

Extension at Wiggleys Fun Farm, Aberbaiden Road, Ffordd y Gyfraith, Cefn Cribbwr, Bridgend, CF32 0BQ

Design and Access Statement

Transport Statement

Introduction and Background

Planning application P/07/357/OUT granted consent for the diversification from agricultural land to tourism/ fun farm on a portion of Ton Phillip Farm at Ffordd Y Gyfraith, Cefn Cribbwr.

Wiggleys Fun Farm opened in 2012 after substantial private investment and is now an established part of the indoor and outdoor tourism offer in Bridgend County Borough. With its location in driving distance from the County's established resort of Porthcawl and in close proximity to Junction 36 MacArthur Glen, the fun farm is strategically well located to boost the tourist profile of the area and to provide jobs in the rural sector.

Wiggleys is a friendly family run all weather fun experience for children of all ages. Visitors can enjoy the large indoor and outdoor adventure play areas, Babies Barnyard, Mini Racetrack, Farm Animals and Pets Corner.

Current facilities include:

Indoors

- Adventure play for all ages - 4 lane wavy slide, tube slide, rope bridges, crawl tower, toddlers play, babies' barnyard;
- Didi car race track;
- Party rooms; and
- Cafe dining area.

Outdoors

- Animal paddocks - ponies, donkeys, sheep, goats, rabbits and guinea pigs;

- ❑ Pigs corner;
- ❑ Adventure play - swings, tube slides, rope bridges, agility trail;
- ❑ Ball game areas;
- ❑ Woodland walk with duck ponds;
- ❑ Picnic areas; and
- ❑ Sun terrace patio area.

Wiggleys Fun Farm is open 363 days a year (closed Xmas Day and Boxing Day). It is open from 10 am to 6pm during school term and on the weekend and school holidays from 10am – 5pm.

On 16 May 2019, BCBC granted planning approval (ref P/18/1026/FUL) for 'New farm museum to side of existing building, change of use of land to east for additional storage compound and additional car parking with tree planting to east'.

Since this consent the change of land to the east of the additional compound and additional car parking (54 cars) have been implemented. Surface water drainage associated with the car park and compound to the east has been completed. The museum element of that consent was not implemented.

Proposed Development - Extension

Wiggleys Fun Farm wants to expand its day visitor tourist potential and grow the business to improve its visitor offering by extending the main building to the west in order to create larger indoor facilities in order to meet demand.

The current building of Wiggleys Fun Farm, 42.4m x 30.3m, comprises of a rectangular, steel framed structure made from Olive green PVC coated profile steel cladding. The building has a shallow pitched roof reaching a maximum height of 7.9m and translucent panels set in the roof to provide natural light.

The single storey extension would be located to the west of the existing main building. The profile of the extension would match the existing building which is asymmetrical in nature with a higher eaves to the rear at 5.4m rising to a ridge of 7.9m with then a much longer roof at the front falling to a lower eaves of 2.8m.

External materials would match the existing building as follows:

- ❑ The roof cladding is of 0.5mm Kingspan KS1000RW XL Forte Leathergrain plastic coated box profile LPC Approved 115mm composite insulated panels.
- ❑ With 20% Kingspan Rooflights KS1000DLTR 1.6

- Side Cladding: Vertical 0.5mm Kingspan KS1000RW XL Forte Leathergrain plastic coated box profile LPC Approved 80mm composite insulated panels.

The low profile of the main building structure is set generally along the natural contour of the land which ensures that it will not appear excessive in scale. By locating the proposed development south west of the site, it will be screened from near and far viewpoints by a dense belt of mature trees and further to the south landscaped landforms.

The proposed extension internally will be built to the same detailed format as the current building. Wiggleys require the proposed building to run along the same line and low level height south of the building as the existing building. So that the party rooms are built and designed at the low level point of the building but ensuring enough room for customers to go in the room with no height level problems. We require the new building at its highest point of 7.9m, the same height as the current building. This height is imperative to build the children's play framework in order to incorporate the height of the slides. The lay of the land will be graded in line with the current carpark meaning no insteps will be required.

The additional floor area formed by the 48.7m x 30.3 m extension would contain an enlarged play area, smaller rooms to hold parties, larger kitchen to serve additional visitor numbers and alternative pedestrian access/egress point at times of peak demand. This additional floorspace will ease the current issue of full operational capacity in Wiggleys. At this present time, staff must clean and turn around the parties quickly which leaves party guests with limited time at their birthday party. The additional rooms will give more time to party guests to enjoy at Wiggleys, resulting in an enhanced experience for all the party guests attending.

Additionally, Wiggleys aim is to attract children from older age groups. This is due to the fact the current children visiting to play are around 1-8 years old. Wiggleys would like to attract children a couple of years older than this and therefore the height of the building needs to be at least the height of the current building, 7.9m, to interest slightly older children. The proposed extension will hold additional play areas and seating for tourists, local visitors and party guests. Play areas will include levelled play which will also require the building to be of the same height of the current building.

Within the proposed building, Wiggleys will need to include a much-needed segregated area for Santa visits during the *end of November and December months. Currently we manage this by losing a party room to house Santa and his Grotto which unfortunately leaves Wiggleys having no option but to turn away numerous parties during this time of year. The additional space the building will give for this attraction is essential and will undoubtedly help the organisation massively. When this area is not in use outside this time of year*, it can be utilised to become a play area for the rest of the year.

The proposed building will be built in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 like the current building has.

The current entrance is sufficient for the proposed development however, Wiggleys plan to add additional entrance doors should the applicants want an entrance just for party guest visitors. From there the party guests are directed straight to the party planner and the entrance will be an additional fire exit.

The current building has enough WC facilities for the proposed development. At the moment Wiggleys has 2 mother & baby unit rooms, the men's toilets have 4 urinals and 3 cubicles, the women's toilets have 6 cubicles and there is 1 disabled toilet / accessible room. These facilities are certainly large enough because during Wiggleys peak season and peak times they have rarely ever been full and have never formed any queues; even amongst the COVID-19 restrictions with 2m distancing rules.

The proposed building will have all new Escape Fire Regulations, Lighting, Air circulation, Safety, Security, Signage Rules in line with the current building and latest regulations.

During the year of 2023, 218 Solar Panels were installed on Wiggleys' roof and 3 x tesla batteries have been installed to reduce environmental impact.

Currently, the solar panels have supplied Wiggleys with 22.8MW of electricity and charged 7.8MW of batteries. The batteries have supplied Wiggleys with 7.8MW. The proposed extension will be constructed to withhold solar panels should the need for more arise for them in the future.

Transport

A tourism direction signage scheme is currently in place in accordance with Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions 2002. The signs start in the East from just below Sarn Park Services on A4063 and repeater signs until Wiggleys Entrance and oppositely from the West A48 with repeater signs until Wiggleys Entrance.

A 40mph speed limit has been introduced along New Road, extending from the east of Cefn Parc to the east of New Road / Fountain Road crossroad junction and Fountain Road up to the rail crossing to the south.

The existing access to Wiggleys is sufficient for any additional visitors, where the access is laid out with sufficient radius kerbing on either side of the entrance. This is retained in permanent materials and gives sufficient vision splay.

There has never been a build-up of traffic congestion on the highway at our peak times **e.g. bank holidays, weekends with parties all day and during school holidays. The road into the carpark is of a considerable distance which thus eliminates any potential traffic problems on the highway. There have been zero accidents since the opening of Wiggleys Fun Farm in 2012.

There are sufficient car parking facilities within the current development and from a previous application, a new overspill car park was created in 2022. During 2022 and 2023, this overflow parking area has never been used; the current car parking facilities have been more than adequate for the number of visitors we receive at peak times**.

There is a local cycle network within a few hundred metres of Wiggleys Fun Farm, and as a result there are areas where cyclists can leave and lock their cycles when visiting us.

Car Parking

Based on the planning consent ref P/18/1026/FUL, the applicants have completed works to the additional car park to the east. This can accommodate 60 cars and would replace the car parking spaces lost (30 spaces) from the area that the proposed extension would cover. Discussions with Wiggleys' Health & safety consultant led the management of Wiggleys Fun Farm to decide that it was better to park on this overspill land rather than to allow cars to park on the narrow private road coming into Wiggleys and certainly preferable to parking on Aberbaiden Road.

The additional car park creates two banks of 18 cars set in a north/south direction separated from a single bank of a further 18 cars. Separation distances to allow safe reversing exist with minimum distances of 7m between the banks of cars and between the western bank and the storage compound area. is

The car park is additional car park area located a sufficient distance away from the root protection area of the existing southern bank of trees plus the new planting area when mature would screen the car park from the adjacent caravan park.

Wiggleys' car park includes coach parking, employee parking and disabled parking. It has an internal road network providing adequate turning facilities for dropping off and collection.

Environment

There will be no impact on any vegetation and habitat as the proposed building will be placed on the current sub base. There is no intention to remove any hedgerows or healthy trees surrounding the site

The Planning Application is supported by a Preliminary Ecology Appraisal - Report by Cadno Countryside.

The Planning Application is supported by an Arboricultural Survey of trees to be felled and in close proximity to the proposal - Report by Cadno Countryside.

Overall Farm Diversity

In overall terms the Farmers Union of Wales planning advisor comments that:

'Our members wish to continue with their successful farm diversification business which opened in 2012. This form of diversification is supported by the Welsh Assembly Government and local authorities as evidenced through the grant systems and assistance available for farmers wishing to diversify their business. At the beginning of July 2018, the Welsh Government released their consultation on the future of farming post Brexit and they have indicated their support to farmers that wish to diversify their farms in order to add economic resilience to their business. Diversification is essential to ensure that farm income is maintained and subsequently that rural communities survive. Therefore, the FUW would like to offer their full support towards Mr Rees' and Mrs Daltons' application'.

Implementation of the proposal would assist in increasing employment opportunities in this rural economy. Currently the tourist facility employs 4 Full Time and 5 Part Time staff while it is planned that the new extension would increase employment opportunities to 6 Full time and 7 Part Time staff

Compliance with National and Local Development Plan Policies.

PPG Ed 11 supports the principles of rural diversity and supports the growth of the rural economy. The extension would support the maintenance of existing jobs and create further jobs at the site. National guidance recognises that rural sites are often not well connected to urban centres by public transport and car journeys will be necessary. It is to be noted however that buses and mini buses bring many groups to the Fun Farm and this helps transport efficiency.

LDP Policy SP02 sets out 15 criteria in relation to the quality of new development proposals. This policy states that development needs to ensure that the proposal is:

Design and Sustainable Place Making Strategic Policy SP2

- 1) Complying with all relevant national policy and guidance where appropriate;**
- 2) Having a design of the highest quality possible, whilst respecting and enhancing local character and distinctiveness and landscape character;**
- 3) Being of an appropriate scale, size and prominence;**
- 4) Using land efficiently by:**
 - (i) being of a density which maximises the development potential of the land whilst respecting that of the surrounding development; and**
 - (ii) having a preference for development on previously developed land over greenfield land;**
- 5) Providing for an appropriate mix of land uses;**
- 6) Having good walking, cycling, public transport and**

road connections within and outside the site to ensure efficient access;

- 7) Minimising opportunities for crime to be generated or increased;
- 8) Avoiding or minimising noise, air, soil and water pollution;
- 9) Incorporating methods to ensure the site is free from contamination (including invasive species);
- 10) Safeguarding and enhancing biodiversity and green infrastructure;
- 11) Ensuring equality of access by all;
- 12) Ensuring that the viability and amenity of neighbouring uses and their users/occupiers will not be adversely affected;
- 13) Incorporating appropriate arrangements for the disposal of foul sewage, waste and water;
- 14) Make a positive contribution towards tackling the causes of, and adapting to the impacts of Climate Change; and
- 15) Appropriately contributing towards local, physical, social and community infrastructure which is affected by the development.

As indicated in earlier sections of the Planning Statement, the proposed single storey extension complements the main building in terms of form and design. The proposed materials match the existing colour and design. The proposed location and single storey structure is such that the quality of the rural environment would not be adversely affected.

The development provides for access to the site that given its rural location, is predominately by car. The already provided additional car parking spaces would ensure that sufficient car parking space exists at peak periods.

The Fun Farm is already in operation and attracts very large numbers of visitors to the area. Given the scale of the site and lack of nearby dwellings, the extension would not have a negative impact on surrounding neighbours and land uses.

The application is supported by a PEA and Arboricultural Report and their recommendations, if followed, would ensure the impact of the development would be acceptable in line with LDP Policies.

Policy REG 12 states

***Policy REG12
New or Extended Tourist Facilities, Accommodation,
and Attractions***

New or extended tourist facilities, accommodation and attractions in the countryside will only be permitted where:

- 1. The activity is compatible with and complimentary**

to the countryside location, including nature conservation interests;

2. The proposed development is part of an appropriate rural enterprise/farm diversification scheme;

3. The proposal assists in the promotion, and is compatible with the role of Bryngarw Country Park and Pontycymmer, Blaengarw, Llangeinor, Blackmill, Nantymoel and Caerau as destination hubs; and/or

4. The proposed development is compatible with the enhancement of its context in terms of its form, materials and details.

Specific sites are allocated for tourism related facilities and attractions at the following locations:

REG12(1) Fun Farm, Ton Philip Farm, Cefn Cribwr

REG12(2) Lakeside Farm Park, Hendre Ifan Coch Farm, Glynogwr

REG12(3) Mountain Biking Hub, Blackmill

REG12(4) Mountain Biking Hub, Calon Lan, Blaengarw

REG12(5) Events Area, Bryncethin Clay Pits, Bryncethin

REG12(6) Camper Van Site, Bryngarw Country Park

The proposed investment and development proposals clearly support Policy REG 12 (1) Fun Farm, Ton Philip Farm, Cefn Cribwr which specifically allocates the tourism site for potential growth in tourism related facilities. The explanatory LDP text that supports REG 12 states:

5.3.4 In addition, Policy SP11 recognises and compliments the initiatives of the Welsh Government's Western Valleys Strategic Regeneration Area (WVSRA) of which the Bridgend Valleys form a part, to harness their tourism potential, diversify the local economy and sustain communities, as expressed in the Valleys Areas Regeneration Plans (VARP's) objectives and projects in each of the 3 Valleys. These plans promote the settlements of Blackmill, Nantymoel, Blaengarw, Llangeinor, Pontycymmer and Caerau as destination hubs.

5.3.5 Opportunities exist for further improving and co-ordinating the range of tourist accommodation, facilities and attractions. The purpose of Policy REG 12 is to encourage tourism development which increases the range of activities available to visitors in appropriate locations.

5.3.7 Policy REG12 ensures that those proposals for tourist facilities and attractions, which seek appropriate countryside locations will be related to and in keeping with the surrounding countryside. The kind of tourism proposals which may be acceptable in the countryside relates to those activities which by their very nature require a countryside location such as golf, walking, cycling, fishing, appropriate equestrian activities, appropriate extreme activities whose environmental impact is usually minimal. However, increased visitor numbers can sometimes result in erosion, damage, litter, the spread of disease and other management issues. Proposals should therefore contain appropriate measures to mitigate such impacts.

5.3.8 The LDP has the opportunity to shape tourism development around existing leisure and recreation facilities such as areas with good opportunities for walking, cycling, horse riding, nature watching or passive enjoyment of the Countryside. Developments which

demonstrate an improved linkage to sport and leisure opportunities (e.g. walking and cycling trails, fishing lakes, golf courses) should be viewed as an opportunity to improve resources for tourists in the County Borough.

5.3.9 Policy REG12 also identifies 6 specific tourism-related facilities and attractions within the County Borough. These, together with other proposals that will come forward and are acceptable in the context of Policy REG12, will improve the County Borough's tourism offer.

The proposed investment and additional facilities at Wiggleys Fun Farm will in line with the objectives of Reg 12 improve the County Borough's tourism offer.

Conclusion

Taking into account all of the details above, the proposed plans to accommodate any additional visitors means the building, carpark and highways will be more than sufficient for this. The size and height of the building is required so that we are able to extend what we have to offer our visitors such as an additional play area for older children and more party availability. How we utilise the extended space will make Wiggleys a great and enjoyable attraction for our current and future customers. The surrounding countryside will not be affected in any way by constructing the proposed building; no trees or habitats will be changed. It will be built on current sub base material. In granting planning permission for the extension, the project would not raise matters of concern regarding land use policy or impact adversely on the environment or habitat.

Any potential impact of the proposed development on the area has been reduced by careful attention to its scale, siting layout, design and landscaping details such that it will not become a dominant feature or impinge directly on the natural qualities inherent in the area.

In applying for planning permission, the proposed building meets with the reasonable expectations of the development. Being of a standard which will not harm environmental and landscape interests and not compromise highway safety or the surrounding landscape in any way.

Careful consideration has been given to the nature of the site and the character and appearance of the area. The structure properly addresses the site and responds to its context, representing a positive, coherent development that will be absorbed into the landscape. Access arrangements for the proposed development align with both National and Local policies. The development would pose no threat to national or local planning policies and as such it is considered that planning permission should be granted.