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LAND SOUTH OF GREENHILL
STATION ROAD
CAEHOPKIN
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SA9 1TP

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 2 NO. DWELLINGS

PLANNING STATEMENT

JUNE 2022

REPORT CONTROL SHEET

Document Title	Planning Statement
Proposal	Proposed development of up to 2 no. dwellings
Address	Land South Of Greenhill, Station Road, Caehopkin, Swansea, SA9 1TP
Client	Mr & Mrs Hopkins
Project Number	AP22011

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Atticus Planning is retained by Mr & Mrs Hopkins to progress an outline planning application for the proposed development of up to 2 no. dwellings on land south of Greenhill, Station Road, Caehopkin, SA9 1TP.

1.1.2 The application is made to Powys County Council as the Local Planning Authority and relates to the red edge site boundary as shown on submitted Location Plan.

1.1.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This Planning Statement will explain how the proposal complies with current planning policies and that there are material considerations which also weigh in favour of the scheme, and should be read in conjunction with the following suite of supporting documents:

- Application Form

- Drawings:

 - Location Plan (no. 2137 P.01)

 - Existing Site Plan (no. 2137 P.02)

 - Indicative Proposed Site Plan (no. 2137 P.03)

- Phase 1 Land Contamination Assessment

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1.1 The site extends to an area of 860sqm and comprises a rectangular shaped piece of land belonging to existing dwelling Greenhill, which is the semi-detached property positioned to the immediate north west.
- 2.1.2 The land has historically been used as an extended garden area by the applicants. A photo showing the garden soon after it was first laid out is provided below (taken Spring 1996). Since this was taken, the site's peripheral trees have matured and effectively screen it from view.



Figure 1: Image showing the site from the access lane in 1996

- 2.1.3 As can be seen from the image above, there is an existing vehicular access from the site's north western corner, which is demarcated by a stone wall. This leads onto a drive, now overgrown with grass, which rises gently to a level plateau; the site is relatively flat.
- 2.1.4 The site lies on the southern edge of the village of Caehopkin and at the end of a row of existing residential properties on Station Road. In addition to the existing dwellings to the north, which includes Greenhill, there are further buildings to the west, which combined with its edge-of-village location, make it an obvious infill plot for housing.
- 2.1.5 The site is not subject to flooding, nor is it constrained by any statutory designations or constraints. It is within an area coal safeguarding area, but this does not pose a barrier to the development.

3 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1.1 In 2014 the applicant submitted an outline planning application (reference P/2014/1073) with all matters reserved for the development of 4 no. dwellings.
- 3.1.2 Following feedback from the Highways department during determination of the application, where concerns were raised over highway safety, the determining officer at the time advised the applicants to withdraw the application and submit amended details. It was advised that the development should be reduced in number, as this could help overcome the highway concerns.
- 3.1.3 This application takes on board both the written and verbal feedback provided as part of P/2014/1073; the amount of development has been reduced by half to two dwellings, which will significantly lessen the amount of new vehicular trips onto the local network and generally represents a much more compatible development, bearing in mind the character of the surrounding area.
- 3.1.4 It is also relevant to note that land to the south of the site recently received outline planning permission for a significant major development associated with the 'Global Centre of Rail Excellence', reference 21/0559/OUT.

4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1.1 Outline permission is sought for the construction of up to 2 no. dwellings. Access is included for approval, as shown on the submitted site layout, with all other matters (scale, appearance, layout and landscaping) reserved for subsequent approval(s).
- 4.1.2 Regarding access, it is proposed to utilise the existing vehicular access point within the site's north western corner, which is considered both suitable and safe for the type and amount of development proposed.
- 4.1.3 An indicative site layout is included with the application which shows how two dwellings can be easily accommodated with off-road parking and good size gardens, whilst respecting the existing pattern of development along the road and avoiding harm on existing residential amenity.
- 4.1.4 It is envisaged that the dwellings would be two storeys and of a traditional appearance.
- 4.1.5 No trees or hedgerows would require removal and there is space within the site to allow for enhanced landscaping.

5 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.1.2 The statutory development plan for the site consists of the Powys Local Development Plan (2011-2026), adopted in April 2018. Work is currently underway to replace this Plan with the Replacement Local Development Plan (2022-2037), but as this is only at the very early stages of its preparation, no consideration has been given to it within this statement.
- 5.1.3 By reference to the Interactive Map that accompanies the Local Plan (2018), Caehopkin is identified as a 'Small Village' whilst the area is designated as a 'Coal Resource Safeguarding Area'.
- 5.1.4 Relevant policies in the Local Plan include:
- Policy SP1 Housing Growth
 - Policy SP5 Settlement Hierarchy
 - Policy SP6 Distribution of Growth across the Settlement Hierarchy
 - Policy DM2 The Natural Environment
 - Policy DM13 Design and Resources
 - Policy H1 Housing Development Proposals
 - Policy H3 Housing Delivery
 - Policy H4 Housing Density
 - Policy T1 Travel, Traffic and Transport Infrastructure
- 5.1.5 Other material considerations include the Future Wales: the national plan 2040 (2021), Planning Policy Wales Edition 11, Building Better Places: The Planning System Delivering Resilient and Brighter Futures (2020), the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015), Technical Advice Note (TAN) 5 – Nature Conservation and Planning and TAN18 – Transport.

6 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

6.1 Principle of Residential Development

- 6.1.1 The application site is situated within the southern confines of Caehopkin village, which is identified in the Local Plan as a Small Village. Within Small Villages Policy SP6 states that “Open market housing development will be restricted to small infill plots (capable of accommodating two dwellings maximum) or to mixed schemes on larger infill sites (capable of accommodating five dwellings maximum) provided the scheme is for no more than two open market houses plus affordable housing”, which is mirrored by Policy H1.
- 6.1.2 The Glossary at Appendix 5 of the Local Plan defines infill as “Development within an otherwise built-up frontage.” In this instance, through being nestled in between existing dwellings to the north and further buildings to the immediate west, the development represents a suitable infill plot against the requirements of Policies SP6 and H1. The site lies at the end of a linear row of detached and semi-detached residential properties, and represents a natural extension to this row. Two detached houses are indicated on the submitted masterplan which would be in harmony with the existing pattern of development and crucially, would not exceed the maximum thresholds laid out by Policies SP6 and H1.
- 6.1.3 Furthermore, it is worth noting here that during the determination of previous application P/2014/1073, the principle of the development was not a source of contention; it was recommended for refusal on highways grounds alone. Officers accepted that the site is a logical infill plot and represents the rounding off to the village.
- 6.1.4 Regarding Policy H4, which deals with housing density, the policy requires new housing proposals to make the most sustainable and efficient use of available land. It states that within Small Villages, densities should be 20-25 units per hectare. The site area is 860sqm and based on the number of units proposed, the proposed development equates to 25 units per hectare, which is in line with the Council’s expectations as set out in Policy H4. Also, to reiterate, the proposal is reflective of existing densities along Station Road and is therefore in keeping with the local built environment.
- 6.1.5 The development will provide a notable contribution towards the Council’s ongoing housing requirement, as outlined in Policy SP1, in a location which is supported in principle by Policies SP6 and H1.
- 6.1.6 Small plots play a vital role in helping to meet the Council’s housing targets and allow people to build their own homes (self builds); small plots are recognised as being an important part of housing

delivery in the Future Wales: the national plan 2040 (2021). The site comprises a small plot and is therefore in compliance with the government's aims and aspirations for future housing growth.

6.1.7 The scheme utilises a piece of redundant land, which has previously functioned as extended garden space for Greenhill, is nestled in amongst existing buildings and is an obvious infill plot. The development avoids tree and hedgerow loss, and through being contained by mature boundary treatments, would avoid visual incursion into the surrounding landscape. It presents an opportunity to sustain the local community and help add vibrancy to the neighbourhood. It will also result in socio-economic benefits to the area, chief of which is an increase in spending power within the area's local shops and facilities, which will help sustain these services. These benefits are a material consideration to be weighed in favour of the scheme.

6.1.8 Moreover, the proposal represents sustainable housing growth within a rural village, in compliance with the development plan and relevant material considerations, and should therefore be supported.

6.2 Access

6.2.1 Part 11 of Policy DM13 states 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. This is reinforced by Policy T1, which refers to the transport network implications of development and the importance of highway safety.

6.2.2 In this instance, it is considered there would be negligible impacts on the local road network; the provision of two dwellings would not result in a notable increase in traffic and the existing road, which is a quiet, residential lane and is not subject to high volumes of traffic, would not be impacted.

6.2.3 The site is within an easy walking and cycling distance to bus stops within the village, where occupants could use public transport to form part of longer journeys. It is also only a 10-20 minute walk (and even shorter drive) to the neighbouring, larger village of Abercave, where there is a good range of local services and amenities available. The proposed development therefore displays good levels of sustainability with regards access to everyday goods and services, whilst minimising reliance on the private car.

6.2.4 As part of previous application P/2014/1073, the Council's Highways department had objected due to the quantum of the development proposed; four dwellings were submitted for outline approval. It was indicated to the applicants at the time that a reduced number may be acceptable, as it would inevitably result in a reduction of traffic. Moreover, through halving the amount of dwellings, it is considered the proposal robustly addresses previous highway concerns and would avoid impacts on highway safety.

6.2.5 Based on the above, it is considered compliance with Policy DM13 and TAN 18 is achieved.

6.3 Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscaping – The 'Reserved Matters'

6.3.1 Whilst the above details would be submitted as part of a subsequent application seeking approval for the reserved matters, the indicative layout clearly shows how two dwellings can be accommodated within the site with ease. Two dwellings would reflect the local pattern of development and would ensure a good degree of separation with the existing dwellings to the north, thereby respecting existing and proposed residential amenity.

6.3.2 It is anticipated that the dwellings would be of a traditional design, sympathetic to the vernacular, constructed from locally distinctive materials and would be two storeys. If required, the applicant would be happy to put a limit on the maximum heights of the properties, in order to give some assurances in this regard.

6.3.3 Moreover, whilst the relevance of Policy DM13 is tempered by the fact the design, appearance and layout of the development are unknown at this stage, it is considered that any future reserved matters application can ensure full compliance with it.

6.4 Other Matters

6.4.1 A Preliminary Ecological Assessment is provided with the application which provides the results of a thorough survey. Providing the development adheres to the recommendations contained within the report, which could be secured via a suitably worded planning condition, compliance with Policy DM2 can be achieved, as well as TAN 5.

6.4.2 A Phase 1 Land Contamination Assessment is also included with the application. The report explains that the site is quite complex in terms of historic mining activity and that a Phase 2 Site Investigation will be needed, the implementation of which can be secured via planning condition.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1.1 It has been demonstrated that the proposed development is in conformity with the development plan and that there would be no adverse impacts either on the environment, highways or on existing amenity.
- 7.1.2 There would be a number of social, economic and environmental gains, chief of which is the delivery of two new dwellings on a logical infill plot in a sustainable, village location.
- 7.1.3 The development should therefore be approved, having regard to the statutory determination obligation prescribed by Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.