

21 July 2021
Our Ref: 21.146

The Planning Department
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
The Quays
Baglan Energy Park
Neath
SA11 2GG

Dear Sir / Madam,

Full Planning Application
Development of eight dwellings with parking and associated works on land at Pearson Way,
Penrhiwtyn, Neath, SA11 2EJ.
Planning Portal Reference: PP-09990395

I herewith enclose on behalf of my client, Wellspring Homes, a full planning application for the development described above.

In addition to this covering letter/planning statement, this planning application is supported by a suite of documentation, as set out below:

Document title	Author	Document reference
Site Location Plan	Pentan	3957-PEN-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-1000-S4-P1
Proposed Site Layout	Pentan	3957-PEN-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-1005-S4-P5
House Type A – Floor Plans	Pentan	3957-PEN-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-2000-S4-P4
House Type B – Floor Plans	Pentan	3957-PEN-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-3000-S4-P3
House Type A – Elevations	Pentan	3957-PEN-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-3002-S4-P1
House Type B - Elevations	Pentan	3957-PEN-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-3002-S4-P1
Engineering Layout	PHG	2122/100/A
Ecological Impact Assessment	Ecological Services Ltd	June 2021
Tree Survey	Treescene Ltd	April 2021
Tree Constraints Plan	Treescene Ltd	April 2021
Wellspring Homes -Company Profile/Vision	Wellspring Homes	N/A

It should be noted that the planning application fee, £3,680.00, will be paid by the applicant directly to the LPA.

Site Location & Description

The application site comprises a singular irregular shaped parcel of vacant scrub land, located to the south-west of Pearson Way. The land parcel is situated between a row of semi-detached dwellings, and a cul-de-sac stemming from Pearson Way, serving a limited number of properties. In terms of wider context, the site is located in Penrhiwtyn, approximately 1.6km south of Neath.

The site is located approximately 2.2 km (approx. 30 mins walk/12 mins cycle) south of Neath Town Centre, which offers a range of shops, services, health and recreational facilities. In closer proximity, Briton Ferry District Centre is approximately 2.1km (approx. 25 mins walk/11 mins cycle) south of the site, providing retail, leisure, recreational and healthcare facilities, at a more local level. The nearest bus stops are located 350m from the site along Old Road, and the nearest train station is located at Briton Ferry, 1.9km from the subject site.

Notably, Penrhiwtyn presents an established residential landscape. Pearson Way itself is more contemporary, comprising of dwellings developed in the recent years. In closest proximity to the site along Pearson Way, dwellings south-east of the site are terraced and detached, whilst dwellings to the north-west of the site are semi-detached and integrated into the sloping landscape. The other adjacent dwellings across Pearson Way are detached. In terms of vernacular, local dwellings adopt a mix of brown/red and buff facing brick, with evidence of render. In terms of roof design, these are typically dual pitched front to back, with examples of gable projections prevalent in the area. Due to the surrounding topography, many of the properties have steep sloping gardens with raised terraces that are staggered/integrated into the landscape.

Pearson Way has been developed over a number of phases, and the subject site benefits from existing planning permission relating to Phase 3 of a previous application. Despite this, the application site remains undeveloped and as a result, unkempt in terms of its current appearance. The site is located within the middle of the Pearson Way development, and given its current state of vacancy, Pearson Way, as a whole, appears incomplete.

Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises of eight dwellings, formed through of a mix of four no. detached and four no. (two pairs) semi-detached split-level dwellings. The detached dwellings are to provide four bedrooms, whilst the semi-detached dwellings are to provide two bedrooms. These dwellings are to be set back from the highway, Pearson Way, separated by private off-road parking set within a landscaped front garden.

Whilst the dwellings will be up to three storey in height, the split level design is such that at the front of the site, where viewed from the public realm, the semi-detached house types will appear as bungalows and the detached as dormer bungalows, whilst at the rear the semi's and detached appear as two storey in height, with accommodation provided in the roof void. The bespoke units have been designed to fit into the sloping landscape, helping to reduce the overall extent of retaining walls required.

All of the dwellings are provided with a level terrace at the rear with steps from each provided to the graded rear garden. A stepped pedestrian access is provided to the side of each plot to facilitate waste/recycling transfer and general access. At the very rear of the site, running across the southwestern boundary, a green landscaped buffer is to be retained and enhanced. This buffer will form a screen along the access lane and ensure that a net biodiversity gain is achieved through the development of the site. A tree survey has been prepared which confirmed that most of the trees are of low quality with a limited life span. However, two category B trees were identified which are to be retained in the buffer area identified.

In terms of site access, both pedestrian and vehicular access is to be obtained from Pearson Way. The proposed four-bedroom dwellings are to be provided with three car parking spaces each, whilst the two-bedroom dwellings are to provide two car parking spaces. It is anticipated that the needs of future visitors can be met through on-street parking available within the vicinity. Furthermore, the rear

gardens and terraces, coupled with the side pedestrian access route will facilitate cycle storage for each of the dwellings.

In addition to the green buffer corridor at the rear of the site, soft landscaping is proposed at the front of the site which will also act as a sustainable drainage features, with the planting of trees and hedge planting providing an attractive and functional streetscape.

Planning History

The subject site forms part of a wider allocation, which has secured permission for a number of development proposals since 1998. It appears that the site itself received planning permission with the most recent approval indicating a development of up to 12 no. units. The main planning history for the site is summarised in the table below.

Application Reference	Proposal	Status
P1998/0724	Outline application for residential development	Approved Aug 1998
P2007/0613	Full application for 24 dwellings.	Approved Nov 2008
P2008/1352	Full application for residential development comprising 36 flats, maisonettes and houses with associated infrastructure	Approved Apr 2011

Principle of the Proposal

The application site is situated within the established settlement boundary of Neath Port Talbot, as defined under Policy SC1 of the Neath Port Talbot LDP. The planning history of the site also establishes the acceptability of the scheme, in land use policy terms. Further, PPW promotes the efficient reuse of previously developed land in the most suitable locations. There are no identified constraints or policy conflicts which would have a bearing on the principle of the proposal.

Design and Impact Upon Visual and Neighbouring Amenity

In terms of design, the scale, layout, siting and orientation of the proposed development has sought to follow the general principles established under the previous consent on the site, albeit there are a number of notable differences which the applicant believes constitute improvements. Firstly, fewer dwellings are now proposed, with a mix of larger detached and semi-detached units favoured compared to the previously approved mix of 12 no. linked terraced units set within three blocks.

Furthermore, the scale of the development, when viewed from within the estate is reduced, with the properties taking the appearance as bungalows and dormer bungalows, with the lower ground level at the rear only visible as glimpses from the rear lane that stems from Old Road. The previous permission on the site was for two storey units with terraced gardens at the rear. The proposed design is considered to be more sympathetic to the existing site, as the split-level design, coupled the terracing of the rear gardens works better with the existing topography avoiding the need for significant regrading or large retaining walls.

In terms of car parking, as previously mentioned, the scheme has sought to provide on-plot provision at the front of the site set within a landscaped front garden area. Parking is to be provided, in accordance with the parking guidelines, with the use of hedge and tree planting not only providing an attractive approach to the development but also fulfilling the sustainable drainage requirements for surface water drainage. It is believed that this the layout as design accords with criteria three (Materials and Landscaping) and seven (Integrated Transport and Linkages) of the Design SPG.

This application is accompanied by details which prescribe the proposed materials to be used, with the applicant looking to utilise Hempcrete with light coloured render for the walls, timber for window and door frames, and slate tiles for the roofs. It is explained within the accompanying company profile that the applicant, Wellspring Homes, are striving to improve the quality and performance of housing

delivered in Wales, with a key objective surrounding carbon reduction. As a result, the applicant is looking to use high performance sustainable materials and is seeking the use of Hempcrete as a breathable facing material for the construction of the dwelling, together with natural insulation in the form of sheep's wool. Further information in this respect is contained within the accompanying Company profile. In response to the incorporation of light render within the surrounding area, and in recognition of its environmental benefits, it is considered that the proposed facing materials are both sustainable and appropriate to the local context. As such, it is believed that the materials are appropriate and in compliance with criterion 3 (Materials and Landscaping) of the LPA's Design SPG.

As the proposed development is sited along a similar alignment/footprint to that previously approved, and has a similar north/south orientation, it is not considered that the scheme will give rise to any unacceptable impacts in terms of privacy.

In terms of scale, massing and other amenity considerations, again, the scheme is considered not to give rise to any significant concerns albeit, it could be argued that the revised development offers a number of benefits, compared to that previously approved on the site, given the split-level design and reduced height within the street-scene. As such, it is our assertion that the scheme complies with Policy BE1 (Design) of the LDP, criteria one (Character and Appearance) and four (Highway Safety and Amenity) of the Design SPG and satisfies Placemaking objectives of PPW.

Other Matters

In order to assist with the application appraisal process, the following section intends to pick out a number of additional development management considerations, providing a short commentary which it is hoped will assist in your appraisal of the proposal.

Drainage – the accompanying engineering layout prepared by PHG shows the drainage proposals for both foul and surface water drainage disposal. You will be aware the surface water drainage now requires separate SAB approval albeit it is hoped that by providing you with these details as part of the planning submission it will assist your understanding of the intended approach which includes a combination of permeable paving, dished channels leading to bioretention areas, raingardens and cellular attenuation. To be clear, separate surface water approval will be pursued separately with the SAB.

Cycle, Refuse & Car Parking -as highlighted above, it is the applicants' intention to make provision for cycle storage within the rear garden areas of the dwellings. To facilitate this, each of the units is provided with rear pedestrian paths which will also assist with the transfer of waste and recycling materials to the kerb side on the morning of collection. In terms of parking, each unit is provided with car parking which accords with the parking guidelines.

Affordable Housing -two of the eight units proposed, specifically the two-bedroom dwellings at plots 7 and 8, are to be afforded as affordable housing meeting the LPA's policy requirements. It is anticipated that these units can be secured via the use of an appropriately worded condition.

Landscape, Arboriculture & Biodiversity -as previously mentioned, the proposals include for retention of a green buffer area along the south-western boundary. This area will be supplemented with additional hedge and shrub planting whilst also containing the retained category B trees, as shown on the layout. The utilisation of sensitive site clearance techniques, the new and retained planting measures coupled with the bat and bird box provisions, as set out within the accompany Ecological Assessment, will ensure that the biodiversity interests of the site are appropriately considered and result in a net biodiversity gain, as recommended within PPW.

Furthermore, the frontage of the site is to be landscaped with the addition of trees, shrubs and hedge planting which only add to the biodiversity interest, they contribute to the surface water drainage design and provide an attractive street scene in line with sustainable Placemaking considerations.

I trust that I have provided all information required to allow for the swift validation and processing of the application and look forward to receiving confirmation of receipt.

Should you require any further information or explanation in the meantime however, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam Courtney', with several overlapping strokes.

Sam Courtney BA(Hons) Dip (Uc) MA MRTPI
Director
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Enc.