

Davis, Ellie

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Sent: Bryan, Richard J.
09 May 2022 14:40
To: Lamnea, Chantalle
Cc: Planning Administration; Browning, Rebekah
Subject: Landscape 22/0341/FULL- Llwyn Cae Bungalow Gypsy Lane
Attachments: ufm40_Consultation_Standard_(21d).pdf; Review of LVA Proposed Replacement Single Dwelling Gypsy Lane.pdf

Categories: Ellie

Hi Chantelle,

With regard to your consultation, having studied the latest set of plans, elevations, sections, DAS statement and Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) in support of this application, plus having visited the locality, I still have concerns in relation to the proposed development and the affect it will potentially have on the local setting. As a result, I do not consider the proposals are sufficiently sympathetic to the sensitive setting or comply with Policy CW20, as detailed below. I therefore would not recommend that the application is approved in its current form.

Policy CW20 Locational Constraints - Conversion, Extension and Replacement of Buildings in the Countryside and SPG LDP10 Buildings in the Countryside

Firstly, my concerns remain regarding the proposed properties very large scale. The proposals currently designed remains significantly over the 50% increase, which would be in contravention of LDP policy CW20 and also not comply with LDP10 Section 7.3 Scale, as outlined below.

- Having studied the DAS, sections and overlaid the plans onto aerial photographs, it's clear that the volume is much more than 50% of the original modest dwelling, the proposed two story residential development has a ground floor footprint of 265m², volume 1650m³ as opposed to the existing bungalow of 108m², volume 510m³ which represents a significant increase of more than 200%.
- The existing bungalow dwelling sits well within the setting being of an appropriate scale and mass for the location, although the site has potential to accommodate an enlarged residential property up to a maximum of 50% volume (in line with policy) of the original dwelling, this is providing development is done sensitively to the rural SLA setting. This clearly has not been the case the proposed property remains significantly over 50% increase on the original property in terms of volume, scale and mass.
- The proposed large dwelling has to potential dominate the site being elevated topographically and accessed by both ramp and steps. The footprint from south to north is also extensive and likely to involve significant level changes/ retaining structures and ground works.
- The scale and mass of the proposed dwelling plus hard landscape footprint, including walling and paving and terraces dominating the width of the site, leaves limited space to the west and east for onsite perimeters to be suitably planted with native woodland planting to mature, which would be required to offset for the established mature woodland boundary recently removed.

Removal of mature vegetation, urbanisation, and domestication of the countryside

Unfortunately, it's clear from recent observations that the site has not been sympathetically managed of late due to the recent removal of woodland, erection of urban boundary fencing, and groundworks as outlined below.

APPENDIX 1



IMAGE DATE 20/07/2021



IMAGE DATE 25/06/2018

- In addition to visiting the locality, having studied aerial photographs, shown below, its apparent that on site woodland vegetation including mature trees have been recently removed. This has been undertaken on the lower southern third of the land, the blue line boundary, and extends beyond the redline boundary. This has impacted principally on woodland to the north and west of the site as well as a mature tree to the south. This woodland and mature trees all form part of the landscape character and would have had the potential to constrain development. Its removal could be seen therefore as having the potential to facilitate a larger development at the expense of the sensitive rural setting and landscape character.
- Trees and vegetation clearance has affected the west perimeter adjacent to the Brambles, and extensive close board fencing of 2 metres high has been recently installed (shown on the Proposed Site Plan) along the full length of this west boundary, which is at odds with Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) LDP10 Buildings in the Countryside, bringing inappropriate urban boundary treatments into the countryside, in addition to the adversely affecting the amenity from the neighbouring property to the west. The below images from the submitted DAS show this inappropriate 2m high boundary treatment to the west, along with the area that has been recently cleared of trees and vegetation to the north and west.



View of the existing bungalow from the higher ground to the north



Looking back towards the site frontage from a position north and adjacent to the existing bungalow

- It's recommended that the close board fencing on the western boundary is replaced with a boundary in accordance with SPG LDP10 Buildings in the Countryside, and dense native hedgerow / buffer planting undertaken. Close board fencing should be removed once planting has sufficiently established to ensure neighbouring amenity. See extract below from the SPG.

7.1 Setting

7.1.1 It is important that rural developments do not result in the domestication or urbanisation of the countryside setting. In order to ensure that this does not occur, the following should be considered:

- **Boundary treatments should be appropriate for the context of the area and should ensure that the area remains open in character where this was traditionally the case. Where boundary treatments such as gates, walls or hedges already form part of the traditional character of the countryside location, these should be incorporated into any scheme. Opportunities for the repair of boundary structures where necessary will be favoured over their replacement.**
 - **Suitable new boundary treatments are likely to include native species hedges, dry stone walls and post and wire fencing. Boundary treatments more common to an urban area such as close board fencing, brick walls or concrete will not be appropriate for a residential use.**
- On the west boundary where mature native trees have been recently removed conifer tree planting, likely to be non-native *Leylandii* has been undertaken recently, immediately adjacent to the above installed close board fencing. This is an inappropriate species in this sensitive countryside context, as this fast growing conifer has the potential unless regularly managed to form a high dense all year round screen shading the adjacent property and be visible from the wider SLA. The removal of existing mature native vegetation and planting of the conifers contradicts the statement below from section 5.2 of the submitted DAS.

Remaining hedgerow and trees on the boundaries of the property will be retained intact. Any gaps must be planted up with appropriate native species that match the existing hedgerow so that the site frontage will be retained and protected in terms of character and diversity. This will serve to protect and enhance an important habitat as required by the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, and policy contained in Welsh Assembly Government's Planning Policy Wales (2016) and Tan 5 Nature Conservation and Planning (2009).

- From site observations it's apparent that clearance works have commenced, including groundworks, materials stockpiled and banded, excavation, changes in levels, compaction from mechanical plant and cultivation to plant the new conifer hedge within adjacent trees root protection areas, all works have been undertaken with little regard to the sensitive setting, mature trees/ woodland both on and off the site on adjacent perimeters.

Indicative Proposed Soft Landscaping

In terms of the soft landscaping proposed shown on the Proposed Site Plan, in general the native planting and wildflowers would be welcomed but is currently insufficient to mitigate for native vegetation and trees recently removed on the site, notably on the western perimeter and north of the site.

- The Proposal Plan shows only limited indicative planting, and considerably expansion and more detail would be needed in this respect for concerns to be fully addressed. The Proposed Site Plan still shows the existing western boundary vegetation (which has recently removed) and does not mention the newly planted conifer planting along this boundary.
- Indicative native Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) tree planting shown on the plan on the western aspect will not provide a suitable robust soft boundary. A mix of native species including

both deciduous and evergreens species found locally, would need to be extended to form a continuous vegetated tree and shrub buffer on this important aspect and likewise to the north of the site where woodland has been removed.

Landscape and Visual Appraisal. see attached review.

Whilst the indicative soft landscaping is likely to assist to soften the proposed build form, I do not agree that the proposed development has been designed with a sufficient landscape-led approach. This is notably due to the proposed dwellings scale with an increase of 200% plus on the existing dwelling, extensive hard landscaping and recent loss of mature vegetation. This is likely to result in the proposed large dwelling not sitting acceptably within the site, dominating the width, and adversely affecting the sensitive intimate wooded local landscape character, and consequently adversely affecting the SLA in which it sits.

To conclude, in my professional opinion, I would not recommend the application is approved. This is due to the significant size and scale of the proposed build form in this sensitive SLA landscape setting and noncompliance with policy CW20 or SPG LDP10 Buildings in the Countryside. If approved in its current form the development is highly likely to result in urbanisation of the setting, as well as set a precedent for large scale residential dwellings in the countryside.

However, should amended plans be submitted, scaling back in size of the dwelling in line with Policy CW20, with a landscape-led approach including appropriate boundary treatments, expanded native tree, shrub planting, woodland buffer and mitigation planting, this is likely to be more acceptable subject to further appraisal.

Kind regards

Richard Bryan CMLI

Pensaer Tirwedd | Landscape Architect

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