

Application Reference: FPL/2021/136

Applicant: Mr Meirion Roberts

Description: Full application for the conversion of the outbuilding into a holiday letting unit together with alterations and extensions thereto at

Site Address: Wylfa, Bangor Road, Benllech



Report of Head of Regulation and Economic Development Service (Joanne Roberts)

Recommendation: Refuse

Reason for Reporting to Committee

The applicant is related to a 'relevant officer' as defined within paragraph 4.6.10 of the Constitution.

The application has been scrutinised by the Monitoring Officer as required under paragraph 4.6.10.4 of the Constitution.

At the meeting held on the 1st December 2021, members resolved to visit the site. The virtual site visit took place on the 15th December 2021 and members will now be familiar with the site.

Proposal and Site

The application is for the conversion of the outbuilding into a holiday letting unit together with alterations and extensions thereto at Wylfa, Bangor Rd, Benllech.

The application site is located within the Local Service Centre of Benllech.

Key Issues

The key issues are whether the proposal complies with relevant local and national planning policies and whether the proposal is acceptable in terms of its location, design and appearance and impacts upon the amenities of the area and neighbouring properties.

Policies

Joint Local Development Plan

Strategic Policy PS 5: Sustainable Development
Strategic Policy PS 4: Sustainable Transport, Development and Accessibility
Strategic Policy PS 14: The Visitor Economy
Strategic Policy PS 19: Conserving and Where Appropriate Enhancing the Natural Environment
Strategic Policy PS 1: Welsh Language and Culture
Policy TRA 2: Parking Standards
Policy TRA 4: Managing Transport Impacts
Policy PCYFF 2: Development Criteria
Policy PCYFF 3: Design and Place Shaping
Policy PCYFF 1: Development Boundaries
Policy TWR 2: Holiday Accommodation
Policy AMG 5: Local Biodiversity Conservation

Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning (2009)
Technical Advice Note 12: Design (2016)
Technical Advice Note 18: Transport (2007)
Technical Advice Note 23: Economic Development (2014)

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11, February 2021)

Supplementary Planning Guidance Tourism Facilities and Accommodation (2021)
Supplementary Planning Guidance - Design Guide for the Urban and Rural Environment (2008)
Building Better Places: Placemaking and the Covid-19 Recovery (July 2020)

Response to Consultation and Publicity

Consultee	Response
Cynghorydd Vaughan Hughes	No response at the time of writing the report.
Cynghorydd Ieuan Williams	No response at the time of writing the report.
Cynghorydd Margaret Murley Roberts	No response at the time of writing the report.
Cyngor Cymuned Llanfair Mathafarn Eithaf Community Council	No response at the time of writing the report.
Uned Polisi Cynllunio ar y Cyd / Joint Planning Policy Unit	Comments/advice.

Iechyd yr Amgylchedd / Environmental Health	Comments.
Priffyrdd a Trafnidiaeth / Highways and Transportation	Comments/conditions
Draenio Gwynedd / Gwynedd Drainage	The unit has no observations to offer in terms of land drainage or local flood risk
Ymgynghorydd Ecolegol ac Amgylcheddol / Ecological and Environmental Advisor	No response at the time of writing the report.
Dwr Cymru Welsh Water	CommentsCondition.
Ymgynghorydd Tirwedd / Landscape Advisor	Comments.
Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru / Natural Resources Wales	No objection/advice.

The application was afforded statutory publicity. This was by the posting of personal notification letters to the occupiers of the neighbouring properties. The latest date for the receipt of representations was the 10/11/2021.

At the time of writing the report, no representations had been received by the Department.

Relevant Planning History

None.

Main Planning Considerations

Policy PCYFF 1 of the JLDP relates to development boundaries and states that proposals within Development Boundaries will be approved in accordance with other policies and proposals of this Plan, national planning policies and other material planning considerations.

The application site is located within the development boundary of the Local Service Centre of Benllech and therefore accords with policy PCYFF 1.

Policy PCYFF 2 relates to development criteria and requires that proposals comply with relevant plan policies and national planning policy and guidance.

Policy PCYFF 3 relates to design and place shaping and requires that all proposals will be expected to demonstrate high quality design which fully takes into account the natural, historic and built environmental context and contributes to the creation of attractive, sustainable places. Proposals, including extensions and alterations to existing buildings and structures will only be permitted provided they conform, where relevant to the policy criteria.

Criterion 1 requires that it complements and enhances the character and appearance of the site, building or area in terms of siting, appearance, scale, height, massing and elevation treatment.

Criterion 3 requires that it utilises materials appropriate to its surroundings and incorporates hard and soft landscaping and screening where appropriate, in line with policy PCYFF 4.

The existing outbuilding comprises a single storey pitch roof building with a timber frame flat roof addition to the side and a small mono-pitch outhouse to the rear/side.

The proposed conversion involves alterations to door/window openings, repair/renewal of the timber frame section with flat roof extended to the rear in lieu of the mono-pitch outhouse roof to form new shower room. No increase in the overall floor space of the existing building is proposed.

The proposed alterations to the building are considered to be acceptable in terms of their design and it is not considered that the proposal due to its scale would give rise to unacceptable impacts upon the character and appearance of the area or the privacy and amenities of neighbouring properties in accordance with policies PCYFF2 and PCYFF 3.

Strategic Policy PS 14 of the JLDP relates to the visitor economy and states that whilst ensuring compatibility with the local economy and communities and ensuring the protection of the natural, built and historic environment the Councils will support the development of a year-round tourism industry by:

3. Managing and enhancing the provision of high quality un-serviced tourism accommodation, in the form of self-catering cottages and apartments, camping, alternative luxury camping, static or touring caravan or chalet parks;

4. Supporting appropriately scaled new tourist provision and initiatives in sustainable locations in the countryside through the re-use of existing buildings, where appropriate, or as part of farm diversification, particularly where these would also benefit local communities and support the local economy and where they are in accordance with sustainable development objectives.

Policy TWR 2 relates to holiday accommodation and states that proposal will be permitted, provided they are of a high quality in terms of design, layout and appearance and conform with the relevant policy criteria.

Criterion ii. Requires that the proposed development is appropriate in scale considering the site, location and/or settlement in question.

Criterion iv. Requires that the proposal is not sited within a primarily residential area or does not significantly harm the residential character of an area.

Criterion v. requires that the proposal does not lead to an over-concentration of such accommodation within the area.

The design and scale of the proposal is considered to be acceptable in accordance with criterion ii. of policy TWR 2.

The proposal is not located within a primarily residential area and will not significantly harm the residential character of the area in accordance with criterion iv.

In terms of criteria (v) of policy TWR 2, paragraph 6.3.67 of the JLDP states that to judge whether the proposed development will not lead to an over-concentration of this type of holiday accommodation within a particular location, applicants will be required to submit a detailed business plan, which demonstrates the robustness of the proposed scheme. This would enable the Council to assess whether the scheme has a realistic chance of being viable and is not speculative in nature. It is noted that a business plan has been submitted with the planning application. However, the business plan does not provide the level of detail required to satisfy criterion (v) of policy TWR2 and whilst this has been highlighted to the agent, no response has been received in this regard.

Furthermore, section 4.6 of Supplementary Planning Guidance Tourism Accommodation and Facilities aims to define the issue of over-concentration with paragraph 4.6.1 stating that a high number of holiday accommodation or a concentration of holiday accommodation in a specific area can have a detrimental impact on the social fabric of communities.

Paragraph 4.6.5 states that when assessing whether or not there is an over-provision of holiday accommodation, the following should be considered:

- Whether or not there is an even distribution of holiday accommodation across the area - A provision of holiday accommodation that has been distributed evenly across the area is a way of ensuring that it does not lead to pockets of empty properties during the winter and ensures that excess pressure is not applied on local services and infrastructure at the peak of the season;
- Sociocultural impact – If holiday accommodation permeates into a traditionally residential area it can lead to a change in people's values and behaviour, and consequently, lead to them losing their cultural identity.
- Impact on the amenities of local residents, e.g. complaints regarding noise, disturbance, increase in traffic etc.
- Lack of community facilities and services - Local businesses providing for the needs of visitors more than the needs of local residents and only opening on a seasonal basis.
- Pressure on local infrastructure - The capability and capacity of local infrastructure to cope at the peak of the season.
- Quantity of holiday accommodation - Favourable consideration will not be given to applications for self-serviced holiday accommodation when the existing combination of holiday accommodation and second homes within the Community/Town/City Council area is higher than 15%. Council Tax information should be used as the information source in order to find this information.

The most recent council tax data shows that the population of second homes and self-catering holiday accommodation in the Llanfair Mathafarn-Eithaf community council area is 18.47%, which is above the 15% threshold. It is recognised that some exceptional circumstances can arise where there are clear advantages to allowing holiday accommodation in an area that already has a high number of holiday accommodation and second homes (beyond the 15% threshold). These exceptional cases include:

- An enterprise associated with rural diversification; and,
- A proposal that would involve preserving and making alternative use of a listed building of historical value.

Neither of these apply to this application, consequently it is therefore considered that the proposal would lead to an over-concentration of holiday accommodation in the area and consequently the proposal fails to accord with the provisions of policy TWR 2 of the JLDP.

The application is also accompanied by a Protected Species Report and Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment. The Report confirms that no bats were found to be using the building. It does however include recommendations in relation to bat and bird enhancement, mitigation and compensation in order to satisfy the Section 6 duty under the Environment Wales Act 2016. The report also identifies the presence of Three Cornered Garlic an Invasive Non Native Species (INNS) and makes recommendations in relation to biosecurity measures to be followed to prevent spread.

Strategic Policies PS4 and PS5 of the JLDP relate to sustainable development and transport and requires that development be located so as to minimise the need to travel and where it is demonstrated that they are consistent with the principles of sustainable development. These principles are also reiterated in PPW(11), TAN18 and the Welsh Government's Building Better Places: Placemaking and the Covid-19 Recovery (July 2020)

The application site is located within the development boundary of the Local Service Centre of Benllech and is well located in terms of access to services, facilities and public transport and is therefore consistent with the principles of sustainable development.

In accordance with the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 Local Planning Authorities have a duty when making a decision on a planning application to have regard to the Welsh language, where it is relevant to that

application. This is further supported by para 3.28 of Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11, 2021) together with Technical Advice Note 20 and the Supplementary Planning Guidance: Maintaining Distinctive and Sustainable Communities.

Whilst the application does not trigger a requirement for a Welsh Language Statement or Welsh Language Impact Assessment Report, it does nevertheless need to show how consideration has been given to the language and sufficient information has been provided as part of the planning application to satisfy the requirements of the policy.

Conclusion

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposal would lead to an over-concentration of such accommodation within the area contrary to the provisions of policy TWR 2 of the Joint Local Development Plan, the advice contained in the Supplementary Planning Guidance: Tourism Facilities and Accommodation (March 2021).

Recommendation

That the application is refused for the following reason:

(01) The Local Planning Authority considers that the proposal would lead to an over-concentration of holiday accommodation within the area contrary to the requirements of policy TWR 2 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan and the advice contained in the Supplementary Planning Guidance Tourism Facilities and Accommodation (March 2021).