

## **PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**7 JULY 2022**

### **REPORT OF: DIRECTOR PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT**

#### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

Members are asked to determine the planning application outlined below:

**APPLICATION NO:** 21/1478/10 (KL)  
**APPLICANT:** Cartrefi Limited  
**DEVELOPMENT:** Change of use from office to 26no. student flats including part demolition of the existing building (Amended description and amended plan rec. 20/01/2022).  
**LOCATION:** THE OLD COURTHOUSE, COURT HOUSE STREET, GRAIG, PONTYPRIDD, CF37 1LJ  
**DATE REGISTERED:** 20/01/2022  
**ELECTORAL DIVISION:** Graig

---

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve, subject to conditions

**REASONS:** The application site is located within the defined settlement boundary and within a highly sustainable location where the principle of purpose-built student accommodation is considered to be acceptable.

The works would involve some demolition works however, the main parts of the building would be retained, including the principal elevation and other features considered to be of architectural merit. It is therefore not considered that the development would have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the site or that of the conservation and character areas in which the site is situated.

The alterations to the building would have no impact upon the amenity and privacy of adjacent properties and whilst it is noted that a number of objections have been received from local residents in relation to the potential for noise and disturbance, the site is located in a mixed use area and it is not considered that the proposal would have an adverse impact upon the amenity and privacy of existing neighbouring properties.

Furthermore, the proposal includes ample off-street parking provision to the front of the site which would ensure that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact upon highway safety in the vicinity of the site.

As such, the proposal is considered to comply with the relevant policies of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

---

## REASON APPLICATION REPORTED TO COMMITTEE

- The proposal is not covered by determination powers delegated to the Director of Prosperity & Development
- Three or more letters of objection have been received;

## APPLICATION DETAILS

Full planning permission is sought for the conversion of The Old Courthouse on Courthouse Street, Pontypridd from offices to 26 no. self-contained student flats. The proposal also includes partial demolition of the existing building.

The application has been submitted following the approval of planning application ref. 20/0120 which granted permission for the conversion of the building to 20 no. units, which also included partial demolition. It is understood that conversion works have already commenced under the approved consent however, during the early stages of the development, the applicant considered that less of the building needed to be demolished than originally thought and that additional units could be incorporated into the scheme. It is currently unclear how much work has already been undertaken as all of the works are effectively internal however, the current application will inevitably be part-retrospective.

As with the previous consent, the proposal includes partial demolition of the original building however, this would be limited to the most central part of the building and a small single storey toilet block on the north-western (side) elevation. The main structure, including the front elevation, would be retained. The main entrance to the building would be via an existing doorway to the right-hand side of the front elevation. This would open into a communal hallway which would provide direct access to 3 units and to a communal open-air courtyard which would provide access to all other units in blocks A, C and D, as well as the first-floor units in block B (total of 19 units). A secondary access to the left-hand side of the principal elevation would replace an existing window and would provide access to the ground floor of block B only (4 units).

As indicated above, the proposed accommodation would be arranged in 4 blocks which would be arranged around a newly created outdoor courtyard. A number of internal alterations would be required to facilitate the units which would include the demolition of some internal walls and the creation of new ones. The accommodation would be arranged as follows:

- **Block A** would form the main part of the front of the building facing onto Courthouse Street. It would consist of 10 units which would be arranged over 3 floors (4 units at ground floor, 4 units at first floor and 2 units at second floor). The principal elevation would largely remain unchanged however, new openings would be provided within each of the 4 existing leaded windows. Due to the partial demolition of the central part of the building, a newly created rear elevation would be created in this section which would be finished with smooth

render. A total of 5 pitched roof dormers would be inserted in the existing roof slope (3 at first floor and 2 at second floor), as well 2 roof lights (second floor only).

- **Block B** would form the north-western section of the building and would consist of 6 units which would be arranged over 2 floors (4 units at ground floor, accessed through the secondary entrance, and 2 units at first floor, accessed through block A). A small internal section would be demolished to provide an external courtyard and the external walkway from Block A to the two first floor units. Whereas the previous consent included the demolition of a small projection to the front elevation, this is now proposed to be retained and it is understood that this would provide an additional storage area.
- **Block C** would form the rear of the building. It would consist of 6 units which would be arranged over 2 floors (4 units at ground floor and 2 units at first floor). All of these units would be accessed via various access points off the newly created communal courtyard. Due to the demolition of the single storey toilet block at the north-western (side) elevation, a small section would need to be blocked up. An existing window in the south-eastern elevation would also need to be blocked up to facilitate a bathroom in one ground floor unit.
- **Block D** would form the south-eastern section of the building and would consist of 4 units (2 at ground floor which would be accessed off the main communal entrance, and 2 at first floor which would be accessed via an external walkway off block C). A doorway within the south-eastern elevation would be blocked up however, a new opening would be created further along to provide access to the bin storage area to the side and the communal amenity area to the rear.

Each unit would vary between 15.8sqm and 36.9sqm however they would each contain a living area (to include a bed, study area and a small kitchen) and an en-suite shower room.

A total of 7 no. off-street car parking spaces would be provided to the front of the building whilst a bin storage area would be provided to the south-eastern side (accessed via an existing 3.5m high steel security gate and fence adjacent to the main entrance). A communal laundry room would also be provided at ground floor between blocks B and C, with access off the main courtyard area.

The application is accompanied by the following:

- Planning, Design and Access Statement;
- Nesting Bird Survey (dated 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020)
- Bat Survey (dated July 2020)
- Bat and Nesting Bird Survey (dated February 2020)
- Environmental Noise and Vibration Assessment (Dated August 2020)
- Heritage and Design Appraisal

This application is connected to another planning application (ref. 21/1479) which is for Conservation Area Consent for the part-demolition of the existing building, the report for which appears elsewhere on this agenda.

## **SITE APPRAISAL**

The application site relates to a broadly rectangular shaped parcel of land that is located on the north-eastern side of Court House Street, Pontypridd. It measures approximately 1154m<sup>2</sup> and appears to be relatively flat in profile.

The site is currently occupied by a large detached building that occupies the most central part of the plot. A linear row of off-street car parking spaces are provided to the front of the building whilst an area of established trees appear to occupy the rear of the plot. It is understood that the building was last in use as Council offices.

The surrounding area is characterised by a mix of uses with some residential and commercial uses located in the immediate vicinity. The site is bound by the former registry office (currently or most recently used as offices) to the north-west and the Masonic Hall to the south-east. The grounds of Dewi Sant Hospital are located immediately opposite the site to the south-west whilst Pontypridd Train Station is located approximately 11 metres to the north-east.

It should be noted that the former registry office to the north-west is a Grade II Listed Building. The application property however, whilst holding some architectural merit, is not Listed. The site is located within the Pontypridd Conservation Area and the Pontypridd Character Area.

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

The following planning applications are on record for this site:

21/1479	The Old Courthouse, Courthouse Street, Pontypridd	Conservation Area Consent – change of use of officers to 26 no. student flats including part demolition of the existing building	Pending
21/0772	The Old Courthouse, Courthouse Street, Pontypridd	Discharge of conditions 6 (landscaping) & 7 (materials) of planning permission 20/0120).	Granted 09/08/21
20/1364	The Old Courthouse, Courthouse Street, Pontypridd	Discharge of condition 10 (biodiversity enhancement) of 20/0120	Granted 27/01/21

20/0120	The Old Courthouse, Courthouse Street, Pontypridd	Change of use of building from council offices to 20 no. self-contained residential student flats (Sui Generis), including demolition of part of existing building, construction of new block and associated works (Bat Survey and Nesting Bird Survey rec. 15/07/20) (Noise Report rec. 05/08/20) (Amended Plan rec. 0/09/20).	Granted 28/10/20
20/0118	The Old Courthouse, Courthouse Street, Pontypridd	Conservation Area Consent: Change of use of building from council offices to 20 no. self- contained residential student flats (Sui Generis), including demolition of part of existing building, construction of new block and associated works (Bat Survey and Nesting Bird Survey rec. 15/07/20) (Noise Report rec. 05/08/20) (Amended Plan rec. 0/09/20).	Granted 28/10/20

## **PUBLICITY**

The application has been advertised by means of direct neighbour notification as well as through the erection of site notices in the vicinity of the site and through the publication of a press notice in a local newspaper. This exercise was repeated when amended plans were received showing a reduction in the number of units from the initial proposal of no. 27 to the current no. 26.

A total of 2 letters of objection were received from local residents whilst a further 2 letters of objection were received from the Local Member, Councillor Jayne Brencher, and from Pontypridd Town Council. The objections are summarised as follows:

### Traffic and Parking

- There are already parking issues in the area due to the close proximity to town, the train station and the hospital.
- It would be an issue with 20 no. flats so adding 6 more would make parking impossible.
- At present there is no parking with contractors and residents parking dangerously on surrounding roads, endangering other motorists and pedestrians.
- It is indicated that a collision has already occurred outside the property due to reckless parking.
- It is also indicated that children have narrowly avoided being hit by a vehicle unable to see because of abandoned cars and cars parking dangerously on the road.
- More residences will add to the already chaotic streets and there will be no provision for parking.
- It will not be long before there is a more serious collision, perhaps even a fatality.
- This development is in the immediate vicinity of Dewi Sant Hospital which is not only used for outpatients but also for a large GP practice which caters to patients from all over the town council area of Pontypridd. The facilities at this location have been increased in recent times adding to traffic and parking issues.
- Parking at the site is already inadequate and patients face increasing difficulties in parking which forces many into surrounding roads to avoid missing appointments.
- The proposal will exacerbate an already serious situation and will put patients' health and the quality of local residents' amenities at risk of being compromised.
- Concern is raised with regards to the extreme and growing parking issues in the area due to the expansion of Dewi Sant Health Park, the proximity of the town centre and railway station and also the proximity to the Coroners Court and Masonic Lodge.

#### Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- It is requested that Members of the Planning and Development Committee consider its duty to ensure that we have a Healthier Wales; a country in which "people's physical and mental wellbeing is maximised".
- It is considered that the development, because of the potential mental distress caused, runs counter to this duty.

## **CONSULTATION**

The following consultations responses have been received in relation to this proposal:

**Countryside, Ecology and Landscape:** No objection subject to condition

**Fire Safety:** Advises that a comprehensive fire strategy should be provided which indicates the package of fire safety measures that are proposed to satisfy The Building Regulations and should address any variation to current guidelines.

**Flood Risk Management:** No objection subject to condition.

**Glamorgan- Gwent Archaeological Trust:** No objection subject to condition.

**Highways and Transportation:** No objection, subject to conditions

**Natural Resources Wales:** No objection

**Welsh Water:** No objection. Condition and advisory notes recommended.

**Western Power Distribution:** Advises that a separate application will need to be made to WPD should a new or altered connection be required.

The comments will be discussed further in subsequent and relevant sections below.

## **POLICY CONTEXT**

### **Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan**

The application site is located inside the defined settlement boundary and is not allocated for any specific purpose. It is situated within the Pontypridd Town Conservation Area and the Pontypridd Character area and lies immediately adjacent to the defined boundary of Pontypridd Town Centre. The following policies are considered to be relevant to the application:

**Policy CS2 (Development in the South):** sets out criteria for achieving sustainable growth including, promoting and enhancing transport infrastructure services.

**Policy AW2 (Sustainable Development):** supports development in sustainable locations and includes sites that are accessible by a range of sustainable transport modes and would not unacceptably conflict with surrounding uses.

**Policy AW5 (New Development):** sets out criteria for new development in relation to amenity and accessibility.

**Policy AW6 (Design and Placemaking):** requires development to involve a high quality design and to make a positive contribution to place making, including landscaping.

**Policy AW7 (Protection and Enhancement of the Built Environment):** states that developments which impact upon sites of architectural and/or historical merit will only be permitted were it can be demonstrated that the proposal would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the site.

**Policy AW8 (Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment):** seeks to protect RCTs distinctive natural heritage. Proposals that would affect protected and priority species will be required to demonstrate what measures are proposed for the

protection and management of the species and the mitigation and compensation of potential impacts.

**Policy AW10 (Environmental Protection and Public Health):** development proposals must overcome any harm to public health, the environment or local amenity as a result of flooding.

**Policy SSA1 (Development in the Principal Town of Pontypridd):** supports proposals that reinforce the role of Pontypridd at a Principal Town.

**Policy SSA13 (Housing Development within Settlement Boundaries):** development will be permitted where it does not adversely affect the provision of open space and where it does not adversely affect the provision of car parking in the surrounding area.

## **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

Design and Placemaking

The Historic Built Environment

Nature Conservation

Development of Flats

Access Circulation and Parking

Members will be aware that the current LDP's lifespan was 2011 to 2021 and that it is in the process of being reviewed. The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 introduced provisions specifying the period to which a plan has effect and providing that it shall cease to be the LDP at the end of the specified period. These provisions were commenced on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016 but do not have retrospective effect. Therefore, the provisions do not apply to LDPs adopted prior to this date and plans adopted before 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016 will remain the LPD for determining planning applications until replaced by a further LDP. This was clarified in guidance published by the Minister on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020. Subsequently, Members are advised that the existing Plan remains the development plan for consideration when determining this planning application.

## **National Guidance**

In the determination of planning applications regard should also be given to the requirements of national planning policy which are not duplicated in the Local Development Plan, particularly where national planning policy provides a more up to date and comprehensive policy on certain topics.

Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (PPW) was issued on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021 in conjunction with Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (FW2040). PPW incorporates the objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act into town and country planning and sets out Welsh Government's (WG) policy on planning issues relevant to the determination of all planning applications. FW2040 sets out the National



Development Framework for Wales (NDF), WGs current position on planning policy at regional and national level.

It is considered that the proposed development is consistent with the key principles and requirements for placemaking set out in PPW; and is also consistent with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act's sustainable development principles through its contribution towards the Welsh Ministers' well-being objectives of driving sustainable development and building healthier communities and better environments.

It is also considered the proposed development is compliant with the NDF, with the following policies being relevant to the development proposed:

- Policy 1 – Where Wales will grow – Employment/Housing/Infrastructure
- Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth – Sustainability/Placemaking
- Policy 6 - Town Centre First – commercial/retail/education/health/public services
- Policy 9 – Resilient Ecological Networks – green infrastructure/ecology

#### SE Wales Policies

- Policy 33 – National Growth Areas Cardiff Newport & the Valleys – SDP/LDP/large schemes.

Other relevant policy guidance consulted:

PPW Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning;  
PPW Technical Advice Note 11: Noise;  
PPW Technical Advice Note 12: Design;  
PPW Technical Advice Note 18: Transport;  
Manual for Streets

### **REASONS FOR REACHING THE RECOMMENDATION**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that, if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Furthermore, applications that are not in accordance with relevant policies in the plan should not be allowed, unless material considerations justify the grant of planning permission.

#### **Main Issues:**

#### **Principle of the proposed development**

The application site is located within the defined settlement boundary and within close proximity to the defined retail centre of Pontypridd, a Principal Town in the Southern Strategy Area. The site is therefore located within walking distance of a range of key local services and facilities and is highly accessible by a range of sustainable transport options with both bus and train stations located nearby. It is also noted that the site is conducive to travel on foot and bicycle. The site is therefore considered to be situated in a highly sustainable location where student accommodation, such as that proposed in this application, should be encouraged (Policy AW2).

It is noted that the University of South Wales is located in the nearby village of Treforest, which is easily accessible by train and with the train station being located immediately to the rear of the site, it is likely that future student occupiers would utilise this transport option. Furthermore, it is considered that locating such student accommodation in close proximity to the town centre of Pontypridd would reinforce the role of Pontypridd as a Principal Town and would encourage the use of the services and facilities on offer in the area (Policy SSA1).

The proposal would encourage the re-use of the application building (Policy CS2), which is currently vacant, and given that the proposal would not result in any significant alterations to the front elevation of the building, which has some architectural merit, it is considered that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the site (Policy AW7)

Taking the above into consideration, the proposal would comply with Policies CS2, AW2, AW7 and SSA1 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan and the principle of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable, subject to consideration of the criteria set out below.

### **Impact on the character and appearance of the area**

The application site is located within the Pontypridd Conservation Area and within the Pontypridd Character Area. The existing building is not listed however, it is considered to have some architectural merit. Furthermore, it sits between two buildings which are also visually attractive and are also considered to be of architectural merit (one of which is listed) and it is therefore important to ensure that the proposed works are of a high standard to ensure that there would be no adverse impact upon the Conservation and Character Areas.

The Council's SPG: Development of Flats states that where buildings are of an attractive character, care should be taken to retain existing façade details and patterns of fenestration, or to make changes in a sympathetic manner which respect the appearance of the building. Whilst the proposal would involve the partial demolition of the building, these works would largely be carried out at the centre of the building where they would not be visible from the street or the surrounding area. Only very minor alterations would be made to the front elevation (creation of openings within the existing fenestration) with the majority of original features, which are considered to be

visually attractive and to have some architectural merit, being retained. The materials proposed in the new sections of the building would complement the original building and it is not considered that the proposed alterations would appear overly prominent within the street scene.

Consequently, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of the impact it would have upon the character and appearance of the site and indeed the wider conservation and character areas and the application would therefore comply with Policies AW5, AW6 and AW7 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

### **Impact on the setting of the adjacent Listed Building**

Whilst the application property is not listed, it is situated immediately adjacent to the Pontypridd Register Office which was built in 1913 and which is listed for its architectural interest as a well-designed public building in early C20 free Baroque style.

The proposed demolition works would predominantly be limited to the central part of the application building and it is not considered that these works would impact upon the setting of the adjacent Listed Building. However, a small single storey flat roof (toilet block) section to the north-western side elevation (adjacent to the Listed Building) would also be removed, along with a section of the pitched roof along this elevation to create the outdoor courtyard area of block B. The existing brickwork to the side elevation would be retained. Whilst these works would be situated in close proximity to the side elevation of the Listed Building, they would be sufficiently set back from the front elevation with views from the street being limited by the narrowness of the walkway between the two buildings. It is not considered that the demolition works, or indeed the other works required to facilitate the proposed conversion, would adversely affect the setting of the adjacent Listed Building.

As such, the proposal is considered to be compliant with Policy AW7 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

### **Impact on residential amenity and privacy**

#### *Existing Residents*

The alterations to the application property would predominantly be carried out within the centre of the site and it is not considered that the amenity of either adjacent property would be adversely affected by the proposed works. The nearest residential properties are located approximately 45 metres to the north-west (5 & 5a Court House Street) and south-east (Taff Vale Flats) and would also not be adversely affected by the physical alterations of the building.

Whilst it is noted that some windows overlook adjacent properties, these are existing windows and would therefore not lead to any additional overlooking. Furthermore, all

new window openings created would overlook the internal courtyards and would not result in any additional overlooking towards existing neighbouring properties.

It is considered that the conversion of the proposed use of the building for student accommodation, particularly given the number proposed, may result in some degree of noise and disturbance. However, the surrounding area is characterised by a mixture of different uses, some of which are already associated with some degree of noise and disturbance with numerous comings and goings through the day and night (i.e. Dewi Sant Health Park, Masonic Hall and Coroner's Office). It is therefore not considered that the proposed use, which is effectively a residential one, would give rise to significant levels of noise and disturbance that would adversely affect the amenity of surrounding neighbouring properties, particularly given the distances between the application site and the nearest residential properties.

### *Future Occupiers*

In terms of the amenity and privacy of future occupiers of the proposed development, the Council's SPG: Development of Flats states that new flats should provide an acceptable quality of accommodation for residents. Flats should be of a suitable size and habitable rooms should have a reasonable outlook and level of natural daylighting and ventilation. They should also have a main entrance door to the front of the building and have access to either private or communal outdoor space.

It is considered that the level of accommodation proposed is reasonable with adequate space provided within each unit for the occupiers to carry out day to day tasks. The majority of units created would have at least one window opening which would ensure that a reasonable level of daylight and ventilation could be achieved, however, there is some concern with regards to the outlook of two units in the first floor of block A and block D which would effectively face the blank elevation of the Masonic Hall at close range. Whilst this would inevitably have some impact upon the amenity and indeed the health and well-being of any future occupiers of this unit, the overall scheme is considered to provide good quality living accommodation, with access to a shared outdoor space and, on balance, it is not considered that this concern would be sufficient enough to warrant the refusal of the application on its own.

Consequently, it is not considered that the proposal would have an adverse impact upon the amenity and privacy of existing neighbouring properties, and given that the overall scheme provides accommodation of a good quality with good access to outside space within the site, it is not considered that the proposal would have a detrimental impact upon the health and well-being of future occupiers. The application would therefore comply with Policy AW5 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance: Development of Flats.

### **Access and highway safety**

It is noted that a number of objections have been received from local residents and from the Local Member and Pontypridd Town Council in respect of the potential impact of the proposal upon highway safety and parking in the surrounding area. Whilst these comments are noted, the proposal has been assessed by the Council's Highways and Transportation section who have not raised any objection in this regard.

The comments received indicate that the proposed units would be served off Court House Street which is considered to be acceptable in terms of access. The carriageway has a width of 7.0m with a 1.7m wide footway on its development side and a 1.5 wide on the other side. A 2.4m wide on-street parking, limited waiting parking bay is located on the opposite side to the development whilst double yellow lines are situated on the development side.

The application site is located within parking zone 3 and, in accordance with the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance, purpose-built student accommodation has an off-street parking requirement of 1 space per 25 beds for servicing, wardens and drop-off areas, plus 1 space per 10 beds for students and visitors. The proposal for 26 no. student flats has a total requirement of 4-5 spaces.

The proposal indicates that 7 off-street parking spaces would be provided to the front of the building in a similar arrangement to the existing spaces. The proposal would therefore comply with the SPG in terms of the parking provision proposed.

The SPG also requires student accommodation to include 1 cycle stand per 2 bedrooms. In the case of this proposal, this equates to 13-14 stands. The plans indicate that 14 bike stands would be provided in the entrance hallway and, as such, this is considered to be acceptable.

In light of the comments received from the Highways and Transportation section, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of the impact it would have upon highway safety and parking in the vicinity of the site and the application would therefore comply with Policy AW5 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

### **Other Issues:**

The following other material considerations have been taken into account in considering the application, though were not the key determining factors in reaching the recommendation.

### **Drainage**

#### *Surface Water Drainage*

No adverse comments have been received from the Council's Flood Risk Management team however a condition is recommended to ensure that the site does not increase surface water flood risk. As the development would retain the existing

building with some demolition works to the central parts of the building, it is not considered that the impermeable area of the site would be significantly increased. Furthermore, the development would have drainage implications over 100m<sup>2</sup> and surface water drainage would therefore be considered as part of a separate application for Sustainable Drainage Approval. As such, the condition is not considered to be necessary in this case.

Welsh Water have also not raised any objection however, they have commented that the application will need to commission a Hydraulic Modelling Assessment (HMA) to identify a suitable connection point to the existing network and carry out any reinforcement works identified by the HMA. This is outside the parameters of the planning system however, an informative note can be added to bring this issue to the attention of the applicant.

## **Ecology**

The application is accompanied by a Bat Survey which identifies that the building is being used as a day roost by Soprano Pipistrelles and Brown Long Eared bats. The plans include details of a bat loft within the roof space of block C, along with a 25mm gap between the bargeboard and wall to facilitate bat access. The Council's Ecologist has reviewed the information submitted and raises no concern in this regard however, it is recommended that a condition is imposed to ensure that the details are adhered to. It is also advised that An European Protected Species Licence will be required and should be added as an advisory note, should permission be granted. NRW have also not raised any objection to the proposal.

The application is also accompanied by a Nesting Bird Survey which confirms that no nesting birds were present within the building. Notwithstanding this, the plans indicate that a total of 6 no. swift boxes would be incorporated into the scheme. This is welcomed by the Council's Ecologist and a condition is recommended to ensure that the boxes are provided in accordance with the Ecological Nesting Bird Survey, which specifies that either a Woodstone Built in Swift box built into the stonework of the building or a Woodstone Swift Next Box would be appropriate. This can be condition accordingly.

## **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Liability**

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced in Rhondda Cynon Taf from 31 December 2014.

The application is for development of a kind that is liable for a charge under the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended) however, the CIL rate for this type of development as set out in the Charging Schedule is £nil and therefore no CIL is payable.

## **Conclusion**

The application site is located within the defined settlement boundary and within a highly sustainable location where the principle of purpose-built student accommodation is considered to be acceptable.

The works would involve some demolition works however, the main parts of the building would be retained, including the principal elevation and other features considered to be of architectural merit. It is therefore not considered that the development would have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the site or that of the conservation and character areas in which the site is situated.

The alterations to the building would have no impact upon the amenity and privacy of adjacent properties and whilst it is noted that a number of objections have been received from local residents in relation to the potential for noise and disturbance, the site is located in a mixed use area and it is not considered that the proposal would have an adverse impact upon the amenity and privacy of existing neighbouring properties.

Furthermore, the proposal includes ample off-street parking provision to the front of the site which would ensure that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact upon highway safety in the vicinity of the site.

As such, the proposal is considered to comply with the relevant policies of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan and the application is therefore recommended for approval.

**RECOMMENDATION: Grant**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Sections 91 and 93 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents received by the Local Planning Authority, unless otherwise to be approved and superseded by details required by any other condition attached to this consent:

- Drawing No. Court/21/03: Site Location Plan (rec.4<sup>th</sup> November 2021)
- Drawing No. Court/21/02: Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations (rec. 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022)
- Schedule of Materials indicated in an email rec. 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022 (including k rend through coloured render – Limestone White. FloPlast 115mm Hi-Cap upvc rainwater goods – Black. Smart Oxford Aluminium Door in Black DM0031. Smart Alitherm 600 aluminium windows in dark grey. Clements Conservation Roof Lights).

Reason: To ensure compliance with the approved plans and documents and to clearly define the scope of the permission.

3. The works identified in the submitted Environmental Noise and Vibration Assessment (undertaken by Hunter Acoustics and dated 5<sup>th</sup> August 2020) shall be completed prior to the beneficial occupation of the development, hereby permitted.

Reason: To ensure that the development would not result in a risk of unacceptable harm to health or amenity in accordance with Policy AW10 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

4. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations set out in Section 9 of the submitted Bat Survey (undertaken by Ecological Services Ltd, dated July 2020) and as shown in drawing No. Court/21/02 (rec. 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022).

Reason: In the interests of ecology and to afford protection to animal species in accordance with Policy AW8 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

5. The Swift Boxes shall be provided in accordance with the details shown in Drawing No. Court/21/02 (Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations) and in the Recommendations Section of the Nesting Bird Survey (13<sup>th</sup> July 2020), unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of ecology and to afford protection to animal species in accordance with Policy AW8 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

6. The parking spaces indicated on submitted drawing no. Court/21/02 shall remain for the purpose of the parking of vehicles only.

Reason: To ensure vehicles are parked off the public highway, in the interests of highway safety and the free flow of traffic, in accordance with Policy AW5 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

7. The 14 cycle stands shown on plan No. Court/21/02 shall be retained in perpetuity for the storage of cycles unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the safe storage of alternative transport methods in accordance with Policy AW5 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan and with the Council's adopted SPG, 'Access, Circulation and Parking (2011).



