



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

**From:**

[REDACTED]  
Planning Casework Branch  
Planning Directorate

**Cleared by:**

**Date:**

[REDACTED]  
13/06/2025

## MINISTERIAL ADVICE

**For decision by: Rebecca Evans MS, Cabinet Secretary for  
Economy, Energy and Planning**

<b>Subject</b>	Call-In Request – Full planning application for the proposed erection of a Class A1 food store with access and all associated development on land at Bridge House Farm, Llanmaes Road, Llanmaes, Llantwit Major – Application No 2022/00907/FUL.
<b>100 word summary</b>	The Cabinet Secretary is asked to make a decision on whether to call in this planning application for determination by the Welsh Ministers.
<b>Timing</b>	Routine.
<b>Recommendation</b>	To call in the planning application for determination by the Welsh Ministers.
<b>Decision report</b>	This decision requires a Decision Report, which may be published no earlier than the date the decision is issued.

## ADVICE

### Background

1. The Welsh Ministers have been asked to call in a full planning application for the erection of a Class A1 foodstore with access, surface level parking, landscaping and all associated development on land at Bridge House Farm, Llanmaes Road, Llanmaes, Llantwit Major.
2. The planning committee of the local planning authority (LPA), Vale of Glamorgan Council, resolved to approve the application on Thursday 12 December 2024, contrary to officer advice. However, when the initial call-in request was submitted on 22 January 2025, the LPA had not issued a decision notice in respect of the application as the section 106 legal agreement associated with the application had at that time not been signed.
3. A direction under article 18(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 (the DMPWO) was issued on 23 January 2025. This prevents the LPA from granting planning permission until the call in process is concluded.
4. There have been several requests to call in the application. Requests were received from two Members of the Senedd, two local residents, a residents group and Colwinston Community Council.
5. You are not being asked to make a decision on the merits of the planning application. This decision concerns only who should determine the planning application; either the Welsh Ministers or the LPA.

### Advice

6. The main issue to consider in assessing whether an application should be called in by the Welsh Ministers is whether the application raises issues of more than local importance. The Welsh Government's policy on calling in planning applications is set out in Planning Policy Wales (PPW). It sets out six examples of situations which may persuade the Welsh Ministers it is appropriate to call in an application. These include when applications:
  - are in conflict with national planning policies;
  - could give rise to substantial controversy beyond the immediate locality;
  - are likely significantly to affect sites of scientific, nature conservation or historic interest, or areas of landscape importance;
  - raise issues of national security;
  - may have wide effects beyond their immediate locality; or
  - raise novel planning issues.
7. The planning issues raised in the requests can be summarised as follows:
  - Proposal is contrary to the development plan as it conflicts with local and national policy on development in the open countryside.
  - Coalescence of settlements would occur contrary to a proposed designation as green wedge

- Harm to the Llanmaes conservation area
- Sequential search not followed contrary to town centre first policies

### **Development in the countryside**

8. The Officer's Report confirms the site is outside of the settlement boundary defined in the Local Development Plan ('LDP') and as such is within the open countryside where development should be strictly controlled.

### **Coalescence of settlements**

9. The village of Llanmaes is around 200 metres (roughly one to two fields) away from the distributor road marking the outer north eastern edge of Llantwit Major. While the land between the settlements is designated countryside where development is restricted, some LPAs apply a 'green wedge' policy to prevent coalescence. In this particular case the land is only a candidate site for a green wedge designation within the Replacement LDP. The Replacement LDP is not at an advanced stage of preparation and green wedge designations have not been fully considered. The application site is not located in a green wedge and therefore national policy pertaining to them would not apply for the purposes of determining this application.

### **Llanmaes Conservation Area**

10. The Officer's Report states that the proposals would likely have significant detrimental impact upon the Llanmaes Conservation Area and the character of the countryside.

### **Town centre first**

11. The Officer's Report states that on the basis of the information available the proposals broadly comply with local and national policy in terms of demonstrating capacity and the sequential test.

### **Consideration of the local planning authority**

12. The officer's report concludes that the application should be refused, as due to the sites'  
*"location, design, form, and scale, the proposals would unacceptably impact upon the appearance and character of the countryside and would be incongruous with the surrounding area. The proposals, inclusive of the impacts of ancillary elements including lighting and parking, would result in an unacceptable urbanising form of development that would result in the confluence of the settlements of Llanmaes and Llantwit Major and be detrimental to the setting of the Llanmaes Conservation Area. As such the proposals would be at odds with Policies MD1, MD2 and MD8 of the Vale of Glamorgan Adopted Local Development Plan 2011-2026, the council's SPG on Residential and Householder Development, Planning Policy Wales (12th Edition) and Technical Advice Note 12 (Design)."*

13. When reported to the Planning Committee, members were minded to approve the application on the grounds that:
- The relevant public consultation had not suggested significant opposition to the development, but rather significant support for it within the wider Llantwit Major area.
  - The concerns raised around the access to the proposed retail development / food outlet had been considered by the Council's Highways Section, and no objection had been raised (subject to the conditions outlined within the report in question and the applicant undertaking the necessary works and providing (S106 funding). The site also lay near to a substantial highway network and population area.
  - The Applicant had revised their plans for the proposed development which restricted the height of the food outlet to be limited to 7 metres, the use of green roofing and solar panels. This would help to mitigate the concerns raised around the impacts of the development on the local area.
  - Due to the location, landscape and topography of the area identified for this development, it was felt that these would help to minimise the visual impact on the local primary catchment area and community.
  - The proposed area for the development lay outside of the Llanmaes Conservation Area and it was felt therefore that although it was near to this area, there was still insufficient visual harm to justify refusing the application.
  - Due to the increased urbanisation and significant population within the local Llantwit Major / St Athan area and the wider southwestern Glamorgan location (including the Wick-Rhose 'corridor') there was a need to have further retail / food outlet development in order to meet increased need and address the insufficient availability of such an outlet in the local area.
  - This development would also help benefit the local environment and sustainability by lessening the journeys required by local communities in order to access such a retail / food outlet, as well as the wider economic, employment, commercial and financial benefits to the local communities and economy.

## **Consultation**

Advice from Policy Branch is set out below in paras 12 - 14

14. The proposal does not appear to conflict with the sequential approach to development or retail assessment criteria, or suggest potential wide or significant effects beyond the local area or be either controversial or novel in nature.
15. However, the proposal is considered to raise issues that may be in conflict with aspects of national planning policy. In particular, location of development in the countryside away from the urban form, landscape impact, placemaking in terms of sustainable location, provision of a choice of transport modes, reducing

carbon emissions, reducing the need to travel and avoiding dependence on private vehicles, and effect on the setting of a Conservation Area.

16. For the reasons cited above Policy Branch considers the proposed development could be contrary to national planning policy and should be called in for determination by the Welsh Ministers.

## Conclusion

17. A consideration in any call-in request is whether the LPA has given due regard to the relevant national and local policies and correctly interpreted them. This is ordinarily evidenced in the officer's report but in this case, it is necessary to look at the reasons given by Members for going against officer's advice.
18. Having regard to the information provided in the call-in requests, the Members' reasons for approval and the advice from Policy Branch, it is clear that this application raises issues of interpretation of national policy, in particular the potential conflict with national policies on development in the countryside and the protection of conservation areas.

## Recommendation

19. Officials have assessed the request in the light of all the above information and, on balance, recommend the application should **be called in** for determination by the Welsh Ministers, for the reasons set out above.
20. If you decide not to call in this planning application, then the relevant Direction issued under Article 18(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 will be withdrawn, and the LPA's decision of 12 December 2024 to grant planning permission will take effect.

## Well-being of future generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WFG Act 2015")

21. The well-being duty in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFG Act) has been considered by officials in drafting this advice. Section 2 of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 requires decisions on planning applications to be made in accordance with the WFG Act and applies whether the Welsh Ministers or the local planning authority determine this application.

## Legal Advice

22. No legal advice was sought for this submission.

## Financial Issues

23. Should you choose to call in the application, the administrative costs for calling in and subsequently determining the application would be met from within the existing Planning Directorate budget.

## **Communication and media handling**

24. There is expected to be limited press interest in this submission. We will work with the press office to provide appropriate lines if needed.

## Annex 1: ASSURANCE AND COPY RECIPIENTS

## CLEARANCE TRACKING

CLEARANCE TRACKING					
Aspect	Tracking	Yes	No	N/A	Clearance no.
Finance	Financial implications over £50,000?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Cleared by Group Finance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Cleared by Budget & Government Business Division?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Cleared by Local Government Finance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Legal	Legal issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Cleared by relevant lawyers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Governance	Novel and contentious issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Cleared by Corporate Governance Centre of Excellence?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

## DEPUTY DIRECTOR, STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

In clearing this MA, I confirm that I, [REDACTED], have quality assured this advice, ensuring it is provided on the basis of evidence, accurately presents the options and facts and I am accountable for the recommendations made.

I am satisfied that the recommended decision or action, if agreed, would be lawful, affordable and comply with all relevant statutory obligations. Welsh Government policy priorities and cross portfolio implications have been fully considered in line with delivery of the government objectives.

I have fully considered the statement of assurance contained in the MA guidance to ensure all relevant considerations have been taken into account, appropriate impact assessments have been undertaken and that the actions and decisions take account of regularity, propriety and value for money.

There are no financial implications for Welsh Government arising from this advice. Therefore, no financial clearance is required.

## COPY LIST

**This submission relates to a planning decision; all copies of it are for information only and not for comment.**

All mandatory copy recipients (as indicated in the guidance). Additional copy recipients specifically interested in this advice:

- [illegible]