



LRM
PLANNING
LIMITED



LAND AT ABERTHIN ROAD, COWBRIDGE

Design and Access Statement version 2

Prepared by LRM Planning Limited on behalf of Hafod Housing
Association

January 2020



Site of proposed
development



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Figure 2 - Internal image of the school, Aug 2018



Figure 3 - Internal image of the school, Aug 2018



1

Introduction

1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by LRM Planning with input from Pentan Architects to accompany a full planning application submitted on behalf of Hafod Resources Ltd. The application seeks consent for the proposed demolition of the existing school, development of 34 dwellings (30 flats and four houses) and associated works including construction of bespoke bat roost, access/parking and landscaping, at the former Cowbridge Comprehensive School on Aberthin Road, in Cowbridge. This is the second version of the document, having been updated to address design changes made since the original application was submitted.

Background

1.2 The application site comprises the former Cowbridge Comprehensive School and associated ancillary buildings which are currently vacant and derelict. The school buildings are of late Victorian construction and comprise a fairly substantial, partially single storey, partially two storey building.

1.3 This Design and Access Statement will demonstrate how the proposed development layout responds positively to the local context, site features and constraints whilst having regard for the relevant planning policy.

Purpose

1.4 TAN 12 defines a Design and Access Statement as *'a communication tool which outlines how the design of the proposal has been considered from the outset of the development process and how the objectives of good design have been used to inform this.'*

1.5 The purpose of this document is to analyse the context of the site in respect of planning policy and the local character of the area, whilst having regard to each of the five objectives of Good Design.

Vision

1.6 The vision for the development is to create a high quality, sustainable development which is both visually attractive and robust, whilst also seeking to address a known housing need by positive

reuse of a brownfield site in an inherently sustainable location.

Aim

1.7 The aim of this document is to:

- Provide an overview of the site context, which has aided in shaping the proposals;
- explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development;
- demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and how the design of the development takes that context into account;
- explain the policy or approach adopted for access and how policies relating to access in the development have been taken into account; and
- explain how specific issues which might affect access to the development have been addressed.

Figure 4 - Part of main elevation of former school building, facing onto Aberthin Road



Figure 5 - Side (northern) elevation



2

Site description and context analysis

Location

- 2.1 The application site is located to the north eastern extent of the town of Cowbridge, to the south of the A48. Cowbridge is located centrally within the Vale of Glamorgan, acting as a service centre for the surrounding villages.

Features

- 2.2 The site is brownfield, comprising the former Cowbridge Comprehensive Sixth Form and ancillary buildings which are vacant and derelict. The wider site area measures approximately 0.53 hectares and is broadly rectangular in shape, though slightly wider towards the north-eastern end of the site. In terms of topography, the site is generally flat, albeit that it lies slightly set down below the road level.
- 2.3 The former school buildings are of late Victorian construction but are not listed nor sited within the conservation area. The structures comprise a substantial, partially single storey, predominantly two-storey building. Steep pitched roofs, tall windows and dark stone construction give the

former school a dominant presence on the streetscene, visible in the streetscene from the approach from either a southerly or northerly direction. In addition to the school, there is also a more modern demountable single storey building to the rear of the site, which is of no merit in architectural terms.

Boundaries

- 2.4 The eastern boundary of the site faces directly onto Aberthin Road (the A4222), on the opposite side of which are existing dwellings, elevated above the road, and an undeveloped heavily vegetated area. The short southern boundary and the majority of the longer western boundary are flanked by the rear of dwellings on Slade Close and Millfield Drive. Much of these properties are two-storey semi-detached or detached houses, though some have extended into their roofs. The northern boundary meets the flyover of the Cowbridge by-pass (A48), but is undefined on the ground, as there is no physical boundary under the flyover until it reaches the sports courts of the new Cowbridge Comprehensive School. The new school lies

beyond, to the northeast.

Access

- 2.5 Historically, it is anticipated that vehicular access to the school would have been from just inside of its southern boundary. In this location, an opening wide enough for vehicles has been closed off for such use by the placement of large boulders in the entrance. The site offers good highway visibility in both directions, onto Aberthin Road, which has a 30 miles-per-hour speed limit. A lay-by and bus stop are located immediately to the east of the site, adjacent to Aberthin Road.
- 2.6 In addition to the bus stop located directly adjacent to the site boundary, two further stops are located within 400m to the south of the site along Cardiff Road providing services to Cardiff, Porthcawl and other local destinations. The closest rail station is located approximately 8.9km to the south of the site in Llantwit Major. This station provides regular services to Cardiff Central, Bridgend and Aberdare.



Local facilities

- 2.7 The site is located within 200m of the defined Cowbridge District Shopping Centre, which provides access to a wide range of local services and facilities including supermarkets, convenience stores, banks, cafes and a number of other independent shops and restaurants.
- 2.8 In terms of education and healthcare provision, Y Bont Faen Primary School is located 500m walking distance to the south of the site, with Cowbridge Comprehensive School located directly to the north. Cowbridge and Vale Medical Centre and Cowbridge Health Centre are also located approximately 800m to the east.

Local architectural context

- 2.9 The local vernacular within the immediate context of the site is varied, including a mix of both large detached dwellings set in generous plots with driveways and detached garages along Aberthin Road, and smaller semi-detached dwellings of post war construction along Millfield Drive. The larger dwellings are finished in a variety of brick, stone and cream render, with brown coloured tiled roofs. The semi-detached units include a mix of pebble-dash render and red/buff brick with hanging tile detail, and brown coloured tiled roofs.
- 2.10 Cowbridge conservation area is located to the south and west of the site, separated from

the site by existing dwellings. This area is characterised by late 19th century development, including a number of mediaeval buildings.

Heritage

- 2.11 The site does not lie within a conservation area, nor are there any listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments or public rights of way within the site vicinity that would impact upon the proposals.
- 2.12 No designated historic assets within the vicinity of the site have been identified that are at risk of having their significance harmed by the proposed development, either in terms of an effect on their physical form/fabric or through change to the contribution made by their setting. This includes the Cowbridge conservation area, the setting of which is assessed as being unaffected by the proposed development.
- 2.13 The site contains buildings of the former Cowbridge Comprehensive School. The main school building, which dates from 1896 and 1908, is considered to represent a non-designated historic asset, of low significance that is not Locally Listed.
- 2.14 The site also contains a boundary wall and railings associated with the former school, these are considered to represent an historic asset of low significance closely related to the school.

Archaeology

- 2.15 Evidence on the Historic Environment Records

suggests that there is a moderate potential for prehistoric archaeology within the site, and a low potential for archaeology of other periods. However, it is considered that any archaeological remains located within the footprint of the former school buildings are likely to have been damaged or destroyed. Likewise, historic landscaping within the school grounds is also likely to have resulted in at least some degree of damage or destruction of archaeological remains located within the site.

- 2.16 For more information on the heritage and archaeological characteristics of the site, refer to accompanying Archaeological and Heritage Assessment by the Environmental Design

Ecology and trees

- 2.17 In order to inform this planning application, Soltys Brewster undertook an Extended Phase 1 and Bat Survey Report in August 2018. The combination of desk study and field surveys undertaken at the site identified a limited range of habitat types dominated by scrub vegetation, the school buildings and bare ground.
- 2.18 There are also a limited amount of species-poor semi-improved grassland and mature trees on-site. The grassland and scrub habitat were generally considered to be of some ecological value in a local context and the scrub habitat in particular is adjudged to be likely to function as a shelter, foraging and commuting resource for a variety of mammal, bird and invertebrate species. In this regard, slow worms were found to be present on site, in addition to bats roosting within the main school building.

2.19 With regards to existing trees, the Tree Survey accompanying this application identifies three large, mature category A lime trees to the north west of the site, as well as a category B yew towards the south-eastern end of the site. All other trees on-site are of minimal quality or merit.

Flood risk

2.20 Welsh Government's TAN 15 Development Advice Maps, as hosted by Natural Resources Wales, shows that the site is in Flood Zone A and therefore not at risk from flooding.

Planning History

2.21 There is no recent planning history for the site. The Council's online records reference the following, although given the significant time that has elapsed since and the nature of these approvals, none of these applications are of relevance in the context of the current proposals for residential development:

- 2000/01191/REG3 - Demolition of demountables and construct new single storey art block (Approved 23/11/2000)
- 1999/00360/REG3 - New classroom block to replace existing demountable units (Approved 28/05/1999)
- 1995/00902/REG3 - Two storey teaching block (Unknown)
- 1993/00916/OBS - Erect demountable classroom accommodation (Approved 08/10/1993).



Figure 6 - Primary elevation of former school building, with flyover visible to right-hand side



Figure 7 - Part of rear elevation of school building, with flyover visible to left-hand side



Planning policy overview

2.22 The planning context for the application site is provided by National and Local Planning Policy. The National Guidance is provided within Planning Policy Wales alongside its supporting Technical Advice Notes (TANs) whereas the Local Policy Guidance is set out by The Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan (up to 2026) and associated Supplementary Planning Guidance. This chapter provides an overview of the relevant planning policy context, the Planning Statement that accompanies this application should be referred to for a more thorough analysis of the relevant planning policy context.

Planning Policy Wales

2.23 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) is the principal national planning policy document which sets out the land use policies of the Welsh Government (WG) against which development proposals should be assessed. The main thrust of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. Placemaking lies at the heart of PPW, with policy and development management decisions required to seek to deliver development in line with these principles.

2.24 In a bid to ensure placemaking is prioritised, and in order to aid in implementing the Well-being of Future Generations Act, policy topics within PPW have been grouped under four themes, namely '*Strategic and Spatial Choices*'; '*Active and Social Places*'; '*Productive and Enterprising Places*'; and '*Distinctive and Natural Places*', which are supplemented by interwoven policy, which seeks to work together in delivering sustainable places.

2.25 All statutory bodies in Wales carrying out a planning function must exercise functions within the principles of sustainable development as defined in the Well Being Act. Accordingly, PPW states a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Technical Advice Notes

2.26 The following Technical Advice Notes (TANs) are considered to be of relevance in the consideration of these proposals.

- TAN 1 – Joint Housing Land Availability Studies (2015)
- TAN 2 – Planning and Affordable Housing (2006)
- TAN 5 – Nature Conservation and Planning (2009)
- TAN 11 – Noise (1997)
- TAN 12 – Design (2016)
- TAN 18 – Transport (2007)

Local Development Plan

2.27 Section 38(6) of the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning application decisions should be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

2.28 The statutory development plan for this site is the Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan 2011-2026 (Adopted 2017). The site (shown in red at fig.8) is allocated for residential development under policy MG2(18) of the Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan, and therefore the principle of the proposed development is established, subject to detailed design.

2.29 A summary of the pertinent LDP policies is listed below.

Strategic Policies:

- SP1 - Delivering the Strategy
- SP3 - Residential Requirement
- SP4 - Affordable Housing Provision
- SP7 - Transportation
- SP10 - Built and Natural Environment

Managing Growth Policies:

- MG1 - Housing Supply in the Vale of Glamorgan
- MG2 - Housing Allocations



- MG4 - Affordable Housing

Managing Development Policies:

- MD1 - Location of New Development
- MD2 - Design of New Development
- MD3 - Provision of Open Space
- MD4 - Community Infrastructure and Planning Obligations
- MD5 - Development within Settlement Boundaries
- MD6 - Housing Densities
- MD7 - Environmental Protection
- MD9 - Promoting Biodiversity

Supplementary Planning Guidance

2.30 The Vale of Glamorgan also has a number of adopted SPGs, listed within the Planning Statement.

- Affordable Housing,
- Biodiversity and Development,
- Design in the Landscape,
- Model Design Guide for Wales,
- Parking Standards,
- Planning Obligations,
- Public Art,
- Residential and Householder Development,
- Sustainable Development - A Developer's Guide, and
- Trees, Woodlands, Hedgerow and Development.

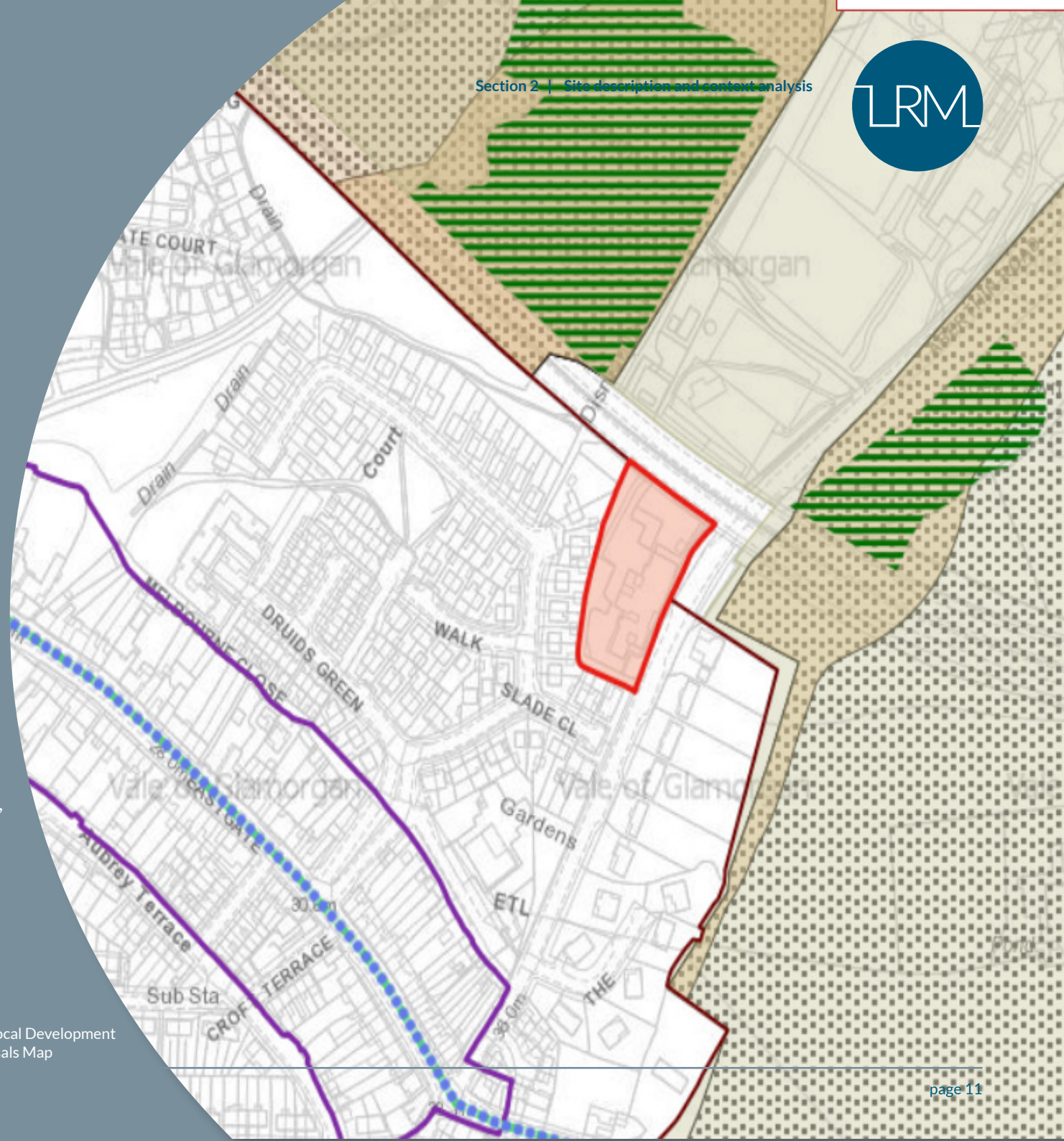


Figure 8 - Local Development Plan Proposals Map



Figure 9 - Part of primary elevation of former school building



Figure 10 - View of side (northern) elevation with demountable structure visible on right-hand side



Figure 11 - View from pavement along northeastern boundary of site, looking south



3

Interpretation and design development

Pre-application engagement with Local Authority

- 3.1 This section explains how the site context has been taken into account in forming the proposals, as well as summarising how the scheme has evolved through engagement with the Local Planning Authority.

Interpretation

- 3.2 The context to the site, set out in section 2, provided fundamental parameters within which the proposals had to be designed. Chief amongst these are the following, which correspond to the opportunities and constraints diagram at fig.13 overleaf:

- 1 - Adjoining residential context and potential amenity impact upon neighbours.
- 2 - Existing school building and potential historic value.
- 3 - Existing mature trees, which became subject to TPOs post-submission.

- 4 - Potential for use of existing building by bats and likelihood for mitigation measures.
- 5 - Proximity to flyover, which provides a clear physical boundary to the north.
- 6 - Easement required for flyover maintenance in perpetuity.
- 7 - Aspect onto main road.
- 8 - Noise and air quality considerations arising from proximity to roads.
- 9 - Potential for archaeological value within site.
- 10 - Sun path.

- 3.3 The majority of these matters were known from an early stage in the process, aside from the air quality concerns, which was brought up by the Shared Regulatory Services as a consultee to the application; and the trees been subjected to TPOs, which the applicant was advised of some four months after the application was submitted, and was formalised some three further months thereafter. Accordingly, the layout and design sought to account for much of these elements from an early stage.

- 3.4 In addressing these, a number of early layouts were prepared.

Pre-application consultation

- 3.5 Pre application advice was sought from the Local Planning Authority with regards to the proposed scheme, via written correspondence submitted to the Council on 17th May 2018. A meeting was held with Senior Planning Officer Yvonne Prichard on the 7th June 2018 at the Council offices. This was followed up by written advice in a letter dated 15th August 2018 and issued by email on 24th August 2018. The main comments in respect of design have informed the current layout.
- 3.6 A full summary of the comments received from the Local Authority is provided in the accompanying Planning Statement, with the comments that are most pertinent in design terms outlined below:
- It was confirmed that, although the loss of the existing building is regrettable, there

would be no planning justification to refuse an application that sought the demolition of the building.

- There was no objection raised in the principle to the number of units proposed, although it was suggested that the constraints to development be borne in mind so that the proposals would not amount to overdevelopment.
- In relation to the proposed four storey apartment block, the principle was accepted, but it was advised that much would depend on the detailed design. The 3D images provided at the meeting were considered to demonstrate that the size and scale of the apartment block would not be out of place alongside the elevated section of the adjacent A48 bypass.
- The proposed layout was accepted to generally appear to respect the privacy and outlook of the existing neighbours to the site.
- Concerns were raised about the number and proximity of the car parking to the properties on Millfield Drive, and whether this could be broken up.

3.7 In addition, a statutory Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) exercise and a non-statutory

public exhibition were undertaken prior to the submission of the planning application. The results of these exercises are presented within the 'PAC Report' that accompanies this planning application.

Design development

3.8 A thorough breakdown of the design development is contained within section 5 of the accompanying Planning Statement, which may be read alongside this summary.

3.9 Following on from the pre-application discussions, the original planning application was submitted in December 2018, which followed the advice that had been received from the Authority earlier in the process.

3.10 A meeting was held with Planning Officers at the LPA in February 2019, where it was advised that there were concerns about the height of the proposed structures and the design of the dwellings. Officers also informed the applicants that it would be likely that four of the trees

Figure 12 - View looking north along Aberthin Road - site to the left, flyover ahead



Figure 13 - Opportunities and constraints diagram





on site would imminently be subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

- 3.11 There followed a submission of indicative drawings by the applicant later that month, which reduced the main roof ridge by 1.8m and the bookended gables by 1.4m. This resulted in the main ridge being clearly and inarguably lower than the flyover, which was a request of the officers from the meeting earlier in the month.
- 3.12 The indicative drawings was met by a response from officers in March 2019, stating that the reduced height had not sufficiently allayed concerns, and further amendments would be required.
- 3.13 The applicants' response was to submit further indicative drawings that included omission of five flats, which resulted in the visual impact of removal of an entire storey, albeit whilst retaining six flats at the uppermost floor. This revision resulted in a cumulative reduction in height of 2.99m, and a clear subservience to the flyover.
- 3.14 In April 2019, extensive comments were provided by officers, listing concerns that they held about the latest indicative drawings. The main concerns included the scale, character and appearance of the apartments; the scale of the town houses and their impact on the neighbour at Slade Close; and the lack of amenity space on site. On a positive note, the officers advised that they did not consider that an unacceptable amenity impact upon dwellings on Millfield Drive

was arising at this stage.

- 3.15 In June 2019, further revised drawings were issued. By now, the dwelling numbers had reduced from the original 48 down to 37. The apartments were split into two smaller, discrete blocks rather than one block of single massing and their scale at the highest point marginally reduced by a further 65mm. The terrace of five houses was replaced with two pairs of semi-detached houses and rotated through 90 degrees, to allow retention of the yew tree that was now subject to a TPO, and to ensure proposed dwellings would be sufficiently distant from existing Millfield Drive dwellings.
- 3.16 Other design changes at this stage included the house at plot 1 being designed as dual aspect so as to face onto main road as well as new internal access road; various material choices being shown, comprising of two different coloured bricks in various forms; and amendments made to the fenestration in terms of size, positioning and proportion, in response to LPA's earlier comments about the proposed style.
- 3.17 Another detailed response was issued by the LPA in July 2019, where they maintained concerns over the scale, height and impact of the amended scheme. Officers were concerned that the proposals were over-scaled and unusually high, and being driven by the flyover, despite the pre-application advice accepting this as a barometer to guide the height of the proposed buildings. Similarly, it was also raised that the proposed buildings were too close to the flyover, despite

this not having been mentioned previously. The proposals were advised to be at odds with the existing context.

- 3.18 Concerns were raised over the design contrast between the two apartment blocks, and it was suggested that a more closely aligned design between the two blocks would be preferred. It was advised that more amenity space should be provided.
- 3.19 In terms of positive feedback at this stage, it was concluded that pending agreement on scale and height, the finishes shown were '*likely to be considered acceptable*'. Latest changes were '*welcomed*' in respect of previously raised amenity impact concerns about no.8 Slade Close. Coupled with earlier comments in terms of impact upon dwellings on Millfield Drive, the LPA by this stage had confirmed that there is no undue impact upon neighbours.
- 3.20 The images at figs.14 and 15 serve a number of purposes. Fig.14 demonstrates the context of the existing buildings on site against outlines of the various iterations of the proposed development, showing the progressive reduction in scale since the original submission. Fig.15 serves a similar purpose, but is also set against the context of the neighbouring dwellings and flyover, and also indicating the extent of built development on the opposite side of the road.



Figure 14 - Comparison heights of various submitted proposals against existing buildings

- Blue line - existing structures on-site
- Red line - December 2018 submission - ridge height 15.165m
- Purple line - March 2019 submission - ridge height 12.175m
- Orange line - June 2019 submission - ridge height 12.110m
- Currently proposed ridge height 9.84m



Figure 15 - Comparison of existing buildings, original proposal and current proposal, against existing context



- Orange shading - existing structures on-site
- Red line - original planning submission
- Dashed black line - extent of existing built development on opposite side of Aberthin Road



Figure 16 - View southwards along Aberthin Road



Figure 17 - Northern part of site alongside flyover, demountable structure visible to left-hand side



Figure 18 - Side (northern) elevation



Figure 19 - Rear of site with existing building shown to left-hand side



Figure 20 - Dwellings on Millfield Drive



Figure 21 - Dwellings on Millfield Drive, flyover visible to rear



Figure 22 - Dwelling opposite site on eastern side of Aberthin Road



Figure 23 - Dwellings on Millfield Drive, flyover visible to rear



Figure 24 - Dwellings on eastern side of Aberthin Road, opposite site



Figure 25 - Rear of houses on Slade Close and Millfield Drive, to the immediate south of the site



Figure 26 - Rear of houses on Millfield Drive, to the immediate west of the site



Figure 27 - Rear of houses on Millfield Drive, to the immediate west of the site



Figure 28 - View south along Aberthin Road, site viewed to the right



Figure 29 - Flyover to north of site



Figure 30 - Former access into site, blocked by boulders



Figure 31 - View underneath flyover



SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION

4no. 1B2P wheelchair accessible apartments
 4no. 2B3P apartments
 2no. 2B4P apartments
 20no. 1B2P apartments
Total = 30 apartments

4no. houses (1 x 4B6P, 1 x 2B4P and 2 x 3B5P)

Total = 34 units

Car parking spaces: 38no. total (30no. apartments & 8no. houses)

Communal cycle storage: 18no. spaces total (12no. external & 6no. internal)

Boundary Key

- TYPE 01 - 1100mm high black powder coated steel railings
- TYPE 02 - 1800mm high timber close boarded fencing
- TYPE 03 - Proposed retaining wall in strict accordance with Structural Engineer's specification
- TYPE 04 - 1800mm high black powder coated steel cladding
- TYPE 05 - 450mm high facing brick wall
- TYPE 06 - 1100mm high black powder coated steel railings along existing stone boundary wall and between existing / new stone posts

Landscape Key

- A Grass / turf/ed areas
- B Permeable concrete block pavours
- C Fine grade tarmac
- 405 x 405mm pre-cast concrete paving slabs
- Existing trees to be retained. Dashed line indicates not protection zone. Category A & B Trees
- Existing trees to be removed
- New tree positions in accordance with Landscape Architect's design & specification
- New low level vegetation in accordance with Landscape Architect's design & specification
- 2.8m x 4.8m parking space

General Key

- 00 Plot number
- Timber garden shed (suitable for bike storage)
- 3-arm rotary clothes line
- Site Boundary - Condition of fence to be assessed and replaced with 1800mm high close boarded timber fence if retained

Figure 32 - Site layout



4

The proposal & assessment against objectives of good design

Character

- 4.1 This application proposes the demolition of the existing former school building and ancillary structures, and their replacement with a development of 34 affordable homes, comprising 30 flats and four houses. The flats include four one-bedroom wheelchair accessible apartments, six two-bedroom general needs apartments and 20 one-bedroom general-needs apartments. The houses are a mixture of one four-bedroom, two three-bedroom and one two-bedroom homes. In addition to the new homes, various associated works are proposed including the forming of new access, car parking provision, erection of a bat roost, cycle storage, planting, and other landscaping works including natural play space.
- 4.2 **Layout** – the proposed development is laid out to reflect the constraints on site, and to provide a streetscene that addresses the road. In this regard, the four trees subject to TPOs are retained, comprising the three limes to the northwest (rear) corner of the site, and the yew to the southeast corner. This provides an

established verdant character to the site from the outset. This, in combination with the need to respect the privacy and amenity of existing neighbours has resulted in the flats addressing the main road. Meanwhile, the two pairs of semi-detached houses are effective in serving to address the main road as well as the access road into the site, lying perpendicular to the apartment blocks. The flats are split into two blocks in every respect aside from the bin store that adjoins the two in the middle.

- 4.3 The northern part of the site comprises an area of amenity space, primarily set out as natural play space for use by children, as well as providing a sitting out area. The play area and the spaces formed around the proposed buildings, complemented by the proposed landscaping (see fig.43), also combine to adhere to ensure that a sense of place is created. To the southwest corner of the site, behind plot 4, is a proposed detached structure to be used as a bat roost, and thus designed according to best

Figure 33 - Welsh Government's Objectives of Good Design (source: Planning Policy Wales)



practice guidance in this regard.

4.4 **Scale** – the apartment blocks are each designed to three storeys in height; the four-bedroom house is two-and-a-half storeys high, whilst the remaining houses are all two storeys. The bat roost is a single storey structure. The scale of the development presently proposed has been reduced from the initial proposals that formed part of the pre-application discussions and the originally submitted application drawings. The currently proposed scale is entirely appropriate within this setting, aiding in creating a streetscene of variety and interest, whilst also making good use of a redundant allocated housing site. In order to minimise perceived impact upon existing neighbouring dwellings, the taller flats are located to the northeast/eastern boundary of the site, furthest from existing dwellings on Slade Close and Millfield Drive.

4.5 **Character and appearance** – The architecture of the proposed development comprises of elements of contemporary design with traditional cues. The traditional pitched roofs and primary use of brick and hanging tiles are enlivened by the type, colour and tone of the brick, and the fenestration proportions. The existing vernacular in this part of the town is of little obvious merit so does not provide a clear character to adhere to. Therefore, the site provides an opportunity to create a distinctly positive character amongst the verdant edge-of-settlement setting.

Access

4.6 The site's location within walking distance of the town centre is a distinct positive of the proposal, with a pedestrian route from the site to the existing pedestrian network ensuring that pedestrian travel opportunities are maximised. The site is designed to ensure pedestrian movements are not inhibited, and

Figure 34 - Apartment Block A elevations



Front Elevation



Rear Elevation

N.B. Not to scale - see submitted plans for scaled versions



Front Elevation



Rear Elevation

N.B. Not to scale - see submitted plans for scaled versions

movement into and within individual properties has been designed to ensure accessibility for users of all needs.

- 4.7 Similarly, cycle access to the site is good, with connectivity maintained and cycle storage provided on site. Storage for the flats is proposed through the combination of an external shelter, and ground floor internal storage provision within each apartment block. The houses each have sufficient space within their gardens and/or sheds for the storage of bikes, and the back garden to each house is independently accessible from the road.
- 4.8 Car parking provision is in line with national standards, which require that a design-led approach to the provision of car parking should be taken, so as to ensure that it does not dominate the development.
- 4.9 In terms of its location, car parking does not dominate the streetscene, with no parking facing directly onto the main road. To the immediate south of the access road, adjacent to the properties they serve, is the car parking provision for the houses. The car parking for the flats is provided to the rear (west) of the flats, overlooked by the flats and concealed from public view on Aberthin Road. The parking spaces are punctuated by planting to soften the appearance. The access into the site via Aberthin Road leads to a turning head for manoeuvring by

a refuse vehicle.

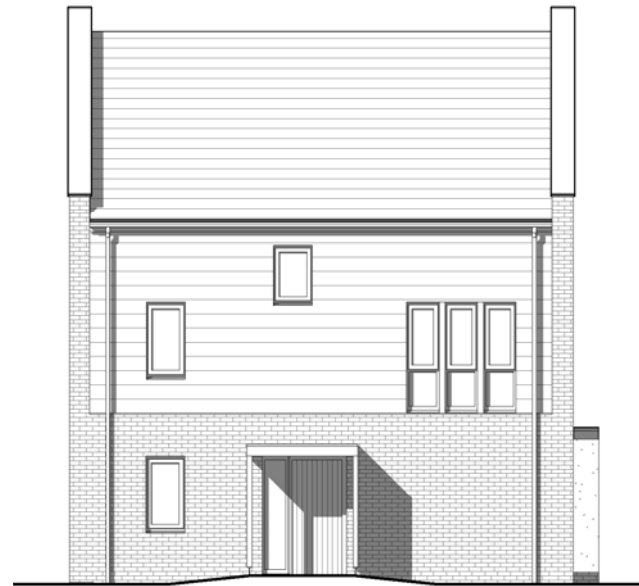
4.10 Overall, it is considered that the proposal represents a sustainable development. The accompanying Transport Statement concludes that future residents will have the opportunity to travel to key destinations and amenities via means of sustainable transport, including walking and cycling, complying with the sustainable transport hierarchy within PPW. In addition, vehicle trips associated with the proposed redevelopment are not considered material nor discernible in the case of highway safety or the capacity of the surrounding highway network.

Movement

4.11 The site is located within 200m walking distance of the defined Cowbridge District Shopping Centre, which provides access to a wide range of local services and facilities including supermarkets, convenience stores, banks, cafes and a number of other independent shops and restaurants.

4.12 A lay-by and bus stop are located immediately to the east of the site, adjacent to Aberthin Road. In addition, two further stops are located within 400m to the south of the site along Cardiff Road providing services to Cardiff, Porthcawl and other local destinations. The closest railway station is located approximately 8.9km to the south of the site in Llantwit Major. This station

Figure 36 - Primary elevations for 4B6P house



Front Elevation



Side Elevation 2

Figure 37 - Primary elevation for 3B5P house



Front Elevation

Figure 38 - Primary elevation for 2B4P house



Front Elevation

N.B. Not to scale - see submitted plans for scaled versions



provides regular services to Cardiff Central, Bridgend and Aberdare.

Environmental Sustainability

- 4.13 At this stage of the process, construction methods have not been determined, but it will be ensured that wherever possible, sustainable materials and methods are utilised.
- 4.14 In other respects, this proposed development demonstrates strong sustainable credentials, not least including the reuse of previously developed land within a highly sustainable location. In addition, the proposals include the retention of four mature trees on-site, three of which are of very high quality and retention value, in the form of the limes to the rear of the site. This provides multiple benefits in respect of retaining habitat; preserving local character; and providing a mature quality to the site upon its completion. The natural play space to the north of the site is also considered to be a valuable part of the landscaping strategy, providing opportunity for practical use of the site and also variety in the streetscape. Potential existing bat habitat will also be catered for via retention of the existing trees, significant landscaping improvements, and the provision of a bespoke bat house.

Community Safety

- 4.15 The site exhibits a series of positive traits that

would aid in designing out crime, in accordance with Secured By Design principles. In this respect, all areas of car parking are overlooked by the dwellings they serve; there is a clear distinction between public and private spaces; robust boundary treatments and well-lit areas ensure that spaces are secure after dark; and in general terms the mix of dwellings on site will provide a mix of household types, improving the chances of activity at all times of the day and thereby increasing passive surveillance.

Response to planning policy

- 4.16 This application has sought to ensure compliance with all relevant local and national policy. As follows is an overview of the relevant policy, which is an abridged version of a similar process that is examined through the accompanying Planning Statement.
- 4.17 The proposed development complies with PPW's placemaking agenda, through its holistic approach to the redevelopment of this site. A high quality development with usable spaces is proposed, enhancing the streetscape by providing activity and quality architecture facing onto one of the main roads into Cowbridge. The context of existing residential uses, mature vegetation, and proximity to the town centre all contribute to the vitality of the place that is being created, forming a resilient and sustainable development that will provide a much-needed

mix of affordable homes.

- 4.18 Other key elements of PPW that are adhered to include the requirement to make the most efficient re-use of previously developed land, in preference to use of greenfield land; seeking to provide the higher density elements on site, which are importantly proposed in the part of the site most remote from existing dwellings; and ensuring that the layout is not car-dominated and allowing the LPA an opportunity to approve a scheme that keeps parking levels down.
- 4.19 PPW brings the objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations Act into clearer focus in a planning context, and it is considered through the analysis of this proposal from a planning policy context that compliance with PPW is demonstrated. In this regard, wellbeing goals of the Act are considered to be adhered to through this application in that there would be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of wellbeing objectives as a result of the application being approved and development being carried out.
- 4.20 With regard to the LDP, commencing with the Strategic Policies, policy SP1 is an overarching policy that provides a framework to deliver the LDP Strategy, and is adhered to within this proposal by it seeking to provide a range and choice of housing for all sectors of the community, reinforcing the role of Cowbridge



as a service centre settlement, and promoting sustainable transport.

- 4.21 The development aids in ensuring that the Local Authority's housing land supply is maintained, in line with LDP policies SP3 and SP4.
- 4.22 Though the loss of the buildings would be contrary to LDP policy SP10, the wording of this policy states that 'the architectural and / or historic qualities of buildings' must be preserved and where appropriate enhanced under development proposals. This statement is considered unrealistic and onerous as it could theoretically be applied to most buildings in the Vale of Glamorgan and would therefore stymie development significantly. It is therefore suggested that appropriate and reasonable weight be given to this policy. There is no policy position that demands the retention of the existing buildings. The site is not within the conservation area, nor is it a listed building, nor does it appear on the County Treasures list. In respect of the latter, it is asserted that if the buildings on site were considered to be of sufficient merit to appear on the County Treasures list, this should have been enacted prior to the site being allocated under the extant LDP.
- 4.23 The Managing Growth Policies begin with policy MG1, which supplements policy SP3 and is therefore adhered to herein.

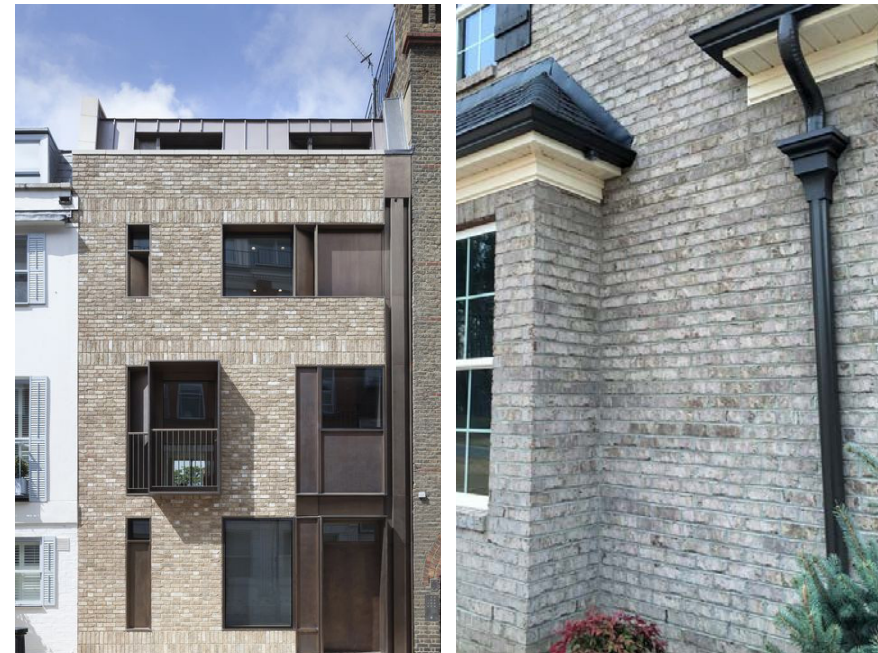


Figure 39 - Precedent images demonstrating proposed brick tones



- 4.24 The application site is an allocated housing site within the current LDP, under policy MG2, site reference 18. It lies alongside existing residential dwellings, which would comprise of a conforming land use, on the edge, but closely related to, the town centre of Cowbridge, which is within walking distance.
- 4.25 Policy MG4 sets targets for Affordable Housing in the Vale, stating a 40% requirement in Cowbridge for developments resulting in a net gain of one or more dwellings. This proposal seeks consent for 100% affordable homes, which should be lauded in light of local and national shortages. In this regard, a community's need for affordable housing is cited in PPW as a material planning consideration which must be taken into account when determining relevant planning applications.
- 4.26 Policy MG21 is entitled Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites and Priority Habitats and Species. The goals of this policy are met through the proposed development's plans for bat mitigation, via the provision of enhanced planting and a bespoke bat house on-site.
- 4.27 The final grouping of policies is within the Managing Development chapter. Policy MD2 is an overarching design policy, entitled Design of New Development, which lists series of requirements expected of development proposals in order to create high quality, healthy, sustainable and locally distinct places. Though not all elements are of relevance to this application, as a proposal for residential development, the following criteria are considered to be adhered to herein.
- 4.28 Points 1 and 2 of the policy relate to design in terms of responding to context and being appropriately conceived in respect of use, form, scale, mix and density, amongst other matters. In the character assessment at the beginning of this section, these elements are demonstrably achieved. On a similar vein, the design process has ensured that a healthy and active environment is being created, reducing opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour, as per the requirements of criterion 4 of MD2.
- 4.29 Items 5 and 6 of MD2 relate to accessibility, movement and highway safety, and once again are adhered to through the design and supporting studies that have formed this application.
- 4.30 Correspondence from the Authority, outlined in section 3 and in further detail within the accompanying Planning Statement, has confirmed that no unacceptable amenity impact on dwellings on Millfield Drive and Slade Close are arising (see also figs.41 & 42). To the east, the site faces existing dwellings on Aberthin Road, albeit these are raised above the application site, set back from the road, and secreted behind established vegetation. Furthermore, approximately half the site frontage is faced by an area of mature vegetation to the east, rather than facing towards existing dwellings. Therefore, there is considered to be no unacceptable amenity impact arising from the development, adhering to part 8 of MD2.
- 4.31 Parts 9, 10 and 11 of MD2 require provision of public open space, private amenity space and car parking; sensitive landscaping and retention of existing landscape and biodiversity features; and adequate facilities for waste. As already outlined in this document, these are all matters that have clearly been evidently addressed via the submission.
- 4.32 Point 12 of MD2 relates to sustainability and is addressed earlier in this section.
- 4.33 Policy MD3 requires new residential development with a net gain of five or more dwellings to provide open space. In compliance with this policy, an area of equipped natural play space is provided on-site that could also be used as a sitting-out area, whilst it is understood that the Authority will also seek planning obligations to contribute towards off-site provision. This links to policy MD4, which states that planning obligations will be sought where appropriate.
- 4.34 Policy MD5 relates to development within settlement boundaries and is adjudged to be adhered to via the allocation of this site within



Figure 40 - Proposed street elevations



Street Elevation From Ground Floor Level



Street Elevation From Ground Floor Level

N.B. Not to scale - see submitted plans for scaled versions



the LDP. In any case, its provisions are met by virtue of the proposed development making efficient use of land; being of suitable scale, form, layout and character within its setting; not resulting in the unacceptable loss of natural or built features that contribute to the character of the settlement (this point already covered in discussing policy SP10); not resulting in the loss of open space, community or tourism buildings; having no unacceptable impact in respect of noise, traffic and parking; and finally, making appropriate provision for community infrastructure.

- 4.35 Policy MD6 relates to housing densities and requires residential developments in specified settlements, including Cowbridge, to deliver a minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare. The policy states that higher densities are able to be permitted where they would not unacceptably impact upon local amenity, and where they'd reflect the character of the surrounding areas. This is met via the considered design of the site and the resultant density that makes most efficient use of the land, without prejudicing amenity impact upon existing neighbours nor being out of character.
- 4.36 Policy MD7 is entitled Environmental Protection, and amongst other matters, covers noise pollution, air pollution, land contamination, flooding, and anything else of risk to public health and safety. Through the submission of noise,

air and site investigation studies, this policy is adhered to. The site is not within the flood zone.

- 4.37 Policy MD8 covers the Historic Environment of the Vale of Glamorgan and on the basis of the designations of the site, is only applicable in respect of the site's potential archaeological interest. Discussions of this are subject to an accompanying Archaeological and Heritage Assessment, and it is also within the Authority's gift to apply suitably worded and appropriate conditions in respect of archaeology.
- 4.38 Policy MD9 refers to the need for new development proposals to conserve and where possible, enhance, biodiversity interests unless it can be demonstrated that the need for the proposed development outweighs the biodiversity credentials, and the impacts can be mitigated and managed in perpetuity. The ecological survey work accompanying this application addresses these matters, and the proposed bat house suitably mitigates against the loss of potential habitat.



Figure 41 - Separation distance diagram

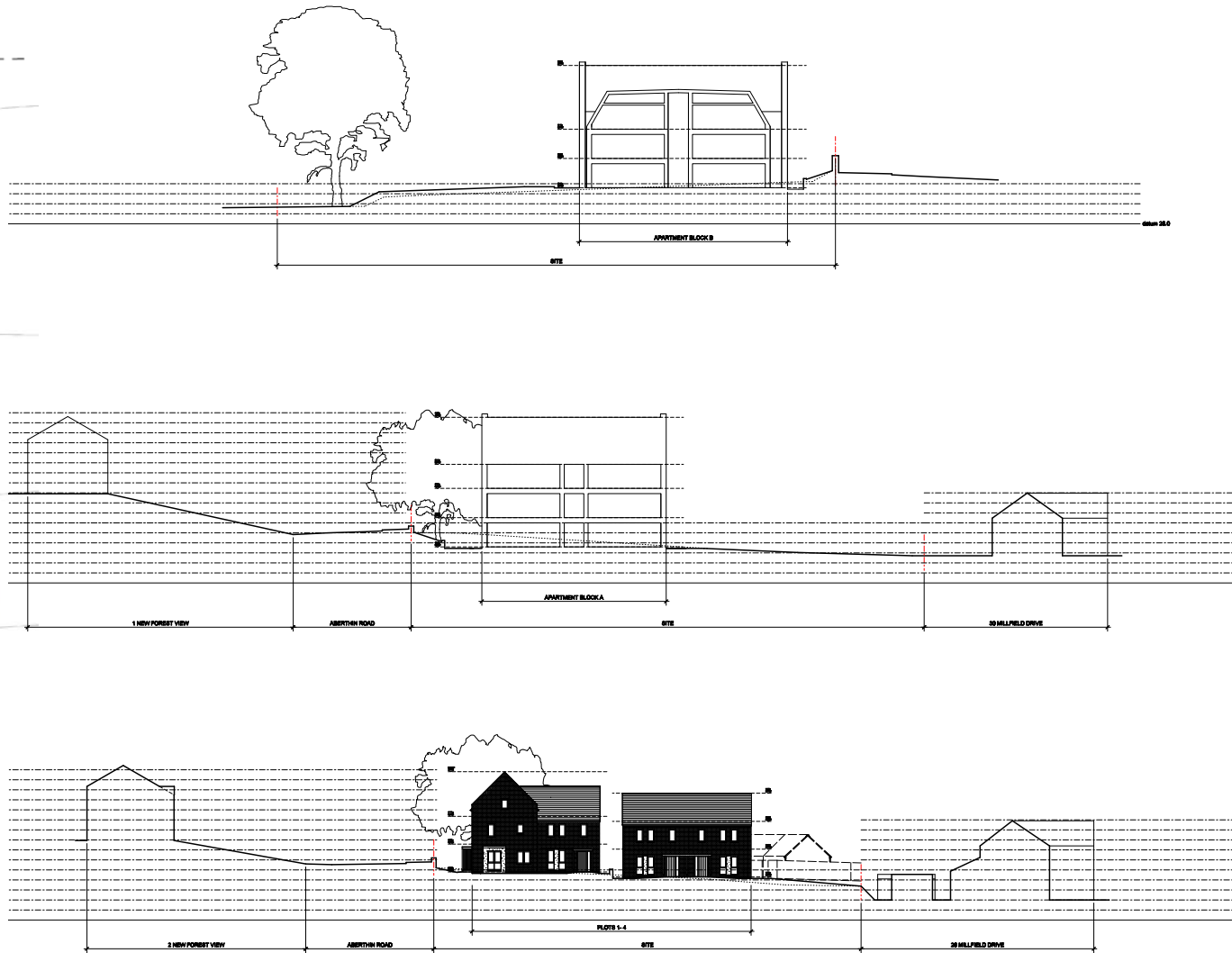


Figure 42 - Site sections

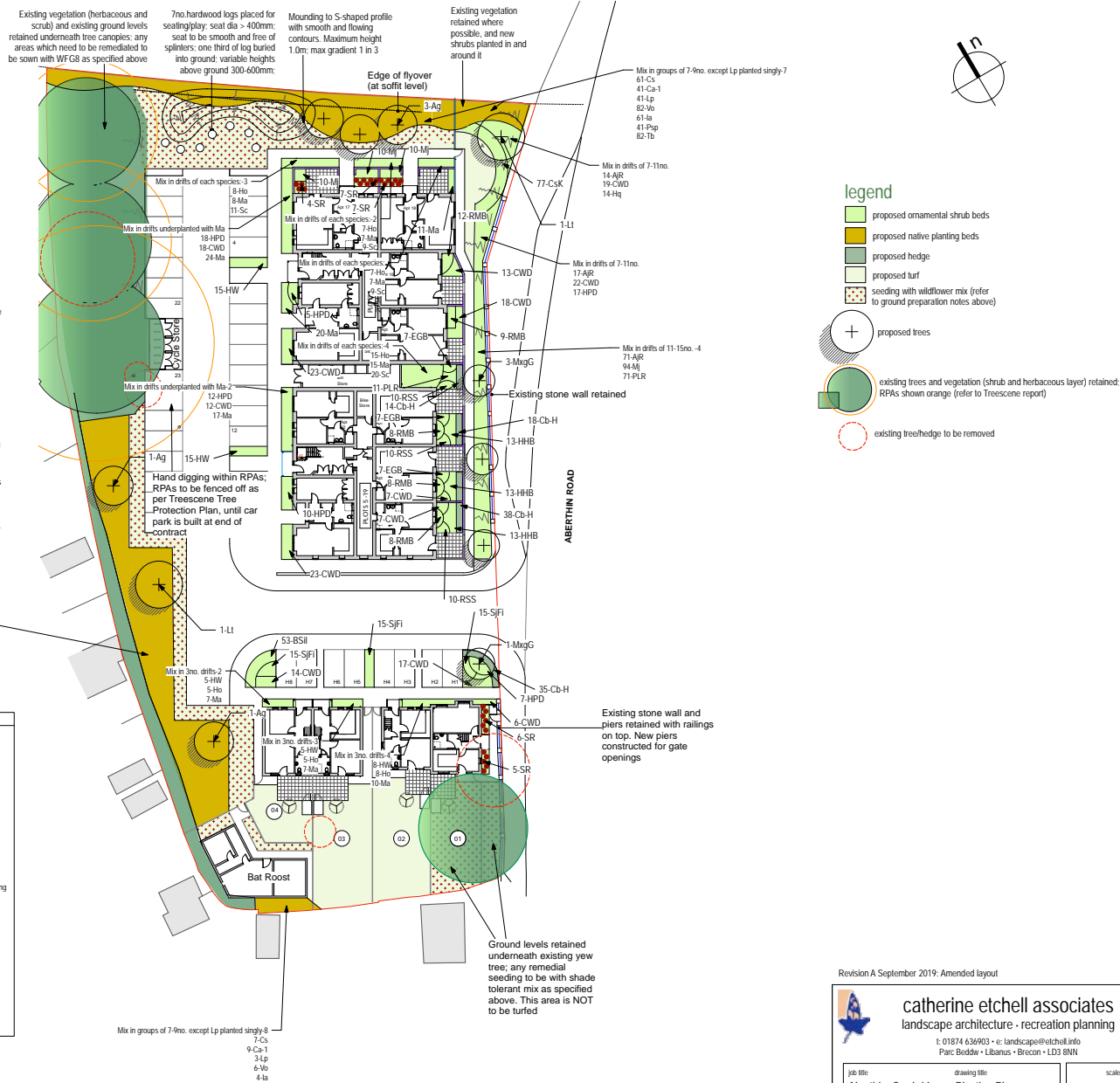


planting specification notes

- Tree locations are subject to confirmation of engineering and foundation details. Foundations shall comply with guidelines set by structural engineering consultants, and shall accord with the current NHBC Standards Building near Trees and shall accommodate immediate and future impact of tree or shrubs on buildings and their foundations.
- The landscape contractor is to make him/herself aware of any underground services prior to planting.
- Any proposed substitutions, whether species, cultivar, pot size or other specification, must be approved by landscape architect prior to planting.
- Any significant layout changes necessitating revised details (such as new retaining walls casing shade on planting beds) should be reported to the landscape architect.
- All container grown stock to be in peat-free compost.
- All native stock to be of local provenance.
- All Nursery Stock to comply with BS 3934 Part 1:1992 and all subsequent amendments.
- All Landscape operators to comply with BS 4428:1989 and all subsequent amendments.
- All soils to be imported, topsoil and subsoil to be stored in separate, non-overlapping mounds and topsoil should be shipped from any areas used for subsoil storage. The minimum amount of compost should be applied when forming soil storage mounds, they should not be driven across. Topsoil mounds should be no greater than 2m in height and subsoil mounds should be no higher than 3m.
- The imported soils for tree and shrub planting will comprise sandy loams as per BS 3882:2015 and BS 8601:2013, of slightly acid (pH 5.0-6.5) on placement and with excellent drainage and aeration properties.
- The protection of topsoil and subsoil for planting areas should accord with the Construction Code for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites (DEFRA, 2009), BS 3882:2015 and BS 8545:2014.
- Great care must be taken to preserve existing soil quality and integrity. The planting beds will be lime-tipped to relieve any compaction due to construction works and to ensure the substrate to receive the subsoil is free draining.
- Shrub planting areas to be spread with topsoil to a depth of 300mm for planting beds, above 300mm subsoil topsoil allowed to settle prior to planting.
- For new wildflower areas and remedial areas: Wildflower grass seed to be Germinol WF G8 Hedgerows and Shaded areas' sown at 5g/m² on finely cultivated subsoil using shake-aerator spread with 10-15mm subsoil; topsoil worked into the top layer and watered in (to ensure some nitrogen but low phosphorus).
- Hornbeam hedges to be planted in double staggered rows at 51mm: all hedges to be planted a minimum of 400 from adjacent kerb line or wall foundations.
- Tree pits to be excavated to minimum 1m x 1m x depth of rootball. In staging ground, maintain horizontal bases and vertical sides with no less than minimum depth throughout. Break up bottoms of pits to a depth of 150mm and scally sides.
- Tree supply, planting and aftercare must accord with BS 6545:2014. All non-biodegradable wrappings, cages etc. to be completely removed on planting. Biodegradable wrappings also to be removed, but may, where root-ball collapse is a concern, be cut and peeled back to a depth of 150mm and scally sides.
- Containerised trees to be staked with short double stakes, maximum height one quarter the height of the tree, secured with biodegradable hessian tree ties.
- All rootballed trees to be anchored underground with Greenleaf Rootball Fixing System.
- All trees to be planted with Greenleaf 'Root Rain Urban' watering pipes, fitted according to manufacturer's instructions, removal prior to planting.
- All trees in grass or wildflower areas to be planted in an edge and mulched bed, 1000mm diameter.
- Any poor site or soil preparation or conditions to be reported to site manager for remediation prior to planting.
- All planting to receive Green-Tech Mycorrhiza Rootgrow, either as dry granule (container planting areas) or root dipping gel (bare root planting). Application according to manufacturer recommendation.
- All plant beds (but not tree pits) to receive peat-free compost during cultivations at a rate of 1m³ to 2m² and slow release fertiliser (e.g. Ficolite 140) at rate of 25g/plant; beds to be thoroughly watered following planting and before mulching.
- For new wildflower areas and remedial areas: Wildflower grass seed to be Germinol WF G8 Hedgerows and Shaded areas' sown at 5g/m² on finely cultivated subsoil using shake-aerator spread with 10-15mm subsoil; topsoil worked into the top layer and watered in (to ensure some nitrogen but low phosphorus).
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planting specification

Spacing	ID	No.	Latin Name	Scheduled Size	Notes
TREE	Ag	1	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	16-18cm	Rootballed
4m ²	AGR	102	<i>Acacia japonica</i> 'Rozanne'	30-40cm, 3L	2 breaks in lower third, bushy
6m ²	BSI	53	<i>Bergenia</i> 'Sibirich'	30-40, 5L	Full pot
2m ²	Ca-1	217	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	1+2, 60-80cm	BR
51mm	Cb-H	105	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	100-125cm, BR	1+2, 5 breaks
2m ²	Cs	179	<i>Comus sanguinea</i>	1+1, 60-80cm	BR
3m ²	CsK	77	<i>Comus stolonifera</i> 'Kelsey'	30-40cm, 3L	Bushy
4m ²	CWD	199	<i>Chosya dewitteana</i> 'White Dazzler'	40-50cm, 3L	3 breaks in lower third
4m ²	EGB	21	<i>Escallonia exoniensis</i> 'Gold Brian'	30-40cm, 3L	3 breaks in lower third
4m ²	HHB	39	<i>Hale's 'Midsomer Beauty'</i>	30-40cm, 3L	2 breaks in lower third
5m ²	Ho	55	<i>Helleborus x hybridus</i>	20-30cm, 3L	Full pot
3m ²	HPD	69	<i>Hydrangea paniculata</i> 'Pink Diamond'	30-40cm, 5L	5 breaks in lower third
3m ²	Hq	14	<i>Hydrangea quercifolia</i>	30-40cm, 5L	5 breaks in lower third
3m ²	HW	48	<i>Hale's 'Winters'</i>	30-40cm, 5L	2 breaks in lower third
2m ²	Ia	176	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	60-80cm, 3L	2/3 breaks in lower third
1m ²	Lp	100	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	60-90cm, 3L	min 2 breaks, cane removed on planting
TREE	PLR	2	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	20-25cm	Rootballed, 1.5m clear stem
4m ²	Mia	133	<i>Mahonia aquifolium</i> 'Apoll'	20-30cm, 3L	main leader, well branched
4m ²	MJ	124	<i>Mahonia japonica</i>	20-30cm, 3L	main leader, well branched
TREE	MugG	4	<i>Magnolia x grandiflora</i> 'Callisnoire'	200L 4m high	2m clear stem
4m ²	PLR	82	<i>Phloxia x fraseri</i> 'Little Robin'	40-60, 7L	5 strong breaks in lower third
2m ²	Psp	41	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	1+1, 60-80cm	BR; 3 breaks
4m ²	RMB	45	<i>Rosa x alba</i> 'Maiden's Blush'	30-40, 3L	5 breaks in lower third
4m ²	RSS	30	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> 'Severn Sea'	30-40cm, 3L	3 breaks in lower third
4m ²	Sc	49	<i>Sarcococca confusa</i>	30-40cm	3L
4m ²	SJFI	45	<i>Spirea japonica</i> 'Firelight'	30-40, 3L	Bushy, 5 breaks in lower third
2m ²	SR	29	<i>Skimmia 'Reevesiana'</i>	30-40cm, 7L	7 breaks in lower third
3/1m	Tb	138	<i>Taxus baccata</i>	40-60cm	cg or br
2m ²	Vo	144	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	1+2, 60-90cm	BR



Revision A September 2019; Amended layout

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job title Abertihin, Cowbridge	drawing title Planting Plan	scale · 1:250 at A1
client Hafod	date · December 2018	drawn · CE
	drawing number · 4271.01	revision · A

Figure 43 - Landscaping scheme



Figure 44 - Current view from south along Aberthin Road



Figure 45 - Proposed view from south along Aberthin Road



Figure 46 - Current view from north along Aberthin Road

Figure 47 - Proposed view from north along Aberthin Road



5

Appraisal & conclusion

- 5.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the demolition of existing buildings on site and replacement with a proposal for 30 apartments and four houses.
- 5.2 The site is allocated for residential development under policy MG2(18) of the Local Development Plan. This, along with the site's location in the settlement boundary, its sustainable location and the reuse of a redundant site combine to establish the principle of development.
- 5.3 There are no policy constraints requiring the retention of the existing building. The development seeks to provide affordable housing in an existing urban area, supported by both local and national policy principles, and aiding in meeting provision.
- 5.4 The proposals accord with national and local planning policy in the form of the new PPW, its supporting TANs; and the Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan.
- 5.5 The design of the proposed dwellings is appropriate in its setting, placing the marginally higher density buildings away from existing neighbouring structures; making efficient use of previously developed land in an urban contest; improving the local vernacular; and not resulting in any unacceptable amenity impacts upon existing dwellings.
- 5.6 The highways impact of the proposed development is negligible, with sustainable means of transport designed for and encouraged through the sustainable location of the site.
- 5.7 The retention of existing mature high-quality trees, and the proposed mitigation planting, ensure a positive visual impact and encouragement of biodiversity.
- 5.8 Wellbeing goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act are considered to be adhered to through this application in that there would be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of wellbeing objectives as a result of the application being approved and development being carried out. The new PPW brings the objectives of the Act into clearer focus in a planning context, and it is considered through the planning policy analysis undertaken in this Statement, that compliance with PPW is demonstrated.
- 5.9 In conclusion, it is considered that the proposal offers development of quality within a sustainable location in Cowbridge, adhering to the placemaking agenda advocated by PPW. The proposal is a rare opportunity to bring high-quality much-needed affordable homes to this part of Cowbridge, adhering with all relevant local and national policies. On this basis, it is respectfully recommended that the Vale of Glamorgan Council puts this application forward for approval.



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