



PLANNING STATEMENT

PROPOSED TEMPORARY RURAL ENTERPRISE DWELLING AT **BRYN AWEL FARM, CRYNANT, NEATH PORT TALBOT**

On behalf of
Mr J Blake

Our Ref: 1331.a
Date: July 2022
Prepared by: Jason Evans

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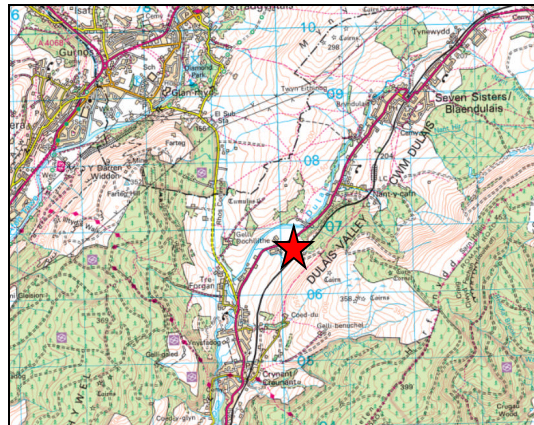
1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Evans Banks Planning Ltd has been instructed by the Applicant to prepare and submit an application for the siting of a temporary rural enterprise dwelling at Bryn Awel Farm, Crynant, Neath Port Talbot. This current application therefore seeks to provide all information previously requested by the local planning authority (LPA) to provide a full and robust case for the proposed development.
- 1.2 This Planning Statement therefore forms part of the submissions of the application to be considered by the Authority and should be read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings and supporting information.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 THE SITE

- 2.1.1 The application site relates to an element of an agricultural holding that lies between the settlements of Crynant and Seven Sisters, with its position indicated by the red star on the plan below.



Plan A

- 2.1.2 The application site itself consists of an area positioned directly to the south of one of the holding's existing buildings, with the area in question pictured in foreground of Photograph 1.



Photograph 1

2.1.3 The application site is generally level and undefined by any formal boundary treatment, currently forming part of a larger enclosure of semi-improved grassland. As detailed above, the site is located directly adjoining an existing building serving the holding and its associated yard to the north. It is as a result of the site's close proximity to the core complex and yard, and the natural screening/sheltering attributes of the adjoining land, that this location has been chosen.

2.1.4 In terms then of the rural enterprise to which this application relates, this is currently of a mixed operational format consisting of livestock (sheep) rearing and a firewood enterprise. The livestock element has involved the purchase of 40-45 ewe lambs, in the autumn each year and then selling them as yearlings in the following summer. The firewood enterprises is a direct by-product of the applicants work as a tree surgeon servicing local landowners, which has seen considerable growth in the last 2 years.

2.1.5 The objective is to now grow the existing mixed rural enterprise at the holding to include a more sustainable form of livestock production (home-grown) and a new Alpaca enterprise. Part of achieving this is on-site living accommodation for the Applicant, which would in turn also ensure greater efficiency of the current enterprises.

2.1.6 Further detail on the enterprise, its activities and financial operation can be found in the accompanying Agricultural Planning Appraisal (APA).

2.2 THE SURROUNDING AREA

2.2.1 In the immediate sense, as detailed above, the application site (indicated by the red star) lies directly to the south of the enterprise's core complex, as illustrated below.



Photograph 2

2.2.2 The complex includes a range of building used for a mix of purposes, dependant on the time of year and the specific needs of the holding during a certain period. The bulk of the land holding is then located to the east and south of the complex, consisting primarily of parcels of productive semi-improved grassland. Access to the holding and its complex is via a shared access land on its western edge, that then leads onto the A4109 to the north.

2.2.3 In the wider sense, as can be seen in Photograph 2, an existing residential property is located to the west and a large commercial enterprise (scrap yard) beyond it. The surrounding landscape is then largely dominated by agricultural enclosures, isolated dwellings and farmsteads. The nearest settlements to the application site are then Crynant to the south and Seven Sisters to the north.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The proposal is for temporary planning permission for a period of 3 years for a rural enterprise dwelling (cabin). The following information should therefore be read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings. An assessment of the functional and financial aspects of the proposal can be found in that accompanied APA and should also be referred to.

The Enterprise and Development Justification

- 3.2 As detailed previously, the enterprise relates to a mixed-activity form of holding that has a fully diversified series of streams of income, resulting in an all-year labour requirement and sustainable income model.
- 3.3 As detailed in the accompanying APA, the proposed additions to the enterprise's core activities will not only increase the proposed annual stocking levels of the holding, but also the functional and financial contribution it makes to it. The Applicant has made clear and committed improvements to the agricultural elements of the enterprise through existing and recently approved infrastructure, but in order to progress to the next stage, on-site full time residential accommodation is required.
- 3.4 All the above is fully explored and demonstrated in the accompanying APA, illustrating that there is a clear justification for the proposed development. However, in recognising that certain elements of the enterprise are yet to be established, a temporary consent of 3 years is sought at this stage.

Layout and Design

- 3.5 The proposal relates to the temporary siting of a modest log cabin. As detailed above, the cabin will be sited on the edge of the existing yard, to ensure that it is within 'sight and sound' of all aspects of the enterprise.

- 3.6 Internally, the cabin is likely to have 2-3 bedrooms, bathroom and an open plan kitchen/dining/lounge area.

Access and Parking

- 3.7 Access to serve the application site will be via the existing adjoining yard.
- 3.8 In terms of parking, this will be provided for by the adjoining yard.

Drainage

- 3.9 All surface water will be disposed of via new soakaways.
- 3.10 All foul drainage will be disposed of by a private package treatment plant served by its own independent drainage field.

4.0 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

4.0.1 In terms of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the adopted development plan for the area within which the application site is positioned is the *Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan* (LDP). All relevant policies have been considered, including the following:

- Policy SP3 (Sustainable Communities)
- Policy SP14 (The Countryside and the Undeveloped Coast)
- Policy SC1 (Settlement Limits)
- Policy EN2 (Special Landscape Areas)
- Policy EN6 (Important Biodiversity and Geodiversity Sites)
- Policy EN7 (Important Natural Features)
- Policy TR2 (Design and Access of New Development)

4.0.2 All of the above have been given due consideration in the preparation of this planning application, but of particular relevance are the requirements of Policy SC1 and Policy EN7, which are now discussed in detail.

4.1 POLICY SC1 – SETTLEMENT LIMITS

4.1.1 As its title suggests, under the provisions of Policy SC1, the majority of settlements within the County Borough have defined limits within which the principle of development is considered acceptable and supported. Outside these limits, development may still be considered acceptable, but only if it qualifies as one of a series of listed exceptional circumstances. One such example is proposals for rural enterprise dwellings, providing the guidance and requirements of relevant national planning policy and guidance are met.

4.1.2 The accompanying financial information and APA provides a detailed assessment of the application proposal against the relevant tests of TAN6 for rural enterprise dwelling proposals. As can be seen, there is a clear functional requirement for the

Applicant to live on site. Being currently unable to do so, is preventing them from growing the business and diversified streams of income of their rural enterprise. The on-site presence will allow an immediate change in the form, nature and growth in the animal rearing element. Living off-site – which at present is not a possibility for both financial and availability options - means that the on-site proposal put forward by this current planning application represents the only option if the business is to now move forward.

- 4.1.3 In summary therefore, the application proposal adheres to all relevant tests and requirements of PPW, TAN6 and so in turn Policy SC1.

4.2 POLICY EN7 – IMPORTANT NATURAL FEATURES

- 4.2.1 Policy EN7 represents the overarching ecological policy, seeking to ensure that in the case of all proposals that biodiversity interests are given due consideration. It sets out that proposals should not “... *adversely affect ecologically or visually important natural features such as trees, woodlands, hedgerows/field boundaries, watercourses or ponds ...*”.
- 4.2.2 As detailed in Section 2 of this Statement, the application site represents a very small area of land, occupied only by semi-improved grassland (see Photograph 1). It does not contain any ecologically or visually important features, including water bodies, trees, hedgerows or stone outcrops. The application site therefore has a low biodiversity level and its loss would not represent an unacceptable impact. The application proposal therefore adheres to the requirements and objectives of Policy EN7.
- 4.2.3 In conclusion, the application proposal adheres to all relevant aspects of both national and local adopted planning policy.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This application seeks temporary planning permission for the siting of a rural enterprise dwelling.
- 5.2 As detailed in the accompanying APA and this Statement, the Applicant has already laid the foundations for a strong rural enterprise based on principles of diversification that are rooted in and strongly related to agricultural activity and its economy. They have identified through this process that linking these ensures a strong economic base, ensuring they can farm their land in a sustainable and viable fashion. However, in order to continue this path of security and growth, on-site residential accommodation on the holding is now needed.
- 5.3 As this Statement and the accompanying information has shown, there is clear evidence that the proposal meets all relevant tests and requirements as set out by national and local planning policy. However, recognising that their case relies on a new business element, they are more than willing that consent should in the first instance be granted on a temporary basis, confident that all expectations will be met by the end of its period.
- 5.4 In conclusion and based on the accompanying information, we therefore respectfully request that planning permission is granted for the proposed development in question.