

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2022-2023:

**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE**

20th JULY 2023

**REPORT OF: DIRECTOR
PROSPERITY AND
DEVELOPMENT**

Agenda Item No.

**APPLICATION NO: 22/0668/10 - Conversion of former church to 11 flats.(FCA received 11th July 2022, Ecological Impact Assessment received 20th September 2022),
Ystrad English Congregational Church, 1 Church Road, Ton Pentre, CF41 7AD**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Members are asked to consider the determination of the above planning application.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That Members consider the report in light of the additional information received and determine the application having regard to the advice given.

3. BACKGROUND

This application was originally presented to the Planning and Development Committee for determination on 3rd November 2022. A copy of the original report is attached as Appendix A.

During the Committee debate Members were very supportive of the proposed conversion of the former Church to 11 apartments and resolved to approve the application, subject to a range of conditions and a Section 106 agreement.

The original report outlines the S106 heads of terms as follows:

LDP Policy NSA11 requires an affordable contribution of 10% or more, for developments of 10 residential units or more. In this case the Council's Housing Strategy Team has identified that a financial contribution equal to 30% of the open market value of one of the two-bedroom flats would be required.

4. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Following the Committee meeting of 3rd November 2022, the Applicant's Agent advised that the general economic environment has worsened in the period since the building was acquired by his client.

The Agent has written to confirm that the viability of the scheme has been affected to a point where the off-site affordable housing contribution has become unsustainable. Furthermore, a Viability Assessment, as circulated to Members, has been provided, which clearly shows a negative return whether the units are sold or rented.

In this regard it is noted that the application was submitted prior to the UK Government's 'mini-budget' of September 2022, which resulted in a sterling crash and interest rate hikes. Alongside inflationary pressures and falling property prices it is acknowledged that these factors are having a significant and widespread impact on development costs.

Paragraph 4.1.7 of the Council's SPG for Affordable Housing makes provision for exceptional circumstances where site viability is considered to be an issue and, in this case, it is considered that the submitted Assessment demonstrates that an affordable housing contribution, although modest, would add to that lack of viability.

In all other respects, the proposed development remains a well-designed and thought-out scheme which would provide quality housing and secure the future of an existing, vacant building.

Consequently, it is recommended that planning permission be granted on the basis of that previously agreed and set out in Appendix A below, but without the requirement for a Section 106 agreement for an off-site affordable housing contribution.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

03 NOVEMBER 2022

REPORT OF: DIRECTOR PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Members are asked to determine the planning application outlined below:

APPLICATION NO: 22/0668/10 (GH)
APPLICANT: Taff Developments Ltd
DEVELOPMENT: Conversion of former church to 11 flats. (FCA received 11th July 2022, Ecological Impact Assessment received 20th September 2022)
LOCATION: YSTRAD ENGLISH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, 1 CHURCH ROAD, TON PENTRE, PENTRE, CF41 7AD
DATE REGISTERED: 20/09/2022
ELECTORAL DIVISION: Pentre

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS BELOW AND A SECTION 106 AGREEMENT

REASONS:

The proposed development would contribute towards the local housing supply and provide a range of one and two bedroom flats in a sustainable and convenient location.

In addition, the reuse and conversion of the building would secure the retention of a prominent and attractive building, remove opportunities for dereliction, and result in a positive impact to the street scene.

Whilst there are concerns that the site is physically incapable of providing any off-street parking, these have been set against the benefits of the re-use of the site and its proximity to local facilities and the rail and bus network.

REASON APPLICATION REPORTED TO COMMITTEE

The proposal is not covered by determination powers delegated to the Director of Prosperity & Development.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Full planning consent is sought to convert the former Ystrad English Congregational Church at 1 Church Road, Pentre, to provide 11 flats.

The accommodation would be arranged over four floors and would include 8 x one-bed flats and 3 x two-bed flats.

Minor alterations are proposed to the external appearance of the building, to include the insertion of rooflights and replacement fenestration. In addition, the main access into the building would be from an existing doorway on Church Street, whilst what was formerly the public entrance into the building on Church Road would be blocked up.

However, other than for those works indicated above, together with general replacement and repair works, the footprint, scale and form of the building would be unaltered, since the majority of the works would be internal.

No off-street parking can be provided on site, however the small green space to the north-facing part of the site would be landscaped, together with a new gate and an enclosed cycle store provided.

In addition to the plans and elevation drawings accompanying the application, the following supporting documents have been submitted:

- Planning Statement
- Ecological Impact Assessment Report
- Flood Consequences Assessment

SITE APPRAISAL

The application property is a large church building which was constructed in the late 1800s but ceased as a place of worship in early 2020, and which occupies a prominent position on the corner of Church Street and Church Road.

The property is of a four storey height and is constructed from typical Victorian materials of dressed stone beneath a slate roof with contrasting ridge. Window and door openings to the north-east and south-east elevations have engineering brick detail and there are matching brick quoins to elevation corners.

Conversely, the north-western elevations, which represented the main public entrance to the Church, appear to be more decorative and openings are surrounded by stone rather than brick. Similarly, window detail is greater, and the glazing is formed of small leaded panes, albeit that these are very damaged.

The existing development surrounding the site comprises a mix of residential and commercial uses. The property is close to Ton Pentre Railway Station and is on a bus route.

Whilst the site is within the settlement boundary and a Registered Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales, it is also within a C2 flood risk zone and designated as high, medium and low risk from surface water flooding.

PLANNING HISTORY

The most recent or relevant applications on record associated with this site are:

21/5114/41: Pre-application advice. Decision: 27/10/2021, Further Information Required.

PUBLICITY

The application has been advertised by direct notification to sixteen neighbouring properties and notices were displayed on site.

One letter of objection was received raising the following concerns:

- There is no parking provision for the flats. An existing problem is caused by people parking near the site to catch the train to Cardiff and by large lorries delivering to the nearby builder's yard.
- There is a right of way through the back of the Church for numbers 21 and 22 Church Street.
- The Church is a home to bats.
- There are already flats next door to the site.
- The application does not acknowledge the trees and hedge on site.

Whilst highway issues are considered within the body of the report further below, the matter of any neighbouring rights of access or easements are not a material planning concern and the conversion of the Church does not require any enlargement of its footprint into the space around it.

The Ecological Impact Assessment found no bat roosts, but evidence of jackdaw nests. Biodiversity enhancement measures are recommended accordingly. In addition, the garden area to the front of the site, which currently accommodates overgrown shrubs and a conifer, is proposed to become a small garden.

CONSULTATION

Highways and Transportation

No highway objection is raised or condition suggested.

Flood Risk Management

Objection - the site falls entirely within an area of high, medium and low surface water flood risk. Surface water appears to accumulate within the proposed site.

Public Health and Protection

Conditions are recommended in respect of hours of operation, noise, dust and waste. However, it is considered that such issues are best controlled by powers contained within the scope of existing public health legislation and an informative note is proposed to be added to any consent instead.

Natural Resources Wales

No objection.

Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT)

The proposal requires archaeological mitigation and a historic building survey should be sought by condition.

Dwr Cymru Welsh Water

No objection, subject to an informative note regarding sewer connections.

Western Power Distribution

A new connection or service alteration will require a separate application to WPD.

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service

No objection. The service has provided fire safety guidance for the benefit of the Applicant.

Countryside – Ecologist

No objection, subject to a condition for biodiversity enhancement measures and a nesting bird method statement as identified within the Ecological Impact Assessment.

No other consultation responses have been received within the statutory period.

POLICY CONTEXT

Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan

Members will be aware that the current LDP's lifespan was 2011 to 2021, that it has been reviewed and is in the process of being replaced. 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 4th 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 4th 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 24th September 2020. Subsequently, Members are advised that the existing Plan remains the development plan for consideration when determining this planning application.

The application site lies within the settlement boundary for Ton Pentre.

Policy CS1 - the emphasis is on sustainable growth in the Northern Strategy Area and is to be achieved by promoting residential development in locations which support and reinforce the roles of Key Settlements.

Policy AW1 - sets out how the housing requirement figure will be met during the plan period. This includes but is not limited to the development of unallocated land in the settlement boundary

Policy AW2 - provides for development in sustainable locations which are within the settlement boundary; would not unacceptably conflict with surrounding uses; and have good accessibility by a range of sustainable transport options.

Policy AW4 - sets out that planning obligations, including affordable housing contributions, may be sought to make proposals acceptable in planning terms.

Policy AW5 - identifies the appropriate amenity and accessibility criteria for new development proposals. It expressly states that the scale, form and design of the development should have no unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area. There should also be no significant impact upon the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and should, where appropriate, retain existing features of natural environmental value. The development would require safe access to the highway network and provide parking in accordance with the Council's SPG.

Policy AW6 - supports development proposals that are of a high standard of design that reinforce attractive qualities and local distinctiveness. In addition, proposals must be designed to protect and enhance landscape and biodiversity

Policy AW7 - development proposals which impact upon sites of historical interest will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the site.

Policy AW8 - seeks to protect and enhance the natural environment from inappropriate development.

Policy AW10 - prevents development which could cause or result in a risk of unacceptable harm to health or local amenity due to land instability, contamination, or any other identified risk to local amenity and public health.

Policy NSA10 - stipulates that the net residential density must be a minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare and lists criteria where lower density levels are permitted.

Policy NSA11 - the provision of at least 10% affordable housing will be sought on sites of 10 units or more.

Policy NSA12 - permits development within settlement boundaries if they demonstrate that infrastructure and car parking will not be adversely affected.

Policy NSA13 - supports the conversion of large buildings within the Northern Strategy Area.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Delivering Design and Placemaking
- Access, Circulation and Parking Requirements
- Development of Flats
- Nature Conservation

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 24th 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), WG's 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

SE Wales Policies

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

Other relevant national policy guidance consulted:

PPW Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning

PPW Technical Advice Note 12: Design

PPW Technical Advice Note 15: Development and Flood Risk

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

LDP Policy AW1 identifies a housing land requirement for the provision of 14,385 dwellings within the plan period and states that this total includes a contribution from the conversion of suitable structures.

The reuse of previously developed land and buildings is also supported by PPW11 and Policy CS1, the latter seeking to ensure the removal and remediation of dereliction – or in this case, the potential for the fabric of the former Church to deteriorate if left unused.

Likewise, Policy NSA13 supports the rehabilitation of large buildings for residential purposes within the Northern Strategy Area, if located within the settlement boundary, is of historic or architectural importance, or if there are no economically viable alternative uses for the building.

Firstly, the site is within the settlement boundary, in accordance with Policy NSA12, where there is a presumption in favour of housing development. This presumption is made on the basis that public open space would not be affected and there would be no detrimental impact upon the highway network and provision of car parking in the surrounding area.

Secondly, the property is of local architectural importance – the Coflein record of the building notes that the original Chapel was built in 1870 in the Gothic style – and therefore makes a valuable contribution to the townscape of the settlement.

Thirdly, no other uses have come forward for the building, including any which fall within the same planning Use Class D1, such as a nursery, creche, public hall, clinic, training centre etc., and it is considered, given the closeness of existing residential properties to the site, that a residential use would be preferable to a business or industrial one.

The site is very close to the centre of Ton Pentre and has good access to a range of shops and services. There is also good access to sustainable transport, with the property being located on a bus route and within walking distance, approximately 219m, of Ton Pentre Railway Station; all of which means that this site would be considered to be a highly sustainable location and accord with the relevant criteria of Policy AW2.

The site is however, currently within a C2 flood zone and the development proposes highly vulnerable development. PPW Technical Advice Note 15: Development and Flooding and a recent Chief Planning Officer letter from the Welsh Government affirms highly vulnerable development should not be allowed in Zone C2.

Notwithstanding the C2 status, which is considered separately below, the planning policy framework weighs strongly in favour of the proposal. Therefore, subject to consideration of the other material matters, the principle of development is considered to be acceptable.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area

The application details show that save for some minor changes to windows and doors and the landscaped area to the front of the building, the mass and form of the building would not be altered.

In a general sense, therefore, the development would have little impact on the appearance of the site or affect the local character.

However, the conversion of the building and the repair of its fabric means that its physical condition would be greatly enhanced; thus this, together with its reuse by future residents means that there would be a positive contribution to the street scene and preservation of a historic asset.

Impact on residential amenity

Firstly, the proposed development has been considered against the criteria set out within the SPG for the Development of Flats, relating to access and the amenity of future occupiers.

Although the site is constrained, like many others in urban locations, some external garden space would be provided, together with cycle storage and a bin store. In

addition, a comparison of proposed floor plans and elevation drawings show that habitable rooms would benefit from natural light and windows.

Secondly, the development has been considered with regard to the existing neighbouring properties. Since there would be no significant external development the relationship between neighbouring properties, in terms of their built form, would be largely unchanged and the development would not alter the outlook for current residents, or exacerbate problems from shading.

Nonetheless, the windows within the south-east and south-west facing elevations of the new flats were considered in relation to the closest dwellings at Church Street and Elias Court. Although these windows are already present in the Church, an occasional outwards glance from non-resident Clergy or worshippers is a different matter to having a permanent residential presence.

However, it was noted that the aforementioned windows would mostly face either towards the blank gable ends of Elias Court and 22 Church Street, or towards the rear car park serving the former. Any other views towards habitable rooms would be very unlikely due to the angle of skew between structures and the small windows and deep reveals of the Church.

Consequently, it is considered that the development would not cause detriment to the amenity and privacy of neighbouring occupiers and is therefore acceptable in this regard.

Access and highway safety

The Council's Highways and Transportation Section has provided the following assessment:

Access

The site is located in the heart of the community in Ton Pentre. The existing Church is located within easy walking distance of public transport, both bus and rail, and the retail area of Ton Pentre which offers a variety of local facilities.

Church Road has a carriageway width of 7.3m with double yellow lines opposite and parking restrictions on the development side which limits on-street car parking between the hours of 09:00 - 18:00 hours on Monday to Saturdays. To the side the highway has a width of 7.9m with double yellow lines on the opposite side and on-street car parking available on the development side. Pedestrian access is gained via footways which vary in width between 1.8m - 2m which are acceptable for safe access.

Parking

The Council's SPG for Access, Circulation & Parking notes that established use of the Church as a place of worship requires in the region of 50 off-street car parking spaces with none provided, although it is recognised that a number of local trips would have been undertaken on foot or by public transport.

The same SPG outlines that the proposed 8 x one-bed flats and 3 x two-bed flats require 1 space per bedroom, which gives a much lower requirement of 14 spaces.

There is considerable on-street parking demand within the streets surrounding the site due to the nature of the existing terraced dwellings which have limited or no off-street car parking provision. It is also noted that there is potential for a residential development to generate additional on-street car parking for longer durations than the previous use as a Church.

However, taking into account that the on-street demand for the proposed residential use would be substantially less than the previous use, the proposal is, on balance, acceptable in this respect.

Cycle Parking

The submitted plans provide for 6 secure cycle stands within the front garden area to promote sustainable modes of transport with less reliance placed on private motor vehicles. The provision of 6 cycle stands accords with the Council's SPG for residential use.

Sustainability

The development of flats in sustainable locations has a range of potential benefits, providing residents with the opportunity to live close to existing services and facilities and access to a range of transport options.

Such development will be supported where residents would have access to a wide range of services, including public transport, and where development would contribute to the continued viability of existing services. Conversely, the development of flats in locations which would result in residents having limited access to services are likely to be resisted.

The Council's SPG for the Development of Flats notes that residents are less likely to own cars than other household types, and special consideration should be given to ensuring that flats are not built in locations where such residents would be isolated. In addition, the creation of flats in locations where residents do not require a car is likely to contribute to the creation of more sustainable patterns of movement.

Proposed larger and higher density development of flats are likely to be supported in or close to town centres, where it contributes to regeneration objectives, or supports the re-use of buildings of historic or community value.

Conclusion

Taking into account the existing demand generated by the established Church use, the sustainable location within easy walking distance of both bus and rail stops and local facilities within Ton Pentre, the proposed development is acceptable in this regard.

Archaeology

The consultation response from GGAT notes that the internal change to the building means that the internal worship space and layout will be lost, and that the site is of historic importance by virtue of its history and cultural significance.

GGAT advises that although the exterior is not protected by statutory designation, since no major external changes are proposed, the interior should be recorded in the form of a Level 2 survey, as set out within 'Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice' produced by Historic England (2016), which will include a measured scale in photographs and a directional plan.

Therefore, a condition, similar to that within Welsh Government Circular 016/2014, has been included within the list of recommended conditions at the end of the report.

Flooding

NRW has confirmed that the planning application proposes highly vulnerable development within Zone C2 of the Development Advice Map (DAM) contained within PPW TAN15.

Both TAN15 and the Chief Planning Officer letter from Welsh Government, dated 9 January 2014, affirm that highly vulnerable development and emergency services should not be permitted in Zone C2 and that justification tests do not apply in this scenario.

However, a Flood Consequences Assessment (FCA) was produced on behalf of the Applicant, by Grays Consulting Engineers, which was assessed by NRW. The FCA shows that the site would be flood free in the 1% AEP (Annual Exceedance Probability) plus climate change flood event but may experience some shallow flooding in the most extreme 0.1% AEP flood event.

NRW notes that the FCA uses the River Rhondda model and that they are satisfied with the use of the flood data. Furthermore, NRW advises that the FCA shows that the risks and consequences of flooding are manageable to an acceptable level and therefore have "no objection to the application as submitted".

Conversely, the Council's Flood Risk Management Team has objected to the proposal on the basis of the site's surface water risk and that the development would be contrary to TAN 15. Nevertheless, although surface water flooding is referenced in TAN 15, this is only in general terms of it being desirable for new development not to create additional run-off.

In this case, the development does not propose any increase in impermeable surfacing and as NRW advises, the development would not result in significant alterations to site levels and they have no concern about the development resulting in an increased risk elsewhere.

Whilst there is a risk to the property from flooding, this is not considered to be of sufficient material weight to warrant a recommendation of refusal. In this regard, it is noted that the established use of the building already constitutes highly vulnerable development as would all of the other potential uses of the site which fall within Use Class D1, for which planning permission would not be required.

National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes

Chapter 2 of PPW11 emphasises that development proposals should demonstrate sustainable placemaking, to ensure that the right development is achieved in the right place, and states that development proposals should be assessed against the national sustainable placemaking outcomes.

PPW acknowledges that not every development proposal will be able to demonstrate that they can meet all of the outcomes, or that it can be proved that an attribute of a proposal will necessarily result in a particular outcome.

It is also recognised that the interpretation of the relevant criteria will depend upon the detail and context of the proposal and the application site, and in the planning balance, that greater material weight may be given to some attributes rather than others.

Therefore, in addition to consideration of the positive placemaking merits of the scheme within the sections of the report above, the proposed development is considered to align particularly well with the following national sustainable placemaking outcomes:

- **Creating and Sustaining Communities:** The development density is appropriate for the central settlement location and would contribute to the overall housing requirement within the Northern Strategy Area.
- **Facilitating Accessible and Healthy Environments:** The application site is located on a bus route, close to a railway station, and benefits from many services and facilities located within walking distance. Being within the settlement boundary is considered to be a sustainable location and would not be car dependent.
- **Maximising Environmental Protection:** The development would result in mitigation and enhancement for bats and nesting birds.

- Growing Our Economy in a Sustainable Manner: The development would have a positive effect in terms of construction jobs.
- Making Best Use of Resources: The development supports the prioritisation of use of previously developed land and existing buildings

In respect of the other national outcomes listed the development would not be considered to have a neutral impact.

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 application site lies within Zone 1 of Rhondda Cynon Taf's Residential Charging Zones where a nil charge is applicable. Therefore, no CIL would be payable.

Section 106 Contributions / Planning Obligations

Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended) enables Local Planning Authorities and developers to agree to planning obligations to require operations or activities to be carried out on land (in-kind obligations) or require payments to be made (financial contributions), to mitigate any unacceptable impacts of development proposals.

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010, with effect from 6 April 2010, state that a planning obligation (under S.106) may only legally constitute a reason for granting planning permission if it is:

1. necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms,
2. directly related to the development; and,
3. fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

Welsh Office Circular 13/97 Planning Obligations provides procedural guidance on the role of planning obligations in mitigating the site-specific impacts of unacceptable development to make it acceptable in planning terms. The Welsh Government Development Management Manual also advises planning obligations should only be used where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts through a planning condition and when it meets the three tests above. Further guidance regarding what types of obligations developers may be expected to contribute towards is also contained within Policy AW4 of the Local Development Plan and the Council's SPG on Planning Obligations, however it is made clear that this is only intended to form the basis of negotiations between all parties.

The Section 106 requirements in this case

In this case the proposed development would provide 11 market flats for sale.

LDP Policy NSA11 requires an affordable contribution of 10% or more, for developments of 10 residential units or more. In this case the Council's Housing Strategy Team has identified that a financial contribution equal to 30% of the open market value of one of the two-bedroom flats would be required.

Conclusion

The application property is within the settlement boundary and therefore the principle of residential development and the re-use of a brownfield site would be supported by LDP Policies CS1, AW1, AW2, NSA12 and NSA13.

Ideally, it would be preferred that new developments were able to provide sufficient off-street parking provision to accord with the SPG for Access, Circulation and Parking. However, this site, like many others, were constructed in an era when vehicular traffic was neither a problem nor a consideration, and where the constrained curtilage gives no scope to accommodate parking for either existing or new uses.

In this case, the recommendation gives greater weight to the provision of new housing, where there is a national shortage; and to ensuring that this prominent and historical building continues to have a future beneficial use.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS BELOW AND A SECTION 106 AGREEMENT:

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 completed in accordance with the approved drawings and documents:

- A109
- A110
- A111
- A112
- A113
- A114
- A115

and details and documents received on 26th May 2022, 11th July 2022 and 20th September 2022, unless otherwise to be approved and superseded by

details required by any other condition attached to this consent.

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

3. No development shall commence on site until the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

- i) details of a scheme for the provision of biodiversity enhancement measures for bats and nesting birds, as per Section 5 of the Ecological Impact Assessment (Wildwood Ecology, dated 15th September 2022).

- ii) a method statement in respect of the protection of nesting birds relating to the redevelopment works for the site.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to beneficial occupation.

Reason: In the interest of biodiversity mitigation and enhancement in accordance with PPW11 and Policy AW8 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

4. No development shall commence on site until an appropriate programme of historic building recording and analysis has been secured and implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The building is of architectural and cultural significance and the records are required to mitigate the impact of the development in accordance with Policy AW7 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.