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VILLAGE HOMES

LAND EAST BONVILSTON

Proposed Scope of Environmental Impact Assessment

December 2014

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VILLAGE HOMES

LAND EAST OF BONVILSTON

Proposed Scope of Environmental Impact Assessment

December 2014

PREPARED BY:

Wardell Armstrong LLP



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CA10624/011 – Boundary area

CA10624/002 - Habitat plan

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 This report outlines the proposed scope for an Environmental Impact Assessment of the proposed residential development on approximately 7.2 ha of land at Bonvilston, near Cowbridge, Vale of Glamorgan.

1.1.2 This report sets out an outline of the proposed scope for a future EIA and Environmental Statement (ES) for the proposed development and forms part of a request to Vale of Glamorgan Council for a scoping opinion under the terms of Regulation 10 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment)(England and Wales) Regulations 1999.

1.1.3 The report includes an outline description of the proposed development and a summary of the environmental information which is available. It describes the likely principal environmental effects of the proposed development and summarizes the further assessment which is proposed for the purpose of the EIA, to be presented in an Environmental Statement. Drawing CA10624/011 shows boundary of the area

2 THE PROPOSE DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 The proposed development falls within the criteria of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999 (as amended), for which EIA is not mandatory but may be required in certain circumstances (depending on the scale and the nature of the development, the sensitivity of the site and its surroundings and the likelihood of significant environmental effects arising.)
- 2.1.2 A request for an Environmental Impact Assessment screening opinion under the terms of Regulations 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999 was submitted to the Vale of Glamorgan Council, (referred as the Local Planning Authority or LPA from now onward) on October 2014.
- 2.1.3 The LPA has decided that the proposal should be considered EIA development. The LPA provided a written explanation to explain its decision. The LPA report and the original EIA screening opinion are shown on Appendix 1.
- 2.1.4 According to the Welsh Office Circular 11/99, EIA will usually only be needed for Schedule 2 developments in three main types of case: a) for major developments which are of more than local importance; b) for developments which are proposed for particularly environmentally sensitive or vulnerable locations; and c) for developments with unusually complex and potentially hazardous environmental effects.
- 2.1.5 The LPA recognised that the proposal is neither a major development which is of more than local importance or that the environmental effects arising are likely to be unusually complex or potentially hazardous.
- 2.1.6 However, it is considered in the LPA report that the proposal location particularly environmentally sensitive or vulnerable.

2.1.7 A small part of the site is located within the Bonvilston Conservation Area. The LPA considers that the location of the site is important and sensitive with regard to the whole character of the village and the Conservation Area.

2.1.8 The LPA recognises that *“Thus although the location of the site does not fall within the definition of a ‘sensitive area’ within the Circular, nevertheless in line with paragraph 39, it is considered that the particular circumstances of this site, as outlined above, makes it an environmentally sensitive and vulnerable, where the proposal has the potential to have a significant impact on the rural character of the village and the Bonvilston Conservation Area.”* See Appendix 1.

2.1.9 In light of the LPA decision to consider the proposal EIA, a Request for a Scoping Opinion (this report) is submitted to Vale of Glamorgan Council under the terms of Regulation 10 of the EIA Regulations 1999.

2.1.10 For the purpose of this report, Table 1 below summaries the responses of the statutory consultees to the EIA Request. These are shown on Appendix 1.

Table 1 – Responses to EIA screening Opinion		
Statutory Consultee	Is EIA Required?	Comments
Natural Resource Wales (NRW)	No	There may be environmental risks associated with the proposal but these are likely to be managed and are not deemed significant in the context of the EIA Regulations. Consideration should be given to drainage, ecology and protected species present on site.
Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust	GGAT does not express opinion on EIA	The area affected is on the line of a major Roman



(GGAT)		<p>road, at the outskirts of a Medieval settlement. Archaeological evaluation would be necessary prior to the determination of any planning application for the site.</p> <p>Information in the Historic Environment Record shows five Scheduled Ancient Monuments within 1.2km of the site; and a number of sites and findspots in the immediate and wider area; these include a Registered Park, cropmarks of enclosures, burial sites and widespread flint scatters, representing pre-historic land use, and Roman finds. The impact of the proposal on the archaeological resource forms a material consideration in the planning process.</p>
Vale of Glamorgan Council – Landscape section	Yes – Not necessarily in terms of landscape and visual impact but to be considered in the context of the overall assessments in relation to the Regulations.	The Planning Application will have to be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) addressing the Conservation Area,

		Schedule Ancient Monuments and the Bonvilston Circular Walk
The Council's Legal, Public Protection and Housing Services Directorate - Environmental Health - Pollution Section - Note that as part of the Welsh Government's obligation under the Environmental Noise Directive.	No	The area is not within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) nor is the land deemed as potentially contaminated. The A48 is designated by the Welsh Government as a Round 2 Priority Area. The area adjoins an Action Plan area designed to manage noise issues and effects, including any necessary noise reduction.

2.1.11 No representations were submitted to the LPA in connection with the EIA request for a Screening Opinion

2.2 The proposals

2.2.1 The planning application area and location of the site is shown on Drawing Number CA10624/011 and is located at grid reference ST 07069 74190.

2.2.2 Full planning permission is being sought for a residential development of up to 120 dwellings plus associated open space, foul and surface water infrastructure, a site access on approx. 7ha of land.

2.2.3 The final composition of the development may be subject to change as a result of detailed designs currently under consideration by the Client.

2.2.4 Subject to planning permission, construction would be undertaken as a two phased development. 60 dwellings commencing in 2016 and 60 units from 2021 onwards.



2.3 Planning Policy Context

2.3.1 The following planning documents are relevant to the proposed development and are considered in the preparation of the proposal.

- Planning Policy Wales 7th Edition 2014
- The Vale of Glamorgan Adopted Unitary Development Plan 1996 - 2011
- The Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan Deposit Draft 2011 – 2026

3 THE SITE – ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

3.1.1 The site lies outside of the residential settlement boundary for Bonvilston as defined in the Vale of Glamorgan Adopted Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011 (UDP). The village is situated on the A48 approximately four miles east of Cowbridge.

3.1.2 The village settlement of Bonvilston is adjacent to the western site boundary and Cottrell Park Golf Resort is located to the north and east of the site. The A48 road is located adjacent to the site's southern boundary with an A48 junction route (running south to north) bordering the site immediately east. The site is located predominantly to the rear of five properties which front the A48. These comprise Court Farm, Sheep Court Farm, Sheeppcourt Cottage, Hill Cottage and Sycamore Farm/Cottages. Open arable and pastoral farmland bounded by hedgerows dominate the wider landscape.

3.1.3 The site comprises fields of improved grassland grazed by horses with other habitats present including hedgerows, tree-lines, one pond, mature trees, buildings and hardstanding/gravel. In addition to the areas of pasture there is an area of lawn (associated with Court Farm), a manege with two modern wood built stable blocks (associated with Court Farm) and a barn (associated with Sheep Court Farm). A rear driveway to Sheep Court Farm is aligned through the site.

3.1.4 The site slopes from 125m above ordnance datum (AOD) in the north-east, to 102m AOD in the south-west.

Landscape

3.1.5 The site lies outside of two identified Special Landscape Areas (SLA) (non-statutory designations), i.e. the Ely Valley and Ridge Slopes SLA to the east and the Nant Llancarfan SLA to the south.

3.1.6 The site is screened to the west and south with mature hedgerows and tree-lines and existing properties. A golf course is located to the north and east.



Ecology

- 3.1.7 No statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations are present within or adjacent to the site. The closest statutory designation to the site is Ely Valley Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which is located approximately 1.8km to the north of the site. Therefore no direct impacts are anticipated on these statutory and non-statutory designations as a result of the proposed development.
- 3.1.8 The most notable habitats on site are the hedgerows and tree-lines which contain a mixture of semi-mature and mature trees and mature hedgerow shrubs. Two hedgerows/tree-lines appear to meet the wildlife criteria for 'important' hedgerows under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. The majority of the hedgerows and tree-lines will be retained, where feasible providing wildlife corridors around the boundaries of the site and these will be managed to improve their nature conservation value as part of the development.
- 3.1.9 Areas retained will be managed to improve their nature conservation value and consideration will be given to increasing biodiversity of species within areas of public open space through use of native tree and shrub planting and wild flower seed mixes. Retained habitats will be appropriately protected during the construction works.
- 3.1.10 One pond is located in the south-western corner of the site with no aquatic or marginal vegetation observed in or adjacent to the pond. It is connected to a short section of ditch in the north. These features were both dry in Spring 2014.
- 3.1.11 Breeding birds and foraging and roosting bats use the application area. A couple of hedgerows contain elm species therefore the site has potential to support the white-letter hairstreak butterfly, which is a UKBAP and LBAP priority species. Amphibians including great crested newts are present ponds located within 500m of the site.

Trees

- 3.1.12 Trees may be legally protected by either a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or by the fact that they are located within a Conservation Area. There is a Tree Preservation Order relating to trees on the western boundary of the site with Maes y Ffynnon, TPO 1973/08/A03.

Geology, Hydrogeology and Ground Conditions

- 3.1.13 There are no records of Artificial Ground or Made Ground being present beneath the study site. The EA indicate that the Superficial Till Deposits underlying the site have low permeability that have negligible significance for water supply or river base flow.
- 3.1.14 The underlying solid bedrock of both the Friars Point Limestone Formation and the Gully Oolite Formation are classified as being Principal Aquifers. Principal Aquifers usually provide a high level of water storage and may support water supply and/or river base flow on a strategic scale. The site is not located within a Groundwater Source Protection Zone (GSPZ), and there are no GSPZs located within 500m of the study site.
- 3.1.15 There are no major surface water bodies recorded within 500m of the desk study area. However, the source of the Nant Llancarfan (a river 5km to the south of the site) is identified just south of Bonvilston village. A GroundSure report indicates tertiary rivers and tributaries are located to the south of the site, with the closest one being identified 290m south of site.
- 3.1.16 The flood map for the site shows that the development is located in an area defined as having a low risk of flooding.
- 3.1.17 The Health Protection Agency (HPA) classifies the site as being within a Radon Affected Area, as between 5% and 10% of properties in the area are above the Action Level. The BRE guidance document indicates that basic radon protective measures are necessary for residential properties.
- 3.1.18 From a review of historical mapping, there is no history of major industrial or contaminative activities on the site.
- 3.1.19 The assessment of environmental data for the site and surrounding area identifies potential offsite sources of contamination to comprise tanks of unknown content 63m to the east of the site and potential agricultural usage of the site.

Soils and Land Use

- 3.1.20 The Agricultural Land Classification map for this Welsh Region shows that the site area has an ALC grade of 2-3 (potentially best and most versatile agricultural quality

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land). A soil survey and assessment of the quality of the agricultural land has been carried out to determine the Agricultural Land Classification. The site comprises Grade 2 -0.8ha; Grade 3a-2.3ha; Grade 3b-3.7ha and 0.4ha non-agricultural land.

Archaeology

- 3.1.21 The majority of the site lies outside of the Bonvilston Conservation Area. The parts of the Conservation Area extending within the boundary of the site comprise a lawn to Court Farm, a small enclosed area of pasture/a small paddock to the rear of Court Farm and a plot of land including within it a large barn associated with Sheep Court Farm.
- 3.1.22 Within 1km radius of the site there is one area of Historical Landscape, four Scheduled Monuments, six Listed Buildings and six County Treasures (locally listed buildings).
- 3.1.23 Two of the County Treasures are located adjacent to the southern boundary of the site. These comprise 'Sheepcourt Cottage' and 'Sheep Court Farm'. These and the other buildings listed above are described as 'positive buildings' in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Bonvilston (The Vale of Glamorgan 2009).
- 3.1.24 None of the buildings within the boundary of the site (the stable blocks or the barn) were recorded as positive buildings by the Bonvilston Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.
- 3.1.25 The Historic Environment Record (HER) does not record any non-designated heritage assets within the boundary of the site.
- 3.1.26 In respect to buried archaeological remains the HER does not record any archaeological remains within the boundary of the site but archaeological remains dating from the Neolithic period onwards are located within the search area or its vicinity and the site is located to the immediate north of a Roman road.
- 3.1.27 A Geophysical Survey was conducted in September 2014 in order to establish the presence/absence, nature and extent of potential archaeological features within the site. The surveys recorded a series of agricultural features, including land drains and plough furrows, some of which may relate to ridge and furrow cultivation or

medieval or post-medieval date. A number of possible soil-filled features of unknown date were also detected within the northeaster part of the site.

3.1.28 There is no evidence to suggest there is presence of remains of high importance within the site boundary which would preclude development.

Vehicular Access and Public Rights of Way

3.1.29 The site is currently accessed via a junction from the road which borders the site to the east.

3.1.30 There are no Public Rights of Way located within the site area.

Noise

3.1.31 The main noise source across the proposed site is expected to be from road traffic associated with the A48, A4426 and other minor roads bordering the site.

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4 POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The environmental effects of the proposed development will relate to the following principal stages of the development of the site:

- Construction of the proposed new buildings, associated infrastructure and landscape works;
- The occupation and use of the proposed development and the associated grounds.

4.1.2 For the purpose of this scoping assessment, the likely potential environmental effects of the proposed development have been considered against the principal aspects of the environment of the site and its surroundings. Further assessment of these potential effects and of their magnitude and significance and the potential for cumulative effects to arise will then form part of the environmental impact assessment and be reported in the Environmental Statement.

4.1.3 The Environmental Statement (ES) will be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country (Environmental Impact Assessment)(England and Wales) Regulations 1999 and other relevant guidance. The ES will therefore include the following main elements (as set out in Schedule 4 of the 1999 Regulations):

- Description of the proposed development;
- An outline of the alternative forms of development studies and the reasons for selecting the proposed scheme;
- Description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected;
- Description of the likely significant effects on the environment, including cumulative effects;
- Description of the measures proposed to prevent, reduce or offset significant adverse effects on the environment;
- Non-technical summary.

4.1.4 The following sections summarise the baseline characteristics of the site, the proposed methodology and the likely potential impacts of the development. Where potential impacts are unlikely to be significant they are proposed to be excluded from the scope of the future ES.

4.2 Soils and land use

Baseline Data

4.2.1 According to published sources, the site is characterized by soils in the Wick 1 Association. The underlying geology of the Wick 1 association is described as Glaciofluvial or river terrace drift. Soils comprise deep and well drained loamy brown earths, intermixed with brown sands and gleyic brown earths. Typical land uses include a wide variety of arable crops, dairying and grassland.

4.2.2 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Map for this Welsh region shows that the site has an ALC grade of 2-3 (Potentially best and most versatile agricultural quality land). A soil survey and assessment of the quality of the agricultural land has been carried out to determine ALC. The site comprise Grade 2 – 0.8ha; Grade 3a – 2.3ha; Grade 3b – 3.7ha and 0.4ha non-agricultural land.

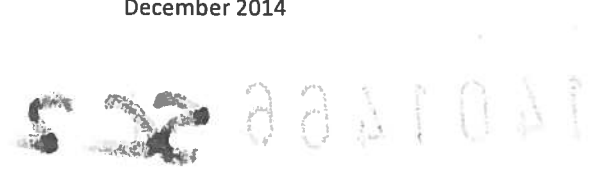
Proposed Methodology

4.2.3 Soil profile characteristics would be investigated across the site by an experienced soil scientist using a 70mm diameter hand-held Edelman auger capable of sampling to a depth of 120cm. The soils will be mapped at a density of approximately one soil profile inspection per hectare, on an approximate 100m grid, giving sufficient coverage of the site to enable accurate assessment.

4.2.4 The baseline soils data will be assessed for agricultural land classification and to provide additional comment on the safeguarding of topsoils for garden and open space areas within the development. The purpose of this is to provide guidance and advice concerning likely constraints and liabilities to the proposed development.

Likely Potential Impacts

4.2.5 The proposed development would result in the permanent loss of 3.1 ha of the best and most versatile agricultural land and cannot be mitigated, however the area affected is relatively small.



4.2.6 Potential negative impacts could occur to soil resources (for example structure, nutrient status, organic activity) if handling, stockpiling and restoration is not carried out correctly. Wherever possible, soil resources would be retained on site for use in restoration. Limited resources may require removal for suitable use off site if a surplus is identified. Mitigating measures, however, would be adopted to reduce such potential impact and the significance of such impacts is therefore considered to be negligible.

4.3 Ecology and wildlife

Baseline Data

4.3.1 No statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations are present within or adjacent to the site. The closest statutory designation to the site is Ely Valley Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which is located approximately 1.8km to the north of the site.

4.3.2 The most notable habitats on site are the hedgerows and tree-lines which contain a mixture of semi-mature and mature trees and mature hedgerow shrubs. Two hedgerows/tree-lines appear to meet the wildlife criteria for 'important' hedgerows under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. These are shown on drawing number CA10624/002.

4.3.3 One pond is located in the south-western corner of the site with no aquatic or marginal vegetation observed in or adjacent to the pond. It is connected to a short section of ditch in the north. These features were both dry in Spring 2014.

4.3.4 Breeding birds and foraging and roosting bats use the application area. A couple of hedgerows contain elm species therefore the site has potential to support the white-letter hairstreak butterfly, which is a UKBAP and LBAP priority species. Amphibians including great crested newts are present in ponds located within 500m of the site.

4.3.5 Hedgerows/trees lines were identified as having potential to support common reptiles.

4.3.6 The proposed development has the potential to give rise to adverse direct and indirect effects on wildlife due to light, noise and loss of habitats. It is unlikely that the development will have a direct effect on the nearby nature conservation sites.

Proposed Methodology

Desk Base Study

4.3.7 A desk based study was conducted to gain contextual habitat information. Specific information was sought for the following:

- Statutory designated sites;
- Locally designated sites;
- Ancient Woodland;
- Protected and priority species; and
- Local BAP Priority species

4.3.8 The Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey report prepared by Soltys Brewster Ecology (October 2010) was reviewed.

Great Crested Newt

4.3.9 A scoping survey was conducted to assess the likelihood of Great Crested Newts (GCN) being present in the ponds within 500m of the site. The scoping survey was based on the Habitat Suitability Index (HIS) which is a numerical index between 0 and 1 and uses 10 suitability indices, all of which are factors thought to GCN.

4.3.10 It was concluded that there was potential for GCN to be present in several of the ponds within 500m of the site, so further surveys were conducted following the guidelines from Natural England.

4.3.11 The principal guidance for undertaking great crested newt surveys is provided in English Nature's document 'Great crested newt mitigation guidelines' (August 2001). Further guidance on survey effort is also provided in the Method Statement Template (August 2012) for a Natural England disturbance licence application.

4.3.12 Current guidelines recommend that four survey visits to each pond should be undertaken in order to determine presence / likely absence of great crested newts under a survey licence. If great crested newts are found to be present during any of

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these survey visits an additional two survey visits may potentially be required in order to determine the population size class. These survey visits need to be undertaken between the months of mid-March and mid-June, with at least two (for presence / likely absence) or three (for population size class) of these survey visits undertaken between mid-April to mid-May.

4.3.13 Three survey methods are recommended, preferably torchlight inspections after dusk, but overnight “bottle-trapping” and egg searching are also recommended.

4.3.14 GCN were found to be present in several ponds within 500m of the site and therefore mitigation would be required to exclude them from the site before the construction of the proposed development commenced.

Reptiles

4.3.15 There is presently no definitive methodology for surveying for reptiles. The methodology we recommend for this survey is principally derived from guidance given in the Froglife Advice Sheet 10: Reptile Survey leaflet¹ and the Herpetological Workers Manual² which uses artificial refugia.

4.3.16 As recommended in the guidance documents, at least 7 survey visits were undertaken in order to determine presence / absence of common reptiles within suitable habitats on the site. The survey required the use of rectangles of corrugated roofing felt, each about 0.5m², which provide an opportunity for reptile species to hide and to heat up (during suitable weather conditions) whilst minimising exposure to predators. The guidance recommends that for a presence / absence survey between 5 and 10 refuges per hectare of site area should be used.

4.3.17 As reptiles were found it was necessary to undertake additional surveys to gain an idea of relative population size and at least 20 survey visits, in suitable weather conditions, were undertaken.

Birds

¹ Froglife (1999) *Reptile Survey: an introduction to planning, conducting and interpreting surveys for snake and lizard conservation*. Froglife Advice Sheet 10. Froglife, Halesworth.

² Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2003) *Herpetofauna Workers' Manual*, Peterborough.

4.3.18 Breeding bird surveys are conducted during the bird breeding season (March to August inclusive). The method used broadly followed that of the Common Bird Census (CBC) (Gilbert et al. 1998)³ where three to ten visits are conducted at the site during the bird breeding season. Generally three visits are considered sufficient for the detection of a high proportion of the breeding bird territories present within a given site and therefore we undertook three surveys in total including one in April, one in May and one in June.

4.3.19 Transects were walked during each visit and all birds seen along the route were recorded. Birds were identified by direct observation, using 10x25 binoculars, and/or by their vocalisations.

Bats

4.3.20 Activity surveys were undertaken to establish bat foraging and commuting activity on site and comprised both walked transects and the use of automated detectors at the site. The surveys broadly followed the guidance provided in Hundt (2012) '*Bat Surveys – Good Practice Guidelines 2nd edition.*' The level of survey effort employed for a site is based on the size of the site and the quality of the habitats present on site for bats.

4.3.21 In this case the site was assessed as being a medium site of medium habitat quality for bats and therefore as the guidelines recommend, one visit per transect each month (Apr-Sept) was undertaken and automated detector surveys were undertaken at one location per transect per month (Apr-Sep). Data was be collected by the automated detectors over 3 consecutive nights each month.

4.3.22 Observations of bat behaviour, size and the direction of the flight path were also noted where possible.

Hazel dormouse

4.3.23 A dormouse nest tube survey is based on nest-tubes being erected in the hedgerows and woodland from March/April and checked for signs of dormouse on a monthly basis potentially up until November. The level of survey effort required is stated in

³ Gilbert et al (1998) *Bird Monitoring Methods: A manual for techniques for key species.* RSPB/BTO/JNCC/WWT/ITE/The Seabird Group RSPB/RTO, Sandy.



English Nature's Dormouse Conservation Handbook (2nd ed)⁴ and is based on achieving a minimum score of 20. This score is calculated based on the time of year the nest-tube checks take place and the number of nest-tubes employed.

4.3.24 For this survey the nest-tubes were erected in March/April and checked once a month from May to September to achieve a score of 20.

Likely Potential Effects

4.3.25 There are no direct impacts anticipated on the statutory and non-statutory designations as a result of the proposed development.

4.3.26 Residual impacts which will remain after mitigation will include a possible increased risk of predation on bats and birds by cats, increased risk of road mortality for wildlife entering roads, reduction in some bird species and beneficial impacts on amphibians, bats, birds, invertebrates and other wildlife species as a result of habitat creation and enhancement measures.

4.4 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

Baseline Data

4.4.1 As discussed above, the majority of the site lies outside of the Bonvilston area. The parts of the Conservation area extending within the boundary of the site comprise a lawn to court farm, a small enclosed area of pasture/small paddock to the rear of court farm and a plot of land including within it a large barn associated with Sheep Court Farm.

4.4.2 Within 1km radius of the site there is one area of Historical Landscape, four Scheduled Monuments, six Listed Buildings and six County Treasures (locally listed buildings).

4.4.3 None of the buildings within the boundary of the site (the stable blocks or the barn) were recorded as positive buildings by the Bonvilston Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

⁴ Bright *et al* (2006) *The Dormouse Conservation Handbook 2nd edition*. English Nature, Peterborough

- 4.4.4 The HER does not record any non-designated assets within the boundary of the site.
- 4.4.5 Sheepcourt Cottage' and 'Sheep Court Farm' located outside the site boundary are described as 'positive buildings' in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Bonvilston which describes the village as low density with linear scattered buildings set back either side (north and south) of the A48. Notable views to the south, towards the Severn Estuary, are noted on several occasions (the Vale of Glamorgan 2009). The site, located to the north of the A48, would not infringe on these significant views.
- 4.4.6 In respect to buried archaeological remains the HER does not record any archaeological remains within the boundary of the site but archaeological remains dating from the Neolithic period onwards are located within the search area or its vicinity and the site is located to the immediate north of a Roman road.

Methodology

- 4.4.7 A desk based assessment has been conducted including data from
- Glamorgan Gwent Historic Environment Record (HER) consulted April 2014
 - Glamorgan Record Office
 - In house datasets of designations (Cadw):
 - Scheduled Monuments
 - Listed Buildings
 - Areas of Historic Landscape
- 4.4.8 A walkover site survey of the site was conducted in April 2014 to:
- Establish the presence of above ground archaeology, whether or not previously recorded;
 - Assess and validate data collected as part of the desk based assessment; and
 - Assess the topography of the site.
- 4.4.9 A geophysical survey was produced in October 2014 to provide an archaeological evaluation of the site and will be submitted as an appendix to the Environmental Impact Assessment.

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Likely Potential Impacts

- 4.4.10 The proposed development has the potential to impact upon the Conservation Area that it is partly within.
- 4.4.11 On balance and on the assumption that any development would be sympathetic in terms of building materials and massing it is considered that significant impact to the Conservation Area and to 'positive' or Locally Listed buildings present between the site and the A48 (including two County Treasures) could be avoided. For example, the proposed development can incorporate, where possible, white rendering and slate roofs. In addition, mature trees can be retained within the boundary of the site and any proposed boundary walls can be utilised grey limestone rubble where possible.
- 4.4.12 The buildings located within the boundary of the site, comprising modern stable blocks and post war barn, are not significant buildings and are not identified as 'positive' buildings in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. Impact to these buildings, including demolition, would not be significant.

4.5 Landscape and Visual Impact

Baseline Data

- 4.5.1 The site lies outside of two identified Special Landscape Areas (SLA) (non-statutory designations), these are the Ely Valley and Ridge Slopes SLA to the east and the Nant Llancarfan SLA to the south. Some small parts of the site lie within the Bonvilston Conservation Area.
- 4.5.2 The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Bonvilston describes the village as low density and linear scattered buildings set back either side (north and south) of the A48. Notable views to the south, towards the Severn Estuary, are noted on several occasions (the Vale of Glamorgan 2009). It also notes that the ground undulates gently on entering the village from both east and west, providing a pleasant change in level which is enhanced by the views over falling land towards the south.
- 4.5.3 The site is screened to the west and south with mature hedgerows and tree-lines and existing properties

Methodology

4.5.4 The Landscape and Visual appraisal will be undertaken broadly following the methodology outlines in the guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition, edited by the Landscape Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (April 2013). The appraisal will include:

- Site visit to find photo capture between 6 & 8 representative viewpoints within approximately 3.5km of the site;
- Site description and its visibility in its wider landscape context;
- Reference to LANDMAP
- Reference to local authority landscape character assessment and landscape designation;
- Appraisal of the site's capacity to accommodate change without loss of character;
- Description of the development and identification of the elements/operations that could cause landscape and or visual effects;
- Appraise changes to views from public vantage points;
- Estimating changes to views during construction and operation from representative public viewpoints captured and any potential significant effects on private receptors;
- Appraise changes to the site and wider landscape character;
- A summary of findings;
- Recommendations for mitigation if necessary.

Likely Potential Effects

4.5.5 The site has the potential to effect the views from the neighbouring SLAs, due to the topography of the land. Due to the small scale of the site and its location behind existing housing, the effect on the views can be mitigated against.

4.6 Ground conditions

Baseline Data

4.6.1 From a review of historical mapping, there is no history of major industrial or contaminative activities on the site.

4.6.2 There are no key potential pollution linkages associated with the site.

- 4.6.3 There are no records of Artificial Ground or Made Ground being present beneath the study site. The EA indicate that the Superficial Till Deposits underlying the site have low permeability that have negligible significance for water supply or river base flow.
- 4.6.4 The underlying solid bedrock of both the Friars Point Limestone Formation and the Gully Oolite Formation are classified as being Principal Aquifers. The site is not located within a Groundwater Source Protection Zone (GSPZ), and there are no GSPZs located within 500m of the study site.
- 4.6.5 There are no major surface water bodies recorded within 500m of the desk study area. However, the source of the Nant Llancarfan (a river 5km to the south of the site) is identified just south of Bonvilston village. A GroundSure report indicates tertiary rivers and tributaries are located to the south of the site, with the closest one being identified 290m south of site.
- 4.6.6 The flood map for the site shows that the development is located in an area defined as having a low risk of flooding.
- 4.6.7 The Health Protection Agency (HPA) classifies the site as being within a Radon Affected Area, as between 5% and 10% of properties in the area are above the Action Level.

Methodology

- 4.6.8 A Phase 1 Desk Study and walkover was undertaken in April 2014. The review of the environmental data available for the site and the assessment of this information allows for an overview of the historical and current contaminative setting of the site and its surrounding area. This includes:
- Geo-environmental conditions at the site;
 - Land contamination risks associated with the site; and
 - Statutory records in relation to the site (which requires consideration as part of any planning process).
- 4.6.9 A site investigation (Phase 2) was undertaken in August 2014. The investigation assessed the historical, geological & environmental setting of the site together with a

record of the results of the site investigation works undertaken across the proposed development area.

4.6.10 The investigation comprised sixteen (16No) machine excavated trial pits located across the proposed development area of the Bonvilston subject area. Five soakaway tests were carried out within chosen trial pits to provide permeability data for drainage design based on the proposed development layout at the time of the works. Five (5No) window sample boreholes were also drilled within the site boundary to provide in-situ geotechnical data on the near surface soils. Selected samples of sub-profile materials were obtained and dispatched for laboratory analysis to provide geotechnical and geochemical data for foundation design.

Likely Potential Effects

4.6.11 The geotechnical investigation and laboratory testing works recorded the underlying natural soils to comprise predominantly firm, locally soft to stiff brown, grey brown, red brown and light grey to grey green sandy gravelly CLAY. On this basis, the near surface materials of the Glacial Till Formation should generally provide a suitable founding horizon for the proposed residential development depending on structure loadings.

4.6.12 The results of the soil analysis indicate all determinant concentrations to be below the General Assessment Criteria and therefore do not pose a risk to future occupiers or users of the site for the proposed residential end-use.

4.6.13 The near surface soils do not pose a significant risk to future site users for the proposed residential end use with gardens.

4.6.14 The site is deemed suitable for the proposed residential end use with gardens and is suitable for use without mitigation. Following the relevant guidance and best on site practices, it is unlikely that the construction works will pose any risk of pollution to the natural environment and future residents.

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4.7 Noise

Baseline Data

4.7.1 The main noise source across the proposed site is from road traffic associated with the A48, A4426 and other minor roads bordering the site. The other minor noise sources are from the houses adjacent to the site and airplanes.

Methodology

4.7.2 The methodology for the assessment has been approved by the Vale of Glamorgan Environmental Health Service.

4.7.3 A noise survey was carried out in October 2014 to assess the background noise levels at the sensitive areas of the proposed development in terms of transportation noise and any other noise sources.

4.7.4 The potential impacts of the existing noise sources on the proposed residential development will be assessed with reference to:

- Planning Guidance (Wales): Technical Advice Note (Wales) 11 – October 2007;
- World Health Organisation Guidelines for Community Noise 1999; and
- British Standard 8233: February 2014: Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for buildings – Code of Practice (BS58233).

4.7.5 Mitigation measures will be recommended where necessary to ensure noise levels affecting the proposed development remain below the levels recommended in the guidelines.

Likely Potential Effects

4.7.6 Properties nearer to the roads, i.e. on the southern and eastern sides of the proposed development are likely to be affected by noise levels above those recommended in the guidelines if mitigation measures are not incorporated into the design of the proposed development.

4.8 Water and Drainage

Baseline Data

4.8.1 Consultation from Welsh Water revealed that the foul only flows from the proposed development could be accommodated within the public sewerage system. It also noted that discharge of surface water to the sewer is to be used as a last resort after infiltration and disposal to a watercourse have been ruled out.

4.8.2 No highway or land drainage run-off will be permitted to discharge directly or indirectly into the public sewerage system.

4.8.3 There is an available water supply from a 6" diameter water main in the 'A48 Bonvilston' location.

Methodology

4.8.4 Welsh Water is currently undertaking a Waste Water Treatment Works Feasibility Study for Bonvilston East Waste Water Treatment Works in order to establish whether the increased load and flow from the proposed development of the land to the east of Bonvilston can be accommodated

4.8.5 The proposed development will be designed to avoid the safety zone of the public sewer and will incorporate Sustainable drainage systems (SUDs) to manage the discharge of surface water. The design will also include details of how to connect to the water main.

4.8.6 A separate drainage strategy will be provided to support the full planning application. As such, it is proposed that the ES will only include a summary of the results of the Welsh Water feasibility study and drainage strategy.

Likely Potential Effects

4.8.7 The proposal will not have direct impacts on water courses. However, Welsh Water is currently investigating the potential for the proposed development to have an impact on the existing Bonvilston East Waste Water Treatment Works.

4.8.8 The results of the Welsh Water feasibility study will inform the overall drainage strategy, which will be prepared separately to support the planning application.

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4.8.9 Based on the above, it is proposed to only include a summary of the results in the future ES.

4.9 Traffic

Baseline Data

4.9.1 The site is accessed via a junction from the road which borders the site to the east. The main road adjacent to the southern side of the site is the A48. The A48 is busy during peak traffic hours.

Methodology

4.9.2 A separate Transport Impact Assessment (TIA), carried out in accordance with the 'Planning Policy Wales, Technical Advice Note 18: Transport' 2007, will be provided the TIA will assess the impact of the proposed development on the highway network, is required.

4.9.3 The TIA will consist of the following elements:

- Trip generation
- Trip distribution
- Modal Split
- Junction capacity analyses
- Collision analysis
- Public transport provision
- Pedestrian linkage
- Cycle linkage

4.9.4 Traffic surveys will be required including:

- Classified turning counts and queue length surveys at Sycamore Cross and Waycock Cross Junctions (0730-0930 & 1630-1830 hours on a weekday);
- Automatic traffic counts on all arms of Sycamore Cross Junction with an additional site adjacent to Culverhouse Cross Junction (7 day survey period).

4.9.5 A road safety audit will be completed in line with requirements and procedures set out in the current standard HD19/03.

4.9.6 The TIA will be prepared in consultation with the highway authority.

Likely Potential Effects

4.9.7 There is likely to be a small increase in traffic at Sycamore Cross Junction during peak traffic hours.

4.9.8 As the likely effects of the proposal will be considered in details in the separate TIA, it is proposed **to scope out** the assessment of the effects of the proposal on the local traffic network from the ES.

4.10 Air Quality

Baseline Data

4.10.1 The site is not located within or near an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and is not proposed for inclusion in future. Overall the air quality of the area is considered good. Therefore, it is not considered that the existing emission levels will have an effect on the future residence at Bonvilston.

4.10.2 The main road adjacent to the southern side of the site is the A48. The A48 is busy during peak traffic hours.

4.10.3 The proposal is for 120 new dwellings and is unlikely that the completed development will give rise to any significant effects on the local air quality. The preliminary results of the TIA showed that there is likely to be a small increase in traffic at Sycamore Cross Junction during peak traffic hours. The effect on the local air quality will be negligible.

4.10.4 Therefore, it is proposed to **scope out** the assessment of the effects of the proposal in terms of changes in air quality from the ES. This appears to be in line with the comments included in the EIA Screening response (see Appendix 1). The Council's Legal, Public Protection and Housing Services Directorate - Environmental Health – Pollution Section does not raise any concern in terms of changes in the local air quality.

4.11 Waste

Baseline Data

- 4.11.1 The South East Wales Regional Waste Group, Annual Monitoring Report 2007 (AMR) recorded in 2005/06, 823,391 tonnes of regional household waste arisings. Household waste arising in 2005/06 were 1,248kg per household and 504kg per person. Of these waste arisings 16.4% of household waste was recycled, 6.6% composted and 77% sent to landfill.
- 4.11.2 Construction and demolition waste arisings for the region was 2,750,000 tonnes in 2003, of which 2,490,000 was reused or recycled. This equates to 90% of construction and demolition waste being reused or recycled and 10% being sent to landfill.
- 4.11.3 The proposed development will include a maximum of 120 houses. Using the AMR figure of 1,248kg of waste annually per household, the proposed development would produce approximately 150 tonnes of waste per annum. This is less than 0.02% of the total household arising in 2005/06. Approximately 77%, 115 tonnes of this would be landfilled and 23%, 287 tonnes recycled or composted per annum.
- 4.11.4 According to the Environmental Association for Universities and colleges website, 1 tonne of household waste is approximately 0.27m³, therefore 115 tonnes of waste is equal to approximately 31m³. Using the worst case scenario of 16,400,000m³, the proposed development would contribute less than 0.0002% per annum to the remaining non-hazardous landfill capacity.
- 4.11.5 287 tonnes of waste to be recycled or composted is 0.003% of the annual non-landfill capacity in the south east wales region.
- 4.11.6 It is estimated that the houses will cover an area of 21,000m³, assuming that on average, each house is no larger than 175m². This equates to 6,741m³ of construction and demolition waste. 10% of this would go to landfill, 574.1m³. 574.1m³ equates to 0.003% of the remaining non-hazardous landfill capacity in the south east Wales region.

4.11.7 Due to the minimal effect on waste production the proposed development would have on current landfill capacity it is proposed to **scope out** the assessment of the effects of the proposal in terms of arising waste and will not be considered further within the context of the Environmental Statement.

4.12 Summary

4.12.1 Table 2 summarises the potential for significant environmental effects to arise from the proposed development *before* any measures to mitigate any adverse impacts are implemented. In each case, the expected potential for significant environment effects is shown as “adverse” or “beneficial” or where no significant environmental effect is expected, “not significant”. Where a potential impact is not considered significant, it is proposed to be scoped out from the ES.

Table 2 – Summary of Potential Environmental Effects (before mitigation)				
Issue	Summary of potential effects	Construction phase	Completed development	To be considered further in the ES
Land use and soils	Change of existing use	Adverse	Adverse	YES
	Loss of agricultural land	Adverse	Adverse	
	Potential disruption of natural soils during construction	Adverse	Not Applicable	
Ecology and Wildlife	Loss of existing habitats	Adverse	Not significant	YES

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	Potential for disturbance of nesting birds and other protected species (Great Crested Newts, reptiles, dormouse and foraging bats)	Adverse	Adverse	
Archaeology and Cultural Heritage	Buried archaeological remains	Adverse/Unknown	Not applicable	YES
	Effects on Conservation Area Settings	Adverse	Adverse/ Neutral	
Landscape and Visual Impact	Loss of landscape character	Adverse	Adverse/ Neutral	YES
	Impact on views	Adverse/ Neutral	Adverse/ Neutral I	
	Effects on Conservation Area Settings	Adverse	Adverse/ Neutral	
Ground conditions	Potential localised contamination due to construction earthworks	Adverse/ Neutral	Not Significant	YES
Noise	Increased noise during enabling works	Adverse	Not applicable	YES

	Effects of existing noise levels in future residents	Not applicable	Adverse	
Water	Increased demand on public services (Foul Water)	Unknown	Adverse	NO - to be included in separate Welsh Water feasibility Study and Drainage strategy
	Localised diversion of current services	Adverse	Not applicable	
Traffic	Effects on road traffic	Adverse	Adverse	NO - to be included in separate TIA
Air Quality	Increased emissions from traffic	Not Significant	Not Significant	NO
Waste and recycling	Effects on landfill capacity	Not Significant	Not Significant	NO

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5 PROPOSED SCOPE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1.1 This scoping report considers what baseline data is available and identifies areas of further work required for each section of the ES. In each case, the issues that have the potential to give rise to significant environmental effects, as summarized in Table 2, will be considered.

5.1.2 For the purposes of this outline scoping report, the following have been identified as having a potential to give rise to significant environmental effects (either adverse or beneficial) and which therefore require assessment in the EIA process:

- Land use and soils
- Ecology and wildlife
- Archaeology and cultural heritage
- Landscape and visual impacts
- Geology and ground conditions
- Noise

5.1.3 Traffic and the effects of the proposal on foul and surface water will be considered within separate reports.

DRAWINGS

1401466 SC2



REFERENCE

Improved grassland	I
Amenity grassland	[Yellow box]
Species rich hedgerow	[Green line]
Species poor hedgerow	[Dashed green line]
Mature/Semi-mature tree line	[Green line with dots]
Mature/Semi-mature tree	[Green dot]
Dense scrub	[Green cross-hatch]
Amenity planting	[Yellow cross-hatch]
Fence	[Red dashed line]
Gate	[Red X symbol]
Wall	[Pink line]
Hardstanding/Gravel	[Grey box]
Building	[Dark grey box]
Pond	[Blue box]
Ditch	[Blue line]
Tall ruderals	[Red diagonal lines]
Target note	10

A	First Issue	10/02/14	RJH	AC	AB
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REVISION	DETAILS	DATE	DRAWN	CHK'D	APP'D
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CLIENT	VILLAGE HOMES
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PROJECT	BONVILSTON RESIDENTIAL SCHEME
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DRAWING TITLE	HABITAT PLAN & TARGET NOTES
---------------	-----------------------------

DRG No. CA10624-002	SCALE 1:2500 @ A3	DATE 29/01/14
DRAWN BY RJH	CHECKED BY AC	APPROVED BY AB

<input type="checkbox"/> STOKE-ON-TRENT (HEAD OFFICE) TEL 0845 111 7777	<input type="checkbox"/> CARDIFF TEL 029 2072 9191
<input type="checkbox"/> NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE TEL 0191 232 0943	<input type="checkbox"/> LEIGH TEL 01942 260101
<input type="checkbox"/> WEST BROMWICH TEL 0121 580 0909	<input type="checkbox"/> SHEFFIELD TEL 0114 245 6244
<input type="checkbox"/> LONDON TEL 020 7287 2872	<input type="checkbox"/> EDINBURGH TEL 0131 555 3311
	<input type="checkbox"/> LIVERPOOL TEL 0151 494 5431

1401466 SC2

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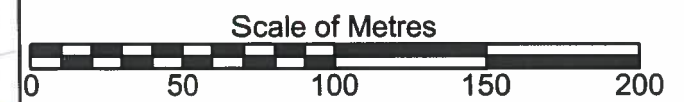




DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING A3

REFERENCE

Planning Application Area _____



REVISION	DETAILS	DATE	DRAWN	CHK'D	APP'D
A	First Issue	03/12/14	RJH	GB	JF

CLIENT
VILLAGE HOMES

PROJECT
BONVILSTON RESIDENTIAL SCHEME

DRAWING TITLE
PLANNING APPLICATION BOUNDARY FOR EIA SCOPING

DRG No. **CA10624-011** SCALE **1:2,500 @ A3** DATE **01/12/14**

DRAWN BY **RJH** CHECKED BY **GB** APPROVED BY **JF**

- STOKE-ON-TRENT (HEAD OFFICE) TEL 0845 111 7777
- LEIGH TEL 01942 260101
- NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE TEL 0191 232 0943
- SHEFFIELD TEL 0114 245 6244
- WEST BROMWICH TEL 0121 580 0909
- EDINBURGH TEL 0131 555 3311
- LONDON TEL 020 7287 2872
- LIVERPOOL TEL 0151 494 5431

1401466 S&Z



APPENDICES

1401466 SC2

Our ref: JF.JLH.CA10624.LET-001
Your ref:

Date: 9th October 2014

Mr Rob Thomas
Director of Development Services
The Vale of Glamorgan Council
Dock Offices
Barry Docks
Barry
CF63 4RT

Dear Rob

LAND EAST OF BONVILSTON – PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, VALE OF GLAMORGAN – REQUEST FOR AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING OPINION

Introduction

Wardell Armstrong LLP (WA) is acting as a consultant for W.D. Johns-Powell & J.N. Johns-Powell who plan to seek full planning permission for residential development on approximately 7.2 ha of land at Bonvilston, near Cowbridge, Vale of Glamorgan.

As you will be aware this site is currently allocated for Residential use in the Deposit LDP 2011-2026 9policy MG2(37) refers).

Under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999 (as amended) , the proposed development could be deemed to fall within part 10 (b) of Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations as an “Urban Development Project”, for which EIA is not mandatory but may be required in certain circumstances (depending on the scale and the nature of the development, the sensitivity of the site and its surroundings and the likelihood of significant environmental effects arising.)

The purpose of this letter is to request a Screening Opinion as to whether an Environmental Impact Assessment is required. A brief description of the proposed development and a summary of the environmental information which is available is provided. It describes the likely principal environmental effects of the proposed development and compares this information with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact assessment



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ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY
INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES
LAND AND PROPERTY
MINING AND MINERAL PROCESSING
MINERAL ESTATES AND QUARRYING
WASTE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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(England and Wales) Regulations 1999 (as amended) Schedule 3 criteria to establish whether the proposed development requires an EIA.

For the reasons set out as follows, whilst the development may fall within Schedule 2, as the site area exceeds the 0.5 ha threshold, the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to significant adverse environmental impacts during the site clearance, construction and operational phases of development and therefore an EIA should **not** be required.

Description of Proposed Development

The final composition of the development may be subject to change as a result of detailed designs currently under consideration by the Client. However the material facts of the development, which are sufficient to provide a screening opinion with respect to the requirement for an EIA are outlined as follows:

Full planning permission is being sought for a residential development of up to 120 dwellings plus associated open space, foul and surface water infrastructure, a site access on 7.2ha of land.

The planning application area and location of the site is shown on Drawing Number CA10624/001 and is located at grid reference ST 07069 74190.

Subject to planning permission, construction would be undertaken as a two phased development. 60 dwellings commencing in 2016 and 60 units from 2021 onwards.

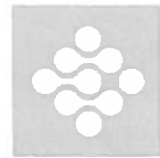
The Site and its Environment

The site lies outside of the residential settlement boundary for Bonvilston as defined in the Vale of Glamorgan Adopted Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011 (UDP). The village is situated on the A48 approximately four miles east of Cowbridge.

The village settlement of Bonvilston is adjacent to the western site boundary and Cottrell Park Golf Resort is located to the north and east of the site. The A48 road is located adjacent to the site's southern boundary with an A48 junction route (running south to north) bordering the site immediately east. The site is located predominantly to the rear of five properties which front the A48. These comprise Court Farm, Sheep Court Farm, Sheepcourt Cottage, Hill Cottage and Sycamore Farm/Cottages. Open arable and pastoral farmland bounded by hedgerows dominate the wider landscape.

The site comprises fields of improved grassland grazed by horses with other habitats present including hedgerows, tree-lines, one pond, mature trees, buildings and hardstanding/gravel. In addition to the areas of pasture there is an area of lawn (associated with Court Farm), a manege with two modern wood built stable blocks (associated with Court Farm) and a barn (associated with Sheep Court Farm). A rear driveway to Sheep Court Farm is aligned through the site.

The site slopes from 125m above ordnance datum (AOD) in the north-east, to 102m AOD in the south-west.



Soils and Land Use

The Agricultural Land Classification map for this Welsh Region shows that the site area has an ALC grade of 2-3 (potentially best and most versatile agricultural quality land). There is no differentiation made between sub-grades 3a and 3b at the scale of map provided (1:250,000). A soil survey and assessment of the quality of the agricultural land has been carried out to determine the Agricultural Land Classification. The site comprises Grade 2 - 0.8ha; Grade 3a-2.3ha; Grade 3b-3.7ha and 0.4ha non-agricultural land. The proposal would result in the permanent loss of 3.1 ha of best and most versatile agricultural land and cannot be mitigated however the area affected is relatively small.

Potential negative impacts could occur to soil resources (for example structure, nutrient status, organic activity) if handling, stockpiling and restoration is not carried out correctly. Wherever possible, soil resources would be retained on site for use in restoration, although limited resources may require removal for suitable use off site if a surplus is identified. Mitigating measures, however, would be adopted to reduce such potential impact and the significance of such impacts is therefore considered to be negligible.

Archaeology

The majority of the site lies outside of the Bonvilston Conservation Area. The parts of the Conservation Area extending within the boundary of the site (refer to drawing number CA10624-SK01) comprise a lawn to Court Farm, a small enclosed area of pasture/a small paddock to the rear of Court Farm and a plot of land including within it a large barn associated with Sheep Court Farm.

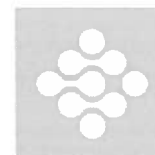
Within 1km radius of the site there is one area of Historical Landscape, four Scheduled Monuments, six Listed Buildings and six County Treasures (locally listed buildings).

Two of the County Treasures are located adjacent to the southern boundary of the site. These comprise 'Sheepcourt Cottage' (reference 2486) and 'Sheep Court Farm' (reference 2485). These and the other buildings listed above are described as 'positive buildings' in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Bonvilston (The Vale of Glamorgan 2009).

None of the buildings within the boundary of the site (the stable blocks or the barn) were recorded as positive buildings by the Bonvilston Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

The HER does not record any non-designated heritage assets within the boundary of the site.

The parts of the Conservation Area extending within the boundary are not publically accessible areas and are not particularly significant elements in respect of the Conservation Area as a whole. Development within these areas and other parts of the site would, however, need to enhance the Conservation Area.



Sheepcourt Cottage' and 'Sheep Court Farm' located outside the site boundary are described as 'positive buildings' in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Bonvilston which describes the village as low density with linear scattered buildings set back either side (north and south) of the A48. Notable views to the south, towards the Severn Estuary, are noted on several occasions (the Vale of Glamorgan 2009). The site, located to the north of the A48, would not infringe on these significant views.

On balance and on the assumption that any development would be sympathetic in terms of building materials and massing it is considered that significant impact to the Conservation Area and to 'positive' or Locally Listed buildings present between the site and the A48 (including two County Treasures) could be avoided.

The buildings located within the boundary of the site, comprising modern stable blocks and post war barn, are not significant buildings and are not identified as 'positive' buildings in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. Impact to these buildings, including demolition, would not be significant.

In respect to buried archaeological remains the HER does not record any archaeological remains within the boundary of the site but archaeological remains dating from the Neolithic period onwards are located within the search area or its vicinity and the site is located to the immediate north of a Roman road.

A Geophysical Survey was conducted in September 2014 in order to establish the presence/absence, nature and extent of potential archaeological features within the site. The surveys recorded a series of agricultural features, including land drains and plough furrows, some of which may relate to ridge and furrow cultivation or medieval or post-medieval date. A number of possible soil-filled features of unknown date were also detected within the northeaster part of the site.

There is no evidence to suggest there is presence of remains of high importance within the site boundary which would preclude development.

Landscape

The site lies outside of two identified Special Landscape Areas (SLA) (non-statutory designations), i.e. the Ely Valley and Ridge Slopes SLA to the east and the Nant Llancarfan SLA to the south.

As noted above, the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Bonvilston describes the village as low density with linear scattered buildings set back either side (north and south) of the A48. Notable views to the south, towards the Severn Estuary, are noted on several occasions (the Vale of Glamorgan 2009). The site, however being located to the north of the A48, would not infringe on these significant views.

The site is screened to the west and south with mature hedgerows and tree-lines and existing properties. A golf course is located to the north and east. The development will



be designed with a selection of materials which will be sympathetic to existing character and materials of older and modern properties within the locality.

Ecology

No statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations are present within or adjacent to the site. The closest statutory designation to the site is Ely Valley Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which is located approximately 1.8km to the north of the site. Therefore no direct impacts are anticipated on these statutory and non-statutory designations as a result of the proposed development.

The most notable habitats on site are the hedgerows and tree-lines which contain a mixture of semi-mature and mature trees and mature hedgerow shrubs. Two hedgerows/tree-lines appear to meet the wildlife criteria for 'important' hedgerows under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. The majority of the hedgerows and tree-lines will be retained, where feasible providing wildlife corridors around the boundaries of the site and these will be managed to improve their nature conservation value as part of the development. The proposed development will include new structural landscape planting to compensate for any sections of hedgerows lost.

Areas retained will be managed to improve their nature conservation value and consideration will be given to increasing biodiversity of species within areas of public open space through use of native tree and shrub planting and wild flower seed mixes. Retained habitats will be appropriately protected during the construction works.

One pond is located in the south-western corner of the site with no aquatic or marginal vegetation observed in or adjacent to the pond. It is connected to a short section of ditch in the north. These features were both dry in Spring 2014.

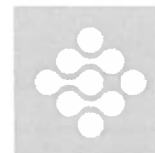
Breeding birds and foraging and roosting bats use the application area. A couple of hedgerows contain elm species therefore the site has potential to support the white-letter hairstreak butterfly, which is a UKBAP and LBAP priority species. Amphibians including great crested newts are present in ponds located within 500m of the site. Measures to mitigate for the potential adverse impacts on these groups and to provide new habitat which will be of value for wildlife will be identified within a suite of ecological reports accompanying a planning application.

Residual impacts which will remain after mitigation will include a possible increased risk of predation on bats and birds by cats, increased risk of road mortality for wildlife entering roads, reduction in some bird species and beneficial impacts on amphibians, bats, birds, invertebrates and other wildlife species as a result of habitat creation and enhancement measures.

Trees

Trees may be legally protected by either a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or by the fact that they are located within a Conservation Area. There is a Tree Preservation Order relating to trees on the western boundary of the site with Maes y Ffynnon, TPO 1973/08/A03.

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In order to prevent damage to existing and retained hedgerows and trees, excavations near hedgerows and trees will be undertaken in accordance with BS5837:2012 – Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction.

Geology and Hydrogeology

There are no records of Artificial Ground or Made Ground being present beneath the study site. The EA indicate that the Superficial Till Deposits underlying the site have low permeability that have negligible significance for water supply or river base flow.

The underlying solid bedrock of both the Friars Point Limestone Formation and the Gully Oolite Formation are classified as being Principal Aquifers. Principal Aquifers usually provide a high level of water storage and may support water supply and/or river base flow on a strategic scale. The site is not located within a Groundwater Source Protection Zone (GSPZ), and there are no GSPZs located within 500m of the study site.

There is one pond feature on site which was dry during Spring 2014. There are no major surface water bodies recorded within 500m of the desk study area. However, the source of the Nant Llancarfan (a river 5km to the south of the site) is identified just south of Bonvilston village. A GroundSure report indicates tertiary rivers and tributaries are located to the south of the site, with the closest one being identified 290m south of site.

The flood map for the site shows that the development is located in an area defined as having a low risk of flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy will accompany the application which will focus on the management of surface water run-off.

The Health Protection Agency (HPA) classifies the site as being within a Radon Affected Area, as between 5% and 10% of properties in the area are above the Action Level. The BRE guidance document indicates that basic radon protective measures are necessary for residential properties.

Ground Conditions

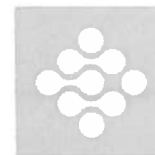
From a review of historical mapping, there is no history of major industrial or contaminative activities on the site.

The assessment of environmental data for the site and surrounding area identifies potential offsite sources of contamination to comprise tanks of unknown content 63m to the east of the site and potential agricultural usage of the site.

A site investigation was undertaken in August 2014. Further to the site specific investigation there are no key potential pollution linkages associated with the site, and the site is deemed suitable for the proposed residential end use with gardens and are suitable for use without mitigation measures.

Vehicular Access and Public Rights of Way

The site is currently accessed via a junction from the road which borders the site to the east. There are no Public Rights of Way located within the site area.



Noise

The main noise source across the proposed site is expected to be from road traffic associated with the A48, A4426 and other minor roads bordering the site. In order to consider the site for residential development, onsite attended monitoring will be undertaken to determine the need for any noise mitigation in order to achieve internal and external levels at any proposed residential dwellings.

A noise assessment will accompany a planning application which will detail the results of noise monitoring, the scope of which and the noise assessment methodology, will be agreed with the Public Protection Officer.

As required, mitigation measures will be specified into the site design to ensure that the required external daytime, and internal daytime and night-time noise levels, are achieved at proposed residential areas.

Existing Public Utilities and Services

Enquiries with public utility service providers will investigate whether suitable levels of supply to the proposed development can be achieved for all key services.

Waste

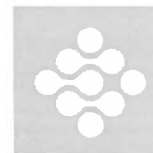
Excavation works and construction works associated with the proposed development will result in waste arising and the need to dispose of certain wastes to landfill. In order to minimise the volume of waste generated, the site contractor will adhere to the waste hierarchy system and best practice, set out in the Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) which will be implemented during the construction works. The SWMP will form part of the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

Planning Application Supporting Documentation

The following documents and technical assessments will accompany a full planning application:

- Planning Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Transport Assessment and Travel Plan
- Detailed Archaeological Evaluation including a Conservation Area Assessment and Geophysical Survey Report
- Landscape Appraisal
- Ecological Impact Assessment
- Arboricultural Constraints Report and Arboricultural Method Statement, Tree Location and Constraints Plan, Tree Protection Plan
- Ground Conditions: Desk Study and Ground Investigations Reports
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy
- Noise Assessment

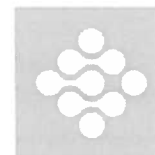
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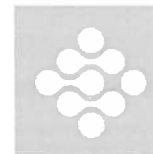
CONCLUSIONS

The table below sets out the criteria defined in Schedule 3 together with the key characteristics of the proposals.

Selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development		
Schedule 3 criteria		Key characteristics of the proposed scheme
Characteristics of the development	The size of the development	The proposed development is approximately 7.2ha.
	The cumulation with other development	A Transport Assessment will consider the impact of other committed developments in the locality and a Travel Plan will be prepared for the site.
	The use of natural resources	The development will use existing resources such as potable water, construction materials, energy, fuel, natural soils and agricultural land, etc. Some of the resources are finite. This proposal will not decrease significantly the amount of natural resources available at present and in future within the area.
	The production of waste	The proposal will be designed and maintained to allow the segregation and storage of waste. New residents will have access to convenient and simple to use waste management and recycling facilities, and the bin storage facilities and waste collection points provided within the proposed development will adhere to the requirements of the Local Authority.
	Pollution and nuisance	The construction works will generate a temporary local disturbance. Risk of pollution will be mitigated by the implementation of pollution prevention measures. These can be outlined within a Construction and Environmental Management Plan to be approved by the Local Authority prior to commencement of construction activities. As required, mitigation measures will be specified into the site design to ensure that the required external daytime, and internal daytime and night-time noise levels, are achieved at proposed residential areas.
	Risk of Accidents	Risk of accidents during the construction phase can be prevented by implementation construction site good practices.



Location of development	Existing land uses	The whole site will be removed from agriculture. However, the area is relatively small.
	The relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources	Disruption to agricultural land use will be permanent however, the area is relatively small.
	The absorption capacity of the natural environment	Excavations near hedgerows and trees will be undertaken in accordance with BS5837:2012 – Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Removal of trees and shrub vegetation will be outside breeding bird season or under the supervision of qualified personnel. Parts of the Conservation Area extending within the boundary are not publically accessible areas and are not particularly significant elements in respect of the Conservation Area as a whole.
Characteristic of the potential impacts	The extent of the impact	The majority of the impacts of the proposal will have local effects with the exception of the waste generated by the development, which will have a district effect and the loss of 3.1 ha of agricultural land grades 2 and 3a which will deplete a national resource. However, the area of grade 2 and 3a land is relatively small.
	The transfrontier nature of the impact	Not applicable.
	The magnitude and complexity of the impact	The scale of the project is relatively small and the works required are not complex. Therefore the likely magnitude and complexity of the effects is limited/low.
	The probability of the impacts	The studies undertaken have identified the potential effects of the proposed scheme. The scheme is limited in scale and complexity and therefore the probability of the identified impact has been established with a high degree of confidence.
	Duration, frequency and reversibility of the impacts	Subject to planning permission, construction would be undertaken as a two phased development. 60 dwellings commencing in 2016 and 60 units from 2021 onwards.



		<p>Temporary impacts (increase in noise levels) will occur during construction but will be limited and reversible. Mitigation measures will be in place to reduce the impact to nearby properties.</p> <p>Once the development is completed, the impacts will be irreversible but through careful detailed design of the application, the potential residual environmental impacts will be minimised.</p>
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The site is not located within or adjacent to any European and Nationally Protected sites of nature conservation interest. Whereas there is a potential for some protected species to be disturbed by the construction, effects on such species will be mitigated satisfactorily by a range of measures and the residual effects on protected species will not be significant.

Parts of the Bonvilston Conservation Area extending within the boundary are not publically accessible areas and are not particularly significant elements in respect of the Conservation Area as a whole. The development will be designed to enhance or preserve the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

All the principal potential environmental impacts which can be identified can be mitigated with the exception of the permanent loss of a relatively small area of best and most versatile agricultural land. This is not considered sufficient to trigger the need for EIA. In addition the proposal is not likely to have significant effects on the environment by reason of its nature, size and location.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development is not EIA development within the meaning of the 1999 Regulations (as amended), and an Environmental Impact Assessment will not be required.

We will be grateful for your opinion of this screening assessment and look forward to receiving the formal opinion of the Planning Authority within the statutory three-week period identified for this process.

Yours sincerely
for Wardell Armstrong LLP

JON FOX
Technical Director
jfox@wardell-armstrong.com
Enclosure

2014/01205/SC1

Received on 13 October 2014

W. D. Johns-Powell and J. N. Johns-Powell, C/o Agent.
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Land East of Bonvilston

Proposed residential development

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 1999 (as amended)

REGULATION 5 – REQUEST FOR SCREENING OPINION

Background

A formal request for a screening opinion under the above regulations has been received from consultants Wardell Armstrong on behalf of W D Johns-Powell & J N Johns-Powell for residential development on land of approximately 7.2 ha at Bonvilston.

It is considered that the proposal falls to be considered for EIA under Section 10 (b) of Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 (as amended), which relates to *“Urban development projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks, sports stadiums, leisure centres and multiplex cinemas”*.

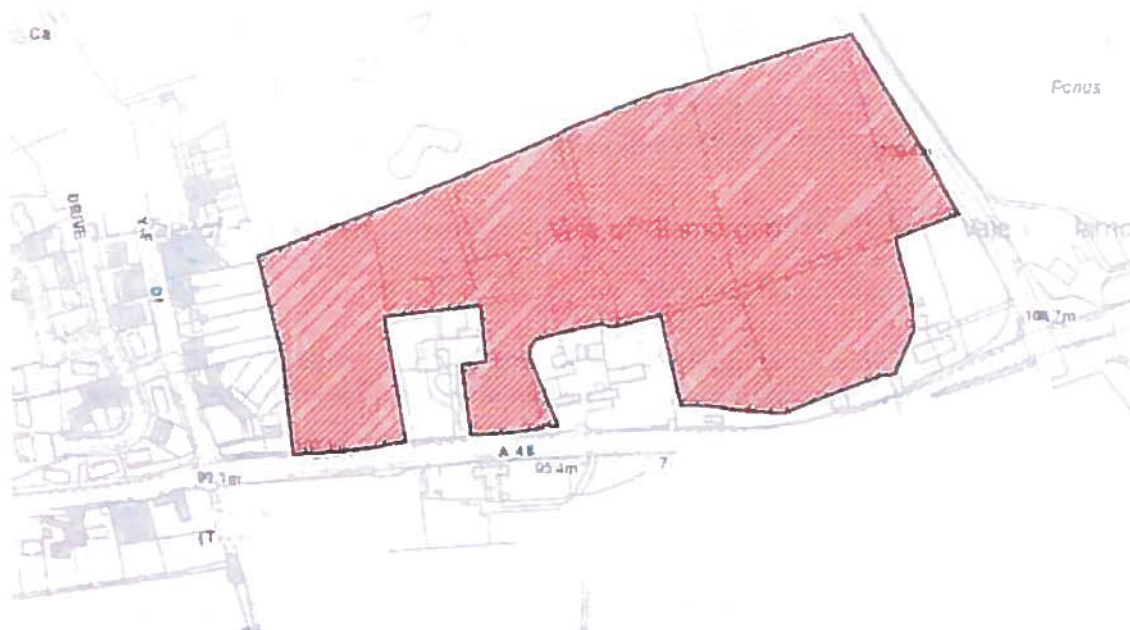
The applicable threshold is that the area of the development exceeds 0.5 ha.

In undertaking this assessment as to whether the proposed works amount to an EIA development it is noted that WO Circular 11/99 advises that the basic question to be asked is *“Would this particular development be likely to have significant effects on the environment?”* (para. 32). This assessment has therefore to examine the characteristics of the development (including its size, use of natural resources, quantities of pollution and waste generally), the environmental sensitivity of the site and the characteristics of the potential impact (including its magnitude and duration) (para. 33).

SITE AND CONTEXT

The area defined in red on the accompanying plans comprises agricultural land located to the north of the A48 on the eastern side of Bonvilston. The land abuts the existing houses at Maes y Ffynnon on its western side, with the Sycamore road junction to the east. On its southern side there are a number of existing properties, including dwellings at Court farm, Sheepcourt farm and Sycamore farm with the site extending down to the A48 in parts.

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The site lies in the countryside outside of the residential settlement boundary for Bonvilston as defined in the Vale of Glamorgan Adopted Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011. Part of the site lies within the Bonvilston Conservation Area. There are protected trees on the site TPO No. 8 1973. In addition the site lies close to two identified Special Landscape Areas (SLA), i.e. the Ely Valley and Ridge Slopes SLA to the east and the Nant Llancarfan SLA to the south.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

The description of the development as outlined in the accompanying information is for a detailed scheme for a residential development of up to 120 No. dwellings plus associated open space, foul and surface water infrastructure and a site access. It is envisaged that construction would be undertaken in two phases, with 60 No. units commencing in 2016, and 60 No. units from 2021 onwards.

PLANNING HISTORY

1991/00147/OUT – Sheepcourt Farm, part of current site – Residential development - Refused 16 April 1991 for the following reasons:

- 1. The proposed development is contrary to Policy H.10 of the approved South Glamorgan Structure Plan and Policy H.4 of the Draft Rural Vale Local Plan which carry a presumption against the erection of dwellings in the open countryside, unless such development can be justified in the interests of agriculture and forestry. No such justification has been made in support of the application.*
- 2. The Local Planning Authority is satisfied that sufficient provision of sites for Housing for Senior Management within the Rural Vale have been identified and that in the case of the application site, the provisions of Circular 30/86 and Structure Plan Policy H.17 should not take precedence over the policies for the protection of the countryside.*
- 3. The proposal would not preserve or enhance the environmental character or appearance of the Bonvilston Conservation Area.*

CONSULTATIONS

Natural Resources Wales – In considering whether an EIA is required for the proposed development we have considered only the issues within our remit. There may be environmental risks from this proposed development, however, we consider these are likely to be managed, and are not deemed significant in the context of the above Regulations. We do not consider that the development is likely to have 'significant environmental effects' that requires a formal EIA.

From the information received we consider that there are matters relating to drainage, ecology and protected species that will need to be considered if any planning application is submitted, and recommend that the applicant discusses these matters with us before any submission.

Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust – Previous comments on the inclusion of this site in the LDP process noted that the area is on the line of a major Roman road, at the outskirts of a Medieval settlement and it was our recommendation that archaeological evaluation would be necessary prior to the determination of any planning application for the site.

Information in the Historic Environment Record shows five Scheduled Ancient Monuments within 1.2km of the site; and a number of sites and findspots in the immediate and wider area; these include a Registered Park, cropmarks of enclosures, burial sites and widespread flint scatters, representing pre-historic land use, and Roman finds. The impact of the proposal on the archaeological resource forms a material consideration in the planning process.

We note from the supporting information that a geophysical survey of the area was undertaken recently. It is our opinion, that this information could be presented as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment, or as a separate archaeological desk-based assessment. This study should present information on the archaeological resource in the application area and study area, in order to assess the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological resource, including the visual impact.

It is noted that the supporting information gives the opinion that it is unlikely that archaeological features of significance would preclude development, however, until the necessary reports are examined, it remains our opinion that archaeological evaluation will be required to be undertaken prior to the determination of any planning application.

The Council's Ecology team – Consulted on 16 October 2014. No comments received to date.

The Council's Legal, Public Protection and Housing Services Directorate - Environmental Health – Pollution Section – Note that the A48 is designated by the Welsh Government as a Round 2 Priority Area as part of the Welsh Government's obligation under the Environmental Noise Directive. The area adjoins an Action Plan area designed to manage noise issues and effects, including any necessary noise reduction.

Noise action planning priority areas are residential areas that are likely to be exposed to the highest levels of road traffic and railway noise, according to strategic noise maps and other sources of information such as persistent complaints validated by independent noise measurements.

The area is not part of an Air Quality Management Area nor is the land deemed as potentially contaminated.

The Council's Landscape Section – The two adjacent Special Landscape Areas, Conservation Area, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, and the Bonvilston Circular Walk are highlighted as factors to be addressed by a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). They are satisfied that the information required to determine the landscape impact of the development should be covered by the LVIA.

REPRESENTATIONS

None.

REPORT

Issues

In reaching a screening opinion, the Council must have regard to the matters listed in Schedule 3 of the Regulations, which sets out the 'selection criteria' which must be taken into account in determining whether a development is likely to have significant effects on the environment.

It identifies three broad criteria which should be considered: the characteristics of the development (e.g. its size, use of natural resources, quantities of pollution and waste generated); the environmental sensitivity of the location; and the characteristics of the potential impact (e.g. its magnitude and duration).

Welsh Office Circular 11/99 states that in general EIA will be needed for Schedule 2 developments in three main types of case: a) for major developments which are of more than local importance; b) for developments which are proposed for particularly environmentally sensitive or vulnerable locations; and c) for developments with unusually complex and potentially hazardous environmental effects. It also states that the number of cases of such development will be a very small proportion of the total number of Schedule 2 developments.

From a consideration of the proposal in the context of the site, and on the basis of the information provided by the agents, which itself addresses the Schedule 3 criteria, the following conclusions are reached in relation to the Schedule 3 issues.

Characteristics of Development

Schedule 3 - Selection Criteria for Screening Schedule 2 Development of the regulations advises that the characteristics of development must be considered having regard, in particular, to:

- (a) the size of the development;
- (b) the cumulation with other development;
- (c) the use of natural resources;
- (d) the production of waste;
- (e) pollution and nuisances;
- (f) the risk of accidents, having regard in particular to substances or technologies used.

Annex A to Welsh Office Circular 11/99 lists thresholds indicating the types of cases where an EIA is more likely to be required. Paragraph A19 notes that development proposed on sites that have not previously been intensively developed are more likely to require EIA if the site area is more than 5 hectares. In this case the proposal would exceed this threshold as it relates to approximately 7.2 hectares of agricultural land that lies outside of the residential settlement boundary for Bonvilston and therefore within the countryside.

The Circular also indicates that development that would "*have significant urbanising effects in a previously non-urbanised area*" is more likely to require an EIA. Although the suggestion is that this is likely to occur when developments are 1000 dwellings or more, nevertheless, given the size of the site relative to the existing village, it is considered that 120 No. dwellings represents close to the doubling in size of the village. Given the context of the site, which is explored further below, this would have a significant urbanising effect on this rural conservation area village, bearing in mind the number of units and the on-site open space requirement in the LDP allocation.

As regards any cumulative impacts the Council is not aware of any other likely developments of similar size within the immediate vicinity. However, the LDP allocation indicates infrastructure provision with road improvements north of the A48, and Sycamore Cross/five mile lane. Thus in terms of the traffic impacts, although only 120 No. units, as these will need to access onto the A48, either directly or indirectly, the impact would not be insignificant, particularly given the strategic nature of the highway network involved. It is noted that the supporting statement indicates that a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan will be undertaken to accompany a full application. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that the relative size of the proposed development alone would have significant impacts in relation to the character of the village and its Conservation Area.

In relation to point (c) it is noted that the supporting information indicates that a soil survey and assessment of the quality of the agricultural land has been carried out to determine the Agricultural Land Classification. This identifies that the site comprises 0.8 ha of Grade 2, 2.3 ha of Grade 3a, 3.7 ha of Grade 3b, and 0.4 ha of non-agricultural land. Thus the proposal would result in the permanent loss of 3.1 ha of best and most versatile agricultural land. The supporting statement also notes that potential negative impacts could occur to soil resources if handling, stockpiling and restoration are not carried out correctly.

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As regards points (d) and (e) the comments from Natural Resources Wales and the Council's Environmental Health section suggest that any impacts are unlikely to be significant. The information provided on the geology, hydrogeology and ground conditions of the site is supported by NRW and Environmental Health. The Council's Environmental Health section has confirmed that the land is not deemed as potentially contaminated, nor is it part of an Air Quality Management Area. NRW note that there may be environmental risks from this proposed development, but these are likely to be managed and are not deemed significant in the context of the EIA Regulations. On the issue of noise, the Environmental Health section note that the A48 is designated by the Welsh Government as a Round 2 Priority Area as part of the Welsh Government's obligation under the Environmental Noise Directive. The area adjoins an Action Plan area designed to manage noise issues and effects, including any necessary noise reduction.

Finally, on the issue of risk of accidents, it is considered that there should be no greater risk than other residential developments of a similar size and nature.

Thus it is considered that the characteristics of the development indicate that there is the potential for significant impacts as a result of the proposed development.

Location of development

It is necessary to assess the area for its environmental sensitivity, and whether any part of the development would be carried out in a sensitive area. Paragraph 36 of WO Circular 11/99 provides a definition of 'sensitive areas' and includes:- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); National Parks; Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); World Heritage Sites; Scheduled Ancient Monuments; and Internationally designated sites.

Notwithstanding this paragraph 39 of the Circular makes it clear that there can be other circumstances where a site can be considered to be environmentally sensitive. This states:-

"In certain cases other statutory and non-statutory designations which are not included within the definition of 'sensitive areas', but which are nonetheless environmentally sensitive, may also be relevant in determining whether EIA is required. Where relevant Local Biodiversity Action Plans will be of assistance in determining the sensitivity of a location. Urban locations may also be considered sensitive as a result of their heavier concentrations of population."

Thus when considering the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by development, regard must be had, in particular, to –

- (a) the existing land use;
- (b) the relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area;
- (c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment paying particular attention to the following areas -

- (i) wetlands;
- (ii) coastal zones;
- (iii) mountain and forest areas;
- (iv) nature reserves and parks;
- (v) areas classified or protected under Member States' legislation; areas designated by Member States pursuant to Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds and Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora;
- (vi) areas in which the environmental quality standards laid down in Community legislation have already been exceeded;
- (vii) densely populated areas;
- (viii) landscapes of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

The submitted documentation makes reference to the archaeological, historical and landscape setting of the site, noting that within a 1km radius of the site there is one area of Historical Landscape, four Scheduled Monuments, six Listed Buildings and six County Treasures. Reference is also made to the Bonvilston Conservation Area, noting that the majority of the site lies outside. It does recognise that parts of the site do extend into the Conservation Area, however, it suggests that these *"are not particularly significant elements in respect of the Conservation Area as a whole."*

However, it is considered that the location of the site is important and sensitive with regard to the whole character of the village and the Conservation Area. The Bonvilston Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan identifies the character of the Conservation Area as having a linear form with a gradual reduction in density to its western and eastern edges. Bonvilston lies within rolling countryside and overall the conservation area is very spacious and maintains a strongly rural character. *"Farming land with open fields and low hedges, with clumps of woodland, are typical of the surrounding landscape."* In addition, all of the buildings that front the A48 adjacent to the site are identified as 'Positive Buildings', in part due to their agrarian origins and their relationship to each other and the wider village. The Appraisal also identifies 'Significant Views' from the A48 to the north, and a 'Significant Tree group' on the south western boundary with the A48. As such it is considered that development of the size proposed will have a significant impact on the rural setting of the village on the Conservation Area. The development will have the urbanising effect referred to in the Circular, given the existing appearance and character of the site which is undeveloped fields in the countryside. Although only 120 No. units, the on-site open space requirement identified within the LDP allocation will mean a relatively dense form of development is unavoidable. In addition its location at the eastern edge of the village will alter the identified character in the Appraisal.

In addition it is noted that although the site does not currently lie within any of the designated Special Landscape Areas, there are two positioned close by, including the Ely Valley and Ridge Slopes SLA to the east and the Nant Llancarfan SLA to the south. Current UDP policy ENV4 recognises that even development outside of the SLA's but closely related can have an impact on the landscape character, features or visual amenities of the designate area. The Conservation Area Appraisal recognises that the location of the village along the A48, which follows the alignment of a natural ridge of land, provides the most characteristic feature of the landscape. The ground undulates gently on entering the village from both east and west, providing a pleasant change in level which is enhanced by the views over falling land towards the south. The large fields around the village are mainly used for grazing sheep and cattle, with low hedges dividing them. Stands of tall trees such as horse chestnut, beech and sycamore, are a feature of the village and of the landscape which surrounds it. It is also noted that in the emerging Local Development Plan there are changes proposed to the designated SLA's, with the relevant background papers to the LDP, including, Designation of Landscape Character Areas (2013 update) (Landscape Character Area 22- Central Vale Ridges and Slopes), Designation of Special Landscape Areas (2013 update), and Designation of SLAs Review Against Historic Landscapes Evaluations (2013 update). The Ely Valley and Ridge Slopes SLA is proposes to be extended to the west in a large area that will encompass the development site. The area is intended for inclusion to reflect the Cultural, Landscape Habitats and Geological Landscapes data. The Designation of Special Landscape Areas document notes that there is a need for the extension as there is a decline in the area, with reference made to, amongst a number of factors, development along the A48, and suburban detailing. Thus the emerging LDP documents acknowledge that the site is a particularly vulnerable one.

The Council's Landscape section has highlighted the factors that would need to be addressed in any visual assessment, referencing the SLA's, the Conservation Area, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and the Bonvilston Circular Walk. Although they are of the opinion that the information required to determine the landscape impact of the development should be covered by a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment, it is not considered that this rules out the need for an EIA bearing in mind the overall assessments in relation to the Regulations.

As regards the issue of the abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources, again it is noted that the proposal will result in irreversible development, and the loss of high quality agricultural land. Whilst it is argued that this is a relatively small area, nevertheless, in relation to point (c) and the absorption capacity in respect of the historical and cultural significance, it is clear from the assessment above that the effect on the rural character of the village and its Conservation Area will be significant.

On the specific issue of archaeology the Council's archaeological advisors Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust have not formed a view as to the need for an EIA, but have confirmed that the impact of the proposal on the archaeological resource forms a material consideration in the planning process. Although the supporting information suggests that it is unlikely that archaeological features of significance would preclude development, nevertheless GGAT reserve their judgement on this pending the assessment of the necessary reports.

As regards the likely ecology impacts, the supporting statement notes, and it is agreed, that there are no statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations relating to the site. The closest statutory designation is the Ely Valley SSSI, and there habitats, such as the pond, trees and hedgerows, where there will be impacts as a result of the development, but it is not considered that these would be so significant as to justify an EIA, although ecological surveys would be required.

Thus although the location of the site does not fall within the definition of a 'sensitive area' within the Circular, nevertheless in line with paragraph 39, it is considered that the particular circumstances of this site, as outlined above, makes it an environmentally sensitive and vulnerable, where the proposal has the potential to have a significant impact on the rural character of the village and the Bonvilston Conservation Area.

Characteristics of the potential impact

An assessment of the potential significant effects of development must have particular regard to:

- (a) the extent of the impact (geographical area and size of the affected population);
- (b) the transfrontier nature of the impact;
- (c) the magnitude and complexity of the impact;
- (d) the probability of the impact;
- (e) the duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact.

In considering the potential impacts, it has already been noted that the size of the site at 7.2 ha, and the comparative scale of development in respect of the existing geographical size and population of the existing village, will result in an almost doubling of the community, with significant impacts on the character of the area.

There is no transfrontier nature to the impact, and in terms of magnitude and complexity it relates solely to the one rural village. However, the probability of the impact is certain, and the effect on the character and setting of the village and the Conservation Area will be permanent and irreversible.

As such it is considered that the scheme has the potential for significant environmental effects, and, in this instance the proposal is an EIA application.

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CONCLUSION

Welsh Office Circular 11/99 states that EIA will usually only be needed for Schedule 2 developments in three main types of case: a) for major developments which are of more than local importance; b) for developments which are proposed for particularly environmentally sensitive or vulnerable locations; and c) for developments with unusually complex and potentially hazardous environmental effects. It also states at A19-Urban development projects, that an EIA is more likely to be required for sites of more than 5 ha that have not previously been intensively developed.

In this respect, and taking into account the above circular advice and each of the stated criteria in Schedule 3, it is concluded from the information submitted that the project is a type b) case, being development which is proposed for particularly environmentally sensitive or vulnerable location, and the proposal has the potential to cause significant impacts on the interests identified above. As such it is considered that there is a requirement for a formal Environmental Impact Assessment to be submitted under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 (as amended).

RECOMMENDATION – OFFICER DELEGATED

An Environmental Impact Assessment is required.

1. Having regard to the key issues identified in Schedule 3 of the Regulations and WO Circular 11/99, the Local Planning Authority is of the view that the characteristics and location of the site is such that it is a sensitive and vulnerable one and the potential impact of the development as outlined in the supporting documentation is likely to be significant upon the environment for the reasons identified in the screening opinion attached.

Accordingly, it is considered that there is a requirement for a formal Environmental Impact Assessment to be submitted under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 (as amended).

NOTE:

1. **Please note that the Council's Screening Opinion comprises this decision letter and the accompanying Screening Report.**

Please note that this consent is specific to the plans and particulars approved as part of the application. Any departure from the approved plans will constitute unauthorised development and may be liable to enforcement action. You (or any subsequent developer) should advise the Council of any actual or proposed variations from the approved plans immediately so that you can be advised how to best resolve the matter.

In addition, any conditions that the Council has imposed on this consent will be listed above and should be read carefully. It is your (or any subsequent developers) responsibility to ensure that the terms of all conditions are met in full at the appropriate time (as outlined in the specific condition).

The commencement of development without firstly meeting in full the terms of any conditions that require the submission of details prior to the commencement of development will constitute unauthorised development. This will necessitate the submission of a further application to retain the unauthorised development and may render you liable to formal enforcement action.

Failure on the part of the developer to observe the requirements of any other conditions could result in the Council pursuing formal enforcement action in the form of a Breach of Condition Notice.

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