

## Planning Statement

### Application for the conversion of a redundant building into a two-bedroom residential dwelling and associated works

Former storage building, Pencerrig Street, to the rear of 1 Ty'n y Graig Road, Llanbradach, Caerphilly, CF83 3LH

LRM Planning is instructed by the client in the submission of an application for the conversion of a redundant former storage building into a residential dwelling and associated works, including the provision of car parking and private amenity areas. The plans are at an early stage and as such, we are seeking to engage the local authority to discuss principles and possible design proposals.

The following information is submitted in support of the proposal:

Document Title
Application Forms
Cover Letter
Site Location Plan
Existing Floor Plan
Existing Front Elevation
Existing Rear Elevation
Existing Side Elevations
Proposed Site Plan
Proposed Ground Floor Plan
Proposed First Floor Plan
Proposed Front Elevation
Proposed Rear Elevation
Proposed Side Elevations

This statement provides a summary of pertinent considerations, which it is hoped will assist you in your consideration of the acceptability of the proposal. It covers the following broad headings:

- Description of the site and its context;
- Planning policy context;
- Planning history and review of precedents;
- An explanation of the proposals;
- A brief summary of any other relevant planning considerations; and
- A short appraisal and summary.

## Site location and context

The subject site is situated on the western boundary of Llanbradach, within the settlement boundary. The site comprises of a former storage building which is a stone and brick structure which has ceased to be used and its condition is deteriorating. It has a metal sheet roof and evidence of weeds growing through the walls. Windows have been replaced with concrete breezeblocks and wood panelling, with the former access covered by metal roller shutter doors.

The site is bordered by Pencerrig Street to the north, with dwelling of no.1 Tyn y Graig Road to the east. The rear gardens of dwellings of Tyn y Graig Road lie to the rear and a footpath runs to the west, beyond which runs the main Rhymney Valley railway line. The immediate context is defined by residential development with terraced dwellings built of stone with red and buff brick dressing to doors and windows.

The site is located within the Llanbradach Conservation Area, which was designated by the former Rhymney Valley District Council on 17 November 1992. The conservation area does not have an appraisal or management plan; but a document exists (dated 17.11.92) that records the reasons for the designation of the conservation area. The designation stems from attempts made by the All Saints Preservation Group to protect the former All Saints Parish Church from demolition. The Church was assessed for listing by Cadw, but ultimately deemed by them to not be of special architectural or historic interest and therefore worthy of listing.

A north and southbound bus stop is located on High Street and Park View at the end of Pencerrig Street, 150m east of the site adjacent the site providing eight services an hour between Caerphilly and Bargoed/Nelson and other local destinations including two services an hour between Cardiff and Blackwood. Llanbradach Railway station is also located within a 5-minute walk (400m) providing services terminating at Cardiff and Penarth (southbound) and Bargoed and Rhymney (northbound). Caerphilly Town Centre can be accessed by bus (a 10/15-minute journey) and provides access to number of employment opportunities, along with restaurants, shops and other leisure facilities.

With regards to education, Coed-Y-Brain Primary School is located 650m south of the site, with Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymny (Y Gwindy) located 3km to the south in Caerphilly.

The site is located within Flood Zone A as outlined on NRW's Development Advice Map. This Zone identifies areas which are at little or no risk of flooding.

In relation to heritage assets, the site is located within Llanbradach Conservation Area, discussed above. Otherwise, the site is remote of anything of value, it is not near to any listed buildings. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens or other heritage assets within the vicinity of the site which have the potential to be affected by the development proposals.

## Planning policy context and planning history

### Caerphilly County Borough Council Local Development Plan ('LDP')

The statutory development plan for this site is the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 (LDP) which was adopted in 2010. The main design objectives of the LDP include (*inter alia*):

3. *Ensure effective and efficient use of natural and built resources while preventing the unnecessary sterilisation of finite resources.*
4. *Ensure that the environmental impact of all new development is minimised.*
7. *Encourage the reuse and / or reclamation of appropriate brownfield and contaminated land and prevent the incidence of further contamination and dereliction;*

- 8. Ensure that all new development is well designed and has regard for its surroundings in order to reduce the opportunity for crime to occur;*
- 15. Reduce the impact of flooding by ensuring that highly vulnerable development is directed away from areas of risk wherever possible.*

Of particular relevance to the proposal is Policy SP3, Development in the Southern Connections Corridor, which encourages development within the settlement boundary that utilises previously developed land, reduces car borne trips, has regard to the social and economic function of the area and protects the natural heritage from inappropriate forms of development.

Policy CW2, Amenity, states “*Development proposals must have regard for all relevant material planning considerations in order to satisfy the following requirements:*

- A There is no unacceptable impact on the amenity of adjacent properties or land*
- B The proposal would not result in overdevelopment of the site and / or its surroundings*
- C The proposed use is compatible with surrounding land-uses and would not constrain the development of neighbouring sites for their identified land-use*
- D Where applicable, the viability of existing neighbouring land uses would not be compromised by virtue of their potential impact upon the amenity of proposed new residential development”.*

The following policies are also considered relevant to this application:

- SP3 –Development Strategy in the Southern Connection Corridor
- SP4 –Settlement Strategy
- SP5 –Settlement Boundaries
- SP6 –Place Making
- SP7 –Planning Obligations
- SP8 –Minerals Safeguarding
- SP9 –Waste Management
- SP10 –Conservation of Natural Heritage
- SP14 –Total Housing Requirement
- SP21 –Parking Standards
- CW1 –Sustainable Transport, Accessibility and Social Inclusion
- CW2 –Amenity
- CW3 –Design Considerations: Highways
- CW4 –Natural Heritage Protection
- MN2 –Minerals Safeguarding.

The development must also have regard for the Council's adopted SPG on car parking standards (LDP5) for the defined zones within the borough. For new dwellings, the SPG statutorily requests that 1 space is provided per bedroom with a maximum of 3 per dwelling.

### **Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (February 2021)**

The main thrust of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. Placemaking lies at the heart of PPW, with policy and development management decisions required to seek to deliver development that adheres to these principles. The national planning context is noted but not discussed here in the interest of brevity.

### **Planning History**

The site has no planning history that is available on the Local Planning Authority's website.

## Appraisal and proposal

The principle of development on site is supported by its sustainable location within the settlement boundary and re-use of a building falling into disrepair. Within settlement boundaries on existing residential land, the principle of residential development is acceptable, subject to material planning considerations.

The overriding principles of PPW are met. In this respect, a redundant dwelling is being brought into beneficial use to provide housing in a highly sustainable location. It also advocates development of sites near modes of sustainable transport. The site is well located in terms of immediate access to a range of shops, services, public transport, recreation, and employment opportunities, all of which are within convenient walking distance. Caerphilly town centre is also within 3.5km. The principle of the proposal therefore complies with key objectives relating to health, well-being, sustainability, and climate change.

Policies of the LDP are also considered to be complied with, not least due to the site's location within the settlement boundary. The plan emphasises the need for development, where possible, to favour the re-use of previously developed land, avoid areas of flood risk and promote a range and choice of new housing in sustainable locations with good access to employment, public transport, community facilities and shops, all of which are adhered to by the proposal.

Additionally, policy SP3 advocates development to make beneficial use of previously developed land and buildings and managing future growth through resource efficient settlement patterns that reduce the need to travel. Another in-principle policy that must be considered is policy SP5, which relates to development within settlement boundaries. The development brings back a redundant building into beneficial use benefitting the conservation area. It is also sympathetic to the immediate setting and wider surroundings, with no new openings proposed, thus the rear of the building will not have any windows overlooking neighbouring gardens, demonstrating compliance with policy CW2.

The sustainable location of the site will reduce car borne trips. The proposed development will also have regard to the social and economic function of the area, whilst protecting the natural heritage from inappropriate form of development in line with Policy SP3 of the LDP. Further, the development will not increase the risk of flooding, and due to its scale and location there will be no impact on residential amenity.

Accordingly, as evidenced above, the principle of development is established.

**Proposal and Layout** – The proposal seeks the development of a new two-bedroom residential property comprising and associated works.

The design is befitting of the site's location and is considerate to its surrounding contributing to the quality of the conservation area. The development will be refurbished and built to a high quality and the proposed external finishes have been chosen to assimilate to the existing building and the historic setting. In this regard, the building will retain its current prominence, with re-pointing and redressing of the brick helping to restore the quality of the building. No extensions are proposed to the building to ensure the primacy of the building. Together, these demonstrate adherence with policy CW2, CW3, CW5 and SP6 of the LDP which seeks to preserve and enhance the built and natural environment through sensitive design and setting.

There are no instances of privacy or overlooking concerns arising in respect of existing dwellings. The extensions have been designed so as to respect relationships with existing neighbours.

**Access and parking** – On-street car parking is proposed with sufficient space available on Pencerrig Street in front of the site. Although the SPG requires one space per bedroom up to a maximum of three for residential dwellings, the site context prohibits provision of these space without the site appearing over-engineered. The parking and access arrangements are considered acceptable and will have a neutral impact on the highway network.

Should any concerns be raised that this may be insufficient, it should be borne in mind that reduced car parking provision in sustainable locations is a principle strongly advocated in national policy. In this respect, PPW states that Local Authorities *'must support schemes which keep parking levels down. Especially off-street parking, when well designed'* [emphasis added].

On the basis, and the site's highly sustainable location, the level of car parking provided is considered to be justifiable on multiple grounds, with the provisions of local policy met, as well as the clear and robust principles of PPW.

**Heritage** – The proposed development is sited within Llanbradach Conservation Area. There is no conservation area appraisal and the dilapidated building is considered to make minimal, if any, contribution to the Conservation Area as it stands. Refurbishment of the building would provide a welcome cessation to its decline and bring it back into beneficial use, thus improving its presentation within the conservation area. It is concluded that the proposal would result in an enhancement to the character and appearance of the conservation area, in line with SP6.

Rejuvenating the derelict building ensures that the conservation area remains vibrant and prosperous in line with PPW. The proposal enhances the qualities of the building, retaining it in sustainable use, ensuring compliance with national policy. Otherwise, the building stands to continue its decline and ultimately remain a blemish within the conservation area.

**Amenity** – It is considered that the scale and massing of the building would not result in an overbearing or un-neighbourly form of development. There are sufficient separating distances between the proposed development and existing properties. No new openings are proposed, with the main elevation overlooking Pencerrig Street, therefore the proposed development will not result in an unacceptable impact.

**Flood Risk** – NRW's Development Advice Map confirms that the site is within Flood Zone A, which covers areas considered to be at little or no risk of fluvial or coastal/tidal flooding.

**Ecology/Noise** – The site's ecological and noise constraints are noted and will be assessed in due course. A bat study has been undertaken and the report is attached to the application. The recommendations outlined within the report will be undertaken as described.

The applicant is firstly seeking to establish the principle of the proposed development with the Local Authority.

**Drainage** – The development will utilise existing drainage connections, thus, no constraints are considered to be arising in this respect. Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB) consent will not be required, as the proposals do not exceed 100sqm of new hardstanding.

## Conclusion

To conclude, it is considered that the proposals are a well-considered response to the site context and its constraints. The proposed development is considered appropriate and offers bespoke accommodation that will contribute, albeit on a small scale, to the housing land shortfall within the Authority. In this regard, the site context is positively responded to, arriving at a design that is sympathetic to the existing character of the building and conservation area. Further, the site is located in a sustainable location within the settlement boundary of Llanbradach and will be a suitable addition to the area. On the basis of the above, it is hoped that the scheme is one that the Local Authority can support.

I look forward to receiving confirmation of the name of the officer who would be dealing with this enquiry such that we may arrange a meeting to discuss this proposal. I trust the above is clear, but should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

