

Planning, Design and Access Statement

February 2022

Full application for change of use and conversion of a commercial building to a dwelling

Storage and workshop building, adj Brookside, Larkey Lane, Knighton, Powys, LD7 1DW

1. Summary

1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement supports a full application for the change of use and conversion of an existing storage and workshop building off Larkey Lane in Knighton in order to create a single residential dwelling.

1.2 The statement assesses the scheme against prevailing local and national planning policy, and explains the design and access principles and concepts that have been applied to the various aspects of the proposed development, concluding that the application should be supported because it promotes the delivery of sustainable development.

2. Site description

2.1 The site currently accommodates a 2-storey detached storage and workshop building fronting onto Larkey Lane. The site is in a central location within the border market town of Knighton, which performs an important sustainable 'liveability' function for its residents and rural hinterland, with a wide range of services and facilities available. The town is also well-served by public transport options, with a station on the Heart of Wales railway line and a number of bus stops serving a range of existing services.

2.2 The immediate area is characterised by a mixture of mainly residential properties, in an array of architectural styles, and of varying ages and character. Some commercial buildings also exist nearby, and close too is a public pay and display surface level car park. The property itself is straightforward in terms of its design with rendered lower elevations and timber-boarded upper elevations under a pitched slate roof.

2.3 There are no listed buildings immediately close-by and sections of the Offa's Dyke Scheduled Monument are somewhat distant too, to the west, although the route of the Offa's Dyke Path National Trail runs past the front of the site down Larkey Lane. The site is, however, on the edge of the designated Knighton Conservation Area, and is recognised to be in a sensitive location as a result.

2.4 Further relevant detail is included below in the Design and Access section of the statement.

3. Proposed development

3.1 The application is made in full and proposes the change of use and conversion of the property to allow it to be used as a single residential 2-bedroomed dwellinghouse. The scheme ensures a minimal level of change to the external appearance of the building. The proposed arrangements are shown in detail on the submitted plans and elevational drawings.

3.2 No on-site parking is possible with the scheme. However, a public car park exists close-by which, whilst pay-and-display restrictions apply during the day, is free overnight. Albeit limited, there are also some on-street parking options available nearby and elsewhere within the town.

3.3 Overall, a sympathetic conversion scheme is proposed, the design, layout, scale and density of which, whilst making the most efficient use of the space available, would reflect and respect the character of existing development in this part of the town, and the wider context for the site.

3.4 Further relevant detail is included below in the Design and Access section of the statement.

4. Legal context

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 says that if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of making any determination under the Planning Acts, which it must do in this case by virtue of Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 38(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that if, to any extent, a policy contained in a development plan for an area conflicts with another policy in the development plan, the conflict must be resolved in favour of the policy which is contained in the last document to be adopted, approved or published (as the case may be - this is considered to be relevant in respect of the parking situation - see below).

4.2 Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation areas) Act 1990 sets out a general duty in terms of conservation areas in the exercise of planning functions, namely that special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing their character or appearance.

4.3 The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 requires any statutory body carrying out a planning function to exercise those functions in accordance with the principles of sustainable development, as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Act provides a definition of sustainable development, meaning the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals.

4.4 Also relevant is Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, known as the 'Section 6 duty', which requires public authorities to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions, including the planning function, and in so doing promote biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions.

4.5 In terms of relevant secondary legislation, the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 (as amended) requires a Design and Access Statement (DAS) to be submitted for schemes such as this within designated conservation areas. The order as amended states that a Design and Access Statement must:

- (a) Explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development;
- (b) Demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and how the design of the development takes that context into account;

- (c) Explain the policy or approach adopted as to access, and how policies relating to access in the development plan have been taken into account; and
- (d) Explain how any specific issues which might affect access have been addressed

4.6 Relevant detail is included below in the Design and Access section of the statement.

5. Development plan

5.1 The statutory development plan for the purposes of 'Sections 38(5) and (6)' above comprises two documents, namely:

- Future Wales, The National Plan 2040 (Future Wales), which was published by Welsh Government on 24 February 2021. It is now part of the development plan for all of Wales, meaning decisions on planning applications will need to accord with its policies, so far as material to the decision. On page 134, it states that *"Policies 2, 3, 6 and 8 will ensure development in mid Wales' towns is sustainably located in areas with good access to public transport where reliance on the car can be reduced."*
- The Powys Local Development Plan (LDP), which was adopted by Powys County Council on 17 April 2018. It came into effect as (now part of) the statutory development plan for the area on that date, setting out the policies and proposals for development in the County from 2011 to 2026. The LDP places sustainable development at its core and its vision for Powys in 2026 is given at paragraph 3.1.2, which states that *"As the 'green heart of Wales', Powys will be a place of vibrant and resilient communities providing sustainable development and economic opportunities set in a healthy, safe environment, whilst celebrating, protecting, enhancing and sustainably managing its natural resources, native wildlife and habitats, heritage, outstanding landscapes and distinctive characteristics..."*

5.2 The narrative associated with Policy 6 of Future Wales (Town Centre First) states that: *"To breathe new life into town centres, the Welsh Government has adopted a 'Town Centre First' approach. This puts the health and vibrancy of town centres as the starting point of locational decision-making. It also directs facilities and services to where intended users can easily walk, cycle and/or use public transport to access them."* It states further that: *"As well as non-residential development, town centres are an appropriate location for new homes. Policy 2 provides the basis for local planning authorities to support intensification in and around town centres. This will support the future of our town centres and provide opportunities for small-scale development, including new housing..."*

5.3 The LDP lists a range of objectives to help deliver its vision centred around meeting future needs; supporting sustainable development and the re-use of suitable sustainably located previously developed land; ensuring town centres are vital, viable and attractive; supporting the regeneration and renewal of Powys' built environment and historic towns; protecting, preserving and enhancing the distinctive historic environment, heritage and cultural assets of Powys; encouraging active healthy lifestyles by enabling access to open spaces; and supporting community wellbeing and cohesion.

5.4 The LDP contains a number of Strategic, Development Management and Topic Based policies to help implement its objectives, the most relevant of which are as follows:

5.5 Strategic Policy SP1 (Housing Growth) refers to the positive contribution of housing on windfall sites in meeting the identified housing need. Strategic Policy SP5 (Settlement Hierarchy) sets out the County's sustainable settlement hierarchy as: Towns, Large Villages, Small Villages, Rural Settlements and Open Countryside. Knighton is designated as a Town, placing it at the top of the hierarchy. Strategic Policy SP6 seeks to direct a higher proportion of all new development to Towns, including through development on suitable sites within the development boundary, such as the

application site. Strategic Policy SP7 (Safeguarding of Strategic Resources and Assets) seeks no adverse impact on the County's assets, which include in this context Knighton's Conservation Area and its setting, and the Offa's Dyke Path National Trail.

5.6 In terms of the most relevant Development Management policies, Policy DM13 (Design and Resources) is a wide-ranging policy that seeks development proposals which demonstrate good quality design that has regard for its setting, infrastructure and resources. Development should complement the character of the surrounding area, respect conservation areas, and contribute to the preservation of local distinctiveness and sense of place. It should also be inclusive to all, and must be designed and located so as to minimise access and transportation impacts. The living conditions of residents must not be unacceptably affected and adequate utility services must also exist, or be provided. Development should also demonstrate a sustainable and efficient use of resources by including measures to achieve, for example, energy conservation and efficiency.

5.7 In terms of the most relevant Topic Based policies, Policy H1 (Housing Development Proposals) states at Criterion 1 that in Towns and Large Villages, and in order to meet the aims of relevant strategic policies (SP1, SP5 and SP6 above), housing development will be permitted on suitable sites within development boundaries, as in this case. Policy H3 (Housing Delivery) states that housing development proposals must be of an appropriate scale and shall provide a suitable mix of housing types to meet the range of identified local housing needs. Policy H4 (Housing Density) seeks the most sustainable and efficient use of land.

Assessment against the development plan

Principle

5.8 As a residential scheme utilising an existing building in a sustainable, town centre location, the proposal is demonstrably acceptable as a matter of principle, subject to compliance with all detailed aspects of policy, including impact on the character and appearance of the area, and conservation area, effects on living conditions of both existing and future occupiers, the availability of only off-site parking, and all other detailed matters.

5.9 Fundamentally, bringing an under-utilised building back into productive usage will enhance the viability and vitality of this part of the town centre, in line with the strategic aims of both national and local development plan policy.

Detailed considerations

Design, character and appearance

5.10 The existing building currently contributes to the character and appearance of the area by means of its modest form and appearance, which would be maintained as part of the scheme. This would ensure the proposal is well-designed and acceptable. It would likewise preserve the characteristics of the conservation area and its setting, as required by both statute and policy.

Highway safety and Parking provision

5.11 There is currently a vehicular access to the existing building serving an up-and-over door to part of the ground floor of the existing storage and workshop area. The space has not been used previously as a residential garage; neither can it now. In order to create an acceptable living environment, including the provision of a level pedestrian access into the property to meet current regulations and standards, no private garage element has been included within the conversion scheme. It is accepted that this means the new dwelling would have no dedicated car parking space, none being feasible within the confines of the site. However, the following points are relevant.

5.12 The site is in a sustainable town centre location with many accessible services, facilities and public transport options nearby. As such, the lack of on-site parking is not considered to be a situation that would undermine the role, purpose and successful functioning of a dwelling in this location. This is a conclusion supported by adopted statutory development plan policy (Policy 6 of Future Wales), which seeks to direct facilities and services to where intended users can easily walk, cycle and/or use public transport to access them. New homes are not excluded in this context; town centres being an appropriate location for new homes. Policy 6 is up-to-date policy and should be given significant weight. TAN 18 also allows for some car free housing developments - see below.

5.13 In addition, car parking provision is available elsewhere within the town, either within the public car park opposite or in permissible on and off-street locations nearby.

5.14 Furthermore, also relevant is the updated CSS Wales parking standards 2014 and the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013. The scheme proposes a 2-bedroomed residential conversion. Typically, this would require the provision of 2 car parking spaces (1 space per bedroom for general needs accommodation). Nonetheless, in line with the Active Travel (Wales) Act, which seeks to achieve an increased and greater proportion of society using walking and cycling as the preferred mode of transport over shorter distances, the 2014 CSS standards now include a sustainability reduction on parking spaces to be provided. Given the close proximity of a supermarket, post office, community hospital and school, together with an accessible railway station and bus stops, it is considered justified to conclude that in applying the sustainability reduction criteria, the requirement would be reduced to 1 space. This level of provision could reasonable be met by the existing facilities mentioned above, if necessary.

5.15 A similar set of circumstances was accepted by the Council previously as part of its consideration of a recent application (ref. 20/1460/FUL) for the conversion of a former church in Llanidloes town centre into a dwelling. The delegated officer report states that:

"A safe access, parking, and visibility splays are a fundamental requirement of any development (LDP:DM13, Part 10).

It is noted that the proposed development currently has no vehicular access or parking available within the curtilage of the site. The Design and Access Statement confirms that parking is unavailable at the application site but reference is given to the close proximity of the development to the centre of Llanidloes.

Technical Advice Note 18 paragraph 4.15 states that "some car free housing development may be appropriate in locations with good walking, cycling and public transport links and in areas where parking is controlled". Given the proximity of the application site to the centre of Llanidloes which has good walking and transport links to nearby facilities it is considered that in this instance parking provision on site is not considered to be essential.

Powys County Council's Highway Authority have been consulted on the proposed development and have no objection.

In light of the above, it is considered that the proposal complies with relevant planning policies."

Impacts on living conditions

5.16 The scheme has been designed to achieve an acceptable living environment, both for existing and future occupiers. The main outlook from habitable living areas will be to the front and rear. As a result, there will be no unacceptable adverse impact on existing neighbouring properties through overlooking; nor will there be any loss of outlook. There is the added benefit too of a more neighbourly use being created. In terms of open space, much is available nearby within the town itself and beyond.

Biodiversity

5.17 The application does not propose any re-roofing works and as such, no further detail has been provided in terms of any potential impacts on protected species. Nonetheless, the scheme shows suitable biodiversity enhancements, as required.

Overall

5.18 The proposed development will respect the character and appearance of its surroundings, and have an acceptable impact. It is well related and complementary to the area, offering an appropriate level of development in keeping with surrounding and adjoining land uses. Furthermore, the scheme will ensure the living conditions of future occupiers and neighbouring properties are maintained. It will also safeguard and enhance the appearance of the site and the contribution it makes, meeting all relevant and applicable detailed policy criteria in the process. On this bases, it has been demonstrated how the proposed scheme complies with the overall strategy and approach of the statutory adopted development plan, taken as a whole, and how it also complies with the more detailed aspects of policy.

5.19 Further relevant detail is included below in the Design and Access section of the statement.

6. Other material considerations

Planning Policy Wales - Edition 11 - February 2021 (PPW)

6.1 National policy set out within PPW has the promotion of sustainable development at its heart. Its overriding objective is to deliver social, environmental, economic and cultural prosperity for the country, looking to the planning system to help achieve this. It states that the planning system provides for a presumption in favour of sustainable development to ensure such factors are balanced and integrated in decisions taken on planning applications. It also explains how this approach is supported through legislation and that planning authorities, as public bodies subject to the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, must exercise these functions as part of carrying out sustainable development.

6.2 Specifically, PPW states that in contributing to the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, planning proposals and decisions should ensure that all local communities, both urban and rural, have sufficient good quality housing for their needs, in safe neighbourhoods and promoting access to employment, shopping, education, health, community, leisure and sports facilities, and open and green space, maximising opportunities for community development and social welfare. PPW also says that planning authorities should follow a search sequence when considering sites for housing, starting with the re-use of previously developed and under-used land and buildings within settlements.

6.3 The proposals are clearly compliant with the policies and principles of PPW.

6.4 In addition, PPW confirms that Cadw's Conservation Principles set out the basis for making informed decisions about any proposed change that has an impact on the historic environment, based on a full consideration of the significance of any historic asset and the impact of the proposal on that significance. The greater the significance and/or impact then the greater the benefit needed to justify any harm. No harm is envisaged; the proposed conversion scheme is sensitive and will ensure the long-term preservation of the building, with limited change in its external appearance and the contribution it makes to the conservation area, thereby preserving its essential characteristics, as required both by statute and policy.

Technical Advice Notes (TANs)

TAN 12 - Design (March 2016)

6.5 At paragraph 2.2, TAN 12 confirms that the Welsh Government is strongly committed to achieving the delivery of good design in the built and natural environment, which is fit for purpose and delivers environmental sustainability, economic development and social inclusion, at every scale throughout Wales. At paragraph 5.11.3, it says that the design of the built form should reflect local context and distinctiveness. For the reasons outlined above, the scheme, in proposing the sensitive and sympathetic conversion of an existing building, meets these requirements and is considered compliant with TAN 12.

TAN 18 - Transport (March 2007)

6.6 TAN 18 seeks development that has an appropriate impact on the highway networks and transport users. It also allows for some car free housing developments in locations with good walking, cycling and public transport links and in areas where parking is controlled. The scheme is considered to be compliant with TAN 18 for the reasons set out above.

TAN 24 - The Historic Environment (May 2017)

6.7 TAN 24 provides advice and guidance in relation to heritage. At paragraph 1.15, it says that heritage impact assessment is a structured process that enables the significance of a designated asset to be taken into account when considering proposals for change, and that it should be proportionate both to the significance of the historic asset and to the degree of change proposed. At paragraph 1.16, it also confirms that a Design and Access Statement is required for certain applications such as this. The level of overall change in this case is minimal.

6.8 As such, when considering the character and appearance of the conservation area as a whole, it can be seen how the limited level of change proposed is compliant with the advice and guidance of TAN 24.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

Conservation Areas - January 2020

6.9 The SPG requires that where there is not a Conservation Area Character Appraisal in place for a particular conservation area, all planning applications will need to demonstrate that the character of the area has been assessed and how this assessment has been used to inform the design of the development. Fundamentally, and given the need for a proportionate approach, the minimal level of change involved with the proposed scheme means that the level of information contained within this Planning, Design and Access Statement provides all necessary context in this respect.

Residential Design - January 2020

6.10 One of the main aims of the SPG is to improve design standards and layouts, encourage a mix of residential properties and create responsive environments, which are outward looking and connect with the community. The SPG is also concerned with local distinctiveness and sense of place, seeking developments which contribute positively to the local area and preserve the distinctiveness of the settlement in which they are proposed. In terms of legibility, the proposed development is very well-related to existing development, thereby ensuring compliance with the SPG. In addition, any relevant prescriptive space and privacy standards can be met.

Historic Environment - July 2021

6.11 The SPG provides further guidance relating to proposals affecting heritage assets, which the proposals are compliant with for the reasons outlined above.

7. Design and Access Statement

Design - overall

7.1 Policy DM13 of the LDP sets out the essential design criteria for all development proposals to meet, requiring good design to be demonstrated having regard for the qualities and amenity of the surrounding area (including designated conservation areas), local infrastructure and resources. The following paragraphs explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development and demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and how the design of the development takes that context into account.

Design principles and concepts

7.2 In terms of detailed design principles and concepts, the proposed scheme brings forward the conversion of an existing building in a sustainable town centre location. The layout and scale of the development maximises any available amenity space, whilst also ensuring a positive outlook and opportunities for solar gain through orientation. External appearance has been kept deliberately close to that which exists at present to ensure the least change and disruption possible, and to create a sympathetic development that respects its setting.

7.3 The scheme has been designed to ensure an attractive and safe private space with an open and accessible public facing realm, securing natural surveillance by design through the residential use of an existing building with clear and open aspects. In turn, this will aid crime prevention and social cohesion.

Appraisal of site context

7.4 The site is included within the designated Knighton Conservation Area. The site is, therefore, recognised to be sensitive. The character and appearance of existing neighbouring and nearby dwellings and other buildings is mixed. The design successfully retains the existing character of the building and, therefore, its setting; this being the most appropriate design solution for the site and wider area, enabling a low level of intervention. Within this context, it can be seen how the proposed scheme will maintain the existing mix of development locally, providing new development that responds positively to its location and setting.

Visual impact

7.5 As far as visual impact is concerned, careful consideration has been given to designing a scheme that makes the most efficient use of the site and existing building whilst respecting and responding to its sensitive setting, and whilst also ensuring the protection of amenities for future and adjoining occupiers. The development will ensure satisfactory levels of privacy and light and, utilising an existing building, will also be visually unobtrusive and assimilated. On this basis, there will likewise be no harm to the setting, character and appearance of the conservation area.

7.6 Overall, the layout, scale and appearance of the proposed scheme will respect the character and appearance of its surroundings, maintaining the contribution the building makes in the locality. The development will not appear incongruous or out of keeping, nor will it undermine any existing

attractive views or vistas. As such, it will complement the existing built form in this location, providing a form of development that safeguards and enhances the site, its surroundings and wider context.

Landscape impact

7.7 Whilst the site offers limited potential for additional landscaping, the important point is that the existing landscape characteristics of the locality will be maintained. Overall, a scheme that is both purposeful and acceptable in its own right, whilst also respecting the character of existing development and its wider urban setting has been designed in order to ensure that the development is complementary to the mature setting of the locality.

7.8 Overall, the development will be seen as a logical addition to accommodation in the area, which will sustain and enhance local character by promoting a legible form of development that is clear and understandable. This will promote a successful relationship between public and private space, and provide for a quality development with choice and variety.

Environmental sustainability

7.9 Policy DM13 also requires all development proposals to address the principles of sustainable design. The proposal seeks to achieve the most efficient use and protection of natural resources through the re-use and recycling of an existing building in a town centre location. The new development could also incorporate renewable energy solutions, if practicable, and the use of energy and water efficient fittings, etc. On this basis, the proposal represents an adaptive and flexible scheme that responds positively to social, economic and environmental factors.

7.10 In addition, the conversion scheme has been designed so as to maximise solar gain, as far as is practicably possible given existing orientation of the building. Together, these elements will help reduce environmental impact and minimise demand for energy. The conversion and construction process will likewise be undertaken so as to minimise any such impacts. The units will also meet all applicable standards including any that are relevant under Part L of the Building Regulations.

Local environmental issues

7.11 Existing arrangements for both foul and surface water drainage will be utilised, representing the most sustainable solution for the site. No other local environmental issues or impacts are identified. The site is not within an area identified as being at risk of flooding.

Biodiversity

7.12 Policy DM2 of the LPD (The Natural Environment) seeks no adverse impact on ecology and biodiversity assets. It is not proposed to re-roof the building. On this basis, it is anticipated that there would be no unacceptable effects in ecological terms. Appropriate biodiversity enhancements can be successfully incorporated.

Access - overall

7.13 The proposal will achieve and promote sustainable means of active travel by providing safe and clear connections within a sustainable settlement location, in close proximity to existing roads, footpaths, shops, services and other facilities, offering residents the opportunity to utilise safe, convenient and attractive connections. No discernible, unacceptable or undue increase in traffic is anticipated from the new development, which is unlikely to have any adverse impact in terms of highway safety.

Movement and accessibility

7.14 Policy T1 of the LDP (Travel, Traffic and Transport Infrastructure) seeks the safe and efficient flow of traffic for all transport users, including more vulnerable users, and especially those making active travel journeys by walking or cycling. It also requires any impacts to the network and the local environment to be managed and mitigated. In addition, it seeks to minimise the demand for travel by private transport and encourages the promotion and improvement of sustainable forms of travel including active travel opportunities in all developments. As a town centre conversion scheme, within accessible distance of a significant number of services and facilities, the opportunity to improve and promote accessibility and to reduce reliance on the private car has clearly and demonstrably been taken. The proposed development also takes full account of the needs of all transport users, including those with disabilities and mobility impairment.

Vehicular access

7.15 No vehicular access is proposed.

Parking and turning

7.16 Policy DM13 states in terms of highway considerations that development needs to be designed and located to minimise the impacts on the transport network - journey times, resilience and efficient operation - whilst ensuring that highway safety for all transport users is not detrimentally impacted upon. It states further that development proposals should meet all highway access requirements, (for all transport users), vehicular parking standards and demonstrate that the strategic and local highway network can absorb the traffic impacts of the development without adversely affecting the safe and efficient flow of traffic on the network, or that traffic impacts can be managed to acceptable levels to reduce and mitigate any adverse impacts from the development. Parking provision should be provided at the optimum level to support these policy aspirations.

7.17 Policy 6 of Future Wales seeks the health and vibrancy of town centres, directing facilities and services to where intended users can easily walk, cycle and/or use public transport to access them.

7.18 The proposed arrangements are considered appropriate within this policy context. Paragraphs 5.11 to 5.15 above set out the reasons for considering the scheme to be policy compliant in greater detail.

Accessibility, permeability and sustainability

7.19 Knighton is a town well served by public transport options and connections. It is also served by a network of main, district and classified local roads. The proposed scheme will have very little impact, if any, upon any major traffic movements. The site is within accessible distance of a wide range of many local community and other services and facilities.

Inclusive design

7.20 The proposals promote an inclusive form of development, both in terms of accessibility and the nature and extent of accommodation proposed. The site offers the opportunity for a safe level access at ground floor, to meet the needs of residents and visitors alike. In addition, the proposals will comply with all applicable standards including any that are relevant under Part M of the Building Regulations. Furthermore, the scheme provides for ease of access for emergency vehicles and offers clear connections for all transport users including pedestrians and cyclists, thereby meeting the requirements of policy.

8. Conclusions

8.1 The planning acts say that applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The legal starting point, therefore, is both Future Wales and the LDP, which together comprise the statutory adopted development plan.

8.2 The proposed scheme is a good example of how an existing building in a sustainable, town centre location can be successfully utilised to provide much needed new housing, whilst also respecting its character and that of its surroundings. The proposal is sympathetic, attractively and simply designed to suit the location and wider setting, and no harm has been identified. As such, the application is considered to accord with both the strategic and more detailed aspects of development plan policy, taken as a whole.

8.3 The proposals are likewise considered compliant with Welsh Government policy, guidance and advice, the Council's SPG, and all other relevant material considerations, including the statutory requirement for there to be no harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

8.4 Overall, therefore, the proposals have been shown to represent a form of development that is environmentally, socially, economically and culturally sustainable, with no known constraints to delivery. PPW introduces a presumption in favour of such development. Whilst ultimately a matter for the planning authority, a decision to approve the application taken on the strength of the relevant arguments and weighing any competing and/or conflicting issues in the balance would be appropriate, in that it would represent a well-informed position reflecting a sound understanding of all relevant factors. Sections 38(5) and (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act allow for such a decision to be made.

8.5 Finally, there is a willingness to meet all essential requirements so that the Council can assess the suitability and sustainability of the proposed development. If further information is required, the applicant would welcome the opportunity to provide any additional clarification or evidence necessary and would also be happy to discuss any appropriate conditions and/or planning obligations with the Council in order for the application to go forward with a positive recommendation.