



BRECCON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

Application No: 12/08212/FUL **Case Officer:** Mr Alastair Scott
Site Notice Posted: 12 July 2012 **Consultation Date:** 4th Jul 2012
Date Valid: 2nd Jul 2012 **8 Week Target:** 27th Aug 2012
Decision Type: Delegated Decision
Proposal: Demolition of existing shed, erection of stable block and associated vehicular access.
Address: Fedw Ddu Farm, Upper Cwm Nant Gam, Llanelly Hill

CONSULTATIONS/COMMENTS

Consultee	Received	Comments
Llanelly Community Council	19th Jul 2012	Responded with no objection
The Coal Authority	18th Jul 2012	No objection but have commented that there are unrecorded mining features in the area and if any are discovered they should be reported to the Authority.
National Grid UK Transmission		No response received
Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust	26th Jul 2012	No Objections
CADW Ancient Monuments		No response received

RELEVANT POLICIES

G1: "Section 3 Conservation Map" (Unitary Development Plan 2007)
G3: "Development in the National Park" (Unitary Development Plan 2007)
G6: "Design" (Unitary Development Plan 2007)
ES18: "Equestrian Facilities" (Unitary Development Plan 2007)
ES39: "Boundary Features" (Unitary Development Plan 2007)
G3: "Development in the National Park" (Adopted Local Plan 1999)
G7: "Design" (Adopted Local Plan 1999)
R6: "Estate roads and access to properties." (Adopted Local Plan 1999)

PLANNING HISTORY

There is no planning history relevant to the application site.

OFFICER'S REPORT

Introduction

This application relates to a site situated west of Llanelly Hill and entails the demolition of an existing corrugated iron shed, the erection of a stable block, the construction of a vehicle turning area and improvements to the existing access track.

Site Description

The application site is located at Fedw Ddu Farm, which is situated on the southern hillside which overlooks the Clydach Valley and west of the dispersed settlement of Llanelly Hill. The application site is on a relatively steep slope and consists of a farmhouse and an access track leading to it from the unclassified public road. This rutted grass access track is not surfaced and consists of rubble hard standing. The existing corrugated iron shed is located on a terraced platform and is surrounded by waste materials including discarded scraps of wood, metal fencing and plastic containers etc.

The site is located within the Clydach Gorge Registered Landscape of Outstanding Historic Importance which is a mixed dispersed industrial/agricultural settlement landscape comprising agricultural buildings and field systems; rows of industrial housing; industrial railway features and bridges and slag heaps.

Proposal Description & Appraisal

The proposal includes the demolition of a corrugated iron shed and the enlargement of the terraced platform to enable it to accommodate a stable block and vehicle turning area for the applicant's towing vehicle and horsebox with total length of 9.73 metres when attached together. The proposed turning area adjacent to the stable block would measure approximately 26 squared metres in area.

The proposed stable block which includes a fodder storage area would be set into the embankment in order to minimise its visual impact by making use of the site's topography. The proposal includes a retaining wall, 3.5 metres in height, and its base would measure 3.2 metres in width. The retaining wall would be a total 18.67 metres in length. The up slope side of the wall (southern) would be excavated to allow for its construction which when completed would be backfilled with earth and turfed over. The side elevations of the stable block would be made of rough sawn timber weather boards attached to timber bearers. The front elevation would include three windows and double doors for access to the fodder storage section of the stables. The three individual stable doors would be located in the rear elevation of the stables facing the retaining wall. The retaining wall (standing at 1 metre in height) would extend to the east of the stable block into the turning area by 8 metres. The stable block would be 3.8 metres in height.

Proposed additional screen planting

Additional screen planting is proposed in front of the stable block in order to enhance the existing vegetation and reduce its visual impact on the landscape, particularly from vantage points situated across the opposite side of the valley. The additional trees and shrubs proposed include blackthorn and alder which are considered to be effective species for screening purposes.

Additional screen planting is also proposed around the vehicle turning area which itself would be surfaced with 'grasscrete surfacing', consisting of concrete strips in a grid pattern that would allow grass to grow in the gaps and also allow surface water to soakaway.

Upgrading to access track

The proposal includes upgrading the existing access track with concrete running strips that would allow grass to continue to grow between them. The up slope running strip would also comprise a rough finished concrete lined gutter to convey surface runoff safely down the side of the track and into the existing road side gutter. Surface water from the hardstanding would be allowed to percolate into the granular fill and naturally seep away or run off into the access track gutter during more intense rainfall events. The proposed improvements to the access track would not entail any changes to the existing boundary features and therefore it would satisfy policy ES39 of the UDP and policy R6 of the Adopted Local Plan which relate to the improvement of access roads and the potential impact on boundary features.

Officer's appraisal

Following statutory adoption of the Brecon Beacons National Park Local Plan 1999 (hereinafter called 'the Local Plan'), work on the Brecon Beacons National Park Unitary Development Plan (hereinafter called 'the UDP') commenced in 2000. The UDP was subject to all the statutory consultations and procedures associated with the preparation of development plans, including a local inquiry and an Inspector's report.

The Brecon Beacons National Park as Local Planning Authority (hereinafter called 'the Authority') received a direction from the Welsh Assembly Government (hereinafter called 'WAG') under Section 17(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) in relation to the safeguarding of sand and gravel in the National Park. The Authority resolved not to comply with the WAG direction to modify the UDP as it was not considered that the quality of the resource had been adequately established or that the environmental constraints relating to the sites had been sufficiently considered.

The UDP was subsequently approved by the Authority for development control purposes in March 2007 and sets out the policies and proposals to guide development in this area from 2001 to 2016 and beyond. As a point of clarification, the direction from the WAG relates solely to sand and gravel issues and does not relate to any matters raised in this application.

Whilst the adopted Local Plan and its associated Structure Plans remain the formal statutory policy framework for the area, the UDP provides a more up-to-date and relevant planning framework in line with current National Planning Policy. Planning Policy Wales (hereinafter called 'PPW') advises that the weight to be attached to emerging plans will increase as successive stages are reached. Whilst the development proposal will be considered against both the Approved UDP and Adopted Local Plan policies, greater weight shall be given to the more up to date UDP policies unless the Local Plan policies materially differ to warrant a departure from the UDP.

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Local Development Plan (LDP) has been published in draft and progressed to public deposit state. Legal Advice is that whilst the emerging LDP is now material, little weight can be given to it in planning decision making at this stage.

This application is considered under Policies G1, G3, G6, ES39 and ES18 (relates specifically to the development of equestrian facilities) of the Unitary Development Plan and Policies G3, G7 and R6 of the Adopted Local Plan.

Neighbour Amenity

The UDP Policies G3 (v) and ES18 (iii) as well as Policy G3(viii) of the Adopted Local Plan seek to ensure that any proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of the area, adjacent properties or the general public.

There are no residential properties in close proximity to the application site, the nearest being located approximately 300 metres to the west. The proposed stable block would not be visible from this property due to existing vegetation and the topography of the land. It is considered that the proposal would not have a significant impact on neighbour amenity and it would therefore satisfy the above policies in relation to neighbourhood amenity.

Visual Impact and historical landscape setting

Policy G3 (i) and policy ES18 (ii) of the UDP both require that the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact or detract from the special qualities or the cultural heritage of the National Park. Policy G3 (iii) and Policy ES18 (II) of the UDP require that the scale, form, design and layout of a proposed development is appropriate to its surroundings and will maintain or enhance the quality and character of the Park's landscape and built environment. Policy G6 (ii) expects development to sustain or enhance character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing, where appropriate, locally distinctive patterns and form of development, landscape and culture.

The proposed site for the stables would be at a distance of 28 metres from the farmhouse and on the site of the existing corrugated iron shed. It is, therefore, considered that the proposal satisfies Policy ES18 (i) of the UDP which requires new equestrian facilities to be sited as close to existing buildings as possible.

The application site is situated on a relatively steep hillside, located to the west of the settlement of Llanelly Hill. The views from the opposite side of the valley looking towards the application site and its surrounding area are of a mixed dispersed industrial/agricultural settlement landscape comprising agricultural buildings and field systems; rows of industrial housing; industrial railway features and bridges; and slag heaps.

It is considered that the proposed stable block and vehicle turning area would not stand out within a landscape consisting of a mix of building types and other man-made features which illustrates its industrial past e.g. bridges made out of brick and slag heaps.

It is also considered that the existing vegetation and the proposed planting of trees and shrubs between the unclassified road and the proposed stable block would substantially shield it from views off the unclassified road. It is also considered that the proposal would result in the removal of the existing corrugated shed which is in a dilapidated condition and the considerable amount of debris material (left by the previous owners) which are having an adverse impact on the landscape.

Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust

The Trust was consulted on the application due to the site being within a Registered Landscape of Outstanding Historic Importance and responded saying it does not consider that the proposal would adversely affect the character or appearance of the area. The Trust does not object to the proposal and considers it to be essentially a modification of the same use. Therefore, having regard to the above it is considered that the proposal accords with policies G3 and ES18 of the UDP.

Access and parking

The proposed improvements to the access track would not entail any alterations to the existing boundary features and therefore satisfies Policy ES39 of the UDP and Policy R6 of the Local Plan which relate to the retention and enhancement of boundary features that are adjacent to access roads.

The proposed turning area for the towing vehicle and horse box and the three proposed parking spaces situated at the front of the house would satisfy Policy ES18 (iv) of the UDP which requires suitable access and parking can be provided for horse boxes.

Third party comments

No comments have been received from third parties

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposed development complies with the policies G3(v) and ES18 of the UDP and policy G3(viii) of the Local Plan in relation neighbourhood amenity. It also conforms with policy G3(iii) of the UDP and Policy G3 i) of the Local Plan with regards to scale, form, design and layout as it is appropriate to its surroundings and will maintain the character of the Park's landscape and built environment.

It is considered that although the application site is situated on a hillside overlooking the Clydach Valley and visible from vantage points on the opposite side of the valley, it is in a landscape containing a mixture of industrial and agricultural features. It is considered that the proposed stables would not therefore significantly stand out in the landscape to its detriment and it satisfies the relevant policies of the UDP and the Local Plan which seek to protect the visual amenity of the National Park.

RECOMMENDATION: Permit

Conditions and/or Reasons:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.
- 2 The development hereby approved shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved plans (drawing nos. NP3 v1, NP5 v1 and NP6 v1) and the schedule of materials indicated thereon, except where otherwise stipulated by conditions attached to this permission and unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 3 The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the access, turning area and parking facilities shown on the approved plan have been properly consolidated, surfaced, drained and otherwise constructed in accordance with the approved plans and these areas shall thereafter be retained and kept available for those uses at all times.
- 4 All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner, and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation. If any plants fail more than once they shall continue to be replaced on an annual basis until the end of the 5 year defects period.

Reasons:

- 1 Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 2 To ensure adherence to the approved plans and to protect the general character and amenities of the area.
- 3 In the interests of highway safety and to ensure the free flow of traffic using the adjoining highway.
- 4 In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.

Informative Notes:

The Coal Authority have responded and pointed out that the site is an area of previous coal workings and recommended that the applicant contact them if any features are discovered during the construction works.

Signed (Case Officer):
Alastair Scott



Date: 10 October 2012

Checked (Principal Planner):

Date:

**Signed (National Park
Authorised Officer):**



Date: 10/10/2012