

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT –

To Support a Planning Application for a new Domestic Extension, a Double Garage and a new Highway Access at Gate Farm, Caersws, Powys, SY17 5RE.

Overview:

The purpose of this application is to create a new entrance and lobby to the dwelling, facing the east side of the property, a new double garage with an open front for the charging of motor vehicles and a new highway access to the property that will improve visibility and safety considerations. It is proposed that the existing entrance to the property will be blocked off, as will a further two field gate positions, currently accessed directly from the B4569 in order that a single point of access will be provided in the future to both the residential property and to the adjacent fields in a more open and visible location.

The recent planning history of the property indicates –

P/2009/1062 - Erection of a replacement dwelling and detached double garage, change of use of agricultural land to extend domestic curtilage, installation of a septic tank and drainage mound and associated works; Decision: Consent; Date: 23/11/2009

Pre-planning advice was sought from Powys County Council which indicated the ‘it is likely the principle of development would be considered acceptable’ with due consideration also having been given to the advice and guidance offered by the consultees. These recommendations have been incorporated into the submission that is now being presented as a full planning application as a result of the new access serving agricultural land along with the dwelling (PCC Reference for the Pre-Planning Application Enquiry - 21/0043/PRE).

The Proposals:

Setting, Character and Scale

Gate Farm is a detached property with existing outbuildings that stands alone on the north side of the B4569, in open countryside, some 1Km to the west of the Caersws settlement boundary. The original farmhouse was replaced with the current dwelling after planning permission was granted in 2009. The property is set back from the highway and is screened by the boundary hedge to the south. The finished floor level to the property is also between 0.5m and 1.0m lower than that of the highway which assists to anchor the appearance and scale of the property into its site and immediate context. The property is not overlooked and does not overlook others. The property can be viewed from distance and locations from the NW to the ENE of the property, but otherwise has a low visual impact on the wider agricultural landscape setting.

The proposed extension to the existing dwelling is modest in scale (nom. 9m²) and seeks to provide a new ‘front door’ entrance and lobby to the property. The extension is to be positioned on the principal elevation at the SE corner of the property and composed to appear subservient to the existing sunroom that is located at the centre of the elevation. The visual impact of the proposals will be small as the new roof covering will be extended down to tie in with eaves and a new bay window detail. External material finishes are proposed to tie in with the colour and texture of the existing in order that the new extension remains complementary in appearance and scale to the aesthetic and details of the main dwelling house. The proposals have been developed to align with LDP Policy H7 (Householder Development) and with Policy DM13. Extension would not be visible from the highway, particularly once existing property and field entrances have been blocked and new hedging species planted.

Similar considerations have been given to the construction of the new, open fronted double garage on the east side of the property. It has been positioned some 5m away from the east facing gable of the dwelling house in order to maintain the grouping of buildings and a strong link with that of the main house. The floor level will be set down to be similar with that of the main house, which in turn would reduce its visual impact on the setting. The form of the garage has been kept simple, and the selection of materials for the external finishes will include natural slate and timber cladding in order that they align with the palette of materials used elsewhere at the property and in the locality.

The creation of a new highway access to the property is considered a priority to improve upon the location and sightlines/visibility from the existing access on the west side of the existing dwelling house. The location of the new proposals would increase the visibility to the west (from the direction of Trefeglwys), and in turn would ensure that the new entrance will be constructed to an improved standard in terms of its visibility, width, surfacing, radii and approach gradient. Please refer to the accompanying design drawings which seek to convey these points. It is proposed that a further two field gate openings will also be closed up therefore 3No existing points of access will be reduced to 1No joint access for both the property and for access to the agricultural pasture. With reference to LDP Policies DM13 and T1, it is anticipated that the proposals will make access to the property and land along this curtilage safer. The layout will enable larger agricultural vehicles with trailers to pull off the road in their entirety and is sufficiently dimensioned to accommodate their geometries. The parking capacity for vehicles at Gate Farm will not be reduced by these proposals, sufficient turning space is available within the site/garden space and all vehicles will be able to approach the edge of the highway safely, in a forward gear.

Accessibility

The criteria are less applicable at this location due to the nature and scale of this domestic application. The proposals however will offer barrier free access to the property from the location of the new double garage and vehicle parking to the new entrance and lobby extension that is proposed. Widths of new door openings will also align with the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations and BS8300.

Movement

Aspects of the application are not applicable on this occasion, as the application does not relate to sustainable, public means of travel nor does it change any other routes, connectivity nor access to these facilities in the immediate area. However, the new double garage is proposed as a charging point for the electric vehicles that the owners currently run. They are committed to reducing their carbon footprint/emissions and as such are proposing that the charging units are to be provided beneath the shelter of the garage roof.

Environmental Sustainability

Use of Resources - The proposals do seek to make best use of natural resources with existing materials. The timber being used for the cladding, and structure will be sourced from certified sources/suppliers and local trades/craftsmen will be approached to undertake the alterations and new elements of work. Energy efficient lighting will be used throughout the scheme, in parallel with existing renewable and low-carbon installations/measures that are operational at the property.

Ecology – A Preliminary Ecological Report has been prepared by Jon Sloan Ecological Consultants to support the application. The report indicates that there is a low/negligible potential for bats to access the existing property and for existing and as such the new extension would not pose a concern in this regard.

The proposals also require the translocation of a 25m length of hedgerow to the east of the existing house, including the felling of an existing oak tree at this location. The Ecological Report outlines the methodology and timings to be adopted and identifies a location for its future position. The existing property entrance and two field gate openings are to be blocked off as part of the development proposals, and in doing so, the report outlines the mix of species that will be used in the planting scheme. It is also proposed that an Ecologist will be in attendance whilst these works are undertaken on a precautionary basis to ensure that bats and other wildlife species can be adequately safeguarded during these works.

Further mitigation measures and enhancements are also proposed within the report and aftercare advice offered to improve the probability of a successful outcome, which in the longer term will offer opportunities for habitat improvements to be realised at Gate Farm.

Community Safety

The criteria are not applicable on this occasion.

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