### **Application Ref: NP/12/0303**

**Application Type** 

Full

Grid Ref:

SN13970539 Mr D Lewis

Applicant Agent

Acanthus Holden Ltd

Proposal

Demolition of hotel (& associated buildings) & toilet bock, and erection of new building providing restaurant and bar, 2 retail units, activity hire centre, education centre, public toilets & changing facilities. Resurfacing, re-arrangement & landscaping of existing car park and provision of additional grassed car parking areas, relation of Sustrans cycle route and new pumping

station building.

Site Location

Parking Facility at Coppet Hall, Saundersfoot,

Pembrokeshire, SA69 9AJ

Case Officer

Julia Evans

### Summary

This major application proposes a mixed use scheme, including the erection of a new building to replace those that are to be demolished, the resurfacing and rearrangement of the existing car park and public rights of way, the provision of a pump house, and associated landscaping. The application has been carefully considered against the relevant national and local development plan policies, and on balance the proposal is considered acceptable subject to the suggested conditioning.

### **Consultee Response**

**Saundersfoot Community Council:** Supporting - Would greatly improve the area and provide much needed facilities.

Countryside Council for Wales: No objection - The development as proposed in its current form is not likely to have an adverse effect on the natural heritage interests listed.

**Ecologist - Pembrokeshire County Council:** No objection

**Dwr Cymru Welsh Water:** Conditional Consent

**PCC - Head of Public Protection**: Conditional Consent - Not opposed to the application in principle but would recommend conditions.

**PCC - Transportation & Environment:** Conditional Consent

Coal Authority: Conditional Consent

Environment Agency Wales: Conditional Consent PCC- Building Regulations: No Response Received

Sustrans: No Response Received

**Dyfed Archaeological Trust:** No adverse comment

# **Public Response**

The application has been advertised and neighbour notifications undertaken. At the time of writing the report the expiry dates of the notices had not been spent, but no responses had been received. Any comments that are made will be reported to the Committee.

# Policies considered

Please note that these policies can be viewed on the Policies page Pembrokeshire Coast National Park website - <a href="http://www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk/default.asp?PID=549">http://www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk/default.asp?PID=549</a>

LDP Policy 01 - National Park Purposes and Duty

LDP Policy 07 - Countryside

LDP Policy 08 - Special Qualities

LDP Policy 09 - Light Pollution

LDP Policy 11 - Protection of Biodiversity

LDP Policy 15 - Conservation of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park

LDP Policy 17 - Shore Based Facilities

LDP Policy 29 - Sustainable Design

LDP Policy 30 - Amenity

LDP Policy 31 - Minimising Waste

LDP Policy 32 - Surface Water Drainage

LDP Policy 33 - Renewable Energy

LDP Policy 34 - Flooding and Coastal Inundation

LDP Policy 35 - Visitor Economy

LDP Policy 36 - Loss of Hotels and Guest Houses

LDP Policy 48 - Community Facilities and Infrastructure Requirements

LDP Policy 49 - Retail in the National Park

LDP Policy 52 - Sustainable Transport

LDP Policy 53 - Impacts on traffic

PPW4 Chapter 04 - Planning for Sustainability

PPW4 Chapter 05 - Conserving and Improving Natural Heritage and the

Coast

PPW4 Chapter 06 - Conserving the Historic Environment

PPW4 Chapter 07 - Supporting the Economy

PPW4 Chapter 08 - Transport

PPW4 Chapter 10 - Planning for Retailing and Town Centres

PPW4 Chapter 11 - Tourism, Sport and Recreation

PPW4 Chapter 12 - Infrastructure and Services

PPW4 Chapter 13 - Minimising and Managing Environmental Risks and Pollution

SPG03 - Loss of Hotels and Guesthouses

SPG05 - Sustainable Design

SPG06 - Landscape Character Assessment Study, June 2009

SPG11 - Coal Works - Instability

SPG12 - Parking

TAN 04 - Retailing and Town Centres

TAN 05 - Nature Conservation and Planning

TAN 06 - Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities

TAN 08 - Renewable Energy

TAN 11 - Noise

TAN 12 - Design

TAN 13 - Tourism

TAN 14 - Coastal Planning

TAN 15 - Development and Flood Risk

TAN 16 - Sport, Recreation and Open Space

TAN 18 - Transport

TAN 21 - Waste

TAN 22 - Planning for Sustainable Buildings

# Officer's Appraisal

#### Background

The Coppet Hall Beach Hotel and car park are part of the Hean Castle Estate, and lie to the north of Saundersfoot in the open countryside. The existing car park is a graveled and hard surfaced area accessed from the Saundersfoot – Wisemens Bridge road which bounds the site to the west. There is currently a small ticket booth in the centre of the access to the car park, which is ticket controlled in the summer months. The gravelled area of the car park runs from the booth to the shore, with parking able to occur across the whole area. North of the gravelled area is a grassed area used for overspill parking, and between this area and the maturely wooded cliffs bounding the site to the north is the SUSTRANS route, which then leads through the Coppet Hall tunnels at the eastern point of the site. None of the parking areas is formally laid out, but the applicant estimates there to be approximately 232 spaces on the gravelled area, and a further 118 on the grassed areas.

The shore line and its associated sea buckthorn vegetated bank forms the southern side of the site. In the south-western corner is the existing toilet block, owned by Pembrokeshire County Council. The tunnel to Saundersfoot lies just to the south of this building. Between the toilets and the slipway to the beach is a mobile home used as a seaside shop and café.

Turning now to the hotel that is located in the northern part of the site, this is a much extended building constructed of render and artificial slate within predominantly grassed gardens. The hotel has been closed since 2011 due to its poor condition and unviable business. Within the hotel were a restaurant, bar and ice cream kiosk, that were open to both residents and the public. To the rear of the hotel are a number of storage buildings, including a mobile home. Beyond the hotel to the north are two detached residential properties. Access to the hotel is separate from the car park, and forms the northernmost boundary of the site.

#### Constraints

- Adjacent to the Carmarthan Bay and Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC);
- Adjacent to the Saundersfoot Telpyn Coast Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI);
- Technical Advice Note 15 area;
- Coal Referral Area:
- Public rights of way in and through site, including SUSTRANS route;
- Biodiversity issue; and
- Potential for surface water flooding.

# Relevant Planning History

 NP11/455 – Demolition of existing WCs and beach shop, re-locating them into a new two storey building located at the north end of the redesigned car parking facility. New building to include a restaurant and licensed bar, activity centre, ice cream and beach shop, education / interpretation centre and a toilet and family changing facility – Withdrawn 31st January 2012.

#### **Current Proposal**

The current application is a major application and seeks to redevelop the site by demolishing the hotel and toilet block, removing the existing mobile home used as a shop, and relocating the services provided by these buildings into a new two storey building located in the eastern corner of the site. This building would be located to the eastern corner of the site, and would be constructed of natural coloured render to the ground floor with larch timber boards to the first floor. Doors and windows would be of black metal, with roofs being a mix of sedum and metal flat roofs, the latter concealed behind a parapet. It would be a curved two storey building measuring approximately 31m x 17m x 8.5m, overlooking the sea. It would be set back from the sea front and its associated vegetated cliff by approximately 7 metres. It would also be set down into the landscape, so that its finished ground floor level would be 7.99 metres AOD, compared to the 7.99 and 8.00 metres of the surrounding car parking areas. The building would provide the following services within it:-

- Ground floor A beach sales shop, an ice-cream kiosk; male and female toilets and changing rooms; and an interpretation area;
- On the first floor would be a restaurant and associated bar providing 56 internal covers, and 48 external covers. There would be a balcony at first floor level providing a seating area for the external covers.

The existing toilets and pump station block would be demolished and a new pumping station control room provided over it, constructed of timber boarding under a slate roof. This building has been designed to include bat roost opportunities, and would measure approximately 5.6m x 4.4m x 5.1m.

As regards the existing gravelled car park area, this would be formally laid out in rows on a north-east – south-west orientation, with tarmac roads and gravelled parking bays. Disabled spaces and a pedestrian footpath and cycleway would be aligned along the shore. To the north of the proposed surfaced car parking area there would be a grassed area marked out with timber posts providing further car parking spaces at busy times. Approximately 201 spaces would be provided with the redevelopment of the site. The existing mature trees along the SUSTRANS route would be retained and the area where the hotel was will be turfed and leveled. The existing access to the hotel would be retained and would provide service access to the new building. The existing ticket booth to the car park would be removed and replaced with ticket operated entrance gates. New landscaping, including hedgebanks, would be provided to screen the car parking areas.

The application has been supported with the following information:-

- A transport statement;
- A Flood Consequences Assessment;
- A Coal Mining Risk Assessment Report;
- A Design and Access Statement;
- An Arboricultural Report;
- A Hotel and Retail Impact Assessment;
- A Financial and Marketing Evidence statement;
- A Demolition Statement:
- A Structural Statement;
- An Ecological Survey;
- A Bat Survey; and
- Copies of pre-application correspondence with the statutory consultees.

#### **Key Issues**

The application raises the following planning matters:-

- Principle of the development;
- Impact on the special qualities of the National Park;
- Sustainable design and demolition of the existing buildings;
- Highways and rights of way matters;
- Contaminated land matters;
- Trees and landscaping;

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- The water environment and drainage matters;
- Flooding matters;
- Nature conservation designations and protected species;
- Retail, leisure and community facilities provision within the open countryside;
- Loss of hotel;
- Coal mines and reserves matters;
- Amenity matters.

#### Principle of the development:

The site lies within the open countryside to the north of Saundersfoot and is defined as such in the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan: Policy 7 is applicable to development proposals in this location. The pertinent caveats within this policy are that the location of tourist attractions or recreational activity is essential in countryside locations (caveat e), and that the enhancement of community facilities is proposed (caveat d).

The proposal has been the subject of much pre-application discussion with the Authority, where both the principle and design of the development has been supported. During negotiations for this and the withdrawn submission of the previous application, NP11/455, the matters of principle that were highlighted as needing to be addressed with any submission were the need and justification for the amalgamation of the existing services on the site into one building in a sensitive countryside and shore side location, and the impact of the proposal on the special qualities of the National Park. Further discussion of these matters occurs in the sections below.

#### Impact on the special qualities of the National Park:

Policies 8, 15, and 29, in particular in the adopted Local Development Plan seek to protect the special qualities of the National Park, including its remoteness and tranquility, the pattern and diversity of the landscape, the protection and enhancement of the historic environment and its biodiversity, and the protection of undeveloped areas of the coast. Policy 17 requires shore based facilities to be permitted within the developed areas of the coast where compatible with adjacent uses.

The site is a mix of existing uses and buildings, and includes the vacant hotel and its associated outbuildings, the mobile home used as a beach shop, the toilet block and pump building to the west of the site, and the gravelled and grass car parking areas. The application proposes the removal of the existing buildings on the site, with the services they provide being amalgamated into a single building that overlooks the beach. The existing vacant hotel forms a dominant building in this rural landscape, visible from a number of viewpoints, by virtue of its location, design and size. Its demolition and the resulting landscaping of the site with grassland will open out the views to this

area, restoring its rural character, plus provide a more appropriate setting for The Cottage, which is a Grade II Listed Building.

In addition to the demolition of the hotel the application proposes to demolish the existing toilet and pumping station block and mobile shop. Both these buildings are located towards the south-western end of the site. The toilet block is tucked into an area of existing mature landscaping, whilst the shop occupies a more visible location between the toilets and slipway. The removal of the latter in particular would serve to enhance the special qualities of the National Park, by restoring the open rural character of the area.

The application also proposes the formalisation of the car park, providing rows of compacted gravelled car parking bays, separated by tarmac roads. This would replace the existing gravelled and tarmac surfaces, which are quite badly rutted and decayed. The car park would also be levelled, and a clearly demarcated row of disabled parking spaces would be provided overlooking the re-located footpath and cycleway that would front the beach. The whole area is already used as a car park which is very popular in summer months, but its current state is untidy. The formalization of the car parking layout plus the provision of a further grassed area for overspill parking allows the existing uses to be more organized, minimise vandalism and joy riding, and provide an opportunity for further landscaping to minimise the visual impact of the landuse. Conditions have been suggested concerning landscape detailing (including surfacing), and lighting, so as to minimise the effect of the proposal with the special qualities of the National Park.

The provision of the new two-storey building would be to the north-eastern corner of the site: the applicant seeks to amalgamate the existing facilities on the site into one building. It would be set down into the landscape so as to minimise its visual impact, whilst at the same time capitalising on its shore-line location with the first floor restaurant. The applicant considers that the proposed location of the building combined with its design and use of natural materials (particularly wood and sedum), would further minimise its visual impact in the site. In addition the existing beach edge vegetation would be retained and supplemented. The applicant has also proposed minimal internal lighting for the building, so as to reduce light pollution in the area. through the provision of table and floor lighting rather than more conventional arrangements. The key issue with the provision of this contemporary designed building in such a sensitive location is whether it harms the special qualities of the National Park. The application has provided evidence that the services offered within the new building amalgamate, but not increase, those currently on the site, including the hotel's public restaurant and bar. The applicant also proposes that the provision of all these services into one building will add to the economic viability of the Park, including providing new employment, tourism, and recreation facilities. On balance, therefore, it is felt that the positive benefits of amalgamating the existing services into one building does not significantly harm the special qualities of the National Park, plus adds to its economic well-being. Conditions are suggested considering materials and finishes.

### Sustainable design and demolition:

Both national and local Development Plan Policy requires sustainable design. Policy 29 of the Local Development Plan expects all proposals for development to demonstrate an integrated approach to design and construction. Policy 31 requires development to minimise, re-use, and recycle waste generated during demolition and construction, and provide waste management facilities of an appropriate type and scale as an integral part of the development.

The current proposal sources locally produced timber for its construction. It has also been designed to maximise passive heating through solar gain, with all walls and floors of the building built to exceed Building Regulation requirements for insulation. Low energy heating and lighting will be provided to the building, including solar water heating and a ground source heat pump. The building would be connected to the existing mains sewer serving the area.

As regards the demolition of the buildings on site, the applicant has provided a Demolition Statement. This states that any contractor would be asked to put into place a Site Waste Management Plan to minimise demolition, construction and excavation waste and avoid material going into landfill. It is proposed that waste will either be recycled on the site or sorted and taken for recycling. Hazardous waste will be segregated on site, to avoid environmental contamination. In view of the policy requirements of Policy 31, the proposal is felt to be compliant subject to observance of the Demolition Statement arrangements.

#### Highways and rights of way matters:

Policies 52 and 53 of the Local Development Plan refer to the traffic impacts of proposed development, requiring opportunities to improve and promote accessibility, reducing the need to travel by private car, and ensuring that appropriate access can be achieved.

The Highways Authority at the County Council has been consulted on the proposal and consider that there will be no significant increase of traffic using the existing two accesses. They have also raised no objection to the alterations to the Shared Use Path (SUP), particularly as vehicular traffic crossing it will be reduced. The ticket operated entrance barrier is considered to be at an acceptable distance from the site access, without the chance of tail backs onto the highway. Consequently no objections are raised to the proposal, subject to conditions being attached concerning parking and turning areas, and to ensure that the SUP is free from impediments during construction.

There are three public footpaths within the site, and as a result the Authority's Rights of Way Section has been consulted on the application. It notes that

there will be slightly changed routes for the paths to allow their safe use, and the efforts of the applicant to provide clear routes for the public to follow by segregating pedestrians and vehicular traffic has been supported. Due to the route changes, the applicant is advised that this needs to be changed under Section 257 of the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended), and this has been suggested as an informative. It is also advised that signage is erected at the points where the public may encounter vehicles crossing or passing the footpaths, and this has been suggested as a conditional requirement.

#### Contaminated land matters:

Planning Policy Wales requires planning applications to take into account contaminated land and the potential hazard that it may pose to the development, its occupants and the local environment. Where necessary, specialist investigation may be required.

The site lies partly over a former railway line that was known to transport coal locally along the coastline. Railway lines are potentially contaminative, and as a result the Environmental Health Section at the County Council have been consulted as to the potential risks this may pose. They have raised no objection to the application in principle, but require a condition attached to any permission requiring a contaminated land assessment if any contamination is found on site.

#### Trees and landscaping:

Landscaping is integral to the character of the area and the special qualities of the National Park and the application proposes to retain the existing mature trees within the site, and proposes additional planting to the seaward side of the building, to the rear of the pump station, and in and around the car parking areas. In view of the sensitivity of area and the visual importance of the existing trees in and adjacent to the site, the comments of the Authority's Trees and Landscape Officer were sought. No objection is raised to the principle of the proposal, but further information is required as regards tree protection measures and landscaping. These have therefore been suggested as conditional requirements.

# The water environment and drainage matters:

Policy 32 of the Local Development Plan requires development to incorporate sustainable drainage systems for the disposal of water on site. Both the Environment Agency and Welsh Water have been consulted on the application, and neither raise objection to the proposal subject to conditions concerning the provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) for surface water disposal, permeable hardsurfacing, foul drainage going to the sewer, protection of the public sewer crossing the site, and pollution prevention measures.

#### Flooding matters:

Policy 34 of the Local Development Plan seeks to direct development away from areas at risk of flooding, unless there are sound social or economic justifications in accordance with requirements of Technical Advice Note 15 (TAN 15). The application was supported with a Flood Consequences Assessment that was submitted to the Environment Agency for comment. They have confirmed that it is acceptable and accurate in its findings that the building is not considered to be at risk of flooding. They have also advised that the applicant contact the County Council as Coast Protection Authority to establish whether there is any risk of coastal erosion to the site. The stability of the proposed development was a consideration at the pre-application stage, and the applicant has stated in the application that it will be constructed on a raft foundation that will accommodate unstable land. Consequently, the Agency's instruction is attached as an informative.

### Nature conservation designations and protected species:

Policy 8 of the Local Development Plan seeks to protect the special qualities of the National Park, including protecting local biodiversity action plans species and habitats. Policy 11 states that development that would harm protected species or their habitats will only be permitted where the effects can be acceptably minimised or mitigated against.

The site is adjacent to both a SSSI and an SAC, and as a result the application has been sent to the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) due to this proximity. It is of the view that the proposal is not likely to adversely affect either of these designations. It considers that there is sufficient distance between these designations and the development to ensure that there will be no impact on these sites either through construction or operation.

CCW has also considered the protected species report submitted with the application concerning the presence of bats on the site, including in some of the buildings to be demolished. The pump station housing is being designed to create a roost for bats within its roofspace, and both CCW and the County Council's Ecologist are satisfied that this will provide sufficient mitigation measures. As the proposed works will require a bat licence this has been attached as an informative.

The Environment Agency has also requested a buffer strip of a minimum 3 metres wide along the water course running along the southern corner of the site. This is requested in accordance with the Ecological Survey provided by the applicant, and is suggested so as to protect biodiversity in and along it, and to allow access for the maintenance and riparian access to the watercourse. This condition has been suggested.

### Retail, leisure, and community facilities provision within the open countryside:

Chapter 10 of Planning Policy Wales is relevant in respect of the provision of retail units in the countryside. This seeks to reinforce the role of existing Centres as the best location for most retail and leisure activities. It is advised that the applicant demonstrates why a centre location is not acceptable for a development outside such a centre with a sequential test.

Unlike the application submitted in 2011, and at the request of the Authority, the applicant has now sought to demonstrate that the existing leisure and retail uses on the site will result in a total loss of combined floorspace by relocating them all in one building. The floor area of the public restaurant and bar in the hotel is approximately 298 square metres, compared to the proposed 250 square metres including external seating areas. The existing beach shop provides approximately 70 square metres of retail floorspace, compared to the proposed 82 square metres of the shop and ice cream kiosk. The existing toilets measure approximately 72 square metres, compared to the 106 square metres in the new building. The applicant is therefore proposing that in addition to the visual improvements that the amalgamation of the existing services into one building will provide, there will also be an increase in employment from the existing 2 part-time employees to 8 part-time and 4 full-time. In view of the similar comparative floorspaces, it is not felt that the application could be refused for retail and leisure impacts.

#### Loss of hotel:

Policy 36 of the Local Development Plan requires the submission of evidence to show that either the potential for the continued use of a hotel is not viable or that demand can continue to be met in the area and that there is no adverse impact on the local character of the area. The applicant has been supported with a viability statement which has demonstrated that the hotel is unviable. Your officers have also undertaken an assessment that demonstrates that peak demand can continue to be met within Saundersfoot without the Coppet Hall Beach Hotel and as such demand can continue to be met in the area. In addition, it is not considered that the character of the area is dependent on the hotel building. Consequently it is considered that the hotel closure is acceptable under the requirements of Policy 36.

#### Coal mines and reserves matters:

The site lies over an area of coal working, and as a result a requirement from the Coal Authority is that applications in such areas as this are supported with Coal Mining Risk Assessment Reports. This was duly submitted with the application, and the Coal Authority has considered it and advised that the Report correctly identifies that the application has been subject to past coal mining activity, namely shallow coal workings and coal outcrops. In light of this it requires that a condition is attached requiring site investigation of these works prior to commencement of any development on site to establish the

exact situation regarding the coal mining legacy issues and the relevant mitigation works required.

### Amenity matters:

Policy 8 of the Local Development Plan seeks to protect the special qualities of the National Park, including its remoteness and tranquility. In view of the use of part of the building as a restaurant and bar in the open countryside, the comments of the Environmental Health Section at the County Council have been requested as to its views on potential noise and lighting nuisance. It is proposed that the opening hours of the restaurant and bar will be 11.00 to 22.00 hours daily, with the shop and other activities being between 09.00 and 17.00 daily. The Section is of the opinion that the relocation of the restaurant and shop uses away from the neighbouring residential properties will reduce the possible impact of noise and lighting nuisance on them. It raises no objections to the proposal subject to conditions controlling delivery times, hours of use, and lighting arrangements.

#### Conclusion

The application proposes a mixed use scheme, including the erection of a new building to replace those that are to be demolished, the resurfacing and rearrangement of the existing car park and public rights of way, the provision of a pump house, and associated landscaping. The application has been carefully considered against the relevant national and local development plan policies. On balance the proposal is considered acceptable subject to the suggested conditioning.

## Recommendation

Permission, subject to conditions.

#### **Conditions and Informatives**

#### Suggested conditions:-

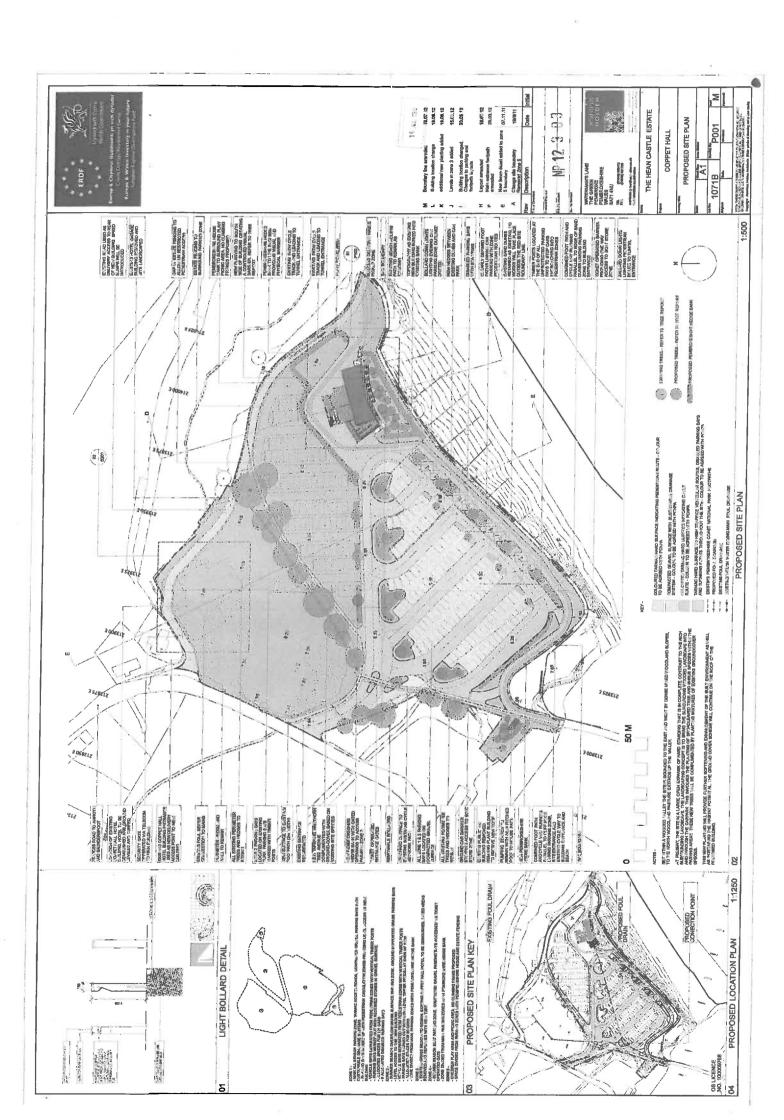
- Time limit;
- Decision drawings;
- Materials;
- Render sample panel;
- Compliance with submitted demolition statement;
- Landscaping, including topography and surfacing;
- Tree protection;
- Lighting details;
- Parking and turning area provision;
- No impediment to the Shared Use Path;
- Warning signage for the public rights of way;
- Contaminated land;
- Delivery hours;
- Opening hours;

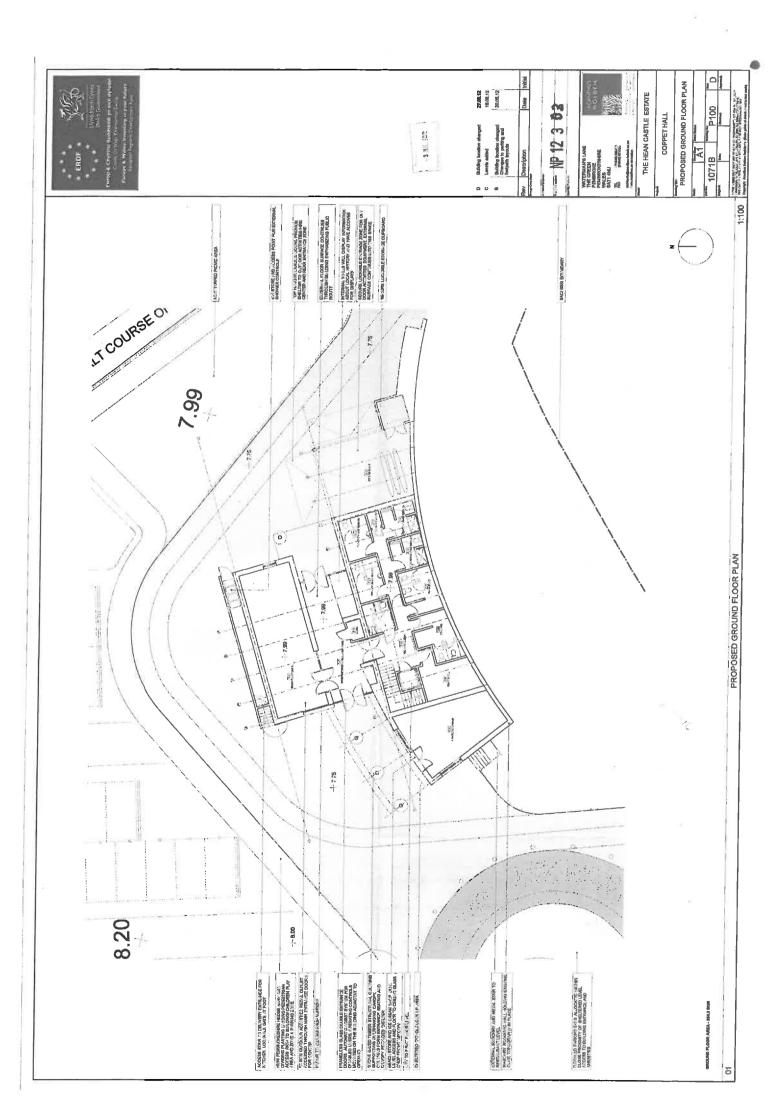
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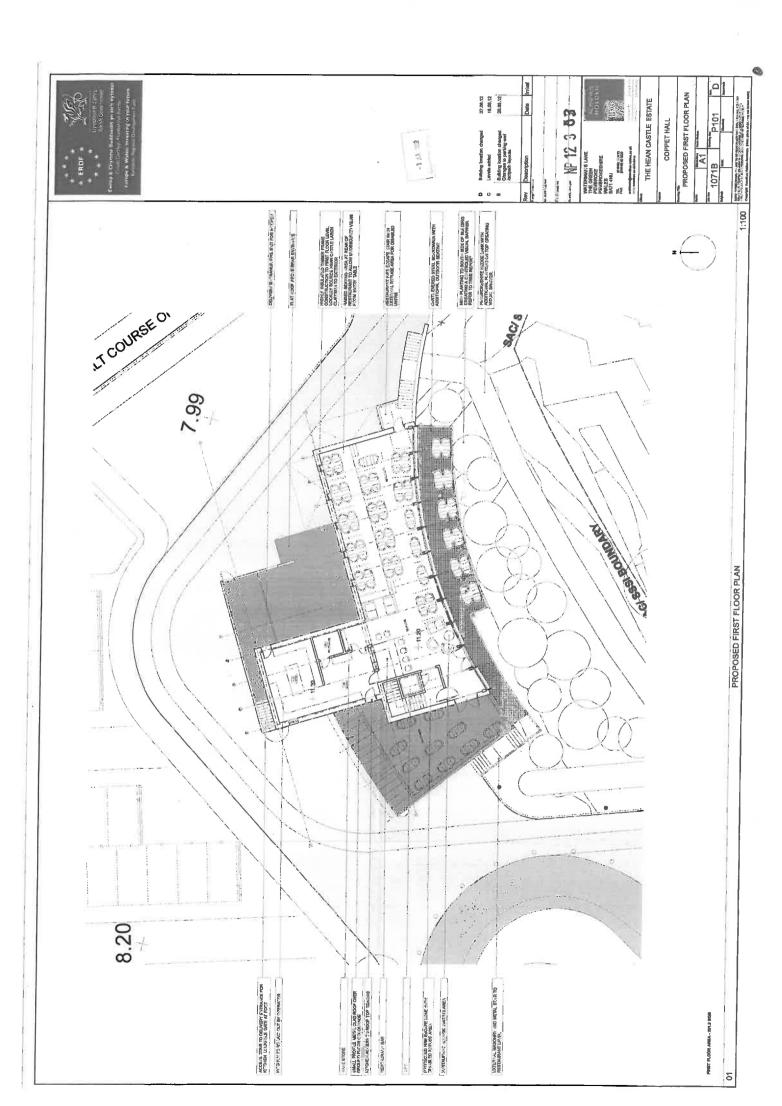
- Sustainable Drainage Systems for surface water;
- Permeable paving for areas of hardstanding;
- Foul drainage to go to public sewer;
- The separation of foul and surface water drainage arrangements;
- The provision of grease traps to protect the public sewer;
- The protection of public sewer crossing site;
- Method statement for pollution prevention measures;
- Storage of chemicals;
- Development-free buffer zone to watercourse;
- Coal and mine survey.

# Suggested informatives:-

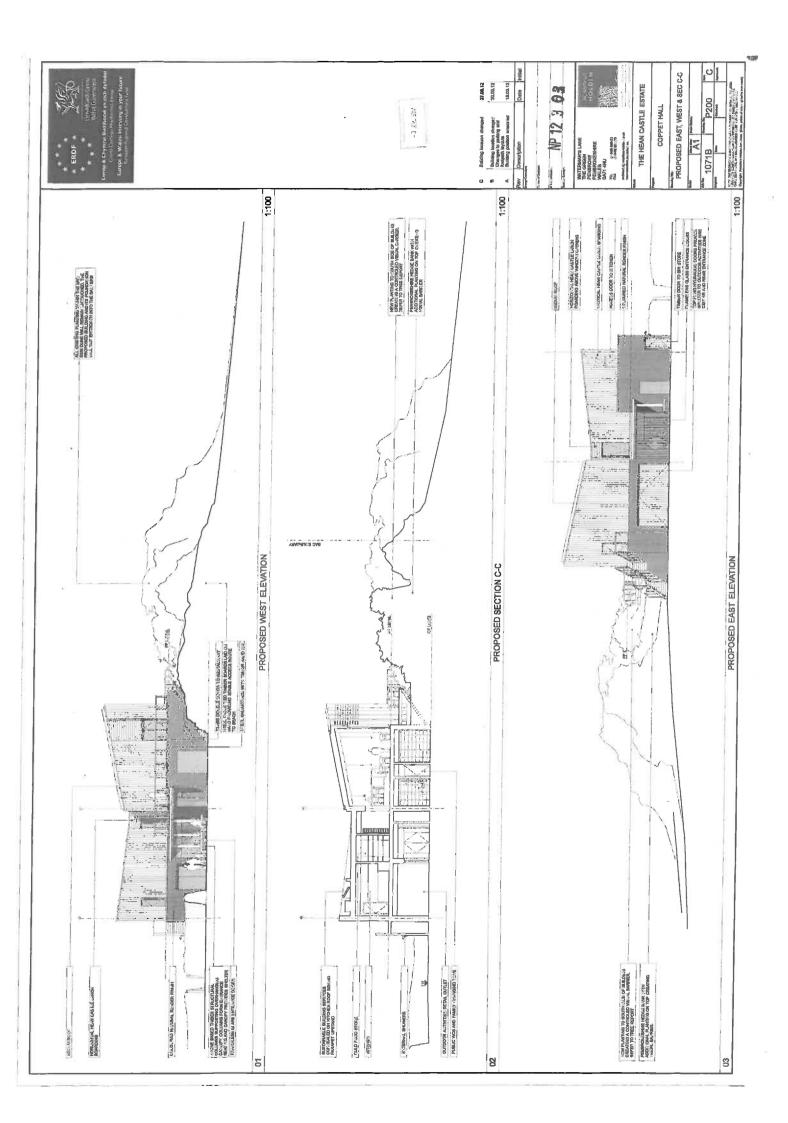
- Public rights of way alterations;
- Japanese Knotweed;
- Contact with the Coast Protection Authority;
- Bat licence.

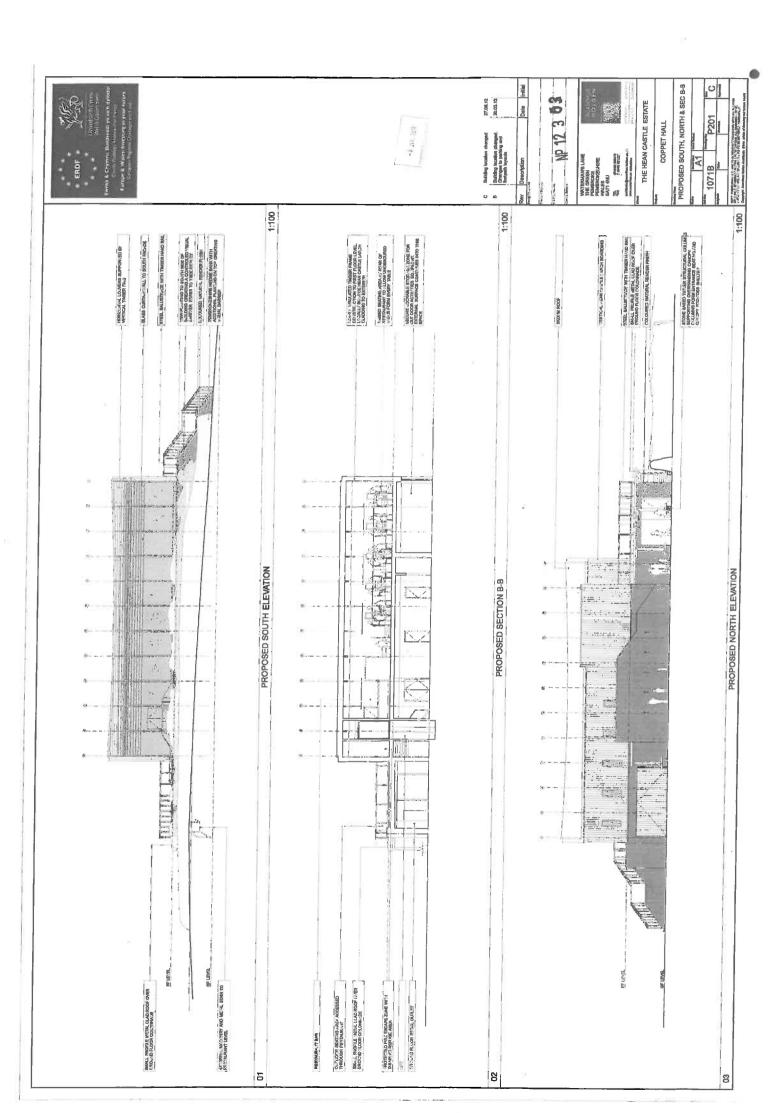


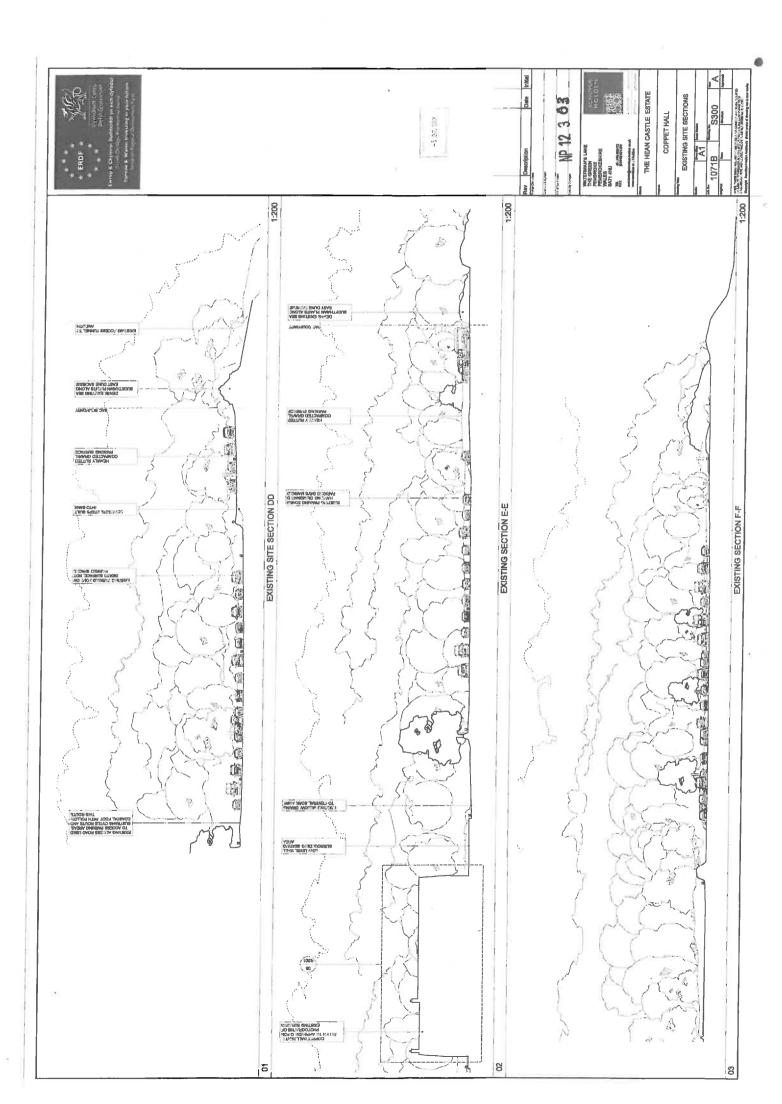


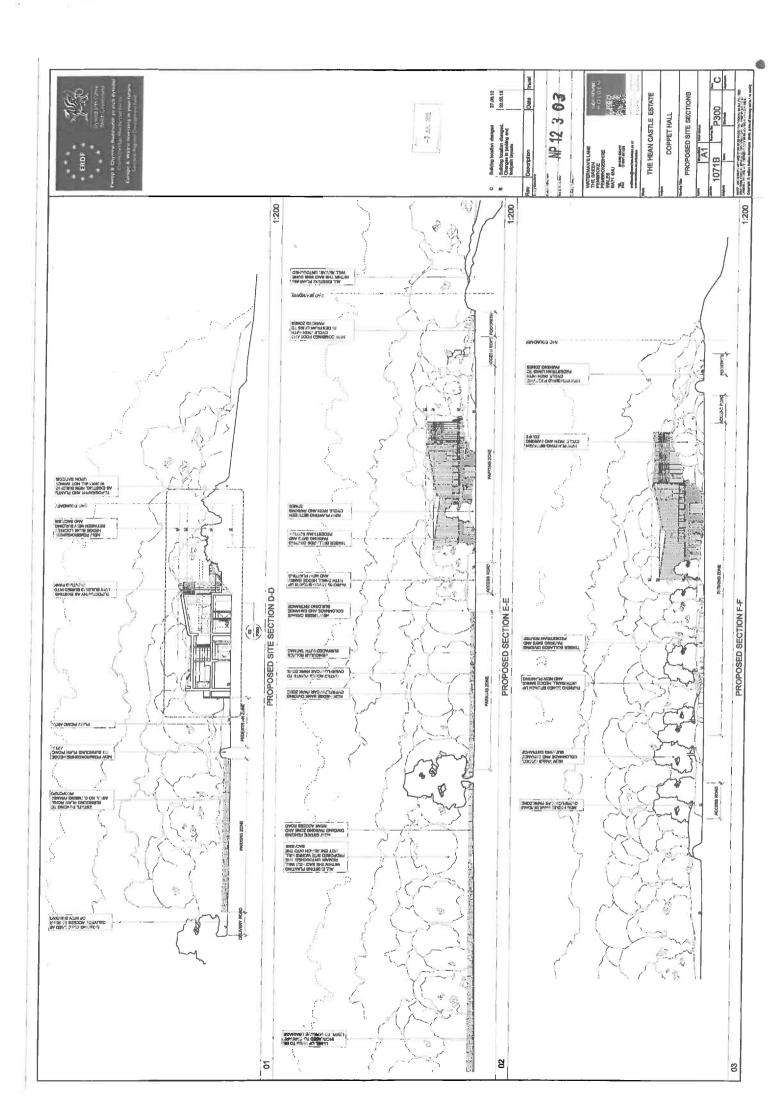


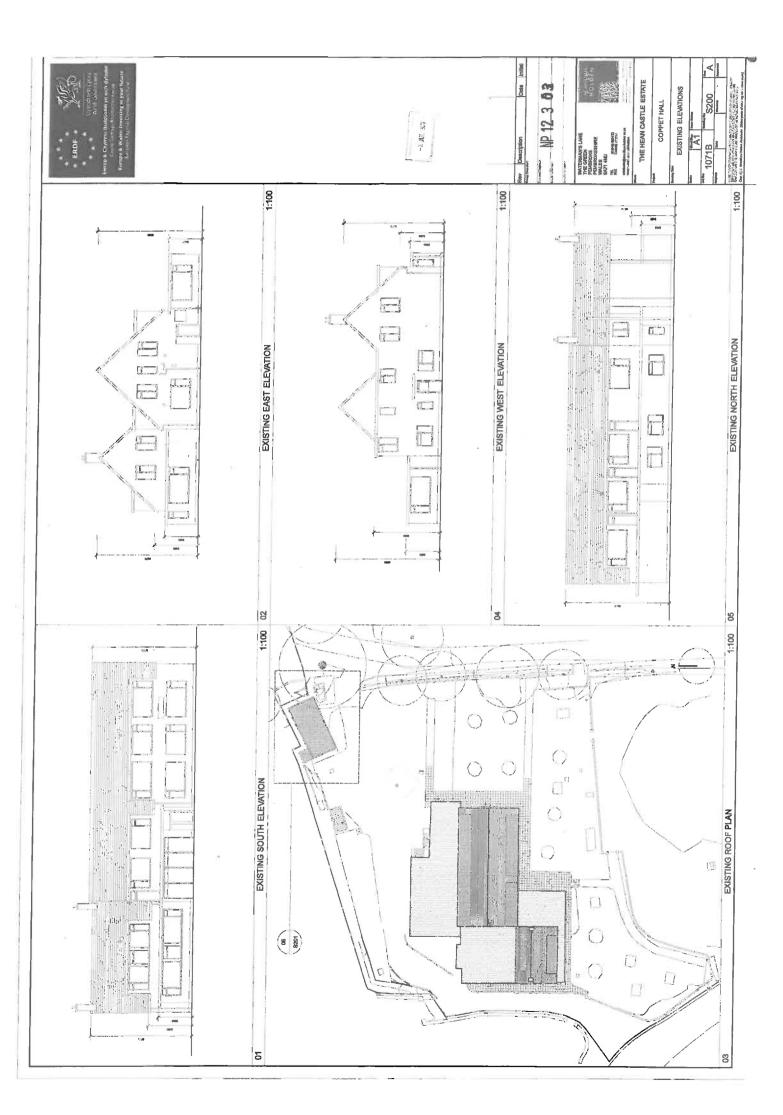


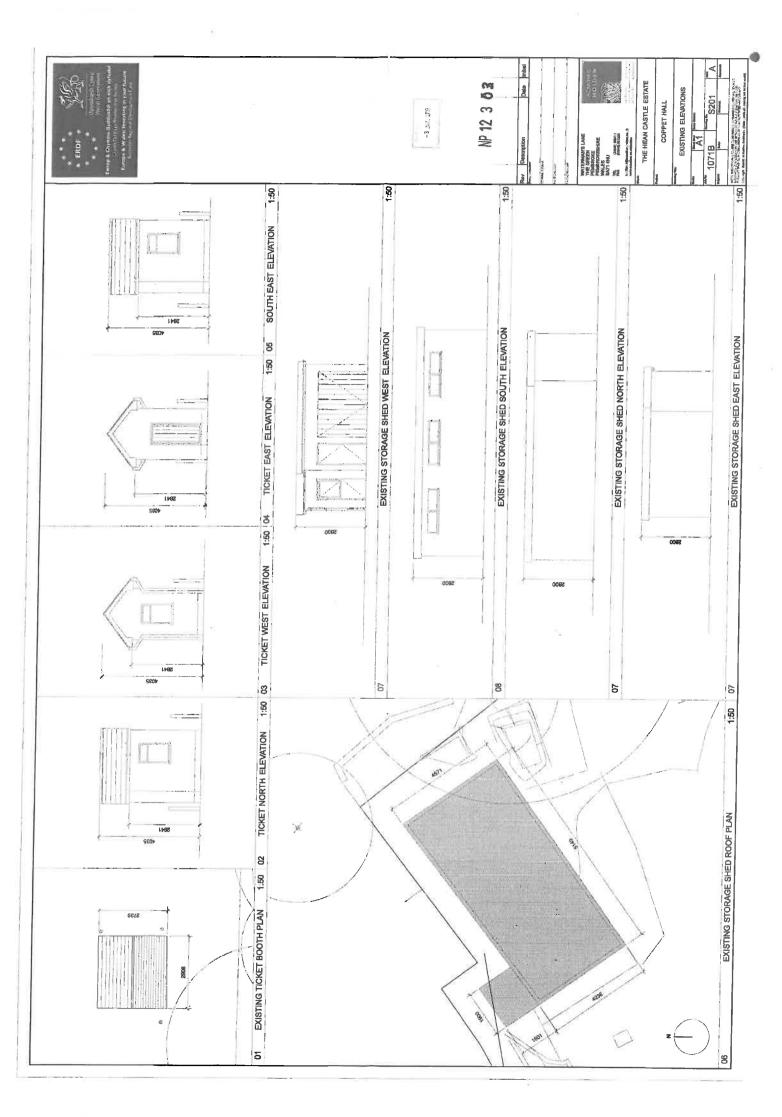












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