

FFESTINIOG QUARRY

Welsh Language Statement
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CONTENTS

| | | |
|------------|--|-----------|
| 1.0 | INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.1 | Requirement for a Welsh Language Statement | 1 |
| 1.2 | Structure of this Report | 2 |
| 1.3 | Application Submission Package | 2 |
| 2.0 | THE SITE | 3 |
| 2.1 | Introduction | 3 |
| 2.2 | Location | 3 |
| 2.3 | The Oakeley Quarry Complex | 4 |
| 2.4 | The Bryntirion Waste Slate Tip..... | 5 |
| 3.0 | THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT | 6 |
| 3.1 | Introduction | 6 |
| 3.2 | Background | 6 |
| 3.3 | Construction Phase | 6 |
| 3.4 | Operational Phase..... | 6 |
| 3.4.1 | Reworking of Slate Waste Tips..... | 6 |
| 3.4.2 | Operating Hours | 6 |
| 3.4.3 | Employment..... | 7 |
| 4.0 | COMMUNITY PROFILE | 8 |
| 4.1 | Area and Population | 8 |
| 4.2 | Welsh Language | 9 |
| 4.3 | Employment..... | 10 |
| 4.4 | Local Infrastructure - Facilities and Services | 11 |
| 4.5 | Engagement with the Local Community | 11 |
| 5.0 | POLICY BACKGROUND | 12 |
| 5.1 | National Policy | 12 |
| 5.1.1 | Planning Policy Wales (2021)..... | 12 |
| 5.1.2 | Technical Advice Note 20: Planning and the Welsh Language | 13 |
| 5.2 | Local Policy..... | 13 |
| 5.2.1 | Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan..... | 13 |
| 5.2.2 | Supplementary Planning Guidance: Maintaining and Creating Distinct and Sustainable Communities (July 2019) | 14 |
| 6.0 | ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT ON THE WELSH LANGUAGE | 16 |

| | | |
|------------|---|-----------|
| 6.1 | Characteristics of the Proposed Development | 16 |
| 6.2 | Key Considerations in the Context of Welsh Language | 16 |
| 6.3 | Analysis and Summary | 18 |
| 7.0 | CONCLUSIONS | 20 |

DOCUMENT REFERENCES

TABLES

| | | |
|-----------|--|----|
| Table 4-1 | Age Structure (2011 Census) | 8 |
| Table 4-2 | Welsh Language Proficiency | 9 |
| Table 4-3 | Welsh Language Ability by Age Group in Gwynedd | 10 |
| Table 4-4 | Employment Characteristics | 10 |

1.0 Introduction

This document comprises a Welsh Language Statement and has been produced by SLR Consulting Limited on behalf of Breedon Trading Limited (trading as Welsh Slate). This statement forms part of a package of documents being formally submitted to Gwynedd Council (as Mineral Planning Authority, 'MPA') in support of a planning application relating to land at the Oakeley Quarry Complex (also referred to as Ffestiniog Quarry), Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd.

Breedon Trading Limited (hereafter referred to as 'the applicant') operates a 'minerals plant' at its Oakeley Quarry complex. The plant uses slate extracted from two waste tips (referred to as 'mineral working deposits') within the quarry complex to produce powdered and granulated slate products for use in manufacturing/building construction materials (for example artificial slates and coated roofing felts). Material is extracted from the tips, crushed, dried and then milled. The product is then bagged for onward dispatch. In addition, some of the material from the mineral working deposits are also exported as a secondary aggregate.

The two tips that are being worked are known as Fridd and Bryntirion and are the closest to the minerals plant. Reserves of material within Fridd Tip are now exhausted, and a limited quantity remains within the permitted area of the Bryntirion Tip. The planning permission for working Bryntirion Tip only covers the southern part of the tip (covering an area of around 1.4 ha); the tip extends further to the north and contains suitable material that could be worked and used in the minerals plant.

The planning permissions governing the operation of the minerals plant (which were amended in July 2020), allow it to operate up to 31 January 2040. Consideration is being given to the longer term supply of waste slate materials to the plant from within the wider quarry complex; it has been agreed with the MPA that some of the existing tips located within the southern part of the quarry complex can be worked as part of the extant planning permission for the quarry. Notwithstanding this, given the presence of materials within the remainder of Bryntirion Tip, and its location close to the minerals plant, mean it is sensible to make an application to extend the workings in a northerly direction.

1.1 Requirement for a Welsh Language Statement

Policy PS1 "Welsh Language and Culture" within the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan indicates that:

"The Councils will promote and support the use of the Welsh language in the Plan area. This will be achieved by:

1. Requiring a Welsh Language Statement, which will protect, promote and enhance the Welsh language, where the proposed development falls within one of the following categories:

a. Retail, industrial or commercial development employing more than 50 employees and/or with an area of 1,000 sq. m. or more. ...

2. Requiring a Welsh Language Impact Assessment, which will set out how the proposed development will protect, promote and enhance the Welsh Language, where the proposed development is on an unexpected windfall site for a large scale housing development or large scale employment development that would lead to a significant workforce flow"

To support the policy, a Supplementary Planning Guidance Note (the 'SPG') "*Maintaining and Creating Sustainable Communities*"¹ has been prepared which, inter alia, provides guidance on when a Welsh Language Statement or Welsh Language Assessment will be needed.

Whilst the planning application does not create any new floorspace (over that already in existence) or create any new employment opportunities, in considering previous planning applications at the site, the MPA has indicated² that a Welsh Language Statement should be provided.

1.2 Structure of this Report

The Welsh Language Statement has been prepared having full regard to the provisions of the SPG, and in particular, Appendix 7. In this context, the SPG indicates that the methodology to be used for preparing a Welsh Language Statement should follow three general steps:

- STEP 1 – Collect, record and analyse information about the local community;
- STEP 2 – Collect, record and analyse policy requirements; and
- STEP 3 – Apply the information in Steps 1 and 2.

In the context of Step 3, the SPG indicates that consideration should be given to the characteristics of the development and discuss the key matters, referring to evidence in Steps 1 and 2 as appropriate.

It should be noted that the guidance is aimed at all forms for development, and particularly new housing or employment. As such, some of the considerations are not relevant to the planning application (for example housing profile or facilities and services).

The remainder of this document is structured as follows:

- Section 2 provides a brief description of the application site and surroundings;
- Section 3 provides a brief description of the development;
- Section 4 provides a description of the community profile;
- Section 5 provides a summary of relevant policy documents;
- Section 6 provides an assessment of the effects; and
- Section 7 provides the conclusions.

1.3 Application Submission Package

The full submission to the MPA comprises the following:

- Application Forms and Certificates;
- Planning Statement (including Drawings and Appendices); and
- Welsh Language Statement (this document).

This document should be read alongside the Planning Statement. To assist, this document identifies the relevant parts of the Planning Statement by indicating the relevant chapter; cross references are indicated by underlined text.

¹ Supplementary Planning Guidance Note "*Maintaining and Creating Sustainable Communities*". Gwynedd Council and Isle of Anglesey County Council, July 2019.

² Emails from D G Jones (Senior Minerals and Waste Planning Officer, North Wales Minerals and Waste Planning Service) dated 28 January 2020.

2.0 The Site

2.1 Introduction

The site has been described in full within [Chapter 2](#) of the Planning Statement. This section provides a brief overview of the site and its surroundings.

2.2 Location

The Oakeley Quarry Complex is located to the north of the town of Blaenau Ffestiniog, to the west of the A470 (T). The closest settlement is Rhiwbryfdir, located on the northern edge of Blaenau Ffestiniog, approximately 1.1km from the edge of Bryntirion Tip³.

The quarry complex is located wholly within the administrative area of Gwynedd Council. The boundary of the Snowdonia National Park lies around 575m to the north of the quarry complex. For identification purposes, the quarry complex is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SH 69229 47257.

The Bryntirion Tip lies at the northern extent of the quarry complex, with the northern flanks descending towards Llyn Ffridd y bwlch reservoir and the eastern flanks rising from the A470. The existing minerals plant lies to the south of the tip, approximately 170m to the west of the site entrance. To the south of Bryntirion Tip and the Minerals Plant is the quarry void.

Figure 2-1 below provides an illustration of the form of the quarry complex.

³ Distance measured from edge of settlement to nearest façade of the minerals plant using Google Earth.

Figure 2-1
The Oakeley Quarry Complex



2.3 The Oakeley Quarry Complex

The Oakeley Quarry Complex extends over a substantial area on the south-eastern flank of Moel Druman and Allt fawr. The majority of the quarry complex has been disturbed to some degree by slate quarrying or associated activities (tips, processing plant etc).

Immediately to the east of the quarry is the A470(T), which is a principle road running north to south through the region linking Blaenau Ffestiniog with Betws-Y-Coed locally, but extending further beyond these two towns to the south (Cardiff and the M4) and north (A55 North Wales Expressway). Also to the east is a railway line, which passes into a tunnel as it passes the northern part of the quarry complex. To the east of the A470 are further areas of slate workings which are now in leisure uses, including Zip World, Llechwedd Slate Caverns, shops, cafes and slate crafts.

To the north of the quarry is the Llyn Ffridd y bwlch reservoir. Beyond the reservoir the topography rises steeply (characterised by escarpments) to form an area of open upland interspersed with areas of woodland plantation and small villages (typically fronting the A470). This area lies within the Snowdonia National Park, the boundary of which is around 470m north of the reservoir (and 1km north of the minerals plant).

To the west of the quarry are further areas of undulating upland (associated with Moel Druman and Allt fawr) which reach an elevation of 698m AOD. Further to the west is a valley, within which is the Llyn Cwmorthin and Cwmorthin Quarry workings (now disused). Other former slate workings are also evident within the landscape to the west, whilst other lakes are present to the south of Moel Druman.

Finally, to the south of the quarry (which is characterised by large slate tips) is the urban area of Blaenau Ffestiniog; the northern part of Blaenau is formed by a small industrial area between the A470 and railway line.

Immediately to the south of this are residential properties fronting Glanypwll Road and the A470, together with sports pitches. Close to the junction of the A470 and A496 (formed by a roundabout) are other industrial premises.

2.4 The Bryntirion Waste Slate Tip

Bryntirion Tip lies to the north of the minerals plant and extends northwards to the edge of Llyn Ffridd y bwch reservoir. Planning permission has been granted to extract slate from an area of 1.4ha located at the southern end of the tip.

3.0 The Proposed Development

3.1 Introduction

The nature of the development has been described in [Chapter 3](#) of the Planning Statement. This section provides a brief overview of the development for which planning permission is sought.

3.2 Background

As noted from previous chapters, the applicant operates a minerals plant at its Oakeley Quarry complex. The plant uses slate from two mineral working deposits located within the quarry complex to produce powdered and granulated slate products for use in manufacturing/building construction materials (for example artificial slates and coated roofing felts). Material is extracted from the tips, crushed, dried and then milled. The product is then bagged for onward dispatch. In addition, some of the material from the mineral working deposit is exported as a secondary aggregate.

Planning permission is being sought to provide a stock of raw material (i.e. slate waste) for the minerals plant to process. Under the current planning permission, material can be worked from the Fridd and Bryntirion tips (see Chapter 2 above). The permitted extraction area within the Fridd tip is exhausted of slate waste, but reserves remain in the Bryntirion tip. Moreover, the permitted extraction area within the Bryntirion tip does not cover the whole of the tip and so the proposals include a small lateral extension (around 1.8 hectares) to the working area.

3.3 Construction Phase

As an established operation site infrastructure is already in place and thus the nature of the application would not therefore require a construction phase.

3.4 Operational Phase

3.4.1 Reworking of Slate Waste Tips

The feedstock for the minerals plant is derived by removing slate from two mineral working deposits. The material is excavated using a tracked excavator and fed into a mobile Jaw crusher to produce 40mm and 20mm products. The arising 13mm down to dust crushed material is then stockpiled prior to transfer to a feed hopper at the north western corner of the minerals plant site, where the material is conveyed to the minerals plant via dryer (see above). To minimise the effects of the extractive operation, the eastern flank of the Bryntirion Tip is left *in situ* to provide a screen; this ameliorates visual intrusion along with noise and dust emissions.

3.4.2 Operating Hours

The current planning permission for the minerals plant (ref. C03M/0010/03/MW) does not provide a restriction on the operation of the plant (in that it can operate for 24 hours per day). Condition 3iii does though stipulate that the operation of the plant shall be continuous between the hours of 2200 and 0700. Condition 2iii does provide a restriction on the HGV movements associated with the dispatch of processed materials in that no imports or exports are allowed between 2200 and 0700 hours.

The current planning permission for working the waste tips limits operations to the following hours:

- 0700 to 1900 hours Monday to Friday
- 0700 to 1300 hours on Saturdays

- no working is allowed on Sundays or bank holidays.

It is proposed that the operation of the minerals plant and the working of the slate tips would be carried out during the approved hours set out above.

3.4.3 Employment

The operation of the minerals plant and associated reworking of the slate tips results in the employment of nine full-time/direct personnel.

The development also supports the indirect employment of a number of 'downstream' jobs including haulage, engineering services.

4.0 Community Profile

Introduction

This section provides an overview of the profile of the community within which the Oakeley Quarry is situated. It draws from information gathered in the 2001 and 2011 Census (and held on the Gwynedd County Council website) and provides information on:

- Area and Population
- Welsh Language
- Employment

4.1 Area and Population

Oakeley Quarry is located within the Gwynedd Council area which has a population of some 121,874 (2011 Census) and extends in area to 253,494 hectares (ha). Compared to 2001, the population has increased in Gwynedd by 5,031 people (representing a 4.3% increase). The population in the whole of Wales was reported as 3.06 million people in 2011, increasing by 5.5% since the 2001 census. As such, the increase in population in Gwynedd is below the national figure.

For administrative purposes Gwynedd is divided into three sub areas namely:

- Arfon;
- Dwyfor; and
- Meirionnydd (in which the quarry lies).

The Meirionnydd Sub Area, which covers an area of 150,612 ha, is further divided into 20 Wards; the quarry is located in Bowydd a Rhiw Ward, as is part of Blaenau Ffestiniog; the eastern part of Blaenau Ffestiniog is within Diffwys a Maenofferen Ward.

The Bowydd a Rhiw Ward covers an area of 2,603 ha and has a population of 1,878 recorded in the 2011 Census, being 2.2% increase over the 2001 Census. In terms of the make-up of the population 50.9% are male and 49% female. Table 4-1 below summarises the age structure of the community.

Table 4-1
Age Structure (2011 Census)

| | Bowydd a Rhiw Ward | Gwynedd |
|---------|--------------------|----------------|
| Age | Percentage (%) | Percentage (%) |
| 0 - 4 | 6.3 | 5.6 |
| 5 - 15 | 12.9 | 11.6 |
| 16 - 64 | 64 | 62.2 |
| 65 - 74 | 9.1 | 10.8 |

| | Bowydd a Rhiw Ward | Gwynedd |
|---------|--------------------|---------|
| 75 - 84 | 5.5 | 7.0 |
| 85 - 89 | 1.7 | 1.9 |
| 90+ | 0.5 | 1.0 |

From this it can be seen that the age profile for the ward is similar to that for the county. The proportion of the population being of a 'working' age is slightly higher, and the proportion of the population over 65 is slightly lower.

4.2 Welsh Language

Gwynedd contains the highest proportion of Welsh speakers in Wales (65.4% of people above the age of 3 can speak Welsh; the figure nationally across the whole of Wales is 19%). Compared to the 2001 Census, this has fallen slightly (by 5.2%) from 69%.

Within the Bowydd a Rhiw Ward 78.2% of the population aged 3 and above can speak Welsh, which like the county, has fallen slightly from the 2001 Census (drop of 2.1% from 79.9%). As such, it can be seen that the proportion of the population that can speak Welsh within the ward is higher than the figure for the county as a whole. Allied to this, the decline in Welsh speakers in the Ward is not as great as within the county as a whole.

Table 4-2 summarises the information from the 2011 Census in terms of the proficiency of the population in the ward and county to speak, read and write Welsh.

Table 4-2
Welsh Language Proficiency

| | Bowydd a Rhiw Ward | Gwynedd |
|---|--------------------|----------------|
| Proficiency Level | Percentage (%) | Percentage (%) |
| Population aged 3+ | 96 | 96.6 |
| Can speak Welsh | 78.2 | 65.4 |
| No skills in Welsh | 15.3 | 26.5 |
| Can understand spoken Welsh only | 5.5 | 6.9 |
| Can speak but cannot read or write Welsh | 5.5 | 5.8 |
| Can speak and read but cannot write Welsh | 3.3 | 3.4 |
| Can speak, read and write Welsh | 69.3 | 56 |
| Other combination of skills in Welsh | 1.2 | 1.5 |

In terms of the ability to speak, read and write Welsh by age group, the 2011 Census⁴ provides the following information for Gwynedd.

Table 4-3
Welsh Language Ability by Age Group in Gwynedd

| Date | 2011 | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Geography | Gwynedd | | | | | |
| Measures | Count | | | | | |
| Welsh Language Skills | All usual residents aged 3 and over | Can understand spoken Welsh | Can speak Welsh | Can read Welsh | Can write Welsh | No skills in Welsh |
| Age | | | | | | |
| All categories: Age 3 and over | 117,789 | 79,395 | 77,000 | 71,236 | 66,703 | 31,177 |
| Age 3 to 15 | 16,866 | 14,912 | 15,035 | 13,144 | 12,533 | 917 |
| Age 16 to 24 | 16,723 | 10,014 | 9,805 | 9,491 | 9,017 | 5,910 |
| Age 25 to 34 | 12,532 | 8,993 | 8,632 | 8,227 | 7,724 | 2,852 |
| Age 35 to 49 | 22,808 | 16,179 | 15,208 | 14,229 | 13,267 | 5,255 |
| Age 50 to 64 | 23,720 | 14,749 | 13,730 | 12,634 | 11,636 | 7,536 |
| Age 65 and over | 25,140 | 14,548 | 14,590 | 13,511 | 12,526 | 8,707 |

4.3 Employment

From the 2011 Census 73% of the population in Gwynedd are aged between 16 and 74, whilst 73.1% of the population within the ward fall within this age banding. In the 2001 Census, 71.6% of the population in the county and 69% of the population in the ward were between 16 and 74.

Table 4-3 below summarises the data from the 2011 Census.

Table 4-4
Employment Characteristics

| | Bowydd a Rhiw Ward | Gwynedd |
|---|--------------------|----------------|
| Economic Activity | Percentage (%) | Percentage (%) |
| Economically active | 68.4 | 65.2 |
| Economically active: Unemployed | 11.0 | 5.5 |
| Economically Inactive | 31.6 | 34.8 |
| Economically Inactive: Long term sick or disabled | 21.4 | 12.5 |

⁴ https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/LC2106WA/view/1946157384?rows=c_age&cols=welsh_language_skills

| | Bowydd a Rhiw Ward | Gwynedd |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Social Class | Percentage (%) | Percentage (%) |
| Managerial and Professional | 18.7 | 26.7 |
| Skilled | 32.6 | 30.4 |
| Part/Unskilled | 32.9 | 25.9 |
| Students/Other | 15.9 | 17.0 |

Within Gwynedd, the majority of the population between 16 and 74 are employed within the following sectors:

- Health and Social (14.7%);
- Wholesale and Retail (14.5%);
- Education (12.6%);
- Accommodation and food services (9.8%);
- Construction (9.6%).

Across the county, 2.6% are employed within the “*mining, quarrying, energy and water*” sectors.

For the Bowydd a Rhiw Ward, the main employment are:

- Health and Social (18.1%);
- Construction (13.3%);
- Wholesale and Retail (11.4%);
- Accommodation and food services (9.3%);
- Manufacturing (8.8%).

Finally, 7.4% of the population are employed within the “*mining, quarrying, energy and water*” sectors.

4.4 Local Infrastructure - Facilities and Services

Oakeley quarry is located to the north of the town of Blaenau Ffestiniog, adjacent to the A470 which is a major road in the region. The centre of Blaenau Ffestiniog lies around 1.8km to the south east.

As an ‘Urban Service Centre’ (as defined by the Settlement Strategy in the LDP) there are a range of facilities and services located within the town including schools, leisure centre, shops, library, GP surgeries, pharmacies, train station, bus routes, hotels and restaurants. There are also residential areas and industrial areas within the town.

It is therefore considered that there are adequate services and facilities in the local area and the proposed development would not affect these.

4.5 Engagement with the Local Community

The nature of the development is such that it pre-application consultation is required. A copy of the complete planning application, including this Welsh Language Statement, has been made available to members of the public for comment. In addition, a ‘drop in’ session was held on 9 December 2021 at [venue].

5.0 Policy Background

5.1 National Policy

5.1.1 Planning Policy Wales (2021)

Edition 11 of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. 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 cultural well-being of Wales.

At the heart of PPW (as with previous editions) is the concept of sustainable development. PPW defines sustainable development as:

“... the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals.

Acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle means that a body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

PPW is divided into five key chapters covering People and Places; Strategic and Spatial Choices; Active and Social Places; Productive and Enterprising Places; Distinctive and Natural Places. In relation to the Welsh Language, it crops up in several chapters including Chapters 2 (People and Places); 3 (Strategic and Spatial Choices); 4 (Active and Social Places). Firstly, chapter 2 comments that the planning system should create sustainable places, which are *“attractive, sociable, accessible, active, secure, welcoming, healthy and friendly”*⁵; the Welsh language helps to support this aim through the sociable, welcoming and friendly aspects referred to. Referring to Figure 5 in chapter 2, creating and sustaining communities enables the Welsh language to thrive, which is an integral part of the *‘National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes’*. Paragraph 2.28 adds that key factors in the assessment process include *inter alia “cultural considerations – how far the proposal supports the conditions that allow the use of the Welsh language”*.

In chapter 3 paragraphs 3.25 to 3.29 address the Welsh language. In paragraph 3.25 it states that *“the Welsh language is part of the social and cultural fabric and its future well-being will depend upon a wide range of factors, particularly education, demographic change, community activities and a sound economic base to maintain thriving sustainable communities and places. The land use planning system should take account of the conditions which are essential to the Welsh language and in so doing contribute to its, use and the Thriving Welsh Language well-being goal.”*

In chapter 4, within the introductory PPW comments that *“active and social places are those which promote our social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing by providing well connected cohesive communities”*. It goes on to set out the ways places which are active and social contribute to the seven goals in the Well-being of Future Generations Act including:

“A vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language ... Culture and the Welsh language make a distinctive contribution to the vitality of communities”.

⁵ Paragraph 2.3

5.1.2 Technical Advice Note 20: Planning and the Welsh Language

The purpose of this TAN is to provide guidance on how the Welsh language may be given appropriate consideration in the planning system and on compliance with the requirements of planning and other relevant legislation.

Section 1.7 in the introduction addresses the Welsh language. In paragraph 1.7.1 it recognises that the Welsh language is part of the social and cultural fabric of Wales. Paragraph 1.7.3 goes on to add that *“The future of the language across Wales will depend on a wide range of factors beyond the town and country planning system, particularly education, demographic change, community activities and a sound economic base to maintain thriving sustainable communities. The planning system can contribute to the future well being of the Welsh language, by establishing the conditions to allow sustainable communities to thrive. For example, creating conditions for well-paid employment opportunities and a range of quality housing options are integral to planning for sustainable communities”*.

In the context of ‘Development Management’ (Chapter 3) paragraph 3.1.2 states *“In determining individual planning applications and appeals, considerations relating to the use of the Welsh language may be taken into account so far as they are material. Section 70(2) TCPA does not give any additional weight to the Welsh language above any other material consideration and decisions on all applications for planning permission must be based on planning grounds only and be reasonable”*.

Finally, under the heading of mitigation, paragraph 3.4.1 comments *“Mitigation measures can reduce or eliminate potential adverse impacts of development on the Welsh language, while enhancement measures may deliver wider benefits from a development. Circumstances in which the LPA expect mitigation or enhancement measures to be applied should be identified in the LDP, while further matters of detail may be set out in supplementary planning guidance (SPG). These should provide the developer and decision maker with information relating to appropriate measures for the type and location of development. For large windfall developments, an impact assessment may identify additional or site-specific measures”*.

5.2 Local Policy

5.2.1 Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan

The Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted on 31 July 2017. The LDP is a land use development strategy for a period of 15 years which concentrates on sustainable development. It will aim to achieve the following:

- guide the development of housing, retail, employment and other uses;
- include policies which will aid the Local Planning Authority’s decision with regard to planning applications;
- protect areas to ensure the maintenance and enrichment of the natural and built environment

The LDP contains a number of Strategic Policies and general policies which are grouped by topic area. As the LDP covers all forms of development not all of the policies are relevant. Of note is Strategic Policy PS:1 which considers the Welsh language and culture indicating that the Councils will promote and support the use of the Welsh language in the Plan area. It then sets out how the policy will be achieved, referring to the need for Welsh Language Statement or Assessment. Strategic Policy SP 1 is also directly referenced in policy ISA 1: Infrastructure Provision and PS5: Sustainable Development.

5.2.2 Supplementary Planning Guidance: Maintaining and Creating Distinct and Sustainable Communities (July 2019)

The purpose of this SPG is stated (paragraph 1.4) as being to *“help applicants for planning permission to understand relevant policies that integrate 'sustainable development' into the development process, in order to maintain and create distinctive and sustainable communities. This will ensure that legislative and policy requirements are met and that best practice standards are achieved. It provides a standardised methodology that all applicants should follow.”*

The SPG may be considered to be material planning considerations during the process of assessing and determining planning applications.

The SPG is structured into three main sections and a series of Appendices:

- SECTION 1 (Parts A and B) – this section gives a general description of what is meant by distinctive and sustainable communities and how specific types of development contribute to maintaining and creating distinctive and sustainable communities;
- SECTION 2 (Part C) – The first Section of the SPG highlights the relevance of the Welsh language to a number of developments that are necessary to maintain and create distinctive and sustainable communities. The second Section of the SPG provides information on the detailed requirements of the Local Planning Authority about the way Policy PS 1 of the Local Development Plan will be implemented. It shows how Welsh language considerations are expected to be incorporated into every relevant development. It includes requirements about how to record the way the relevant development would benefit the Welsh language through a Welsh Language Statement or a Report about a Welsh Language Impact Assessment;
- SECTION 3 (Parts CH and D) – this section provides guidance in terms of how supporting evidence should be provided having regard to the wider considerations associated with sustainable development.

At paragraph A3 the SPG links sustainable development with the Welsh language stating *“With respect to the Welsh language, a sustainable development involves the promotion, protection and strengthening the situations in communities that are important cornerstones of linguistic planning, such as passing on the Welsh language in the home (or the socialisation of Welsh in the family), and providing and replicating the necessary social context to use the Welsh language as part of the normal fabric of society.”*

Table 1 (planning policy considerations for specific types of development) indicates how a development helps or maintains distinctive and sustainable communities. For employment developments it comments:

- developments that support jobs in the area of the Plan are crucial in fostering the economic and social well-being of our local communities (Policy PS 13);
- developments that require a location in the countryside are likely to be approved if they support industries that are in keeping with the site and local area (Policy PS 13, Policy CYF 6, Policy TWR1 - Policy TWR 5);
- places of work are one of the important linguistic places where the aim is to encourage and enable the use of the Welsh language in the workplace and when interacting with customers, the public, and other workers in the workplace (Policy PS1, Policy ISA1).

Finally, in paragraph C1, in considering The Welsh Government's ambition is to "see a million people being able to enjoy talking and using Welsh by 2050" the SPG comments that *“it is important for applicants to understand therefore that there is an expectation for developments over the Plan period to contribute positively towards the sustainability and viability of the Welsh language and not only avoid contributing to a reduction in the proportion of the population that can speak the Welsh language”*. However, Paragraph C12 adds that the

system cannot “*discriminate against a planning application on the grounds of an applicant's linguistic ability and the linguistic ability of the individuals who will occupy or use a property or land*”.

6.0 Assessment of the Effects of the Development on the Welsh Language

6.1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

The development has been summarised in Section 3 above, as well as being described in more detail within the Planning Statement which accompanies the planning application.

The Minerals Plant is an established operation for which planning permission was first granted in c. 1990. Over the years, investment has been provided for the Minerals Plant and the business has developed, supplying a specialised mineral product to the local and regional construction sector.

The plant currently supports the employment of nine personnel directly

The proposals seek to secure further reserves of waste slate to use within the Minerals Plant, extending the current operations within the Bryntirion Tip.

In terms of compliance with the Development Plan, Chapter 4 of the Planning Statement should be referred to. That chapters sets out the main policies at the National and local level and how the development accords with the thrust of these policies. It is not proposed to repeat this policy analysis in this statement.

6.2 Key Considerations in the Context of Welsh Language

Based on the issues shown in the table following paragraph 23 in Appendix 7 to the SPG the following table sets out the analysis of how the planning application may affect Welsh language. As the development does not involve the construction of any new housing, issues relating to housing have not been included.

| LANGUAGE AND POPULATION MOVEMENT | |
|---|--|
| How will the development ensure opportunities for local people to stay in their communities? | The development will support the existing employment opportunities for the workforce at the minerals plant by providing materials from within the site. This will allow for jobs associated with the processing of the waste slate to be retained on site. |
| Is it likely that the development will attract people to the community? If there is, how many are expected? How many and what percentage are likely to be Welsh speakers? | The development will maintain the status quo at the site. As such there is not expected to be any inward migration to the area. |
| Is there a likelihood that local people will migrate from the community as a result of the development? | Again, as an established operation it is not considered that the proposals will cause a migration from the local community. |
| Balance between Welsh speakers (including learners) and individuals that do not have any Welsh language skills? | As the development will maintain the status quo at the site the proposals are unlikely to change the current balance of Welsh speakers within the workforce. |
| Is the development likely to lead to a change in the age structure within the population: more or less children, young people, middle- age people, elderly? | As the development will maintain the status quo at the site the proposals are unlikely to change the age structure. |

| | |
|---|--|
| Is the change likely to be a permanent one or a temporary one? | Any changes would be short to medium term. |
| VISUAL ELEMENTS | |
| Whether the development will increase the visibility of the language? | The development will continue the extraction of waste slate from an existing tip and so there would be no change to the visibility of the Welsh Language |
| Corporate image and branding - signs and advertisements on the site that are within the planning remit, e.g. advertising/marketing sign for a new housing site, signs and advertisements to customers in public places on employment sites | The site has a corporate sign at the entrance. There are few signs around the site other than the usual health and safety notices. No additional signage is proposed as part of the development. |
| The name of the site or development – will it retain an old Welsh name or will any new name be derived from historic, geographical or local ties to the area, if practical | The site will continue to be known as Bryntirion Tip being associated with the Ffestiniog Minerals Plant (for which a corporate sign is already in place – see previous question). |
| QUALITY OF LIFE INCLUDING COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE | |
| Is there a sufficient supply of childcare and preschool places in the locality? | Given there are no changes to the level of employment (and thus no inward migration) at the site there would be no effects on childcare/pre-school places |
| Is there sufficient capacity in schools in the locality? Is the development likely to require more school places or is the provision already sufficient? Is there sufficient resources to ensure that the schools are able to carry on to accomplish their role of producing fluent Welsh speakers? | As above. Given there are no changes to the level of employment (and thus no inward migration) at the site there would be no effects on school places. |
| The balance between non-Welsh speakers and Welsh speaking pupils in the school | As above. Given there is no change to the level of employment there are no implications for the balance between non-Welsh and Welsh speaking pupils. |
| Will the development increase the demand for Welsh immersion support for newcomers? | No. |
| Will the development increase the demand on local facilities and services? | No. |
| The extent to which the development will have a positive or negative impact on existing facilities or services? | The development would have neither positive or negative impacts on existing facilities. |
| To what degree will the development create new opportunities to promote the Welsh language in local facilities and services such as halls, shops, and so on? | A high proportion of the workforce, including senior management, are Welsh speakers. Whilst the proposals will not lead to any new opportunities it will maintain the status quo. |

| EMPLOYMENT | |
|---|--|
| How will the development contribute to current employment opportunities in the area, e.g. will it foster economic variability in the local area or not? | The development will maintain the existing level of employment at the site. In addition, the development supports indirect employment through procuring services and goods. Wherever possible, these are sourced locally. |
| Number of full and/ or part time jobs | The development supports nine direct employees. |
| Skills which are necessary for the business or organisation and how that compares with the labour skills of local people (within the travel to work area) | As an existing operation the skills necessary for the development are already in place. Aside to this a training development programme is in place which consists of statutory as well as industry specific training. This programme also includes development of management skills. A large proportion of the workforce live within a 10km radius of the site. |
| Salaries that will be offered and how that compares with average wages in the area | As a continuation of the existing operation there would be no change to the payroll for the site; the level of salary would continue, leading to no change in the level of disposal income. |
| The labour skills of local people (within the travel to work area) and how likely it is according to the above assessment the posts will be filled from among the local population | As an existing operation there is no requirement for any new posts to be filled. |
| Is it likely that you will need to search outside the local area for employees, e.g. to obtain specialist skills | As above. |
| What type of Welsh language skills are essential and desirable for the jobs that will be created by the development? These will need to be defined as part of the development's Welsh language Plan (voluntary or statutory). | The ability to speak Welsh fluently is desirable given the level of Welsh spoken on site (and at other sites operated by the applicant). |
| Welsh Language skills that will be necessary for the workers and their dependants to integrate into the local community | As there is no change to the level of employment then this is not an issue. In the past when new staff have been employed, they have been recruited from the surrounding local community. |
| The possible cumulative impact that the development could have, taking account of any other relevant recent development in the local area | As the development is for the continuation of an existing operation then there would not be any cumulative effects. |

6.3 Analysis and Summary

As an existing operation the workforce is already in place. A substantial number of the workforce, including senior management, have a range of abilities in the Welsh language, including the ability to speak Welsh.

With the workforce in place, there is no requirement to recruit and so there would be no inward migration of workers to the area and thus no likelihood of diluting the proportion of the local population with Welsh language skills. Similarly, no pressure would be placed on local services.

Overall therefore, no further mitigation is considered necessary to promote or enhance the use of the Welsh language.

7.0 Conclusions

This document comprises a Welsh Language Statement and has been produced by SLR Consulting Limited on behalf of Breedon Trading Limited (trading as Welsh Slate). This statement forms part of a package of documents being formally submitted to Gwynedd Council (as Mineral Planning Authority, 'MPA') in support of three planning application relating to land at the Oakeley Quarry Complex (also referred to as Ffestiniog Quarry), Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd.

Breedon Trading Limited (hereafter referred to as 'the applicant') operates a 'minerals plant' at its Oakeley Quarry complex. The plant uses slate extracted from two waste tips (referred to as 'mineral working deposits') within the quarry complex to produce powdered and granulated slate products for use in manufacturing/building construction materials (for example artificial slates and coated roofing felts). Material is extracted from the tips, crushed, dried and then milled. The product is then bagged for onward dispatch. In addition, some of the material from the mineral working deposits are also exported as a secondary aggregate.

The two tips that are being worked are known as Fridd and Bryntirion and are the closest to the minerals plant. Reserves of material within Fridd Tip are now exhausted, and a limited quantity remains within the permitted area of the Bryntirion Tip. The planning permission for working Bryntirion Tip only covers the southern part of the tip (covering an area of around 1.4 ha); the tip extends further to the north and contains suitable material that could be worked and used in the minerals plant.

The planning permissions governing the operation of the minerals plant⁶ (which were amended in July 2020), allow it to operate up to 31 January 2040. Consideration is being given to the longer term supply of waste slate materials to the plant from within the wider quarry complex; it has been agreed with the MPA that some of the existing tips located within the southern part of the quarry complex can be worked as part of the extant planning permission for the quarry. Notwithstanding this, given the presence of materials within the remainder of Bryntirion Tip, and its location close to the minerals plant, mean it is sensible to make an application to extend the workings in a northerly direction.

Policy PS1 "*Welsh Language and Culture*" within the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan indicates that a Welsh Language Statement or Welsh Language Assessment will be needed for certain developments. This is expanded upon in the Supplementary Planning Guidance Note "*Maintaining and Creating Sustainable Communities*". Following an email exchange with the Senior Planning Officer at the Council it has been confirmed that a Welsh Language Statement is needed.

This statement has followed the relevant guidance noted above and has collected, recorded and analysed information about the local community within which the development is located; the policy requirements; and then considered this against the questions posed in the guidance.

From this analysis it has been noted that as an existing operation the workforce is already in place. A substantial number of the workforce, including senior management, have a range of abilities in the Welsh language, including the ability to speak Welsh.

With the workforce in place, there is no requirement to recruit and so there would be no inward migration of workers to the area and thus no likelihood of diluting the proportion of the local population with Welsh language skills. Similarly, no pressure would be placed on local services.

Overall therefore, no further mitigation is considered necessary to promote or enhance the use of the Welsh language.

⁶ Planning permission references C20/0067/03/AC and C20/0066/03/AC

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