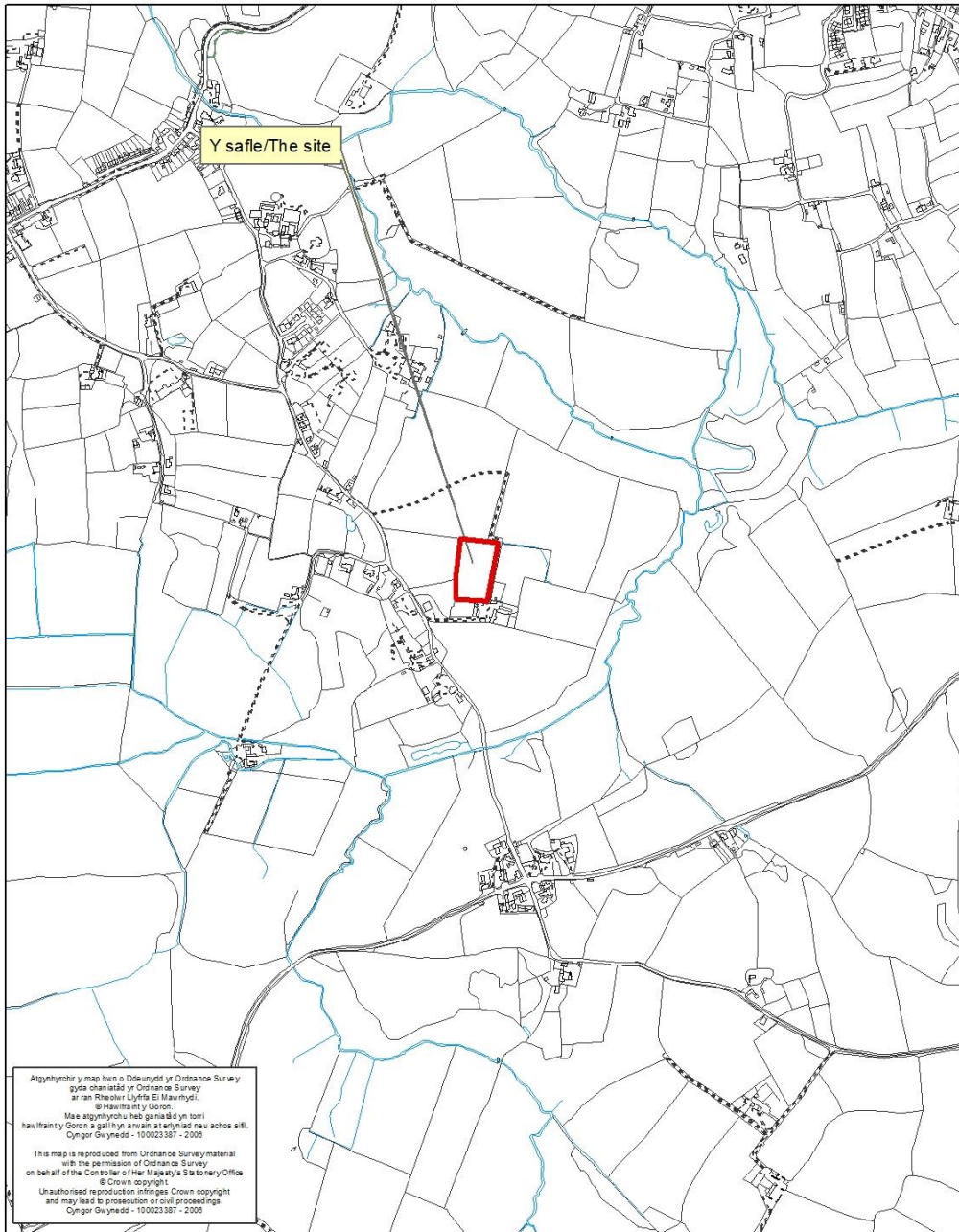


Number: 5.5



Rhif y Cais / Application Number : C15/1238/42/LL

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



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Application Number: C15/1238/42/LL
Date Registered: 10/12/2015
Application Type: Full - Planning
Community: Nefyn
Ward: Morfa Nefyn

Proposal: CREATION OF TOURING CARAVAN SITE FOR 27 UNITS ALONG WITH BUILDING A TOILET / SHOWER BLOCK AND INSTALLING A SEWAGE TREATMENT TANK
Location: CEFN EDEYRN, EDERN, PWLLHELI, LL536YX

Summary of the Recommendation: TO REFUSE

1. Description:

1.1. The application is for a new touring caravan site and for the siting of 27 caravans along with the construction of a building as a shower / toilet block. The shower / toilet block would include a laundry room and it is proposed to finish the external walls with local pebble-dash and green coloured steel sheets for the roof. It is also intended to install a septic tank as part of the application. The 27 touring caravans would be located near the site boundaries and the toilet / shower block would be located on the southern side of the site. As part of the application it is intended to reinforce parts of the boundaries by additional planting work which would include rowan, hawthorn, blackthorn, ash and holly.

1.2 The site is located in the countryside and is within a Landscape Conservation Area and a Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest. A combination of hedges and trees surrounds the site. The site itself is relatively flat and agricultural buildings and the applicant's dwelling house are located towards the south of the site. Access to the site is along a track from a third class road situated to the south-west of the site. The Mount touring caravan site is approximately 115 metres to the south-west of the site which has permission for 20 touring caravans and Tyn Lon is approximately 80 metres to the west which has been granted a planning permission in December 2014 to site 15 touring caravans on the land. Approximately 400 metres to the east of the site is the Llŷn Fens Special Area of Conservation and the Cors Geirch Site of Special Scientific Interest.

1.3 A Design and Access Statement and Language and Community Statement were received as part of the application.

1.4 The application is submitted to Committee as it involves more than five caravans.

2. Relevant Policies:

2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and paragraph 2.1.2 of Planning Policy Wales emphasise that planning decisions should be in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning considerations include National Planning Policy and the Unitary Development Plan.

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2.2 **Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan 2009:**

Policy A2 - PROTECT THE SOCIAL, LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL FABRIC OF COMMUNITIES - Safeguard social, linguistic or cultural solidarity within communities against significant harm due to the size, scale or location of proposals.

Policy B10 – PROTECTING AND ENHANCING LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION AREAS – Protect and enhance Landscape Conservation Areas by ensuring that proposals conform to a series of criteria aimed at avoiding significant damage to recognised features.

POLICY B12 – PROTECTING HISTORICAL LANDSCAPES, PARKS AND GARDENS - Safeguard landscapes, parks and gardens of special historical interest in Wales from developments which would cause significant damage to their character, their appearance or their setting.

POLICY B15 – PROTECTION OF NATURE CONSERVATION SITES OF INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE - Refuse proposals which are likely to cause significant damage to nature conservation sites of international significance unless they conform to a series of criteria aimed at managing, enhancing and safeguarding the recognised features of such sites.

POLICY B16 – PROTECTING NATIONALLY IMPORTANT NATURE CONSERVATION SITES - Refuse proposals which are likely to cause significant harm to nature conservation sites of national significance unless they conform to a series of criteria aimed at protecting, enhancing and managing the recognised features of the sites.

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

POLICY B23 – AMENITIES - Safeguard the amenities of the local neighbourhood by ensuring that proposals conform to a series of criteria aimed at safeguarding the recognised features and amenities of the local area.

POLICY B25 – BUILDING MATERIALS - Safeguard the visual character by ensuring that building materials are of a high standard and are in keeping with the character and appearance of the local area.

POLICY B27 – LANDSCAPING SCHEMES - Ensure that permitted proposals incorporate high quality soft/hard landscaping which is appropriate to the site and which takes into consideration a series of factors aimed at avoiding damage to recognised features.

POLICY CH33 – SAFETY ON ROADS AND STREETS - Development proposals will be approved provided they can conform to specific criteria relating to the vehicular entrance, the standard of the existing roads network and traffic calming measures.

POLICY D19 – NEW SITES FOR TOURING CARAVANS, CAMPING AND TOURING UNITS - Proposals for developing touring caravan sites, camping, or new touring units will be approved if they conform with specific criteria regarding design, setting, appearance and location of the development, traffic issues, restrictions on use of the units and the accumulative impact on the local area.

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Supplementary Planning Guidance : Holiday Accommodation (July 2011)

2.3 National Policies:

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 8, January 2016)

Technical Advice Note 13 – Tourism

Technical Advice Note 18 – Transport

3. Relevant Planning History:

3.1 The site has no relevant planning history.

4. Consultations:

Community/Town Council: Concerned about the application due to the numbers requested and also what impact it would have on traffic in the area as the road is narrow. Questions the need for more caravan parks in the area as there are some already in the neighbouring area.

Transportation Unit: 27 touring caravans are excessive to the area in addition to the numbers permitted on other nearby sites and the access in its existing shape does not meet standards in terms of sufficient visibility either.

Natural Resources Wales: Not received.

Welsh Water: Not received.

Public Protection Unit: Not received.

Biodiversity Unit: The proposed caravan site is within 500 metres of the Llŷn Fens Special Area of Conservation which is wetland and is sensitive to nourishment and pollution. It is important that no spillages from the septic tank reach the wetland. Natural Resources Wales should be consulted with on the proposal due to its close relationship with the Special Area of Conservation. Aerial photographs show that there are hedges surrounding the field proposed for use as a caravan site and these should be preserved. Wetland in the field is of unknown biodiversity value and it should be assessed by an ecologist. Water voles and otters have been recorded 250 metres from Cefn Edeyrn, however, it is unlikely that they are within the footprint of the proposed caravan site as there are no water courses. However, ditches near the field could sustain water voles.

Caravans Officer: No objection to the application provided that there is compliance with the following acts and regulations:-

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- Caravan Site and Control of Development Act 1960.

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- Model Standards 1983.

Fire Officer: No observations on the application.

Public Consultation: A notice was posted on the site and nearby residents were notified. The advertisement period has expired and correspondence was received objecting on the following grounds:

- Concerned about the number of planning applications for touring caravans in this area of Llŷn and the cumulative visual impact of this on beautiful rural landscape which is detrimental and changes its special character.
- Also concerned about the proposal's impact on local roads.

5. Assessment of the relevant planning considerations:

The principle of the development

5.1 Policy D19 permits proposals to develop new touring caravan and touring unit sites provided they conform to all of the noted criteria. These include the need for the development's design, setting and appearance to be of a high standard and that it is sited in an unobtrusive location, screened effectively by existing landscape features and/or where touring units can be readily assimilated into the landscape in a way that does not significantly harm the visual quality of the landscape; that the site is close to the main highway network and that adequate access can be provided; that the site is used for touring purposes only, and that the proposal will not exceed the reasonable, capacity of the immediate locality to accommodate the development taking into account any accumulative impact of existing touring caravan sites.

5.2 The site is fairly flat and in its current form is relatively concealed as trees and hedges surround the site. The units would be sited in a row near the site's boundaries. Therefore, the existing hedges and trees would be a way of sheltering and screening the units and enclose most of the units from the most prominent views. It is considered that the natural landform and the farm buildings would also conceal the development. It was believed that the plan submitted was of a suitable design and the building and units had been placed in areas which meant that they did not stand out in the landscape significantly. It is not considered that the proposal would cause significant harm to the visual quality of the landscape and as the additional landscaping will develop and mature the visual impact of the proposal would reduce. Nevertheless, should the application be acceptable in the context of all other relevant policies, it is considered that it would be appropriate to include a condition to ensure suitable landscaping within the site in order to improve its appearance and quality for users but also in terms of the fact that it adds to the landscaping which would be a means of assimilating it better with the landscape.

5.3 Criterion 2 of Policy D19 requests that a site is in close proximity to the highways network, and that adequate access can be provided without causing significant harm to the character and features of the landscape. Paragraph 34 of the Supplementary Planning Guidance – Holiday Accommodation states that it is important that new sites are located as near as possible to the main highways network (i.e. class A and

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B), especially those sites that are proposed to exit onto unclassified country roads. The main roads network, namely the B4417, that travels through the centre of the village of Edern, is located approximately 1km to the north of the site access. This means that all vehicles towing touring caravans would be required to travel for 1km along the third class road which is of rural nature in order to reach the access leading to the caravan site itself. Therefore, it is not considered that the proposal is located near the main roads network. Additionally, in its current condition, access with the county road is sub-standard and there is no suitable visibility towards the south although the agent notes in the design and access statement that there is a visibility of 45 metres towards this direction. The application in its current form does not propose any adaptations to the access. From the information submitted with the application, it appears that the applicant owns the land on either side of the access, and therefore, there is potential here to improve the access. However, no proposal to undertake this was submitted as part of the application and therefore, it is not possible to assess the changes and how they would impact the character and features of the landscape. Therefore, it is not considered that the proposal in its current form is contrary to criterion 2 of Policy D19.

- 5.4 Criterion 3 of Policy D19 requires that the site is used for touring purposes only and that any units are removed from the site during periods when not in use. The application is not contrary to point 3 of the criteria, and this can be ensured by the use of valid planning conditions.
- 5.5 Taking into account the cumulative impact of existing touring caravan, camping and touring unit sites approved within the locality, criterion 4 of Policy D19 states that the proposed development will not exceed the reasonable ability (e.g. environmental, social and cultural, roads network, amenities etc.) of the locality to accommodate such developments.
- 5.6 It must be acknowledged that some areas in Gwynedd already have a high density of holiday sites which can place a strain on the reasonable ability of the locality to accommodate further such developments. This proposal involves creating a new touring caravan site for 27 units. Currently, the Mount touring caravan site for 20 units is approximately 115 metres to the south-west. Also, a planning permission was granted in December 2014 for a site including 15 touring caravans in Tyn Lon approximately 80 metres to the west of the site. In addition to this, the Cae'r Odyn static caravan site is located approximately 300 metres to the north-west of the site which has permission for 107 units. Considering the scale of the development and in light of the location of the site and size of the village, it is considered that it would be beyond the reasonable ability of the locality to accommodate this additional development. Should it be permitted, this would be the third touring caravan site within around 115 metres of each other and all of these sites use the same part of the county road to gain access from Edern to the site. This is mainly a rural single track road and establishing a touring caravan site for 27 units would be a substantial addition in terms of traffic which would use this road and in addition to the fact that there is permission for 35 touring units on sites near the site. In addition to these touring caravan sites, the road is also used by users of the Cae'r Odyn static caravan site and is also used for Ysgol Edern and the Woodlands Hall Hotel. Therefore, it is not considered that it is reasonable for the roads network to cope with this substantial increase in vehicles, which would be vehicles towing caravans using this rural road. The proposal would also add to potential collisions between pedestrians and vehicles. This would include collisions between those who currently use the road for leisurely walks and vehicles but it would also increase the number of pedestrians who would use the road due to the fact that users of the proposed caravan site would walk to the village of Edern. Most of this road between the site and Edern does not have a

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pavement and is a road that is shared between vehicles and pedestrians. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal is beyond the reasonable ability of the locality to cope with such a development and therefore, it is considered that the proposal is contrary to criterion 4 of Policy D19 of the GUDP.

Effect on the visual amenities of the area

- 5.7 One of the main objectives of policy B10 is to safeguard and enhance Landscape Conservation Areas and ensure that developments are integrated well in the landscape. As already noted, it is not considered that the site is too intrusive in the landscape because of the location of the caravans and the existing mature boundaries. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal would cause significant harm to the visual quality of the landscape and as the additional hedges would mature the impact of the proposal would reduce. Nevertheless, should the application be permitted, it is considered that it would be appropriate to include a condition to ensure suitable landscaping within the site in order to improve its appearance and quality for users but also in terms of the fact that it adds to the landscaping which would be a means of assimilating it better with the landscape. Consequently, it is not considered that the touring caravan site would stand out prominently in the landscape and it would not have an adverse impact on the Landscape Conservation Area.
- 5.8 The plans submitted show an intention to reinforce parts of the boundaries by additional planting work which would include rowan, hawthorn, blackthorn, ash and holly. As part of the application it is also intended to build a toilet / shower block in the southern part of the site. The building would have a pitched roof finished with dark green steel profile sheets. The external walls would be pebble-dashed. The building appears acceptable in terms of scale, size, form and location. In light of its location, it is not considered that it would stand out in the landscape which has been designated a landscape conservation area. Consequently, it is considered that the proposal complies with policies B10, B22, B25 and B27 of the GUDP.
- 5.9 The site lies within the Llŷn and Bardsey Island Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest. Policy B12 states that consideration will be given to the information about the Historical Landscapes if the impact of proposals is on such a large scale that their impact would be greater than merely a local impact. In terms of its location and size it is considered that the proposal would have a local impact and that it would not have a broader impact on the historical landscape. Therefore, it is not considered that the proposal is contrary to Policy B12 of the GUDP.

Transport Matters

- 5.10 The main roads network, namely the B4417, that travels through the centre of the village of Edern, is located approximately 1km to the north of the site access. This means that all vehicles towing touring caravans would be required to travel for 1km along the third class road which is of rural nature in order to reach the access and track leading to the caravan site itself. This road also serves the Mount caravan site which has 20 touring units and permission has also been granted for 15 touring caravans in Tyn Lon. The third class road from Edern to the site access would serve the touring caravan sites that have permission as well as this proposed site. In addition to these touring caravan sites, the road is also used by users of the Cae'r Odyn static caravan site and is also used for Ysgol Edern and the Woodlands Hall Hotel. As a result, it is considered that approving this application would go beyond the ability of the local roads network to deal with the increase in traffic. In addition to this, the access with the third class county road is sub-standard in its current form and no details on an intention to improve it were submitted. The observations of the Transportation Unit on the proposal were received and they were of the opinion that 27 touring caravans are excessive for the area in addition to the numbers permitted on

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other nearby sites and the access in its existing shape does not meet standards in terms of sufficient visibility either. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal would affect road safety, not only in terms of vehicle users but also in terms of creating collisions between vehicles and pedestrians and on a road which is mainly without a pavement. It is therefore considered that the proposal is contrary to Policy CH33 and D19 of the GUDP.

General and residential amenities

- 5.11 There are some dwelling houses in the locality. It is not considered that a site of 27 touring caravans would mean an over-development in terms of the number of caravans on the site itself. However, the proposal would substantially add to traffic that would use the third class road from Edern to the site. This road serves a number of dwelling houses, however, it is not considered that this increase would cause significant harm in terms of local amenities. The caravan site would have seasonal use, and it is usual to impose a condition restricting the season to between 1 March and 1 October. As a result, should the application be approved the site would be used on a seasonal basis and the caravans would not be sited on the land throughout the year. This would mean that there would be no change to local residents' amenities outside the occupancy season. Therefore, it is not considered that the proposal would cause significant harm to the amenities of the local neighbourhood and it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of policy B23 of the GUDP.

Linguistic matters

- 5.12 Policy A2 of the GUDP states that proposals that would cause significant harm to the social, linguistic or cultural cohesion of communities, due to their size, scale or location, will be refused. As the proposal involves a tourism development which will create ten or more holiday units there is a requirement for a Language and Community Statement to be prepared in order to comply with the Supplementary Planning Guidance: Planning and the Welsh Language. A Language and Community Statement was received as part of the application and the Joint Planning Policy Unit was consulted. The response of the Joint Planning Policy Unit to the Language and Community Statement had not been received at the time of preparing the report. Should favourable observations be received it is considered that the proposal would be in accordance with Policy A2 as noted above.

Biodiversity Matters

- 5.13 The Llŷn Fens Conservation Area and the Cors Geirch Site of Special Scientific Interest are located around 400 metres to the east of the site. The Biodiversity Unit has not objected to the proposal but refer to the need to be cautious that spillages from the septic tank do not reach the wetland and also that there is a need to preserve the boundary hedges. Reference is also made in the observations that the biodiversity value of the wetland which forms part of the application is unknown and they refer to the fact that water voles and otters have been recorded approximately 250 metres from Cefn Edeyrn but that it is unlikely that they are within the footprint of the proposed caravan site. Natural Resources Wales were also consulted but no response was received. Due to the distances between the application site and the Special Area of Conservation and the Site of Special Scientific Interest, it is not considered that the proposal would have a substantial impact on these designated areas and it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of Policies B15 and B16 of the GUDP.

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6. Conclusions:

6.1 Having given due consideration to the application, the use and location of the proposal is deemed unacceptable. The main roads network, namely the B4417, that travels through the centre of the village of Edern, is located approximately 1km to the north of the site access. This means that all vehicles towing touring caravans would be required to travel for 1km along the third class road which is of rural nature in order to reach the access and track leading to the caravan site itself. This road also serves the Mount touring caravan site which has 20 touring units and permission has also been granted for 15 touring caravans in Tyn Lon. The third class road from Edern to the site access would serve the touring caravan sites that have permission as well as this proposed site. As a result, it is considered that approving this application would go beyond the ability of the local roads network to deal with the increase in traffic. In addition to this, the access with the third class county road is sub-standard in its current form and no details on an intention to improve it were submitted. All material considerations have been addressed when determining this application; however, this has not changed the recommendation.

7. Recommendation:

7.1 To refuse – reasons

1. The proposal is not located close to the main roads network and the proposed development would create a substantial increase in traffic using the roads and the sub-standard access leading to the site and cause significant harm to road safety. The proposal is therefore contrary to policy CH33 and D19 of the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan (2009) and the Supplementary Planning Guidance : Holiday Accommodation, Gwynedd Council (July 2011).
2. Should it be approved, the proposal would create a joint cumulative impact with other touring caravan sites that have been approved in the locality and therefore, the proposal would go beyond the reasonable ability of the locality to accommodate the development in particular therefore in terms of its impact on the local roads network and the proposal is therefore considered contrary to Policy D19 and CH33 of the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan (2009) and the Supplementary Planning Guidance : Holiday Accommodation, Gwynedd Council (July 2011).