

CADNANT

PLANNING

**LAND AT Tŷ MAWR, EGLWYSBACH
DESIGN, ACCESS AND PLANNING STATEMENT**

GJ & CW Davies

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DRAFT FOR PRE-APPLICATION
CONSULTATION

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Design, Access and Planning Statement



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Design, Access a Planning Statement accompanies a full planning application for the change of use of land for the erection of five holiday units within the ground as a farm diversification scheme together with associated works including creation of a new vehicular access, internal access road and parking areas, engineering works, landscaping and associated works on land at Tŷ Mawr, Eglwysbach. This application is submitted on behalf of the applicants, GJ and CW Davies.
- 1.2 The application site lies on a hill slope within the Conwy Valley Special Landscape Area, set 1000 feet above the valley, possessing panoramic views from Denbighshire to Snowdonia. The proposed development has been designed specifically to provide an unique form of holiday accommodation that would be nestled into the hillside.
- 1.3 Tŷ Mawr is a working grassland beef cattle farm located on the outskirts of the village of Eglwysbach. The farm currently has around 550 cattle and in 2022, the farm will celebrate 100 years and four generations under the same ownership. Three full-time family members work at Tŷ Mawr and a further family member works part-time on the farm, however they wish to go full-time when the business can financially support another family member. In order to support the long-term sustainability of the farming enterprise, it is proposed to diversify the farms income by introducing tourist accommodation which would sit alongside the agricultural element of the business.
- 1.4 Following the enactment of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 (the Act) the requirement for pre-application consultation on major development schemes was implemented. This includes the provision of a site area over 1ha. The proposed development exceeds the 1ha threshold.
- 1.5 The requirement to carry out pre-application consultation falls under Section 17 of the Act and the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 (DMPWO) as amended by the 2016 Order. Guidance on carrying out the pre-application consultation requirements within the Act has been provided by the Welsh Government set out in Article 1 of the Town and Country Planning DMPWO (Amendment) 2016 'Guidance on Pre-application Consultation'.
- 1.6 This Design, Access and Planning Statement is issued as part of a suite of documents for Pre-Application Consultation prior to the submission of a formal planning application.

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- 1.7 As required by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order (Amendment) 2016 the statement aims to address the following matters;
- Explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development;
 - Demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and how the design of the development takes that context into account;
 - Explain the policy or approach adopted as to access, and how policies relating to access in the development plan have been taken into account; and
 - Explain how any specific issues which might affect access to the development have been addressed.
- 1.8 The adopted development plan consists of the Conwy Local Development Plan (LDP) which sets out the planning framework for the Conwy plan area for the period 2007 to 2022.
- 1.9 This Design, Access and Planning Statement sets out an appraisal of the application site and its surroundings, the proposal, the relevant planning policy and guidance, and the main considerations relating to the proposed development.

2. The site and context

2.1 The application site comprises of an area of agricultural grazing land located 1.2km west off the B5113 and 4.8km (a 9-minute drive) south of Eglwysbach, identified as a main village within the Conwy LDP. An aerial image of the site in relation to Eglwysbach and its wider surroundings can be found in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1. An aerial image of the site in relation to Eglwysbach and its wider surroundings.



2.2 An aerial image of the application site in the context of its immediate surroundings can be found in Figure 2.2 below.

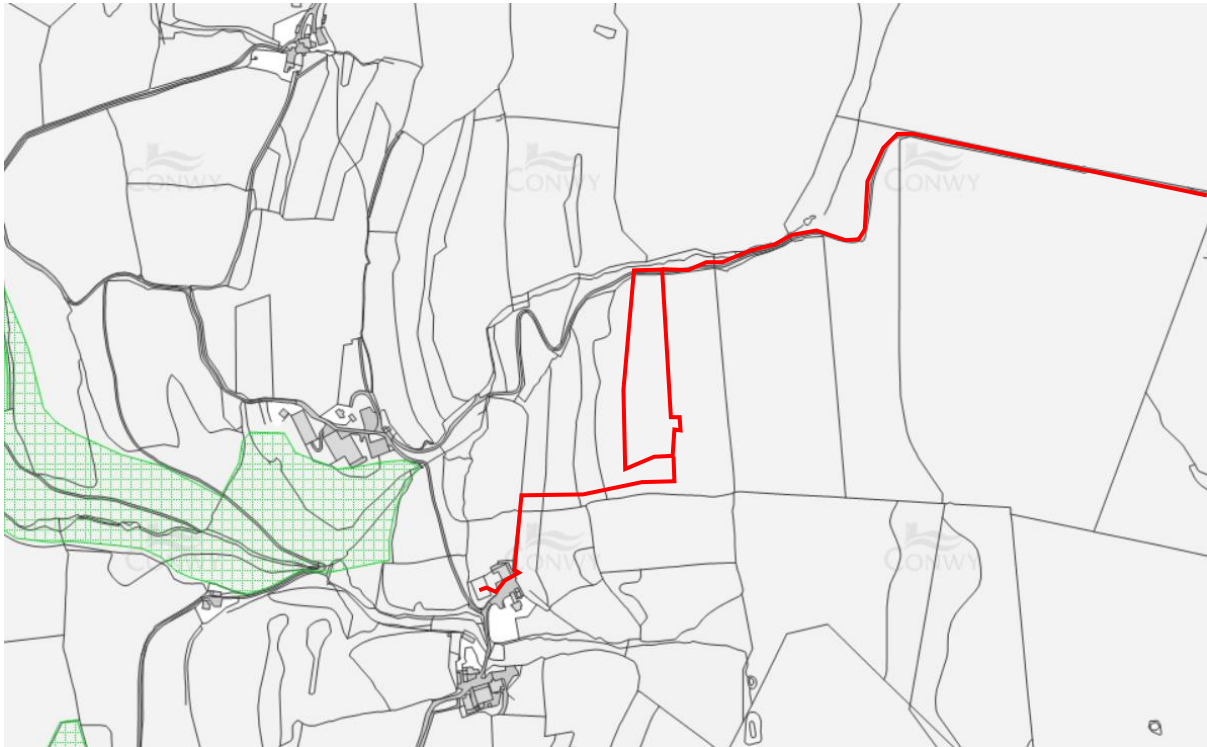
Figure 2.2. The site in the context of its surroundings (Google Maps)



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- 2.3 The application site is located on an area of hillside at Tŷ Mawr, Eglwysbach, approximately 1.2km east of the B5113, and is within the Conwy Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA). The area of land is classified as grade 5 on the Predictive Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Map and is graded as very poor quality agricultural land.
- 2.4 An area of ancient woodland is located approximately 500m west of the proposed site. The site's proximity to the area of ancient woodland can be seen in Figure 2.3 below.

Figure 2.3. The site in relation to an area of ancient woodland (green hatch).



- 2.5 The application site is located around 5km (a 9-minute drive) to the south of Eglwysbach, which provides access to a convenience store, public house and bus stops. The public house, The Bee Inn, is a popular local award winning pub that serves both food and drink, attracting visitors from the local area and beyond. The Holland Arms public house is also located around 2.5km to the north.
- 2.6 The application site is located in close proximity to Bodnant Gardens National Trust as well as Bodnant Garden Centre, both of which are located 7.8km (A 14-minute drive) away from the application site. The Bodnant Gardens is a hugely popular National Trust destination with a recent study finding that it is one of the most photographed gardens in the world on social media. The Bodnant Welsh Food Centre is located 8km (a 15-

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minute drive) to the north of the site providing access to fresh local produce, a café, restaurant and farm shop.

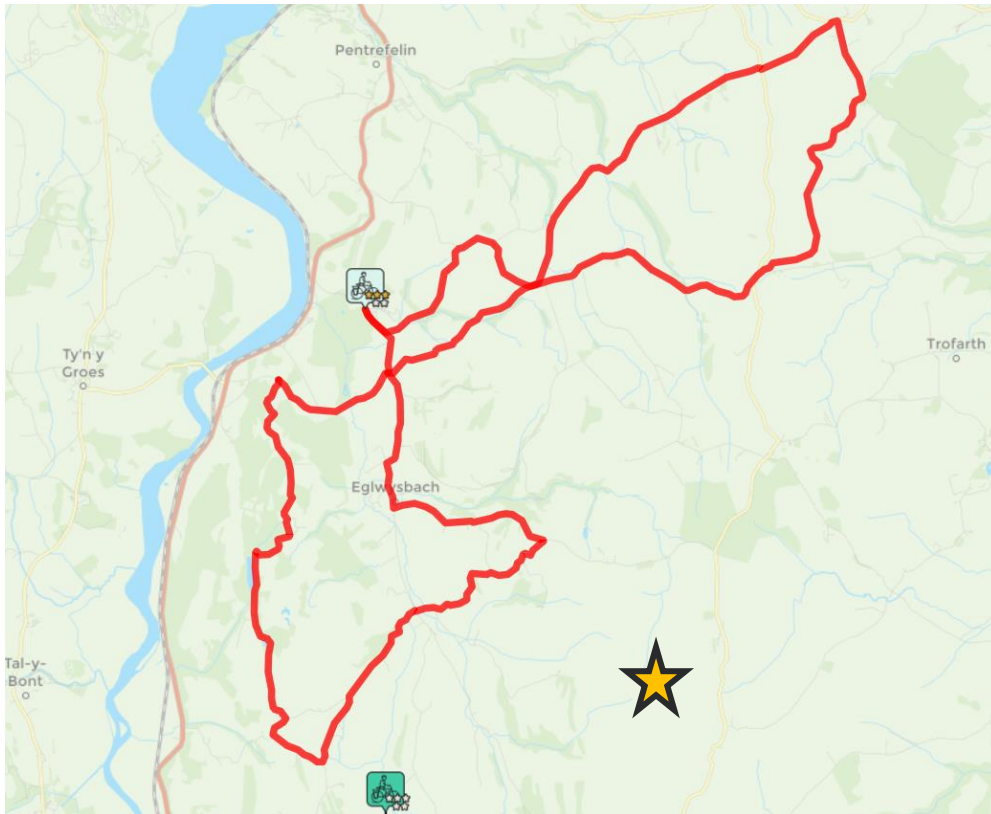
2.7 Conwy and Llandudno Junction are located 10.5km to the north (a 18-minute drive) and Llanrwst is located 10km (a 17-minute drive) to the south, both of which provide access to a train stations, bus stops, supermarkets, cafes, restaurants, garages and other local amenities.

2.8 The application site is also conveniently located within a 30-minute drive of the following popular local tourist attractions:

- Snowdonia National Park
- Adventure Park Snowdonia
- Zip World Fforest
- Welsh Mountain Zoo
- Llandudno and the Great Orme
- Conwy World Heritage Site
- Llyn Brenig
- Colwyn Bay Beach

2.9 The site is further located within 1.5km of the Bodnant Loop, a 17.1 miles recreational cycling loop. The route provides a connection to Bodnant Gardens, Bodnant Garden Centre, and the Bodnant Welsh Food Centre, as well as providing a scenic loop around the Conwy Valley SLA. The site in proximity to the loop can be seen in Figure 2.2. Pilgrims Way is also accessible from the site (around 250m from the site).

Figure 2.2. The site (star) in relation to the Bodnant Loop (red).



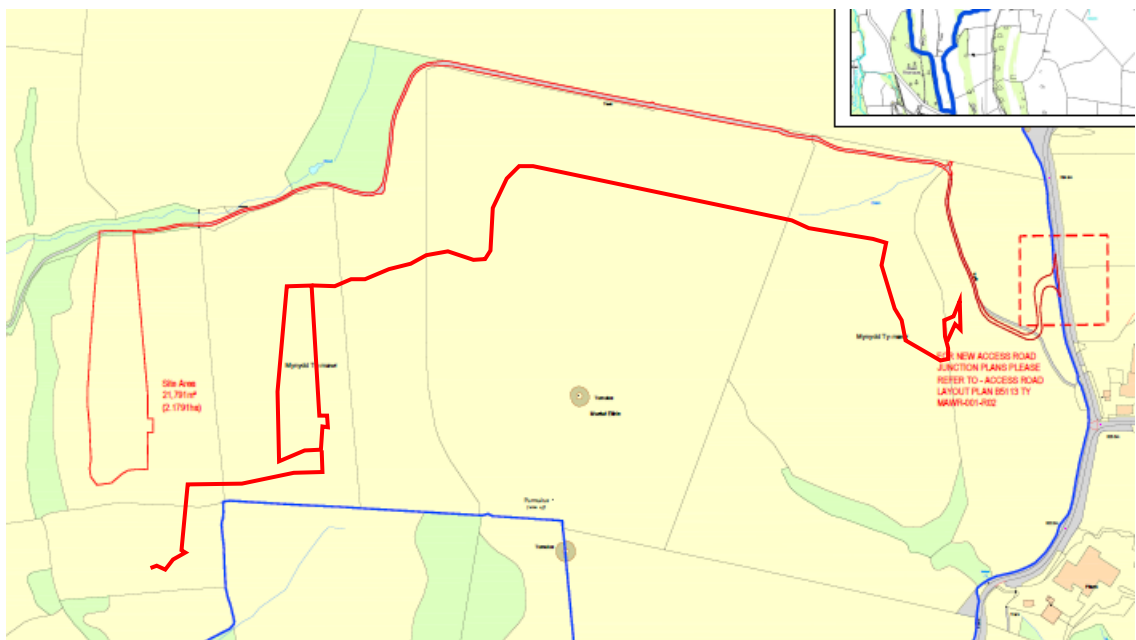
2.10 The site is also located in close proximity to sustainable modes of transport. Two bus stops are located within Eglwysbach, a short distance from the site, and provides a connection to Glan Conwy, Llandudno Junction and Llandudno to the north. The bus route north further provides a safe and sustainable connection to Bodnant and its variety of popular tourist attractions.

3. The proposed development

Use, amount, scale, appearance, layout, access and landscaping

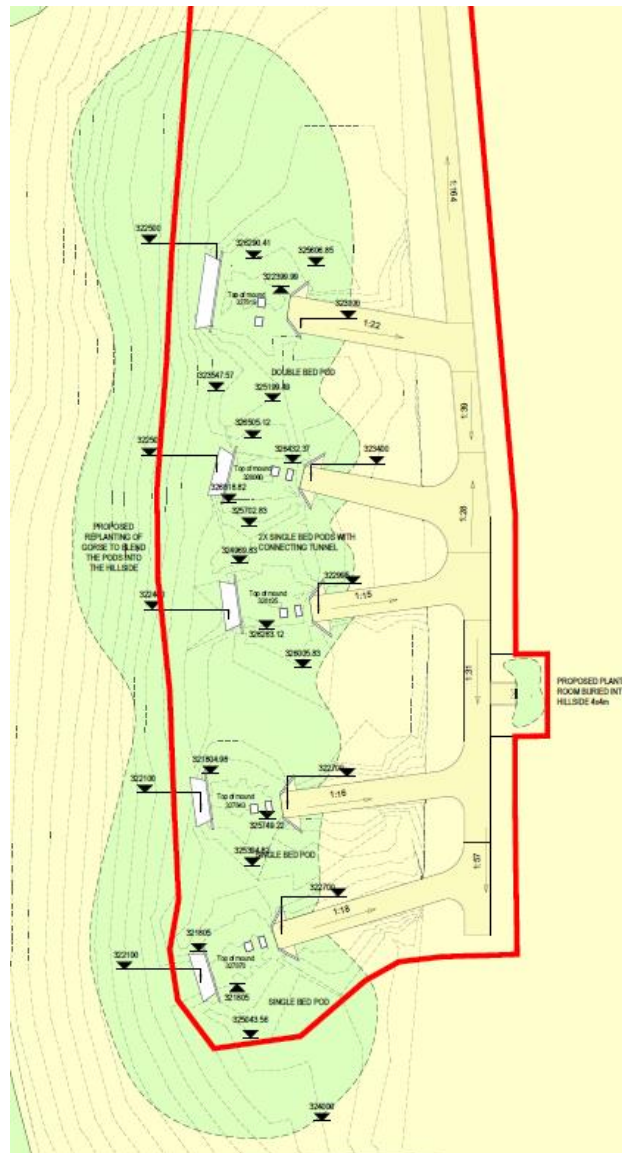
- 3.1 The proposed development seeks full planning permission for change of use of land and engineering works to enable the siting of five holiday units within the ground as a farm diversification scheme together with associated works including creation of a new vehicular access, creation of internal access road and parking areas, landscaping and associated works on land at Tŷ Mawr, Eglwysbach.
- 3.2 An extract of the site's location plan can be seen in Figure 3.1 below.

Figure 3.1. An extract of the site's location plan.



- 3.3 An extract of the proposed site plan can be seen in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2. An extract of the proposed site plan



- 3.4 The proposed development seeks to incorporate four one-bed and one two-bed holiday units into the scheme. The one-bed holiday units will include one bedroom with an en-suite bathroom, an open plan kitchen/dining area, a lounge area, a wet/dry store, plant room and an outdoor decking area. The two-bed holiday unit will include two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a kitchen area, a lounge dining area, a wet/dry store, plant room and an outdoor decking area. Both holiday unit designs will incorporate a parking area with space for two cars into the design of the scheme

- 3.5 The holiday pods will be constructed in such a manner that they look like they have been built into the side of the hill. In order to give the units the desired effect, the roof of the units will be covered in soil, shrubbery and grasses which will create a design similar to a green roof. The outer concrete wall of the units will also be painted a dark

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green to reduce their overall visual impact. The development will therefore seamlessly blend into the surrounding landscape.

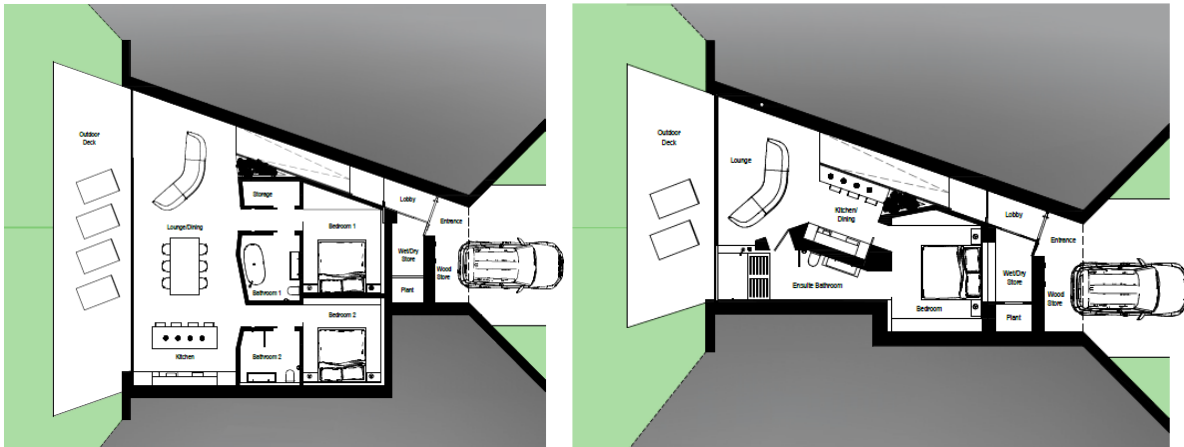
- 3.6 The area of land that will need to be reprofiled will be landscaped so that it reflects the land's current grassed appearance but will also include a landscaping scheme in order to provide biodiversity enhancement.
- 3.7 The development seeks to use the following materials outlined in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. The proposed materials.

| Feature | Material |
|-----------------|--|
| Walls | Fair faced in-situ concrete painted dark green |
| Doors | Glazed and aluminium doors Timber front door and surround |
| Windows | Fair faced in-situ concrete skylight |
| Other - Railing | Weathered steel fall protection railing |

- 3.8 An extract of the floor plans for both pod designs can be found in Figure 3.3 below.

Figure 3.3. An extract of the floor plans for both pod designs.



- 3.9 An extract of the proposed site elevations for both holiday unit designs can be found in Figure 3.4 below, whilst an illustrative render of the units in the context of the wider hillside can be seen in Figure 3.5.

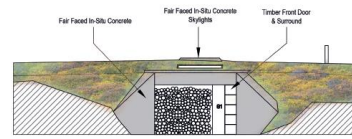
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Figure 3.4. An extract of the elevations for both pod designs.

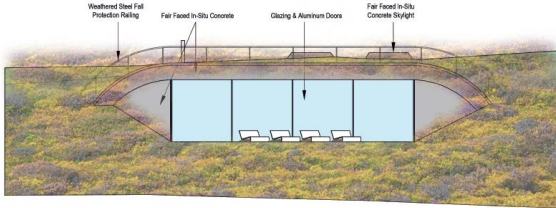
Proposed Double Bed Pod - Roof Elevation



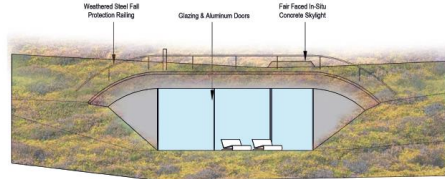
Proposed Single Bed Pod - Roof Elevation



Proposed Double Bed Pod - East Elevation



Proposed Single Bed Pod - East Elevation



Proposed Double Bed Pod - West Elevation

Proposed Single Bed Pod - West Elevation

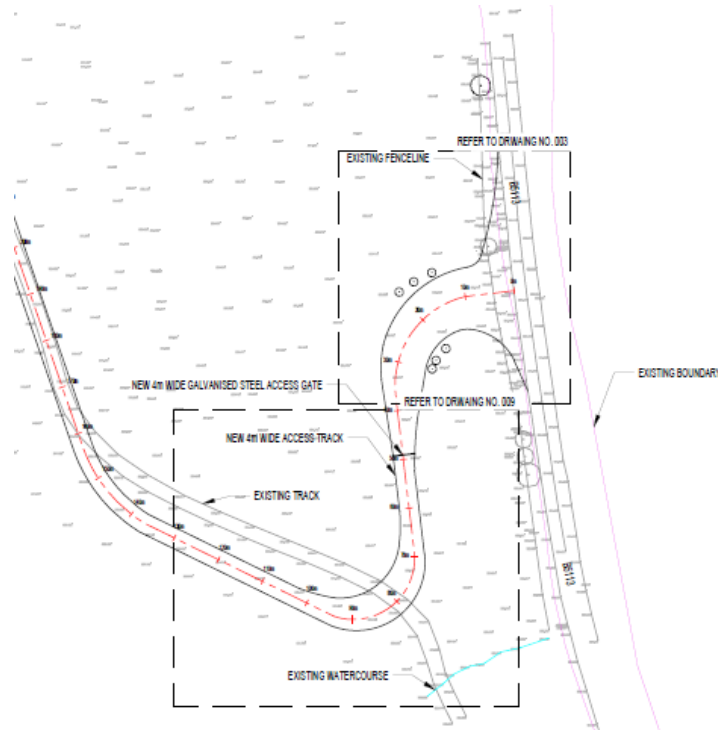
Figure 3.5. A render of the holiday units looking west in the context of the wider hillside and landscape



3.10 The proposed development seeks to create a new vehicular access to provide a safer connection to the B5113 for the proposed development which is currently served by an existing agricultural access to the east. A new section of access track will also be created, which will be 4m wide and will include a new 4m wide galvanised steel access gate. An extract of the proposed access layout can be seen in Figure 3.6.

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Figure 3.6. An extract of the proposed new access layout.



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4. Policy context

- 4.1 This section provides a summary and analysis of the local and national planning policy relevant to the consideration of the application

National planning policy

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

- 4.2 Future Wales – the National Plan 2040 is the recently produced national development framework which sets the direction for development in Wales to 2040 at a strategic level. It is a development plan with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy through promoting the tourist industry, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.
- 4.3 Policy 4 - Supporting Rural Communities of FWTNP states that, *“The Welsh Government supports sustainable and vibrant rural communities.”*
- 4.4 Policy 5 - Supporting the rural economy states that, *“Strategic and Local Development Plans must plan positively to meet the employment needs of rural areas including employment arising from the foundational economy; the agricultural and forestry sector, including proposals for diversification; start-ups and micro businesses.”*

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (Edition 11, February 2021)

- 4.5 Paragraph 1.18 of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) states that *“Legislation secures a presumption in favour of sustainable development in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise to ensure that social, economic, cultural and environmental issues are balanced and integrated.”*
- 4.6 PPW is underpinned by the principles of sustainable development and is in line with the Welsh Government’s Well-being agenda as set out in the relevant Act and identifies that local planning authorities should exercise their planning functions with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development PPW is supplemented by a suite of Technical Advice Notes (TANs). The Welsh Government has also produced guidance on Building Better Places, 2020, in response to the Covid-19 situation.

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- 4.7 The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation.
- 4.8 New development should contribute towards the delivery of sustainable development and improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.
- 4.9 Paragraph 2.27 states “Planning authorities should ensure that social, environmental and cultural benefits are considered in the decision-making process...”.
- 4.10 Paragraph 5.5.2 states that, *“The planning system encourages tourism where it contributes to economic development, conservation, rural diversification, urban regeneration and social inclusion, while recognising the needs of visitors and those of local communities. The planning system can also assist in enhancing the sense of place of an area which has intrinsic value and interest for tourism. In addition to supporting the continued success of existing tourist areas, appropriate tourism-related development in new destinations is encouraged. In some places however there may be a need to limit new development to avoid damage to the environment or the amenity of residents and visitors.”*
- 4.11 Section 5.6 of PPW related to the rural economy. Paragraph 5.6.1 states that, *“The rural economy must develop a wide base if it is to be adaptable and resilient to the challenges it faces now and in the future. Events such as the climate emergency, the coronavirus pandemic and exiting the European Union all bring economic and societal uncertainty, and the ability to respond flexibly to these issues will be key to the future success of rural areas.”*

Technical Advice Notes (TAN's)

- 4.12 The following TAN's relevant to the determination of this planning application are as follows:
- TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities
 - TAN 12: Design
 - TAN 13: Tourism
 - TAN 18: Transport

Building Better Places (July 2020)

- 4.13 In July 2020, the Welsh Government issued the document Building Better Places: The Planning System Delivering Resilient and Brighter Futures.
- 4.14 The document emphasises the importance for the consideration of health and well-being throughout the planning system of Wales and sets out ways in which future development and the planning system must move forward following the significant impact that Covid-19 has had on communities. It further emphasises the importance of reawakening Wales tourism and cultural sector.
- 4.15 The planning system strongly supports a diverse, sustainable tourism and culture industry. It brings jobs and income into Wales and it enables people worldwide to enjoy and experience Welsh hospitality, landscape and culture. It is important that any new investment works with our cultural and historic assets to maximise benefits and positively contribute to sustainable development.

Local planning policy

Conwy Local Development Plan (LDP) 2007-2022

- 4.16 In accordance with the provisions of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the starting point for the determination of the application is the Development Plan which comprises, in this instance, the Conwy LDP 2007-2022, which was adopted in October 2013.
- 4.17 The main policies within the LDP which are relevant to the determination of this application are as follows

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Strategic Policy DP/1 | Sustainable Development Principles |
| Policy DP/3 | Promoting Design Quality and Reducing Crime |
| Policy DP/4 | Development Criteria |
| Policy DP/6 | National Planning Policy and Guidance |
| Strategic Policy TOU/1 | Sustainable Tourism |

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| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Policy TOU/2 | New Sustainable Tourism and Recreational Development |
| Strategic Policy NTE/1 | The Natural Environment |
| Policy NTE/3 | Biodiversity |
| Policy NTE/4 | The Landscape and Protecting Special Landscape Areas |
| Policy NTE/9 | Foul Drainage |
| Strategic Policy STR/1 | Sustainable Transport, Development and Accessibility |

4.18 Conwy County Borough Council have also produced Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) notes. The following SPG is considered relevant to the determination of this planning application:

- Parking Standards SPG (Feb 2014)

5. Main considerations

- 5.1 The proposed development relates to a tourist accommodation development as a farm diversification scheme in relation to the working family farm of Tŷ Mawr, Eglwysbach.
- 5.2 It is considered that the main considerations in determining the outcome of this application are as follows:
- Principle of development;
 - Sustainable development;
 - Design, landscape and visual impact;
 - Economic benefits; and,
 - Ecology.
- 5.3 These are discussed in turn below.

Principle of development

- 5.4 The principle of development can be established through an assessment of the proposed development against both national and local planning policy guidance.
- 5.5 Policy 4 - Supporting Rural Communities of FWTNP states that, *“The Welsh Government supports sustainable and vibrant rural communities.”* Policy 5 - Supporting the rural economy of FWTNP further states that, *“The Welsh Government supports sustainable, appropriate and proportionate economic growth in rural towns that is planned and managed through Strategic and Local Development Plans. Strategic and Local Development Plans must plan positively to meet the employment needs of rural areas including employment arising from the foundational economy; the agricultural and forestry sector, including proposals for diversification; start-ups and micro businesses.”*
- 5.6 The proposed development seeks for the erection of five holiday accommodation units at Tŷ Mawr, Eglwysbach. The development seeks to help secure the long-term viability of an established fourth generation rural enterprise in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, Brexit and diminishing farm subsidies, through diversifying its sources of income. The proposed holiday units will create additional income helping the farming enterprise to become more sustainable financially, and support the applicant and his family who wish to carry on the farming tradition. The development will further draw additional tourism to the Plan area. This will lead to additional knock-on spending within

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the local economy, thus helping to create a more sustainable, vibrant and thriving rural economy and community.

- 5.7 Strategic Policy TOU/1 of the Conwy LDP outlines how the Council will promote a sustainable tourist economy. Criteria a. states that, Council will support in principle, *“proposals for new high quality all-year round sustainable tourism development that diversifies the economy and encourages cross-boundary links with neighbouring authorities, in line with Policy TOU/2 – ‘New Sustainable Tourism and Recreational Development’”*.
- 5.8 The proposed development relates to a unique tourist accommodation scheme that will provide high quality accommodation with the Conwy Valley helping to promote year round tourism within the Conwy Plan area. As a farm diversification scheme, the proposed development will also provide an additional source of income to an existing agricultural enterprise which is facing a period of uncertainty as a result of diminishing farm subsidies, Brexit and the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Due to the application site’s close proximity to the Snowdonia National Park, located less than a 30-minute drive away, the proposed development can be seen to encourage cross-boundary links with Snowdonia National Park Authority, helping to promote tourism to the National Park. Overall, it can be considered that the proposed development complies with the relevant criteria outlined with Policy TOU/1.
- 5.9 The supporting text which accompanies policy TOU/4 of the Conwy LDP which relates to chalet, caravan and camping sites advises that:
- ‘... the Council also believes that given the right location the development of small-scale groups of high quality, purpose built, holiday chalets can be acceptable in the rural area. However, development permitted under the policy must form part of an existing hotel/motel facility, working farm or an established tourist attraction, since this would assist in retaining the enterprise and be beneficial to the rural economy.’*
- 5.10 The proposal forms part of a farm diversification scheme in relation to the working family farm at Tŷ Mawr. The application is accompanied by a Business Plan, which is submitted on a confidential basis, which demonstrates how the proposal would provide an additional form of income which would support the existing rural farming enterprise, enabling the applicants’ son to work at home on the farm full-time, supporting employment in the rural economy.

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- 5.11 The application would relate to purpose-built holiday units, comprising of five units, which is considered to be small in scale. In light of this, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable.
- 5.12 Point 2 of Policy TOU/4 advises that *“the term ‘camping site’ encompasses touring caravans, tents and yurts, whilst schemes for timber pods or alternative small structures will be assessed on their own merits in line with the above criteria”*.
- 5.13 The proposed units are unique in terms of they would be small units, built into the hillside, with engineering works to provide holiday units which would only be accessible and visible from the rear. The remainder of the unit would be built into the ground.
- 5.14 Criteria 2 of Policy TOU/2 states that, “New high quality holiday accommodation will only be supported where it forms an ancillary or complementary part of an existing or proposed new tourism development scheme and meets all of criteria 1 a) – j).” The application would form part of a farm diversification project in relation to Tŷ Mawr farm. As the development is a proposed new tourism development scheme, the proposed development must meet all of criteria 1 a) - j).
- 5.15 An assessment of the proposal against the set criteria is set out below.
- a) The proposal represents an all year-round high quality tourism offer which provides a range of tourism facilities and leisure activities;*
- 5.16 The proposed development seeks to erect five tourist accommodation units which will be available to let all year-round and offer customers a completely unique experience that is not on offer anywhere else in North Wales or the surrounding area. The units have been designed to the highest standards and seamlessly blend into the hillside. The incorporation of a large glass window into the western elevation will offer guests views of the Conwy Valley SLA and the Snowdonia National Park. The proposed development will further provide tourist accommodation that is completely unique to North Wales and the surrounding areas that will be located close to a variety of popular tourist attraction within Bodnant, the Conwy Plan area, and the Snowdonia National Park.
- b) The proposal is appropriate in scale and nature to its location and demonstrates resource efficient design;*
- 5.17 The scale and nature of the proposed development has been taken into account at every stage of the design process to ensure it is appropriate within its surroundings.

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The proposed development seeks to build the holiday units into the side of the hill, covering the roofs of the units with soil so only the western elevation of the units, which comprises of a concrete façade and a large glass window, would be visible. The concrete will also be pigmented to further reduce the overall visual impact the development will have on the Conwy Valley SLA. The effect of the development seeks to minimise its visual impact on the units, allowing it to seamlessly blend into the landscape.

- 5.18 Considering the size of the parcel of land within which the proposed development is located, it does not represent an overdevelopment of the site. Instead, the proposed development seeks to make best use of low quality agricultural land that located on the steepest part of the farm that is hardest to maintain, that also possesses views of the Conwy Valley and the Snowdonia National Park. Overall, it is considered that the proposed development is appropriate in scale and nature to its location.

c) The proposal is supported by evidence to demonstrate that there would be local employment benefits in terms of the number and range of jobs;

- 5.19 The existing rural enterprise currently employs three family members consisting of the applicant, his wife and one of their sons. Another son works part-time on the farm and it is his desire to join his family in farming full-time once it is financially viable for him to do so. The proposed development therefore seeks to provide an additional source of income which will allow the rural enterprise to support one of the applicant's sons on a full-time basis. Tŷ Mawr will also be celebrating 100 years and four generations under the same ownership in 2022, meaning the development will help support the farming tradition of a well-established rural enterprise.

- 5.20 In addition, the proposed development further seeks to create two part-time jobs for local people to help run and manage the accommodation. It is therefore considered that local employment benefits will arise as a result of the development through allowing the rural enterprise to take another one of the applicant's sons on, on a full-time basis, and through the creation of two part-time jobs.

d) The proposal is sustainably accessible and encourages the use of non-car based transport;

- 5.21 The proposed development is located within close proximity to both the bus network which provides a sustainable connection to Bodnant and its variety of popular tourist attractions such as Bodnant Gardens, Bodnant Garden Centre, and the Bodnant Welsh

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Food Centre. The application site is also located within 300m of Pilgrim's Way, a popular footpath and walking route that spans the whole of North Wales. A popular cycling route, the Bodnant Loop, is located within close proximity to the application site and also provide a connection to Bodnant and its tourist attractions.

f) The proposal would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on occupiers of neighbouring properties;

5.22 The proposed development is located within open countryside with a small number of neighbouring properties located within close visual proximity to the application site. Due to the proposed development's located, it will not affect the residential amenity of any surrounding residential properties. A Landscape Statement has been prepared by Designed by MH and submitted alongside this planning application concludes that the proposed development will not result in a negative visual impact for any neighbouring dwellings, and that existing and proposed planting will provide suitable screening. Overall, the proposed development will have no impact on the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings.

g) The proposal would support and extend the range of facilities on offer within the County;

5.23 The proposed development seeks to extend the range of tourist accommodation facilities on offer within the County, by providing a truly unique, one-of-a-kind development within the Conwy Valley Special Landscape Area

i) The proposal meets other related policies in the Plan;

5.24 As demonstrated through this Planning Statement, the proposed development complies with other related policies within the Plan.

j) The proposal would not appear obtrusive in the landscape and is accompanied by a detailed landscaping scheme and, where appropriate, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

5.25 A Landscape Statement has been prepared by Designed by MH and submitted alongside this planning application and concludes that the proposed development will not appear obtrusive in the landscape. The Landscape Statement should be read in full alongside this application. As the proposed development complies with both national and local planning policy, it can also be seen to comply with DP/6 - National Planning Policy and Guidance.

Sustainable development

5.26 Strategic Policy DP/1 outlines a number of sustainable development principles that all proposals must meet.

1. Development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that it is consistent with the principles of sustainable development. All developments are required to:

c. Make efficient and effective use of land, buildings and infrastructure by giving priority to the use of previously developed land in accessible locations, achieve compact forms of development through the use of higher densities and be capable of future adaptation in line with Policy DP/2 and other related policies within the Plan;

5.27 The proposed site is classified as grade 5 on the Predictive ALC Map. The land is therefore classed as very poor quality agricultural land. The proposed development will therefore not impact the best and most versatile agricultural land and can be seen to make more effective use of the land, utilising its views for holiday accommodation purposes. Whilst the site is located in a rural setting, it is located within close proximity to a variety of popular local tourist attractions, many of which are accessible within a 30-minute drive.

e. Conserve or enhance the quality of biodiversity and wildlife habitats, and safeguard protected species in line with Strategic Policy NTE/1 – ‘The Natural Environment’;

5.28 The proposed development seeks to replant an area of gorse around, and on top of the proposed holiday units which will enhance the overall quality of biodiversity and improve wildlife habitats on the application site.

2. Development proposals should also where appropriate:

d. Be designed to a high standard, being attractive, adaptable, accessible, safe and secure as set out in Policy DP/3;

5.29 The proposed development has been designed to the highest standards and seeks to blend into the surrounding landscape to minimise its impact on the surrounding landscape. The proposed new access will further ensure that both the proposed development and farm are accessible through improving the site’s accessibility and enhancing road safety.

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f. Conserve or enhance the quality of valued open spaces, the character and quality of local landscapes and the wider countryside in line with Strategic Policies NTE/1 and CFS/1 - 'Community Facilities and Services';

- 5.30 The proposed development has been designed to blend into the surrounding landscape to maintain the character and quality of the local landscape and wider countryside. This has been done through designing the holiday units into the hillside ensuring only one elevation is visible to the surrounding area. Through planting gorse around the proposed units, the development can also be seen to enhance and further minimise the impact the development will have on the local landscape.

Design and impact on the SLA

- 5.31 Policy NTE/4 – The Landscape and Protecting Special Landscape Areas states that to conserve the attributes of SLA's such as Conwy Valley SLA, development proposals will have to show particular regard to the character of each locality in order to minimise their impact.
- 5.32 A Landscape Statement has been prepared by Designed by MH and submitted alongside this planning application and concludes that the proposed development will not appear obtrusive in the landscape. The effect that the proposed development would have on the Conwy Valley SLA has been taken into account in the preparation of the Landscape statement. The Statement concludes that the proposed development incorporates an extensive landscaping proposal into the scene which seeks to reduce and soften views into the units, and provides suitable biodiversity enhancement measures within the site through a gorse landscape buffer zone. The proposed development can therefore be seen to preserve the attributes and character of the Conwy Valley SLA.
- 5.33 Policy DP/3 - Promoting Design Quality and Reducing Crime further states that, *"All new development will be of high quality, sustainable design which provides usable, safe, durable and adaptable places, and protects local character and distinctiveness of the Plan Area's built historic and natural environment."* The proposed development has been designed to the highest quality which provides a unique set of tourist accommodation to ensure it has a minimal effect on the landscape of the surrounding area and natural environment.

Economic benefits

- 5.34 The Welsh Government outline their support for farm diversification in section 5.6 of PPW which states that *“The rural economy must develop a wide base if it is to be adaptable and resilient to the challenges it faces now and in the future.”* The proposed development forms part of a farm diversification scheme that seeks to secure the long term viability of the rural enterprise. The applicant’s rural enterprise is currently facing a number of challenges in the form of diminishing farm subsidies, Brexit and the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The scheme therefore seeks to diversify the sources of income the farm generates to ensure the viability of the enterprise which will celebrate 100 years and four generations under the same ownership in 2022. The additional source of income will further allow the rural enterprise to become more resilient against future challenges
- 5.35 TAN 6 identifies that many economic activities can be sustainably located on farms. Paragraph 5.5.2 of PPW also states that, *“The planning system encourages tourism where it contributes to economic development, conservation, rural diversification, urban regeneration and social inclusion, while recognising the needs of visitors and those of local communities.”* The proposed development seeks to promote tourism within the local area, and within the wider Conwy Plan area. In addition to the economic benefits the development will bring to the rural enterprise, it will also lead to additional spending in local businesses within the wider area, and within neighbouring local authorities such as the Snowdonia National Park. The proposed development can therefore be seen to bring economic benefits to the rural enterprise and the local and wider area.

Ecology

- 5.36 The proposed development is sited on an exposed area of grazing land that is of little ecological value. The proposed development will result in the planting of a large area of gorse around the proposed units which will enhance the ecological value of the application site. New tree planting is also proposed each side of the new vehicular access from the B5113. The development will therefore comply with Policy NTE/1, which outlines how the Council will seek to regulate development so as to conserve and, where possible, enhance the Plan Area’s natural environment, countryside and coastline, and Policy NTE/3, which outlines how proposals should conserve and enhance biodiversity.

6. Accessibility

Movement to, from and within the development

- 6.1 The proposed development seeks to create a new vehicular access to provide a safer connection to the B5113 for the proposed development which is currently served by an existing agricultural access to the east.
- 6.2 A new section of access track will also be created, which will be 4m wide and will include a new 4m wide galvanised steel access gate. This will then connect with an existing access track providing access uphill towards the units. A length of a new access track will then be created from the existing access track to provide access directly to each holiday unit.

Accessibility and sustainability

- 6.3 Strategic Policy STR/1 outlines that development will be located so as to minimise the need to travel and promote alternative forms of transport. Whilst it is acknowledged that the site is located within a rural location, the site is still located within close proximity to sustainable modes of transport. Two bus stops are located within Eglwysbach, located a short distance away to the west of the application site. The bus route north further provides a safe and sustainable connection to Bodnant and its variety of popular tourist attractions. The application site is also located within in close proximity to the Bodnant Loop, a popular cycle route that also provides access to Bodnant, and Pilgrim's Way (250m from the site), a popular walking route than spans North Wales. The application site is also located within a 30-minute drive of a variety of popular tourist attractions such as the Snowdonia National Park, Conwy World Heritage Site and Adventure Park Snowdonia.
- 6.4 TAN 6 states that, *"when considering planning applications for farm diversification projects, planning authorities should consider the nature and scale of activity taking a proportionate approach to the availability of public transport and the need for improvements to the local highway network."*
- 6.5 As demonstrated, the application site is located within close proximity to a number of sustainable modes of transport such as the bus and cycle network which provide connections to popular local tourist attractions. The development also seeks to create a new site access. The altered site access will provide a more suitable access than the

Design, Access and Planning Statement

existing access arrangements for the proposed development, thus leads to an improvement in highway safety. The proposed access will also improve the current access arrangements to agricultural land owned by the applicant which will benefit them in their day-to-day farming operations. The proposed development can therefore be seen to improve the local highway networks. Overall, the proposed development can be seen to comply with TAN 6.

Parking

- 6.6 The proposed development will incorporate a parking area into the design of each unit. The parking area will be large enough for two vehicles ensuring the development complies with Policy STR/2 and the Parking Standards SPG which outlines a minimum requirement of one space per unit.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 This Planning Statement supports a full planning for change of use of land and engineering works to enable the erection of five holiday units within the ground as a farm diversification scheme together with associated works including creation of a new vehicular access, creation of internal access road and parking areas, landscaping and associated works on land at Tŷ Mawr, Eglwysbach.
- 8.2 In summary, the proposed development can be seen to provide high quality tourist accommodation as a farm diversification project which complies with Policy TOU/1 and meets the criteria outlined in Policy TOU/2 and TOU/4 of the Conwy LDP. The proposed development can also be seen to be a sustainable development as it meets the criteria outlined in Strategic Policy DP/1 of the LDP.
- 8.3 The proposed development has been designed to the highest standards to provide tourist accommodation that is completely unique to North Wales and will draw visitors to the Conwy Valley and the nearby Snowdonia National Park. The proposed development has also been designed so that it does not negatively impact the character and appearance of the Conwy Valley SLA. The proposed development forms part of a farm diversification scheme which is supported by PPW and TAN 6, complies with the Council's parking standards and will provide biodiversity enhancements on site.
- 8.4 As demonstrate throughout this Planning Statement, it is considered that this proposal is a sustainable development that is in accordance with both national and local planning policy and guidance, and is therefore considered to be acceptable.

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