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Planning & Building Control
The Quays
Brunel Way
Neath
SA11 2GG

Date: 10/11/2020
Our Ref: 2020010DA
LPA Ref: P2020/0841

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (As Amended)
Proposed Siting of Vintage Horsebox Café/Bar (A3 Use)
High Street, Pontneathvaughan Road, Pontneddfechan, Neath SA11 5NR

I write this letter to accompany an application for full planning permission to Neath Port Talbot Council's Planning and Building Control Department. The planning officer has requested a statement justifying the development in accordance with Planning Policy TO1.

Policy TO1

"Tourism proposals outside of settlement limits will only be permitted where all of the following criteria are satisfied:

- 1. It is demonstrated that the proposal is viable and contributes towards the quality and economic sustainability of the tourism industry;*
- 2. It is demonstrated that either the proposal requires a countryside location, or it could not be accommodated within an existing settlement;*
- 3. The proposal would not have an adverse impact upon the landscape, ecology, and cultural heritage and would not adversely impact upon the social, economic, environmental or residential amenity of the area;*
- 4. The proposal does not create unacceptable levels of vehicular traffic, cause a detriment to highway safety and access can be provided by a range of transport modes."*

Commercial Viability

The applicant has prepared a detailed viability assessment into their business plan which has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority as evidence to satisfy Policy TO1. As this information is commercially sensitive, we would request that this information is not publicly available. From the information provided, the applicant believes that the scheme would be commercially viable and greatly contribute to the diversity of food and drinks services whilst providing opportunities for local tourism employment.

Requires Countryside Location

The area is an extremely popular tourist attract due to the Waterfall Country trails and sees approximately 250,000 tourists per annum. The main access footpath to the waterfalls is situated just West of the proposal site and thus the scheme would see a very high level of passing trade. The proposal site itself is south adjacent to the river which acts as the natural boundary between Powys

and Neath Port Talbot, a boundary which immediately on the other side is the settlement of Pontneddfechan within the authority control of Powys. Whilst technically the scheme is situated outside of settlement boundary, it is adjacent to Pontneddfechan and situated amongst two prominent public houses which also reside outside of the settlement boundary according to the Councils Policy Maps. Whilst the scheme is considered to be out of settlement, it is still within immediate proximity to an existing settlement which benefits from public and private services, furthermore the access to the tourist attraction necessitates the scheme to be placed at the proposal site to benefit from passing trade, making the business operation viable.

Character Impact

The scheme comprises of a vintage horsebox which is a common feature of the countryside aesthetic as equestrian uses are typically rural. In addition, the horsebox is small in scale and a non-permanent structure meaning that the scheme will not detract from the area either in the short or long term. At present the site is underutilised but it is the intention of the applicant to enhance the site with landscaping, bird boxes and potentially other biodiversity improvements for which they will be contacting the Council's biodiversity team.

Transport Impact

The scheme will serve pedestrian traffic moving between the surrounding parking areas and the Waterfall Country walking route. The applicant has confirmed that the horsebox will remain in situ at the site and that they will be restocking the site with provisions and removing refuse in early morning hours. Furthermore, employment will be focused on those living locally that can either walk or cycle to the site or arrive and depart through local bus services which are well established at the site location. Considering the above the scheme will have no unacceptable impact to local transport infrastructure.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,



James Banks BSc(Hons) AssocRTPI
Town Planning Consultant
Alpha Planning & Development Ltd

