

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No:	P/22/0292
Site Address:	The Croft Queens Road Twynyrodyn Merthyr Tydfil CF47 0HE
Development:	Change of use from 2 bedroom dwelling with annexe to short term holiday rental
Case Officer:	Marlene Ferreira
Site Visit:	16th November 2022
Application Expiry Date:	5th January 2023
Consultation reply date expired:	7th December 2022

APPLICATION SITE

The application site relates to a detached dwelling with an attached single storey annexe, known as The Croft, located immediately off Queens Road in the area of Thomastown. The annexe was formerly used as a coffee shop/snack bar (A3 use) but has recently had planning permission to be used as a residential annex. The property is served by two on-site parking spaces. Additional unrestricted on-street parking is available along the front highway.

The property is bound by Queens Road to the east, a narrow unadopted lane and a public park to the north and neighbouring properties, Park Lodge and Dan-y-Bryn to the south and west.

The application site lies within the settlement boundary and within the Thomastown Conservation Area, as designated within the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks planning permission to change the use of the dwelling with annex to short term holiday lets (C6 use class). The submitted floor plans indicate that the dwelling and attached annex would remain unaltered internally, as such, the dwelling would continue to provide two living areas and a kitchen at ground floor and two bedrooms and a bathroom at first floor, whilst the annex would provide studio type accommodation with a shared kitchen/living/bedroom area and a separate bathroom. Externally, there are no alterations proposed.

Supporting information confirms that the stays at the holiday lets are likely to be short term stays from 1-4 days. The holiday let would be marketed on Airbnb and other online holiday agents.

PLANNING HISTORY

P/22/0174 – Change of use from A3 to residential annex – Approved: 3rd August 2022

P/05/0625 – Retention of extension to existing shop and food preparation and servery area associated with proposed A3 (Coffee shop snack bar facility) – Approved: 25th January 2006

P/00/0277 – Proposed extension to existing shop and food preparation and servery area associated with proposed A3 (Coffee shop snack bar facility) – Approved.

CONSULTATION

Head of Engineering and Highways	No objection.
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Planning Policy Officer	No objection.
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Town Planning Division's Ecology Officer	No objection.
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Environmental Health Manager	No objection.
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Welsh Water	No objection.
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PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order (Wales) 2012, letters were sent to the adjoining properties and site notices were displayed within the vicinity of the site. No letters of objection were received following this publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

National Development Framework

- Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (February 2021)

Policy 1 – Where Wales Will Grow

Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking

Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities

Policy 9 – Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure

Policy 33 – National Growth Area – Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys

National Planning Policies

- Planning Policy Wales - Edition 11 (February 2021)

Paragraph 3.14 refers to context appraisal and states that these '*...should be used to determine the appropriateness of a development proposal in responding to its*

surroundings. This process will ensure that a development is well integrated into the fabric of the existing built environment...

Paragraph 6.1.14 refers to conservation areas '*...There should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of conservation areas or their settings. Positive management of conservation areas is necessary if their character or appearance are to be preserved or enhanced and their heritage value is to be fully realised. Planning authorities should establish their own criteria against which existing and/or new conservation areas and their boundaries should be reviewed...*

Paragraph 6.4.3 discusses biodiversity and states that '*...the planning system has a key role to play in helping to reverse the decline in biodiversity and increasing the resilience of ecosystems, at various scales, by ensuring appropriate mechanisms are in place to both protect against loss and to secure enhancement...*

- TAN's (Technical Advice Notes)

TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning (2009) – This TAN provides guidance on how the land use planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological conservation.

TAN 12: Design (2016) – This TAN advises that the Welsh Government is strongly committed to achieving the delivery of good design in the built and natural environment, which is fit for purpose and deliver environmental sustainability, economic development and social inclusion at every scale throughout Wales.

TAN 13: Tourism (1997) – This TAN discusses tourism and states that '*...tourism makes a major contribution to the Welsh economy, provides employment in a wide variety of occupations and can bring benefits to local economies and communities in urban and rural areas...*

TAN 24: The Historic Environment (2017) – This TAN refers to conservation principles and '*... recognises that the whole of the historic environment is a finite and shared resource. Every place has its own history, which has shaped its character and leaves tangible traces in its present form and fabric. This historic character makes each place unique and gives it a distinctive identity. Historic character should be taken into account in the management of change in order to sustain local distinctiveness and a sense of place. The use of an objective, structured approach to identify the elements of historic character and creating an evidence base is vital...*

Local Planning Policies

- The Merthyr Tydfil Replacement LDP 2016-2031

Policy SW4: Settlement Boundaries

Policy SW11: Sustainable Design and Placemaking

Policy CW1: Historic Environment

Policy EnW1: Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience

Policy EnW4: Environmental Protection

Policy EcW7: Tourism, Leisure and Recreation Development

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main issues to consider in the assessment of this application relate to whether the principle of the development is acceptable in this location and whether it would be an appropriate development in respect of its impact upon the character and appearance of the area, the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, ecology, parking provision and highway safety.

Principle of Development

The development seeks to change the use of the residential dwelling with annex to holiday lets. Given that the property lies within the settlement boundary it would be acceptable in principle provided it complies with other relevant policies. The proposed development would therefore comply with LDP Policy SW4.

LDP Policy EcW7 relates to tourism, leisure and recreation development and states that *'...tourism...development...within settlement boundaries is generally supported, particularly where they aid the revitalisation and regeneration of the Town and local Centres.'* The proposed holiday lets seek to occupy an existing residential dwelling and an annex, which has been vacant for a significant number of years following the closure of the coffee shop. The proposed development would therefore comply with LDP Policy EcW7.

Character and Appearance

The change of use would not include any alterations to the interior or exterior of the property. As such, the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the appearance of the property or the character of the wider area and would therefore not have a detrimental impact on the character of the street scene or the conservation area. The proposal would therefore comply with LDP Policies SW11 and CW1.

Residential Amenity

In terms of the impact the proposal would have on residential amenity, the main considerations would relate to the potential noise and disturbance the use would have on nearby occupiers. In terms of overlooking and loss of privacy, the dwelling and annex would not undergo any external alterations and in addition, lies in a relatively isolated position without any immediately adjoining properties. As such, the proposed holiday lets would not be deemed to give rise to any significant overlooking or loss of privacy to surrounding properties.

It is accepted that the use of the dwelling and annex as holiday accommodation may result in some additional noise and disturbance, which is generally caused by the comings and goings of guests and/or the activities they engage in during their stay (since it is recognised that people behave differently when on holiday). However, the use of the property and annex would be fundamentally residential in a nature and given the modest size of the holiday accommodation, it would only be able to accommodate a limited number of guests. Therefore, the noise and disturbance that would likely result from such a use would not be deemed significantly greater than that of a single dwelling with annex. Indeed, any noise and disturbance would also be significantly less than that associated

with an A3 coffee shop, for which the annex was used for a number of years. It should also be noted the responsibility for dealing with issues such as anti-social behaviour is shared between different agencies, which include the Police, local authorities (e.g. Public Health and Protection) and landlords. The proposed use would therefore be acceptable in this instance and would accord with LDP Policy SW11.

Ecology

The proposed development, as noted previously, does not include any internal or external alterations. As such, the Council's Ecologist has not requested any survey work. The proposed development would therefore accord with LDP Policy EnW1. However, enhancement works requiring the installation of a bat box, have been requested in line with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. Since the proposed development is solely a change of use without any internal or external alterations, it would not be deemed necessary or reasonable to request such enhancement works under this application.

Parking and highway safety

In respect of parking and highway safety, it is noted that the property is served by two on-site parking spaces, however, the application forms indicate that on-site parking would not be provided in association with the proposed use. Indeed, a site visit concluded that the on-site parking areas did not appear to be well used. As such, the proposed holiday lets are not proposed to be served by any on-site parking. However, it should be noted that the proposed holiday lets would not increase the number of rooms and as such should not increase the demand for on-site parking. The requirement for on-site car parking would therefore be similar to that required for the existing dwelling and annex. Furthermore, the front highway, Queens Road, is a wide flat road which provides unrestricted on-street parking provision which would serve any guests who visit the property and/or the annex individually or simultaneously. The site also lies in a sustainable location, being located within close proximity to the town centre. As such, the Head of Engineering and Highways has not objected to the application. The proposal would therefore accord with Policy SW11 of the LDP.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development, for the reasons discussed above, is considered acceptable and should therefore be approved.

Finally, I have considered the duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WBFG Act"). In reaching this decision, I have taken into account the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act and I consider that this decision is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives set out as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

Accordingly, the following recommendation is made:

RECOMMENDATION: BE APPROVED subject to the following **CONDITIONS:**

1. The development shall begin not later than five years from the date of this decision.

Reason - To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- The Croft and Annex, Queens Road, Floor Plan Existing and Proposed, received: 10th November 2022;
- Existing and Proposed Floor Plan of the Upper Floor of The Croft, Queens Road.

Reason -To ensure compliance with the approved plans and clearly define the scope of the permission.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Director of Neighbourhood Services

DATE:

19/12/22