

Planning Statement

Land at The Paddocks, Bedlinog

April 2024

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1. Introduction

Document Purpose

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Turley on behalf of, Daphne Tranter (the ‘Applicant’), in support of a full planning application for a proposed rural enterprise dwelling on land at The Paddocks, Bedlinog.
- 1.2 The application seeks planning permission for the following:
- “Construction of a rural enterprise dwellings and associated works.”*
- 1.3 The purpose of this Statement is to assist Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (MTCBC) by describing the proposal and assessing the extent to which it complies with national and local planning policies. In undertaking the assessment, reference is made to the findings of various technical surveys and assessments which also form part of the application submission.

Supporting Information

- 1.4 The planning application is accompanied by the following documents:

Table 1.1: Schedule of Documents

Document/Plan	Prepared by
Covering Letter	Turley
Completed Application Forms and Certificates	Turley
Planning Statement	Turley
Preliminary Ecological Assessment	Ecological Services
Habitat Mitigation Strategy	Ecological Services
Rural Enterprise Dwelling Appraisal (including forward projections and budget)	Cynllunio RW Planning Ltd and Graham Leaver
Site Location Plan (ref: 100 P1)	Inspire Architects
Proposed Site Plan (ref: 200 P1)	Inspire Architects
Proposed Site Sections (ref: 155 P1)	Inspire Architects
Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan (ref: 300 P1)	Inspire Architects
Proposed Gound Floor Plan (ref: 310 P1)	Inspire Architects
Proposed Roof Plan (ref: 320 P1)	Inspire Architects
Proposed Sections (ref: 400 P1)	Inspire Architects
Proposed Elevations – East and West (ref: 500 P1)	Inspire Architects

Proposed Elevations – North and South (ref: 510 P1)	Inspire Architects
Photo Survey Legend	Inspire Architects
Photos – A - M	Inspire Architects
Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS)	Turley

- 1.5 This Statement summarises the key elements and findings of the technical assessments and sets out how the proposal complies with prevailing planning policies. It is important that the application submission is read as a whole.

Structure

- 1.6 The remainder of this Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** – Site Description
- **Section 3** – The Proposed Development
- **Section 4** – Planning Policy Context
- **Section 5** – Planning Assessment
- **Section 6** – Conclusion

2. The Application Site

The Application Site

- 2.1 The application site is located at The Paddocks, an active farm situated in Bedlinog. It is centred on the following grid coordinates: E: 309296; N: 200436 and is located approximately 750m south of Bedlinog and some 3.4 miles north of Treharris town centre.
- 2.2 The site relates to a parcel of land extending to 0.13 hectares on the applicant's agricultural property. The site contains a mixture of grassland and bare stony ground with two mature oak trees.
- 2.3 The site is bound by vacant greenfield land to the north and west; agricultural sheds to the east; and a narrow track to the south. The site can be accessed from the B4255 via an unnamed track. Immediately adjacent to the east of the site is a selection of barns, stables, garages and a chalet type building all known as The Paddocks.
- 2.4 The Natural Resource Wales (NRW) Development Advice Map (DAM) indicates that the site is located within Flood Zone A (lowest risk of flooding). The emerging NRW Flood Map for Planning shows that the site does not lie in a flood zone and is not subject to surface water flooding. The Flood Map for Planning has no official status for planning purposes until June 2023.
- 2.5 There are no Listed Buildings or Locally Listed Buildings located on site or within its vicinity.
- 2.6 The site is located outside settlement boundary within the countryside. It is located within a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), Sandstone Area and a Special Landscape Area.

Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The site is surrounded by vacant greenfield land and other agricultural properties, as expected to see in this rural location. A range of services and facilities can be found in Bedlinog village, these include Bedlinog Community Centre, Cadees Cakes, Bedlinog Inn and TK Gardening convenience store.
- 2.2 The nearest bus stop is located a mile north of the site. This bus stop provides regular services to Merthyr Tydfil (via the following bus numbers: 79 and E79).
- 2.3 The area is home to several farms that contribute to the unique charm and appeal of the locality. Indeed, the farmsteads in this location enhance the rural character of the region and are an integral part of this area's identity.

Background

2.4 The Paddocks is a family-run farm which extends over an area of 580 acres (all owned by the applicant). The farm is progressively expanding and currently comprises the following livestock:

- 167no. cattle and calves;
- 22no. ewes; and
- 50no. horses.

Planning History

2.5 A review of the Merthyr Tydfil Council planning register shows that the following applications are relevant to the site:

- Ref: P/19/0177 - Creation of horse exercise area – Approved: 14th September 2020.
- Ref: P/18/0360 – Erection of barn – Barns at The Paddocks Nant-y-Fewd Farm CF46 6UF – Approved: 22nd January 2019.
- Ref: P/10/0200 - Retention of building used for the accommodation of cattle, pigs and horses – Approved: 23rd September 2010.

Enforcement Appeal

2.6 It should be noted that the wider site at The Paddocks was subject to an enforcement notice (ref: PE/21/0145), which was served on 15 March 2023. The Notice stated that the matters which appear to constitute the breach of planning can be described as follows:

“Without planning permission, the siting of a caravan (and decking and extension thereto) for residential purposes.”

2.7 The Notice required the permanent removal of the caravan (and extension thereto), decking and any other associated domestic paraphernalia. The time period compliance of these steps is given as 52 weeks, beginning with the day the Notice takes effect.

2.8 An appeal was subsequently lodged on 10 May 2023, based on Grounds (a), (b), (f), and (g) in that:

- Ground (a) - that, in respect of any breach of planning control which may be constituted by the matter stated in the Notice, planning permission ought to be granted or, as the case may be, the condition or limitation concerned ought to be discharged.
- Ground (b) – that those matters have not occurred.

- Ground (f) - that the steps required to comply with the requirements of the enforcement notice are excessive and lesser steps would overcome the objections.
- Ground (g) – the time given to comply with the Notice is too short.

2.9 Following the submission of representations from both the appellant and MTCBC, the Inspector at PEDW concluded that the scope of the corrected Notice would be materially different to that formed the basis of the appellant's evidence. Therefore, PEDW requested MTCBC to confirm how it wished to proceed.

2.10 MTCBC confirmed on 20 March 2024 that the enforcement notice will be withdrawn, and PEDW formally reaffirmed this on the 18 April 2024.

3. Pre-application Enquiry

- 3.1 A formal pre-application enquiry for the construction of a rural enterprise dwelling at the application site was submitted on 24 November 2022. Feedback from MCTCBC planning officers was subsequently received on 13 January 2023.
- 3.2 A summary of the feedback is outlined below.

Principle of Development

- 3.3 The proposal would constitute 'countryside development'. Typically, residential development outside of the settlement limits would present a departure from the LDP. However, in exceptional circumstances policy SW4 sets out, amongst other criteria, that development 'associated with a rural enterprise or the winning and working of minerals' may be permitted where such locations can be fully justified and satisfies other relevant plan policies.
- 3.4 TAN 6 allows for dwellings to be built in the countryside to accommodate workers for a wide range of rural enterprises. Section 4.3 of TAN 6 highlights whether a new dwelling is essential will depend on the needs of the enterprise and not the individual circumstances or preferences of the applicant.
- 3.5 At this stage there is insufficient level of information to determine whether there is a clear established need for a new dwelling on this site. A rural enterprise dwelling appraisal must accompany a planning application of this type.

Siting, Design and Scale

- 3.6 At this stage, due to the limited amount of information available, the local planning authority are unable to assess the full impact of the proposed development or provide comments on the proposed size or design of the dwelling.
- 3.7 As the site is located within the Cwm Fedw Site of Important Nature Conservation (SINC), consideration should be given to siting of the dwelling on the existing yard area (in a similar location to the existing unauthorised residential accommodation).

Ecology

- 3.8 While a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been submitted, the Council's Ecologist has advised that there is insufficient information to assess the impacts of the proposed development on protected species and the SINC. Full details of the proposed development will need to be provided to your ecologist (i.e. a proposed layout drawing, lighting proposals etc) to enable them to make definite statements within their report and recommend fully informed mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures for the scheme.
- 3.9 'The Survey & Assessment for SINC Designation and the Habitat plan (2008)' for Cwm Fedw SINC (see attached) possibly shows semi-improved acid grassland and possibly acidic flush habitat on the site. It is questioned whether these documents have been

considered by your ecologist as these may be important in designing mitigation, compensation and enhancement in relation to the impacts on SINC habitat. A quantitative appraisal of the areas of habitat retained, lost and created would be useful in assessing the overall impact on the SINC.

Conclusion

3.10 At this stage, based on the level of information currently provided, the proposal would represent unjustified and unacceptable encroachment into the open countryside and as such any application submitted would not be permitted.

3.11 The following applications would be required to accompany a full planning application:

- Application forms;
- Site location plan;
- A scaled block plan showing the siting of the proposed building works (including the means of access and any hardstanding/amenity areas that may be proposed in relation to the existing buildings, site boundaries, adjacent roads and neighbouring buildings etc);
- Proposed elevations and floor plans;
- Rural Enterprise Appraisal; and
- Relevant Ecological Surveys

4. Proposed Development

- 4.1 The application seeks full planning permission for a rural enterprise dwelling on land at The Paddocks, Bedlinog. The full description of development is set out below:

“Construction of a rural enterprise dwellings and associated works.”

- 4.2 The rural enterprise dwelling will provide essential residential accommodation for the family living and working full-time on the farm.
- 4.3 As shown on the below elevation plans (Figures 1 and 2), due to the topography of the site, the dwelling will rise to two storeys in height at the front, transitioning to a single storey towards the rear.



Figure 1: Proposed West and East Elevations

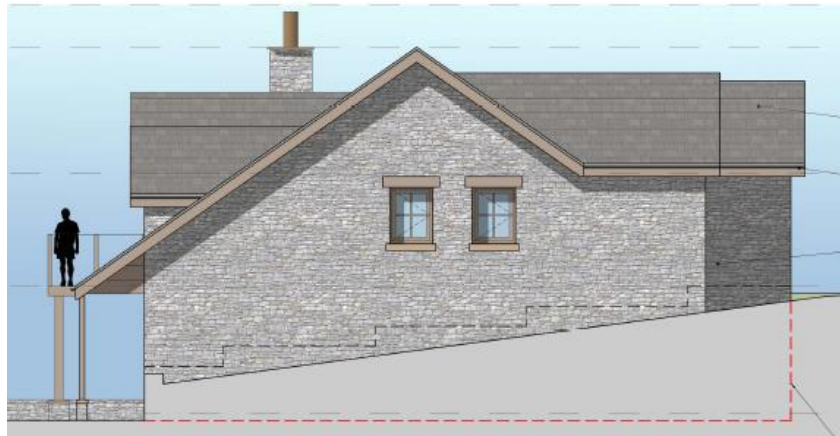


Figure 2: Proposed North and South Elevational Plans

4.4 As shown in Figure 3, the lower ground floor will comprise the following elements:

- 1no. master bedroom with a dressing room and an ensuite
- 2no. bedrooms
- Family bathroom
- Laundry area

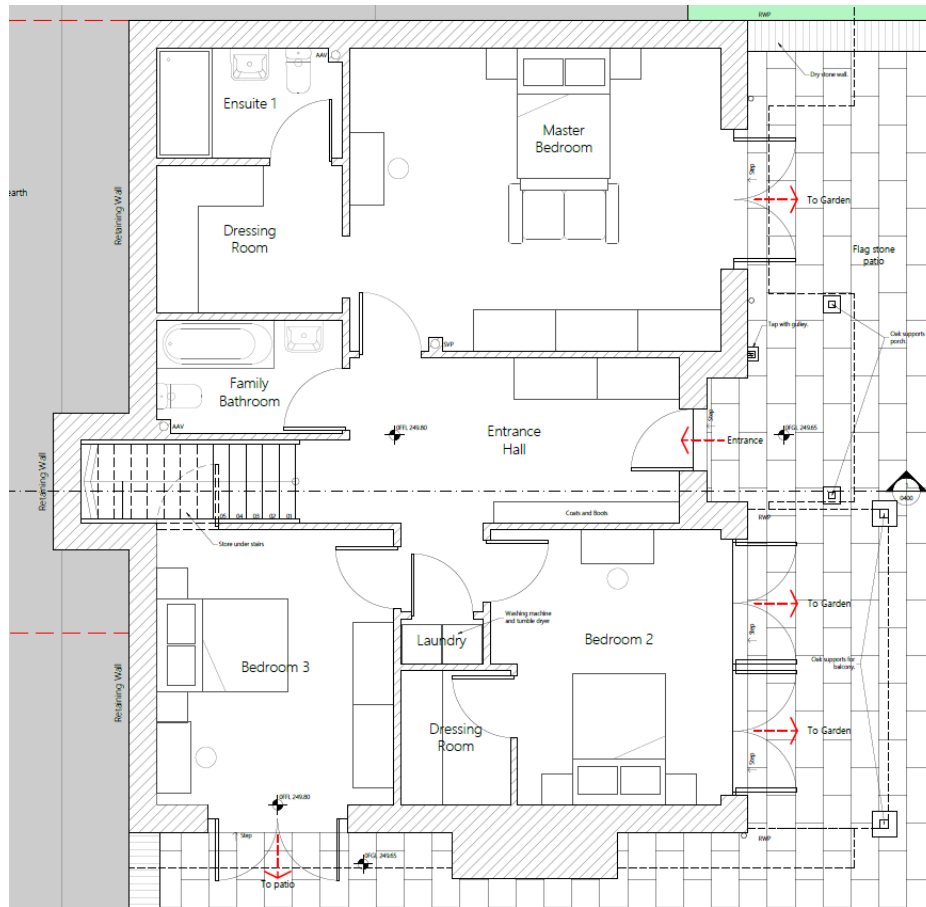


Figure 3: Proposed Lower Ground Floor Floorplan

4.5 As shown in Figure 4 below, the ground floor (annex) will comprise the following elements:

- Open kitchen/lounge area
- 1no. bedroom with an ensuite and dressing area
- Sitting room
- Bathroom
- Cupboard

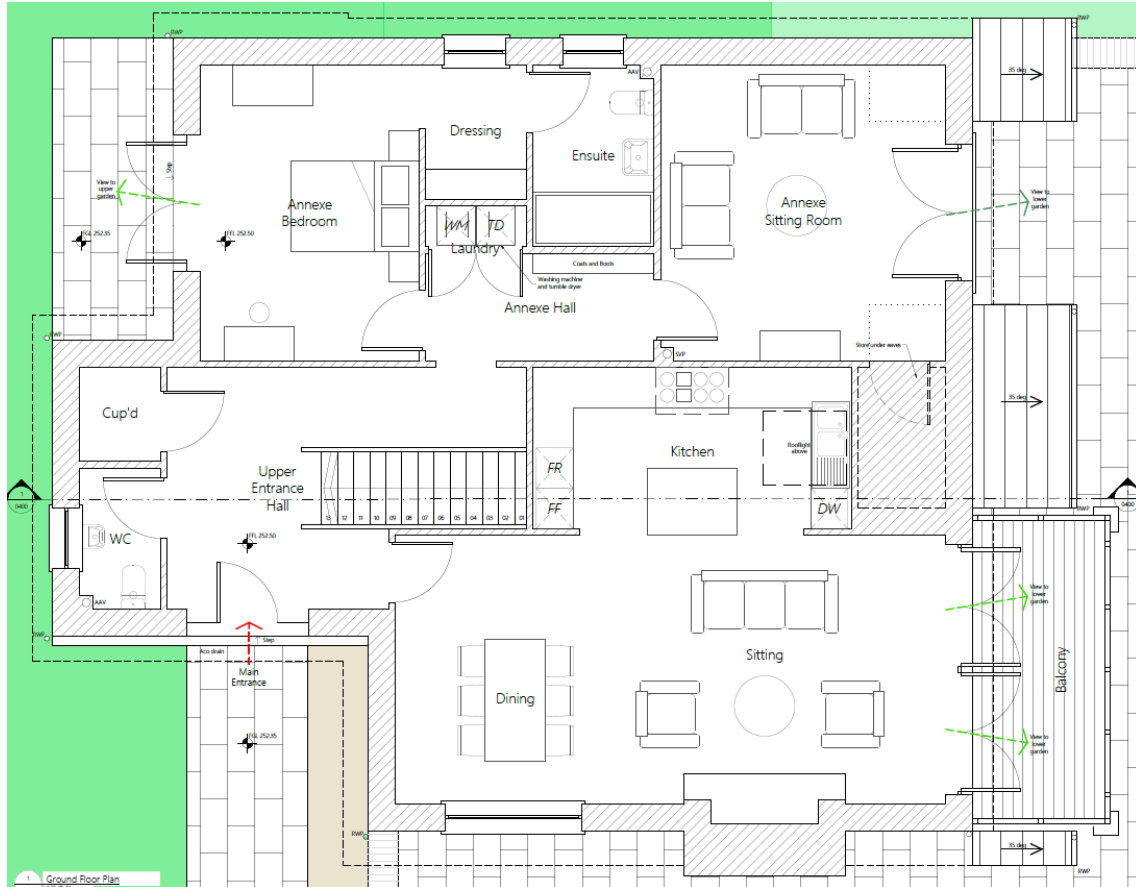


Figure 4: Proposed Ground Floor Floorplan

- 4.6 The dwelling will be based on the concept of an energy-efficient home, hence the orientation of the dwelling towards the south-east. It is proposed to use slate for the roof; local stone for the gable walls; timber for other walls; and hardwood timber for windows, doors and facias. The use of materials such as stone is predicated on the fact that the materials can be sustainably sourced directly from the existing farmstead, and associated land, at The Paddocks.
- 4.7 The site benefits from an existing access road from the B4255 which will be utilised to gain access into the site. An associated area of parking for 6no. cars can be found to the rear of the dwelling.

5. Planning Policy Context

- 5.1 This Section provides a summary of the key elements of national planning guidance and local planning policy relevant to the proposed residential development at the application site.
- 5.2 The Development Plan for the site comprises the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Local Development Plan (adopted January 2020) and Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (published in 2021). Other planning policy and non-statutory documents of relevance to the determination of this planning application include Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12) and Supplementary Planning Guidance.

National Planning Policy

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

- 5.3 Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 was published in February 2021 as the national development framework setting the direction of development in Wales to 2040. It provides a strategy to address key national priorities through the planning system, including developing a vibrant economy, developing strong ecosystems, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience and improving the health and wellbeing of communities.
- 5.4 Future Wales sets out 11 ‘outcomes’ comprising the vision for Wales in 2040. The aim is for a Wales where people live:
- in connected, inclusive and healthy places;
 - in vibrant rural places with access to homes, jobs and services;
 - in distinctive regions that tackle health and socio-economic inequality through sustainable growth;
 - in places with a thriving Welsh Language;
 - in towns and cities which are a focus and springboard for sustainable growth;
 - in places where prosperity, innovation and culture are promoted;
 - in places where travel is sustainable;
 - in places with world-class digital infrastructure;
 - in places that sustainably manage their natural resources and reduce pollution;
 - in places with biodiverse, resilient and connected ecosystems; and
 - in places which are decarbonised and climate resilient.
- 5.5 Policy 4 of Future Wales relating to ‘Supporting Rural Communities’ states that the Welsh Government supports sustainable and vibrant rural communities.

- 5.6 Policy 5 of Future Wales, ‘Supporting the Rural Economy,’ supports the rural economy and requires SDPs/LDPs to plan positively to meet the employment needs of rural areas. It states that:

“Many rural towns and villages are integral to their surrounding areas. Thriving, resilient and sustainable rural settlements are characterised by a rich mix of housing, employment, services, and infrastructure, located in the right places to meet the needs and future aspirations of the population.”

- 5.7 Other Future Wales policies that are relevant to the proposed development include:

- Policy 1 (Where Wales will Grow).
- Policy 9 (Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure).

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (Edition 12, 2024)

- 5.8 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 12 (February 2024) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs), Welsh Government Circulars, and policy clarification letters, which together with PPW provide the national planning policy framework for Wales.

- 5.9 The most relevant sections are summarised below.

- Sections 3.3 – 3.16 set out the principles of good design in new development proposals, which should take into account its relationship to its surrounding context.
- Section 3.55 notes that previously developed land wherever possible should be used in preference to greenfield sites where it is suitable for development.
- Section 4.2.36 states that the purpose of ‘rural enterprise dwellings’ is to enable rural enterprise workers to live at or close to their place of work, including encouraging younger people to manage farm businesses and supporting the diversification of established farms. It confirms that *“rural enterprise dwellings represent one of the few circumstances in which isolated new residential development in the open countryside may be justified.”*
- Section 4.2.37 highlights that all applications for new rural enterprise dwellings should be carefully examined to ensure that there is a genuine need and that the planning guidance in TAN 6 sets out the need for rural enterprise dwelling appraisals.
- Section 6.4.21 – 6.4.23 note that local authorities should seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and build resilient ecological networks to ensure that any adverse environmental effects can first be avoided, mitigated or compensated. Regard should also be given to any potential impacts on protected species which may result in disturbance or harm to the species or its habitat.

Technical Advice Notes (TANs)

5.10 PPW is supported by Technical Advice Notes (TANs) which provide more detailed guidance on a variety of issues. TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities is relevant to the application and is summarised below:

- Paragraph 4.3.1 outlines examples of when national policy considers it appropriate to grant planning permission for a new rural enterprise dwelling. A new dwelling on a new rural enterprise where there is a functional need for a full-time worker and the business case demonstrates that the employment is likely to remain financially sustainable.
- Paragraph 4.6.2 does however state that *“where the case is not completely proven for a dwelling permission should, not be granted for it, but it may be appropriate for the planning authority to test the evidence by granting permission for temporary accommodation for a limited period. Three years will normally be appropriate to ensure that the circumstances are fully assessed”*.
- Paragraph 4.6.1 outlines a series of criteria that must be met if the proposed dwelling is to be considered acceptable. It states that, if it is considered that a new dwelling will be essential to support a new rural enterprise, it should satisfy the following criteria:
 - a) clear evidence of a firm intention and ability to develop the rural enterprise concerned (significant investment in new buildings and equipment is often a good indication of intentions).
 - b) clear evidence that the new enterprise needs to be established at the proposed location and that it cannot be accommodated at another suitable site where a dwelling is likely to be available;
 - c) clear evidence that the proposed enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis;
 - d) there is a clearly established functional need and that need relates to a full-time worker, and does not relate to a part-time requirement;
 - e) the functional need could not be fulfilled by another dwelling or by converting an existing suitable building on the enterprise, or any other existing accommodation in the locality which is suitable and available for occupation by the workers concerned; and
 - f) other normal planning requirements, for example siting and access, are satisfied.
- Paragraph 4.7.1 confirms that a rural enterprise dwelling appraisal must accompany planning applications for new permanent and temporary rural enterprise dwellings. The appraisal should address the following tests:

- a) The Functional Test – provide evidence of whether there is a need for a resident worker for the proper functioning of the enterprise;
- b) The Time Test – provide evidence of the labour requirement for the worker who is working on the justifying enterprise;
- c) The Financial Test – provide evidence of the economic sustainability of the justifying enterprise and identify the size of dwelling that the enterprise can sustain;
- d) The Other Dwellings Test - identify whether there is an existing dwelling or building suitable for conversion on the enterprise or dwelling in the locality that could meet the identified functional need;
- e) Other Planning Requirements Test - demonstrate that the dwelling is suitably located to fulfil its identified need and to minimise impact on the wider environment.

5.11 Other relevant TANs include the following:

- TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning, September 2009.
- TAN 12: Design, March 2016.

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Local Development Plan (adopted January 2020)

5.12 The site is located outside settlement boundary in the countryside, as illustrated on MTCBC's proposals map (Appendix A). The site is also located within a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC); Sandstone with potential for high specification aggregate; and Special Landscape Area.

5.13 The relevant policies contained within Merthyr Tydfil's LDP are summarised below.

- **Policy SW1 - Provision of New Homes** states that 2,250 additional homes are required to sustainably grow the population.
- **Policy SW4 - Settlement Boundaries** confirms that development in the countryside will not be permitted unless the development:
 - (i) is for the purposes of agriculture or forestry;
 - (ii) is associated with rural enterprises or the winning and working of minerals;
 - (iii) is for the re-use, adaptation, or replacement of rural buildings and dwellings;
 - (iv) supports the expansion of an existing business in the countryside;
 - (v) is for tourism, recreation or leisure facilities or complementary development where the need for a countryside location is fully justified;

- (vi) is for the provision of public utilities, infrastructure or waste management facilities that cannot reasonably be located elsewhere;
 - (vii) is required for the reclamation or treatment of unstable or contaminated land;
 - (viii) is for renewable energy in accordance with Policy EcW8;
 - (ix) is for affordable housing in accordance with Policy SW5;
 - (x) or is low-impact One Planet Development.
- **Policy SW11 - Sustainable Design and Placemaking** requires new development to meet a certain set of design principles.
 - **Policy EnW3 - Regionally Important Geological Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Local Nature Reserves and Priority Habitats and Species** states that development proposals likely to have an adverse impact on Geological Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Local Nature Reserves, or Priority Habitats and Species will only be permitted where It can be demonstrated that:
 - (xi) The need for the development clearly outweighs the conservation value of the site;
 - (xii) Adverse impacts on nature conservation features or geological features can be avoided;
 - (xiii) Appropriate and proportionate mitigation and compensation measures can be provided; and
 - (xiv) The development maintains and where possible enhances biodiversity and geodiversity interests.
 - **Policy EnW5 - Landscape Protection** confirms that development proposals will be permitted where it would not cause unacceptable harm to the character and quality of the landscape setting of the County Borough;
 - (xv) Development within Special Landscape Areas are sensitive to their special characteristics;
 - (xvi) Development respects the local distinctiveness and historic character of the landscape;
 - (xvii) Development will safeguard local landscape character and landscape features, including views, which make a significant contribution to the character, history and setting of the locality;
 - (xviii) Development secures the enhancement of the character, appearance and quality of the landscape, through restoration, management or enhancement where possible;

- (xix) There is no satisfactory alternative and the benefits associated with the development can be demonstrated to outweigh the harm; and
- (xx) Where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided appropriate mitigation has been secured.
- **Policy EcW13 - Minerals Safeguarding** states that new development will only be permitted in an area of known mineral resource where it has first been demonstrated that:
 - (xxi) Any reserves of minerals can be economically extracted prior to the commencement of development, and in the case of primary coal resources, there are wholly exceptional circumstances to justify its prior extraction; or
 - (xxii) Prior extraction would have an unacceptable impact on environmental or amenity considerations; or
 - (xxiii) The resource in question is of poor quality / quantity; or
 - (xxiv) The development would have no significant impact on the possible future working of the resource by reason of its nature, location or size

6. Planning Assessment

- 6.1 This section provides an assessment of the proposed development with reference to the planning policy context provided in previous sections, amongst other things. It focuses on the suitability of the site to accommodate the proposed development, the benefits of the development and specific issues associated with the suitability and deliverability of the application proposals.

Principle of Development

- 6.2 The application site is located outside of the settlement limits, within the countryside. PPW states that new housing in the open countryside should be strictly controlled, but at Paragraph 4.2.36, it confirms that:

“Rural enterprise dwellings represent one of the few circumstances in which isolated new residential development in the open countryside may be justified.”

- 6.3 PPW also states that the purpose of rural enterprise dwellings is to enable rural enterprise workers to live at or close to their place of work, including encouraging younger people to manage farm businesses and supporting the diversification of established farms. As established, the site relates to an agricultural holding extending over 580 acres of pastureland (all owned by the applicant). The farm is progressively expanding and currently comprises the following livestock:

- 167no. cattle and calves;
- 22no. ewes; and
- 50no. horses.

- 6.4 There is an extant functional need for a full-time worker to be on-hand at all hours of the day, to ensure the smooth-running of the enterprise, and for reasons of good husbandry and security. Therefore, the proposed development constitutes a rural enterprise dwelling, which falls under the few circumstances where new residential development in the open countryside is justified (Paragraph 4.2.36 of PPW).

- 6.5 Policy SW4 of the LDP sets out criteria for exceptional circumstances where development may be permitted. As mentioned, the proposed development will provide essential accommodation for the applicant and her family. It will enable them, as rural enterprise workers, to live on the farm and allows them to be on-hand night and day to deal with any emergency that would threaten the continued viability and existence of the enterprise without immediate attention. As such, the site meets the following two criteria of LDP Policy SW4:

- *It is for the purpose of agriculture or forestry; and*
- *It is associated with a rural enterprise or the winning and working of minerals.*

- 6.6 In accordance with Policy SW4 of the LDP, development for the purpose of agriculture, and development associated with a rural enterprise are deemed acceptable in the open countryside.
- 6.7 In line with the requirements of LDP Policy SW11 'Sustainable Design and Placemaking' the proposed dwelling will be appropriate to its local context in terms of scale, height, massing, elevational treatment, materials and detailing. The informal proposal submitted represents the client's aspirations for the site, particularly in terms of seeking some form of energy eco-efficiency. Additionally, and as outlined above, the proposed materials can be sought from the existing farmstead.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the area

Location

- 6.8 The site is surrounded by vacant greenfield land and other agricultural properties, as expected to see in this rural location. The area is home to several farms that contribute to the unique charm and appeal of the locality. Indeed, the farmsteads in this location enhance the rural character of the region and are an integral part of this area's identity.
- 6.9 The site can only be accessed via an unnamed road, from the B4255. It is located over 700m west of the B-road and is screened by existing topography and woodland. As such, the site is not visible from the main road (B4255). Furthermore, the proposed dwelling will be unintrusive in the landscape as it is not located in an obvious vista, as evidenced by the accompanying Photo Survey (A-M).
- 6.10 The context of this location is appropriately reflected in the proposal, as expanded upon below, and has informed the approach to the design solution, with an emphasis on local material and effective integration into the landscape.

Size, Scale and Design

- 6.11 Careful considerations have been given to the size, scale and design of the proposed dwelling to ensure it does not adversely impact the character and appearance of the area. The surrounding dwellings in the area are predominantly two storeys in height; as such, the proposal is considered to be in keeping with the local surrounding context. Additionally, the design of the dwelling harmonises with the natural surroundings, utilising earthy tones and locally sourced materials to blend effortlessly into the rural setting. This is enhanced by the design solution that seeks to utilise the natural gradient of the site to accommodate the dwelling in a flexible manner, with the design respecting the inherent site characteristics. The proposed materials include:

- Stone – locally sourced stone, primarily collected from the farm and environs;
- Slate – Welsh slate roof;
- Hardwood windows and doors;
- Oak Lintels – Oak sourced from the farm;
- Timber fascias, verge, bargeboard;

- Aluminium rainwater goods – Alumasc heritage;
 - Chimney – Terracotta pots, some stone detailing around chimney top;
 - Barbeque integrated into the chimney stack.
- 6.12 As outlined above, the proposal is in keeping with the surrounding rural context of the area. It does not cause an unacceptable harm to the character and quality of the landscape, rather, it adds to the character of the locality. The site safeguards local landscape character and landscape features, including views which make significant contribution to the character, history and settling of the locality, in accordance with Policy EnW5 of the LDP.
- 6.13 Furthermore, in line with Policy SW11 of the LDP, given the location of the application site, the proposal will not result in an unacceptable impact on local amenity, loss of light or privacy, or visual impact.

Ecology and Nature Conservation

- 6.14 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been prepared by Ecological Services in support of the application. The PEA found the site to contain semi-improved grassland, short perennial vegetation and scattered trees. Plant species indicative of marshy grassland were noted within the short perennial vegetation. The site was assessed as having potential to be used by nesting birds, common reptiles and amphibians. The report recommends a number of measures to be put in place during construction and the operational phase of any future development within the site.
- 6.15 An appropriate Habitat Mitigation Scheme has been prepared in support of this application. While the site sits within the Cwm Fedw Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), during the site visit made by Ecological Services, no habitats were found that would meet the criteria for SINC designation. The development site has been subject to disturbance across the years and a lack of suitable management to encourage biodiversity value in line with the SINC designation. The recommended on-site and off-site compensation measures are outlined below.

On Site Mitigation Measures

- 6.16 Adequate on-site mitigation and compensation cannot be achieved in this instance. The development will result in the direct loss of 1,304m² of habitat. The remaining 3,912m² will be subject to soft landscaping and use as garden space. On site landscaping will be designed to benefit wildlife where possible but the exclusive use of non-native species within a garden setting is not realistic. Biodiversity enhancement measures will be provided within the site boundary in the form of integrated bat and bird boxes, native planting and hedgehog passes in any fencing. These features will be added to address the Environment Act (Wales) 2016 biodiversity duty.

Offsite Mitigation Measures

- 6.17 As it is not possible to compensate for SINC habitat loss within the site boundary, off site compensation is required. The development site is part of a family owned and run farm. A suitable off site compensation site has been suggested which can be enhanced to meet the criteria of the Cwm Fedw SINC. The proposed development site will be owned by the

applicant. The proposed off site compensation site will be owned by the applicant. If either the proposed development site and or compensation site is ever sold details of all management obligations within this management plan will be passed on to future owners as part of any legal documentation associated with the purchase.

Compensation Site Management

6.18 The following measures will be adhered to:

Mowing Strategy

- All grassland habitat within both sections of the compensation site will be managed via mowing. For the first few years of management 2 cuts per year will be undertaken to help reduce soil fertility and prevent bracken encroachment. Amendments to the cutting frequency can be undertaken from year 3 onwards.
- The grassland will be cut twice each year for at least 3 years. The grassland will be cut in April and September each year. All cuttings will be collected and removed to an agreed compost location in the eastern most field.
- In year 3 the site will be subject to a summer (May - August inclusive) monitoring visit by a suitably experienced ecologist. The ecologist will walk the entire compensation site recording all plant species present. A comparison to the baseline data held within this report will be made and hopefully an increase in species diversity will be recorded. The monitoring visit will make special note of indicator species for neutral grassland present.
- After the monitoring visit changes to the management regimes within the compensation site can be proposed and agreed with the Local Planning Authority Ecologist. Any amendments to the agreed Habitat Management Plan must be agreed in writing with the LPA ecologist prior to being implemented.

Tree Planting

- To help improve diversity within the compensation site 4 native trees will be planted within the compensation site. All planted trees must be root ball and at least 1.5m in height as opposed to sapling whips. By using root ball trees the specimens are more likely to establish and to establish more quickly into mature trees.
- It is not proposed to graze the compensation site therefore tree protection is not suggested at this point. If management is to switch to grazing in the future tree protection will be required to prevent cattle damage to trees while they are establishing.
- It is recommended that native sessile oak trees are planted. Any failed planting must be replaced in the next growing season.

Compost Area

- All cuttings collected, as part of the mowing activities within the site boundary, will be deposited in the north-eastern corner of the eastern most field within the compensation site.

- This area has been chosen as its the lowest point within the compensation site. Therefore, any nutrients that leach out of the material as it decomposes will not run into the compensation site.
- A compost pile will also provide an additional habitat for small animals such as slow worm/ grass snake, fungi and small invertebrates. The decomposing material provides heat and shelter for a range of animals and species.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 This Planning Statement is submitted on behalf of the applicant to support a full planning application for the construction of a rural enterprise dwelling on land at The Paddocks, Bedlinog.
- 7.2 This Statement demonstrates that the proposed development constitutes a rural enterprise dwelling in accordance with PPW, TAN6 and Policy SW4 of the LDP. Therefore, the principle of development is considered acceptable at this location.
- 7.3 The accompanying plans demonstrate that the site is capable of being developed in response to planning policy with no detriment to the character of the site or the surrounding area, and that the amount of development proposed is appropriate.
- 7.4 The application is supported by a comprehensive set of supporting plans and documents, which demonstrate that there are no significant constraints that would prevent the development of the site for the proposed use.
- 7.5 This Planning Statement clearly demonstrates that the scheme, as presented, complies with the relevant national and local planning policies to which material weight can be attributed.
- 7.6 A rural enterprise dwelling on land at The Paddocks, Bedlinog is therefore considered acceptable, and accordingly, planning permission should be granted.

Appendix 1: Extract of MTCBC LDP Proposals Map



Extract from MTCBC Local Development Plan (LDP)

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