

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** **9<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2015**

**REPORT BY:** **CHIEF OFFICER (PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT)**

**SUBJECT:** **CHANGE OF USE TO EQUESTRIAN AND CARAVAN STORAGE AT "TYDDYN Y GWYNT FARM", RHYDYMWYN, MOLD, FLINTSHIRE.**

**APPLICATION NUMBER:** **053794**

**APPLICANT:** **MR. R. DAVIES-COOKE**

**SITE:** **TYDDYN Y GWYNT FARM**  
**RHYDYMWYN**  
**MOLD**  
**FLINTSHIRE.**

**APPLICATION VALID DATE:** **29<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2015**

**LOCAL MEMBERS:** **COUNCILLOR. C. LEGG**

**COMMUNITY COUNCIL:** **HALKYN COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**REASON FOR COMMITTEE:** **SITE AREA EXCEEDS THAT FOR WHICH DELEGATED POWERS ARE CONFERRED TO THE CHIEF OFFICER TO DETERMINE**

**SITE VISIT:** **NO**

**1.00 SUMMARY**

- 1.01 This full application seeks approval for a change of use of this site to equestrian use. The proposals include operational development in the form of the creation of an outdoor manege. Caravan storage is proposed within one of the existing former agricultural buildings which form part of the site.
- 1.02 The issues for consideration are the principle of the development in planning policy terms and the effect on the character of the open countryside.

**2.00 RECOMMENDATION: TO GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:-**

**2.01 Conditions:**

1. Commencement within 5 years
2. Development as per approved plans
3. No external lighting without a further grant of permission.
4. Caravan storage not to exceed 10 units.
5. No external caravan storage.
6. Car parking facilities to be provided prior to the first use of the premises
7. DIY livery not to exceed 16 horses.
8. Passing places to be provided prior to first use.
9. Finish colours of Yorkshire boarding to be agreed.

**3.00 CONSULTATIONS**

**3.01 Local Member**

Councillor C. Legg

No response at time of writing.

Halkyn Community Council

No objection provided the proposal is policy compliant.

Highways DC

No objections.

Pollution Control Officer

No objections.

Natural Resources Wales

No objections.

**4.00 PUBLICITY**

4.01 The application has been publicised by way of a press notice, site notice and neighbour notification letters.

4.02 At the time of writing there have been no response to this consultation exercise.

**5.00 SITE HISTORY**

5.01 No previous relevant history

## **6.00 PLANNING POLICIES**

### **6.01 Flintshire Unitary Development Plan**

Policy STR1	-	New Development
Policy STR7	-	Natural Environment
Policy GEN1	-	General Requirements for Development
Policy GEN3	-	Development in the Open Countryside
Policy D4	-	Outdoor Lighting
Policy L1	-	Landscape Character
Policy AC13	-	Access and Traffic Impact
Policy AC18	-	Parking Provision and New Development
Policy RE4	-	Small Scale Rural Enterprises
Policy SR2	-	Outdoor Activities

## **7.00 PLANNING APPRAISAL**

### **7.01 Introduction**

This is a full planning application for the change of use to a mixed use of agricultural and equestrian. The proposals include the creation of an outdoor manege; the conversion of existing agricultural shed to provide stabling accommodation, tack room, w.c and kitchen facility; conversions of an existing agricultural shed to form an area for the interior storage of caravans; and the laying out of parking facilities and an access passing place.

### **7.02 Site and Surroundings**

The site forms the easternmost parcels of land amongst a larger agricultural holding at Tyddyn Y Gwynt comprising some 13.44 hectares of land. The application site includes a range of buildings, located primarily to the west of the site, comprising a mixture of traditional farmhouse and outbuildings of stone and slate constructions, and more modern steel framed agricultural barns with profiled sheet steel cladding.

7.03 The northern two field parcels are relatively flat on both axis. The third parcel to the south slopes steadily southward. Each field boundary is formed by mature hedgerows interspersed with mature indigenous trees. Both site topography and nature are reflective of the wider landscape in this open countryside location.

7.04 Access to the site facilitated by a hard surfaced access track from the eastern boundaries heading westward to the farmhouse.

### **7.05 The Proposals**

The proposals involve the conversion of the large combined agricultural sheds which form the easternmost buildings within the agricultural complex. The conversions involve the internal reconfiguration of the former cattle shippon areas of the western part of the building to create 26No. stable units accessed via central hard surfaced corridors. The stabling corridors are accessed via existing

doorways in the north and south elevations of the building. In addition, an old milking parlour is proposed to be converted to provide kitchen and W.C facilities.

7.06 The eastern part of the building, presently used to provide temporary calving pens, is proposed to be internally cleared of the partitions etc so that the presently hard surfaced area can be used to provide an internal hard surfaced space for the internal storage of 10No. caravans.

7.07 The westernmost part of the most northerly of the three field parcels forming the application site is proposed to be used as the site for a riding manege. The manege is proposed to be some 60 metres by 30 metres and fenced with timber post and rail fencing. The surface is proposed to be formed by a silica sand and fibre mixture.

7.08 Main Issues

The main issues for consideration are:

1. the principle of the development in planning policy terms; and
2. the effect on the character and appearance of the open countryside.

7.09 Principle of Development

Policy GEN3 'Development in the Open Countryside' allows for developments related to tourism, leisure and recreation to be located in the open countryside, provided there is no unacceptable impact on the social, natural and built environment. In this case it is considered the equestrian enterprise would not be detrimental to the social, natural or built environment.

7.10 Policy SR2 'Outdoor Activities', permits activities where the activity proposed is of a type, scale and intensity that would not unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings, residential or other amenity, or any landscape, nature or conservation interest. The policy also requires sites to be accessible by a choice of modes of transport.

7.11 There are no residential properties in close proximity to the application site, the nearest dwellings being associated with other small holdings located well to the north of the site. There will be no impact on the amenity of these dwellings with the introduction of a new use. It is not considered that either the operation of the equestrian activities or the caravan storage would have any significant impact on amenity. The site is accessible by a choice of modes of travel other than the private car, as it is located on a bus route, therefore there are alternatives options for accessing the site.

- 7.12 Policy RE4 'Small Scale Rural Enterprise' is relevant to the proposal. The proposal complies with the policy as the buildings to be converted are structurally sound and capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction and it is suitable for the specific re-use. The development is of a form, bulk, design and materials and sited so as to respect the character of the site and surroundings. It does not unacceptably harm features or areas of landscape, nature conservation or historic value. The permission can be conditioned to not allow external storage or operations which would be harmful to visual amenity or to the character and appearance of the area. Satisfactory on-site parking, servicing and manoeuvring space for the nature and volume of traffic likely to be generated which should be capable of being served satisfactorily by the highway network is proposed.
- 7.13 PPW paragraph 7.6.8 in relation to 'supporting the economy', says the re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings has an important role in meeting the needs of rural areas for, amongst other matters, recreation. Local planning authorities should adopt a positive approach to the conversion of rural buildings for business re-use, especially those buildings located within or adjoining farm building complexes, provided that:
- a. they are suitable for the specific reuse;
  - b. conversion does not lead to dispersal of activity on such a scale as to prejudice town and village vitality;
  - c. their form, bulk and general design are in keeping with their surroundings;
  - d. imposing conditions on a planning permission overcomes any planning objections;
  - e. if the buildings are in the open countryside, they are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction;
  - f. conversion does not result in unacceptable impacts upon the structure, form, character or setting where the building is of historic and/or architectural interest.
- 7.14 It is considered that the proposal complies with both local and national planning guidance.
- 7.15 Impact upon Landscape Character  
Notwithstanding the policy position, I consider the key issue in this case is the impact on the character and appearance of the open countryside. The landscape in this area is characterised by rolling farmland with field parcels bounded by mature hedges and trees. The landscape is interspersed with small farm holdings and further afield to this site, mineral workings associated with aggregate extraction. The landscape is seen as part of the foreground to the AONB which lies further to south west and on higher ground.

- 7.16 The only aspect of the proposals within would introduce a visually new element within the landscape is the proposed manege. However, this is not proposed to be illuminated and therefore its impact upon a wider bas in the landscape is very limited. The manege is bounded by agricultural style post and rail fencing and therefore would not appear incongruous in this landscape.
- 7.17 All other aspects of the proposals are contained within the existing buildings with no additional extensions. The proposals actually seek to improve the external visual appearance of the buildings by the replacement of the dilapidated and incongruous profiled sheeting with Yorkshire boarding which is much more reflective of the more modern buildings in this agricultural landscape.
- 7.18 I have considered the potential impact of the proposed car parking area and the improvements to the access track. The access track is proposed to be altered by the creation of a passing place. This will result in the increased width of the track for a 20 metre length from 4.8 metres to 7.5 metres. In the context of the length of the access and the appearance of the trackway, this is negligible. Similarly, the car parking area is proposed to be formed upon an already existing area of hard standing to the east of the building. This area is presently unsightly and used for a mixture of parking and equipment and bale storage. The car parking would be less intrusive, being intermittent, and does not introduce any more 'hard' form within the landscape than already exists.

## **8.00 CONCLUSION**

- 8.01 It is considered that the proposed change of use is appropriate development in the open countryside given the non-intrusive nature of the use of the site. The proposed conversion of the buildings for the stables, ancillary facilities and caravan storage do not involve any extension to the existing structures and the proposals actually seek to improve the external appearance of the buildings and therefore their impact in the landscape. Accordingly, the proposals comply with the requirements of the identified policies and are considered acceptable in all other respects.
- 8.02 In considering this planning application the Council has acted in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998 including Article 8 of the Convention and in a manner which is necessary in a democratic society in furtherance of the legitimate aims of the Act and the Convention.

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Planning Application & Supporting Documents  
National & Local Planning Policy  
Responses to Consultation  
Responses to Publicity

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