

DATE WRITTEN	14th April 2026
REPORT AUTHOR	Judith Jones
CASE OFFICER	Gareth Davies
COMMITTEE	Planning and Regulatory
COMMITTEE DATE	22nd April 2026

Application No.
P/26/0032

Date
20th February 2026

Determining Authority
MTCBC

Proposed Development

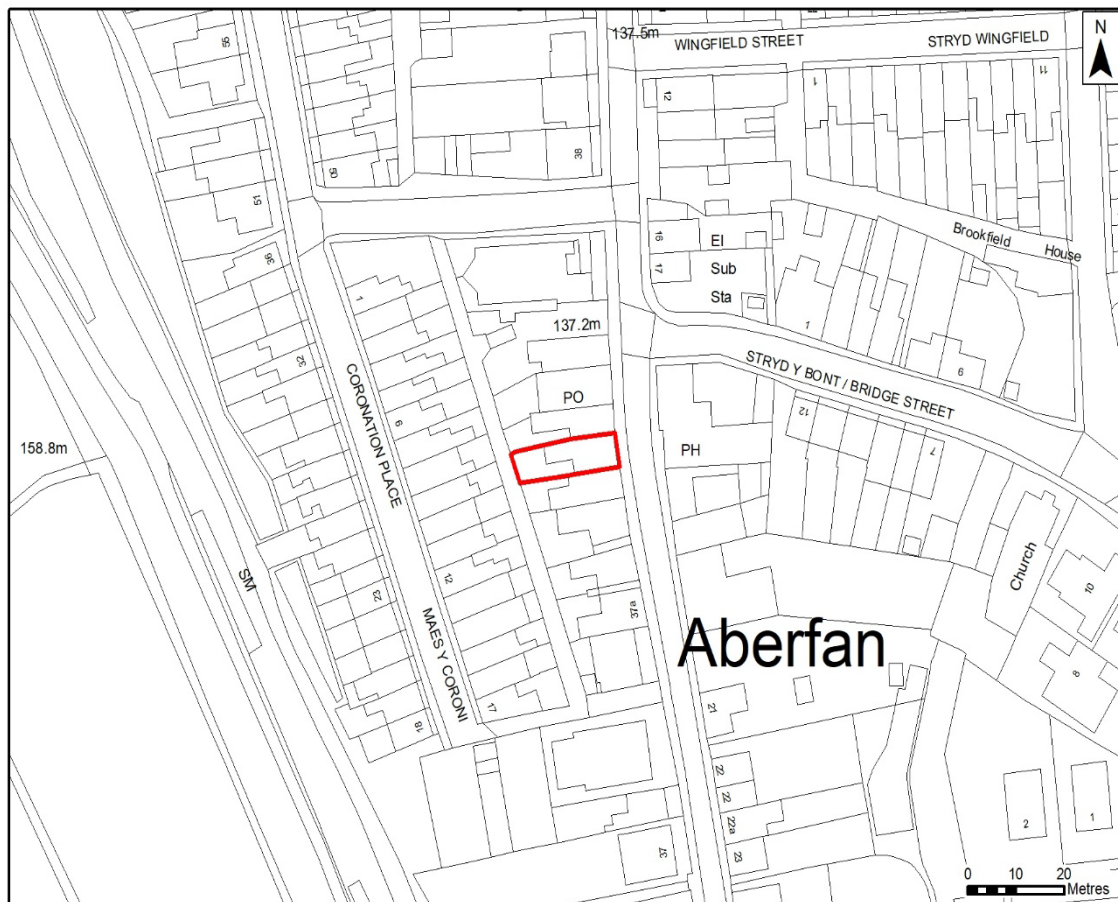
Location

Name & Address of Applicant/Agent

Change of use from dwelling (C3)
to small HMO (C4)

Greenwich House
Aberfan Road
Aberfan
Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 4QN

Hon Edward Makgill
The House
St.Mary Bourne
Andover
SP11 6AY



Councillor Darren Roberts has requested that the application be considered by the planning committee to deliberate on the concerns raised by local residents, which include the impact the proposal would have on parking availability and highway safety, the lack of a management plan for the proposed facility and the proximity of the proposed development to a care facility for vulnerable individuals.

APPLICATION SITE

This application relates to an existing 5 bedroom mid terrace dwelling. It is a substantial property with spar dash rendered elevations and a slate roof. The surrounding area is a mix of residential properties, local shops and a pub located in the Bronheulog Terrace element of Aberfan Road. The application property sits at the back edge of the pavement and has a small private rear garden area.

To the rear of the site is an access lane servicing properties on Aberfan Road and Coronation Place. The lane is a shared vehicular/pedestrian route and provides access to the properties on both streets.

There are no existing or proposed dedicated off-street parking spaces. However, there is limited on street parking available along one side of Bronheulog Terrace and along nearby streets.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks full planning permission to change the use of the property from a 5 bedroom dwellinghouse (C3 Use Class) to a 6-bedroom House of Multiple Occupation (HMO) (C4 Use Class).

Whilst the proposal does not involve any internal or external alterations to the property, it is noted that the existing dining room on the ground floor would instead be used to provide an additional bedroom. The property also provides a sitting room, kitchen, utility and shower room on the ground floor. There are 4 existing bedrooms and a bathroom on the first floor and an existing bedroom within the roof space.

PLANNING HISTORY

P/02/0455 – change of use of property to a dwellinghouse – Approved 20th December 2002.

CONSULTATION

Head of Engineering and Highways – no objection

Planning Policy Officer – no objection

Environmental Health Manager – no objection

Housing Division – no comments

South Wales Fire & Rescue Service – no objection

South Wales Police – no comments

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, letters were sent to the adjoining properties on 24th February 2026 and site notices were displayed within the vicinity of the site on 25th February 2026

As a result of this publicity exercise, 18 letters of objection have been received. Below is a summary of the concerns that have been raised:

- The site is on a busy road with limited on street parking and surrounding streets are also limited with insufficient parking space causing congestion.
- The proposal would harm the character of the area and fail to respect Aberfan's historic sensitivity and character.
- Allowing the proposal could set a precedent for the development of further HMO's in the area.
- The proposal increases the potential for noise, disturbance, anti-social behaviour and crime.
- Increased waste and a lack of waste storage could lead to adverse environmental and visual effects.
- HMO's often have high tenant turnover, intensification of use and can undermine the cohesion of the local community.
- Residents believe there has been a lack of consultation on the proposal.
- The Council's duties under the Housing Act 2004 and HMO Management Regulations must be considered as the application property does not appear to have a licence.
- Concerns are raised in respect of fire safety, lack of police presence in the area, risks to vulnerable individuals including women, children and schools.
- There are no details of how the HMO would be managed with the applicant living outside the area.
- The proposal has the potential to negatively impact on the surrounding house prices.
- Conversion of the property might require substantial alterations.
- The need for the proposal is questioned.

POLICY CONTEXT

National Development Framework

Future Wales: the National Plan 2040 (February 2021) sets out a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining, and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems, and improving the health and well-being of our communities.

National Planning Policies

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, February 2024) must be taken into considerations. Relevant sections are identified below:

- Paragraphs 3.3 refers to good design and states that “...good design is fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. Design is not just about the architecture of a building but the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment and between people and places. To achieve sustainable development, design must go beyond aesthetics and include the social, economic, environmental, cultural aspects of the development, including how space is used, how buildings and the public realm support this use, as well as its construction, operation, management, and its relationship with the surrounding area.”
- Paragraph 3.12 highlights that “...good design is about avoiding the creation of car-based developments. It contributes to minimising the need to travel and reliance on the car, whilst maximising opportunities for people to make sustainable and healthy travel choices for their daily journeys. Achieving these objectives requires the selection of sites which can be made easily accessible by sustainable modes as well as incorporating appropriate, safe, and sustainable links (including active travel networks) within and between developments using legal agreements where appropriate...”.
- Paragraph 4.1.1 refers to sustainable development and states that “...the planning system should enable people to access jobs and services through shorter, more efficient, and sustainable journeys, by walking, cycling, and public transport. By influencing the location, scale, density, mix of uses and design of new development, the planning system can improve choice in transport and secure accessibility in a way which supports sustainable development, increases physical activity, improves health, and helps to tackle the causes of climate change and airborne pollution...”
- Paragraph 4.1.37 notes that “...planning authorities must direct development to locations most accessible by public transport. They should ensure that development sites which are well served by public transport are used for travel intensive uses, such as housing, jobs, shopping, leisure, and services”. In respect to car parking provision, paragraph 4.1.50 notes that “parking provision should be informed by the local context, including public transport accessibility, urban design principles and the objective of reducing reliance on the private car and supporting a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport”.

The following Technical Advice Notes (TAN) are also relevant:

- TAN 12: Design
- TAN 18: Transport

Local Planning Policies

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) 2016-2031:

- SW1 Provision of New Homes
- SW3 Sustainably Distributing New Homes
- SW4 Settlement Boundaries
- SW11 Sustainable Design and Placemaking
- EnW1 Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience
- EnW4 Environmental Protection

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) Notes:

- Note 4 - Sustainable Design.
- Note 5 - Nature and Development.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The key issues to consider in the assessment of this application relate to whether the principle of the development is acceptable in this location and whether it would be appropriate in respect of its potential impact upon the character and appearance of the area, residential amenity, ecology, parking provision, and highway safety.

Principle of Development

The proposed development seeks to change the use of a 5-bedroom residential dwelling into a 6-bedroom HMO. Given that the property lies within the settlement boundary and the proposal seeks to continue to provide a residential use (albeit of a different nature), it would be acceptable, provided it complies with other relevant policies. The proposed development would therefore be acceptable in principle and would accord with LDP Policy SW4.

Character and Appearance

The proposed change of use does not involve any external alterations or extensions to the property. Therefore, the development would not have any adverse visual impact on the appearance of the property itself or the character of the wider area.

It is appreciated that properties occupied by non-family households have the potential to change the character of an area, however it is not evident that the proposed 6-bedroom HMO would lead to an over-concentration of HMO's that would result in significant harm to the residential character of the street or community cohesion. As such, the proposal would comply with LDP Policy SW11.

Residential Amenity

In terms of the impact on residential amenity, i.e. additional noise, disturbance and management of additional waste (which has been raised in the letters of objection), the proposed 6-bedroom HMO would not be significantly different to the existing use,

as a 5 bed residential dwelling. Indeed, planning permission is not required to change a ground floor dining room into a bedroom. Nor are there any external works proposed that would impact on the residential amenities of neighbours.

Regarding the potential for additional noise and disturbance, which may have an impact upon the amenities currently enjoyed by surrounding residents, it is not considered that the proposal would be significantly harmful. Indeed, given its scale and the nature of the use, which would not differ greatly from that of a typical dwelling, it is unlikely to give rise to an impact on residential amenity that would warrant the refusal of this application. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that the Environmental Health Manager has not raised any objection to the proposed development on this basis. Additionally, the property is located in an area with mixed uses with shops and a public house nearby where ambient noise levels are generally higher than in solely residential areas. It is acknowledged that concerns have been expressed that the development might result in an increase in anti-social behaviour in the locality, however, there is little evidence to support the case that the proposal would lead to an increase in anti-social behaviour or that there is a pre-existing issue that would be exacerbated by the development.

The potential for waste issues to arise in the day to day running of the property as an HMO is a management issue rather than a planning matter. That said, the proposed change of use is unlikely to increase the amount of waste produced at the property to a significant level over and above that would be generated by the existing property if it were home to a large family. There is sufficient space available within the curtilage of the property to provide a waste/bin storage area. It should also be noted that no concerns in respect of this issue have been raised by Environmental Health.

Concerns raised in respect of noise, anti-social behaviour, crime, proximity to schools and vulnerable individuals and groups, are all matters that lie beyond the remit of planning control. Typically, these issues would be a matter for the Police, Environmental Health or the Landlord. Planning is concerned with the use of the property and not its potential users. As such concerns in respect of the potential occupiers of the HMO are not material planning considerations. Whilst issues in respect of overcrowding cannot be controlled through the planning process, it has been noted by the Environmental Health Manager that this property would fall within the scope of mandatory HMO licensing under the Housing Act 2004. The proposed development would therefore be considered to comply with LDP Policy SW11.

Ecology

Given the nature of the proposal the development would not have an adverse impact on protected species, habitats or existing green infrastructure. In this respect it is acknowledged that the Council's Ecologist has not raised any concerns with the proposal and has requested biodiversity enhancements be provided, which can be secured as a condition of any planning permission that may be granted.

It is noted that chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales (edition 12) requests that applications be supported by Green Infrastructure Statements (GIS). In this instance, due to the scale and nature of the development, which includes no internal or external alterations of any substance, the submission of a GIS is deemed to be disproportionate

and unreasonable. Notwithstanding this, ecological enhancements would be secured by condition, which would provide a net benefit to biodiversity and would contribute to the wider green infrastructure objectives. The proposed development would therefore comply with LDP Policy EnW1.

Parking Provision and Highway Safety

With regard to the potential impact upon highway safety, the proposed HMO would increase the number of bedrooms from 5 to 6. Typically, 1 parking space per bedroom would be sought, up to a maximum of 3 parking spaces for any residential property. As such, the provision of an extra bedroom would not necessarily require additional parking to be provided. Notwithstanding this, currently the parking for the property is accommodated along the adopted highway, with no off-street provision available. Whilst it is recognised that there would be an increase in bedrooms, the Head of Engineering and Highways notes the current parking arrangement for the dwelling and has raised no highway safety concerns with the proposal, which seeks to continue to provide a residential use (albeit of a different nature).

Though located on a busy road with limited on street parking, it should also be noted that the application site lies adjacent to residential streets with unrestricted on-street parking provision. The site also lies within walking distance of public transport (i.e. a bus stop), where the use of more sustainable modes of transport can be encouraged. Thus, given the sustainable location of the property and the parking requirements associated for a typical 5-bedroom home and a 6-bedroom HMO, the proposal would not result in a significant change in circumstances that would give rise to highway or pedestrian safety concerns.

It is acknowledged that local residents have raised concerns in respect of the existing on-street congestion and the additional parking pressures that the proposed use could place upon the local area. However, the merits of the development should also consider that a dwelling can accommodate up to 6 persons living together as a single household without the need for planning permission. In this instance, the impact of the proposed development upon highway and pedestrian safety, would not warrant the refusal of the application. Therefore, the proposal would accord with LDP Policy SW11.

Other Issues Raised by Residents

The concerns raised in the publicity exercise have been taken into consideration in the relevant sections of this report above. The following additional considerations are also noted:

- Whilst fire safety issues have been raised, it is noted that the South Wales Fire and Rescue Services have not raised any objection to the proposal.
- The potential impact on property values in the area is not a material planning consideration.
- There are no alterations to the property that would give rise to any structural concerns with the building.

- There is an identified need for additional housing across the county borough. It is noted that the Housing Division has not raised any comment or concern in this respect.
- Whilst there are concerns that this application could set a precedent for similar future applications in the area, it should be noted that each application is determined on its own merits.

CONCLUSIONS

For the above reasons and taking into consideration the concerns raised by local residents and consultee responses, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable and would accord with the relevant LDP policies.

Finally, the duty to improve the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (“the WBFG Act”) has been taken into consideration when determining this application. In reaching the following recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been considered and thus the proposal is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives set out as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

Accordingly, the following recommendation is made:

RECOMMENDATION: BE APPROVED subject to the following **CONDITIONS:**

1. The development shall begin not later than five years from the date of this decision.

Reason - To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

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

- Location Plan
- Amended Ground Floor Plan received 05/03/2026
- First Floor Plan
- Second Floor Plan

Reason - To ensure compliance with the approved plans and clearly define the scope of the permission.

3. Prior to the occupation of the property as a House in Multiple Occupation, details of cycle parking facilities to serve the development, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle parking facilities shall be provided in accordance with the approved details and shall be

available for such purposes prior to the beneficial use of the property as a House in Multiple Occupation.

Reason - To ensure the provision of adequate facilities and to encourage sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Policy SW12 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

4. Prior to the occupation of the property as a House in Multiple Occupation, details of the location and type of refuse & recycling storage facility to serve the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The storage facility shall be provided in accordance with the approved details and shall be available for such purposes prior to the beneficial use of the property as a House in Multiple Occupation.

Reason - In the interests of general amenity and to accord with Policies SW11 and EnW4 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

5. Prior to the occupation of the property as a House in Multiple Occupation, a scheme for biodiversity enhancements, including a timescale for implementation, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the beneficial use of the property as a House in Multiple Occupation and retained in perpetuity thereafter.

Reason - Future Wales and Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12 February 2024) requires all development to maintain and enhance biodiversity, and to accord with Policy [DC4.1]EnW1 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.