

LAND TO THE EAST OF THE A548

COMPRISING

PLOTS 06/102- 06/105 (INCLUSIVE)

**MONA OFFSHORE WIND LIMITED
DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER
SECTION 56 PLANNING ACT 2008
PLANNING INSPECTORATE REFERENCE NUMBER
EN010137**

MNOW-AFP079: MNOW-AFP129: MNOW-AFP130: MNOW-AFP131

WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS

OF

ROBERT WYNNE. PARRY

Introduction

1. I **ROBERT WYNNE PARRY** of [REDACTED] provide these Written Representations by way of opposition to the development consent order (**Order**) applied for by Mona Offshore Wind Limited in respect of land to the east of the A548 being plots 06/102 to 06/105 (inclusive) (**Plots**). These Written Representations are made on my own behalf as part owner of the Plots, and on behalf of my co-owners of the Plots, namely my mother, Harriet Mary Parry, my brother, Griffith Wynne Parry and my sister, Elizabeth Wynne Wade.
2. Our opposition to the Order in so far as the Plots are concerned is contained in:
 - a. these Written Representations;
 - b. the Written Representations of Griffith Wynne Parry; and
 - c. the Written Representations of Kerry James, Chartered Town Planning Consultancy.
3. Where in these Written Representations I refer to page numbers, it is to page numbers in the attached annex marked "**RWP**".

Personal Background

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Projects at Pen Yr Allt

7. Following a visit home to Pen Yr Allt in 2020, I found myself locked down in the UK during Covid. During this time, I dedicated my time to assisting with necessary renovations and maintenance of listed Pen Yr Allt. This has included the complete renovation of the annex to the main Grade 2 * farmhouse, the complete renovation of the separately listed bakehouse along with extensive landscaping works to provide a formal garden area and a wildflower meadow. All this work has been completed not only to an exceptionally high standard of workmanship by the involvement of local Welsh heritage craftsman, but it has also been done sympathetically to the rural landscape.
8. My passion for my Welsh heritage and extensive experience in luxury hospitality was re-ignited and I also began working on a new project. Drawing from my wealth of knowledge, I embarked on a remarkable project: the design and construction of a 5-star luxury Shepherd's Hut named Siôr which is situated at Pen Yr Allt. It was granted the necessary planning permission (see pages 1 to 6 of RWP) with the decision noting at paragraph 14, its high-quality design and its contribution to the local rural economy,
9. Internal and external photographs of Siôr, showing the high quality design and finish and how it fits sympathetically with the surrounding rural landscape are at pages 7 to 10 of RWP. It promotes the Welsh cultural heritage and safeguards the local rural environment.
10. Siôr was completed in spring 2022 and since then I have been welcoming guests from all over the UK as well as international visitors. I have already had a number of repeat guests or guests who have recommended others.
11. This unique glamping experience has garnered acclaim, earning us the prestigious Visit Wales Gold Glamping status (see page 11 of RWP). Additionally, it was recognised as one of the 25 Best New Glamping Stays in the whole of the UK by The Times newspaper in April 2022 [see pages 12 of RWP].
12. Our guests regularly tell me that they chose to stay at Siôr due to its unique high-quality heritage offering along with the unique design and bespoke experience in a rural area of peaceful tranquillity. It is fair to say that Siôr has become a "destination" in itself, drawing people to stay in the local area due to the unique nature of what Siôr offers.

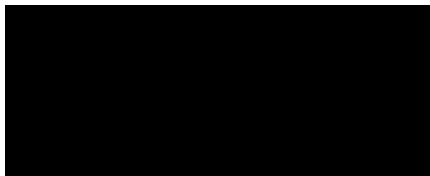
Next Steps at Pen Yr Allt/Planning Application

13. Buoyed by this success, I have delved into extensive local research, exploring opportunities to further invest in developing much-needed luxury, bespoke, heritage accommodation with an associated local farm shop within the North Wales region. Following initial surveys and appraisals, land to the east of the A548 was identified and earmarked for this purpose, primarily due to its accessibility and position at the Pen Yr Efail crossroads where the B5831 bisects the A548. This site was also chosen given its proximity to local communities Abergele (2 miles), Betws yn Rhos (2 miles), Llanfair Talhaearn (2.5 miles) and St Asaph (7 miles) where customers could be drawn from for the farm shop.
14. I have been in the process of putting together a full planning proposal that illustrates how we will create a world-class glamping site designed with sustainable tourism in mind along with an associated farm shop.
15. In the same way that I chose a Shepherd's hut (Sior) as the accommodation best suited to integrate with the surrounding sheep grazing farmland where it is situated at Pen Yr Allt, my new concept proposes to create a modern, luxury version of an early Celtic village. With the demand for eco-friendly accommodation increasing, we would be looking to erect around 30 stilted, luxury eco glamping lodges, placed to offer stunning surrounding views. The concept aims to connecting visitors with the Welsh landscape and local wildlife, as well as offering an authentic Welsh experience. I attach pictures of the concept at pages 13 to 18 of RWP by way of illustration.
16. I also attach at pages 19 and 20 of RWP the architect's site feasibility plan in two phases which we are using to work up our planning application. As can be seen from the plans, Phase 01 envisages 30 high quality luxury eco glamping lodges set around 2 small lake areas. The lodges are a mixture of 1 and 2 bed units.
17. Visitors can explore the surrounding countryside, engage in outdoor activities, and learn about the local culture and heritage of North Wales. The proposal also considers incorporating sustainable features such as solar panels, rainwater harvesting, and composting toilets. All of this strongly aligns with the government's commitment to environmental conservation and responsible tourism. In addition, the proposal follows the desires highlighted in **The Welsh Government's Welcome to Wales: Priorities for the Visitor Economy 2020-2025** (see pages 21 to 38 of RWP) which emphasises enhancing the tourism sector with a focus on offering unique, sustainable accommodations that attracts visitors seeking memorable experiences.

18. I also intend to add a local farm shop, restaurant and antique/gallery similar in design to that of other successful project such as Durslade Farm Shop on the outskirts of Bruton in Somerset (see pictures at pages 39 to 42 of RWP). As can be seen from the plans, there is provision for 4 modern agricultural buildings to accommodate a shop, restaurant, gallery etc. There is also provision for another 12 small timber pod structures which can be rented for stalls for outlets such as wood fired pizza, Welsh food, local jams and chutneys etc. The project will therefore generate income through accommodation bookings, the sale of local produce in the Farm shop, provide traditional food in the restaurant and promote local crafts and talent in the retail outlet. The proposal highlights the impact on a local level for employment (both during construction and for the ongoing operations), as well as independents, artists and local farming community.
19. Provision for parking for the Farm Shop, gallery and stalls is made on the plans and it can be seen that access to these facilities, and the Eco-Glamping pods, needs to be directly from the A548. There is no other way to access the proposed project. Also, the access for the necessary underground infrastructure, electricity, drainage and waste etc would need to be direct to and from the A548.
20. Phase 02 builds on the tourist retail and leisure facilities and incorporates a further 21 accommodation units. In addition, and due to the attraction of Pen Yr Efail cross roads for serious cyclists who consider it to be a central point from which they can comfortably circumnavigate all 4 quadrants of North Wales, we have provided for 22 basic cycling pods with outdoor covered barbeque/ picnic areas. Attracting cyclists also support the planning guidance which provides visitors who travel otherwise than by car should be supported and attracted.
21. In short, what I am proposing is an integrated tourist facility. The initial forecast calculated over the 5-year development plan for glamping accommodation, a farm shop, restaurant and gallery/retail facility suggest that this would significantly diversity our farm business and enhance our off-farm income. To support the proposal, I have provided the Written Representations by Kerry James, which suggests that on initial review, my plans are achievable and the concept at pages 13 to 20 of RWP shows what I intend to achieve.
22. If for any reason the tourist facility was not granted planning, Kerry James sets out in her representations that planning could be granted for renewable energy use which is something which would be pursued.

Impact of Mona Scheme

23. It is also my understanding that, in using the Plots for a compound and area to lay cables, Mona Offshore intends to temporarily use 60.21% of the of the full 23.9 acres (9.68ha) of the Plots. The architect's concept plan at page 20 of RWP has been overlaid with Mona Offshore's proposed working corridor edged in red so the impact of the Mona Scheme on my proposed scheme can clearly be shown.
24. Of particular concern to me is that the Mona Scheme proposes to close access directly off the A548 which alone is likely to severely curtail my proposals.
25. Of equal concern however, is that I understand that once Mona Offshore gets their Scheme confirmed then they will not have to do anything on site for up to 10 years and it could be a further 3 or 4 years before the construction works are complete and reinstated and we get the land back.
26. Mona Offshore will also render some 10,350m² (1.04ha/ 2.56 acres) or 10.69% of the entire site, permanently sterilised and suitable only for grassland use in perpetuity. In the event that Mona Offshore is permitted to continue and permanently sterilise the Plots and to impact the access from the A548, then the scheme will (i) lose accessibility; (ii) we will not be able to build the necessary infrastructure for services and (iii) the scheme would lose density. In short, for all these reasons it will make the proposed scheme completely untenable.
27. I therefore urge the inspector to recommend not confirming the Order in respect of the Plots as I believe that there are number of other options open to Mona Offshore to transmit the power along this part of the line (as set out in the Written Representations of Griffith Wynne Parry) and which would not impinge on my plans.
28. In the event that the Inspector feels that it is necessary to confirm the Order in respect of the Plots then I would like to request that alternative mitigating solutions be considered to enable my proposed scheme to proceed.



ROBERT WYNNE PARRY

Dated 7th August 2024

LAND TO THE EAST OF THE A548

COMPRISING

PLOTS 06/102- 06/105 (INCLUSIVE)

**MONA OFFSHORE WIND LIMITED
DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER**

SECTION 56 PLANNING ACT 2008

**PLANNING INSPECTORATE REFERENCE NUMBER
EN010137**

ANNEX RWP TO WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS

OF

ROBERT WYNNE. PARRY

EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY

ITEM 1 : PLANNING PERMISSION FOR SIOR (ON APPEAL)



Appeal Decision

by I Stevens BA (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Decision date: 12/10/2023

Appeal reference: CAS-02536-C0V1D0

Site address: Pen Yr Allt Farm, Tan Y Fron Road, Abergele, LL22 9BB

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Robert Wynne Parry against the decision of Conwy County Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 0/50072, dated 22 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 16 November 2022.
 - The development is described as retention of shepherd's hut and associated works (retrospective application).
 - A site visit was made on 25 September 2022.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for shepherd's hut and associated works at Pen Yr Allt Farm, Tan Y Fron Road, Abergele, LL22 9BB, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 0/50072, dated 22 September 2022, subject to the conditions set out in the schedule to this decision letter.

Procedural Matters

2. As I noted on my site visit that the shepherd's hut was in place, along with the associated parking area and connecting pathway, I have dealt with the appeal on the basis that it seeks retrospective planning permission under the terms of Section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. However, as the retention of works does not fall within the meaning of development as set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, I have amended the description of the development in the formal decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether there are other material considerations that would be sufficient to outweigh any conflict with local planning policies.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises an irregular shaped portion of land that has been fenced off from an agricultural field at Pen yr Allt Farm. The farm buildings, some of which are listed, lie to the north of the site beyond the large field. An existing field access has been used to provide a parking space, from which a path runs adjacent to the field boundary

www.llyw.cymru/penderfyniadau-cynllunio-ac-amgylchedd-cymru
www.gov.wales/planning-and-environment-decisions-wales

EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY

Ref: CAS-02536-COV1D0

hedgerow towards a shepherd's hut. The hut is used for self-catering holiday accommodation. It is finished in corrugated metal on its walls and curved roof, with timber-framed openings.

5. In planning policy terms, the appeal site is in the Rural Development Strategy Area (RDSA), as defined in the Conwy Local Development Plan (LDP) 2007-2022, adopted in October 2013. The site is also in the Rhyd y Foel to Abergele Special Landscape Area (SLA). LDP Policy TOU/1 supports a sustainable tourism economy, and includes, in principle, support for new high quality all-year round sustainable tourism development. Policy TOU/2 seeks, amongst other things, to support new high quality holiday accommodation only where it forms an ancillary or complementary part of an existing or proposed new tourist development and meets several development criteria. The supporting text to this policy adds that the Plan will support suitable schemes for business diversification schemes within rural areas, in appropriate locations complying with local and national guidance. To this end, Planning Policy Wales (PPW), Edition 11, February 2021, recognises that in rural areas, tourism-related development is an essential element in providing for a healthy and diverse economy.
6. Although not a refusal reason, LDP Policy TOU/4 has been referred to in parties' submissions. The policy addresses extensions or improvements to existing chalet, caravan, and camping sites within the RDSA. It also clarifies that schemes for timber pods or alternative small structures will be assessed on their own merits in line with policy criteria. Policy TOU/4 clearly refers to existing sites, whereas the appeal development is a single holiday unit on a farm, and there is no suggestion that it forms part of an existing tourist development or holiday accommodation site. There is no clear reference within the policy to the creation of new sites in the RDSA.
7. The appellant has confirmed that Pen yr Allt is still a working farm. Although I note the Council's comment that the development does not represent a farm diversification scheme, there is no local policy requirement to demonstrate this. Indeed, the supporting text to Policy TOU/4 supports small-scale groups of holiday chalets in the rural area on, amongst other things, working farms. Although the appeal development is not a chalet, as an alternative small camping structure it is different to a 'new build' form of un-serviced accommodation, which the supporting text to Policy TOU/2 clarifies is not supported in the open countryside to protect the area from private holiday homes being built across the Plan Area.
8. Whilst noting the development does not fall within the types of holiday accommodation supported by Policy TOU/2, by virtue of it being a new site in the rural area, I have considered other material considerations. The supporting text to Policies TOU/2 and TOU/4 does not prohibit such developments in the rural area; in the latter case, there is support for development in the right location. More broadly, national planning policy supports tourism-related development which is sympathetic in nature and scale to the local environment.
9. As the site is in the SLA, development will only be permitted if it is shown to be capable of being satisfactorily integrated into the landscape, as sought by LDP Policy NTE/4. The shepherd's hut is adjacent to the narrow and winding rural lane. However, views of the structure are largely confined to its upper section, given the presence of the tall hedgerow that lines the lane and provides strong definition to the field. The absence of any similar structures in the locality does not necessarily make the development harmful. Indeed, the presence of a small-scale, metal-clad structure of simple form and appearance is not untypical in the countryside and affords the hut a rural character that is appropriate to its setting.

EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY

Ref: CAS-02536-C0V1D0

10. The surrounding topography also limits views further along the highway, particularly as it lowers to the east, such that the structure is seen in glimpses for short durations for passing vehicles. The development has also not affected any existing features along the lane, as it utilises an existing agricultural field access. The slate-covered hardstanding areas are small, supporting the hut, outdoor area, parking area and connecting pathway. The hut and hardstanding materials are appropriate to the rural setting and not excessive in scale as they serve this single unit of holiday accommodation. The development does not affect the broader field pattern, as it occupies a small portion of the land adjacent to its edge.
11. I viewed the development from the eastern highway and western footpath boundaries to the field, respectively. While it is located at the higher end of the field, the development is viewed in longer-distance glimpses in between vegetation, and in those views, it is set against the backdrop of the hedgerow boundary. The timber fencing that separates the appeal site from the wider field is unobtrusive and I note that additional landscaping measures are proposed along that section. In these more distant views, the development is perceived as a small-scale structure related to the rural, agricultural context in which it is located. Contrary to the Council's assessment, I do not consider the hut is prominently located as it is only seen partially from the highway and in glimpses from either side of the large field.
12. Although detached from the farm complex, the shepherd's hut has been carefully sited and its position, along with proposed additional landscaping, ensures that it is not prominent in the landscape nor harmful to the rural character of this locality. I note that additional paraphernalia is located adjacent to the hut, including a hot tub, heater, outdoor seating, and lighting attached to several poles. The features are predominantly timber-clad, in a small section of the site which is to be enclosed by additional hedgerows. Given their minor scale and close association with the single hut, the features do not have a harmful effect on the rural character of the area.
13. I have considered the statutory requirements for special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings. In doing so, given the design of the shepherd's hut and its distance from the group of buildings at Pen yr Allt Farm, I am satisfied that the development does not harm the setting of listed buildings. I note the Council's Conservation Officer also raises no objection, and whilst I note their concerns about additional units on the land, I am dealing with the proposal before me which is for a single unit. Any future proposals would be subject to separate planning applications and be assessed on their own merits at that time.
14. Overall, whilst noting the LDP aims to control new holiday accommodation through Policies TOU/1, TOU/2 and TOU/4, the development has been located so as not to harm the rural character of the area. It is not a visually obtrusive form of development and as such, its high-quality design protects local character, in accordance with the design-related objectives of LDP Policies DP/3, DP/4 and NTE/4. Furthermore, the development provides some small benefits to the rural economy of Conwy through the additional holiday accommodation. This broadly accords with the aims of local and national tourism policies. These material considerations support my conclusion that, due to the specific circumstances of this case, the development does not result in material harm and does not conflict with the spatial development aims of the Conwy LDP.

Other Matter

15. I note references from the parties to other rural holiday accommodation schemes in Conwy. From my reading of the submitted decision (Appeal Ref: APP/T6905/A/18/3202290) there is a clear difference between the appeal development

EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY

Ref: CAS-02536-C0V1D0

and that scheme, where the proposed pods/hut accommodation formed part of a tourist development scheme at the main dwelling. I also note references to another Council decision (Local Planning Authority Ref: 0/47072) for a shepherd's hut. While the Council refer to other decisions it has taken for holiday accommodation, the site-specific circumstances of those cases differ from the development before me, which I have determined on its own merits and having regard to material considerations.

Conditions

16. I have considered the conditions recommended by the Council in the light of advice in Welsh Government Circular 016/2014 'The Use of Planning Conditions for Development Management' ('the Circular'). The Council's suggested occupancy condition is necessary to restrict occupancy of the shepherd's hut to holiday accommodation use, given the LDP's approach to development in the countryside. Given that the site access and vehicle parking are in place, the suggested highways conditions are not necessary.
17. As the development is in place, it is necessary to secure details of the additional landscaping measures via planning conditions. The Council's Ecologist considers that the measures will provide an appropriate biodiversity enhancement measure, thereby satisfying national planning policy, and I see no reason to disagree. There are strict timetables for compliance because permission is being granted retrospectively, and it is not possible to use negatively worded conditions to secure the approval and implementation of the biodiversity enhancement scheme before the development takes place. The conditions will ensure that the development can be enforced against if the requirements are not met.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.
19. In reaching my decision, I have taken into account the requirements of sections 3 and 5 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. I consider that this decision is in accordance with the Act's sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers' well-being objectives.

I Stevens

INSPECTOR

EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY

Ref: CAS-02536-C0V1D0

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1) The development shall be occupied as holiday accommodation only and shall not be occupied as a person's sole or main place of residence or by any persons exceeding a period of 60 days in any calendar year. An up-to-date register shall be kept at the holiday accommodation hereby permitted and be made available for inspection by the local planning authority upon request. The register shall contain details of the names of all the occupiers of the accommodation, their main home addresses and their date of arrival and departure from the accommodation.

Reason: To ensure that the development is used as holiday accommodation and to comply with Policies DP/1, DP/2, DP/6, HOU/1, HOU/2, and HOU/6 of the adopted Conwy Local Development Plan (2013) and advice in Planning Policy Wales, Edition 11 (February 2021).

- 2) Unless within 3 months of the date of this decision a detailed scheme of landscaping, to include details of proposed planting (including planting layout plans, planting schedules, species, sizes, numbers/densities and the implementation/maintenance programme) is submitted in writing to the local planning authority for approval, and unless the approved scheme is implemented in the first planting season following the local planning authority's approval, or in accordance with a timetable set out in the approved details, the use of the shepherd's hut shall cease until such time as a scheme is approved and implemented. If no scheme in accordance with this condition is approved within 6 months of the date of this decision, the use of the shepherd's hut shall cease until such time as a scheme approved by the local planning authority is implemented.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and biodiversity, and to protect the setting of the Special Landscape Area and nearby listed building, in accordance with Future Wales Policy 9, Policies DP/3, DP/4, DP/6, NTE/3, NTE/4 and CTH/2 of the adopted Conwy Local Development Plan (2013), and advice in Planning Policy Wales, Edition 11 (February 2021).

- 3) Any planting, seeding, or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping which within a period of 5 years from the date of planting die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and biodiversity, and to protect the setting of the Special Landscape Area and nearby listed building, in accordance with Future Wales Policy 9, Policies DP/3, DP/4, DP/6, NTE/3, NTE/4 and CTH/2 of the adopted Conwy Local Development Plan (2013), and advice in Planning Policy Wales, Edition 11 (February 2021).

- 4) The existing boundary hedge shown on the topographic survey (Drawing Ref: 10773/1 (sheet 1 of 1)) shall be retained at a minimum height of 2m in height above the level of the adjacent highway.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to protect the setting of the Special Landscape Area, and to comply with Policies DP/3, DP/4, DP/6, NTE/3, NTE/4, and CTH/2 of the adopted Conwy Local Development Plan (2013), and advice in Planning Policy Wales, Edition 11 (February 2021).

- 5) No external lighting shall be installed within the application site unless details of the external lighting have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The external lighting shall thereafter only be installed in accordance with the approved details.

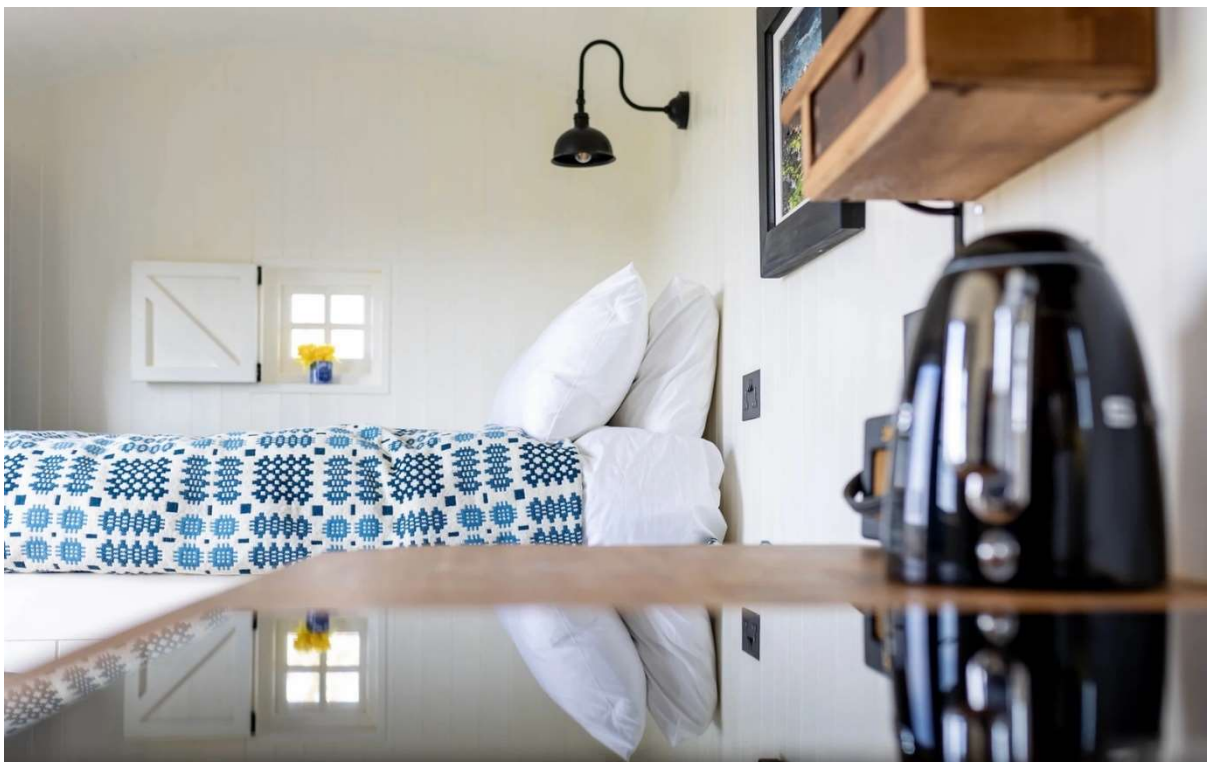
EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY

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Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to protect the setting of the Special Landscape Area and nearby listed building, and to comply with Policies DP/3, DP/4, DP/6, NTE/4 and CTH/2 of the adopted Conwy Local Development Plan 2013, and advice in Planning Policy Wales, Edition 11 (February 2021).

EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY

ITEM 2 : SIOR GLAMPING SITE



EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY



EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY



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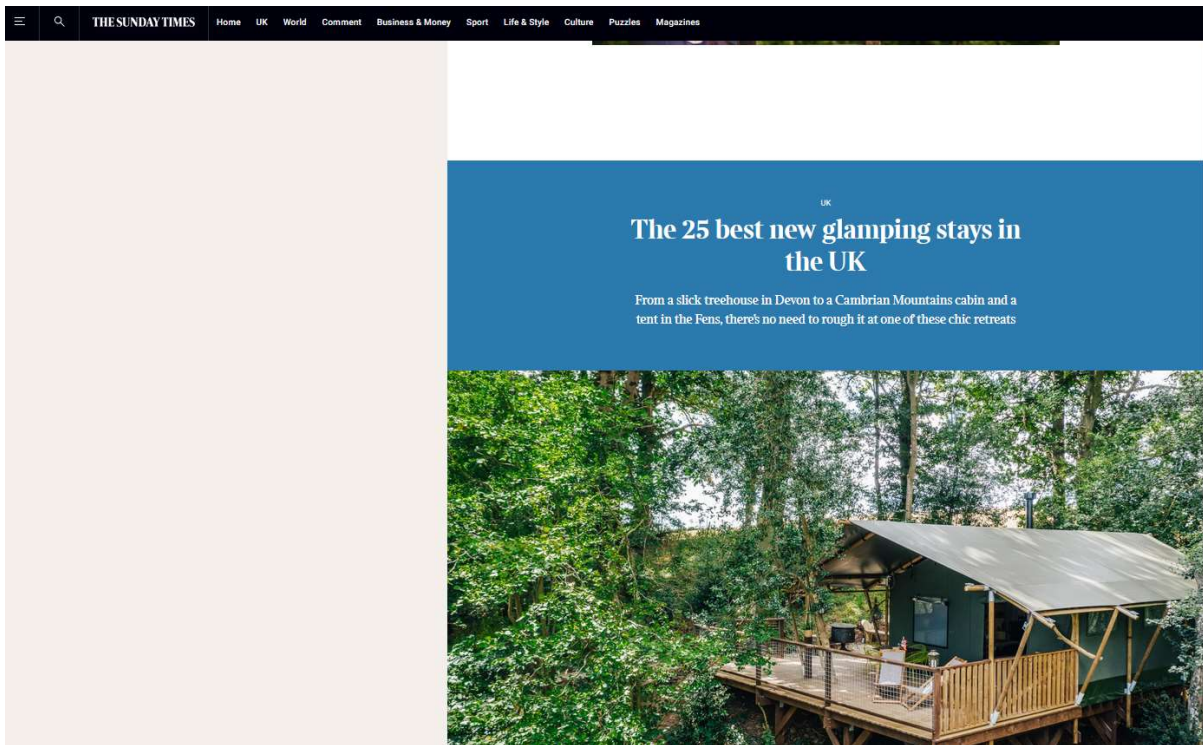
EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY

ITEM 3 : VISIT WALES GOLD GLAMPING STATUS



EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY

ITEM 4 : TIMES NEWSPAPER 25 BEST GLAMPING SITES

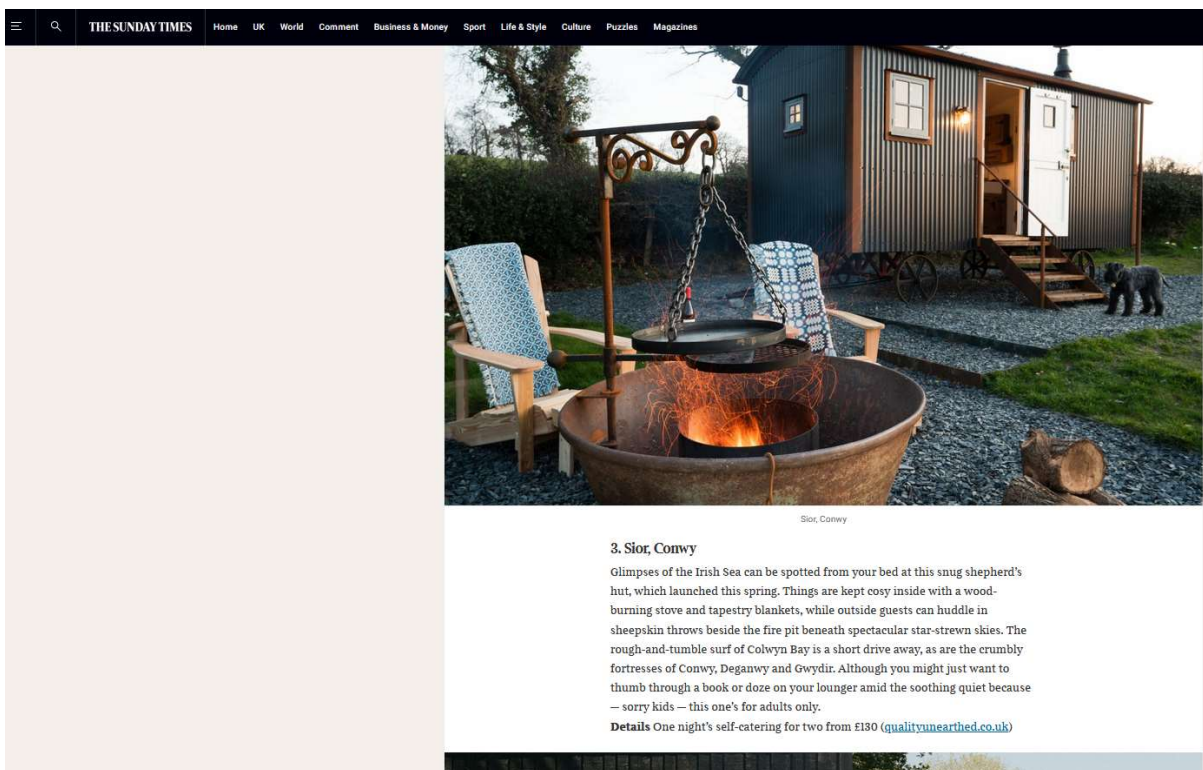



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UK

The 25 best new glamping stays in the UK

From a slick treehouse in Devon to a Cambrian Mountains cabin and a tent in the Fens, there's no need to rough it at one of these chic retreats



THE SUNDAY TIMES Home UK World Comment Business & Money Sport Life & Style Culture Puzzles Magazines



Sior, Conwy

3. Sior, Conwy

Glimpses of the Irish Sea can be spotted from your bed at this snug shepherd's hut, which launched this spring. Things are kept cosy inside with a wood-burning stove and tapestry blankets, while outside guests can huddle in sheepskin throws beside the fire pit beneath spectacular star-strewn skies. The rough-and-tumble surf of Colwyn Bay is a short drive away, as are the crumbly fortresses of Conwy, Deganwy and Gwydir. Although you might just want to thumb through a book or doze on your lounge amid the soothing quiet because — sorry kids — this one's for adults only.

Details One night's self-catering for two from £130 (qualityunearthed.co.uk)

EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY

ITEM 5 : CONCEPT PICTURES OF PROPOSED SCHEME



EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY



EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY



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High House lets you enjoy the outdoors even in the middle o...

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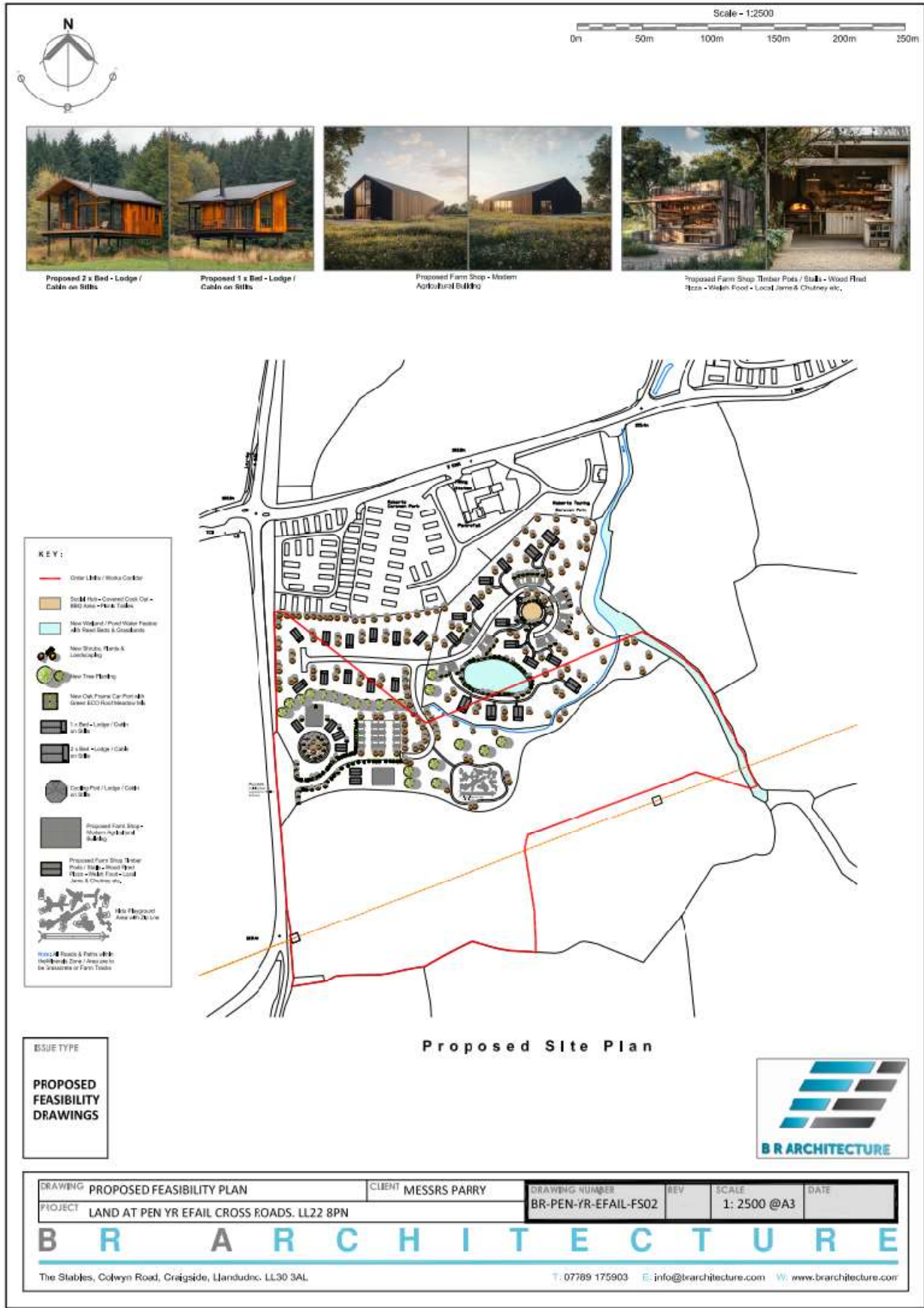
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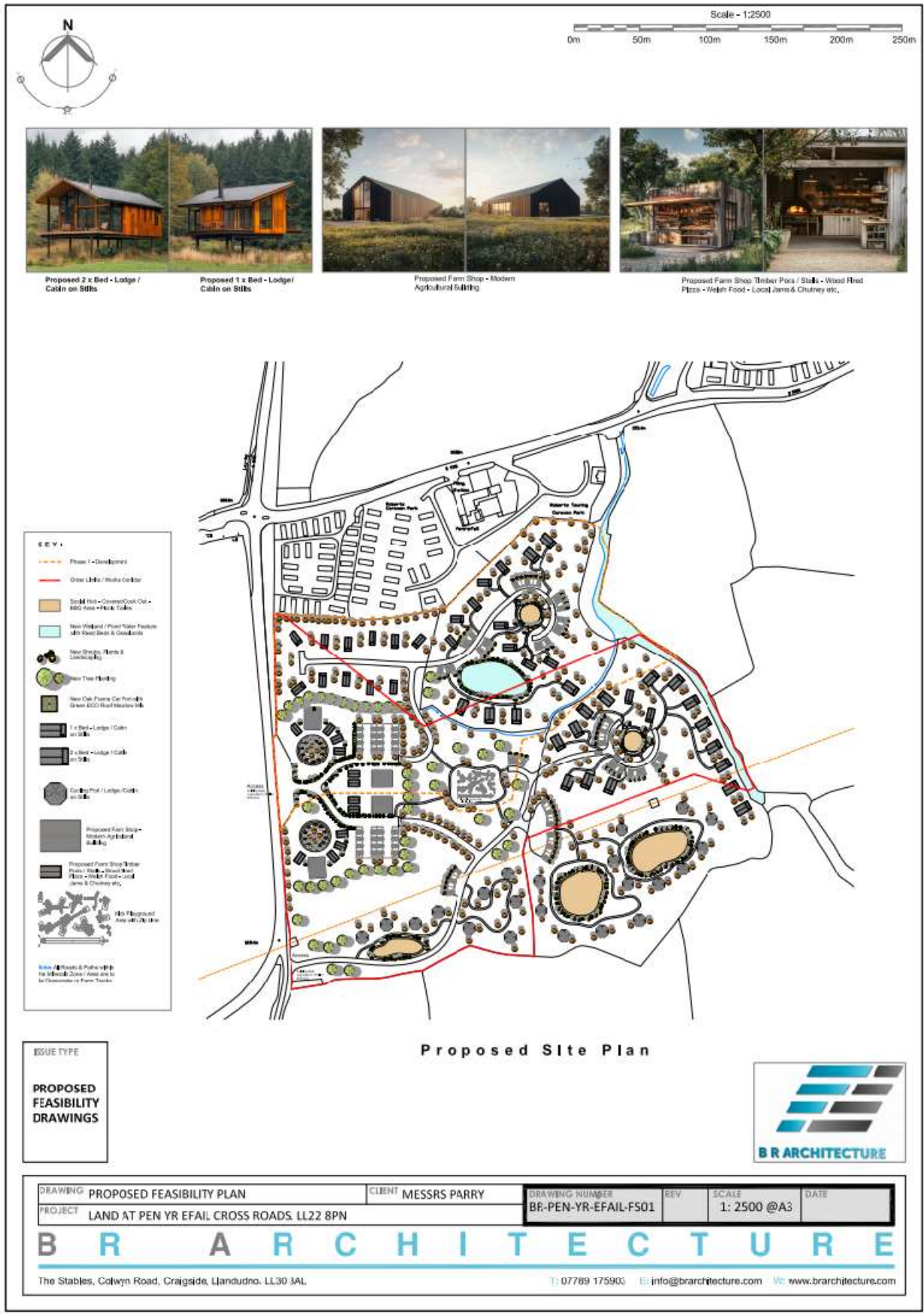
EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY

ITEM 6 : ARCHITECTS CONCEPT PLAN: PHASE 01



EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY

ITEM 6 : ARCHITECTS CONCEPT PLAN: PHASE 02



EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY

ITEM 7 : WELCOME TO WALES: WELSH TOURISM GUIDE



Open.

Welcome to Wales:
Priorities for the visitor economy 2020–2025

Your short guide.



Croeso.

This is a summary of our priorities for developing and promoting the visitor economy in Wales over the next five years: our ideas have been shaped by your input. Diolch.

“I spend many weekends trail-running in the mountains above Betws-y-Coed. My way of life, and our culture here in Wales, are shaped by our landscapes, which are alive with so much creativity and adventure. The paths I follow are busy with visitors from all parts of the world – but they are owned by our community too, and we share the journey together... The future of our industry goes hand in hand with the future of our communities; what is good for visitors can also be good for locals.”

Lorð Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM
Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism

This guide provides:

- An overview of the vision and direction.
- A summary of Visit Wales' key priorities and actions.
- Stories, interviews and case studies to inspire you to work with us in the future.

You can read the plan in full by visiting:
businesswales.gov.wales/tourism

Working together.

04

Visit Wales is the team within Welsh Government that is responsible for the development and promotion of the visitor economy in Wales. Our role is to support and enable our partners to grow our sector for the future.

This plan is for all of us.

Our partners include:

- Teams across Welsh Government, such as Health and Education.
 - UK-level organisations, including VisitBritain.
 - National organisations, such as Transport for Wales and National Museum Wales.
 - Wales' Local Authorities.
 - Members of our four regional forums.
 - Public and third sector organisations both in tourism and beyond.
 - And — most importantly — private sector tourism operators and businesses in Wales, and across the world.
-

Tourism today.

05

Tourism to Wales is in a strong position — and there is scope to grow our sector for the future. But in the face of potential over-tourism in some parts of the country and climate emergency there are new challenges ahead. You have told us that growth must also serve to sustain and support the wellbeing of the strengths that bring people here in the first place — our landscapes, culture and localities. It is the right thing to do. And it's also what future visitors will demand.

That is the opportunity at the heart of our plan.

Our plan.

06

Here is a snapshot of the plan — in summary.

Ambition				
To grow tourism for the good of Wales				
Goals				
Economic growth that delivers...	Environmental sustainability	Social and cultural enrichment	Health benefits	
Listen to residents, visitors and businesses				
Approach				
High-quality, year-round experiences that are good for visitors and host communities				
Inherently Welsh — with a global outlook				
Bro — Welsh and local		Byd — international		
Wales' core offer				
Outstanding natural landscapes	Creative culture	Epic adventure		
Croeso: a warm welcome, unique accommodation and local food and drink				
The Wales Way				
Brand objectives				
Elevate our status	Surprise and inspire	Change perceptions	Do good things	Be unmistakably Wales
Our visitors				
Seasonality	Spend	Spread		
New staycation markets in the UK	International visitors — new to Wales	The people of Wales		
Types of visitor				
General visitors	Business travellers	Special interest visitors		
Trade and operators				
Key priorities for Visit Wales				
Great products and places	Quality visitor experiences	An innovative Cymru Wales brand	An engaged and vibrant sector	
Commercial priorities				
Improved routes to market	A focus on special interest products	Commercial partnerships		
Implementation				
Restructured internal team	Refreshed governance structures	Streamlined business support		
Review of delivery at local level		New approach to partnership delivery		

Ambition.

08

Our ambition is to grow tourism for the good of Wales: generating economic, environmental, cultural and health benefits that enrich the lives of our visitors — and local communities.



Approach.

09

Central to our approach is an emphasis on developing outstanding, high-quality, year-round visitor experiences that are good for our guests — and local people. Experiences that strike a balance between:

Bro.

Meaning local community, a sense of purpose and place.

Local impact:

- Experiences with a Welsh sense of place.
- Friendly, welcoming communities.
- A showcase for Welsh food and drink.
- Clean, green destinations.
- Driving local economies and supply-chains.
- Accessible and inclusive, offering value for money.
- Open year-round, across all parts of Wales.
- Growing home-grown businesses.
- Celebrating the Welsh language.

Byd.

Meaning international levels of quality standards and ambition.

International relevance:

- A respected destination brand.
- Attracting new international business.
- Driving value over volume.
- World-class experiences and events.
- Better connectivity including a globally-connected Cardiff Airport.
- Meeting international quality standards.
- Relevant, innovative and contemporary.
- Harnessing data and insight for decisions.
- Multi-lingual and culturally aware.
- Minimising environmental impact.

Wales' core offer.

10

We want to create and celebrate experiences that reflect Wales' stand-out strengths as a country, picking up on our recent annual themes.

By 2025 we want Wales to be famous for its:

Outstanding landscapes: protected and cared for.	Vibrant communities and creative culture.	Epic adventures and activities for everyone.
--------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------

Unique Welsh welcome.

National experiences such as The Wales Way.

Our visitors.

11

Wales attracts around 11 million visitors a year. There is still scope to grow the overall number of visitors to Wales but in order to develop sustainably we need to address three key challenges:

Seasonality

Growing off-peak tourism.

Spend

Encouraging visitors to spend longer and spend more in Wales.

Spread

Inspiring visitors to discover new tourism-ready areas of Wales.

Our main focus will be on:

- New staycation markets across the age-spectrum in Wales, the UK and Ireland.
- International visitors, that are new to Wales that have been or are considering the UK.
- The people of Wales, inspiring confidence, visits and advocacy.
- Lifetime visitors, with the aim of turning students into repeat visitors.
- Business travellers, starting with doing more to attract Business Events to Wales.
- Special interest visitors, with a passion for specific experiences.
- Trade and operators, intermediaries that bridge us and our visitors.

“Britain’s most beautiful country punches well above its weight. And in recent years, it has blossomed — with lovely small hotels, flourishing food scenes and audacious activities — without sacrificing the soul that made it so appealing in the first place.”



Audacious.

Epic adventures are the best.

Phil Scott, RibRide.

Play to your strengths.

The Welsh landscape and coast provide such a strong context for adventure. There's been a lot of investment here, so the outdoors industry has become a hotbed of professionalism that you can both work with and draw on.

Think big.

There's no point doing anything half-measure, so we decided to build the world's fastest commercial RIB experience, RibRide Velocity.

Work together.

We're very friendly with the guys who operate Zip World. Sean Taylor developed a zip wire that's the fastest in the world. So in order to develop a more cohesive draw to North Wales, we asked Sean's permission to use the word 'Velocity' and he very generously said, 'Yes, let's make North Wales a stronger destination.'

Think international.

We are using Welsh expertise and innovation, and using Wales as the proving ground. We're creating a reason to visit, but also exporting the values of Wales further afield. We can take Welsh innovation to the world.

Be the greenest, be the best.

We became the first UK marine operator to achieve Blue Flag status. When we interact with the environment, we protect it as much as possible. It's about our credentials, and earning people's trust. It's important to aspire beyond just driving a boat quickly. That's what we do, fundamentally: we aspire to be as good as we possibly can in every aspect of our operation.

A large stone suspension bridge with a boat on the water below. The bridge has two main stone towers and a metal suspension structure. The water is dark and choppy, with a small boat moving across it. In the background, there are houses on a hillside under a cloudy sky.

Think big.

“Effective engagement between the private and public sectors is hugely important. Success depends on partnership and collaboration, so we need to forge relationships that make the best possible use of resources. The objectives of any priorities plan will be better achieved if we all collaborate closely. We’re all on the same journey together.

We need to work in a greener and more environmentally efficient way, but sustainability also means sustaining communities. Tourism creates jobs in places that other industries don’t. This sector deserves to be taken seriously. We make a huge economic contribution — £6.2 billion a year to the Welsh economy — and that needs to be recognised.”

Forge relationships.

The social impact of holidays can change lives.

Lowri Jones, Gwersyll yr Urdd, Llangrannog.

Our family holidays grew out of our original ethos.

Traditionally during the school holidays we offer summer camps for children and young people, but we had to look for another source of income on quieter weekends. The natural progression was family holidays for Urdd members, and now many other organisations take advantage of the setting here at Llangrannog and organise their own unique family holiday. We have families that come back year after year, as they feel safe and relaxed. Parents and guardians witness their children gaining confidence as they participate in over 20 different activities.

Around 600 families visit us every year.

The main priority is to spend time together as a family, learning different skills and activities. In the current economic climate it's important that we offer an affordable family holiday.

It goes back to the core values of the Urdd: developing new skills, new experiences, new relationships.

This could be as simple as offering a haven to develop family bonds, creating long lasting memories — and inevitably becoming a better human being and creating stronger communities. It sounds drastic, but it happens.

It helps that we're in a beautiful place.

Our location is a jewel in the Cardigan Bay coastline. We make sure that families can take advantage of the Wales Coast Path or spend a day on the beach. We provide things like buckets and spades, blankets, shuttle bus, and anything else to minimise extra costs to the families. We try and ensure that everybody can enjoy what we have to offer.

We help children who are disadvantaged socially or financially.

In August 2018 we launched a Fund For All to give disadvantaged children the opportunity to enjoy a summer holiday at one of our Centres. We saw the fruits of our labour in 2019 and it was absolutely amazing. Fifty children from around Wales were able to join us for free, and you could see the difference it made to them in front of your eyes. Seeing those children change for the better, it was my proudest moment in 15 years of working for the Urdd. We have an incredible team of staff. When we say we make a difference, we really do. It sounds cheesy. But it's true.

I often think we're a microcosm of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

We try and source food and energy as locally as possible. We do all those little things that help the local economy. I went to a conference recently where they talked about well-being centres, and I thought, 'Actually, that's what Llangrannog has been doing for decades.' It's not called that. But it's entrenched in everything we do.

Safe...

and relaxed.

To deliver these ambitions, we have identified four key priorities for Visit Wales:

<p>1</p> <p>Great products and places Continued investment in tourism products and events that deliver both local benefits to communities in Wales (Bro), and also put Wales on the world stage (Byd).</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Outstanding visitor experiences Stand-alone products are not enough; every visitor to Wales should also have a positive, memorable experience at individual attractions and throughout their stay.</p>
<p>Actions:</p>	<p>Actions:</p>
<p>Visit Wales-led projects We will lead on a small number of public sector direct investments in projects that have the potential to promote Wales internationally. The first project to be considered and scoped is based on the ‘Paradores’ model in Spain.</p>	<p>Brilliant basics We will launch a new fund to invest in basic tourism infrastructure around Wales.</p>
<p>Industry-led capital investment We will continue to support innovators in the industry including via the recently launched £50 million Wales Tourism Investment Fund.</p>	<p>A new approach to hospitality We will explore the possibility of moving towards a free grading system, which would provide support for businesses to help them grow.</p>
<p>Integrated place-making We will support destination management across Wales. We will also introduce a strategic approach to place-development, channelling public efforts towards a small number of destinations, potentially one in each of the four tourism regions.</p>	<p>Skilled people We will establish a formal Tourism Skills Partnership and explore a range of ways to raise the status of the sector to future generations of workers.</p>
<p>International and home-grown events We will establish Event Wales to continue to deliver a balanced and sustainable portfolio of events, and to grow the Business Events sector.</p>	<p>Food tourism We will continue to work to help improve the food tourism offer in Wales.</p> <p>Product-led teams We will strengthen our focus on special interest products, creating product teams to deliver priority products based on our core offer.</p>

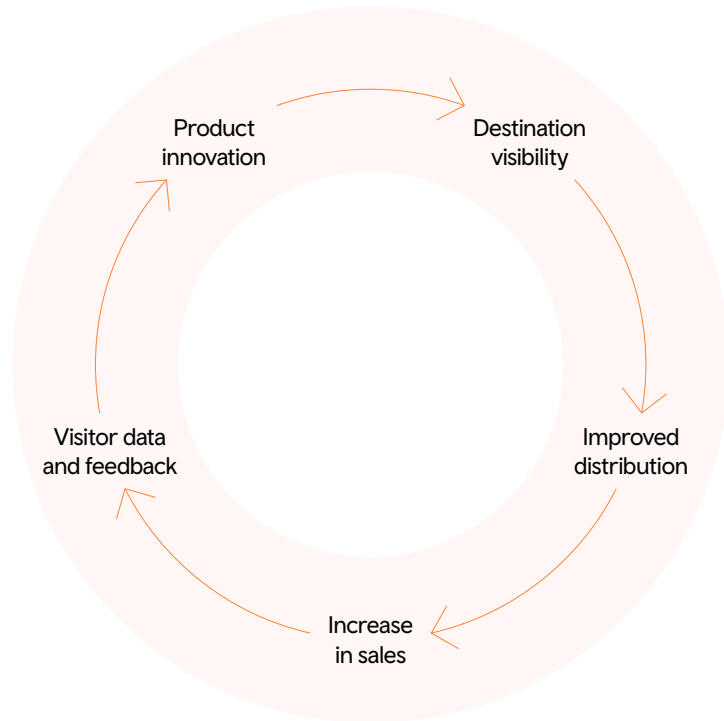
<p>3</p> <p>An innovative Cymru Wales brand We will continue to deliver a bold and integrated brand for Wales, harnessing tourism’s potential to present Wales to the world as a welcoming, vibrant destination.</p>	<p>4</p> <p>An engaged and vibrant sector We will recognise, coordinate and harness the contribution a wide range of partners can make.</p>
<p>Actions:</p>	<p>Actions:</p>
<p>A stronger nation brand We will continue to strengthen the Cymru Wales brand, working across sectors to promote Wales in the UK and beyond.</p>	<p>Effective industry engagement and a collective industry voice We will bring the private sector together and engage with sector partners in creative ways.</p>
<p>Adaptive marketing with an off-peak focus We will promote Wales confidently to new visitors, with an emphasis on off-peak periods and value over volume.</p>	<p>Improved data and insights based on industry need We will provide timely insights for industry and better communicate research findings with our stakeholders.</p>
<p>One campaign, two themed years We will launch a major new campaign for Wales for the next 3–5 years and announce new themed years for 2022 and 2024.</p>	<p>Stronger strategy and policy function We will work across Government to deliver the full benefits of tourism for Wales and to ensure that the sector’s views are taken into account on issues such as Tourism Tax.</p>
<p>A digital-first industry We will harness digital platforms — including social media — to promote Wales and develop the industry.</p>	<p>An agile and responsive Visit Wales We will enable the sector to better understand how Visit Wales works, and operate in a way that is closely aligned to these new priorities.</p>
<p>Visit Wales Centre of Excellence We will establish a Centre of Excellence — a physical, open hub for events and training to help us all work together to promote Wales to the world.</p>	

In order to ensure that Wales is in a stronger competitive position in future we will also work on:

1

Improved routes to market

A stronger business-to-business programme will make it easier for visitors to find and book the best that Wales has to offer.



2

Special interest products

We will develop special interest products and experiences that support and fit with our core product strengths:

Outstanding natural landscapes.	Creative culture.	Epic adventure.
Specific products		
The Wales Coast Path, Offa's Dyke and National Trails. Golf.	Heritage Tourism. Film and television.	Mountain-biking and cycling.
Cruise and marine tourism.		

3

Commercial partnerships

Partnerships amplify, extend and add value to our marketing. In future we will develop fewer, bigger and better commercial partnerships with key brands and operators.

Wellbeing priorities.

24

Here are just some examples of how our plans will deliver wider wellbeing:

1

Social and cultural benefits

We will:

- Do more to survey local residents to understand the local impacts of tourism.
- Promote a sense of place, culture and language more proactively.
- Develop product experiences for special interest cultural markets.
- Improve access to facilities, and project an inclusive view of Wales.
- Consider an annual festival of accessible events and activities for children and young people.

2

Improving our environmental performance

We will:

- Encourage sustainable transport via infrastructure such as electric charging points.
- Encourage tourism businesses to improve environmental management through grading.
- Explore the use of 'Big Data' to track visitor flows at peak periods and in specific areas.

3

Growing our contribution to health

We will:

- Ensure that adventure and activity are core to the Wales brand and our marketing work.
- Invest in facilities that enhance Wales' adventure offering.
- Enable a wide range of visitors to access and enjoy new wellbeing opportunities.

Measuring success.

Implementation.

25

In line with our ambition and goals, our measures of success are:

People benefits

- Track visitor and resident satisfaction with tourism, and business confidence.

Economic benefits and industry performance

- Growth of the sector.
- Growth of seasonal spread.
- Growth in yield per visitor.
- Growth in the sector's contribution to GVA.

Wellbeing benefits

- Environmental measures.
- Social and cultural measures.
- Health measures.

Delivering the plan

We will:

- Restructure the internal team.
- Refresh our governance structures.
- Streamline our business support approach.
- Review delivery at local level.
- Establish a new approach to partnership delivery.

Please sign up to our newsletter and follow us on social media to find out more.
@VisitWalesBiz

Healthy, happy: this amazing landscape belongs to all of us.
Ben Clifford, Surfability.

27

Blue s p a c e .

“Wales is incredible — all this green and blue space — and if you’re denied access to that because of a disability, it’s such a shame. So it’s important that we make those spaces accessible to everyone. Surfing is great physical exercise, and it really connects you to the world around you and the environment. Being present and focused in the moment, while simultaneously being outdoors in the fresh air and exercising — the benefits are incredible.

The techniques we’ve developed in Wales are becoming part of the worldwide standard. Our own community benefits, too. Our volunteers get the chance to work with people in their community, making it a better place.”

Do good things and the world will love you for it.

James Lynch, Fforest.

'Sense of place' is an approach, not a slogan. We try and embody it in the things that we do. Much of that comes from our staff: lots of young Welsh people who enjoy working for us, and communicate that enjoyment and pleasure to our guests.

My approach to Fforest is based on travelling to other places and seeing how they embrace their localness. New Zealand is a great example. We travelled around for six weeks when our boys were little, and Kiwis are both very welcoming and have a palpable love for their homeland. It's becoming more like that here. It's about the way you express it. The sense of your own worth when you're embracing others is a wonderful thing.

Visitors have always been surprised about what they find here. Recently they're surprised by quality. Our approach is still to embrace the outdoors, but offer higher quality, moving up all the time. That works for us commercially. There is a wealthier sector of tourism coming to Wales now and what they want is for stuff to be really good. They're not interested in 'inexpensive and okay', but they're very happy with 'expensive and great'.

Do not undervalue yourself. If you've got something that's unique, sing about it — and charge for it. Marketing is about getting people here in the first place. Once they're here, getting people to pay for quality isn't a problem.

Cardigan is a collective of many good things. When you get that certain critical mass, that's the point when it becomes sustainable. For any town that has challenges of geography, economy and seasonality, there have to be enough people doing the right things at the right time. I've always believed that the more people doing good things, the better. Good + good = better. It's never competition.

Good + Good = Better

The Wales Way travels deep in the heart of the nation.
Alwyn Griffith, Celticos.

“Our customers are looking for a taste of the real Wales — our language, culture, heritage and landscape. They want to be taken off the beaten path, as well as to the more iconic spots, and this is what The Wales Way is all about. Businesses like ours can leverage massive benefits from the international marketing opportunity offered by The Wales Way.”

Real Wales.

Iconic products can drive both business and leisure tourism: it's a double win.

Ian Edwards, International Convention Centre Wales.

ICC Wales is a game-changer. Wales is now a major player, across the UK and internationally in Business Events. But we didn't just say, 'This is what we're going to design and build.' We went to the marketplace and asked the people who use these facilities: 'Tell us what's best in class, tell us why, and help us.' And that's what we built: an incredible convention centre that really is world class.

If 2,500 people come to an event at ICC Wales, they all need somewhere to eat, drink and stay. Celtic Manor can't offer all of that — it's already running at 90 per cent occupancy. So it benefits other local bars, hotels, restaurants, taxis, coaches. All that ancillary spend makes a massive difference.

A business tourist generally spends three times as much as a leisure tourist.

But over 60 per cent of people who come to an event will return with their family. It's a double win, and a massive opportunity for us to keep pushing the visitor economy both in business and leisure tourism.

In our first two weeks of opening we had several major events.

The immediate local impact was about £4.8 million, which is great, but the important thing is what happens next. People who come to conferences are senior people, and that means that they're decision-makers. They realise how accessible Wales is, and how close to the rest of the UK's population. They could open offices here, or bring in other events.

It's about having audacious goals.

When we first bid to host the Ryder Cup 2010, we were given a one per cent chance of winning. But we worked collaboratively with Welsh Government and together we pulled off an incredible Ryder Cup. We did it again with the 2014 NATO Summit Wales. With the convention centre, we can host major events like this every year. That's where we've got to show the audacity and ambition to drive the business forward. This is a real Team Wales approach.

Game-changer.

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EXHIBITS OF ROBERT PARRY

ITEM 8 : DURSLADE FARM SHOP



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