

Application No	S/36018
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Application Type	Full Planning
Proposal & Location	CONVERSION AND EXTENSION OF BARN TO FORM A RESIDENTIAL ANNEXE FOR FAMILY MEMBERS OF ADJOINING DWELLINGHOUSE AT LLWYNY RHOS, COOPERS ROAD, AMMANFORD, SA18 3SH

Applicant(s)	MR A & EDAVIES, LLWYN Y RHOS, COOPERS ROAD, TYCROES, AMMANFORD, SA18 3SH
Agent	JCR PLANNING LTD - RICHARD BANKS, UNIT2 CROSS HANDS BUSINESS WORKSHOP, HEOL PARC MAWR, CROSS HANDS, CARMARTHENSHIRE, SA14 6RE
Case Officer	Paul Roberts
Ward	Tycroes
Date of validation	29/08/2017

CONSULTATIONS

Local Member – County Councillor T Higgins has asked that the application be referred to the Planning Committee for determination if officers are minded to refuse the application. The reasons for the request are:

- The annexe is to accommodate an elderly family member and will be ancillary to the main house.
- The increase in the roof space of the original barn is intended to provide an attic workshop and playroom and roof is to be set below the roof level of the main house.
- The site is in an isolated position several hundred metres off Coopers Road where there are no neighbouring properties in close proximity and no public rights of way running near the property.
- The roof height will not pose any detriment to the setting of the landscape as it appears to be part of the farm buildings.

County Councillor T Higgins has asked that the Planning Committee undertake a site visit to fully consider the proposal.

Llanedi community Council – Have not commented on the application to date.

Neighbours/Public – The application has been publicised with the posting of a site notice at the entrance to the site. In response, no third party letters of representation have been received to date.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

S/35553	Conversion and extension of barn to form a residential annexe for family members of adjoining dwellinghouse. Planning permission refused	14 July 2017
S/26588	Proposed barn conversion to holiday let Planning permission refused Appeal upheld	9 July 2012 11 April 2013

APPRAISAL

This application has been submitted following an investigation/action undertaken by the Authority's planning enforcement team.

THE SITE

The application site consists of the curtilage of a detached dwelling and disused barn located in a countryside location to the south of Capel Hendre. The barn is located close to the rear elevation of the dwelling being separated from the same by an access track that serves the site. The track is largely unmade and extends over some 500 metres eventually egressing onto Coopers Road to the east.

The original barn structure is of a single storey design and consists of thick random stone walling. It covers a floor area of 13.8 metres by 5.5 metres and previously had a small lean-to extension on its rear elevation. Its front elevation is characterised by a number of window and door openings which are set immediately below the eaves level of the building.

Works have commenced on converting the building to habitable accommodation which includes raising the eaves level of the building with new block work while new roof trusses have also been erected on the building. The original rear lean-to extension has been replaced with a larger lean-to extension which is partly completed and has a mix of stone and facing brick elevations.

The area around the barn consists of a mix of a loose gravel surface and overgrown grassed areas with the former being used for parking purposes in association with the neighbouring dwelling.

THE PROPOSAL

The application seeks partly retrospective permission for the conversion and extension of the original barn to a residential annexe to be used as ancillary accommodation in association with the adjacent dwelling.

By way of background to the application, the applicant previously submitted an application to convert the barn to holiday let accommodation which was refused by the Authority back in July 2012. Planning application S/26588 refers. The application was refused on the basis that the applicant had failed to provide sufficient information to demonstrate that the building was structurally sound and could therefore be converted without extensive rebuilding works. The applicant appealed the decision and was subsequently granted planning permission in April 2013.

The approved scheme reflects the scale and form of the original barn and provides ground floor holiday let accommodation which incorporates two bedrooms. The eaves and ridge heights of the barn are maintained at their original levels while the rear lean-to extension was also to be retained as part of the scheme albeit with a small extension to provide a porch area to the building. The design of the scheme is reflective of the Authority's policy requirement of ensuring that conversion schemes retain the character and appearance of the original building without extensive rebuilding or alterations.

The works undertaken by the applicant on the conversion of the barn go beyond those permitted under the planning permission whereby the eaves and ridge levels of the building have been increased in height and the rear lean-to projection has been demolished and replaced with a new larger extension. The eaves heights of the building have been raised by 1.6 metres above those of the approved scheme with block work walling that is to be clad externally with stonework. The ridge height is set at 6.7metres in contrast 4.2 metre height of the permission granted. The rear extension added to the barn measures 5 metres in depth by 9 metres in width in contrast to the smaller extension approved which measured 2.5 metres in depth and 5 metres in width.

The application seeks permission to retain these alterations to the design of the barn as well as changing its intended use to a residential annexe to be used in association with the adjacent dwelling. The supporting information indicates that the applicant intends to occupy the main dwelling house and the converted annexe is to be used as an annexe by his elderly disabled father. The annexe is shown to include a lounge and bedroom on the ground floor of the barn and a further sun room and disabled bathroom in the new rear extension. The first floor of the building is to be accessed via a pull down ladder and utilised as a domestic workshop and play room.

It is of note that the applicant has previously submitted an application to retain the alterations to the barn and change its use to an annexe under planning S/35553. This application was refused in July of this year on the basis that extensions resulted in an incongruous form of development that was harmful to the original character and appearance of the barn and the surrounding rural area. The current application is a resubmission of this previous application.

PLANNING POLICIES

In the context of the Authority's current Development Plan the application site is located in the countryside outside the development limits of settlements defined in the Local Development Plan. The following policies are of relevance to the proposal.

Policy GP1 is a general policy which, amongst others, promotes sustainability and high quality design, and seeks to ensure that development proposals conform with and enhance the character and appearance of the site, building or area in terms of siting,

appearance, scale, height, massing, elevation treatment and detailing. Developments should also not have a significant impact upon the amenity of adjacent land uses and properties, be served by appropriate access provision and have regard to the safe and efficient use of the transport network. Proposals are also required to have regard to the generation, treatment and disposal of waste.

Policy SP1 supports development proposals where they reflect sustainable development and design principles by, amongst others, respecting, reflecting and, where possible, enhancing local character and distinctiveness.

THIRD PARTY REPRESENTATIONS

No third party letters of representation have been received to date in respect of the application. The application is presented to Committee in response to a request received from the local member for the ward, County Councillor T Higgins, who supports the proposal.

CONCLUSIONS

The main issue in the determination of the application is the visual impact of the extensions and alterations to the barn upon its original character and appearance in the surrounding rural area.

The original barn is of a single storey design of modest proportions having a low eaves level set directly above its window and door openings and a low roof pitch. These features give the building a utilitarian appearance reflective of its previous agricultural use. The increase in the height of the building with the large expanse of walling between the heads of ground floor openings and the new eaves combined with the higher roof pitch alter the shape and proportions of the building significantly to the extent that they appear incongruous with its original character and appearance. The visual impact of the proposal is exacerbated by the addition of the large lean-to extension on the rear elevation which detracts from the attractive simplicity of the original barn and combined with the higher eaves level gives the building a domestic appearance that pays little regard to its agricultural origins.

The previous scheme approved for the conversion of the barn to holiday let accommodation demonstrates that the building can be converted to residential use in a sympathetic manner without significant extension or alterations works to the original building. The barn is considered to be of sufficient size to incorporate a residential annexe without detracting from its original appearance by increasing its overall height and adding a large extension to the rear. Indeed, the building is to be occupied by the applicant's disabled father whereby there will be no functional for the first floor accommodation which is to be accessed via a loft ladder from the ground floor.

Whilst Councillor Higgins opines that the building occupies an isolated location that is not visually prominent from the wider area, this is not a sound basis upon which to grant planning permission and does not outweigh the visual harm of the proposal upon the existing building.

The proposal is therefore considered to be at odds with the objectives of policies GP1 and SP1 of the LDP in that it does not conform with or enhance the character and appearance

of the existing building in the wider rural area in terms of its appearance, scale, height and massing. The application is therefore put forward with a recommendation for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION – REFUSAL

REASONS

- 1 The proposal is contrary to Policy GP1 of the Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (December 2014):

Development proposals will be permitted where they accord with the following:

- a) **It conforms with and enhances the character and appearance of the site, building or area in terms of siting, appearance, scale, height, massing, elevation treatment, and detailing;**
- b) **It incorporates existing landscape or other features, takes account of site contours and changes in levels and prominent skylines or ridges;**
- c) **Utilises materials appropriate to the area within which it is located;**
- d) **It would not have a significant impact on the amenity of adjacent land uses, properties, residents or the community;**
- e) **Includes an integrated mixture of uses appropriate to the scale of the development;**
- f) **It retains, and where appropriate incorporates important local features (including buildings, amenity areas, spaces, trees, woodlands and hedgerows) and ensures the use of good quality hard and soft landscaping and embraces opportunities to enhance biodiversity and ecological connectivity;**
- g) **It achieves and creates attractive, safe places and public spaces, which ensures security through the ‘designing-out-crime’ principles of Secured by Design (including providing natural surveillance, visibility, well-lit environments and areas of public movement);**
- h) **An appropriate access exists or can be provided which does not give rise to any parking or highway safety concerns on the site or within the locality;**
- i) **It protects and enhances the landscape, townscape, historic and cultural heritage of the County and there are no adverse effects on the setting or integrity of the historic environment;**
- j) **It ensures or provides for, the satisfactory generation, treatment and disposal of both surface and foul water;**
- k) **It has regard to the generation, treatment and disposal of waste.**
- l) **It has regard for the safe, effective and efficient use of the transportation network;**
- m) **It provides an integrated network which promotes the interests of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport which ensures ease of access for all;**
- n) **It includes, where applicable, provision for the appropriate management and eradication of invasive species.**

Proposals will also be considered in light of the policies and provisions of this Plan and National Policy (PPW: Edition 7 and TAN12: Design (2014)).

In that the proposed extensions to the building with the raising of the eaves and roof level and addition of a large rear extension will result in an incongruous form of development that will be harmful to the character and appearance of the original barn and surrounding rural area.

- 2 The proposal is contrary to Policy SP1 of the Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (December 2014):

Proposals for development will be supported where they reflect sustainable development and design principles by:

- a) **Distributing development to sustainable locations in accordance with the settlement framework, supporting the roles and functions of the identified settlements;**
- b) **Promoting, where appropriate, the efficient use of land including previously developed sites;**
- c) **Integrating with the local community, taking account of character and amenity as well as cultural and linguistic considerations;**
- d) **Respecting, reflecting and, wherever possible, enhancing local character and distinctiveness;**
- e) **Creating safe, attractive and accessible environments which contribute to people's health and wellbeing and adhere to urban design best practice;**
- f) **Promoting active transport infrastructure and safe and convenient sustainable access particularly through walking and cycling;**
- g) **Utilising sustainable construction methods where feasible;**
- h) **Improving social and economic wellbeing;**
- i) **Protect and enhance the area's biodiversity value and where appropriate, seek to integrate nature conservation into new development.**

In that the proposed extensions to the building with the raising of the eaves and roof level and addition of a large rear extension will result in an incongruous form of development that will be harmful to the character and appearance of the original barn and surrounding rural area