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**CONSTRUCTION OF GRAVEL ACCESS TRACK WITH GRASS
CENTRAL RESERVATION
AT
LAND TO THE REAR OF YNYSYGORED COTTAGES,
BRYNHEULOG ROAD, TROEDYRHIW, MERTHYR TYDFIL
CF48 4QD**

**PLANNING STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF APPLICATION
MARCH 2020**

1 Introduction

1.1 This planning statement has been prepared in support of a planning application relating to the creation of a gravel access track on land to the rear of Ynysygored Cottages, Brynheulog Road, Troedyrhiw CF48 4QD. The track is largely in place but it is intended to largely soften it having a grass track in the middle and partly laying it with gravel. The following plans and documents have been submitted in support of the application:

- Plan 9041/01/A – Red and Blue Lined Location Plan
- Plan 9041/02/A – Site Layout Plan – existing and proposed
- This Planning Statement.
- Email dated 22/11/2020 to Ms S Thomas of MTCBC
- Letter dated 30/09/2019 from Rural Payments Wales

1.2 The applicant owns the land where a stable building is in the process of being constructed and finished. The stable is one of two stables that has full planning permission under a decision notice dated 31/08/2017 (ref: P17/0152). This granted consent for *“Change of use of land for the keeping of horses including erection of stables and barns including concrete hardstanding with associated post and rail fencing.”*

1.3 This application arose out of an enforcement investigation (ref: PE/19/0034) that considered the following alleged breaches had occurred on land owned by the applicant:

- Stationing of a caravan and any associated paraphernalia
- Creation of a hardstanding and access road leading to the caravan
- Erection of a storage shed
- Erection of stone pillars

1.4 However in an email response to the case enforcement officer (dated 22/11/2019), it was contended that the caravan, is in use as a respite/refreshment facility, and the storage shed were still required because the works had not been completed. They would be completed

in July 2020 after which the shed, caravan and any associated paraphernalia would be removed (copy of email submitted).

- 1.5 As regards the stone pillars, it was contended that these were permitted development as they have been erected to support gates and fences and in any event are below 2m. As regards the access track and hardstanding, the hardstanding is to be removed and seeded back to grass.
- 1.6 Therefore it is only the access track for which planning permission is being sought, which is the subject of this application.
- 1.7 It should be noted that whilst the proposed site layout plan refers to the erection of new gates and fences and provides details of the same, planning permission is not being sought for these as these are considered to be permitted development. They are only included on the plan for illustrative purposes.
- 1.8 Land use planning policies emphasise the desirability of achieving sustainable development. The considered view is that the proposal amounts to necessary, appropriate and acceptable development in this countryside location that accords with relevant national and local planning policies. It should therefore be granted planning permission.

2 Site Location and Surroundings

- 2.1 The red line application site currently comprises an area of paddocks and stables that are under construction, located some 50m behind an existing pair of dwellings, known as the Ynysygored Cottages, to the west of Brynheulog Road. The site is part of other land (as denoted in blue) owned by the applicant comprising grazing land and woodland that is bounded by the River Taff to the east and the Brynheulog Rd to the west.

- 2.2 The application site is located outside the settlement boundary and is not located in a designated Conservation Area or near any listed buildings. Previously it was located within a designated Green Wedge but this designation have been removed by the most recently adopted development plan.

3 Description of Proposed Development

- 3.1 There is an existing track that has been created that runs along the west side of the stable building and to the north of it. It offers access to paddock to the rear of the stables and to the other paddocks to the north and west as well to the wider land beyond.
- 3.2 It is proposed to partly gravel it with a grass central reservation that over time, would blend fully into the landscape.

4 Planning Issues

- 4.1 Planning law requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The relevant development plan is the recently adopted Methyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031 (adopted 29 January 2020). The policies of that plan will be considered against any relevant planning issues that arise in the consideration of the application. From that context, it is considered that only one planning issue arises and that is:

- Whether the proposal is acceptable as regards impact on the character and appearance of the countryside;

- 4.2 Policy SW4 – Settlement Boundaries – states that outside defined settlement boundaries, proposals will be regarded as “countryside development” and will only be permitted for amongst other things, purposes of agriculture or forestry; or is for tourism, recreation or leisure facilities or complementary development where the need for a countryside location is fully justified.
- 4.3 Policy SW11 – Sustainable Design and Placemaking – requires new development contribute to the creation of attractive and sustainable places by amongst other things, being appropriate to its local context; integrate effectively; not result in an unacceptable impact on local amenity, loss of light or visual impact and incorporate a good standard of landscape design.
- 4.4 The site is also located in a mineral resource area. Policy EcW10 – Sustainable Supplying Minerals – states that the mineral resources will be safeguarded from permanent development that would sterilise or hinder their extraction. Policy EcW13 – Minerals Safeguarding – states that new development should have no significant impact on the future working of the mineral resource.
- 4.5 It is considered that firstly the proposal is justified in principle as it would serve an ongoing agricultural and/or recreational activity. The applicant owns woodland and grazing land as well as the stables which has planning permission. Attached is a copy of a confirmation letter dated 30/09/2019 from Rural Payments Wales that confirms the land is a permanent agricultural holding. Therefore the creation of the access would meet policy SW4 as regards being for the purposes of agriculture and/or a recreational use, the stables, that is appropriate for the countryside.

- 4.6 It is proposed to gravel the access but also include a grass central reservation. It is considered that this would mitigate its impact and ensure the access track would blend into the landscape. Therefore it is contended that in this respect, the proposal would satisfy policy SW11.
- 4.7 As regards safeguarding mineral resources, it is not considered that the minor nature of the development would prevent any future exploitation of mineral resources in the area. Consequently the proposal would accord with policies EcW10 and EcW13.
- 4.8 Therefore it is considered that the proposal is justifiable in principle and would not have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the countryside.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 The proposal is for the creation of an access track for agricultural and recreational purposes to afford access to paddocks and wider land beyond. This satisfies relevant policy as regards appropriate development in the countryside.
- 5.2 The proposal would also satisfy relevant policy in respect of the impact on character and appearance of the countryside and safeguarding mineral resources. The fences and gates shown on the plans are not applied for as it is considered that they can be erected as permitted development under the relevant provisions. In the light of the above, the LPA is respectfully requested to grant planning permission for the proposed development.