

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No:	P/25/0047
Site Address:	Ponsford Somerset Lane Cefn Coed Merthyr Tydfil CF48 2PA
Development:	Upgrading of dwelling to include conversion of a garage, extension to first floor bedroom with Juliet balcony, insertion of larger windows and the widening of a front driveway.
Case Officer:	Marlene Ferreira
Site Visit:	20th March 2025
Application Expiry Date:	22nd April 2025
Consultation reply date expired:	19th March 2025

APPLICATION SITE

The application site relates to a large dwelling, known as Ponsford, located off Somerset Lane in the area of Cefn Coed. The detached property lies within a spacious plot and is served by relatively large garden areas to the front, side and rear. It also benefits from on-site parking by means of an attached garage and front driveway area.

The dwelling, finished in render and timber clad elevations, concrete roof tiles and UPVC windows, appears to be currently vacant due to its 'tired' appearance and overgrown garden areas.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks planning permission to convert the existing garage and lobby area at ground floor, erect a pitched roof above the flat roof garage, enlarge the first-floor bedroom (no. 2) and provide a Juliet balcony, provide new windows to the front and southern side elevations and extend the driveway area to the front of the property. (Some of the works proposed do not require planning permission and can be carried out under permitted development rights).

The existing garage and lobby area at ground floor would be converted to provide an en-suite bedroom. The new pitched roof of the former garage and lobby area would measure 5.6m wide and 2.2m in height, resulting in a total height of 4.9m (increasing from 2.6m in height). Three new windows would be added to the front elevation.

The first-floor bedroom would be extended into an existing covered veranda area, measuring approximately 3.6m wide and 1m deep and as such, would not extend beyond the southern side gable elevation of the property. A new Juliet balcony, enclosed by 1.2m high glass balustrade would also serve the extended bedroom. New large windows would be provided to the southern side elevation, to serve the extended bedroom at first floor and the existing lounge area at ground floor. The driveway area currently serves a single vehicle. This is proposed to be widened from 4m to 7m to provide an additional parking space. The driveway would be laid in a permeable and porous asphalt surface.

PLANNING HISTORY

The Council's records do not show any other relevant or recent planning history relating to this property.

CONSULTATION

Ecology Officer - A Preliminary Roost Assessment is required.

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, letters were sent to adjoining occupiers. No letters of representation were received following this publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

National Development Framework

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

National Planning Policies

- Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, February 2024)

Local Planning Policies

- Merthyr Tydfil Replacement local Development Plan 2016-2031

Policy SW4 – Settlement Boundaries

Policy SW11 – Sustainable Design and Placemaking

Policy EnW1 – Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience

- Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

SPG Note No. 6 – A Design Guide for Householder Development (September 2015)

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The issues to consider under the assessment of this application relate to whether the proposed alterations and extensions, in terms of their siting, scale and design, would comprise an acceptable form of development with regards to their impact upon the character and appearance of the property and the street scene. The impact of the proposal upon residential amenity and ecology are also important considerations.

Character and Appearance

The proposed development comprises low key changes to the property. The proposed garage conversion and alterations would result in the addition of new front windows and a new pitched roof. The windows would match the fenestration arrangement of the dwelling. The proposed roof design, scale and finishes would also be in context with that of the remaining dwelling. These alterations would therefore be acceptable.

The extension to the 2nd first floor bedroom would amount to a small scale addition. Indeed, it would be completely contained within the property (thus only replacing the existing covered veranda area) and as such would not project any further than the existing southern gable elevation. A new large window would be added to this elevation with a new Juliet balcony, enclosed by a glazed balustrade. This would also be acceptable and would add character and interest to the property's southern elevation. A new large window would also be installed at ground floor to serve the lounge area and this would also appear acceptable.

The proposed driveway area to the front of the property would be widened to provide a larger parking area for 2 vehicles instead of 1. This would be set back from the front highway and would be laid in a porous material. Given its layout and finishes, these works would also be acceptable.

The proposed development would therefore amount to sympathetic alterations which would not dominate or harm the appearance of the property. Instead, these works would serve to revive the dwelling's 'tired' appearance and add interesting features. The proposal would also be in context with the character and appearance of the wider area, which is made up of distinct house types of various scales, design and finishes. As such, it would accord with LDP Policy SW11.

Residential Amenity

Regard has been had to the proposed development and its impact on the nearest residential properties.

Having noted the siting of the dwelling, its distance from dividing boundary and the nature of the development, these works would not be considered to give rise to any significant concerns and no letters of objection have been received in respect of this application.

The garage alterations would have a total height of 4.9 metres. As such it would remain a single storey development. Furthermore, it is located over 4.5m from the dividing boundary with the dwelling to the north (Somerset House) and a further 16 metres from the dwelling itself. As such, it would not cause any significant overbearing impact upon these neighbouring occupiers. Whilst new windows are proposed, these would be located to the front elevation of the former garage and as such would not provide any direct overlooking

into the neighbouring property, which lies to the northern side elevation, particularly since it is well enclosed by a boundary wall and extensive vegetation along the dividing boundary.

The proposed extension to the bedroom, as explained above, would be contained within the property and as such would not extend beyond the southern elevation. Thus, whilst a new large window with Juliet balcony would be proposed to this elevation, this would only allow for a very similar extent of overlooking as the existing covered veranda area. These alterations would therefore not be deemed any more harmful when compared to the existing arrangement, particularly since the balcony area would be located between 6m and 11m from the nearest properties to the south and southwest and between 12m and 24m from the dwellings themselves (Alltelyn, Holford House, Brendale and Cyfarthfa). Thus, these works would not be deemed to have any significant or adverse impact upon the privacy and amenities of the nearest neighbouring occupiers.

The proposed addition of a large ground floor window and the extension of the front driveway area would also be considered acceptable and would not be deemed to have any adverse or significant impact on surrounding occupiers.

The relationship between the proposed development and the neighbouring properties is therefore considered acceptable and would accord with LDP Policy SW11.

Ecology

The proposed development was considered by the Council's Ecologist and it was requested that a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) for bats and nesting birds be submitted in support of the application. Given that the works are proposed on a residential property, where many developments can be undertaken without planning permission, the request for a PRA would be considered unreasonable in this instance. However, enhancement works in line with the Environment (Wales Act 2016) and Welsh Government Circular 'Securing Biodiversity Enhancements' would be requested by a suitably worded condition, which could be added to any planning permission granted.

It is also noted, under chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales (edition 12) that applications should be supported by Green Infrastructure Statements (GIS). However, due to the scale and nature of the development, the submission of a GIS would be deemed disproportionate and unreasonable. Notwithstanding this, ecological enhancements would be provided (to be requested by condition) which would contribute to the wider green infrastructure objectives. Thus, the proposed development would therefore be considered acceptable and accord with LDP Policy EnW1.

CONCLUSION

The development, due to the reasons discussed above, is therefore considered acceptable and would comply with the relevant policies and guidance.

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") has been taken into consideration when determining this application. In reaching the following recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been

considered and thus the proposal 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:

- Drawing No: PONSFORD, PRPSD 02A, received: 25th February 2025

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

3. **BEFORE WORKS COMMENCE ON SITE** a scheme for biodiversity enhancement, to include a timescale for implementation, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and retained in perpetuity thereafter.

Reason - Future Wales and Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, February 2024) requires all development to maintain and enhance biodiversity and to accord with Policy EnW1 of the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan.

INFORMATIVES

1. This planning permission does not provide consent to undertake works that require a European Protected Species (EPS) licence.
All bats and their roosts are protected under UK and European legislation. It is an offence to deliberately kill, injure, capture or disturb a bat or to recklessly damage or destroy their breeding sites or resting places.

If works are planned on a building/tree in which bats are found to be roosting, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) must be contacted. on 0300 065 3000 or at <https://naturalresources.wales/permits-and-permissions/species-licensing/apply-for-a-protected-species-licence/bat-licences/?lang=en>.

If work has already commenced and bats are found, or if any evidence that bats are using the site as a roost is found, work should cease and NRW should be contacted immediately.

Under these circumstances, an EPS licence is likely to be required to undertake the works within the law.

2. All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) while they are breeding.

If works to any trees, hedgerows and/or other nesting bird habitat (including buildings with suitable features) are to be undertaken, they will take place outside of the bird nesting season. If the works must be undertaken during the nesting season (generally from 1st March until 31st August, although birds are known to nest outside of these dates in suitable conditions), a breeding bird survey will be required and must be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist. Any active nests identified will be protected until the young have fledged.

Where a Schedule 1 species (as defined in the Wildlife and Countryside Act - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/schedule/1>) is involved, compensation for impacts, e.g., loss of nesting sites, will be devised and implemented.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Director of Neighbourhood Services

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DATE: 11.04.2025