

Matters Arising Statement

From: Rhys Davies, Cadnant Planning

Date: 16 August 2016

Subject: Hearing Session 5
Tourism - Issues 16-19

Introduction

1.1 Cadnant Planning Ltd submitted objections to a number of the tourism policies and explanatory text. These were given the following representation numbers: 485; 486; 467; 468; 472; 473; 475; 483; & 470.

Matters to be addressed

Does the Plan, through Strategic Policy PS11 and Policies TWR1 and TWR2 provide an appropriate framework for the consideration of proposals for new or enhanced tourism and leisure facilities and accommodation?

1.2 Policy TWR 2 requires that new build tourist accommodation must either be located within a development boundary, or makes use of a suitable previously developed site. This is contrary to advice in Planning Policy Wales at paragraph 7.3.3 which states that:

“Local planning authorities should adopt a positive approach to development associated with farm diversification in rural areas, irrespective of whether farms are served by public transport. While initial consideration should be given to adapting existing farm buildings⁹, the provision of a sensitively designed new building on a working farm within existing farm complexes may be appropriate where a conversion opportunity does not exist.”

1.3 Policy TWR2 effectively places an embargo on new build tourist accommodation as part of an agricultural diversification scheme which conflicts with the advice in PPW.

Does Policy TWR3 achieve an appropriate balance of provision and restraint in relation to existing and proposed development?

- 1.4 Policy TWR 3 does not achieve an appropriate balance as it imposes an embargo on additional chalets and static caravans within the AONB. Our objection to the Deposit Plan has not been addressed. We can point to small scale sensitive schemes to improve the provision of holiday caravans on sites within the AONB on Anglesey and Gwynedd where additional units were essential to ensure comprehensive improvements were viable, whilst striking a balance with a need to preserve the character on the AONB. For example, recent schemes have been implemented at Capel Elen, Lligwy and Porthllongdy, Red Wharf Bay where more than 10 additional static caravan pitches were provided with no harm to the AONB. We would ask that the Inspector visits these recently completed schemes.

Does Policy TWR4 comply with national planning guidance in terms of year round occupancy and is the use of a condition restricting the operational period appropriate?

- 1.5 Placing conditions on these developments can ensure that holiday accommodation is used for its intended purpose and does not become a permanent place of residence. However, the suggestion that conditions will be used to restrict the operational period is contrary to national planning guidance. Model conditions can be used to ensure that holiday accommodation is used for its intended purpose. Those conditions do not restrict the operational period but are normally worded as follows:
- 1.6 The development shall be occupied as holiday accommodation only and shall not be occupied as a person's sole or main place of residence. An up to date register shall be kept at the holiday accommodation hereby permitted and be made available for inspection by the local planning authority upon request. The register shall contain details of the names of all of the occupiers of the accommodation, their main home addresses and their date of arrival and departure from the accommodation.

Does Policy TWR5 provide adequate protection to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Special Landscape Areas? Does the policy provide clarity on the type of development which would be acceptable on existing touring caravan sites?

- 1.7 The policy is not clear and the explanatory text is used to try to exclude features such as hardstanding bases, drainage and water supplies which are all now expected on modern touring caravan sites. The concerns set out in our original objection and appended to this statement remain to be addressed. These concerns are echoed by others. For example the explanatory text advises that any proposals that include structures with mains water and drainage will be dealt with under Policy TWR3. In effect this will mean that any touring caravan sites and glamping sites will fall to be considered under the static caravan policy. This will, in practice, lead to an embargo on the provision of new high quality touring and glamping pitches.

Appendix – Summary of objections:

REP ID 467:

(Object) POLICY TWR5 - Deposit Joint Local Development Plan

Respondent: **Cadnant Planning (Mr Rhys Davies) [1366]**

We object to criteria 3 and 7 of policy TWR 5

Changes to Plan:

 criterion 3 could be amended to read:

 capable of being removed off the site if the use has been discontinued.

Document is not Sound

Full Text

An objection is made to criterion 3 of this policy as many forms of alternative camping do require physical connection to the ground. The removal of this connection out of season may not be necessary or appropriate in many cases. For example, with the extended holiday season delivering economic benefits often for all but a short 6 week break in mid-winter it would be unsustainable to remove and store tent or camping pod bases for such a short period. The retention of such bases would be commensurate with the retention of hard surfaced under touring caravan pitches.

Criterion 7 should be deleted as touring or alternative camping units/large tents and pods etc should not need to be removed when not in use. Policy should only be concerned with the land use and appearance of the touring caravans or alternative form of camping. For example, the land use impact and visual appearance of a touring caravan or tent is no different should that pitch be occupied by a single "seasonal" caravan or tent or by several caravans or tents throughout the season.

REP ID: 468

(Object) 7.3.74 - Deposit Joint Local Development Plan

Respondent: **Cadnant Planning (Mr Rhys Davies) [1366]**

The words "When not in use and during the winter months all units should be removed from the site" should be deleted as touring caravans, tents and camping pods can stay on the land "when not in use". Additionally, many touring caravan and alternative camping sites are open during some but not all of the "winter months". the text which requires their removal during winter months therefore has the effect of shortening the holiday season contrary to national policy .

Changes to Plan:

delete "when not in use and during the winter months"

Document is not Sound

Rep ID: 470

(Object) 7.3.76 - Deposit Joint Local Development Plan

Respondent: **Cadnant Planning (Mr Rhys Davies) [1366]**

The wording of paragraph 7.3.76 contradicts the aims of Policy TWR5 which is to facilitate the establishment of high quality touring and camping sites in appropriate locations and recognises the contribution made by high quality touring and camping sites to the range of holiday accommodation available for visitors.

The restriction to limit any temporary structures to basic facilities with no drainage or water will inhibit the provision of high quality touring and camping sites. The highest quality alternative camping sites do need to provide water and drainage connections that are now sought by high spend tourists.

Changes to Plan:

Delete the wording:

They should only provide basic facilities for sleeping, seating and eating without installation of water services or provision of drainage facilities for WC, showers and washing. This ensures that such structures do not generate a level of permanence that could increase the level of landscape impact and site restoration should removal of the structures be required

Document is not Sound

REP ID: 472

(Object) 7.3.75 - Deposit Joint Local Development Plan

Respondent: **Cadnant Planning (Mr Rhys Davies) [1366]**

The extent and acceptability of areas of hard standings can be adequately assessed under Policy TWR 5 without the need to have an effective "embargo" as set out within para. 7.3.75

Changes to Plan:

Delete "The use of concrete bases is not considered acceptable"

Document is not Sound

REP ID: 475

(Object) 7.3.78 - Deposit Joint Local Development Plan

Respondent: **Cadnant Planning (Mr Rhys Davies) [1366]**

This policy is unduly restrictive and contrary to National Planning Policy as the economic benefits of many forms of alternative camping sites can be extended to periods covering almost 12 months.

Changes to Plan:

Amend the text to read limiting the operational period of the site to between 1st March and 6th January the following year.

Document is not Sound

REP ID: 483

(Object) POLICY TWR3 - Deposit Joint Local Development Plan

Respondent: **Cadnant Planning (Mr Rhys Davies) [1366]**

The policy effectively places an embargo on additional static caravans within the AONB and SLA's. This provides no incentive to owners and operators to bring forward improvements to their sites. The effective embargo on additional caravans is contrary to National Planning Policy which places an increased emphasis on the economic benefits of tourism.

Full Text:

As currently drafted Policy TWR3 does not meet the tests of soundness in terms of consistency/coherence and effectiveness. It is widely recognised within national planning policy that the caravan sector and its tourism role is vitally important within, in particular rural areas. It is also acknowledged within the LDP Topic Paper on Tourism that across the caravan industry is important across the Plan area and that it provides significant contributions to the local economy. It is also acknowledged that many of the existing caravan parks are located within AONB and SLA's.

The policy effectively places an embargo on additional static caravans within these areas and, as such is contrary to National Planning Policy which places an increasing emphasis on the economic benefits of tourism.

There are many recent examples within Gwynedd and Anglesey where significant economic benefits have followed from the re-development and re-configuration of caravan sites within the AONB's and SLA's. These benefits have been delivered at sites such as Plas Coch, Capel Elen, and Porthllondy on Anglesey without detriment to the character and appearance of those areas. The proposals have effectively delivered economic benefits alongside wider upgrades to on-site facilities and environmental and biodiversity improvements.

The plan strategy of imposing an effective embargo on additional caravans is contrary to national policy and at odds with the approach taken by adjoining Local Planning Authorities such as Conwy CBC who have recognised specifically the benefits that the extension of such sites can deliver to the rural economy. PPW acknowledges at 11.2.7 that the development plan should encourage the diversification of farm enterprises and other parts of the rural economy for appropriate tourism, sport, recreation and leisure uses. As currently drafted Policy TWR3 negates the contribution that a significant part of the rural economy can make towards rural diversification and employment.

Each application for either an extension to an existing caravan site or addition to the number of caravans on a particular site can be assessed against other policies within the plan which protect the AONB and SLA's. As such it is inappropriate to introduce this embargo within TWR3.

Added to the inappropriateness of imposing the cap on numbers of caravans within the AONB and SLA's it should be noted that sites within these areas are not likely to be subject to any environmental or other improvements as there will be no incentive or balancing benefit for site owners and operators to bring forward those improvements.

Changes to Plan:

A consistent policy approach should apply to all static holiday caravan sites within Gwynedd and Anglesey regardless of whether sites are within the AONB or SLA.

Document is not Sound

We wish to strongly object to the embargo on additional static caravans within the AONB and SLA's and wish to set out at a hearing session the clear benefits that have been delivered from very recent developments within AONB's and SLA's that would otherwise be precluded by the draft policy.

REP ID: 485

(Object) 7.3.63 - Deposit Joint Local Development Plan

Respondent: **Cadnant Planning (Mr Rhys Davies) [1366]**

Para 7.3.63 is inconsistent with Policy TWR3 which allows extensions to sites regardless of the conclusion of the sensitivity and capacity study.

Additionally, it is clear that the study has not considered the capacity of the area in such detail as to be able to conclude that there is "no capacity" for further static caravan/chalet park development or extensions"

Full Text:

We object to the wording of para 7.3.63. The sensitivity and capacity study has clearly not assessed the scope for additions to each site in detail. There are numerous recent examples of where extensions, including additional numbers of caravans, have been permitted on Anglesey and Gwynedd without detriment to the character and appearance of the AONB and SLA's. Many of these developments have delivered benefits to the appearance of the areas in general and also biodiversity and other environmental improvements. The text at para 7.3.63 is inconsistent with Policy TWR 3 as the policy allows extensions to sites within the AONB and SLA's in any event. However, we question the viability of these proposed extensions without an ability to increase the number of caravans.

Changes to Plan:

Delete para 7.3.63

Document is not Sound

Soundness Test(s):

- iii. Test C1: it is a land use plan which has regard to other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to the area or to adjoining areas
- vii. Test CE1: the plan sets out a coherent strategy from which its policies and allocations logically flow and, where cross boundary issues are relevant, it is compatible with the development plans prepared by neighbouring authorities
- viii. Test CE2: the strategy, policies and allocations are realistic and appropriate having considered the relevant alternatives and are founded on a robust and credible evidence base
- ix. Test CE3: there are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring
- x. Test CE4: it is reasonably flexible to enable it to deal with changing circumstances

REP ID: 486

(Object) 7.3.64 - Deposit Joint Local Development Plan

Respondent: **Cadnant Planning (Mr Rhys Davies) [1366]**

This should be deleted as set out in our response to TWR3

Changes to Plan:

Delete para. 7.3.64

Document is not Sound