

**TAN 6 and Rural
Enterprise
Dwellings
For Wales**

DLP BRIEFING NOTE 11

Prepared by
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TAN 6 AND RURAL ENTERPRISE DWELLINGS

Current guidance for the development of dwellings in the open countryside in Wales is contained in Planning Policy Wales and in Technical Advice Note (TAN) 6: Agricultural and Rural Development (2000). The policies within these documents are very similar to those provided by PPS7 in England, i.e. *“isolated new houses in the open countryside require special justification, for example, where they are essential to enable farm or forestry workers to live at or close to their place of work in the absence of nearby accommodation”*.

In its present guise TAN6 advises on the need for a functional test and a financial test to establish whether a new dwelling for rural workers can be justified (paragraphs 41 to 49). The tests are designed to establish that:-

- the rural enterprise in question has an existing need for a full-time worker to live on site (factors such as: the value of the animals; the need to attend land and stock throughout the year, seven days a week; the need to monitor pregnant animals, new infants and care for other specific aspects of husbandry including dental and toenail care; and the need to be on-site as a deterrent to thieves, have all been considered when determining ‘functional need’ across England and Wales);
- the rural enterprise in question has been in business for at least three years, profitable for at least the last year and will continue to be financially viable; and
- there is no alternative accommodation available locally.

It is also important to consider that the guidance advises that:-

- a financial test is used to establish the size of the property required;
- in addition all usual planning considerations still apply, e.g. design and siting; and
- if the case is not completely proven for a permanent dwelling, a form of temporary accommodation may be acceptable for the first three years whilst the business is developed.

However draft TAN6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities was published in the summer of 2009 for consultation. This document introduces the concept of ‘rural enterprise dwellings’ albeit these are essentially a new name for agricultural / forestry workers’ dwellings. However an interesting addition is that it includes:-

- *“a second dwelling on an established farm, which is financially sustainable, to facilitate the progressive handover of the management of the farm business to a new farmer within 5 years of planning consent for the rural enterprise dwelling being granted”*; and
- *“A second dwelling on an established farm, which is financially sustainable, where there is a functional need for a further 0.5 or more of a full time worker and at least 50% of the workers income, is obtained from the farm business”*.

The draft guidance appears clearer than its extant predecessor, if also more onerous. It states that '*a rural enterprise dwelling appraisal must accompany planning applications*' that formalises the existing advice into **five** tests:-

1. functional test - as existing;
2. time test - to identify the labour requirement for the worker;
3. financial test – to ensure the size of the dwelling is commensurate to the need;
4. other dwellings test; and
5. 'other normal planning requirements test'

The draft TAN also considers matters such as sustainable agriculture, rural services, 'One Planet Developments' (that may be acceptable in open countryside) and the rural economy.

Although in its present form the document is afforded minimal weight in the development control process, DLP Planning Ltd are well-placed to provide guidance on all the aspects that the draft TAN covers and would be pleased to discuss the implications further.

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