

PENRHOS, CAE GLAS & KINGSLAND, HOLYHEAD

APPLICATION NUMBER 46C427K/TR/EIA/ECON

Responses to Impact on Woodland assessment received from Ed Henderson
on 14/02/2013 - PLANIT RESPONSE

1 Impact on Trees and Woodland

Comment: We do not have an overlay of the indicative layout on the tree compartments; within Cae Glas estimates have been made on the areas potentially effected.

Response: This has now been provided within the Methodology for development within woodland blocks – attached as Appendix A to this document

2 Penrhos.

Comment: An area of gardens around Penrhos Farm has not been surveyed for the assessment

Response: These areas have now been surveyed and the complete assessment is provided in Appendix B. The detailed survey identified no major issues with the current strategy, a key constraint being a line of mature yew trees running east/ west along the boundary of the walled garden - the current masterplan shows a garden space left available for this feature. In addition the number of higher quality trees and small groups could be retained around the proposed cottages to maintain an element of established tree cover.

W64 and Quillet - Lodges

Comment: It is unclear if the proposed development would be designed around the existing tree groups or if all the interior of the woodland would be removed.

Response: A detailed response to development within the Quillet area is provided with the Methodology for development within woodland blocks – attached as Appendix A to this document. The woodland strategy for this area is to retain a large proportion of the tree stock within the area, protecting large tree groups to form an attractive buffer between lodge 'clusters'. Unlike the adjacent woodland areas, the age of the trees within this area makes relocation to other areas of the Quillet, of the native climax species – such as oak and ash, a viable option where there is conflict with services, access and lodge placement. This will be supplemented with a variety of new tree planting including native evergreen species. The general good health and vigour of the young tree stock is an excellent indicator of future growth potential, and we are confident that the woodland would continue to develop in conjunction with the new development.

W63, W68 and W65 – Estate Cottages

Comment: The indicative Layout would appear to follow the second option showing that most of the tree cover within the walled enclosures (Estate Cottages) would be removed. This includes the un-surveyed areas surrounding Penrhos Farm.

Response: A detailed response to development within the Estate Cottages area is provided with the Methodology for development within woodland blocks – attached as Appendix A to this document.

The approach to the woodland management of the former walled gardens is to identify and retain the high value specimen tree stock in the area, remove younger self seeded blocks, and provide new planting to reinstate the historic character of the spaces. Within the heart of the masterplan are numerous larger green spaces that allow important woodland connections across the area and larger blocks of the woodland to remain intact – subject to survey and assessment.

All of the areas identified for Estate Cottages have now been surveyed formally and are included in Appendix B to this document.

Comment: An area of lodges is shown on the indicative layout for the eastern area of W68. This would result in fragmentation if the wooded area if existing trees were retained, and should be avoided to the extent noted in the tree report.

Response: To reduce the impacts on this woodland block from the new leisure village, the parking within this area has been removed and the footprint of development reduced - please refer to figure 1 below which shows the Illustrative Masterplan layout for this area. The whole of W68 is now shown as retained which ensures that the important buffer to the A55 is maintained. Additional proposed planting along this boundary will reinforce this woodland block.

Figure 1
Excerpt from Illustrative Masterplan
PL1114.P.GA100 revJ



A detailed response to development within the eastern W63 woodland area is also provided with the Methodology for development within woodland blocks – attached as Appendix A to this document.

The methodology outlines a light touch approach to this area of woodland with a significant edge buffer of 20m protected to the northern boundary and lodges placed within the central area around the underlying historic pathway network. The detailed tree survey will be used to identify existing and potential clearance areas within the woodland as well as key specimens to be protected. Root protection areas will be identified and protected, except where it is demonstrated that lodges or infrastructure could be provided with minimal impact to the trees.

Comment: Whilst there may be potential to retain the individually noted trees, the layout would also need to respect the appropriate buffer zones for the avenue of trees of W65.

Response: The woodland strategy promotes the retention and protection of individual trees as identified in the assessment. The key tree avenue of W65 is retained within the proposals and will be protected in accordance with the required RPA protection areas of 'BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Recommendations.'

G59, W60 – Bathing House

Comment: As shown in the LVIAs photomontage P13A, W60 and G59 are important in providing a backdrop and screening for proposed redevelopment of the bathing house and lodges to the rear. In this respect, their retention is important.

Response: Agreed. The extent of effected woodland is now demonstrated in the woodland block overlay - provided within the Methodology for development within woodland blocks – attached as Appendix A to this document.

Infrastructure.

Comment: The existing routes within the site are bounded by trees and would be restrictive in their current condition for construction vehicles.

Response: It is acknowledged that the RPA of trees immediately adjacent to key roadways may be effected by roadway improvements. To minimise impact construction routes and roadways will be selected that avoid key specimens or groups of particular value identified during the detailed survey. Initial thoughts on potential construction routes are provided within the detailed plans that are included within the Methodology for development within woodland blocks – attached as Appendix A to this document. Where conflicts are identified, special construction methods will be considered to minimise excavations for roads and services, with a view to reducing impact to an area not greater than 20% of the total RPA. W65 in particular is proposed as a pedestrian route only, with protection provided to BS:5837 which outlines how the RPA area would be protected during the construction phase. The proposed permanent pathways would be designed as minimal impact construction (no dig) with informal path drainage – reducing the need for service trenches and excavation.

W45 – Parking

Comment: The form of the individual trees indicate that it is not suitable for heavy thinning and dense parking layout would require the area to be cleared as it would be difficult to respect the probable RPA for individual trees.

Response: A detailed response to development within the W45 woodland area is provided with the Methodology for development within woodland blocks – attached as Appendix A to this document. The strategy proposes that the parking provision is consolidated into a compact area within the woodland to minimise the land take and allow for significant buffers to be retained around the edge of the woodland block. This would involve significant clearance of a smaller area, although the detailed tree survey will identify if particular specimens or small groups could be retained within the layout with minimal impact on RPA's.

3 Cae Glas

Comment: Having viewed the trees, it would seem likely that denser parts of the compartment if opened up by thinning, would be very susceptible to wind damage. Due to the limited green crown of the trees, they are unlikely to provide an attractive setting for built development until further landscaping would be established.

Response: A detailed response to development within the Cae Glas woodland areas is provided with the Methodology for development within woodland blocks – this also includes mapping showing the specific woodland areas effected.

Subject to more detailed survey and assessment in line with the aforementioned methodology, specifically with regards to wind throw, the proposals allow for potential clear fell of some woodland blocks. If possible smaller intact blocks will be retained to provide context and buffer to development – and a potential scenario for this is outlined in the methodology. New infrastructure and services will be designed to avoid any retained tree stock, with low impact pedestrian routes directed within woodland. Significant new native woodland planting is proposed within the lodge areas, although it is acknowledged that this will take some time to fully establish.

W22 Hotel

Comment: This is the largest area of higher value trees on the site. Without further survey work it is not possible to comment on the suitability of a hotel within the boundary of the woodland. Open ground near the woodland, while retaining the woodland as a setting for the hotel may be more

appropriate.

Response: The masterplan proposes a new hotel facility that is integrated into the Tre Gof farmstead remains – utilising the existing walls and vegetation to provide a high quality and unique setting. The farmstead also sits within a natural ‘low spot’ within the site that in conjunction with the surrounding trees, helps to minimise the visual impact of the development. It is acknowledged that although the footprint of the building and construction zone would be kept to an absolute minimum, there would be tree loss both within the boundary of the farmstead and in the immediate adjacent areas. Woodland Block G32 would be retained and incorporated into a small garden area within the hotel walls.

The rational for the design of the Hotel and its integration into the farmstead remains is detailed within the Design and Access Statement (pp140-141).

Following an additional Abouricultural Constraints Plan of the farmstead - attached as Appendix B to this document - it is noted that the positioning of a hotel building on the site is possible, as the removal of individual trees and small groups within the farm footprint should not significantly affect the function of this high value woodland. It is acknowledged that consideration will be required during the detailed design stage of the operational area needed for the building and stand off distances - this being provided largely within the footprint of the existing farm and the areas of smaller lower value trees immediately adjacent to it. A notional Strategy plan for the hotel building is provided in Appendix A.

4 Mitigation

Comment: Based on the indicative layout the area of tree loss is not easily quantifiable, it is not clear to what extent trees can be retained in some of the development areas proposed. Where trees are retained, they may be no longer publicly accessible.

Response: Mapping and woodland quantities have now been provided within the Methodology for development within woodland blocks – attached as Appendix A to this document.

This supplements the overall woodland strategy plans which are contained within the Design and Access Statement that supports the application (pp90 & 132).

Whilst there is a demonstrable increase in woodland with public access in Cae Glas, all retained and proposed new woodland will be managed through a comprehensive 10-20 year active management plan which will promote improvements to access, habitat and biodiversity.

In summary, the table below outlines the woodland areas affected and created by development. This is meant as a guide only, to assist with overall woodland assessment:

Penrhos

The approximate area of woodland on site	32ha
Approximate area of woodland cover lost to development	6.75ha
Approximate area of new woodland planting	4.3ha
Net Loss in woodland cover	2.45ha

Cae Glas

The approximate area of woodland on site	41.5ha
Approximate area of woodland cover lost to development	6.71ha
Approximate area of new woodland planting	11ha
Net Gain in woodland cover	4.29ha

Overall

Overall total area of woodland cover lost to development	13.46ha
Overall total area of new woodland planting	15.30ha
Net Gain in Woodland cover	1.84ha
(additional Tree Planting to lodge areas within Cae Glas)	4.8ha

Detailed Breakdown

Penrhos

Anticipated areas of woodland cover lost to development:-

W63 - Eastern block	(assumed 30% tree loss)	0.3ha	catA
W63 - Estate Cottages	(assumed 70% tree loss)	2.5ha	catA
W71 - Buffer Edge	(assumed 20% tree loss)	0.25ha	catC
W64 - Quillet Edge	(assumed 50% tree loss)	0.38ha	catC
The Quillet	(assumed 50% loss/ (of which 30% is relocated))	2.03ha	/
W45 - Woodland Parking (including access roadway)	(assumed clear fell of areas)	1.15ha	catB
G66, G62, G61	(assumed clear fell of areas)	0.14ha	catB/C

Approximate area of woodland cover lost to development

6.75ha

Cae Glas

Anticipated areas of woodland cover lost to development:-

W22 - Tre Gof Farmstead	(assumed clear fell of identified area)	0.19ha	catA
W19/20 - Woodland Parking	(assumed 90% loss of identified area)	0.32ha	catB/C
W12-14 &G24-28 - Lodges	(assumed clear fell)	4.57ha	catC
W15-17 - Lodges	(assumed clear fell of identified area)	0.67ha	catB/C
W7 - Lodges	(assumed clear fell)	0.19ha	catC
W1,2,9,10,11 - Access Road	(assumed clear fell of identified areas)	0.38ha	catB/C
G34 - Lodges	(assumed 50% tree loss)	0.32ha	catC
W25 - Visitor Centre	(assumed clear fell of identified area)	0.07ha	catC

Approximate area of woodland cover lost to development Cae Glas

6.71ha

Public Access

Penrhos

Existing area of woodland with managed public access	30.50ha
Proposed new and retained woodland with managed public access	15.6ha

Cae Glas

Existing area of woodland with managed public access	0.0ha
Proposed new and retained woodland with managed public access	38.8ha

Overall net gain in public access to woodland areas

20.89ha

Comment: The value of the areas lost and retained should also be considered. Replacements would not be viewed purely in quantitate terms but also in terms of quality and public access.

Response: Woodland blocks have now been mapped over the proposed layout, which allows consideration of the quality of woodland impacted - provided within the Methodology for development within woodland blocks – attached as Appendix A to this document.

Categories of woodland lost and public access is provided in the table above, which allow overall woodland value and accessibility to be fully considered in relation to the new development

5 Conclusion

Penrhos

5.1 As discussed in section 4, although lodge placement will have an impact on the current Cat A woodland, the development will introduce a comprehensive management program for all the woodland areas on the site, with an aspiration to raise the quality to Cat A in the medium to long term. This would be in addition to the development and maturity of new planting as well as additional publicly accessible woodland within the adjacent Cae Glas site.

5.2 Agree. The detailed proposals for the Quillet demonstrate how woodland cover would be maintained in conjunction with Lodge development.

5.3 As discussed in section 2, the detailed strategy plan for this woodland block indicates low density lodge development with minimal tree removal at the core of the woodland and extensive buffers to the northern and eastern edges. The strategy would exploit the existing clear areas within the wood and any new areas proposed as part of the proposed management plan. Consideration of impacts to the RPA's of the identified tree stock will guide lodge placement and ultimately dictate both construction and permanent access routes into the woodland area.

5.4 The proposals seek to find an appropriate balance between density of development and retention of tree stock within the site. The detailed plans provided within Appendix A outline an approach to development and consideration of construction requirements, whilst also being realistic on the likely tree retention possible – as discussed within sections 2&3 the target percentage of tree retention is now stated, and should help guide assessment of impact. It is also reiterated that a considerable area of woodland is retained within the coastal park for public use and that all woodland areas would be subject to a comprehensive woodland management plan that seeks to maintain and ultimately enhance the entire woodland stock within the site.

Cae Glas

5.5 Agree. Detailed mapping contained within Appendix A illustrates the extent of woodland areas protected and enhanced through the development and also the quantum of woodland with managed public access.

5.6 Detailed mapping is now provided within Appendix A to demonstrate the extent of trees effected by the development and also the areas of new planting to be provided. These should be read in conjunction with the relevant woodland sections within the Design and Access Statement provided to support this application (pp90 &132). As already stated, one aim of the proposed woodland management plan for the site will be to nurture the areas of lower grade/ younger woodland so that they ultimately mature into higher category blocks.

5.7 As stated in sections 2&3, mapping is now provided in Appendix A that illustrates the extent of woodland effected, retained and where public access is altered. It should be noted that particular emphasis has been placed on retention of important woodland buffers to both the Coastal Park and also the A55 corridor, with new woodland planting introduced where appropriate to further reinforce these buffer zones. The mapping indicates significant increases in the quantum of high quality woodland that has been opened up to public access within Cae Glas, and the retention of considerable areas of woodland within Penrhos that will be maintained as a public coastal park. It is considered that in addition to a proposed woodland management plan, these proposals would lead to an overall improvement in tree cover and accessibility within the area in the short to medium term.

Recommendations

- 1: Full assessments have now been completed for the Penrhos farm dwellings and gardens – Appendix B
- 2: Typical woodland strategy drawings have been provided with the Methodology for development within woodland blocks – attached as Appendix A to this document. It should be noted that exact construction routes will be subject to further detailed tree survey, assessment, and detailed layout proposals.
- 3: Typical woodland strategy drawings for parking within the W45 woodland block is provided in the Methodology for development within woodland blocks – attached as Appendix A to this document.
- 4: Detailed mapping for woodland across both sites, indicating public access is provided in the Methodology for development within woodland blocks – attached as Appendix A to this document.
- 5: Detailed mapping for woodland across both sites, indicating woodland lost vs woodland available for public access is provided in the Methodology for development within woodland blocks – attached as Appendix A to this document.