
Planning and Design Statement

Proposed change of use of land from agricultural to tourism use for the siting of six log cabins, formation of associated access track and all associated works

Prepared for: Mr R Thomas

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1.0 Introduction

This supporting statement considers the planning issues relating to the application proposals for the proposed change of use of land from agricultural to tourism use for the siting of six log cabins, formation of associated access track and all associated works on land at The Cann Office, Llangadfan.

Mr Thomas would like to offer a unique holiday experience, allowing visitors to relax and escape in this rural setting. The proposed development is on land under the ownership of the client.

The proposal will provide additional tourist accommodation in Powys, contributing to the local economy.

2.0 Description of the Site and Surroundings

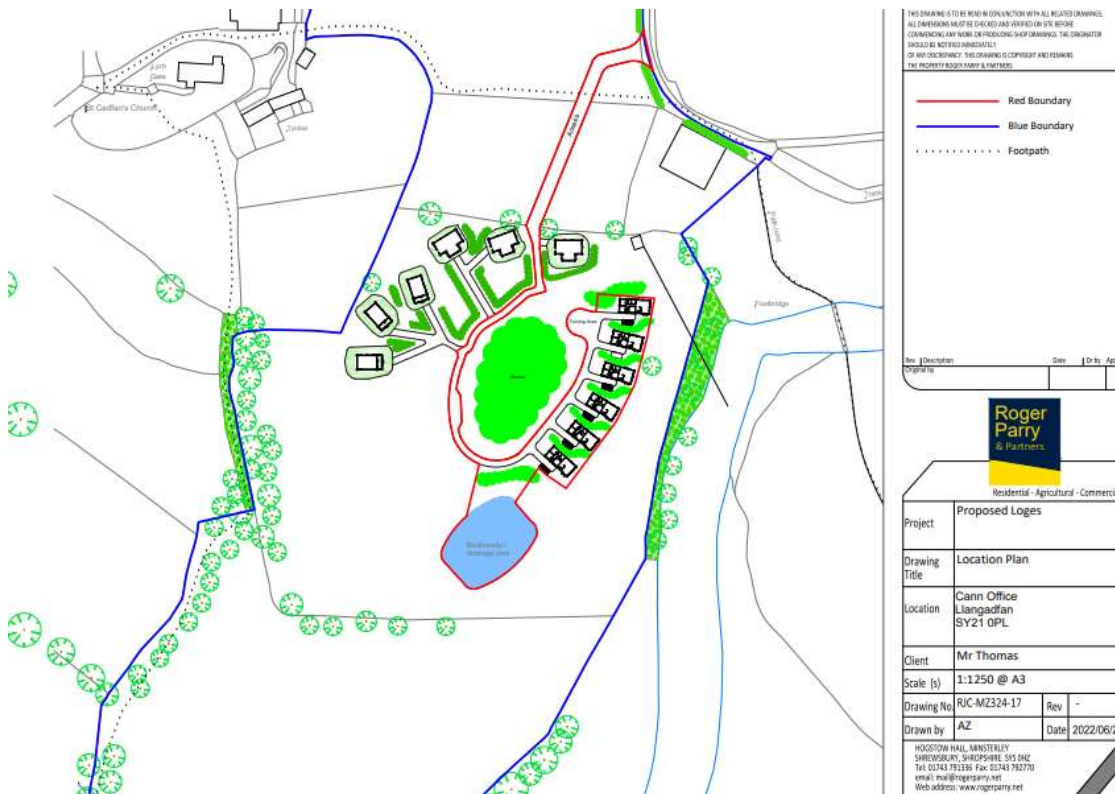
The Cann Office is more than just a comfortable Hotel, wholesome restaurant and fabulous pub.

Established in 1310 the Cann Office is interwoven with the heritage of the local and surrounding areas of mid Wales. In the latest chapter of remarkable history, we have seen current owners Robert and Rachel breath new life into 'the Office' which is now as vibrant and lively as ever.

Being equidistance on the A458 between Welshpool and Machynlleth or Dolgellau, the Cann Office is a natural resting place en route to the popular holiday cottages in Snowdonia National Park or the timeless coastline beaches of Aberystwyth, Borth, Tywyn and Aberdovey.

With a varied menu to suit all appetites, whether formal seating, pub table or al fresco; the Cann Office offers a warm welcome to those en route to vacation or just a day at the seaside. Additionally, as well as supporting a range of caravan parks in the local area, there are 8 rooms available for those who wish to discover the secrets of the surrounding areas including the Dyffnant Forest and Lake Vyrnwy.

The clients would like to strengthen their current business while creating a sustainable business allowing them to become a successful all year round business rather than relying on seasonal visitors, thus allowing them to employ further members of staff. The clients have been granted planning for 6 luxury lodges adjacent to the proposed lodges, works have started on this site however the craftsmanship in financial cost associated with the luxury loges has resulted in a delay in the operation of the approved site. The client is proposing more of a standard lodge with a luxury feel that can be sourced and erected in a more suitable timeframe. The site will eventually appeal to all clientele.



The Cann Office extends to 50 acres of owned land and is used for rearing ewe and growth of an annual harvest.

The client is the owner of the holding known as The Cann Office and as such is the applicant for the proposed development.

Tourism is a substantial sector of the Powys economy, spreading employment and income across Powys. The Wales Visitor Survey 2013 – Powys booster concluded that visitors to Powys tend to have a very high overall trip satisfaction and that the quality of the natural environment including Powys' natural landscapes are the county's key tourism draw.

The natural and built environment and Powys' natural landscapes are significant tourism assets. The large majority of attractions in Powys are associated with the area's landscape, history, heritage and culture, few of which are of a scale to become attractors in their own right. This is coupled with their use being influenced by seasonality and the weather. Any new developments therefore should be sympathetic to their surroundings and not detrimentally impact on their environment.

Planning Policy Wales encourages the diversification of farm enterprises and other parts of the rural economy for appropriate tourism uses subject to adequate safeguards for the character and appearance of the countryside, particularly its landscape, biodiversity and local amenity value.

The proposed development is within an established wooded area and is set away from the public house, it is screened from the surrounding landscape by the existing topography and vegetation.

The proposed development can be sited and developed without detrimental effect on the surrounding landscape. An Extended Phase One Habitat Survey has been provided. The survey concluded that although the scheme inevitably will result in some localised ecological impact, this can be mitigated for by sensitive design and adoption of a management plan including mitigation measures.

The site will be accessed off the A458 then off an approved new access (20/0343/FUL) to serve the proposed cabins. Car parking spaces will be provided.

The site is within the ownership of the client and can provide an opportunity for the family to gain an additional income. Mr Thomas realises the need to diversify to improve the sustainability of the land and provide an additional income.

3.0 The Planning Application Proposal

The clients would like to offer a unique holiday experience, allowing visitors to relax and escape in this rural setting while having a site owned pub and restaurant within walking distance.

The proposed development site includes the area of land to incorporate the six log cabins, the proposed access track and car-parking spaces. The client also proposes additional planting and a biodiversity/drainage pool. The small site can be developed without detrimental effect on the surrounding landscape. A Phase One Habitat Survey has been carried out and concludes that the impact of the development would be minor.

Planning application 19/0153/FUL for 6 luxury lodges was approved 15/11/2019 and as part of the application highway improvements were conditioned. These improvements are currently being undertaken and will be completed prior to any occupation on the site.



An example of the proposed lodges

4.0 Tourism in Powys

Powys is the largest county in Wales with sparse populations and a highly rural context. Tourism is one of the largest employers and rival's agriculture in its economic importance. It is therefore vital that tourism develops strongly.

Tourism makes a substantial contribution to the Powys economy, supporting over 12,327 jobs. There are 1,549 tourism accommodation establishments' in Powys, with a recent bed-stock survey confirming a total of 49,697 sleeping / bed spaces. The average length of stay is 3.71 bednights with an average spend per day visitor of £41.61 per night. STEAM research figures indicate that 3 million day trips were taken in 2011, spending £ 84.4 million in the local economy. Tourism is a substantial sector of the region's economy, spreading employment and income throughout Powys.

Tourism in Powys helps to support other industries such as agriculture, crafts and local services. These in turn support the tourism industry, transport and local services. The current situation presents a platform of opportunity to target growth sectors of the market and this provides a sound foundation for further development and niche marketing activity. The landscape and environmental resources of the area are, in tourism terms, attractive and capable of competing with other destinations.

Although only a small site, it will contribute to the local economy from the construction stage through to bringing visitors to the area.

5.0 Rural Diversification

The DEFRA and Welsh Government definition of a diversified enterprise is:

‘The entrepreneurial use of farm resources for a non-agricultural purpose for commercial gain’

Under this definition, activities such as non-agricultural contracting, the letting of buildings for non-agricultural purposes, processing and retailing of farm produce, using farm resources for tourism, sport and recreational activities would be included as diversification. On-site energy generation which either offsets on-site use or is exported to the grid is also considered to be a diversification activity.

The following activities would not be included as diversification: other gainful activity (for example, a second job or investing in stocks and shares), agricultural contracting, activities inseparable from agriculture (for example packing mushrooms if there is no market for unpacked mushrooms), agri-environment payments, the letting of land (it is assumed the farmer does not have an entrepreneurial role in letting the land), and the hiring of assets (again unlikely to involve the farmer in an entrepreneurial role). (Statistics for Wales – Farm Diversification in Wales 2011-12 ref: SB125/2012).

Rural diversification is of increasing importance to those with an interest in agriculture and rural communities as a whole. With rising uncertainty in farming, diversification offers a way of supplementing incomes and improving the economic viability of a farm business. Diversification reflects the reduced dependence of farmers on agriculture as a source of income. Diversification also implies some kind of entrepreneurial activity on behalf of the farmer (DEFRA – Farm Diversification in England: 27/01/11).

Farm resources are defined as land or capital that was previously used for agricultural purposes. Where a farmer/spouse takes up external employment, this will be classified as other gainful activity. However, any activities that the farmer/spouse spends their time doing will still be classified as diversified activities whenever any land or capital previously used for agricultural purposes is also employed (for example a farmer running a shop selling produce from the farm).

Whether an activity is defined as diversified or as other gainful activity would depend on a combination of factors. For example whether the farm resource previously used for agricultural purposes could be switched back to agricultural use, whether the accounts of the activity are separate from those of the farm, and how long it has been a diversified activity. It is useful to think of diversification as a transition rather than an end-state (Statistics for Wales – Farm Diversification in Wales 2011-12 ref: SB125/2012).

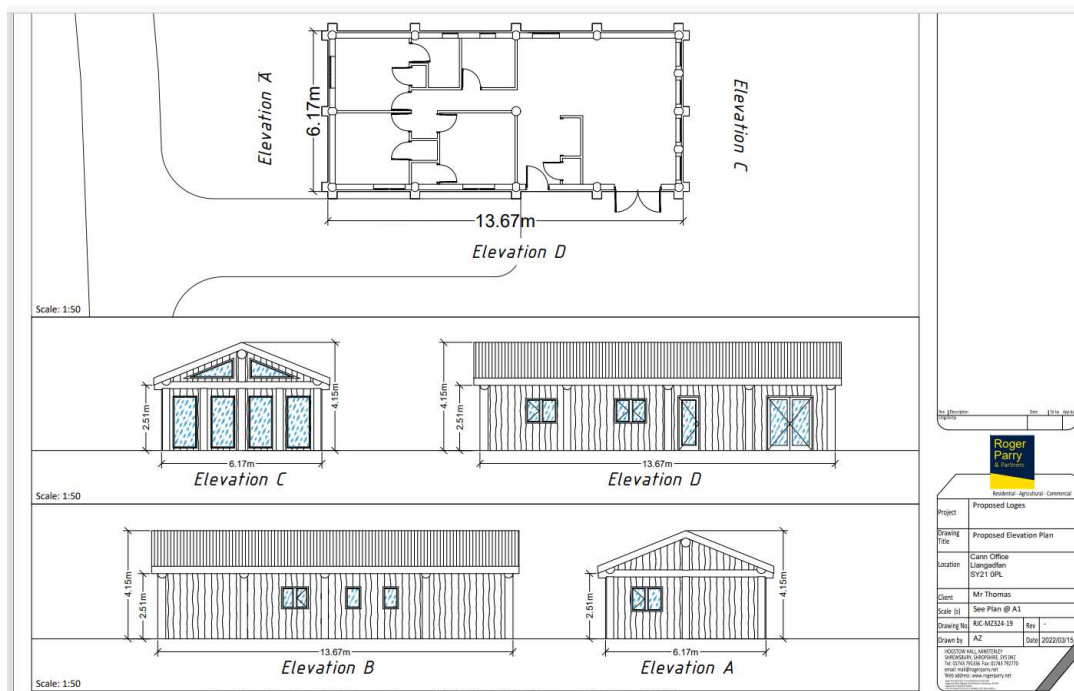
The proposal is a rural diversification scheme.

6.0 Design and Access

The proposed layout of the site has been designed to fit into the surroundings and to be unobtrusive into the countryside. The log cabins have been chosen to blend into the surroundings and as such would not be seen within the wider context.

The proposed development complies with local planning policy; the proposed development is appropriate to the rural Powys landscape and is not obtrusive into the character of the surroundings. The design aims to keep a balance between the two aims of the planning system – efficient economic development and protection of the landscape.

Externally the walls are constructed and clad with natural timber. The roof will be felt shingle. The proposed developments siting and design have been detailed on the elevation and block plans which accompany this planning application.



Access to the site is proposed from the adjoining improved road with appropriate visibility achievable in both directions. The local road network can accommodate the negligible amount of traffic generated by the proposal. Parking is proposed on site.

7.0 Environment

A preliminary ecological appraisal was carried out in June 2022, this concluded there is no evidence of protected species using the site was found during the survey and the site is not considered to provide suitable habitat for any of the species afore mentioned. Mitigation has been suggested and this will be completed by the client.

The clients haven proposed planting and a drainage/biodiversity pool as part of the application.

8.0 Assessment of Access and Inclusive Design against Planning Policies

One of the key requirements of inclusive design is the need to ensure that development is accessible to all users. This relates not only to its detailed design but also to its locational characteristics. All users of the development would have equal and convenient access to the development itself and also to the local community and service.

Access by Disabled Persons. Applications will be permitted for the development of new buildings, public amenities, recreational spaces and, where practicable and reasonable, the changes of use or alterations to existing buildings, where suitable access is made to and within the building or amenity and adequate facilities are provided for people with disabilities.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) seeks to avoid discrimination against people with impairments and disabilities and for instance ensures that work premises do not disadvantage someone with a disability.

The access arrangements have adopted an inclusive approach and aims to ensure that all users will have equal and convenient access.

The design of the application will have full consideration for ease of access for disabled pedestrian use. Our full application submitted incorporates the following points:-

1. The car parking area will be located near to the principal entrance and is at the same level as the principal entrance.
2. Access from the car parking area to the principal entrance is by way hard landscaping, which is suitable for a disabled wheel chair.
3. The principal entrance is at a level threshold.
4. Easy access is obtained around the circumference of the house by way of hard landscaping.

5. All construction work to comply (where relevant) to Part M of the Building Regulations Act 2000, and also subsequent amendments.
6. All doors to be of disabled criteria.
7. All external doors to be 930mm minimum width.
8. All sockets and light switches to be in compliance with Part M with regard to the height from floor level.
9. All washing facilities are located on the same level (ground level).

All of the measures detailed above will be maintained in such a way that will allow all people access to and from cabin. Also, the facilities within the cabin will also be constructed and maintained in such a way to ensure people's access to the development.

9.0 Planning Policy

The Policies that have been taken into account when preparing this application are:

National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales Edition 9 was adopted in November 2016 and is the key national land use planning policy document for Wales.

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 6 – Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (2010)

3.1.2 Planning authorities should support the diversification of the rural economy as a way to provide local employment opportunities, increase local economic prosperity and minimise the need to travel for employment.

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 13 – Tourism (1997)

This TAN provides guidance on tourism related issues in planning including matters relating to hotel development, holiday and touring caravans and seasonal and holiday occupancy conditions.

Policy GP1 Development Control

Criteria of the above policy:

- 1) The design, layout, size, scale, mass and materials of the development shall complement and where possible enhance the character of the area.
- 2) The design, layout and lighting of the development shall minimise the potential for crime.
- 3) Features and designated or proposed sites of natural, historic, archaeological or built heritage interest shall not be unacceptably adversely affected and biodiversity and wildlife habitats shall be safeguarded wherever possible.
- 4) The amenities enjoyed by the occupants of nearby or proposed properties shall not be unacceptably affected by levels of noise, light, dust, odor, hours of operation or any other planning matter.
- 5) The development shall incorporate appropriate measures to protect water and soil quality and also for energy, water and waste efficiency and conservation.
- 6) The development shall incorporate adequate provision for drainage including the use of sustainable urban drainage systems where appropriate.
- 7) The development shall not be located in a high flood risk area unless in accordance with policy UDP SP14.
- 8) Adequate provision shall be made for highway access and parking in accordance with policy GP4.
- 9) Adequate utility services shall exist or be capable of being readily and economically provided without the unacceptable adverse effect on the surrounding environment.
- 10) Important trees, hedgerows, open spaces and other local features that contribute significantly to the quality and character of the local environment shall be safeguarded and, where practicable, be incorporated within the development.
- 11) Developments shall be landscaped using appropriate indigenous species or materials, which complement and enhance the character of the locality. Planting shall be carried out in the first available planting season, or in accordance with the stated planning condition, and any plants which die or are removed within 5 years shall be replaced with similar species.

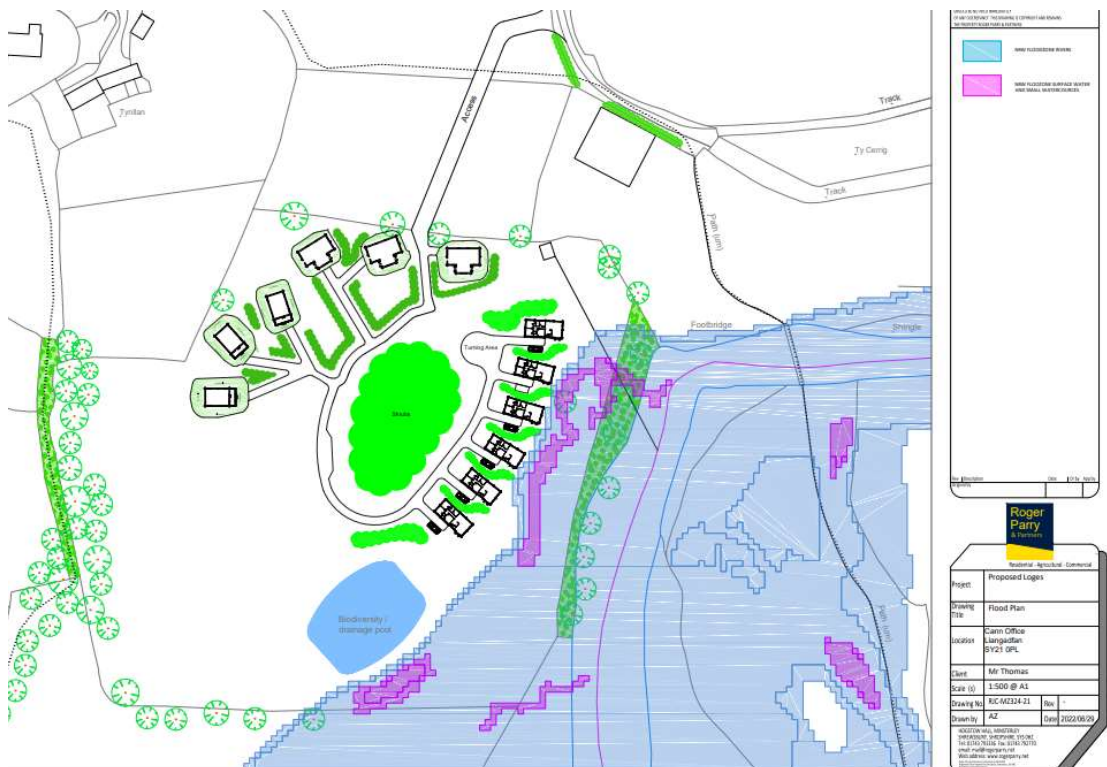
LDP TD1 – Tourism Developments

Tourism developments appropriate in scale and appearance to the locality and community will be acceptable where they would:

1. Within settlements, where commensurate in scale and size to the settlement.
2. In the open countryside, where compatible in terms of location, siting, design and scale and well integrated into the landscape so that it would not detract from the overall character and appearance of the area and in particular where:
 - i. It is part of a farm diversification scheme; or
 - ii. It re-uses a suitable rural building in accordance with TAN 6; or
 - iii. It complements an existing tourist development or asset, without causing unacceptable adverse harm to the enjoyment of that development or asset; or
 - iv. It is not permanent in its nature.
3. Accommodation shall not be used for permanent residential accommodation

10.0 Flood Risk – Flood Consequence Assessment

The site is located outside NRW's Flood Plan area which shows the 0.1% annual probability of extreme flood.



11.0 Conclusion

The site is within the ownership of the client and can provide an opportunity for the family to gain an additional income. Mr Thomas realises the need to diversify to improve the sustainability of the business and provide an additional income. Rural diversification is of increasing importance to those with an interest in agriculture and rural communities. With rising uncertainty in rural businesses, diversification offers a way of supplementing incomes and improving the economic viability of a rural business.

The proposed development can be sited and developed without detrimental effect on the surrounding landscape and the existing trees. An Extended Phase One Habitat Survey has been provided. The survey concluded that although the scheme inevitably will not result in any impact on protected species.

The local road network is currently under going improvements and is capable of accommodating the negligible amount of traffic generated by the proposal.

The development is intelligently and sympathetically designed and strikes a balance between practical and economic efficiency and minimal landscape impact.

The proposal is of an appropriate location, scale and type so as not to be detrimental to the amenities of any nearby existing residential properties. This development will support both the local economy and local tourism. The proposal also meets the need for holiday accommodation within Powys.

This proposal has significant merit, fits within the policies of the core strategy and national planning guidance, and it is respectfully requested that the submitted planning application be approved.