PLANABUILD

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Planning Statement

Planning Application for New House on Plot 6

at Old School Court, Neath Road, Bryn, Port Talbot, SA13 2BJ

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1) Overview of Application

The Outline Section of Planning Permission P2019/5330 to develop the part of the previous Bryn Primary School site for 10 houses has not proceeded.

This has occurred due to a number of reasons amongst which are: - lack of interest from potential buyers; the Covid epidemic; steeply rising construction prices; and property prices.

The site has since been split into separate areas of ownership.

The development proposed in this application comprises of one detached house on a site which has been unused since Bryn Primary School closed in August 2015.

A separate Planning Application (P/24/0750) has been submitted by the owner of the adjacent land for the proposed private shared drive to which would provide access and utilities to the proposed plot and 3 other properties. The private drive would facilitate distribution of all required utility services from the adopted highway at Neath Road and electricity from the pole mounted sub station in the field adjacent to the north east corner of the site. Application P/24/0750 includes the works to the existing highway required to facilitate the proposed development of all 6 houses on the former school site.

The proposed house to Plot 6 would be set with a frontage on to the proposed private shared drive to be known as “Old School Court”.

Full access rights over the private drive have been granted to the Applicant by the adjacent landowner.

2) Physical and Social Context

a) Physical and historical context

The proposed development is located at the north edge of Bryn, a village located astride the B4282, approximately 8 Km (5 miles) from Port Talbot and 3 Km (2 miles) from Maesteg.

Neath Road is an adopted highway which runs in a northerly direction from the B4282 at the east end of the village.

The site of this planning application would have a frontage to the proposed shared private access drive from Neath Road which is proposed to be constructed on the site by the adjacent landowner.

The frontage of the side from the shared private drive would be 30 metres.

The average depth of the site would be 60 metres.

The site is 0.13 Hectare in area.

The site is vacant and would be cleared of redundant surface structures.

The site was farm land until 1967 when the former Glamorgan County Council purchased the land and built a single storey Primary School on the site. The school opened in 1968 . For the next 47 years the Bryn Primary School served the educational needs of young children in Bryn. The school was closed on 16th July 2015, since when the young children living in Bryn travel to the Cwmafan Primary School 5 Km (3 miles) away.

The boundaries of the site comprise a fenced boundary to the south where a number of trees which have been planted during the time that the school occupied the site. A survey of the trees on the site is further detailed in the tree report, referred to in section 3c of this statement and which forms part of this planning application.

b) Mining Risk

The site is located within a Development High Risk Area as defined by the Coal Authority (C.A.). Further investigations have been carried out and a Coal Mining Risk Assesment has been prepared by Rhondda Geological Services. A copy of this report is appended to this statement.

The conclusion of this report states:-

This risk assessment has presented abundant evidence from comprehensive research that there is no risk to ground stability posed by coal mining legacy issues at the site. The threat posed by a mineshaft has been the subject of an intrusive investigation and has proved to be groundless. Secondly, the seam shown by the C.A. report outcropping across the site (and therefore underlying part of the site) does not exist at a workable thickness, if at all. There is simply no evidence to support the presence of the seam (Gorllwyn) outcropping at ground level as is shown in the C.A. Consultant's Report. In fact all available evidence proves the opposite. The Caedavid or Upper Cockshot (the earlier name for the seam) was an economically important seam east and west of the site respectively. During the heyday of shallow coalmining around the village of Bryn the fact that the seam was locally absent was clearly discovered. The stratigraphic succession was well known by that time. If the seam was there it would undoubtedly have been exploited. This knowledge has fed into the Geological Survey Memoir, the third edition of which was published in 1964, using information gathered from local mining records and intense, thorough fieldwork. In particular the study of spoil from long abandoned adits formed a major part of the 1947-49 survey. The Golden seam has been proved to outcrop north of the site, not on the site, and also does not correlate with the Gorllwyn. Therefore there is no need for a part of the site to be classified as Development High Risk (See Figure 19 overleaf), and no reason for the Coal Authority to object to planning permission being granted for the proposed development.

c) Contaminated land

The site was previously used as a primary school so was initially assessed as being of low risk from contamination in the land.

However council officers have previously requested that a Phase 1 Contaminated Land Assessment. A copy of this report is appended to this statement.

The Phase 1 Contaminated Land Assessment report, prepared by Rhondda Geological Services, concludes that there is no risk to the proposed development from contaminants in the land.

Asbestos was only present in the now demolished school building which has been demolished and removed off site to an appropriately licensed tip.

d) Ecology

A Report of the Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Protected Species Surveys was produced by Hawkeswood Ecology. The report makes recommendations particularly in respect of the potential of the existing school building to support bats and the potential for reptiles being present on the site.

A further Reptile Mitigation Scheme report was produced by Hawkeswood Ecology setting out a methodology for clearing the site of Unit 2 and translocation any reptiles if found on the site when further stages of the site are developed .

Discussions held with Hawkeswood Ecology took place prior to the determination for the 2 houses on Plots 1 and 2 which have been constructed on the site and it was agreed that a reasonable method of dealing with reptiles on the entire site would be to clear the site of individual houses and the highway.

The sites of House 1 and House 2 and the working area have been cleared as specified in the Hawkeswood Methodology without finding any reptiles;

As each area of the site was cleared it was fenced off with reptile proof fencing during construction. This result in any reptiles being restricted to the area of the site to be developed on the remainder of the site.

No reptiles have been observed during the construction of the houses on Plot 1 and Plot 2.

If any reptiles are found on the site arrangements will be made, in consultation with the Council's Ecologist, to translocate any remaining reptiles to a suitable off site location.

e) Trees and Landscaping

Appended to this application is an Arboriculture Survey Report produced by G.M. Ayres and T.A Seymour of Cardiff Treescapes for the whole of the former Primary School Site.

Drawing 1177-6-03 shows the proposed planting of trees to the site perimeter, to provide screening of the site from the surrounding countryside. Should this application be granted planning permission the south north west boundary would be reinforced with replacement trees suited to local conditions and in keeping with the landscape. The planting of boundary trees will also enhance the visual amenity of the site and provide refuge for nesting and foraging wildlife. The planting of a perimeter hedgerow between the new and existing trees would provide low cover. This hedge would include Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Field Maple Wayfaring tree, Spindle tree and Hazel Holly.

Some of the new trees to the boundary would be larger specimen trees . Species would include Oak; Birch; Beech; and Scots Pine together with evergreen broad leafed trees including Evergreen Oak, Bay Laurel, Holly, and Portugal Laurel.

3) Policy Context

The development is located within the settlement boundary of Bryn which is located within the administrative area of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

The site has previously been granted planning permission for housing development under Planning Permission P2019/5330 which established the principals of development on this site. The houses to plots 1 and 2 have been constructed but the site infrastructure improvements to suit the 10 further houses proposed at that time were not put in place due to the uncertain future plan for the overall development.

The reduced scale proposals for the infrastructure required to support the currently proposed site-wide development are shown on drawing 1177-6-03 for completeness. The infrastructure proposals have been submitted as a separate planning application (P/24/650) by the adjoining landowner as they lie on his land and will be constructed by him.

The development has been designed with reference to the National Guidance published by the Welsh Assembly Government and the relevant policies of the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Local Development Plan (2011-2026) Adopted in January 2016.

a) Planning Policy Wales

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 12 (February 2024) is a material consideration in the determination of this Planning Application. The document sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's land use planning policies and is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TAN's).

PPW promotes sustainable development by ensuring that the planning system can provide for an adequate and continuous supply of land, available and suitable for development to meet the needs of society that is consistent with the overall sustainability principles.

In particular, it seeks to promote resource-efficient settlement patterns that:-

minimise land-take and urban sprawl, locate developments so as to minimise the demand for travel; ensure that all communities have good quality housing for their needs, promote access to shopping, education, employment, health, community, leisure and sports facilities and open space.

Chapter 3 on Strategic and Spatial Choices Planning for Sustainability contains the following paragraphs relevant to this planning Application:-

3.55 Previously Developed Land

Previously developed (also referred to as brown field) land (see definition overleaf) should, wherever possible, be used in preference to green field sites where it is suitable for development. In settlements, such land should generally be considered suitable for appropriate development where its re-use will promote sustainability principles and any constraints can be overcome

The proposed development makes use of part of the previously developed land last used until 2015 by the Bryn Primary School.

6.2.12 Green Infrastructure Statement

At paragraph 6.2.12 PPW states that a green infrastructure statement should be submitted with all planning applications. This will be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed and will describe how green infrastructure has been incorporated into the proposal. In the case of minor development this will be a short description and should not be an onerous requirement for applicants. The green infrastructure statement will be an effective way of demonstrating positive multi-functional outcomes which are appropriate to the site in question and must be used for demonstrating how the step-wise approach (Paragraph 6.4.15) has been applied.

Surrounding Area description:
The existing site was part of a Primary School which has since been demolished and replaced by the two existing houses. A large part of the land previously occupied by the school remains undeveloped as shown on drawing 1177-P-02. The site is surrounded to the north and east by arable farmland; to the south by a clubhouse and housing forming part of the village of Bryn; and to the west by the entrance to the Bryn Parc Leisure Facilities.

Site description
The application site is bounded to the rear by a post and wire fence with a number of existing mature trees forming a screen to the farmland beyond. The south western boundary would be a retaining wall varying in height between ground level and 2.0 metres high between the garage of Plot 1 and the proposed house. A similar wall maximum height 2.5 m high would be provided between Plots 5 and 6. The north western boundary is currently undefined but will be the edge of a paved shared private drive.

The garden area to the front of the house would be paved and used for car parking. The remaining garden areas will be planted to lawn; patio or planning areas to suit the requirements of the occupants over which the developer will have no control

The trees at the south western boundary would be supplemented by a number of new trees and shrubs to fill the gaps as described in section 2e) of this document.

Development Impacts:
The existing site is undeveloped and has no vegetation present on the site. The areas of the building and hard landscaping will therefore have little effect upon the biodiversity value of the site.

Biodiversity Enhancements Proposed
Connectivity for birds and other wildlife to the retained wooded area will be created by the proposed planting to the south boundary.

Bird and Bat boxes would be fixed to the north facing elevation of each of the proposed dwelling houses.

Conclusion.
It is considered that subject to the above, the proposed development would maintain and enhance biodiversity and build a resilient ecological network at the rear of the garden and deliver net benefits for biodiversity.

This will ensure that any adverse environmental effects are avoided.

b) Tan 12 – Design

One of the key objectives of TAN 12 is the impact of the development on the character of the area.

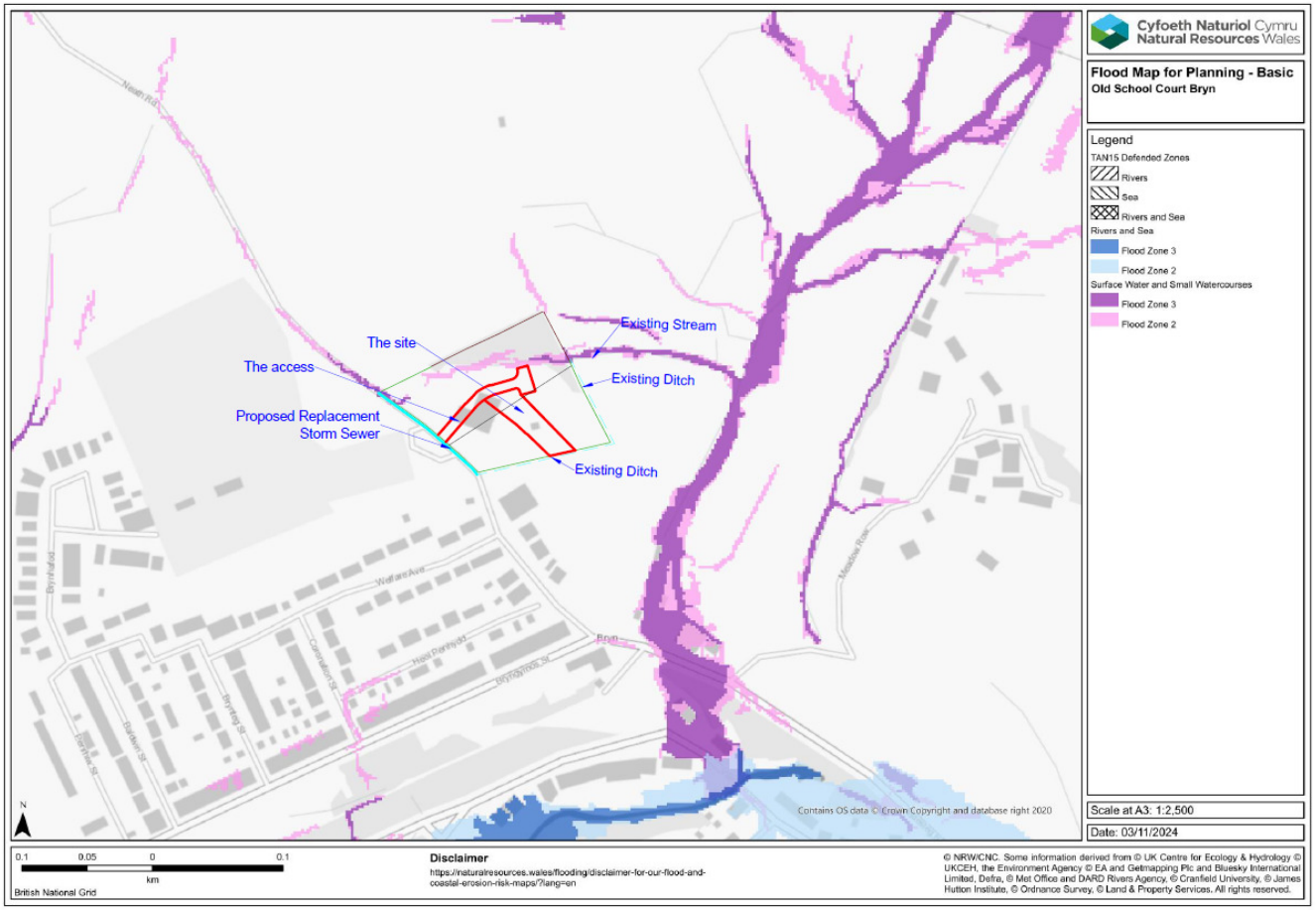
The TAN encourages:

- Promoting legible development.
- Promoting a successful relationship between public and private space.
- Promoting quality, choice and variety.
- Promoting innovative design.
- Design Response Following Appraisal of Context by responding to:
- landscapes and townscapes, culture and biodiversity.
- locally distinctive patterns and forms of development.
- existing buildings, infrastructure, urban/rural landscape and public art.
- clear boundaries and established building lines.
- appropriateness of uses and the mix of uses and densities
- easily recognisable and understood features and landmarks.

The proposed development is proposed would be designed at detail stage to satisfy the requirements of TAN 15.

c) Tan 15 – Flood Risk

The site is not shown on the Flood Map for Planning to be within any flooding from rivers. An extract of the Flood Map for planning with the site area shown on it is reproduced below.



It is noted from the current Flood Map for Planning that Neath Road is subject to flooding which has a potential to overflow onto the site.

Further local enquiries have revealed that this section of Neath Road floods in most periods of heavy rain. As the grass banking between the highways surface and the ditches either side of the road are higher than the road surface a considerable body of water flows down the road. Some of this water is collected at the headwalls either side of the highway by the existing vehicular access to the school site. However, significant quantities continue to run down Neath Road. In cold weather this has been known to form ice on the highway especially the very steep section in front of the Rugby Club.

d) Local Development Plan:
The most relevant Policies are TR2, and BE1

Policy TR 2
Design and Access of New Development

Development proposals will only be permitted where all of the following criteria, where relevant, are satisfied:

1. The development does not compromise the safe, effective and efficient use of the highway network and does not have an adverse impact on highway safety or create unacceptable levels of traffic generation;

A Separate Planning Application by the neighbouring landowner (P/24/750) includes proposals to:-

Provide a 2.0 metre wide footway to the highway frontage of Plot 2 to the east side of Neath Road where none currently exists.

Replace the existing ditch and surface water pipework under the existing footway and in the existing verge with a larger diameter pipeline. This will avoid the current flooding which occurs down Neath Road and sometimes enters and runs across the site on its way to the existing stream

Construct a Shared Private Drive to serve the proposed development; Plot 1 and the other future development indicated in outline on drawing 1177-6-03.

Provide the utility mains required to serve the proposed dwellings on the site.

Construct a carrier drain to carry the attenuated flows of Storm Water from each plot and the shared private drive to the existing stream.

2. Appropriate levels of parking and cycling facilities are provided and the access arrangements for the site allow for the safe manoeuvring of any service vehicles associated with the planned use;
The site of the proposed house contains sufficient parking facilities for 3 cars and a visitor on the plot. Cycle storage will be provided attached to the house . The private shared drive access to the dwelling provides adequate room for service vehicles to turn so that they may leave and enter the public highway is a forward direction.

3. The development is accessible by a range of travel means, including public transport and safe cycle and pedestrian routes;
The proposed house is within the village of Bryn which is served by a bus service running between Maesteg and Port Talbot. The road system in Bryn is provided with footpaths to facilitate safe use by pedestrians and cyclists.

4. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans are provided for developments that are likely to create significant traffic generation.
The proposed development will not generate significant traffic.

Policy BE 1
Design

All development proposals will be expected to demonstrate high quality design which fully takes into account the natural, historic and built environmental context and contributes to the creation of attractive, sustainable places. Proposals will only be permitted where all of the following criteria, where relevant, are satisfied:

1. It complements and enhances the character and appearance of the site, building or area in terms of siting, appearance, scale, height, massing and elevation treatment;
The site is a separate parcel of land set aside from the mainly semi detached and detached house and the Rugby Club on Neath Road

2. It respects the context of the site and its place within the local landscape, including its impact on the important arterial gateways into the County Borough, its effects on townscape and the local historic and cultural heritage and it takes account of the site topography and prominent skylines or ridges;
This former school site was surrounded with trees – all as described in the tree report which forms part of this planning application. Should this application be granted the work to enhance the boundary would be undertaken. This is further described in section 2e) of this Statement.

3. It utilises materials appropriate to its surroundings and incorporates hard and soft landscaping and screening where appropriate;
The houses will be bespoke designs set in on a substantial plot with no visual link to surrounding buildings it will be landscaped with the trees as set out above.

4. It would not have a significant adverse impact on highway safety, the amenity of occupiers of adjacent land or the community;
The proposed development would have no adverse effect on the above as set out in the comments against policy TR2 above.

5. Important local features (including buildings, amenity areas, green spaces and green infrastructure, biodiversity and ecological connectivity) are retained and enhanced as far as possible
No important local features are worthy of retention on the site. The biodiversity of the site will be enhanced by the planting described above.

6. It achieves and creates attractive, safe places and public spaces, taking account of 'Secured by Design' principles (including where appropriate natural surveillance, visibility, well lit environments and areas of public movement);
No public spaces are proposed. The existing footway is served with public street lighting between the village and the entrance to the shared private drive. The footway would be modified and extended to suit the location of the new shared access and the pavements to the south western boundary of the dwelling of Plot 1.

7. It plays a full role in achieving and enhancing an integrated transport and communications network promoting the interests of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and ensures linkages with the existing surrounding community;
The adjacent highway is to be enhanced as set out in the comments relating to Policy TR 2 above

8. It uses resources, including land and energy, as efficiently as possible through:

(a) Making the best and most efficient use of the land available through being of appropriate density taking into account the character and appearance of the area;

***(b) The layout and form of the development does not preclude the reasonable use of other adjacent* land;**

(c) Developing brown field land in preference to green field land where possible;

(d) Minimising building exposure while maximising solar gain.

The proposed development is on Brownfield land and built to modern standards of energy efficiency and in compliance with these aims.

9. Its drainage systems are designed to limit surface water run-off and flood risk and prevent pollution;
The ground on the site has been tested to determine if soakaways are possible. Unfortunately the site is overlain by a thick layer of clay which does not provide any percolation of storm water into the ground.

The disposal of surface water from hard surfaces of each house will be therefore achieved by means of an attenuation chamber fitted with a flow reduction device to limit the flow of water leaving each dwelling and the area of the shared private drive to 2 metres per second each. The total attenuated flow of 14 litres per second will be directed to a carrier drain to be provided by the adjoining landowner under the shared private drive to direct storm water to the existing stream at the west side of the site which previously carried the un-attenuated flow from the former school premises and playground areas.

10. The layout and design of the development achieves inclusive design by ensuring barrier free environments, allowing access by all and making full provision for people with disabilities.
The proposed dwelling would be constructed to be accessible to all .

4) Social and Economic Context

a) Social Context

The site provides a suitable location for additional dwellings without causing any harm to the current amenity enjoyed by neighbouring houses or any person passing by site.

The proposed development is of a type that would not adversely impact upon its surroundings.

The existing highway would be enhanced with a new 2.0 metre wide footway across the south western boundary of the proposed development. The dwellings would also be provided with improved drainage (further discussed in section 4e). The highway proposals to reduce the flooding which currently affects those living on and passing along the southern portion of Neath Road. This would provide measurable social benefit to those who live in the locality and those who travel to and from the existing public leisure facilities sited to the west of the proposed dwelling.

b) Community safety

The development, during construction and when completed, would not affect the safety or security of those using, visiting or passing by the premises.

c) Movement to, from or within the development

The proposed dwellings would be accessed from the proposed new public highway to be known as Old School Court which leads onto the existing public highway at Neath Road.

d) Economic context

The development of the site for residential use makes a good use of an existing redundant site.

e) Environmental sustainability
The new houses would be designed to meet the present needs of the prospective occupiers without compromising the environment on a long term basis.

The Energy Hierarchy
Reduce consumption
The new dwelling would meet the carbon emissions target under Welsh Building Regulations Part L1:2022.

▼
Maximize energy efficiency
In constructing the dwelling the current building regulations, the dwelling would maximise energy efficiency.

▼
Use renewable sources
Renewable technologies would be installed as part of these works.

▼
Use fossil fuels as efficiently as possible
The new houses would be heated and provided with hot water by a Cylinder heated from an electrically powered air source heat pump supplied by the grid and roof mounted PV Panels.

In the future, as components such as windows, boiler etc wear out, it is anticipated that they would be replaced with components reflecting the enhanced standards of efficiency current at the date of such renewal.

f) Drainage and Utilities

i) Storm water drainage

The site is covered by a layer of clay. Tests carried out on site have determined that infiltration is not a viable method of storm water disposal.

Surface Water from the roof of the now demolished school and the hard playground and internal road surfaces was disposed of via a 150 mm dia surface water drain which itself discharges into the existing stream to the east of the site.

The roofs of the already constructed houses on the site continue to drain to the existing surface water drain as the new roof areas are far less than the hard surfaces previously drained from the school estate. No external hard areas have yet to be constructed to each dwelling. The disposal of surface water from roofs and the hard surfaces of each house will be drained to an attenuation chamber built within each curtilage. This will be fitted with a flow reduction device to limit the flow of water leaving each dwelling to 2 metres per second.

Similarly the surface water from the permeable paved shared private drive will be collected into a slotted pipe set within type 3 sub-base and carried to an attenuation chamber and flow control device located under the turning bay of the private shared drive - to discharge storm water into the carrier drain carrying the surface water from each dwelling to the stream.

The flows from each element will be transported by the carrier drain to be provided by the adjoining landowner under the shared private drive to the new headwall where the existing un-attenuated storm water flow currently enters the stream. The total attenuated flow will be a maximum of 14 litres per second entering the existing stream. The facilities will be designed to the requirements of the Welsh Government publication entitled ”Statutory Standards for the Design, Construction and Maintenance of Surface Water Drainage Systems”. The carrier drain and outfall structure will be offered for adoption by the Local Authority.

ii) Foul Drainage

The site is currently served by an adopted foul sewer which runs behind the adjacent rugby club building to a chamber from which it turns to run under the club house and into Neath Road. This existing sewer will be modified under a section 104 agreement by the Adjoining Landowner to provide foul sewerage facilities to the proposed houses

iii) Electricity

The existing underground electrical distribution cables would be extended as required by National Grid to serve the proposed houses

iv) Gas

The existing gas main in Neath Road would be extended by Wales and West Utilities alongside the proposed shared private drive to provide mains gas to the proposed new houses if this is required.

v) Telecommunications

BT Open reach would provide a scheme and stores to allow the adjoining owner to provide ductwork and junction boxes to allow BT Openreach to provide each house with telecommunications and internet services.

vi) Water Further investigations will be carried out in consultation with Welsh Water to determine if further works to the local water main network is required to facilitate the development.

g) Detail Design

The design of the house is shown on drawings 1177-6-04-C; 1177-05-C; and 117706-C which are dimensioned and annotated with the proposed external finishes proposed.

The house has a gross floor area of 190 m2 and has a height to eaves of 5.1m and to ridge of 9.0m.

h) Parking Provision

The house would be provided with a drive able to hold 4 cars with sufficient manoeuvring room remaining to allow them to be turned so that they can enter and leave the site in a forward direction.

5) Drawings and Documents

a) The following drawings form part of this planning application:-

1177-6-01	Location Plan
1177-6-02	Existing Site Plan
1177-6-03	Proposed Site Plan
1177-6-04-C	Ground Floor Plan
1177-6-05-C	First Floor Plan
1177-6-06-C	Elevations

b) The following specialist Reports form part of this planning application:-

Coal Mining Risk Assessment
1177 Revised CMRA Part 1 of 3
1177 Revised CMRA Part 2 of 3
1177 Revised CMRA Part 3 of 3

Contamination Report
Contaminated Land Assessment Phase 1 – Part 1
Contaminated Land Assessment Phase 1 – Part 2
Contaminated Land Assessment Phase 1 – Part 3
Contaminated Land Assessment Phase 1 – Part 4

Trees
Initial Arboriculture Survey Report
Impact Assessment Drawing
Tree Constraints Drawing

Ecology
Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Protected Species Surveys Report
Reptile Mitigation Report

6) Inclusive access statement

The proposed access into the dwelling houses would comply with the current national planning policies. The access into dwelling would be designed in accordance with Part M:2004 of the Building Regulations.

There are no specific issues which may affect access to the development.

The site is linked to the public highway by a shared private drive which will be constructed before the proposed dwellings are occupied.

Access into the dwellings for all persons is from the private drives into the front door of each dwelling house which will be provided with a step free threshold.