



Appeal Decision

by L. Hughson-Smith LLB MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Decision date: 08/06/2026

Appeal reference: CAS-04642-F5F7H1

Site address: 6 Abermorlais Terrace, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8HU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ms. Linda Taylor, Taylor Holding Investments Ltd., against the decision of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P/25/0146, dated 13 May 2025, was refused by notice dated 4 July 2025.
 - The proposed development is the change of use from a 3 bed residential property to a 6 bed HMO.
 - A site visit was made on 1 April 2026.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for the change of use from a 3 bed residential property to a 6 bed HMO at 6 Abermorlais Terrace, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8HU, in accordance with the terms of the application, ref: P/25/0146, dated 13 May 2025, subject to the conditions set out in the schedule to this decision letter.

Application for Costs

2. An application for costs has been made by Ms. Linda Taylor, Taylor Holding Investments Ltd., against Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council. This application is subject to a separate Decision.

Procedural Matter

3. I have taken the site address from the appeal form and decision notice since it is more accurate.
4. I have taken the description of development as cited on the appeal form and decision notice since it is more succinct.

Main Issues

5. These are:
 - whether the development would comply with planning policies that seek to maintain sustainable and balanced communities and protect the character of the area; and

- the effect of the proposal on highway safety, with particular regard to parking.

Reasons

6. The appeal property is a mid-terraced, two-storey house along Abermorlais Terrace, located on the outskirts of Merthyr town centre. The proposal seeks permission to change the use of the appeal property from a 3no. bed residential dwelling to a 6no. bedroom House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

Sustainable and balanced communities

7. Abermorlais Terrace is a traditional terraced street with a predominantly residential character. During my site visit, I observed that the street has a generally attractive residential appearance, with properties appearing to be in good condition and a reasonable state of repair. I did not observe any obvious signs of poor waste management, neglect, or other indicators that the area's existing character is under threat. Furthermore, with no existing HMOs identified along the street, the proposal would not result in an overconcentration of such uses.
8. I acknowledge the proposal would result in the loss of a family home and prospective occupant may be more transient compared to a single household. However, no substantive evidence has been presented which indicates this would be harmful to the character of the area or community cohesion. Rather, in my view, and despite the limited scale of the proposal, it would provide an additional form of smaller scale, low cost, shared accommodation, which would support the provision of a range and choice within the housing market.
9. I have had regard to the representations made by local residents and local councillors. However, given the limited scale of the proposals, the level of noise or disturbance associated with the proposal is unlikely to be excessive or unneighbourly and would be comparable to a typical family home. No cogent evidence to persuade me otherwise has been presented. Similarly, considering the limited number of occupants, the level of waste associated with the proposal would be similar to the existing use. Therefore, I do not consider the proposal would be unacceptable in this regard or that it would have an adverse impact on the well-being of local residents. There is also limited cogent evidence of existing issues of anti-social behaviour in the immediate locale or that the proposal would add to or exacerbate these issues.
10. Concerns have also been raised regarding the management of the property, including the location of the landlord and the lack of CCTV. However, there is no substantive evidence that these factors would result in the improper management of the proposed HMO. Matters relating to the potential behaviour of prospective occupiers, tenancy management, HMO licensing or other housing regulation would generally be addressed through other regulatory regimes which are separate to the planning process.
11. Consequently, based on the evidence before me, I conclude the proposal would maintain a sustainable and balanced community and not cause unacceptable harm to the character of the area. This is in accordance with the aims of the Replacement Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Local Development Plan (RLDP) Policy SW11 which states that development must contribute to the creation of attractive and sustainable places through high quality, sustainable and inclusive design and, amongst other things, new development will be required to promote the creation of healthy and active environments and reduce the opportunity for crime and anti-social behaviour.

Highway Safety

12. Abermorlais Terrace is a narrow street with no through access and most of the terraced housing along it do not benefit from off street parking. Whilst some unrestricted parking is available the majority of its length, the limited road width effectively restricts parking to one side only. During my site visit, which I note represents only a snapshot in time, I observed several parking spaces available along the length of the street. Despite this, I accept that, due to the lack of dedicated off-street parking and the constrained width of the road, competition for parking spaces is likely to be high during times of peak residential demand.
13. Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) Policy SW11 states that development must, amongst other things, demonstrate that any traffic movements will not have an unacceptable impact on local amenity or highway safety and satisfy the Council's parking standards.
14. The Council confirm that the proposed HMO does not result in an increased parking requirement compared to the three spaces required for the existing residential dwelling, and the Highways Authority did not object to the application. In addition, both parties agree that the appeal site is in a highly sustainable location, being a short walk from Merthyr town centre, which is well served by several local facilities, services, shops, local employment opportunities and public transport links. A cycle store is also proposed, details of which can be secured by planning condition.
15. Given the appeal site's highly sustainable location, future occupiers would have realistic alternatives to the private car. As such, it is my view that the proposed HMO would be more attractive to those without regular access to a private car. Therefore, rather than increasing demand for on-street parking, the proposal is more likely to limit the reliance on the private car in accordance with the aims of PPW.
16. I accept that the appeal property's location close to the town centre, together with nearby holiday accommodation and surrounding residential streets with limited on-street parking, is likely to result in existing parking pressures along Abermorlais Terrace. This may lead to parking within the turning area and some inconvenience for local residents. Nevertheless, and having regard to my findings above, I am satisfied that the proposal would not materially worsen local highway conditions or give rise to an increased risk to highway safety. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not have a harmful impact on highway safety and accords with RLDP Policy SW11.

Other Matters

17. I have had due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty and have considered the potential effects of the proposal on existing occupants and families in the area. However, no substantive evidence has been provided to identify which protected characteristics, if any, would be affected, the nature or extent of such effect, or why the proposal would give rise to adverse equality impacts. Consequently, I have afforded this matter limited weight in my assessment.
18. Whilst there may be some disruption during the construction works, the physical alterations are primarily limited to minor internal works. As such, I find it unlikely construction works would result in significant disruption or unacceptable harm to neighbouring occupiers.

Conditions

19. I have amended the wording and combined some of the Council's suggested conditions in the interests of conciseness.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

21. In reaching my decision, I have taken into account the requirements of sections 3 and 5 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. I consider that this decision is in accordance with the Act's sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers' well-being objectives.

L. Hughson-Smith

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Sections 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans:

- Site Location Plan, drawing reference: BRI-00, Rev. 1.0
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan, received: 13th June 2025
- Proposed First Floor Plan, received: 13th June 2025
- Proposed Roof Plan, received: 13th June 2025

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans submitted with the application.

3. Prior to first occupation of the development, a plan indicating the positions, height, design, materials and type of bicycle store/bays and bin store/recycling area to be provided, shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The bicycle store/bays and bin store/recycling area shall be provided in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the development and retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport and to ensure that the development is served by appropriate bin store/recycling facilities in accordance with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

4. Prior to first occupation of the development, a scheme for biodiversity enhancement, including a timescale for implementation, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme for biodiversity shall be provided in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the development and retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

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Reason: In the interests of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, in accordance with Future Wales Policy 9 and Policy EnW1 of the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan.