

Planning, Design and Access Statement


Land at Victoria Street, Pontycymmer

November 2025

amity

planning consultants



Introduction	
Client	This statement has been prepared on behalf of Kyle Spiller Ltd.
Scope	This statement accompanies the following application: <i>"Erection of up to 31 affordable dwellings (outline application with all matters reserved except access)"</i>
Site Details	
Site Address	Land at Victoria Street, Pontycymmer.
Site Location	<p><i>Fig.1 Application Site</i></p> 
Site Description	<p>The application site comprises an area of land measuring approximately 0.75 Hectares, which is bordered to the east by Victoria Street. The site is within the settlement boundary of Pontycymmer. The site is brownfield land and was previously occupied by several buildings which formed part of the Ffaldau Colliery. The site has been vacant for many years and until recently was overgrown with vegetation. The site is roughly rectangular in shape and narrows towards the southern boundaries of the site. The site broadly slopes away from Victoria Street and has steeply sloping embankments to the western and southern boundaries.</p>

Relevant Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales

Planning Policy Wales (12th Edition, February 2024)

Planning Policy Wales (12th Edition, February 2024) Planning Policy Wales (PPW) forms the overarching national planning policy document within Wales, providing guidance to Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) for the preparation of development plans and the determination of planning applications through their development management functions. Paragraph 2.8 acknowledges that “planning policies, proposals and decisions must seek to promote sustainable development and support the well-being of people and communities across Wales” and “the Fig.3 The Seven Goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 most appropriate way to implement these requirements through the planning system is to adopt a placemaking approach to plan making planning policy and decision making” as per Paragraph 2.9.

PPW defines placemaking as a “holistic approach to the planning and design of development and spaces, focused on positive outcomes”. This approach “considers the context, function and relationships between a development site and its wider surroundings” and “adds social, economic, environmental and cultural value to development proposals resulting in benefits which go beyond a physical development boundary”.

Fig.2 PPW Themes Collectively Contribute to Placemaking (extract from PPW Edition 12)



In light of the nature of the development proposals and their location, the following themes and policy topic areas are identified as relevant.

Paragraph 3.55 emphasises the preference of previously developed land as opposed to greenfield sites. The paragraph advises that *‘Previously developed (also referred to as brownfield) land (see definition overleaf) should, wherever possible, be used in preference to greenfield sites where it is suitable for development. In settlements, such land should generally be considered suitable for appropriate development where its re-use will promote sustainability principles and any constraints can be overcome.’*

Housing

Paragraph 4.2.1 states that: *'Planning authorities must understand all aspects of the housing market in their areas, which will include the requirement, supply and delivery of housing. This will allow planning authorities to develop evidence-based market and affordable housing policies in their development plans and make informed development management decisions that focus on the creation and enhancement of Sustainable Places. New housing development in both urban and rural areas should incorporate a mix of market and affordable house types, tenures and sizes to cater for the range of identified housing needs and contribute to the development of sustainable and cohesive communities.'*

Transport

Paragraph 4.1.1 aims to reduce the need to travel, especially by private car, by locating development where there is good access by public transport, walking and cycling. It also supports the locating of development near related uses to encourage multi-purpose trips and reduce the length of journeys.

Para 4.1.8 states that:

'The Welsh Government is committed to reducing reliance on the private car and supporting a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport. Delivering this objective will make an important contribution to decarbonisation, improving air quality, increasing physical activity, improving the health of the nation and realising the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.'

Planning Policy Wales and Placemaking

Para 2.17 -2.20 states:

'In responding to the key principles for the planning system, the creation of sustainable places and in recognition of the need to contribute to the well-being of future generations in Wales through placemaking, development plans and development proposals must seek to deliver developments that address the national sustainable placemaking outcomes.'

The national sustainable placemaking outcomes for Wales seek to outline what a sustainable place will look like, characterised by the planning principles they relate to.

Every development plan must take forward the national sustainable placemaking outcomes and use them to develop an overarching set of outcomes. Each development plan will consider the scale at which they will contribute, through policies and allocations, to achieving an outcome. Collectively, the focus on achieving these outcomes across all development plans will ensure the planning system plays its role in delivering sustainable places.

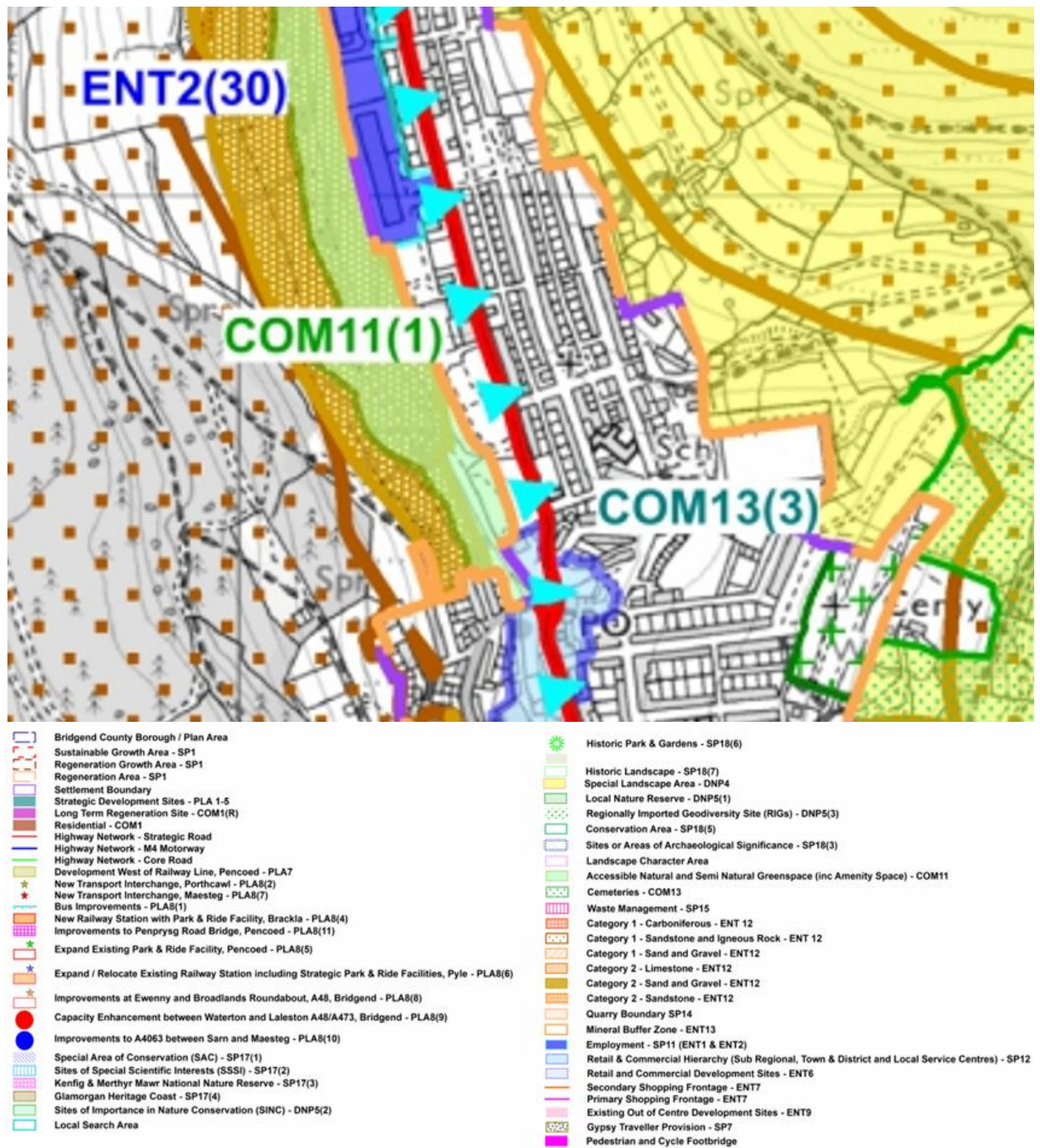
Not every development or policy proposal will be able to demonstrate they can meet all of these outcomes, neither can it necessarily be proved at the application or policy stage that an attribute of a proposal will necessarily lead to a specific outcome. However, this does not mean that they should not be considered in the development management process to see if a proposal can be improved or enhanced to promote wider well-being. It is for developers and planning authorities to identify these opportunities and act upon them.'

Future Wales – The National Plan 2040

'Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking

	<p><i>The growth and regeneration of towns and cities should positively contribute towards building sustainable places that support active and healthy lives, with urban neighbourhoods that are compact and walkable, organised around mixed-use centres and public transport, and integrated with green infrastructure. Urban growth and regeneration should be based on the following strategic placemaking principles:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• creating a rich mix of uses;</i> <i>• providing a variety of housing types and tenures;</i> <i>• building places at a walkable scale, with homes, local facilities and public transport within walking distance of each other;</i> <i>• increasing population density, with development built at urban densities that can support public transport and local facilities;</i> <i>• establishing a permeable network of streets, with a hierarchy that informs the nature of development;</i> <i>• promoting a plot-based approach to development, which provides opportunities for the development of small plots, including for custom and self-builders; and</i> <i>• integrating green infrastructure, informed by the planning authority's Green Infrastructure Assessment.</i> <p><i>Planning authorities should use development plans to establish a vision for each town and city. This should be supported by a spatial framework that guides growth and regeneration, and establishes a structure within which towns and cities can grow, evolve, diversify and flourish over time.'</i></p>
Technical Advice Notes	<p>Planning Policy Wales is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs) which provide further national advice and guidance on specific areas of the planning system. Of particular relevance to this application are the following TANs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAN 2: 'Planning and Affordable Housing' (June 2006); • TAN 5: 'Nature Conservation and Planning' (September 2009); • TAN 10: 'Tree Preservation Orders' (October 1997); • TAN 12: 'Design' (March 2016); and • TAN 18: Transport (2007).
Development Plan	<p>In accord with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, development must be carried out in accordance with the development plan (in this case the adopted Cardiff Local Development Plan) unless material considerations indicate otherwise.</p> <p>The Development Plan for the area comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridgend Local Development Plan 2018 to 2033, which was adopted 13th March 2024. <p>The LDP Proposals Map extract on the following page shows that the site is within the settlement boundary of Pontycymmer, adjacent to the site is an <i>Accessible Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace (in Amenity Space) (COM11)</i> and to the north of the site is designated as <i>Employment (ENT2)</i>. To the south-east of the site is a <i>Cemetery (COM13)</i>.</p>

Fig.3 LDP Proposals Map Extract



The following policies are considered to be of direct relevance to the assessment of the proposed development:

- (i) Policy SP1: 'Settlement Hierarchy and Urban Management'

The Policy states that *'Development will be permitted within settlement boundaries at a scale commensurate with the role and function of settlements as set out in the hierarchy'*

The Policy proceeds to categorise Pontycymmer as a 'Local Settlement'.

(ii) Policy SP3: 'Good Design and Sustainable Placemaking'

All development must contribute to creating high quality, attractive, sustainable places that support active and healthy lives and enhance the community in which they are located, whilst having full regard to the natural, historic and built environment, by:

- 1) Demonstrating alignment with the principles of Good Design; and
- 2) Demonstrating a Sustainable Placemaking approach to their siting, design, construction and operation.

Planning applications must be supported through the submission of appropriate design and technical information to demonstrate compliance with criteria a) to o). All development must:

- a) Have a design of the highest quality possible, whilst respecting and enhancing local distinctiveness and landscape character;
- b) Be appropriate to its local context in terms of size, scale, height, massing, elevational treatment, materials and detailing, layout, form, mix and density;
- c) Use land efficiently by being of a density which maximises the development potential of the land whilst respecting that of the surrounding development;
- d) Provide for an appropriate mix of land uses to promote compact, walkable urban neighbourhoods;
- e) Maximise opportunities for active travel and increased public transport use and promote connections within and outside the site to ensure efficient and equality of access for all;
- f) Minimise opportunities for crime to be generated or increased, whilst promoting community safety in accordance with Secured by Design principles;
- g) Avoid or minimise noise, air, and soil and water pollution;
- h) Incorporate methods to ensure the site is free from contamination (including invasive species);
- i) Safeguard and enhance biodiversity and integrated multi-functional green infrastructure networks;
- j) Make sustainable use of natural resources, including land and water, and adopt circular economy principles that:
 - i. prioritise locally sourced construction materials to help reduce transport emissions
 - ii. Demonstrate that consideration has been given to the use of secondary recycled aggregates or materials before using primary materials to help ensure the availability of materials in the long term;
- k) Ensure that the viability and amenity of neighbouring uses and their users/occupiers will not be adversely affected;
- l) Incorporate appropriate arrangements for the disposal of foul sewage, waste and water;
- m) Respond to the climate emergency by:
 - i. Reducing energy demands and maximising opportunities for renewable or low carbon energy generation, incorporating resource efficient/adaptable buildings and layouts using sustainable design and construction techniques
 - ii. Protecting and increasing the resilience of both ecosystems and communities to address the inevitable effects of climate change; and
- n) Include the provision of high-speed digital infrastructure from the outset; and
- o) Appropriately contribute towards local, physical, social and community infrastructure which is affected by the development.

Strategic Allocations must be developed in line with site specific policies and associated masterplan development principles set out within the Replacement LDP. A detailed masterplan will need to be developed in line with this and agreed with the Council prior to development commencing. A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment must accompany development proposals on allocated sites with identified likely significant adverse effects (pre-mitigation) in relation to SA Objective 14 (Landscape).

(iii) **Policy SP4: 'Mitigating the Impact of Climate Change'**

SP4: Mitigating the Impact of Climate Change

All development proposals must make a positive contribution towards tackling the causes of, and adapting to the impacts of Climate Change. Means of achieving this may include:

- 1) Having a location and layout which reflects sustainable transport and access principles, thereby reducing the overall need to travel (active travel);
- 2) Having low / zero carbon energy requirements by reducing energy demand, and promoting energy efficiency;
- 3) Utilising low carbon, local materials and supplies (adopting circular economy principles);
- 4) Encouraging the development of renewable and low/zero carbon energy generation;
- 5) Having a design, layout and landscaping which: (i) helps wildlife and habitats to adapt to the changing climate; (ii) assists cooling of the urban environment, including the use of passive building techniques where appropriate;
- 6) Using resources more efficiently, including averting waste generated from demolition and minimising waste water use and pollution;
- 7) Directing development away from flood risk areas, and avoiding development that increases the risk of flood and coastal erosion, including through the deployment of sustainable urban drainage systems where relevant.

All applications for development proposals must clearly demonstrate how they contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption.

(iv) **Policy SP5: 'Sustainable Transport and Accessibility'**

SP5: Sustainable Transport and Accessibility

Development must be located and designed in a way that minimises the need to travel, reduces dependency on the private car and enables sustainable access to employment, education, local services and community facilities. Development must also be supported by appropriate transport measures and infrastructure, and depending on the nature, scale and siting of the proposal will be required to:

- 1) Accord with the sustainable transport hierarchy for planning (as set out in PPW);
- 2) Be designed to provide safe and efficient access to the transport network, which includes the active travel, public transport and street networks;
- 3) Safeguard, enhance and expand the active travel networks identified in the Council's Existing Routes Map and ATNM, including links to those networks as a means of improving connectivity;
- 4) Prioritise the delivery of the key transport measures and schemes identified in the Bridgend Local Transport Plan, which must be delivered in an efficient and timely manner in accordance with land use development. This includes resolving localised junction capacity issues where they restrain growth;
- 5) Reduce reliance on private car use by maximising the potential of movement to/
- from the development by public transport, including for the urban area ensuring developments are served by walking routes to public transport networks;
- 6) Adopt a placemaking approach in the identification, design and delivery of all transport measures in order to maximise their contribution to sustainable development;
- 7) Provide new transport infrastructure and improvement measures to mitigate the impact of the development and demonstrate the level and acceptability of impacts on the surrounding road network;
- 8) Help to reduce transport related airborne pollution by enabling more sustainable travel choices and reducing the demand for travel by car; and
- 9) Ensure that developments are served by appropriate parking provision, in accordance with the Council's parking guidance, including infrastructure which caters for future technological developments such as electric vehicle charging points, and circulation areas, including adequate road widths to allow access for service vehicles.

Development that would have a negative impact on the safe and efficient operation of the transport network will not be permitted.

(v) **PLA11: 'Parking Standards'**

PLA11: Parking Standards

All development must be served by appropriate levels of parking in accordance with the adopted SPG on parking standards. Consideration must be given to electric and Ultra Low Emission Vehicles.

(vi) Policy DNP8: 'Green Infrastructure'

DNP8: Green Infrastructure

Development proposals will be required to integrate, protect and maintain existing green infrastructure assets and to enhance the extent, quality, connectivity and multi-functionality of the green infrastructure network. Where the loss or damage of existing green infrastructure is unavoidable, appropriate mitigation and compensation will be required.

All developments must seek to maximise, as far as practicable, the amount of green infrastructure on the site, as well as the interconnectedness of green infrastructure within and around the site to the wider green infrastructure network. Development must also maximise opportunities to achieve multi-functionality by bringing green infrastructure functions together.

All major developments will be required to submit a Green Infrastructure Assessment.

(vii) Policy SP17: 'Conservation and Enhancement of the Natural Environment'

SP17: Conservation and Enhancement of the Natural Environment

The County Borough has a rich and varied biodiversity with a broad range of species, habitats and unique, rich landscapes. In particular, these include the nationally important Glamorgan Heritage Coast, the outstanding historic landscapes of Kenfig and Merthyr Mawr Warren, and other regionally and locally important areas. Development which will maintain and, wherever possible, enhance the natural environment of the County Borough will be favoured. Development proposals will not be permitted where they will have an adverse impact upon:

- 1) The integrity of the County Borough's countryside;
- 2) The character of its landscape;
- 3) Its biodiversity and habitats; and
- 4) The quality of its natural resources including water, air and soil.

Areas having a high and/or unique environmental quality will be protected and the following strategically important areas within the County Borough will specifically be protected from inappropriate development which directly or indirectly impacts upon them:

SP17(1) National Site Network Sites (including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs);

SP17(2) Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs);

SP17(3) Kenfig and Merthyr Mawr National Nature Reserves (NNRs);

SP17(4) The Glamorgan Heritage Coast;

SP17(5) Mynydd Margam Registered Historic Landscape.

The weight to be afforded to environmental designations in the determination of relevant planning applications will be based on their statutory or non-statutory status and geographical scale of designation.

Proposals likely to have direct or indirect adverse effects on Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Ramsar sites, must be subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). This includes development proposals on allocated sites where this plan indicates a project level HRA is required and any other development proposals likely to have adverse effects on SACs/SPAs/Ramsar sites. In addition, any proposals that could affect the habitat of marsh fritillary butterfly within 2km of Cefn Cribwr Grasslands SAC, as illustrated on the Policies Map, must be subject to HRA.

Development requiring HRA will only be allowed where it can be determined through HRA that:

- a) taking into account mitigation, the proposal would not result in adverse effects on the integrity of the SACs/SPAs/Ramsar sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects; or
- b) HRA proves there are no alternatives and that the development is of overriding public interest and appropriate compensatory measures are provided

Proposals within or affecting a SSSI must demonstrate how they safeguard, support or where possible enhance identified special features of the designation.

The importance and features of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and local wildlife sites must also be considered as appropriate in the determination of relevant planning applications (refer to DNP5).

(viii) Policy DPN9: 'Natural Resource Protection and Public Health'

DPN9: Natural Resource Protection and Public Health

Development proposals will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that they would not cause a new, or exacerbate an existing, unacceptable risk of harm to health, biodiversity and/or local amenity due to:

- 1) Air pollution;
- 2) Noise pollution;
- 3) Light pollution;
- 4) Water pollution;
- 5) Contamination (including invasive species);
- 6) Land instability;
- 7) Sustainable development of mineral resources;
- 8) Sustainable waste management;
- 9) Any other identified risk to public health or safety.

Development in areas currently subject to the above will need to demonstrate mitigation measures to reduce the risk of harm to public health, biodiversity and/or local amenity to an acceptable level. The use of construction phase Pollution Prevention Plans are encouraged, where appropriate, to demonstrate how proposals can prevent development water run-off from causing pollution of the water environment. All proposals within HSE consultation zones must also demonstrate the acceptability and need for development.

All development in flood risk areas must be supported by a Flood Consequences/Risk Assessment and incorporate any mitigation measures required to avoid or manage increased flood risk.

(ix) Policy SP10: 'Infrastructure'

SP10: Infrastructure

All development proposals must be supported by sufficient existing or new infrastructure. In order to mitigate likely adverse impacts and/or to integrate a development proposal with its surroundings, reasonable infrastructure provision or financial contributions to such infrastructure must be provided by developers where necessary. This will be secured by means of planning agreements/obligations where appropriate.

The requirements for such agreements will include consideration of and appropriate provision for:

- 1) Affordable housing;
- 2) Economic Infrastructure – Telecommunications / broadband infrastructure;
- 3) Utilities;
- 4) Educational facilities and/or their upgrades;
- 5) Green infrastructure and outdoor recreation;
- 6) Renewable energy and low carbon technologies;

- 7) Transportation Infrastructure - Improvements to the highway network, including walking and cycling routes (Active Travel) and public transport;
- 8) Protection, enhancement and management of the natural, historic and built environment;
- 9) Community facilities, health facilities and/or their upgrades;
- 10) Waste management and recycling facilities;
- 11) Initiatives to manage and mitigate the impact of climate change;
- 12) Improvements to the public realm; and
- 13) Welsh Language.

Infrastructure providers will be consulted on relevant planning applications.

(x) Policy SP6: 'Sustainable Housing Strategy'

SP6: Sustainable Housing Strategy

The plan makes provision for 8,628 homes to promote the creation and enhancement of sustainable communities and meet the housing requirement of 7,575 homes for the Plan period, of which, 1,711 of these homes will be affordable. Development will be distributed in accordance with Strategic Policy SP1, based on the Sustainable Housing Strategy that will:

- 1) Prioritise the re-use of previously developed (Brownfield) land;
- 2) Enable delivery of Strategic Sites, including Regeneration Sites within existing settlement boundaries and Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) on the edge of established settlements;
- 3) Enable Edge of Settlement Sites within, and on the edge of, established settlements;
- 4) Support windfall residential development at appropriate sites within the settlement, focussing on the re-use of previously developed land;

- 5) Enable exception sites within or adjoining settlement boundaries to deliver affordable housing and homes that provide for an identified local need; and
- 6) Support use of Place Plans to identify small, local development sites that reflect local distinctiveness and address local, specific community scale issues and promote self and custom build opportunities.

There will be a presumption against housing development in all areas outside defined settlement boundaries, unless the proposal is considered an appropriate exceptional case as detailed in Development Management Policy COM5.

Delivery of the housing requirement is fundamental to effectiveness of the LDP and will be monitored on an annual basis through the Annual Monitoring Report.

(xi) Policy COM6: 'Residential Density'

COM6: Residential Density

Development must seek to create mixed, socially inclusive, sustainable communities by providing a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of residents at an efficient and appropriate density. In the first instance, residential development should seek to reflect a density of 50 dwellings per hectare. Higher residential densities and mixed uses must be achieved along public and mass transport hubs to maximise the opportunities for transit orientated development. A lower density of development will only be permitted where:

- 1) Design, physical or infrastructure constraints prevent the minimum density from being achieved; or

- 2) The minimum density would harm the character and appearance of the site's surroundings; or
- 3) Where it can be demonstrated there is a particular lack of choice of housing types within a local community.

In all cases, housing developments must make the most efficient use of land in accordance with sustainable, placemaking principles. Good Design must be utilised to maximise the density of development without compromising the quality of the living conditions provided, whilst making adequate provision for privacy and space about dwellings.

(xii) Policy COM2: 'Affordable Housing'

COM2: Affordable Housing

Provision will be made to deliver 1,711 affordable homes over the Plan period through the following measures:

- 1) Setting targets for on-site provision of affordable housing to be delivered as part of residential proposals where appropriate and viable;
- 2) Enabling off-site provision of affordable housing in exceptional circumstances;
- 3) Enabling Registered Social Landlord schemes to come forward as small and windfall sites; and
- 4) Providing a policy framework to determine Affordable Housing Exception Sites.

(xiii) Policy COM10: 'Provision of Outdoor Recreation Facilities'

COM10: Provision of Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Provision of a satisfactory standard of outdoor recreation space is required on all new housing developments, based on following standards:

- 1) 1.2 hectares per 1,000 population for Playing Pitches;
- 2) 1.6 hectares per 1,000 population for Other Outdoor Sports (non-pitch);
- 3) 0.25 hectares per 1,000 population for Equipped/Designated Play Areas;
- 4) 0.3 hectares per 1,000 population for Other Outdoor Provision;
- 5) 0.2 hectares per 1,000 population for Allotment provision;

The nature and type of provision will be informed by the findings of the latest Outdoor Sport and Children's Playspace Audit and Allotment Audit. On-site provision must comply with the accessibility benchmark standards set out in the Outdoor Recreation Facilities and New Housing Development SPG.

Good quality SuDS (such as wetlands, swales, ponds and vegetated SuDS) that help enhance access to green spaces and provide an improved local environment which integrates the surface water drainage

function with open space and provides habitat opportunities to deliver biodiversity net benefit will be supported.

However, the SuDS provision must not impact on the continual use of formal open space throughout the year, nor be used in lieu of providing a suitable amount of outdoor recreation facilities and play space provision in line with Fields in Trust (FIT) Guidance.


Financial contributions, equivalent to the same value that would otherwise be expected on-site, may be acceptable in lieu of on-site provision for larger scale play spaces, or where existing play space lies within walking distance of a proposed development. These contributions will be used to improve existing provision by:

- a) making an area more accessible to the community;
- b) better management for biodiversity and/or for passive enjoyment;
- c) enhancements through more usable equipment, or better space or ancillary facilities;
- d) increase in playing capacity; or
- e) a combination of the above.

Bridgend Supplementary Planning Guidance

The Council has also produced the following Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) which is relevant to this proposal:-

- SPG07: Trees and Development;
- SPG17: Parking Standards; and
- SPG19: Biodiversity and Development.

<p>Flood Risk</p>	<p>The NRW Development Advice Maps (extracted below) identifies the site as being adjacent to but outside of a Flood Zone C2 area and on land which is known to have previously flooded. The site broadly slopes from a high point in the east down to the west.</p> <p><i>Fig 4. DAM Extract</i></p> 
<p>Planning History</p>	
<p>Planning History</p>	<p>The following planning history is of relevance:</p> <p>P/99/212/OUT – Outline planning permission for a housing development was granted on 3rd August 1999. It should be noted that although outline planning permission was granted, the use of the existing access to serve the development was opposed on highway safety grounds on the basis that vision at the junction was deficient. Modifications to this access were also discouraged on the basis that they could affect the protected trees. The permission was granted on the basis that a new point of access could be provided at the southern end of the site, although this would require extensive engineering due to the difference in site levels.</p> <p>P/98/340/OUT – an application to demolish the former pit head baths & buildings & the construction of community foodstore car park & environmental improvements was refused planning permission on 17th July 1998.</p> <p>P/97/1112/OUT – planning permission was refused on 24th February 1998 for demolition of former pit head baths and outbuildings for supermarket and car parking, 91/0667 – planning permission was granted on 4th July 1991 for the construction of two machinery pits, raise roof by 2 metres. 80/0194 – planning permission was granted on 21st August 1980 for alteration of access onto a classified road at junction off Victoria Street to Ffaldau Colliery 77/1111 – planning permission was granted on 1st December 1977 for change of use, manufacture of rotationally moulded containers and storage to extrude and grind raw materials.</p>

Analysis

Land Use Planning and Design

The site represents previously developed brownfield land within the settlement boundary of Pontycymmer. Further the site would provide affordable housing, in respect of which there is an evidenced local demand. As such the principle of the development of the site for affordable housing would be fully in accord with the development plan (including LDP policies SP1, SP6 and COM2), as well as nation planning policy.

The application for consideration is for Outline permission for 31 dwellings, with all matters other than access, reserved for subsequent consideration at the Reserved Matters application stage. Notwithstanding this, an indicative, Indicative Site Layout has been produced and is submitted in support of this application. The Indicative Site Layout shows the 31 dwellings to be a mix of 1, 2, 3, and 4 bed dwellings. The dwellings are shown to run either side of a new road which will extend from the existing access from Victoria Street and extend to the south (broadly adjacent to Victoria Street). The proposed dwellings are indicated as a mix of bungalows, two-storey dwellings and two-storey apartment. The scale parameters of the individual dwellings are as follows:

Ridge Height:

Min: 4m

Max: 8.6m

Width:

Min: 3.5m

Max: 8m

Depth:

Min: 3.5m

Max : 8m

Fig.5 Site Layout

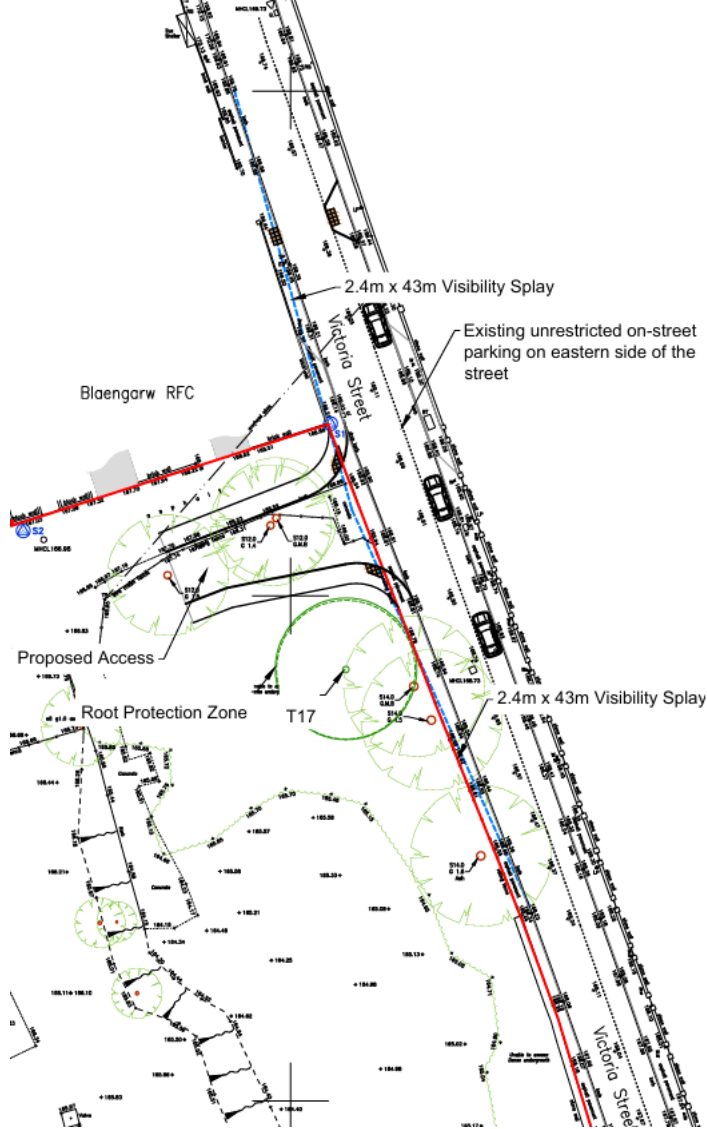


Concept site layout

	<p>The site slopes away significantly from Victoria Street. Therefore, the difference in levels between the site and the dwellings on the eastern side of Victoria Street will assist in minimising any impact upon existing the neighbouring occupiers. Furthermore, setting the properties back from the boundary with Victoria Street by a minimum of 5 metres will further minimise any potential impact upon the amenities of the neighbouring occupiers. Clearly this is a matter which will be scrutinised at the Reserved Matters application stage, in due course.</p> <p>The Indicative Site Layout shows an area of open space in the south-western corner of the site, immediately to the south of the access from Victoria Street.. It is worthy of note that the site is also ideally located for access to the Blaengarw and Pontycymmer Linear Park, which runs immediately to the west of the site and would provide an attractive amenity for residents of the development.</p> <p>The site is of sufficient size to provide a development of 31 dwellings, which is suitably laid out to ensure high standards of privacy and appropriate provision of private amenity space, whilst achieving sustainable levels of housing density. Accordingly, the proposed development complies with the provisions of Policies SF1 'Settlement Hierarchy and Urban Management' and SP3 'Good Design and Sustainable Placemaking' of the LDP.</p>
Trees	<p>The application is informed and supported by a Tree Survey (dated February 2021) and Tree Constraints Plans, which are both provided by Treescene.</p> <p>There are a group of trees in the north-eastern corner of the site, immediately adjacent to the existing vehicular entrance to the site which are the subject of a Group Tree Preservation Order. The TPO was issued in 1998 and the report states that the trees (Group A1) are: <i>'Consisting mainly of Ash, Birch, Elder, Apple, Willow, Hawthorn, Oak and Cherry.'</i></p> <p>The Tree Survey recently undertaken shows that the health of a number of the trees within the group TPO has declined over the past few decades. The report recommends the removal of some of these trees, which are suffering Ash Dieback and decay. The removal of some of these trees would enable the widening of the access. The trees of quality within this portion of the site will be retained, including the category 'A' Oak (T17).</p>
Ecology	<p>The application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Reptile Survey Report (November 2025) prepared by Just Mammals. The Survey included an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey. This survey led to a recommendation by Just Mammals for a Reptile Survey to be undertaken. A summary of key outcomes is below:</p> <p><i>1.4 As habitat on site has been assessed as suitable for nesting birds, vegetation clearance must be scheduled to be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season where possible, which runs from March to August. If any vegetation requires removal within the bird nesting season, these must first be checked by a suitably qualified ecologist. If during any vegetation removal an active nest is discovered, all works within a minimum 2m radius of the nest must be immediately stopped, and not recommenced until all chicks have fledged.</i></p> <p><i>1.5 Mature trees are present across the site. If development requires the removal of any trees this will need to be proceeded by a ground level tree assessment for bats, utilising an endoscope and ladder as required, and undertaken by an appropriately qualified ecologist. Further survey utilising a ladder and endoscope will also be required along the retaining wall, if this structure is likely to be impacted by the development, for example through light pollution, or if the structure is to be physically altered or destroyed. Ground level assessments can be undertaken at any time of year, but are recommended to be carried out during the winter months when vegetation is less likely to obscure potential roost features.</i></p>

	<p><i>1.6 A robust reptile survey effort was carried out, and across the survey one hundred and twenty two slow-worm observations were recorded, in addition to ten common lizards and five grass snakes. The regularity with which reptiles were found on site suggests a small population of common lizards and grass snakes, in addition to a good population of slow worms. The legal protection afforded to reptiles means that every effort must be made to ensure that they are not harmed during the development and their populations on site maintained. Consequently, an area of the site must be retained to provide suitable reptile habitat, with a proposed area to be retained noted in Figure 4 (see Appendix I). Prior to any development works occurring, a relocation effort must be carried out where reptiles will be captured and moved from other parts of the site and into the area of the retained suitable habitat. An Ecological Method Statement (EMS) must be provided, which will set out the various processes including a timetable for works.</i></p> <p><i>1.7 In order to comply with current Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 12, it will be necessary to provide enhancements for biodiversity. Proposals for measures to promote wildlife and nature conservation, geared specifically towards reptiles, amphibians and pollinating invertebrates, are contained in this report.</i></p> <p>In accordance with the recommendations of the report the Indicative Site Layout illustrates how the site is capable of being developed whilst maintaining a 5 metres gap between development and the boundary wall along Victoria Street and a reptile grassland mitigation area, which runs adjacent to the southern and western boundaries.</p>
Highways Impact	<p>Acstro Highway and Transport Planning Consultants have produced a Transport Statement, which is submitted in support of the planning application. In summary the Transport Statement demonstrates that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• 'The site's location is closely related to the services and facilities available within the Pontycymmer and Blaengarw;</i> <i>• The site is accessible to pedestrians and cyclists and is well connected to the existing active travel network.</i> <i>• The site is accessible to public transport users with a bus stop located adjacent to the site;</i> <i>• A safe and appropriate access, that meets current design standards, can be provided to the site from Victoria Street;</i> <i>• A pedestrian crossing of Victoria Street will be provided allowing for the safe movement of pedestrians to and from the site. The pedestrian crossing will also benefit existing users of the street.</i> <i>• The estimated traffic generation of the proposed development is considered to be insignificant compared to the traffic generation of the existing use of the site and will have no material impact to the safe operation of the surrounding highway network.</i> <p><i>As such it is considered that the site meets planning policy requirements in terms of being in an appropriate location that is safely accessible by all forms of transport and that the impacts of the development on the continued operation and safety of the surrounding highway network would be acceptable.</i></p> <p><i>It is concluded therefore that there are no transport related issues that should prevent planning permission for the proposed development.'</i></p> <p>Below is an extract from the Proposed Access drawing, which shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The existing access to the site will be improved to provide a 5.5m wide carriageway and 2m footway; (ii) The provision of a 2.4 x 43m visibility splay. (iii) The provision of an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing of Victoria Street.

Fig. 6 Proposed Access Drawing



Drainage

The residential scheme would be designed to be SABS compliant at the Reserved Matters stage. The submitted proposed site plan is indicative but it does show a scheme which would be capable of supporting a SABS compliant surface water drainage scheme.

Design and Access Statement

Site Analysis

The application site comprises an area of land measuring approximately 0.75 Hectares, which runs adjacent to and is bordered to the east by Victoria Street. There is one sole access point into the site and this is from Victoria Street (to the east), by an existing combined vehicular and pedestrian access. The boundary to the east of the site with Victoria Street is predominantly a stone retaining wall. The remainder of the boundaries to the site are a mixture of railings and vegetation. The site is brownfield land and was previously occupied by several buildings which formed part of the Ffaldau Colliery. The site has now been vacant for many years and until recently was overgrown with vegetation. The site is roughly rectangular in shape and narrows towards the southern boundaries of the site. The site broadly slopes away from Victoria Street and has steeply sloping embankments to the western and southern boundaries. The site presents an opportunity for redevelopment of a brownfield site and the opportunity for regeneration within an economically

deprived area. The biggest constraint of the site is the topography and the requirements for ground works to facilitate the residential development.

Context Analysis

To the north of the site is a Blaengarw Rugby Club's large flat roofed building, to the east are terraced dwellings on the opposite side of Victoria Street, to the south is the COOP supermarket and to the west of the site lies the Blaengarw and Pontycymmer Linear Park. The site and the surrounds to the south and west form part of a land reclamation scheme following the closure of the Ffaldau Colliery in November 1985. Following the closure of the colliery and the loss of many jobs the local area has suffered from long term decline. The proposed scheme will be the next step in the reclamation and restoration of the site to provide much needed investment and new homes in the community.

Policy Context

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12 – February 2024) PPW sets out the land-use policy context for the consideration and evaluation of all types of development. As a general rule, a presumption in favour of sustainable development is promoted when preparing development plans and in the determination of planning applications. PPW sets out a number of principles that those involved in the planning system are expected to adhere to. These include,;

- taking a long-term perspective to safeguard the interests of future generations, whilst at the same time meeting needs of people today;
- respect for environmental limits, so that resources are not irrevocably depleted or the environment irreversibly damaged. This means, for example, mitigating climate change, protecting and enhancing biodiversity, minimising harmful emissions, and promoting sustainable use of natural resources;
- tackling climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change and ensuring that places are resilient to the consequences of climate change;
- taking account of the full range of costs and benefits over the lifetime of a development, including those which cannot be easily valued in money terms when making plans and decisions and taking account of timing, risks and uncertainties. This also includes recognition of the climate a development is likely to experience over its intended lifetime.

PPW describes Design and Access Statements as a communication tool that explain how the objectives of good design and placemaking have been considered from the outset of the development process. It encourages applicants to take an integrated and inclusive approach to sustainable design, proportionate to the scale and type of development proposed.

Technical Advice Note 12: Design TAN12 provides guidance on how good design should be achieved through the planning process. The diagram overleaf, extracted from the document, sets out the key objectives of good design and the various considerations that should be taken into account in the appraisal of development.

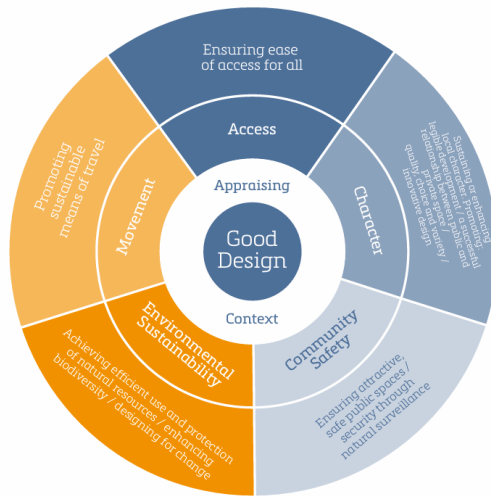


Figure 8: Objectives of Good Design (PPW 12)

Design Analysis

Character and Context

The below photograph shows the Ffaldau Colliery site prior to the demolition of the colliery buildings. This photograph is taken looking north along Victoria Street. This allows comparison with a Streetview image from a similar location on the following page:



Photograph 1: Photograph of Ffaldau Colliery Following Closure in November 1985



Photograph 2: Streetview Image in Similar Position to Photograph 1

The photograph below shows the colliery when operational with Victoria Street visible to the top left:



Photograph 3: Photograph of Ffaldau Colliery When Operational

	<p>The character of the site and surrounds has changed significantly in recent decades. The closure of the colliery and the land reclamation has wiped the obvious visual cues to the industrial past. The subtle grandeur of buildings secreted around Pontycymmer provides a glimpse of the former industrial heritage within the area. The terraced dwellings on the eastern side of Victoria Street, which face toward the site have changed little over the decades and still retain their character.</p> <p>The design of the proposed dwellings is not for consideration as part of this Outline application. However, there should be scope for consideration of different forms of design considering the varied architecture within close proximity to the site. The submitted scale parameters are a matter which is more appropriate for consideration at this stage. The parameters indicated are typical for modern dwellings and should be considered acceptable for this site, considering its separation from existing built form.</p> <p><i>Access & Movement</i></p> <p>Access into the site will remain in the same position. However, the standard of the access will be significantly improved, with a wider entrance with appropriate visibility splays provided. The access will also be provided with a dedicated footway to encourage walking and improve safety. The submitted Transport statement examines the ease of access of the site and the connectivity of the site to public transport and the attractiveness of walking and cycling as a means of transport.</p> <p><i>Community Safety</i></p> <p>The site is currently vacant and there was evidence on site of dumping of waste and general anti social behaviour around the peripheries of the site. The proposed development would provide quality housing to the site which would result in the remediation of the site and the creation of both public and private areas. The development would also greatly improve natural surveillance within the area and accordingly this should have a positive impact upon anti-social behaviour and crime.</p> <p><i>Environmental Sustainability</i></p> <p>The proposal is for the restoration of a vacant, brownfield site to provide much needed housing. The principle of the environmental sustainability of the scheme is unquestionable. The site is also located within a short walk of public transport and the services and facilities available within Pontycymmer and Blaengarw. The site is also accessible to pedestrians and cyclists and is well connected to the existing active travel network. The detail of the environmental sustainability of the scheme to be delivered in terms of renewable energy technologies and materials and building construction methods will be for consideration at the Reserved Matters application stage.</p>
Conclusion	
	<p>The proposed development would enable the sustainable redevelopment of an area of brownfield land, which has remained vacant and largely overgrown since the demolition of the Ffaldau Colliery. Furthermore, the proposals would make a meaningful contribution towards housing land supply and play an important part in the regeneration of Pontycymmer.</p> <p>The proposed development adheres to the provisions of National policy in the form of PPW and all relevant TANs. Furthermore, the development adheres to the policies of the Bridgend LDP and the guidance contained within the adopted SPGs.</p>