and appearance of the site, the building or the area in terms of setting, appearance, scale, height and mass. Also, by undertaking all the proposed changes it is considered that the proposal does not respect the context of the site and the proposal as a whole would create an oppressive development on the surrounding property.

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- 5.23 Therefore, as a result of the above, the proposal would not add to or enhance the character and appearance of the site, the building or the area in terms of setting, appearance, scale, height and mass. It is considered that it would create an obtrusive and dominating feature in the rear of the site and would not respect the context of the site and create an oppressive development on the surrounding property. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal is contrary to criteria 1 and 2 of Policy PCYFF 3 of the LDP.
- 5.24 The site also lies within the Llŷn AONB. Policy PS19 of the LDP requires the protection and, where relevant, enhancement of the natural environment, countryside and special coastline of the Plan area. Criterion 2 states that international, national, regional and local importance should be protected and, where relevant, enhanced, as well as, where appropriate, their settings in accordance with National Policy. Furthermore, Policy AMG 1 requires that proposals that are within or affect the setting and/or significant views into or out of the AONB, give consideration to the relevant Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan.
- 5.25 Venetia is located amongst other houses in the centre of the village of Abersoch. The main changes proposed to the property are situated towards the back with only minor amendments to the front elevation. The front section of the property is the most visible from public places. Therefore, as a result of the site's location amongst the built forms and that only minor amendments are proposed to the front of the property, it is considered that in this case that the proposal would not affect the AONB. The AONB Unit had no objection in terms of its impact on the AONB. The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of Policy PS 19 and AMG 1 of the LDP.
- 5.26 The site lies within the Llŷn and Bardsey Island Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest. The proposal involves making adaptations to existing property and the construction of new buildings to the rear of the property and it is considered that the impact of the proposal would be local and would not have a wider impact on the historic landscape. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of Policy AT 1 of the LDP.

General and residential amenities

- 5.27 Policy PCYFF 2 of the LDP deals with assessing amenities linked to the proposal. The proposal would entail creating six self-contained holiday units on the site with three within the existing hotel building and the other three in new buildings at the back of the site. We realise that the site has been used as a bed and breakfast hotel and restaurant and therefore commercial use is already made of the site. However, such establishments often have someone on site supervising with rules regarding opening and closing times. Self-contained holiday units are wholly dependent on those who are staying in the property to be obliging and considerate to other nearby residents and therefore there is less control over coming and going and activities that are held from the holiday units. The nature of holiday units mean that the movements are different to usual residential units and these differences could cause a disturbance due to the nature of holiday use, time of movements and noise, etc. It is noted from the plans that the bin storage area, recycling etc. is located directly near the boundary with a neighbour's property and this type of use is likely to cause a nuisance in terms of noise and also odours, particularly considering that it would serve six proposed holiday units. Also, the parking spaces are available in the front of the site (access to the back of the site is on foot along the side of the main building and it is too narrow for vehicles), and this will mean that there will be regular coming and goings from the back of the site to the front, once again, adding to the noise and disturbance that may emanate from the proposal, and this in an area where there are several dwellings.

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5.28 In addition, the amenity land provided for holiday unit users will be scarce as this, on the whole, is limited to terraces/balconies where there is no privacy between units within the site. There is concern here about the impact of the units on each other with the back of the units in the existing hotel building looking towards the front of the new buildings that are to be erected and this in a situation where buildings are close together. In addition, the back of the existing hotel includes the balconies / terrace for the holiday units located in the building, while the balcony /terrace of the new proposed buildings are in the front and therefore the only amenity area for holiday unit users overlook each other. In terms of the impact on nearby housing, it is realised that some over-looking currently exists between properties. However, the proposal in question would increase the over-looking / loss of privacy to nearby property, due to the fact that several balconies and additional windows are linked to the proposal compared to the existing situation. It is understood that it is proposed to install high-level opaque glass at the side of the second floor balcony, however, this would not prevent over-looking when standing in other areas of this balcony. In the same manner, over-looking cannot be avoided from the first floor balcony at the back of the existing hotel building. In the same manner, plans indicate a proposal to include six windows (two on the first floor level and four on the ground floor level) on the north western elevation of the new two-storey building. This building borders housing at Maes Gwydryn. There are two windows (one at first floor level and the other at ground floor level) in this elevation in the existing house. This section of the proposal in question therefore increases the opportunities in terms of over-looking and loss of privacy to nearby houses and gardens. We understand that the plans indicate that the two first floor windows would have opaque glass. However, this does not prevent opening the windows and creating a situation of over-looking and loss of privacy. In addition, the first floor of these holiday units will be used extensively with the kitchen/dining room/living room on the first floor and the sleeping rooms on the ground floor.

5.29 Taking all the matters into consideration, it is deemed that the proposal would cause detrimental harm to the occupants of nearby housing together with holiday unit users on the grounds of increased activity, disturbance, noise, over-looking and loss of privacy and therefore the proposal is contrary to criterion 7 of Policy PCYFF 2 of the LDP.

Transport and access matters

5.30 It is proposed as part of the application to re-locate the vehicular access to the site in order that it is centralised on the site's frontage. The proposal includes seven parking spaces within the site. There are no road safety concerns associated with re-locating the access, however, there are concerns regarding the number of parking spaces within the site.

5.31 The applicant in the Parking Statement argues that the site has permission to operate as a five bedroom hotel, restaurant to serve 50, residential unit and a caravan to be let and there are only about 4-5 parking spaces within the curtilage and therefore this number does not correspond to current highway requirements in terms of use made of the site. They consider that if the site is used as it is to its full capacity that approximately 31 cars associated with this site are parked on nearby roads. They consider that changing the site to six self-contained holiday units would reduce the parking levels significantly and the proposal would include one parking space for each unit with one visitor parking space. In the parking statement, the worst case scenario is noted with two cars for each of the larger units and one car for the three smaller units and this would only need a total of nine parking spaces and therefore with only seven being provided on the site there would be a significant reduction in the number of cars parking on the nearby streets compared to the existing 31.

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- 5.32 The Transportation Unit was consulted on the proposal. These comments state that the Transportation Unit is in total agreement with this and it is claimed in the Parking Statement, that the previous use of the site should be considered, with the possibility of up to 25 vehicles for the restaurant with a capacity for 50. As a site in the centre of the village and within walking distance to the majority of the caravan sites, I assume that many visitors will arrive on foot, as amongst the shops, restaurants and other local attractions it is unlikely that there is a high demand for parking on the nearby streets, and it is unlikely that approximately 31 vehicles there will be related to this site only. The nature of the proposal is also completely different to a restaurant, where it is expected that the majority of the visitors to a hotel would arrive in a vehicle, but not as many for restaurants in village locations. I therefore will disregard the comparison made with the previous use and will focus on what is proposed as part of the application in question. It appears that the parking provision would continue to be below the expectation for the size and number of proposed units. The applicant's parking report suggests that two vehicles can be expected for each of the three large units, with one vehicle for each of the smaller three units, giving a total of nine vehicles. With seven parking spaces within the curtilage, only two will need to park on the nearby streets. The access statement suggests that the parking can be divided to one space per unit, with one extra space for visitors. The concern of the Transportation Unit is that the large units would attract groups in more than one vehicle, and it is possible that the holiday unit earmarked for the manager would need more than one space if the manager had a partner or family, and owned more than one vehicle. Consequently, it is assumed that the proposal may attract a number of vehicles at a time, and regularly more than the seven spaces provided; this means that the development would lead to more demand for on street parking, in a village where there is already huge pressure on the parking provision during the holiday season.
- 5.33 It should be noted that the manager unit referred to in the Transportation Unit's comments has been withdrawn from the proposal and the proposal is now for six holiday units. However, it is considered as the Transportation Unit's observations state that the larger units may attract more than one vehicle and therefore the parking provision on the site is insufficient to serve the proposal and it is likely that the proposal will lead to on street parking in a village where parking provision is under pressure, especially during the holiday season. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal would affect road safety and is contrary to the requirements of Policy TRA 2 and TRA 4 of the LDP.

Biodiversity matters

- 5.34 As a result of receiving the Biodiversity Unit's observations on the application an Initial Ecology Report and Bats Roosting Assessment Survey was received. This report notes that there was no evidence of protected species using the site and there was limited potential for protected species to be using the site and therefore there was no need for any further ecology surveys. The report recommends measures to improve opportunities for biodiversity including provision for nesting birds and bats. The Biodiversity Unit was re-consulted as a result of receiving the survey but no response was received. However, it is considered that it would be possible to impose a condition on the permission in terms of Biodiversity matters if the application is approved. It is considered acceptable in terms of Policy AMG 5 of the LDP.

6. Conclusions:

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- 6.1 Therefore, based on the above assessment, the proposal is unacceptable due to its scale, loss of a house from the housing stock, location of the site within a residential area and an excess of this type of accommodation in the area where 42.29% of the housing stock are second homes. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to criteria ii, iii, iv and v of policy TWR 2 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan. Consequently, it is considered that the proposal would not create a high quality development in terms of design, setting or location and is therefore contrary to the requirements of policy TWR 2 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan and also Supplementary Planning Guidance: Holiday Accommodation (July 2011).
- 6.2 The Local Planning Authority has not been convinced that measures such as bilingual signs and Welsh names would not be sufficient mitigating measures in terms of improving and contributing positively to the Welsh language and Welsh culture in an area that is already under pressure in terms of language skills together with second homes / holiday units. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal is contrary to point 3 of policy PS 1 of the LDP as it is likely to cause harm to the community's character and the language balance in a way that cannot be avoided or satisfactory mitigated.
- 6.3 It is considered that the proposal would not add to or enhance the character and appearance of the site, the building or the area in terms of setting, appearance, scale, height and mass. It is considered that it would create an obtrusive and dominating feature in the rear of the site and would not respect the context of the site and create an oppressive development on the surrounding property. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal is contrary to criteria 1 and 2 of Policy PCYFF 3 of the LDP.
- 6.4 It is considered that the proposal would therefore cause significant detrimental harm to the occupants of nearby housing together with holiday unit users on the grounds of increased activity, disturbance, noise, over-looking and loss of privacy and therefore the proposal is contrary to criterion 7 of Policy PCYFF 2 of the LDP.
- 6.5 Parking provision on the site is insufficient to serve the proposal and is therefore likely that the proposal will lead to on street parking in a village where parking provision is under pressure especially during the holiday season affecting road safety and is therefore contrary to the requirements of Policy TRA 2 and TRA 4 of the LDP.

7. Recommendation:

7.1 To refuse – Reasons -

1. The proposal is unacceptable due to its scale, loss of a house from the housing stock, location of the site within a residential area and an excess of this type of accommodation in the area where 42.29% of the housing stock are second homes. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to criteria ii, iii, iv and v of policy TWR 2 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan. Consequently, it is considered that the proposal would not create a high quality development in terms of design, setting or location and is therefore contrary to the requirements of policy TWR 2 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance: Holiday Accommodation (July, 2011).
2. The Local Planning Authority has not been convinced that measures such as bilingual signs and Welsh names would be sufficient mitigating measures in terms of improving and contributing positively to the Welsh language and Welsh culture in an area that is already under pressure in

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terms of language skills together with second homes / holiday units. Based on the information received, it is considered that the proposal is therefore contrary to point 3 of policy PS 1 of the LDP as it is likely to cause harm to the community's character and language balance in a way that cannot be avoided or satisfactorily mitigated.

3. The proposal would not add to or enhance the character and appearance of the site in terms of its setting, appearance, scale and mass and it would create an obtrusive and dominating feature on nearby property and would not respect the context of the site. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal is contrary to criteria 1 and 2 of Policy PCYFF 3 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan.
4. The proposal would therefore cause significant detrimental harm to the occupants of nearby housing together with holiday unit users on the grounds of increased activity, disturbance, noise, over-looking and loss of privacy and therefore the proposal is contrary to criterion 7 of Policy PCYFF 2 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan.
5. Parking provision on the site is insufficient to serve the proposal and is therefore likely that the proposal will lead to on street parking in a village where parking provision is under pressure, especially during the holiday season, thus affecting road safety and is therefore contrary to the requirements of Policy TRA 2 and TRA 4 of the LDP.