The site was granted planning permission (P/2006/0826) in April 2007.

The permission included a requirement to provide details of a new junction to serve the site from the A525.

An application (P/2015/0181) to construct the new access was granted permission in June 2017.

However, having reviewed the overall application it is considered that the requirements for a new access are far too arduous and unnecessary for the size of the approved development.

The original application was for a change of use of the farm barns into 4 dwellings.

The barns when operating would have generated a significant number of traffic movements on a daily basis. This would have involved significant numbers of large farm machinery and vehicles driving along Porthwgan Lane every day using the existing junction on to the A525.

The proposed change of use to just four dwellings would have generated no more than 32 to 36 traffic movements per day.

So, it is clear that the potential generation of traffic from the new dwellings would have been not dissimilar to that generated by the barns when they were operating as a working farm. More pertinently perhaps the type of vehicle used at the barns would have been large farm machinery and large slow-moving vehicles. In comparison the dwellings would generate standard family motor vehicles.

Use of Porthwgan Lane and its junction with A525 would have been more concerning from a highway safety perspective than the residential vehicle use. Slow moving vehicles pulling out of the site could have created highway safety issues.

The A525 itself was subject to a derestricted speed limit (60 mph) at the time and would have been far more dangerous than the current situation since the speed limit was reduced to just 40 mph

It is therefore considered that the requirement for a new access is arduous and unnecessary given the limited size of the development and the comparable potential traffic generation between the former and existing uses.

There is also concern that the access point is more or less coincident with the flood zone identified in NRW flood maps. There seems little point in constructing a new access when it is potentially going to be closed to traffic every time there is a significant flood event. In fact, it would be dangerous to allow a new access to be built when it may be closed due to flooding and there is no alternative means of access to the housing/ buildings beyond it.

Far better surely to retain the existing access which has never been closed by flood water due to its more elevated position on the highway.

The approved permissions also included a highway request to close the existing highway junction on to the A525 but to implement a cycle path. If the junction is deemed by the highway department to be unsafe for motor vehicles, then surely the same should apply to cyclists? Or putting that another way, if its safe for cyclists then surely, it's safe for motor vehicles?

Crash map statistics show that there has been not one single recorded traffic injury accident at the Porthwgan Lane junction with A525 in 10 years.

More pertinently, since the development was first occupied 4 years ago there hasn't been an accident at the junction.

Despite not meeting current standards for highway design, the junction has to be considered inherently safe if there hasn't been an accident there in 10 years.

It is therefore considered that the condition requiring anew access to serve just 4 houses should be deleted.

The developer is more than willing to fund the passing places identified on the approved plan. Porthwgan Road is actually adopted highway, maintainable at public expense, but there clearly hasn't been much maintenance done there in years. The developer is willing to fund the resurfacing of the first 25m of the highway back from the A525 junction; and install new road markings at the junction.

At present visibility to the south of the junction is restricted by an overgrown hedge – the developer will happily cut back or remove the hedge to ensure that a splay of 2.4 m x 120m is achievable from the existing access in the critical southerly direction. This is a considerable gain and benefit to highway safety.

With full visibility being achievable to the south it is possible for vehicles to nose carefully into the highway to check the road is clear to the north.

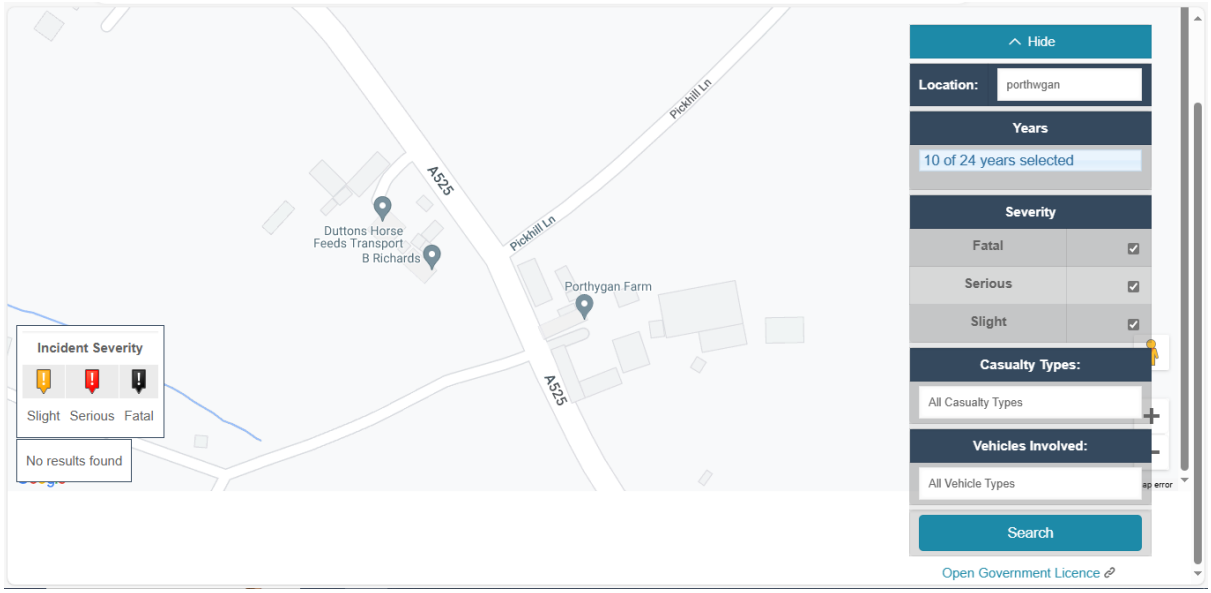
Conclusion

The condition requiring a new access is considered unnecessary and arduous for such a small development. It fails to meet the 6 tests of planning. The highway consultant at the time of the first application should have prepared a comparison of traffic generation from the potential and proposed uses; it does not appear that this was done.

Crashmap statistics prove that the existing access is inherently safe.

The proposed access is coincident with the flood zone and may lead to the road being closed in extreme weather particularly as climate change seems to be making flood events more excessive than in previous years.

It is therefore considered that the condition should be deleted and that the existing access should be retained to serve the development; but with new road surfacing, new white lining / road markings and improved visibility splays in a southerly direction.


Hide
Location:
porthwgan
Years
10 of 24 years selected
Severity
Fatal
Serious
Slight
Casualty Types:
All Casualty Types
Vehicles Involved:
All Vehicle Types
Search
Open Government Licence
Incident Severity
Slight
Serious
Fatal
No results found
A525
Pickhill Ln
Duttons Horse Feeds Transport
B Richards
Porthygan Farm