



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

9th AUGUST 2022

SITE MEETING

APPLICATION NO: 22/0492/10 HARD STANDING (RETROSPECTIVE) AND DROPPED DOWN KERB ACCESS OVER PUBLIC FOOTPATH, 36 ABER-RHONDDA ROAD, PORTH, CF39 0BB

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATION

Author: Kate Spence, Council Business Unit.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the outcome of the site inspection in respect of the above-mentioned proposal and to determine the application, as outlined in the report of the Director, Prosperity & Development, attached at Appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Approve the application in accordance with the recommendation of the Director, Prosperity & Development, subject to conditions.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In accordance with Minute No 22 (Planning and Development Committee – 21st July 2022) a site inspection was undertaken on Tuesday 9th August 2022 to consider the potential impact that the proposed development would have upon highway safety in the vicinity of the site.
- 3.2 The meeting was attended by the Planning and Development Committee Members County Borough Councillors S Rees, C Middle, J Smith and R Williams, and Local Member County Borough Councillor S Hickman.

- 3.3 Apologies for absence were received from Planning and Development Committee Members, County Borough Councillors D Grehan, W Lewis, W Owen, L Tomkinson, and D Williams.
- 3.4 Members met at the front of the property on Aber-Rhondda Road, Porth. The Planning Officer advised Members that full planning permission is sought for the retention of a hardstanding, boundary fencing and gates to the front of the property and for the construction of an associated dropped kerb access over the public footpath at 36 Aber-Rhondda Road, Porth.
- 3.5 The Planning Officer advised Members that 11 letters of objection had been received in respect of the application, citing issues of highway safety and removal of on-street parking for surrounding residents, in addition to 3 letters of support.
- 3.6 The Planning Officer advised that the proposed development would not cause an unacceptable level of overshadowing or detriment to outlook for neighbours; and although the proposed development would form a minor alteration to the front of the site, this would not be dissimilar to other dropped kerb / driveway developments in the immediate vicinity.
- 3.7 With respect to the gates in front of the hardstanding, the Planning Officer advised that it was considered their scale and design were not suitable for this prominent location and that should Members be minded to approve the application, it is advised alternatives are sought. As such it was suggested that Condition 5 be amended to read as outlined below:

Within 1 month of the date of this consent, full details of replacement gates to be located across the front of the driveway hereby approved (adjacent to Aber-Rhondda Road), shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The approved gates shall be installed within 3 months of approval, shall open into the site, and shall be retained as such thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and highway safety, in accordance with Policies AW5 and AW6 of the Rhondda Cynon Taff Local Development Plan.

- 3.8 The Highways Officer raised no objection to the proposed development, advising that the hardstanding and dropped kerb are considered acceptable in principle, subject to conditions being attached to any consent to ensure the dropped kerb is constructed to the relevant Council standards and that no surface water discharges onto the public footway/highway. The Highways Officer confirmed adequate visibility for

the vehicular crossover of the neighbouring property, advising that there had not been any reported issues to date and advised that guidance on the provision of vehicular crossovers was provided on the Councils website, and Manual for Streets. Given that the vehicular crossover satisfied the requirements, including the common law right of owners whose land abuts the highway to have access to and from the highway, no objection was raised. The Highways Officer acknowledged the concerns for limited on-street parking, however, the requirement of a highway is to accommodate free passage, and does not confer any legal rights with regard to parking.

- 3.9 Members queried on-street parking along the distance of the dropped kerb. The Highways Officer advised that enforcement of obstructive parking across a vehicular crossover was a Police matter, and it would be at their discretion whether they permitted residents of No. 36 Aber-Rhondda Road to obstruct their own access.
- 4.0 Members discussed gate access in front of the hardstanding. The Planning Officer advised that gates would be inward-opening, but the requirement of a manual or electric gate could not be enforced.
- 4.1 Members queried the visibility of pedestrians utilising the pavement when manoeuvring across the vehicular crossover. The Highways Officer noted the obligation of drivers to manoeuvre cautiously when merging onto the carriageway, whilst giving way to pedestrians, as per the requirement at all vehicular crossovers.
- 4.2 Members queried the ability to condition the use of the hardstanding. The Planning Officer advised that the use of hardstanding could be limited to the parking of any non-commercial vehicle, although the type of private vehicle could not be controlled.
- 4.3 Members queried the potential damage to drain covers that are situated within the vehicular crossover. The Planning and Highways Officers advised that the design and details of the vehicular crossover would be submitted to, and approved in writing, by the Local Planning Authority, and construction supervised by the highway inspector, thus alleviating any adverse impact on services and adjacent footway
- 4.5 Local Member, County Borough Councillor S Hickman spoke against the proposed development and shared concern for loss of on-street parking for local residents.
- 4.6 Members queried approval of the neighbouring hardstanding and dropped kerb. The Local Member discussed the retrospective application that was

granted full planning permission in 2010, but referenced the reduced demand for on-street parking at that time.

- 4.7 The Local Member further shared concerns for poor visibility for entry and egress onto the hardstanding, with reference to two nearby S-bends of Aber-Rhondda Road, in addition to the regular incidence of vehicles travelling beyond the speed limit of 30mph.
- 4.8 Members queried the impact of the Welsh Government policy initiative to reduce the default speed limit within 30mph zones to 20mph, and the Highway Officer advised that the speed limit of Aber-Rhondda Road would likely decrease to 20mph in line with the Welsh Government initiative next year.
- 4.9 The Chair thanked the Officers for the report and closed the meeting.