

STONE PLANNING SERVICES LIMITED

**COMMUNITY AND LINGUISTIC IMPACT
ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION**

Outline Planning Application for the erection of a manager's house, 13 Park homes for Travelling Showmen families, area for resident only touring caravan storage, external storage area, covered barn for maintenance of equipment, restoration of former granary to garden store, and green and other infrastructure, demolition of former Gors Farm House and outbuildings, Land at Gors Farm, Gors Road, Towyn, Conwy, North Wales. Point of access onto Gors Road not reserved

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CONTENTS

| | | <u>Page No</u> |
|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| SECTION 1: | BACKGROUND | 1 |
| SECTION 2 | PROPOSAL | 2 |
| SECTION 3 | AREA PROFILE | 3 |
| SECTION 4 | PLANNING POLICY | 5 |
| SECTION 5 | MAIN CONSIDERATIONS | 6 |
| SECTION 6 | CONCLUSION | 9 |

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND

- 1.1 SPS Limited is appointed by Mr Charles Holden to prepare and submit a planning Outline Planning Application for the erection of a manager's house, 13 Park homes for Travelling Showmen families, area for resident only touring caravan storage, external storage area, covered barn for maintenance of equipment, restoration of former granary to garden store, and green and other infrastructure. Point of access onto Gors Road not reserved
- 1.2 This statement has been produced in response to Conwy County Borough Council's request for a Community and Linguistic Impact Assessment & Mitigation relating to the possible impact of the proposed development on the use of the Welsh Language and on the local community which the application site is located within.
- 1.3 The application is supported by various documentation including
 - a) Pre-Application Consultation Report
 - b) Planning application forms, certificate and declaration.
 - c) Planning Drawings:
 - I. Red Line Site Location Plan
 - II. Indicative layout
 - III. Typical unit
 - d) Planning Support Statement
 - e) Housing Demand Statement
 - f) Flood Consequences Assessment
 - g) Foul & Surface Water Drainage Strategy
 - h) Affordable Housing Viability Assessment
 - i) Planning Obligations Statement
 - j) Landscape Strategy
 - k) Bio-Diversity Statement
 - l) Tree Survey
 - m) Lighting Assessment
 - n) Noise Assessment
 - o) Transport Statement
 - p) Highway Visibility Requirements
 - q) Parking Assessment
 - r) Open Space Assessment
 - s) Structural Survey of Granary Building
- 1.4 The importance of the Welsh Language as a planning matter is recognised in National Planning Policy. This is further supported by Conwy County Borough Council planning policies and more specifically its adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance – 'Welsh Language' which seek to ensure that development supports the character and language balance of predominantly Welsh speaking communities and seeks to defend such communities from inappropriate development with the potential to undermine the language.

SECTION 2: PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal is for the erection of a manager's house, 13 Park homes for Travelling Showmen families, area for resident only touring caravan storage, external storage area, covered barn for maintenance of equipment, restoration of former granary to garden store, and green and other infrastructure.
- 2.2 There is only one Travelling Showmen site in the whole of North Wales and that is a small overcrowded site on the outskirts of Wrexham. As a consequence, Travelling Showmen in the area have no base from which to live, maintain their funfair rides and equipment and reside in a good environment. Their equipment and a plot to live are inseparable.
- 2.3 The Site is proposed on the edge of Towyn on land that has a planning consent for a Hotel, Motel, Restaurant and 18 No Holiday Lodges. It is ideally located as it will enable residents to integrate within the Towyn/Kinmel Bay community and social structure but be sufficiently remote so as not to cause any impacts.
- 2.4 This will be the permanent base for the families and each will have a plot upon which to affix their Park Home. There will also be an area to park and maintain their equipment and an area to store their touring caravans. There will also be small play area for children.

SECTION 3: AREA PROFILE

- 3.1 The Council's Area Profile for Towyn is based on the 2011 census indicates the following main points.
- 3.2 The Council's Area Profile for Kinmel Bay is based on the 2011 census indicates the following main points.
- 3.3 The Welsh Language in Conwy County Borough" was produced by the Council in 2013 and the headline findings were
1. The 2011 Census estimated that in Conwy County Borough there were 30,600 people aged 3 or over who are able to speak Welsh. This is 27.4% of the population. For Wales as a whole only 19% of the population were able to speak Welsh.
 2. The ability to speak Welsh differs between age groups:
 - The ability to speak Welsh is most prevalent amongst those of school age – overall, 49.2% of 5-15 year olds can speak Welsh
 - Those aged 50-69 have the lowest proportions of Welsh speakers (only 20.4%), though even in this age group Conwy CB is well above the Wales average).
 3. In general, the incidence of Welsh speakers increases towards the west, and as one travels inland from the more highly populated coastal strip. It is:
 - at a peak in the rural southern electoral division (ward) of Uwchaed (71% Welsh speaking); and
 - at its lowest in the eastern coastal community of Towyn & Kinmel Bay (less than 12% Welsh speaking).
 - However, numerically there are many more Welsh speakers in the urban areas than in the more sparsely populated rural areas. Rhos-on-Sea has over 1,350 Welsh speakers.
 4. Between 2001 and 2011 the number of Welsh speakers in the County Borough fell from 31,050 to 30,600 – a decrease of 450 or -6.2%. As a proportion this was a fall from 29.2% of the population aged 3+ in 2001 to 27.4% in 2011. This decline has been continuous over the past four Censuses.
 5. Not all areas in Conwy CB have seen a persistent decline in Welsh speaking abilities however. Between 2001 and 2011:
 - four electoral divisions saw an overall increase in Welsh speakers within their population in terms of both numbers and proportion – Penrhyn (Llandudno), Kinmel Bay, Llandrillo yn Rhos and Eglwysbach.
 - a further 11 electoral divisions saw a numeric increase in the number of Welsh speakers, even though there was a proportionate decline
 6. Conwy County Borough has the fifth highest proportion of Welsh speakers in its population, behind Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey, Ceredigion and Carmarthen. Numerically, the County Borough ranks sixth.
 7. Conwy County Borough's 30,600 Welsh speakers make up 5.4% of the Welsh speaking population of Wales. (Our population as a whole makes up 3.8% of the total Welsh population).

8. Only 12.2% of pupils in local authority schools are fluent in Welsh. 16.4% of pupils are in Welsh medium schools, which is higher than the proportion of fluent Welsh speakers, and a further 21.7% of pupils are educated in schools which provide significant schooling through the medium of Welsh.
9. Conwy County Borough Council's 2013 staff survey asked employees 'What is your preferred language?' Overall, 28% of staff expressed a preference for Welsh (10% for Welsh only, 18% for both Welsh and English).
10. The 2011 Census estimates that in Conwy County Borough there are 30,600 people aged 3 or over who are able to speak Welsh. This is 27.4% of the population. For Wales as a whole only 19% of the population are able to speak Welsh.

- 3.4 The Council's Welsh Language SPD (2013) reiterate the local situation in Towyn and Kinmel Bay and at para 3.4 states:

"The proportion of Welsh speakers is lowest along the coast. However, in Towyn & Kinmel Bay, although only 11.3% of the population speak Welsh, 927 Welsh speakers were recorded in this community. It is a common myth that the Welsh language is no more than a language of rural communities. However, in terms of numbers, the Welsh language is more prevalent in urban areas. High numbers and low percentages, however, lead to low usage of the language. One of the aims of this Guide is to encourage the opportunities to make more use of the Welsh language".

SECTION 4: PLANNING POLICY

- 3.1 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 4 refers at section 4.12.1 to the planning system's role in supporting the Welsh Language and identifies that; "*The Welsh Language is part of the social and cultural fabric of Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to ensuring that the Welsh Language is supported and encouraged as a language of many communities all over Wales. Iaith Pawb: A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales sets out how the Welsh Assembly Government intends to achieve its goal of revitalising the Welsh language and creating a bilingual Wales. The future well being of the language across the whole of Wales will depend on a wide range of factors, particularly education, demographic change, community activities and a sound economic base to maintain thriving sustainable communities. The land use planning system should also take account of the needs and interests of the Welsh language and in so doing can contribute to its wellbeing*".
- 3.2 Further advice on planning and the Welsh Language is contained within Technical Advice Note 20 (TAN) '*Planning and the Welsh Language*'. TAN 20 identifies how local planning authorities, when they are producing plans or making planning decisions, should consider the needs and welfare of the Welsh language, and in so doing, contribute to its well-being. The language is therefore, unquestionable, a material planning consideration in planning.
- 3.3 There is also advice in the Conwy Welsh Language SPSD which sets out the issues that should be addressed in assessing the impact of a proposal. The next section considers this.

SECTION 5: MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 Table 3: Community Linguistic Impact Assessment of the Welsh Language SPD sets out a checklist against which the proposal's impact on the Welsh language should be judged. These are considered in turn under 5 sub headings identified in the SPD

Population characteristics

- 5.2 ***Q1 - Is the proposal likely to lead to a population increase or decrease that might affect the balance of English/Welsh speakers, positively or negatively?***

A number of Travelling Showmen and their families who will live on the site speak the Welsh language to differing degrees of proficiency. By coming together there is the potential for increased dialogue in the Welsh language.

Signage on the site will be bilingual. Furthermore, the work force that assist in the delivery of the fun fairs are and will be sourced locally. Any non-Welsh language speakers will have opportunities to use the language initially with a few simple phrases

Towyn, according to the 2011 Census has just 10.8% of the population speaking the Welsh language; Kinmel Bay has 11.5%. The corresponding figure for Conwy is 27.4%.

Taking all of these aspects into account it is considered that the proposal will have a positive impact, or at least neutral impact, on developing the Welsh language

- 5.3 ***Q2. Is the proposal likely to lead to either increased in - or out- migration?***

All of the future residents of the proposal are currently residing in North Wales with many in Conwy and some in Towyn and Kinmel Bay. Hence, there will be a small amount of in migration. As stated above in response to Q 1 some of the residents do speak Welsh to different degrees of proficiency. The proposal should be positive.

- 5.4 ***Q3. Is the proposal likely to lead to a changing age structure for the community area?***

In 2011 Towyn had some 57.1% (1358) residents in the 16-64 age group; the figure for Kinmel Bay is slightly higher at 57.9% (3520). The demographics of the Travelling Showmen community covers the broad spread of age groups. Their age structure will reflect the existing position with the majority of working age but with young children and teenagers. Statistics show that there is more Welsh spoken amongst the younger age groups and it is hoped that this will benefit the site.

Most of the Travelling Showmen families live in comparative isolation of the broader community and it is hoped that by coming together on one site it will both strengthen its own community but also encourage greater integration into the social network.

Quality of Life

5.5 ***Q4. Is the proposal likely to have an impact on the quality of life of the local people?***

There will be no adverse impacts on resident amenity. The site is located adjacent to the built edge of Towyn. At the same time, it is relatively isolated from other residential properties. The Travelling Showmen community is extremely law abiding with a strong social structure and an adherence to civil and family values. There will be no residential adverse impacts associated with the proposal.

Economic Factors

5.6 ***Q5. Is the proposal likely to have a detrimental impact on local businesses and local jobs?***

The proposal will have a very positive impact on local employment and help sustain local jobs. Travelling showmen employ a significant number of local residents both at the number of fairs in North Wales but also on the tir prince site in Towyn. Travelling showman support the local economy buying goods and services from local shops and businesses – some of which are operated by Welsh speaking people. The proposal will have a positive impact on the local businesses and local jobs.

5.7 ***Q6. Is the proposal likely to lead to greater economic diversity in the community(or wider area)?***

Any increase in migration will be by residents who have families and economic ties in Conway. The distances are updated in the local Conley and that presents can only aid this. Local labour will also be used in the construction phase of the development. As a consequence of slats of the greater economic diversity in the area.

5.8 ***Q7. Is the proposal likely to have an impact on local wages/ salary levels and / or house prices?***

The proposal will have no assets impact on the broader house prices in the locality. Each family will provide an affordable park home and erected on that plot. This initiative, is, save for a very small and poor site in Wrexham, the only travelling showman site in North Wales. It will ensure that many families can move from unsatisfactory housing and create a new life.

There will be no adverse impacts on salary levels. Once a travelling showman family has a base it can plan to expand its business and this will create first direct and indirect jobs in the industry. This will have a very positive impact on jobs/salaries/homes in the locality.

Infrastructure Supply

5.9 ***Q8. Is the proposal likely to have an impact on local infrastructure and services provision?***

A very small increase in the population of Towyn can only help the sustainability of existing services in the locality. Families on the sites will use local shops, post office, bank, s public houses and so support their future existence.

Social and Cultural Aspects

5.10 ***Q9. Will the proposal potentially lead to social tensions, conflict or serious divisions within the (Welsh speaking) community?***

Travelling Showmen employ both Welsh and non-Welsh speakers. Travelling Showmen. have a long tradition in North Wales and have a long standing presence in Conwy for many decades. The North Wales coastal strip is very popular as a entertainment area by both tourists and local residents. Families are proud of their local heritage and consider themselves an integral part of the social and economic architecture of the area. Having a base in Conwy will only have a positive impact on traditional values.

5.11 ***Q10. Will the proposal potentially lead to changes in local - Welsh traditions/culture?***

There will be no adverse impact on housing provision; the proposal will allow families to live in affordable housing. Employment levels will rise as local jobs will be created. There will be no adverse impacts on Welsh traditions or culture.

5.12 ***Q11. Is the proposal likely to have an impact on the use of the Welsh Language in the community?***

As some Welsh speakers will and are employed by Travelling Showmen there is every possibility that's its use will increase. The site will have bi lingual signage and staff will be encouraged by Welsh speakers to use simple Welsh phrases . Against that background, the proposal is likely to have a positive impact on the use of the Welsh language

Mitigation Measures

5.13 In order to ensure the safeguard of the Welsh Language the applicant will fully promote the use and promotion of the language as part of the proposed development.

5.14 Use of the Welsh language is not very strong in the locality and the applicant is prepared to work with the Welsh Language Board to promote its use.

5.15 The applicant has very strong links into the local community - he employs large numbers of local employment and uses local shops for the purchase of stores and equipment. With a base that will increase.

SECTION 6: CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This Statement has identified that in formulating the proposed development due consideration has been given to any effects of the proposal on the Welsh language.
- 6.2 We consider that the proposal provides an opportunity to promote the use of the Welsh language as well as introduce social and economic benefits to the area
- 6.3 The Planning Statement and the supporting documents demonstrate that the proposal is consistent with National and Local Planning Policy and that it will meet an identified housing need on this site which has the benefit of an extant planning permission.
- 6.4 Full and part-time, temporary and permanent job opportunities will arise from te development and job opportunities will increase if the Travelling Showmen have a base to operate from
- 6.5 The development has potential to promote the linguistic character of the area. We believe that this statement and the accompanying documents have demonstrated that every effort will be made to ensure the promotion of the Welsh language through advertisement and signage.
- 6.6 We hope that the application will be supported.