

# DELEGATED REPORT

**Application No:** P/21/0228

**Site Address:** Tir Cook Farm Bungalow  
Twynygarreg  
Treharris  
CF46 5RN

**Development:** Extend and raise roof of garage to accommodate first floor gymnasium ancillary to the use of Tir Cook Farm Bungalow

**Case Officer:** Caroline Pulley

**Site Visit:** 12th July 2021

**Application Expiry Date:** 24th August 2021

**Consultation reply date expired:** 9th August 2021

## APPLICATION SITE

The application site comprises Tir Cook Farm Bungalow, Treharris. The property is located in the open countryside and within an area which sits to the north of the Treharris settlement. The bungalow and the adjoining land comprise a series of buildings occupying a total area of land amounting to some 1.2 hectares. The garage which forms the subject of this application is located to the front of the bungalow and alongside the lane boundary. Works on the garage have already commenced. The roof has been removed and the south facing side elevation of the building has already been extended.

## PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks full planning permission to extend and raise the height of the garage to allow a gymnasium to be provided at first floor. The application has been submitted following a complaint made to the planning department that works were being undertaken at the property without the benefit of planning permission. Following an investigation by the enforcement officer, it was concluded that the alterations to the garage for which work had already commenced, would require planning permission.

The works seek to provide a domestic gymnasium and a small workshop and lobby. To accommodate this, the south-eastern side elevation of the garage has been extended by 1.9m. The existing garage roof has also been removed and the walls of the garage have been increased in height to provide additional head room in the roof space. When completed, the garage would be 9m wide and 6.9m long. Its roof would be pitched and would have an eaves height of 3.7m and a ridge height of 5.9m.

The extension formed to the side of the garage would feature a new pedestrian door to the front elevation, which would provide independent access to the workshop and the

gymnasium. The gymnasium, which would be accommodated at first floor, would be served by three windows located within the south-eastern side, rear and front elevation of the building. The workshop would be served by a single window located within the ground floor side elevation of the extension. The walls of the building are to be completed in render to match the existing. The roof would be covered in synthetic slate and the windows would be made from brown uPVC to match the bungalow.

## PLANNING HISTORY

The planning history relating to the application site is as follows:

|           |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| P/18/0370 | Proposed stable block extension for livery use.<br>APPROVED – 02.05.2019                                                                                                         |
| P/16/0317 | Erection of single storey rear extension with living accommodation in the roof space, new dormer window in front roof plane and other minor alterations<br>APPROVED – 30.08.2016 |
| P/07/0386 | Extension to sides and rear and alteration to pitch and ridge height of roof<br>APPROVED – 30.08.2007                                                                            |
| P/81/0090 | Erection of a bungalow<br>APPROVED without CONDITIONS – 06.05.1981                                                                                                               |
| P/79/0297 | Outline application for erection of farmhouse<br>APPROVED – 03.12.1980 (AGRICULTURE OCCUPANCY<br>CONDITION ATTACHED)                                                             |

## CONSULTATION

|                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Planning Division's Ecologist: | Advises that as works have already commenced, a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) for bats and nesting birds will not be required. However, in line with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, enhancement of the site would be necessary. |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, a site notice was displayed within the vicinity of the site.

No letters of objection were received following this publicity exercise.

## POLICY CONTEXT

### National Policy

The Future Wales – the National Plan 2040 sets out a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 11 (February 2021) sets out the land use policies of the Welsh Government. The most relevant paragraphs are:

Paragraphs 3.3 – 3.16 sets out the principles of good design in new development proposals, which should take into account its relationship to its surrounding context. Paragraph 3.10 states *'In areas recognised for their particular landscape, townscape, cultural or historic character and value it can be appropriate to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. In those areas, the impact of development on the existing character, the scale and siting of new development, and the use of appropriate building materials (including where possible sustainably produced materials from local sources), will be particularly important.'*

Paragraph 3.60 sets out guidance in relation to development in the countryside. It states *'...new building in the open countryside away from existing settlements or areas allocated for development in development plans must continue to be strictly controlled. All new development should be of a scale and design that respects the character of the surrounding area.'*

Paragraph 3.38 advises that *'the countryside is a dynamic and multi-purpose resource... and it must be conserved, and where possible, enhanced for the sake of its ecological, geological, physiographic, historical, archaeological, cultural and agricultural value and for its landscape and natural resources. The need to conserve these attributes should be balanced against the economic, social and recreational needs of local communities and visitors.'*

Paragraph 6.3.12 advises that local landscapes should be valued and conserved through the planning process. It advises that this may include policies for landscape features, characteristics and qualities of local significance, and the designation of Special Landscape Areas (SLAs).

The policies in PPW are supported by Technical Advice Notes (TANs). The most relevant TANs to this application are as follows:-

TAN 5 – Nature Conservation and Planning – provides advice on how the planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological conservation.

TAN 6 - Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities - provides guidance on the role of the planning system in supporting the delivery of sustainable rural communities.

TAN 12 - Design advises that the Assembly Government is strongly committed to achieving the delivery of good design in the built and natural environment, which is fit for purpose and delivers environmental sustainability, economic development, and social inclusion at every scale throughout Wales.

## Local Policy

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) 2016-2031:

Policy SW4 – Settlement boundaries

Policy SW11 – Sustainable design and Placemaking

Policy EnW1 – Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience

Policy EnW2 – Internationally and Nationally Protected Sites and Species

Policy EnW3 – Regionally Important Geological Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Local Nature Reserves and Priority Habitats and Species

Policy EnW4 – Environmental Protection

Policy EnW5 – Landscape Protection

Policy EcW10 – Sustainably Supplying Materials

Policy EcW13 – Minerals Safeguarding

- Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs)

Note No. 5 – Nature and Development

Note No. 6 - A Design Guide for Householder Development.

SPG 6 provides advice to ensure alterations, and extensions have a positive contribution to the appearance of a dwelling and the character of the surrounding area. In respect of garages, it advises that they should be located to the side or to the rear of the dwelling. If they project forward of a property, it highlights that they are likely to be situated in a prominent position that will often adversely impact of the character of the dwelling and the street scene.

- Other documents consulted

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan (2016 – 2013) - Special Landscape Areas Background Paper, June 2018.

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

As highlighted earlier, the application seeks retrospective planning permission for works, which extend the footprint and height of a garage that is located within the curtilage of Tir Cook Farm Bungalow. The property is located outside the settlement boundary and therefore, within open countryside as defined by Policy SW4 of the LDP. The Policy states that outside defined settlement boundaries proposals will be regarded as 'countryside development' and will not be permitted unless the development, amongst other things, is for the re-use, adaption, or replacement of rural buildings and dwellings. In this case, the applicant has confirmed that the additional floor space created by this development would be ancillary to use of the existing bungalow. Taking this into account and the fact that the garage lies within the curtilage of the existing dwelling, the development is acceptable in principle. It is acknowledged that the planning history for the site does highlight that an agricultural occupancy condition was attached to an outline planning permission for a dwelling in 1980 (application P/79/0297). However, it would appear that the application bungalow was subsequently constructed, following the approval of full planning permission in 1981 (ref: P/81/0090). This permission is not subject to an agricultural occupancy condition. As such, there does not appear to be any agricultural ties, which would prevent

this dwelling from being extended. Moreover, the property has been subject to previous extensions approved under application P/16/0317 and P/07/0386.

As the application property is located some distance away from neighbouring properties and the gymnasium and workshop would be used for domestic purposes, the alterations to the footprint and height of the garage would not give rise to any adverse amenity issues. Also, there are no highway safety issues arising from this type of development. Therefore, the main issue to consider under this application is the impact of the development on the character and appearance of the existing property and the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, including the Gelligaer and Taf Bargoed Special Landscape Area (SLA).

A search of the planning history for the property reveals that there is no record of planning permission being approved for the existing garage. It would appear from aerial imagery that construction works on the garage begun around 2010. As more than four years has passed, the original garage building would now be exempt from any enforcement action. Notwithstanding the fact that planning permission was not sought for the existing garage, its scale, design, roof pitch, height and overall appearance was in keeping with and subservient to the existing property. Also, due to its low height, the garage would not have appeared as an overly prominent structure in the area. However, the extended building already appears substantial in terms of both its scale and its height. Due to its positioning, forward of the dwelling and adjacent to the lane and junction (leading to the neighbouring farm), the substantial increased mass and height of the building is readily apparent when travelling in a northerly direction along the road. From this viewpoint, the side wall of the garage appears bulky and cumbersome in its appearance. The additional height arising from pitched roof, which is yet to be constructed, would exacerbate this impact further and would result in the garage having a dominating and urbanising effect on the surrounding landscape which is within the Gelligaer and Taf Bargoed Special Landscape Area (SLA) designated under Policy EnW5 of the LDP.

While acknowledging that the garage is positioned a metre below the floor level of the house, the proportion and massing of the building, arising from the height of the walls, the height of the building's eaves and the overall height of the building, is out of scale with the bungalow. Indeed, due to its wide frontage and high eaves, the pitch of the roof does not relate well to the existing bungalow and the height of the walls appear inappropriate to the scale of the bungalow. As such, it would appear as a dominant and incongruous form of development, harming the area's character and appearance. Additionally, the garage's extended frontage appears overly wide and bulky in scale. Due to its increased width, the garage doors now appear unbalanced in the elevation and the first floor window, being tall and wider than the garage doors below, appears overly large and top heavy. The first floor windows located within the side and rear elevation of the garage, also relate poorly to the existing bungalow in terms of their shape and size. For these reasons, the general design and scale of the building is deemed unacceptable.

For the reasons highlighted above, the development as a result of its prominent siting, design, scale, height and appearance, would be visually prominent and detrimental to the character and appearance of the existing bungalow and the rural landscape character of the area, contrary to Policies SW11 and EnW5 of the LDP. The scheme does not raise any highway safety or residential amenity concerns. Due to a combination of its siting, height, scale, and mass the proposal would be visually obtrusive and would cause harm to the distinctive openness and landscape character of the Gelligaer and Taf Bargoed SLA.

## Other matters - Ecology

Planning Policy Wales and TAN 5 refer to the importance of the conservation of biodiversity. Having regard to the very nature of the land, a close mown agricultural field, the Council's Ecologist does not consider that ecological survey work is necessary. However, in line with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, he has advised that should the application be approved, there would need to be some on-site enhancement. This may include the provision of integrated bat boxes and the incorporation of features within the building, which are suitable for Bat species.

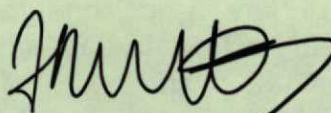
The duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WBFG Act") has been taken into consideration when determining this application. 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 REFUSED for the following REASON**

1. The proposal, by virtue of its prominent siting, design, scale and height, would result in a dominant and incongruous form of development which would be detrimental to and out of keeping with the character and appearance of the existing property and the surrounding area. As such, the development is contrary to Policies SW11 and EnW5 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED**



Head of Town Planning

**DATE:**

12/8/21