

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 28/02/2022
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION SERVICE MANAGER	

Number: 9

Application Number: C21/0767/14/LL

Date Registered: 04/08/2021

Application Type: Full

Community: Caernarfon

Ward: Cadnant

Proposal: Construction of 17 affordable housing, access, parking spaces, landscaping and associated works.

Location: Former Cae'r Glyn Allotments, Bethel Road, Caernarfon, LL55 1HW

Summary of the Recommendation: TO APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

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1. Description:

- 1.1 Full application for the construction of 17 affordable dwellings, including 6 x two-storey houses for four persons, 6 x two-storey houses for five persons, 2 x two-storey houses for seven persons, and 3 x bungalows for three persons. The proposal also includes an entrance building and access road, parking spaces, landscaping and land drainage swales in the south-eastern corner of the site in order to contain surface water. The site is located amongst houses within the town of Caernarfon. The north-eastern, south-eastern and south-western boundaries would face residential property and the north-western boundary would face the county road. The site is located opposite Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen secondary school.
- 1.2 The site was used some time ago as allotments, and it is currently undeveloped green land. Note that the site is situated on a gradual downwards slope away from the county road towards residential houses to the south-east. The site is served by an existing agricultural access from the adjacent class 2 county road. The site is located within the development boundary of the town of Caernarfon but it is not designated for any particular use within the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan.
- 1.3 The application is supported by the following assessments:
- Design and Access Statement.
 - Planning Statement
 - Welsh Language Impact Assessment.
 - Affordable Housing Needs Statement.
 - Housing Mixture Statement.
 - Drainage Strategy (including a brief reference to water conservation)
 - Transport Assessment.
 - Trees Survey.
 - Hedgerow Specification.
 - Initial Ecological Assessment.
 - Pre-application Enquiry Report
- 1.4 The proposed development does not fall within the criteria in Schedule 1 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017. Considering that the proposal is an urban development project, it falls into column 1, section 10(b) of Schedule 2. The area of the site is no more than 5 hectares and the number of dwellings do not exceed 150, which means that the proposal does not pass the threshold for column 2. Therefore, there is no need to screen the proposal due to its size and nature and consequently, it is unlikely that the proposed development will have a significant impact on the environment and so there is no need to submit an environmental impact assessment with the planning application.
- 1.5 The application is submitted to the Planning Committee as the proposal would involve constructing more than five houses.
- 1.6 The application was presented to the planning committee on the 10/01/22 where it was decided to defer the application in order for the Committee to receive additional information regarding the following:
- A more detailed response to the Town Councils response and confirmation regarding the period when the Transport Assessment was carried out.

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- A more detailed plan showing pedestrian and vehicular accesses to the school.
- Photos / video showing the site in relation to the school.
- Greater detail regarding the speed limit and possible traffic calming measures.

1.7 In response to the deferral, the agent has submitted the following additional information:

- A copy of the Safety Audit carried out which is referred to in the Transport Assessment.
- A statement by Cadarn Consulting, the specialist Highway Engineers that carried out the transport assessment in response to the Committee's and Town Council's Concerns.
- A plan detailing vehicular and pedestrian access to the school.
- Additional statement with regards to the reliability of the traffic count figures and conclusions of a pedestrian survey carried out on the 7th February 2022.

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 (Wales) Act 2015 places a duty on the Council to take reasonable steps in exercising its functions to meet the seven well-being goals within the Act. This report has been prepared in consideration of the Council's duty and the 'sustainable development principle', as set out in the 2015 Act. In reaching the recommendation, the Council has sought to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

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

PS 1: The Welsh language and culture

PS 2: Infrastructure and developer contributions

ISA 1: Infrastructure Provision

ISA 4 - Safeguarding current open spaces

ISA 5: Provision of Open Spaces in New Housing Developments

PS 4: Sustainable transport, development and accessibility

TRA 2: Parking standards

TRA 4: Managing transport impacts

PS5: Sustainable development

PS6: Alleviating and adapting to the effects of climate change

PCYFF 1: Development Boundaries

PCYFF 2: Development Criteria

PCYFF 3: Design and place shaping

PCYFF 4: Design and landscaping

PCYFF 6: Water conservation

PS 17: Settlement Strategy

TAI 1: Housing in the Sub-regional Centre and the Urban Service Centres

TAI 8: An appropriate mix of housing

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PS 18: Affordable housing
 TAI 15: Threshold of Affordable Housing and their Distribution
 PS 19: Protect and/or enhance natural environment
 AMG 5: Local Biodiversity Conservation

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG):

SPG: Affordable housing
 SPG: Appropriate mix of housing
 SPG: Maintaining and Creating Distinctive and Sustainable Communities
 SPG: Housing Developments and Educational Provision
 SPG: SPG: Planning Obligations.

2.4 National Policies:

Technical Advice Note 12: Design
 Technical Advice Note 18: Transport
 Technical Advice Note 2: Planning and Affordable Housing
 Technical Advice Note 20: Planning and the Welsh Language
 Technical Advice Note 5: Planning and Nature Conservation

3. Relevant Planning History:

- 3.1 Application number C09A/0279/14/AM - Outline application to build 23 houses, parking spaces and access - Application withdrawn on 12 December 2009.
- 3.2 Application number C09A/0564/14/AM - Outline application to construct 23 houses, parking spaces and access - The application was archived due to the lack of response from the applicant and it has not been determined.
- 3.3 Application number 8365 Residential development on field number 380, 381 and 384. Refused on 07.02.1962. Reason: retention of allotments.

4. Consultations:

Town/Community Council: I wish to inform you that Caernarfon Town Council discussed the above application last night, and have decided as follows:

"It was (unanimously) decided to defer making a decision for the time being, requesting:

- (1) Observations from Gwynedd Council's Highways Department on the application, including in terms of traffic survey and how reducing the speed to 20mph would affect safety.
- (2) Request a meeting with the officers of the Highways Department on the site.
- (3) Ask for the reasons why the application was previously refused."

Further observations:

Defer making a decision for the time being, and make the following observations:

- 1. The document notes;

"The observations are based on the information that has been submitted by the applicant."

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An assessment is awaited from Gwynedd Council. Why has no assessment been done?

2. The document notes;

"The Transport assessment has been carried out by the applicant in June this year."

It was noted that the applicant was not best placed to carry out the assessment and that the timing had not been the best either since it had been done in June during the pandemic, when 3/7 of the classes had external examinations.

The assessment should have been assessed during this term - in dry weather and on a rainy day.

3. The document notes;

"The assessment shows that the schools are open during the period and notes that the level of traffic is moderate."

The committee was awaiting data and an analysis of it.

(a) How many vehicles coming from the direction of the town;

(b) How many vehicles from Bethel;

(c) How many vehicles are parked along the side of the road - parking for a period, parking to pick-up children, etc.

Certainly, the traffic is not moderate from 8.40a.m. - 9.00 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. - 3.40 p.m.. It is very busy there with a number of teachers in high-vis directing children. This is why a site visit was requested. The school objects based on the additional traffic and this response does not allay their concerns.

4. Ask why comments have not been received from Gwynedd Council's Highways Department.

5. Ask for a meeting with the Highways Department's officers at the site.

6. Ask for the reasons why the application was previously refused.

Transportation Unit:

First response:

I wish to present the following response to the application to construct 17 houses in Cae Glyn, Caernarfon. The observations are based on the information that has been submitted by the applicant.

TAN 18 provides guidance on transport and notes that the main objective of Welsh Government for new developments is to ensure that they are located where there is, or where there will be, good access via public transport, walking and cycling, thus reducing the need to travel and fostering social inclusion.

The proposed plan is located near Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen, Caernarfon,

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and also offers links by walking to the local primary school, Ysgol y Gelli, and the Leisure Centre.

The Transport assessment has been carried out by the applicant in June this year. The assessment shows that the schools are open during the period and notes that the level of traffic is moderate. It also notes that the level of the traffic is much higher during the school's opening and closing times.

The junction to the proposed site will be located across the road to Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen. The information submitted by the applicant shows that an entrance will be built to provide suitable visibility for vehicles. To achieve this, the plans show sufficient visibility in both directions, from a point 2.4m from the junction of the site.

As part of the scheme, around six parking spaces will be removed from the lay-by outside the school. To compensate for the number of parking spaces in the lay-by, six additional parking spaces will be introduced within the estate. The parking assessment also shows that the current spaces are not full during the School's opening and closing times. The parking provision for every property is also in line with the relevant guidance.

On the site, it must also be acknowledged that there are two crossing places, on either side of the proposed access, therefore, we do not anticipate that many school children will cross in front of the proposed entrance.

The greatest concern noted in the transport assessment is the speed recorded on the existing road, outside the school. The majority of vehicles travel at a speed within the legal limit, namely 30mph, but the road in front of the school has signage advising vehicles to travel at a speed of 20mph.

I do not believe that there are any grounds to refuse the following application as a result of the current traffic situation in front of the school as the development will not affect the situation. Nevertheless, it is encouraging to hear that the applicant has offered financial support to the Transport Service in order to look into road safety matters on the road.

Second response:

I wish to confirm that there are two crossings on both sides of the entrance to the proposed site. One of these crossings is a 'formal' crossing but there is also an 'informal' crossing located on the eastern side of the proposed entrance. The 20mph signs in the report refer to a road opposite Arfon Leisure Centre and not Bethel Road.

As part of the scheme, there were discussions regarding introducing advisory 20mps signs on the road, but, as Welsh Government had proposed plans to change existing 30mph restrictions to 20mph on the road, in April 2023, we believe that these measures would not be suitable.

I have concerns that introducing 20mph speed restrictions only would not be adequate to improve the current safety situation in front of the

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school, and, therefore, believe that additional traffic calming measures are required. A financial contribution would allow us to achieve this.

With the contribution presented, it would be possible to consider measures such as speed bumps and changes to road markings, but we are of course eager to work with the community to ensure that any change to the road would be beneficial to the community.

Third Response:

There is a document which states that the figures align with DfT data. But I believe that this is not true. The DfT information shows an increase in the number of vehicles on the road until 2009, when DfT ceased collecting the data. From 2009 onwards, there is no information to show whether there has been an increase or reduction in vehicles. (there is data for Bethel which shows an increase of 15% in traffic for a period until 2019). Therefore, I think that some impact from the pandemic is shown in the figures given.

Nevertheless, the following comments must be acknowledged:-

The works currently being undertaken on the Caernarfon Bypass has a very unpredictable impact upon the AADT for the Minor Road, however when works are completed in 2022 it is anticipated that the AADT will decrease by 16%.

In categorising of moderate traffic is in accordance with the NRSWA Road Type categorisation and the DfT technical guidance, Transport in the Urban Environment as well as CD 224 of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. Indeed, the current B4366 has the potential to accommodate 50% increase in AADT whilst remaining within the same design category.

Councillors' concerns refer to traffic at school times. I do not believe that much additional information has been provided to show how the two aforementioned comments influence traffic during this period.

Fourth Response:

The additional information is sufficient to address the concerns in relation to safety as a result of the proposal.

What the following report shows is:-

There is not much difference in the number of vehicles travelling on the road in 2021, during the pandemic, compared with the pre-pandemic period in 2019.

Also, a survey has been carried out which shows the number of people (school children mainly) who walk on this part of the road at present. The figures show that the numbers are low, with the majority crossing on the adjacent crossing.

Natural Resources Wales:

Thank you for consulting with Natural Resources Wales regarding the above application.

We have reviewed the planning application submitted to us, and

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from the information provided, we are not of the opinion that the proposed development impacts any matters listed on our Consultation Topics, Development Planning Advisory Service: Consultation Topics (September 2018). Therefore, we have no observations to make on the proposed development.

We note that the bat survey report submitted to support the above application (AES Ltd. 30/09/2020) has noted that no bats were using the application site. Therefore, we do not have any comments to make on the application as submitted.

Note that our decision not to provide observations does not mean that there may not be a possibility for the proposed development to affect other interests, including environmental interests of local importance.

The applicants should be informed that it is they, together with planning permission, who are responsible for ensuring that they obtain all the permits/permissions relevant to their development.

Welsh Water:

Observations regarding the location of the public sewer near plot 12, the need to undertake an inspection to establish the exact location of the sewer and connect to the sewer. Usual observations regarding sustainable drainage systems

Language Unit:

No specific observations. It appears that they carried out a fair analysis of the situation, and the possible impact if the proposal responds to local demand for affordable units. Very good mitigation steps are also proposed, and these are welcomed.

Drainage Unit

The developer has taken appropriate steps to identify ditches / water courses within the site and the only one is a ditch that carries water from the direction of the highway to the north-west; measures have been included in the design to allow this ditch to be transported and provide an existing path through the proposed site. Our Unit is unaware of any other system or water course without attending to carry out our own investigation.

Sustainable measures have been included in the drainage plan to deal with any surface water that falls on the proposed site; details of the drainage plan will be further scrutinised as the SAB application is decided.

Further observations

I feel that the response of the agent is sensible and that the drainage design will be scrutinised in detail by the SAB in order to prevent water from accumulating like this in the future. Having said this, if any kind of drainage feature is present, which has not been identified in the original inspection, then it would be beneficial for the designers to have a look at this as soon as possible so that any changes can be

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made to the plan; I am happy to make arrangements to follow this up with the designers and get back to the Councillor with an update.

As we are only looking at the principles of the drainage plan as a part of the further planning process, I do not believe that this matter needs to hold up a decision.

Biodiversity Unit

The applicant has provided an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey report by Applied Ecological Services. I can confirm that the report and survey has been done to a good quality. I agree with the mitigation measures and the measures to enhance biodiversity noted in the report (section 7 of the report). All points from 7.8 - 7.15 in the report will be included as planning conditions. The applicant has also provided a Hedgerow Strategy. I can confirm that I am happy with the plan. Further observations to correspond with point 7.8 of the Extended Phase 1 report, the applicant will provide a soft landscaping plan. To correspond with point 7.9 of the Extended Phase 1 report, the applicant will need to provide a simple lighting plan.

Trees Unit

The tree reports have been carried out to a good standard, and there is a need to impose a condition regarding the work method - is as outlined under the tree protection plan.

Education Matters

Educational Contribution

Based on the methodology in the SPG Planning Obligations for the number of children that could be expected from the proposal, the following figures are obtained:

Primary School = 6.8 children.

Secondary School (years 7-11) = 4.93 children

Secondary School (years 12 and 13) = 0.34 children

The application was submitted in **August 2021** therefore, in accordance with the SPG, the figures of the 2020/21 educational year should be used for the capacity and number of pupils at the relevant schools.

The site falls within the catchment area of the Ysgol Maesincla, Ysgol Santes Helen and Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen

See below the capacity figures for these three schools:

Maesincla 318

Santes Helen 75

Syr Hugh 1164

Pupil numbers in 2020/21 are as follows:

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Maesincla 240

Santes Helen 55

Syr Hugh 912

This means that there is enough capacity in the schools for this proposal and that no educational contribution would be required to support the proposal.

Public Consultation:

A notice was posted on the site and in the press, and nearby residents were informed. Correspondence and a petition were received objecting to the application on the following grounds:

Road hazards

Child safety

Level of traffic to the adjacent school

The development would better suit single-storey houses

Loss of privacy

Flood concerns

Photos showing the south-eastern corner of the site submerged in water

Loss of light.

Private access to the land.

Lack of consideration to boundaries.

5. Assessment of the relevant planning considerations

The principle of the development

- 5.1 The principle of constructing houses on this particular site is based on Policies PCYFF 1, TAI 1, TAI 15 and PS 5 of the LDP. Policy PCYFF1 states that proposals will be approved within development boundaries in accordance with other policies and proposals in the Plan, national planning policies and other material planning considerations. As referred to above, the site is located within the development boundaries of the Town of Caernarfon and from this perspective, therefore, the application can be considered under Policy TAI 1 of the LDP. The size of the site is around 0.55ha, therefore, 17 units involves a density of 30.9 houses per hectare, which complies with Policy PCYFF 2 in the Plan.
- 5.2 Policy TAI 1 states in the urban service centres that houses to meet the strategy of the Plan will be ensured through the housing designations along with suitable windfall sites within the development boundary, based on the indicative provision shown within policy TAI 1. The site is not designated for any specific use within the LDP and so the site can be considered as a windfall site. During the life of the plan, a provision of 221 (including a slippage allowance of 10%) houses is expected on windfall sites in Caernarfon. The latest figures show that 55 windfall units have been completed between 2011 and 2021 and there are 43 units in the land bank. Therefore, 123 additional units are expected on windfall sites in Caernarfon. Based on this information, there is a need for more houses in Caernarfon and consequently, it is considered that the proposal in terms of principle and compliance and policy TAI 1 is acceptable.

Affordable Housing / Housing Mix

- 5.3 In relation to the housing mix, the proposal is for 6 x houses for four people, 5 x houses for six people, 3 x houses for three people and 2 x houses for seven people and the applicant states that this mix is based on the figures of local need in the area. It appears that there is a good cross-section

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to the proposal and observations were received from the Council's Housing Strategic Unit stating that the proposal meets the current high demand that exists in the county.

- 5.4 Policy TAI 15 seeks to ensure an appropriate provision of affordable housing. It has a threshold figure of 2 or more units in towns like Caernarfon. Since the proposed development proposes 100% affordable housing, this means that the proposal meets the requirements regarding the percentage of affordable units within this Policy. In this case, all of the proposed units will be affordable and will be designed to the Wales Development Quality Requirements and tenancy will be part social rent and part intermediate rent.

Linguistic Matters

- 5.5 Observations were received from the Council's Language Unit on the Assessment of the Impact on the Welsh Language that was submitted with the application. The Unit stated no specific observations and it appears that the applicant has undertaken a fair analysis of the situation, and the possible impact if the proposal respond to local demand for affordable housing. Very good mitigation steps are also proposed, and these are welcomed. Note that the development would increase the prominence of the Welsh language by giving the development a Welsh name. It is considered that the proposal would satisfy the objectives of Policy PS1 of the LDP.

Sustainability

- 5.6 Policy PS 5 states that developments will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they are consistent with the principles of sustainable development, including suitable sites within the development boundaries. It is deemed that this specific site can be defined as a sustainable site based on its location within the development boundary, near an established residential area, opposite a secondary school, its location close to the local road network and public transport and that the homes are constructed in accordance with Lifetime Homes standards and will be insulated to a very high level.

Open spaces

- 5.7 Policy ISA 5 of the LDP states that new housing proposals for 10 or more dwellings, in areas where existing open space cannot meet the needs of the proposed housing development, should provide suitable provision of open spaces in accordance with the *Fields in Trust benchmark standards*. The current information received from the Joint Planning Policy Unit shows that there is a lack of play areas with equipment for children locally and as part of the proposal and to this end, therefore, a financial contribution will need to be made in order to meet this lack of provision. Confirmation was received from the applicant, stating that they would be willing to make a contribution of £3346.16 and this can be secured via a legal 106 agreement. Therefore, it is not considered that the proposal will be contrary to Policy ISA 5 of the LDP, as well as SPG: Open Spaces in New Housing Developments.

Educational Matters

- 5.8 Observations were received from the Policy Unit, stating that there was sufficient capacity in the schools for this proposal and that no educational contribution would be needed to support the proposal. The proposal meets the criteria of SPG Housing Development and Educational Provision and policy ISA 1.

Visual amenities

- 5.9 Policy PCYFF3 states that proposals will only be permitted provided they conform to a number of criteria, including that the proposal complements and enhances the character of the site, building or area in terms of siting, appearance, scale, height, massing and elevation treatment; that it respects the context of the site and its place within the local landscape; that it utilises materials appropriate to its surroundings and incorporates soft landscaping; it enhances a safe and integrated transport and communications network; that it limits surface water run-off and flood

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risk and preventing pollution; that it achieves inclusive design allowing access by all and it helps to create healthy and active environments, and considers the health and well-being of future users.

- 5.10 There is a mix in terms of form, construction and design of existing developments in the application site catchment area. Two-storey residential houses account for the majority of the housing that can be seen in the application site's area, including houses with a standard mid-20th century design. The Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen building is located across the county road. The main construction materials that are common to the local area are clean brickwork, natural stone, natural slate, smooth render as well as pebble-dash. The elevations of the proposed housing will be in keeping with these materials using natural slate on roofs, painted smooth render together with a brick cover to the walls. The enclosure boundaries will be made from timber fences and steel railings. A condition should be imposed on any planning permission to protect the boundaries.
- 5.11 The development plan follows a rough "L" shape in a *cul-de-sac* form with parking provision to the front of the houses and open amenity areas on the northern peripheries of the site, which also includes landscaping. There will be open gardens to the front of the houses along with private gardens at the rear of the houses. The proposed housing is located on a lower level than the adjacent county road and it is noted that the plans show that the height of the houses would be similar to the height of houses and buildings in the area. The plan and feel of the development will be similar to the adjacent estates, including a mix of private lawns, open amenity land and hard surfaces for pedestrians and vehicles. It is therefore considered that the design and appearance of the development is acceptable and in accordance with policy PCYFF 2, PCYFF 3 and PCYFF 4.
- 5.12 Although there are no concerns regarding the design of the proposed houses on the site, the proposal would involve the development of a green field and felling 12 trees along the site's boundary with the highway. No landscaping plan was received as a part of the application, however, the applicant gave to understand that there would be no objection to imposing an appropriate condition on any planning permission to submit a landscaping plan to the Council within a month of commencing work on the site. Under those circumstances, it is felt that the proposal would not be contrary to policy PCYFF 3.

General and residential amenities

- 5.13 The proposal involves erecting 17 houses on a green field where existing private houses are located around southern, eastern and north-eastern boundaries and a county road runs along the north-western boundary. Observations were received objecting to the proposal based on loss of privacy.
- 5.14 Plots 1 - 9 (two-storey houses) are located along the north-western boundary that will mainly face the county road and the gable end wall of plot 9 will face the gable end wall of adjacent property number 6, Ystâd Llwyn Ceirios. It is not considered that there would be a substantial impact on the amenities of the residents of that house.
- 5.15 Plots 10 - 12 (single-storey houses) are located along the north-eastern boundary, the rear elevation of those houses are within around 5 metres of the site's boundary and face a gable end wall and the rear garden of property number 5, Ystâd Llwyn Ceirios, located nearby. There is a concern regarding the proximity of the proposed house to the boundary due to the impact on a neighbour. However, as the property would be single-storey, it is not considered that the houses would overlook the neighbour. Also, a cross-section was received to show levels and a further plan showing the impact of the bungalow on the lighting path of the neighbour; the plan shows that it would not have a substantial impact on light into the neighbour's house. The gable end wall of house number 12 would be within around 6m to the eastern boundary but as there is 20 metres between the proposed houses and the houses to the east, it is not considered that there would be a significant impact on those houses.
- 5.16 Plots 13 -16 are located in the middle of the site, roughly where the rear elevation and gable end of house number 13 (two-storey house) would be over 20 metres from the houses of the nearest

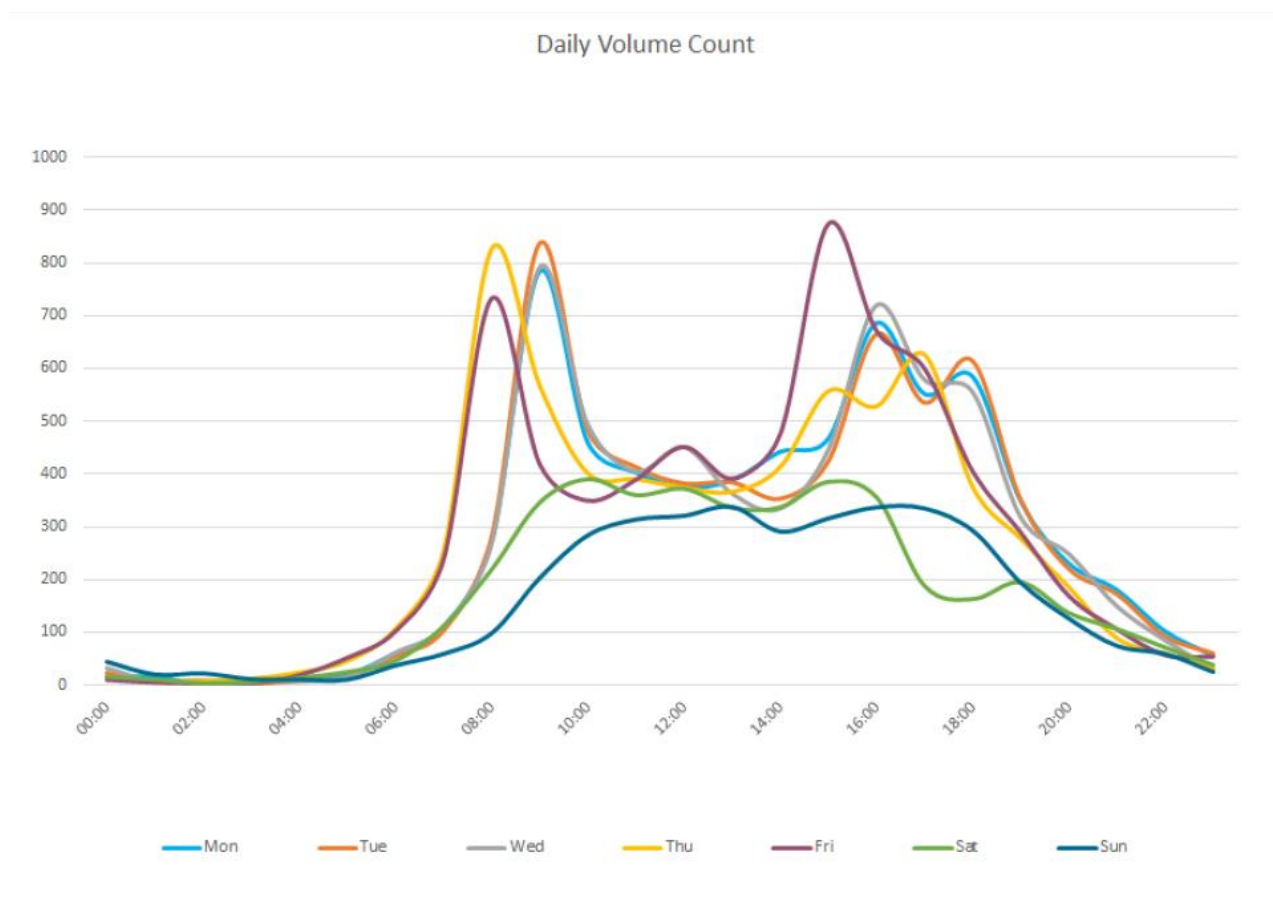
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neighbours. Therefore, it is not considered that it would have a substantial impact on nearby residents.

- 5.17 In relation to house number 17 (two-storey house with a single-storey extension); a single-storey and two-storey gable end wall would face the rear of the neighbours' houses, with windows in the single-storey section only and the two-storey section of the house will be located around 14 metres at its nearest point to the southern boundary. There is concern regarding the location of the proposed plot between the houses of neighbours and plots 13 - 16, and that its setting within the estate would appear awkward. However, the setting of the estate would only be visible from inside the estate, and is unlikely to disrupt the amenities of the broader area.
- 5.18 There is some concern regarding the location of some of the proposed houses on the properties of neighbours; however, it is felt that those concerns can be alleviated by imposing conditions on any permission, removing permitted rights in relation to extensions and additions to the roofs of the proposed houses and a requirement to erect a fence/boundary measuring 1.8 metres / 2m in height around the site. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable and in accordance with Policy PCYFF 2, which protects amenities.

Transport and access matters

- 5.19 The proposal involves building 17 houses, including an estate road and parking places for each plot. Also, it is proposed to remove an existing parking lay-by on the county road in order to improve the visibility splays of the proposed estate and installing those parking spaces within the estate entrance. As a result of this, there will be no loss of on-road parking provision. The site lies within the town's development boundary in a residential area, opposite the secondary school. It is also noted that the site would be served by a class 2 county road.
- 5.20 A transport assessment was submitted with the application in order to assess highway matters that are relevant to the development. Following the statutory publicity, the Planning Service received correspondence from local residents and Caernarfon Town Council, expressing substantial concerns regarding the impact of the proposal on road safety in the local area.
- 5.21 Observations were received from the Council's Transportation Unit on the proposal, which stated that the site is located in a location that is accessible to social facilities such as schools and leisure centres. It is also noted that the proposed entrance is acceptable and that it would not impact local parking spaces as a result of the relocation of an existing lay-by within the boundary of the entrance to the proposed estate.
- 5.22 During discussions at the planning committee meeting, concerns were raised regarding the period when the Transport Assessment was carried out and if the times it was conducted gave a true reflection of the situation. The assessment was carried out with the use of an Automated Traffic Counter, placed near the site on Bethel road for a period of seven days (over 24hr periods) between 21/06/21 - 28/06/21. Appendix C of the Transport Assessment includes the graph below which shows the peak traffic flows over the seven day period:



- 5.23 Concerns were raised in relation to the time of year the data was collected and possible impacts upon traffic movements caused by the restrictions in connection with the Covid Pandemic. In response to this, the additional information received from the applicant's highway specialists confirmed that at the time of the traffic survey, schools were open and the number of covid cases was low.
- 5.24 The statement referred to historical traffic data for the B4366 from the Department for Transport (DfT) was attained from a manual traffic counter station located approximately 250m West of the proposal site, that had collated 10-year traffic data. The mean annual average daily traffic (AADT) from the 10 years of data held by the DfT for this road was calculated as 5,389. The AADT calculated from the automatic traffic counter data gathered during the June 2021 survey is summarised in paragraph 3.2.1 of the transport assessment as 5,856.
- 5.25 Taking into account growth factors on the data provided by the DfT the AADT for the site gathered in 2021 aligns with AADT data gathered for that particular road over a 10-year period. The information also included the following response:
- a. A potential reduction in traffic from domestic vehicles as a result of reduced school examinations could be balanced by the need for increased numbers of vehicles as a result of COVID restrictions in sharing vehicles to gain access to the school.
 - b. The works currently being undertaken on the Caernarfon Bypass has a very unpredictable impact upon the AADT for the Minor Road, however when works are completed in 2022 it is anticipated that the AADT will decrease by 16% (Table 12.3.2 A487 Caernarfon and Bontnewydd Bypass Environmental Statement – Volume 1 Technical Assessment Report) as a result of the introduction of a new Local Distributor route, further reducing traffic volumes and the overall AADT for the minor road.

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c. It is also anticipated in the longer term, through initiatives set out by the Welsh Government through statutory instruments such as the Active Travel Wales Act and the Future Generations Wales Act, that overall vehicle volume on Minor roads located within built urban environments such as these, will reduce through the development of better sustainable modes of transport.

d. It is also noted that section of the Minor Road closed for the bypass works had reopened on 11th of June 2021, whereas the Traffic Survey was conducted during 21st of June – 27th of June 2021.

- 5.26 The statement received also explained that the information requested by the Town Council with regards to the direction of traffic and the use of on road parking is available in the Transport Assessment. The information goes onto explain that the road has the potential to accommodate a 50% increase in annual average daily traffic whilst remaining in the same design category and that the application currently under consideration is likely to cause only a 3.5 % increase in the annual average daily traffic.
- 5.27 The transportation unit assessed the additional information and acknowledged the findings with regards to the standard of the road and its capacity to deal with additional traffic and the likely decrease in traffic following completion of the bypass. However, they did not consider the findings with regards to vehicle numbers conclusive and it was still not clear if the pandemic has affected the figures shown. In addition, the information did not respond to the committees concerns regarding traffic during school times.
- 5.28 Following the Transportation Units comments, the applicant's Highway Consultant's carried out additional survey work and submitted additional evidence. The evidence referred to a traffic survey carried out outside of Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen in 2019 (prior to the pandemic) which shows that there is only minimal difference between traffic levels in 2019 and 2021 when the traffic survey was carried out. It is therefore considered that the evidence is sufficient to demonstrate that the Transport Assessment and its conclusions can be relied upon.
- 5.29 In response to members concerns regarding peak school times and pedestrians, the applicant's highway consultants carried out a pedestrian assessment on the 7th February 2022. The assessment found that the majority of pupils used the western pavement to walk to the school but 90% were dropped off at the eastern layby and utilised the safe crossing provision on the road. It should be noted that the proposal will not result in the loss of parking provision. Parking is being provided within the site to replace the area lost on the layby.
- 5.30 In response to the additional information the Transportation unit responded confirming that they were satisfied with the information, it was sufficient to overcome the Committee's concerns and they have no safety concerns regarding the proposal.
- 5.31 Members also discussed the need for a risk assessment to be carried out to ensure the safety of pedestrians (which includes school pupils) and road users. The Transport Assessment submitted with the application refers to a safety audit that was carried out. A copy of the stage 1 road safety audit has now been submitted. The audit made several recommendations regarding the scheme and it is noted that they have been incorporated into the scheme.
- 5.32 The Transport assessment then goes further with its recommendations following completion of the road survey. One of the recommendations of the assessment is that the speed limit of the road outside the school should be reduced to 20mph. However, the transportation unit has concerns that if the speed limit is reduced with no other intervention, given the nature of the road, reducing the speed limit alone is unlikely to slow vehicles or improve the safety of the highway in this location. To ensure speeds are reduced and the safety improved, the transportation unit considers that traffic calming measures are required.

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- 5.33 Following discussions, the applicant has offered a financial contribution to the Transportation Service so that traffic calming measures can be put in place / highway improvements can be made to improve highway safety. The improvements may include features such as speed humps and alterations to the road markings.
- 5.34 Having considered all information received, it is considered that the contribution is reasonable enough and necessary in order to ensure that any transport impacts deriving from the proposal are acceptable. It is considered that the proposal is in accordance with policy ISA 1, which enables the Authority to ensure improvements to the infrastructure in order to make the proposal acceptable.
- 5.35 As a result of the comments of the Transportation Unit, further observations were received from the Town Council, questioning why no assessment had been done by Gwynedd Council, and questioning the transportation assessment. When assessing a planning application, the burden falls on the applicant to present information to enable the Local Planning Authority to assess the planning application. In this case, the application is supported by a full transportation assessment. The LDP only requests for applications for 100 houses or more to be accompanied by a transportation assessment. Therefore, the applicant has gone beyond the policy requirements to assess the impact of the proposal and it should be noted that the applicant has provided additional information, carried out by qualified highway engineers in response to the committees concerns. The Local member and Town Council has been consulted on the additional information and a response has been requested prior to the committee meeting.
- 5.36 As advised previously, it is not usual for the Council to undertake its own detailed technical assessments when assessing a planning application. In this case, it is considered that there is sufficient information and evidence to hand to allow for a detailed assessment of the application and so there is no justification in asking for more information or for a further assessment. If the application is approved, the Transportation Unit has confirmed that the Town Council will have an opportunity for further discussions to discuss and reach an agreement on the improvements to the road.
- 5.37 With relevant conditions and notes to ensure that the work will be completed in accordance with statutory standards and a financial contribution via a 106 agreement to secure road improvements, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable on the grounds of the requirements of Policy ISA 1, TRA 2 and TRA 4 of the LDP.

Trees and Biodiversity Matters

- 5.38 An Enhanced Phase 1 Habitats Survey was received as a part of the application. In response, observations were received from the Biodiversity Unit, confirming that the report and the survey had been done to a good standard. The Unit agrees with the mitigation measures and the measures to improve biodiversity noted in the report (part 7 of the report), that all points from 7.8 - 7.15 in the report are included as planning conditions. The applicant has also provided a Hedgerow Strategy which is acceptable but there will be a need to submit a soft landscaping plan and lighting plan to mitigate the impact of the development and ensure biodiversity improvements.
- 5.39 Also, observations were received from the Trees Unit, confirming that the trees assessment received with the application had been prepared to a good standard and that a condition should be imposed on any permission, enforcing the implementation of the application in line with the tree protection plan. It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with Policy AMG 5 of the LDP.

Land drainage matters

- 5.40 Following the statutory consultation period, correspondence and photos were received from local residents, expressing concern about flooding near the site. That the site does not lie within Flood Zone C1 or C2, as categorised by the Development Advice Maps in TAN 15, where such designations would show a risk of flooding. Nevertheless, the Council's records show a risk of surface water flooding of 1 in 30 in the lowest part of the site. TAN 15 notes in all other zones

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where flooding has been noted as a relevant consideration, that Section 7 will apply, i.e. flood consequence assessment.

- 5.41 As part of the application, a report was received with a drainage strategy and detailed plans of the drainage layout for the site. The proposal includes building soakaways and swales on the site to receive surface water from the proposed houses and hard surfaces and for it to be disposed of in a sustainable way. Four soakaways will be built for the development, with the largest measuring 68 cubic metres to be installed in the lowest part (southern corner) of the site. It is realised that the drainage system has been designed to ensure that the proposal deals with a rainwater incident up to an extreme event and for it to do so sustainably.
- 5.42 Comments were received from the Drainage Unit (in its role as a Local Flood Authority), confirming that the developer submitted sufficient information to show that the proposed drainage system was acceptable and suitable for the site. The information also shows that appropriate steps have been taken to identify ditches/watercourses within the site and the only one there is the ditch that carries water from the direction of the highway to the north-west. Measures have been included in the design to allow this ditch to be transported along its current path through the proposed site.
- 5.43 It is also noted that sustainable measures have been included in the drainage plan to deal with any surface water that falls on the proposed site; details of the drainage plan will be scrutinised further as the SAB application is determined and the principles of the drainage plan only are being discussed as part of the planning application.
- 5.44 It is realised that drainage details have been submitted as part of the application and considered by the Council's Drainage Unit. The applicant also states "Every drainage strategy submitted in Wales is prepared exactly in this way, in line with TAN 15. Therefore, it is considered from the information and advice received, that the drainage strategy is acceptable for this proposed development and is in accordance with policy PS 6, PCYFF 6 and TAN 15.

Additional Matters:

- 5.45 It is noted that the Town Council requested information as to why a previous application was refused on the site. As can be seen from the site history above, an application was refused in 1962 as it would have resulted in the loss of allotments. The use of the land as allotments ceased around 10 years ago and the site reverted back to greenfield. The land has not been safeguarded as open space or for the provision of allotments in the LDP. Two subsequent applications were submitted, the first was withdrawn and the second application remains undetermined (but is now finally disposed of / closed, which was previously allowed by the General Development Procedure Order). From the documentation held, it appears that the LPA was awaiting amended plans for the design and layout of the dwellings but the scheme was not furthered by the applicant or agent at the time. Given that the LDP has since been adopted and the policy considerations changed, it is not considered that any meaningful weight can be given to the planning history on the site in consideration of this application.

6. Conclusions:

- 6.1 Having considered the above assessment, it is believed that the proposal to develop 17 affordable houses is a positive response to the various housing needs that have been identified in the area. There is no objection to the design of the houses and it is not considered that the proposal would have a substantial impact on the residential amenities of nearby houses.
- 6.2 The Council's Transportation Unit has submitted observations stating that the proposal will not adversely impact road safety although the observations received objecting to the application on the grounds of road safety are acknowledged. With conditions and a financial contribution to ensure improvements to the road via a 106 agreement, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance

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with the transportation policies. The agents have submitted additional information in response to the committee's concerns and the transportation unit has confirmed that the information is accurate and that they have no safety concerns relating to the proposal.

- 6.3 The Council received correspondence from local residents stating that the lowest part of the site floods during periods of heavy rain and with concern that the development would exacerbate the situation, rather than resolve the flood problems on the site. Nevertheless, information was received with the application to show that an effective, sustainable drainage system can be designed for the site, that would improve the current situation.
7. **Recommendation:** To delegate powers to approve subject to signing a 106 Agreement in order to secure a financial contribution to improve the road / install traffic calming measures and provide open spaces.

Conditions:

1. Five years.
2. In accordance with the plans and documents submitted with the application.
3. Natural slate.
4. Highway conditions.
5. Tree planting plan.
6. Biodiversity mitigation measures conditions to include compliance with the requirements of the Preliminary Ecological assessment; provision of Pollution Prevention Plan; ensuring that the site is permeable for hedgehogs and submitting a biodiversity improvement plan
7. Limit working hours between 08:00-18:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00-13:00 Saturday and not at all on Sunday or Bank Holidays.
8. Agree on details regarding a Welsh name for the development together with advertising signage informing of and promoting the development within and outside the site.
9. Removal of development rights from the affordable housing.
10. Ensure a plan/arrangements for providing the affordable housing.
11. Submit an Environmental Management Plan to include noise, vibration and dust.
12. Ensure compliance with British Number *BS 5837:2012*.
14. Samples of the materials and colours for the houses and hard and soft landscaping.
15. Ensure financial contributions for road improvements and open spaces.
16. Erection of fence along the boundaries.