



Hafod Housing Association

Land at Pentre Meyrick

Planning Statement

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1 Introduction

1.1.1 This Planning Statement refers to, supports and supplements a full planning application that is submitted on behalf of Hafod Housing Association, in relation to the following development proposal:

“Development of 13 Affordable Homes, access arrangements and associated works”.

1.1.2 This Planning Statement outlines the context within which the application is made, and provides a detailed examination of the main planning considerations raised by the proposals, together with reasoned justification in support of the proposed development. The statement is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** provides a description of the characteristics of the site and surrounding area, and details regarding the planning history associated with the site.
- **Section 3** provides details of the development proposals.
- **Section 4** outlines the relevant planning policy framework in relation to the site and the development.
- **Section 5** analyses the key planning considerations arising from the proposed development (in light of the planning policy context and discussions with the Local Authority).
- **Section 6** sets out our conclusions.

1.1.3 The following documents (in addition to application plans and drawings) are submitted in support of the application, and should be read alongside this Planning Statement:

- Scheme Drawings
- Design and Access Statement
- Ecology Survey
- Agricultural Land Quality Assessment
- Statement of Community Involvement

2 Site and Surroundings

2.1.1 The site is located directly adjacent to the settlement of Pentre Meyrick, and immediately to the north and west of existing residential dwellings. Pentre Meyrick is situated approximately 1.4 miles to the northwest of Cowbridge and around 3 miles to the east of Bridgend.



Map: 2013 Site Aerial

2.1.2 In terms of the key landscape features / boundaries, the site is bound by the following physical 'defensible' boundaries:

- Eastern: Road to Fferm Goch;
- Western: Mature trees and hedgerow;
- Southern: Mature trees, hedgerow, and private access road to West House.

2.1.3 The site is located approximately 150 metres to the north of bus stops which are located on the A48. The bus stops provide services to Bridgend and Cowbridge and further afield to Cardiff and Barry.

3 Development Proposals

3.1.1 As indicated in Section 1 the application seeks full planning permission for the development of 13 affordable residential units.



3.1.2 The development will incorporate the following range of units on the site:

| Unit Type | No. of Units | No. of Beds |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Bungalow | 2 | 2 |
| Dormer Bungalow | 1 | 3 |
| Houses | 4 | 2 (4 person) |
| | 6 | 3 (5 Person) |

3.1.3 The level of development has been formulated to ensure it is considered to be acceptable, appropriate and set in consideration of the size of the site, the viability of the scheme and density of surrounding development.

3.1.4 The proposed layout plan which accompanies this application illustrates that the indicative built form works well in the context of the site, has the ability to provide adequate amenity and privacy space, whilst also integrating and responding to the site context.

3.1.5 It is proposed to utilise the existing access off the main road which currently serves West House. The junction with the main road will be upgraded to ensure the appropriate vision splays and road width to serve such a development. West House will continue to be served from this access. The access road will lead into a cul-de-sac layout.

3.1.6 In order to ensure the character and appearance of the site is maintained, the existing trees and matures hedges located around the periphery of the site will largely be retained and additional planting proposed to supplement this.

3.1.7 In terms of any agreement between the Penllyn Estate (the landowner) and Hafod the land is essentially being 'gifted'. Accordingly as there is essentially no land value to be taken into account this represents an opportunity for a reduced level of Social Housing Grant to be required than would otherwise be the case and consequently this will 'free up' monies for other affordable housing schemes within the Authority. It is considered that this is an innovative approach to delivering affordable housing and should be welcomed.

3.1.8 For further information on the development proposals, please refer to the Design and Access Statement which accompanies this application.



4 Planning Policy Context

- 4.1.1 A review of the planning policy context associated with the site and proposed development (at the national and local level) is provided within this section of the Statement.
- 4.1.2 The key planning policies of relevance to the determination of the application are outlined below. A detailed assessment of the accordancy of the proposed development with these policies is provided in Section 5 of the Statement (Material Considerations).

4.2 National Planning Policy

- 4.2.1 The following policy/guidance documents prepared at the national (Welsh Government) level are of relevance to the determination of the application.

Planning Policy Wales (7th Edition, July 2014)

Sustainability

- 4.2.2 Sustainable development forms a key consideration central to all policies contained within Planning Policy Wales (PPW). Paragraph 4.4.3 of PPW sets out a series of objectives which development proposals should seek to achieve – those of key relevance to the application include the following:
- *Ensure that all local communities – both urban and rural – have sufficient good quality housing for their needs, including affordable housing for local needs and for special needs where appropriate; and*
 - *Play an appropriate role to facilitate sustainable building standards (including zero carbon) that seek to minimise the sustainability and environmental impacts of buildings.*



Housing

- 4.2.3 Paragraph 9.2.14 of PPW states that *“A community’s need for affordable housing is a material planning consideration which must be taken into account in formulating development plan policies.”*
- 4.2.4 Paragraph 9.2.15 of PPW emphasises that *“Affordable housing also makes an essential contribution to community regeneration and social inclusion. It is desirable in planning terms that new housing development both in rural and urban areas incorporates a reasonable mix and balance of house types and sizes so as to cater for a range of housing needs and contribute to the development of sustainable communities.”*
- 4.2.5 With regards to development proposals in rural areas paragraph 9.2.22 of PPW states that the *“sensitive filling in of small gaps, or minor extensions to such groups, in particular for affordable housing to meet local need, may be acceptable, but much depends upon the character of the surroundings, the pattern of development in the area and the accessibility to main towns and villages.”*
- 4.2.6 It is highlighted at Paragraph 9.2.23 of PPW that *“The special provision of **affordable housing exception sites** must be considered to help ensure the viability of the local community. To support policies, local planning authorities should refer to their up-to-date local housing market assessment or local survey. Policies should make clear that the release of small housing sites within or adjoining existing settlements for the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs which would not otherwise be allocated in the development plan, is an exception to the policies for general housing provision.*

Good Design

- 4.2.7 It is set out within PPW that *“meeting the objectives of good design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process and applied to all development proposals, at all scales, from the construction or alteration of individual buildings to larger development proposals”* (Paragraph 4.11.2). Further detail regarding the objectives of good design is set out within Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design (2002) – as detailed below.
- 4.2.8 PPW advises at Paragraph 4.11.9 that *“the visual appearance of proposed development, its scale and its relationship to its surroundings and context are material planning considerations”*. PPW goes



on to advise that local planning authorities should reject poor design, however *“they should not attempt to impose a particular architectural taste or style arbitrarily”*.

- 4.2.9 Development proposals should give consideration to addressing climate change, as set out within Paragraph 4.11.6 of PPW as follows: *“Good design should ensure that development contributes to tackling the causes of climate change (by reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and to effective adaptation to the consequences of climate change. An integrated and flexible approach to design, including location, density, layout and built form, will be an appropriate way of contributing to climate responsive development”*.

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 2 – Planning and Affordable Housing (2006)

- 4.2.10 It is noted in paragraph 10.12 of Tan 2 that *“it is important that there is adequate housing provision in rural areas to meet the needs of local people and to contribute to the delivery of sustainable communities.”*
- 4.2.11 TAN 2 also states that the affordable housing provision in rural areas must be supported by a rural exception site policy. A rural exception site is defined as a site which *“should be small (as locally defined in the development plan), solely for affordable housing and on land within or adjoining existing rural settlements which would not otherwise be released for market housing.*

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 6 – Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (2010)

- 4.2.12 Paragraph 2.2.3 of the TAN states that *“Where development proposals are intended to meet local needs, planning authorities should recognise that a site may be acceptable even though it may not be accessible other than by the private car. Development not intended to cater primarily for local needs should continue to be located in market towns, local service centres or clusters of smaller settlements where a sustainable functional linkage can be demonstrated and which are accessible by public transport.”*
- 4.2.13 Paragraph 4.2.3 of TAN 6 states that, *“In smaller settlements and clusters, planning authorities should proactively engage with the local community and rural housing enablers to bring forward sites for affordable homes to meet local needs” and “Sites for affordable housing should either be*



selected as part of the development plan process or be brought forward as affordable housing exception sites.”

Development Plan Context

4.2.14 The current (adopted) Development Plan for the area consist of the following:

- Vale of Glamorgan Adopted Unitary Development Plan (1996). (Adopted 18 April 2005)

4.2.15 The Vale of Glamorgan Council are currently preparing their Local Development Plan (LDP), which once adopted, will supersede and replace the UDP.

4.2.16 A Deposit Plan (February 2012) was released for consultation between 20 February and 2 April 2012, but in order to address concerns raised on the Plan, on 23rd January 2013 the Council resolved not to progress any further with the Deposit LDP.

4.2.17 Since this resolution, work has commenced on a replacement version of the LDP. The Deposit LDP was issued for consultation in October 2013.

Vale of Glamorgan Adopted Unitary Development Plan (1996)

4.2.18 A summary of the key UDP policies of relevance to the proposed development are provided below.

4.2.19 The Proposals Map element of the Plan confirms that the site is not allocated for any use within the UDP, and that it does not fall within, for instance, a special landscape area or a green wedge. Pentre Meyrick also does not have a boundary drawn round the village indicating the extent of settlement.

Policies HOUS3, HOUS2 and HOUS8

4.2.20 Policy HOUS3 only permits new dwellings in the countryside where they are justified for agricultural purposes. Policies HOUS2 and HOUS8 relate to residential development proposals within or adjoining settlement boundaries. In this case Pentre Meyrick does not have a settlement boundary and therefore these policies are not explicitly relevant to the proposal.

Policy ENV 1 – Development in the Countryside



- 4.2.21 This policy relates to the protection of the countryside and aims to control development proposals within this location except for specific identified uses, or uses which are allowed under separate policies, for example affordable housing sites.

Policy ENV 27 – Design of new developments

- 4.2.22 This relates to the design of new developments and states that they must have full regard to the context of the local natural and built environment and its special features. Specific issues such as amenity, accessibility, energy efficiency, and open spaces, amongst others are dealt with under this policy.

Policy HOUS 13 – Exception Sites For Affordable Housing In The Rural Vale

- 4.2.23 Policy HOUS 13 relates to exception sites for affordable housing in the rural vale and specifies that these types of housing can be acceptable in such a location subject to certain criteria. These criteria include, an establish need for such housing in the area, the benefits of such development is secured for initial and future occupants, open space is provided and the development does not result in the loss of good quality agricultural land.
- 4.2.24 The policy defines the 'Rural Vale' as the areas beyond the settlements of Barry, Penarth, Llandough, Dinas Powys and Sully.

Policy TRAN 10 - Parking

- 4.2.25 The policy relates to parking facilities for new developments and requires that they meet the requirements of the approved parking guidelines.
- 4.2.26 In addition the Authority have an approved SPG (2013) relating to Affordable Housing. Paragraph 2.1 confirms that:

"Within the Vale of Glamorgan as with other areas of Wales, it is extremely difficult for local people on low incomes, and increasingly for those people on middle incomes, to afford a home of their own. Indeed, most recently evidence on the level of affordable housing need within the Vale of Glamorgan Council indicates that the demand for affordable housing has increased steadily between 2008 and 20101. This has placed greater emphasis on the Council to provide suitable affordable housing, and as such its provision is a key strategic objective of the UDP as well as its' Community Strategy (2011-21) and Local Housing Strategy 2007-12."



4.2.27 Paragraph 7.1 also states that the principle of 'rural exception sites' is well established in National Planning Policy as a mechanism for meeting the housing needs of local people who can no longer afford to rent or buy properties in rural settlements.

Emerging Development Plan Context

4.2.28 As indicated previously the Deposit LDP was issued for consultation in October 2013. When the LDP is formally adopted it will replace the current UDP.

4.2.29 A summary of the key LDP policies of relevance to the proposal development are provided below.

Policy SP 4 – Residential Requirement

4.2.30 Policy SP 4 relates to the provision of affordable housing within the Vale of Glamorgan generally. It states that there is a need for 2694 affordable units over the plan period.

Policy MG 4 – Affordable Housing

4.2.31 Policy MG 4 also relates to affordable housing and provides more specific guidance on the level of contribution required for new residential developments within the Authority area.

Policy MD 1 – Location of New Development

4.2.32 Policy MD 1 provides criteria for new development on unallocated /windfall sites and deals with matters such as amenity, open space, parking and sustainability, amongst others.

Policy MD 3 – Design of New Development

4.2.33 Policy MD 3 includes criteria to seek high quality development through design, compatibility with other uses, highway safety and amenity.

Policy MD 11 – Affordable Housing in Rural Areas



4.2.34 Policy MD 11 provides the criteria on which planning applications for affordable housing on exception sites outside settlement boundaries are to meet.

4.2.35 These criteria include matters such as reasonable access to amenities and services, there is an established need for affordable housing in the area, and the number of dwellings is proportionate to the size of the adjoining settlement.

5 Material Considerations

5.1.1 The key material planning considerations arising from the proposed development (in light of the planning policy context outlined within the preceding section of the Statement, and having regard to the proposed development) are considered to be as follows:

- Principle of Development
- Relevant Planning Decisions
- Landscape and Visual Amenity
- Highways
- Ecology
- Drainage
- Agricultural Land Classification



5.2 Principle of Development

Planning Policy Overview

- 5.2.1 Planning guidance advocates that determination of applications should be in accord with the provisions of the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2.2 In this case, the key UDP planning policies are considered to be ENV1 and HOUS 13.
- 5.2.3 However, it is noted that the Vale of Glamorgan UDP, which was adopted in 2005, covered the period from 1996 – 2011. The UDP is therefore now dated and accordingly, the weight that can be attached to the policies and proposals should be considered in this context.
- 5.2.4 In particular, PPW confirms that where plans or policies are outdated or superseded, then there is a presumption in favour of developments which accord with the key objectives of sustainable development.
- 5.2.5 Accordingly, whilst the Vale of Glamorgan UDP is still material, given that its plan period has been exceeded, this forms only one of a number of material considerations which should be taken into account in determining this application.
- 5.2.6 This position has been confirmed by the Vale of Glamorgan Council, through their assessment and determination of a number of planning applications. In particular, within the Committee Report (dated 7 March 2013) for the application at the Former Emporium Garden Centre, Fferm Goch, Llangan (application reference 2012/00862/OUT), the Officer states the following:

“... given that the UDP is time-expired, it is necessary, as emphasised by PPW, to have regard to whether there are any material considerations which would justify development of the site as proposed” (Page 50)

- 5.2.7 The Committee report goes on to confirm the following:

“It is clear when examining the Unitary Development Plan alone that development of this site in the manner proposed would amount to unacceptable development in the countryside. Nevertheless, PPW makes it clear that in circumstances where a Unitary Development Plan is time-expired, it is for the decision-maker to determine whether policies in the adopted Development Plan are out of date or have been superseded by other material considerations, in light of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.



Within this context ... other material considerations exist relating to ... the background studies to the LDP and assessment of sustainable settlements, the contribution made to meeting rural and affordable housing need, and the contribution the site will make to meeting the council's existing shortfall in land supply." (Page 58)

5.2.8 It is considered that the above identified material considerations, which finally justified the approval of the Llangan scheme, are also of relevance to this proposed development at Pentre Meyrick.

5.2.9 Each of the key material considerations are discussed in further detail below.

Conformity with Relevant UDP Policies

5.2.10 As outlined above, it is acknowledged that the UDP is now 'dated', and accordingly, the weight that should be attached to the policies of the UDP should be considered in this context, alongside all other material considerations.

5.2.11 The proposed site is located to the north western edge of Pentre Meyrick. Pentre Meyrick has not been allocated with any particular status as a settlement within the UDP, as such is located in an area designated as countryside. The first matter with respect to UDP policy for development in this location is ENV1 – Development in the Countryside.

5.2.12 It is acknowledged the development does not strictly accord with the types of development identified in Policy ENV1 for which a countryside location is acceptable. The Policy does, however, make provision, under criterion (iv) for exceptions to the rule which are approved under other policies in the Plan. The application is being submitted under the provision of policy HOUS13 – Exception Sites for Affordable Housing in the Rural Vale.

5.2.13 Policy HOUS13 states, amongst other criteria, that if it can be demonstrated that in the rural Vale there is an identified local need for affordable housing, the development of a limited number of additional sites will be permitted if the site is within or adjoining an existing settlement boundary. As has already been highlighted the site is not located within or adjoining an existing settlement boundary.

5.2.14 Accordingly, it is accepted that the affordable element of the proposal does not entirely accord with Policy HOUS13, given the location of the site outside and away from any residential settlement boundary. However there are a number of significant material considerations in favour of the proposal, particularly the pressing need that exists for affordable housing in the rural Vale of



Glamorgan – and particularly the case of the approval at the Herbert's, St Mary Church of an affordable housing development in November 2011 (ref: 2011/00732/FUL). This scheme comprised the development of eight semi-detached affordable dwellings. Six of the dwellings were proposed for social rent, and the other two were proposed for low cost home ownership.

- 5.2.15 Whilst there were several issues raised in this application relevant to Pentre Meyrick, the main issue of specific relevance to criterion iv) of Policy HOUS13 is that the site was also not located adjacent to a settlement boundary. In justifying the development the Authority confirmed that a key material factor was the identified and pressing need for affordable housing in the rural Vale of Glamorgan.
- 5.2.16 Furthermore it is considered reasonable to suggest that Policy HOUS13 is somewhat dated and does not reflect the more recent guidance published at the national level, particularly PPW, which supports affordable housing provision to meet local needs, both in urban and rural areas.
- 5.2.17 In the context of this policy and based on the following case for affordable housing need and the accessibility of the site's location, the principle of this development is considered acceptable in a countryside location, subject to the specific criteria of HOUS 13. Discussion of the scheme's acceptability against these criteria is also provided below.

Need for Affordable Housing

- 5.2.18 It is acknowledged in the Deposit LDP that there is a pressing requirement to deliver affordable housing on windfall sites such as this. Furthermore at the national level on 14th May 2012 the Welsh Government issued a statement confirming that there would be a target of 12,500 affordable homes during the term of the Government. The target is to be made up of 7,500 new affordable homes – 1,000 more than the previous target.
- 5.2.19 It is also understood that the Penllyn Community Council area has been ranked as 4th in the terms of the wards in the Authority that require affordable housing to be delivered. Accordingly it is considered that this proposal, as was demonstrated through the recommendation to approve the planning application at the Herberts, will go some way to meeting the need to provide affordable housing to meet an identified need.
- 5.2.20 Furthermore Pentre Meyrick borders the Cowbridge ward but the proposed dwellings would also serve the rural areas of the Vale of Glamorgan around the A48. Consequently, discussions have been undertaken with Elisa Faulkner (the Authority's Affordable Rural Housing Enabling Officer) to



provide some detailed context to the affordability issues that exist in the locality and she has researched the wards of Cowbridge, Llandow/Ewenny and Peterston-super-Ely, which covers villages such as Pendoylan. The wards of Rhoose and Bonvilston, were also considered but she decided not to include these as their rural character is distorted because they include the substantial settlements of Rhoose and Wenvoe.

5.2.21 Given the nature of this proposal they have examined the affordability of a two bedroom home in the lower quartile house price for all three areas. The headline factor is the price to income ratio in the owner-occupation market. The regional ratio is 5.5:1 and the cost of buying is based on assumed 85% mortgage at 2.8%. Costs are shown as weekly outgoings. Assuming a mortgage offer of three times the household income they have also examined the number of first time buyers excluded from entry level housing [terraced]. This is shown as a percentage.

| Ward | Ratio | Cost of buying/week | Rent/week | % excluded |
|-----------------|-------|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| Cowbridge | 13:1 | 148 | 150 | 72% |
| Peterston | 10:1 | No data | 173 | 80% |
| Llandow/ Ewenny | 14:1 | No data | 121 | 75% |

5.2.22 This demonstrates that affordability is a key issue for the local population.

5.2.23 Hafod Housing Association will, as per the approach taken at the Herberts, adopt a bespoke Local Lettings Policy which will be discussed with the local community and the Authority's Housing Section. This will ensure that priority is given to those applicants with a local connection. For instance, this would also be similar to the approach adopted by Hafod in Colwinston for the affordable housing scheme they developed opposite St Michaels (Church Ref: 2003/00882/FUL).

5.2.24 Given the importance of the development at Pentre Meyrick, it was considered fundamental that consultation with the public was carried out. This was undertaken between 2pm – 8pm on Friday 21 March 2014 in Penllyn Village Hall.

5.2.25 Approximately 80 members of the public visited the exhibition across the day. In terms of the feedback forms relating to the overall proposal, of the respondents 20 (71.4%) were in favour, 4 (14.3%) undecided and 4 (14.3%) against. In terms of the specific benefits / issues raised by the respondents these were as follows:

- Providing housing for local people



- Provides accommodation which is in demand

5.2.26 This demonstrates that there is considered to be a recognition within the general public that there is a need to deliver affordable housing in rural areas such as this.

Conformity with Criteria of Policy HOUS13

5.2.27 The proposals' compliance with the criteria provided within Policy HOUS 13 of the UDP are outlined in turn below:

- i The site is within or adjoining an existing settlement boundary* – it is acknowledged that the proposed site is not related to any settlement boundary. However there are a number of significant material considerations in favour of the proposal, particularly the pressing need that exists for affordable housing in the rural Vale of Glamorgan. Furthermore it is considered reasonable to suggest that Policy HOUS13 is somewhat dated and does not reflect the more recent guidance published at the national level, particularly PPW, which supports affordable housing provision to meet local needs, both in urban and rural areas.

In addition, as per the case of the Herbert's the main issue of specific relevance to this criterion is that the site was also not located adjacent to a settlement boundary. In justifying the development a key material factor was the identified and pressing need for affordable housing in the rural Vale of Glamorgan.

In light of more up-to-date national policy background and the affordable housing need identified above and the pressing need for such housing in the Pentre Meyrick area there is a material justification for the approval of this scheme against this criterion.

- ii The site is commensurate in scale, design and location with the identified need* – as has been highlighted above there is a significant well defined, accepted and evidenced need for affordable housing specifically within Pentre Meyrick, with a significant annual requirement for units, which has been unmet for a number of years. There has been little significant development in Pentre Meyrick and the wider communities in recent years which contributes to this need.

The two images below indicate how the shape and scale of the village will alter as a result of the development. It is clear that the scale of the village will not significantly change as a result of the development. It is evident also that this development would successfully round off the existing built form of Pentre Meyrick.



Existing Area

Area including proposed development

The proposed scale of development has been defined in consideration of the assessed level of affordable housing need and will provide directly for this.

- iii ***Clear and adequate arrangements are made to ensure that the benefits of such housing are secured for initial and subsequent occupants*** – the development is proposed by Hafod Housing Association, a registered social landlord. Accordingly, their own guidelines / requirements will ensure that the affordable units remain affordable in perpetuity. This can be further controlled through any grant of planning permission.

Hafod Housing Association can, as per the approach taken at the recently developed Herberts site adopt a bespoke Local Lettings Policy which can, if necessary, be discussed with the local community and the Authority's Housing Section. This will ensure that priority is given to those applicants with a local connection.

- iv ***The scale and form of the proposed development is in keeping with surrounding uses*** – the proposal provides for residential development which seeks to mirror the form, layout and scale of the development within Pentre Meyrick. Adjoining uses to the site include residential and agricultural land. There would therefore be no incompatibility with surrounding / adjoining uses in scale and form.
- v ***The proposal has no unacceptable effect on the amenity and character of existing or neighbouring environments by virtue of noise, traffic congestion, exacerbation of parking problems or visual intrusion*** – the proposed development will not have any significant impacts on the amenity and character of existing or neighbouring environments, with no negative highways impacts, and limited (and acceptable) visual impacts due to the natural relationship it would have with the existing built form – as considered in further detail below and as assessed and evidenced by the comprehensive supporting information. The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable in this regard. Furthermore the proposals have been amended to reflect and address local concerns in respect of access and parking.
- vi ***The proposal does not have an unacceptable impact on good quality agricultural land (grades 1, 2 or 3a), on areas of attractive landscape or high quality townscape or on areas of historical, archaeological, ecological, geological or geomorphological importance*** – the assessment of the agricultural quality of the application site has established



that it is sub grade 3b. The proposal will therefore not have an unacceptable impact on agricultural land.

- vii ***Open space is provided in accordance with the council's approved standards*** – as indicated on the proposed site plan adequate areas of private amenity space is being provided for each dwelling.
- viii ***The provision of car parking and amenity space is in accordance with the council's approved guidelines*** – the proposed development will provide a total of 26 off-street car parking spaces within the site. In addition, each unit will be provided with a private garden area, which will ensure that residents will all have areas of private, usable amenity space.
- ix ***Adequate community and utility services exist, are reasonably accessible or can be readily or economically provided*** – the site is located within close proximity to a wide range of facilities and services within Cowbridge and Penllyn. PPW states that Local Planning Authorities must make appropriate provision for affordable housing. At paragraph 9.2.22, it considers rural housing development. It states *“In order to safeguard the character and appearance of the countryside, to reduce the need to travel by car and to economise on the provision of services, new houses in the countryside, away from existing settlements recognised in development plans or from other areas allocated for development, must be strictly controlled.”* However, it continues *“Many parts of the countryside have isolated groups of dwellings. Sensitive filling in of small gaps, or minor extensions to such groups, in particular for affordable housing to meet local need, may be acceptable, but much depends upon the character of the surroundings, the pattern of development in the area and the accessibility to main towns and villages.”* This guidance clearly supports allowing affordable housing schemes in locations such as Pentre Meyrick where such proposals are intended to make provision for affordable housing to meet local needs.

As the transport and facilities link plan in Appendix 1 confirms the services provided within Cowbridge, Llangan and Penllyn are located within a reasonable distance and are easily accessible via a range of modes of transport, including bicycle and public transport. The X2 bus (which stops at Pentre Meyrick) runs through the centre of Cowbridge which accommodates much of the services and facilities for the settlement.

5.2.28 As the above demonstrates, the proposed development complies with the criteria provided in Policy HOUS13. It is therefore considered that the principle of development on the site is acceptable in this context.

Compliance with Relevant Emerging LDP Policies

5.2.29 Whilst the Deposit LDP could be considered to be of limited weight as it is yet to be considered 'sound', as part of the evidence base for the emerging plan a number of background reports have been published. In relation to the issue of affordable housing, and Pentre Meyrick specifically, these confirm the following:



- It is outlined within the Affordable Housing Background Paper that the anticipated contribution from windfall sites such as this, over the LDP plan period would be 709 affordable dwellings. Accordingly this site would go some way to achieving this aim. This is out of a total target for affordable housing of 2,624 units over the plan period.
- Based on the initial sustainability rankings contained in the 'Sustainable Settlements Appraisal Review Background Paper', Pentre Meyrick scores well due to its location next to a strategic highway (A48) by virtue of the bus service that runs along it, and that it is located in close proximity to employment opportunities. It was however considered as a 'potential anomaly settlement' due to no specific facilities being provided and a relatively small population. Despite this, it is the case that the settlement benefits from good public transport links and furthermore, Llangan, Graig Penllyn, and Penllyn (which have been identified as sustainable rural settlements due to the facilities they provided) are in close proximity.

5.2.30 Policy MD11: Affordable Housing in Rural Areas of the Deposit LDP, permits affordable housing beyond identified settlement boundaries subject to a number of criteria. The general thrust and aims of the policy is similar to that provided by Policy HOUS13 of the adopted UDP. Accordingly, as the proposed development has been demonstrated to be in compliance with Policy HOUS13 (as outlined above), the proposal is also considered to be in compliance with the aims and objectives of the emerging LDP.

Deliverability

5.2.31 It should be noted that the site is inherently deliverable. The application is submitted by Hafod Housing Association who have a proven track record in delivering affordable housing sites.

Relevant Planning Decisions

The Herbert's

5.2.32 As stated above, in November 2011 a planning application (ref: 2011/00732/FUL) for 100% affordable housing in the countryside was recommended for approval.

5.2.33 In terms of specific issues which would be relevant to the consideration of these proposals, it was confirmed in the committee report that:

- The Council's Rural Affordable Housing Needs Survey confirmed that there was a net need estimate of 250 affordable dwellings per year in the rural vale.
- That average house prices in the locality were significantly above the regional average and therefore they were not available to local people who were in housing need – and whose needs may actually be hidden to many of the community (e.g. those living with family and friends). It was confirmed that a more diverse mix of housing tenures, which provide affordable options to local people, can open up opportunities to those who would otherwise have to leave the area or remain living in undesirable circumstances.



- Whilst the site was also not located adjacent to a settlement boundary (as per this site) a key material factor was the identified and pressing need for affordable housing in the rural Vale of Glamorgan.

Former Emporium Garden Centre, Fferm Goch

5.2.34 This outline planning (ref: 2012/00862/OUT), located in the region of 0.5 miles to the north of the application site, was approved in 2013 for 40 dwellings with associated access and landscaping. It was agreed that 35% of the proposed dwellings would be affordable.

5.2.35 Within the committee report, specifically in relation to affordable housing within the rural Vale, it is noted:

“that there is a strong need for affordable housing in rural areas of the Vale, which has only been made worse by low build rates and underprovision in recent years.”

5.2.36 This demonstrates that the issue of affordable housing need in the locality is a positive material consideration in favour of the planning application.

Old Station Yard, St Athan

5.2.37 This application (ref: 2013/001165/FUL) for 23 affordable dwellings was also considered under Policy HOUS13 of the UDP and approved in March 2014. The site was located to the south of St Athan, and similarly to this proposal and the Herberts, was not adjacent to the settlement boundary of St Athan.

5.2.38 It is stated within the committee report that the need to provide affordable housing was *‘a material consideration that must be given a significant degree of weight’*. It was also recognised that the scheme would go some way to meeting the affordable housing delivery targets set out within the UDP and emerging LDP.



Landscape and Visual Amenity

- 5.2.39 The existing dwellings in the immediate locality comprise a mix of residential buildings, mostly two storey properties, and it is not considered that the settlement is defined by a particular dwelling type / vernacular.
- 5.2.40 The dwellings proposed are a mix of 2 storey houses and bungalows, with the use of render and reconstituted stone, and slate effect roofs.
- 5.2.41 As indicated above the site is not located within a special landscape area in terms of the UDP, or subject to any other designations. The site is not in an elevated position and there are no significant views into it from the surrounding area. Furthermore the proposal (although new development in the countryside) will relate well to the existing settlement as its southern boundary is directly adjacent to the existing dwellings. Opportunities to enhance / improve the existing landscaping would also be available. The proposal would be viewed in the context of the existing built environment, rather than the wider rural area. It is therefore considered that this form of development, at this location, will not be viewed as an incursion into the open countryside nor is it considered would cause significant and adverse harm to the rural character of the area.



Highways

- 5.2.42 The proposal will utilise and improve on an existing access into the land which currently accommodates two residential units. The junction with the main road will be improved and the access track to the site will be upgraded to adoptable standards.
- 5.2.43 Vision splays at the junction with the main road are appropriate and meets the required standard for the location.
- 5.2.44 It is widely acknowledged that the traffic generated by, and the parking requirements for, affordable housing sites are lower than for open market housing. This is reflected in CSS Wales Parking Standards 2008 which allows for lower parking requirements for developments with lower than normal car ownership.
- 5.2.45 As indicated above the site is also well located to the services provided within Cowbridge, Llangan and Penllyn are located within a reasonable distance and are easily accessible via a range of modes of transport, including bicycle and public transport.
- 5.2.46 With regards to the issues of planning policy and sustainability it is noted within the committee report for the Herbert's that:
- *'TAN 6 recognises that where development proposals are intended to meet local needs, planning authorities should recognise that a site may be acceptable even though it may not be accessible other than by the private car (paragraph 2.2.3 refers). Therefore, on balance, it is not considered that the development should be resisted on the grounds of accessibility'.*
 - *'it is noted that the site is located at some distance from shops and services and therefore the development will generate travel demand. Whilst there is provision for public transport via bus services operating along St. Athan Road, these are infrequent, and it is considered that future occupiers are likely to rely in the main on private cars to access goods and services'*
- 5.2.47 It is considered that the context of this proposals is similar to that of the Herbert's and is inherently similar. The Herbert's was ultimately considered acceptable in terms of sustainability – not least due to the pressing need for the Authority to deliver affordable housing which is enshrined in national guidance.

Ecology



- 5.2.48 A Phase I Habitat Survey of the site has been undertaken by David Clements Ecology, and the report accompanies this application. This report assesses the ecological interest of the site and outlines the ecological constraints / opportunities associated with the proposed development.
- 5.2.49 The report confirms that the site does not contain any statutory or non-statutory conservation designations and is not located in close proximity to any such site (so as to be of ecological relevance).
- 5.2.50 The habitats of the site considered to be of only Local value for wildlife. The hedge boundary is likely to be used by birds as a foraging, nesting and roosting recourse. The arable crop habitat of the site is considered to be of no greater than local value, and is also relatively negligible in its value.
- 5.2.51 No mitigation measures are considered necessary on this site. Although consideration could be given to potential enhancements where possible. Notwithstanding this, it is considered on the basis of the present survey that the proposed development of this site would not entail any significant loss of wildlife features, and therefore the proposed development is not significantly constrained by biodiversity and nature conservation considerations.

Drainage

- 5.2.52 In relation to this issue, initial investigations with DCWW have identified that the foul flows from 13 dwellings could be accommodated within the public sewerage system. Surface water flows would need to be disposed of separately. A copy of DCWW's letter of 6 August 2012 confirming this position is enclosed in Appendix 2.

Agricultural Land Classification

- 5.2.53 The assessment that has been undertaken confirms that the land quality of the site is Subgrade 3b, based on laboratory analysis which confirms that the clay content exceeds 27% in the samples. It therefore comprises poorer quality land and in accordance with PPW there is no planning policy justification for its retention on this basis.
- 5.2.54 Furthermore it has been confirmed by Penllyn Estate (the land owners) in their letter of 16 August 2012 (attached in appendix 3) that due to the irregular shape of the site, it is not utilised for agricultural purposes and is of limited value. This is due to the advent of the large arable



machinery necessary in an operation of their scale, become steadily more difficult to plough and cultivate. Therefore its development for affordable housing should not raise any issues in terms of the loss of agricultural land.

6 Summary and Conclusions

6.1.1 This application seeks planning permission for the proposed development on land at Pentre Meyrick. The proposed development is considered to be both appropriate and acceptable. In particular, it is considered that there are a number of material considerations in support of the application, which include the following:

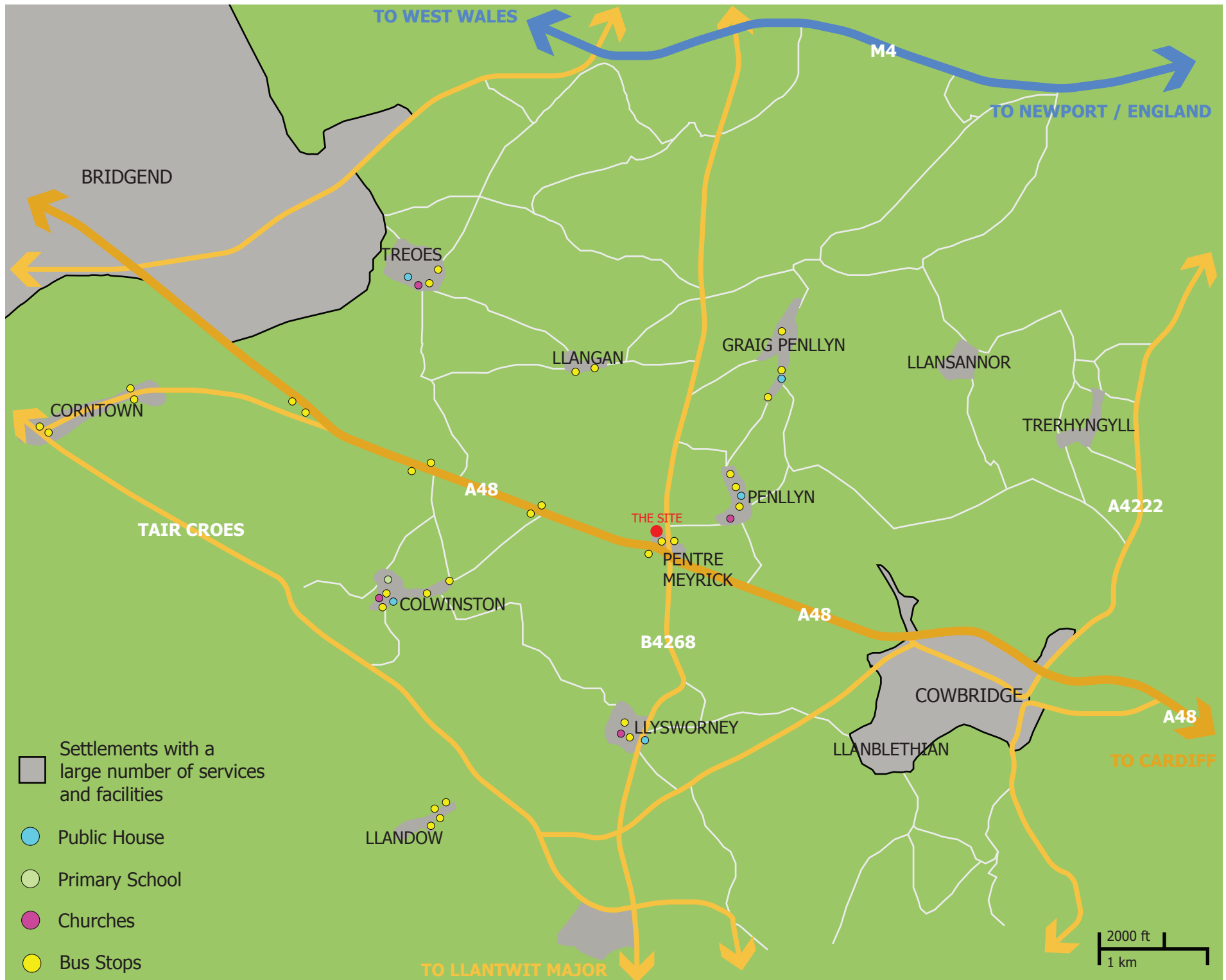
- The development will contribute to an identified shortfall in affordable housing supply in the Rural Vale of Glamorgan.
- The scheme, comprised of, affordable housing which will directly contribute to an assessed need within the Ward of Penllyn.
- The inherent deliverability of the site.
- The site is located in an accessible location with excellent links to public transport nodes.
- Services and facilities within Llangan, Penllyn and Cowbridge are accessible via a range of modes of transport, including bicycle and bus.
- The proposals can be considered to comply with the aims and objectives of Policy HOUS13 of the UDP.
- The scale of development is considered to be acceptable, appropriate and has been set in consideration of the size of the site, the viability of the scheme, and the density and context of surrounding development. The proposed layout demonstrates that the properties work well in the context of the site, providing adequate amenity space and privacy, integrating and responding to the site context, whilst also utilising the site to its full potential.
- The visibility of the site within the wider open landscape would be limited, and impact on the landscape, are unlikely to be significant given the setting of the site.



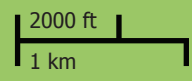
- 6.1.2 Having regard to the above key material considerations, it is considered that the proposed development represents an appropriate and policy compliant scheme, which makes good use of this site, to the benefit of the wider community.
- 6.1.3 Accordingly, it is therefore considered that the proposed development is acceptable and we would respectfully request that the application be approved.



Appendix 1 – Transport and Facility Links Plan



- Settlements with a large number of services and facilities
- Public House
- Primary School
- Churches
- Bus Stops





Appendix 2 – Letter from DCWW

Nick Renwick Architects
Ty Cattwg
Llancarfan
Barry
Vale Of Glamorgan
CF62 3AL

Date: 06/08/2012
Enquiries Tel.: 08009172652
Our Ref.: 2012/DCWW/81056
Your Ref.: -----
Grid Ref.: SS9662875965

Mr Nick Renwick

Dear Sir

Re: 13 No dwellings, Pentremeyrick, Cowbridge

Further to the above consultation we would provide the following comments:-

SEWERAGE

In relation to capacity to accept sewage flows from the proposed development, we would confirm the following.

The public sewerage system within the vicinity of the proposed development generally consists of a separate type.

Only foul flows from the proposed development of 13 residential dwellings could be accommodated within the public sewerage system.

In relation to the surface water flows from the proposed development, these will have to be disposed of separately by other means, such as using soakaways or discharging directly to a watercourse. Permissions to connect to a watercourse may need to be sought from the Land Drainage Authority and / or Environment Agency.

Please note that no highway or land drainage run-off will be permitted to discharge directly or indirectly into the public sewerage system.

If any onsite or offsite sewers are to be offered for adoption, an application should be made to this office. The design of which should be in accordance with the publication "Sewers for Adoption" - 6th Edition.

The Welsh Government are planning to introduce new legislation that will make it mandatory for all developers who wish to communicate with the public sewerage system to obtain an adoption agreement for their sewerage with Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW). A Mandatory Build Standard for the construction of sewerage apparatus and an agreement under Section 104 of the Water Industry Act (WIA) 1991 will need to be completed in advance of any authorisation to communicate with the public sewerage system under Section 106 WIA 1991 being granted by DCWW.

Early indications from the Welsh Government are that the new standards will be with us on the 1st October 2012 and we are currently working to this initial implementation date and would welcome your support in informing applicants who wish to communicate with the public sewerage system to engage with us at the earliest opportunity. We will shortly be publishing further information on the Mandatory Build Standards which will be available for viewing on the Developer Services Section of our website - www.dwrcymru.com

Further information on the Mandatory Build Standards can be found on the Welsh Government website - www.wales.gov.uk We would also point out that if any of the private connections from the former garden centre were not to be utilised then they will need to be abandoned and capped off before entering our public sewer. We require these drains to be capped off as to ensure no water infiltration is entering our sewer via your private drain.

If new connections to the public sewerage system are required the developer should contact us at the address detailed above to obtain the necessary paperwork under Section 106 of the Water Industry Act 1991.

SEWAGE TREATMENT


No problems are envisaged with the Waste Water Treatment Works for the treatment of domestic discharges from this site.

WATER SUPPLY

A water supply can be made available to service this proposed development. Initial indications are that a connection can be made from the 100mm diameter watermain in lane just off Roman Road location. The cost of providing new on-site watermains can be calculated upon the receipt of detailed site layout plans which should be sent to the above address.

We hope the above is satisfactory. However, should you require further assistance please contact us on the above telephone number, quoting our reference.

Yours faithfully,


Rhidian Clement
Principal Planner

Demands upon the water and sewerage systems change continually; consequently the information given above should be regarded as reliable for a maximum period of 12 months from the date of this letter.

Enc

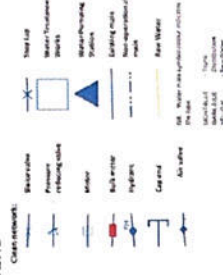
*Sewer Plan
Water Plan*



2012/DCWW/81056



LEGEND

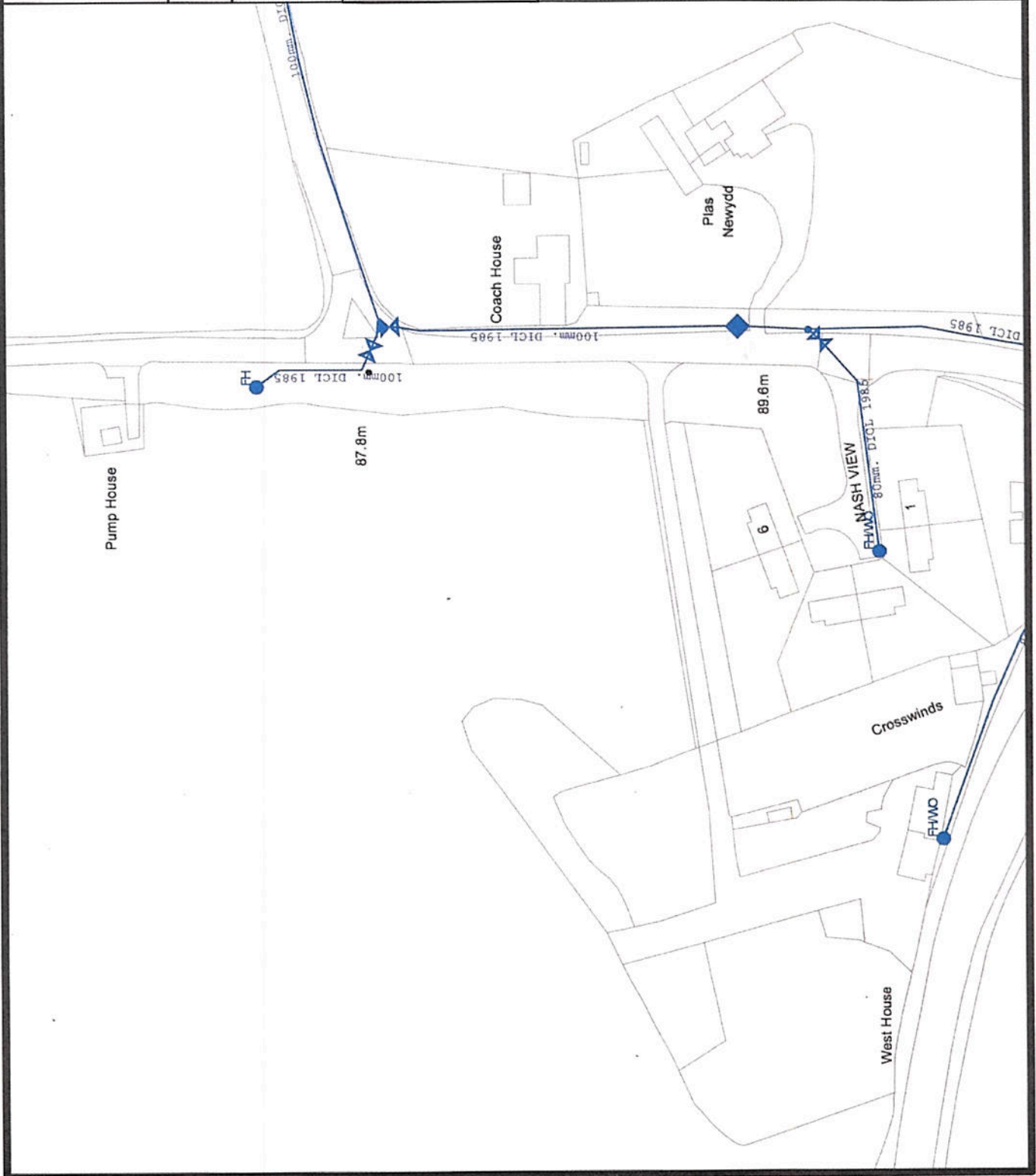


Notes:

EXACT LOCATIONS OF ALL APPARATUS TO BE DETERMINED ON SITE.

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Appendix 3 – Letter from Penllyn Estate



Penllyn Estate Farm

Matthew Davies
Director of Development
Hendre
St Hilary Court
Cophorne Way
Cardiff CF5 6ES



August 16th 2012

Dear Matthew

PENTREMEYRICK AFFORDABLE HOUSING SITE

The small patch of ground in question, which is an adjunct to field NG5407 (SS9670 7600) has, with the advent of the large arable machinery necessary in an operation of our scale, become steadily more difficult to plough and cultivate. Furthermore, being close to the top of the hill, ground conditions are very rocky, further exacerbating any cultivation difficulties. This means it is not a very versatile piece of land and is of limited agricultural value. Taking that 'kink' off the field will in fact be helpful, leaving the field as a quadrilateral shape with almost straight sides.

I hope this describes the situation in a helpful way.

Yours sincerely,

John Homfray