

**Application Number:** DM/2023/01242

**Proposal:** The construction of a workshop and machinery storage and associated development

**Address:** Llan Farm, Nant Road To The Grange, The Hendre, Monmouth, NP25 5NX

**Applicant:** Xafinity Pension Trustees Ltd

**Plans:** Site Plan 1749/101 - A, Floor Plans - Proposed 1749/102 - , Floor Plans - Proposed 1749/103 - , Elevations - Proposed 1749/104 - , Elevations - Proposed 1749/105 - , Location Plan 1749/106 - , Landscaping Plan P0599

**RECOMMENDATION: Approve**

Case Officer: Ms Kate Bingham  
Date Valid: 05.09.2023

**This application is presented to Planning Committee at the request of the Local Member**

**1.0 APPLICATION DETAILS**

1.1 Site Description

This application relates to an existing group of farm buildings located approximately 5 miles from Monmouth. The farm is situated in a self-contained rural location in open countryside. The applicants wish to create a long term equestrian business and family home at the site.

The property already benefits from planning approval DM/2019/02004, granting the change of use of the existing granary and a range of traditional stone barns within the adjoining courtyard into a single residential dwelling, alongside the associated works necessary for conversion along with the establishment of a professional equestrian enterprise, under planning reference number DM/2022/00905.

The site is within the Phosphorous Sensitive Catchment Area of the River Wye Special Area of Conservation.

1.2 Proposal Description

It is proposed to erect a new single storey workshop and machinery store on the site of a former Dutch barn. The removal of the Dutch barn was part of the previous planning approval (DM/2022/00905).

**2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (if any)**

<b>Reference Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Decision Date</b>
DM/2019/02004	The change of use of a range of traditional stone barns into a single residential dwelling (C3) along with works necessary for conversion.	Approved	10.03.2020

DM/2022/00389	Discharge of condition 8 (WSI) relating to application DM/2019/02004.	Approved	30.06.2022
DM/2022/00525	Change of use from agricultural to equestrian land, creation of outdoor riding arena and horse walker.	Approved	12.08.2022
DM/2022/00863	Discharge of condition 10 (Bat method statement/mitigation strategy) for planning decision DM/2019/02004.	Approved	15.09.2022
DM/2022/00886	Condition 6 relating to DM/2019/02004 (to enable the installation of a drainage system in advance of any structural building works commence).	Approved	08.08.2022
DM/2022/00905	Creation of equestrian facility for professional rider, to include change of use of land to equestrian, re-use of existing agricultural barn to provide American barn stabling with ancillary areas, erection of indoor riding arena, storage barn and lunge pen.	Approved	15.11.2022
DM/2023/00183	Discharge of condition 5 and 7 of DM/2022/00905 Hard and Soft Landscaping details and schedule of maintenance	Approved	30.03.2023
DM/2023/01080	Extension and modernisation of Llan Farmhouse.	Approved	08.12.2023
DM/2023/01116	Equine Manure Storage Barn.	Approved	12.10.2023

### **3.0 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES**

#### **Strategic Policies**

S13 LDP Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment  
S17 LDP Place Making and Design

#### **Development Management Policies**

DES1 LDP General Design Considerations  
EP1 LDP Amenity and Environmental Protection  
EP5 LDP Foul Sewage Disposal  
LC5 LDP Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character  
NE1 LDP Nature Conservation and Development

## 4.0 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

### Future Wales - the national plan 2040

Future Wales is the national development framework, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a development plan with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities. Future Wales - the national plan 2040 is the national development framework and it is the highest tier plan, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a framework which will be built on by Strategic Development Plans at a regional level and Local Development Plans. Planning decisions at every level of the planning system in Wales must be taken in accordance with the development plan as a whole.

### Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 11

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 and resultant duties such as the Socio-economic Duty.

A well-functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places. PPW promotes action at all levels of the planning process which is conducive to maximising its contribution to the well-being of Wales and its communities.

## 5.0 REPRESENTATIONS

### 5.1 Consultation Replies

**Whitecastle Community Council** - Members expressed their concern about the cumulative effect of the many different planning applications for this site and asked Cllr. I. Chandler to request application DM/2023/01242 be referred to the Planning Committee for decision.

**Natural Resources Wales (NRW)** - No objections. The application as submitted is unlikely to increase the amount of phosphorus entering the catchment. Therefore, we are satisfied that the proposal is not likely to have a significant effect on the River Wye SAC.

**MCC Biodiversity** - No objections.

**MCC Landscape** - The overall landscape strategy detailed drawing PO599, provides an overview of development proposals and a strategic approach to landscape and biodiversity for the site which is welcome.

**MCC SAB** – No objection. SAB application for whole site pending.

SEWBRc Search Results - No significant ecological record identified.

### 5.2 Neighbour Notification

No comments received.

### 5.3 Other Representations

None.

### 5.4 Local Member Representations

County Councillor Ian Chandler - Attended the meeting of Whitecastle Community Council. Some concern was expressed about the cumulative effect of the many different planning applications being sought for Llan Farm, and so they asked me as the Ward Member to request that the application be referred to Planning Committee for decision.

## **6.0 EVALUATION**

### **6.1 Good Design/ Place making**

6.1.1 The proposed workshop building has been designed to minimise the impact on the adjacent farmhouse whilst retaining the historical agricultural character of the site and surrounding land. This building has been designed to store machinery and equipment required for the running of the agricultural and equestrian enterprise safely and securely.

6.1.2 The materials used have been chosen to reflect the existing buildings and blend into the surrounding rural landscape with Welsh blue slate tiles (to match those of the existing farmhouse and barn) and timber clad walls left to weather over time to a natural colour. The natural timber will assimilate well with the stone walls of the surrounding traditional properties and boundary treatment. The building will be surrounded by new orchard and native hedgerow planting. The design, scale and form of the proposed new workshop is considered to be appropriate to its setting which feature a mix of commercial and domestic uses.

6.1.3 Consequently, it is considered that the rural character of the area will not be harmed by the proposed workshop and machinery store and the development complies with LDP Policy DES1.

### **6.2 Landscape Impact**

6.2.1 The site is located in open countryside within the context of the existing farm and farm buildings. The external environment to the farm is of small outbuildings and a larger barn complex subject to a separate approved application to be removed. Areas of open grass, shrubbery and orchard extend to the boundary of Nant Road and operational areas of the farm.

6.2.2 The landform is such that the area is slightly elevated in an undulating, predominantly pastoral landscape. The site is located in the Kingswood Local Character Area (LCA) typified as an upland south-east facing ridgeline overlooking the Trothy Valley to the south and Monmouth to the east. It is dissected by a number of streams and tributaries and is dominated at its highest point in the south by Kingswood creating an important visual marker in the surrounding landscape. The land cover comprises mainly medium to large fields of mixed pasture and arable crops, interspersed with bracken scrub and small scattered blocks of woodland. This LCA does not contain any settlements identified in the LDP although the village of Newcastle is just north of the site.

6.2.3 Policy LC 5 - Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character, highlights the importance of Monmouthshire's landscape character, and that development would be permitted provided it would not have an unacceptable adverse effect on the special character or quality of Monmouthshire's landscape in terms of its visual, historic, geological, ecological or cultural aspects.

6.2.4 Extensive landscaping and planting proposals have been approved in and around the farmyard and equestrian site which have incorporated parts of both the commercial and residential areas of the property. In terms of this application, the existing hedgerow features will be enhanced and a new orchard will be planted. The overall landscape strategy provides an overview of development proposals and a strategic approach to landscape and biodiversity for the site which is considered to be acceptable. This shows that an orchard of seven trees was to be planted on the area where the workshop is proposed. The orchard now proposed in this application is slightly smaller having six trees. This slight reduction is considered to be acceptable given the extent of the landscaping proposed across the wider site.

6.2.5 Implementation of the landscaping should be conditioned if Members are minded to approve the application.

### **6.3 Impact on Residential Amenity**

6.3.1 The site is located in a secluded position, with no immediate neighbours. Therefore there will be no negative impact from the development on any neighbouring properties and there is no conflict with LDP Policy EP1.

### **6.4 Access / Highway Safety**

6.4.1 No changes to the main vehicular access are proposed as part of this application. A service yard is proposed in front of the workshop/store that will join an existing internal gravel track. Access to the equestrian business and domestic dwelling will remain separate. As such, the proposed workshop development will have no impact on wider highway safety.

### **6.5 Biodiversity**

6.5.1 There are several recent and current applications for the buildings at this site which have been supported by bat survey reports. Bat surveys have concluded 'numerous common and soprano pipistrelles were observed foraging at the site, mainly over the courtyard to the west.' The Dutch barn that is to be demolished has been surveyed and found not to be suitable for use for roosting.

6.5.2 All developments result in net benefit to biodiversity. In this case enhancement measures in the form of new planting on the wider site is proposed. However, there are also opportunities to include features for owls and/or bats on the proposed workshop building itself. The inclusion and retention of these features can be conditioned should Members be minded to approve the application.

### **6.6 Foul Drainage (Phosphates)**

6.6.1 Under the Habitats Regulations, where a plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, and where it is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site previously (designated pursuant to EU retained law) the competent authority must carry out an appropriate assessment of the implication of the plan or project in view of the site's conservation objectives.

6.6.2 Natural Resources Wales has set new phosphate standards for the river Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in Wales (21st January 2021). Any proposed development within the SAC catchments that might increase the amount of phosphate within the catchment could lead to additional damaging effects to the SAC features and therefore such proposals must be screened through a HRA to determine whether they are likely to have a significant effect on the SAC condition.

6.6.3 This application has been screened in accordance with Natural Resources Wales' advice for planning applications within the river Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) catchments (version 3 issued 22nd July 2022). It is considered that No Likely Significant Effects on the SAC are anticipated as a result of these development proposals as there is unlikely to be a source of additional phosphorus or pathway for impacts. The development is therefore screened out as not likely to have a significant effect on a river SAC in relation to phosphorus inputs as it falls within the following criterion in the NRW advice: Any development that does not increase the volume and phosphorus concentration of wastewater.

### **6.7 Surface Water Drainage**

6.7.1 Consultants have been commissioned by the applicants to progress a SAB application that encompasses all five current planning applications/consents assigned to the overall site. The option of water re-use will be explored for the equine development and the residential

development. If re-use is not appropriate or sufficient, other SuDS discharge destinations will be considered.

6.7.2 Soakaway testing already progressed at the site has confirmed that utilising infiltration as the primary means of disposal will not be feasible with very poor testing rates evidenced on-site.

6.7.3 The consultants have identified that the nearest open watercourse is located circa 300m south west of the site, therefore discharge into this watercourse is considered feasible. There are proven existing culverted sections which discharge from site to this watercourse with at least two down gradient culverted sections passing under the highway that are clear. These are then piped / culverted down gradient and discharge into the stream.

6.7.4 To comply with Planning and SAB requirements, discharge to a surface watercourse would be restricted to an appropriate rate in order to provide flooding and morphological protection to the watercourse. Sufficient water attenuation will be provided for the 1 in 100 year design rainfall event. The surface water will be attenuated on site within a large field to the south west of the site. A detailed drainage strategy will be prepared by the consultants that identifies that the surface water runoff will be captured at source into a series of SuDS features, including where required swales, basins and permeable surfacing to comply with the SAB requirements. This information is considered sufficient to satisfy SAB requirements for this development pending a full SAB application which will be submitted should Members be minded to approve the planning application.

## **6.8 Response to Community Council Comments**

6.8.1 Whitecastle Community Council raised concerns regarding the cumulative impact of the various planning applications and existing consents at the site as a whole. This application has been assessed in conjunction with the approved householder planning application for the extension and refurbishment of Llan Farmhouse, reference DM/2023/01080. The site has the benefit of planning approval DM/2019/02004, granting the change of use of the existing granary and a range of traditional stone barns within the adjoining courtyard into a single residential dwelling alongside the establishment of a professional equestrian enterprise, planning reference number DM/2022/00905. To date, a large equestrian stable building (labelled as 'American Barn' on the landscaping plan) has been erected. Also consented but not yet built are an indoor and outdoor horse arena, a horse walker and a lunge pen. This part of the site is also to benefit from new tree planting. A substantial gap of approximately 40m between the large commercial equestrian buildings and the proposed workshop will remain.

6.8.2 The proposed workshop is considered to be an appropriate addition to the existing farmyard for the secure storage of farm equipment, tools and machinery, and is a visual improvement on the Dutch barn originally on the site. The proposed building provides a progression in design between the farmhouse and traditional barns and that of the agricultural and equestrian buildings whilst the area as a whole is enhanced by orchard and hedgerow planting.

## **6.9 Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

6.9.1 The duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales has been considered, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the WBFG Act). In reaching this recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been taken into account and it is considered that this recommendation is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers' well-being objectives set out in section 8 of the WBFG Act.

## **6.10 Conclusion**

6.10.1 The proposed workshop is appropriate in this rural setting in terms of scale, form and design. The proposed hedgerow planting and orchard will enhance the appearance of the site, and provide net benefit for biodiversity.

6.10.2 The proposed development is therefore considered to be in compliance with both national and LDP Policies LC1, LC5, DES1 and EP1.

## **7.0 RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE**

### **Conditions:**

1 This development shall be begun within 5 years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the list of approved plans set out in the table below.

REASON: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved drawings, for the avoidance of doubt.

3 All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shown on drawings no. PO599 shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season 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.

REASON: To safeguard the landscape amenities of the area and to ensure compliance with LDP Policy G11.

4 Prior to the commencement of development, details of bat and bird mitigation (to include location, position and specification) to be provided on the building hereby approved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The mitigation shall be provided prior to the first beneficial use of the extension and shall be maintained as such thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of the ecological and biodiversity value of the site and to ensure compliance with PPW 10, the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and LDP policies S13, and NE1.

### **INFORMATIVES**

1 Due to the minor nature of the proposed development (including any demolition) and the location of the proposed development, it is considered that the proposals did not need to be screened under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.

2 Please note that Bats are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This protection includes bats and places used as bat roosts, whether a bat is present at the time or not. If bats are found during the course of works, all works must cease and Natural Resources Wales contacted immediately. Natural Resources Wales (NRW) (0300 065 3000).

3 All birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The protection also covers their nests and eggs. To avoid breaking the law, do not carry out work on trees, hedgerows or buildings where birds are nesting. The nesting season for most birds is between March and September.

4 As of 7th January 2019, all construction work in Wales with drainage implications, of 100m<sup>2</sup> or more, is now required to have Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage on-site surface water (whether they require planning permission or not). These SuDS must be designed and constructed in accordance with the Welsh Government Standards for Sustainable Drainage.

The SuDS Approving Body (SAB) is a service delivered by the Local Authority to ensure that drainage proposals for all new developments of at least 2 properties OR over 100m<sup>2</sup> of construction area are fit for purpose, designed and built in accordance with the National Standards for Sustainable Drainage published by Welsh Ministers.

If you are in any doubt as to whether you require SAB approval, please contact:

[SAB@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:SAB@monmouthshire.gov.uk)