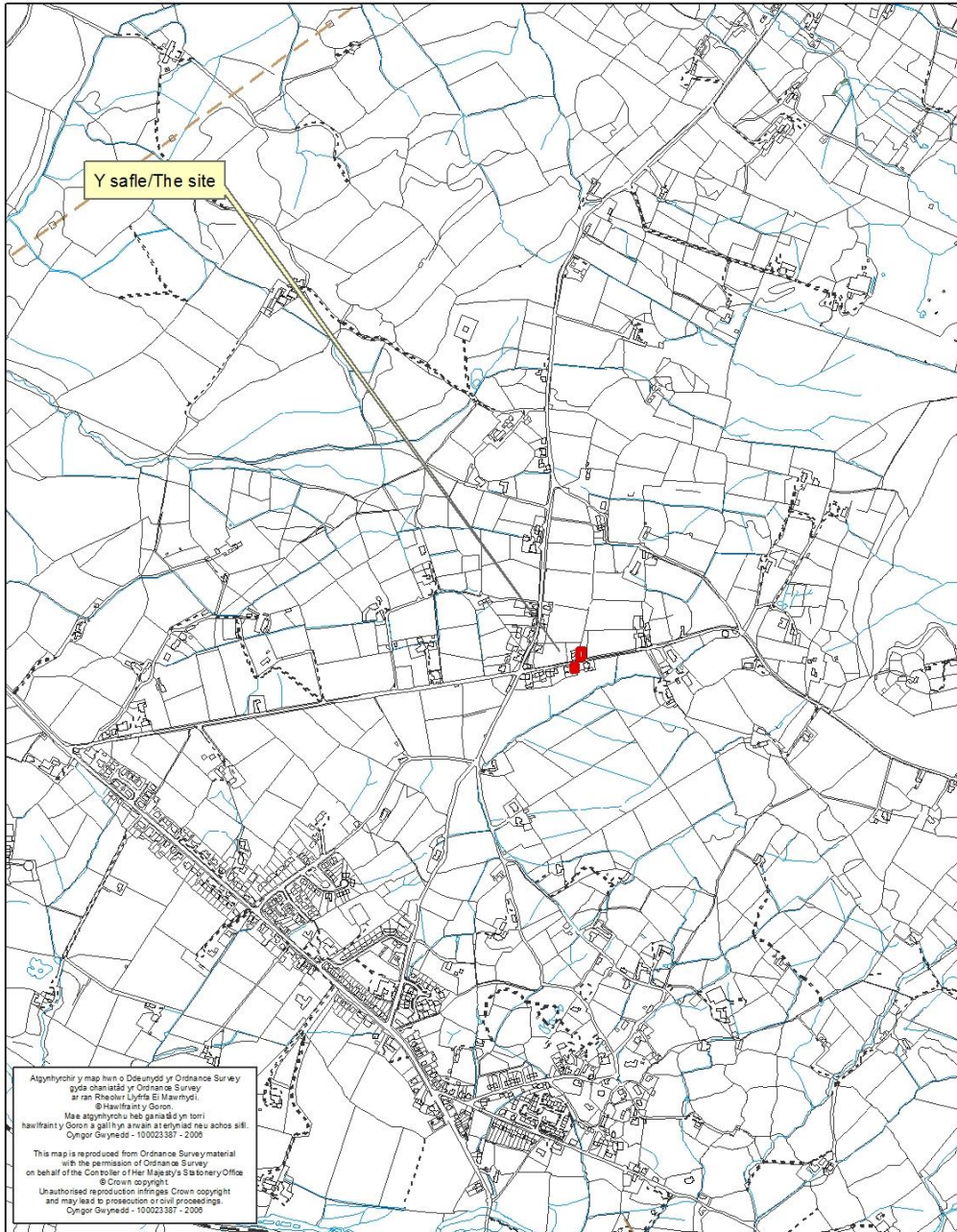


Number: 1



Rhif y Cais / Application Number : C16/0563/26/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: C16/0563/26/LL
Date Registered: 24/05/2016
Application Type: Full - Planning
Community : Waunfawr
Ward: Waunfawr

Proposal: ADAPT A FORMER SCHOOLHOUSE INTO HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION, PROVIDE PARKING SPACES AS WELL AS CHANGING THE USE OF A PLOT OF LAND FOR A GARDEN FOR THE OCCUPANTS OF THE HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION
Location: FORMER MORIAH SCHOOLHOUSE AND CHAPEL, GROESLON, WAUNFAWR, GWYNEDD, LL554EQ

Summary of the Recommendation:

TO APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS.

1. Description:

- 1.1 This is a full application to adapt a former schoolhouse into a 3 bedroom holiday accommodation, as well as using the plot of land adjacent to the schoolhouse as a garden for the occupants of the accommodation and create 2 parking spaces in the Groeslon, Waunfawr area. Internally, the facilities will include 2 bedrooms, a kitchen, a hallway and a bathroom on the first floor with a bedroom, a toilet, a living room as well as a bat roost. Externally, the renovation work will include keeping the current slate roof and installing 4 conservation cast iron roof windows on the roof's eastern slope and 2 conservation windows on the roof's western slope; adapt a window on the front elevation (northern) of the schoolhouse to be the main door to the accommodation and create an access for the bats on the upper part of the second front window; replace the clear glass on both windows on the eastern elevation of the schoolhouse with opaque glass and horizontal slates on the upper part of the windows themselves; create a new opening on the schoolhouse's southern gable end in the form of a window on the first floor along with replacing the current framework of the 2 windows on the schoolhouse's western elevation with clear glass windows and horizontal slates on the upper part of the windows themselves along with whitewashing the external walls.
- 1.2 As was referred to above, the proposal also involves using the old Moriah chapel site (that has been demolished by now and is situated adjacent to the schoolhouse site) as a garden/amenity area for the occupant of the holiday accommodation. The site is currently used to store and park vehicles, building machines and equipment. The proposal would also involve creating 2 parking spaces on this plot.
- 1.3 The site of the ex-schoolhouse is located in the rural village of Groeslon, Waunfawr as defined within the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan (GUDP) on an infilling site between residential property known as Llys Morley to the east and Rose Mount to the west. To the south, agricultural land is located with the village of Waunfawr further away. The proposed garden site is located directly at the rear of the dwellings known as Tan Capel with open agricultural land to the north and to the east.

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

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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 also to 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 recommendation.

2.3 **Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan 2009:**

POLICY B20 – SPECIES AND THEIR HABITATS THAT ARE INTERNATIONALLY AND NATIONALLY IMPORTANT

Refuse proposals that are likely to cause unacceptable disturbance or harm to protected species and their habitats unless they can conform to a series of criteria aimed at safeguarding the recognised features of the site.

POLICY B22 - BUILDING DESIGN

Promote good building design by ensuring that proposals conform to a series of criteria aimed at safeguarding 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 protecting the recognised features and amenities of the local area.

POLICY 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.

POLICY B25 – BUILDING MATERIALS

Safeguard the visual character of the Plan area by ensuring that only natural Welsh slates or slates that are similar in terms of their appearance, colour and weathering properties are permitted, other than in circumstances in which the type of building or its particular setting, or the sustainability benefits, are such that another material would be appropriate. In respect of other parts of the building, development will be required to use high quality building materials that complement the character and appearance of the local area. Proposals that introduce substandard or intrusive materials will be refused.

POLICY C4 – ADAPTING BUILDINGS FOR RE-USE

Proposals to adapt buildings for re-use rather than demolition will be approved provided they can conform to specific criteria relating to the suitability of the building, visual considerations, design and the impact on the vitality of neighbouring towns and villages.

POLICY CH12 – CONVERSION OF BUILDINGS IN RURAL VILLAGES AND OPEN COUNTRYSIDE FOR RESIDENTIAL USE

Approve the conversion of buildings to residential use within rural villages and the countryside if a suitable economic use can be secured for the building, and that criteria

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relating to local need, affordability, impact on the character of the area and occupancy of the dwelling can be met.

POLICY 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, and having given due consideration to the accessibility of public transport, the possibility of walking or cycling from the site and the proximity of the site to a public car park.

POLICY D15 – SELF-SERVICED HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

Proposals for developing new, permanent self-catering holiday accommodation and adaptation of existing buildings or existing establishments will be approved if the design, setting and appearance of the development is of high standard and if it conforms to criteria relevant to the location and scale of the development, impact on the permanent housing stock and on residential areas and availability of this type of holiday accommodation.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG): Holiday Accommodation, (July 2010).

SPG: Converting buildings in open countryside and in rural villages (2009).

The Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Local Development Plan which is currently being prepared is subject to an ongoing Public Inquiry. At present, it is not a relevant planning consideration for making decisions on planning applications.

2.3 National Policies:

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12 Design, (2016).
TAN 23 Economic Development (2014).
Planning Policy Wales, Edition 8 (November 2016).

3. Relevant Planning History:

3.1 Application number C07A/0293/26/LL - converting and adapting a former schoolhouse into a house - withdrawn, May 2016.

4. Consultations:

Community/Town Council: No objections from members of the Community Council but the question was asked if the building is safe? It was added that this would probably be considered before starting on any work if the application was successful.

Transportation Unit: No objection to the amended plan that shows both parking spaces on the former Moriah Chapel site. Standard Highways conditions / notes.

Natural Resources Wales: Refer to regulation requirements which safeguard species such as bats. A bat licence is needed before starting on any work on the site.

Welsh Water: Standard condition regarding the disposal of surface water from the site.

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Public Protection Unit: No response.

Biodiversity Unit: Following receipt of amended plans regarding creating a bat roost within the schoolhouse, approve with appropriate conditions.

Public Consultation: A notice was posted on the site and nearby residents were notified. The advertising period has ended and letters were received objecting on the following grounds:

- The proposal would mean overlooking, and loss of privacy for local residents at the expense of residential amenities on the basis of installing windows in the roof, creating an open amenity space in the south-eastern corner of the site and creating a new window in the rear gable end of the schoolhouse.
- Offering one box fir roosting bats is not sufficient.
- Using the schoolhouse as holiday accommodation would disrupt the amenities of local residents on the basis of general disturbance (movements in and out of the site) as well as noise.
- 2 parking spaces is not sufficient for a 3-bedroom holiday accommodation.
- The schoolhouse was not built for residential use and it does not have basic facilities such as sewerage and a garden.

As well as the objections noted above, objections were received which were not valid planning objections these included:

- The proposal includes land used as a cemetery in the past.
- Object on the basis of the dangerous condition of the building (lack of maintenance work as well as lack of interest in the building itself) and demolishing it would be more appropriate.
- Damage to a local neighbour's vehicles due to slates falling from the roof of the schoolhouse.

5. Assessment of the material planning considerations:

The principle of the development

5.1 The principle of adapting buildings for re-use is based on Policy C4 of the GUDP which approves such developments instead of demolition, provided that guidelines can be conformed with involving the condition of the building, suitability of the building for proposed use, acceptable design, form and character, visual amenities and safeguarding the vitality of the villages and towns. To this end, it is believed that the proposal, as amended, is acceptable based on (i) the schoolhouse is a structurally sound building that enables it to be converted for the use of holiday accommodation without undertaking significant re-building work. Even though objections have been received from local residents concerned about the structural condition of the building, written confirmation has been received from the applicant stating that the schoolhouse is structurally sound and surface cracks are in the schoolhouse walls; (ii)

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the design of the building is suitable for use as holiday accommodation; (iii) the changes to the building are acceptable on the basis of scale, materials and design and respects the current character of the building; (iv) the proposal will not create any storehouses or external work that would cause harm to the visual quality and character of the local area; and (v) the proposal will not lead to dispersing activities at such a scale as to harm the vitality of towns and villages.

5.2 Policy CH12 states that it is not permitted to convert buildings for residential use in rural villages and the countryside buildings without being able to prove first that it is not possible to ensure suitable economic use for the building. To this end, and taking this assessment into account, it is believed that holiday accommodation is a suitable economic use for the building considering its location (on infill land) and the size/design of the building itself.

5.3 Policy D15 states that proposals are approved to develop new self-service holiday accommodation or adapt an existing building if the design, lay-out and appearance of the development is of high standard. To this end, it is believed that the proposal complies with the requirements on the basis of (i) the scale of the development is acceptable on the basis of its setting between existing structures. (ii) it will not lead to the loss of permanent housing stock; (iii) even though the site is located within a residential area, it is not believed it will cause significant harm to the residential character of the area on the basis of its scale and its proposed use (which is of similar use to permanent residential use); and (iv) it is not believed that it would lead to an over-concentration of this type of accommodation within the area.

5.4 Considering the observations above, it is believed that the proposal is acceptable on the basis of principle.

Visual amenities

5.5 As already referred to, the proposal includes undertaking a number of changes to the existing schoolhouse's external elevations including:- (i) installing 6 conservation cast iron windows in the roof; (ii) create a front door within the opening of the present window, re-install glass and horizontal slates within the existing openings. (iii) erect a low wall in the site's south-eastern corner; (iv) create a window on the first floor at the rear of the schoolhouse; and (v) whitewash the external walls.

5.6 It is not believed that these changes will undermine the building's character and integrity (that is typical of similar buildings from the early period of the 20th century and contributes towards the local history of the settlement) and it is a way of improving its appearance considering its present condition and its prominence in this part of the streetscape. It is also believed that changing the use of the former Moriah Chapel from the use of storing vehicles and outdoor building equipment to a private garden and parking spaces will be an improvement in amenity in this part of the streetscape. To this end, therefore, it is believed that the proposal is acceptable based on the requirements of Policy B22, B23, B24, B25, C4 and CH12 of the GUDP.

General and residential amenities

5.7 As referred to above, correspondence was received from local residents that are material to planning, objecting to the application on the following grounds:- (i) overlooking and loss of privacy; (ii) general disturbance and noise; (iii) lack of parking spaces and (iv) the building is not suitable for residential use. In response to these objections, the following observations are offered:

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- Overlooking and loss of privacy. The occupants of the dwellings identified as Llys Morley (to the east of the site), Rose Mount (to the west of the site) and Sŵn y Gwynt (the house next door down from Rose Mount) states that adapting the schoolhouse to holiday accommodation would impact on their residential amenities based on loss of privacy and overlooking. The front elevation of Llys Morley stands around 16m away from the eastern side elevation of the schoolhouse with this empty space including an open garden with shrubs and evergreen trees on the boundary between the garden of Llys Morley and the application site. The proposal involves re-using the two windows on the southern part of the elevation, using opaque glass as well as installing 4 conservation windows on the lowest part of the roof that faces Llys Morley in order to lighten the lounge, toilet and the stairs/landing. Considering these changes, it is not believed that there would be any significant direct overlooking into the garden of Llys Morley or into the rooms in the house itself, considering that the two big windows would be of opaque glass (an appropriate condition can be included in this application, should it be approved, to ensure that the glass continues to be opaque glass permanently) and that the lay-out and design of the roof windows resulting in no direct overlooking into the garden/house of Llys Morley. This can also be secured by including an appropriate condition should this application be approved. It is intended to install a window at the rear gable end of the holiday accommodation for the lounge with views towards the south where the majority of the rear garden of the occupants of Rose Mount is located. It must be noted here that the parcel of land located directly behind the southern gable end of the schoolhouse is an extension to the original garden of Rose Mount and, to this end, this part of the garden is not located directly adjacent to the rear of Rose Mount itself. In 2009, this parcel of land was part of a significant agricultural field that stretches down the rear of the dwellings on the southern outskirts of Groeslon, Waunfawr. In order to reduce any significant and direct overlooking into this part of the garden and into the other gardens, the applicant has agreed to reduce the size of the window by submitting an amended plan, and considering the height of the window above the nearby gardens, the eye level would mean looking above these gardens instead of down towards them (these gardens include the gardens of Rose Mount, Llys Morley and Sŵn y Gwynt).
- General disturbance and noise. Objections were received on the basis that adapting the schoolhouse to holiday accommodation would disrupt the amenities of nearby local residents on the basis of disturbance (emanating from the coming and going on the site), creating noise. It should be noted here that using the schoolhouse as a 3-bedroom holiday accommodation is of similar use to the use of permanent residential dwelling use on the basis of density, nature and character. It is predicted that the movements in and out of the site would be similar to that of a permanent residential dwelling, therefore, it is predicted that approving this application will not create significant disturbance at the expense of local residents.
- Lack of parking spaces. After receiving amended plans, the Transportation Unit confirms that the new parking arrangement is acceptable on the basis of numbers and road safety and the requirement for 2 cars is also appropriate for the permanent 3-bedroom residential dwelling.
- The building is not suitable for residential use. Considering the location and setting of the schoolhouse along with its size, it is believed it is appropriate for adapting for use as holiday/residential accommodation and that it is a way of providing sustainable development in using a building that is historically important in the village.

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- 5.8 By considering the above assessment, it is believed that the proposal is acceptable on the basis of residential and general amenities for local residents and that it conforms with the requirements of Policy B23 and D15 of the GUDP.

Transport and access matters

- 5.9 The application was originally submitted with 2 parking spaces located in front of the schoolhouse but, following observations from the Transportation Unit (difficult to provide parking in front of the schoolhouse due to differences in ground levels and sub-standard visibility), amended plans were submitted where the 2 parking spaces were re-located in front of the former Moriah Chapel site which is adjacent to the schoolhouse site. As a result of changing the original plans, the Transportation Unit do not have any concerns anymore regarding safety implications if this application was approved. Therefore, the application is acceptable on the basis of the requirement of Policy C4, CH36 and D15 of the GUDP.

Biodiversity matters

- 5.10 As part of the application, a protected species survey was submitted and the survey confirms that there is a bat roost within the schoolhouse's roof. As a result of this, there will be a need to carry out mitigation measures in order to safeguard the roost and the Biodiversity Unit is satisfied with the proposal subject to ensuring appropriate conditions on any planning permission. Concern was received by a member of the public about the situation with bats but it is considered that the response from the Biodiversity Unit and Natural Resources Wales confirms that what is offered as mitigation measures are appropriate and acceptable for the situation. In addition to this, a bat licence will need to be received from Natural Resources Wales before starting any work on the site. Therefore, the application is acceptable on the basis of the requirement of Policy B20 of the GUDP.

Archaeological Matters

- 5.11 Comments were received from Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service with regard to the application and because the proposal means undertaking the schoolhouse's structural work (which is described by the Archaeological Service as a historical communal building with an important contribution to the history of the village) a photographic record will need to be taken of the building before any work starts on it.

6. Conclusions:

- 6.1 Having considered the relevant matters, including the objections, it is not considered that the proposal is contrary to the local and national policies and guidelines noted in the assessment, nor are there any material planning considerations that state otherwise.

7. Recommendation:

- 7.1 To approve – conditions:-
1. Five years.
 2. In accordance with the amended plans.
 3. Protected species' mitigation measures.

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4. Conditions of disposal of surface water from the site.
5. Removal of permitted development rights.
6. Highways conditions / notes.
7. Archaeological matters condition.
8. Holiday units conditions and keeping a register.
9. Location of the roof windows to be agreed.
10. External materials to be agreed