



11<sup>th</sup> June 2021

## **2021/00423/FUL – Land at Bolston House, A48, Bonvilston**

The Community Council considered this application again at our meeting held on June 7 following the publication of additional documents and greater awareness of global material shortages, and finite resources. The Community Council continues to **object** to the proposals before us. Information contained here is in addition to that provided on April 19.

The reasons for the objection can be summarised as:

- Lack of acceptable footways linking the site to nearby services & amenities
- Noise pollution from the A48 –
  - lack of Environmental Noise Survey
  - Failure to address Noise Action Priority Area (PPW11 6.7.6)
- The environmental impact of demolition & replacement dwelling
- Low density of proposed development
- Uncertainty over the apparent building plot at the north west of the site

Included in the 8 key issues identified in the Welsh Government's guidance Building Better Places (BBP) – The Planning System Delivering Resilient and Brighter Futures (2020) are:

- Staying local: creating neighbourhoods
- Active travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods
- Improving air quality and soundscapes for better health and well-being

BBP also states that planning “must maximise opportunities for people to make sustainable and healthy travel choices for their daily journeys and leisure.” “New development should improve the quality of place and create safe, social, attractive neighbourhoods where people want to walk, cycle and enjoy.”

Planning Policy 11 states, “Development in (rural) areas should embrace the national sustainable placemaking outcomes and, where possible, offer good active travel connections to the centres of settlements to reduce the need to travel by car for local journeys.” In Bonvilston this would require attractive, quality footways connecting the development to the village shop and the Cottrell Gardens development, which includes a playing field.

Planning Policy Wales 11 (PPW11) 4.1.11:

*Development proposals must seek to maximise accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport, by ... where necessary, mitigating transport impacts through the provision of off-site measures, such as the development of active travel routes ... Importantly, sustainable transport infrastructure and services should be prioritised and put in place from the outset, before people have moved in and travel patterns have been established.*

PPW11 4.1.31 (emphasis added)

Planning authorities **must** support active travel by ensuring new development is fully accessible by walking and cycling. The aim should be to create walkable neighbourhoods, where a range of facilities are within walking distance of most residents, and the streets are safe, **comfortable and enjoyable to walk and cycle**.

PPW11 4.1.34 (emphasis added)

In determining planning applications, planning authorities **must** ensure development proposals, through their design and supporting infrastructure, prioritise provision for access and movement by walking and cycling and, in doing so, **maximise their contribution to the objectives of the Active Travel Act**.

PPW11 4.1.45 (emphasis added)

Local authorities must adopt an integrated approach to traffic management. They should consider how different measures can complement one another and contribute to the achievement of wider planning and transport objectives, **implementing the Active Travel Act and reducing exposure to air and noise pollution, taking into account the needs of the disabled and less mobile sections of the community**.

Not only are the footways along Cowbridge Road, Bonvilston, narrow, they are uneven, and very uncomfortable for wheelchair users. Mobility scooter users also experience particular discomfort and inconvenience. The Community Council has received complaints from residents regarding the footway width and surface. The development must provide **equality of access**.



Perhaps a **Transport Assessment** is required to provide the basis for negotiation on scheme details, including measures to improve walking, cycling, and public transport access, as well as measures reduce levels of air and noise pollution. (PPW11.1.56)

Building Better Places states that “the effect of noise can, in the short-term, disrupt sleep and increase levels of stress, irritation and fatigue, as well as interfering with important activities such as learning, working and relaxing.”

We would expect an **Environmental Noise Survey** to be carried out prior to determination. This was a requirement for the application 2017/00188/FUL, in St Nicholas, where Welsh Government research suggests that noise is less of a problem than in Bonvilston.

The wall to the front of the site, which is of unknown age, and presents a blank and unwelcoming street scene mitigates some of the road noise to the site. However,, it’s partial removal for the widening of the site entrance to enable access must be taken into consideration when considering how the proposed dwellings will be subjected to road noise pollution.

PPW11 6.7.6 (emphasis added)

In proposing new development, planning authorities and developers **must**:

- **address** any implication arising as a result of **its association with**, or location within, air quality management areas, **noise action planning priority areas** or areas where there are sensitive receptors
- seek to incorporate measures which reduce overall exposure to air and noise pollution and create appropriate soundscapes.

Cowbridge Road, **Bonvilston** has been identified as a **Priority Area** for tackling noise pollution since 2011.

A Goal of the Vale of Glamorgan Council under the Well-being of Future Generations Act is **A Healthier Wales** – A society in which people’s physical and mental well-being is maximised. Poor quality footways and road noise are not compatible with this statutory goal.



## Future Generations and Climate Emergency – Demolition

- There is a global shortage of **finite** & renewable building materials. This includes timber, sand, and metals.  
For construction alone, the world consumes roughly 40 to 50 billion tons of sand on an annual basis. That's enough to build a wall of 27 meters high by 27 meters wide that wraps around the planet every year. This far exceeds the natural rate at which sand is being replenished by the weathering of rocks by wind and water.
- Demolition wastes building materials and the embodied energy within building materials and products is lost.
- The embodied energy within concrete made with Portland cement is 1.5 Mj/kg. **“Most carbon emissions associated with buildings are due to the Portland cement that is traditionally used for concrete.”**
- No case has been made for demolition, and the existing building sits well within the proposed layout as shown on the plan below.

The footprint of the existing Bolston House is shown on the site plan below, and demonstrates that **there is no need for demolition – it's a choice**. The Five-ways of Working must be applied to the decision-making, with consideration particularly of the long-term consequences of demolition and building a new, replacement dwelling from finite and scarce resources.



**The guiding principle of sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.**

A Goal of the Vale of Glamorgan Council under the Well-being of Future Generations Act is A Globally Responsible Wales – Reducing the Vale’s ecological footprint and the impact this has on the global environment and “promoting sustainable development and protecting our environment.”

The unnecessary demolition of Bolston House would conflict with the Vale of Glamorgan Council’s statutory duties under the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Due to a scarcity of building materials, market prices are forecast to continue rising.

In an [article](#) on June 8, 2021, PBC Today wrote:

“...strong global demand for steel is resulting in shortages, order backlogs and increased prices for most products. And while supply and demand issues were likely to rebalance within the next few months, “global dynamics may continue to drive prices up”.

The U.K. construction industry should be prepared for the high price of timber to continue for the foreseeable future, the BMF/CPA said, with production in traditional timber-growing countries easing off in 2020 vs. 2019. Sweden saw production down 7%, while in Finland production was 15% lower.

John Newcomb, chief executive of the BMF and co-chair of the Construction Leadership Council’s Brexit movement of building products and materials group, said recently that timber prices were surging by 20%.

This is telling, not least because timber has undergone a surge in popularity among many house builders, being seen as an effective and environmentally friendly solution to delivering new homes quickly.

Nearly half (49%) of member firms of the National Federation of Roofing Contractors (NFRC) said the lack of roofing tiles topped their list of concerns.

According to the NFRC, building materials shortages were having a knock-on impact on material prices, with three-quarters (76%) of firms reporting inflationary pressures in the past year, and more than two-thirds (65%) of roofers saying that prices have increased in the previous quarter.”





## Density

Members of the Community Council considered carefully the density issue, and the information provided by the applicant. The Community Council agrees with the applicant that it would be appropriate for this site is to have a lower density of development than set out in LDP policy documents. This is supported by public opinion, particularly since the outbreak of the pandemic.

However, we would like to see more than the proposed nine (8 additional) dwellings on a site of this size. **The Community Council feels that 11 or 12 dwellings would be more appropriate.** Perhaps these additional dwellings could be located in the plot of land that's shown as vacant to the north west of the development? The Community Council would not like this development to be determined whilst the future of this plot of land remains unknown.



*The proposed site plan derived from the discussions of the pre-app enquiry*

Cllr Ian Perry

For and on behalf of St Nicholas with Bonvilston Community Council

