

# INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

**To:** Kate Glover - Development Control Case Officer

**Reference:** P/26/0120

**From:** Planning Policy and Implementation Section

**Ask for:** David James

**Extension:** 7053

**Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> July 2026

## **Summary**

No objection raised. The development meets the relevant Replacement LDP policies (SW4 - Settlement Boundaries and SW13 - Protecting and Improving Local Community Facilities).

If minded to approve in principle, particular consideration should be given to the impact of the development on the character of the area, the impact on heritage assets and biodiversity, and the impact on surrounding area and occupiers in terms of residential amenity, noise and disturbance, highway safety, traffic generation and parking provision (Policies SW11, SW12, CW1, EnW1, EnW3 & EnW4).

## **Observations in respect of the above proposal**

### **1. Proposed Development**

A proposal for the change of use from an artists studio (Use Class B1) to a residential flat (Use Class C3), at Trinity Chapel, Wesley Place, Merthyr Vale.

### **2. Development Plan Framework**

#### **The Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan (2016 - 2031)**

The relevant LDP Objectives are:-

- *LDP Objective 1 Sustainable Population Growth: To encourage a sustainable level and distribution of population growth.*
- *LDP Objective 2 Welsh Language and Culture: To protect and enhance Welsh language and culture.*
- *LDP Objective 3 Housing Provision: To ensure the sufficient provision of land for the delivery of a range and choice of housing and affordable housing to address local housing needs.*
- *LDP Objective 4 Regeneration: To promote the suitable reuse of previously developed land and the continued regeneration of local communities.*

- *LDP Objective 6 Sustainable Design: To promote high quality, sustainable and inclusive design and support measures which mitigate the predicted effects of climate change.*
- *LDP Objective 7 Transport: To support an integrated transport system, promote active travel and ensure new developments are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport links.*
- *LDP Objective 8 Community Facilities: To support existing community facilities and suitable community led development.*
- *LDP Objective 9 Heritage and Cultural Assets: To protect, enhance and promote all heritage, historic and cultural assets.*
- *LDP Objective 10 Biodiversity: To improve ecosystem resilience and connectivity which support habitats and species of principle importance.*

The following development plan policies would apply:-

- *Policy SW1: Provision of New Homes*
- *Policy SW2: Affordable Housing.*
- *Policy SW3: Sustainably Distributing New Homes*
- *Policy SW4: Settlement Boundaries*
- *Policy SW9: Planning Obligations*
- *Policy SW11: Sustainable Design and Placemaking*
- *Policy SW12: Improving the Transport Network*
- *Policy CW1: Historic Environment*
- *Policy EnW1: Nature Conservation & Ecosystem Resilience*
- *Policy EnW3: Regionally Important Geological Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Local Nature Reserves and Priority Habitats and Species*
- *Policy EnW4: Environmental Protection*

The following supplementary planning guidance is applicable:-

- *Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 1: Affordable Housing (March 2012).*
- *Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 2: Planning Obligations (March 2012).*
- *Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 4: Sustainable Design (July 2013).*
- *Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 5: Nature and Development (May 2015)*

## **National Planning Policy**

### **Future Wales – The National Plan 2040**

- Policy 1: Where Wales will grow
- Policy 2: Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking
- Policy 7: Delivering Affordable Housing
- Policy 33: National Growth Area: Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys

## **Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, February 2024)**

Planning Policy Wales provides guidance on matters relevant to this application, namely:

- Placemaking in Action: Good Design Making Better Places
- Strategic Placemaking: Previously Developed Land
- Active and Social Places: Living in a Place
- Activities in a Place: Community Facilities
- Recognising the Special Characteristics of Places
- Recognising the Environmental Qualities of Places

### **3. Policy Considerations**

#### **The Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan (2016 - 2031)**

The site of the proposal is located within an Other Growth Area (Policies SW1 and SW3), as defined by the LDP, and within the settlement boundary where development will be allowed subject to the proposals compatibility with other plan policies and material considerations (Policy SW4).

Policy SW1 states that 2250 additional homes are required to sustainably grow our population. The proposal comprises a new residential unit, which would represent a contribution to the 2250 units that are required during the plan period. Furthermore, Policy SW3 states that new homes will be concentrated within the main settlement of Merthyr Tydfil.

Policy SW9 relates to planning obligations. Given that the proposal is for one new residential unit, on-site provision of affordable housing or open space, or a financial contribution towards affordable housing, would not be sought. Additionally, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is not chargeable in this part of the County Borough.

Policy SW11 advises that development must contribute to the creation of attractive and sustainable places through high quality, sustainable and inclusive design. Where appropriate, new development will be required to (amongst other things):

- be appropriate to its local context in terms of scale, height, massing, elevational treatment, materials and detailing, layout, form, mix and density;
- integrate effectively with adjacent spaces, the public realm and historic environment to enhance the general street scene and create good quality townscape;
- not result in an unacceptable impact on local amenity, loss of light or privacy, or visual impact, and incorporate a good standard of landscape design;
- allow access for the widest range of people possible, and demonstrate that any traffic movements will not have an unacceptable impact on local amenity or highway safety and satisfy the Council's parking standards.

Considering the location of the application site, in close proximity to, existing dwellings, careful consideration should be given to these issues, particularly impacts on amenity resulting from increased noise and traffic movements. Any, the proposed parking provision should be checked against the Council's current parking standards, and the views of the Engineering and Traffic Group Leader should be sought in this respect.

LDP Policy SW12 supports development that encourages a modal shift towards sustainable transport, including the enhancement of pedestrian, cycle, rail and bus facilities, in addition to any necessary road improvements. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they reduce the need to travel and encourage the use of sustainable transport. As such, the views of the Engineering and Traffic Group Leader should be sought in this respect.

Policy SW13 states that the provision of new and enhanced community facilities will be supported, subject to satisfying other relevant LDP policies. And that the Council will protect and support the enhancement of the County Borough's existing community facilities. Development proposals that would result in a loss of an existing community facility will only be permitted where:-

- alternative provision of at least equivalent value to the local community can be provided nearby, or
- it can be demonstrated that existing provision is inappropriate or surplus to the needs of the community and is no longer required, or
- it can be demonstrated there is no longer a viable community use for the facility.

Information has been supplied with previous applications (P/20/0171 & P/23/0029), indicating that the chapel has been vacant since 2018. It is noted that part of the building was utilized as an artists studio (a private rental, with infrequent art classes), following the granting of application P/20/0171, but that this was not sustainable. As such, it appears that the proposal would comply with second and third criteria above.

Additionally, alternative similar facilities are available in the surrounding area (Aberfan Community Leisure Centre and The Willows Centre, Troedyrhiw. This would satisfy the first criterion above.

Therefore, in this instance, the proposal would be in accordance with Policy SW13.

Policy CW1 advises that the integrity of our historic environment assets will be conserved and enhanced. Development proposals will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated they would preserve or enhance the architectural quality, character or the historic or cultural importance of our designated historic environment assets. Development affecting undesignated historic environment assets including, locally listed buildings or structures, Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales, Urban Character Areas (UCA) and Archaeologically Sensitive Areas should have regard to their special character and archaeological importance.

Policy EnW4 advises that development proposals will be required to demonstrate they will not result in an unacceptable impact on people, residential amenity, property and / or the natural environment from either:

- Pollution of land, surface water, ground water and the air;
- Land contamination;
- Hazardous substances;
- Land stability;
- Noise, vibration, dust, odour nuisance and light pollution; or
- Any other identified risk to public health and safety.

Where impacts are identified the Council will require applicants to demonstrate that appropriate measures have been incorporated to reduce, or minimise the impact identified to the lowest possible acceptable level. Planning conditions may be imposed or legal obligation entered into, to secure any necessary mitigation and monitoring processes. As such, the views of the Engineering and Traffic Group Leader, and the Environmental Health department, should be sought as appropriate.

With regard to flood risk, new developments will be expected to avoid unnecessary flood risk and meet the requirements of TAN 15. A very small part of the site is within Flood Zone 3 (Surface Water & Small Watercourses). As such, NRW should be consulted as appropriate.