

Monmouthshire County Council

Eich cyfeirnod
Your reference

DM/2023/01200

By email

Ein cyfeirnod
Our reference

LC

Dyddiad
Date

9 November 2023

Llinell uniongyrchol
Direct line

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Ebost
Email:

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Dear Sir/Madam

Planning Application – Change of use of the existing log cabin to a mixed use, The Old Forge, The Old Smithy, Main Road, Portskewett, Monmouthshire, NP26 5SG

Thank you for your letter of 6 November inviting our comments on the information submitted for the above planning application.

Advice

Having carefully considered the information provided, we have no objection to the proposed development in regards to the scheduled monuments listed in our assessment of the application below.

The national policy and Cadw's role in planning are set out in Annex A.

Assessment

Scheduled Monuments

MM019 Portskewett Hill Roman Site
MM029 Harold's House (site of)
MM315 St. Mary's Churchyard Cross, Portskewett

This planning application is for the change of use of the existing log cabin to a mixed use (residential/tourism) at The Old Forge, The Old Smithy, Main Road, Portskewett, Monmouthshire NP26 5SG.

The above designated historic assets are located inside 500m of the proposed development, but intervening topography, buildings and vegetation block all views between them except for MM029 Harold's House (site of). Consequently, the proposed development will have no impact on the settings of these designated assets other than MM029.



The proposal is located some 40m north of scheduled monument MM029 Harold's House (site of), the remains of a medieval manor house. The site consists of a series of upstanding earthworks traditionally thought to be the site of a hunting lodge belonging to Harold Godwinson, later King Harold II of England, which is described in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. The chronicle states that the lodge was destroyed before it was even completed, by Caradog ap Gruffydd on the feast of St Bartholomew (24th August) 1065. Caradog's attack also involved the massacre of many of Harold's people. Occupation of the site continued after the attack and it eventually fell under Norman control, with the Domesday Book recording the site as one of three hardwicks (dairy farms) belonging to Chepstow Castle. In 1270 the manor is recorded as in the ownership of the Deneband family who held it until the fifteenth century, after which it is abandoned and eventually demolished.

The earthworks comprise a sub-rectangular or oval platform 21m-22.5m in diameter and 1m high, with a bank defining part of a possible enclosure measuring 55m east to west by 25m north to south. Within the centre of the platform are a series of roughly north to south aligned linear earthworks which appear to be the remains of walls from a stone building. On the western slope of the raised mound is an east to west orientated bank 50m long by 15m wide and 1m high, forming a dam or causeway. The area crossed by the dam forms part of an old stream channel, now silted up, which may have formed a tidal inlet that was navigable from the Severn Estuary.

An evaluation excavation undertaken in 2007 found evidence for 11th century activity on the site and the foundations of two buildings; one a possible animal shelter and the second a much more substantial structure measuring some 25m by 20m with thick stone walls interpreted as a possible tower house. These structures are thought to be part of the manorial complex belonging to the Deneband family.

The site is located on a slight spur above coastal levels and as a manorial centre it will have functioned as the focus of the contemporary agricultural landscape. It will also have been closely associated with St Mary's Church immediately to the east, a Norman foundation first mentioned in 1254. The relationship between the two sites is significant and surviving views from the monument south in an arc from west to east over open ground are also important.

The proposed development is for the change in use of a single storey log cabin measuring 8.5 long north to south by 1.6m east to west to residential accommodation.

The building for which the change in use is proposed is visible from the scheduled monument but the proposed change in use will not alter the external appearance of the building. Some small change will be made within the application area by addition of small herbaceous on the west of the extant driveway and a hedgerow border with fruit trees to be established on the south side of the building.



As such whilst there may be a very slight visual change in the view from the monument this will not have any effect on the way that it is experienced, understood, and appreciated. Consequently, the proposed development will have no impact on the setting of scheduled monument MM029.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Cooper
Casework Officer

Annex A

Our role

Our statutory role in the planning process is to provide the local planning authority with an assessment concerned with the likely impact that the proposal will have on scheduled monuments, registered historic parks and gardens, registered historic landscapes where an Environmental Impact Assessment is required and development likely to have an impact on the outstanding universal value of a World Heritage Site. We do not provide an assessment of the likely impact of the development on listed buildings or conservation areas, as these are matters for the local authority.

It is for the local planning authority to weigh our assessment against all the other material considerations in determining whether to approve planning permission.

National Policy

Applications for planning permission are considered in light of the Welsh Government's land use planning policy and guidance contained in Planning Policy Wales (PPW), Technical Advice Notes and related guidance.

PPW [planning-policy-wales-edition-11.pdf](#) explains that it is important that the planning system looks to protect, conserve and enhance the significance of historic assets. This will include consideration of the setting of an historic asset which might extend beyond its curtilage. Any change that impacts on an historic asset or its setting should be managed in a sensitive and sustainable way.

The conservation of archaeological remains and their settings is a material consideration in determining a planning application, whether those remains are a scheduled monument or not. Where nationally important archaeological remains are likely to be affected by proposed development, there should be a presumption in favour of their physical protection in situ. It will only be in exceptional circumstances that planning permission will be granted if development would result in a direct adverse impact on a scheduled monument (or an archaeological site shown to be of national importance)

[Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment](#) elaborates by explaining that when considering development proposals that affect scheduled monuments or other nationally important archaeological remains, there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ, i.e. a presumption against proposals which would involve significant alteration or cause damage, or would have a significant adverse impact causing harm within the setting of the remains.

Historic Parks and Gardens

PPW also explains that local authorities should value, protect, conserve and enhance the special interests of parks and gardens and their settings included on the register of



historic parks and gardens in Wales and that the effect of a proposed development on a registered park or garden or its setting should be a material consideration in the determination of a planning application.