

**Y Cynghorydd  
Councillor  
Sion Jones**

Ward – Bethel and Llanddeiniolen

12 August, 2016



**Local Development Plan – Bethel**

**Response to the Focussed Change – Bethel**

**Dear Sir / Madam,**

I have been working very closely with the residents of Bethel over recent years to ensure that the community's voice is heard during the Local Development Plan process. Since then, I have tried my best to collaborate with Gwynedd Council to convey the community's opinions, which has at times been very frustrating.

During the Deposit Plan stage, the land behind Saron had been adopted as land suitable for development, but during the 'Focussed Changes' stage, the officers decided to replace the land behind Saron with two other plots in Bethel, a site opposite Cremlyn for 28 houses and land opposite Rhoslan for 12 houses. The grounds for the decision was that a biodiversity report identified plants of significance on the land behind Saron.

We have campaigned against this decision for a number of reasons. We recognise the need to address the figure of 40 houses in Bethel, and accept this. The Cremlyn site qualifies for the new Plan. We request that the inspector reconsiders the situation in relation to the land opposite Rhoslan, not only has this land been refused twice through the Government's appeal process, but because it also holds more significant biodiversity value.

The majority of Bethel's community are in favour of developing the land behind Saron, although I received a petition from five families in Saron objecting to it. We have held a public meeting to discuss the Local Development Plan's proposals in Bethel; the residents were in favour of the site opposite Cremlyn, they objected to the Rhoslan land, and were in favour of the land behind Saron. I believe that it is extremely important to address the community's needs and wishes in relation to future planning in Bethel.

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Evidence shows that the original biodiversity report on the Saron site is incorrect, and the owner of the land behind Saron has now commissioned a new report which contradicts the original report (and the basis for the Council's decision to change the sites during the Focussed Changes process).

Therefore, our proposal is that the land behind Saron should be adopted in the plan rather than the land opposite Rhoslan, for the reason that there is more biodiversity value in the retention of this land. No biodiversity reasons have been noted in the report stating that the land behind Saron is unsuitable.

**Sion Jones**

**Bethel Councillor**