

RHYDYGARTH, LLANDEFALLE, BRECON, LD3 0NR

## RETENTION OF SHEPHERD'S HUT AND ASSOCIATED HARDSTANDING

### SUPPORTING STATEMENT

#### Introduction

The applicant owns and lives in Rhydygarth and has done for some years, in 2019/2020, looking to supplement her retirement income, the applicant commissioned a shepherd's hut for use as occasional holiday accommodation, installed same in 2020 and let said hut from time to time from spring of that year.

In June 2023, the applicant received a [REDACTED] from the Local Planning Authority. The information requested was duly supplied, in parallel to which the applicant, who is a [REDACTED]

I explained to the applicant that planning consent should have been obtained before bringing the shepherd's hut on site and that the fact that there had been no objection or complaint to date did not obviate the need to obtain consent. I subsequently discussed the matter with officers of the LPA and undertook to prepare and submit a retrospective application for consent.

I have lengthy experience having been involved with planning applicants for over thirty years. I recognise that the applicant is a family friend. However, I am of the firm and sincere opinion that the failure to apply for consent before embarking upon the project was a matter of ignorance rather than malice. That does not excuse the need to properly regularise the matter, though I trust that it is something that the LPA will have in mind as the determination process unfolds.

#### The Shepherd's Hut

The hut occupies a footprint of 6.3m x 2.8m (a block plan and elevations are submitted with the application) and is raised from the ground on wheels. The 'skirt' of the hut is 650mm above ground level and the threshold of the only access to the hut is 800mm above ground, the hut being accessed by a flight of wooden stairs on the eastern elevation. The hut is faced with galvanised corrugated iron with windows and doors being of softwood timber.

The hut houses a maximum of two people, is warmed by a log burning stove with water fed from the applicant's house being heated by use of Calor gas. Electricity is run from the applicant's house. The hut benefits from a compost toilet. The provision is deliberately low key, the applicant having a keen eye to sustainability and low environmental impact. Such advertising as the applicant is involved in stresses the merits of the hut as a place for reflection and pastoral entertainment (there is no TV or wi-fi).

The hut sits on a hardstanding that accommodates a single vehicle by way of a pre-existing entrance. Access/egress is by way of a lane that serves only Rhydygarth and one other property, Tretirion. The lane is not a thoroughfare.

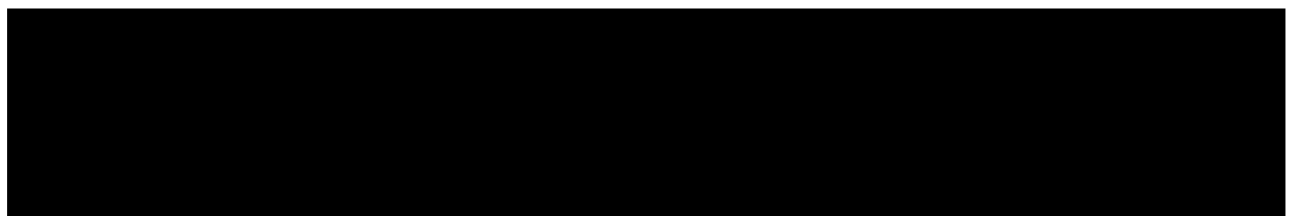
The hut sits a few metres to the south of a small brook that takes water from land to the west above Rhydygarth/Tretirion. Generally the brook is at low ebb, though can be in spate at times of heavy rain. The shepherd's hut is located 1.4m from the invert of the brook at its closet point, the threshold of the hut being 2.2m above the invert. During my visits (generally in dry periods) the brook is no more than 200mm at its deepest point over the length that could impinge upon the hut. Any visitors in the hut have immediate and unimpeded access to the rising ground constituting the garden of Rhydygarth and dwelling itself to the south.

The hut is built upon a wheeled chassis that raises the hut above ground. The skirts of the galvanised corrugated walls are 650mm above existing ground levels with the access/threshold which is the entry point for any water is 800mm above ground level. Sections from ground level below the door/threshold to and beyond the invert of the brook have been prepared and are submitted with the application.

Notwithstanding the above, the applicant has commissioned a Flood Consequences Assessment which is submitted with the application.

The hut sits in a largely unspoiled area which attracts a considerable amount of wildlife, something encouraged by the applicant. There is a good selection of flora in the area around the hut and in the grounds of Rhydygarth. Ready access to the surrounding countryside is available by way of the footpath network.

The hut offers little if any impact to the environment. Occupants of [REDACTED] have no view of the hut which is fully screened by a hedge,. In any event, views from [REDACTED] itself are generally to the west, north and south. The applicant does provide a table and two chairs adjacent to the access in the eastern elevation. The provision does not lend itself to noisy activity, though the sitting area is not on the elevation adjacent to [REDACTED]



## Conclusion

The provision of the hut is benign –as the fact that it has not come to the LPA's notice before implies. It does offer the applicant some help with her living costs and does allow visitors an opportunity to enjoy peace and solitude. In short, I am of the view that the hut should attract planning consent.

Peter Weavers  
February 2024