



14 December 2021

Outline Planning Application for Rural Enterprise Dwelling Planning Statement and Dwelling Appraisal

At

**Tyn Y Cwm Farm,
Rhos,
Pontardawe,
SA8 3EY**

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Long Toll, Woodcote,
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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Reading Agricultural Consultants Ltd (RAC) is instructed by Mr Rhodri Hopkins (the Applicant) to submit an outline planning application for a rural enterprise dwelling at Tyn Y Cwm Farm, Rhos, Swansea, SA8 3EY. This document forms the supporting statement and appraisal for that application. Figure 1 below shows the location of the application site.

Figure 1. Location of the Proposed Building and Surrounding Area at Tyn Y Cwm.



- 1.2 The application is a resubmission of a previously withdrawn application (P2020/1114) for a combination agricultural building and dwelling. The two applications have now been separated in line with officer advice and this application is submitted in tandem with a full application for an agricultural building for sheep accommodation. Details of design are reserved for future consideration, although maximum parameters are provided in line with legislation and for assessment against Policy criteria.

- 1.3 This document provides justification for the proposal in line with the requirements of Technical Advice Note 6 (TAN 6) Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities whilst also addressing a number of queries raised by the Council in relation to the previously withdrawn application.
- 1.4 In responding to these instructions RAC has visited the farm and discussed the farm management arrangements with the applicant, providing further supporting information. We have also reconsidered the design of the proposed dwelling and reduced its maximum parameters as a result to ensure the proposal remains affordable to the business and as a rural enterprise dwelling.

2 Background

- 2.1 Recently, planning permission was applied for, and subsequently withdrawn, for an agricultural building and detached rural enterprise dwelling at Tyn Y Cwm Farm under application P2020/1114. This application had previously been the subject of a pre-application enquiry (ref Q2020/0121). The site history is discussed in further detail below.
- 2.2 Tyn Y Cwm Farm forms part of an existing family-run business which extends to approximately 410 acres of permanent pasture land which supports a flock of 370 breeding ewes and 50 suckler cows with followers, in conjunction with land at Llwyn Llanc Uchaf Farm, Crynant and further blocks of land in Crynant, Abernant, Rhyd Y Fro and Pendoylan. Tyn Y Cwm Farm alone comprises approximately 67ha (165 acres) of owned pasture land. There is currently no dwelling at Tyn Y Cwm, or indeed on any of the other land available to the business.
- 2.3 The land at Tyn Y Cwm Farm comprises over 40% of the farm holding and all of the agricultural buildings are located on the farm. It is considered that the farm business is not capable of being farmed to its full potential until such time as a farm dwelling and an additional farm building are provided at Tyn Y Cwm Farm which would allow a full-time worker to be present on the farm at all times and to allow the land to be fully stocked both with sheep and cattle to maximise the potential of the business. Currently, lambing and calving at the farm is very difficult to manage due to the lack of a full-time worker being present on the holding.
- 2.4 Currently, the farm is operated in equal partnership between Phillip Hopkins, who lives at Llwyn Llanc Uchaf Farm, and his brother, Hywel Hopkins. Rhodri (the applicant) is assuming growing responsibilities in the running and managing of the farm business. Hywel and Phillip Hopkins are both of retirement age and both have suffered serious ill health during the last few years. They

have been advised to restrict manual work to a minimum. The majority of farm work is now carried out by Rhodri who has been gradually reducing his workload in the other family business operated from Tyn y Cwm - Crynant Plant.

- 2.5 Due to his father and uncle's ill health, it is becoming more important for Rhodri to make himself available to the holding at all times and the proposal for a rural enterprise dwelling at Tyn y Cwm Farm will enable Rhodri to take over a full management control of the holding based at the site.
- 2.6 Philip and Hywel recognise the input in terms of the operation and management of the business provided by Rhodri and that it is essential to the business that his contribution continues. They are of the view that it would be impossible to continue farming without the input of Rhodri and that he should become a majority partner of the business. A draft partnership agreement has been formulated which sets out how this partnership will operate and is submitted with this application for information. It confirms that Rhodri will be a partner in the business with a 51% share with Philip and Hywel relinquishing majority control owing to their ill health.
- 2.7 Considering his essential role and interest in the operation and success of the farm business, this application will provide a dwelling at Tyn Y Cwm Farm to allow Rhodri to live at Tyn Y Cwm Farm with his young family and be available on site full-time.

The Farm Business

- 2.8 Tyn Y Cwm Farm comprises most of the better quality agricultural land which is available to the farm business which is both suitable for mowing in the summer and grazing in the winter months. There are existing farm buildings at Tyn Y Cwm Farm which are to be supplemented by sheep housing which is submitted in a parallel application. This will ease the burden of losses incurred during lambing in previous years.
- 2.9 Llwyn Llanc Uchaf farm is 8.6 miles away from Tyn Y Cwm farm and is too far away to allow proper management of the holding at Tyn Y Cwm farm particularly during busy times including lambing and calving. There is a dwelling at Llwyn Llanc, which is not owned by the farm business and is occupied by Philip Hopkins and his wife. Philip Hopkins is relinquishing majority control and owing to his health, and the dwelling is their independent asset.

The Existing Agricultural Business

2.10 The farm business comprises of approximately 410 acres (166 hectares) of land, the largest proportion of which is located at Tyn Y Cwm, whilst the rest is located at the various sites under control of the business as follows (see plan at Appendix 1 for respective locations):

- 67ha of pastureland situated at Tyn Y Cwm Farm which is rented on a Farm Business Tenancy;
- 28ha of pastureland at Rhyd Y Fro which is rented on a Farm Business Tenancy;
- 13ha of FBT land at Llwyn Llanc Uchaf Farm, Crynant;
- 20ha of FBT land at Tynywern Farm, Crynant;
- 11ha of FBT land at Llwyngriffith farm, Crynant;
- 18ha of FBT land at Abernant;
- 9ha of FBT land at Pendoylan in the Vale of Glamorgan; and,
- 5ha of rented land at Alltwen.

Cropping

2.11 The land is laid mostly to permanent pasture with 125 acres (50 hectares) of winter fodder made on the farm each year which is conserved as round bale silage.

2.12 Approximately 15 acres (6ha) of stubble turnips are grown on rotation each year which are grazed to fatten lambs during the autumn and winter months.

Livestock

2.13 The farm business includes a flock of approximately 370 breeding ewes with lambs and a herd of approximately 50 suckler cows with followers producing some: -

- 320 commercial lambs per annum
- 40 barren ewes per annum
- 40 commercial store cattle per annum
- 10 cull cows per annum

- 2.14 The sheep flock comprises mostly Welsh Mountain ewes. The ewes are put to Welsh Mountain rams to produce replacements for the flock and rams to be sold at Society breeding sales and finished lambs for market.
- 2.15 The suckler cow herd comprises a commercial herd of approximately 50 suckler cows which are mostly continental cross including Charolais and Limousin. These cows are put to a Charolais and Limousin bull with calving taking place in two batches (March to May) and (September to November). The cattle are sold as stores at approximately 15 to 20 months old with approximately 10 heifers retained each year as replacements for the herd.
- 2.16 The beef herd and sheep flock are managed as closed enterprises apart from accredited rams and bulls for breeding purposes in order to minimise the chances of introducing disease.

Agricultural Buildings

- 2.17 All the buildings on the holding are at Tyn Y Cwm Farm and comprise two large steel portal framed buildings – one (30.6m x 18.5m) to house cattle, particularly during calving. The other (30.48m x 25.90m) comprises two adjoining steel portal frame buildings predominantly set out as a workshop to carry out machinery and equipment repairs for Crynant Plant. It is also used for the storage of agricultural machinery and veterinary medicines.
- 2.18 In addition, a further farm building, 18.2m x 12.1m to house livestock and store straw, hay and other fodder is currently under consideration by the planning department. This will enable close observation of ewes lambing, in close proximity to the proposed dwelling. Lambing is currently undertaken in fields adjoining the buildings but it is difficult to monitor the more vulnerable ewes under darkness.

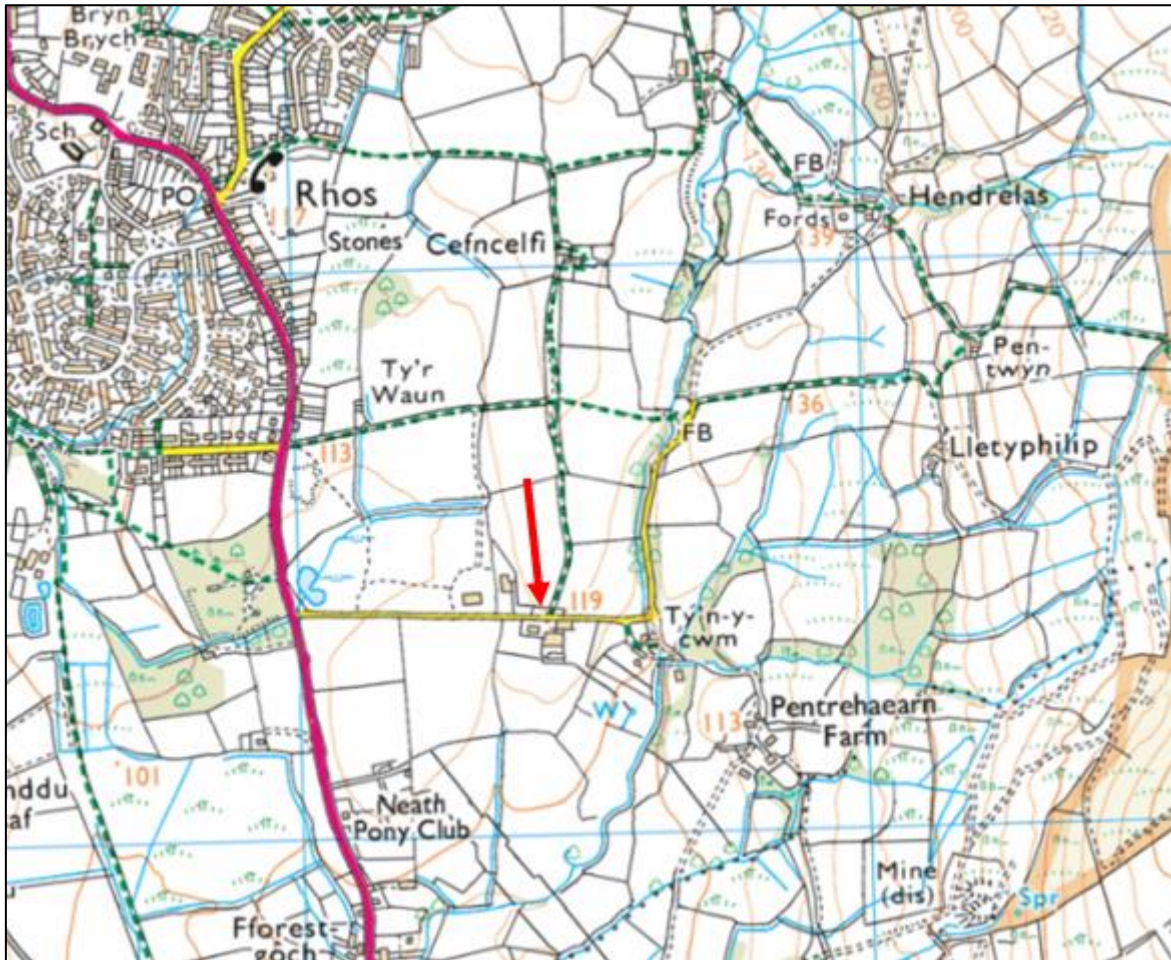
Existing Workforce

- 2.19 Rhodri Hopkins undertakes the majority of the work on the holding with the assistance of external contractors when required.

The Application Site

- 2.20 The site located off Tyn y Cwm Lane, which runs eastward from the A474 Neath Road A474, Rhos and is immediately to the east of the existing mixed-use yard and proposed sheep building at Tyn Y Cwm Farm. It is located in open countryside and within a designated Green Wedge and also in a Mineral Safeguarding Zone. Its precise location is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Location of the Application Site



2.21 The site currently forms part of a large agricultural field and access to the dwelling would be over an existing right of way outside of the applicant's ownership. The images in Figure 3 shows the application site as viewed from the highway.

Figure 3: View of Application Site Travelling West Along Tyn Y Cwm Lane



- 2.22 The land surrounding the site is predominantly agricultural with large expanses of pasture land divided by hedgerows and Public Rights of Way (PROWs), as indicated in Figure 2. The gradient of the land slopes gently downhill from east to west.
- 2.23 There are a small number of residential dwellings accessed off Tyn-Y-Cwm Lane, with a small-holding south-west of the application site and Pentrehaern Farm to the south-east.

Site History

- 2.24 The wider Tyn Y Cwm site has a varied history, which has culminated in an established, and lawful, mixed agricultural/commercial use site. The history, as revealed through a search on the Local Authority's website, is summarised below in Table 1. However, it does not reveal the full history of the site and is expanded further below.

Table 1: Relevant Site History

Reference	Description	Decision
P2000/0102	EXTENSION TO AGRICULTURAL BUILDING FOR HANDLING PENS FOR CATTLE AND SHEEP	Prior Notification not required
P2000/0676	APPLICATION UNDER CONDITION 3 OF APPEAL PERMISSION APP/J6710/95/508622 FOR APPROVAL OF VARIED PHASING AND RESTORATION PROGRAMME (APPROVED UNDER CONDITIONS 2 AND 4 ON 9TH JANUARY 1996)	Approved
P/2003/0167	DETAILS UNDER CONDITION 1 (RESTORATION SCHEME) OF CONSENT P00/0676	Approve
P/2003/0561	VARIATION OF CONDITION 1 OF APPROVAL REF:P/00/0676 TO ENABLE CONTINUATION OF PHASE 3 TIPPING OPERATIONS UNTIL 30 SEPTEMBER 2003 AND COMPLETION OF RESTORATION WORKS BY 30 APRIL 2004	Refused
P/2006/0523	Agricultural Building	Prior Notification Required
P/2006/0873	AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS FOR STORAGE OF HAY ETC AND FOR CATTLE AND SHEEP	Refused
p/2019/5590	LAWFUL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATE (EXISTING USE) FOR THE USE OF WORKSHOP BUILDING AND ASSOCIATED YARD FOR THE CARRYING OUT OF THE SERVICING AND REPAIR OF BOTH AGRICULTURAL AND COMMERCIAL	Issue Certificate

	VEHICLES, MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT AND THE ASSOCIATED PARKING AND STORAGE OF SUCH VEHICLES, MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS.	
p/2020/0185	RETENTION OF EXTENSION TO WORKSHOP BUILDING	Approved
P/2020/0835	SINGLE STOREY SIDE EXTENSION TO EXISTING AGRICULTURAL BUILDING FOR LIVESTOCK ACCOMMODATIO	Approved
p/2020/1114	DETACHED RURAL ENTERPRISE DWELLING, PARKING AND ASSOCIATED WORKS AND AN AGRICULTURAL BARN	Withdrawn
P/2021/0189	EXTENSION OF AGRICULTURAL BUILDING	Approved

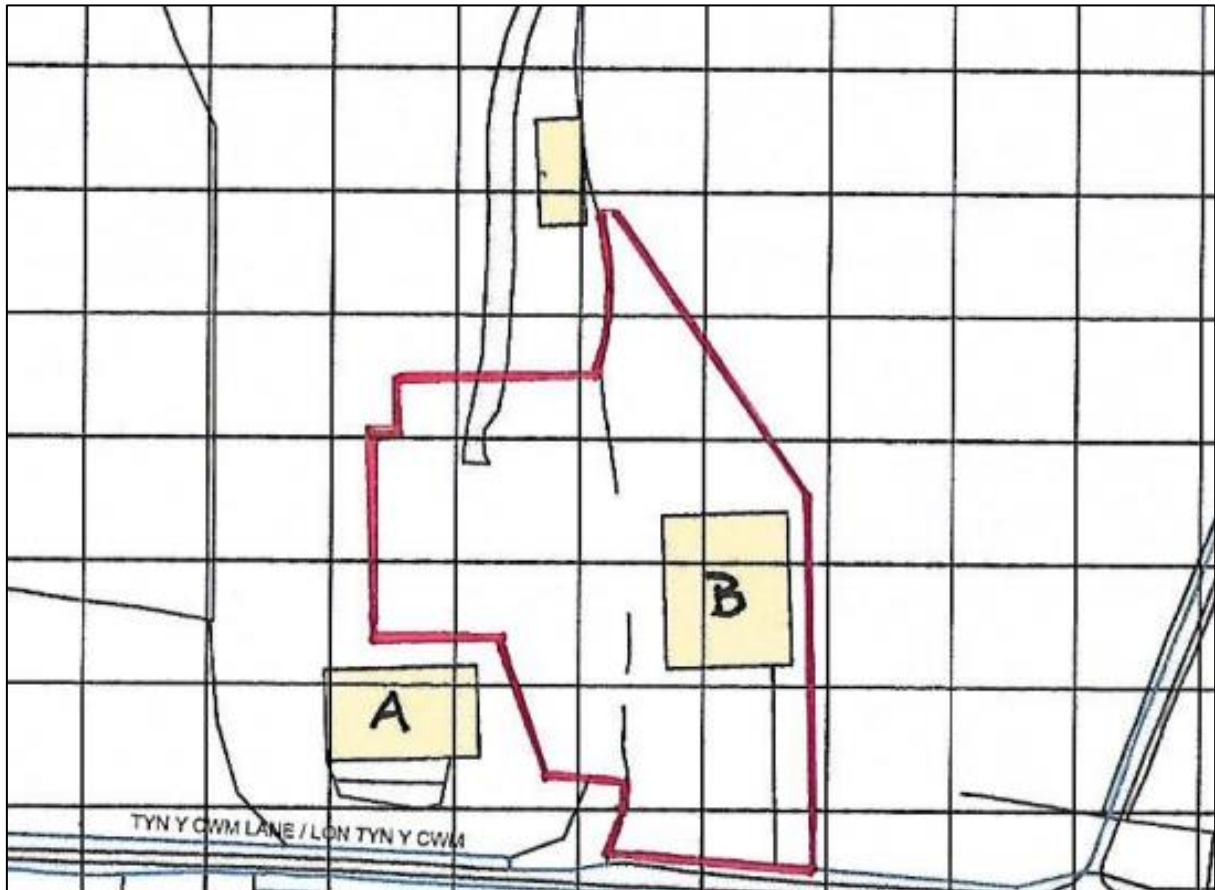
- 2.25 The large barn closest to the proposed development site was constructed in 1996/97. It was set up to be predominantly a workshop to carry out machinery, equipment and vehicle servicing and repairs, as well as for the storage and servicing of agricultural machinery. The building has consistently been used since construction for the service and maintenance of both agricultural and commercial vehicles and equipment.
- 2.26 The yard adjacent to the barn has also been used since the 1990s to park both agricultural and commercial vehicles, equipment and materials, and from 2001/02 the farm has been a registered operating centre for 5 vehicles and 5 trailers for Crynant Plant.
- 2.27 No planning permission had ever been sought for the use of the barn and yard for commercial purposes in connection with Crynant Plant and a certificate of lawful use or development was applied for in 2019, and subsequently issued, to regularise the use of both.
- 2.28 The certificate states:

“Lawful development certificate (existing use) for the use of the workshop building B only and associated yard as identified on drawing number 099 (location Plan dated Aug 2019) for the carrying out of the servicing and repair of both agricultural and commercial vehicles,

machinery and equipment and the associated parking and storage of such vehicles, machinery, equipment and materials.”

- 2.29 The certificate related to the whole of the barn i.e. building B, and including a side extension that was built in 2017 without the benefit of a prior planning permission, and the associated yard, as shown in the extract from approved plan 099 in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Extract from Plan 099 Approved under p/2019/5590



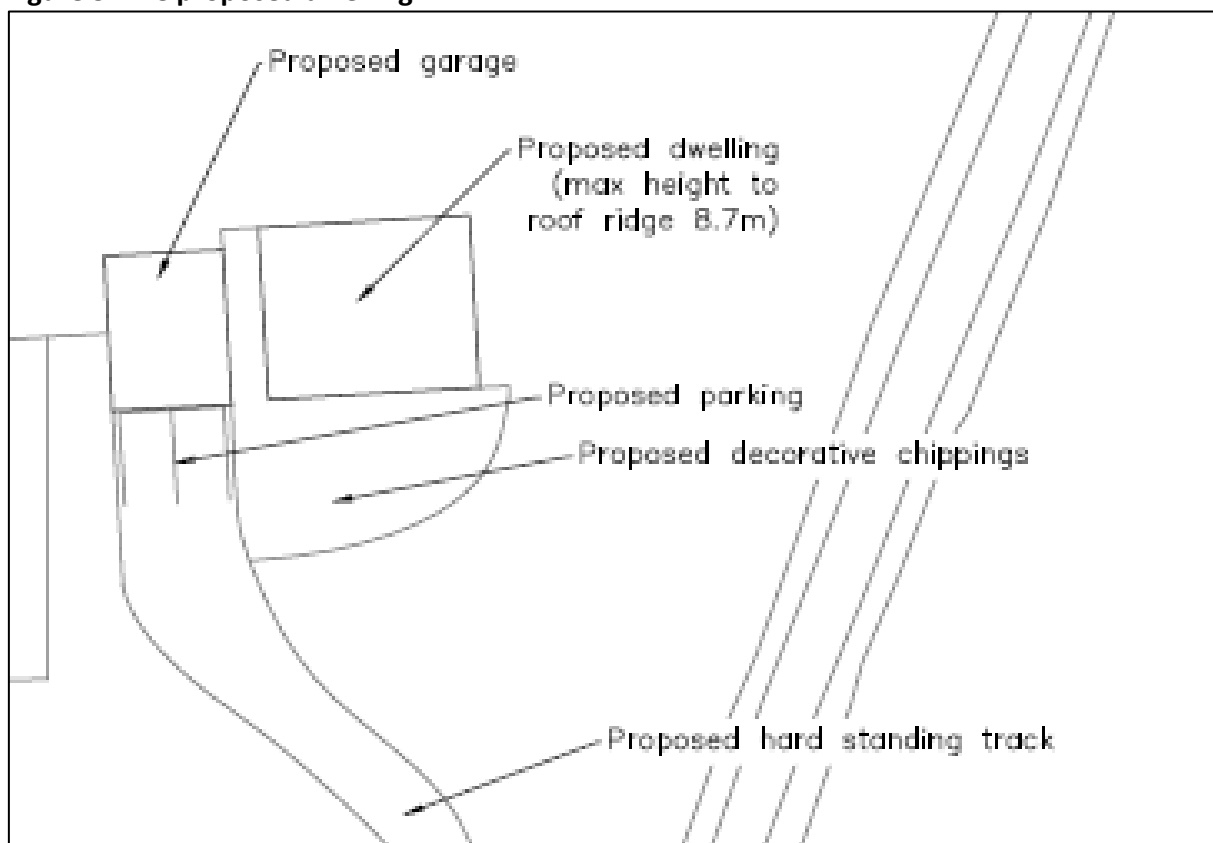
- 2.30 An application for retrospective planning permission (P2020/0185) was approved on April 2nd 2020 for the extension and was subject to the following condition:

“ The development hereby approved shall only be used for the carrying out of the servicing and repair of both agricultural and commercial vehicles, machinery and equipment and the associated parking and storage of such vehicles, machinery, equipment and materials as certified as being lawful under Existing Lawful Development Certificate P2019/5590.”

3 The Proposal.

- 3.1 The Applicant is seeking outline planning permission for the construction of a dwelling on this established holding to provide close care and attention of the livestock at all times throughout the year.
- 3.2 The majority control of the business will be transferred to the applicant due to the age and ill health of his father and uncle who have previously controlled the business.
- 3.3 The proposed dwelling is to be located within close proximity to the existing livestock buildings, housing cows, and the lambing area of the ewes, which will be supplemented by the proposed sheep housing. Its position would provide clear views of the farmyard and access for enhanced security.
- 3.4 Mr Hopkins will live in the dwelling with his wife and two children. The proposed two-storey, four-bedroom dwelling will extend to a habitable floor area of 198m², which is an acceptable size for a principal worker's dwelling and is affordable to the business, as demonstrated through the submitted accounts. Design is reserved for future considerations, however, it is to be positioned centrally within the plot with a maximum height of 8.7m, as indicated on the submitted site plan and as shown in Figure 5 below. The future building would utilise traditional materials such as natural stone and render with a slate roof.

Figure 5: The proposed dwelling



- 3.5 The dwelling will be sited close to an existing field entrance with access over a right of way. The remainder of the field would remain as pastureland which is used for grazing and lambing ewes. The property is proposed to have a detached double garage and two further external parking spaces.
- 3.6 The proposal would be visible from the access at Tyn Y Cwm Lane, although views will be screened by existing mature hedging and additional planting in the form of new hedging to site boundaries. This will also have the added benefit of enhancing the biodiversity value of the land.

4 Relevant Policies

- 4.1 The main policy areas to be taken into consideration in the determination of this application are:

National Policy

- 4.2 One of The Welsh Government's main objectives for rural areas, as set out in the May 2009 document 'Farming, Food & Countryside - Building a secure future', is the promotion of a:

“sustainable and profitable future for farming families and businesses through the production and processing of farm and forestry products while safeguarding the environment, animal health and welfare, adapting to climate change and mitigating its impacts, while contributing to the vitality and prosperity of our rural communities. The planning system can play an important part in supporting the future sustainability of agriculture.”

4.3 National guidance and planning policy is contained within Planning Policy Wales, Edition 11, February (PPW); and a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs).

4.4 The principle of sustainability lies at the heart of the objectives contained within PPW. To this end, PPW is supportive of the rural economy. It notes at paragraph 5.6.2 et:

“supporting the development of a broad range of employment opportunities in rural areas planning authorities can increase economic prosperity and help address the effects of rural decline or depopulation where it occurs. Greater opportunity can support and strengthen the future well-being and sustainability of rural communities”

4.5 It goes on to specifically comment on agricultural proposals at paragraph 5.6.8:

“Planning authorities should adopt a constructive approach towards agricultural development proposals, especially those which are designed to meet the needs of changing farming practices or are necessary to achieve compliance with new environmental, hygiene or welfare legislation....”

4.6 The proposal represents a new dwelling on an established rural enterprise, in the open countryside. With regard to the proposed dwelling, paragraph 4.4.1 of TAN 6 deals with new dwellings on established enterprises and states:

“New permanent dwellings should only be allowed to support established rural enterprises providing:

- a. there is a clearly established existing functional need;*
- b. the need relates to a full-time worker, and does not relate to a part-time requirement;*
- c. the enterprise concerned has been established for at least three years, profitable for at least one of them and both the enterprise and the business need for the job, is currently financially sound, and has a clear prospect of remaining so;*

d. the functional need could not be fulfilled by another dwelling or by converting an existing suitable building already on the land holding comprising the enterprise, or any other existing accommodation in the locality which is suitable and available for occupation by the worker concerned; and

other normal planning requirements, for example siting and access, are satisfied.”

4.7 However, management control of the business is being transferred to Rhodri, who will hold 51% of the business upon transfer, in the event of approval of this dwelling application.

4.8 The transfer of management meets the TAN6 policy exemption – ‘Second dwellings on established farm’ where paragraph 4.5.1 states:

“The Assembly Government wishes to encourage younger people to manage farm businesses and promote the diversification of established farms. To support this policy objective it may be appropriate to allow a second dwelling on established farms that are financially sustainable where the criteria set out in paragraph 4.4.1 cannot be fully satisfied. The two exceptions to the policy are:

- Where there are secure and legally binding arrangements in place to demonstrate that management of the farm business has been transferred to a person younger than the person currently responsible for management, or, that transfer of management is only conditional upon grant of planning permission for the dwelling. The younger person should demonstrate majority control over the farm business and be the decision maker for the farm business;....”*

4.9 Paragraph 4.5.2 then goes on to state:

“ In these circumstances a rural enterprise dwelling may be considered favourably provided the criteria set out above and in paragraph 4.4.1 c - e are met...”

4.10 This transfer of management option removes the requirement of the applicant to satisfy the functional and time tests set out in paragraph 4.41.

4.11 The application site is in a Green Wedge and PPW specifically references development in such areas at paragraph 3.75 stating that it will only be appropriate in a small number of circumstances, including where it is justified for rural enterprise needs.

Local Policy

4.12 The Neath Port Talbot CBC Local Development Plan (2011-2026) (Adopted January 2016)

provides the vision for development in the area and the policies against which development in the County Borough must be assessed. The policies relevant to the determination of this application are:

- **Policy SC1 Settlement limits:** Outside development limits development associated with agriculture will be permitted;
- **Policy EN3 Green Wedges:** there is a presumption against inappropriate development in Green Wedges. The proposal site is within EN3/1 – Alltwen/Rhos/Bryncoch/Neath Abbey/ Leiros Park;
- **Policy M1 Development in Mineral Safeguarding Areas:** Development in these areas will only be permitted in certain circumstances including where there is an overriding need for the development and where the location would have no significant impact on the working of the resource
- **Policy TR2 Design and Access of New Development:** Proposals will only be permitted where they do not have an adverse impact on highway safety, provide appropriate levels of parking and access and are accessible by a range of transport modes
- **Policy BE1 Design:** Proposals should complement and enhance the character and appearance of the site and area and respect the context, utilising appropriate materials;

5 Policy Appraisal

5.1 Having regard to the above, the main issues to consider in this application relate to the principle of development within the open countryside, the impacts of the development upon:

- the character and visual amenity of the area;
- sustainable development;
- the amenities of neighbouring properties;
- highway and pedestrian safety; and
- the mineral resource.

- 5.2 In the below assessment, the response of the officer to the associated pre-application enquiry has been taken into consideration.

Principle of the Development

- 5.3 The application site is located outside the settlement limits defined by Policy SC1 of the Neath Port Talbot, and is within the open countryside, as well as within an area defined as Green Wedge (Policy EN3). As such, there is a policy presumption against new residential development, unless it can be fully justified and is “*appropriate*”.
- 5.4 As the proposal is for a rural enterprise dwelling associated with agriculture, it would fall within the stated exceptions of Policy SC1 and identified as appropriate development in Policy SP3, provided it can be demonstrated that it is essential for the proper functioning of the enterprise and subject to compliance with the criteria set out in paragraph 4.4.1 of TAN 6. An assessment of the proposal against TAN 6 is provided below .

Impact on Character and Visual Amenity

- 5.5 It is noted that the site is located in the open countryside and also within the EN3/1 Alltwen/Rhos/Bryncoch/Neath Abbey/Leiros Par Green Wedge, where there is a presumption against inappropriate development, except in very exceptional circumstances. PPW clarifies that these exceptional circumstances include where a new dwelling is justified for rural enterprise needs. This need has been established in the TAN 6 assessment below.
- 5.6 The dwelling will be sited in an existing agricultural field, close to the main farm complex and directly adjacent to a farm building for which planning permission is being sought under a separate application. It is proposed to be two-storey in design and constructed from traditional materials appropriate to this location.
- 5.7 It will be visible within the surrounding landscape, although views will be screened when travelling eastwards along Tyn Y Cwm Lane by existing mature hedging and from other public vantage points by new boundary hedging, which will also enhance the ecological value of the site. Where views of the building are available, they will be against the context of the existing farm complex and so there will be no adverse impact upon the appearance or character of the area. The proposal is therefore compliant with Policy BE1.

Sustainable Development

- 5.8 The proposal adjoins an existing highway with a direct link onto the Neath Road and local bus services. Although the dwelling itself will be accessed primarily by private motor vehicles, its construction will actually reduce the number of journeys generated currently by the applicant in visiting the site from his current home, over 7 miles from the application site. The proposal is, therefore, compliant with the principle of sustainable development and Policy SP3.

Amenities of Neighbouring Properties

- 5.9 Having regard to the location of the application site relative to surrounding neighbouring properties, it is considered that the proposal is unlikely to have an adverse impact on the residential amenity of any nearby properties. Officers shared this view in their response to the pre-application enquiry made prior to the submission of this application.

Highway and Pedestrian Safety

- 5.10 Highways officers have previously commented that since Tyn Y Cwm Lane has a speed limit of 30mph, a visibility splay of 90 metres in each direction is required. This is not achievable; however, advice has been sought and it is understood that in rural locations Manual for Streets 2¹ standard requirement on 30mph roads is for a visibility splay of 56m, which can be achieved. Notwithstanding this, low vehicle numbers and speeds allow for a reduced splay in this instance.
- 5.11 Furthermore, four off-street parking spaces have been provided on-site, exceeding the requirements of the Supplementary Planning Guidance for Parking Standards and the proposal will not therefore have any adverse impact upon pedestrian or vehicular safety.

Mineral Resource

- 5.12 The proposal site, being located immediately adjacent to existing development and opposite a residential property and along a through-route to other dwellings, albeit a small number, does not make for a viable mineral extraction site. To extract the mineral resource in this location would have a significant adverse effect on land stability and residential amenity of properties at Tyn Y Cwm as well as rendering the existing business at Tyn y Cwm Farm obsolete. It would not, therefore, have a significant impact upon the working of the mineral resource since this specific site would not be considered appropriate.

¹ Manual for Streets 2: Wider Application of the Principles (2010) CIHT

5.13 Application P/2021/0189 for an extension to an agricultural building on the farmyard was recently approved, which sets a precedent in terms of allowing development in this location.

5.14 In addition, it has been demonstrated above that there is an overriding need for the development in this location and there the proposal complies with Policy M1 of the LDP.

Other Matters

5.15 The proposal will comply with the relevant surface water sustainable drainage requirements under the SAB regime.

5.16 The proposal is located in an existing agricultural field which is formed of semi-improved and well-maintained grassland. It will not result in the removal or impact upon any existing trees or hedgerows and so will have no adverse impact upon known protected species. Ecological enhancement can however be provided in the form of design measures incorporated into the building itself such as bird boxes and bat bricks as well as additional planting throughout the site.

6 TAN 6 Assessment

Functional Test

6.1 The functional test is necessary to establish whether “*there is a clearly established existing functional need*” and:

“it is essential for the proper functioning of the enterprise for one or more workers to be readily available at most times. It should relate to unexpected situations that might arise, for which workers are needed to be on hand outside of normal working hours for the particular enterprise. Such a requirement might arise, for example, if workers are needed to be on hand day and night to deal with an emergency that would threaten the continued viability and existence of the enterprise without immediate attention. Where there are existing dwelling(s) on the enterprise then the need for additional workers to live on the site for the proper functioning of the enterprise must be demonstrated to be essential.”

6.2 TAN 6 paragraph 4.4.1b also notes that the functional requirement should relate “to a full-time worker” and it is necessary to consider the ‘time test’ in paragraph 4.9.1. The time test states:

“Where there is currently no dwelling associated with the rural enterprise the worker for whom there is a functional need for new accommodation must be a full-time worker. With the exception of second dwellings on established farms, it must not relate to a part-time

requirement, or a requirement that does not relate to the enterprise. If this is a second (or further) dwelling, all existing dwellings must also be occupied by full-time workers for whom it is essential that they also remain on site for functional reasons, or by workers and their dependents last employed in a rural enterprise.”

- 6.3 The functional test requires the establishment of an essential need for workers to live on site to prevent foreseeable accidents or emergencies which could prejudice the viability of the business. In this case the needs arise from the supervision of 50 suckler cows calving throughout the year; and 370 spring lambing ewes with particular attention to the yearlings and ewes carrying multiples which would be lambed indoors in the proposed new building. In previous years all ewes have lambed in fields adjacent to the buildings, but the lack of ability to monitor them adequately from an off-site location has led to unacceptable losses and a significant amount of time spent travelling from the applicant’s dwelling to the farm at all hours.

The Labour Requirements

- 6.4 Labour requirements on farms can be calculated by means of Standard Man Days (SMD) where one SMD equates to 8 labour hours a day and 275 SMDs equates to the labour provided by a farmworker each year.
- 6.5 The standard coefficients are taken from from the *John Nix Farm Management Pocketbook* 52nd edition (2022). Based upon these details it is possible to estimate the labour requirements of the holding using SMD coefficients:

6.6

Enterprise	Number	SMD/head	Standard Man Days
Suckler cows & calves	50	1.35	67.5
Suckler bred stores	75	1.1	82.5
Bulls	2	3.5	7
Ewes	370	0.5	185
Sub-total			342

15% management & maintenance			51
Total			393
Standard Man Days/worker			275
Labour Requirement			1.4

6.7 Based on a total labour requirement of 275-man days per agricultural worker, it can be seen that the theoretical labour requirement for the farm is 1.4 full-time workers. Clearly the proposed dwelling will be occupied by a full-time worker.

6.8 However, given the transfer of management exemption in paragraph 4.5.1 of TAN6 it would not be necessary to meet the functional and time tests laid out above.

Financial Soundness

6.9 Paragraph 4.4.1(c) of TAN 6 is divided into four parts and states that the unit and the agricultural activity concerned should:

- i) have been established for at least three years;
- ii) have been profitable for at least one of them;
- iii) be currently financially sound; and
- iv) have a clear prospect of remaining so.

6.10 The financial test is set out at Paragraph 4.10.2 of TAN6. It states:

“Evidence of actual or potential economic performance will be required. To assess economic sustainability it will be necessary to show the business has a reasonable prospect of providing a market return for all operators for the amount of management and manual labour inputs, including the job for which the rural enterprise dwelling is being sought, for at least five years from the anticipated completion of the proposed development. This should be assessed on the basis of what is a realistic income for the skills of the operator. A financial test is also necessary to assess the size of dwelling which the enterprise can afford to build and maintain. Dwellings which are unusually large in relation to the needs of the enterprise, or unusually

expensive to construct in relation to the income it can sustain in the long-term, should not be permitted. It is the requirements of the enterprise rather than of the owner or occupier which are relevant to determining the size of dwelling that is appropriate.”

- 6.11 The business accounts for P & HL Hopkins are available from the years ended 31st December 2018 to 31st December 2020 inclusive, with a profit being shown in every year, thereby satisfying the first two criteria of the financial test.
- 6.12 Business profits are good over the past three years, but in common with every other business, profits do fluctuate. Nevertheless, it is clear that the wage equivalent (£18,132) for the full-time worker, Rhodri, is met in 2020 and in all previous years if depreciation is discounted. The other 0.4 of a full-time worker is met from wages paid to part-time staff which is already accounted for in the business accounts in each and every year.
- 6.13 The proposed outline dwelling would extend to 198m², which would be appropriate for a principal worker's dwelling.
- 6.14 Standard build costs for a dwelling are generally accepted as £1,000/m², resulting in a theoretical build cost of £198,000 for the proposed dwelling. However, given the ready access to machinery and the fact that the Applicant would undertake all the groundworks plus many other lesser skilled tasks associated with the construction it is estimated that build costs could be reduced to £125,000.
- 6.15 The capital account has a significant sum which has built up over several years of profitable trading. These saving shave been made in full knowledge of the business' aspiration to construct an on-site dwelling. This would significantly reduce the notional mortgage requirement to £50,000 without any threat to the future viability of the business. A mortgage equivalent for this proposal would be £2,900.
- 6.16 The sum of £21,032 (£18,132 + £2,900) is clearly affordable to the business, particularly given the fact that the proposal will result in an increased number of sheep surviving as a result of an on-site presence.

- 6.17 The financial test is considered as met.

The Suitability and Availability of Other Accommodation

- 6.18 A search of www.rightmove.co.uk on 12th December 2021 found there was a single four-bedroomed flat within a 1-mile radius of the application site, priced at £150,000. However, this

property is actually located at 1.1miles driving distance from Tyn Y Cwm Farm and this is too far to enable close monitoring and rapid response to livestock welfare issues within the buildings and therefore not appropriate.

- 6.19 The original Tyn Y Cwm Farmhouse was sold separately by auction by its former owners in 1997 and remains in the ownership and occupation of the purchasers.
- 6.20 There are no other dwellings available on the holding for Rhodri Hopkins and his family to occupy and there are no farm buildings which are suitable for conversion to residential use. The occupation of the dwelling at Llwyn Y Lanc is addressed above and notwithstanding the fact it is not a business asset and is occupied by an individual who has relinquished majority control and is not able to provide farm labour, it is too far away from the buildings at Tyn y Cwm and the livestock there to meet the welfare and monitoring requirements.
- 6.21 The lack of available suitable housing within close proximity to Tyn Y Cwm Farm supports the need for an on-site rural enterprise worker dwelling.

Siting and Access

- 6.22 The proposed siting of the dwelling would allow it to be viewed in the context of a group of existing agricultural buildings, whilst proving security for the farm by deterring opportunists from entering the site and the ability to respond rapidly to any livestock which may escape from the buildings.
- 6.23 The proposal would utilise an existing vehicle cross-over, over which there is a right of access and utilise an existing field entrance, currently used by farm vehicles and animals. With the construction of the dwelling, farm vehicles will continue to be directed through the existing yard and the new formalised access only utilised by domestic traffic, improving highway safety at this part of Tyn Y Cwm Lane.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 This statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for a farm worker's permanent dwelling on an agricultural holding.
- 7.2 The majority control of the business will be transferred to the applicant due to the age and ill health of his father and uncle who have previously controlled the business.

- 7.3 Whilst the exemption policy does not require the functional and time tests to be met, there is a clear for a dwelling at the site for a full-time worker.
- 7.4 The business is well established and profitable in all years and meets all nominal wages and build costs.
- 7.5 At 198m² the proposed principal dwelling is within the size parameters of other approved rural enterprise workers' dwellings and is a suitable size to accommodate the applicant and his family. It will be constructed using traditional materials and to a design which is appropriate given its rural context.
- 7.6 There are no other dwellings nearby which are suitable and available to meet the needs of the enterprise, nor are there any buildings suitable for residential conversion.
- 7.7 The dwelling is suitably located to meet the functional needs of the holding, enabling the occupant to monitor both the agricultural buildings, the housed cattle and the entrance, for security purposes.
- 7.8 The proposal therefore complies with the relevant policies of PPW and the LDP and TAN 6 and it is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.