

SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site is a detached dwelling located within the countryside. The property is located to the south of the B4287 between Cimla and Efail-Fach and is located outside settlement limits. The site area is approximately 0.18 hectares.

There is a watercourse to the west and south of the site and the property benefits from off-street parking with a detached garage and a fairly large rear amenity space.

The property has previously been extended to provide a large two-storey side extension, however the original section of the dwelling retains its original cottage appearance.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

The application site seeks to construct a two-storey extension to the front of the property.

Due to the orientation of the dwelling the front elevation is on the opposite side of the road and facing into the garden area.

The existing two-storey side extension to the southeast of the dwelling was constructed over 20 years ago and extends above the ridge of the original dwelling and beyond the front elevation.

The proposed two-storey extension would retain the ridge height of the original dwelling and the cat-slide roof to the rear elevation. The two-storey extension would have a dual pitched roof and would measure 9.2m in width and 6.3m in depth.

The proposal would include the installation of roof lights to the rear cat-slide roof and would include alterations to the roof and windows of the existing two-storey extension.

The application also proposes to extend the existing patio by 2.8m.

NEGOTIATIONS

Extensive discussions have been on-going throughout the course of the application and pre-application stages.

There have been various alterations to the design have been discussed with concerns raised in regard to the scale, form and massing of the proposal.

PLANNING HISTORY

The application site has the following relevant planning history: -

N1996/0006 - Proposal: Extension To Building And Detached Garage. Decision: Approved. Decision Date: 13-FEB-96

CONSULTATIONS

Ward members have been notified

Community Council – no representation received.

Authority Tree Officer – no objections raised with request for conditions.

Authority Biodiversity Officer – No objection, with request for informative relating to bats.

Authority Contaminated Land – No objection with request for unexpected contamination condition.

REPRESENTATIONS

A site notice was also displayed on 15.04.2026 and 30.04.2024.

In response, to date no representation has been received.

REPORT

The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 places a duty on the Council to take reasonable steps in exercising its functions to meet its sustainable development (or wellbeing) objectives. This report has been prepared in consideration of the Council's duty and the "sustainable development principle", as set out in the 2015 Act. In reaching the recommendation set out below, the Council has sought to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

National Planning Policy:

[Future Wales: The National Plan 2040](#) is the national development framework, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040. The development plan 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 wellbeing of our communities.

The following policies are of particular relevance to the assessment of this application:

Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking

Policy 8 – Flooding

Policy 9 – Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure

Policy 12 – Regional Connectivity

[Planning Policy Wales \(Edition 12, February 2024\)](#) outlines the Welsh Government's commitment to the importance of 'places' and 'place-making', the importance of using previously developed land wherever possible in preference to greenfield sites, and the recognition of the health and wellbeing related benefits by creating a sense of place and improving social cohesion. PPW 12 confirms that the environmental components of places are intrinsically linked to the quality of the built and natural environment and contribute to the health and wellbeing of the people who live, work and play there. It emphasises the importance of creating sustainable communities and reducing reliance on the private car as part of a package of measures to reduce the country's carbon footprint and help tackle the climate emergency.

PPW12 is supported by a series of more detailed [Technical Advice Notes](#) (TANs), of which the following are of relevance: -

- TAN 12 – Design

2.6 “Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to grasp opportunities to enhance the character, quality and function of an area, should not be accepted, as these have detrimental effects on existing communities.”

4.5 “In many cases an appraisal of the local context will highlight distinctive patterns of development or landscape where the intention will be to sustain character. Appraisal is equally important in areas where patterns of development have failed to respond to context in the past. In these areas appraisal should point towards solution which reverse the trend.”

4.8 “Appraising “character” involves attention to topography; historic street patterns, archaeological features, waterways, hierarchy of development and spaces, prevalent materials in buildings or floorscape, architecture and historic quality, landscape character, field patterns and land use patterns, distinctive views (in and out of the site), skylines and vistas, prevailing uses and plan forms, boundary treatments, local biodiversity, natural and cultural resources and locally distinctive features and traditions (also known as vernacular elements).”

6.16 “The appearance and function of proposed development, its scale and its relationship to its surroundings are material considerations in determining planning applications and appeals. Developments that do not address the objectives of good design should not be accepted.”

- TAN 15 – Development, flooding and coastal erosion

Local Planning Policies

The Local Development Plan for the area comprises the [Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan](#) which was adopted in January 2016, and within which the following policies are of relevance:

Strategic Policies

- **Policy SP3** Sustainable Communities
- **Policy SP4** Infrastructure
- **Policy SP10** Open Space
- **Policy SP15** Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- **Policy SP20** Transport Network
- **Policy SP21** Built Environment and Historic Heritage

Topic Based Policy

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| Policy SC1 | Settlement Limits |
| Policy EN5 | Conversion and extension of existing buildings in the Countryside |
| Policy EN06 | Important biodiversity and geodiversity sites. |
| Policy EN07 | Important Natural Features |
| Policy TR2 | Design and Access of New development |
| Policy BE1 | Design |
| Policy I1 | Infrastructure Requirements |

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

The following SPG is of relevance to this application: -

- [Parking Standards \(October 2016\)](#)
- [Pollution \(October 2016\)](#)
- [Design \(July 2017\)](#)
- [Development and the Welsh Language \(July 2017\)](#)
- [Landscape & Seascape \(May 2018\)](#)
- [Biodiversity and Geodiversity \(May 2018\)](#)
- [The Historic Environment \(April 2019\)](#) (incl. [Schedule of Buildings of Local Importance](#) and [SPG: Schedule of Designated Canal Structures](#))

ASSESSMENT

Having regard to the above, the main issues to consider in this application relate to the principle of development, together with the impact on the visual amenity of the property and wider locality, highway safety, biodiversity, trees and flooding.

Principle of Development

As noted above, the application site is located outside settlement limits. Policy SC1 of the Adopted Local Development Plan states that *'Development within settlement limits that is proportionate in scale and form to the role and function of the settlement as set out in the Settlement Hierarchy will be acceptable in principle. Outside settlement limits, development will only be permitted under the following circumstances:*

1. Constitutes a sustainable small scale employment use adjacent to a settlement limit; or
2. It constitutes live-work unit(s) immediately adjacent to a settlement limit in the Valleys Strategy Area only; or
3. It constitutes the small-scale expansion of an existing business or the suitable conversion of an existing building; or
4. It constitutes the appropriate replacement of an existing dwelling; or
5. It is an affordable housing exception site; or
6. It is an appropriate rural enterprise dwelling; or
7. It is an appropriate 'One Planet Development'; or
8. It is a sustainable tourism or farm diversification proposal that is suitable in a countryside location; or
9. It is associated with the provision of public utilities, infrastructure and waste management facilities that cannot reasonably be located elsewhere; or
10. It is associated with either agriculture, forestry, minerals or energy generation; or
11. It relates to the appropriate provision of accommodation for Gypsies / Travellers; or
12. It constitutes the provision of open space and small scale ancillary facilities adjoining the settlement limit.

Where development is permitted outside settlement limits, any new buildings must be located adjacent to existing buildings or settlements wherever possible and be of an appropriate scale and form.

It is noted that the application seeks to extend an existing dwelling in the countryside and as such would also need to comply with Policy EN5 of the Local Development Plan. Policy EN 5 (Conversion and Extension of Existing Buildings in the Countryside) states that *'The alteration, extension or conversion of existing suitable buildings outside the defined settlement limits for residential, employment, or tourism uses will only be permitted where:*

1. *The existing building is structurally sound and is capable of conversion without substantial major external alteration or reconstruction.*
2. *In the case of changes of use to residential purposes alone: (a) It can be demonstrated that there are no viable alternative uses to secure the retention of the building; and (b) That the building is of architectural and/or historic merit.*
3. ***In the case of residential extensions, the extension does not result in a disproportionate increase in the size, scale and massing of the building'***

The supporting text of policy EN5 also states '*Extensions to buildings that are either existing dwellings in the countryside or are buildings being converted into dwellings should be limited in size to ensure that the form and character of the original building is not adversely affected. The size of extension likely to be acceptable will depend on the circumstances of each individual case, but extensions should not normally exceed the overall dimensions or cubic content of the original building by more than 20%.*

As noted above the application has historically been extended with a two-storey extension approved in 1996. While the extension is an addition to the original dwelling it is acknowledged that this extension is in excess of 20 years old and the Authority have no record of the approved plans. Any additional extension to the dwelling would further exacerbate the 20% cubic content increase of the original dwelling however consideration does also need to be given to the scale and massing of the proposed extension, and the impact upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider locality.

Criteria 3 of Policy EN5 places emphasis on the size, scale and massing of the building, and the design of the proposal is considered in the following section.

Impact on Visual Amenity

The application site is a two-storey part stone and part render detached property located within the open countryside and within the Green Wedge (Policy EN3) which seeks to prevent inappropriate development.

The property is located along the B4287 which is a busy classified highway located between Cilma and Pontrhydyfen with a dispersed number of detached dwellings located at sites along the road.

As noted above, the existing property has been extended in the past which has impacted the historic scale, character and visual appearance of the property. However, the original property has largely remained, with the catslide roof to the rear facing the road and the mini double gable detailing above the first floor windows to the front elevation.

The property is located next to the B4287 and it partially screened by existing vegetation around the boundary. The property benefits from a parking area and garage to the east and a large garden area to the south. The proposed extension would be located on the southern elevation and partially screened by the existing dwelling.

The application has been under consideration for a prolonged period as discussions have been on going in regard to the scale, form and design of the proposed extension. It is noted that the revised design has reduced the massing of the extension and has considered the existing scale and character of the existing dwelling.

The revised plans demonstrate that the proposed extension would retain the ridge height of the existing dwelling and would extend forward of the front elevation. The revised design includes a dual pitch design to the front elevation which would be sympathetic to the existing character of the dwelling.

The overall scale and mass of the extension would inevitable conflict with the advice set out in the supporting text of the LDP Policy EN5, as the 20% would be significantly exceeded. However the policy aims to protect the form, character and visual appearance of the original dwellings in the countryside from inappropriately sized extensions and alterations. As the property has been unsympathetically extended in the past it is considered that the form, character and appearance of the original dwelling has already been diluted.

The plans convey that the extension would also include the installation of roof lights to the catslide elevation facing the road, however the roof lights are appropriately located on the roof slope and are considered to be acceptable.

The two windows located within the front elevation of the two-storey extension would be enlarged to provide asymmetrical windows, while the windows would be larger than the existing they are not considered to be out of keeping with the property.

The extension would be completed in off-white render, natural stone plinth, white facias and Welsh slate roof, which would match the existing dwelling and is considered to be in-keeping.

It is considered that the revised design, scale and massing of the proposed extension is appropriately designed and would not be a disproportionate addition to the dwelling.

In addition, due to the limited visibility of the proposed extension, due to orientation of the property with road and the vegetation, the extension would not to be widely visible.

Due to the location of the property within the open countryside, it is considered reasonable to remove Permitted Development Rights for the dwelling, due to the scale of the extension proposed and the scale of the existing side extension, to prevent further development on site without prior consideration from the Authority.

The application also proposes to increase the patio area to the front of the property that would measure 800mm in height and 2750mm in depth. The patio is considered to be an acceptable scale and would match the existing patio form.

In conclusion, having regard to amount of negotiation on scale and design, the extension is not considered to unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the property or the wider rural landscape surrounding the property.

Impact on Residential Amenity

As noted above the application site is located within the open countryside, and the closest residential property to the application site would be located in excess of 160m.

As such, the proposed development is not considered to result in an unacceptable impact in terms of overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impacts. The proposal is also considered to be of a scale that would not result in unacceptable impacts in terms of noise during construction.

Parking and Access Requirements and Impact on Highway Safety

In line with the Parking Standards SPG, dwellings are expected to provide an on-site parking provision of 1no space per bedroom up to 3no spaces. It is noted that the application site benefits from an existing garage and driveway for the provision of 3no vehicles. It is noted that the dwelling currently accommodated 4no bedrooms and the proposed extension would result in the addition of one further bedroom. As such the expected parking provision on site would remain unchanged and is considered to be acceptable.

Biodiversity / Ecology

As identified above, Policies EN6 and EN7 of the Local Development Plan will be of relevance insofar as there is a need to ensure any impacts on biodiversity/ natural features are appropriately assessed and, where applicable, mitigated.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 12 sets out that “planning authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. This means that development should not cause any significant loss of habitats or populations of species, locally or nationally and must provide a net benefit for biodiversity”. This policy and subsequent policies in Chapter 6 of PPW 12 respond to the Section 6 Duty of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The application has been supported by a tree survey, which sets out that the proposed extension is not envisaged to impact upon the existing trees on site and no trees would need to be removed in order to facilitate the development. Tree Protection fencing is to be provided to protect T1-T4 and a suitable worded condition will be attached to the Decision Notice to ensure this is installed prior to the commencement of construction works. A response has been received from the Authority’s Arborist which confirms no objections to the proposal, with a request for conditions.

The application has also been supported by a Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS) which outlines that bird boxes would be added to the existing trees in the garden. A condition will be attached to the Decision Notice to ensure the bird box is installed in a reasonable period.

A response has been received from the Authority's ecology Team who have provided a no objection response with the request for the development to be undertaken in accordance with the GIS, and an informative for a bat advisory note.

Flood risk / Drainage

The application site is partially located within the Flood Zone 2 and 3 for Surface Water and Small Watercourses due to the location of a small watercourse to the west off the application site. It is noted that the extension would not be located within the flood zone and would be located at an elevated position.

Given that the application for a household extension to an existing dwelling, it is not considered reasonable to require the submission of a Flood Consequence Assessment for this application.

An informative will be added to the Decision Notice to ensure the applicant is aware of the sites partial located within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

Contaminated Land

The application site is located within an area identified land contamination. The Authority's Environmental Health officer has been consulted and has provided a no objection response with a request for a condition relating to unexpected contamination.

CONCLUSION

The decision to recommend planning permission has been taken in accordance with Section 38 of The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires that, in determining a planning application the determination must be in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan comprises Future Wales - the National Plan 2040 and the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan (2011–2026) adopted January 2016.

It is considered that the proposal represents an appropriate form of development that would have no unacceptable impact on design and visual amenity, highway and pedestrian safety, biodiversity, trees, contaminated land, flooding and drainage. Accordingly, the proposed development is in accordance with Policies SC1, EN5, EN6, EN7, EN8, BE1 and TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

It is further considered that the decision complies with Future Wales - the National Plan 2040, and the Council's well-being objectives and the sustainable development principle in accordance with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.