



PLANNING STATEMENT

RETENTION OF REAR YARD SHELTER **AT 129 HEOL CAE GURWEN,** **GWAUN CAE GURWEN, NEATH PORT TALBOT**

On behalf of
Mr John Hughes and Mr Andrew Thomas

Our Ref: 1670.a
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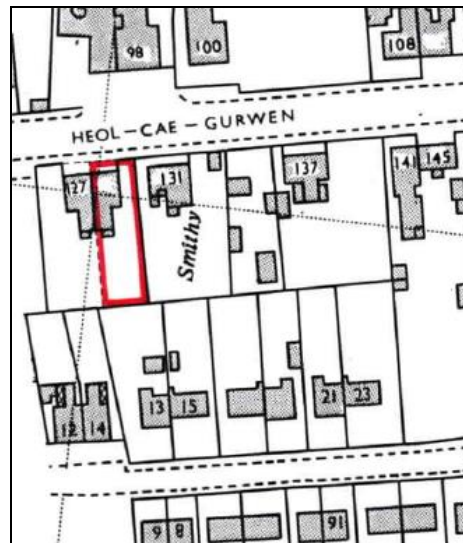
1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Evans Banks Planning Ltd. has been instructed by Mr J Hughes and Mr A Thomas (the Applicants) to prepare a full planning application for the retention of a rear yard shelter at 129 Heol Gurwen, Gwaun Cae Gurwen.
- 1.2 This Planning Statement therefore forms part of the submissions of the application to be considered by the Authority, and provides information on the following points:
- A brief description of the site and surrounding area
 - A description of the proposed development
 - Consideration of relevant local planning policy

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 THE SITE

- 2.1.1 The application relates to a semi-detached two storey property (edged red on Plan A and Photograph 1) used as a private members club with a rear enclosed amenity area (yard).



Plan A



Photograph 1

- 2.1.2 From the public highway (to its east), the application building is entered through a single pedestrian door, pictured in Photograph 2 below.



Photograph 2

- 2.1.3 On both the ground and first floor there are a range of rooms (including Members Bar), utilised as a Private Members Club by the Hells Angels Motorcycle Club South West.
- 2.1.4 As can be seen in Photograph 2, at the side of the main building leading to the rear yard/garden is a partly enclosed space (pictured below), formerly used as a garage.



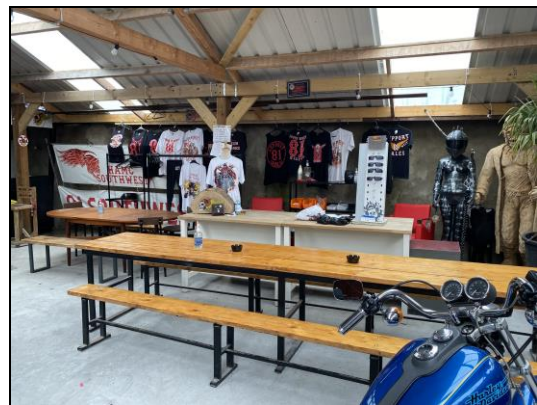
Photograph 3

2.1.5 Moving westwards from the above building and former garage then is the rear enclosed yard of the property, which includes an external toilet block. The yard has historically been and continues to be used as an external space and extension of the wider private members club use of the property, particularly when meetings, larger gatherings, and events are held.

2.1.6 In order to create a space for such activities that could take place irrespective of weather conditions, several years ago a shelter/roof structure was erected over this external area and external toilet block, based on a wooden framed with a roof clad in sheeting, as can be seen from the photographs below.



Photograph 3



Photograph 4

2.1.7 As can also be seen, the boundary walls of the property shared with properties to the north and south have been retained, as has the former storage container at the western element of the application site, used as a private bar and entertainment stage.

2.1.8 It is this wooden roof structure for which planning permission is now sought.

2.2 THE SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.2.1 In the immediate sense, residential properties adjoin the application site's boundaries to the north, south and west, with Cwmamman Road itself then bounding the site's on the east.
- 2.2.2 In the wider sense, the application property forms part of the settlement of Gwaun Cae Gurwen, which is generally linear in pattern. Like most, the settlement is dominated by residential development, but does include a variety of other uses including retail units, public houses, a number of industrial units, as well as a number of places of worship.
- 2.2.3 In terms of access, as detailed above, the application site is positioned on Heol Gurwen, the principle transport artery through the village. As a result, the application site is within walking distance of a number of bus stop served regularly by the X26 service running between Brynamman and Swansea.

2.3 PROJECT DESIGN PARAMETERS AND PRINCIPLES

- 2.3.1 As a result of the local context and the aspirations of the Applicant for the property, the following design principles and parameters influenced the design of the proposal subject of this planning application:
- **Scale** – To be no more than single storey in nature.
 - **Design** – To utilise a traditional pitched design, using materials used on similar commercial and outbuildings found in the immediate and surrounding area.
 - **Access** – To maintain existing access arrangements to the rear yard.
 - **Surface Water Drainage** – To retain the existing and original means of surface water disposal serving the rear hardsurfaced yard.
 - **Biodiversity** – A bird box will be installed on the external wall of the property as a simple enhancement measure to support local wildlife and contribute to biodiversity gain.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

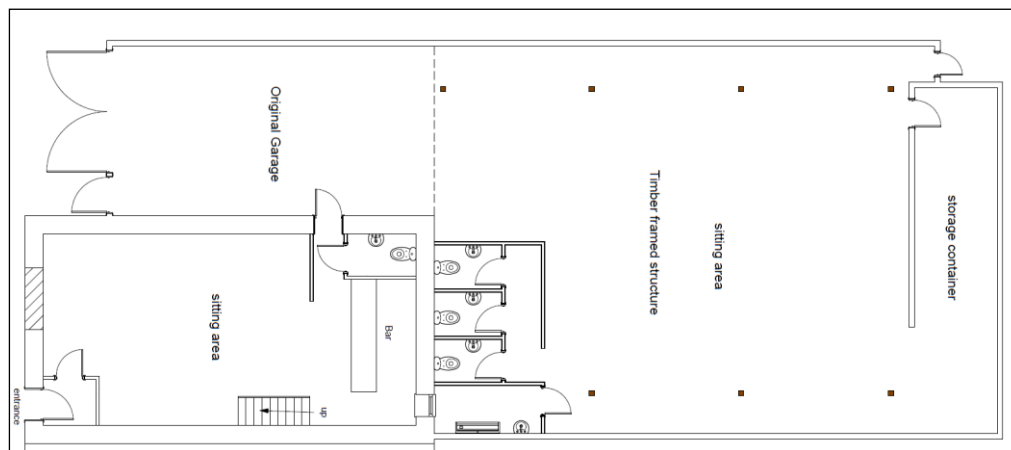
3.1 *Project Overview*

3.1.1 This application seeks permission for the retention of a rear yard shelter at 129 Heol Gurwen, Gwaun Cae Gurwen. The yard forms part of a private members club and so has historically been utilised for the purposes of meetings, events and larger gatherings by Members and their guests on a regular basis.

3.1.2 In addition to their weekly meetings, such uses of the space in question have also included charity fundraising events, weddings, birthdays and other celebrations, as well as gatherings with other motorcycle clubs. However, it was identified some time ago that the often inclement weather resulted in the use of the rear yard/garden being conditional on good weather spells and so Members took the decision to cover this space with a wooden framed shelter, for which now retrospective planning permission is sought.

3.2 *General Scale and Design*

3.2.1 As can be seen from the submitted drawings, the shelter-structure covers the whole of the rear yard and the external toilet block, as shown by the plan extract below.



Plan B

3.2.2 It consists of a wooden framed structure, with its roof then clad in metal profile sheeting and polycarbonate sheeting to allow the penetration of natural light into the space below. Its northern and southern edges are open then to the existing boundary walls of the properties to the north and south of the application property. Its western edge is then defined by an existing storage container and its eastern boundary then links up with the existing building and aforementioned garage structure.

3.2.3 In general design terms, the structure is single storey in nature and has used materials that are commonly used in the construction of ancillary structures found throughout the settlement.

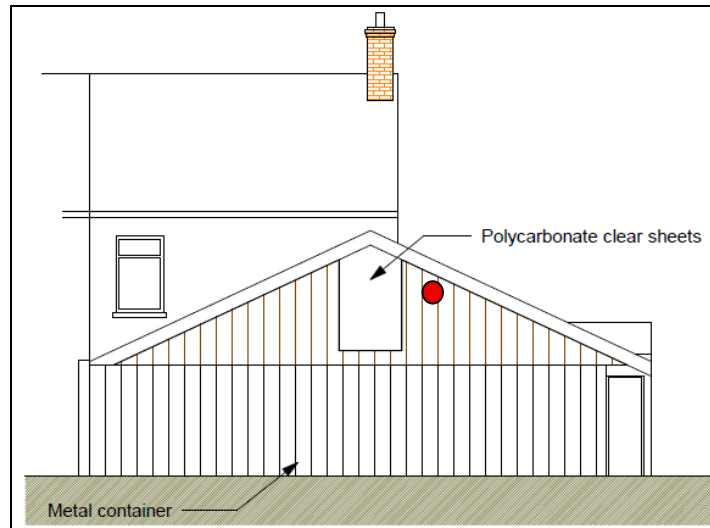
3.3 Drainage

3.3.1 All surface water will continue to be managed in the same fashion as has historically been done so in the case of the hard-surfaced yard that the structure now covers – namely, two soakaway trenches running along the northern and southern application site boundaries. No change is proposed to these structures, due to their efficient operation to date.

3.3.2 No change is proposed to foul water management and disposal, with the historic external toilet block retained and unchanged by this application.

3.4 Biodiversity

3.4.1 In line with current statutory requirements, the proposal will include measures to increase the application site's biodiversity levels through the installation of a new bird box on the structure's eastern elevation, at the location indicated by the red circle in the plan below.



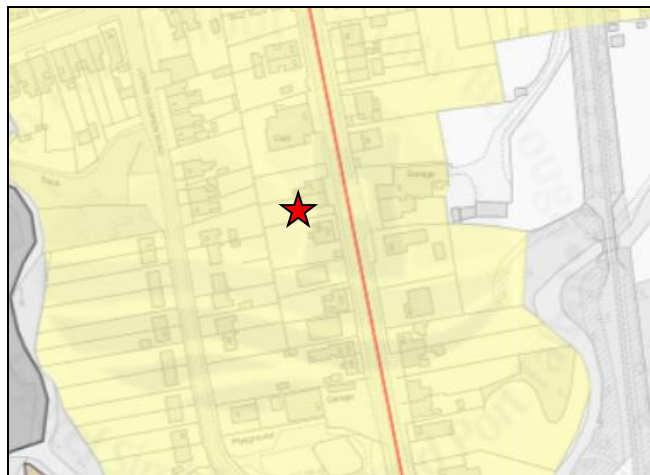
Plan C

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). As such, the policies contained within this document have been carefully considered in the preparation of this planning application. The proposal has been assessed with particular reference to the following relevant policies:

- **Policy SC1** – Settlement Limits
- **Policy BE1** – Design

4.0.2 Plan D below displays an extract from LDP Proposals Map, showing the position of the application site (red star).



Plan D

4.0.3 As can be seen from the above, the application site lies within the defined Settlement Limits (Policy SC1) for Gwaun Cae Gurwen/Cwmgors, as well as being on one of the County Borough's identified *Primary & Core Road Networks*.

4.0.4 As a result of the above, the principle of development at the location in question is supported and so the more detailed requirements of Policy BE1 are now considered.

4.0.5 Accordingly, particular attention has been paid to Policy R2 and Policy TR2 which are considered of key relevance to this application. The following sections provide a detailed assessment of the proposal against the specific requirements of these policies.

4.1 Policy BE1 - Design

4.1.1 Policy BE1 is the overarching policy of the LDP against which all proposals are assessed and are required to demonstrate “... *high quality design which fully takes into account the natural, historic and built environmental context and contributes to the creation of attractive, sustainable places.*”. In ensuring that this is achieved, proposals are required to meet the requirements of 10 criteria, of which 5 are relevant to the application proposal. The proposal is therefore now assessed against each in turn.

4.1.2 The first criteria (Criterion 1) for consideration requires that a proposal “... *complements and enhances the character and appearance of the site, building or area in terms of siting, appearance, scale, height, massing and elevation treatment;*”. As illustrated on the accompanying drawings and photographs within this report, the proposal relates to a single storey structure that is subordinate to the principle two storey building and the wider streetscene it forms part of. It also utilises materials that draws from those found on buildings within the surrounding area and retains existing boundary treatments of the application site, shared with adjoining properties. As a result, the application proposal satisfies the requirements of Criterion 1, but also in turn those of Criterion 2 and Criterion 3.

4.1.3 The fourth criterion for consideration (Criterion 4) then requires that a proposal will “... *not have a significant adverse impact on highway safety, the amenity of occupiers of adjacent land or the community.*”. As detailed above, the use of the land upon which the application structure is positioned has already been established as being

lawful by virtue of an associated application for a certificate of lawfulness. The land therefore forms part of an established private members club and the yard area has a longstanding history of being used for a range of purposes, including events and celebrations involving large groups of people and entertainment.

- 4.1.4 With the requirements of Criterion 4 in mind, on the basis of the above context, the assessment is made against the structure itself and not the use within it. As a result, with no increase in activity, the application proposal will not have any detrimental impact on highway safety. However, with the area in question now being covered, any impact on the amenity of surrounding properties will be reduced further by the application structure. As a result, the application proposal satisfies the requirements of Criterion 4.
- 4.1.5 The final criterion for consideration then is Criterion 9. The criterion relates to matters of surface water run-off and flood risk. As the proposal will in effect result in no change to the land-cover of the application site (i.e. hard surfaced), there will then be no relative change to such matters. As a result, the requirements of Criterion 9 and Policy BE1 as a whole are satisfied in full.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the retention of a rear yard shelter at 129 Heol Gurwen, Gwaun Cae Gurwen.
- 5.2 The proposal has come about through the associated private members club's desire to utilise the rear yard of the application property in all weathers. As detailed herein, the space in question has a long history of being used for a range of activities associated with the club, including meetings, formal and charity events. However, inclement weather has often prevented them from doing so and so the application structure was naturally constructed in response to this.
- 5.3 The application structure itself is modest in scale, being only single storey in height. It consists of a wooden framework with a roof clad in profile metal sheeting and polycarbonate sheets. All other aspects of the space in question – yard surface, surface water drainage features and boundary treatments – have been retained and remain unchanged. As a result, the overall design and form of the application structure is reflective and respectful of the wider streetscene and context, as well as of the amenity of adjoining land uses. This then in turn ensures it is fully compliant with the requirements of relevant local planning policy.
- 5.4 In light of the above, we respectfully request that planning permission be granted for the proposed development.