



Snowdonia National Park Authority
Supplementary Planning Guidance:
**General Development
Considerations**
September 2011

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SNOWDONIA NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY



**SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE:
GENERAL DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This note is one of a series of Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes (SPGs) which has been prepared by Snowdonia National Park Planning Authority and provides further detailed information in support of the policies contained in the Eryri Local Development Plan 2007- 2022. Supplementary Planning Guidance is intended to give greater detail on specific issues than is possible or appropriate in the Eryri Local Development Plan and is a material consideration when determining planning applications.
- 1.2 They can be used to:-
- inform potential applicants about the manner in which the Planning Authority will deal with developments which may have an effect on the special qualities of the National Park and,
 - To provide guidance in assisting planning officers and local members in determining planning applications.

STATUS

- 1.3 This Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) will be a material planning consideration when decisions are made on planning applications. It supplements policies contained within the Eryri Local Development Plan 2007 – 2022 and those contained in national planning guidance, Planning Policy Wales and associated Technical Advice Notes. The most relevant policies in the Eryri Local Development Plan are Strategic Policy A: National Park Purposes and Sustainable Development and Development Policy 1: General Development Principles. Reference is also made where relevant and appropriate to other policies in the Plan. However the Plan should be read as a whole when a development proposal is being assessed.
- 1.4 In accordance with good practice, applicants are encouraged to discuss applications with officers, beforehand, in order to decide where new development could be located, its scale and appearance. Pre-application advice can also assist potential applicants in providing the correct information when submitting a planning application (see separate protocol on Pre-Application Planning Advice).

2. SETTING THE CONTEXT

- 2.1 Controlling new development at a local level will contribute to the overall vision and objectives of the Authority contained in the Eryri Local Development Plan. Protecting, enhancing and managing the natural environment in a sustainable manner is paramount whilst at the same time providing diverse employment and housing opportunities to retain and enrich local communities. Proposals for new development will be assessed firstly against local and national planning policies and on any other planning consideration which may be relevant to the proposal.
- 2.2 In assessing a planning application the Authority will normally take into account the following :-
- Compliance with local and national planning policies contained in the Eryri Local Development Plan and Planning Policy Wales and Minerals Planning Policy Wales
 - Compliance with National Technical Advice Notes
 - Compliance with Local Supplementary Planning Guidance
 - Scale, siting and design
 - Impact on community and culture
 - Impact on neighbours
 - Impact on the countryside and landscape
 - Impact on protected wildlife species
 - Views expressed by those consulted : Community Councils, statutory consultees such as the Countryside Council for Wales and other relevant organisations
 - Views expressed by local members, neighbours and third parties
 - Any other relevant planning matter particular to a proposal
- 2.3 The Authority provides pre-application advice to any person prior to submitting a formal planning application on whether a particular proposal is likely to receive planning permission or not. At this stage advice can be given on how to improve or change a proposal to make it more acceptable and therefore more likely to receive planning permission. Contact details of how to engage in this process are included in Appendix 1.

3. COMPLIANCE WITH POLICIES AND ADVICE NOTES

- 3.1 If a development proposal is obviously contrary to both local and national planning policies, the Authority are likely to refuse the proposal without the need to do further detailed analysis of the planning application. National planning policies are not replicated in the Eryri Local Development Plan and therefore will need to be looked at in addition to local policies. The national policies contained in Planning Policy Wales and Minerals Planning Policy Wales, supplemented by associated Technical Advice Notes are frequently changed or modified and therefore it will be important to ensure that comparisons are made with the most up to date policies and guidance.

4. SCALE SITING AND DESIGN

- 4.1 The scale and design of a building should be appropriate to its setting. A proposal may generally comply with planning policies but fail because of inappropriate design or use of materials. Development Policy 1: General Development Principles of the Eryri Local Development Plan sets out the main development principles which should be adhered to. Generally new residential development will only be allowed within defined settlement boundaries unless located on exception sites immediately adjacent and based on local need in smaller settlements. Strategic Policy G: Housing outlines the main requirements governing the location and type of new housing that will be allowed within the settlement hierarchy.
- 4.2 Any proposal which does not respect its setting and is obviously out of scale and character with its local surroundings will not be supported. Emphasis will be placed on ensuring good sustainable design and complying with more detailed design guidance provided by the Authority.
- 4.3 Particular attention will also focus on the landscape, environmental quality, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Snowdonia National Park. All forms of development should seek to minimise their impact on any interests of acknowledged importance.

5. IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURS

- 5.1 A proposal may be undesirable because of its adverse impact on a neighbour or the wider local community. Such a nuisance may relate to excessive noise or odour levels which cannot be reduced by planning condition and therefore would significantly impact on other people's everyday way of life. Consent for noise-generating development will be carefully controlled or refused where the special qualities of the National Park would be affected. It will also be important to ensure that access to a new development is consistent and appropriate and does not cause a highway danger and would not result in excessive traffic generation on inadequate roads. New parking provision should be related to a proven need and capable of being screened adequately by additional landscaping.

6. IMPACT ON THE COUNTRYSIDE AND LANDSCAPE

- 6.1 Small scale proposals which are appropriate and assist the local economy will be supported. Proposals to convert existing buildings of permanent and substantial construction for economic use should be capable of implementation without the need for large extensions which may be out of scale or destroy the original character of the building to be converted. Any scheme of conversion must be sympathetic to the original character and be in scale with its immediate surroundings. Existing buildings may be suitable for conversion as small scale visitor or farm shops which are associated with a recognised existing rural attraction. The goods to be sold should be related to the activity and should not take trade away from existing retail facilities in the locality. New build proposals for economic development adjacent to existing settlements will be supported provided their design and scale is appropriate.
- 6.2 Other proposals which may impact on the countryside are uses such as caravan proposals, equestrian centres or additional car parking associated with existing visitor attractions. Caravans could be stored in existing agricultural buildings provided the building is surplus to agricultural requirements and does not result in the erection of a new agricultural building. All new proposals should have adequate access and a highway network capable of accommodating increases in traffic. In some instances minor off site road improvement such as extra passing bays may provide a solution. Equestrian centres should have safe access to an adequate network of public rights of way or suitable land away from public roads.
- 6.3 With all new forms of development in the countryside potential applicants need to match the scale of the proposal to its surroundings and to minimise its visual impact as is appropriate for a National Park setting. In the case of static caravans for example, physical extensions to sites will be allowed provided there are no additional caravan or chalet pitches and significant environmental improvements can be achieved.

7. IMPACT ON PROTECTED SPECIES AND DESIGNATED SITES

- 7.1 Certain areas within the national park have been designated for further protection because of their very special wildlife habitats. Usually development on or close to sites of national or international Nature Conservation Importance or Priority Natural Habitat Type will be refused. Strategic Policy D: Natural Environment of the Eryri Local Development Plan provides the strategic policy context for these designations. Certain species such as bats and barn owls are protected under National and European legislation and the Authority will ask for surveys to be undertaken to establish whether protected species are present in a building or habitat prior to the submission of a planning application. If a protected species is located a licence will be required from National Government to carry out the development, should planning permission be obtained. In most cases it is possible to mitigate against the impact new development may have, such as providing dedicated roost areas for bats or alternative nesting sites for barn owls. Such matters can be conditioned as part of a planning permission. It is a

criminal offence not to obtain a wildlife licence prior to the commencement of development.

8. VIEWS OF CONSULTEES

- 8.1 The Authority consults a variety of organisations on every planning application. Some consultees such as the Countryside Council for Wales, the Environment Agency and local Community Councils are statutory bodies and are informed on almost all applications. Members of the public and other local organisations can make representations on a planning application if they are affected in any way. All relevant planning related responses received are taken into account during the processing of a planning application which could affect the final outcome. Views expressed must relate to the development and be a relevant planning matter. For example opinions expressing loss of view or loss of property values are not relevant planning considerations. However general loss of residential amenity through increased noise, loss of open space or a dangerous access are relevant planning matters that can be taken into account.
- 8.2 A consultee may suggest a planning condition to regulate the development which could make it acceptable. In such cases the Authority will propose a conditional permission including the suggested condition.

9. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 There may be other material planning considerations specific to certain proposals which are not covered by planning policies. These will depend on particular circumstances which are only pertinent to a specific development. The views of Snowdonia National Park Authority members may place additional emphasis on a particular planning matter which may also influence the determination of a planning application.