

Date: 2nd January 2020

Our Ref: S19.200

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F.a.o – Chris Davies

Dear Sir,

Town and County Planning Act 1990 (As Amended)

Application Reference P2019/5611 - Full Planning Application: Proposed demolition of existing building and construction of 3 block consisting of 12 x 2 person 1 bedroom flats, 6 x 3 person 2 bedroom flats and 2 x 3 person 2 bedroom flats, with associated car parking and landscaping works at Melyn Close, Briton Ferry, Neath, SA11 2DH.

I refer to our ongoing discussions in relation to the above-mentioned application which is currently awaiting determination by the Local Planning Authority.

As you will be no doubt fully aware, Welsh Government have recently introduced new procedures and guidance relating to their Social Housing Grant (SHG) allocations to Registered Social Landlords in an effort to streamline procedures and ensure a higher standard of delivery of social housing. As part of the Technical Scrutiny for SHG, schemes are now required to undergo both a concept stage and a pre-planning stage approval. This is to ensure that Welsh Government is satisfied that the design of the scheme is acceptable and meets their design standards.

Melyn Close had previously undergone the Concept Stage review, however following a meeting in early December 2019, Welsh Government considered that further changes were required in order to achieve an acceptable design. These changes have been summarised in the attached Design & Access Statement Addendum and which outlines how the scheme has evolved following the post-planning discussions.

As such please find attached for your information copies of the following revised drawings and documents;

Drawing/Document Number	Prepared by
R481 - P-01D - (Proposed Site Location & Site Plan)	RLH Architectural
R481 - P-02C - (Proposed Block-Roof-Lighting Plan)	RLH Architectural
R481 - P-04C - (Hard & Soft Landscaping Plan)	RLH Architectural
R481 - P-05C - (Street Elevations-Site Sections)	RLH Architectural
R481 - P-06C - (3D Renders)	RLH Architectural

R481 - P-08D - Block A (Plans-Elevations-Sections)	RLH Architectural
R481 - P-09C - Block B (GF, FF, & SF Plans)	RLH Architectural
R481 - P-09C - Block B (GF, FF, & SF Plans)	RLH Architectural
R481 - Finishes Schedule - REV D	RLH Architectural
DAS Addendum	Asbri Planning Ltd
Bat Roost Method Statement	Hawkeswood Ecology
Preliminary Roost Assessment and Observation Survey	Hawkeswood Ecology

Turning to the recent consultation response received from the Local Highway Authority, in terms of the number of the car parking provision, there is currently a total of 10 existing spaces on the site and the proposed plans allow for the retention of these 10 new spaces as well as dedicated cycle parking provision.

The existing number of spaces is considered to be sufficient for the new development, given the reduced number of units that are proposed. Furthermore, the site currently has a low car ownership rate, which is demonstrated within the supporting letter from Tai Tarian which states that only 4 out of 24 tenants own a car at the site.

As I am sure you are aware both housing tenure and type have a direct correlation to the level of car ownership. Statistical Bulletin (SB100/2013) 'People and Licensing and Vehicle Ownership, 2012' states that 23% of households in Wales do not have access to a car, however, this figure rises substantially to 53% of households that are housing association (social rent) accommodation. Housing tenure has a significant impact on car ownership rates, with only 13% of open market houses having no access to a car. As stated previously, whilst the scheme is to provide accommodation for social rent statistics are available for houses that are rented (either social or private) with 44% of households having no access to a car.

In addition to the above, it should be noted that these car ownership rates are for housing of all sizes and it has not been possible to establish car ownership data for flats. The Statistical Bulletin does, however, identify that across Wales 45% of one person households (typically associated with smaller houses or flats) have no access to a car compared with 23% average for all household types.

The above, clearly reinforces the position in so far as the actual data provided by the applicant following their tenant interviews. As such it is clear that the current 30-unit scheme has adequate car parking provision and that the revised new scheme which has a significant reduction in overall units also has sufficient car parking provision. I would also confirm that the issue of car parking ratio was discussed at the recent design meeting with officers from Welsh Government who felt that the level was commensurate with the type of development which is proposed.

Regarding matters relating to ecology and the recent email exchanges between the project ecologist and the Local Authority's Biodiversity Officer. I note that we have come to a pragmatic compromise as regards the issue of the working on a worst-case scenario as suggested.

As such please find attached for information only, a copy of the Bat Roost Method Statement which form part of the information submitted in support of the licence application to NRW. As you will be aware in order to achieve the very

tight timescales involved in meeting the grant allocation spend we will be required to undertake certain works in relation to roof stripping to be done by the end of March in order to be confident of missing the nursery season and thus we would need a planning approval as soon as is possible to achieve this timeframe. At this stage the licence application is being worked up for submission to NRW upon planning permission being released and discussions have been ongoing between NRW and the project ecologist.

I trust that the submitted documents allow the application to be successfully determined and suggest we discuss in greater detail upon your return to the office on the week commencing the 6th January.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Bowen', enclosed within a large, loopy oval shape.

Richard Bowen

Director