



DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT
FOR
PROPOSED CONVERSION TO RESIDENTIAL USE
OF EXISTING LISTED BARN

WEST ABERTHAW FARM, ABERTHAW

RECEIVED

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ENVIRONMENTAL
AND ECONOMIC
REGENERATION

14 00870 LBC

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the proposed conversion to residential use of existing Listed Barns at West Aberthaw Farm, Aberthaw in the Vale of Glamorgan.

1.2 A location plan is included as Figure 1, below.



Figure 1: Location Plan

1.3 The existing development consists of the following Grade II listed buildings:

- Barn at West Aberthaw Farm (Ref: 83111);
- Bull House (Old Chapel) at West Aberthaw Farm (Ref: 83112);
- Cart Shed at West Aberthaw Farm (Ref: 83113); and
- Heavy Horse Stable at West Aberthaw Farm (Ref: 83122).

1.4 The proposals comprise 4 No. residential conversions based on the existing Barn, with Barns 1, 2, 2A & 2B, 3 bed and 4 with these providing a 2 bedroom unit, a 3 bed unit, a 4 bedroom unit, and a 2 bedroom unit respectively.

2 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

Planning Policy Wales

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2.1 Welsh Assembly planning policy contained within Planning Policy Wales sets out how,

"Design is taken to mean the relationship between all elements of the

natural and built environment. To create sustainable development, design must go beyond aesthetics and include the social, environmental and economic aspects of the development, including its construction, operation and management, and its relationship to its surroundings.”
(para. 4. 10. 1)

Technical Advice Note 12: Design (2009)

2.2 TAN 12 advocates a process model for design drawing from a contextual analysis of the surroundings of a development to achieve well designed, flexible, adaptable development. The key aspects are:

- Access;
- Character;
- Community Safety;
- Environmental Sustainability; and
- Movement.

The Vale of Glamorgan Adopted Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011

2.3 Strategic Environmental Policy 1 states that,

“The Vale of Glamorgan’s distinctive rural, urban and coastal character will be protected and enhanced.”

2.4 Policy ENV6 – East Vale Coast states that,

“Outside the Glamorgan Heritage Coast, development within the undeveloped coastal zone will be permitted if:

- i. A coastal location is necessary for the development; and*
- ii. The proposal would not cause unacceptable environmental effects by way of:*
 - *Visual or noise intrusion;*
 - *Impact on areas of landscape importance;*
 - *Air, land or water pollution;*
 - *Exacerbation of flooding or erosion risk;*
 - *Hazardous operations; or*
 - *Impact on ecology or features of geological or geomorphological importance.*

In areas of existing or allocated development within the coastal zone, any new proposal should be designed with respect to its local context and sensitive to its coastal setting.”

2.5 Policy ENV8 – Small Scale Rural Conversions states that,

“Proposals which involve small scale conversions of rural buildings to new uses will be permitted if all of the following criteria are met:

- i. Where the building is of architectural or historic value, the proposed conversion retains those architectural or historic features present in the building;*
- ii. In the case of a conversion to business use, the building, in terms of form, bulk and general design, is in keeping with its surroundings;*
- iii. The building is structurally sound and the conversion can be*

- achieved without substantial reconstruction of the external walls, or extension to the building. However, each proposal will be assessed as a matter of fact and degree, depending on the particular circumstances of the case;*
- iv. Conversion work can be undertaken without unacceptably altering the appearance and rural character of the building;*
 - v. Where residential use is considered acceptable, amenity space can be provided within the curtilage of the site without undue incursion into the rural landscape;*
 - vi. Vehicular access is available or can be provided from the public highway without any unacceptable effect upon the appearance of the countryside;*
 - vii. Satisfactory parking provision can be made within the curtilage of the site;*
 - viii. In the case of conversion for small scale commercial, industrial, recreational or tourism use, the proposal should not create unacceptable traffic or other environmental problems;*
 - ix. In the case of conversion for small scale commercial or industrial uses. Any retail sale or products should be ancillary to the main use;*
 - x. The proposal is not incompatible with activities carried out on adjoining land. Applicants may be requested to enter into a legal agreement to control the activities of other land in their ownership;*
 - xi. Utility and infrastructure services can be provided without unacceptable visual intrusion and without detriment to the environment;*
 - xii. The proposed new use would preserve or enhance the setting or character of any conservation area;*
 - xiii. The proposal would preserve or enhance the architectural or historic quality of a listed building or its setting."*

2.6 Policy ENV17 – Protection of Built and Historic Environment states that,

"The environmental qualities of the built and historic environment will be protected. Development which has a detrimental effect on the special character, appearance or setting of:

- i. A building or group of buildings, structures or site of architectural or historic interest, including listed buildings and conservation areas;*
- ii. Scheduled ancient monuments and sites of archaeological and/or historic interest;*
- iii. Designed landscapes, parks or gardens of historic, cultural or aesthetic importance*

Will not be permitted."

2.7 Policy ENV27 – Design of New Development states that,

"Proposals for new development must have full regard to the context of the local natural and built environment and its special features. New development will be permitted where it:

- i. Complements or enhances the local character of buildings and open spaces;*
- ii. Meets the Council's approved standards of amenity and open space, access, car parking and servicing;*
- iii. Ensures adequacy or availability of utility services and adequate provision for waste management;*
- iv. Minimises any detrimental impact on adjacent areas;*

- v. *Ensures existing soft and hard landscaping features are protected and complemented by new planting, surface or boundary features;*
- vi. *Ensures clear distinction between public and private spaces;*
- vii. *Provides a high level of accessibility, particularly for public transport, cyclists, pedestrians and people with impaired mobility;*
- viii. *Has regard to energy efficiency in design, layout, materials and technology; and*
- ix. *Has regard to measures to reduce the risk and fear of crime.”*

2.8 Policy ENV28 – Access for Disabled People states that,

“All new development (and where predictable, the change of use or alterations to buildings) open to the public and buildings used for employment and education purposes will be required to provide suitable access for customers, visitors or employees with mobility difficulties.”

3. ACCESS

3.1 The entrances of the proposed dwellings will meet the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations. Access to the gardens will be of a similarly high level of accessibility and any steps required will be shallow and easily cleared by a wheelchair. Car parking will be provided at a conveniently close position to the dwellings.

3.2 All of the inclusive access measures described in para. 3.1 above will be incorporated within the fabric of each building and so remain available for the lifetime of the development without requiring additional management measures.

3.3 Furthermore, with these measures in place, the requirements of UDP policies ENV27 and ENV28 can be satisfied.

3.4 With regard to access to local facilities, the proposed development is approximately 900m from and so within walking distance, from Four Cross Service Station which is a petrol filling station that also has a mini market selling a variety of goods including convenience foods, snacks, drinks, confectionery and tobacco products as well as mobile top up cards, phonecards, scratchards and Lotto tickets.

3.5 The proposed development is also less than 2km from the village of St. Athan where there is a church, a primary school, a convenience store, a Post Office, a pharmacy, a Chinese takeaway, a flower shop, a hairdressers, two pubs, a library, a recycling point and several community facilities such as a health centre, halls for hire, playgroups etc.

4. CHARACTER

Amount

4.1 The proposed development consists of 4 No. residential conversions based on Barn 1, Barns 2, 2a and Barns 3 and 4, providing two number, 2-bed dwellings (Barns 1 and 4), 1 No. 3-bed dwelling (Barn 2) and 1 No. 4-bed dwelling (Barn3). These barns comprise an existing group of derelict barns, and all but Barn 4 are listed. barns.

Layout

- 4.2 Proposed layout plans have been submitted as part of the application to convert the existing barns, see 'Drawing AS 01/7- Proposed Ground Floor Plan and 'Drawing AS02/7 – Proposed First Floor Plan.
- 4.3 The layout of the group of barns is retained as existing, with internal sub-division and so the coastal location is unavoidable. The proposed development will not cause any unacceptable environmental effects and the few changes that have been proposed externally have been designed with respect to the local context and sensitivity of the coastal setting as per the provisions of UDP Policy ENV6 relating to the East Vale Coast.

Scale

- 4.4 Proposed elevations have been submitted as part of the application to convert the existing barns, see 'Drawings AE01/3 & AE02/3 Proposed Elevations and these demonstrate the generally sympathetic nature of the conversions, with external alterations generally kept to a minimum.
- 4.5 The proposed dwellings will be of a similar scale to the existing group of barns but with sufficient private amenity space in the form of gardens and terraces and adequate car parking to meet the Council's standards as per provisions v, vi and vii of UDP Policy ENV8 relating to small scale rural conversions.

Appearance

- 4.6 The proposed development will retain the main architectural and historical features present in the group of barns, e.g. stone walls and slate roofs, see Figures 2, 3 and 4 below.



Figure 2: Barns 1, 2,2a and 2b

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Figure 3: Barns 1, 2, 2a and 3



Figure 4: Barn 3 and 4

- 4.7 A structural report for the group of barns concluded that the buildings are structurally sound although some re-pointing is advised (including boundary walls) as a measure to ensure the condition of the barns does not deteriorate as a result of them now being derelict. Essentially, however,

“... the barn stone walls are generally in good condition with only isolated rebuilding work required [but] ... the vast majority of roof timbers will have to be replaced (with the possible exception of Barn 3) as the installation of new floor and roof timbers will reinstate lost lateral restraint.”

- 4.8 The conversion can be achieved, therefore, without substantial reconstruction of the external walls or extension to the buildings as per provisions i, iii, iv, x, xi, xii and xiii of UDP Policy ENV8 relating to small scale rural conversions.
- 4.9 Furthermore, the conversion of the group of barns to residential use will not have a detrimental effect on their setting, with the barns benefitting from the removal of corrugated roofed Dutch barn. This will enhance the site and buildings restoring the historic relationship between the barns. Conservation type roof-lights will be used where essential to accommodate the revised floor plan, although these are primarily located on the southern, less public side of the buildings on barns 2a, 2b & 3. These additions to the buildings will provide natural light whilst appearing externally as a minimal addition to the overall stone walling/pitched roofs and structural character of the group of barns. As such, this will help the proposed development to meet the criteria identified in Policy ENV17 relating to protection of the built historic environment.

Landscaping

- 4.10 Each of the proposed dwellings has an enclosed private garden with a terrace. The farmyard area between the barns will largely be retained and given a unifying treatment. This will comprise a dust driveway, combined with a re-use of existing pebble flooring in an edging strip, with subservient areas of Blue Pennant Flats and some peripheral planting to soften the overall effect. Parking for Barns 3 and 4 will be accommodated on the elevated area currently covered by the Dutch Barn. Again, the main feature is a dust driveway with hard landscaping and peripheral planting – see Detailed Landscape Proposals drawing
- 4.11 Along the northern western boundary of the proposed development to the rear of Barn 4, there will be a new hedgerow planted to define the curtilage of Barn 4. On the southern boundary it is proposed to reinstate the former pitched roof cow shed structure to provide an open fronted cart shed type appearance. This may be used for storage and/or other ancillary purposes, possibly subject to further planning applications by future purchasers.

5. COMMUNITY SAFETY

- 5.1 There is no public access to the development generally and so community safety will be largely unaffected by the proposals.
- 5.2 The development will, however, remove the inactivity of the existing unused site and provide a new land use with associated activities and patterns of movement.
- 5.3 Furthermore, the layout is arranged to ensure that all useable amenity spaces and car parking areas are overlooked or close to dwellings in order to provide casual surveillance and help avoid opportunities for anti social behaviour from arising.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- 6.1 The proposed dwellings will be required to obtain level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes and obtain additional credits for dwelling emission rate. It is anticipated that this will be achieved, where feasible, by incorporating the following technologies:
- Improving the insulation of walls, floors, roof, windows and external doors;
 - Installing an efficient gas boiler;
 - Improving air tightness and reducing thermal bridges during construction;
 - Using materials with a low environmental impact;
 - Managing water usage and drainage sustainably; and
 - Making provision for the sorting and storage of waste.
- 6.2 The proposals will also be environmentally sustainable by providing a beneficial use of an existing resource (the existing buildings) in a design that is harmonious to its setting and will be converted, where practicable, using locally sourced materials.

7. MOVEMENT

- 7.1 The proposed development is located off an unclassified road off the B4265 and forms part of West Aberthaw Farm.

7.2 Some 10 formal car parking spaces are provided within the layout, with the yard areas providing ample additional parking space for visitors. The area available will ensure that all vehicles can access and egress the proposed development in a forward gear.

8. CONCLUSIONS

8.1 This Design and Access Statement for the conversion of a group of barns to 5 no. residential dwellings describes the measures that will be taken to meet the design and access requirements of the Vale of Glamorgan's UDP policies as well as the considerations set out in PPW and TAN 12.

8.2 The development will enhance the listed barns and their environment whilst providing modern residential facilities that will extend the life and enjoyment of the listed barns. The development, therefore, is a sustainable development which incorporates good design and improved levels of accessibility.