



DAS

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

60 GELLI ROAD, PENTRE, RHONDDA CYNON TAF. CF41 7ND

RESIDENTIAL FLATS DEVELOPMENT

SEPTEMBER 2020

OUR REF: 20/822

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

a) Aims and objectives

The aims of the applicants for the purposes of this application are to put into viable use, an existing large former hotel/public house building within the main thoroughfare of Pentre that has been vacant for some years. The application will consist of a Full change of use application for a flats development of some 14 residential units with associated access and infrastructure.

The proposals will provide a viable long-term use for the site and maximise the land available together with safe and accessible access to the adjoining highway and footway network.

b) Background

The site is located on the northern side of the B4223 (Gelli Road), a local distributor road serving Pentre locally and linking other communities such as Ton Pentre, Treorchy and Tonypany.

The site currently houses a former public house/hotel building (The Gordon Hotel), which is an established three-storey building, fronting directly onto the footway of Gelli Road. The business has been closed for many years and the property left vacant with no viable use or user found within the preceding years.

The site is located in a predominately residential area with the local street network to the north and south being characterised by rows of established terrace properties.

There is a section of commercial properties on the opposite side of Gelli Road with a range of shops and outlets.

The site currently has a rear vehicular and pedestrian access via the rear service lane, which serves the rear gardens and garages to the adjoining terraced properties on Gelli Road and Rees Street to the north. There is also a vehicular access to the side of the main building directly off Gelli Road, leading to the rear of the property.

The application site is located within the defined settlement limits of Ton Pentre as defined within the Adopted LDP.

c) The proposals

As indicated above, this application will be a Full change of use application for a flats development of some 12 residential units with associated access and infrastructure to put into viable use, an existing large former hotel/public house building that has been vacant for some years.

The proposals will provide a viable long-term use for the site and maximise the land available together with safe and accessible access to the adjoining highway and footway network.

The development proposals comprise: 14 x 1 bed apartments with associated internal laundry room, storage, garden and external drying areas. All residential units will be private apartments with an element of affordable tenure apartments due to their size and associated value.

Access to the proposed development will be via the existing site access directly off Gelli Road to the front and via the existing service to the rear as shown on the submitted site layout drawing.

The proposed development is easily and readily accessible to pedestrian and cyclist movements via the adjoining highway network with provision for pedestrian/cycle links to existing footways. The proposals allow for the provision of covered bicycle stands for some 12 bicycles.

d) Purpose of the report

The report has been produced to set out the design principles adopted in the scheme on behalf of the applicants. It is designed as an aid to the Local Authority and to explain the design thinking behind the application. Together with the accompanying drawings and details, it includes a written description of the proposals with photographs to illustrate the points being made.

The statement in particular looks at the proposed uses and their extent, the layout and how this has included public realm and permeability issues, the scale and mass of the proposed buildings and their appearance, with reference to materials used and how this fits into the environment.

e) Structure of the report

The report is structured into the following sections:

A. Site analysis

- Access points
- Boundaries
- Site features
- Topography
- Constraints and opportunities

B. Context analysis

- Character appraisal

- Local facilities
- Physical, social and economic issues
- Community/neighbour engagement

C. Policy context

- Relevant Unitary Development Plan policies and area designations
- Relevant sections of Supplementary Planning Guidance

D. Movement

- How does the proposal promote sustainable means of travel

E. Access

- How does the proposal ensure ease of access for all

F. Character: amount of development

- Sustain or enhancing local character
- Promote quality, choice and variety

G. Character: layout

- Promote legible development where it is easy to find your way around
- Promote a successful relationship between public & private space

H. Character: scale**I. Character: appearance**

- Promote innovative design

J. Character: landscaping**K. Community Safety**

- Ensure attractive, safe public spaces
- Achieve security through natural surveillance

L. Environmental Sustainability

- Achieve efficient use and protection of natural resources

- Enhance biodiversity
- Design for change

M. Appendices

- Supporting documents or photographs

f) Limitations

This statement is produced to provide a written description and justification for the accompanying planning application only and is not intended for any other purpose. It should be read in conjunction with the plans and information supplied in the context of the planning application and not read in isolation.

A. Site analysis

a) Site and ownership

The site is wholly owned by the applicant and is located on the northern side of Gelli Road, a local distributor road serving Pentre locally and linking other communities such as Ton Pentre, Treorchy and Tonypany.

The site currently houses a former public house/hotel building (The Gordon Hotel), which is an established three-storey building, fronting directly onto the footway of Gelli Road. The business has been closed for many years and the property left vacant with no viable use or user found within the preceding years.

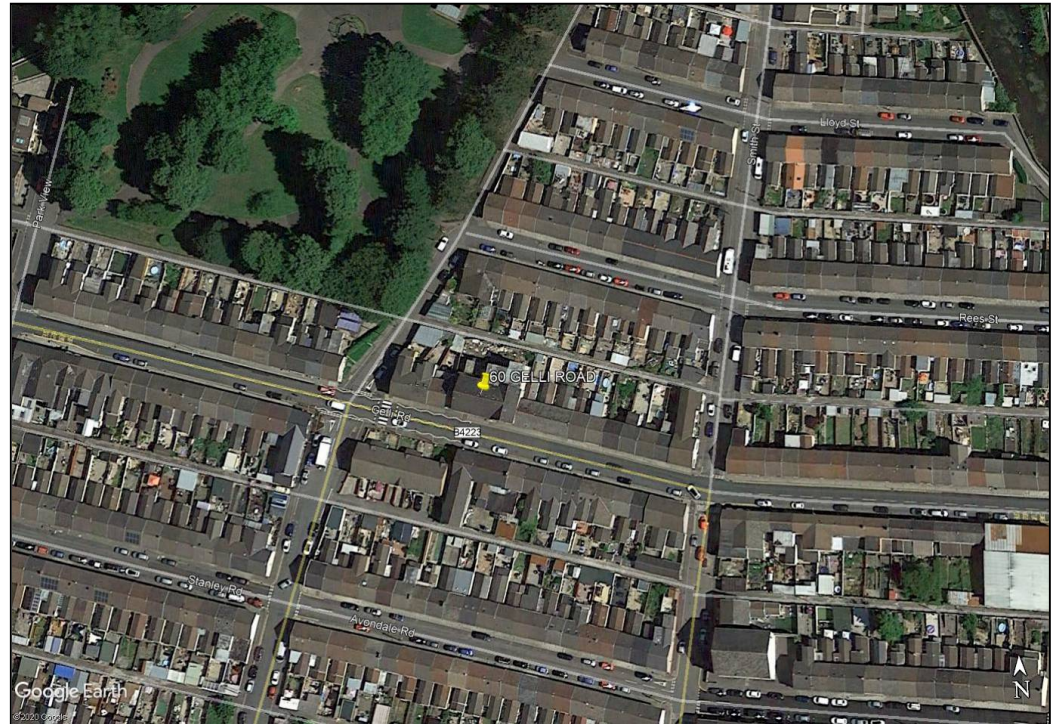
The site is located in a predominately residential area with the local street network to the north and south being characterised by rows of established terrace properties.

There is a section of commercial properties on the opposite side of Gelli Road with a range of shops and outlets.

The site currently has a rear vehicular and pedestrian access via the rear service lane, which serves the rear gardens and garages to the adjoining terraced properties on Gelli Road and Rees Street to the north. There is also a vehicular access to the side of the main building directly off Gelli Road, leading to the rear of the property.

The site will be generally level throughout with a gentle gradient down from front to back (south to north) and allow easy access to the adjoining highway and footway network for pedestrian and cyclist movement.

The application site is generally clear of any vegetation with the rear area once forming a limited and restricted the car park to hotel.



The application site has very limited long-range public views given its location within an established residential street frontage and minimal changes to the exterior of the building. The main view of the site will be from the adjoining Gelli Road with very short-range and immediate views from this highway. Views of the rear of the building exist from the north albeit these are existing, unchanged views from the pre-development position and against a backdrop of established properties and the general built form.

b) Surrounding land uses

The site is located in a predominately residential area with the local street network to the north and south being characterised by rows of established terrace properties.

There is a section of commercial properties on the opposite side of Gelli Road with a range of small-scale shops, convenience stores and outlets.

To the immediate north of the site are the established residential streets of Rees Street and Lloyd Street with the Rhondda River further to the north. To the east and west of the site are the established terraced properties located directly off Gelli Road with rear access via the rear service lane. To the south of the site beyond Gelli Road are similar rows of established terraced properties on Avondale Road and Alexandra Road

Gelli Park is located to the north-west of the application with public open space, childrens play areas, bowling greens and access to the Rhondda River area.

The site is therefore well served and well connected to local employment sites, supermarkets, leisure facilities and local public transport connections.



B. Context analysis

a) Existing buildings and landscape

The site currently houses a three-storey former public house/hotel building, (three-storeys from the Gelli Road side and four-storeys from the service lane side) attached to its immediate neighbour on the eastern side in terrace fashion. The whole site once formed the Gordon Hotel prior to its closure some years ago.

The submitted application documents contain a building condition survey completed by Mr Jeffrey R Tucker, M.R.I.C.S., Chartered Building Surveyor, on 20th May 2020, which indicates that:

'The property is a vacant former licensed premises set over 4 floors and is located on the eastern side of the highway.

The property is traditionally constructed with both pitched and flat roofs and has rendered external walls.

The rear has been extended at some stage and internally various structural changes have taken place over time.

The building is located at the end of a residential terrace and there is both side access and rear access to the accommodation.

The approximate age of the original structure is circa 1900s.'



The building survey report concludes:

'SUMMARY

Externally the main roof requires an overhaul including any roof lights as some are damaged.

Various timber members located below the PVC clad areas of the roof edge are poor and my advice is to strip off all PVC and repair / replace any defective timbers to the roof edge before re cladding with PVC.

All rainwater goods will require replacing.

The flat roof at the rear requires immediate repair to prevent ongoing water damage internally along with all flashings being replaced around the roof junctions.

The external rendering is generally considered to be poor with various defects identified and my recommendation is to have the external walls re rendered since water penetration is evident in a number of locations.

All windows are dated and I recommend replacement PVC grade "A" double glazed units to be fitted and must include trickle vents in each window frame.

The front wall of the building has a sandstone banding feature at two locations and this should be cloaked on top with leadwork to prevent ongoing issues with water penetration which is a common problem with older stonework.

This could be done with the re rendering works when scaffolding is in place.

The existing metal escape stairs and platforms at the side / rear require repairs in part and welding of additional metal plate and repainting if they are to be maintained.

Internally, there are mainly defects associated with water damage from both the north gable wall area and the rear walls where there are both rainwater downpipe defects and water penetration from the missing upper flat roof area.

Many of these defects are likely to be resolved once the building is made weathertight which is urgently needed.

With the solid external walls being saturated in part on the rear and north areas with damp these walls will require some time to completely dry out before any internal finishes are installed and care must be taken to completely dry out these areas of walls before any internal boards or plaster finishes are applied to prevent potential dry rot outbreak.

I recommend hacking off all damaged plasterwork internally where affected by damp to assist in drying out these walls.

A number of timber supporting members are typically built-in to the solid external walls and visually they appear to be generally satisfactory but where damp is evident there may be historic damage to the timber ends which need to be checked before being covered over.

The main roof frame is satisfactory but both principle trusses have been modified and require the struts to be reinstated at the front to maintain the integrity of the support frame.

Some of the common rafter ends on the front roof have deteriorated and have been strengthened using new timbers which appear satisfactory.

Adequate soundproofing and thermal resistance will be required as part of the proposed conversion works and you are advised to seek professional advice on these and other matters under Building Regulations requirements which will form an integral part of this scheme for compliance.

Additional insulation will be required throughout the roof void and must include adequate cross ventilation throughout.

Additional thermal insulation requirements will be required as part of the adaptation works in converting the structure into individual flats for compliance with Building Regulations.

Generally the main fabric of the building is satisfactory and most of the defects relate to water ingress which should be resolved by re rendering works externally, replacement windows, repairs to defective flashings and rainwater goods and a replacement flat roof as listed in my findings.

The structural integrity of the loadbearing walls and main roof is considered to be satisfactory and following remedial works identified with time allowed for drying out there is potential with the building to be successfully modified for a change of use into residential apartments.'

In relation to the site context, as has been indicated above, to the immediate north of the site are the established residential streets of Rees Street and Lloyd Street with the Rhondda River further to the north. To the east and west of the site are the established terraced properties located directly off Gelli Road with rear access via the rear service lane. To the south of the site beyond Gelli Road are similar rows of established terraced properties on Avondale Road and Alexandra Road

Gelli Park is located to the north-west of the application with public open space, childrens play areas, bowling greens and access to the Rhondda River area.

The attached photographs at Appendix A, show the site from both an aerial and ground level perspective.

b) Views and zones of visual influence

The site is located and built against the natural sloping valley side topography of this part of Pentre and the Rhondda Valleys. There is a storey difference between the front of the building to Gelli Road and the rear of the building to the service lane.

The established nature of the built form of the locality however places rows of terraced properties running east-west along the natural sloping topography down to the Rhondda River below and to the north of the site and therefore the building sits naturally within the existing built form context.

It is not intended to significantly change or extend the existing building and as such, there will be little visual influence in the locality over and above the existing, pre-development position.

The existing terraced streets provide natural screening and a visual 'buffer' between the site and surrounding established properties to the extent that there will be little visual change following completion of the proposals.

Any short-range views are seen against the context of the existing residential street pattern with any long-range views similarly seen against and mitigated by the existing and established pattern of local development.

c) Local Facilities

As has been indicated above, the area is well served by the close-by small-scale retail and commercial outlets with convenience stores, hairdressers and take-aways. Slightly further afield in Ton Pentre and Treorchy are a larger range of supermarkets, retail outlets and employment sites.

These facilities provide opportunities for shopping, leisure and employment, all within a short walk or short bus trip/car journey of the application site.

The site is well served by public transport with existing bus stop facilities located on Gelli Road. The site is well served by public footpaths, public roads and public transport to all local areas with Ton Pentre railway station being located some 0.5km to the north-west.

Gelli Park is located to the north-west of the application with public open space, childrens play areas, bowling greens and access to the Rhondda River area.

C. Policy context

This section sets out the relevant Policy approach to the proposals and addresses the contextual Policies that formulate the approach to development in this locality. Material considerations will include current circumstances, current UDP or LDP policies, policies in an emerging Development Plan, and planning policies of the Welsh Government and the UK Government where applicable. All applications should be considered in relation to up-to date policies.

a) National Planning Policy

Government guidance is to be found in Planning Policy Wales (PPW), first issued in March 2002 and currently at Edition 10, (December 2018), together with the accompanying Technical Advice Notes (TAN's).

Paragraph 3.1.2 of PPW requires that regard is to be had to the Development Plan and the determination shall be made in accordance with the Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Similarly, Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, requires that, in determining a planning application, the determination must be in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicated otherwise.

Sustainable development is the key theme running through PPW and Chapter 4 details the main principles and objectives for delivering sustainable development, with paragraph 4.1 of PPW promoting sustainable development through good design and sets out objectives of good design as being related to Access, Character, Community Safety, Environmental Sustainability and Movement.

Similarly, paragraph 4.2.2 states that:

"The planning system provides for a presumption In favour of sustainable development to ensure that social, economic and environmental issues are balanced and Integrated, at the same time, by the decision-taker when:

- *Preparing a Development Plan; and*
- *In taking decisions on individual planning applications. "*

In this regard, Paragraph 4.1 of PPW defines sustainable development as:

'Enhancing the economic, social and environmental well-being of people and communities, achieving a better quality of life for our own generation in ways which:



- *Promote social justice and equality of opportunity, and,*
- *enhance the natural and cultural environment and respect its limits – using only our fair share of the earths resources and sustaining our cultural legacy.*

Sustainable development is the process by which we reach the goal of sustainability.'

Paragraph 4.4.3 sets out a number of Key Policy Objectives, stating that planning policies and proposals should, inter alia:

Promote resource-efficient and climate change resilient settlement patterns; Locate development so as to minimise the demand for travel; Support the need to tackle the causes of climate change; Play an appropriate role to facilitate sustainable building standards; Contribute to the protection and improvement of the environment; Ensure that all local communities have sufficient good quality housing, including affordable housing, for their needs; Promote access to employment, shopping, education, health, community, leisure and sports facilities and open and green space; Foster improvements to transport facilities and services; Foster social inclusion; and Promote quality, lasting, environmentally-sound and flexible employment opportunities.

Paragraph 4.6.1 recognises the strengths of urban communities, stating that the priorities for urban areas are to, amongst others, *"foster sustainable change, in particular making it possible to live with less noise, congestion and traffic pollution, and improving the quality of life"*, Para. 4.9.1 of PPW is supportive of these proposals as it states that:

'Previously developed (or Brownfield) land should, wherever possible, be used in preference to Greenfield sites', this includes sites; 'in and around existing settlements where there is vacant or underused land or commercial properties...'

Previously developed land (Brownfield) is defined in PPW as: *'land... which is or was occupied by a permanent structure... and associated fixed surface infrastructure. The curtilage of the development is included.'*

Further, paragraph 4.11.1 seeks to promote good design, stating that design goes beyond aesthetics and includes the social, environmental and economic aspects of development and its relationship to its surroundings, while Section 4.12 seeks to ensure that the causes of climate change are tackled through the provision of sustainable buildings and Practice Guidance – Planning For Sustainable Buildings.

Chapter 5 of PPW details the principle objectives for the conservation and improvement of the natural heritage, which are to:

Promote the conservation of landscape and biodiversity, in particular, the conservation of native wildlife and habitats; Ensure that action in Wales contributes to meeting international responsibilities and obligations for the natural environment; Ensure that statutorily designated sites are properly protected and managed; Safeguard protected species; and Promote the functions and benefits of soils, and in particular their function as a carbon store.

Paragraph 5.1.4 continues this theme by stating that:

"It Is Important that biodiversity and landscape considerations are taken into account at an early stage In both Development Plan preparation and development management. The consequences of climate change on the natural heritage and measures to conserve the landscape and biodiversity should be a central part of this."

Chapter 6 of PPW seeks to conserve the historical environment, with paragraph 6.1.2 stating that;

"Local Planning Authorities have an important role in securing the conservation of the historic environment while ensuring that it accommodates and remains responsive to present day needs."

The Welsh Government's objectives for conserving the historical environment are to, amongst others:

Preserve or enhance the historic environment, recognising its contribution to economic vitality and culture; Protect archaeological remains; Ensure that the character of historic buildings is safeguarded from alterations, extensions or demolition that would compromise a building's special architectural and historic Interest; and Ensure that Conservation Areas are protected or enhanced.

Chapter 8 of PPW addresses transport and, as with the majority of transport planning policy over recent years, seeks to tackle climate change by promoting sustainable modes of transport and seeking to minimise the need to travel, especially by private car. The policy guidance also proposes locating development where there is good access by public transport, walking and cycling and by locating development near other related uses to encourage multi-purpose trips and reduce the length of journeys.

Chapter 8.1.3 of PPW indicates that: *'The Welsh Government supports a transport hierarchy in relation to new development that establishes priorities in such a way that, wherever possible, they are accessible in the first instance by walking and cycling, then by public transport and then finally by private motor vehicles. Careful consideration needs to be given to the allocation of new sites which are likely to generate significant levels of movement in Local Development Plans to ensure that access provisions which promote walking and cycling, as well as by public transport are included from the outset. Similarly, the Welsh Government expects that Design and Access Statements give consideration to accessing developments by modes other than private motor vehicles.'*

Chapter 8.1.4 states:

Land use planning can help to achieve the Welsh Government's objectives for transport through:

- reducing the need to travel, especially by private car, by locating development where there is good access by public transport, walking and cycling;
- locating development near other related uses to encourage multi-purpose trips and reduce the length of journeys;
- improving accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport;
- ensuring that transport is accessible to all, taking into account the needs of disabled and other less mobile people;

- promoting walking and cycling;
- supporting the provision of high quality public transport;
- supporting traffic management measures;
- promoting sustainable transport options for freight and commerce;
- supporting sustainable travel options in rural areas;
- supporting necessary infrastructure improvements; and
- ensuring that, as far as possible, transport infrastructure does not contribute to land take, urban sprawl or neighbourhood severance.

Chapter 9 of PPW backs up the reuse of the site and indicates that: *'Local planning authorities should address the scope and potential for rehabilitation, conversion, clearance and redevelopment when considering suitable sites for housing development. Maximising the use of suitable previously developed land for housing development can assist regeneration and at the same time relieve pressure for development on greenfield sites. In particular, local authorities should consider the contribution to the overall provision of land for housing that can be made by reclaimable or reclaimed urban land and by disused or underused buildings. Sites which are no longer likely to be needed for office or industrial purposes may also be appropriate locations for housing.'*

Sections of Planning Policy Wales have been updated into Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statements (MIPPS), including issues on Sustainability, Housing and Planning for Good Design.

The following summarised points are of particular relevance to the issue of infill development:

- Sensitive infilling of small gaps within small groups of houses, or minor extensions to groups, may be acceptable, though much will depend upon the character of the surroundings and the number of such groups in the area (MIPPS – Housing 01/2006 - para 9.3.2).
- Insensitive infilling that could damage an area's character or amenity should be avoided (MIPPS – Housing 01/2006 para 9.3.3).
- Increases in density are noted to help to conserve land resources, and good design can overcome adverse effects, but where high densities are proposed the amenity of the scheme and surrounding property should be carefully considered (MIPPS – Housing 01/2006 - para. 9.3.4).
- Sensitive design and good landscaping are particularly important if new buildings are to be fitted successfully into small vacant sites in established residential areas. 'Tandem' development, sharing the same access, may cause difficulties of access to the house at the back and disturbance and lack of privacy to the house in front and should be avoided (MIPPS – Housing 01/2006 - para 9.2.13).

Technical Advice Notes (TANs) should be taken into account by Local Planning Authorities and should be read along with PPW. They provide more detailed planning policy guidance on technical disciplines that are broadly covered within PPW.

Technical Advice Note - *TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning (2009)*; sets out how the planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological conservation.

Technical Advice Note - *TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (2010)*; sets out guidance on how the planning system can support sustainable rural communities and provides advice on: sustainable rural communities, sustainable rural economies, rural affordable housing, rural enterprise dwellings, one planet developments, sustainable rural services and sustainable agriculture.

Technical Advice Note - *TAN 12: Design (2014)*; provides more detail on the design aspects set out in PPW as well as providing detail on five key aspects of good design that should be integrated into proposed developments. TAN 12 now also incorporates key aspects of TAN 22. The key aspects of TAN 12 are:

- Access Objective: Ensuring ease of access for all.
- Character Objectives: Sustaining or enhancing local character; Promoting legible development; Promoting a successful relationship between public and private space; Promoting quality, choice and variety; and Promoting innovative design.
- Community Safety Objectives: Ensuring attractive, safe public space; and Security through natural surveillance.
- Environmental Sustainability Objectives: Achieving efficient use and protection of natural resources; Enhancing biodiversity; and Designing for change.
- Movement Objective: Promoting sustainable means of travel.

Technical Advice Note - *TAN 18: Transport (2007)*; continues the theme established in PPW of minimising the need to travel, especially by the private car, and to seek to encourage the increased use of sustainable modes of travel, including public transport, walking and cycling. These initiatives will help to reduce road traffic growth, which is causing increased local air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions contributing to climate change and global warming and, in some areas, congestion, which can affect economic competitiveness.

Technical Advice Note - *TAN22: Sustainable Buildings (2010)*; recognises that the planning system can play an important role in improving the sustainability of new developments and that it has a role in encouraging and facilitating homes and buildings that meet higher sustainable standards, and continues what PPW advocates in terms of national minimum sustainable building standards.

Manual For Streets 2007, paragraph 8.3.6 indicates that; *'Provision below demand can work successfully when adequate on-street parking controls are present and where it is possible for residents to reach day-to-day destinations such as jobs, schools and shops without the use of a car. This will normally be in town and city centres where there will be good public transport and places that can be accessed easily on foot and by cycle. For residents who choose not to have a car, living in such an area may be an attractive proposition.'*

b) Development Plan Policy

By way of guidance on reference to the Development Plan, the Development Plan for the area comprises the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan 2006 – 2021: March 2011 (LDP).

Policies that may be of relevance include:

- **Policy NSA 11 – Affordable Housing**

The provision of at least 10% affordable housing will be sought on sites of 10 units or more.

- **Policy NSA 12 – Development within and adjacent to Settlement Boundaries**

Development in the Northern Strategy Area will be permitted within the defined settlement boundaries where it can be demonstrated that:

1. The proposed development does not adversely effect the provision of open space;
2. The proposed development does not adversely affect the highway network and is accessible to local services by a range of modes of transport, on foot or by cycle;
3. The proposed development does not adversely affect the provision of car parking in the surrounding area; and
4. Where sites are contaminated or subject to land instability, adequate remediation can be achieved;

In addition, proposals for residential development outside but adjoining the defined settlement boundary will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

5. The proposal does not result in the construction of more than 10 dwellings;
6. The site is bounded on at least one side by the defined settlement boundary and the scale, form and design of the proposed development does not adversely affect the amenity or character of the site, surrounding or wider area;
7. The proposed development is not within a green wedge or a site designated for international, national or local importance.

Development proposals in the identified area of Aberdare will only be permitted within the defined settlement boundary. Development proposals outside and adjoining the defined settlement boundary of Aberdare will not be permitted.

Development proposals within and / or adjoining the defined settlement boundaries around the Strategic Sites defined by Policy CS 3 will only be permitted where they will not prejudice the development of the Strategic Sites

- **Policy NSA 13 – Rehabilitation / Conversion of Large Buildings**

The rehabilitation and conversion of large buildings for residential purposes within the Northern Strategy Area will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

1. The building is located within the settlement boundary identified in Policy NSA 12;
2. The building is of historic or architectural importance or is prominent and makes a valuable contribution the townscape of the settlement;
3. There is no economically viable alternative use for the building.

- **Policy AW 2 - Sustainable Locations**

In order to ensure that development proposals on non-allocated sites support the objectives of the plan, development proposals will only be supported in sustainable locations. Sustainable locations are defined as sites that:–

1. Are within the defined settlement boundary or in the Northern Strategy Area, accord with Policy NSA 12;
2. Would not unacceptably conflict with surrounding uses;
3. Have good accessibility by a range of sustainable transport options;
4. Have good access to key services and facilities;
5. Do not permit highly vulnerable development and Emergency Services within Zone C2 floodplain. Within Zone C development will be permitted where it can be justified that: -
 - a) It is necessary to assist the regeneration of a Principal Town or Key Settlement including the key employment objectives, or where development involves a large brownfield site.
 - b) the potential consequences of a flooding event have been considered and found to be acceptable in accordance with national guidance and meet the definition of previously developed land.
6. Support the roles and functions of the Principal Towns, Key Settlements and Small Settlements;
7. Support the development of the 8 Strategic Sites;
8. Are well related to existing water, sewerage, waste, electrical, gas and telecommunications infrastructure and improvements to such services will be provided where necessary.
9. Where proposals relate to existing buildings in the countryside, accord with AW 9.

- **Policy AW 5 - New Development**

Development proposals will be supported where:-

- 1) Amenity
 - a) The scale, form and design of the development would have no unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area;
 - b) Where appropriate, existing site features of built and natural environment value would be retained;

- c) There would be no significant impact upon the amenities of neighbouring occupiers;
- d) The development would be compatible with other uses in the locality;
- e) The development would include the use of multi-functional buildings where appropriate;
- g) The development designs out the opportunity for crime and anti social behaviour.

2) Accessibility

- a) The development would be accessible to the local and wider community by a range of sustainable modes of transport;
- b) The site layout and mix of uses maximises opportunities to reduce dependence on cars;
- c) The development would have safe access to the highway network and would not cause traffic congestion or exacerbate existing traffic congestion;
- d) Car parking would be provided in accordance with the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Delivering Design and Placemaking: Access, Circulation and Parking Requirements.

• Policy AW 6 - Design and Placemaking

Development Proposals will be supported where:-

1. They are of a high standard of design, which reinforces attractive qualities and local distinctiveness and improves areas of poor design and layout;
2. They are appropriate to the local context in terms of siting, appearance, scale, height, massing, elevational treatment, materials and detailing;
3. In the case of extensions to buildings, they reflect, complement or enhance the form, siting, materials, details and character of the original building, its curtilage and the wider area;
4. In the case of proposals for new and replacement shop fronts and signage, they make a positive contribution to the streetscene;
5. In the public realm and key locations such as town centres, major routes, junctions and public spaces, the character and quality of the built form is to a high standard of design;
6. They include public art;
7. Landscaping and planting are integral to the scheme and enhance the site and the wider context;
8. They include an integrated mixture of uses appropriate to the scale of the development;
9. They include the efficient use of land, especially higher-density residential development on sites in proximity to local amenities and public transport;
10. Open space is provided in accordance with the Fields in Trust Standards;
11. A high level of connectivity and accessibility to existing centres, by a wide range of modes of sustainable transport;
12. Schemes incorporate a flexibility in design to allow changes in use of buildings and spaces as requirements and circumstances change;
13. The development reflects and enhances the cultural heritage of Rhondda Cynon Taf;

14. The design protects and enhances the landscape and biodiversity;
15. The development promotes energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy; and
16. The design promotes good water management, including rainwater storage, sustainable urban drainage, porous paving etc.

Developers will be required to submit comprehensive masterplans for residential proposals of 50 dwellings and over; for commercial developments of 10,000m² net and over; and for schemes where the Council considers the issue of place making can only be fully considered through the submission of a masterplan. Masterplans must have regard to the need to create high quality, sustainable and locally distinct places.

D. Movement

The site is well served by public transport, footways and public highways with a close connection to the local highway network directly on Gelli Road with access to local distributor roads.

The site is well served by public transport with existing bus stop facilities located directly on Gelli Road with Ton Pentre railway station being located some 0.5km to the north-west.

E. Access

The site currently has a rear vehicular and pedestrian access via the rear service lane, which serves the rear gardens and garages to the adjoining terraced properties on Gelli Road and Rees Street to the north. There is also a vehicular access to the side of the main building directly off Gelli Road, leading to the rear of the property.

The property is located directly on Gelli Road with main communal access to all flats gained directly through the existing main doorway.

The site will be generally level throughout with a gentle gradient down from front to back (south to north) and allow easy access to the adjoining highway and footway network for pedestrian and cyclist movement.

The application site is generally clear of any vegetation with the rear area once forming a limited and restricted the car park to hotel.

Given the nature of the proposals and scale of flats proposed, it is not intended to provide any on site parking.

Inclusive Design

Inclusive design means providing inclusive access into and around new developments for everyone. 'Everyone' includes parents with buggies, older people, people with less than perfect sight, less than perfect hearing, less than perfect mobility or less than perfect understanding of the world around them. Inclusive design puts people at the heart of the design process, aiming for good access into and around places and buildings so everyone can use them safely, easily and with dignity.

All inclusive design issues identified have been addressed wholly in compliance with the requirements of the Disability Rights Commission Code of Practice "Rights of Access: Services and Premises" and Part M of the Building Regulation 2004 as amended along with reference to the provisions of BS8300/2009.

Features of the Inclusive Design

Outside the Building

- (a) The development proposal will ensure that the maximum gradient of driveways and footways to building entrances, together with non-slip pathways will be deployed in compliance with current regulations.
- (b) Car parking spaces will be surfaced firm and level, free from loose stones. Every effort will be made to ensure proposed parking facilities are well lit for all users in compliance with the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations.
- (c) Hard landscaping will be wheelchair friendly and capable of access for all.
- (d) Colour contrast and tactile surfacing will be used at any pedestrian crossing points and parking will link safely with footpaths to avoid unnecessary vehicle/pedestrian conflicts, and storage areas for waste bins will not create obstructions.
- e) Access to the adjoining highway for bus routes and public transport is level and a continuation of the existing highway ensuring ease of access to public transport routes.

Building Structure

- (a) If required, access to an external doorway will be made available via a short, shallow ramp. It is unlikely due to the site topography that a ramp will be required; however where necessary handrails will be accompanying features on the ramp. Any necessary ramps will be in compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations.

- (b) One external doorway will be wheelchair compliant in compliance with Part M of the Buildings Regulations. That entrance shall be clearly identifiable to all users.
- (c) All internal doors will be compliant with Part M of the Building Regulations.
- (d) Entrance doors will avoid the use of large glass facades, and door thresholds will be flush in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations, and similarly door closures will require a minimum use of force.
- (e) Hallways will have a clear turning circle in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations.
- (f) Where possible, the placement of window cills and electrical sockets will have regard to the need for use by all users, and be in compliance with the Building Regulations.

The proposal will therefore ensure ease of access for all and 'everyone'.

F. Character: amount of development

The application is submitted in Full and it is intended to develop the whole of the application within the red line area for the purposes of the new residential use. It is intended to use the whole of the existing building 'as is' without the need for any significant changes, demolition or extensions.

The overall application site area is some 461 square metres (0.0461 hect.) and the proposed development will be contained within this site area.

The building will retain a ground floor gross footprint of some 286 square metres, with the existing basement and ground floors having respective gross floor areas of 286 square metres each. The first and second floors will have respective gross floor areas of some 248 square metres.

This breaks down into internal net development floor areas of:

Basement

Flat 1	65.28 sq.m.
Flat 2	69.07 sq.m.

Ground Floor

Flat 3	47.70 sq.m.
Flat 4	53.87 sq.m.
Flat 5	59.24 sq.m.
Flat 6	59.77 sq.m.

First Floor

Flat 7	48.60 sq.m.
Flat 8	48.92 sq.m.
Flat 9	43.63 sq.m.
Flat 10	48.40 sq.m.

Second Floor

Flat 11	47.97 sq.m.
Flat 12	48.92 sq.m.
Flat 13	43.93 sq.m.
Flat 14	48.40 sq.m.

The remaining site areas will be taken up by communal amenity and access areas, bike parking, bin storage and clothes drying areas.

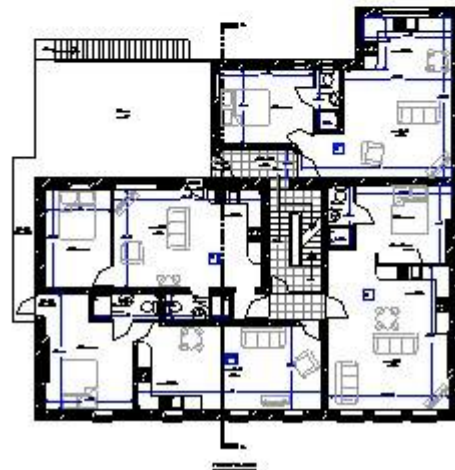
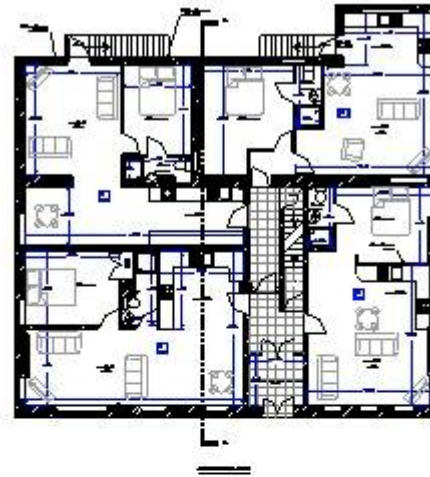
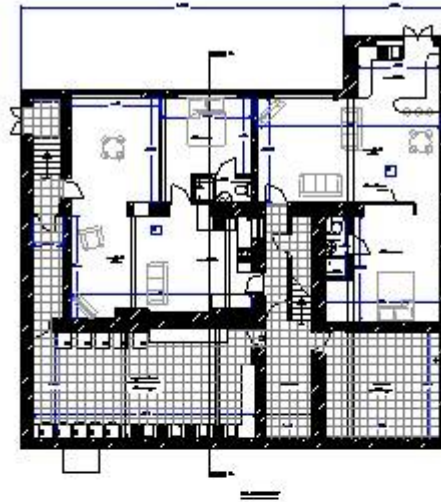
G. Character: layout

As has been indicated above, the proposals are contained within the existing building structure and no extensions, demolitions or significant building changes are proposed.

Site layout plans are submitted as part of the application documentation but will generally consist of two flats and communal storage/washing areas on the basement floor, four flats and communal main access on the ground floor, four flats on the first floor and four flats on the second floor.

Fires escape staircases and external escape routes are also retained and provided to ensure safe evacuations in the event of fire.

The rear curtilage area is laid out to provide external clothes drying areas, communal gardens and covered cycle park areas.



H. Character: scale

The scale of the development has been designed to suit the nature of the site, its existing fixed boundaries and within the existing building.

The proposals are contained within the existing building structure and no extensions, demolitions or significant building changes are proposed and therefore, the scale of the proposals compared to the pre-development position will not change.

The site is located and built against the natural sloping valley side topography of this part of Pentre and the Rhondda Valleys. There is a storey difference between the front of the building to Gelli Road and the rear of the building to the service lane.

The established nature of the built form of the locality however places rows of terraced properties running east-west along the natural sloping topography down to the Rhondda River below and to the north of the site and therefore the building sits naturally within the existing built form context.

It is not intended to significantly change or extend the existing building and as such, there will be little visual influence in the locality over and above the existing, pre-development position.

The existing terraced streets provide natural screening and a visual 'buffer' between the site and surrounding established properties to the extent that there will be little visual change following completion of the proposals.

Any short-range views are seen against the context of the existing residential street pattern with any long-range views similarly seen against and mitigated by the existing and established pattern of local development.

Character: appearance

The scale, layout and design of the site and buildings will be as shown below and on the submitted layout drawings.

As has been indicated above, it is intended to retain the existing building in its present form, together with the detailing of the building, fenestration and opening positions.

The final colour scheme will reflect the current exterior colour scheme with cream painted render walls, black cornices, black fascias, soffits and bargeboards, and, dark grey window surrounds and brick quoins. The natural slate roof will also be retained and repaired where necessary.



J. Character: landscaping

There is currently no landscaping or ecology on site and other than areas of grass or turf, it is not intended to add or create any additional areas of soft landscaping to the rear of the site.

K. Community Safety

The site has been vacant and the target for vandalism, break-ins and potential arson for many years.

Redevelopment of the site will remove this target and bring back into use a large imposing building that has been left derelict for too long. The redevelopment will also provide a sustainable long-term use for the building, providing much needed accommodation in the area.

The site will have two gated pedestrian accesses only, one to the front using the existing side driveway and one to the rear from the rear service lane. Both will be gated and locked with keypad operation to provide a safe enclosed site. The rear fencing will be 2 metres high close boarded fencing with locked pedestrian gate. The side driveway access will also provide access for bin collection.

The main communal front door into the building together with the side door that leads to the communal laundry and storage rooms will be locked with a keypad entry system and intercom.

Low level bollard lighting will be installed within the rear curtilage areas and down the side driveway for on-site safety and illumination. Existing highway street lighting will provide illumination to the communal front entrance.

Given the overall design and measures proposed, it is not considered that there will be any undue impact on adjoining neighbours nor any site specific security concerns that will be considered a negative impact of the development.

L. Environmental Sustainability

a) Landscape/habitat

Given the former use of the building and its location adjacent to an existing busy main highway, it is not anticipated that there is any ecology within the building or on the site that would be affected by the proposals.

b) Energy and resource efficiency

The fabric first approach forms the basis of the energy efficient design. The three steps are:

- Reducing the demand for energy using enhanced levels of insulation, low air permeability, good daylighting design and the integration of natural ventilation strategies wherever possible within the buildings.

- Delivering the building's energy as efficiently as possible, providing efficient building services and high performance appliances, such as high efficiency lighting, close control heating strategies, heat recovery ventilation and low fan energy consumption.
- Generating energy from low or zero carbon (LZC) technologies. By reducing the energy consumption we can increase the impact and effectiveness of any LZCs. The most appropriate solutions have been considered in terms of technical, functional and economic viability.

The final scheme will maximise the orientation of the site and location of buildings to provide photovoltaic panels to roofs where appropriate and practicable, particularly on south facing elevations.

In terms of this site therefore, it is considered that any impact of the new development on energy resources will be minimised and balanced through the provision of suitable energy efficient fixtures and fittings.

The proposed finish to the rear communal areas will be fully SuDS compliant, providing a fully permeable base without the need for attenuation or complex drainage systems. The site will remain largely naturally drained in a manner that will remain unchanged from the current state. The geotextile and sub-base finish will provide a natural filtration to the site, allowing rainwater to pass naturally into the ground without additional filtration or piping. It is intended that the rainwater entering the ground and water table will remain largely unchanged from the current undeveloped state.

c) Waste

As discussed above, the proposals utilise the existing building in its current form without any demolitions so it is not considered that there will be any pre-construction or site clearance waste arising from the site.

Due to the inherent cost of removal of site waste, the applicants are conscious to minimise any removals from site. Where there is a need to remove subsoil from site, this will be undertaken by a licensed waste carrier to a licensed waste facility. It is not intended to import any additional soil or subsoil onto site.

With regard to waste arising from the proposed end use of the site, a communal bin store area is provided for the collection and storage of waste away from the buildings but in an area that is accessible by waste refuse lorries and collectors. It is anticipated that this will be undertaken by the local authority domestic refuse collection, already in operation in the area.

M. Appendices

Appendix A – Site Photographs