
LAND TO THE NORTH OF HANMER ARMS, HAMNER SY13 3DE

19 no. Holiday Lodges, Reception Building and Ancillary Works

Planning Statement

Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

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Client:
Carlton Holdings

Date:
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This is an outline planning application for a proposal to develop 19 no. holiday lodges, reception building and ancillary works on land adjacent to the Hanmer Arms.
- 1.2 The purpose of this statement is to compliment the "Design and Access Statement" and the other reports which have been prepared as separate documents. It sets out the relevant legislation, national policy and development plan context and assesses the application proposal in terms of this.
- 1.3 In addition to this planning statement, the following documents have been prepared and are submitted in support of the planning application:

Design and Access Statement	RLPP
Heritage Impact Assessment & Statement of Significance	Enzygo
Site Layout Plan	Enzygo
GCN Ecological Impact Assessment	Bobby John Smith
Protected Species Survey	Elizabeth Barrett

- 1.4 An assessment of the site and its surrounding area has been undertaken to demonstrate its suitability for the proposed development and to establish the general principles particularly regarding the siting of the lodges, access points and reception facilities.

2. DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan for the area unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.2 The Development Plan for this area presently comprises the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan which was adopted in February 2005. Whilst Wrexham UDP remains the adopted development plan for the area, it was adopted in February 2005 and covers the period 1996 – 2011. It is therefore largely out of date. However certain policies remain relevant to the site and the development proposal.
- 2.3 The Wrexham Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) 2013 to 2028 has yet to be submitted for Examination (anticipated November 2018). Given the stage that the Plan has reached, only very limited weight can be attributed to the policies that it is proposing.
- 2.4 National planning policy in the form of the Planning Policy Wales Edition 9 was

published in November 2016 and is supported by a series of updated Technical Advice Notes (TANS). These are material considerations in determining this planning application.

3. PLANNING POLICIES

The following planning policies are relevant to this planning application:

Wrexham UDP

- 3.1 UDP Policy PS2 advises that development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment.
- 3.2 UDP Policy GDP1 requires that all new development should:
- a) Ensure that built development in its scale, design and layout, and in its use of materials and landscaping, accords with the character of the site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality.
 - b) Take account of personal and community safety and security in the design and layout of development and public / private spaces.
 - c) Make the best use of design techniques, siting and orientation in order to conserve energy and water resources.
 - d) Ensure safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to and from development sites, both on site and in the nearby locality.
 - e) Ensure that built development is located where it has convenient access to public transport facilities and is well related to pedestrian and cycle routes wherever possible.
 - f) Ensure the safety and amenity of the public and safeguard the environment from the adverse effects of pollution of water, land or air, hazards from industry and quarrying, and associated noise, odour or vibration arising from development.
 - g) Secure public services (e.g. gas, water, electricity) to development at minimum public cost.
 - h) Safeguard sites and areas of nature conservation and wildlife interest, and to provide new habitats where there is an unavoidable loss of existing habitats and areas of wildlife interest.
 - i) Ensure that development does not result in, or is subject to, flooding, soil erosion, landslides or contamination, either on or off the site.
 - j) Have regard to the need to safeguard those areas that possess a strong Welsh cultural and/or linguistic identity from development that could harm this identity.

- k) Secure the development of sustainable communities, through the promotion of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

- 3.3 UDP Policy EC6 advises that development either within or close to sites of biodiversity interest will only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that the need for the development outweighs the need to safeguard the intrinsic nature conservation value of the site. Where such development is permitted, damage should be kept to a minimum, and compensatory measures should be provided. Measures to improve the biodiversity value of sites and enhance their natural conservation interest and landscape quality including the establishment of local nature reserves, will be supported.
- 3.4 UDP Policy EC7 advises that, in close proximity to conservation areas, the priority will be to preserve and or enhance those buildings, structures, streets, trees, open spaces, archaeological remains, views, and other elements which contribute to the unique character of the area. New buildings and alterations or additions to existing buildings in conservation areas, whether listed as of special architectural or historic interest or not, must reflect the design and character of the area as a whole and the form, scale, detailing and materials of existing buildings.
- 3.5 UDP Policy CLF9 advises that visitor accommodation outside settlement limits will only be permitted through the conversion of existing buildings and by extensions to accommodation. It advises that extensions to accommodation will only be permitted where:
 - a) existing buildings are fully utilised and incapable of further adaptation; and
 - b) the proposed extension is appropriate in scale and design to the existing building and does not have an adverse impact on the local landscape, green barrier or other features of acknowledged importance.
- 3.6 The implications of the above policies are addressed in the Assessment Section of this Planning Statement.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW)

- 3.7 Since the adoption of the Wrexham UDP in February 2005, Planning Policy Wales Edition 9 was published in November 2016 and is supported by a series of updated Technical Advice Notes (TANS). These policies represent the most up to date national planning policy and are therefore material considerations. Due weight should be given to relevant policies in the out of date UDP according to their degree of consistency with national policy.
- 3.8 PPW Para 2.1.2 advises:

"Up-to-date Local Development Plans (LDPs) are a fundamental part of a planned planning system and set the context for rational and consistent decision making in line with national policies. Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the adopted plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.9 PPW para 2.14.4 advises:

"It is for the decision-maker, in the first instance, to determine through monitoring and review of the development plan whether policies in an adopted LDP are outdated for the purposes of determining a planning application. Where this is the case, local planning authorities should give the plan decreasing weight in favour of other material considerations such as national planning policy, including the presumption in favour of sustainable development." [RLPP emphasis]

3.10 PPW is supportive of tourism development. With regard to development management, PPW para 11.3.1 advises (in part):

"In determining planning applications for tourism developments, local planning authorities need to consider the impact of proposals on the environment and local community....."

3.11 Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24 requires local planning authorities to give special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing Conservation Areas when taking planning decisions.

4. ASSESSMENT

4.1 This application seeks outline planning permission to develop 19 no. holiday lodges, a reception building and associated facilities. It will deliver new visitor accommodation that will be sensitively designed to respond to its rural context.

4.2 Taking into account the relevant development plan policies, other material considerations and the characteristics of the site, the key issues in determining this application are:

- Whether the proposal is acceptable in principle
- Compliance with other development plan policies
- Other material considerations.

Principal Relevant Policies

4.3 The application site is not allocated for a specific use or development and is located beyond the Settlement Limit of Hanmer. The Development Plan policy relevant to the principle of the application proposal is UDP Policy CLF9. It permits the

development of visitor accommodation outside settlement limits in certain circumstances, including by extensions to accommodation.

4.4 The application proposal seeks to extend the range of visitor accommodation available at Hamner Arms. The existing buildings are fully utilised and there is insufficient space within the immediate grounds to accommodate the proposed extension to the business.

4.5 The proposal is relatively small-scale. The accompanying reports demonstrate that it will not have an adverse impact on the local landscape, Hanmer Conservation Area, wildlife habitats or other features of acknowledged importance.

4.6 It is therefore contended that the application proposal accords to the principal development plan policy in this regard. More up to date guidance provided within PPW at para 11.1.7 recognises that:

“In rural areas, tourism-related development is an essential element in providing for a healthy, diverse, local and national economy. It can contribute to the provision and maintenance of facilities for local communities. Here too development should be sympathetic in nature and scale to the local environment and to the needs of visitors and the local community.”

4.7 PPW para 11.2.7 advises:

“The development plan should encourage the diversification of farm enterprises and other parts of the rural economy for appropriate tourism, sport, recreation and leisure uses, subject to adequate safeguards for the character and appearance of the countryside, particularly its landscape, biodiversity and local amenity value.”

4.8 It is also contended that the proposed development accords to many of the core objectives and targets set out in Welsh Government’s Strategy for Tourism 2013–2020. The Strategy advises that the focus for investment in tourism will be on product quality and range. It states:

“Providing an excellent experience at every level of business activity is vital for Wales to improve its competitive position. Value for money is as important as ever, but there is no reason why Wales cannot aspire to provide best in class provision across the spectrum. There is clear evidence to show that investment in better quality visitor facilities, particularly accommodation, supports higher performance and drives profitability. While the quality of the tourism product in Wales has never been higher, there are still important gaps that need to be filled if the vision of delivering excellence is to be achieved.

..... Opportunities exist to promote higher quality and facility provision in our caravan and self catering sectors and to accelerate the encouraging investment that has taken place in recent years."

- 4.9 The main market for holiday lodge rentals in this location is likely to come from within an approximate 1-2 hour drive. Within a 90-minute drive of Hanmer, there is a high proportion of older people (the core market for holiday lodges) as well as more than 2.5 million ABC1 residents. These older and more affluent people typically drive demand for lodge developments. As well as catchment demographics, the regional visitor profile also provides a good fit with the typical market for timber lodge holidays, and is likely to lead to strong demand for the proposed lodges in this location. The proposed development site lies close to the A539, providing excellent accessibility by private car.
- 4.10 At present, the local holiday lodge market supply does not reflect the growing popularity of this type of self-catering accommodation amongst consumers. The site's location offers an easily accessible base to explore the wider area. Developments of this nature are likely to assist in establishing the area as a visitor destination, with a range of high quality accommodation and attractions.
- 4.11 The development proposals will help to improve the quality and range of the local accommodation product and attract an increased number of overnight visitors, creating jobs both on-site and indirectly in the wider local economy through increased visitor expenditure. This will help to support local shops and services, as well as creating further employment opportunities for local residents, therefore representing a net gain to the local economy.

Summary

- 4.12 The proposed development of lodge-style, self-catering visitor accommodation at Hanmer will create a high quality new addition to the area's accommodation stock. It accords to the the principal UDP Policy CLF9 and the more up to date advice provided in PPW and is supported by the Government's Tourism Strategy. It is therefore contended that the application proposal is acceptable in principle.

Compliance with other Policies

- 4.13 The site is located beyond the Settlement Limit of Hanmer. It also located outside of the village's Conservation Area and it does not fall within the Special Landscape Area designation.
- 4.14 UDP Policy PS2 advises that development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the

natural environment. This policy is expanded upon in UDP Policies GDP1, EC6 and EC7. These are addressed below:

4.15 UDP Policy GDP1 sets out a list of criteria to be addressed:

- a) Character and appearance – These points have been addressed in the accompanying DAS and are further addressed in respect of Policy EC7 later in this assessment.
- b) Personal and community safety and security - This has been addressed in the accompanying DAS.
- c) Design to conserve energy and water resources - This has been addressed in the accompanying DAS and can be further addressed by planning condition.
- d) Safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access - This has been addressed in the accompanying DAS.
- e) Access to public transport facilities, pedestrian and cycle routes - This has been addressed in the accompanying DAS.
- f) Safety and amenity - This has been addressed in the accompanying DAS.
- g) Service provision – This matter can be addressed by planning condition.
- h) Nature conservation and wildlife interest – Wildlife surveys have been carried and the reports are submitted in support of this application. This is addressed in respect of Policy EC6 later in this assessment.
- i) Flooding, soil erosion, landslides or contamination - This matter can be addressed by planning condition.
- j) Welsh cultural and/or linguistic identity – This will not be detrimentally affected. The proposal will provide economic support to the local community.
- k) Sustainable communities – Given the greater emphasis on sustainability in PPW, this is addressed separately later in this assessment.

4.16 With regard to UDP Policy EC6, protected species and GCN surveys have been undertaken. No GCN activity was noted in any of the ponds or surrounding terrestrial habitat. Providing RAMs are applied then a European Protected Species Licence in respect of GCN will not be required.

4.17 It has therefore been demonstrated that the proposed development will not harm any sites of biodiversity interest. Measures can be implemented to improve the biodiversity value of site.

4.18 With regard to UDP Policy EC7, a Heritage Impact Assessment & Statement of Significance has been submitted in support of this application. It concludes that no Designated buildings or features would be impacted by the proposed development.

The site of the proposed development lies outside the northern boundary of the Conservation Area, which in this location is characterised by the modern Bowling Green and its access road. It is considered that, with the proposed siting of the lodges and by additional planting, the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the Conservation Area.

- 4.19 It has therefore been demonstrated that the proposed development will not harm features of local heritage interest.

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy

- 4.20 At the heart of PPW is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. With regard to the three dimensions of sustainable development, the following aspects are directly relevant:

Economic role – Whilst this proposal is relatively small scale, it will contribute to the continuing viability of Hanmer Arms by providing a wider choice of accommodation options to suit different needs than those already catered for. It will support the existing businesses and their employees by extending the period of the year and the number visitors stay there. It will also support the area's tourism economy and will have positive effects upon the local economy through the supply of goods and services to visitors and deliver additional potential spending within local shops, food and drink outlets.

Social role – The proposal would add to the sustainability of the existing rural community by supporting existing local facilities and employment. Hanmer Arms is accessible to the local community and also the facilities and events held there.

Environmental role – The proposal represents an effective and efficient use of the land. Whilst the site is located outside the Settlement Line, it is not covered by any specific policy that indicates that development should be specifically restricted.

There is a range of local features and facilities in Hamner that attract visitors. The site is accessible to the Wrexham-Whitchurch bus service. The site is therefore accessible by other transport modes than the private car and also has access to local attractions and the PROW network.

- 4.21 It is therefore contended that the application proposal represents sustainable development. Sustainable development proposals that accord to the development

plan should be supported.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The proposal complies with UDP Policy CLF9 and Welsh national planning policy and tourism objectives.
- 5.2 From a strategic perspective, it is clear that the proposed small-scale, high-quality holiday lodge development accords to many of the objectives set out in Welsh Government Strategy for Tourism. The proposal will assist in improving the quality of the local accommodation product and attract a greater number of overnight visitors - creating jobs both on-site and indirectly in the wider local economy.
- 5.3 Wrexham County Borough Council is therefore respectfully requested to support this proposal.