

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION

**GOITRE COED FACH, QUAKERS YARD, TREHARRIS,
CF46 5BB**

**PROPOSED CONVERSION OF FARM BUILDING TO
PROVIDE A DWELLING**

PLANNING STATEMENT

SEPTEMBER 2021



Geraint John Planning

CONTENTS

Chapter 1	Introduction
Chapter 2	Site and Surroundings
Chapter 3	Development Proposals
Chapter 4	Planning Policy Context
Chapter 5	Material Considerations
Chapter 6	Summary and Conclusions

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Background

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a Full Planning Application, submitted on behalf of Mr Roome in relation to the following development at Goitre Coed Fach, Quakers Yard, Treharris.

'Proposed conversion of agricultural building to a dwelling'

Information Submitted in Support of the Application

- 1.2 The following information has been prepared in support of the planning application following comprehensive dialogue with the Local Planning Authority regarding the level and nature of assessment work required to accompany the application:

- Planning Application Form;
- Plans and Drawings:
 - OAD5206_1001_Location Plan;
 - OAD5206_1101_Proposed Site Plan;
 - OAD5206_1201_Existing Barn Plan;
 - OAD5206_1202_Proposed Plans;
 - OAD5206_1301_Existing Elevations;
 - OAD5206_1302_Proposed Elevations;
 - OAD5206_Design Statement.

Purpose and Structure of this Statement

- 1.3 This Statement outlines the context within which the application is made and provides a detailed examination of the main planning considerations raised by the proposals. The Statement also sets out reasoned justification in support of the proposed development. The statement is structured as follows:
- **Section 2** provides a description of the characteristics of the site and surrounding area, and details regarding the planning history associated with the site;
 - **Section 3** provides details of the development proposals;
 - **Section 4** outlines the relevant planning policy framework in relation to the site and the development;
 - **Section 5** analyses the key material considerations arising from the proposed development (in light of the planning policy context and discussions with the Local Authority);
 - **Section 6** sets out our conclusions.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The site forms a small farm named Goitre Coed Fach, located within Quakers Yard, to the north of Goitre Coed Road, from which the site is accessed.
- 2.2 An existing dwelling is currently located on the site – this being the northernmost building in the site – as well as a number of barns / outbuildings and an area for the parking of vehicles. Aside from this, the remainder of the site is made up of fields and trees.



Site Location



Site Location Plan

- 2.3 The site is bounded to the south by the rear boundaries of the dwellings on Goitre Coed Road, with an access track in place between two of these properties. The remainder of the site is bounded by mature trees, which, alongside the site's topography, shield the site and the existing buildings from views from the surrounding area.



Site Context

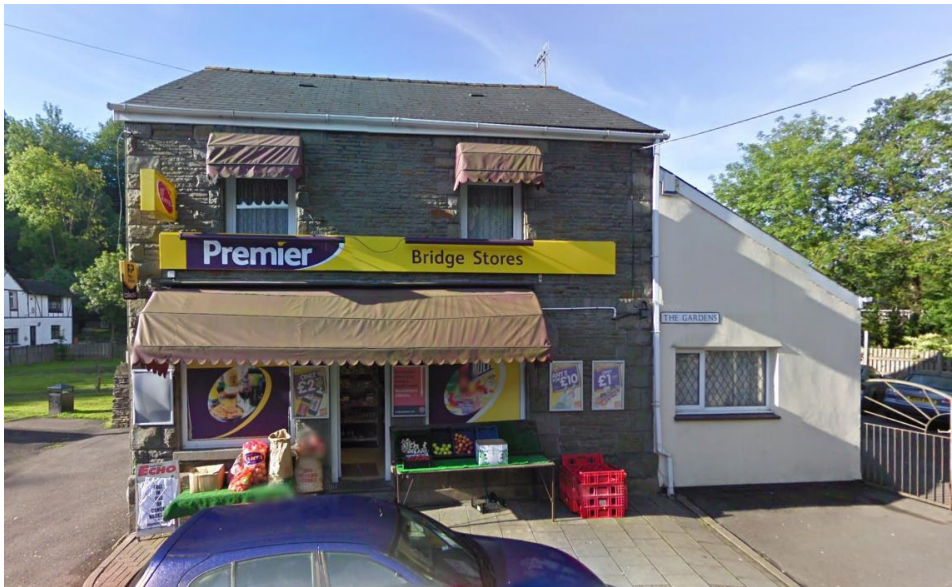
Site Surroundings and Sustainability

- 2.4 The site is located within the established settlement of Treharris, within proximity to the A470. As such, there are accessible links to Cardiff and Pontypridd to the South-East, and Merthyr Tydfil to the North.
- 2.5 In terms of public transport provision, the site is situated within 550 metres to bus stops located on the A4054 (at the junction of Cardiff Road and Caerphilly Road). These bus stops provide to the main settlements in the local area, including Merthyr Tydfil, Pontypridd and Cardiff, as well as a number of other local destinations.
- 2.6 As well as these bus stops, Quakers Yard railway station is situated approximately 1.2 miles from the site, with Abercynon station approximately 1.4 miles away. Abercynon railway station includes park and ride facilities, providing regular services to Merthyr Tydfil, Cardiff and Aberdare, among others.
- 2.7 The local area also benefits from good cycling and walking routes, with Sustrans Routes 47 and 8 accessible from approximately 500m from the site.



Bus Stop (on A40554)

- 2.8 The site is also within proximity to a range of services and facilities in the local area. A small retail centre situated 600m away at Caerphilly Road includes a 'Bridge Stores' Convenience store, 2 Public Houses ('The Glantaff Inn' and 'Quakers Yard Inn') and a number of other commercial units, such as a salon and Chinese takeaway.



'Bridge Stores' Convenience Store



'Quakers Yard Inn'



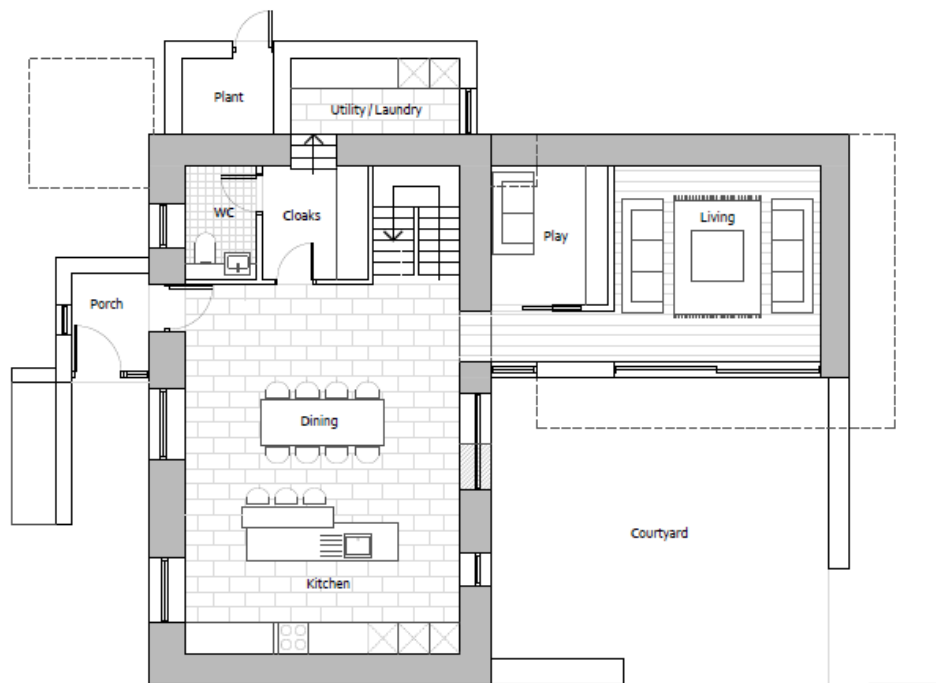
Salon

Planning History

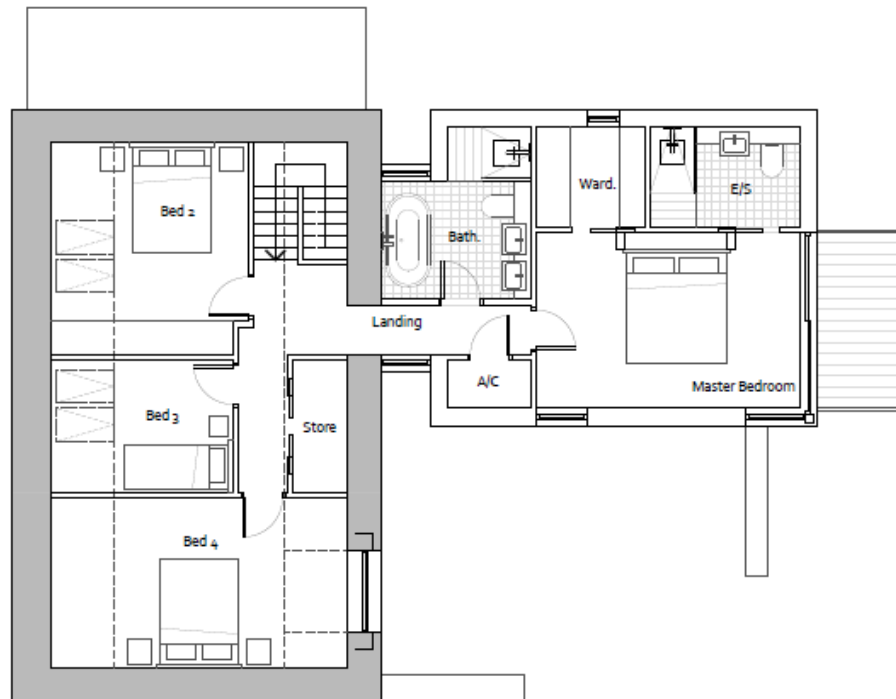
- 2.9 An online planning history search of the site and the surrounding area has been undertaken using Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's website. This search found that the site has been the subject of one previous planning application.
- 2.10 An application for the conversion of the barn into a dwelling was approved by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council on 3rd December 1991
- 2.11 While work to implement the Permission was begun during within 3 years of its approval, the conversion of the barn was not finalised, and the building remains in use for storage. As the Permission was implemented, it does mean that some elements of the barn have been domesticated, as evident from the photographs included as part of this submission.

PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS WITH MERTHYR TYDFIL COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

- 2.12 A formal pre-application enquiry was submitted to MTCBC with a formal written response received on 30th March 2021 and is provided in Appendix B.
- 2.13 In summary, a pre-application was lodged to discuss the merit of the conversion of the building to a 4-bedroom dwelling. The proposed dwelling will include four bedrooms on the first floor, as well as a kitchen, dining and living area at ground floor level. A private courtyard area to the rear of the property is proposed, which also benefits from a vast area of open space surrounding the site.
- 2.14 With the second floor of the building enclosed within the roof space, natural light will be provided through roof lights at the front of the property, with a dormer window proposed to the rear.



Proposed Ground Floor Plan



Proposed First Floor Plans

- 2.15 As is evident from the plan extracts above, the conversion of the building will be sympathetic to its existing rural character, as well as the character of the site. A steep roof pitch is proposed to maximise space inside the building, while reflecting the pitch of the roof of the existing dwelling on the site – this steep pitch is typical of the roof type of traditional rural barns and buildings.
- 2.16 An existing lean-to is present to the rear of the property which is shown in the photograph above. This element of the building is sunken, with the intention to provide a first-floor extension above the lean-to, as per the image below.



Proposed Elevations of the Front of the Building



Proposed First-Floor Extension to the Rear of the Building

- 2.17 In response to the proposal, and in summary, the following comments were received from MTCBC.
- 2.18 To summarise, the response confirms that the principle of converting the existing barn into a new residential unit would be acceptable, although the case officer seems to be taking the line that any conversion would need to be carried out without substantial alteration to the existing building.
- 2.19 The response suggests that the alterations proposed would significantly alter the barn and detract from its existing character / appearance, advising that a more modest conversion would be required in order to be considered acceptable.
- 2.20 The response lists the following amendments which are proposed, which we can assume are the works which, in combination with each other, are causing concern:
- Alterations to the scale and form of the building;
 - Considerable increase to the size of the building;
 - Introduction of a number of new window openings and doorways; and
 - Introduction of varying roof styles, including altering the pitch of the existing roof.
- 2.21 A meeting was held with officer David Cross on Microsoft Teams in April 2021 to discuss the response and to understand the changes in design form. Discussions were had in relation to the main points of the re-roofing and the extension. The proposed changes to the pre-app discussions are set out in greater details in the next sections. However, the scheme has been amended in part with further justification for the roof pitch as proposed.

3.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The proposed development comprises the change of use of the existing barn to a residential use. The proposed development will retain and convert the existing building, with a 1st storey rear extension forming part of the proposals. The barn and the wider site are in the ownership of the applicant and his family, with the intention for the extended family to live together on site across the two dwellings (existing farmhouse and the proposed property).
- 3.2 The existing building was historically used as a barn in association with Goitre Coed Fach Farm. The building consists of a small stone-built barn set in an L-shape, with a lower level 'lean-to' section extending to the east from the main body of the building.



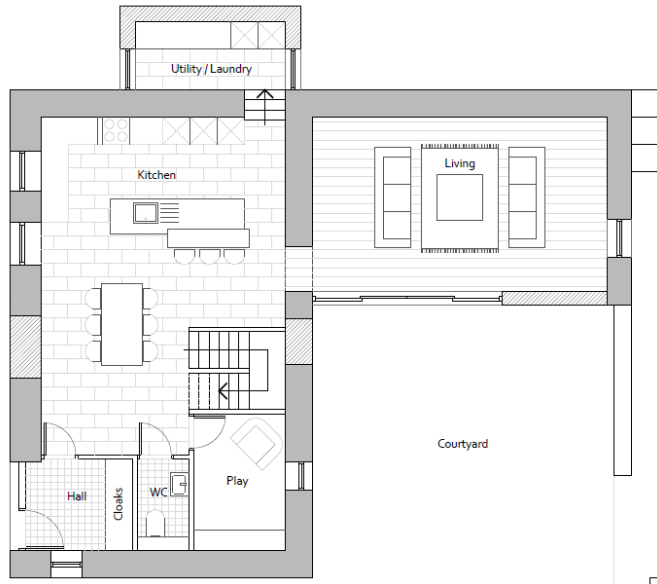
Photograph of Existing Building

- 3.3 As well as the annexed element of the building, a small courtyard exists to the rear. While much of the building retains its original features, the original roof has been replaced with a pitched corrugated roof. The building is structurally sound, largely constructed from stone, with elements of brickwork also present. The building has a timber frame and the roof consists of metal sheeting.

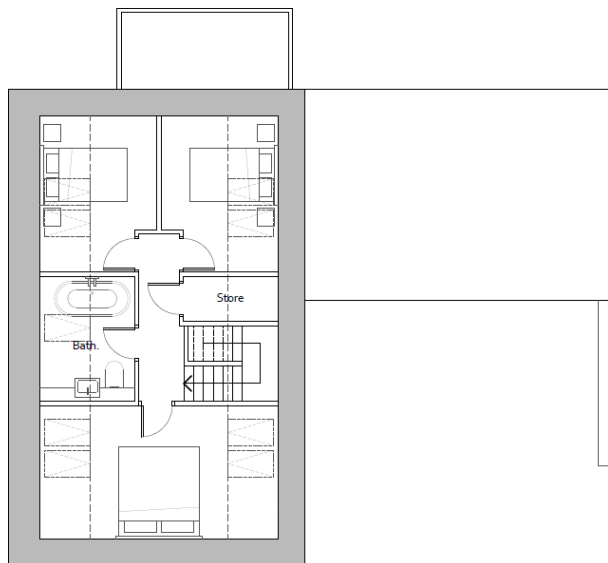


Photograph of Building from the Rear

- 3.4 The proposed dwelling will include three bedrooms on the first floor, as well as a kitchen, dining and living area at ground floor level. A private courtyard area to the rear of the property is proposed, which also benefits from a vast area of open space surrounding the site.
- 3.5 With the second floor of the building enclosed within the roof space, natural light will be provided through roof lights at the front of the property.



Proposed Ground Floor Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan 1:100

Proposed First Floor Plans

- 3.6 An existing lean-to is present to the rear of the property which is shown in the photograph above. This element of the building is sunken, with the intention to 'upgrade' the existing lean-to, to amore modern and contemporary approach. This also sees the removal of the previously proposed first floor accommodation here as discussed at the pre-app stage.



Proposed Elevations of the Front of the Building



Proposed First-Floor Extension to the Rear of the Building

- 3.7 As has been indicated above, an existing track from Goitre-Coed Road provides access to the site. This is currently used by the site owner to access the existing property on the site, and is considered to be suitable to serve one additional dwelling. With regards to parking, ample space is available for parking on the site for both residents and visitors to the site.
- 3.8 Further information on the proposed design is included within the Design Statement.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 This section of the Statement provides a summary of the relevant planning policy framework in relation to the Site and the proposed development.
- 4.2 In light of the importance of demonstrating the sustainability credentials of the site and the proposals, this section of the statement also includes a detailed review of the relevant policy and guidance relating to Sustainable Development, not least as the concept of sustainable development underpins all planning policy.
- 4.3 The key planning policy documents of relevance to the determination of the application are outlined below. A detailed assessment of the accordance of the proposed development with these policies is provided in Section 6 of the Statement (Material Considerations).

National Planning Policy

- 4.4 The following policy / guidance documents prepared at the national level are of relevance to the determination of the application.

Planning Policy Wales (11th Edition, February 2021)

- 4.5 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) forms the overarching national planning policy document within Wales, providing guidance to Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) for the preparation of development plans and the determination of planning applications through their development management functions.

Key Planning Principles

- 4.6 Paragraph 2.13 states that *"The plan-led system underpins the delivery of sustainable places to ensure all development plans and decisions taken by the planning system work together to deliver sustainable places. The Key Principles (see Figure 4) represent a guiding vision for all development plans, including Future Wales"*. The key principles are as follows:

- Growing our economy in a sustainable manner;
- Making best use of resources;
- Facilitating accessible and healthy environments;
- Creating and sustaining communities; and
- Maximising environmental protection and limiting environmental impact.

- 4.7 Paragraph 2.17 states *"In responding to the key principles for the planning system, the creation of sustainable places and in recognition of the need to contribute to the well-being of future generations in Wales through placemaking, development plans and development proposals must seek to deliver development that address the national sustainable placemaking outcomes"*.

Sustainability and Placemaking

- 4.8 Sustainable development forms a key consideration central to all policies contained within Planning Policy Wales (PPW). Paragraph 2.1 states: *"The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation"*.

4.9 Paragraphs 2.8-2.9 state that: *"Planning policies, proposals and decisions must seek to promote sustainable development and support the well-being of people and communities across Wales. This can be done through maximising their contribution to the achievement of the seven well-being goals and by using the five Ways of Working [long-term thinking, prevention, collaboration, integration and involvement], as required by the Well-being of Future Generations Act. This will include seeking to maximise the social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits, whilst considering potential impacts when assessing proposals and policies in line with the Act's Sustainable Development Principle. The most appropriate way to implement these requirements is to adopt a placemaking approach to plan making, planning policy and decision making."*

4.10 Figure 6 depicts the PPW themes that collectively contribute to placemaking:



4.11 Paragraph 2.27 sets out how to assess the sustainable benefits of development:

"Planning authorities should ensure that social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits are considered in the decision-making process and assessed in accordance with the five ways of working to ensure a balanced assessment is carried out to implement the Well-Being of Future Generations Act and the Sustainable Development Principle. There may be occasions when one type of benefit of a development proposal or site allocation outweighs others, and in such cases robust evidence should be presented to support these decisions, whilst seeking to maximise contribution against the well-being goals."

4.12 In respect of infill and development comprising extension of settlement, Para 3.60 states that: *"Infilling or minor extensions to existing settlements may be acceptable, in particular where they meet a local need for affordable housing or it can be demonstrated that the proposal will increase local economic activity... All new development should be of a scale and design that respects the character of the surrounding area"*.

Housing

4.13 Paragraph 4.2.2 states, in respect of housing that *"the planning system must:*

- *Identify a supply of land to support the delivery of the housing requirement to meet the differing needs of communities across all tenures;*

- *Enable provision of a range of well-designed, energy efficient, good quality market and affordable housing that will contribute to the creation of sustainable places; and*
- *Focus on the delivery of the identified housing requirement and the related land supply."*

4.14 Moreover, Paragraph 4.2.10 states: *"The supply of land to meet the requirement proposed in a development plan must be deliverable. To achieve this, development plans must include a supply of land which delivers the identified housing requirement figure and makes a locally appropriate additional flexibility allowance for sites not coming forward during the plan period. The ability to deliver requirements be demonstrated through a trajectory. The trajectory will illustrate the expected rate of housing delivery for both market and affordable housing for the plan period"*

4.15 Paragraph 4.2.13 also states: *"As part of considering housing delivery options, planning authorities should understand the contribution that all sectors of the housing market and house-builders could make to meeting their housing requirement. When allocating sites, planning authorities need to consider providing a range of sustainable and deliverable sites to allow all sectors and types of house-builder ... the opportunity to deliver the proposed housing requirement."*

4.16 Paragraph 4.2.23 states: *"Development plans must include clear policy criteria against which applications for housing development on unallocated sites will be considered. Infill and windfall sites can also often make a useful contribution to the delivery of housing. Proposals for housing on infill and windfall site development within settlements should be supported where they accord with the national place-making outcomes."*

Affordable Housing

4.17 In respect of affordable housing, Paragraph 4.2.25 states: *"A community's need for affordable housing is a material planning consideration which must be taken into account in formulating development plan policies and determining relevant planning applications. Affordable housing for the purposes of the land use planning system is housing where there are secure mechanisms in place to ensure that it is accessible to those who cannot afford market housing, both on first occupation and for subsequent occupiers."*

4.18 Paragraph 4.2.29 states: *"Where development plan policies make clear that an element of affordable housing, or other developer contributions, are required on specific sites, this will be a material consideration in determining relevant applications. Applicants for planning permission should therefore demonstrate and justify how they have arrived at a particular mix of housing, having regard to development plan policies. If, having had regard to all material considerations, the planning authority considers that the proposal does not contribute sufficiently towards the objective of creating mixed communities, then the authority will need to negotiate a revision of the mix of housing or may refuse the application."*

Good Design

4.19 It is set out within Paragraph 3.3 of PPW that *"Good design is fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. Design is not just about the architecture of a building but the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment and between people and places. To achieve sustainable development, design must go beyond aesthetics and include the social, economic, environmental, cultural aspects of the development, including how space is used, how buildings and the public realm support this use as well as its construction, operation, management, and its relationship with the surrounding area"*.

- 4.20 Further detail regarding the objectives of good design is set out within Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design (2016) – as detailed further below.
- 4.21 Figure 8 in PPW sets out the objectives of good design in an illustrative / diagrammatic manner.



Transport

- 4.22 Para 4.1.10 states that:

"The planning system has a key role to play in reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car, and supporting sustainable transport, by facilitating developments which:

- are sited in the right locations, where they can be easily accessed by sustainable modes of travel and without the need for a car;*
- are designed in a way which integrates them with existing land uses and neighbourhoods; and*
- make it possible for all short journeys within and beyond the development to be easily made by walking and cycling."*

- 4.23 Furthermore, Para 4.1.11 states that: *"Development proposals must seek to maximise accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport, by prioritising the provision of appropriate on-site infrastructure and, where necessary, mitigating transport impacts through the provision of off-site measures, such as the development of active travel routes, bus priority infrastructure and financial support for public transport services."*

Distinctive and Natural Places

- 4.24 With regards to conservation areas, Para 6.1.16 states that: *"Preservation or enhancement of a conservation area can be achieved by a development which either makes a positive contribution to an area's character or appearance or leaves them unharmed. Mitigation measures can also be considered which could result in an overall neutral or positive impact of a proposed development in a conservation area."*

Technical Advice Notes

- 4.25 Technical Advice Notes (TANs) supplement the policy principles of PPW and add further detail on issues which might affect development potential of the site. TANs which are considered relevant to the proposal and should therefore be given weight are:

TAN	Title
TAN 1	Joint Housing Land Availability Studies (2015)
TAN 2	Planning and Affordable Housing (2006)
TAN 12	Design (2016)
TAN 18	Transport (2007)

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 1 - Joint Housing Land Availability Studies (2015)

- 4.26 TAN 1 sets out how an authority must act when it does not have a 5-year land supply. It states that, *"where shortfall in the housing land supply is identified the local planning authority should consider the reasons for the shortfall and whether the LDP should be reviewed either in whole or in part"*(Paragraph 6.1).
- 4.27 Furthermore, Para 6.2 notes that the housing land supply figure should also be treated as a material consideration in determining planning applications for housing. It states that, *"Where the current study shows a land supply below the 5-year requirement or where the local planning authority has been unable to undertake a study, the need to increase supply should be given considerable weight when dealing with planning applications provided that the development would otherwise comply with development plan and national planning policies."*
- 4.28 On 18th July 2018 the Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs wrote to the Local Planning Authorities in Wales to confirm the immediate suspension of Paragraph 6.2 of TAN 1. This paragraph of TAN 1 required Local Planning Authorities to give 'considerable' weight to the need to increase the housing land supply, in circumstances where a 5 year housing land supply could not be demonstrated.
- 4.29 The letter does confirm that *"it will be a matter for decision makers to determine the weight to be attributed to the need to increase housing land supply where an LPA has a shortfall in housing"*. As such, the letter confirms that the Local Planning Authority are still required to acknowledge any shortfall in the Housing Land Supply below the 5 year target and then determine the weight which should be afforded to such a shortfall in the decision making process.

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 2 – Planning and Affordable Housing (June 2006)

- 4.30 TAN 2 sets out further guidance which indicates how affordable housing targets are identified through policies and the development plan and the type of action which can be taken to ensure that the target is met. The guidance also sets out that Local Housing Market Assessments should be undertaken 'to establish the nature and level of housing requirements in their local housing market(s).' as set out in Paragraph 7.2 of the Technical Advice Note.
- 4.31 Paragraph 9.1 states developments plans must include an authority-wide target for affordable housing to be provided through the planning system, based on the housing need identified. Once the target has been established, there are several policy approaches that can be used to deliver the targets, as set out in Para 10.1, which includes site specific targets (including sites allocated solely for affordable housing). When setting the site-capacity thresholds and site-specific targets local planning authorities should balance the need for affordable housing against the viability.

- 4.32 Paragraph 9.9 states, where evidence has identified a need for affordable housing to contribute to the creation of balanced and sustainable communities, local planning authorities may identify sites for up to 100% affordable housing based on the criteria set out in the development plan. Such sites are likely to be small in relation to the total number of sites available in a local planning authority area and small in scale.

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12 – Design (March 2016)

- 4.33 Further detailed guidance on the objectives of good design is provided within TAN 12. The objectives of good design are set out within the following categories:

Access

- Ensuring ease of access of all.

Movement

- Promoting sustainable means of travel.

Sustaining or Enhancing Local Character

- Promoting legible development;
- Promoting a successful relationship between public and private space;
- Promoting quality, choice and variety;
- Promoting innovative design.

Community Safety

- Ensuring attractive, safe public spaces;
- Security through natural surveillance.

Environmental Sustainability

- Achieving efficient use and protection of natural resources;
- Enhancing biodiversity;
- Designing for change.

- 4.34 TAN 12 advocates that careful and innovative design can ensure higher densities are appropriate and acceptable, this is confirmed at paragraph 5.7.4, which states the follows:

"Building at higher densities is not synonymous with high rise development and innovative good design is a prerequisite to the success of higher densities. The perception of lower density can be influenced by skilful design. Clearly defining public and private space and ensuring suitability for purpose will be particularly important where densities are high."

- 4.35 Likewise, TAN 12 advocates varying the density of development 'to create difference in the built form to which residents and visitors can relate and make it an interesting place' (paragraph 5.11.5) which can assist in creating a sense of place.

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 18 – Transport (2007)

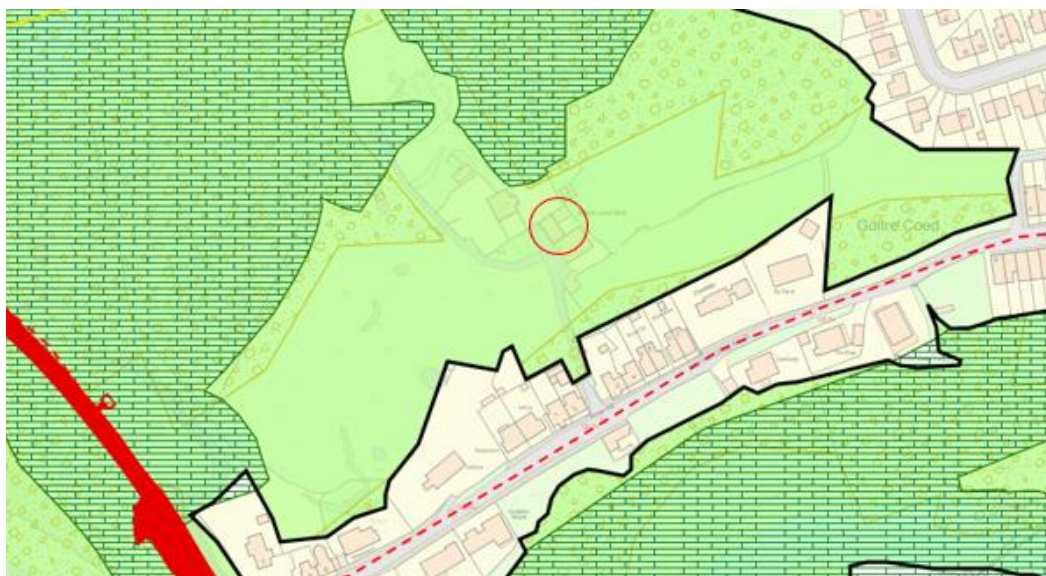
- 4.36 As paragraph 3.3 of TAN 18 sets out, "The location of new residential development has a significant influence on travel patterns as the majority of trips start or finish at home." For this reason, the criteria set out within TAN 18 are of particular relevance to this proposal.

- 4.37 The overarching theme of TAN 18, with reference to new residential development is set out in paragraph 3.3 which states *"It should be a key aim of development plans to identify residential sites that are accessible to jobs, shops and services by modes other than the car and where public transport services have the existing or planned capacity to absorb further development."*
- 4.38 TAN 18 also sets out parking space requirements for new residential development, as well as the criteria for any new highways built on the proposed site.

Local Policy Context

Development Plan Context

- 4.39 The current adopted Development Plan is the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP), adopted on 29th January 2020 which covers the timeframe 2016-2031.
- 4.40 The extract below shows an overview of the site and its surroundings from the Merthyr LDP Proposals Map:



Merthyr LDP Proposals Map Extract (site outlined in red)

Key:

	Settlement Limits		Proposed Active Travel Integrated Network Map route		South East Wales Metro improvements
	Special Landscape Area (SLA)		Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)		Sandstone with potential high specification aggregate

- 4.41 To summarise, the LDP Proposal Map shows that the site is:
- Located outside, albeit in close proximity to the defined settlement boundaries;
 - Situated within a Special Landscape Area (SLA);
 - Within close proximity to a Proposed Active Travel Integrated Network Map route, as well as a route identified for upgrading as part of the South East Wales Metro improvements.

4.42 An extract from the LDP Constraints Map is provided below:



LDP Constraints Map Extract

Key:

	Listed Building		Strategic Pathways and Cycleways		Existing Active Travel Route
	Ancient Woodland		Tree Preservation Order (TPO)		Zone B
					Zone C1
					Zone C2
					TAN15 Flood Zones

4.43 The Constraints Map extract above confirms that the site is not subject to any development constraints, albeit is located in close proximity to a number of trees protected by TPO.

4.44 In view of the above, it is considered that the emerging policy position regarding the site is of most relevance to the proposed development. The relevant policies are:

Policy	Title	Summary
Policy SW1	Provision of New Homes Sustainably	To sustainably grow our population, 2,250 additional homes are required. To ensure these are delivered, provision is made for 2,821 additional homes.
Policy SW2	Provision of Affordable Housing	During the plan period, development proposals will be expected to deliver up to 253 affordable dwellings across the County Borough in order to contribute to the identified level of housing need.
Policy SW3	Distributing New Homes	Approximately 70% of new homes will be directed towards Merthyr Tydfil (Primary Growth Area), with the remaining 30% directed towards our other settlements, Troedyrhiw, Merthyr Vale and Aberfan, Bedlinog, Edwardsville, Quakers Yard, Trelewis and Treharris (Other Growth Area).
Policy SW4	Settlement Boundaries	Containing development within the urban area promotes sustainably located development which can assimilate with existing services and facilities and also encourages the re-use of previously developed land in accordance with Planning Policy Wales.

Policy	Title	Summary
Policy SW11	Sustainable Design and Placemaking	Development must contribute to the creation of attractive and sustainable places through high quality, sustainable and inclusive design.
Policy EnW5	Landscape Protection	Landscape designations are not intended to prevent development but to ensure that, where development is acceptable, careful consideration is given to the design and scale of the development including siting, orientation, layout and landscaping and the special qualities and characteristics for which the SLAs have been designated are protected.

- 4.45 In addition, the following supplementary planning guidance published and adopted by Merthyr are also considered to be of relevance to the application:

Title	Summary
Sustainable Design	Sustainable development is defined in Wales as a means of enhancing the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of people and communities, achieving a better quality of life for our own and future generations.

5.0 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 The key planning considerations arising from the proposed development (in light of the nature and form of the proposed development and the planning policy context outlined within the preceding section of the Statement) are considered to be as follows:

- Principle of Development;
- Design;
- Landscape and Visual Impact;
- Residential Amenity;
- Highways, Access and Parking;
- Other material considerations.

5.2 These issues are discussed and appraised in further detail below.

The Principle of Development

5.3 The proposal seeks to sympathetically convert an existing barn at Goitre Coed Fach into a residential dwelling.

5.4 Policy SW1 of the LDP notes that, over the Plan period, an additional 2,250 homes are required in the County Borough, with provision for an additional 2,821 homes in the LDP. The component of the housing supply for the LDP is as follows:

- Allocations for housing land (as per Policy SW3) – 2,196 dwellings.
- A windfall contribution allowance – 572 dwellings.

5.5 Evidently, in order to deliver the target of providing 2,250 new homes in the County Borough over the Plan period, the Council are reliant on windfall contribution coming forward (i.e. housing land that is not currently allocated in the LDP). While the proposal is for the net gain of 1 residential unit, this is a contribution to the housing need in the area nonetheless.

5.6 Policy SW4 of the LDP promotes sustainably located development by outlining the areas in which development is considered to be acceptable in principle. To encourage development within urban areas, support the re-use of previously developed land, and to protect and support the functioning of the rural economy and the countryside, settlement boundaries are defined within the LDP Proposals Map.

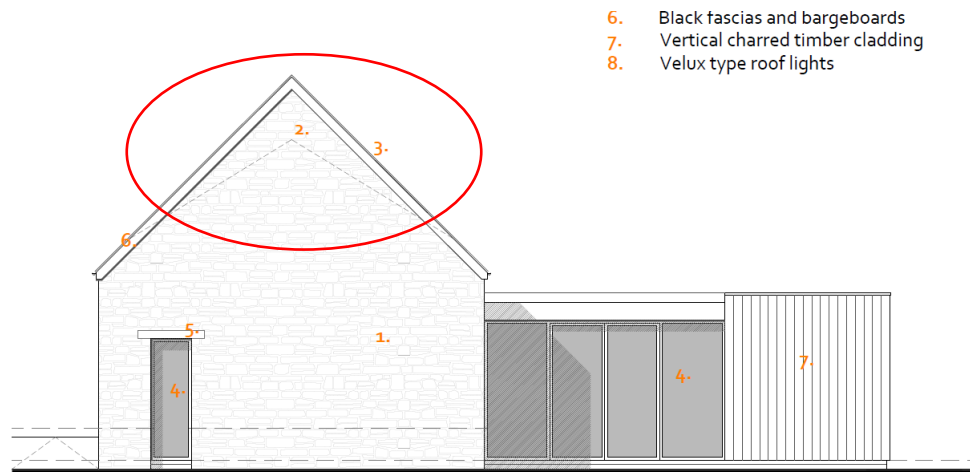
5.7 It has been highlighted in the Planning Policy section above that the site is located outside of, albeit in close proximity to, the defined settlement boundaries. Policy SW4 goes on to state that '*outside defined settlement boundaries, proposals will be regarded as 'countryside development' and will not be permitted unless the development: -*

- *is for the purposes of agriculture or forestry;*
- *is associated with rural enterprises or the winning and working of minerals;*
- ***is for the re-use, adaptation, or replacement of rural buildings and dwellings;***
- *supports the expansion of an existing business in the countryside;*
- *is for tourism, recreation or leisure facilities or complementary development where the need for a countryside location is fully justified;*
- *is for the provision of public utilities, infrastructure or waste management facilities that cannot reasonably be located elsewhere;*
- *is required for the reclamation or treatment of unstable or contaminated land;*
- *is for renewable energy in accordance with Policy EcW8;*
- *is for affordable housing in accordance with Policy SW5;*
- *or is low-impact One Planet Development (GJP emphasis added).*

- 5.8 The proposed development is for the re-use and adaptation of a rural barn in order to provide one residential dwelling and as a result it is considered that this development is acceptable in principle, in light of the criteria set out for development in the countryside within the above policy.
- 5.9 While Settlement Boundaries have been defined in the Plan in order to avoid urban coalescence and the unnecessary encroachment of development into the countryside, this small-scale proposal is for the re-use of an existing, underutilised building and as a result is considered to be acceptable in this regard, being in line with criterion 3 of Policy SW4.
- 5.10 The proposed development is for the change of use of the existing building at the Goitre Coed Fach and will not give rise to the need for a replacement building. As outlined in the development proposals, some extensions and alterations to the existing building are proposed as part of the change of use, albeit the sympathetic and high-quality design is one that is appropriate to the appearance and rural character of the building and its setting.
- 5.11 It has been indicated within the Planning History section of this statement that an application for the conversion of the barn into a residential dwelling was previously approved by the Local Planning Authority. While this permission is no longer extant, the planning history of the site does consist of a material consideration in favour of the development.
- 5.12 Referring to the pre-application discussions and formal response, the written response from MTCBC states:
- "As such, the proposal would constitute a form of countryside development. In such locations, Policy SW4 is of particular importance as it seeks to encourage new development within established urban areas and protect the qualities of the open countryside. However, this policy does indicate that development in a countryside location will not be permitted unless it relates to, amongst other things, the re-use, adaption, or replacement of rural buildings and dwellings. **As such, the principle of providing a new residential unit in this location would depend on the ability to convert the barn without substantial alteration. Furthermore, it is noted in the pre-app details that planning permission was granted to convert the barn a considerable time ago in 1995.**"*
- 5.13 It is therefore considered that the principle of the development has been established and agreed to-date.
- 5.14 On the matter of a structural report, one has not been undertaken to-date and the images of the building explain why, as the building is in very good condition, and it is considered the conversion can capably occur and thus is policy compliant.

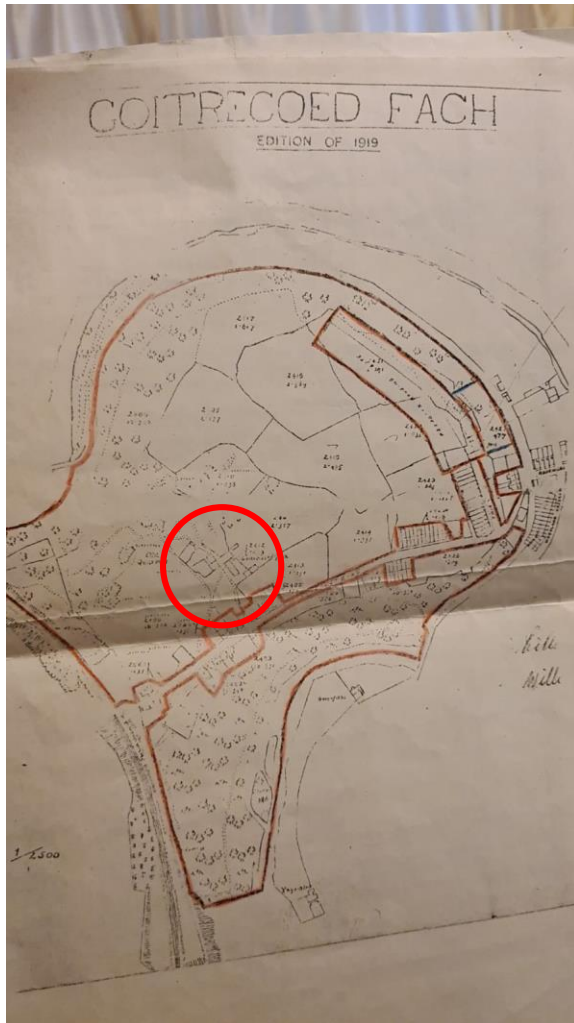
Design

- 5.15 The proposal will see the re-use of existing openings, and re-use of former historic openings. Albeit there is no 'major' or significant opening which would detract from the buildings historic fabric and character.
- 5.16 For greater context, please refer to the design statement prepared by the scheme architect.
- 5.17 One noteworthy amendment will see the provision of a new roof, and a steeper pitch than existing. This is conveyed on the proposed elevations as highlighted below:



Side Elevation (South)

- 5.18 This modest re-alignment to a traditional Welsh agricultural vernacular is considered acceptable, and is considered to be the initial style 'as-built' when this barn was first built. It is initially noted through old OS maps, that this barn has been present since 1919 as per the OS map photo extract below. It is understood from journals that a traditional 'steep' roof pitch was the style during this time of build, and it is present on the main farm-house adjacent to the application site. As such, it is considered that it is extremely likely that such a pitch roof was present initially during its construction. It should also be noted that the gable ends of the application building have seen removal of stonework to allow for the former re-roofing, as such, on balance and given the evidence, the re-roofing as proposed to a traditionally steep vernacular is acceptable and preserves, retains and enhances the Welsh vernacular.



Landscape and Visual Impact

- 5.19 The LDP Proposals Map suggests that the site is located within the Pontygwaith Special Landscape Area. Policy EnW5 of the LDP covers Landscape Protection and outlines that 'Development proposals will be permitted where it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that:
- a) *It would not cause unacceptable harm to the character and quality of the landscape setting of the County Borough;*
 - b) *Development within Special Landscape Areas are sensitive to their special characteristics;*
 - c) *Development respects the local distinctiveness and historic character of the landscape;*
 - d) *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;*
 - e) *Development secures the enhancement of the character, appearance and quality of the landscape, through restoration, management or enhancement where possible;*
 - f) *There is no satisfactory alternative and the benefits associated with the development can be demonstrated to outweigh the harm; and*
 - g) *Where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided appropriate mitigation has been secured'.*
- 5.20 The proposals seek the change of use of an existing barn, which will include some amendments and alteration to the layout of the building. Despite this, the changes are relatively modest in nature, with only one dwelling being created through the extension of the building on one side.

The property will retain the existing rural features of the barn and as such will remain consistent with character of the building and the surrounding area.

- 5.21 The intention is to reinstate the traditional character of the building by developing a dwelling in the mould of a traditional farmhouse. This will include replacing the existing roof (which is not an original feature of the building) with a more traditional, steep-pitched roof, finished in slate. This sensitive approach is considered to be appropriate to the rural landscape within which the building is set.
- 5.22 Due to the topography of the site and the surrounding area, as well as the large number of trees on and around the site, views of the existing building are well-shielded from outside of the site itself. Given this, as well as the intention to sympathetically convert the property, it is considered that any impact on the SLA will be minimal and would not detrimentally impact the landscape character of the area.

Residential Amenity

- 5.23 The proposed development site is relatively spacious, with one other dwelling – which is in the ownership of the applicant – on site. A separation distance of approximately 10m exists between the two buildings, with the barn rotated 90 degrees as compared with the existing dwelling. Given this, it is considered that the privacy of residents of either dwelling will be safeguarded, with no direct overlooking resulting from the development proposals. Further to this, the properties to the south of the barn are considered to be a sufficient distance that overlooking / private amenity is not an issue.
- 5.24 Given the spacious nature of the site, ample amenity space exists in the land surrounding the property, included grassed and wooded areas. The intention is for the barn conversion to be occupied by the extended family of the residents of the existing dwelling and as such this amenity space is to be shared between the properties.

Highways, Access and Parking

- 5.25 The site currently benefits from an access road from the south, linking the site to Goitre Coed Road. This highway is residential in nature and links Quakers Yard and Treharris to Abercynon and the Cynon Valley, albeit traffic movements are relatively low. A photograph of the access point is included below.



Existing access point

- 5.26 The access consists of a single-track accessed via a gated entrance. Ample room for the turning and parking of cars is available at the northern end of the access road, adjacent to the existing buildings on site.



- 5.27 The site is well served in terms of private parking, with the existing parking provision considered to be sufficient to support the change of use proposed. It has been noted above that this is a spacious site and as a result ample parking provision for residents and visitors is available. The proposed layout provides 2 no. parking spaces as required in the SPG and associated turning area for safe access and egress.
- 5.28 As has been indicated within the Sustainability and Connectivity section above, the site is located within walking distance of a number of local services and facilities, as well as bus stops providing public transport to a number of larger settlements in the area.

Ecology

- 5.29 An initial bat scoping survey has been undertaken by I&G Ecology and forms part of the application submission material. The report concludes there are no bats present nor are there any potential for their presence.

Heritage

- 5.30 A review of Historic Wales map illustrates that the site is of no archaeological heritage interest. There are no heritage assets identified within the boundaries of the site nor within close proximity to the site.



Historic Wales Map Extract (site in red)

- 5.31 The development of the site is acceptable in this regard.

Flood Risk

- 5.32 The Natural Resource Wales (NRW) Development Advice Maps (DAM) and TAN 15 maps have been checked for their updated guidance and this confirms that there are no flood risk constraints on site.



NRW Development Advice Map Extract (site in red)

Public Rights of Way

- 5.33 The online OS Map indicates that there is no footpaths or rights of way near the site.



6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Purpose of this Statement

- 4.22 This Planning Statement outlines the context within which the application is made and provides a detailed examination of the main planning considerations raised by the proposals, together with reasoned justification in support of the proposed development.
- 4.22 The detailed assessments undertaken and provided to inform this planning application are considered to add considerable weight to the merit of this proposal and enable the scheme to be viewed favourably.

Summary of the Key Considerations

- 4.22 In summary, on the basis of a comprehensive review of both the policy and physical context of the application site, the site is considered to be suitable for development and the proposals should be viewed favourably for the following reasons:
- The proposal seeks to re-use this existing, previously developed site, which will contribute to the windfall housing provision of the LDP;
 - The existing building consists of a rural building which is suitable for conversion, being compliant with Policy SW4 of the LDP;
 - The proposals consists of the sympathetic conversion of the existing barn, which would look to retain the rural characteristics of the building, while respecting its surroundings;
 - The redevelopment of the site is considered to be acceptable in terms of both local and national planning policy, including Policies SW1 – SW4 of the LDP;
 - The revised submission takes account of the discussions held at the pre-app stage, and has responded positively to the design discussions which have seen the proposal rationalised;
 - The proposal is also evidenced with historic information to support the re-roofing to a traditionally steeper roof pitch as per the traditional vernacular at the time of construction;
 - The site is located within a sustainable and accessible location – located within proximity to a public transport hubs and facilities accessible on foot;
 - The proposed siting and scale of the proposal would not lead to an unacceptable impact on the character of the area, or upon the residential amenity of the surrounding residential dwellings and visual impact on landscape; and
 - There are no adverse impacts in respect of flood risk or heritage.

Conclusion

- 5.34 Having regard to the above key considerations, it is considered that the proposed development is fundamentally sound in principle and represents an appropriate scheme, This, coupled with the lack of any technical constraint, provides considerable support for the scheme proposal.
- 5.35 Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully contends that the proposal should be supported by the Local Planning Authority and outline planning permission ought to be granted.