



WELSH LANGUAGE ACTION PLAN

In respect of:

**RESERVED MATTERS SUBMISSION –
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
LAND AT FORGE WASHERY, LOWER
BRYNAMMAN, NEATH PORT TALBOT,
SA18 1SW**

On behalf of:

Tolkein Property Ltd.

Ref: 2020.a

May 2021

JCR Planning Ltd.

PLANNING • DEVELOPMENT

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development industry**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.0.1 This Welsh Language Action Plan (WLAP) has been prepared on behalf of Tolkein Property Ltd. to accompany a reserved matters submission in respect of residential development (30 no. dwellings) at the Forge Washery, Lower Brynamman, Neath Port Talbot, SA18 1SW. More specifically, it is being submitted in order to discharge Condition 9 of Appeal decision APP/Y6930/A/18/3194251 dated 1st June 2018:-

9) As part of the first reserved matters application a scheme to address the impacts upon the Welsh Language shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall be based upon the recommendations set out in the letter from GJ Planning dated 13th July 2016. The scheme as approved shall be fully implemented prior to the first beneficial use of any dwelling, or any other timeframe as approved as part of the scheme.

- 1.0.2 Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council's Local Development Plan (2011 – 2026) (LDP) adopted a “...committed and proactive approach to the protection, promotion and enhancement of the Welsh language...”, with Objective 25 aiming to:-

OB25: *Preserve and enhance the area's cultural heritage and identity with a focus on the Welsh language in language sensitive areas.*

- 1.0.3 LDP policy relating to the Welsh language comprises Strategic Policy SP22 ‘Welsh Language’ and Policy WL1 ‘Development in Language Sensitive Areas’, together with supplementary planning guidance (SPG) published in July 2017 ‘Development and the Welsh Language’.

Policy SP 22 – Welsh Language

The Welsh language will be safeguarded and promoted in the following language sensitive areas:

- 1. Amman Valley.*
- 2. Swansea Valley.*
- 3. Pontardawe.*
- 4. The community of Crynant in the Dulais Valley*

Policy WL1 – Development in Language Sensitive Areas

The following development proposals within the identified language sensitive areas will be required to submit a Language Action Plan, setting out the measures to be taken to protect, promote and enhance the Welsh language:

- (a) Residential development for 10 or more dwellings;*
- (b) Retail, commercial or industrial development with a total foorspace of 1,000 sqm or more.*

1.0.4 The SPG considers Lower Brynamman to be a language sensitive area (LSA) – where the language is an integral and important element of the daily life of the community but where its erosion in recent years is a cause for concern. Policy WL1 requires planning applications for residential developments of 10 dwellings or more, within LSAs, to be accompanied by a WLAP. This plan therefore sets out the measures to be taken to protect, promote and enhance the Welsh language and which will serve to address and mitigate any potential negative impact on the language from the development. This WLAP builds upon the previous Welsh Language Assessment submitted at the time of the original outline planning application (P2008/0798 refers) and also the contents of the Geraint John Planning letter dated 13th July 2016.

1.0.5 The purpose of this WLAP is therefore to:-

- demonstrate that the Welsh language has been afforded full consideration throughout the formulation of this proposal
- establish any resultant potential impact on the Welsh language
- determine the required mitigation measures should there be a negative impact.

1.0.6 In accordance with both national and local planning policy and guidance, this WLAP is submitted in support of the accompanying reserved matters submission.

2.0 THE SITE AND LOCALITY

2.0.1 The application site comprises that of the former Forge Washery at Lower Brynamman. The original structures have largely been removed and this brownfield site is now dominated by areas of hard standing and remnant spoil workings.

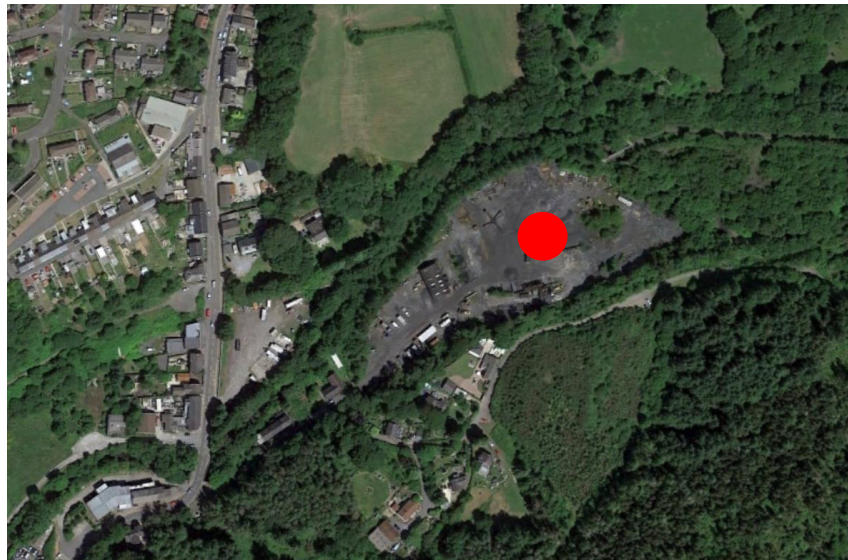


Fig. 1 - General aerial view of application site

2.0.2 The application site measures approximately 2.23 ha and is relatively level. Access to the site is obtained via the existing access leading from the A4069, the main road through Lower and Upper Brynamman. The site has clearly defined boundaries, with woodland areas to the north and east. A wooded bank forms the southern boundary of the site, beyond which is development to the south and west.

2.0.3 The site is located to the east of the built up area of Lower Brynamman but is situated within convenient walking distance of the settlement's services and facilities. Neighbouring Upper Brynamman, which lies within the administrative area of Carmarthenshire County Council, offers additional retail outlets, pubic houses, places of worship, and a cinema.

2.0.4 There are bus stops within a short walk of the site's access, with regular services linking Lower Brynamman with several nearby settlements, including Ammanford to the west (124) with its wide range of services and facilities, and further afield to Swansea (X26). The site's key sustainable accessibility characteristics and carefully

designed layout ensure its compliance with LDP Policy TR2 ‘Design and Access of New Development’.

- 2.0.5 Lower Brynamman has good public transport links and is categorised within the LDP’s settlement hierarchy as a ‘Small Local Centre’, namely, “...*Settlements with adequate public transport links with at least one shop and/or several community facilities.*” The settlement hierarchy identifies those areas within Neath Port Talbot which are considered the most sustainable locations and therefore able to accommodate appropriate growth.
- 2.0.6 In terms of locality, Lower Brynamman is located in the upper Amman Valley, approximately five miles to the east of the Carmarthenshire town of Ammanford, and approximately six miles to the north of Pontardawe in the Swansea Valley, with their extensive range of facilities and services.
- 2.0.7 Lower Brynamman has a coal mining heritage, as do the majority of settlements in this locality, and there is a strong sense of community, to which the relatively high proportion of Welsh speakers contributes significantly.
- 2.0.8 The settlement is typical of a West Wales village community that has seen a decline in primary industry and manufacturing, and is now reliant on service industries, largely located elsewhere.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.0.1 This reserved matters submission follows the granting of outline planning permission at Appeal on the 1st June 2018 (APP/Y6930/A/18/3194251 refers). The submitted scheme proposes 30 no. dwellings, comprising 26 detached and 2 no. pairs of semi-detached. It is evident from the accompanying drawings that the 2.23 hectare brownfield site is capable of accommodating the proposed number of dwellings and associated parking, amenity areas and open space provision, etc., without detriment to any known acknowledged amenity interest.



Fig. 2 - Proposed site layout

3.0.2 The proposed scheme comprises 6 no. two bedroom, 11 no. three bedroom and 13 no. four bedroom dwellings sited within an attractive and pleasant residential layout.

3.0.3 In more detail, the five dwelling types proposed are:-

- Aman - 6 no. detached, 2 storey, 2 bedroom
- Bryn - 7 no. detached, 2 storey, 3 bedroom
- Garw - 4 no. semi-detached, 2 storey, 3 bedroom
- Olchfa - 9 no. detached, 2 storey, 4 bedroom
- Isaf - 4 no. detached, 2 storey, 4 bedroom

3.0.4 It is anticipated that the development will provide accommodation for 30 no. households, which equates to between 60 and 70 persons. For the purposes of this

report, a figure of 65 persons is considered representative. However, pre-judging the number and type of households that will occupy a proposed development is fraught with difficulty. The most robust way of evaluating potential occupancy characteristics is simply by applying the average household size figure to each proposed dwelling.

- 3.0.5 Given the size of the dwellings, the expected occupation will be by families, as opposed to retired couples or single persons. Applying the average household size of 2.4 persons, it is anticipated that there will be at least twelve children living within the thirty dwellings.
- 3.0.6 The anticipated impact on existing services is likely to be positive, in the sense that the expected number of children will not result in an excessive burden being placed on local schools. Likewise, it is not thought that the anticipated number of adults will place undue demand on health services, given their anticipated average age.
- 3.0.7 The submitted scheme relates to the provision of 30 no. dwellings but does also include informal grassed areas of open space and makes provision for access to the adjacent Amman Valley Cycleway at three locations. Provision is also made for the retention of the archaeological kiln features with appropriate landscaping of these locally significant assets.
- 3.0.8 Access to the site is via the existing access from the A4069 which previously served the washery. Each dwelling is served by individual driveways direct from the estate road, with sufficient parking provision.
- 3.0.9 Although the site lies outside the settlement limits for Lower Brynamman, as defined in the LDP, the principle of residential development at this location is established by the granting of outline planning permission. Furthermore, the redevelopment and regeneration of this key brownfield site is supported by both national and local planning policy and will bring a previously community significant site back to efficient and beneficial use.
- 3.0.10 Overall, it is considered, that due to the limited scale of the development, there will be no negative impact on the community of Lower Brynamman.

4.0 POLICY

- 4.0.1 There is a significant amount of policy, both national and local, relating to maintaining and protecting Welsh speaking communities, the most relevant of which is:-

PLANNING (WALES) ACT (2015)

- 4.0.2 The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 revises Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 by adding “...*any considerations relating to the use of the Welsh language, so far as material to the application...*” (Section 31 refers). Thereby there is a duty to take account of all relevant Welsh language considerations when determining planning applications.

THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015

- 4.0.3 The use of the Welsh language is further promoted in the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 which requires a positive approach, namely “...*public bodies to do things in pursuit of the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales in a way that accords with the sustainable development principle*”.

- 4.0.4 Seven ‘well-being goals’ are listed in the Act, one of which is specifically relates to the Welsh language:-

“A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation”.

- 4.0.5 In addition, the goal is expressed in the following manner:-

“Through promoting and protecting our culture and heritage, we come to value their role as mechanisms for social change and their potential to achieve prosperity and resilience.”

CYMRAEG 2050: A MILLION WELSH SPEAKERS (2017)

- 4.0.6 This 2017 document sets out the Welsh Government’s strategy for the “...*promotion and facilitation of the use of the Welsh language...*”. It aims to secure:-

- a target number of one million Welsh speakers by 2050.
- percentage of the population speaking Welsh on a daily basis, and able to speak more than just a few words of Welsh, to increase from 10 per cent (in 2013–15) to 20 per cent by 2050.

4.0.7 The document emphasises the importance of safeguarding Welsh-speaking communities as a means to promote the wider daily use of the language.

PLANNING POLICY WALES (PPW) EDITION 11 (FEBRUARY 2021)

4.0.8 Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11) is the latest update that sets out the direction of Welsh Government policy, with its holistic objective to accommodate both current and future societal needs. It is heavily linked to the newly released national development framework for Wales called 'Future Wales: The National Plan 2040' (February 2021). In accordance with Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Future Wales document has become part of the development plan. Planning Policy Wales (Ed.11) (PPW) establishes the key principles for the planning system, whereas Future Wales (FW) applies the key principles of PPW and establishes where in Wales development should take place and how these places should grow and change.

4.0.9 The most dramatic change within PPW is the promotion and adherence to the socio-economic context provided by the 'Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015' and thus aims to deliver a vision of Wales encompassing:-

- a more prosperous Wales
- a resilient Wales - which supports healthy, functioning ecosystems and recognises the limits of the global environment
- a healthier Wales
- a more equal Wales
- a Wales of more cohesive communities
- a Wales of vibrant culture, and
- a globally responsible Wales.

4.0.10 It is evident that PPW is now aiming to maximise the delivery of outcomes against all aspects of well-being and sustainable development by adopting the new and largely conceptual ‘placemaking’ approach.

4.0.11 The definition of ‘placemaking’ contained in PPW is:-



Fig. 3 - PPW Definition of Placemaking
(PPW, p. 14)

4.0.12 In effect, trying to secure placemaking within the planning system, has become the main component in the delivery of all the aspirations within the ‘Well-being of Future Generations Act’, as well as placing a duty on public bodies to embrace and carry out sustainable development.

4.0.13 The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and other key legislation.

4.0.14 In terms of the Welsh language and placemaking, PPW states that:-

The Welsh language is part of the social and cultural fabric and its future well-being will depend upon a wide range of factors, particularly education, demographic change, community activities and a sound economic base to maintain thriving sustainable communities and places. The land use planning system should take

account of the conditions which are essential to the Welsh language and in so doing contribute to its use and the Thriving Welsh Language well-being goal.

(PPW, para. 3.25)

4.0.15 PPW does however include a caveat effectively only allowing the use of Welsh language considerations to be taken into account during decision making “...so far as they are material to applications for planning permission...”, there must not be “...any element of discrimination between individuals on the basis of their linguistic ability, and should not seek to control housing occupancy on linguistic grounds...”. (PPW, para, 3.28)

TECHNICAL ADVICE NOTE (TAN) 20 (PLANNING AND THE WELSH LANGUAGE)(OCTOBER 2017)

4.0.16 The manner in which the Welsh language may be given appropriate consideration in the planning system is outlined in Technical Advice Note (TAN) 20. (Section 1.3)

4.0.17 Paragraph 1.7.3 of the TAN stipulates that the planning system can contribute to the future well-being of the Welsh language, by establishing the conditions to allow sustainable communities to thrive. It is acknowledged however that the future of the Welsh language is dependent upon a wide range of factors outside the scope of the town and country planning system, including education, demography, and socio-economic activities.

4.0.18 When determining planning applications, TAN 20 reiterates previous guidance in that “...considerations relating to the use of the Welsh language may be taken into account so far as they are material...”. It does emphasise that no additional weight is to be given to the Welsh language above any other material consideration and decisions on all applications for planning permission must be based on planning grounds only and be reasonable. (Para. 3.1.2)

NEATH PORT TALBOT CBC LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP)(2016)

4.0.19 The LDP acknowledges that “...the Welsh language is an integral part of the social fabric...” of Neath Port Talbot. Through LDP Objective 25, Neath Port Talbot County

Borough Council has adopted a committed and proactive approach to the protection, promotion and enhancement of the Welsh language.

- 4.0.20 The Council's policy framework for the Welsh language is contained in LDP Policies SP22 and WL1. Strategic Policy SP22 'Welsh Language' sets the context and meets the aim of Objective 25, whilst Policy WL1 'Development in Language Sensitive Areas' requires developments of a certain size, proposed in LSAs, to submit a WLAP, setting out mitigation measures to address any negative impacts resulting from the proposed development.
- 4.0.21 Within the framework provided by these policies, Lower Brynamman is categorised as an LSA in the LDP. Whilst Neath Port Talbot generally has a lower number of Welsh speakers than the national average, the LDP recognises that Lower Brynamman is a traditionally Welsh speaking settlement, with a higher than average number of speakers, hence its LSA designation.
- 4.0.22 All residential development proposals within LSAs over the threshold of ten units are required to submit a WLAP and make a financial contribution of £500 per unit (to cover 3 years) towards the creation of a framework of activities to mitigate any negative effects on the Welsh language.
- 4.0.23 The Council's accompanying SPG 'Development and the Welsh Language' provides further guidance and outlines the methodology for undertaking a WLAP. The document details the relevant matters that need to be considered in respect of developments planned for the designated LSAs.
- 4.0.24 The SPG acknowledges that new development can place both positive and negative impacts upon a community, many of which have been assessed by means of the LDP's Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA). The document concludes that any proposed mitigation which aims to protect, promote and enhance the Welsh language will therefore be addressed through the use of planning obligations.
- 4.0.25 It is therefore hoped that this WLAP will fully assist in helping to inform the mitigation measures required in respect of the development proposal.

5.0 WARD / LOCAL INFORMATION

5.0.1 This section provides background information relating to the local community in respect of demography, language and infrastructure. Its focus on Lower Brynamman however has to acknowledge that the impact of any development, whether positive or negative, is likely to affect a wider area within the Upper Amman Valley.

5.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

5.1.1 According to the 2011 census, the population of Wales was 3.1 million. This represented an increase of 5.3% or 153,000 during the 10 years since the 2001 census figure of 2.9 million.

5.1.2 This increase was reflected both in the population of Neath Port Talbot in 2011 (139,812) as compared with 134,380 at the time of the 2001 census, and that of the Lower Brynamman ward, where the total population in 2011 was 4,240, having increased from 2,827 in 2001. (ONS) General information relating to Lower Brynamman's demographic profile is provided at *Figure 4*.

General Demographic Profile (2011 Census)	
Lower Brynamman	
Category	No.
All residents	305
No. of households	135
Avg. household size	2.30
Pop. Density (ha)	2.40
Mean age	42
Males	154
Females	151

Fig. 4 – General Profile of Lower Brynamman Ward 2011 (UK Census Data)

5.2 LANGUAGE PROFILE

5.2.1 At the time of the 2011 census it was recorded that 19.0% (562,000) of Wales' population (aged 3 and over) could speak Welsh. This represented a 2% drop from the 21% (582,000) recorded in the 2001 census.

5.2.2 At a county level, the proportion of Welsh speakers recorded within Neath Port Talbot in 2011 was 15.3%, i.e. approximately 20,698 people. This decline from 18% in 2001

mirrored both the national picture and locally in Lower Brynamman itself, as shown in *Figure 5*. However, the decline experienced at a local level was considerably greater, with the percentage change in the number of those speaking the language in Lower Brynamman between 2001 and 2011 being a drop of 7.32%.

% of Welsh Speakers		
	2001	2011
Wales	20.8	19.0
Neath Port Talbot	18.0	15.3
Lower Brynamman	68.12	60.80

Fig. 5 - Percentage of Welsh Speakers (NPTCBC)

5.2.3 The vast majority of the communities that comprise Neath Port Talbot County Borough have lower numbers of Welsh speakers when compared to both national and county averages. However, there are Welsh language strongholds within the county, where the language is spoken on a daily basis by high numbers of the local population. Evidently, Lower Brynamman is one such community, with over 60% speaking Welsh, according to Menter Iaith Castell Nedd Port Talbot. In an effort to safeguard its Welsh language status, it was designated an LSA by the Local Authority in the LDP.

5.2.4 *Figure 6* compares the 2011 census data in respect of the population's Welsh language skills at a community, county and national level.

Welsh Language Skills Profile (2011 Census) %			
	Wales	Neath Port Talbot	Lower Brynamman Ward
No skills in Welsh	73.3	75.2	29.4
Can understand spoken Welsh only	5.3	6.4	8.8
Can speak but cannot read or write Welsh	2.7	2.7	12.1
Can speak and read but cannot write Welsh	1.5	1.6	6.0
Can speak, read and write Welsh	14.6	10.8	42.6
Other combination of skills in Welsh	2.5	3.3	1.3

Fig. 6 - Welsh Language Skills Profile 2011 (UK Census Data)

- 5.2.5 The data in *Figure 6* shows that Welsh language skills levels of the population of Neath Port Talbot largely reflect those of Wales as a whole in 2011. However, the significance of the Lower Brynamman ward is evident in the well above average proportion not only speaking Welsh, but also having writing and reading skills. There is also a dramatic difference between the 75.2% of the county's population with no skills in Welsh compared with only 29.4% in Lower Brynamman.
- 5.2.6 It is clear therefore why Lower Brynamman is considered a 'language sensitive area'. In fact, Lower Brynamman ward had the highest percentage of Welsh speakers in Neath Port Talbot CBC in 2011 (60%). Furthermore, with such a significant proportion of the population (42.6%) being able to speak, read and write in Welsh, this suggests a level of fluency lacking in the majority of Neath Port Talbot.
- 5.2.7 However, despite the relatively high levels of Welsh language use, Lower Brynamman did experience a notable decline in Welsh speakers between 2001 and 2011, and if we examine data from the 1991 census, the decline is even more significant, with a 15.8% reduction in the proportion of Welsh speakers.
- 5.2.8 In light of these linguistic trends, it is important that any proposed development within this community seeks to protect and promote the Welsh language, through the mitigation of any potential negative impacts.

5.3 WELSH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROVISION

- 5.3.1 Welsh medium education is generally considered to have a significant influence on the numbers of those with the ability to speak the language. Consequently, the impact of any development on school places will be of relevance.
- 5.3.2 At present, within the Neath Port Talbot administrative area, there are nine Welsh medium primary schools, one Welsh medium 'all-through' school (3 to 18 years of age), and one Welsh medium secondary school (11 to 18 years of age). The Local Education Authority (LEA) states that Welsh medium education is an option for all pupils from both Welsh and non-Welsh speaking households and provides courses for primary age pupils to improve Welsh language skills.

- 5.3.3 Whilst the closest primary school education to the site is provided by Ysgol Gynradd Brynaman, a Welsh medium primary school situated in Upper Brynamman, this school lies within the Carmarthenshire County Council administrative area. Neath Port Talbot CBC has confirmed that pupils can attend any school where there is an available place. However, for the purposes of this WLAP and the site's location within the Neath Port Talbot administrative area, information relating to this Local Authority will be utilised and thus the closest primary school is at nearby Gwaun Cae Gurwen.
- 5.3.4 Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Gwaun Cae Gurwen is a Welsh medium school with pupils ranging in age from 3 to 11 years. The school has 183 pupils on the roll, including a nursery class. The school aims to “...*encourage and inspire our children to use Welsh in all aspects of their lives...*” according to its website. Welsh is the medium of teaching and communication and pupils should be bilingual at the end of Year 6. To enable non-Welsh speakers to join the school, special provisions are made, with pupil support and additional Welsh language lessons available.
- 5.3.5 Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur provides all age (3 – 18 years) Welsh medium education at its Ystalyfera, Upper Swansea Valley site, and aims to “...*enable each pupil to communicate effectively in both spoken and written Welsh and English...*” whilst fostering “...*pride in the Welsh language and culture...*” and preparing “...*each pupil for a full and satisfying life after leaving school, and to serve communities as responsible, bilingual citizens.*” It presently has a school roll of approximately 1099 and interestingly, the school website states that approximately 86% of its pupils come from non-Welsh speaking households. Schools bus service transport is provided to the school.
- 5.3.6 Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera has received considerable investment from the Local Authority's '21st Century Schools' programme with the improvement of existing facilities and a new-build school at Sandfields, Aberavon/Port Talbot, catering for 650 Year 7 – 11 pupils, boosting Welsh medium education provision within the southern part of the county.
- 5.3.7 The Local Authority's 'Welsh in Education Strategic Plan' (2017 – 2020) acknowledges that “...*language and culture are essential parts of an individual's*

identity...” and is “...committed to promoting and celebrating the Welsh language and culture in a pro-active and inclusive way across all its schools...”. The document aims to support the Welsh Government’s 2050 target of a million Welsh speakers by increasing the use of Welsh in all aspects of education.

5.3.8 In addition to the Welsh language opportunities provided by schools, Menter Iaith Castell Nedd Port Talbot has advised that, in addition to themselves, the following Welsh language medium groups are presently active in Lower Brynamman:-

- Urdd Gobaith Cymru
- Cymraeg i Blant
- Mudiad Meithrin
- Merched y Wawr

5.3.9 The foregoing confirms that Lower Brynamman is a vibrant and sustainable community, where the Welsh language is an intrinsic element of the population’s daily lives.

6.0 CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

- 6.0.1 The original approved outline planning application (P2008/0798 refers) was subject of Welsh Government Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales)(Amendment) Order 2016).
- 6.0.2 Members of the public, statutory bodies, and other third parties, were consulted and were afforded a minimum period of 28 days within which to make representations in respect of the proposed development. All representations received as a result of this process were carefully considered by the LPA prior to determining the planning application.
- 6.0.3 Previous consultation responses have assisted in the production of mitigation measures appropriate to the proposed development and which seek to protect, promote, enhance and nurture the Welsh language in Lower Brynamman.
- 6.0.4 In addition, the views of Menter Iaith Castell Nedd Port Talbot have been sought in respect of any preferred or recommended mitigation measures and which have assisted in informing this process. Menter Iaith confirms that a large percentage of the area's population (over 60%) is Welsh speaking and suggests that a full Welsh Language Action Plan be put in place which could include a number of mitigation activities, such as, the production and distribution of a Welsh Welcome Pack, advertising Welsh language services available in the local area; highlighting the fact that the dwellings are located within a predominantly Welsh speaking area; highlighting that there is funding available for Welsh language courses; and that there are Welsh language community events available provided by Menter Iaith and partners, working with the local schools, etc.
- 6.0.5 At this stage, the only certainty regarding future occupation of the site and its consequent impact relates to the fact that the population of Lower Brynamman will increase as a result of the development. No firm conclusions can be drawn in respect of socio-cultural impacts, as the demographic and linguistic abilities of the prospective occupiers are unknown. There is the possibility that future occupiers may all be local residents and all Welsh speaking, which would clearly have considerable

positive impacts. More realistically, there is likely to be a mix of Welsh speaking and non-Welsh speaking occupiers. However, overall, it is considered that the construction of this modest number of dwellings will not impact negatively upon the Welsh language due to its relative strength and vibrancy within the community.

6.0.6 It is evident therefore that appropriate consultation has been undertaken in respect of the proposal and all responses given due consideration.

7.0 MITIGATION

- 7.0.1 The proposed development at Forge Washery, Lower Brynamman, comprises 30 no. dwellings – 26 no. detached and 4 no. semi-detached, with two, three and four bedroom dwellings, and is likely to introduce approximately sixty new residents to Lower Brynamman. It is anticipated that the existing percentage of Welsh speakers in the Lower Brynamman ward will be reflected in the proportion of Welsh speaking future occupiers of the development.
- 7.0.2 Whilst it is important to address the issue of potential new non-Welsh speaking occupiers of the dwellings, attention should also be paid to the need to ensure that current Welsh speaking households are not lost from the community, either as a result of moving elsewhere or as a result of losing their language skills due to lack of opportunity.
- 7.0.3 The development will provide a much needed choice and range of housing for the locality, which will help sustain the local population. The provision of new, modern housing will afford existing residents of Lower Brynamman the opportunity to relocate to new dwellings without leaving the area. This is likely to assist in retaining those younger residents/young families who may prefer to live in modern accommodation. This in turn will benefit the locality in that it will help retain vibrancy within the community and thereby prevent dilution of Welsh speakers. These are clearly positive impacts and examples of the beneficial effect of the development, irrespective of any specific mitigation measures.
- 7.0.4 It is considered that the 30 no. dwellings proposed at Lower Brynamman are likely to have an overall positive impact on the Welsh language. However, despite there being no anticipated negative language impacts, the following mitigation measures are proposed, which reflect Condition 9 of Appeal decision APP/Y6930/A/18/3194251:-

- *the signage and all aspects of the scheme's marketing will be bilingual*

The Welsh language is prioritised in the marketing of the five different dwelling types with each having been given a Welsh name that also reflects the local community and heritage – Aman, Bryn, Garw, Olchfa and Isaf.

Bilingual marketing of the development in terms of sales literature and site marketing boards will achieve maximum exposure for the language in terms of both direct enquiries to the sales agents and general passers-by.

- *any new names given to the development will take into account both the site's local linguistic heritage and its importance within the community as the site of the former Forge Washery, and will be reflected in all signage*

The residential development has been given the name 'Pentre Efail' to specifically reflect its local heritage. Paragraph 5.1.1 of Technical Advice Note 20 states that "...Signs can have a very visible impact on the character of an area, including its linguistic character. They are also one method of promoting the distinctive culture of Wales...". Giving the development the name 'Pentre Efail' will undoubtedly promote use and familiarisation of the Welsh language in Lower Brynamman.

- *appropriate public open space provision and connectivity to and with the surrounding community*

The proposal includes generous levels of open space provision which can facilitate the social interaction of residents. Provision is made for public connections to the Amman Valley Cycle Way, which runs close to the site. This provision will foster interaction between residents and the general community, thereby supporting social networks. Furthermore, provision is made for open space to enhance the setting of the listed kilns situated at the periphery of the site. This locally significant historic feature had hitherto been inaccessible to the general public but which will now be viewed within an appropriately landscaped setting. The substantial improvement to connectivity resulting from the development will undoubtedly benefit the community by facilitating opportunities to interact socially and thereby encourage daily use of the Welsh language. The combination of the provision of open space, cycleway access, and enhancement of historic features, will also assist in integrating the development within the local community.

- a 'Welcome Pack' will be provided placing the language in its context and setting out local Welsh language provision, such as the location of Welsh medium schools and Welsh language classes and social groups.

The production and distribution of a Welsh language 'Welcome Pack', advertising the Welsh language services available in the local area; highlighting the fact that the dwellings are located within a predominantly Welsh speaking area; publicising that there is funding available for Welsh language courses and that there are Welsh language community events available provided by Menter Iaith and partners, working with the local schools, etc., will serve as a valuable introduction to Welsh language activities for future residents.

- 7.0.5 The aim of the foregoing mitigation measures is to assist in the protection, promotion and enhancement of the Welsh language within the community of Lower Brynamman and it is hoped that their introduction will nurture and indeed ensure the language's future daily use by both existing and new speakers.
- 7.0.6 The development is considered more than acceptable in terms of its impact on the Welsh language.

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.0.1 This residential development represents an opportunity to regenerate a sustainable, brownfield site, thereby making an important positive contribution, by means of environmental improvement and the provision of much needed quality housing.
- 8.0.2 The provision of 30 no. quality dwellings will help in sustaining local services, facilities and businesses. Through enabling sustainable communities to develop and thrive, the planning system can make an important and significant contribution to securing the future of the Welsh language.
- 8.0.3 Furthermore, it is expected that the development will have no overall negative effect on the Welsh language in this locality.
- 8.0.4 Rather, it is anticipated that the development will assist in retaining Welsh speakers within the local community, who will therefore continue to use the language on a daily basis.
- 8.0.5 Should non-Welsh speakers occupy any of the new dwellings, the proposed mitigation measures will ensure that they are aware of the importance of the language within Lower Brynamman and they will be encouraged to learn to speak Welsh.
- 8.0.6 It is therefore concluded that the development, through the promotion and support of the Welsh language, and by providing both residents and the community as a whole, with the opportunity to learn and use the language, will have a clear, positive impact on not only the local community but on the Welsh language itself.