



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

27th August 2024

SITE MEETING

APPLICATION NO 24/0164/10 Residential Development of 41 no. Affordable Dwellings and Associated Works (Hydraulic Modelling Assessment Rec. 25/03/24)(Amended Plans Rec. 11/04/24) LAND ADJACENT TO BRYNGELLI ESTATE, MEADOW LANE, HIRWAUN

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATION

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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.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In accordance with Minute No 61 (Planning and Development Committee – 15th August 2024), a site inspection was undertaken on Tuesday 27th August 2024 of the proposed development.
- 3.2 The meeting was attended by Planning and Development Committee Members, County Borough Councillors S Rees, W Lewis, J Smith, L Tomkinson and R Williams.

- 3.3 Apologies for absence were received from Planning and Development Committee Members, County Borough Councillors J Bonetto, A Dennis, S Emanuel, D Grehan, W Owen and M Powell.
- 3.4 Members met at the proposed front highways access to the site and the Planning Officer advised Members that full planning permission was sought for the construction of 41 no. residential dwellings on a parcel of land which is situated immediately to the west of Bryngelli Industrial Estate, Hirwaun.
- 3.5 The Planning Officer also outlined for Members the highways improvements proposed outlining how the applicant has acquired additional land to provide a widened carriageway to a minimum of 5.5m in width with a 1.8m wide safe segregated footway facilities to serve the proposed dwellings. The widened carriageway removes the sub-standard pinch point on the existing carriageway, providing for a 5.5m running width which is in compliance with the Council's Design Guide for Residential Estate Roads and which is considered acceptable.
- 3.6 Members walked up the lane to view the proposed site layout and the Planning Officer pointed out the position of the proposed dwellings on the site. The Planning Officer also highlighted to Members that an application (planning ref. 21/1491) for 35 no. residential dwellings at the site was reported back to Committee in April 2023 where Members resolved to approve the application, subject to a S106 Agreement. The S106 Agreement has not yet been finalised and, as such, the decision notice has not been issued.
- 3.7 Members sought clarification on the land ownership query that was raised at the meeting and the Planning Officer confirmed that this section of land has now been taken out of the application.
- 3.8 The Planning Officer concluded their presentation of the application by highlighting that the site is in an established area built up of residential and commercial properties.
- 3.9 The Highways Officer confirmed the information provided related to the proposed highways improvements that would be required as part of the application and taking into consideration the proposed 100% affordable housing allocation and the vehicular movements associated with social housing, it is felt the application is acceptable.
- 3.10 Members sought clarification that the removal of land as a result of the land ownership query does not impact on the ability to deliver the

highways improvements outlined in the application. The Planning and Highways Officers confirmed this would not impact the improvements being made.

- 3.11 Members noted the current highways access and took consideration of the proposed new width as detailed as part of the improvements. Members also queried the number of vehicular movements per day and the Highways Officer confirmed an estimated 106 movements. The Highways Officer also highlighted to Members that as part of the conditions of the application, no development on the site would take place until the highways improvements to Meadow Lane and the junction access had been completed.
- 3.12 Members noted the track opposite the site entrance and queried the potential use of this. The Senior Highways Officer informed Members this was a private unadopted track. It was also highlighted to Members that the entry access to the proposed development would be off centred to the current access and therefore it would be unlikely that this route would be used.
- 3.13 Members also queried the revision to the layout of the proposed dwellings and the Planning Officer presented Members with the previous visual plans for comparison and commented there has been minimal change from the previously approved application to accommodate the extra properties.
- 3.14 Local Members, County Borough Councillors K Morgan and A O Rogers spoke of their concern regarding the highways safety and in particular the use of Meadow Lane to access the site, the access for construction traffic and the use of the unadopted track directly opposite the site. The Highways Officer advised Members that a construction method statement would be required as part of the conditions of the application and that the use of the private unadopted lane would not be acceptable by construction traffic. He also reiterated that the highways improvements would be required to be completed before any construction work could commence on the main site.
- 3.15 The Local Members also shared their concern regarding the number of parking spaces available and in particular the possibility of visitors parking outside the site further impacting on highways safety. The Highways Officer outlined the number of parking spaces as shown on the application and confirmed whilst the parking provision was lower than the maximum standards set out within the council's Supplementary Planning Guidance the proposed development provides 74 off-street car parking spaces with a minimum of 1 space per 1 & 2 bed unit, a minimum of 2 spaces per 3 bed unit and 3 spaces per 4 bed unit with space available within the new

development and widened lane to accommodate an element of short term visitor or residents parking. In light of the development for social housing with established lower levels of car ownership the parking provision was considered to be acceptable.

3.16 The Chair thanked the Officers for the report and closed the meeting.

4. Further Information / Additional correspondence received.

4.1 As indicated above, amended plans have been received to properly reflect the land owned/in control of the Applicant. This removes a small strip of land in front of existing garages on Meadow Lane (opposite the site) which was initially included in error. Further consultation with residents has not been undertaken in this case as the red line boundary has been reduced to only include land within the applicant's ownership/control. Furthermore, the plans do not include any other changes to the scheme.

4.2 The submission of the amended plans requires the substitution of plans in condition 2 and 4 to reflect the updated plan numbers.

4.3 A further 3 letters of objection have been received since the completion of the original report (Appendix 1). Two of those letters are from new sources whilst one forms a second objection from a resident who has previously submitted a letter of objection. Some of the concerns raised in the recently submitted letters have been raised and addressed previously (access to the site, access to facilities) (Appendix 1) however, a number of new concerns have been raised which are summarized as follows:

- The development will devalue existing properties.
- Affordable housing will bring threat to people already living in Hirwaun.
- Residents no longer feel safe in the village.
- Children will be at risk.
- There is no need to expand Hirwaun.
- The rural aspect of the village will be lost.
- The lane is a popular walking area for locals.
- A better access would be via the A465.
- A large and small lorry recently tried to access the site via the track between Meadow Lane and Rhigos Road to deliver drainage and building materials.
- There is concern that the development has already been given the go ahead without first fully considering the legitimate concerns of residents and that reporting the application to the Planning and Development Committee is just a rubber stamping of the proposal.

- 4.4 In response to the additional concerns raised, Members will already be aware that matters of tenure and property value are not material planning considerations.
- 4.5 Whilst residents suggest that they no longer feel safe in the village and that local children will be at risk, it is not considered that the development of the site for residential purposes would adversely affect public safety. It must also be noted that South Wales Police have been consulted on the scheme and have not raised any objection in this regard.
- 4.6 Whilst residents do not consider that there is any need for further residential development in the area, consultation with the Council's Housing Strategy team has confirmed that the scheme would help to address the need for additional affordable housing in the Hirwaun area and that the unit mix and tenure proposed are in accordance with the Local Housing Market Assessment 2022/37.
- 4.7 Whilst one resident considers that the rural aspect of the village will be lost, the site is situated within an established built-up area between an existing industrial estate to the east and residential properties to the north and north-west. Planning consent has also recently been granted for a care home on land immediately to the western boundary of the application site (planning ref. 23/0506). The application site is also a brownfield site which was previously used for industrial purposes (B1/B2) and, as such, it could effectively revert back to a more intensive industrial use. Furthermore, whilst reference is made to the use of the lane by residents to walk their dogs, the proposal does not remove public access to the lane. Rather, the existing lane would be widened with segregated footways provided, which would improve pedestrian safety in this location.
- 4.8 It is noted that one resident considers that access via the A465 would be a better option, however, the Council must consider the scheme that has been presented. The proposed works to the A465 are still ongoing and may not be finished for a number of years. It is therefore not currently practicable to provide a suitable access via that route.
- 4.9 One resident indicates that two lorries have recently attempted to deliver materials to the site via the track between Meadow Lane and Rhigos Road. The track in question does not form part of the application site, nor is it an adopted highway which would be suitable for use as an access to the site. The ownership of the track is currently unknown however, the Council's Highways and Transportation Officer has recommended the use of a condition for a Construction Method Statement to be submitted prior to any work commencing to ensure that all works traffic to the site would enter via an acceptable route, which would not include the track.

4.10 Whist one resident is of the opinion that the proposal has already been given the go ahead without due consideration of the concerns and objections raised by residents, that is clearly not the case given that at the previous meeting, Members resolved to undertake a site visit in order to fully assess the proposal before reaching a decision.