

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

DATE: **30TH AUGUST 2023**

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

SUBJECT: **CONVERSION AND EXTENSION OF OUTBUILDING TO FORM A HOME OFFICE AND GYM, DEMOLITION OF PART OF A BOUNDARY WALL TO CREATE OFF STREET PARKING SPACE WITH AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINT.**

APPLICATION NUMBER: **FUL/000621/23**

APPLICANT: **MR & MS M & S HODGSON & POOSTCHI**

SITE: **ARWEINFA, GWAENYSGOR, RHYL, LL18 6EP**

APPLICATION VALID DATE: **05-Jul-2023**

LOCAL MEMBERS: **CLLR G BANKS**
CLLR G MADDISON

TOWN/COMMUNITY COUNCIL: **TRELAWNYD & GWAENYSGOR COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

REASON FOR COMMITTEE: **CLLR G MADDISON - I WISH FOR THE APPLICATION TO BE DISCUSSED AT PLANNING COMMITTEE. REASON, THE DEVELOPMENT IS UNSUITABLE FOR A CONSERVATION AREA IN AONB**

SITE VISIT: **YES**

1.00 SUMMARY

- 1.01 This application seeks permission for the conversion and extension of outbuilding to form a home office and gym and the demolition of part of a boundary wall to create off street parking space with an electric vehicle charging point. The application is to be read alongside the associated conservation area consent - CONS/000790/22 application for the demolition of part of a

boundary wall in order to create an off-street parking space with an electric vehicle charge point.

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

2.01 Conditions

1. Time limit on commencement.
2. Compliance with approved plans.
3. Materials to be submitted and approved.
4. The use hereby approved is ancillary to the dwelling house.
5. Archaeological Watching Brief

3.00 CONSULTATIONS

3.01 Local Member - Cllr G Maddison - I wish for the application to be discussed at planning committee. Reason, the development is unsuitable for a conservation area in AONB

Town/Community Council - No comments received at the time of writing the report.

Public Rights of Way - No objection. Public Bridleway 10 abuts the site but appears unaffected by the development. The path must be protected and free from interference from the construction.

Highways Development Control – Following revision of Block plan, no objection.

Built Conservation – Following examination the Conservation Team identified that the section of the wall subject to this application is un-historic in date, having been reconstructed within the last thirty years. Conservation thereby considers that the loss of a small section of modern wall would not be adversely detrimental to the character and appearance of the area on this basis raise no objection.

Community & Business Protection (Pollution) - No objection.

Area of Outstanding Nature Beauty (AONB) Joint Committee – No Objection

CADW - No comments received at the time of writing the report.

Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust - No objection, recommend planning condition and archaeological watching brief

4.00 PUBLICITY

4.01 A site notice was posted outside the site and 18 Neighbour Notifications were sent to adjoining/nearby properties. At the time of writing a number of objections have been received. The objections are summarized as follows:

1. The plans do not appear to be drawn correctly.
2. PV Panels & scale of roof detrimental to the framing and focus of Arweinfaf.
3. Too big and overbearing
4. Loss of privacy
5. Personal business Use
6. Building subject to application already in use as personal training business use
7. No significant justification for the removal of the historic wall.
8. Impact on amenity, character and appearance of the village.
9. Highway safety concerns
10. Negative impact on the centre and character of Gwaenysgor and conservation area.
11. Appearance and impact on street scene
12. Misleading application description

5.00 SITE HISTORY

5.01 064268 - Proposed outbuilding conversion and extension to form home office with off-road parking- Refused 29.09.2022 (Householder)

064269 - Proposed demolition of stone wall within conservation area to create new access- Refused 29.09.2023 (Conservation Area Consent).

6.00 PLANNING POLICIES

6.01

Flintshire Local Development Plan (Adopted)
PC1 – The Relationship of Development to Settlement Boundaries
PC2 – General Requirements for Development
PC3 – Design
PC4 – Sustainability and Resilience
PC5 – Transport and Accessibility
HN4 – Housing in the Countryside
HN5 – House Extensions and Alterations
EN4 – Landscape Character
EN5- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
EN6 – Sites of Biodiversity Importance
EN8 – Built Historic Environment and Listed Buildings
EN9 – Development within or Adjacent to Conservation Areas

EN10 – Buildings of Local Interest
EN18 – Pollution and Noise

Supplementary Planning Guidance (Adopted)
SPGN No 1 – House Extensions and Alterations
SPGN No 2 – Space Around Dwellings
SPGN No.6 – Listed Buildings
SPGN No 7 - Conservation Areas
SPGN No 8 – Nature Conservation and Development
SPGN No.11 - Parking Standards
SPG on Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Gwaenysgor Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Future Wales Development Plan 2020-2040
Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 11

Welsh Government Technical Advice Notes (TAN)
TAN12 - Design
TAN24 – The Historic Environment

7.00 PLANNING APPRAISAL

Site & Surroundings

- 7.01 The application site is located Gwaenysgor and is within the Conservation Area and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 7.02 The site consists of a relatively large, detached dwelling - part two storey, part single storey, located centrally within the village. The property is built in traditional stone and is surrounded by similar style dwellings.
- 7.03 The property has an area of amenity space at the rear that consists of a courtyard with a small orchard beyond. A stone wall surrounds the property with railings above the wall in front of the principal elevation.
- 7.04 The outbuilding is located at the rear of the site and forms an open store - ancillary to the main dwelling. The existing structure ties into the stone wall forming the courtyard area at the back of the property.

Proposal

- 7.05 This application seeks permission for the conversion and extension of outbuilding to form a home office and gym and the demolition of part of a boundary wall to create off street parking space with an electric vehicle charging point. The application is to be read

alongside the associated conservation area consent application - CONS/000790/22 for the demolition of part of a boundary wall in order to create an off-street parking space with an electric vehicle charge point.

The Main Issues

7.06 The main issues for consideration in this matter are;

- Principle of development having regard to planning policy framework and background planning history
- Scale and design of development
- Adequacy of access
- Impact on living conditions & impact upon conservation area
- Impact upon AONB

Principle of Development

7.07 The application site is located in Gwaenysgor which a Tier 5 Undefined Village in policy STR2 of the adopted Flintshire Local Development Plan. Tier 5 settlements are the smallest settlements and do not have defined a settlement boundary. However, the application site sits at the centre of the village and is clearly contained within the existing built form of the settlement. There are no policies in the adopted Plan which would preclude the principle of converting and extending an existing building for an ancillary residential use.

7.08 Arweinfa is sited within an area identified as a Conservation Area and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

7.09 The Welsh Government sets out in para 6.1.1 of Planning Policy Wales that schemes should preserve and enhance the historic environment, recognise its contribution to economic vitality and culture, civic pride and the quality of life, and to recognise its importance as a resource for future generations. It adds that schemes should ensure that the character of historic buildings is safeguarded from alterations, extensions or demolition that would compromise a building's special architectural and historic interest and to ensure that Conservation Areas are protected and enhanced. In respect of AONB's para 6.3.7 states 'In AONBs, planning authorities should give great weight to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of AONBs, and should have regard to the wildlife, cultural heritage and social and economic well-being of the areas'.

7.10 Policies PC2 and PC3 seek new development to harmonise with and enhance the existing character and appearance of the site and surroundings.

7.11 Policy EN9 states development within or adjacent to a conservation area will only be permitted if it would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area or its setting. New

development in such locations must also be of a high standard of design, respond to the area's special characteristics, and pay particular regard to:

- a. important views, vistas, street scenes, roofscapes, trees, open spaces, gaps and other features that contribute to the character or appearance of the conservation area;
 - b. the retention of historically significant boundaries or other elements that contribute to the established form of development;
 - c. the relationship to existing buildings and spaces, and pattern of development;
 - d. scale, height and massing, architectural design and detailing, the use of materials, boundary treatment, and public realm materials.
- Policy EN5 relates to development affecting Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and states new development will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances the natural beauty of the designated area and its setting. In assessing the likely impact of development proposals on the natural beauty of the AONB, cumulative impact will also be taken into consideration.

- 7.12 The adopted SPG on Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) guides the key design considerations at these locations, which include scale, siting, design, materials, setting and landscape.
- 7.13 SPGN No.7 advises Conservation Area designation gives control over the total or substantial demolition of unlisted buildings within conservation areas, by making it necessary to obtain conservation area consent – see CONS/000790/22.
- 7.14 Given the above context, national and local policy confirm that the application site is in an appropriate location for such development subject to compliance with the relevant policy.

Conservation Area and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- 7.15 The development site is located in a prominent position in the centre of the Gwaenysgor Conservation Area and is within an identified area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 7.16 Gwaenysgor Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, is a guidance document produced by the village following consultation with Flintshire County Council and carries some weight in terms of character and appearance, but does not supersede the adopted policies provided under the adopted Flintshire Local Development Plan, Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes and Welsh Government Technical Advice Note.
- 7.17 The document advises for the area that the familial character for the Gwaenysgor is strengthened by the use of common building materials and building form with the north eastern section of Arweinfaf identified

within the document as a focussed building with long views into the village, from routes converging towards the village core. Section 3 and subsequent paragraphs within this segment there is discussion of the alterations and changes that have occurred over the years, with the introduction of more modern elements in such as new windows, dormers and modern materials within the village. Paragraph 3.24 negative development include breaks in stone walls to create vehicular access ways.

- 7.18 The Built Conservation Team have reviewed the documents submitted within the current submission which now proposes to extend and alter an existing stone outbuilding into a single storey structure rather than a two storey which had been refused under the earlier two applications due to the concerns raised over the impact of the development upon the overall character of the area.
- 7.19 The outbuilding subject to this application is located at the rear of Arweinfaf and it is intended to convert and extend the building to create a new office and gym building for personal use of the occupants of Arweinfaf. The use of the building for personal use can be controlled by condition.
- 7.20 As set out above the host dwelling and associated buildings are located in a prominent position in the centre of the Gwaenysgor Conservation area and near to a number of Grade II* and II Listed buildings. It is noted that the Arweinfaf outbuilding was noted as a building that had a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area in Gwaenysgor Conservation Appraisal document.
- 7.21 It is considered that the previously refused two storey building was out of character in massing and appearance to the surrounding buildings and that the two storey building would be out of scale to the adjacent single storey cottage and would appear awkward being so close to Arweinfaf.
- 7.22 Under the current submission the applicants have now reduced the height of the ridge of the proposed converted and extended building. In addition, at the request of the Local Planning Authority the new dormer structure on the inward facing elevation has been removed and the building has retained a slated roof with traditional eaves.
- 7.23 The proposed roof contains three conservation style roof lights facing the orchard, with two new windows containing new cast stone lintels and stone of traditional scale. Facing into the courtyard are new timber framed double glazed, non-opening screens, enclosed within a timber structure with solar PV panels flushed to the roof. The design has been assessed having regards to its impact upon both the conservation area and the AONB and given the quality of the proposed structure/materials

and its overall design are deemed acceptable given the important location.

- 7.24 It is considered that the simpler, more traditional form with materials anticipated in a traditional garden outbuilding retain the character of the conservation area as well as that of the AONB .
- 7.25 It is worth noting that the AONB Joint Advisory Committee have no objection to the proposal.
- 7.26 In terms of the loss of the proposed wall, the Built Conservation Officer had an opportunity to re-examine section proposed to be removed and identified that the section of the wall is not historic in date, having been reconstructed within the last thirty years. It is thereby considered that the loss of a small section of modern wall would not be adversely detrimental to the character and appearance of the area.
- 7.27 In addition as this plot lies within the predicted medieval historic core of Gwaenysgor and the Conservation Area a condition will be imposed to ensure appropriate archaeological monitoring takes place during construction.

Impacts upon Living Conditions

- 7.28 Representation has been made to the extent that the proposal results in a loss of residential amenity of adjacent residents. Given that the site is relatively well screened from the adjoining properties and is single storey in nature, the living conditions are considered to be preserved to an acceptable degree having regards to policy PC2 and PC3 as well as SPG no's 1 & 2.

Highway Safety and Parking

- 7.29 In terms of the concerns raised by local residents regarding off road parking and highway safety, the Highways Development Control Team advised that a speed survey was undertaken which demonstrated that vehicular speeds passing the site are in the region of 15 mph and on this basis were prepared to accept a relaxation to the visibility standards generally required. As such they advise that whilst there is no longer a necessity to provide the measure of visibility originally requested (in the previous application), the speed survey results do indicate the necessity for a 14m sightline to be provided in the critical direction. This is based on the 85th percentile average 7 day speeds for westbound traffic (14.2mph).
- 7.30 The Highways Development Control Team subsequently raise no objection to the 2.0m set back along the centreline of the access and accept the sightline being drawn to the centre of the nearside lane, which has been addressed within revised drawings taking into account

that vehicles are unlikely to be driving tight up against the stone wall on approach.

- 7.31 Officers advise that the off-road parking for one car within Arweinfaf, would equalise the current situation and would not lead to material increase in highway safety. The proposal is therefore acceptable having regards to policy STR5 and PC5 of the LDP.

Other Issues

- 7.32 Concern has been raised over the accuracy of the plans. If it transpires that the development is not built in accordance with the approved plans, this matter that can be investigated by the enforcement team to see if it is expedient to take enforcement action.

8.00 CONCLUSION

It is considered that the proposed conversion and extension of an existing outbuilding, the design of the proposed development and removal of the small section of wall are deemed acceptable having regard to the impact upon the conservation area and AONB. The proposal is within acceptable limits having regard to impact upon residential amenity as well as upon highway safety and parking. The development is therefore deemed acceptable having regards to the Flintshire Local Development Plan, supplementary planning guidance and National Planning Policy.

8.01 Other Considerations

The Council has had due regard to its duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable increase in crime and disorder as a result of the recommended decision.

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.

The Council has had due regard to its public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010.

The Council has had due regard to its duty under Section 3 of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable impact upon the achievement of wellbeing objectives as a result of the recommended decision.

LIST OF BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Planning Application & Supporting Documents

National & Local Planning Policy

Responses to Consultation

Responses to Publicity

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