

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No:	P/25/0269
Site Address:	6 Cardiff Road Troedyrhiw Merthyr Tydfil CF48 4LB
Development:	Proposed change of use from dwelling to a 8 bedroom House in Multiple Occupation all with en-suites
Case Officer:	Kate Glover
Site Visit:	15th October 2025
Application Expiry Date:	3rd December 2025
Consultation reply date expired:	5th November 2025

APPLICATION SITE

This application relates to what appears to be a large, detached property when viewed from the front, but instead it seems to have been sub-divided previously at some point with No. 1-5 occupying the left side of the building and No. 6 in the right side. The main entrance to No. 6 is located to the side (south-east) of the property. To the north-west is No. 1-5 Cardiff Road with vacant scrub land beyond. To the north-east and south-east are adjoining residential properties, the majority of which are traditional terraces that front directly onto the highway. To the south-west is Cardiff Road which is a busy main road with a nearby school to the north of the site, together with a number of local shops and services in the vicinity.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission is sought for the change of use of the property from a dwellinghouse within Use Class C3 (comprising 5 bedrooms) to an 8 room HMO ('sui generis' use).

The proposal largely involves internal alterations to provide 4 additional bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms on the ground floor along with a shared kitchen/dining area. At first floor level 4 bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms would be provided together with a separate toilet and another shared kitchen/dining area. Whilst the majority of the bedrooms are shown on the submitted plans to be single rooms, two of the rooms on the first floor appear to be double rooms, which would suggest provision for up to 10 people residing at the property.

The proposal would involve some minor external works to the property which reflects the changes to the internal spaces. The front and rear elevations of the property would remain unchanged. A number of alterations would take place along the south-east elevation. The

main entrance which provides access into a reception room would be repositioned with glazing introduced to the side and above the doorway with access into a stairwell area. The existing main entrance would be replaced with a window. The existing doorway serving the ground floor kitchen area would be replaced with a new window. A first floor window which currently serves a bathroom which would become an ensuite bathroom, would be fitted with obscured glazing. Another first floor window which currently serves a bedroom and which would serve the proposed first floor kitchen/dining area would be fitted with obscured glazing. A new ground floor and first floor window would be installed (to serve two bedrooms) which would project from the elevation at a 25 degree angle to restrict overlooking towards the adjacent property.

Within the side access area serving the property, the submitted plans indicate that a bin store and bike area can be provided.

PLANNING HISTORY

The relevant planning history is summarised below:

P/24/0261 Change of use to a 11 bed House in Multiple Occupation Refused: 03 April 2025 for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development would be of an unacceptable density that constitutes an over intensification of the residential use, which fails to provide adequate living spaces for the future occupiers to the detriment of their residential amenity, contrary to Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031.
2. The proposed development, by virtue of the intensified residential use and lack of any dedicated parking provision, would result in an unacceptable increase in the level of onstreet parking, which would give rise to indiscriminate parking along the local highway network, creating traffic hazards to the detriment of highway and pedestrian safety, contrary to Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031.

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town & County Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, letters were sent to the neighbouring properties and 4 site notices were displayed within the vicinity of the site.

As a result of this publicity exercise 8 letters of objection (2 from the same person) and a petition signed by 143 people have been received which raised the following points:

- Lack of parking for residents of the proposal and surrounding streets, causing congestion; accidents have occurred in the vicinity.
- Transportation report includes photographs of parking areas up to 100 m from the site.
- The proposed HMO would be in very close proximity to a school, raising safety and suitability concerns.
- Current waste and recycling management is problematic; the proposal would increase pressure on waste services.

- Concerns that future residents may cause anti-social behaviour, increased noise, disturbances, and crime.
- Negative impact on local businesses.
- Additional pressure on health resources.
- Detrimental impact on house prices and overall community cohesion.
- Property is not designed for multiple occupancy.
- Other HMOs in the area have previously been refused.
- If the A470 is shut, the road becomes heavily congested with traffic, including heavy goods vehicles.
- High turnover of HMO residents leads to lack of community cohesion and discourages family residencies.
- Unknown occupants raise safety and security concerns.

The local ward councillors have been informed of the concerns raised by the residents and have not requested the application be presented to the planning committee. As such, the application shall proceed to be determined under delegated powers by the Director of Neighbourhood Services.

CONSULTATION

Head of Engineering and Highways	-	Objection: There is a lack of off-street parking and would lead to congestion along the highway to the detriment of highway safety.
Planning Policy Officer	-	Objection: The proposal would result in a mix and density of development inappropriate to its local context which would have an impact on local amenity and highway safety.
Natural Resources Wales	-	Objection: The application relates to highly vulnerable development within a Flood Zone 2 (Rivers). No flood consequence assessment has been submitted to assess potential for flood risk.
Environmental Health Manager	-	Concerns have been raised that the proposal would fail to provide adequate living standards/facilities to serve the proposed number of people in the HMO. Other concerns regarding compliance with fire safety requirements have been raised.
Housing Division	-	Comments received in relation to other HMOs in the area

POLICY CONTEXT

National Development Framework

Future Wales: the National Plan 2040 (February 2021) (Future Wales) 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) (PPW).

Paragraphs 6.6.22 to 6.6.29 relate to development and flood risk with 6.6.22 noting that “Planning authorities should adopt a precautionary approach of positive avoidance of development in areas of flooding from the sea or from rivers”.

The policies in PPW are supported by Technical Advice Notes (TANs). The most relevant TANs to this application are as follows:-

- TAN 12: Design
- TAN 15: Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion
- TAN 18: Transport

In relation to TAN15 paragraph 10.19 states that “*Planning applications in Zone 2 require careful consideration and must be consistent with the acceptability considerations set out in section 11. They must also be accompanied by a FCA which clearly describes the flood risk and the risks must be acceptable. Applications for new highly vulnerable development on greenfield land are only appropriate where the site has been allocated in adopted Development Plans. Proposals for redevelopment on brownfield land of any vulnerability will need to assist, and be consistent with, the Development Plan strategy to regenerate an existing settlement or achieve key economic or environmental objectives. Where proposals for redevelopment include residential use, local authorities should ensure that such uses do not occur at ground floor level, they will also need to be compatible with the tolerable conditions set out in section 11 and exhibit resilient flood design as described in section 13.*”

In summary, Section 11 of TAN 15 advises that a full understanding of the potential risks and consequences will be required to inform the planning authority in its decision making. Before a planning authority determines an application, a Flood Consequences Assessment must be undertaken and provide sufficient information to consider flooding implications and, if required, to balance them against other considerations.

Local planning policy

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

- Policy SW1 – Provision of New Homes
- Policy SW4 – Settlement Boundaries
- Policy SW9 – Planning Obligations
- Policy SW11 – Sustainable Design and Placemaking

- Policy CW1 – The Historic Environment
- Policy EnW1 – Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience
- Policy EnW4 – Environmental Protection

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

SPG Note 1: Affordable Housing (March 2012)

SPG Note 2: Planning Obligations (March 2012)

SPG Note 4: Sustainable Design (July 2013)

SPG Note 5: Nature and Development (May 2015)

CSS Wales Parking Standards 2008

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of development

The application site lies within the settlement boundary where the majority of development is generally encouraged and is located in a predominantly residential area. Additionally, the property is already used for residential purposes. Whilst the proposal would change the nature of the residential use from a dwellinghouse to a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO), the property would continue to provide residential accommodation and would generally be compatible with the neighbouring uses. As such, the principle of the development is deemed to be acceptable subject to its compliance with other relevant policies.

It is acknowledged that the number of persons residing in the property could increase to accommodate up to 10 persons with shared kitchen/dining facilities on the ground and first floors and one additional toilet on the first floor. In this regard, consideration is given to Policy SW9 (Planning Obligations) of the LDP which seeks contributions towards the provision of affordable housing and open spaces. The proposal would essentially provide for one residential unit with up to 10 residents. Given the nature of the proposal, the above mentioned contributions would not be sought in this instance. Therefore, the proposal complies with Policy SW9 of the LDP.

Design and amenities

There are no significant alterations to the property other than changes to the doors and fenestration on the south-east elevation of the property. These alterations largely involve the reposition of doorways and installation of new windows in response to the internal alterations, which involves the creation of new bedrooms and shared facilities. These alterations would have a minimal impact on the character and appears of the building and would not be readily visible within the streetscene.

It is acknowledged that the proposal involves the installation of first floor windows which would have some potential to give rise to overlooking concerns into the neighbouring rear garden area. To overcome this, it is proposed that one of the windows serving a bedroom would be fitted with obscured glazing. Another window would have a slight projection with the windows placed at an angle to limit the potential views across to the neighbouring garden. With such measures in place, which could be secured as a condition of any permission, it appears that the potential for overlooking would be appropriately minimised

in the interest of the amenities of the neighbouring occupiers. In this regard it is noted that no concerns have been raised in relation to the loss of privacy.

It is acknowledged that concerns have been raised in respect of the potential for anti-social activity which could be a source of nuisance for local residents. Given the proposed number of people that would reside at the property, there would be some potential for increased noise and disturbance, particularly from the coming and going of people, of which the main entrance would be to the side of the adjoining property adjacent to a rear garden area. Notwithstanding this, the neighbouring property is in an elevated position and separated by a high stone boundary wall which would likely minimise such disturbances. Given that the property does not benefit from any off-road parking, the disturbances from vehicles coming and going would not likely differ significantly from the current situation, where residents are already subjected to some noise from the main highway. As such, it is considered that the proposal would not give rise to significant impacts on the amenities of the neighbouring occupiers. Nor have any such concerns been raised as a result of the publicity exercise.

Concerns have been raised by the Environmental Health Manager in respect of the proposed number of people that would be residing in the property and the potential living standards of the HMO. For a HMO of this size, the following facilities (amongst other things) would be required:

- Fire safety issues regarding access direct access from a bedroom to the kitchen and lack of details on fire alarms and detection.
- There are no identified living areas as such all bedrooms should be at least 9sqm, two ground floor bedrooms do not as they measure 6.6sqm.
- The combined kitchen, dining, and living space should have a minimum total area of 27.5sqm, to ensure adequate shared facilities for occupants.
- The bedrooms should be at least 6.5sqm for a single person and 9sqm if it includes a combined living room.

On the ground floor, a kitchen and dining area measuring approximately 20.28 sqm is proposed, and on the first floor, a second kitchen with dining area measuring approximately 11.02 sqm. Although two kitchen/dining areas are provided, each falls short of the expected requirement of 27.5 sqm to accommodate the necessary space and facilities.

It is noted that the property does not provide any separate living rooms or combined kitchen/dining/living space. Therefore, it would be appropriate for the bedrooms to incorporate some living space. The submitted plans illustrate that the bedrooms on the first floor and two on the ground floor are of a sufficient size (i.e., 9 sqm or more). However, concerns are raised regarding the remaining two ground floor bedrooms, which fall short of the required space. While they are adequate as bedrooms, they would not be large enough to include a reasonable area for living space.

It appears that the proposed conversion of the property to an HMO accommodating up to 10 persons would fail to provide adequate living space for residents. Consequently, the proposal is considered to represent an unacceptable design, resulting in over-intensification of use and a density that undermines reasonable living standards and amenity, contrary to Policy SW11 of the LDP.

Highway implications

The property directly fronts on to the highway and does not provide for any off-street parking. The majority of the existing properties in the vicinity are traditional terraces that also front onto the highway and do not provide any off-street parking. As such, parking in the area is largely accommodated along the highway, which often presents considerable congestion in the area. Additionally, there are highway restrictions with double yellow lines at nearby junctions and along one side of the road, which further reduces the capacity for street parking. These restrictions are in places due to the narrow width of the carriageway, which is exacerbated by the street parking that can have some impact on the free flow of traffic.

The existing property currently provides 5 bedrooms and is considered to be a dwellinghouse which could accommodate a family or up to 6 unrelated persons living together as a single household (within Use Class C3). The proposed change of use to an 8 bedroom HMO, which could accommodate up to 10 people would almost double the number of people residing at the property.

The application is supported with a Transport Statement which incorporates Google Street View information and a parking survey. The survey advises that the occupants of the property are unlikely to be car owners and would more likely utilise the public transport links in the area which comprise of a train station and bus routes.

The Head of Engineering and Highways notes that there are no accidents recorded along Cardiff Road or any local cluster area within the search area. However, they object to the proposal, noting that despite proximity to public transport, the development would likely generate additional on-street parking for at least six cars in an area already under substantial pressure, to the detriment of highway safety.

Concerns are raised regarding the parking survey's reliability. The photographs are not time- or date-stamped, lack a clear timeline, and show only limited sections of the street. No images were taken before 10:30 a.m., and only two were captured after 6:00 p.m., missing peak parking times. Similarly, Google Street View images are up to 82 m from the site, show no restrictions, but cannot be relied upon as they lack date and time information. Further to this other Street View images available on-line show there is little parking available close to the application site.

The evidence presented does not justify claims of parking availability. Encouraging parking on a bend would restrict traffic flow and compromise pedestrian safety, forcing pedestrians onto the carriageway where visibility is limited. With no off-street parking or scope to create any, the proposal would significantly increase parking pressure on the local highway network, potentially leading to indiscriminate parking and displacement to already congested nearby streets.

Given these concerns, and in light of the objection from the Head of Engineering and Highways, it is considered that the development would result in an unacceptable level of on-street parking, exacerbating congestion and harming highway safety. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy SW11 of the LDP.

Flood risk

The application site is identified as being at risk of flooding on TAN 15's Flood Maps for Planning and falls within Flood Zone 2 (Rivers).

While the application seeks permission to change from one form of highly vulnerable development to another, both residential in nature, the proposed HMO would intensify the residential use by adding three bedrooms to the existing five, with four bedrooms located on the ground floor. Given the proposal seeks consent for eight bedrooms, these ground floor rooms could not be removed or relocated to the upper floors, nor could a communal refuge space be provided upstairs without significant redesign. Furthermore, even if such changes were possible, they would not address the overall intensification of use and the increased flood risk this poses.

TAN 15 clearly states that a Local Planning Authority can only permit development where the applicant demonstrates, through a Flood Consequences Assessment, that the risks and consequences of flooding are manageable and meet TAN 15 criteria. It is also noted that Natural Resources Wales has objected to the application for these reasons. Therefore, the proposal is considered contrary to TAN 15.

Ecological impact

The Planning Ecologist has requested further information on any potential works to the roof, render or roof goods. However, it is noted that the property is in an urban location and the property could be subject of significant alteration without the benefit of planning permission, and this could include a replacement roof. In this instance that given that the development largely relates to a change in the use with minor alterations to the elevations the submission of works which do not require the benefit of planning permission is not proportionate and unreasonable.

It is recognised that chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales requests that applications be supported by Green Infrastructure Statements (GIS). A GIS has been submitted in support of the proposal, noting that the site does not benefit from any existing green infrastructure and advises that to aid ecological enhancement a new nest box would be installed on the southeast elevation of the property. The installation of a nest box on the southern elevation of the property would not be appropriate as the box would overheat as it would be in sunlight for most of the day. Instead, biodiversity enhancement would be sought via a condition requiring details of a suitable nest box to be located on the east elevation, thus contributing to the wider green infrastructure objectives. The proposed development would therefore comply with Policy EnW1 of the LDP.

Response to Representations

The material planning considerations raised in the letters of objections have been addressed in the relevant sections above. With regards to other concerns raised (which are not planning matters), these have been addressed below:

- HMO properties would generally be managed by the owner/developer and any concerns regarding its management, such as overcrowding, unsafe environments due to fire safety breach regulations, improper disposal of waste, would be a matter for the Council's Environmental Health Division.

- It has been highlighted that this proposal may cause some distress and unease amongst surrounding residents, including vulnerable and elderly individuals, particularly in response to potential occupiers of the HMO. Whilst the concern for the wellbeing of residents is noted, the future occupiers of the property is not a material planning consideration.

- Any impact on the potential value of properties is not a material planning consideration.

- There is no evidence to support the comments that HMOs result in a negative impact on businesses.

CONCLUSIONS

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, as well as the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives set out in section 8 of the WBFG Act.

The proposed development is deemed to be unacceptable, as it would result in an over intensification of the residential use at the site, which would fail to provide adequate living standards and amenity provision for the residents, potential for flood risk and associated impacts on the residents of the property have not been assessed though a flood consequence assessment and the proposal would give rise to unacceptable levels of on-street parking to the detriment of highway safety. Accordingly, the following recommendation is made:

RECOMMENDATION: BE REFUSED for the following REASONS:

1. The proposed development would be of an unacceptable density that constitutes an over intensification of the residential use, which fails to provide adequate living spaces for the future occupiers to the detriment of their residential amenity, contrary to Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031.
2. Insufficient information has been provided to assess the potential impact of flood risk on the proposed development which would result in an intensification of highly vulnerable residential accommodation on the site and the introduction of 4 ground floor bedrooms. As such, the proposed development is contrary to Technical Advice Note 15: Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion (March 2025) and Policy EnW4 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031.
3. The proposed development, by virtue of the intensified residential use and lack of any dedicated parking provision, would result in an unacceptable increase in the level of onstreet parking, which would give rise to indiscriminate parking along the local highway network, creating traffic hazards to the detriment of highway and pedestrian safety, contrary to Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED


Director of Neighbourhood Services

DATE: 01.12.2025