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Ein Cyf/Our ref: qA2087720
Eich Cyf/Your ref: P/2023/0738
Dyddiad/Date: 4 June 2024

Dear Mr Fitzsimon

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (MAJOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT)
(NOTIFICATION) (WALES) DIRECTION 2020
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE)
(WALES) ORDER 2012 – DIRECTION UNDER ARTICLE 18(1)
DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND ERECTION OF 10 DWELLINGS AT
GAMFORD HOUSE, GAMFORD LANE, ROSSETT, WREXHAM
APPLICATION P/2023/0738

Issue

1. I refer to the above planning application which you forwarded to the Welsh Ministers under the Town and Country Planning (Major Residential Development) (Notification) (Wales) Direction 2020 (Notification Direction) on 5 March 2024. The application was referred as it proposes “major residential development” which does not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area where the application site is situated.
2. Section 77 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 enables the Welsh Ministers to direct an application to be referred to them instead of being dealt with by the local planning authority (LPA). This power falls within the portfolio of Julie James MS, Cabinet Secretary for Housing, Local Government and Planning.

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Policy

3. The Welsh Government's policy on calling in planning applications is set out in Planning Policy Wales (PPW), Edition 12, February 2024. The Welsh Government considers LPAs, as elected bodies, should be left to make decisions about development proposals wherever possible. The Welsh Ministers do not, in practice, call in many planning applications and will only do so where the proposal raises issues of more than local importance. The decision on whether to call in an application is not about the acceptability of the development and whether planning permission should be granted; it is concerned with who should make the decision.

Application

4. The application subject to the Notification Direction is for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of 10 dwellings at Gamford House, Gamford Lane, Rossett, Wrexham.

Consideration

5. Circular 001/2020: Guidance on the Town and Country Planning (Major Residential Development) (Notification) (Wales) Direction 2020 explains the Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that good planning outcomes for communities are secured by the planning system, with a focus on national sustainable placemaking outcomes. The Notification Direction allows the Welsh Ministers to consider whether certain residential proposals outside adopted development plans have been appropriately assessed against these placemaking principles and relevant planning policies.
6. In considering these matters, informed by the LPA's Committee Report (the officer's report), the proposed development raises a number of issues.
7. The officer's report summarises all relevant policies in the adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) and concludes that the application should be refused. The report notes the application provides no affordable housing on site (albeit a commuted sum can be sought) and the proposal is outside a settlement boundary and located in the countryside, contrary to national policy. It identifies the location of the proposed development as one where employment, education facilities or services would not be accessible by sustainable means of transport.
8. The application has made no assessment of updated environmental/biodiversity issues, including the step-wise approach, as set out in Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales (PPW 12) and against which the application should be determined.
9. The officer's report also notes Natural Resources Wales and the LPA's ecologist have concerns relating to the lack of detail and assessment of ecological issues.
10. For these reasons the proposed development appears to conflict with policies in the LDP; the LDP has only recently been adopted and been found to be 'sound', in general conformity with Future Wales and reflecting policies in PPW. The proposal also raises concerns, regarding its conformity directly with national planning policy in PPW, particularly in terms of placemaking and the creation of sustainable places, and also compliance with the step-wise approach to site selection.

Decision

11. In light of the assessment above, the Cabinet Secretary for Housing, Local Government and Planning has concluded the application appears to be of more than local importance and, consequently, it should be called in for determination by the Welsh Ministers.
12. **The Welsh Ministers hereby direct that the planning application referred to in the heading to this letter (ref no P/2023/0738) shall be determined by the Welsh Ministers.** The original planning application, together with any plans, sections and maps, and any other documents accompanying it, including related certificates and other correspondence, which have not already been supplied, shall be sent to Planning and Environment Decisions Wales, Crown Buildings, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ.
13. You will be notified of the process to be adopted for the consideration of the application as soon as possible. Your attention is drawn to the provisions of Article 13 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 ("DMPWO") which requires your LPA to serve notice of the terms of and the reasons for the Section 77 Direction on the applicant.
14. The Direction made by the Welsh Ministers under Article 18 of the DMPWO on 12 March 2024 remains in force.
15. Progress of our consideration of this and all other called-in cases and call-in requests can be found at [Planning decisions being considered by the Welsh Ministers | GOV.WALES](#). The progress chart is updated weekly.
16. The decision to call in application P/2023/0738 does not imply or infer any view from the Welsh Ministers about the merits of the application.
17. A copy of this letter has been sent to Appleton Deeley Planning and Landscape, agents for the applicant.

Yours sincerely



Hywel Butts

Pennaeth Gwaith Achos Cynllunio / Head of Planning Casework
Y Gyfarwyddiaeth Gynllunio / Planning Directorate

Arwyddwyd o dan awdurdod Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Lywodraeth Leol, Tai a Chynllunio, un o weinidogion Cymru.

Signed under authority of the Cabinet Secretary for Housing, Local Government and Planning; one of the Welsh Ministers.