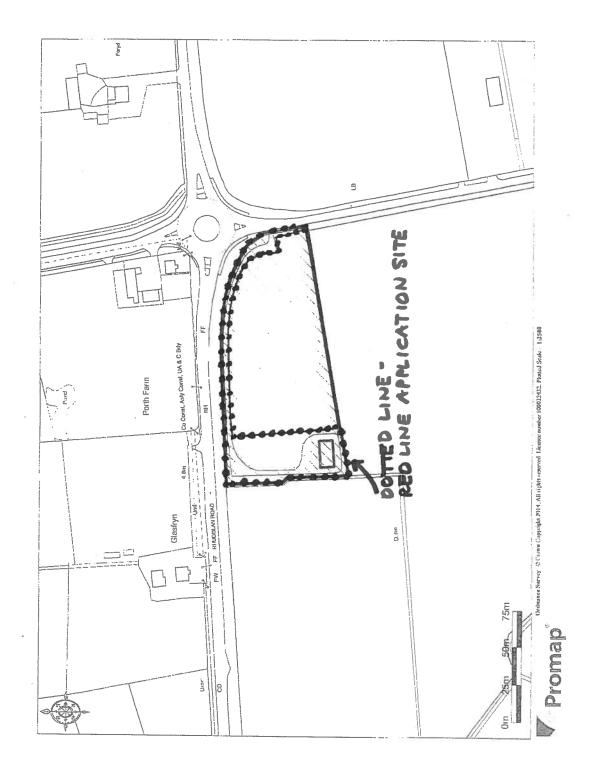
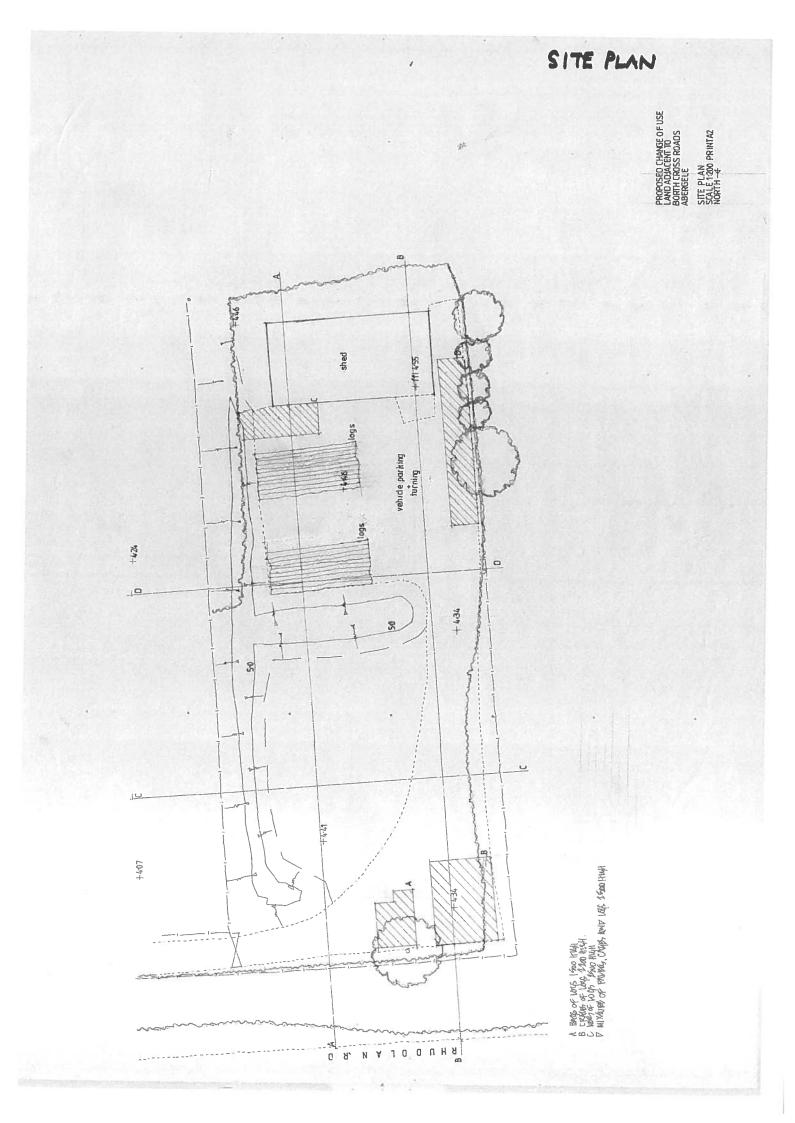


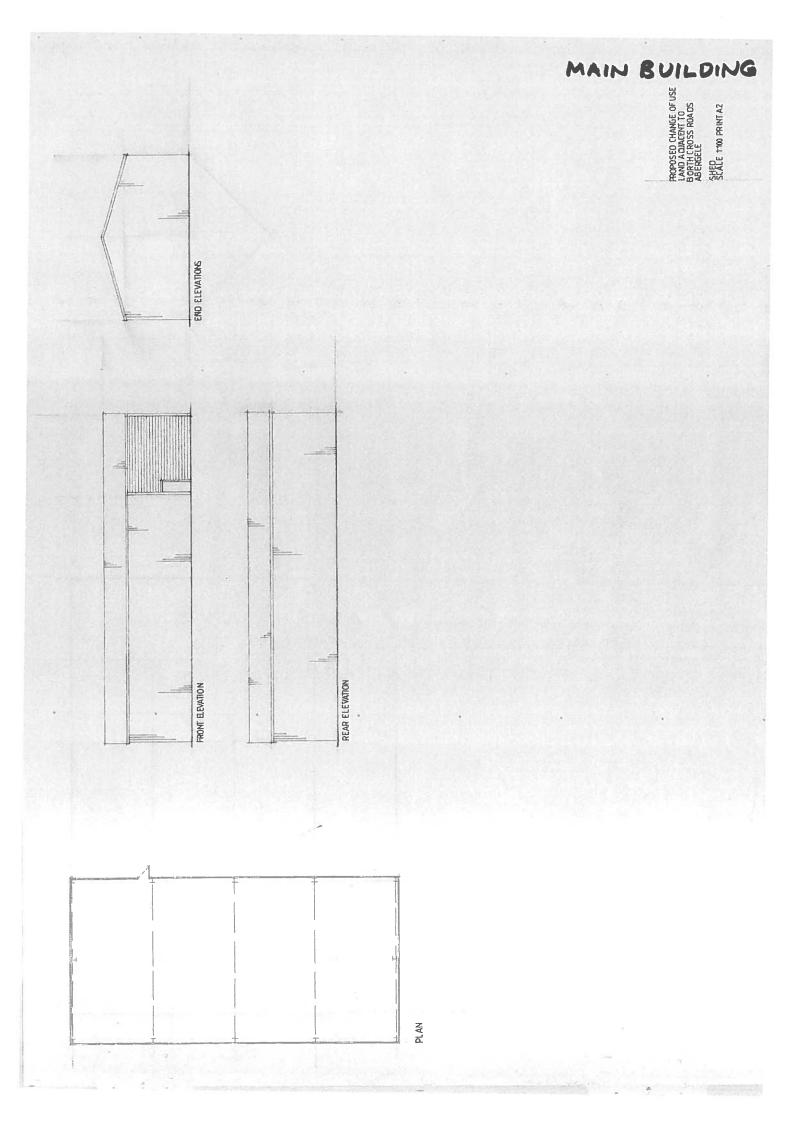
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16/02/2016.





	Philip Garner
WARD :	Bodelwyddan
WARD MEMBER:	Councillor Alice Jones (c)
APPLICATION NO:	40/2016/0256/PC
PROPOSAL:	Change of use of agricultural building to wood processing and use of yard as wood storage (retrospective application) (re-submission)
LOCATION:	Fields South-West Of Borth Crossroads Abergele
APPLICANT:	Mrs Penny Broadway PWR Properties
CONSTRAINTS:	C1 Flood Zone
PUBLICITY UNDERTAKEN:	Site Notice – Yes Press Notice – No Neighbour letters – Yes

REASON(S) APPLICATION REPORTED TO COMMITTEE: Scheme of Delegation Part 2

- Community Council objection Officer recommendation to grant
- 4 or more objections

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

BODELWYDDAN TOWN COUNCIL -

"The Town Council objects to this application for the following reasons. The access and egress on the highway is very close to the roundabout and the creation of a recess and other measures still does not make this a safe place for vehicle movements. The activity affects the residential amenity of the area and the neighbouring properties."

NATURAL RESOURCES WALES –

No objection. Note that the site is within zone C1 as per the Development Advice maps accompanying TAN15 and tend to agree with the content of the FCA in that it has identified the potential sources of flood risk to the site. No indication on flood depths, etc, have been produced and it is suggested that in preparing the FCA reference should have been made to a Coastal flood risk study undertaken by Conwy County Borough Council.

CONWY CBC -

No objection subject to restrictions on hours of use and all wood processing to be undertaken inside the building.

DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTEES

PUBLIC PROTECTION OFFICER (NOISE AND POLLUTION) -

Notes the findings of the submitted noise assessment and raises no objection to the scheme on this basis, subject to conditions to address (i) the hours of operation which should be limited to 0900 hours to 1700 hours Monday to Friday and 0900 hours to midday on Saturday with no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays as per the noise assessment document; and (ii) the processing of the timber shall only take place within the building.

It is further suggested that notes to the applicant should be included to ensure that: the chainsaw used to "trim up" the logs should be battery operated not the petrol unit as pictured in the noise report or the noise will be louder than stated in the report; the doors of the processing building should remain closed during the processing of timber whenever practically possible; and the reversing beepers of the on-site fork lift truck should be of the white noise variety only.

HIGHWAY OFFICER -

Given the fundamental importance of this issue to the scheme, the response of the highway officer is set out in full below for the benefit of members, which follows detailed discussions which have been ongoing with the agent and their appointed highway consultant:

"Having regard the existing lawful agricultural use, evidence has been submitted by way of swept path analysis (Drawing no: SCP-16260-ATR01) showing various types of farming vehicles that can use the access at present. It is clear from this evidence that the type of vehicle, such as a hay wagon and trailer and combine harvester and trailer require the full extent of both carriageways to access/egress the site. In considering the proposed use and evidence received and to overcome concerns in relation to the size and type of vehicle using this access for the wood processing operation, believe that by restricting vehicle sizes and frequency for the proposed use would be acceptable. A suitably worded condition could be imposed, to restrict vehicles no greater than 12m in length and or greater than 7.5 t in weight for one – two-way vehicle movements to and from the site per week. This would ensure that tighter restrictions and controls are in place to prevent the larger vehicles using the access.

It is also proposed to widen the existing access / gate as part of the proposals so as to make the passage of vehicles into and out of the site easier, the existing vehicular crossing will require widening as part of this work. (Drawing no: SCP-16260-ATR01)

Given the above the Highway Authority can see no reason to refuse this application, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Full details of the vehicular foot way crossing shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Highway Authority and the access shall be completed in accordance with the approved plans within 6 months of the date of permission. Reason: To ensure the formation of a safe and satisfactory access in the interest of highway safety.
- 2. The proposed access shall have a visibility splay of 2.4 x the maximum that can be achieved in both directions measured along the nearside edge of the adjoining carriageway overland within the control of the Applicant and or the Highway Authority and within which there shall be no obstruction in excess of 1.05m in height. Reason: To ensure that adequate visibility is provided at the point of access to the highway.
- 3. Facilities shall be provided and retained within the site for the loading/unloading, parking and turning of vehicles in accordance with a scheme to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority and completed within 6 months of the date of permission. Reason: To provide for the loading/unloading, parking and turning of vehicles clear of the highway in the interest of highway safety."

RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY:

In objection

Representations received from:

- i) The RT Hon David Jones MP/AS
- ii) Mrs M Jones, Foryd
- iii) Mr and Mrs Jones, Llecyn Braf
- iv) R & O Lloyd, Glasfryn
- v) Mrs D Rodwell, Porth Farm
- vi) Lynn Jones, Pen-y-Bont Cottage
- vii) Mr & Mrs Labban, Tyn-y-Llyn
- viii) Ester Tedeschi, Three Oaks
- ix) Peter Derbyshire, Morfa Chapel

Summary of planning based representations in objection:

i) Inappropriate industrial/commercial development in a rural area;

- ii) Noise pollution including existing problems from the use which has commenced;
- iii) Detrimental impact on road safety;
- iv) Previous reasons for refusal remain valid;
- v) Loss of agricultural land.

(Neighbours and consultees were re-notified prior to this report being drafted to inform them of additional information which had been submitted following discussions between the highway officer and the agent. Any further representations received prior to Committee will be referred to on the late representation sheets).

EXPIRY DATE OF APPLICATION: 05/05/2016

REASONS FOR DELAY IN DECISION (where applicable):

Ongoing discussions relating to highways.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT:

1. THE PROPOSAL:

- 1.1 Summary of proposals
 - 1.1.1 The application relates to the change of use of an agricultural building and the adjacent field to a wood processing business within the building and wood storage, parking and a turning area within the field.
 - 1.1.2 The use is stated on the submitted form as having commenced in April 2014 and operates from 0900 hours to 1700 hours each weekday and from 0900 hours to midday at the weekend.
 - 1.1.3 The site has an area of 1.16 hectares with the building having a floor area of 161 sqm, and the use employs one full-time member of staff and one part-time employee.
 - 1.1.4 The application follows a previous refusal by the Council on 6 November 2015 of an application seeking the same basic uses on the site.
 - 1.1.5 The submission is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, a Planning Support Statement, a Noise Assessment and a Flood Consequences Assessment.
 - 1.1.6 It is concluded in the Planning Statement that *"the proposal is an appropriate application for the re-use of a redundant rural building for a suitable business use that is suited to both the site and its setting."* The other supporting documents provide information to assist consideration of the application, including material which seeks to address the reasons for refusal of the 2015 application.

1.2 Description of site and surroundings

- 1.2.1 The site is comprised primarily of an open field with an access at the eastern end approximately 30 metres south of the roundabout junction known as Borth Crossroads.
- 1.2.2 The field is bounded by hedges to all sides with tree planting along the road frontage to the north and contains a pre-fabricated metal clad building within its south western corner.
- 1.2.3 There are dwellings across the road to the north and across the fields to the south, along with a number of other residential properties in the locality.

1.3 Relevant planning constraints/considerations

- 1.3.1 The site stands outside of any development boundary in an area without any specific designation in the Local Development Plan.
- 1.4 Relevant planning history
 - 1.4.1 The site has a history of agricultural related development. See Section 2 of the report.

1.4.2 The previous retrospective application to change the use from agriculture to wood processing and storage was refused in November 2015 on grounds of amenity impact, traffic and use of high quality agricultural land.

1.5 Developments/changes since the original submission

1.5.1 Further information has been submitted relating to the detailing of highway arrangements.

1.6 Other relevant background information

- 1.6.1 Additional information has been submitted in relation to highway detailing in response to feedback from the Highway Officer.
- 1.6.2 The applicant's agent has forwarded additional information in relation to the business case for the development:

"Policy PSE 5 and its supporting paragraphs require that business development in rural areas makes a contribution to and supports the local economy, and that detail is provided *"to establish the benefits of the scheme in relation to sustaining local employment and the rural economy. The benefits could include provision of local employment opportunities, use of locally sustainable sources for any raw materials, scope to sell local produce, and provision of services to local communities."*

It is submitted that the business in this case is a clear example of an enterprise that makes a valuable contribution to the local economy in a number of respects. In particular it:-

- Employs a local person, with the operator of the site living locally. It is expected that any increase in employment in the future would also employ local people. Indeed, the nature of this type of business is that it will be locally based due to its fairly small scale;
- The timber that is processed on the site is sourced from local woodlands in the county and neighbouring areas. As such the business clearly sources its raw materials from the locality;
- The products provided by the enterprise are then sold locally, either directly to local private customers (by delivery from the site to customers' properties) or to local trade customers (who then sell the enterprises products to their customers). As such it is clear that the enterprise provides a service to the local community and economy, and that it also sells local products;
- Local firms are used to deliver the timber to the site. Therefore it is clear that the enterprise also supports employment in other local businesses by using their services;
- Indeed, the equipment used by the business is also sourced from local suppliers, and local companies are used for on-going servicing of the equipment. Local firms are also used for maintenance work on the building and site (such as maintenance of the building, yard, cutting of hedges etc.).

As such it is clear that the business that is the subject of this application supports local employment and the rural economy, and that it therefore clearly fits into the policy requirements of Policy PSE 5 in this respect (and indeed its other requirements as set out in the Planning Support Statement)."

2. DETAILS OF PLANNING HISTORY:

2.1 40/2003/1126 - Erection of agricultural building: Refused 18/03/2004.

- 2.2 40/2004/0807 Erection of agricultural building: Granted 22/09/2004.
- 2.3 40/2006/0577 Details of external wall and roof materials submitted in accordance with condition no. 2 of planning permission code no. 40/2004/0807/PF: Granted 11/05/2006.

- 2.4 40/2007/0448 Retention of agricultural building and access track, hard-standing and bund: Granted 11/05/2007.
- 2.5 40/2011/1159 Erection of an agricultural building for storage of hay and silage: Granted 18/11/2011. Condition 2 of this consent reads as follows:

"The building hereby permitted shall be used for agricultural purposes. Should the use of the building for agricultural purposes cease the building shall be removed from the site.

Reason: The building is located in the open countryside where rural restraints policies exist, the permission has been granted on the basis of a need existing for the building."

- 2.6 40/2015/0869 Change of use from agriculture to wood processing and storage (retrospective application): Refused 06/11/2015 for the following three reasons:
 - 1. The change of use proposed is contrary to Paragraphs 3.1.4 and 3.1.7 of Planning Policy Wales 7 due to the adverse impact on the neighbourhood via a loss of amenity from the noise and disturbance emanating from the wood processing business and its associated yard area.
 - 2. The submitted application fails to demonstrate that the increased traffic generation from the proposed use would not have an adverse impact on highway safety due to the location of the access close by to the road junction, and accordingly the scheme is contrary to Paragraph 3.1.4 of Planning Policy Wales 7.
 - 3. The proposal involves development of an area of high quality agricultural land within the grades considered as 'best and most versatile' in Paragraph 4.10.1 of Planning Policy Wales, Edition 7 which Welsh Government considers is of special importance and should be conserved as a finite resource for the future. Paragraph 4.10.1 requires Local Planning Authorities to give considerable weight to protecting such land from development, and outlines considerations to be applied to proposals when determining applications. In this case, the Local Planning Authority do not consider the application demonstrates that the use cannot be met on either previously developed land or on land in lower agricultural grades in the area, or that the application site is the most appropriate for the development, and the proposals are considered to be in conflict with the requirements of 4.10.1 of Planning Policy Wales Edition 7.

3. RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE:

The main planning policies and guidance are considered to be: Denbighshire Local Development Plan (adopted 4th June 2013) **Policy PSE4** – Re-use and adaptation of rural buildings in open countryside **Policy PSE5** – Rural economy

- 3.1 <u>Supplementary Planning Guidance</u> SPG – Re-use and adaptation of rural buildings
- 3.2 <u>Government Policy / Guidance</u> Planning Policy Wales Edition 8 January 2016 Technical Advice Notes Circulars

4 MAIN PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

In terms of general guidance on matters relevant to the consideration of a planning application, Planning Policy Wales Edition 8 (PPW) confirms the requirement that planning applications 'should be determined in accordance with the approved or adopted development plan for the area, unless material considerations indicate otherwise' (Section 3.1.2). PPW advises that material considerations must be relevant to the regulation of the development and use of land in the public interest, and fairly and reasonably relate to the development concerned., and that these can include the number, size, layout, design and appearance of buildings, the means of access, landscaping, service availability and the impact on the neighbourhood and on the environment (Sections 3.1.3 and 3.1.4).

The following paragraphs in Section 4 of the report therefore refer to the policies of the Denbighshire Local Development Plan, and to the material planning considerations which are considered to be of relevance to the proposal.

4.1 The main land use planning issues in relation to the application are considered to be:

- 4.1.1 Principle
- 4.1.2 Visual amenity
- 4.1.3 Residential amenity and noise
- 4.1.4 Highways (including access and parking)
- 4.1.5 Loss of agricultural land

4.2 In relation to the main planning considerations:

4.2.1 Principle

There are policies in the Local Development Plan which offer support for employment development in the open countryside, subject to tests and assessment of local impacts. The policies reflect general support in Planning Policy Wales and the strategy of the LDP for the start up and growth of local businesses.

Policy PSE 4 of the Local Development Plan establishes a presumption in favour of the conversion of rural buildings outside development boundaries for employment use.

In this regard, it is relevant to note that the existing building at the site was granted consent in November 2011subject to the condition that it was to be utilised in connection with agricultural purposes, and that if such a need ceased then the building should be removed. Permission was only granted for the structure at that time as it was stated it was required in connection with the existing agricultural use. The short passage of time since the grant of permission for what is an agricultural building requires due caution in the application of Policy PSE4 to the merits of the current application.

Policy PSE 5 allows for 'appropriate' employment proposals for new build outside of development boundaries and outside of the AONB/AOB provided that the following criteria are met:

i) the proposal is appropriate in scale and nature to its location; and

ii) any suitable existing buildings are converted or re-used in preference to new build; and

iii) proposals for new buildings are supported by an appropriate business case which demonstrates that it will support the local economy to help sustain local rural communities.

The planning statement put forward by the agent suggests that the development proposed would "make a small but valuable contribution to the local economy, both through employment on the site, and through use of local suppliers" The agent has provided additional information, referred to in 1.5.2, in relation to the business case to assist consideration in relation to Policy PSE 5, which suggests there are positive benefits arising.

In principle, therefore, Policies PSE4 and PSE 5 allow for new employment development in open countryside, subject to consideration against tests and assessment of local impacts. The local impact issues are reviewed in subsequent sections of the report.

4.2.2 Visual amenity

In referring to what may be regarded as material considerations, Planning Policy Wales 3.1.4 refers to the number, size, layout, design and appearance of buildings,

the means of access, landscaping, service availability and the impact on the neighbourhood and on the environment. The impact of a development on visual amenity is therefore a relevant test on planning applications. This is emphasised in Paragraph 3.1.7, which states that proposals should be considered in terms of their effect on the amenity and existing use of land and buildings in the public interest.

The area is reasonably well screened especially along the northern boundary where it is closest to residential properties, and the use as proposed is not in itself considered to give rise to visual harm to a degree which would justify a refusal of permission.

4.2.3 Residential amenity and noise

Planning Policy Wales 3.1.4 refers to the number, size, layout, design and appearance of buildings, the means of access, landscaping, service availability and the impact on the neighbourhood and on the environment as potentially material considerations. The impact of a development on residential amenity is therefore a relevant test on planning applications. This is emphasised in Paragraph 3.1.7, which states that proposals should be considered in terms of their effect on the amenity and existing use of land and buildings in the public interest. As the Courts have ruled that the individual interest is an aspect of the public interest, it is therefore valid to consider the effect of a proposal on the amenity of neighbouring properties.

Comments from the Community Council and letters of objection from nearby residential occupiers and the MP/AM refer to noise and disturbance which has occurred since the change of use took place in April 2014. These contend that the creation of a wood yard and wood processing business in this location could give rise to a level of disturbance which is detrimental to residential amenity.

The agent has submitted a noise assessment produced by Martec Ltd to seek to demonstrate that the levels of noise generated by the use are appropriate and are not detrimental to the amenity of nearby occupiers. Based on the measurements and available data, the report suggests that firewood processing noise would have a "Low Impact", which in turn indicates that consent could be granted for the development.

The Council's Pollution Control Officer has assessed the application and considers the submitted report demonstrates that the use is acceptable subject to conditions to limit the hours of use and to restrict certain activities to within the building.

In respecting the concerns of local residents, it is relevant to note that the Public Protection Officer considers on the basis of information submitted with the current application there is a basis for considering the grant of permission, subject to imposition of suitable controls / conditions. This suggests the grounds for refusal based on residential amenity may now be difficult to substantiate.

4.2.4 Highways (including access and parking)

Planning Policy Wales 3.1.4 refers to what may be regarded as material considerations and that these can include the number, size, layout, design and appearance of buildings, the means of access, landscaping, service availability and the impact on the neighbourhood and on the environment. The acceptability of means of access is therefore a standard test on most planning applications. Policy ASA 3 requires adequate parking spaces for cars and bicycles in connection with development proposals, and outlines considerations to be given to factors relevant to the application of standards. These policies reflect general principles set out in Planning Policy Wales (Section 8) and TAN 18 – Transport, in support of sustainable development.

There are concerns expressed by the Community Council and private individuals over the highway implications of the use. There is reference to access and egress on the highway being close to the roundabout and it is suggested the access revisions would not make this a safe place for vehicle movements.

The detailed comments in the response from the Highway Officer follow ongoing discussions with the agent and their highway consultant in relation to the access detailing. These have resulted in the previous objection being withdrawn on the basis that appropriate conditions including a limitation on the use of vehicles would be sufficient to ensure that highway safety is not impacted upon. A swept path analysis plan submitted is acceptable to the Highway Officer, demonstrating that vehicles would be able to manoeuvre into and out of the access.

Accordingly, and on balance, having regard to the information provided and the response of the Highway Officer, it is not adjudged there are now strong highway / traffic grounds to refuse permission.

4.2.5 Loss of agricultural land

Planning Policy Wales (Section 4.10.1) obliges considerable weight to be given to protecting land of grades 1, 2, and 3a quality in the Agricultural land Classification system of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. This land is considered to be the best and most versatile and justifies conservation as a finite resource for the future. PPW indicates that land of this quality should only be developed if there is an overriding need for the development, and either previously developed land or land of a lower grade is available, or available lower grade land has an environmental value recognised by a landscape, wildlife, historic or archaeological designation which outweighs the agricultural considerations.

The submitted planning statement suggests that a change to the red line site area to reduce the area of land associated with the use as compared to the 2015 refusal is sufficient to overcome the reason for refusal relating to loss of agricultural land. However it is acknowledged that a small loss of agricultural land will still result.

Whilst wood processing uses of the type involved here are traditionally sited in agricultural areas, in cases where land of higher agricultural grades is involved, there is inevitably a potential for conflict with advice in Planning Policy Wales in relation to the protection of such land from development. However it has to be noted that apart from the existing building on site, which it is proposed to continue using in connection with the use, the proposal involves a 'reversible' use of the remainder of the land, which could be returned to agricultural use if the wood processing business ceases to operate. These are considerations to put in the balance in weighing the merits of the application.

5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

- 5.1 The application relates to a use which has been operating since 2014, and which has been the subject of a refusal of permission in November 2015.
- 5.2 The submission contains information which seeks to address the substance of the grounds of refusal of the 2015 application.
- 5.3 There remain local concerns from the Community Council and private individuals over the use.
- 5.4 Consultation responses from the Highways Officer and the Public Protection Officer suggest highway and amenity issues have been and can be addressed and that these are now not grounds to merit a refusal recommendation.
- 5.5 There are positive and negative considerations to balance here. The use offers local employment benefits which are in line with the economic / regeneration strategies of the Local

Development Plan and Planning Policy Wales. There are local impacts and loss of agricultural land issues to counter that benefit.

5.6 Officers suggest the positive responses from technical consultees indicate the local impacts of the use can be mitigated by suitable conditions, and this offers a basis for the grant of permission. Whilst there remains an agricultural land issue, the proposal involves largely 'reversible' uses of land which would allow it to return to agricultural use on cessation of the employment use, suggesting there is limited conflict with policy. In these circumstances, where there are tangible employment benefits to weigh in favour of the grant of permission, as outlined in the additional information provided by the applicant's agent, Officers believe it would be reasonable to make a recommendation to grant.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT- subject to the following conditions:-

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in strict accordance with details shown on the following submitted plans and documents unless specified as otherwise within any other condition pursuant to this permission:

(i) Elevations plan received 11 March 2016

(ii) Sections plan received 11 March 2016

(iii) Topographic survey plan received 11 March 2016

(iv) Site plan received 11 March 2016

(v) Location plan received 11 March 2016

(vi) Swept Path Analysis Plan ref SCP-16260-ATR01 received 25 July 2016

2. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.

3. Full details of the vehicular foot way crossing shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the access shall be completed in accordance with the approved plans within 6 months of the date of permission.

4. The proposed access shall have a visibility splay of 2.4 x the maximum that can be achieved in both directions measured along the nearside edge of the adjoining carriageway over land within the control of the Applicant and or the Highway Authority and within which there shall be no obstruction in excess of 1.05m in height.

5. Facilities shall be provided and retained within the site for the loading/unloading, parking and turning of vehicles in accordance with a scheme to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority and completed within 6 months of the date of permission.

6. Within three months of the date of this permission, a flood action plan shall be submitted for the consideration and approval of the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of potential sources of flood risk to the site, an indication of flood depths, and proposals for mitigating impacts and ensuring the safety of persons using the site. Measures outlined in the approved Action Plan shall be implemented no later than 31st December 2016 and shall be maintained at all times thereafter unless agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

7. The hours of operation shall be limited to between 0900 hours and 1700 hours Monday to Friday and 0900 hours to 1200 on Saturday, with no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

8. The processing of the timber shall only take place within the building.

9. Within three months of the date of this permission, a detailed Scheme of Operation of the wood processing operation shall be submitted for the consideration and approval of the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of measures for ensuring that the chainsaw used to ""trim up"" the logs is battery operated (not the petrol unit as pictured in the noise report); that the doors of the processing building remain closed during the processing of timber whenever practically possible; and that the reversing beepers of the on-site fork lift truck should be of the white noise variety only. Measures outlined in the approved Scheme of Operation shall be implemented no later than 31st December 2016 and shall be maintained at all times thereafter unless agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

10. No external lighting shall be permitted to be installed and used until the the written approval of the Local Planning Authority has been obtained to the detailing thereof. The development shall only proceed in accordance with the detailing approved in relation to this condition.

The reason(s) for the condition(s) is(are):-

1. For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure a satisfactory standard of development.

2. To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3. To ensure the formation of a safe and satisfactory access in the interest of highway safety.

4. To ensure that adequate visibility is provided at the point of access to the highway.

5. To provide for the loading/unloading, parking and turning of vehicles clear of the highway in the interest of highway safety.

6. To ensure adequate measures are in place to mitigate flood risk and danger to persons on the site.

7. In the interests of the amenities of occupiers of residential property in the locality.

8. In the interests of the amenities of occupiers of residential property in the locality.

9. In the interests of the amenities of occupiers of residential property in the locality.

10. In order to protect ecological interests, and in the interests of occupiers of residential property in the locality.

NOTES TO APPLICANT:

Your attention is drawn to the following:

Highway Supplementary Notes Nos. 1, 3, 4, 5 & 10. Part N form (New Road and Street Works Act 1991).

Notes relating to applications for consent to construct a vehicular crossing over a footway / verge under Section 184 of the Highways Act 1980.