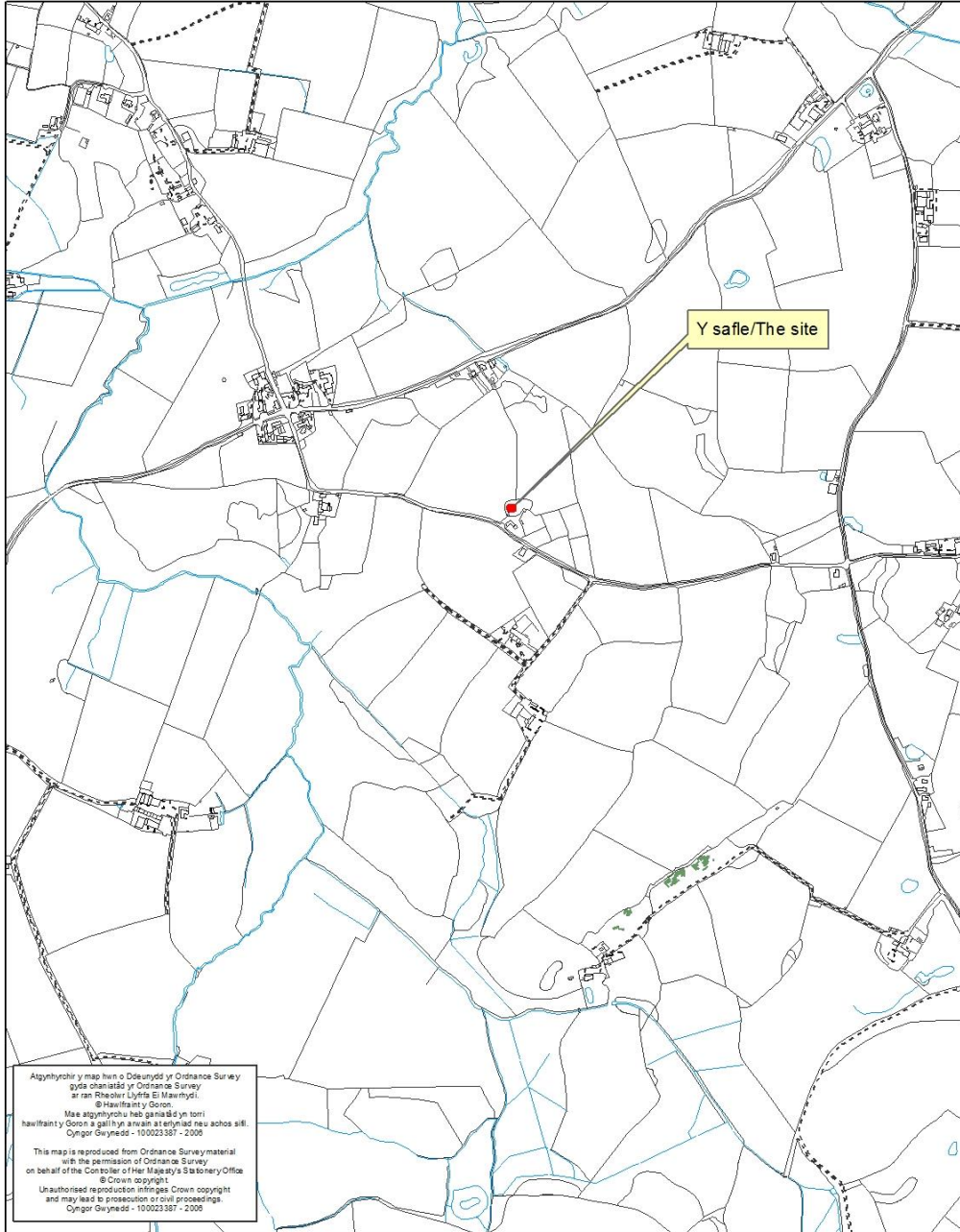


Number : 5.6



Rhif y Cais / Application Number : C16-0246-33-LL

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



PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 04/07/2016
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	PWLLHELI

Application Number: C16/0246/33/LL
Date Registered: 14/03/2016
Application Type: Full - Planning
Community: Buan
Ward: Efailnewydd/Buan

Proposal: CHANGE OF USE OF A FORMER CHURCH INTO A HOLIDAY UNIT
Location: SANT CEIDIO CHURCH, CEIDIO, PWLLHELI, GWYNEDD LL53 8UH

Summary of the Recommendation: TO DELEGATE POWERS TO APPROVE

1. Description:

- 1.1 This is a full application to convert a former Church into a holiday unit. The church has been empty for some time and it has already changed ownership from the Church in Wales to private ownership. The proposal mainly entails adapting the existing building that is already in a good state of repair into a holiday unit. A new floor would be installed within the building that would extend three-quarters of the way above along the internal floor surface area and the main window would be left on show. It is intended to install the kitchen and lounge on the ground floor, with one bedroom, bathroom and wardrobe on the first floor. Externally, it is proposed to install six new conservation-type roof-lights along with a flue on the rear elevation to serve a coal fire.
- 1.2 The site lies in open countryside and within a Landscape Conservation Area. A third class road runs near the site along with a public footpath. The building is a grade II listed building.

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.
- 2.2 Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 the Council has a duty not only to carry out sustainable development, but must also take reasonable steps in exercising its functions to meet its sustainable development (or well-being) objectives. This report has been prepared in consideration of the Council's duty and the "sustainable development principle", as set out in the 2015 Act, and in making 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. It is considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable impact upon the achievement of well-being objectives as a result of the proposed decision.

2.3 Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan 2009:

B2 – ALTERATIONS TO LISTED BUILDINGS OR BUILDINGS IN THEIR CURTILAGE - Ensure that proposals do not cause substantial damage to the special architectural or historical character of Listed Buildings.

B3 – DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING THE SETTING OF A LISTED BUILDING - Ensure that proposals have no adverse effect on the setting of Listed Buildings and

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 04/07/2016
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	PWLLHELI

that they conform to a number of criteria aimed at safeguarding the special character of the Listed Building and the local environment.

B7 – SITES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE - Refuse proposals which will damage or destroy archaeological remains which are of national importance (whether they are registered or not) or their setting. It also refuses any development that will affect other archaeological remains unless the need for the development overrides the significance of the archaeological remains.

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.

B20 – SPECIES AND THEIR HABITATS THAT ARE OF INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL IMPORTANCE – Refuse proposals which are likely to cause disturbance or unacceptable damage to protected species and their habitats unless they conform to a series of criteria aimed at safeguarding the recognised features of the site.

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

B23 – AMENITIES - Safeguarding the amenities of the local neighbourhood by ensuring that proposals must conform to a series of criteria which aim to safeguard the recognised features and amenities of the local area.

B24 – ALTERATIONS AND BUILDING EXTENSIONS WITHIN DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES, RURAL VILLAGES AND THE COUNTRYSIDE - Ensure that proposals for alterations or extensions to buildings conform to a series of criteria aimed at protecting the character and amenity value of the local area.

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.

C4 – ADAPTING BUILDINGS FOR RE-USE – Proposals to adapt buildings for re-use rather than demolish them will be approved provided that specific criteria can be met. These involve the suitability of the building for the proposed use, visual considerations and that the design respects the original building and the surrounding area. Buildings in the countryside must be permanent and structurally sound. Their conversion should be possible without the need for substantial construction work. They should not disperse activities at a scale that would harm the vitality of towns and villages.

CH22 – CYCLING NETWORK, PATHS AND RIGHTS OF WAY – All parts of the cycling network, paths and rights of way shall be protected and promoted by assessing any proposal that would infringe on them and seeking to satisfactorily incorporate them within the development. Should this not be possible, appropriate provision will have to be made to divert the route or to provide a new and acceptable route. Proposals will also be refused if they are likely to prohibit plans to extend the cycling network, paths or rights of way unless a suitable alternative route can be provided.

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 04/07/2016
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	PWLLHELI

CH30 – ACCESS FOR ALL – Proposals for residential units, business / industrial units, or buildings / facilities for public use, will be refused unless it can be shown that thorough consideration has been given to the need to provide appropriate access for the widest possible range of individuals.

CH36 – PRIVATE CAR PARKING FACILITIES - Proposals for new developments, extensions to existing developments or change of use will be refused unless off-street parking is provided in accordance with the Council’s current parking guidelines. Consideration will be given to the accessibility of public transport services, the possibility of walking or cycling from the site and the proximity of the site to a public car park. In circumstances where off-street parking is needed and where the developer does not offer parking facilities on the site, or where it is not possible to take advantage of the existing parking provisions, proposals will be approved provided the developer contributes to the cost of improving the accessibility of the site or providing the necessary parking spaces on another nearby site.

POLICY D15 – SELF-SERVICED HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION – Proposals for the development of new, permanent self-serviced holiday accommodation or for the conversion of existing buildings or the extension of existing establishments will be approved provided the design, setting and appearance of the development are of a high standard and provided they conform to criteria relevant to the location and scale of the development; loss of permanent housing stock; residential areas and a concentration of this type of holiday accommodation.

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Holiday Accommodation

2.4 National Policies:

Planning Policy Wales - (Edition 8, January 2016) Chapter 6: Safeguarding the Historic Environment

Technical Advice Note 12: Design 2016

3. Relevant Planning History:

3.1 9900089LBC13 – Modify a Church into a dwelling – Refused – 23-4-1998

9900088FUL13 – Modify a Church into a dwelling – Refused – 19-2-1999

9700228LBC13 – Modify a redundant Church into a house and construction of porch – Refused – 24-7-1997

9700227FUL13 – Modify a redundant Church into a house and construction of porch – Refused –

4. Consultations:

Community/Town Council: Not received

Transportation Unit: No objection. It is also assumed that the traffic flow expected from a holiday unit is likely to be low and unlikely to have a detrimental impact on the local roads network. It is also assumed that there is sufficient space within the curtilage to turn and park vehicles without having any impact on the nearby highway.

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 04/07/2016
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	PWLLHELI

Footpaths Unit:	No objection.
Welsh Water:	Not received
Biodiversity Unit:	The bats survey submitted with the application showed evidence that bats use the building as a maternity roost. However, there is no reference in the bats survey towards birds and possibly birds do use the building. It is suggested that a roost is obtained within the roof; therefore, amended plans showing this are needed. Provided that the amended plans are acceptable, relevant conditions can be proposed.
Natural Resources Wales:	<p>Note from the application that bats are present within the building and that a licence will be needed to carry out the work. However, as this is a high risk matter, it is not believed that the proposal is likely to have a detrimental impact on the bat population and to offer a condition in accordance with the report and obtain a relevant licence.</p> <p>There are no observations to make regarding sewerage issues.</p>
Public Protection:	Not received
Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service:	<p>It is believed that the proposal is likely to have an archaeological impact. The design seems sympathetic in terms of the alteration; however, further details are required in some cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details regarding the floor and roof insulation • Details regarding drainage and services • Details regarding the installation of the first floor and staircase • Any other structural work • Any internal refurbishment work • Confirmation is also required of how much work is intended on the timber beams
Church in Wales	<p>Observations were received from the Church in Wales, namely the former owners of the Church, and who have kept ownership of the cemetery. There is no objection to the proposal of installing services in the building along the path and it is advised that this is undertaken under the supervision of an archaeologist. In this case, the Church in Wales are still in possession of the cemetery and the control and maintenance of the cemetery is in the care of the Bro Madryn local ministry area and therefore the cemetery would continue to be open to the public. However, it must be borne in mind that the Church in Wales has general responsibility for the cemetery; however, the ownership and obligation of each grave lies directly with the next of kin; therefore the owners who do not protect their graves increase the maintenance burden on the resources of local diocese. If objections have been received to the proposal, it may be an idea to construct a fence around the Church or along the path; however, it is felt that this would have an impact on the setting of the Church.</p>

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 04/07/2016
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	PWLLHELI

The Church in Wales is very dependent on the diocese to volunteer their time to maintain the Church buildings and cemeteries. With congregation numbers and resources reducing, the future management of cemeteries is more dependent on the use of these open spaces as public amenity areas, and where possible, we encourage people, including children, to look at cemeteries as community areas. The Church in Wales does not need empty Churches, and communities must be encouraged to support sensitive redevelopment where possible. These buildings will not re-open for worship; therefore, another use must be obtained in order to retain the historical landscape of the area.

Public Consultation:

A notice was posted on site and in the press, and nearby residents were informed. The consultation period has ended and many items of correspondence were received objecting on planning grounds:

- Family members had been buried in the cemetery and neither the Church nor the cemetery should be altered.
- It is considered that the proposal would obstruct access to the family graves for maintenance purposes.
- Sewerage issues and the impact on the graves nearby
- The features of the grade II Church and the lychgate that needs to be protected for the future
- the bats that use the church need to be protected
- Lack of reference to the public footpath and cemetery in the application along with how the proposal will affect them

Objections were also received that were not relevant planning matters:

- Placing a holiday home/ erecting a new house on the plot would disturb the family graves.
- None of the gravestones will be moved or levelled as part of the development.

In addition, letters were received in support of the principle of the development; however confirmation was needed regarding some aspects of the proposal (noted above).

5. Assessment of the material planning considerations:

5.1 Principle of the Development

Policy C4 of the GUDP states that existing buildings can be altered and re-used provided that the proposal complies with criteria such as the suitability of the building, that the design respects the structure, form and character of the original building and that it will not have a detrimental impact on the general amenities of the area. The proposal, based on its location, scale and materials is acceptable and it is a relatively small building that can be altered quite easily without disturbing its character excessively. The proposal is also a means of protecting a redundant listed

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 04/07/2016
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	PWLLHELI

building and ensuring its use into the future. Policy D15 of the GUDP relates to the development of new permanent self-serviced holiday accommodation and states that the proposal must meet the relevant criteria within the policy which includes converting existing buildings, design and high standard development. In this case, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of policy D15 and the SPA Holiday Accommodation as it is a high quality development and makes economic use of an existing building in the countryside that lies empty. It is believed that this change of use will not have a detrimental impact on the setting or character of the listed building, taking into account that the building has been empty for a long time and that this proposal is a means to secure the building's future without making many changes to it. Therefore, it is believed that the proposal is acceptable in principle and that it is in line with policies C4, D15 and B3 of the UDP. A listed building application has also been registered in order to assess those specific aspects of the proposal.

5.2 Design and amenities

The proposal mainly involves restoring the building by undertaking maintenance work. It will involve the installation of the new roof-lights, installation of secondary glazing if required and a new front door of the exact design and size as the existing and re-point the building. Internally, the proposal will also involve the installation of a new first floor that will extend three-quarters of the way above the floor surface area and leave the main window on show. The work mainly involves the restoration of the building and due to the site's location in open countryside, it is not considered that the proposal will disrupt the amenities of the site or area. The site is also located within the Landscape Conservation Area and it is not considered that adapting the building is likely to affect the character of this area. Subject to relevant conditions, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable from the aspect of policy B10, B22, B23, B24 and B25 of the UDP.

- 5.3** It is also intended to connect the building with the existing water and septic tank by undertaking digging work on the existing path. The Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service is requesting more details regarding the sewerage and other services in order to provide further advice. The existing path leads from the main entrance to the Church door, where no graves are located. It is intended to dig up the path in order to install the appropriate services, under the supervision of an architect. These details are requested from the Agent and it is considered that it could be acceptable in principle from the aspect of policy B7 of the GUDP but subject to these details and relevant conditions.

5.4 Highways matters

The Highways Unit does not have any objection to the proposal as there are sufficient parking spaces within the curtilage of the nearby property in order to park and turn vehicles. Therefore, it is not considered that the proposal is likely to disrupt the roads network and therefore the proposal is in accordance with policy CH36 of the GUDP. No objection has been received from the Footpaths Unit as the proposal is unlikely to disrupt the nearby footpath and it is considered that it is in accordance with the requirements of policy CH22 of the GUDP.

5.5 Biodiversity Matters

A bats report has been submitted with the application stating that bats are present in the building. The Biodiversity Unit notes that amended plans will need to be

PLANNING COMMITTEE	DATE: 04/07/2016
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE MANAGER	PWLLHELI

submitted showing the roost in the roof in order to confirm whether or not it is acceptable so that relevant conditions can be imposed. It is anticipated that this can be done in an acceptable way. Therefore, it is considered, provided that the Biodiversity Unit accepts the amended plans as noted above, that it would be acceptable from the aspect of policy B20 of the GUDP and also the requirements of Natural Resources Wales.

5.6 Response to the public consultation

Some concern exists regarding the fact that this is a Church located in the centre of a cemetery and whether or not the proposal will disrupt this, and also whether or not access to the cemetery will continue. As previously noted, the Church in Wales used to own the entire site, but by now the cemetery is the only part remaining in their ownership, and it will be required for public access to the cemetery to continue. There is also concern regarding changing the use of the Church into a house; however, it must be emphasised that a holiday unit is being considered here and not a permanent residence or new house and therefore, these objections are not considerations in this case.

6. Conclusions:

- 6.1 The principle of using the Church as a holiday unit is acceptable and as a result of receiving more details about some aspects of the proposal, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable and that it is a means of securing long-term use for this listed building that will otherwise deteriorate and stand empty.

7. **Recommendation** - To delegate powers to the Senior Planning Manager to approve the application subject to receiving amended plans showing the bat roost and to receive favourable observations regarding those plans from the Biodiversity Unit, acceptable details regarding the method of installing the new roof-lights, the method for installing the new first floor, details regarding the provision/installation of the services for the building and installation of the secondary windows and to relevant conditions relating to:

1. 5 years
2. In accordance with the plans and recommendations in the bat report
3. Conditions relating to the first floor
4. Conditions relating to work on the roof
5. New timber door
6. The original door to be retained within/in part of the building at all times
7. Conditions relating to the secondary glazing
8. Lime render and plaster work
9. Some of the original pews must be kept within the building at all times (to be agreed with the LPA prior to the commencement of work)
10. Conditions relating to archaeological work
11. Photographic record
12. Bat conditions
13. Holiday use only/register to be kept