

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

DATE: **10 OCTOBER 2012**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF PLANNING**

SUBJECT: **FULL APPLICATION – SITING OF 18 NO. STATIC CARAVANS ON LAND AT PENNANT PARK GOLF CLUB, SAITHFYNNON, WHITFORD, HOLYWELL**

APPLICATION NUMBER: **049812**

APPLICANT: **PENNANT PARK GOLF CLUB**

SITE: **LAND AT PENNANT PARK GOLF CLUB, SAITHFYNNON, WHITFORD, HOLYWELL**

APPLICATION VALID DATE: **31ST JULY, 2012**

LOCAL MEMBERS: **COUNCILLOR P. HEESOM**
COUNCILLOR C.J. DOLPHIN

TOWN/COMMUNITY COUNCIL: **MOSTYN COMMUNITY COUNCIL**
WHITFORD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

REASON FOR COMMITTEE: **MEMBER REQUEST- RAISES CONCERNS WITH REGARD TO THERE BEING AN UNDERUSED CARAVAN SITE ALREADY IN EXISTENCE, THE VISUAL IMPACT ON THE LANDSCAPE AND ACCESS PROBLEMS**

SITE VISIT: **YES (Undertaken on 3rd September, 2012)**

FOR MEMBERS INFORMATION THIS ITEM WAS DEFERRED FROM PLANNING COMMITTEE ON 5TH SEPTEMBER, 2012 IN ORDER FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH WHITFORD COMMUNITY COUNCIL AND COUNCILLOR C.J. DOLPHIN TO BE UNDERTAKEN.

1.00 SUMMARY

1.01 This application seeks planning permission for the siting of 18 no. static caravans on land adjacent to Pennant Park Golf Club, Whitford, Holywell. The main issues for consideration in this application are the principle of development at this location, the potential visual impact on the open countryside, impact on residential amenity and access.

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

2.01 **Conditions**

1. Time limit on commencement of development
2. In accordance with plans
3. Development to be restricted to holiday accommodation only and not for permanent residential occupation
4. Prior to siting of any caravans full details of elevations and floor plans to be submitted for LPA approval
5. Prior to siting of any caravans full details of materials of construction to be submitted for LPA approval
6. Permitted development rights removed
7. Scheme of hard and soft landscaping to be agreed
8. Landscape management scheme to be submitted and agreed prior to occupation
9. Parking and turning facilities to be made available within the site prior to commencement of use
10. Footpath and bridleway to be kept free of obstruction during development works

3.00 **CONSULTATIONS**

3.01 **Local Member:**

Councillor P. Heesom:

Requests Committee determination and site visit on the application. Raises concern regarding there already being an underused facility on the golf course complex, access problems and the possible visual impact on the landscape

Councillor C.J. Dolphin:

Requests Committee determination and site visit. Objects and urges refusal of the proposal on the grounds that access is unacceptable with the lanes being too narrow, queries whether the land belongs to the Golf Club for access/exit and concerned regarding the visibility of the site.

Mostyn Community Council:

The Council are opposed to the proposal as it is an inappropriate development for this location and would have an adverse effect on the highway network.

Whitford Community Council:

No response received at time of writing report.

Chief Highways & Transportation Engineer:

Advises that improvements have been made to the three approaching junctions to the site together with the installation of passing spaces along the connecting lane. Also there is an acceptable standard of visibility which is in line with current day standards. On this basis raises no objection to the proposal but recommends the imposition of a condition requiring that parking and turning facilities are provided

and retained within the site.

Chief Environment & Resources Officer:

No adverse comments to make.

Countryside Council for Wales:

Does not wish to comment on the proposal

British Horse Society:

No response received at time of writing report

Environment (Rights of Way):

Public Bridleway 6 crosses the site but appears unaffected by the development. The path must be protected and free from interference from the construction

Economic Development:

Believes that the caravan development would give the potential to attract more visitors to the area and a large proportion of them would use the golf course and club facilities. From a tourism perspective with an objective of boosting the local economy, wishes to support the application

4.00 PUBLICITY

4.01 Press Notice, Site Notice, Neighbour Notification

3 written representations received from local residents objecting on the grounds of:-

1. Holiday accommodation already well catered for within the area;
2. Impact on bridleway / users of the bridleway;
3. Impact on the highway network due to the increased traffic;
4. Increased noise nuisance;

5.00 SITE HISTORY

- 5.01 Ref. 99/1013 – Erection of a two storey clubhouse approved 15.11.99
Ref. 01/1301 – Change of use to stewards accommodation approved 4.2.02
Ref 035905 – Extension to clubhouse approved 24.7.03
Ref. 038988 – Siting of 15 No. timber clad caravans and associated roads approved 19.8.05

6.00 PLANNING POLICIES

- 6.01 Flintshire Unitary Development Plan
Policy GEN1 – General Requirements for Development
Policy GEN3 – Development within the Open Countryside
Policy T4 – New Static Caravans and Chalet Holiday Sites

Policy STR6 – Tourism
Policy AC13 – Access and Traffic Impact

Planning Policy Wales
Technical Advice Note 13: Tourism.

It is considered the proposal generally complies with the above planning policies.

7.00 PLANNING APPRAISAL

7.01 This application seeks planning permission for the siting of 18 no. static caravans on land at Pennant Park Golf Club, Saithfynnon, Whitford. The main issues for consideration of this proposal are the principle of development at this location, the potential visual impact on the open countryside, impact on residential amenity and access.

7.02 The application site and its surroundings

Pennant Park Golf Club is located outside the settlements of Whitford and Carmel, within the open countryside. The application site is a parcel of land immediately adjoining Pennant Park Golf Club and is within the same ownership. The application site measures approximately 0.99 hectares (2.45 acres) and comprises of an existing field to the rear of a property known as Cae Coch Farmhouse, which is also in the ownership of the golf club. In order to gain access to the application site it is proposed to create a new access onto the existing private road accessing Cae Coch Farmhouse to link up with the existing highway network at Saithfynnon. The site has the benefit of existing mature hedgerows and trees which will effectively shield the proposed development from distant views.

7.03 Proposed Development

The proposal involves the change of use of the existing field to the rear of Cae Coch Farm for the siting of 18 no. caravans for holiday use. The site measures approximately 0.99 hectares (2.45 acres) and rises upwards from the road. The golf club has an existing caravan facility for 15 units to the east of the application site which was granted consent in 2005. This existing site houses 6 no. twin unit timber clad lodges which have been sold to private individuals with the remaining plots currently for sale for long term private ownership. The applicant now wishes to attract tourists seeking holiday lets to the site and is seeking permission for a second site to be marketed for a separate fleet letting use with the site being managed by a holiday company for short breaks.

The site plan shows the plots to be laid out in two rows of single units, the majority being on the lower part of the field. A new access is to be created to the rear of the existing farmhouse with parking for one

vehicle being formed alongside each unit. The boundaries of the site already benefit from existing mature planting and this would be enhanced by significant landscaping to provide additional screening. In view of the land contours the caravans are shown to be laid out at different levels and certain caravans being sited onto level plateaus cut into the slope to assist them in assimilating into the landscape. The excavated material would then be used for screen bunding along the site's western boundary and to the rear of the caravans at a higher level. It is proposed that the caravans will be clad in a sustainable and recyclable cladding material, which has the appearance of solid wood. The colours of the external finishes are to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority prior to any units being sited. The existing lane is proposed to facilitate vehicular access to the entrance to the site and requires no alteration or improvement.

7.04 Issues for Consideration

The main issues in relation to this application are the principle of development in this location, compliance with the requirements of planning policies, the visual impact on the landscape, impacts on residential amenity and the effects of the development on the local highway network.

7.05 Principle of Development / Policy

The site is located in an area of open countryside in the adopted UDP where policies seek to strictly control new development. It is not governed by any landscape or green barrier designation. Planning Policy Wales is supportive of tourism proposals in principle and this approach is supplemented by UDP Policy STR6 which is generally permissive of schemes which enhance tourism within the county.

Policy GEN3 sets out the types of development which may be acceptable within the open countryside and criterion g) refers to development related to tourism and recreation. In physical terms the proposed development is viewed in connection with the long established golf course and this type of development is in principle acceptable subject to (amongst other things) there being no unacceptable impact on the social, natural and built environment.

Policy T4 New Static Caravans contains further detailed advice which states that outside of Talacre, Gronant and Gwespyr area, static holiday caravan or chalet sites are permissible provided that development satisfactorily accords with criteria (a) to (e) of the policy. This sets out matters relating to scale, landscape, nature conservation and accessibility of development. There are no statutory landscapes or nature conservation designations affecting the site and the acceptability of the proposal on the highway network has been addressed by the Highways Officer.

In conclusion, there is no policy objection in principle to this proposal subject to matters of detail being acceptable

7.06 Scale of Development

The scale of the proposal, together with the number, siting, layout of units and circulation roads are appropriate to the characteristics of the site and locality. The proposals submitted have been the subject of pre-application discussions and the siting, number of units and the associated landscaping have all been suggested by officers during these discussions. It is considered that with careful management of the existing landscape and topography and the agreement of a suitable scheme of supplementary planting, that the scale of the proposals are acceptable and will not have a detrimental impact on the characteristics of the locality.

7.07 Visual Impact

Although the site is located within the open countryside, it is not governed by any landscape or green barrier designation. The application site is located at a lower level than the existing main highway networks and has the benefit of established screening by way of mature vegetation. The development is not visible from the main highway networks and approaching roads. The details submitted as part of the application show that the siting of the proposed caravans has been carefully considered and by utilising the existing topography of the site and providing additional bunding and landscaping the units will assimilate appropriately into the surrounding landscape. Furthermore, the materials of construction will be controlled via detailed submission to the Local Planning Authority for approval prior to the site coming into use. I am therefore satisfied that subject to a suitable condition requiring a landscape and management plan for the site together with the approval of materials, the proposals can be successfully assimilated into the landscape without causing a detrimental visual impact on the locality.

7.08 Impact on Highway Network

The site benefits from an existing access which has been the subject of improvements following the granting of permission for the existing caravan site under application reference 038988. These included significant improvements to the three approaching junctions together with the installation of four passing places along the connecting lane.

The site is well located in terms of the existing golf course facility and also to a range of tourism attractions in the wider area and as such is considered to amount to a sustainable location for tourism accommodation.

The Head of Highways and Transportation has examined the

proposals and is of the view that the existing access arrangements to the site are considered acceptable and therefore offer no objection to the proposal subject to the imposition of a suitable condition requiring that facilities should be provided and retained within the site for the parking and turning of vehicles prior to the development being brought into use.

The site is also crossed by Public footpath number 9 and Bridleway No. 6. The Rights of Way Officer has stated that these appear unaffected by the development and has no objection to the proposals subject to the footpath and bridleway being kept free from obstruction during the course of development works.

7.09 Amenity Considerations

The proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residents, other users of nearby land / property or the community in general. The rural location of the site is such that it has very little in terms of shared boundaries with residential properties other than that of the existing Cae Coch Farmhouse which is also in the ownership of the applicants, Pennant Park Golf Club. It is considered that the additional landscaping proposed at the shared boundary with this property will serve to safeguard any impact on amenity of those occupiers.

In terms of the impact in the community in general, residents have raised the issues of traffic impacts and increased noise. As there are no abutting residential properties apart from Cae Coch Farmhouse which is in the applicant's ownership, it is considered that any noise generated from the site would not be detrimental on the local residents. Similarly, the Highways Officer has raised no concerns with regards to the adequacy of the access road which serves the development or the users of the footpath or the bridleway which cross the site.

It is therefore considered that the development will not be detrimental to amenity.

7.10 Other Issues Raised

A number of issues have been raised regarding access rights and site ownership. The Local Planning Authority are satisfied that the correct notices have been served as part of the application and therefore this issue is not a material consideration.

There is also an objection on the grounds that there is an existing under utilised caravan park within the site. This has been considered but what is proposed in the current application is a different form of tourist accommodation tenure being long term private ownership rather than short term holiday lettings and the existing caravan site

has very little room for expansion given the close proximity to existing golf course greens. It is not therefore unreasonable for a second site to be given consideration as a separate entity and assessed on its own merits and this approach conforms with policy.

8.00 CONCLUSION

- 8.01 It is considered that the proposed development is in an appropriate location close to an existing tourism facility, served by a suitable local highway network. Whilst the site is in open countryside, the sensitive siting of the proposed caravans and additional landscaping would reduce the impact on the landscape. The site is in a sustainable location and gives the potential to attract more visitors to the area with an objective to boosting the local economy. The proposal complies with the development plan policies for this type of development.
- 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.

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