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COMMITTEE	Planning and Regulatory
COMMITTEE DATE	12th May 2021

Application No.
P/20/0121

Date
15th June 2020

Determining Authority
MTCBC

Proposed Development

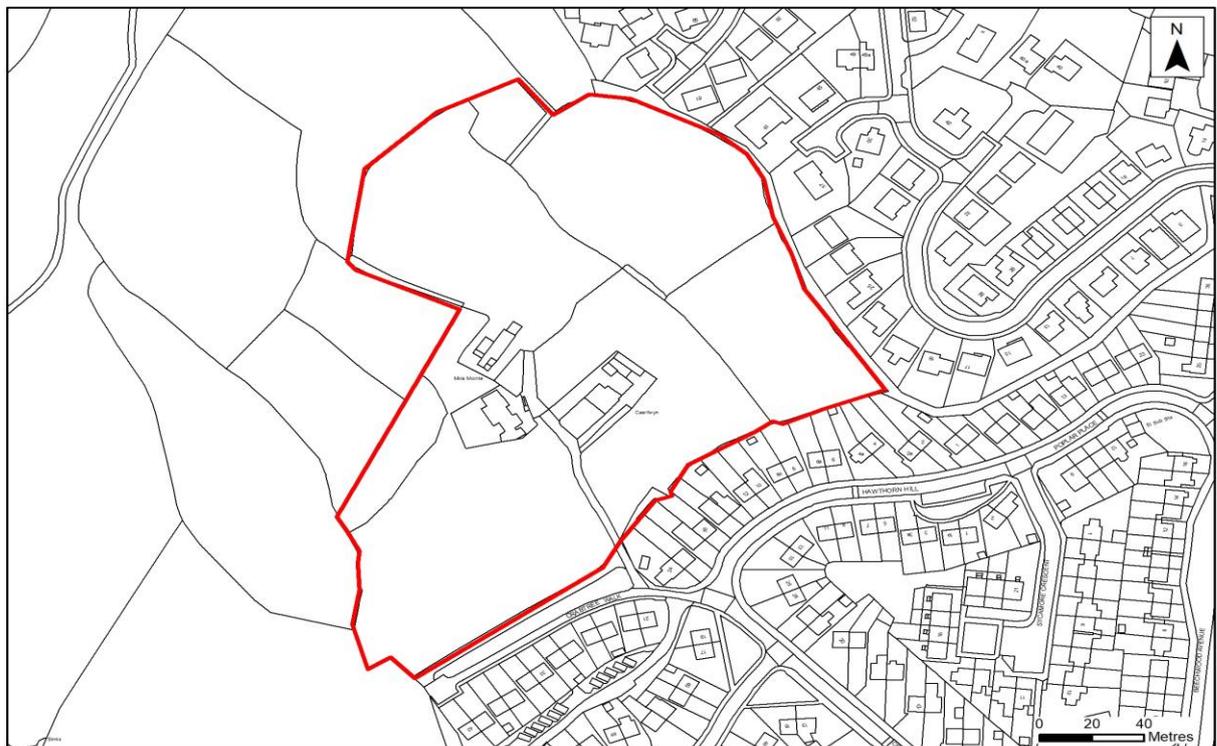
Location

Name & Address of Applicant/Agent

Demolition of bungalow,
construction of residential
development, landscaping,
parking and associated works

Land To The North Of
Crabtree Walk
And To The West Of
Sweetwater Park
Trefechan
Merthyr Tydfil

WDL Homes Ltd
c/o Asbri Planning Ltd
F.a.o. Miss E Harding
Unit 9
Oak Tree Court
Cardiff Gate Business
Park



P/20/0121

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APPLICATION SITE

This application relates to a large area of grass land measuring approximately 3.2 hectares situated in the northern part of Merthyr Tydfil, adjacent to the established residential area of Trefechan. The site itself largely comprises of fields, with overgrown grass and scrub vegetation, that slopes down steeply in places from north-west to south-east. There are also two detached dwellings at the centre of the site (Mira Monte & Caerllwyn), which are served by a narrow access lane that links to the main highway to the south-east. There are small groups of mature trees adjacent to the dwellings and along parts of the southern, eastern and northern boundaries of the site.

To the south-east is a row of semi-detached properties that form part of Crabtree Walk and Hawthorn Hill. Some of these properties have a frontage towards the site. To the north-east are detached properties that back on to the site and form part of Sweetwater Park, which similarly slopes down steeply from north-west to south-east. On all other sides, the site is bound by the open countryside with the Brecon Beacons National Park being approximately 0.1km to the north-west.

The properties along Crabtree Walk and Hawthorn Hill are generally of a modest design with rendered elevations and concrete tiled roofs. Many of the properties have driveways with the front gardens enclosed by a mixture of boundary treatments, including low level mesh fences, walls and hedgerows.

The properties within Sweetwater Park are typically of a more modern design, incorporating front gable features, porches/canopies and integral garages. They have brickwork elevations with concrete roof tiles. Each property has a driveway with some front gardens having an open plan and others being enclosed by brickwork walls of varying heights due to the topography of the area.

The principal access to the site is from the south-east via the main highway (adjacent to The Green) and along Crabtree Walk, where it then continues between No. 21 Crabtree Walk and No. 24 Hawthorn Hill as a narrow section of the highway. Additionally, there is a legal right of way (Bridleway) that runs alongside the north-east boundary of the site, which extends into the surrounding countryside and is currently accessed from the southern part of Sweetwater Park.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Full planning permission is sought for a residential development comprising a total of 45 dwellings, which includes a mixture of 3 and 4 bedroom detached and semi-detached properties. There are 12 different house types proposed, the majority of which would incorporate gable features to the front elevation, some with bay windows, canopies and small dormer windows. Some of the dwellings would also include an integral garage. The majority of the dwellings would be 2 storey, with a small number being 2.5 storey. A bungalow is also proposed. The majority of the properties would have a single garage positioned to the side of the dwellings and setback from the front elevation. At least 2 parking spaces would be accommodated on the driveways. The external finishes of the dwellings would comprise a mixture of brickwork and rendered elevations with concrete roof tiles.

The submitted plans indicate that one of the existing dwellings (Caerllywn) would be demolished and the other (Mira Monte) would be integrated into the development. The general layout of the proposal would involve a new access road being constructed (to adoptable standards) from Crabtree Walk that would extend up through the site, adjacent to the north-east boundary, with dwellings positioned on either side. The western part of the site would then accommodate a number of cul-de-sacs and private drives that spur off the main road. The dwellings in the south-west corner of the site would front onto Crabtree Walk and would be accessed via a private and elevated section of the road due to the level differences.

A new footpath and an area of open space would be located in the south-east corner of the site, which would provide access onto the existing bridleway. Similarly, a footpath onto the bridleway would be created in the northern part of the site. A new footpath and landscaped area would be provided at the centre of the site that provides a pedestrian friendly route through an improved woodland environment.

A detailed landscaping scheme has been provided which identifies a number of mature trees that would be retained, as well as a number of trees and hedgerows to be planted in the open spaces and in the front garden areas. Additionally, along the south-west boundary, at the centre of the site and along the north-west boundary, naturalistic woodland areas would be created. A hedgerow would also be planted along the rear boundaries of the properties that adjoin the Bridleway. As part of the sustainable drainage scheme, it is proposed that rain-gardens would be planted in each of the front gardens.

The following supporting documents have been submitted with this application:

- Design & Access Statement
- Planning Statement
- Pre-application Consultation Report
- Transport Assessment
- Ecological Impact Assessment
- Bat Scoping Survey
- Bat Activity Survey
- Outdoor Lighting Report
- Ground Based Assessment of Trees to Support Roosting Bats
- Extended Phase One Ecological Survey
- Arboricultural Report
- Landscape & Visual Appraisal
- Archaeological & Heritage Assessment
- Archaeological Evaluation
- Flood Consequence Assessment & Drainage Strategy
- Geotechnical Desk Study

PLANNING HISTORY

- | | | |
|-----------|---|---|
| P/19/0277 | - | Proposed highway engineering and access works
Permission GRANTED on 20.12.2019 |
| P/76/0445 | - | Detailed application for the erection of 81 dwellings. |

Permission GRANTED on 02.11.1977

CONSULTATION

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| Head of Engineering | - | No objection subject to a condition relating to retaining works. |
| Planning Division's Policy Officer | - | No objection. |
| Landscape Architect | - | No objection. |
| Planning Division's Ecologist | - | No objection subject to conditions relating to a lighting plan and a habitat management plan. |
| Rights of Way Division | - | No objection. |
| Environmental Health Manager | - | No objection subject to conditions relating to hours of construction, dust management and disposal of waste. |
| Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) | - | No objection subject to a condition relating to a programme of historic recording of the drystone walls within the site. |
| Natural Resources Wales | - | No objection. |
| Cadw | - | No objection. |
| Brecon Beacons National Park Local Authority | - | No objection. |
| Welsh Water | - | No objection subject to a condition relating to surface water and land drainage. |
| South Wales Fire Rescue | - | No objection. |

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, letters were sent to neighbouring properties on the 18.06.2020, 6 site notices were displayed within the vicinity of the site on the 23.06.2020 and a notice was placed in the local newspaper on 02.07.2020

Following the submission of revised details including alterations to the layout, drainage proposal, additional ecological information and section details, a further publicity exercise was undertaken, with letters sent to the neighbouring properties on 09.03.2021.

In response to the publicity exercises, 3 letters of objection were received, which raised the following concerns:

- The existing roads through the village were not designed to cope with the increase in traffic that would be generated by the proposed development. There are concerns with just a single access road serving the development and that an additional access should be provided for emergency vehicles.
- The dwelling on Plot 42 is incongruous and its siting/orientation would be in close proximity and overlook Nos. 23 and 25 Sweetwater Park.
- The development should not introduce a new path at the southern part of the site on to the existing bridle path, which is currently overgrown.
- The removal of trees in the northern part of the site should not be allowed, as they are ancient oaks and should be protected.
- There are concerns with surface water runoff and the flooding impact this may have on the properties at the lower levels.

POLICY CONTEXT

National planning policy

The Future Wales – the National Plan 2040 sets out a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW), Edition 11, February 2021:

Para 3.5 – 3.15 set out the importance of high quality design to ensure inclusive design, to promote environmental sustainability and ensure high environmental quality. Regard should also be given to the special characteristics of an area, community safety and to encourage sustainable forms of transport.

Para 3.55 notes that previously developed land wherever possible should be used in preference to greenfield sites where it is suitable for development.

Para 4.1.43 – 4.1.56 set out the need to reduce the level and speed of traffic in new development, the provision of car parking and how this may be integrated into new development to minimise the reliance on cars. Transport assessments are also an important mechanism to determine anticipated impacts a development proposal may have.

Para 4.2.25 – 4.2.34 set out the need to have regard for the provision of affordable housing in communities and to ensure that they are accessible to those who cannot afford market housing, both on first occupation and for subsequent occupiers.

Para 6.1.6 sets out the Welsh Governments objectives for the historic environment to protect world heritage sites, conserve archaeological remains, safeguard historic buildings, preserve

and enhance conservation areas, as well as preserve and protect historic parks and landscapes in Wales.

Para 6.4.21 – 6.4.23 note that local authorities should seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and build resilient ecological networks to ensure that any adverse environmental effects can first be avoided, mitigated or compensated. Regard should also be given to any potential impacts on protected species which may result in disturbance or harm to the species or its habitat.

Technical Advice Notes (TAN):

- TAN 5, Nature Conservation and Planning, September 2009
- TAN 18, Transport, March 2007
- TAN 12, Design, March 2016
- TAN 24, The Historic Environment, May 2017

Local planning policy

Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) 2016-2031:

- SW1 - Provision of New Homes
- SW2 - Provision of Affordable Housing
- SW3 - Sustainably Distributing New Homes
- SW4 - Settlement Boundaries
- SW9 - Planning Obligations
- SW11 - Sustainable Design and Placemaking
- SW12 - Improving the Transport Network
- CW1 - Historic Environment
- EnW1 - Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience
- EnW4 - Environmental Protection
- EnW5 - Landscape Protection
- EcW12 – Mineral Buffer Zones

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG):

- SPG 1- Affordable Housing, March 2012
- SPG 2- Planning Obligations, March 2012
- SPG 4- Sustainable Design, July 2013
- SPG 5- Nature and Development, May 2015

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of the development

The application site lies within the settlement boundary and the primary growth area where new development is generally encouraged and supported by policy SW4 of the LDP. Although the site is not allocated under policy SW3 for residential development, the proposal would nonetheless make a positive contribution towards the objective of policy SW1 of the LDP, which seeks to increase the provision of new housing within the County Borough.

Therefore, the principle of the development is acceptable. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that planning permission (P/76/0445), albeit a considerable time ago, was previously granted for the residential development of the site, which at the time comprised 81 dwellings.

Design approach

The general layout of the development has initially been informed by the topography of the site and the requirements of the new access road to be constructed with suitable gradients to serve the proposed dwellings. The point of access into the site is also limited to the existing lane which links to Crabtree Walk. Taking into account the contours of the land, the dwellings have been positioned to front on to the highway along both sides and would gradually step up between plots, which reflects the changes in levels. Where appropriate, smaller private roads would spur off the main highway to serve cul-de-sacs. This pattern of development is not dissimilar to that of Sweetwater Park and responds to the sloping nature of the land. The layout of the development has also been informed by the need to provide a sustainable drainage scheme to appropriately manage surface water and land drainage within the site. In this regard, areas of public open space have been created that are multifunctional, in that they would provide suitable attenuation of surface water and improve connectivity between the development and the surrounding area i.e. links to the bridleway. They also provide suitable areas for additional planting to improve the quality of the development and provide ecological benefits.

The scale of the proposed dwellings, both in terms of their footprint and their height, would be similar to the surrounding area, which comprises a mixture of two storey detached and semi-detached properties of comparable sizes. The development would introduce a range of dwellings with varying styles and features, which for a residential scheme of this scale, would add interest to the street scene and enables the development to form its own identity. However, appropriate reference is made to the character of the two adjoining residential areas to the south-east and north-east through the use of similar external finishes that enables the proposal to integrate well with its surrounding.

The general design of the development provides an appropriate response to the constraints of the site, with its challenging levels and appropriately integrates with the surrounding properties, where it would be seen as 'rounding-off' the residential development within the settlement boundary of Trefechan. Therefore, the proposal complies with policy SW11 of the LDP.

Impact on residential amenity

The properties that have the greatest potential to be affected by the development in terms of overlooking or overbearing impacts are those adjacent to the site along the south-east and north-east boundaries. The submitted plans illustrate the majority of the proposed dwellings would be positioned to have a separation distance of at least 23m or more from the existing surrounding properties.

The proposed dwellings on plots 1-4 would front onto Crabtree Walk and due to their elevated nature, would overlook the front garden areas of existing properties opposite. However, these garden areas have low boundary fencing and can already be overlooked by the pedestrians using the adjoining highway.

The proposed dwelling on plot 44 would have an acceptable separation distance of approximately 30m from Nos. 10 & 12 Hawthorn Hill. However, due to the elevated nature of the land, there is potential for part of the rear garden areas to be overlooked by the raised patio area. The provision of a suitable screen along the edge of the raised patio would help reduce the level of overlooking. Additionally, it is proposed that a hedgerow would be planted along the adjoining garden boundary, which may provide additional screening once fully established. This can be suitably addressed by condition.

It is acknowledged that there have been concerns raised, following the publicity exercise, in respect of the siting and orientation of the dwelling on plot 42 and its potential to effect the amenities of the residents at Nos. 23 and 25 Sweetwater Park. Section details have been provided which illustrate the side elevation of the proposed dwelling would be at least 25m from No. 25 and 20m away from No. 23. The siting of the dwelling on plot 42 is deemed to be a sufficient distance away from the existing properties within Sweetwater Park, which are also separated from the development by an established hedgerow and a public right of way. It is noted that the finish floor level of the dwelling on plot 42 would not differ significantly from that of No. 21 and No. 25 and that there would be no first floor windows on the side elevation (of plot 42) that may otherwise give rise to any overlooking concerns.

Taking into consideration the siting, orientation and scale of the proposed dwellings, the development would not give rise to a significant impact on the amenities of the neighbouring occupiers. Therefore, the proposal complies with policy SW11 of the LDP.

Impact on the landscape

A Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been submitted in support of the application, along with a series of viewpoints of the site, which considers the potential impact of the development on the character of the landscape and the visual effects on the surrounding area. It is acknowledged in the LVA that the site lies within the extensive Merthyr Tydfil Registered Historic Landscape and that the western boundary of the site, lies adjacent to the Nant Morlais and Cwm Taf Fechan Special Landscape Area (SLA1) as defined by policy EnW5 of the LDP. The northern boundary of the site also lies within 0.1km of the Brecon Beacons National Park boundary.

In terms of the effects on landscape character, the LVA considers the site to be strongly characterised by the adjoining high density residential areas on two sides, as well as the two detached properties at the centre of the site. The proposal would lead to the loss of openness within the site itself, but would have a sustainable use, which is compatible with the surrounding land uses and the character of the settlement edge of Merthyr Tydfil. As such, the LVA considers the landscape sensitivity to be low, given the small to medium scale of the site, when it is viewed in the context of a much larger urbanised area and taking into account the limited amount of vegetation removal (i.e. the majority of the existing trees and hedgerows would be retained).

The LVA notes that the development would also provide some means of enhancing the landscape character at the north-western edge to the settlement of Trefechan, through the planting of substantial areas of naturalistic woodlands, which can provide a softer and less abrupt transition from the urban landscape to the upland rural landscape leading up to the national park boundary. Additionally, reclaimed stone from within the site would be utilised to repair and provide new drystone boundary walls in various parts of the site, which is a feature

of the area. Once these mitigation measures are established, the LVA considers the development to have a minor-negligible adverse impact on the Nant Morlais and Cwm Taf Fechan Special Landscape Area.

Notwithstanding the close proximity of the development to the boundary of the Brecon Beacons National Park, the LVA acknowledges that the development would be positioned at a much lower level within the valley side, where the character is strongly influenced by the presence of urban environments on two sides of the site. The LVA considers the development to have no substantial adverse residual landscape effects on the national park. Nor would there be substantial adverse effects on the visual setting or on views out from the national park. In this regard, it is acknowledged that the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority have not raised any objection to the proposal and note that the proposed woodland along the northern part of the site is an important feature to assist in assimilating the development into the landscape.

The overall conclusion of the LVA, is that the proposed development would appear as only a minor extension to the existing village edge, appropriately assimilated into the wider landscape by a combination of topography, site layout, existing built form, retained vegetation and proposed planting. The site has the capacity, in landscape and visual terms, to accept the development as envisaged without detriment to its landscape character or that of the open land to the north-west and to the west.

The Landscape Architect has not raised any objection to the proposal and has noted the importance of the proposed landscaping scheme to help integrate the development within the surrounding area, with the naturalistic approach to the proposed planting being acceptable. However, it is noted that a landscape management plan is required to ensure the success of the woodland areas and public open spaces, which can be secured by condition.

An Arboricultural report has been submitted in support of the application, which assesses the current condition of the trees and hedgerows within the site and identifies those which are of poor quality. The report notes that the larger trees (Sycamore & Ash) adjacent to Mira Monte and those adjacent to the south-east and north-east boundaries are of a good condition. These trees have been retained and incorporated into the layout of the development. A small number of Hawthorn trees have also been identified in the northern part of the site that are deemed to be of a poor quality and are proposed to be removed. Whilst a small number of trees would be lost, adequate compensation would be provided through the planting of a considerable number of trees across the site, which includes the provision of woodland areas. It is noted that some concerns were raised by local residents with regard to the loss of large Oak trees in the northern part of the site. However, it is assumed that these concerns were referring to the trees located outside of the site adjacent to No. 63 Sweetwater Park and the bridleway, which are covered by a Tree Preservation Order. The development would have no impact on these trees.

It has been adequately demonstrated that the proposed development would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the character or visual amenity of the surrounding landscaping, including the Nant Morlais and Cwm Taf Fechan Special Landscape Area and Brecon Beacons National Park. Therefore, the proposal complies with policies SW11 and EnW5 of the LDP.

Archaeological remains

Given the location of the development within the Merthyr Tydfil Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest, an Archaeological and Heritage Assessment was submitted in support of the application, which includes an Assessment of the Significance of the Impact of Development on Historic Landscape (ASIDOHL2).

The Archaeological and Heritage Assessment considers the potential impact on a number of heritage assets within a 1km study area, which includes 3 scheduled monuments, the Cyfarthfa Conservation Area and a small number of Listed Buildings. It is concluded in the report that there is no potential for direct physical effects on their fabric, or for any effects upon their setting that may result in harm to their significance or harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area. It was also noted that the report considers there to be a lack of identified prehistoric, Roman and Medieval archaeology in the vicinity of the site, which suggests a low potential for archaeology to exist within the site. There is some potential to encounter low value agricultural or building remains from the post-Medieval and Modern periods, which would not pose a constraint on the development. The ASIDOHL notes that the development entirely falls within the Ty Newydd Historic Landscape Character Area (HLCA - 058) and considers the development to have a fairly severe impact, but this does not take into account any positive benefits of the scheme, such as the enhancements to stone boundary walls. The report also notes that the proposal is a small housing development set against the extensive 20th/21st century housing developments elsewhere in the suburbs of Merthyr Tydfil. If the development was situated in a larger HLCA, the ASIDOHL considers the assessment would have revealed a far lesser impact, which would better reflect the changes to the historic landscape as a whole and leaves its key characteristics unaltered.

Cadw has acknowledged the conclusions reached in both the Archaeological and Heritage Assessment and the ASIDOHL. In their comments it is noted that the proposal includes the restoration of the drystone walls, notably those on the bridleway, being a key surviving historic element within the site, which would represent a marked improvement. Cadw has also noted that the Ty Newydd HLCA is a very large character area, extending into the Brecon Beacons National Park, but only that part of the area inside Merthyr Tydfil is included in the Registered Historic Landscape. The area used in the ASIDOHL to calculate the direct impact of the proposed development has therefore been based on the area included in the Registered Historic Landscape and not on the whole of the Historic Landscape Character Area. As such, Cadw is of the view that the direct impact will therefore be much smaller on the whole HLCA and the overall impact on the registered historic landscape would be moderate but not significant. Accordingly, Cadw has not raised any objection to the proposed development. Furthermore, GGAT have not raised any objection and have requested that a programme of archaeological works be undertaken in the areas where the drystone walls are located in the site. This can be secured by condition.

It has been adequately demonstrated that the proposal would not have a direct impact on any heritage assets or have an unacceptable impact on the historic landscape. Therefore, the proposal complies with policy CW1 of the LDP.

Ecological impact

To determine the potential impact the development may have on any protected species or habitats within the site, an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey was undertaken. The

assessment initially included a walk over of the site and a desktop data search of species records.

It is noted that the site is within 500m of the Cwm Taf Fechan Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the Cwm Taff Fechan Woodland Local Nature Reserve and Taf Fechan Wildlife Trust Reserve to the south-east. However, the development is separated from these areas by the settlement of Trefechan. The site also lies adjacent to the Cilsanws Common South Site of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINC) along the western edge of the development boundary.

The Cilsanws Common South SINC is designated for its mosaic habitats associated with disused quarries and spoil tips. The main habitats include acid grassland, acid flush and marshy grassland. There are also semi natural woodland, neutral grassland, ponds, streamed species rich calcareous grassland on a lime stone tip. The report notes that the development would not have a direct impact on the SINC but a natural buffer between the SINC and the residential plots would help minimise any indirect affects i.e. boundary encroachments, rubbish dumping or anti-social behaviour.

The Habitat Survey has noted that the site is unlikely to be used by Great Crested Newts, Dormice, Otters and Badgers, with the nearest records of these species being a considerable distance away. It is acknowledged that there is some potential for the site to be used by ground nesting birds, especially with close records for the presence of Skylark approximately 430m away from the site. Additionally, the survey considers the site to provide a moderate potential to support reptiles, such as slow worms and lizards. The mosaic of short and tall vegetation with stonewalls and stone outcrops, provide suitable habitats for reptiles. As such, it is assumed that reptiles are likely present.

The existing trees within the site were subjected to a ground level visual assessment to determine the likely presence of bats. Whilst the majority of the trees were deemed to have negligible potential to be used for roosting bats, two sycamore trees in the eastern part of the site were deemed to have some potential. In terms of the potential for foraging, this was reported to be limited, due to the exposed nature of the site and limited connectivity to the wider upland landscape. Two Transect Surveys were also undertaken in the summer and autumn periods, which found no presence of bats roosting within the site and that there was an overall low level of bat activity recorded. It was noted in the assessments that bats are likely to forage across the site in small numbers throughout the year. Given that Caerllwyn Bungalow is proposed to be demolished, a Bat Scoping Survey and Bat Activity Survey were undertaken to assess its potential for roosting bats. Following both external and internal inspections of the building, the surveys concluded that there was no evidence of bats and that the building is considered to have negligible potential for use by bats.

A series of mitigation measures are set out in the Ecological Impact Assessment that include a buffer between the development and the Cilsanws Common South SINC, retention of mature trees (in particular the Sycamore trees), the retention of drystone walls and rubble piles, the provision of dark corridors across the site to the wider landscape. To provide additional enhancements, 12 bird boxes and 10 bat boxes are to be provided, along with appropriate planting across the site. It is noted on the submitted plans that three naturalistic woodland areas would be provided along the western boundary of the site, along with a number of trees planted within the garden areas and public open spaces.

It is acknowledged that the Planning Division's Ecologist is broadly satisfied with the conclusions reached in the Ecological Impact Assessment. It is noted that a further transect survey was requested for the spring period to evidence any bat activity at this time of the year, which is required to fully inform the lighting plan. However, a suitably worded condition can be imposed to agree the details of the lighting plan, which should first be informed by a spring transect survey.

The Planning Division's Ecologist has requested that a wildflower seed mix be used on all the grassed areas within the proposed gardens. The applicant has indicated that this is problematic, particularly in private gardens where the grassed environment can later be disturbed or removed by the future occupants. It has been noted by the applicant that in addition to the planting elsewhere across the site, each residential plot would have a rain garden that would introduce biodiversity benefits across the site.

It has been adequately demonstrated that the development would not have a significant impact on protected species and habitats within the site and that appropriate mitigation and enhancements measures would be provided. In this respect, it is acknowledged that Natural Resources Wales have not raised any objection. Therefore, the proposal complies with policies EnW1 & EnW3 of the LDP.

Highway implications

A Transport Assessment has been submitted in support of the application, which considers the potential impact of the development on the wider highway network. The report includes a traffic survey, a road safety audit and reviews the suitability of the junctions from Vaynor Road to the site entrance.

Access into the site would be from the existing highway along Crabtree Walk, which currently links to a private road that serves two residential properties. Utilising the existing access, a new road would be constructed across the site to adoptable standards, which would comprise a 5.5m wide carriageway and a 1.8m wide footpath on either side. Some of the private roads that spur off the main highway (serve up to 5 properties) would provide shared surfaces for pedestrians and vehicles. It is shown on the submitted plans that adequate visibility splays of 2.4m by 43m would be provided on the junction of the development with Crabtree Walk/Hawthorn Hill.

It was identified in the Road Safety Audit that the existing access into the site from Crabtree Walk is narrow with limited forward visibility and that the use of a priority give-way system would minimise any potential conflict with two-way traffic movements. It was also noted that the existing footpaths were narrow in places and that there was no crossing point for pedestrians. To address some of these concerns an application was previously approved (P/19/0277) to improve the existing junction between Crabtree Walk and Hawthorn Hill, which would introduce a priority give-way system for vehicles entering the site and a clearly marked out give-way junction on the corner of the highway, where Crabtree Walk continues on to Hawthorn Hill. The width of the footpaths were increased with a pedestrian crossing provided, which narrows the width of the carriageway as part of the priority give-way system and helps improve forward visibility for drivers. Additionally, a new parking area with 8 spaces is to be constructed to the front of No. 21-43 Crabtree Walk.

The development is located adjacent to an existing residential area with an established network of footpaths present on both sides of the main highways with regular crossing points that lead to Vaynor Road and nearby local amenities. It is proposed within the site that there will be a continuation of the footpaths alongside the main roads, which would be constructed to adoptable standards. There would also be pedestrian routes across the site that link to the adjoining bridleway, which can provide convenient access to the surrounding countryside. Within walking distance of the site, there are a number of bus stops, including along Hawthorn Hill. The development is also within 500m of a national cycle network (Route 8) which can provide a link to the Brecon Beacons National Park. As such, the development is considered to be situated in a sustainable location.

In regards to parking provision, it is noted that each property would have at least 2 parking spaces accommodated on driveways, with the majority of properties also having a garage that could be utilised for additional parking. As such, adequate off-street parking would be provided within the site and would not impose additional parking pressures on the existing residential areas.

The Transport Assessment considers the likely volume of traffic generated by a proposed residential scheme comprising up to 50 dwellings. A traffic survey was also undertaken to establish the existing vehicular traffic movements in the area. Using TRICS data to predict the potential traffic movements, it has demonstrated that the development would attract up to 30 vehicle trips (two-way) in the AM peak time and up to 29 vehicle trips (two-way) in the PM peak time. This translates to approximately one vehicular movement every 2.5 minutes.

An assessment of the various junctions from the application site to Vaynor Road have been assessed in the Transport Assessment to ensure they have the capacity to accommodate additional traffic. It is concluded in the report that the existing junctions are generally lightly trafficked and there is sufficient capacity to accommodate the development with a negligible increase in queue lengths (being an indicator of how well the junctions would perform). Overall, the Transport Assessment considers the traffic movements associated with the development can be adequately accommodated and would not have a significant impact on the current or future conditions of the existing highway network.

It has been adequately demonstrated that the proposed development would not give rise to significant highway safety concerns. In this regard, the Head of Engineering has not raised any objection to the development. Therefore, the proposal complies with policy SW11 of the LDP.

Ground conditions and flooding

As a result of the publicity exercise, concerns were raised in respect of the potential for surface water within the site to cause flooding issues that may impact on the residents adjoining the site at a lower level.

A Flood Consequence Assessment and Drainage Strategy Report have been submitted in support of the application, which included intrusive site investigations to determine the capacity for surface water to be managed within the site. A number of boreholes were tested across the site to assess the permeability of the ground and whether the provision of soakaways could be utilised. It was concluded that the use of borehole soakaways would be

feasible and that these were tested at depths between 23m to 32m below ground to ensure there would be no impact on the neighbouring properties.

The surface water as a result of the development would have to be managed within the site, rather than it being directed to other areas. As such, the proposal would also include a number of other features to manage surface water, such as rain gardens, porous paving and planted verges alongside the highway. It has been adequately demonstrated that a sustainable drainage scheme can be provided within the site that appropriately manages surfaces water without adversely affecting the surrounding properties. In this regard, the Head of Engineering has not raised any objection the proposal. Notwithstanding this, it should be noted that the drainage scheme for the development would be subject to a separate sustainable drainage application to be determined by the SuDs Approving Body (SAB). Therefore, the proposal complies with policy EnW4 of the LDP.

Affordable housing

In this location, policy SW9 of the LDP states that where appropriate, and having regard to development viability, 10% affordable housing should be provided on site. The applicant has submitted details of the predicted development costs and the anticipated revenue to illustrate the viability of the development. This has been assessed using the Three Dragon's Toolkit to ascertain whether a contribution can be sought without compromising on the deliverability of the residential scheme. In this instance, it has been determined by the Planning Division's Policy Officer that a contribution towards affordable housing can not be sought as this would likely render the scheme financially unviable due to the high development costs. Therefore, the proposal complies with policy SW9 of the LDP.

CONCLUSIONS

The duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WBFG Act") has been taken into consideration when determining this application. In reaching the following recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been considered and thus the proposal is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives set out as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

The proposed development is situated in a sustainable location within the settlement boundary and would make a positive contribution towards the provision of new homes within the County Borough. The general design of the development appropriately responds to the context of the site and surroundings. The landscaping scheme helps to appropriately integrate the development in to the historic landscape, while balancing the need to provide suitable ecological mitigation/enhancement and ensure a sustainable drainage scheme can be implemented.

For the above reasons, the proposed development is acceptable and complies with the relevant LDP policies. Accordingly, the following recommendation is made:

RECOMMENDATION: BE APPROVED subject to the following **CONDITIONS:**

1. The development shall begin not later than five years from the date of this decision.

Reason - To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

Arboricultural Report (Ref ArbTS_580.7_Land at Trefechan, Dated 18th February 2021

Ecological Impact Assessment V2, Dated 29.04.2021

Drawing title - The Garages, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Caswell Elevations Render, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Caswell Floor Plan, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Oxwich Bay Render, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Oxwich Brick, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Oxwich Render, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Windsor Brick, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Windsor Render, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Ashford Elevations Render, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Ashford Floor Plans, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Llangenith Render, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Laugharne Brick, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Laugharne Render, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Mewslade Brick, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Aberaeron Render, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Tenby Render, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Whitland Brick, received 15.06.2020

Drawing title - The Pembroke Brick, received 15.06.2020

Drawing No. TREF-15-04-07, Proposed Street Scenes, Received 15.06.2020

Drawing No. 107-01 Rev A, Site Sections Location Plan, Received 15.06.2020

Drawing No. 107-02 Rev A, Site Sections, Received 15.06.2020

Drawing No. TREF-15-04-50, Additional Site Sections, Received 30.03.2020

Drawing No. 160, Highway Setting Out, Received 04.03.2021

Drawing No. 150-1, Plot Setting Out Sheet 1 of 2, Received 04.03.2021

Drawing No. 150-2, Plot Setting Out Sheet 2 of 2, Received 04.03.2021

Drawing No. 115 Rev A, Road Longitudinal Sections, Received 04.03.2021

Drawing No. 104, S278 Typical Highway Details, Received 04.03.2021

Drawing No. 104-1, S278 Typical Highway Details Sheet 2 of 2, Received 04.03.2021

Drawing No. 001-3 Rev B, Engineering Layout Sheet 1 of 2, Received 04.03.2021

Drawing No. 001-4 Rev B, Engineering Layout Sheet 2 of 2, Received 04.03.2021

Drawing No. 1909TMT.03 Issue 02, Softworks Specification & Schedule, Received 04.03.2021

Drawing No. 1909TMT.02 Issue 02, Overall Landscape Layout, Received 04.03.2021

Drawing No. TREF-15-04-04 Rev B, Boundary Enclosures Layout, Received 04.03.2021

Drawing No. TREF-15-04-06 Rev B, Refuse Collection Layout, Received 04.03.2021

Drawing No. TREF-15-04-03 Rev B, External Materials Layout, Received 04.03.2021

Drawing No. TREF-15-04-05 Rev B, Building Storey Heights Layout, Received 04.03.2021

Drawing no. TREF-15-04-02 Rev C, Planning Layout, Received 04.03.2021

Drawing No. 001-1 rev F, Engineering Layout, Received 04.03.2021

Reason -To ensure compliance with the approved plans and clearly define the scope of the permission.

3. **No development shall take place** until details, including structural calculations and facing materials, of any retaining wall which exceeds 1 metre in height have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The walls shall be completed in accordance with the approved details before the development hereby approved is brought into beneficial use.

Reason - In the interest of safety and visual amenity in accordance with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

4. **Prior to works commencing on Plot 44**, details for the provision of an appropriate screen around the upper rear garden patio, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The screen shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of the dwelling and shall be maintained in an acceptable condition at all times thereafter.

Reason - To ensure that the new development will be visually attractive and boundaries protected in the interests of amenity in accordance with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

5. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Reason - To ensure that the new development will be visually attractive in the interests of amenity and to accord with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

6. A landscape and habitat management plan, including management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscaped and habitat areas, other than privately owned domestic gardens, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority **prior to the occupation of any of the dwellings on the site**. The landscape and habitat management plan shall be carried out as approved.

Reason - To ensure that the new development will be visually attractive in the interests of amenity and to protect the natural environment in accordance with Policies SW11,

EnW1 and EnW2 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

7. **Prior to the occupation of any dwelling**, details shall be submitted for the construction of drystone walls indicating their position and height. All works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and completed as part of the landscaping works during the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner.

Reason - To ensure that the new development will be visually attractive and in the interest of improving the quality of the historic landscape in accordance with Policies SW11 and CW1 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

8. **Prior to works commencing on site** a written programme of historic building recording and analysis shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. Thereafter, the programme of work will be fully carried out in accordance with the requirements and standards of the written programme.

Reason - To identify and record any features of archaeological interest including drystone walls discovered during the works, in order to mitigate the impact of the works on the archaeological resource and in accordance with policy CW1 of Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan.

9. **Prior to the occupation of any dwelling**, a lighting plan including measures to reduce light spillage onto foraging habitats for bats shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The lighting plan shall be informed by the result of a spring bat transect survey and the recommendations of the Ecological Impact Assessment to ensure appropriate dark corridors are provided across the site. All works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason - To protect the natural environment and important habitat in accordance with Policies EnW1 and EnW2 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

10. Demolition or construction works shall not take place outside the hours of 08:00 to 18:00 Mondays to Fridays and 09:00 to 14:00 on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Public Holidays.

Reason - To ensure that the noise emitted/activities are not a source of nuisance to occupants of nearby properties in accordance with Policies SW11 and EnW4 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

11. **No development shall commence**, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The statement shall provide for:
 - i) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
 - ii) loading and unloading of plant and materials;

- iii) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
- iv) the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate;
- v) wheel washing facilities;
- vi) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during demolition and construction; and
- vii) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works.

Reason - In the interests of the highway safety and free flow of traffic and to protect the environment and so as to accord with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

12. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended for Wales) (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no fences, gates or walls shall be erected within the curtilage of any dwelling house forward of the principle elevation of that dwelling house.

Reason - To preserve the open plan character of the housing layout in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.