

**ADRODDIAD PENNAETH  
CYNLLUNIO,  
CYFARWYDDIAETH YR  
AMGYLCHEDD**

**REPORT OF THE  
HEAD OF PLANNING,  
DIRECTORATE OF ENVIRONMENT**

**AR GYFER PWYLLGOR CYNLLUNIO  
CYNGOR SIR CAERFYRDDIN/**

**TO CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY  
COUNCIL'S PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**AR 14 RHAGFYR 2017  
ON 14 DECEMBER 2017**

**I'W BENDERFYNU/  
FOR DECISION**

*Ardal  
Gorllewin/  
Area West*



**Mewn perthynas â cheisiadau y mae gan y Cyngor ddiddordeb ynddynt un ai fel ymgeisydd/asiant neu fel perchennog tir neu eiddo, atgoffir yr Aelodau fod yn rhaid iddynt anwybyddu'r agwedd hon, gan ystyried ceisiadau o'r fath a phenderfynu yn eu cylch ar sail rhinweddau'r ceisiadau cynllunio yn unig. Ni ddylid ystyried swyddogaeth y Cyngor fel perchennog tir, na materion cysylltiedig, wrth benderfynu ynghylch ceisiadau cynllunio o'r fath.**

**In relation to those applications which are identified as one in which the Council has an interest either as applicant/agent or in terms of land or property ownership, Members are reminded that they must set aside this aspect, and confine their consideration and determination of such applications exclusively to the merits of the planning issues arising. The Council's land owning function, or other interests in the matter, must not be taken into account when determining such planning applications.**

<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>14 DECEMBER 2017</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>HEAD OF PLANNING</b>

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**APPLICATIONS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL**

<b>Application No</b>	<b>W/33092</b>
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<b>Application Type</b>	Full Planning
<b>Proposal &amp; Location</b>	CONVERSION OF EXISTING AGRICULTURAL BUILDING TO A DWELLING AT BARN AT CILHERWYDD, LLANBOIDY, WHITLAND, CARMS, SA34 0LL

<b>Applicant(s)</b>	DORIAN PHILLIPS, C/O AGENT, ,
<b>Agent</b>	DORIAN PHILLIPS LTD BUILDING CONTRACTORS, DOLAU GRONW, LLANBOIDY, WHITLAND, SA34 0EE
<b>Case Officer</b>	Helen Rice
<b>Ward</b>	Llanboidy
<b>Date of validation</b>	14/12/2015

## CONSULTATIONS

**Llanboidy Community Council** - No comments received.

**Local Member** - No comments were received by Cllr R Llewelyn who was the Local Member at the time the application was submitted. The applicant is now the Local Member for the Llanboidy ward, Cllr Dorian Phillips.

**Head of Transport** - No objections subject to conditions.

**Natural Resources Wales** - No objections subject to conditions ensuring that the development is carried out in accordance with the recommendations set out in the submitted bat survey and advising that prior to any works commencing, an European Protected Species Licence from NRW will be required.

**Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water** - No objections

**Neighbours/Public** - The application was publicised by way of a site notice. No comments/letters were received as a result. Members are informed that a recent consultation process has been undertaken in view of the development's impact upon a right of way. As required by legislation the application has been the subject of notification in the press and that is not due to expire until 13 December 2017. If any responses are received as a result, an update will be provided to Members at the committee.

## RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

W/25058      Alternative access track to  
Cilherwydd using existing  
entrance onto C3203  
Full Planning Permission

16 November 2011

## **APPRAISAL**

**This application is being reported to the Planning Committee as the applicant, Cllr Dorian Phillips is the Local Member.**

## **THE SITE**

The application site lies in a remote rural location to the north of Whitland and south east of the village of Llanboidy. Set down in the valley from the C3203 road from Whitland to Llanboidy views of the main application site are screened by topography albeit the access is clearly evident from the road. The access road serves both the barn and the farmhouse known as Cilherwydd located further west from the site. Public footpath 18/15 crosses the site. The barn the subject of the application is of a traditional stone built appearance under a corrugated iron roof, with a few openings with arched brick work lintel detail above. It appears that various repairs to the barn have been historically carried out

## **THE PROPOSAL**

Full planning permission is sought for the conversion of the existing barn into a residential dwelling and the addition of a single storey lean-to extension. The proposal would result in the creation of a Lounge, Kitchen/Dining, Utility and WC and Conservatory on the ground floor with 3 no. bedrooms, a bathroom and en-suite at first floor. Existing openings are utilised albeit in amended form in some examples with the main changes to the appearance relating to the insertion of windows within the roof and the addition of the single storey lean-to extension, the foundations of which have already been created. The existing corrugated iron roof is to be replaced by a natural slate roof with the insertion of uPVC woodgrain windows and doors. The created stone access from the existing track terminates with a parking and turning area, with the creation of an amenity garden area surrounding the barn. Foul drainage would be via a septic tank with surface water drainage channelled into a soakaway within the application site area. Minor improvements to the existing access are proposed to ensure the provision of adequate visibility splays in the interests of highway safety.

## **PLANNING POLICY**

This application has been considered against relevant policies of the Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (Adopted December 2014) ('the LDP') and other relevant Welsh Government Guidance. The application site lies in the countryside as defined by the LDP, as such the following policies are of key relevance to the proposal:

**Policy H5 Adaptation and re-use of rural buildings for residential use** sets out the circumstances whereby the conversion of a building in the rural countryside into a residential dwelling can be considered acceptable. The policy replicates the advice set out in national guidance by stating that the conversion of such buildings to residential use should be the last resort and that all reasonable endeavours are first undertaken to establish an alternative economical/commercial use for the building as a means of maintaining such activities in the rural areas or that the building is converted into an affordable dwelling or is associated with

a wider scheme for business re-use.

In cases whereby it is confirmed that there is no alternative use, residential use (including affordable housing) of traditional rural buildings can be considered acceptable provided that the building is structurally sound and intact and that the conversion works can be carried out without extensive alteration, extension or re-construction and that the building demonstrates and retains sufficient quality of architectural features and traditional materials with no significant loss of the character and integrity of the original structure.

**Policy GP1 Sustainability and High Quality Design** is a general policy which promotes sustainability and high quality design, and seeks to ensure that development conforms with and enhances the character and appearance of the site, building or area in terms of siting, appearance, scale, height, massing, elevation treatment and detailing.

**Policy EQ4 Biodiversity** states that proposals for development which have an adverse impact on priority species, habitats and features of recognised principal importance to the conservation of biodiversity and nature conservation (i.e. NERC & Local BAP, and other sites protected under European or UK legislation), will not be permitted unless satisfactory mitigation is proposed, and where exceptional circumstances where the reasons for development outweigh the need to safeguard biodiversity and where alternative habitat provision can be made.

**Policy AH1 Affordable Housing** states that a contribution towards affordable housing will be required on all applications which result in the creation of one or more new dwellings, including barn conversions. In the case of the creation of a single dwelling, this equates to a financial contribution which in this area is equivalent to £77.58 per sq m of the internal floorspace of the proposed property. Such a contribution to be secured by a Section 106 Unilateral Undertaking.

Other Welsh Government Guidance of relevance includes:

- Planning Policy Wales (8<sup>th</sup> Edition) January 2016
- Technical Advice Note 5 (TAN 5) - Nature Conservation and Planning (2009)

## **APPRAISAL**

The key considerations of relevance to this case are whether the proposal complies with the requirements of Policy H5 of the Local Development, its impact upon the character and appearance of the existing barn, affordable housing, biodiversity impacts, impact on highway safety and impact upon the existing public right of way that crosses the site.

### *Policy H5 and impact upon the character and appearance of the building and wider area*

The proposals represents a faithful conversion to the existing building and whilst there will be an additional extension, it is considered that the overall scale, siting and design of the lean-to extension are akin to a agricultural style extension and thus would not have an over-domesticated impact upon the overall character and appearance of the barn. The intended use of materials, including the replacement of the existing roof covering with natural slate is supported. A structural survey submitted with the application indicates that the existing building is of sound construction able to withstand the conversion works without substantial alterations or replacement. A marketing exercise carried out over a period of 21 months indicates that the property has been marketed for uses other than residential in accordance with the requirements of policy H5. The estate agent comments that the barn was

considered by many as too remote for passing trade, too small for industrial usage with a narrow access lane restricting use by large vehicles. As such, it is considered in principle that the proposed conversion of the traditional style building into a residential dwelling is acceptable having regard to the requirements of Policy H5 and would not have an unacceptable impact upon the character and appearance of the building or wider area.

#### *Affordable housing*

This application triggers the requirement for a contribution towards affordable housing under policy AH1 of the LDP. Following lengthy discussions, the applicant has agreed to pay the affordable housing contribution of £77.58 per sqm of the internal floorspace. This contribution has been secured by way of a Section 106 Unilateral Undertaking that has been duly completed.

#### *Impact on biodiversity*

The bat survey submitted with the application indicates the presence of a small number of bats and as such confirms that a European Protected Species Licence will be required from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) prior to the commencement of any work on the barn. No objections have been received from the Planning Ecologist or NRW, provided that conditions are imposed requiring the works to be carried out in accordance with the details set out in the bat survey and highlighting the need for an EPS licence.

#### *Impact on highway safety*

In terms of highways, the proposal seeks to utilise an existing access with some improvements and creation of the necessary visibility splay which requires minor trimming of hedgerows.

#### *Impact on the Public Right of Way*

Footpath 18/15 crosses the application site, immediately in front of the barn's western elevation in the location of the proposed extension. As such, construction of the extension would have the effect of blocking this right of way. The applicant is aware of this matter and has been in discussions with the Council's Right of Way team with a view of diverting the public right of way to follow the track rather than cross the barn and its proposed garden area. This will require a Public Right of Way Diversion Order under separate legislation which again the applicant is aware of. Nevertheless, a note will be inserted on the decision notice advising the applicant of the diversion requirement.

## **CONCLUSION**

After careful consideration of the scheme as submitted it is considered that the proposal complies with the requirement of Policy H5 and would not have an unacceptable impact upon the character and appearance of the building or wider area. Sufficient safeguards are in place to avoid unacceptable impacts upon biodiversity and highway safety, and the applicant is already aware of the need for the diversion of a footpath which currently crosses the application site and is already in discussions with the Council's Right of Way team. A unilateral undertaking has been completed to secure a financial contribution towards affordable housing.

## **RECOMMENDATION – APPROVAL**

## **CONDITIONS**



- 1 The development hereby approved shall be commenced before the expiration of two years from the date of this permission.
- 2 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents, unless otherwise stipulated by conditions:-
  - 1:2500 scale Expanded Location Plan received 9 November 2015
  - 1:2500 and 1:500 scale Location and Block Plans received 9 November 2015
  - 1:250 scale Proposed Site Plan received 9 November 2015
  - 1:200 scale Site Access Plan received 9 November 2015
  - 1:50 scale Proposed Ground Floor Plan received 2 October 2017
  - 1:50 scale Proposed First Floor Plan received 2 October 2017
  - 1:100 scale Proposed Elevations received 2 October 2017
  - Ecological Survey by Kite Ecology dated May 2013 and as supplemented by letter from Kite Ecology dated 14 August 2015
  - Structural Survey by Pattern Associates Limited dated 20 August 2015
- 3 The new vehicular access shall be laid out and constructed strictly in accordance with Typical Layout No. 1 (specification for which is attached to this planning permission), prior to the commencement of any other work or development. Thereafter it shall be retained, unobstructed, in this form in perpetuity.
- 4 Any access gates shall be set back a minimum distance of 5.0 metres from the highway boundary and shall open inwards into the site only.
5. Prior to any use of the access by vehicular traffic, a visibility splay (to the south side) of 2.4 metres x 160 metres and 2.4m x 43 metres (to the north side) shall be formed and thereafter retained in perpetuity, to the respective sides of the centre line of the access road in relation to the nearer edge of carriageway.
6. The access, visibility splays and turning area required, shall be wholly provided prior to any part of the development being brought into use, and thereafter shall be retained unobstructed in perpetuity. In particular, no part of the access, visibility splays, or turning area, is to be obstructed by non-motorised vehicles.
7. The parking spaces and layout shown on the plans herewith approved shall be provided prior to any use of the development herewith approved. Thereafter, they shall be retained, unobstructed, for the purposes of parking only. In particular, no part of the parking or turning facilities is to be obstructed by non-motorised vehicles.
8. The existing access shall be reduced in width to 5.0m, when measured from the south side, so that no part of the access falls within the slip road section to the adjacent junction to the north of the access.
9. The access shall be hard-surfaced in a bonded material for a minimum distance of 5.0 metres behind the nearside edge of carriageway prior to any part of the development approved herewith being brought into use.

## **REASONS**

- 1 Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2 In the interest of clarity as to the extent of the permission.

3 - 9 In the interest of highway safety.

## **REASONS FOR DECISION**

The decision to grant planning permission has been taken in accordance with Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires that, in determining a planning application the determination must be in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- The proposed development complies with Policies H5, GP1, EQ4 and AH1 of the Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan Adopted 2014 ('the LDP') in that the building is of a traditional rural character which has been demonstrated to be structurally sound and is of a sufficient size to accommodate the intended use without substantial alterations or reconstruction. Sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that reasonable endeavour has been made to secure an alternative business use. The proposal would not give rise to highway safety concerns. Appropriate measures are imposed to avoid the potential to impact upon protected species. The application is accompanied by a Unilateral Undertaking to secure financial contributions towards affordable housing.

## **NOTES**

- 1 The application site is crossed by a public right of way, footpath 18/15. The developer is advised that a Diversion Order will need to be applied for. In the meantime, the public right of way that must not be obstructed or encroached upon to maintain the free flow of all users.

An European Protected Species (EPS) licence issued by Natural Resources Wales is likely to be required for the above development and such a licence must be issued prior to any works commencing on the site. Please contact Natural Resources Wales via [enquiries@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk) or 0300 065 3000 for further information.

All British bat species are protected by virtue of the EC Habitats Directive, the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure, take from the wild, possess or trade any species of British bat as well as intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy, or obstruct access to any structure or place which bats use for shelter or protection and to disturb bat(s) whilst they are using such a place. If bats are encountered all works must cease immediately and contact made with Natural Resources Wales via [enquiries@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk) or 0300 065 3000 for further advice.

- 2 Please note that this consent is specific to the plans and particulars approved as part of the application. Any departure from the approved plans will constitute unauthorised development and may be liable to enforcement action. You (or any subsequent developer) should advise the Council of any actual or proposed variations from the approved plans immediately so that you can be advised how to best resolve the matter.

In addition, any Conditions which the Council has imposed on this consent will be listed above and should be read carefully. It is your (or any subsequent developers') responsibility to ensure that the terms of all Conditions are met in full at the appropriate time (as outlined in the specific condition).

The commencement of development without firstly meeting in full the terms of any Conditions which require the submission of details prior to the commencement of development will constitute unauthorised development. This will necessitate the submission of a further application to retain the unauthorised development and may render you liable to formal enforcement action.

Failure on the part of the developer to observe the requirements of any other Conditions could result in the Council pursuing formal enforcement action in the form of a Breach of Condition Notice.

3 Comments and guidance received from consultees relating to this application, including any other permissions or consents required, is available on the Authority's website ([www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk](http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk)).

- Please see the relevant response from Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water and refer to the recommendations and advice contained therein.
- Please see the relevant response from Planning Ecology and NRW and refer to the recommendations and advice regarding British Bat species contained therein.

**APPLICATIONS RECOMMENDED FOR REFUSAL**

<b>Application No</b>	<b>W/35041</b>
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<b>Application Type</b>	Outline
<b>Proposal &amp; Location</b>	AFFORDABLE DWELLING AT LAND ADJACENT, TALJARIS, MAESYCRUGIAU, PENCADER, SA39 9DH

<b>Applicant(s)</b>	JOANNE PRICE, 10 FOREST LANE TERRACE, LLANGYBI, LAMPETER, SA48 8LZ
<b>Agent</b>	CARTREF DESIGNS LIMITED - DARYL THOMAS, CARTREF, TY MAWR, LLANYBYDDER, SA40 9RB
<b>Case Officer</b>	David Roberts
<b>Ward</b>	Llanfihangel-ar-arthW/35041
<b>Date of validation</b>	01/02/2017

## CONSULTATIONS

**Llanllwni Community Council** - No comments received.

**Local Member** - County Councillor Linda Davies Evans supports the application as the applicant meets the local needs eligibility criteria and has requested that if the application cannot be supported, the application should be determined by the planning committee.

**Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water** – No comments.

**Head of Transport** – No observations.

**Natural Resources Wales** - No adverse comments.

**Land Drainage** - Requested that a condition be included that the Surface Water Drainage scheme for the development needs to be agreed and signed off by the Land Drainage Section

**Head of Public Protection** - has expressed concerns about the suitability of the locality for a residential dwelling due to the proximity to the large sawmill business, which it is understood has recently had a large extension granted. Have requested that a Noise Impact Assessment be provided.

**Neighbours/Public** – Site Notices were erected in the vicinity of the application site and no objections to the proposal were received.

## SITE HISTORY

**PLANNING COMMITTEE - 14 DECEMBER 2017**

There is no relevant site history.

## **THE SITE**

The site is located in countryside to the north-west of the settlement of Llanllwni on the edge of the Teifi valley. The site is accessed from the A485 Carmarthen to Lampeter Road via a county road that leads in the direction of Maesycrugiau.

The application site is a plot approximately 41 metres x 31 metres and sits within a field enclosure to the east of Taliaris, a small holding which is situated approximately 50 metres west of the application site. Immediately to the south of the application site there is a large sawmill complex, (Teifi Timber Products Ltd, Llanllwni Saw Mills). Access to the site is from an existing private road that leads to Taliaris and the rear of the sawmill complex.

## **THE PROPOSAL**

The application seeks outline planning permission for an affordable dwelling with all matters reserved for future consideration for the daughter of the residents at Taliaris. The site is approximately 41 metres wide x 31 metres in depth on a relatively level area of pasture land, the proposed dwelling is to be accessed via a new driveway off the private road. An indicative layout has been provided showing the access and parking arrangements and the location of a dwelling with a footprint measuring 8-14 metres in width and 13-18 metres in length and an indicative height to ridge level of between 5-9 metres. As the plan is indicative only, it is sufficient to demonstrate that the application site is large enough to accommodate a dwelling.

The application is made under the affordability/local need eligibility criteria. A planning application supporting statement has been submitted with details of the applicant's circumstances and a local needs case in support of the application. It is conveyed that:-

- The applicant has lived in the local area all her life
- The applicant needs to live closer to provide care and support for her elderly parents who she visits on a daily basis and also helps with the upkeep of Taliaris.
- The applicant is currently living in temporary rented accommodation.
- The proposal accords with the general criteria of the relevant LDP Affordable housing policies in that the application site is located within a small cluster of dwellings.
- There are no building plots/properties available close to her parents within the applicant's financial means.

## **PLANNING POLICIES**

In the context of the current development control policy framework, the site lies in open countryside outside the defined settlement limits for any town or village. The supporting statement with the proposal make reference to Policy AH3 of the Local Development Plan; the application falls to be considered against the following policies as contained in the LDP and Planning Policy Guidance Wales Edition No 9 :-

### **Policy AH3 Affordable Housing – Minor Settlement in the Open Countryside**

**Proposals in the open countryside for affordable housing for a single dwelling will be permitted within settlements, hamlets and groups of dwellings without Development**

Limits where it is to meet a genuine identified local need (as defined within the Glossary of Terms) and provided that:

- a. It represents sensitive infill development of a small gap within an otherwise continuous built up frontage; or, a minor extension which does not result in ribbon development or perpetuate existing ribbon development;
- b. It is of a scale and size appropriate to, and in keeping with (and not detrimental to) the character (including landscape and townscape) of the area;
- c. The benefits of the initial affordability will be retained for all subsequent occupants;
- d. It is of a size, scale and design compatible with an affordable dwelling and is available to those on low or moderate incomes.

### **Policy GP1 Sustainability and High Quality Design**

Development proposals will be permitted where they accord with the following:

- a) It conforms with and enhances the character and appearance of the site, building or area in terms of siting, appearance, scale, height, massing, elevation treatment, and detailing;
- b) It incorporates existing landscape or other features, takes account of site contours and changes in levels and prominent skylines or ridges;
- c) Utilises materials appropriate to the area within which it is located;
- d) It would not have a significant impact on the amenity of adjacent land uses, properties, residents or the community;
- e) Includes an integrated mixture of uses appropriate to the scale of the development;
- f) It retains, and where appropriate incorporates important local features (including buildings, amenity areas, spaces, trees, woodlands and hedgerows) and ensures the use of good quality hard and soft landscaping and embraces opportunities to enhance biodiversity and ecological connectivity;
- g) It achieves and creates attractive, safe places and public spaces, which ensures security through the 'designing-out-crime' principles of Secured by Design (including providing natural surveillance, visibility, well-lit environments and areas of public movement);
- h) An appropriate access exists or can be provided which does not give rise to any parking or highway safety concerns on the site or within the locality;
- i) It protects and enhances the landscape, townscape, historic and cultural heritage of the County and there are no adverse effects on the setting or integrity of the historic environment;
- j) It ensures or provides for, the satisfactory generation, treatment and disposal of both surface and foul water;
- k) It has regard to the generation, treatment and disposal of waste.
- l) It has regard for the safe, effective and efficient use of the transportation network;
- m) It provides an integrated network which promotes the interests of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport which ensures ease of access for all;
- n) It includes, where applicable, provision for the appropriate management and eradication of invasive species.

Proposals will also be considered in light of the policies and provisions of this Plan and National Policy (PPW: Edition 7 and TAN12: Design (2014)).

### **SP1 Sustainable Places and Spaces**

Proposals for development will be supported where they reflect sustainable development and design principles by:

- a) **Distributing development to sustainable locations in accordance with the settlement framework, supporting the roles and functions of the identified settlements;**
- b) **Promoting, where appropriate, the efficient use of land including previously developed sites;**
- c) **Integrating with the local community, taking account of character and amenity as well as cultural and linguistic considerations;**
- d) **Respecting, reflecting and, wherever possible, enhancing local character and distinctiveness;**
- e) **Creating safe, attractive and accessible environments which contribute to people's health and wellbeing and adhere to urban design best practice;**
- f) **Promoting active transport infrastructure and safe and convenient sustainable access particularly through walking and cycling;**
- g) **Utilising sustainable construction methods where feasible;**
- h) **Improving social and economic wellbeing;**
- i) **Protect and enhance the area's biodiversity value and where appropriate, seek to integrate nature conservation into new development.**

### **Planning Policy Guidance Wales Edition No 9 (Paragraph 9.2.22, 9.3.1- 9.3.3)**

9.2.22 In planning for **housing in rural areas** it is important to recognise that development in the countryside should embody sustainability principles, benefiting the rural economy and local communities while maintaining and enhancing the environment. There should be a choice of housing, recognising the housing needs of all, including those in need of affordable or special needs provision. In order to safeguard the character and appearance of the countryside, to reduce the need to travel by car and to economise on the provision of services, new houses in the countryside, away from existing settlements recognised in development plans or from other areas allocated for development, must be strictly controlled. Many parts of the countryside have isolated groups of dwellings. Sensitive filling in of small gaps, or minor extensions to such groups, in particular for affordable housing to meet local need, may be acceptable, but much depends upon the character of the surroundings, the pattern of development in the area and the accessibility to main towns and villages.

9.3.1 New housing developments should be well integrated with and connected to the existing pattern of settlements. The expansion of towns and villages should avoid creating ribbon development, coalescence of settlements or a fragmented development pattern. Where housing development is on a significant scale, or where a new settlement or urban village is proposed, it should be integrated with existing or new industrial, commercial and retail development and with community facilities.

9.3.2 Sensitive **infilling** of small gaps within small groups of houses, or minor extensions to



groups, in particular for affordable housing to meet local need, may be acceptable, though much will depend upon the character of the surroundings and the number of such groups in the area. Significant incremental expansion of housing in rural settlements and small towns should be avoided where this is likely to result in unacceptable expansion of travel demand to urban centres and where travel needs are unlikely to be well served by public transport. Residential development in the vicinity of existing industrial uses should be restricted if the presence of houses is likely to lead residents to try to curtail the industrial use.

9.3.3 Insensitive infilling, or the cumulative effects of development or redevelopment, including conversion and adaptation, should not be allowed to damage an area's character or amenity. This includes any such impact on neighbouring dwellings, such as serious loss of privacy or overshadowing.

## **ASSESSMENT & CONCLUSION**

The three key issues in this instance are whether this local needs dwelling proposal complies with national planning policies and Local Development Plan Affordable Housing Policies for the area, the impact of the proposed dwelling on the open countryside / landscape character of the locality, and the potential impact of the proposed dwelling on the existing adjoining employment usage.

With regard to the first key issue, does the proposal comply with the Authority's LDP policies in relation to the provision of affordable housing in the open countryside, it is considered that the application site does not meet the requirements of policy AH3 of the Local Development Plan as the site does not adjoin or form part of a hamlet or group of dwellings. The site would to a certain extent be screened by the neighbouring sawmill complex, however the nearest residential property is Taliaris which is situated 50 metres west of the application site. The aforementioned policy does not allow for sporadic residential dwellings in the open countryside. National planning guidance also states that new houses in the countryside, away from existing settlements recognised in development plans or from other areas allocated for development, must be strictly controlled.

In relation to the second key issue of the impact of the proposed dwelling on the open countryside and the landscape character of the area, although the proposed dwelling would be screened from the south by the existing sawmill complex, the proposed development would encroach into an agricultural field which at present is free from any form of built development, the field is clearly visible from the county road and provides an attractive landscape buffer between the sawmill and the county road. Consequently the proposed dwelling would appear as an isolated and piecemeal domestic structure in stark contrast to its strongly rural context and would therefore conflict with the Council's landscape protection objectives and its policies relating to the countryside including LDP Policy GP1 which amongst other things seeks conformity with the character and appearance of the site and area and to protect the landscape character of the county.

In considering the third issue of the potential impact of the proposed dwelling on the existing adjoining employment use, it is considered that the existing employment usage would have a significant impact on the amenity of the occupiers of the proposed dwelling due to the significant levels of noise generated by the sawmill and may lead occupiers to try and curtail its industrial operations, The Head of Public Protection has also raised concerns in regard to noise and has requested that a Noise Impact Assessment be provided. In July 2014 when

the sawmill was granted planning permission for a new access and an extension to the existing sawmill structure and an extension to the storage yard, a number of the local residents made representations expressing concern in regard to noise pollution and disturbance generated by the complex, so noise is already an concern for existing residents living in close proximity to the sawmill.

To avoid adjoining uses attempting to curtail the operational processes of the sawmill it is considered that new residential development in the immediate vicinity of this employment site should be strictly controlled. If Committee are minded to approve the application, a Noise Impact Assessment will be requested from the applicant for assessment prior to the release of the planning permission.

In light of the above it is considered that the application should be refused as the proposal does not meet the requirements of Policy AH3 of the Local Development Plan and is also contrary to local development plan policy and national planning policy guidance which seeks to protect the landscape character of the County and also to restrict new dwellings in the vicinity of existing adjoining employment usages where future occupiers may to try to curtail its industrial use.

## **RECOMMENDATION – REFUSAL**

### **REASONS**

- 1 The Proposal is contrary to Policy AH3 of the Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan which states:

**Policy AH3 Affordable Housing – Minor Settlement in the Open Countryside  
Proposals in the open countryside for affordable housing for a single dwelling will be permitted within settlements, hamlets and groups of dwellings without Development Limits where it is to meet a genuine identified local need (as defined within the Glossary of Terms) and provided that:**

- e. It represents sensitive infill development of a small gap within an otherwise continuous built up frontage; or, a minor extension which does not result in ribbon development or perpetuate existing ribbon development;
- f. It is of a scale and size appropriate to, and in keeping with (and not detrimental to) the character (including landscape and townscape) of the area;
- g. The benefits of the initial affordability will be retained for all subsequent occupants;
- h. It is of a size, scale and design compatible with an affordable dwelling and is available to those on low or moderate incomes.

#### **In that:**

- The application site does not represent a sensitive form of infill development or a minor extension to a group of dwellings and if approved it would result in an inappropriate form of residential development in the open countryside. The proposal would extend the built development into an open field and appear as

an incursion into the surrounding countryside to the detriment of the rural character of the area. The proposal would create a fragmented pattern of development.

- 2 The proposal is contrary to Policy GP1 of the Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan, which states:

**Development proposals will be permitted where they accord with the following:**

- a) **It conforms with and enhances the character and appearance of the site, building or area in terms of siting, appearance, scale, height, massing, elevation treatment, and detailing;**
- b) **It incorporates existing landscape or other features, takes account of site contours and changes in levels and prominent skylines or ridges;**
- c) **Utilises materials appropriate to the area within which it is located;**
- d) **It would not have a significant impact on the amenity of adjacent land uses, properties, residents or the community;**
- e) **Includes an integrated mixture of uses appropriate to the scale of the development;**
- f) **It retains, and where appropriate incorporates important local features (including buildings, amenity areas, spaces, trees, woodlands and hedgerows) and ensures the use of good quality hard and soft landscaping and embraces opportunities to enhance biodiversity and ecological connectivity;**
- g) **It achieves and creates attractive, safe places and public spaces, which ensures security through the 'designing-out-crime' principles of Secured by Design (including providing natural surveillance, visibility, well-lit environments and areas of public movement);**
- h) **An appropriate access exists or can be provided which does not give rise to any parking or highway safety concerns on the site or within the locality;**
- i) **It protects and enhances the landscape, townscape, historic and cultural heritage of the County and there are no adverse effects on the setting or integrity of the historic environment;**
- j) **It ensures or provides for, the satisfactory generation, treatment and disposal of both surface and foul water;**
- k) **It has regard to the generation, treatment and disposal of waste.**
- l) **It has regard for the safe, effective and efficient use of the transportation network;**
- m) **It provides an integrated network which promotes the interests of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport which ensures ease of access for all;**
- n) **It includes, where applicable, provision for the appropriate management and eradication of invasive species.**

**Proposals will also be considered in light of the policies and provisions of this Plan and National Policy (PPW: Edition 7 and TAN12: Design (2014)).**

**In that:**

- The proposal does not conform with or enhance the character of the area in

terms of siting. As such it would result in an inappropriate form of residential development in the open countryside. The proposal would extend the built development into an open field and appear as an incursion into the surrounding countryside to the detriment of the rural character of the area. The proposal would create a fragmented pattern of development.

- 3 The proposal is contrary to Policy SP1 of the Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan, which states:

**Proposals for development will be supported where they reflect sustainable development and design principles by:**

- a) **Distributing development to sustainable locations in accordance with the settlement framework, supporting the roles and functions of the identified settlements;**
- b) **Promoting, where appropriate, the efficient use of land including previously developed sites;**
- c) **Integrating with the local community, taking account of character and amenity as well as cultural and linguistic considerations;**
- d) **Respecting, reflecting and, wherever possible, enhancing local character and distinctiveness;**
- e) **Creating safe, attractive and accessible environments which contribute to people's health and wellbeing and adhere to urban design best practice;**
- f) **Promoting active transport infrastructure and safe and convenient sustainable access particularly through walking and cycling;**
- g) **Utilising sustainable construction methods where feasible;**
- h) **Improving social and economic wellbeing;**
- i) **Protect and enhance the area's biodiversity value and where appropriate, seek to integrate nature conservation into new development.**

In that:

- It would result in an inappropriate form of residential development in the open countryside. The proposal would extend the built development into an open field and appear as an incursion into the surrounding countryside to the detriment of the rural character of the area. The proposal would create a fragmented pattern of development.

- 4 The proposal is contrary to Planning Policy Wales (Edition 9) paragraph 9.3.1- 9.3.3, which states:

9.3.1 New housing developments should be well integrated with and connected to the existing pattern of settlements. The expansion of towns and villages should avoid creating ribbon development, coalescence of settlements or a fragmented development pattern. Where housing development is on a significant scale, or where a new settlement or urban village is proposed, it should be integrated with existing or new industrial, commercial and retail development and with community facilities.

9.3.2 Sensitive **infilling** of small gaps within small groups of houses, or minor extensions to groups, in particular for affordable housing to meet local need, may be acceptable, though much will depend upon the character of the surroundings and the number of such groups in the area. Significant incremental expansion of housing in rural settlements and small towns should be avoided where this is likely to result in unacceptable expansion of travel demand to urban centres and where travel needs are unlikely to be well served by public transport. Residential development in the vicinity of existing industrial uses should be restricted if the presence of houses is likely to lead residents to try to curtail the industrial use.

9.3.3 Insensitive infilling, or the cumulative effects of development or redevelopment, including conversion and adaptation, should not be allowed to damage an area's character or amenity. This includes any such impact on neighbouring dwellings, such as serious loss of privacy or overshadowing.

In that:

- The proposal amounts to new residential development outside defined settlement limits. It is not considered to be sensitive infilling or an appropriate minor extension to a group of dwellings. The proposal would create a fragmented pattern of development. The proposal would extend the built development into an open field and appear as an incursion into the surrounding countryside to the detriment of the rural character of the area. The proposed dwelling would be in close proximity to an existing industrial use which generates significant levels of noise that could lead future occupiers to try to curtail the industrial use.