



JMS PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT LIMITED

PLANNING STATEMENT

**IN SUPPORT OF A PRE-APPLICATION
CONSULTATION FOR NEW ROADSIDE SERVICE**

**LAND ADJACENT TO MEIFOD ROUNDABOUT
AT THE
NEW CAERNARFON BONTNEWYDD BYPASS (A487)
FFORDD BONT SAINT
BONTNEWYDD
CAERNARFON
GWYNEDD**

October 2023

Proposal: Planning Statement, Land at the new Caernarfon Bontnewydd Bypass

Client: Malcolm Brymer

Date: October 2023

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Malcolm Brymer and is submitted in support of a pre-application consultation for the development of a spacious new roadside service at land adjacent to Meifod Roundabout at the new Caernarfon Bontnewydd Bypass (A487) along Ffordd Bont Saint, Bontnewydd, Gwynedd. The proposed forward thinking development is anticipated to comprise of a carefully designed forecourt, canopy, provision of new underground fuel tanks and associated pipework, sales building, provision of rapid electric vehicle (EV) charging points throughout the development, HGV and coaches refuelling facilities and parking spaces, provision of 169 car parking spaces, erection of a drive thru coffee shop and drive-thru restaurant, park and rest/ride, tourism information panel and picnic area, biodiversity enhancements, connectivity with existing footpaths, landscaping and associated works.
- 1.2 The development of a new service station and associated facilities adjacent to the new Caernarfon Bontnewydd Bypass will provide essential roadside infrastructure in an appropriate location and is of significant merit. Namely: -
- It provides rest and refuelling facilities for motorists, including tourists, in an area which is currently lacking such facilities;
 - It provides valuable new investment and local job creation (circa six full/part time jobs);
 - Provides rapid speed EV charging facilities;
 - It comprises a high-quality design with landscaping and biodiversity enhancements;
 - The bypass CPO justification identified the immediately adjacent roundabout to be the busiest on the route with a calculated daily vehicular volume of 21,000 daily;
 - Provision of a *'park and rest'* facility; and
 - Was identified as being the only roundabout on the newly constructed section of road that will have the Tourist route signs (brown signs) for route off the bypass into the tourist town of Caernarfon.
- 1.3 This Statement continues in Section 2 by providing a summary of the site's location and its context, with a brief summary of the planning history for the site within Section 3. Full details of the proposal are set out in Section 4. A detailed summary of the planning policy position at

national and local level is contained within Section 5. Section 6 provides the justification for a new petrol filling station facility, particularly given national and local demand. Section 7 sets out the justification for the proposal in the context of the national requirements, local need and the policy position. The conclusions of this Statement are provided in Section 8.

SECTION 2: SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 The application site is located to the south-east of Meifod roundabout, on Pwllheli Road and adjacent to the new A487 Caernarfon Bontnewydd bypass. The site is approximately 500m north of the village of Bontnewydd. Caernarfon is approx. 1.5km to the north. There are open fields immediately to the north, east and south. The nearest residential property is Tyddyn Elen, approx. 100m south-west of the site, and another property approx. 100m to the south-east. Meifod Country House is approx. 190m to the south.
- 2.2 The development site amounts to an area of circa 2.69 hectares and is located on a vacant field. There is a slight gradient which slopes up to the eastern aspect of the site. The site comprises open fencing to the frontage and dry-stone walls around the perimeter with sporadic trees and vegetation around the boundary. The site has no Tree Preservation Order and is not designated for any historic interest. There is a telephone line running south-west to north-east of the site.
- 2.3 According to Natural Resources Wales, the site is at very low risk from river and sea flooding, and at low risk from surface water and small watercourses flooding.

A487 Caernarfon Bontnewydd bypass

- 2.4 The construction of the new A487 Caernarfon Bontnewydd bypass is one of the Welsh Government's largest infrastructure projects in North Wales, commencing in 2019 and opened in February 2022. It provides a 9.7km long bypass to the settlements of Caernarfon and Bontnewydd along the A487 trunk road. This road forms part of the strategic road network in North Wales that links with the A55 corridor further along the coast.
- 2.5 The Compulsory Purchase Order justification for the bypass proposals identified the immediately adjacent Meifod roundabout to be the busiest on the route with a calculated daily volume of 21,000 vehicles. This roundabout was also identified as being the only roundabout on the newly constructed section of road that will have the brown tourist route signs denoting the route into the tourist town of Caernarfon. Therefore, this area of the bypass is a key node, and the site provides a highly accessible and convenient location for motorists on the new bypass.

- 2.6 The application site is located on the northern side of Bontnewydd. The village has a Post Office, a public House (The Newborough Arms), a village Hall (Y Ganolfan), a fish and chip shop (Golden Cod), a 4-star Hotel (Meifod House) and a primary school (Ysgol Gynradd Bontnewydd). The nearest petrol stations are in Caernarfon or at Caethro.
- 2.7 The existing shops in the area (namely Bontnewydd and Caernarfon) provide a varied retail offer. The proposal is to develop this site to provide enhanced local A3 retail facilities and petrol filling station of high quality design for the benefit of residents of the area and passing motorists using the new bypass. The proposal will incorporate Electricity Vehicle Chargers (EVC's) which is a key requirement for society going forward, with the move to net zero. The UK President and CEO Paul Philpott for Kia launched a statement in November 2021 warning people of “charging blackspots” explicitly saying “It’s all very well having clusters of chargers on the M6 and M1, but what about people who want to buy and drive EVs in North Wales?” This is a key site for North Wales in providing purpose built EV charging points, thus will result in people staying on site for a longer period and hence spending their money locally in the convenience shop, having a coffee or eating in the restaurant.

Photograph 1 - The Application Site (with outline of new road)



Source: Google Earth

SECTION 3: PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 There is no known planning history for the site. As such, there is nothing within the planning history of the site which would prejudice the current application.

SECTION 4: THE APPLICATION PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The petrol filling station is proposed to the rear (east) of the site, with the two proposed drive-thru food/beverage units proposed to the front (west) part of the site. The petrol filling station will comprise the erection of a new sales building of approx. 361 sqm, with 6 no. proposed fuel pumps (providing re-fuelling facilities for up to 12 cars at a time) proposed to the side of the sales building, under a canopy. Customer/staff car parking will be provided to the front of the sales building, with provision made for blue badge car parking. A dedicated delivery space is proposed to the rear of the sales building.
- 4.2 To the north of the forecourt, an area for HGV fuelling is proposed. To the south of the forecourt, a lorry/coach park comprising 8 spaces is proposed. Therefore, provision is made for HGV vehicles. In addition, a park and rest facility is proposed. Each parking section will also include a significant number of EV charging points – guidance will be taken from the Local Planning Authority on how many you require. It is proposed to provide circa 169 car parking spaces for the site – this will include provision for blue badge spaces.
- 4.3 To the front of the site, the erection of two buildings is proposed to accommodate a drive-thru coffee shop and a drive-thru restaurant. Each of the food/beverage units will include its own dedicated waste compound.
- 4.4 The proposal will provide a development which is of a quality design, contemporary but respecting the surrounding built form and maximizing the use of natural materials on the façade to add to the quality and built form of the area. This is of extreme importance to our client as the site is open and prominent therefore visual from all aspects which is a positive for people using the bypass – due to people knowing of its existence. Nevertheless, the visual prominence of the site will be an immediate one only and not far reaching.
- 4.5 The proposed access to the site will be from Pwllheli Road, close to the Meifod roundabout and new A487 Caernarfon Bontnewydd bypass. New circulation routes will be provided throughout the site, including a dedicated route for HGV vehicles to re-fuel and park. Many of the existing trees around the perimeter of the site will be retained and landscaping is proposed throughout the site to provide biodiversity enhancements and retain green infrastructure network between the development site and Bontnewydd.

- 4.6 The application proposes a new public footpath to connect with the existing pavement to the village as well as the retention of important hedges and the rewilding of parts of the periphery of the wider site and additional tree planting around the periphery of the site.
- 4.7 The overall aim of this forward thinking scheme is to provide a generous space with natural and green areas at the heart of the design. The aims and objectives of Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 are embedded throughout and aims to contribute to the seven goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. There is more undeveloped land forming part of the scheme than there is of developed land with the health and well-being of the end user in mind. The applicant seeks to provide a service area which accommodates the modern motorist, families along with those with dogs. Providing an opportunity to stop over, charge their electric cars, take a walk or a picnic, explore Bontnewydd and take advantage of the local information panel to be used as a marketing tool for local attractions and Caernarfon town with the added provision of a Park and Ride.
- 4.8 The proposed roadside service is expected to create between 45-50 full/part time jobs offering flexible working contracts.

SECTION 5: PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 This Section sets out an overview of national policy and Development Plan guidance relevant to the proposals.

National Planning Policy

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

- 5.2 Future Wales: National Plan 2040 is the Welsh National Development Framework, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a Development Plan with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate resistance, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of the communities. The Plan acknowledges that Wales is facing a climate emergency which is actively changing the environment and directly affecting communities, whilst also facing an ecological emergency when the behaviours and decisions of the human race are causing harm to the resilience of ecosystems and species, combined with the effects of a global health pandemic and the need for the economy to be re-energised in a sustainable way, also recognising that things need to be learnt from previous excesses which have resulted inequitable wealth and access to services. The Welsh Government seeks to face the challenges and to find opportunities for a better Wales with every mechanism at their disposal. The National Development Framework is an important lever to deliver the change needed.
- 5.3 Future Wales is a Spatial Plan, which means it sets a direction of where we should be investing in infrastructure development for the greater good of Wales and its people. Future Wales sets the challenges of delivering these improvements to the public, private and third sectors. It makes clear the importance of planning new infrastructure and development in such a way that they are complementary rather than competing priorities, and showing opportunities are maximised and multiple benefits are achieved.
- 5.4 The Plan refers to the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the requirement that development and use of land contributes to improving the economy, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. Future Wales is the highest tier of Development Plan setting out the National Development Framework and is focused on

solutions to issues and challenges at a national scale. Its strategic nature means that it does not allocate development to all parts of Wales, nor does it include policies on all land uses. It is framework which will be built on by Strategic Development Plans at a regional level and Local Development Plans at Local Authority level. Plans are required to be in conformity with Future Wales and must be kept up-to-date to ensure they and Future Wales work together effectively.

- 5.5 Planning decisions at every level in the planning system must be taken in accordance with the Development Plan as a whole, Future Wales forms part of this Development Plan and replaces Wales Spatial Plan. Future Wales seeks to align and maximise its contribution to the Well-Being Wales objectives and ways of working as set out in the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and takes a sustainable approach to development.
- 5.6 Future Wales is set out in five parts. Firstly, an Introduction followed by an Overview of Wales, which sets out the four regions of Wales which are given further consideration later in the report. Thirdly, the report sets out ambitions and how these are going to be achieved, followed by Strategic and Spatial Choices and then detailed in relation to the regions.
- 5.7 Future Wales sets out a clear vision of what it seeks to achieve by 2040 in 11 outcomes. These are as follows:
- (i) A Wales where people live and work in connective, inclusive and healthy places;
 - (ii) A Wales where people live in vibrant rural places with access to homes, jobs and services;
 - (iii) A Wales where people live in distinctive regions that tackle health and socio-economic inequalities through sustainable growth;
 - (iv) A Wales where people live in places with a thriving Welsh language;
 - (v) A Wales where people live and work in towns and cities which are a focus and springboard for sustainable growth;
 - (vi) A Wales where people live in places where prosperity, innovation and culture are promoted;
 - (vii) A Wales where people live in places where travel is sustainable;
 - (viii) A Wales where people live in places with world class digital infrastructure;

- (ix) A Wales where people live in places that sustainably manage their natural resources and reduce pollution;
- (x) A Wales where people live in places with biodiverse, resilient and connected ecosystems;
- (xi) A Wales where people live in places which are decarbonised and climate resilient.

5.8 Policy 2 (Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking) confirms that the growth and regeneration of towns and cities should positively contribute towards building sustainable places that support active and healthy lives, with urban neighbourhoods that are compact and walkable, organised around mixed-use centres and public transport and integrate with green infrastructure. Urban growth and regeneration should be based on the following strategic placemaking principles, which include:

- Creating a rich mix of uses;
- Building places at a walkable scale with homes, local facilities and public transport within walking distance of each other; and
- Increasing population densities with development built at urban densities that can support public transport and local facilities.

5.9 Policy 6 (Town Centre First) confirms significant new commercial, retail, education, health, leisure and public service facilities must be located within town and city centres confirming the sequential approach.

5.10 Whilst this document forms part of the Development Plan it is largely at a very high level and the broad principles should be reflected down into more local policies within the Development Plan. However, it does form part of the “*Development Plan*” and therefore is a material consideration in the determination of the application.

Planning Policy Wales

5.11 Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 published in February 2021 sets out the vision for Wales as set out in the Well-Being of Future Generations Act; a more prosperous Wales; a resilient Wales which supports healthy, functioning ecosystems and recognises the limits of the global

environment; a healthier Wales; a more equal Wales; a Wales of more cohesive communities; a Wales of vibrant culture, and a globally responsible Wales. The document embeds the spirit of the Act by moving towards a low carbon, resilient society, of providing secure and well paid jobs and of building well connected environments for everyone in Wales that improves lives, health and enhances well-being. On the 23rd October 2023 Julie James published an immediate change to Planning Policy Wales' Chapter 6 and with immediate effect brought in a requirement for developments to provide Green Infrastructure and Net Benefit for Biodiversity and the Step-wise Approach along with promoting new planting as part of a development based on securing the right tree in the right place.

- 5.12 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government and is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs), Welsh Government Circulars and policy clarification letters which together with the PPW provide the National Planning Policy Framework for Wales (paragraph 1.1).
- 5.13 The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and culture wellbeing of Wales as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation. A well-functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places (paragraph 1.2).
- 5.14 The PPW promotes action at all levels of the planning process, which is conducive to maximising its contribution to the well-being of Wales and its communities. It encourages a wider, sustainable and problem solving outlook which focuses on integrating and addressing multiple issues rather than on an approach which is fragmented, un-coordinated and deals with issues in isolation (paragraph 1.3).
- 5.15 The Well-being of Future Generations Act places a duty on public bodies to carry out sustainable development, with the concept of sustainable development being at the heart of planning policy since 2002. However, the concept has been expanded under the Well-being Act and it requires improvement in the delivery of all four aspects of well-being; social, economic, environmental and cultural. The Well-Being Act has established seven well-being goals which are intended to shape the work of all public bodies in Wales; a global responsible

Wales; a prosperous Wales; a resilient Wales; a healthier Wales; a more equal Wales; Wales cohesive communities; and a Wales of vibrant culture and providing Welsh language.

- 5.16 Paragraph 1.18 confirms that a planned approach is the most efficient way to secure sustainable development through the planning system and it is essential that plans are adopted and kept under review. Legislation secures a presumption in favour of sustainable development in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise to ensure that social, economic, cultural and environmental issues are balanced and integrated.
- 5.17 Everyone engaged with or operating within the planning system in Wales must embrace the concept of place making in both plan making and development management decisions in order to achieve the creation of sustainable places and improve the well-being of communities (paragraph 2.1).
- 5.18 Sustainable places is the goal of the land use planning system in Wales; they are the output of the planning system rather than the process of achieving them. All development decisions, either through Development Plan policies choices or individual development management decisions should seek to contribute towards the making of sustainable places and improving well-being (paragraph 2.2).
- 5.19 The planning system should create sustainable places that are attractive, sociable, accessible, active, secure, welcomingly, healthy and friendly. Development proposals should create the conditions to bring people together making them to want to live, work and play in areas with a sense of place and well-being, creating prosperity for all (paragraph 2.3).
- 5.20 The planning system is the key mechanism for delivering sustainable places. It provides a critical mechanism where opportunities for long term benefit and integrated decision making meet, allowing preventative and proactive solutions to be found (paragraph 2.5).
- 5.21 Planning policies, proposals and decision must seek to promote sustainable development and support the well-being of people and communities across Wales. This can be done through maximising their contribution to the achievement of the seven well-being goals by using the five ways of working, as required by the Well-Being of Future Generations Acts. This will

include seeking to maximise the social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits, whilst considering potential impacts when assessing proposals and policies in line with the Act's sustainable development principle (paragraph 2.8). The most appropriate way to implement these requirements through the planning system is to adopt a place making approach to plan making, planning policy and decision making (paragraph 2.9).

- 5.22 Key planning principles to achieve the right development in the right place include growing our economy in a sustainable manner, making better use of resources, facilitating accessible and healthy environments, creating and sustaining communities and maximising environmental protection and limiting environmental impact.
- 5.23 Paragraph 2.20 acknowledges that in considering social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits there may be occasions when a proposal may not meet all of the desired outcomes or that a specific outcome will not be achieved but wider well-being should be supported.
- 5.24 The impact and challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic is recognised with the need to ensure people's well-being is at the heart of planning and decision making. PPW seeks to lead the way to recover in a positive manner through '*Placemaking*', with social considerations, economic considerations, cultural considerations and environmental consideration at its heart.
- 5.25 Guidance on retail matters is contained within Section 4. This guidance confirms that Planning Authorities should establish a hierarchy of retail and commercial centres in their Development Plan strategy, identifying boundaries on the Proposals Map (paragraph 4.3.10). Such centres should then be categorised by the function they fulfil, considering their future roles and recognise opportunities to support the Welsh Government's retail and commercial centre objectives.
- 5.26 Paragraph 4.3.13 confirms that it is important that communities have access to adequate levels of retail provision and evidence should demonstrate whether a retail provision is adequate or not by assessing if there is further expansion capacity in a catchment area (quantitative need) or there is a lack of retail quality, range of goods assessable (qualitative need).

- 5.27 Paragraph 4.3.14 advises that when determining planning applications Local Planning Authorities should consider whether there is a need for additional retail provision for proposals outside of defined retail and commercial centre boundaries or on non-allocated sites.
- 5.28 It is confirmed that need may be quantitative to address a quantifiable unmet demand for provision or qualitative. Preference should be given to establishing quantitative need. (Paragraph 4.3.15).
- 5.29 Qualitative assessment should cover both positive and negative aspects and may become an important consideration where it supports the objectives and retail strategy of an adopted Development Plan or the policies in the guidance and include; is highly accessible by walking, cycling and public transport; contributes to a substantial reduction in car journeys; contributes to the co-location of facilities in existing retail and commercial centres; significantly contributes to the vibrancy, attractiveness and viability of such a centre; assists in the alleviation of overtrading or traffic conditions surrounding existing local comparable stores; addresses locally defined deficiencies in provision in terms of quality and quantity, including that which would serve new residential developments; or where it alleviates a lack of convenience goods provision in a disadvantaged area.
- 5.30 It will be for the Planning Authority to determine and justify the weight to be given to any qualitative assessment and it is advised that regeneration and additional employment benefits are not considered qualitative need factors in retail policy terms, however they may be material considerations in making a decision on individual planning applications if the regeneration and job creating benefits can be evidenced.
- 5.31 The Welsh Government operates a town centre first policy in relation to the location of new retail and commercial centre development which applies to both site allocations in Development Plans and in the determination of planning applications for retail and other complementary uses. By adopting a sequential approach the first preference should be to locate new development within a retail and commercial centre defined in the Development Plan Hierarchy of Centres (paragraph 4.3.18).
- 5.32 Whilst the document sets out a number of uses to which the sequential approach does apply, it does acknowledge that some education, healthcare and community uses may have specific accessibility requirements which mean that they need to be located close to the communities

they serve. Paragraph 4.3.21 advises that Planning Authorities should be flexible in their approach where it is necessary.

- 5.33 Paragraph 4.3.26 advises that all new retail planning applications or retail site allocations of 2,500 sqm or more gross floor space that are proposed on the edge or outside designated retail and commercial centres should, once a need has been established, be supported by a Retail Impact Assessment. In the case of smaller applications, paragraph 4.3.27, advises that Planning Authorities will need to determine whether an assessment is necessary, for example where a smaller proposal may have a significant impact on a centre. Where such assessments are requested, they should be proportionate to potential impacts.
- 5.34 Paragraph 4.3.42 recognises that shops linked to petrol stations, can also serve a useful role in rural areas by providing new sources of jobs and services. In assessing such proposals, Planning Authorities should take account of the potential impact on nearby retail and commercial centres or village shops; the desirability of providing a service throughout the year; and the likely impact of traffic generated and access and parking arrangements.
- 5.35 Section 5 focuses on '*Productive and Enterprising Places*' and covers the economic components of place making but noting that these are complementary to those of the Active and Social, and Distinctive and Natural themes and collectively the three themes come together to contribute towards the national sustainable place making outcomes. Productive and enterprising places are those which can raise our economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being by providing well-connected employment and sustainable economic development. These places are designed and sited to promote healthy lifestyles and tackle climate change. This is done by making them easy to walk and cycle to and around, accessible by public transport, maximising the use of non-renewable sources and using renewable and low carbon energy sources.
- 5.36 For planning purposes the Welsh Government defines economic development as the development of land and buildings for activities that generate sustainable long term prosperity, jobs and incomes. The planning system should ensure that the growth of output and employment in Wales as a whole is not constrained by a shortage of land for economic uses (paragraph 5.4.1).

- 5.37 Economic land uses include the traditional employment land uses (offices, research and development, industry and warehousing) as well as uses such as retail, tourism and public services (albeit it is confirmed these are dealt with elsewhere in the PPW).
- 5.38 Within Section 5 guidance is given on providing sufficient land needed for the employment market at both strategic and local levels. It goes on to confirm that sites identified for employment use should be protected from inappropriate development (paragraph 5.4.4) but also recognises that necessary infrastructure provision and the alignment of jobs and services with housing and sustainable transport infrastructure is important to reduce the need for travel and dependency on travel by car is important (paragraph 5.4.13).

Technical Advice Notes (TAN)

- 5.39 The Technical Advice Notes (TANs) provide guidance on a range of specific topics. The pertinent TANs in relation to the application site are considered to be:
- TAN4 – Retail and Commercial Development
 - TAN5 – Nature Conservation and Planning
 - TAN11 – Noise
 - TAN12 – Design
 - TAN15 – Development and Flood Risk
 - TAN18 – Transport
 - TAN20 – The Welsh Language
 - TAN22 – Planning for Sustainable Buildings
 - TAN23 – Economic Development

Local Planning Policy

- 5.40 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Planning Authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.41 The adopted development plan for the site comprises the Anglesey & Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (July 2017).

Anglesey & Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (2017)

- 5.42 The Anglesey & Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (JLDP) was adopted in July 2017 and replaced the Unitary Development Plan. The JLDP covers the period 2011 to 2026 and sets out the strategy and aims for development and land use in the local authority areas.
- 5.43 The application site is not allocated within the adopted proposals map, nor does it fall within any designations. It lies outside the development boundary.
- 5.44 Policy MAN 1 (Proposed Town Centre Developments) states that proposals for new retail, commercial and leisure development will be directed towards town centres in the first instance, provided that they are of a scale and type appropriate to the size, character and function of the centre in the retail hierarchy. Retail and commercial proposals outside the defined town centres will need to be supported by evidence of need for additional provision and satisfy the sequential approach set out in national planning policy and accord with other policies within the plan.
- 5.45 Policy MAN 7 (Hot Food Takeaway Uses) states that proposals for hot-food takeaway uses will be permitted provided specific criteria can be met. This includes development will not generate excessive noise, smells or litter which will have an unacceptable impact on the amenities of the local area, it will not lead to an overconcentration of this type of use in the immediate locality, the use is in keeping with adjacent land uses, premises is easily accessible by foot, cycle and public transport, the development will not result in significant congestions or parking problems, adequate waste storage provision will be provided and extraction and ventilation systems must be designed so that they do not have an unacceptable impact on visual and residential amenity.
- 5.46 Policy ISA 1 (Infrastructure Provision) states that proposals will only be granted where adequate infrastructure capacity exists or where it will be delivered in a timely manner.
- 5.47 Policy TRA 2 (Parking Standards) requires parking provision for all modes of transport to be in accordance with the Council's parking standards.
- 5.48 TRA 4 (Managing Transport Impacts) requires that parking provision for all modes of transport should be in accordance with the Council's parking standards.

- 5.49 PS 1 (Welsh Language and Culture) states that the Council will promote and support the use of the Welsh Language in the Plan area.
- 5.50 PS 2 (Infrastructure and Developer Contributions) states that the Councils will expect new development to ensure sufficient provision of essential infrastructure is either already available or provided in a timely manner to make the proposal acceptable, by means of a planning condition or obligation.
- 5.51 Policy PS 4 (Sustainable Transport, Development and Accessibility) states that development will be located so as to minimise the need to travel.
- 5.52 Policy PS 5 (Sustainable Development) states that development will be supported where it is demonstrated that it is consistent with the principles of sustainable development.
- 5.53 Policy PS 6 (Alleviating and Adapting to the Effects of Climate Change) states that in order to alleviate the effects of climate change, proposals will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that they have fully taken account of and responses to the energy hierarchy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, helping to reduce waste and encourage travel other than by car.
- 5.54 Policy PS 15 (Town Centres and Retail) states that the Council's will work with partner organisations and the local community to protect and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres in recognition of their retail, service and social functions in accordance with the retail hierarchy.
- 5.55 Policy PS 19 (Conserving and Where Appropriate Enhancing the Natural Environment) states that the Council will manage development so as to conserve and where appropriate enhance the Plan area's distinctive natural environment, countryside and coastline.
- 5.56 PCYFF 1 (Development Boundaries) states that, outside the development boundaries development will be resisted unless it is in accordance with specific policies in this Plan or national planning policies or that the proposal demonstrates that its location in the countryside is essential.

- 5.57 Policy PCYFF 2 (Development Criteria) states that all proposals should demonstrate compliance with 1) relevant policies in the plan and 2) national planning policy and guidance.
- 5.58 Policy PCYFF 3 (Design and Place Shaping) states that all proposals will be expected to demonstrate high quality design which fully takes into account the natural, historic and built environment context and contributes to the creation of attractive, sustainable places.
- 5.59 Policy PCYFF 4 (Design and Landscaping) states that all proposals should integrate into their surroundings. Proposals that fail to show how landscaping has been considered from the outset as part of the design proposal will be refused.
- 5.60 Policy PCYFF 6 (Water Conservation) states that proposals should incorporate water conservation areas where practicable, including Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs). All proposals should implement flood minimalisation or mitigation measures where possible, to reduce surface water run-off and minimise its contribution to flood risk elsewhere.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 5.61 Gwynedd Council have also produced a number of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents which provide further information on specific policies. Relevant SPGs are summarised below:
- **Planning for Sustainable Development (2010)** – This document sets out the Council’s commitment to the principle of sustainable development. It highlights that the development plan aims to promote the concept of sustainable patterns of development as well as encouraging the sustainable design and construction of development.
 - **Planning Obligations (2009)** – This guidance sets out the circumstances and the required actions by the Council and developers when they enter into a planning obligation. This document intends to make the process of negotiating, agreeing and monitoring a planning obligation fair and transparent to all participants of the planning system.

- **Maintaining and Creating Distinctive and Sustainable Communities (2019)** – This document provides guidance to help improve the quality of new development and facilitate a consistent and transparent way of making decisions. It requires retail, commercial and industrial developments to show how consideration has been given to the Welsh Language.

SECTION 6: BACKGROUND TO EV CHARGING

- 6.1 Powering more of the cars we drive with electricity is essential to addressing growing CO₂ emissions and air pollution in cities. As more electric car models become available, they will also become a more affordable choice for people and businesses.
- 6.2 There are around one billion cars on the world's roads. Of these around two to three million are pure battery electric and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA). The IEA anticipates there may be three hundred to four hundred million electric vehicles (EVs) on the road out of approximately two billion vehicles by 2040.
- 6.3 Electric vehicles are cars and other forms of mobility that use an electric motor as their main source of propulsion, rather than a conventional engine. They also have their energy stored in batteries.
- 6.4 There are three main types of electric vehicles: battery electric vehicles, hybrid electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.
- 6.5 Battery electric vehicles are all electric cars that rely on their batteries as the only source of energy. Hybrid and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles combine electric drive with a conventional fuel engine.
- 6.6 Unlike traditional cars, which usually refuel at petrol stations, electric cars have the potential to be recharged at home, at work or on the go. They can also be charged in shared locations such as forecourts, car parks or supermarkets. Speed, availability and the reliability of charging infrastructure are currently the biggest potential deterrents to buying an electric car. This could be changed with better access to recharging options, better suited to the needs of customers and their lifestyles. This could include smart, regular chargers, ideal for those charging overnight at their homes or during working hours. It could also include high powered, fast chargers designed for when drivers are between destinations and in need of a quick top-up.

Energy White Paper (December 2020)

- 6.7 On 14 December 2020 the Government published its long-awaited Energy White Paper which expands on Prime Minister Boris Johnson's recently announced ten point plan for a green industrial revolution and sets out the steps needed to cut emissions from industry, transport

and buildings by 230 million metric tonnes as part of the journey to net zero emissions by 2050.

- 6.8 The document sets out how the UK will increase deployment of green energy sources in order to meet the 2050 net zero carbon target. The White Paper confirms the Government will support the roll out of charging and associated grid infrastructure along the strategic road network to support drivers to make the switch to electric vehicles (EV's) ahead of the phase out of the new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030 and hybrids with significant zero emission capability by 2035. It is confirmed that the UK will end the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030, ten years earlier than planned. The sale of hybrid cars and vans that can drive a significant distance with no carbon emissions will continue until 2035. The Energy White Paper notes that this accelerated transition requires scaling – up the roll out of EV charge points and, in turn, an associated expansion of electricity generation and network capacity to meet the increase in demand for power. With the necessary investment in new infrastructure and adoption of smart charging the Government is confident the system will cope with the transition. As part of a £2.8bn package announced in the Prime Minister's ten point plan the Government intends to provide funding of £1.3bn to accelerate the roll out of charge points for EV's in homes, workplaces, streets and on motorways across England, so people can more easily and conveniently charge their cars. The Government will invest £950m of this funding in future proofing grid capacity along with the strategic road network to prepare ahead of need for a one hundred percent take up of zero emission cars and vans.
- 6.9 There is therefore acknowledgement at the highest level of Government of the importance of a comprehensive EV network.

Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (October 2021)

- 6.10 The Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener was presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 14 of the Climate Change Act 2008 in October 2021. In a drive to avoid catastrophic climate change it confirms that we need to reduce emissions to as near zero as possible with the small amount remaining absorbed through natural carbon sinks such as forests and new technologies like carbon capture. If this goal is achieved, global emissions of greenhouse gases will be 'net zero'. Delivering this requires urgent global action including ending coal fired power generation, retiring petrol and diesel engines from all cars and halting deforestation. These are the steps the UK was calling for at COP 26 (UN Climate Change Conference).

- 6.11 The Strategy confirms the UK is seeking to lead the way having, since 1990, almost halved greenhouse gas emissions, with the UK the first major economy to legislate (in 2019) to reach zero emissions by 2050. The end of petrol and diesel engines is part of this process and almost all major car companies are now developing or producing zero emission vehicles as battery technology improves and costs reduce.
- 6.12 The Strategy supports new investment in vehicle grants and electric vehicles infrastructure to ensure greener vehicles with big improvements in public charge point provision with funding of £280 million as part of a wider investment in public transport and sustainable travel. The Strategy confirms that an EV infrastructure strategy is to be published later this year setting out the Government's vision for infrastructure roll out and roles for the public and private sectors in achieving these goals.

State of Switch Report Produced by New Automotive (October 2021)

- 6.13 New Automotive is a new independent transport research organisation founded in 2020 with a mission to support the switch to electric vehicles. Based on their research published in October 2021 they estimate that the UK will need 230,000-280,000 public charge points by 2035. However, at the current time, there are 24,000 public charging stations including over 4,000 rapid chargers in the UK.
- 6.14 The report concludes that whilst there has been a huge uptake in EV sales over the past 12 months, the targets are only achievable if policy makers commit to the 'electrification' of UK roads and install the necessary infrastructure. A concern is that the most recent trends indicate the popularity of hybrids which may be one of the key issues to overcome in the transition to a complete shift to electric vehicles.
- 6.15 Another key issue is the provision of charging points which will become increasingly important as the ownership of EVs spreads across the wider population. They hope the report published this month becomes an annual publication tracking the delivery and support for electric vehicles over time.

Taking Charge: The Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (March 2022)

- 6.16 The Taking Charge: The Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy published in March 2022 and sets out the Government's vision and strategy to enable and accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) in the UK.

- 6.17 The Prime Minister’s announcement in November 2020 that sales of all new petrol and diesel cars and vans would end in 2030, put the UK on course to be the fastest nation in the G7 to decarbonise road transport. Since then, the report confirms that in 2021, 190,000 battery-powered electric vehicles were sold in the UK. This was more than the five previous years combined, and nearly one in eight of all new cars sold. Notwithstanding the uptake in use of battery electric vehicles, the focus on vehicles is only one part of the overall approach to transition into net zero road transport with a second priority being the provision of adequate charging infrastructure.
- 6.18 In response to the above, the Government’s vision is to remove charging infrastructure as both a perceived, and a real barrier to the adoption of electric vehicles and have as a minimum 300,000 public charge points by 2030 – equivalent to almost 5 times the number of fuel pumps on our roads today.
- 6.19 To deliver this vision the Government will focus on the roll out of high-powered chargers on the strategic road network and local on-street parking. The strategy focuses on the delivery of:
- Sufficient charge points ahead of demand to ensure that everyone can find and access reliable public charge points wherever they are;
 - Effortless on and off-street charging for private and commercial drivers;
 - Fairly priced and inclusively designed public charging;
 - Market-led rollout for the majority of charge points;
 - Seamlessly integrated infrastructure into a smart energy system; and
 - Continued innovation to meet driver’s needs.
- 6.20 One of the key drivers is to step up the delivery of high-powered chargers on the strategic road network for people making longer journeys. To achieve this, the Government has allocated £950 million on a Rapid Charging Fund to support the rollout of at least 6,000 high powered charge points across England’s motorways and major A-roads by 2035. In particular, the Government highlights the role that service area operators and large fuel retailers have in the delivery of this vision stating, *‘We will ensure that every motorway service area has at least six rapid chargers by the end of 2023, with some having more than 12.’*

- 6.21 Moreover, the strategy confirms that Government will help to reduce the costs to private sector rollout and businesses by tackling barriers to investment and delivery of public charge points, to speed up private sector delivery of much needed EV charging infrastructure.
- 6.22 One of the key challenges identified in the strategy is the slow pace in which charge point installers can roll out the required infrastructure due to the need of multiple permission, consents and licenses; the lack of plentiful, reliable and fairly priced public charging network, amongst others. Notably, the strategy stresses that there needs to be more local engagement, leadership and planning.
- 6.23 The report concludes that if the UK economy is to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, it has to decarbonise road transport. The recent rapid increase in both the supply of, and the demand for, EVs means that charging infrastructure now stands as the single biggest challenge to that decarbonisation.

Zap-Map's EV Charging Survey

- 6.24 Zap-Map's EV Charging Insights Report 2021 provides in-depth analysis of market trends of EV charging behaviours from 2016 to 2021.
- 6.25 In terms of the type of public charging locations that are most regularly used, petrol station forecourt (21%) and EV charging point (26%) are amongst the most popular locations although some way below supermarket car parks and motorway services at 52% and 50% respectively. However, as EV hubs and petrol station forecourts become more prolific with the use of high speed rapid chargers, this figure is expected to significantly increase. The Report also confirms a significant increase in the use of high powered, ultra-rapid chargers (100-350 Kw). This is the type of fast charger proposed in part on site.

SECTION 7: GENERAL PLANNING ISSUES

7.1 This Section of the Planning Statement sets out the general planning matters, which form part of the consideration of the determination of this application. These planning matters relevant to the determination of the application are informed by pertinent planning policy and the pre-application advice received from the Council. Design and access matters are not covered as part of this pre-application as we have no detailed drawings at present only a concept for the development of the site. Guidance is sought however on parking and transport requirements as part of the pre-application query from Gwynedd CC.

7.2 Accordingly, the following general planning matters are considered below:

- The principle of development on the site;
- Sustainability credentials;
- Environmental impact assessment
- Inward investment and job creation;
- Retail need and impact;
- Visual amenity;
- Residential amenity;
- Physical regeneration and social inclusion benefits;
- Welsh language and culture assessment;
- Highway matters;
- Park and ride facilities;
- Trees/landscaping and biodiversity enhancements; and
- Retail Need.

7.3 Each of these issues are now considered in turn below.

Principle of Development on the Site

7.4 Planning Policy Wales Ed 11 (February 2021) confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to provide for a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a duty on public bodies (including the Council) to carry out sustainable development.

- 7.5 The application site lies within open countryside and outside the development boundary. The site is not allocated for any specific use. Policy PCYFF 1 states that outside the development boundaries, development will be resisted unless it is in accordance with specific policies in this Plan or national planning policies or that the proposal demonstrates that its location in the countryside is essential.
- 7.6 In this instance, the proposed development is an essential infrastructure facility given the newly constructed Caernarfon Bontnewydd bypass. As demonstrated in Section 6, there is a clear need for new roadside facilities in this location, comprising a national need for additional petrol filling station facilities, a local need, and policy justification for a new motorist facility in this location and support for economic development.
- 7.7 There are currently no petrol filling stations along the route. Given the logistical importance of the bypass, it is essential that motorists are provided with conveniently located and accessible facilities on the bypass. This will help ensure that motorists do not have to detour into local towns and villages, as this would create traffic implications and undermine the intended purpose of the bypass.
- 7.8 The site represents the optimum location for a new petrol filling station due to its positioning immediately adjacent to the new bypass and on the strategic road network. It is also readily accessible to those travelling more locally – the site’s location adjacent to the Meifod roundabout means that it is easily accessible to those travelling on the A487, as well as for motorists of Bontnewydd and Caernarfon – indeed it must be highlighted that there are no existing petrol filling stations in Bontnewydd, therefore the proposed development will provide a much-needed facility for local people. In addition, Bontnewydd and the surrounding area is a popular local destination for exercise and visitors, as well with commuters to Bangor and further afield. In these terms, it is difficult to envisage a more optimal location for a petrol filling station.
- 7.9 The nearest petrol filling station to the site is Texaco petrol station in Caernarfon, approximately 1.7km north of the site. This facility has no direct access to, or visibility from the new Caernarfon Bontnewydd bypass. To access this petrol station, motorists on the bypass would have to exit the bypass and travel into the town of Caernarfon via the A487, which

would undermine the intended purpose of the bypass. The nearest fuel stations on the strategic highway route are circa 30 miles north and 25 miles south, meaning that there is approx. a 55 miles stretch on the strategic highway with no direct access to motorist facilities.

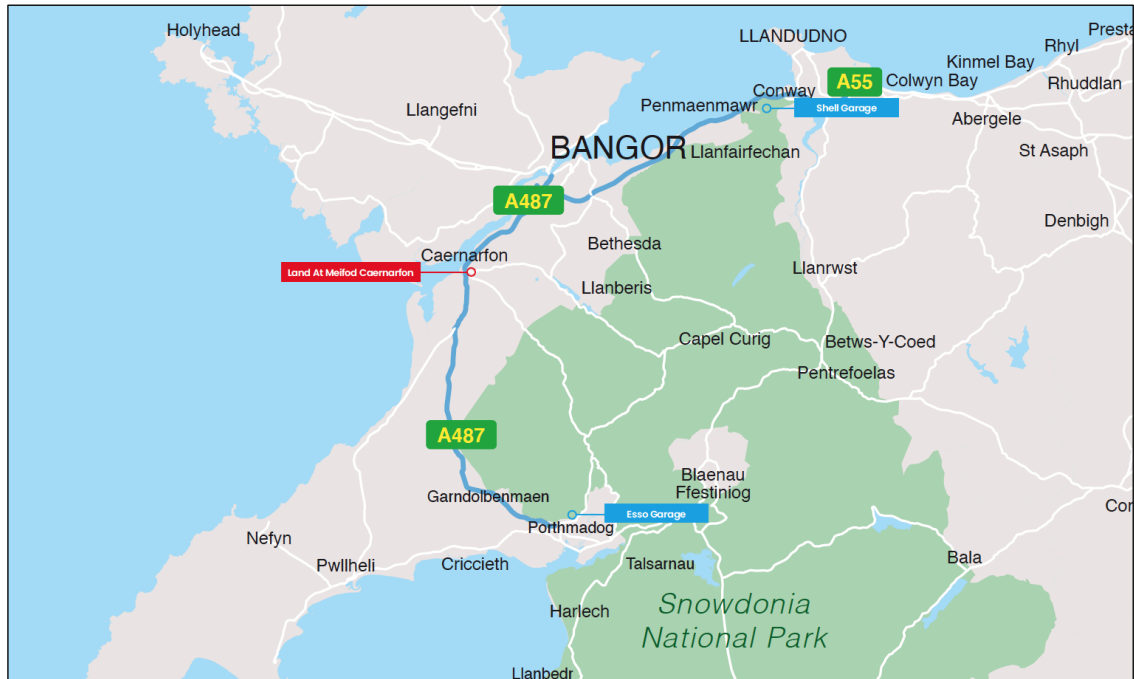


Figure 1: Nearby visible non detour roadside fuel facilities

- 7.10 This proposal represents an opportunity to provide a new petrol filling station in a highly accessible location on this newly constructed major transport route, and to provide a modern petrol filling station incorporating all the latest environmental facilities plus coffee shop and restaurant facilities enabling all motorists' needs to be met.
- 7.11 Additionally, this petrol filling station will not only provide all the facilities needed, and expected, by modern motorists, including the provision of the most up-to-date fuel pumps and car care facilities, but it will also present the opportunity to provide a retail facility which will meet both the needs of motorists and the local residents for top-up convenience items, particularly for those living in and around the local settlements of Bontnewydd, Llandwrog and immediate surrounding areas.
- 7.12 PPW recognises that shops linked to petrol stations can serve a useful role in rural areas by providing new sources of jobs and services. In assessing such proposals, Planning Authorities should take account of the potential impact on nearby retail and commercial centres or village

shops; the desirability of providing a service throughout the year; and the likely impact of traffic generated and access and parking arrangements. In this regard, the proposed petrol station is an essential infrastructure facility which will serve a rural area, whilst also providing a new source of jobs and services – this is discussed further below. The potential impact is also considered further below, however, in summary, it is not considered that the proposal will have a material adverse impact on any nearby retail or commercial centres or village shops. The primary purpose of the proposed service station is to serve motorists on the new bypass, which is currently lacking such facilities. Such a facility is needed and utilised all year round, therefore the “*desirability of providing a service throughout the year*” cannot be contended. Finally, traffic, access and parking arrangements are considered further below, but in summary, it is not considered that the proposals will result in any material adverse impact on the highway. Most of the trade will be passing motorists, who would already be on the highway regardless of the proposal. An appropriate level of parking is provided as part of the proposals. Therefore, the proposal is not in conflict with matters set out in the PPW.

- 7.13 In addition, policy confirms the need to support all business ventures including new and expanded businesses and to ensure that planning policies are flexible enough to support business needs. The importance of supporting the safety and welfare of road users is acknowledged and the proposed development assists in this goal.
- 7.14 Overall, the proposal will provide a much-needed new motorist facility for those travelling on the new Caernarfon Bontnewydd bypass as well as those on the local road network. The development of the site will allow the development of a trend-bucking new petrol filling station incorporating all the latest technology (in terms of vapour recovery, spillage, contamination etc.) and provide coffee shop and restaurant facilities meeting the needs of motorists, including tourists and local people. The need for such a facility is sufficient to justify the scheme.
- 7.15 It is therefore considered that there is an overriding justification for the proposals. The proposed use will result in economic investment and job creation in the local area. The application will represent sustainable development providing social and economic benefits. On the basis that the application site represents sustainable development, there is a presumption in favour of the grant of planning permission.

Sustainability Credentials

- 7.16 The application site proposes a petrol filling station which will provide an important service and facility for local residents and users of the local highway network. The proposal will allow for the site to adapt and meet motorists' needs efficiently.
- 7.17 The provision of EV charging on site will introduce an EV charging facility on the new Caernarfon bypass. This fully adheres to both national and local planning policy which seeks to increase the production of energy from renewable and low carbon sources. In particular, the Government's Energy White Paper sets out the steps needed to cut emissions from industry, transport and buildings by 230 million metric tonnes as part of the journey to net zero emissions by 2050, also focusing on the need to provide charging and associated grid infrastructure along the strategic road network to support drivers to make the switch to electric vehicles.
- 7.18 Electric vehicles can significantly reduce CO₂ emissions from the transport sector, especially if electricity is generated from renewable technologies. The benefits of electric vehicles are expanded upon elsewhere in this Statement, but they have the benefit of improving local air quality and providing significant health benefits, helping to address air pollution, whilst offering a comfortable, quiet ride for motorists.
- 7.19 Whilst the number of electric vehicles within the UK is relatively few at the current time, and a lack (or perceived lack) of infrastructure is seen as a major constraint, there are significant environmental benefits to electric vehicles in environmental terms. Sustainable development objectives are also cross-referenced at the local level and therefore it is considered that the proposal complies with the aims of sustainable development policies through the delivery of new EV charging bays. This is therefore a material consideration weighing heavily in favour of the development.

Environmental Impact Assessment

- 7.20 The proposed development does not fall within Schedule 1 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017, as the development does not comprise the installation of more than 200 tonnes of petroleum or petrochemical at any one

time, nor will the area of any new building or structure exceed 0.05 hectares, as per part 6. Therefore, the proposal does not need to be screened, nor is an Environmental Impact Assessment required. The Applicant seeks confirmation of this as part of the pre-application consultation.

Inward Investment and Job Creation

- 7.21 The proposed service facility includes food and beverage units allowing motorists, workers, and local residents to pick up a coffee or pastry etc on-the-go. In addition, the food and beverage units will include indoor seating areas for customers who wish to sit-in and enjoy their coffee, providing a rest stop for motorists who may be on a long-haul journey. In addition, the scheme provides generous green areas to enhance people's health and well-being providing an opportunity for relaxation, exercise and rest, along with a safe haven for children and pets of a quality environment.
- 7.22 The proposal will aid economic regeneration through the investment into the local area. Further economic regeneration will occur directly through the creation of new jobs – it is likely that the proposal will result in the direct creation of some 45-50 new full and part-time jobs. It is hoped that many of the employees on site will be local residents, particularly residents who wish to be flexible in the hours they work.
- 7.23 In addition to the jobs arising from the ongoing operation of the site, further jobs will be created in the construction phase of the development. There will be other spin-off linkages to the benefit of the local area during the construction period itself as, for example, on site construction staff utilise shops and services within Bontnewydd and Caernarfon during the period of construction.

Visual Amenity

- 7.24 Consideration has been given to all relevant design matters including accessibility. The re-development of the site will have a modern and practical appearance with an extensively glazed front shop elevation to allow natural light into the building, and natural surveillance into and out of the building across the forecourt. It will comprise of high-quality materials with

a low-level sloping roof designed to minimise its visual impact. It will be of an appropriate scale and height given the site extent.

- 7.25 The layout of the scheme has been carefully assessed taking into consideration the site boundaries, existing vegetation, the topography of the land, access to the site and vehicle circulation.
- 7.26 The proposals are therefore in accordance with design policies, including TAN12, Policy PCYFF3 and Policy PCYFF 4.

Residential Amenity

- 7.27 The nearest residential occupier is approx. 100m from the site, it is not considered that there will be any significant adverse impact on any residential occupiers as they are all sufficiently distanced. To reduce the slight noise increase from the coming and going of traffic from the site, new planting is proposed in the form of new trees along the Southern and Eastern boundaries. A lighting and noise assessment is being prepared and will be submitted as part of the full planning application.

Physical Regeneration and Social Inclusion Benefits

- 7.28 The application proposal will result in positive benefits in terms of economic and physical regeneration. The application proposal will bring forward the development of the site which, as discussed above, will bring about economic benefits and job creation. The application proposal will aid social inclusion by providing new petrol filling station facilities and food and beverage facilities to the benefit of passing motorists, visitors to the area, as well as local residents.
- 7.29 In respect to inclusive access, the site will include level access, blue badge parking facilities and disabled toilets. The Applicant however recognises that it is not merely physical barriers that can cause difficulties for customers. Employees will receive Disability Awareness Sessions as part of their basic training, to understand the challenges customers with disabilities may face, and to ensure that their needs are met.

7.30 Accordingly, it is considered that the application proposal will aid social inclusion objectives. Again, this is an important material consideration, which supports a grant of planning permission.

Welsh Language and Culture Assessment

7.31 The Council has demonstrated its support towards safeguarding the Welsh language through the planning system.

7.32 Policy PS1 of the Local Plan (Welsh Language and Culture) states that the Council will promote and support the use of the Welsh Language in the plan area. This policy sets out specific thresholds for retail development which will require a Welsh Language Assessment to be submitted in support of a planning application.

7.33 Whilst the proposed development does not exceed the threshold for requiring a Welsh Language Statement, in July 2019 Anglesey and Gwynedd Council adopted the Maintaining Distinctive and Sustainable Communities SPG which requires all retail, commercial or industrial developments which do not require the submission of a Welsh Language Statement to show consideration has been given to the language.

7.34 The proposed occupier has confirmed the following initiatives will be undertaken:

- Dual language signage
- Dual language menus
- Local History and Information boards setting out the important local facts including Caernarfon Castle both historically and the present day, together with the coast line and other important attractions and businesses.

Highway Matters

7.35 The full highway and parking justification for the application proposal is provided within the accompanying Transport Technical Note prepared by SCP. The Note confirms that the development proposal would provide essential roadside infrastructure to allow motorists to take a break from driving and refuel in an area which is currently lacking such facilities. The report details the car and HGV parking figures along with the access visibility requirements. In

confirms that the impact of the traffic likely to be generated by the site would have a negligible impact on the wider highway network as the majority of the trips would comprise passing motorists and would not draw motorists from much further afield.

- 7.36 Accordingly, it is not considered that the proposal will have any adverse impact upon the wider area.

Park, Charge, Rest and Exercise Facility

- 7.37 The proposed application scheme includes provision for a bus stop, a park and rest/ride facility including bus shelter and tourist information panel with 38 associated car parking spaces, 10 of which will have passive EV charging. The provision of a free park and rest facility will provide motorists with access to Caernarfon Town Centre, providing significant benefits to the town as well as an opportunity to learn more about the area, its history and attractions and provide an area to rest and exercise in the expanse of green natural spaces surrounding the site.

Trees and Landscaping and Biodiversity Enhancements

- 7.38 The site is bordered by several trees around its perimeter. None of these trees are subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). Significant new tree planting and landscaping are proposed within the site, which will help to balance the impact of any trees which have already been removed by the works undertaken to the new bypass.
- 7.39 In addition to new tree planting, there is proposed rewilding around the periphery of the site as well as an ecology enhancement area where biodiversity net gain will be sought. Further details of this biodiversity net gain will be set out in the formal application submission which will be accompanied by a landscaping plan and an ecological assessment. We understand as part of the recent publication by Julie James AS and the immediate changes to Chapter 6 of PPW that there are additional requirements upon the developer to provide Green Infrastructure, Net Gain Biodiversity Enhancements and Tree Planting and Protection.

Retail Need

- 7.40 A Retail Assessment is prepared for two new drive-thru retail units (A3 Use Class) located on land off Caernarfon Bypass, Bontnewydd.

7.41 The approximate store sizes will be:

- Gross External Area Foodstore: 361 sq m
- Drive-thru and Sit in Coffee Shop: 285m2
- Drive-thru and Sit in Restaurant: 196m2

7.42 It is first appropriate to highlight that “impact” is frequently perceived as having negative/adverse connotations, but often this is not based on empirical evidence or local circumstances. On the contrary, retail proposals will often facilitate significant benefits for a community or town centre, resulting in “positive impacts” which should be balanced against any identified or perceived harm.

7.43 PPW recognises that shops linked to petrol stations can serve a useful role in rural areas by providing new sources of jobs and services. In assessing such proposals, Planning Authorities should take account of the potential impact on nearby retail and commercial centres or village shops; the desirability of providing a service throughout the year; and the likely impact of traffic generated and access and parking arrangements. In this regard, the proposed petrol station is an essential infrastructure facility which will serve a rural area, whilst also providing a new source of jobs and services – this is discussed further below. The potential impact is also considered further below, however, in summary, it is not considered that the proposal will have a material adverse impact on any nearby retail or commercial centres or village shops. The primary purpose of the proposed service station is to serve motorists on the new bypass, which is currently lacking such facilities. Such a facility is needed and utilised all year round, therefore the “*desirability of providing a service throughout the year*” cannot be contended. Finally, traffic, access and parking arrangements are considered further below, but in summary, it is not considered that the proposals will result in any material adverse impact on the highway. Most of the trade will be passing motorists, who would already be on the highway regardless of the proposal. An appropriate level of parking is provided as part of the proposal. Therefore, the proposal is not in conflict with matters set out in the PPW.

7.44 In addition, policy confirms the need to support all business ventures including new and expanded businesses and to ensure that planning policies are flexible enough to support business needs. The importance of supporting the safety and welfare of road users is acknowledged and the proposed development assists in this goal.

- 7.45 Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 requires a Retail Impact Assessment for all new retail planning applications of 2,500 sqm or more gross floorspace that are proposed outside of designated retail and commercial centres. The proposal falls considerably below the 2,500 sqm threshold, therefore an impact assessment is not required.
- 7.46 The policy confirms that, in the case of smaller applications, Planning Authorities will need to determine whether an assessment is necessary, for example where a smaller proposal may have a significant impact on a centre. Where such assessments are requested, they should be proportionate to potential impacts. We ask the LPA for your lead on this matter as part of the pre-application.
- 7.47 In this regard, and given the limited scale of the proposal, its position on the highway network, including its location on the new Caernarfon-Bontnewydd bypass and adjacent to Meifod roundabout which is anticipated to be a key node, and its distance from the nearest town centre, there will be no significant diversion of trade from any single centre or particular retail or commercial unit which is protected under retail policy that would cause a significant adverse impact. Most users of the site are expected to be motorists travelling on the new bypass. Accordingly, it is not considered that there will be any adverse impact arising from the proposal and the proposal accords with the relevant national policy.
- 7.48 Overall, the proposal will provide a much-needed new modern motorist facility to cater for the changing trends in vehicle travel and technologies for those travelling on the new Caernarfon-Bontnewydd bypass as well as those on the local road network. The development of the site will allow the development of a trend-bucking new petrol filling station incorporating all the latest technology (in terms of vapour recovery, spillage, contamination etc.) and provide a drive-thru and sit down coffee shop and restaurant facilities meeting the needs of motorists, including tourists and local people.
- 7.49 There is an overriding justification for the proposals. The proposed uses will result in economic investment and job creation in the local area. The application will represent sustainable development providing social and economic benefits. On the basis that the application site represents sustainable development, there is a presumption in favour of the grant of planning permission.

7.50 The application site lies outside the development boundary and therefore is in an out-of-centre location. However, on the basis that an overriding need is identified for the all-encompassing modern service station, both at a national and local level, and given that the proposals do not conflict with any other material policy considerations, the site is an entirely appropriate location for such a facility. The site benefits from readily achievable access and will serve motorists from the new bypass.

7.51 In summary, there is a clearly demonstrated need for the development of the motorist facility in this location near the bypass. The proposed petrol filling station and food/beverage facilities will incorporate the most modern facilities and latest environmental features and will fulfil a qualitative need for both motorists and residents.

7.52 To conclude, the application represents a significant inward investment into Caernarfon and Bontnewydd. Due to the location and nature of the development, the application proposal will not have any unacceptable impact on existing A1 and A3 unit provision. It is therefore considered that any impacts are wholly positive. Notably, the application will:-

- Provide an enhanced food shopping choice in the Caernarfon wide area in a highly accessible location;
- Provide two drive-thru and site down A3 retail units;
- Create approximately circa 45-50 full/part-time equivalent jobs;
- Create new jobs directly from the construction process;
- Offer the opportunity for environmental enhancement by improving the look of the site;
- Provide EV Charging points on site;
- Provide 169 car parking spaces;
- Tourist Information Panels and a green picnic area;
- Create Footpath and linkages to Bontnewydd;
- Provide Park and Rest facility;
- Local Information facilities.

SECTION 8: CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Malcolm Brymer and is submitted in support of a pre-application submission for the development for new roadside services at land adjacent to Meifod Roundabout at the new Caernarfon Bontnewydd Bypass (A487) along Ffordd Bont Saint, Bontnewydd, Gwynedd. The proposed forward thinking development is anticipated to comprise of a carefully designed forecourt, canopy, provision of new underground fuel tanks and associated pipework, sales building, provision of rapid electric vehicle (EV) charging points throughout the development, HGV and coaches refuelling facilities and parking spaces; provision of 169 car parking spaces; erection of a drive thru coffee shop and drive-thru restaurant; local information panel and picnic area, biodiversity enhancements, connectivity with existing footpaths, landscaping; and associated works.
- 8.2 It is considered that the submitted application is of significant merit. Namely:
- It provides rest and refuelling facilities for motorists, including tourists, in an area which is currently lacking such facilities;
 - It provides valuable new investment and local job creation (circa 45-50 full/part time jobs);
 - Provides rapid speed EV charging facilities;
 - It comprises a high-quality design with landscaping and biodiversity enhancements;
 - The bypass CPO justification identified the immediately adjacent roundabout to be the busiest on the route with a calculated daily vehicular volume of 21,000 daily;
 - Provision of new '*park and rest/ride*' facility; and
 - Was identified as being the only roundabout on the newly constructed section of road that will have the Tourist route signs (brown signs) for route off the bypass into the tourist town of Caernarfon.
- 8.3 The proposal is acceptable in respect to all relevant material considerations. We request the Council's written feedback and face to face meeting (in person or via the internet) on the proposals at the earliest convenience before the Applicant progresses a full planning application.