

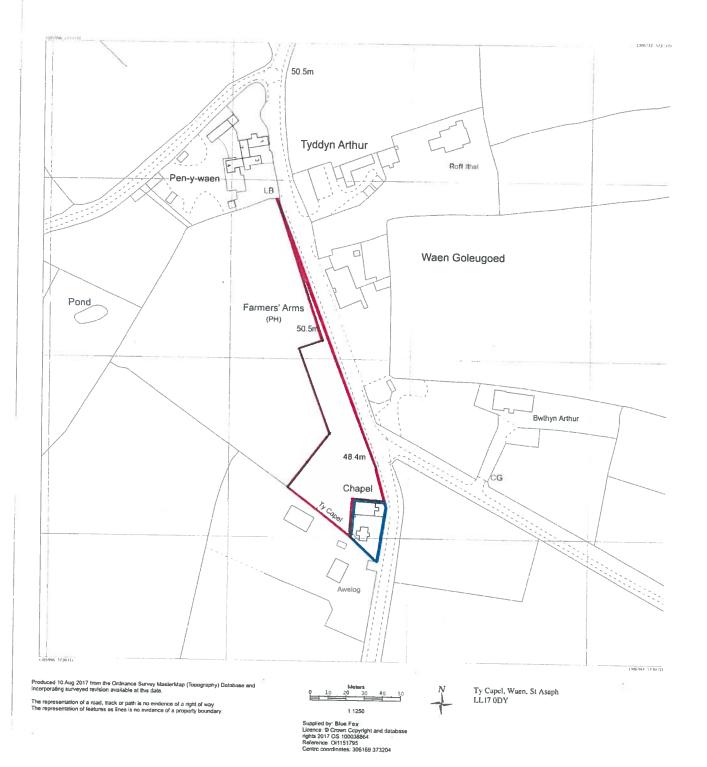
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axisting ditch and North side of headscrow existing hadgerow

EXISTING 1:500

Ian Weaver

WARD: Tremerchion, Cwm and Waen

WARD MEMBER: Councillor Christine Marston (C)

APPLICATION NO: 47/2017/0792/ PF

PROPOSAL: Formation of chapel car park and construction of means of

access

LOCATION: Waen Chapel Waen St Asaph

APPLICANT: Waen Congregational Chapel

CONSTRAINTS: PROW

PUBLICITY
UNDERTAKEN:
Site Notice - No
Press Notice - No
Neighbour letters - Yes

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

• Recommendation to grant / approve – Town / Community Council objection

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

TREMERCHION. CWM AND WAEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

'Objection on the grounds that:-

the car park was too large for its intended purpose;

it was too large and be out of character in a rural position;

its development would exacerbate the existing highway safety issues;

it would represent sporadic development in open rural countryside

this application had only been encouraged by the extension of the adjoining Chapel House. (did that have permission?). '

DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTEES -

- Highways Officer

The case officer has advised there are no objections to the application, subject to inclusion of conditions in relation to the construction of the access. Visibility splays are considered acceptable.

Ecologist

Advises that the proposals should have no negative impact upon protected species, provided conditions are applied.

RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY:

In objection

Philip Day, Castell, St Asaph Alex Wilson, Plas yn Cornel, Waen, St Asaph

Summary of planning based representations in objection: Dangerous access

Need for adequate surveys of impact on road users / too much development for the locality / potential dangers for road users / no need for large car park, will increase potential for accidents / new owners of Farmers arms should be approached to use that car park / retention of existing Wean Chapel entrance will add to dangers / new entrance will add to dangers for motorists and other road users

Ecological impacts Newts and badgers in the area

Use of agricultural land

Other matters

Inaccuracy of plans - Plans do not show developments at the Chapel / Chapel House - Concerns over unauthorised extensions / location of new access relative to existing features not clear / unclear why the land to be used for the car park includes the whole of the hedge up to the gate of the Pen y Waen dwellings

Fear over future development for housing

Development will not serve the Waen Community

Existing community hall should be used for activities

Agree with Community Council's reasons for objecting – including question over the need for so many spaces

Conflict of interests with Trustees over negotiation over lease of land

In support

Representations received from:

Mrs. B. Williams, Ty'n Rhewl, Llannefydd (S)

David Davies, 3 Bro Dawel, Tremeirchion (S)

Ellis Morris, Haylock, Mount Road, St Asaph (S)

Trefor Jones, 10 The Crescent, Ffordd Conwy, Caerdydd (S)

Gwenda J. Roberts, 14 Accar y Forwyn, Dinbych (S)

Lilian Edwards, 29 Madryn Avenue, Rhyl (S)

R. & G. Williams, Bodeugan Bach, Waen, St. Asaph (S)

Rhodri & Julie Wyn Jones, Garth, Ffordd Rhyl, Dinbych (S)

Glain Wynne Jones - Carers Needs Assessor - NEWCIS (S)

Meinir & Arwyn Roberts, Fferm y Rhewl, Waen (S)

Llinos Lanini, 10, The Crescent, Ffordd Conwy Caerdydd (S)

Ruth Williams, Plas Panton, Bylchau, Dinbych (S)

Emyr George, Gorwel, Rhuallt

Mari Jones, Tyddyn Rofft Ithel, Waen, St. Asaph (S)

Ceri & Richard Peacock, Bwthyn Arthur, Waen, St. Asaph (S)

Mrs. Einir Williams, Plas Mawr Farm, Llyn Helyg, Trelawnyd (S)

Bryn Jones, Foxhall Farm, Henllan (S)

Summary of planning based representations in support:

- Highway / road safety benefits

No off road parking available for a well used facility / loss of use of Farmers Arms car park is a significant blow to the facility / parking on the highway and walking along roads with no footway are dangerous for all concerned / there is no public transport serving the site hence private cars are the sole means of accessing it / not having to walk along and cross the road would greatly improve general safety for those visiting the chapel as well as general road users

- Welcome improvement to complement a very valuable local community facility

Facility is essential to serve a Chapel which hosts large services and local events / it accommodates a significant Day Care - Book share - Food parcels - Befriending service / adequate parking is vital to serve those who attend above and fund raising events which are essential to the funding of the facility / consistent with Policy BSC12 of the Development Plan, which supports improvements to community buildings in local communities

There is currently reliance on the goodwill of the neighbour for use of land for some parking

EXPIRY DATE OF APPLICATION: 08/10/2017

Extension of time requested to 13/10/2017

REASONS FOR DELAY IN DECISION (where applicable):

Awaiting determination by Committee

PLANNING ASSESSMENT:

1. THE PROPOSAL:

- 1.1 Summary of proposals
 - 1.1.1 The application proposes the construction of a parking area for use in conjunction with services and functions at Waen Chapel and its associated day care facility.
 - 1.1.2 The parking area would be served by a new access onto the classified road running south from the A55 towards Trefnant.
 - 1.1.3 The access would be on a straight section of the road opposite the parking area of the Farmer's Arms public house.
 - 1.1.4 The plans show the new parking area would be located immediately to the west of the Chapel building, on part of what is currently a large field. It would contain 36 spaces with 3 immediately adjacent to the Chapel building designated as 'disability friendly parking bays'. A new tarmacadam surfaced pedestrian link is shown from the parking area to the front of the Chapel, which in turn links to the Chapel House.
 - 1.1.5 The submitted plans show details of visibility splays along the highway, and new hedgerow planting around the parking area.
 - 1.1.6 Members are referred to the plans at the front of the report which show the details of the proposals.
 - 1.1.7 The Chapel and its day care facility are currently served by an access and limited off road parking / drop off area in front of the Chapel House, which was the subject of a planning approval in 2014. There is space for at most 3 vehicles to park clear of the turning area in this area.
 - 1.1.8 The application is accompanied by a 7 page Planning Support Statement which outlines the background to the proposal and the need for an off-road parking area to serve the Chapel. This explains:
 - The fact that the Chapel has never had a parking area under its own control and has been reliant on use of the Farmers Arms car park under an informal agreement for 15 years, or otherwise on parking along the public highways around the site
 - o The recent termination of the 'agreement' for use of the Farmers Arms car park
 - The problems arising from the absence of dedicated off road parking, primarily from vehicles being parked on the public highway and patrons having to walk along roads with no footways, with attendant dangers
 - The active use of the Chapel for services, community functions, events, a day care and outreach service; with some events generating attendances in excess of 100

- The highway safety benefits of the scheme, removing the dangers and inconvenience of on road parking, providing safe and convenient access to the Chapel for patrons.
- The care taken in the design of the scheme to provide a safe access with clear visibility along a straight section of the road; and to limit visual impact through new planting
- The overriding need for the facility which addresses any concerns over use of agricultural land.

1.2 Description of site and surroundings

- 1.2.1 Waen Chapel and the Chapel House (Ty Capel) are located on the west side of a classified road which runs south from the A55 past the Farmers Arms public house towards Trefnant.
- 1.2.2 The two buildings are physically linked to one another. There is a pedestrian access from the road at the front of the Chapel. Ty Capel was also served by a pedestrian access until the creation of the current vehicular access and small parking area in early 2013. It is understood that Ty Capel has been occupied as the caretaker's dwelling in connection with the Chapel.
- 1.2.3 There is a separate dwelling Awelog, sited immediately to the south of Ty Capel. This is in separate ownership and has its own vehicular access onto the road some 15 metres to the south of the existing entrance serving the Chapel / Chapel House.
- 1.2.4 As noted above, there have historically been no off road parking facilities under the control of the Chapel. Patrons have benefitted for some time from an 'arrangement' with the Farmers Arms public house some 100 metres to the north, which has permitted use of its parking area during services / functions. Otherwise patrons have no choice other than to park on the highways in the vicinity of the site and walk along the road to the Chapel.

1.3 Relevant planning constraints/considerations

1.3.1 The site is in open countryside.

1.4 Relevant planning history

1.4.1 Planning permissions have been granted for extensions to the Chapel in the mid 1970's, 2010 and 2014. These have provided space for basic kitchen / catering for users of the Chapel. Permission was also granted in 2014 for the retention of an access and parking area in front of Ty Capel, which provides a limited parking / turning / drop off area for persons with limited mobility, mainly in connection with the Outreach facility which is hosted in the Chapel.

1.5 Developments/changes since the original submission

1.5.1 None.

1.6 Other relevant background information

1.6.1 The application has been submitted in order to address long term problems of parking facilities for the Chapel.

2. DETAILS OF PLANNING HISTORY:

2/WAE/335/74 Extension to kitchen Granted 1974

47/2010/1107
Erection of single storey pitched roof extension at side of chapel Granted 05/10/2010

47/2014/0577 Retention of conservatory extension Granted 30/07/2014

47/2014/0579/ PC

Retention of previously formed vehicular access and alteration to form new disabled access and turning/parking area

GRANTED at Planning Committee - Decision dated 30/07/2014

3. RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE:

The main planning policies and guidance are considered to be:

3.1 Denbighshire Local Development Plan (adopted 4th June 2013)

Policy RD1 – Sustainable development and good standard design

Policy VOE1 - Key Areas of importance

Policy VOE5 – Conservation of natural resources

Policy ASA3 – Parking standards

3.2 Supplementary Planning Guidance
Parking Requirements in new developments

3.3 Government Policy / Guidance

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 9) November 2016 Development Control Manual November 2016 Technical Advice Notes

- TAN 12 Design
- TAN 18 Transport

4. MAIN PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

In terms of general guidance on matters relevant to the consideration of a planning application, Planning Policy Wales Edition 9, 2016 (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' (PPW section 3.1.3). 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 (PPW section 3.1.4).

Development Management Manual 2016 states that material considerations 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 (DMM section 9.4).

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 <u>Highways impact</u>
 - 4.1.3 Visual impact
 - 4.1.4 Inclusive design
 - 4.1.5 Use of agricultural land
 - 4.1.6 Ecological impact
- 4.2 In relation to the main planning considerations:

4.2.1 Principle

There are no policies in the Local Development Plan which relate directly to the principle of constructing an access and parking area in connection with an established place of assembly in open countryside. There is general advice in Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Notes on the need to ensure safe access and road safety in connection with developments / uses, and encouragement for proposals which provide for the accessibility needs of all sections of society, including those with mobility and sensory impairments. Ultimately the construction of a new access and parking area in connection with an existing long established use may be acceptable in principle in relation to general planning policy and guidance. The issues to address are whether the particular detailing of the arrangements are acceptable in terms of road safety considerations, which are addressed in the following section of the report.

4.2.2 Highways impact

Planning Policy Wales 3.1.4 confirms that factors to be taken into account in making planning decision (material considerations) must be planning matters; that is, they must be relevant to the regulation of the development and use of land in the public interest, towards the goal of sustainability. The highway impacts of a development proposal are a material consideration. 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.

Policy RD1 sets a number of site specific tests to apply to assess the acceptability of proposals, including the need to provide safe and convenient access for disabled people, pedestrians and vehicles, and adequate parking and manoeuvring space; and requires that proposals do not have an unacceptable effect on the local highway network.

These policies reflect general principles set out in Planning Policy Wales (Section 8) and TAN 18 – Transport, in support of sustainable development.

The Community Council have concerns that the car park would exacerbate existing highway safety issues.

There are two individual representations in objection expressing concerns over the highway implications of a new access and potential additional dangers for road users, including from retention of the existing access serving the Chapel, with the suggestion that the new owners of the Farmers Arms should be approached to agree continued use of that car park. There are a number of individual representations in support of the application arguing that existing arrangements are dangerous and that not having to cross the road would greatly improve general safety for those visiting the chapel as well as general road users. The Highways Officer considers that the access arrangements proposed as part of the application are acceptable, subject to conditions controlling the details of construction of the access.

In noting the concerns of the Community Council and the individual objectors, it is significant here that the Highway Officer is satisfied at the proposals having regard to the current situation, highway conditions and the visibility splays. In support of this stance, Officers would suggest the whole purpose of the proposals for the access and parking area are to alleviate what are significant existing highway dangers by providing a safer and more convenient off road parking facility for users of a long established chapel in connection with services, events or the day centre. It is considered the arrangements would bring about a clear improvement for all users of the facility, and in particular those with mobility problems. In respecting the comments made, it is difficult to conclude how the provision of a properly constructed access with reasonable visibility splays and a 36 space parking area capable of accommodating demand for larger events at the property, located immediately adjacent to the Chapel itself could do anything other than improve on what is currently a wholly unsatisfactory situation with cars parked along a public highway and patrons walking along the road to access the Chapel. It is not considered the proposals would exacerbate existing highway safety issues. There are no practical alternatives being suggested: the suggestion that the Chapel try again to negotiate use of the Farmer's Arms car park is not realistic, as the application arises from the decision of the owner of that property to stop the use in the first place – and the continued use of that car park would only perpetuate the dangers of patrons walking along the road.

4.2.3 Visual impact

Planning Policy Wales 3.1.4 confirms that factors to be taken into account in making planning decisions (material considerations) must be planning matters; that is, they must be relevant to the regulation of the development and use of land in the public interest, towards the goal of sustainability. Para 4.11.9 confirms that the visual appearance of proposed development, its scale and its relationship to its surroundings and context are material planning considerations.

Local Development Plan Policy RD 1 test (i) requires due regard to issues of siting, layout, form, character, design, materials, aspect, microclimate and intensity of use of land / buildings and spaces between buildings, which are matters relevant to the visual impact of development; test (vi) requires that development does not unacceptably affect prominent public views into, out of, or across any settlement or area of open countryside; test (vi) requires the incorporation of existing landscape or other features, takes account of site contours, and changes in levels and prominent skylines; and test (xiii) requires the incorporation of suitable landscaping measures to protect and enhance development in its local context.

The Community Council have objected on the basis of the parking area being too large and out of character in a rural position, and that it would represent sporadic development in open rural countryside. There are no individual representations expressing concerns over the visual impact of the proposals.

In respecting the comments of the Community Council, it is not agreed that the development of an access and parking area of the size proposed would be out of character or have an unacceptable visual impact in this rural location, to justify refusal of permission. The site is in open countryside, but is not in an AONB or area with a specific landscape designation. The development is minor in nature and relates to a long established community facility. There are proposals to plant additional hedgerows to mitigate the visual impact of the parking area. The site is not in a prominent location and the visual impacts would only be apparent locally when passing along a short section of the road immediately alongside it. The area covered by the parking area is limited and would not impact adversely on views from higher ground in the Clwydian Range AONB, the boundary of which is some 2km to the east. There are many examples of developments in association with rural businesses and non residential premises (such as the car park of the Farmers Arms, and a range of agricultural developments) which it is suggested are acceptable in the local landscape as small scale, low impact development ancillary to existing uses.

4.2.4 Inclusive design

The requirement to embody the principles of inclusive design in development proposals is set out in Planning Policy Wales (Section 3.4) which outlines accessibility considerations to be given to all development proposals, reflected in TAN 12 Design, TAN 18 Transport, and Policy RD1 of the Local Development Plan, referred to previously.

The proposals are geared at providing a suitable access and parking facility off the highway for use by vehicles carrying persons with limited mobility, hence are compatible with the objectives outlined in the above guidance.

4.1.5 <u>Use of agricultural land</u>

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. Such 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.

There is one individual representations on the application raising concerns over use of agricultural land.

In relation to this issue, the applicant's agent has advised that historically, highways officers have suggested that off-road parking would be a key benefit for the chapel, but there has been no land available for one nor the funding. He confirms both are in place as the owner is prepared to enter a lease, and that the highway safety consideration of providing off-road parking for a chapel capable of holding events for more than 100 attendees is considered an overriding need on highway safety grounds; the land is immediately adjacent to the chapel and a car park serving the chapel could not be sited elsewhere to be fit for purpose; there is no other alternative, the land is less than 1 ha in areas and is currently given over to grazing and would not amount to any strategic loss of best and most versatile land. Officers' conclusion is that in the circumstances, there are no strong agricultural land grounds for refusing a permission.

4.2.6 Ecological impacts

Policy VOE 5 requires due assessment of potential impacts on protected species or designated sites of nature conservation, including mitigation proposals, and suggests that permission should not be granted where proposals are likely to cause significant harm to such interests.

Policy VOE 1 seeks to protect statutory sites for nature conservation from development that would adversely affect them.

Planning Policy Wales 3.1.4 confirms that factors to be taken into account in making planning decisions (material considerations) must be planning matters; that is, they must be relevant to the regulation of the development and use of land in the public interest, towards the goal of sustainability. The biodiversity / ecological impacts of a development proposal are a material consideration.

This reflects policy and guidance in Planning Policy Wales (Section 5.2), current legislation and SPG 18 – Nature Conservation and Species Protection, which stress the importance of the planning system in meeting biodiversity objectives through promoting approaches to development which create new opportunities to enhance biodiversity, prevent biodiversity losses, or compensate for losses where damage is unavoidable.

There are no comments from the Community Council in relation to the ecological impacts of the development, but the individual objector refers to the presence of newts and badgers in the area.

The County Ecologist has no objections subject to inclusion of conditions requiring the mitigation measures outlined in the submission to be implemented.

On the basis of the Ecologist's comments, it is considered that there are no adverse ecological effects likely to arise from the proposals. The Ecologist's requirements can be met through the inclusion of a suitable condition on a permission.

Other matters

Community Council and objectors comments

The report above covers the land use planning concerns raised in the responses from the Community Council and objectors. In relation to the other matters raised:

the car park is too large for its intended purpose;
 It is not considered this is a reasonable basis to oppose the application. The applicant's agent has explained that following closure of other Chapels at Rhuallt and Tremerchion, the Waen Chapel is busier than ever, is used for baptisms, funeral services, and memorial

services; it hosts large community services, fairs, etc where attendances can exceed 100 people; and the Outreach service all generate the need for a parking facility of an adequate size for the Chapel to remain an attractive and successful venue. In this context, a 36 space parking area seems a relatively modest size to cater for the demands of the larger events / services hosted at the premises. It is not clear what harm the Community Council or objectors identify would arise from the proposed size of the car park.

- the application has only been encouraged by the extension of the adjoining Chapel House. (did that have permission?).

The extensions to the Chapel House have been the subject of planning applications and have been granted permission.

The objectors' other comments

Contents / accuracy of the submitted plans

There is no requirement for an applicant to show every detail of existing development which is located away from an application site. The extensions to the Chapel House/ Chapel also referred to by the Community Council are developments which have been the subject of previous applications and permissions. These are not matters of direct relevance to the application in front of the Committee. The site and location plans clearly show the location of the proposed access and car park relative to the Chapel, nearby properties and highways.

Fears over future developments

The Authority has to deal with the application submitted. Fears / rumours over the landowner's intentions for further development are not a relevant material consideration. Ultimately any proposals to develop the land for other uses are likely to require planning permission and would have to go through the normal application process, giving the local community full opportunity to make representations.

The development would not serve the local community

Officers would not consider this statement is relevant to consideration of the application. In any event, the volume of representations in support of the application suggests there is considerable local community value attached to the uses accommodated at the Chapel. The suggestion that an existing community hall in another location should be used as an alternative to the Chapel is not one which should be attached any weight in the consideration of this application, as it is the proposal in front of the Council which has to be determined on its land use planning merits.

Well - being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 imposes a duty on the Council not only to carry out sustainable development, but also to take reasonable steps in exercising its functions to meet its sustainable development (or well-being) objectives. The Act sets a requirement to demonstrate in relation to each application determined, how the development complies with the Act.

The report on this application has been drafted with regard to the Council's duty and the "sustainable development principle", as set out in the 2015 Act. The recommendation takes account of the requirement to ensure that present needs are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is therefore considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable impact upon the achievement of well-being objectives as a result of the proposed recommendation.

5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

5.1 The application seeks to provide off road parking facilities immediately adjacent to the Chapel to accommodate vehicles of patrons attending services and events, and in connection with the Outreach service which uses the Chapel and attached extensions.

- 5.2 Historically, the Chapel has had to rely on an informal agreement with the Farmers Arms to the north for use of its car park, and patrons have parked along the highways in the vicinity. This has been an unsatisfactory arrangement creating potential dangers to all road users as patrons have had no choice other than to walk along the road to access the Chapel. The road has no footway and there is a bend in the road close to the front entrance of the Chapel which adds further to the dangers as it limits visibility of pedestrians walking along the highway for drivers of vehicles. The parking arrangement with the Farmers Arms has been terminated, and whilst it is understood there has been an informal agreement with the owner of an adjoining property for some parking of vehicles, the prospect of parking along the highway for those attending services and activities at the Chapel remains, with its attendant dangers.
- 5.3 Consultation responses are referred to in detail in the report. The Community Council have concerns over the proposals. The Highway Officer and the Ecologist have no objections subject to imposition of conditions. There is one individual representation expressing objections and a number offering strong support for the application as an essential development to support the Chapel and Community uses it hosts.
- **5.4** In respecting the comments, and for the reasons outlined in the report, Officers consider the proposals are wholly reasonable and would address a significant issue in this location, and are worthy of support.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT subject to the following conditions:-

1. The development to which this permission relates shall be begun no later than 11th October 2022.

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

- 2. 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) Proposed access (Drawing No. 2) received 14 August 2017
 - (ii) Existing and proposed site plan (Drawing No. 1) received 14 August 2017
 - (iii) Location plan received 14 August 2017

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

3. All planting, seeding or turfing shown on the proposed plans shall be completed no later than the first planting and seeding season following the bringing into use of the parking area. Any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from being planted die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the local planning authority gives written approval to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of visual and residential amenity

4. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the reasonable avoidance measures set out in Appendix 3 of PROTECTED SPECIES ASSESSMENT, LAND ADJACENT TO WAEN CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL, WAEN, ST ASAPH – Clwydian Ecology (document ref no. 2067552, received 25-08-2017) in respect of great crested newt avoidance measures; and the landscaping schedule detailed in DG1 – Proposed Site Plan (document ref no. 2067557, received 25-08-2017) in respect of the specification, planting, and maintenance of the new hedgerow (H1).

Reason: In order to protect ecological interests.