

<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>	<b>DATE: 21/06/2021</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION SERVICE MANAGER</b>	

**Number: 2**

**Application Number: C20/0533/35/LL**

**Date Registered: 09/07/2020**

**Application Type: Full**

**Community: Dolbenmaen**

**Ward: Dolbenmaen**

**Proposal: Change of use of land for the siting of 42 touring caravans together with the formation of associated access roads, landscaping and the erection of a toilet block.**

**Location: Eisteddfa Caravan and Camping Site, Pentrefelin, Gwynedd, LL52 0PT**

**Summary of the Recommendation: TO APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS**

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## 1. Description:

- 1.1 This is an application to change the use of land for the siting of 42 touring caravans together with the formation of the associated access road and the erection of a toilet block.
- 1.2 The site already forms part of an existing camping site that has planning permission for 13 static caravans, 50 touring caravans and 70 tents. The site is open to visitors from 1 March until 31 October and there is no intention to change this. It is not proposed either to extend the size of the site or increase the number of static caravans. The proposal involves siting 42 additional touring caravans to replace the permission for 70 tents. The site also has a lawful use certificate for tents on land to the south-west of the site.
- 1.3 The site is in a rural location between Pentrefelin and Cricieth. The site is served by an existing access off the A497. There is woodland to the south that largely screens the site from the A497. The fishing lakes of Eisteddfa are to the east, and Mynydd Du campsite is on higher ground to the north and north-west.

## 2. Relevant Policies:

- 2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and paragraph 2.1.2 of Planning Policy Wales emphasise that planning decisions should be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning considerations include National Planning Policy and the 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.
- 2.3 **Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan 2011-2026, adopted 31 July 2017**

ISA 1: Infrastructure provision

PS 2: Infrastructure and developer contributions

PS 5: Sustainable Development

PCYFF 2: Development criteria

PCYFF 3: Design and Place Shaping

PCYFF 4: Design and Landscaping

PS 6: Alleviating and adapting to the effects of climate change

PS 4 : Sustainable transport, development and accessibility

TRA 2: Parking Standards

TRA 4 : Managing Transport Impacts

PS 14: The Tourist Economy

TWR 5: Touring caravan, camping and temporary alternative camping accommodation

PS19: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment where appropriate

AMG3: Protecting and improving features and qualities that are unique to the character of the local landscape

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AMG 5: Local Biodiversity Conservation  
 AMG 6: Protection Sites of Local or Regional Significance  
 SPG Tourist Facilities and Accommodation (2021)

SPG Maintaining and Creating Distinctive and Sustainable Communities (2019)

**2.4 National Policies:**

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11 - February 2021)

Technical Advice Note 12: Design  
 Technical Advice Note 13: Tourism  
 Technical Advice Note 18: Transport  
 Technical Advice Note 20: The Welsh Language and Planning  
 Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning

**3. Relevant Planning History:**

C99D/0097/16/LL – Siting of 3 additional static caravans (making a total of 9) and change the existing permission of 115 tents and 25 touring caravans to 70 tents and 50 touring caravans. Approved 29/06/99

C99D/0378/39/LL – Siting of an additional 2 static caravans. Approved 23/07/01

C02D/0535/36/LL - Siting of 2 additional static caravans on existing caravan and camping site. Refused 21.11.02

C03D/0182/36/LL – Siting of additional static caravans for use by the disabled. Approved 23.05.11

C18/1007/35/TC – Application for a lawful development certificate for the use of land as a camping site Approved 17.01.19

**4. Consultations:**

Community/Town Council: It should be ensured that the site is only approved for touring caravans, and that 'statics' should not be included under any circumstances now or in future.

Transportation Unit: I refer to the above planning application and confirm that I have no objection to the proposal. The site is adjacent to a class A road, with satisfactory access for the likely increase in traffic as a result of the application, with sufficient visibility splays and is located within an appropriate speed limit given the nature of the road.

No objection and no conditions / notes proposed in this case.

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Natural Resources Wales:	No observations and environmental advice.
Welsh Water:	The initial observations raised a concern about the impact of the development on the local sewerage system. Following a further explanation from the agent regarding the fact that the proposal would reduce the number of people staying on the site, Welsh Water does not object to the proposal. Recommend a standard condition to ensure that surface water will not connect or drain into the public sewer.
Public Protection Unit:	<p>Observations were received, including advice about the licensing requirements and the need to update the licence. The site also requires a licence for the land that has a lawful use certificate for tents.</p> <p>In response to this, observations were received from the agent, confirming that that they were aware of the licensing requirements. The application in question has provided sufficient facilities for the proposal under consideration, and an application for a new licence with the necessary information will be submitted to the Licensing Unit if this planning application is permitted.</p>
Biodiversity Unit	I have no ecological concerns about the application. The development includes a proposal to plant native trees and retain the wild flower bunds wherever possible.
Public Consultation:	A notice was posted on the site and nearby residents were notified. The advertising period has expired and no observations have been received.

## 5. Assessment of the material planning considerations:

### The principle of the development

- 5.1 The site entails establishing a touring caravan site on land that already forms part of an existing camping site that has planning permission for 70 tents. Policy TWR 5 of the LDP permits proposals to develop new touring caravan sites and temporary alternative camping accommodation provided they conform to all the criteria noted. These include the need for the proposed development to be of a high quality in terms of design, layout and appearance and sited in an unobtrusive location which is well screened by existing landscape features and/or where touring units can be readily assimilated into the landscape in a way which does not significantly harm the visual quality of the landscape; avoids excessive areas of hard standing; have limited physical connection to the ground and is capable of being removed off the site out of season; any ancillary facilities should, if possible, be located within an existing building or as an extension to existing facilities; that the site is close to the main highway network and that adequate access can be provided without significantly harming landscape characteristics and features; occupation is

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limited to holiday use only; that the site is used for touring purposes only and any units are removed from the site during periods when not in use.

- 5.2 The units would be sited around the site and would be served by a new access track. Each pitch would have a 7m by 6m gravel hard-standing, in keeping with the rest of the site. The majority of the boundaries include hedges and trees, and the site is therefore fairly well concealed in the wider landscape, although the landscaping on the site's northern boundary is weaker than the rest of the site. The plans submitted as part of the application include a detailed landscaping plan that shows additional landscaping along the site's northern boundaries and within the site. These have been included as visual mitigation measures and biodiversity improvements for the proposed development, which would reinforce and strengthen the existing vegetation.
- 5.3 It is considered that the design, setting and appearance of the proposal is acceptable, and that it would not significantly harm the landscape's visual quality. The proposal also involves the construction of a building finished in timber, to provide toilets and showers. This building would be comparatively small, using materials usually found in the countryside and located near the boundary of the existing site, and would therefore not be prominent in the landscape.
- 5.4 In respect of the proximity of the road network, the site has direct access to a class 1 road. It is considered that the roads and access are acceptable and suitable. The Transportation Unit has no concerns regarding the proposal. It is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of road safety.
- 5.5 As a result of the above assessment, and with the use of appropriate planning conditions, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of Policy TWR 5 of the LDP.

### **Visual amenities**

- 5.6 The site occupies a location within open countryside. The site is already well screened from the majority of local vistas, although the northern boundaries of the site are more open and visible from nearby public paths. As part of the application a detailed landscaping plan was received, showing the intention to plant mature trees and hedges along the northern boundary. In addition, planting is also proposed within the site.
- 5.7 Bearing in mind that the site has already been used by tents and touring caravans, this additional planting is to be welcomed and it would add to the landscaping around the site, and would reduce its impact on the landscape. The site is not considered to be oppressive in the landscape as it currently stands and therefore the proposal would not disrupt the area's visual amenities.
- 5.8 The proposed materials to finish the facilities building are also acceptable – timber cladding and a corrugated sheet roof. These materials are appropriate for the location. Therefore, the proposal is considered acceptable in relation to Policies PCYFF 3, PCYFF 4 and TWR 5 of the LDP.

### **Transport and access matters**

- 5.9 The site currently has direct access to a class 1 road. There will be no need to make any changes to the access in order to serve the proposal. The proposal would reduce the impact on the local network by amending the permission for 70 tents to 42 touring caravans. The Transportation Unit had no concerns. There are plenty of parking spaces available within the site. It is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of TRA 2 and TRA 4 of the LDP.

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### **General and residential amenities**

- 5.10 The site is located in the countryside although there are some residential houses in the vicinity. However, given the size of the development, the existing use of the site and the distance to the nearest houses, it is not considered that the activities on site would have a detrimental impact on the amenities of the houses in the vicinity. It is not considered that the proposal would have a substantial detrimental impact on nearby residents and therefore the proposal is not considered to be contrary to Policy PCYFF 2 of the LDP.

### **Biodiversity Matters**

- 5.11 The site is already used for camping, and therefore there will be no loss of habitats that would have an additional impact on biodiversity. It is proposed to plant a hedge and mature trees, and to plant areas of scrub with native grassland and wild flowers. It is considered that the landscaping and planting work would offer biodiversity improvements that would be in keeping with the principles of Planning Policy Wales.
- 5.12 The response of the Biodiversity Unit has been received for the proposal and it confirms that there is no objection to the proposal as long as the noted planting and landscaping work is provided on the site. To this end, it is considered that the proposal complies with the requirements of policies PS 19, AMG 5 and AMG 6 of the LDP.

### **The Welsh Language**

- 5.13 In accordance with the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, it is a duty when making a decision on a planning application to consider the Welsh language, where it is relevant to that application. This is reiterated further in para 3.28 of Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11, 2019), along with Technical Advice Note 20.
- 5.14 The Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 'Maintaining and Creating Unique and Sustainable Communities' (adopted July 2019), provides further guidance on how it is expected for Welsh language considerations to be incorporated in each relevant development. The thresholds in terms of when it is expected to submit a Statement/Report have been highlighted in Policy PS1 of the Joint LDP, along with Diagram 5 of the SPG. The proposed development does not reach these thresholds.
- 5.15 Although no formal Statement/Report is required, consideration should be given to the Welsh language in accordance with the guidance in Appendix 5 of 'Maintaining and Creating Distinctive and Sustainable Communities' SPG. In relation to this, a Welsh Language Statement has been submitted by the applicant and notes the following points:
- Two of the full-time staff members (the applicant's children) are Welsh speakers.
  - The signs are already bilingual.
  - Bilingual information about attractions, facilities and local services are already provided within the site.
  - Local employment opportunities are provided and local contractors would be used.
- 5.16 To this end, it is considered that the proposal conforms to the guidance included in section 'CH' of Appendix 5 in the SPG.

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## Sustainability

- 5.17 Policy PS 5 (Sustainable Developments) supports developments which are consistent with sustainable development principles, and where appropriate, developments should:

*"Reduce the need to travel by private transport and encourage the opportunities for all users to travel when required as often as possible by means of alternative modes, placing particular emphasis on walking, cycling and using public transport, in accordance with Strategic Policy 4" (Bullet point 12, Policy PS 5).*

This is supported by bullet point 4 of Policy PS 14 (The Visitor Economy).

- 5.18 It is considered that the policies of the LDP are consistent with local and national planning policies in terms of how it deals with sustainable development principles.
- 5.19 Although it is accepted that users of the touring units would use private vehicles to reach the site (due to the need to tow a caravan) there are various alternative transport options available once they reach the site, including cycling, public transport and by foot.
- 5.20 It is noted that the bus stop is located close to the main access on the A497. In addition, there is a pavement all the way along the road from the site's access to Cricieth where a number of facilities and attractions are located. The pavement also links to a number of the area's public footpaths. Therefore, in the context of all the relevant material planning considerations, it is considered that the location of the site is sustainable and acceptable in relation to the requirements of policies PS4, PS5 and PS14 of the LDP, and complies with the advice included in TAN 18 and PPW.

## 6. Conclusions:

- 6.1 Having considered the above and all the relevant planning matters including the local and national policies and guidance, as well as the observations received, it is believed that the proposal is acceptable based on the matters noted in the report and that it would not have a substantial impact on the landscape, amenities of the neighbourhood or road safety.

## 7. Recommendation:

- 7.1 To delegate powers to the Assistant Head of the Environment Department to approve the application, subject to the following conditions:
- Time
  - In accordance with the plans.
  - Holiday use only and keep a register.
  - Holiday season - 1 March to 31 October
  - Increase the number of touring units to 92, no tents and retain the same number of static caravans.
  - No storing of touring caravans on the site.
  - Complete the landscaping work.
  - Welsh Water
  - Agree the colour of the roof on the facilities building
  - The timber on the facilities building to be left to weather naturally.