



LRM
PLANNING
LIMITED

LAND AT ABERTHIN ROAD, COWBRIDGE

PLANNING STATEMENT

Prepared by LRM Planning Limited
on behalf of Hafod Resources Ltd.

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Report Control

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Primary author: Rhys Jones

Initialed: RJ

Review by: Steffan Harries

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement accompanies a full planning application submitted on behalf of Hafod Resources Ltd. 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.
- 1.2 The site is allocated for housing and located within the settlement boundary. An application was originally submitted in December 2018 for 48 dwellings, though this Planning Statement is written in support of the revised proposals for 34 affordable homes.
- 1.3 This report forms part of a suite of drawings and documents submitted with the application. The submission documents justify how the proposed scheme demonstrates the site's suitability to accommodate the proposed development. The full suite of documents submitted with this application therefore comprises:

Document	Prepared by
Planning application forms	LRM Planning
Design and Access Statement	LRM Planning
Planning Statement	LRM Planning
Pre-application Consultation (PAC) Report	LRM Planning
Series of Computer-Generated Images of proposed development	iCreate
Transport Statement	Calibro Consultants
Extended Phase 1 and Bat Survey Report - Issued	Soltys Brewster Ecology
Survey for Bats and Reptiles, September 2017 (to supplement above report)	David Clements Ecology
Hibernation Survey - Addendum Report, Cowbridge School - Revision 2	Soltys Brewster Ecology
Archaeological and Heritage Assessment	EDP
Noise Assessment Report	Wardell Armstrong
Air Quality Assessment	Wardell Armstrong
Tree Survey	Treescene
Arboricultural Impact Assessment	Treescene
Tree Protection Plan	Treescene



Landscaping Scheme (ref. 421.01 revA)	Catherine Etchell Associates
Site Contours Sketch (ref. C1214_C-SK03 Rev B)	CB3 Consult
Drainage Strategy (ref. C1214_C-SK01 Rev B)	CB3 Consult
Geo-Environmental and Geo-Technical Report	Earth Science Partnership

1.4 The application is also supported by the following drawings, prepared by Pentan Architects:

Drawing	Reference
Site Location Plan	3703-PA-200
Existing Site Survey	3703-PA-201 rev.A
Proposed Site Plan	3703-PA-210 rev.C
Overlooking Distances	3703-PA-211 rev.A
Apartment Block A Proposed Floor Plans	3703-PA-215 rev.A
Apartment Block A Proposed Elevations	3703-PA-216 rev.A
Apartment Block B Proposed Floor Plans	3703-PA-220 rev.A
Apartment Block B Proposed Elevations	3703-PA-221 rev.A
Proposed 4B6P House Plans & Elevations	3703-PA-225 rev.A
Proposed 3B5P House Plans & Elevations	3703-PA-226 rev.A
Proposed 2B4P House Plans & Elevations	3703-PA-227 rev.A
Proposed Bat Roost	3703-PA-230
Proposed Cycle Store	3703-PA-231 rev.A
Proposed Boundary Details	3703-PA-232
Proposed Site Sections	3703-PA-235 rev.A
Proposed Site Sections Through Fly-over	3703-PA-236
Proposed Coloured Elevations	3703-PA-240
Proposed Coloured Elevations	3703-PA-241

1.5 The following sections discuss the site and its context; the proposed development; a summary of the engagement with various stakeholders undertaken to date; a thorough overview of the process of post-submission engagement and the arising amendments to the proposed development; a review of the planning policy context; followed by an appraisal of the development; and finally, a conclusion that draws together the key points.



2 Site description and context

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 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.
- 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 Partnership.

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 (NRW), 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 a number of minor applications relating to the site's former use as a school, but all are dated from 2000 or earlier and of no obvious relevance to the proposals herein.



3 Proposed development

Proposals

- 3.1 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.

Consideration of retention of existing building

- 3.2 The existing structures on site were initially considered in terms of their potential for retention and conversion for residential use. The main school building is formed of an irregular footprint, varying floor to ceiling heights, and original construction and extensions from different periods. Accordingly, though conversion is possible, it would result in the provision of very few dwellings. Fundamentally, layout and circulation would be problematic, and the quality of accommodation that could potentially be provided would be negated by the size and positioning of existing fenestration.
- 3.3 In addition to the main school building, 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. The proposed development will retain and repair this boundary feature, which will continue to represent a feature of the roadside.

Design of the development

- 3.4 **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 of higher quality 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, and the houses being perpendicular to the flats. The flats are split into two blocks in every respect aside from the bin store that adjoins the two in the middle.
- 3.5 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 practice guidance in this regard.
- 3.6 **Scale** – the apartments 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.
- 3.7 **Character and appearance** – The design of the proposed development takes cues from both traditional and contemporary architecture. The pitched roof forms, proposed materials and other



features are traditional in nature, whereas the type of brick and the fenestration style and size lends a more contemporary feel to the new homes.

- 3.8 **Landscaping and trees** – aside from the retention of the four mature trees on site, extensive planting is proposed to soften the main streetscene and also to bound the site along its western side. The planting on the western boundary serves as both a buffer to the existing dwellings, and as a green corridor to link to the bat roost. To the northern edge of the site, additional tree and shrub planting is proposed, which will adjoin a proposed natural play space former of profiled earthworks and hardwood logs. For more information on the proposed landscaping, see the accompanying landscaping scheme by Catherine Etchell Associates.

Access and car parking

- 3.9 The access into the site via Aberthin Road leads to a turning head for manoeuvring by a refuse vehicle. Cycle storage is proposed for the flats 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.
- 3.10 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 secreted away from public view on Aberthin Road. The parking spaces are punctuated by planting.

Engineering – levels, drainage

- 3.11 **Levels** – the current school building sits below the road by between 0.5m and 1m. The proposal sees the new apartments set at a level of approximately 1m below the main road, whilst the houses are around 0.5m below the road. The access road falls by approximately 1m from Aberthin Road towards the turning head.
- 3.12 **Drainage** – infiltration testing was undertaken in January 2019, which demonstrated that ground conditions were not suitable for soakaways. Accordingly, it is proposed to discharge surface water via attenuated connection at a rate of five litres per second. Alternatively, the site could connect to the combined sewer via the existing on-site connection, which is the proposed method of discharge of foulwater. For more information, see Drainage Strategy drawing (ref. C1214 C-SK01 rev.B) by CB3 Consult.

Waste

- 3.13 Bin storage for the flats is discreetly located between block A and block B, resulting in minimal visual impact upon the streetscene. The houses will present waste onto the road on collection day, and be able to store their bins in rear gardens at all other times.

Ecology

- 3.14 With regards to mitigation of the impact upon slow worms, it is proposed that a detailed mitigation strategy be undertaken prior to site clearance/construction, the details of which will be



agreed with the Local Authority.

- 3.15 With regard to mitigation in respect of bats, a licence will be required from NRW to demolish the existing school building, which can only be obtained once planning permission is granted. Further survey work is also proposed to inform the final mitigation strategy, however it is proposed that much of the existing vegetation along the western boundary of the site will be retained and bolstered with new planting to maintain a dark commuting corridor for bats. In addition, a purpose-built bat house will be provided to the south of the site.



4 Engagement

Pre-application discussions with Local Authority

- 4.1 Pre-application advice was sought from the Local Planning Authority (LPA) 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 letter is appended to this report.
- 4.2 The meeting was broadly positive and framed the quantum, nature and type of development that was initially proposed via the December 2018 submission. In summary, the comments received from the LPA are outlined in the left-hand column below, with the applicant's response as to how, where applicable, these matters have been addressed in the right-hand column.

Local Authority comment	Applicant's response
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. It was confirmed that the site is not within a conservation area, and the building is not listed, nor is it a County Treasure.	Noted.
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.	It should be noted that the constraints raised included archaeology and drainage, which have both been assessed in greater detail since and are not considered to be significant barriers to the quantum of development.
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.	These comments were welcomed and taken forward in forming the design for the proposed apartments.
It was considered that the position of the proposed apartment block close to the bypass could result in noise disturbance to future residents. In addition, the Council's Environmental Health requested submission of a noise report.	In response, a Noise Assessment Report was carried out with proposed mitigation measures recommended.



The proposed layout was accepted to generally appear to respect the privacy and outlook of the existing neighbours to the site.	Noted.
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.	Car parking volumes were reduced in line with the site's sustainable location; to accord with national planning policy guidance, and to address the design concerns.
The Council's Ecologist requested a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal be submitted in support of the proposals for the site.	Ecological Appraisal of the site submitted.
The Council's archaeological advisors, Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust, requested an archaeological evaluation of the site.	Archaeological and Heritage Assessment submitted.
The Council's Environmental Health section requested a preliminary desk-based contamination assessment be undertaken.	Geo-Environmental and Geotechnical Report submitted.
The Council's Environmental Health indicated that a full Demolition and Construction and Environmental Management Plan would be required with any successful application.	Noted.
Cautionary advice provided that applications submitted after 7 th January 2019 would require SAB approval for Sustainable Drainage proposals. Noted that the Council's Drainage section was consulted but had not provided a response at the time of writing. The requirement within the LDP allocation was to investigate the suitability of the use of sustainable drainage system for the disposal of surface water run-off, so it was advised that this should be explored.	Application was submitted prior to SAB legislation coming into force. Infiltration tests were undertaken to inform the surface water disposal strategy.

Engagement with neighbours

- 4.3 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.



5 Post-submission engagement/design evolution

- 5.1 The application has been subject to extended correspondence between the applicants and the LPA. Though the case officer for the application was originally Senior Planning Officer Yvonne Prichard, as per the pre-application enquiry, following Ms Prichard's retirement in early March, the application was passed to Senior Planning Officer, Morgan Howell. For the duration, the application was overseen by Principal Planning Officer Stephen Butler. Note that in this section, the term 'applicant' is interchangeable with 'agent' and in either case, represent the mutual opinions and intentions of both, as well as the rest of the development team. This commentary may be read alongside section 3 of the Design and Access Statement, which contains imagery that supplements the text.
- 5.2 **Tuesday 5th February 2019** – meeting between applicants and LPA, attended by Yvonne Prichard and Stephen Butler. At this meeting, matters raised included the following:
- Conservation comments were awaited from the officer, and it was notified that listing the school as a County Treasure was being considered. It was advised that consultation with Cadw would be recommended.
 - Concerns were raised over the height of the apartment block. Pentan Architects advised that it would likely be possible to reduce the height at either gable end and also the central ridge line.
 - It was advised that the Authority was considering protection of the larger trees on site via Tree Preservation Order.
 - Comments on the design of the houses included that they may be too tall and that projections to either side of the block would add aesthetic interest.
 - Concerns were raised that the proposed development would be visible from the highway along the A48.
 - It was advised that the Council's ecologist was yet to make any comments.
 - It was advised that justification within the accompanying Transport Statement should include comparison of likely vehicular trip rate from extant lawful use of the site as an educational facility.
 - It was recommended by the LPA that the A48 flyover should be shown on drawings for physical context.
- 5.3 **Thursday 21st February** – Revised drawings were issued by the applicants to the LPA showing a significantly reduced ridge and gable height to the proposed development. The main bulk of the roof was lowered by over 1.8m and the bookended gables by over 1.4m, resulting in a reduction in massing and scale of the block. These proposals were submitted in the form of elevations and a section drawing only, and included the A48 flyover in the streetscene drawing for the purposes of context, as had been discussed with the LPA. Though these drawings showed the gables projecting marginally higher than the flyover, the main ridge was clearly lower. These drawings also resulted in a more subtle step up from the proposed houses to the apartments.
- 5.4 It was made clear in the email accompanying this submission that the applicant was willing to openly discuss appropriate materials and design principles for the apartment block, and that the main purpose of the submission was, further to discussions at the 5th February meeting and the pre-application response, to gauge the LPA's initial views on the scale, massing and appearance in



the first instance.

- 5.5 **Thursday 14th March** – feedback from Stephen Butler at the LPA advised that the reduction in massing was not considered to address their concerns and that further reduction would be required, preferable in the form of a loss of a storey.
- 5.6 **Friday 15th March** – revised plans were issued by the applicant to the LPA. The proposal at this stage included the omission of five flats and the visual impact of the removal of an entire storey, albeit whilst allowing retention of six apartments on the upper floor. As a result, the ridge line at its highest point was below the parapet of the flyover, and the main ridge line through the block was approximately at the same level as the highway along the A48. The main ridge height had been reduced by a substantial 2.99m under these revisions. This would have made the proposed development less visible from the bypass.
- 5.7 As per the earlier submission of revised indicative drawings on 21st February, the applicant sought initial views on the massing before exploring the more detailed design changes.
- 5.8 **Friday 12th April** – comments were issued by Morgan Howell at the LPA in response to receipt of the above referenced drawings. This represented the lengthiest response received to date and raised a number of issues for the first time. The comments are summarised as follows:
- The main concerns included the scale, character and appearance of the apartments; the impact of the town houses on the neighbour at Slade Close; and the lack of amenity space on site.
 - In respect of the main block, the officer considered that it would be significantly larger than the existing school; over-scaled and unusually high; and at odds with the existing context. This was considered to be applicable from either direction along the A4222 Aberthin Road, as well as from the A48 bypass and the adjacent streets of Millfield Drive and Slade Close.
 - It was confirmed by the officer that the proposal was not considered to have an unacceptable impact on existing dwellings at Millfield Drive, given the separation distances.
 - The town houses were considered to be of a scale that would not be comparable with dwellings in the immediate area and would appear unusual within this location. It was raised that the southernmost house in the terrace would have an unacceptable overbearing impact on no.8 Slade Close.
 - There were no in-principle objections to the use of brick and stone, however render or cladding would be considered more appropriate above ground floor; and the dwellings as proposed were considered to give the appearance of an urban/dockland building.
 - It was considered that the main block and town houses would have to be significantly altered for the scheme to be considered favourably, *“to a point where it should be split into distinct blocks”*.
 - The lack of amenity space was raised as a concern and it was suggested that a reduction in the scale of the apartment block would allow more amenity space to be provided as fewer car parking spaces would be needed.
 - Advice was provided on likely planning obligations.
 - There was no further mention of the potential listing of the school as a County Treasure.
 - The email closed with a recommendation that the applicant either withdraw the



application or otherwise be faced with a recommendation for refusal at the next available Committee meeting.

- 5.9 **Wednesday 17th April** – letter issued by LPA advising of intention to serve Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on the three lime trees to the rear (northwest) of the site and the yew tree in the south-eastern corner of the site.
- 5.10 **Thursday 9th May** – a meeting was held with the LPA, attended by Stephen Butler and Morgan Howell. The purpose of this meeting was to contend the instruction to withdraw the application, and to attempt to arrive at a mutually agreeable solution to allow the LPA to be in a position where they are able to support a proposal for residential development of the site. It was made clear the meeting that the proposal at its current scale and form would not be supported, and the LPA agreed that they would consider a response from the applicant as to why the application should not be refused nor withdrawn.
- 5.11 Also discussed were a request for an air quality assessment, and the need for latest comments from NRW in respect of ecology.
- 5.12 **Friday 10th May** – email sent to LPA by applicant stating that there was no desire to withdraw the application and that revised drawings had been drafted that were considered able to address some of the concerns raised to date. This referenced changes to the scale, massing and dwelling numbers.
- 5.13 It was also raised that the applicant did not wish to withdraw the application as it would create a number of issues logistically and financially, summarised as follows:
- A withdrawal and resubmission would require a new scheme to comply with Sustainable Drainage legislation brought in in January 2019. The applicant’s competitive bid for the site was based on pre-application advice and as the number of dwellings had already been significantly reduced through negotiation, it was considered that incorporating sustainable drainage on site could render a new scheme unviable.
 - There were not considered to be any significant differences in timescales to determine the extant application when comparing a withdrawal with the submission of revised plans under the current consent.
 - Withdrawal and resubmission would require another Pre-Application Consultation process, and the associated time and cost implications.
 - It was raised that there would be unknown but significant costs arising from a withdrawal. Though this was appreciated as not being an LPA concern, it was highlighted by the applicant that the scheme was a submission by a Registered Social Landlord for 100% affordable housing, and that the proposals had followed pre-application advice. Therefore, the suggestion of withdrawal and the resultant cost incursion would be sought to be avoided.
- 5.14 **Friday 10th May** – LPA responded to confirm that they would not insist upon withdrawal of the application, nor seek to refuse it at the next Committee.
- 5.15 **Tuesday 18th June** – email sent to LPA by applicant that attached revised plans for discussion. The proposals at this stage reduced dwelling numbers to 37, comprising of 33 apartments and four



houses.

5.16 The main amendments at this stage are summarised as follows:

- Apartments split into two smaller, discrete blocks rather than one block of single massing; and scale at highest point marginally reduced by a further 65mm. Access road moved slightly further south to accommodate splitting of apartment block.
- Terrace of five houses replaced with two pairs of semi-detached houses and rotated through 90 degrees, to allow retention of yew tree with TPO, and to ensure proposed dwellings would be sufficiently distant from existing Millfield Drive dwellings.
- House at plot 1 designed as dual aspect so as to face onto main road as well as new internal access road.
- Various material choices shown, comprising of two different coloured bricks in various forms; with one option showing hanging tiles to the house at plot 1, in order to provide LPA with some flexibility and input.
- Fenestration amended in terms of size, positioning and proportion, in response to LPA's earlier comments about the proposed style.
- Selection of images provided showing massing in 3D streetscene context; and model of proposed scheme against previous iteration provided.

5.17 **Friday 5th July** – in response to the submission of additional drawings on 18th June, comments were received from Morgan Howell at the LPA. The comments are summarised as follows, under the headings that were used by the LPA in their response:

Design, Scale and Visual Impact

- The Council maintained concerns over the scale, height and impact of the amended scheme.
- Suggested that the height of the apartment blocks is '*almost the same*' as that shown on the drawings submitted in March. Although this point is accepted as the main ridge had only been reduced by 65mm, this was one element amongst a host of other significant changes.
- Concern that the height of the building is perceived to be being driven by the adjacent flyover, resulting in it being unacceptably high. This is despite the pre-application discussions having agreed in principle that the flyover was a reasonable barometer to guide the height of the proposed buildings.
- The proposed buildings were declared as appearing too close to the flyover, which was a matter not raised by the LPA prior to this juncture.
- Concerns raised over the design/composition of the second block, which was of different scale and roof form. Suggested that the second block would be improved if it were to be more closely aligned in appearance to the larger apartment block.
- Though some confusion was evident in respect of the options shown for finishing materials, it was concluded that pending agreement on scale and height, the finishes shown were '*likely to be considered acceptable*'.
- The proposals were considered to be over-scaled and unusually high, prominent from viewpoints along Aberthin Road, the fly over, and locations in Millfield Drive and Slade Close, '*completely at odds with the existing context*'.



Ecology

- Comments of NRW reiterated including position of bat house.

Amenity Space

- Concerns raised about amount of amenity space provision. Suggested that reduction in number of dwellings could aid in freeing up space for amenity.

Impact upon neighbours

- Latest changes were 'welcomed' and in respect of previously raised concerns about no.8 Slade Close, 'would mitigate the overbearing impact to a satisfactory level'. 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.

Summary

- The Council maintained fundamental concerns with the scale and design of the proposed main buildings, impact on the wider street scene, lack of amenity space, and ecological impact.
- It was advised that the LPA would accept one further submission of revised plans before wishing to make a final decision on the proposals.

5.18 **Friday 19th July** – in response to the 5th July comments, an email was sent back to the LPA by the applicant, seeking clarification on certain points, summarised as follows:

- The requirements of the LPA for the block of apartments within a central location on-site was queried, as the LPA advised in an email dated 12th April 2019 that the applicant should 'split' the main building 'into distinct blocks'. It was considered that the subsequent email dated 5th July suggested that the design of the 'middle' block should be amended so that it replicated the design of the northernmost block. The applicant's concern was that this would remove all 'distinction' between the two blocks, creating a homogeneity that would be sought to be avoided.
- It was also raised that the LPA recognised in its email dated 12th April 2019 that '*the width [of the existing school building] is broken up with a series of recesses and gable fronted projections*', which in context appeared to be written as a positive aspect of the current school building. The applicant therefore sought to draw upon this in the design of the apartment block, to which the LPA advised that they would not support such a proposal. Clarification was sought in respect of what the applicant considered to be inconsistent advice.
- It was highlighted to the Authority that throughout the negotiations on the proposed development, the email of 5th July was the first time that proximity to the flyover was raised as a concern. It was asked of the LPA why it had been raised at this stage and what its specific concerns were.
- It was advised that the applicant was considering reducing car parking provision in order to increase amenity space provision, based on a series of justifications, including PPW's stance on parking; and information on usual car ownership levels of the applicant's tenants. The applicant asked if the LPA would support this.
- The applicant asked the LPA to remind NRW of the requirement for a more substantive response, which the applicant's consultant ecologist was awaiting.



5.19 **Thursday 1st August** – a response to the above was received from the LPA, summarised as follows:

- Regarding the form of the 'middle' apartment block, the LPA suggested that the applicant had taken written comments '*too literally*' in that the intention was for separate blocks rather than differently designed blocks. The LPA advised that it was not supportive of the gable frontages as they were 'too high' and negatively impacted on the design, rather than having any merit in deference to the existing school building. For similar reasons, the LPA stated a preference for the two gable ends and central roof form of consistent ridge height.
- In respect of the flyover, the LPA advised that it considered the flyover was not an appropriate gauge of building height, and that repositioning of the apartment block away from the flyover would allow space for the bat house and would alleviate noise issues. In response, it should be noted that it had previously been made clear that there was no logical position for the bat house in this area due to the easement required away from the flyover; and that noise issues had been technically assessed as being able to be mitigated against, through submission of a suitable assessment.
- The LPA advised that it would consider a car parking reduction, but it would be considered on its merits and against the backdrop of significant neighbour concerns about car parking in the area.
- The LPA expedited matters with NRW and shortly thereafter additional comments were received by the applicant.



6 Planning policy framework

- 6.1 The planning policy context for the determination of this application is provided by national and local planning policy guidance. National guidance is set out within Planning Policy Wales and its accompanying Technical Advice Notes. Local policy comprises the adopted Vale of Glamorgan Council Local Development Plan, and its supporting Supplementary Planning Guidance documents.

Planning Policy Wales

- 6.2 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 latest version is the tenth edition, published in December 2018.
- 6.3 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 that adheres to these principles.
- 6.4 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'. Starting with the former, which is an overarching section for all planning proposals, the subsequent three headed chapters are each supplemented by detailed and interwoven policy, which seek to work together in delivering sustainable places.
- 6.5 PPW promotes action at all levels of the planning process which is conducive to maximising its contribution to the well-being of Wales and its communities. In this regard it seeks to achieve WG's well-being goals. All statutory bodies in Wales carrying out a planning function must exercise those functions with the principles of sustainable development as defined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Accordingly, paragraph 1.17 of PPW confirms that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 6.6 Figure 3 of PPW covers the Key Planning Principles of WG in seeking to achieve "the right development in the right place". This includes the headings of 'Growing our economy in a sustainable manner' and 'Creating & sustaining communities'. Development proposals must seek to deliver development that addresses these outcomes, albeit paragraph 2.20 recognises that not all of these outcomes can necessarily be achieved under every development proposal.

Strategic and Spatial Choices

- 6.7 It is indicated that the first stage of the assessment of proposals is in respect of Strategic and Spatial Choices, following which, assessment is able to be undertaken in relation to the three other themes.

Good design Making Better Places

- 6.8 PPW places highlights the importance of good design in "creating sustainable places where people



want to live, work and socialise”. In order to achieve good design development, proposals need to meet the five overarching aims of design which comprise the following, access, character, community safety, environmental sustainability and movement.

Accessibility

- 6.9 The overarching aim of spatial strategies should be minimising the need to travel, reducing reliance on the private car and increasing walking, cycling and use of public transport, as set out at paragraph 3.46.

Previously Developed Land

- 6.10 Paragraph 3.51 states that *“Previously developed land should, wherever possible, be used in preference to greenfield sites where it is suitable for development.”* It goes on to say that *“In settlements, such land should generally be considered suitable for appropriate development where its re-use will promote sustainability principles and any constraints can be overcome.”*

Supporting Infrastructure

- 6.11 PPW indicates at paragraph 3.59 that development should be located so that it can be well serviced by existing or planned infrastructure.

Active and Social Places

- 6.12 A key theme of PPW is creating places that are active and social, this includes sustainable transport provision for housing and mixed-use development. The opening paragraphs to this chapter include the following aspiration of PPW:

“New development should prevent problems from occurring or getting worse such as the shortage of affordable homes, the reliance on the private car and the generation of carbon emissions.”

Movement

- 6.13 PPW places importance on locating development so as to minimise the need to travel and increasing accessibility by modes other than the private car. It further states that a broad balance between housing and employment opportunities should be promoted in order to minimise the need for long distance commuting and locate generators of travel including housing either within existing urban areas or in other locations which are, or can be, well served by public transport, walking and cycling.
- 6.14 In terms of car parking, paragraph 4.1.51 indicates that *“A design-led approach to the provision of car parking should be taken, which ensures an appropriate level of car parking is integrated in a way which does not dominate the development. Parking provision should be informed by the local context, including public transport accessibility, urban design principles and the objective of reducing reliance on the private car and supporting a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport. Planning authorities must support schemes which keep parking levels down”* [emphasis added].

Housing

- 6.15 Welsh Government recognises the importance of a home to people’s lives and at 4.2.2, PPW



indicates that the planning system must:

- *“identify a supply of land to support the delivery of the housing requirement to meet the differing needs of communities across all tenures;*
- *enable provision of a range of well-designed, energy efficient, good quality market and affordable housing that will contribute to the creation of sustainable places; and*
- *focus on the delivery of the identified housing requirement and the related land supply.”*

6.16 Paragraph 4.2.15 emphasises that local planning authorities must ensure that sufficient land is genuinely available or will become available to provide a 5-year supply of land for housing judged against the general objectives and the scale and location of development provided for in the development plan.

6.17 Paragraph 4.2.25 declares that *“A community’s need for affordable housing is a material planning consideration which must be taken into account in...determining relevant planning applications.”*

Productive and Enterprising Places

6.18 This chapter is more relevant to proposals relating to macro level economy, energy, and use of resources. However, its opening paragraphs include some points of relevance to this proposal, stating the following aspirations of development towards meeting the goals of providing productive and enterprising places:

- *“Development should prevent problems from occurring or getting worse such as the generation of carbon emissions, poor air quality and waste and the depletion of our natural resources which will need to be managed for many years to come.*
- *Development should be integrated to ensure that common issues are considered and accommodated early on, such as equipping our homes and businesses with the necessary digital and physical infrastructure and ensuring we have the right natural resources to do so.”*

Distinctive and Natural Places

6.19 This chapter of PPW covers a range of topics, including cultural heritage matters, natural assets and environmental quality. The opening statement of the chapter states that:

“Development proposals should be formulated to look to the long-term protection and enhancement of the special characteristics and intrinsic qualities of places...Problems should be prevented from occurring or getting worse. Biodiversity loss should be reversed, pollution reduced, environmental risks addressed and overall resilience of ecosystems improved.”

6.20 Paragraph 6.4.22 covers Protected Species, stating that the presence of such species within a development site is a material consideration for a planning authority. In certain circumstances, a derogation licence would need to be applied for where works affect the habitat of a protected species. In such cases, the development works approved are required to be *“for the purposes of preserving public health or safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature”*.

6.21 Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows are covered at paragraph 6.4.24, wherein it states that such natural features are *“of great importance for biodiversity...important connecting habitats for resilient*



ecological networks and make a valuable wider contribution to landscape character, sense of place, air quality, recreation and local climate moderation". The following paragraph within PPW states that authorities should seek to protect trees "where they have ecological value, contribute to the character or amenity of a particular locality, or perform a beneficial and identified green infrastructure function."

- 6.22 Paragraph 6.7.1 relates to air quality and soundscape, emphasising that these are factors that contribute towards the experience of a place, as well as being necessary for various health reasons. Air quality and soundscape *"...are indicators of local environmental quality and integral qualities of place which should be protected through preventative or proactive action through the planning system. Conversely, air, noise and light pollution can have negative effects on people, biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems and should be reduced as far as possible."*

Technical Advice Notes

- 6.23 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)
- 6.24 TAN 1 informs and advises on Joint Housing Land Availability Studies and was published in January 2015. It provides guidance on the requirement for Local Authorities in Wales to maintain a five-year supply of readily developable land suitable for housing.
- 6.25 TAN 2 provides practical guidance on the role that the planning system plays in the delivery of affordable housing. It further defines the type of accommodation that qualifies as affordable housing, the roles of various bodies who can aid in delivering it, and the setting targets for affordable housing delivery.
- 6.26 TAN 5 advises on how the planning system is required to contribute to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geological features. It sets out key principles of planning for nature conservation; advice for preparation of development plans; addresses nature conservation within the parameters of development management; covers designated sites; and deals with conservation of protected species.
- 6.27 TAN 11 provides advice on how the planning system can be used to minimise the adverse impact of noise. It aims to do so without placing unreasonable restrictions on development and outlines some of the main noise-related considerations LPAs need to weigh up when determining planning applications for development.
- 6.28 TAN 12 relates to Design and was updated in March 2016. It provides advice and information on a number of related areas including the definition of design for planning purposes; design considerations in planning decisions; and local planning authority design policy and advice.



6.29 TAN 18, which was published in March 2007, deals with Transport matters, and advocates locating development where there is good access by public transport, walking and cycling; generally advocating development at sustainable sites.

Well-being of Future Generations Act

6.30 The Well-being of Future Generations Act imposes a duty on public bodies to carry out sustainable development in accordance with the sustainable development principles, and to act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Its content is sought to be delivered through the planning system via the intertwining of the Act through the contents of PPW, where the objectives of the Act are integral to the goals of PPW.

Local Development Plan

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

6.32 The statutory development plan for this site is the Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan 2011-2026 (Adopted 2017). The application site is allocated for residential development under policy MG2(18) of the Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan, and therefore the principle of residential development of the site is established, subject to detailed design.

6.33 The following policies of the LDP are considered relevant in the context of the proposed development.

Policy	Relating to
Strategic Policies	
Policy SP1	Delivering the Strategy
Policy SP3	Residential Requirement
Policy SP4	Affordable Housing Provision
Policy SP10	Built and Natural Environment
Managing Growth Policies	
Policy MG1	Housing Supply in the Vale of Glamorgan
Policy MG2 (18)	Housing Allocations
Policy MG4	Affordable Housing
Policy MG21	Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites and Priority Habitats and Species
Managing Development Policies	
Policy MD2	Design of New Development



Policy MD3	Provision for Open Space
Policy MD4	Community Infrastructure and Planning Obligations
Policy MD5	Development within Settlement Boundaries
Policy MD6	Housing Densities
Policy MD7	Environmental Protection
Policy MD8	Historic Environment
Policy MD9	Promoting Biodiversity

- 6.34 Commencing with the Strategic Policies, policy SP1 is an overarching policy that provides a framework to deliver the LDP Strategy, and is entitled *Delivering the Strategy*. It sets out a series of goals of the LDP, included among which are the following of relevance:
- *Providing a range and choice of housing to meet the needs of all sectors of the community;*
 - *Reinforcing the role of Barry, service centre settlements [including Cowbridge] and primary settlements as providers of cultural, commercial and community services;*
 - *Promoting sustainable transport; and*
 - *Delivering key infrastructure linked to the impacts of development.*
- 6.35 Policies SP3 and SP4 respectively set targets for Authority-wide housing targets during the plan period and affordable housing provision. SP3 requires that 9,460 new homes are required in order to meet the identified residential requirement up to 2026, which, as per SP4, includes 3,252 affordable homes.
- 6.36 Policy SP10 relates to the *Built and Natural Environment* and seeks to preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the built and natural environment and heritage of the Vale. Of the assets listed, important archaeological features are included.
- 6.37 The Managing Growth Policies begin with policy MG1, entitled *Housing Supply in the Vale of Glamorgan*. This supplements policy SP3 and allows a 10% margin for flexibility to ensure that the range and choice of housing land is made available during the Plan period, through the targeted development of 10,408 dwellings up to 2026.
- 6.38 Policy MG2 sets out the *Housing Allocations* that aid significantly in meeting the housing requirements set out in policy SP3. Within this, the application site is given reference 18, named as Cowbridge Comprehensive 6th Form Block, Aberthin Road. The site is stated to measure 0.52 hectares and targets the provision of 20 dwellings. The supporting text mentions that the dwelling numbers quoted within the policy are based on minimum densities of 30 dwellings per hectare, as set out in policy MD6.
- 6.39 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.
- 6.40 Policy MG21 is entitled *Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites and Priority Habitats and Species*. This is of relevance due to the site's recognised potential for features of biodiversity interest.



6.41 The final grouping of policies is within the Managing Development chapter. Policy MD2 is an overarching design policy, entitled *Design of New Development*. Amongst the criteria therein the following aims are of relevance:

“In order to create high quality, healthy, sustainable and locally distinct places development proposals should:

- *Be of a high standard of design that positively contributes to the context and character of the surrounding natural and built environment and protects existing features of townscape or landscape interest;*
- *Respond appropriately to the local context and character of neighbouring buildings and uses in terms of use, type, form, scale, mix, and density;*
- *Promote the creation of healthy and active environments and reduce the opportunity for crime and anti-social behaviour;*
- *Provide a safe and accessible environment for all users, giving priority to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users;*
- *Have no unacceptable impact on highway safety nor cause or exacerbate existing traffic congestion to an unacceptable degree;*
- *Safeguard existing public and residential amenity, particularly with regard to privacy, overlooking, security, noise and disturbance;*
- *Provide public open space, private amenity space and car parking in accordance with the council's standards;*
- *Incorporate sensitive landscaping, including the retention and enhancement where appropriate of existing landscape features and biodiversity interests;*
- *Provide adequate facilities and space for the collection, composting and recycling of waste materials and explore opportunities to incorporate re-used or recyclable materials or products into new buildings or structures; and*
- *Mitigate the causes of climate change by minimising carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions associated with their design, construction, use and eventual demolition, and include features that provide effective adaptation to, and resilience against, the current and predicted future effects of climate change.”*

6.42 Policy MD3 requires *Provision for Open Space* for new residential development with a net gain of five or more dwellings. This is preferred to be provided on-site, but where this is not possible, off-site contributions will be required in-lieu.

6.43 Policy MD4 states that *Community Infrastructure and Planning Obligations* will be secured where appropriate to the scale, type and location of proposed development.

6.44 Policy MD5 – *Development within Settlement Boundaries* – states that new development within settlements will be approved where the development *inter alia*:

- *“Makes efficient use of land or buildings;*
- *Is of a scale, form, layout and character that is sympathetic to and respects its immediate setting and the wider surroundings and does not unacceptably impact upon the character and appearance of the locality;*
- *The proposal would not result in the loss of natural or built features that individually or cumulatively contribute to the character of the settlement or its setting;*



- *Would not result in the unacceptable loss of public open space, community or tourism buildings or facilities;*
- *Has no unacceptable impact on the amenity and character of the locality by way of noise, traffic congestion and parking; and*
- *Makes appropriate provision for community infrastructure to meet the needs of future occupiers.”*

6.45 Policy MD6 relates to *Housing Densities* and requires net residential density in settlements that include Cowbridge to deliver a minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare. Lower densities are guarded against unless they can be proven to be required based on a series of criteria. 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.

6.46 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.

6.47 Policy MD8 covers the *Historic Environment* of the Vale of Glamorgan and requires development to protect the qualities of the built and historic environment within the Authority. Given the nature of concerns raised via the application process to date, it is considered pertinent to provide the full policy verbatim, where it is clear that only the fourth point is of direct relevance to these proposals:

1. *“Within conservation areas, development proposals must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area;*
2. *For listed and locally listed buildings, development proposals must preserve or enhance the building, its setting and any features of significance it possesses;*
3. *Within designated landscapes, historic parks and gardens, and battlefields, development proposals must respect the special historic character and quality of these areas, their settings or historic views or vistas;*
4. *For sites of archaeological interest, development proposals must preserve or enhance archaeological remains and where appropriate their settings.”*

6.48 Policy MD9 - *Promoting Biodiversity* – 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.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

6.49 In addition to the above policies, the following SPG documents are also considered to be relevant to this application:

- 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.



7 Appraisal

Overview

- 7.1 This section of the Planning Statement aims to identify the main issues relevant to the determination of the application and assesses the scheme against these.
- The **principle** of the development of this site in land use policy terms.
 - The consideration of the **loss of the existing building**.
 - The **design** of the proposed development including its scale, massing and appearance, amenity impact, and its impact on local **character**.
 - The **ecological impact** of the proposed development.
 - The **highways** impact of the proposed development.
 - Consideration of the existing **trees** on site and the proposed **landscaping**.
 - Other material considerations, including **archaeology, drainage; noise; and air quality**.

Principle of the development

- 7.2 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 short walking distance.
- 7.3 The existing building, which is recognised as having some inherent architectural merit, is not remarkable in any way compared to similar buildings of its age and type. This is substantiated by it having no protection status, either on the County Treasures list, or crucially, by it not being nationally listed.
- 7.4 Development of this site would align with local and national planning policy principles of reusing previously developed land in a sustainable location. Further, the development aids in addressing Planning Policy Wales' aim to tackle the shortage of homes, and assist in ensuring that the Local Authority's housing land supply is maintained, in line with LDP policies SP3, SP4, and MG1. This proposal represents a prospect of providing bespoke affordable homes within Cowbridge, by an applicant who specialises in the delivery thereof, which is a rare opportunity within the town. Through providing a range and choice of housing to meet the needs of all sectors of the community, adherence to point 1 of LDP policy SP1 is demonstrated. Further, the requirements of LDP policy MG4 are being exceeded, given that this site is providing 100% affordable housing.
- 7.5 For these reasons, and as evidenced by the support from the Local Authority during pre-application discussions, it is considered that the principle of residential development of this site is established beyond any doubt. In this respect, compliance with the LDP policies set out above, as well as policy MD5, and the Affordable Housing SPG are demonstrably adhered to.



Heritage considerations

- 7.6 The application site is allocated within the LDP for residential development, via policy MG2, site reference 18. The allocation mentions that the building '*lends itself to conversion*', but it does not explicitly require this, nor are there any policy or legislative requirements for the retention and conversion of the building. Furthermore, whilst it is not called into question that the building could theoretically be converted, it does not favourably lend itself to conversion to efficiently provide a reasonable number of dwellings, due to the unusual floor to ceiling heights; the partially single storey elements of the building; and the nature of the existing fenestration. Therefore, the option of demolishing the existing structures and providing a bespoke new-build development in line with contemporary ways of living would be a far preferable prospect in this instance.
- 7.7 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.
- 7.8 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.
- 7.9 Perhaps of most significance in considering the heritage merits of this site is the fact that Cadw was approached to consider the merits of listing the building. The full judgement of Cadw is presented as an appendix within EDP's Archaeological and Heritage Assessment report and is summarised as follows.
- 7.10 Cadw advised in their response that in order for buildings to qualify for listing, they must be of national significance in terms of architectural or historical interest, rather than solely local interest. The purpose of this is to ensure that only the very best of the country's historic buildings are protected. Various considerations are at hand when listing a building, including specific architecture and exceptional historic interest, as well as a building's age and rarity. In this regard, buildings constructed after 1840 are very closely scrutinised to find the best examples, because of the greatly increased numbers of buildings constructed after that time that are still in existence.
- 7.11 Cadw state that the buildings on the application site were considered and rejected for listing in 1999, when Cadw undertook a community resurvey to identify historic buildings. In light of the recent request, the building was re-assessed, which included a full inspection. The building was identified as having first been constructed in 1896, with further extensions in 1908 and the mid-20th century.
- 7.12 Though the school was identified as being in a semi-derelict state at the time of assessment, some original features were identified as having survived, though many original features have been removed and most updates have been carried out in a manner insensitive to the original architecture.



- 7.13 In judging its merits for listing, Cadw declared that the school did not demonstrate the same quality and character as other schools of its type and period. It was adjudged to lack a distinctive plan form and appearance (for example there is no name or formal entrance), and the school has been altered, in some parts extensively. Further, claims of figures of historic significance being associated with the school were dismissed as inaccurate.
- 7.14 In conclusion, Cadw declared that though the building had clear local importance, this did not extend nationally, and the building has not survived as an especially good example of its type, having had its character compromised by extension. For these reasons, Cadw concluded that the building did not warrant listing.
- 7.15 For the reasons outlined above, it is considered that retention of the existing premises as a historical asset truly worthy of preservation is not a sustainable reason not to support an application for the redevelopment of the site. In this respect, there is no conflict arising with LDP policy SP10, nor any national policies relating to historic buildings.

Design of the development

- 7.16 The proposed design of the site has evolved significantly from initial concept stage, through to the drawings submitted with the planning application, and finally to those that are presented within this resubmission. Section 5 of this report thoroughly reviews the process of iterative design review, and the accompanying Design and Access Statement includes appropriate accompanying drawings. This subsection therefore appraises the current design.
- 7.17 The site layout addresses the highway through the two apartments blocks, aiding in providing a coherent streetscene along Aberthin Road. 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 at a right angle to the apartment blocks. This layout also ensures retention of all four trees on site of quality, comprising three yews to the northwest and a yew to the southeast site corner, all of which are now subject to Tree Preservation Orders. Overall, the result is a development that retains existing natural features whilst also making efficient use of the developable parts of the site, ensuring that the minimum density requirements of LDP policy MD6 are met.
- 7.18 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, thereby complying with LDP policy MD3. The play area and the spaces formed around the proposed buildings, complemented by the proposed landscaping, also combine to adhere to PPW's placemaking agenda. In addition, the site comprises a detached bat roost and car parking.
- 7.19 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.
- 7.20 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 proposed scale at two storeys in respect of the houses and three storeys in terms of the flats is entirely appropriate within this setting, aiding in creating a streetscene of variety and interest, whilst also making good use of the redundant allocated housing site. National planning policy contained within PPW requires the most efficient re-use of previously developed land in preference to use of greenfield land. The layout seeks to provide the highest density elements in the part of the site most remote from existing dwellings. The flats are therefore located to the northeast/eastern boundary of the site, furthest from existing dwellings on Slade Close and Millfield Drive.

- 7.21 Previous correspondence from the Authority, outlined in section 5, has confirmed that no unacceptable amenity impact on dwellings on these streets are arising. 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 screened 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 LDP policy MD2.
- 7.22 The site exhibits a series of positive traits that would aid in designing out crime, in accordance with Secured By Design principles and LDP policy MD2. 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.
- 7.23 Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT), as consultees to the Authority, and the Conservation Officer have requested that, if the main school building is to be demolished, the demolition be preceded by a programme of historic building recording, requested through a condition attached to planning permission.
- 7.24 Overall, it is considered that the proposed development comprises of exemplary architecture that would serve to replace a partially derelict building with a contemporary, holistically devised development that would provide new homes that meet modern living ideals. The application is therefore considered to meet the requirements of LDP policy MD2.

Ecology

- 7.25 Various bat species have been detected on-site, which are summarised within the supporting ecological information by Soltys Brewster (also supplemented by an earlier report by David Clements Ecology, which provides earlier survey data for context). The report concludes that the deteriorating state of the building has made it increasingly unsuitable for use as a maternity site, and there is no evidence to suggest this level of use, spanning from the 2017 surveys by a previous ecologist (details submitted herein), up until the 2018/19 survey work.
- 7.26 Should this application be supported, a derogation licence will need to be obtained from NRW in order to commence works on site. This will need to be accompanied by a detailed method statement, the mitigation strategy for which is outlined in the accompanying December 2018 ecology report submitted with this application. As part of the mitigation works, the proposed bat house will provide suitable conditions for the range of species and roost types identified at the



site. The siting of the bat house within the site has been carefully considered in line with a series of site constraints and will also be complemented by an improved planting corridor along the western site boundary. Lighting of the site has also been considered in detail to ensure no detriment to the site's use by bats. The proposed lighting scheme and associated analysis has been undertaken to a far greater extent than would ordinarily be done at this stage of a development, as evidenced within the accompanying November 2019 ecological reporting.

- 7.27 In summary, the accompanying ecological reports demonstrate that thorough survey work has been undertaken in respect of the likely use of the existing building by various bat species. The proposed bat house offers excellent mitigation insofar as it would cater for all species that may or may not be present on site, effectively representing an 'overspecification' of the structure in order to ensure adequate compensatory habitat. NRW will retain control over the process via the derogation licence application that would be required post-consent.

Highways

- 7.28 The site's location within short 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 movement into and within individual properties has been carefully considered to ensure accessibility for users of all needs.
- 7.29 Similarly, cycle access to the site is good, with connectivity maintained and cycle storage provided on site.
- 7.30 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. PPW also states that provision should be informed by local context, so that sustainable sites are not unduly provided with an excess of car parking and such sites are able to contribute to the objective of reducing reliance upon private motor vehicles. The approach taken should be supported by the Authority, particularly in the context that PPW requires Authorities to support schemes which keep parking levels down.
- 7.31 In terms of its location, car parking does not dominate the streetscene, with no parking facing directly onto the main road. Parking to the flats is provided to the immediate rear of the homes to which it relates, though the applicant considers it reasonably likely that the parking area will not be fully occupied, meaning the visual impact of cars from within the site could be reduced. The parking area is also punctuated by vegetation to soften its appearance.
- 7.32 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. Therefore, no policy objections are considered to be arising from the proposed development in respect of transport and travel, adhering to parts 5 and 6 of LDP policy MD2.



Trees and landscaping

7.33 As mentioned above, the key mature tree specimens of quality on site are sought to be retained via these proposals. This provides multiple benefits in respect of retaining habitat; preserving local character; and providing a mature quality to the site upon its completion. Other existing vegetation is sought to be removed and mitigated through new proposed planting. The accompanying landscaping plan shows the key areas of proposed vegetation, primarily comprising of the corridor of planting along the western boundary, and incidental trees and shrubs in prominent locations such as to the main road and outside the proposed houses. 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. The proposed tree retention strategy and landscaping scheme are concluded as being compliant with the requirements of the Trees, Woodland, Hedgerow and Development SPG.

Other material considerations

7.34 **Archaeology** – PPW states that the relative importance of an archaeological asset should be weighed against other factors, including the need for the proposed development. Consultation with GGAT resulted in a request for the site’s archaeological potential to be investigated through a programme of archaeological trial trenching, which would not need to be carried out prior to the determination of the application. These works would seek to identify the depth of disturbance caused by the landscaping within the school grounds, and thus conclude as to the potential for the survival of archaeological remains in these areas. The proposed development can therefore demonstrate compliance with LDP policies SP10 and MD8.

7.35 **Drainage** – the application is supported by a proposed drainage scheme, which in turn was informed by a site investigation that ascertained infiltration rates on-site. This concluded that the site is not suitable for drainage via means of soakaway. This addressed the requirements of the allocation within the LDP, which stated that sustainable drainage means should be explored. A scheme has been devised as a result of the negative infiltration testing in order to dispose of surface water via attenuation, and foul sewerage via the existing network. As a previously developed site, the principle of drainage is already established and both surface and foul water currently drain to the combined sewer that serves the site. Therefore, this proposal will have negligible impact upon the drainage network.

7.36 **Noise** – an accompanying Noise Assessment Report by Wardell Armstrong identifies that the dominant noise source affecting the proposed development is road traffic from the A48 and Aberthin Road. External noise levels are acceptable across the site, pending the inclusion of suitable boundary treatments to rear gardens. Internally, noise sensitive rooms will meet the required standards with closed windows, provided with adequate glazing. Window frame vents will ensure that ventilation can be provided without comprising adherence to acceptable noise levels. The noise levels within the proposed development site are concluded to satisfy the requirements of BS8233, TAN 11 and LDP policy MD7.

7.37 **Air pollution** – the Air Quality Assessment by Wardell Armstrong concludes that there are no unacceptable air quality concerns arising from the construction phase, subject to suitable mitigation measures being put into place. During operational phase, the number of vehicle movements anticipated to be generated by the site would be well below the criteria for detailed



air quality assessment, therefore resulting in negligible changes to local air quality, which is presently identified as being relatively good. The proposed development will therefore not result in any breach of national objectives as required by national policy, and would comply with LDP policy MD7.



8 Conclusion

- 8.1 This Planning Statement is produced in support of the proposed demolition of existing buildings and replacement with residential development at Aberthin Road, Cowbridge.
- 8.2 The principle of the development is established through the site's sustainable location, within the settlement boundary, its allocation for residential development, and the reuse of a vacant 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 a known need.
- 8.3 The demolition of the existing building is acceptable in a policy context, its loss being reinforced by Cadw's assessment of the building, which concluded it to have no exceptional merit in comparison to buildings of its age and nature, and having been diluted by alterations and loss of original features. There are no policy constraints requiring the retention of the existing building.
- 8.4 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 context; improving the local vernacular; and not resulting in any unacceptable amenity impacts upon existing dwellings.
- 8.5 The ecological impact of the proposed development has been suitably addressed. Extensive survey work has been undertaken and a bespoke bat house is proposed to mitigate against the loss of habitat. NRW will retain ability to control this process via the need for a derogation licence. The retention of existing mature high-quality trees, and the proposed mitigation planting, ensure a positive visual impact and encouragement of biodiversity.
- 8.6 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. Drainage proposals have been carefully considered and are workable; whilst no concerns are arising in respect of noise or air pollution. Appropriate conditions would be accepted relating to archaeology, with no constraints identified that would need to be dealt with prior to determination of this application.
- 8.7 Wellbeing goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act are 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 and the Act is demonstrated.
- 8.8 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.



Appendix a – Pre-application advice letter from LPA

Date/Dyddiad: 15 August 2018

Ask for/Gofynwch am: Mrs Y J Prichard

Telephone/Rhif ffôn: (01446) 704650

Your Ref/Eich Cyf: 18.181

My Ref/Cyf: P/DC/2018/00062/PRE

e-mail/e-bost: Planning@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

The Vale of Glamorgan Council
Dock Office, Barry Docks, Barry CF63 4RT
Tel: (01446) 700111

Cyngor Bro Morgannwg
Swyddfa'r Doc, Dociau'r Barri, Y Barri CF63 4RT
Ffôn: (01446) 700111

www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk



Steffan Harries,
LRM Planning,
22, Cathedral Road,
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ

Dear Sir,

Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 (as amended)
Ref. No. 2018/00062/PRE
Demolition of existing school and development of 45 dwellings and associated works
Former Cowbridge Comprehensive School, Aberthin Road, Cowbridge

I refer to your enquiry for pre-application advice in relation to the above development, and in particular the details received on 18 May 2018, plus the further plans provided at the meeting on 7 June 2018. The following is the formal written response and summary of the points outlined at the meeting, plus the Council's requirements in relation to relevant S106 obligations.

Local Context and Constraints

The site measures approximately 0.53 ha and is currently occupied by the former Cowbridge Comprehensive School, which is currently vacant. The site fronts onto the A4222 Aberthin Road, and close to the elevated section of the Cowbridge bypass. There are existing houses on the boundary to the south and west.

The site is located within the settlement boundary for Cowbridge as defined in the Local Development Plan (LDP). The site is also allocated for housing under Policy MG2 (18) of the LDP.

Relevant Planning History

An examination of our records reveals that there is no planning history relevant to the site. The applications referenced in your supporting letter relate to the school site to the north.

Relevant Planning Policies

Local Development Plan:

Section 38 of The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that in determining a planning application the determination must be in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the area comprises the Vale of Glamorgan Adopted Local Development Plan 2011-2026, which was formally adopted by the Council on 28 June 2017, and within which the following policies are of relevance:

Strategic Policies:

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

Managing Growth Policies:

POLICY MG1 - Housing Supply in the Vale of Glamorgan.
POLICY MG2 (18) - Housing Allocations.
POLICY MG4 - Affordable Housing.
POLICY MG21 - Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites and Priority Habitats and Species.

Managing Development Policies:

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

The Council also has Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), including, Affordable Housing, Biodiversity and Development, Design in the Landscape, Model Design Guide for Wales, Parking Standards, Planning Obligations, Public Art, Residential and Householder Development, and Sustainable Development - A Developer's Guide which would be relevant to the assessment of your proposal. In addition, national guidance is contained within Planning Policy Wales Edition 9, 2016 (PPW), and Technical Advice Notes, including, TAN2-Planning and Affordable Housing, TAN5 - Nature Conservation and Planning, TAN11-Noise, and TAN12-Design. There is also the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 which places a duty on the Council to take reasonable steps in exercising its functions to meet its sustainable development (or wellbeing) objectives.

Analysis of Proposal

As already noted the site is identified as a housing allocation in the LDP under Policy MG2(18). The allocation specifies a number of 20 units for the site, and Appendix 3 to the LDP provides individual site details. This notes the following:-

- Affordable housing will be delivered in accordance with Policy MG4.
- Future development proposals should, in the first instance, investigate the suitability of the use of sustainable drainage system

for the disposal of surface water run-off. If this is not viable, surface water run-off may be able to be accommodated within the existing surface water drainage system. It is likely that flows will be limited to a discharge rate to be agreed with the Council acting as Lead Local Flood Authority.

- The Council's Engineers have advised that the existing vehicular access is sub-standard and dangerous due to the lack of a vision splay and therefore a suitable safe access that conforms to current design criteria will need to be provided.
- Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) has advised that a water supply can be made available to service the proposed development site and that no problems are envisaged with the public sewerage system for domestic discharge from the proposed development. The site is crossed by a 225 mm combined public sewer for which protection measures in the form of an easement width and/or diversion will be required. Programmed improvement works to the Cowbridge Waste Water Treatment Works which could accommodate the proposed development are due to be completed by March 2018.
- The Victorian school building has some architectural merit and lends itself to conversion although the building is not currently listed. GGAT have advised that an archaeological evaluation will be required and that some parts of the site may need to be retained as open space in order to protect archaeological features.

At the meeting 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. As you indicate in the supporting letter, the site is not within a conservation area, and the building is not listed, nor is it a County Treasure.

There is no objection in the principle to the number of units proposed, although it was suggested that the proposal could amount to overdevelopment, bearing in mind the requirements noted above in relation to archaeology, and sustainable drainage. Similarly in relation to the proposed four storey apartment block, the principle is acceptable but much will depend on the detailed design. The additional 3D massing plans provided at the meeting do appear to indicate that the size/scale of the block would not be out of place alongside the elevated section of the Cowbridge bypass.

Criterion 8 of policy MD2 requires that new development safeguards existing public and residential amenity, particularly with regard to privacy, overlooking, security, noise and disturbance. It is considered that the position of the proposed apartment block close to the bypass could result in noise disturbance to future residents. The proposed layout generally appears to respect the privacy and outlook of the existing neighbours to the site. However, there was some discussion about the number and proximity of the car parking to the properties on Millfield Drive, and whether this could be broken up.

Criteria 5 and 6 of policy MD2 relate to access and highway safety. The Council's Highway Development team have been consulted on the proposal but I have not yet received a response. I suggest that you could contact the Council's Highways directly to ensure that the finalised plans provide the necessary vision splays, etc. On the issue of parking, it was agreed that the

site is a sustainable one, and along with the provision of affordable housing, a relaxation in the Council's car parking requirements may be considered appropriate. However, it was pointed out that this would need to be fully assessed bearing in mind the context of the site and the nature of the road, being the main A4222 route to the north of Cowbridge. It was suggested that the case for relaxation of the parking requirement could be further supported if the development were to provide a mix of housing, including, accommodation for the elderly in need of affordable housing.

The Council's Ecologist has been consulted on the proposal, and advise that, as a minimum, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for the site is required. Any survey recommendations made in the report must have been fully undertaken prior to submission of the application as we are not able to assess applications with survey information outstanding. The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Biodiversity and Development provides information on the types and amount of biodiversity conservation and enhancement required. This information, forming a Biodiversity Strategy should be submitted with the application.

The Council's archaeological advisors, Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust, have confirmed their previous comments on the LDP allocation and advise that an archaeological evaluation of the site should be undertaken prior to any determination. The evaluation would consist of the excavation of trial trenching, with the scope dependent on the submitted plans. The results of the evaluation will provide more information regarding the archaeological resource of the development area and may result in further work, or the retention of areas as open space, thus preserving any remains in-situ.

The Council's Environmental Health section indicate that activities associated with the former use may have caused the land to become contaminated and therefore may give rise to potential risks to human health and the environment for the proposed end use. As such they recommend that, as a minimum, a preliminary desk based contamination assessment should be undertaken. Such an assessment will determine the need for further site based assessment and remediation.

The Council's Environmental Health also advise that a noise report is required where a TAN 11 assessment has been undertaken and consideration had to WHO Guidelines. Where such levels cannot be achieved, there would be an objection to the application. However this may be overcome by mitigation (limitation on windows, non-opening windows, triple glazing and mechanical extraction etc. and orientation of the development) which may reduce potential noise levels to receptors. They also indicate that a full Demolition and Construction and Environmental Management Plan would be required with any successful application.

An emerging issue that will impact on any proposed layout relates to surface water drainage. As set out in greater detail below, a new framework for the approval and adoption of sustainable surface water systems serving new development is being introduced on 7 January 2019. If the application is submitted after this date there will be a requirement for a Sustainable Drainage Approving Body (SAB) application. Such an application must demonstrate compliance with the statutory standards, follow a set of principles in the design of the system, and satisfy the standards in relation

to runoff destination, hydraulic control, water quality, amenity, biodiversity, construction, operation and maintenance. SuDS are intended to maximise the opportunities and benefits that can be provided by the effective management of surface water. This can only be achieved when the principles of SuDS are considered at the outset of the development process. The SuDS approach to surface water management will direct the development process and shape the layout of new developments around site drainage.

I note that the Council's Drainage section have been consulted on the proposal, but I have not received a response to date. Bearing in mind the requirement within the LDP allocation to investigate the suitability of the use of sustainable drainage system for the disposal of surface water run-off, you may wish to contact our Drainage section directly before finalising any plans, as the requirement to demonstrate compliance with the statutory standards, can have a significant impact on layout and the development of any scheme. This is particularly important in the case of this application.

Pre Application Consultation

For all applications for 'major' development, there is a statutory requirement for the applicant/developer to consult the community and relevant statutory consultees, and to submit a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report with any application.

Detailed advice can be found here:-

<http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/160129annex-1-pre-application-consultation-en.pdf>

Sustainable Drainage Approving Body (SAB)

In May 2018, Schedule 3 of the Flood & Water Management Act 2010 will be implemented, which provides a framework for the approval and adoption of surface water systems serving new development. Schedule 3 will require sustainable drainage (SuDs) on all new developments (including redevelopment) serving two properties or more and developments of more than 100 sq m of floorspace) and will require local authorities to become a Sustainable Drainage Approving Body (SAB).

The SAB approval process is anticipated to come into force in January 2019 and will be separate from the planning application process. An application for approval for a surface water drainage scheme may be made to the SAB separately from, or combined with a planning application. The planning and SAB approvals are independent systems and there may be circumstances where separate applications are appropriate.

Section 106 Planning Obligations

The Council's Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) provides the local policy basis for seeking planning obligations through Section 106 Agreements in the Vale of Glamorgan. It sets thresholds for when obligations will be sought, and indicates how they may be calculated.

The Council's SPG is available to view/download at: -

<http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Living/Planning/Policy/Planning-Obligations-SPG-Adopted-July-2017.pdf>

At the meeting there was a brief discussion about the S106 requirements for the site. The Council's Housing section confirm the need for affordable housing in Cowbridge as evidenced by the following figures from the council's Homes4U waiting list in the area in the ward of Cowbridge.

COWBRIDGE	
1 BED	77
2 BED	43
3 BED	17
4 BED	3
	140

They note that of the affordable units they would require a 70/30 split between social rented and low cost for sale, and note that the plan is for 40 affordable units of one and two bedroom accommodation which is acceptable, subject to the DQR compliance.

Since the meeting we have sought to clarify the position in relation to the S106 requirements, and I can confirm that where the development is for 100% affordable units there will be an exemption for the first 25 affordable units. In this case, bearing in mind the site is an allocated one within a defined settlement boundary, and the applicant is a recognised Registered Social Landlord, the remainder of the requirements include:-

- Sustainable Transport - £2300/dwelling, i.e. £46,000.
- Education – Contributions per dwelling (depending on available capacity in local schools) – Nursery = £1,825, Primary = £5,073, Secondary = £5,720, Post 16 = £1,193, Total = £13,811 per unit depending on available capacity. For the site this equates to £276,220 maximum depending on local school capacity. One bedroom units are exempt from the education requirement.
- Community Facilities – 0.74sqm of community floor space per dwelling = a financial contribution of £1260 per unit which is a requirement for £25,200.
- Public Open Space – 2.4 ha per 1000 population = 55.68m² per dwelling or £1150 per person = £2,668 per dwelling, i.e. £53,360.
- Public Art – 1% of build costs.

It should also be noted that the development will also be subject to the cost of any highway improvements deemed necessary to facilitate a satisfactory access to the site.

Required Supporting Documentation

In addition to the submission of standard mandatory supporting documentation such as application forms, plans and a Design and Access Statement (see Design Commission for Wales (2014) Design and Access Statements in Wales and Development Management Manual - Revision 2 - May 2017), please be advised that any application for the above

development should also be accompanied by the following additional documentation: -

- A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.
- Archaeological Field Evaluation.
- A Landscape Assessment bearing in mind the location of the site at the edge of the settlement.
- A full tree and hedgerow survey in line with the Council's SPG on Trees and Development.
- A full topographical survey, including full levels details would also be required to fully assess the visual impact of the development.
- A Noise Assessment.
- A preliminary desk based contamination assessment.
- A Transport Statement/Travel Plan to support any relaxation of the Council's car parking standards.
- PAC Report ("Major" applications) where the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more.

If any subsequent application fails to include the information above, there is a chance it may not be registered and, in any event, it is likely that an application will either be refused or will not be able to be progressed until its satisfactory submission.

Requests for Further Advice

In accordance with the Council's Guidance Note on 'charging for pre-application advice', any further requests for pre-application advice will attract payment of a further fee, and should be made in writing with appropriate supporting documentation.

Development Team Approach – Building Control

Please note if you decide to employ the Council's Building Control team in respect of the proposed development for which you have sought advice, any fees you have paid in respect of this guidance will be taken into account in assessing the relevant Building Regulations fee. All Building Regulations fees are now based on a standard hourly rate with the final fee payable worked out on a risk assessed basis. Accordingly as the Council's officers will have been involved in the project from the earliest stages this will be considered in the final risk assessment based fee for Building Regulations.

I hope the above is of some assistance.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Y J Prichard
for Operational Manager Development Management

Please Note:

The advice offered in this response represents an informal opinion, provided in accordance with the Council's Guidance Note on 'charging for pre-application advice'. In particular, it is emphasised that while this pre application advice will be carefully considered in reaching a decision or recommendation on an application, the final decision on any application that you may make can only be taken after we have consulted local people, statutory consultees and any other interested parties. It does not, therefore prejudice any decision which the Local Planning Authority may make should the matter come before them in a formal context.