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DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT INCLUDING A HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Proposed Extension and Conversion of Building into Holiday Let at 'The Old Mill Welsh Shop', Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog, Llangollen LL20 7LD.



Client: Mr Sean O'Sullivan
Design team: HDS Architectural Services LTD

1. Introduction

This statement accompanies a planning application, listed building consent and conservation area consent application for the extension and a change of use of the existing stone building, known as 'The Old Mill Welsh Shop', into holiday accommodation.

To be read in conjunction with drawing No's and details;

- HF/PD/01 – As Existing Ground Floor Plan
- HF/PD/02 – As Existing First Floor Plan
- HF/PD/03 – As Existing Second Floor Plan
- HF/PD/04 – As Existing Elevations
- HF/PD/05 – As Proposed Ground Floor Plan
- HF/PD/06 – As Proposed First Floor Plan
- HF/PD/07 – As Proposed Second Floor Plan
- HF/PD/08 – As Proposed Elevations

This Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) examines the potential effects of the building on the historical and architectural significance of 'The Old Welsh Mill Shop'. The former mill is a Grade II listed building, listed for its architectural and cultural importance.



Fig. 1 – Location of Existing Site

2. Proposed development

The applicant intends to extend and convert the existing former mill building into a holiday let. The building was converted into a small shop, selling local products in either the 1970's or 1980's, but it appears that this business was no longer viable and the previous owner closed it down. The building has stood empty for a number of years and is falling into a state of disrepair.

A small extension to the southern elevation along with the change of use, forms the overall development of the building.

3. Site assessment

The building is located within the conservation area of Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog.

The existing building is situated close to a row of small rendered terrace houses to the west and is also flanked by a row of three slightly larger terrace houses to the east. The building in question sits between these dwellings and is surrounded by the garden areas of the dwelling in the westerly direction. There is a very small patch of land to the southern side of the building that also falls under the ownership of the former mill and this is also where the building is accessed through a door on this elevation.

The building itself is around 45m2 in area over three floors.

The topography of the land that forms part of the mill is fairly flat, although the surrounding properties are flanked by undulating levels, which can be seen in Fig 2 and 3 below.



Fig. 2 & 3 – View of the existing building from various perspectives.

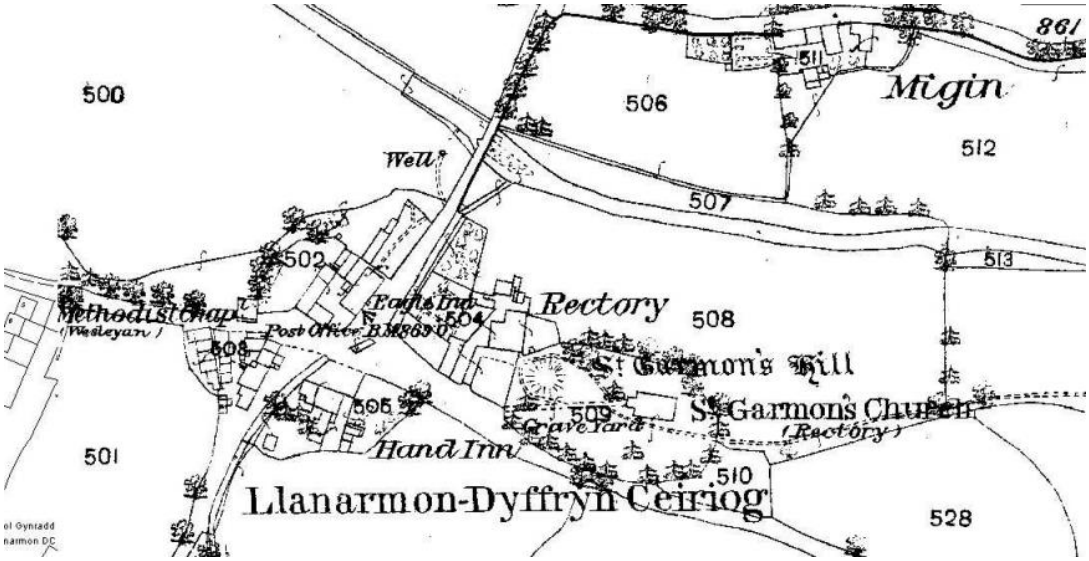


Fig. 4 – Extract from 1875 Historic Map

The garden areas of the existing dwellings to the west are substantially plated and these form a natural, attractive screening to this elevation of the existing mill.

The building dates back to the late 18th Century and can be seen on the map extract dated 1875 Fig 4 (above).

4. Scale

The ridge height of the proposed extension is to be set approximately 375mm lower than the ridge of the existing building to ensure that the proposed building works remain subservient to the existing structure. There are no changes planned to the scale or massing of the existing structure.

5. Appearance

The existing mill is constructed of 'rubble stone, with large quoins, some projecting, under a slate roof'.
A modest extension will be added to the rear of the building. The extension will be constructed from timber frame and finished with a natural rubble stone to match the existing building. Due to the modest footprint of the existing building, the extension ensures maximum use of floor space and allows the main part of the existing building to be utilised as liveable area, whilst retaining the fabric of the listed structure with minimal interventions.

The aims is to ensure that the proposed extension will match the form and materials of the adjacent buildings, whilst ensuring the extension enhances the overall design. The extension will accommodate space for the staircase to access each floor and improve the functionality of the holiday home, providing modern amenities while maintaining a high-quality design aesthetic.

The small external courtyard to the rear of the building will be partially retained to create a small private amenity area to the proposed holiday home.

6. Access

Pedestrian access to the building is provided via an existing public footpath that runs along the eastern elevation of the building and terminates at Swch-Cae-Rhiw to the north and Llanrhaeadr to the south. This will not change with the proposals and access into the building will be via the proposed extension to the rear. All new proposed doorways and hallways will be compliant with Part M of the building regulations to ensure adequate space for wheelchair users.

The footpath that runs alongside the building can be seen in Fig 5 below



Fig. 5 – View of existing footpath along mill.

There is no private parking available within the site, however, the parking demand for the proposed holiday let will be much less than the demand of the current usage of the site, being a retail unit.
As stated within Wrexham County Borough Council's supplementary planning guidance note 16 - Parking, the retain unit as it currently stands would require 1 space per 15m2 of floor space, therefore 3 spaces would be required.

The parking demand for the proposed development is to not likely be higher than a single vehicle.

7. Tourism Benefits

Rural tourism is a key focus for Planning Policy Wales, which supports the development of tourism in rural and peripheral areas. This helps to:

- Diversify the local economy, especially in areas where other industries (e.g., agriculture) may be in decline.
- Encourage small-scale, locally-based tourism projects such as agritourism, eco-tourism, and heritage tourism.

Policies encourage the development of small-scale accommodation, such as bed and breakfasts or rural guesthouses, as well as the preservation and promotion of traditional Welsh landscapes and practices.

7. Heritage impact assessment

History

The Old Mill Welsh Shop is a Grade II listed building that was listed on 23/05/2003. It was opened as a Welsh Craft shop at some point around the 1970's – 1980's. Before that it was used a flannel mill. It's a three-story building of rubble stone under a slate roof, and is thought to date back to the late 18th century. The building is historically significant as one of the oldest in the village.

The mill is listed on the 'Mills Archive Trust' website as a 'Water powered woollen mill in the historic county of Denbighshire'

There is very little additional information available regarding the history of the building, but it is thought that it may have also had alternative uses, other than a mill prior to being opened as shop. The building has been sitting vacant for a number of years and the applicant intends to bring the building back into use with a usage that it more commercially viable in current market conditions.

Exterior
Tall and narrow, occupying a small plot. Constructed from Rubble-stone over three stories with a pitched slate roof. There is a chimney stack on the north gable with a blocked window. The eastern elevation contained three windows, the ground level being a large, arch topped window with a single glass pane. The southern elevation contains two windows along with the main entrance door.




Fig. 6 & 7 – Existing Windows to building

Interior
At the ground floor, there is a small open fireplace on the northern wall, which appears to be original. There is a quarry tiled floor and the internal surface of the stonework has been painted white. The staircase that currently serves the first and

second floor levels appears to be an addition that was probably installed during the 1970's or 1980's when the building was converted to a shop.




Fig. 5 & 6 – Fireplaces to ground and first floor level.

At first floor level there is an additional small open fireplace to the north and a ladder that serves the second-floor level.

The second-floor level is an open plan layout. The roof timbers are visible and these along with the purlins appear to possibly be original.

There are very few other original internal features surviving within the building, the main features being the two small fireplaces, which the applicant intends to retain.

Reason for designation

Listed as a rare survival of a very small mill in a village setting which retains its character. There were formerly many mills in the Ceiriog Valley,
most of which have been demolished or are much altered; this example contributes to that industrial heritage.

<u>Setting</u>

The former mill is hidden from the wider vista of the village due to it being in very close proximity to the adjacent dwellings. Outside of the small village centre, where the building is located the area is very rural in setting and is about 1.5 miles from the nearest village, which is Tregeiriog. Outside of the village centre, the area has excellent views in all directions. The mill is accessed from the public footpath

previously mentioned, although well screened, does provide an attractive backdrop to the existing dwellings when viewed from Llanrhaeadr.

If a visitor was to stay on the designated pathway and view the building from the north, then their focal point would be the dwellings that flank the mill with a backdrop of the trees behind.

From the southern part of the site, if viewed from Llanrhaeadr, then the building forms an attractive backdrop between the dwellings to each side.

The building itself cannot be seen from the East or west, due to the screening of the existing dwellings.

Potential impact of the development

Fig.7 (below) shows the view of the mill set within the dwellings.



Fig. 7 – View of dwellings surrounding mill.

The addition of the extension to the southern side of the building is considered to be of minimal impact to the building and essential to bring the building back into use.

The village of Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog forms an attractive setting in general and it is felt that the addition of the extension and conversion of the building into a holiday let will only benefit the building and it's settings within the surroundings.

Actions to mitigate any potential impacts

The impacts to the character of the existing building will be kept to a minimum. As none of the windows are original in character, the applicant intends to improve the visual aesthetic of the building by fitting more in-keeping character windows. The extension can be partially screened with a small amount of planting along the west elevation if required.

8. Conclusion

The proposed conversion and extension of the stone mill building represents a careful and respectful approach to preserving the building's heritage value while adapting it for modern use.

The project ensures the retention of the mill's key architectural and historical features while introducing a modest extension that complements the rural setting.

The proposed changes are designed to have a minimal impact on the surrounding landscape, preserving the rural character of the site and enhancing the building's long-term sustainability. By preserving and adapting the mill, the development ensures that it continues to contribute to the rural heritage of the area, offering a valuable example of adaptive reuse that respects both the history and the landscape.

In conclusion, the proposals are considered to enhance the architectural setting of the building within the village of Llanarmon-Dyffryn Ceiriog, whilst bringing the benefits of a tourism development to the area. The development will have no adverse effect on the character of the listed structure, or the wider area.