

---

# Planning Statement

---

Barn Conversion to two residential units  
and associated works at White  
Gwentthrew, Sarn, Newtown, Powys,  
SY16 4EQ

---

Mr Higgs

---

**Roger  
Parry**  
& Partners

Roger Parry & Partners LLP  
[www.rogerparry.net](http://www.rogerparry.net)  
[welshpool@rogerparry.net](mailto:welshpool@rogerparry.net)  
Tel: 01938 554499

---

---

Mr Higgs

Barn Conversion to two residential units and  
associated works at White Gwentrew, Sarn,  
Newtown, Powys, SY16 4EQ

---

Planning Statement

May 2022

Site address

White Gwentrew  
Sarn  
Newtown  
Powys  
SY16 4EQ

Planning Authority

Powys County Council  
Neuadd Maldwyn  
Welshpool  
SY21 7AS

---

Publication title	Planning Statement
Version	1.2
Date	May 2022

---

---

Roger Parry & Partners LLP

1 Berriew St  
Welshpool  
Powys  
SY21 7SQ  
Tel: 01938 554499

welshpool@rogerparry.net  
www.rogerparry.net

Ref: PS-GD

---

1.	INTRODUCTION .....	4
2.	NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES.....	4
3.	PRINCIPLE.....	5
4.	PROPOSAL.....	6
5.	ACCESS .....	7
6.	ECOLOGY .....	7
7.	DRAINAGE.....	7
8.	CONCLUSION.....	8

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Planning Statement is prepared and submitted in connection with the full application for the conversion of an agricultural building into two residential dwellings and associated works at White Gwentrew, Sarn.
- 1.2. The proposal will include the sympathetic conversion of an existing relatively disused agricultural building, with limited modifications to 2 residential dwellings. The development is looking to provide a suitable use to the existing derelict barn, which reduces the need to construct on greenfield sites and processing new construction materials.
- 1.3. UDP Policy GP6 always looked favourably towards conversion of buildings in the countryside, subject to going through the set-out hierarchy identified within the Unitary Development Plan, however it is acknowledged that the LDP has been adopted now, and therefore consideration must be given to Technical Advice Note 23, but policy GP6 although out of date, is a very good instrument to use to show conformity with TAN23.
- 1.4. Modern farming activities and machinery has meant that old traditional buildings have become relatively disused. Their design, with small openings, low levels, small sections suited traditional farming methods. However, farming methods have become more intensive, with large machinery, increasing number of livestock have meant that the small traditional barns are not well suited. This is shown, by the number of large modern agricultural buildings that have been constructed and used away from the traditional buildings.
- 1.5. This proposal ensures minimal impact will be had on the environment, in that it is utilising existing disused barns for accommodation, instead of building or siting on good agricultural land.

## 2. NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

- 2.1 National planning policies in Wales are defined within Edition 8 (2016) of Planning Policy Wales and 24 Technical Advice Notes which cover different elements of the planning process. The National policies provide a general and overarching view on what the Welsh Government believes should be the primary objectives of development in Wales.
- 2.2 Powys County Council currently has an adopted plan which is the Local Development Plan. The plan follows on from Planning Policy Wales and the Technical Advice Notes and is a local, more specific concept on planning control in Powys.
- 2.3 Technical Advice Note (TAN) 23 importantly addresses residential conversion of rural buildings. Paragraph 3.2.2 indicates that planning policy favours residential conversions of rural buildings whereby it does not unduly impact the fabric and character of a historic building. It goes on to say that in areas

where the creation of local employment is a priority, the residential re-uses should be prohibited unless a business re-use has been discounted for any reason, the residential conversion is part of a scheme for business re-use or the housing is for affordable housing for local need.

- 2.4 Although the site is in the rural countryside, and therefore not considered an area where priority for the creation of local employment is emphasised, TAN6 and the old GP6 policy does require a justification why an economic re-use cannot be successfully made on site.
- 2.5 The limited floor area of the building and location in the open countryside does not make the building well suited for an economic reuse. There is a lack of demand for economic re-uses within the main settlements, let alone in the open countryside of Powys.
- 2.6 The existing building has to also be suitable for conversion, without any extensive alterations, rebuilding or extension, or the creation of a residential curtilage would harmfully affect the character of the countryside.
- 2.7 Having had due regard to National and Local Planning Policies, the principle of conversion is detailed below.

### 3. PRINCIPLE

- 3.1 As set out within the policy section above, the principle of residential conversion of rural buildings is looked upon favourable through National and Local Planning Policies. The building in question is relatively disused, due to modern farming techniques requiring larger modern farm buildings.
- 3.2 The building is in the open countryside, and therefore the creation of local employment is not seen as a priority in that regard. In light of this and part 3.2.2 of TAN23 the proposed conversion of an existing agricultural building in the rural area of Powys is considered acceptable, subject to it not having a harmful impact upon the fabric and character of a historic building.
- 3.3 TAN6 however requires some sort of evidence and justification of why an economic re-use has not been explored prior to accepting any residential conversion. There are a number of factors that a business use is incompatible with this site which is not exhaustive, but here are a few factors of which we have considered the conversion of a disused agricultural building for this kind of use is impractical, due to the size and location of the building, the need for that use in the area and the viability of converting a building for this use.
- 3.4 Location and Size of building

The size of the building would make it unpractical for several B1 business, given the low ceiling, small doors for deliveries, and therefore it would only work for a very small business with limited storage needs. Its location does not bode well for a business, with limited connectivity, and roads unsuitable to accommodate several customers and deliveries into the site. Businesses are commonly found in known

settlements, and the connectivity of these settlements and other services provided, complement each other well. An isolated business in this location, would find it difficult to become established with the size and location.

#### Viability of converting to a business use

Renting or purchasing this building together with the conversion costs would be unviable, considering the availability of other cheaper alternative buildings in Town Centres such as Welshpool or Newtown. The economic climate has pressurised businesses to find cheap accommodation to help the viability of the business.

In light of the above, it is considered that the location, size, lack of need and unviability demonstrates that the re-use of this building as a business use is impractical and unviable.

3.5 Consideration has also been given to the possibility of converting to meet a proven local need for affordable housing, where they comply with the relevant criteria of HP10.

However, barn conversions are known as expensive projects which would in turn be too expensive for a local need complying with the affordability criteria. First of all, they would be required to purchase the barn, then cover the cost of the whole conversion. Conversions are known to cost more than a new build, given the limitations of converting.

It is therefore concluded that the cost of purchasing and converting the barn for a local need would be unfeasible, and therefore is considered impossible.

3.6 In light of the above considerations, the proposed residential use of the barn once converted is considered fully compliant with National and Local Planning Policies.

## 4. PROPOSAL

4.1 It has been illustrated above, that the proposal in principle for the conversion of this building into two residential units is compliant with national and local planning policy. The proposal now needs to illustrate that it has a favourable impact on the fabric and character of the historic building, together with not requiring any significant alterations, rebuilding or extension that would be harmful to its character.

4.2 The existing barn differ in nature, with a mixture of brick, timber clad and galvanised sheeting as finished material. The re-use of this building is seen as a betterment of the existing situation, where they are disused, and only going to become more in disrepair than currently.

4.3 The conversion is suitably sympathetic, with all existing openings utilised to form new openings for the residential use and making full use of existing big openings to glazing, to make use of natural daylight and solar gain, which in turn assist in making the project high in green credentials.

- 4.4 In light of the above, it is considered the only way to ensure the building is retained in situ is to give them an alternative use. The design ensures it retains the existing traditional fabric and character of the building, together with modern habitable areas.
- 4.5 The principle of conversions have been allowed in the past, with the barns to the South having been converted to residential use successfully in the last 10 years.

## 5. ACCESS

- 5.1 The proposal includes access improvements on the existing access that currently serves existing house, converted barns at White Gwentrew.

Visibility splays of 33m to the South East and a 33m visibility to the North West from 2.4m will be provided for the improved access, with an access width of 5.5m for the first 10m.

- 5.2 Therefore, the proposal is considered fully compliant in terms of highway safety.

## 6. ECOLOGY

- 6.1 Barns have often bat potential, however the condition, materials and lack of loft area or crevices means that it would have negligible roost potential.
- 6.2 Biodiversity enhancement measures have been proposed which include the erection of bat and bird boxes.
- 6.3 The scheme itself is going to have biodiversity enhancements by re-roofing the barn to enable birds to roost under the gable eaves.
- 6.4 An ecological survey has been submitted to evidence the lack of roosting in the barn.

## 7. DRAINAGE

- 7.1 The surface water drainage will be relatively unchanged, with the proposal being a conversion of an existing building. With no additional hardstanding proposed, and rainwater harvesting incorporated, the conversion should improve the current drainage.
- 7.2 In relation to foul drainage, it is envisaged that the conversion will be served by a septic tank and soakaway.

## 8. FOOTPATH

- 8.1 We note that there is an existing public footpath running across the Council Road through the existing farm access, in between the barns and going to the rear of the barns to the field.
- 8.2 The development is for the barn conversion, so no building will obstruct the existing footpath, and the proposed curtilages will not impede the footpath in any way.
- 8.3 We acknowledge that works to improve the access (surfacing), will mean some disruption, but will ensure that the footpath is not obstructed during these works.

## 9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposal is to convert a disused agricultural barn into 2 residential units, together with associated works.
- 9.2 It is clear from the considerations within this planning statement, that the proposal fully complies with national and local planning policies, in relation to the acceptability of converting a barn, the ecological impacts and highways.
- 9.3 In light of the above consideration, and the relevant planning policy context that is currently in place, we consider that the proposed scheme should be viewed positively and recommended for approval.