



Proposed residential development of 29no apartments

Station Road, Bargoed

Planning Statement | September 2026

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to support the Applicant's proposals for the redevelopment of the vacant brownfield site at Station Road, Bargoed. The proposals the construction of a residential development providing 29 self-contained apartments, together with associated parking, cycle storage, refuse storage, landscaping and access arrangements. The existing vehicular and pedestrian connections from Station Road are retained.
- 1.2 The proposals have been informed by a comprehensive assessment of the physical, environmental, social and functional characteristics of the site and its surrounding context. This has included consideration of the site's relationship with the surrounding townscape, movement network, landscape setting, topography, ecology, existing built form and key views. This evidence-led approach has directly informed the scale, massing, layout, access arrangements, architectural expression and landscape strategy.
- 1.3 A detailed Context Analysis, together with a SWOT assessment and Constraints and Opportunities Plan, has informed the evolution of the proposals. Particular consideration has been given to the site's prominent gateway location, immediate proximity to Bargoed Railway Station, existing highway and pedestrian connections, significant changes in level and relationship with the Rhymney River corridor. These characteristics have been fundamental to establishing an appropriate development response.
- 1.4 The submitted scheme seeks to make efficient and sustainable use of a vacant previously developed site while responding positively to its distinctive topography and surrounding context. The building has been positioned to work with the site's natural levels, helping to reduce its apparent scale, while the contemporary architectural approach, material palette and landscape strategy seek to create a high-quality development and positive addition to this prominent gateway location.
- 1.5 Sustainability and placemaking are fundamental to the proposals. The site benefits from immediate access to Bargoed Railway Station and local bus services and is within walking distance of Bargoed and Aberbargoed town centres and a range of employment, education, retail and community facilities. The proposals also incorporate sustainable drainage, Green Infrastructure, biodiversity enhancement, renewable energy and measures to reduce operational carbon emissions.
- 1.6 This Planning Statement sets out the planning and design rationale for the submitted development and assesses the proposals against the relevant national and local planning policy framework. It considers the principal planning matters associated with the development, including design and placemaking, character, movement and accessibility, landscape and visual impact, sustainability, ecology, drainage, flood risk and residential amenity.
- 1.7 Overall, the proposals seek to transform a vacant and visually underutilised brownfield site into a high-quality, well-landscaped residential development which makes efficient use of land in a highly sustainable location, responds positively to its context and delivers wider placemaking, biodiversity and environmental benefits.

2. Site & Surroundings

- 2.1 The site is located on Station Road, Bargoed, within the Rhymney Valley. The site comprises a vacant and previously developed parcel of land occupying a prominent position on the eastern side of Station Road. The site is characterised by a significant change in levels, with the land falling steeply from Station Road towards the Rhymney River corridor to the north-east.
- 2.2 The site is accessed directly from Station Road via an existing vehicular access. Existing pedestrian connections also link the site to the surrounding footway network. The retention and reuse of these established connections provides an opportunity for the development to integrate effectively with the existing movement network without the need for a new principal access arrangement.
- 2.3 A key characteristic of the site's location is its immediate proximity to Bargoed Railway Station, which is located directly opposite the site. The station provides regular rail services towards Cardiff and the wider regional network. Local bus services are also available along Station Road, providing a range of sustainable travel opportunities.
- 2.4 The site is also located within convenient walking distance of Bargoed and Aberbargoed town centres, providing access to a range of shops, services, employment opportunities, education, healthcare and community facilities. This established pattern of development and accessibility represents a significant sustainability benefit and supports the principle of residential development in this location.
- 2.5 In terms of its immediate surroundings, the site is bound by Station Road to the west, with Bargoed Railway Station and associated railway infrastructure immediately opposite. A car wash is located to the north, while a vehicle charging station is located further south. To the east, the land falls towards the Rhymney River corridor, which occupies a substantially lower level than the application site.
- 2.6 The site's topography is one of its defining physical characteristics. There is a substantial level difference between Station Road and the lower land adjoining the Rhymney River. Rather than treating this as a constraint to be overcome, the design approach has sought to utilise the existing landform to inform the siting and massing of the development. The change in level provides an opportunity for the building to be integrated into the slope and for its apparent scale to be reduced when experienced from surrounding locations.
- 2.7 The Rhymney River lies within an established river corridor below the application site. The site's elevated position relative to the river is an important characteristic in understanding its relationship with the surrounding landscape and floodplain. The site itself is identified as being outside areas at risk of flooding on the Natural Resources Wales Flood Map for Planning; nevertheless, the significant change in levels means that the management of surface water runoff is an important consideration in the development of the site.
- 2.8 The surrounding townscape comprises a mixture of residential, commercial, transport and community uses, reflecting the site's location at the interface between the established urban area and the Rhymney River corridor. The site therefore has a somewhat transitional character, whilst its prominent position on Station Road provides an opportunity to establish a stronger architectural presence and improve the appearance of this part of the town.
- 2.9 The visual envelope of the site is influenced by the surrounding landform, railway infrastructure, embankments and established vegetation. Public views are principally experienced from Station Road and the adjacent transport corridor, with longer-distance views generally confined to elevated locations to the north-west. These characteristics provide a degree of visual containment and have informed the approach to the building's height, massing and architectural articulation.
- 2.10 The site is not located within a designated landscape or Conservation Area. The existing vacant and underutilised site currently makes a limited positive contribution to the character or visual amenity of the area. Its prominent gateway position consequently presents an opportunity for regeneration through a well-designed development and comprehensive landscape strategy.
- 2.11 The site's ecological and landscape characteristics have also informed the development approach. Whilst the site itself comprises previously developed land of generally low ecological value, the adjoining railway corridor, mature trees and Rhymney River corridor provide important ecological connectivity. Potential ecological constraints, including the presence of bats associated with adjacent vegetation and

trees, have been identified and will be addressed through the appropriate mitigation and landscape measures.

- 2.12 Overall, the site represents a sustainable and accessible brownfield opportunity within the existing urban area. Its immediate proximity to public transport and local services, established highway and pedestrian connections and potential for regeneration are significant opportunities. At the same time, the steep topography, relationship with the railway and highway, surface water management, ecology and visual considerations represent important design parameters which have been carefully considered in the evolution of the submitted scheme.



3. Site Analysis and Design Evolution

3.1 A comprehensive assessment of the physical characteristics and wider context of the application site has informed the evolution of the proposals. The assessment has considered the site's physical, environmental, social and functional characteristics, including its relationship with the surrounding townscape, movement network, landscape setting, topography, ecology, existing built form and key views. This approach has provided a clear understanding of the opportunities and constraints that should inform the development of the site.

3.2 The analysis has been undertaken in accordance with the principles promoted by the Welsh Government and Design Commission for Wales through the Site & Context Analysis Guide: Capturing the Value of a Site. Rather than considering the site in isolation, the assessment has examined how it functions within the wider urban environment and how the proposed development can positively respond to its surroundings.

SWOT Analysis

3.3 A detailed SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis was undertaken as part of the design process and is illustrated on Drawing AL(90)06. The assessment provided an initial framework for understanding the site's characteristics and identifying the key principles that should inform the development response.

3.4 Strengths identified through the assessment include:

- The site is previously developed brownfield land;
- An existing vehicular access is provided from the adopted highway network;
- Existing pedestrian connections provide permeability to the surrounding footway network;
- The site is immediately adjacent to Bargoed Railway Station and local bus services;
- The site is within walking distance of the town centre, employment, education and community facilities;
- The site is located outside identified flood risk areas;
- There are no public rights of way crossing the site;

- The elevated position provides opportunities for longer-distance outward views;
- There is an opportunity to deliver 100% affordable housing; and
- The vacant site occupies a prominent gateway position and presents an opportunity for regeneration.

3.5 Weaknesses and constraints include the significant change in levels across the site, poor-quality existing vegetation, potential contamination associated with previous industrial use, the existing noise environment generated by Station Road and the railway, engineering requirements associated with retaining structures and level transitions, and the challenges associated with surface water management arising from the site's topography.

3.6 Opportunities identified through the assessment include improving pedestrian connections, delivering a high-quality architectural response to the local context, creating an appropriate landmark building at a prominent gateway location, regenerating a vacant brownfield site, utilising Modern Methods of Construction, reducing operational carbon through Air Source Heat Pumps and photovoltaic panels, delivering a comprehensive Green Infrastructure strategy and using the site's change in level to reduce the apparent scale of the development.

3.7 Potential threats requiring consideration through the design and technical work include ecological constraints associated with bats and adjacent trees, engineering requirements for retaining structures, compliance with Sustainable Drainage Approval Body requirements, noise and vibration arising from the railway and highway, and the management of surface water runoff.

Context Analysis

3.8 A detailed Context Analysis Plan has been prepared to understand the site's wider setting and its function within the surrounding urban environment. The analysis considered movement patterns, landscape structure, built form, topography, public realm, key views, environmental constraints and opportunities for placemaking.

3.9 The analysis confirmed that the site's relationship with Bargoed Railway Station and the wider movement network is a fundamental characteristic. The existing vehicular

access from Station Road is retained, whilst the existing pedestrian connections provide direct links to the surrounding footway network, railway station and town centre. This establishes a strong basis for a sustainable residential development.

- 3.10 The site's topography is the principal physical characteristic influencing the design. The land falls significantly from Station Road towards the Rhymney River corridor. The development therefore responds directly to the existing landform, allowing the building to be set into the slope and reducing its apparent scale when viewed from surrounding areas.
- 3.11 The relationship with the Rhymney River has also informed the development approach. The river corridor sits substantially below the application site, with the site's elevated position providing a clear separation from the river corridor. This relationship has been considered alongside flood risk, surface water management, landscape and ecological matters.
- 3.12 The proximity of the railway and Station Road presents both opportunities and constraints. Whilst the railway provides a significant sustainability benefit, the associated transport infrastructure creates an elevated background noise environment. Consequently, the orientation of the building, internal layouts, glazing, ventilation strategy and landscape buffers have been considered as part of the design response to ensure appropriate residential amenity.
- 3.13 The site's visual envelope is relatively contained by the surrounding topography, railway embankments and mature vegetation. Principal public views are experienced from Station Road and the adjacent transport corridor, with longer-distance views generally limited to elevated locations to the north-west. This informed the approach to the building's massing and articulation, whilst providing an opportunity for a strong architectural response at this gateway location.

Design Evolution

- 3.14 The findings of the site and context analysis have directly informed the evolution of the submitted design. The proposals do not seek to impose a standard development form on the site; rather, the building has been shaped by its existing landform, accessibility, surrounding townscape and environmental characteristics.

- 3.15 The significant change in levels has been used as a positive design opportunity. The building is set into the slope, allowing the development to respond naturally to the valley landform and helping to reduce its perceived height from surrounding viewpoints. This approach also enables the lower levels of the building to engage with the valley and provide appropriate outlook towards the Rhymney River corridor.
- 3.16 The prominent position of the site has informed the architectural approach. The proposals seek to create a contemporary, high-quality building that establishes a positive identity at the entrance to this part of Bargoed, whilst remaining responsive to the scale and character of its surroundings. The use of a considered material palette and variation in the building's elevations assists in breaking down the overall mass and providing visual interest.
- 3.17 The design also responds to the site's movement characteristics. The existing vehicular access from Station Road is retained, whilst pedestrian movement is prioritised through direct connections with the existing footway network. The immediate proximity of the railway station and local bus services supports the provision of a sustainable residential development with realistic alternatives to private car travel.
- 3.18 Landscape and Green Infrastructure have been incorporated as integral components of the development rather than as an afterthought. Although areas of low-quality vegetation will be removed, the proposals provide for native tree planting, species-rich planting and habitat enhancements. This will strengthen ecological connectivity, enhance biodiversity, assist with sustainable drainage and improve the visual setting of the development.
- 3.19 Similarly, drainage, ecology, noise and engineering considerations have been incorporated into the design process from an early stage. The developing sustainable drainage strategy responds to the site's steep topography and runoff characteristics, while ecological mitigation and measures to address noise and vibration have informed the building and landscape design.

Landscape and Visual Response

- 3.20 A Landscape and Visual Appraisal has informed the evolution of the proposals. The assessment identifies that the site is not located within a designated landscape or Conservation Area and that its visual envelope is substantially influenced by existing landform, railway infrastructure and mature vegetation.



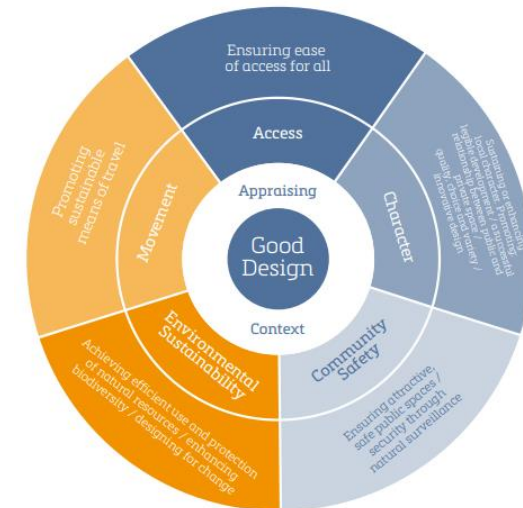
- 3.21 The proposals have consequently been designed to work within these established characteristics. The building's massing responds to the site's topography, whilst the landscape strategy provides a strong green framework around the development. The intention is to replace the existing vacant and visually underutilised site with a well-designed and appropriately landscaped development that makes a positive contribution to the streetscene and wider townscape.
- 3.22 Overall, the site analysis has established a clear set of design parameters which have informed the submitted scheme. The design responds positively to the site's principal opportunities—its sustainable location, brownfield status, gateway position and relationship with the existing movement network—whilst addressing its key constraints, including topography, railway and highway impacts, drainage, ecology, engineering and visual considerations.
- 3.23 The resulting proposals therefore represent an evidence-led design response, derived from a detailed understanding of the site and its context rather than a predetermined development form. This provides the basis for the detailed consideration of the proposed development and its planning merits in the following sections.

4. National & Local Policy

- 4.1 **Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12)** was revised and restructured in February 2024. Its primary objective is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 20 PPW and the National Development Framework (published as **Future Wales – the National Plan 2040**) set out how the planning system at a national, regional and local level can assist in delivering these requirements through Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) and Local Development Plans (LDPs).
- 4.2 **Planning Policy Wales (PPW Edition 12)** sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Assembly Government. It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes. Procedural advice is given in circulars and policy clarification letters.
- 4.3 The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation and resultant duties such as the Socio-economic Duty. A well-functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places.
- 4.4 Section 2 seeks to achieve the creation of sustainable places and improve the well-being of communities.
- 4.5 Section 3 promotes good design as fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise.
- 4.6 Section 4 states *'The planning system should enable people to access jobs and services through shorter, more efficient and sustainable journeys, by walking, cycling and public transport. The Welsh Government is committed to reducing reliance on the private car and supporting a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport. The planning system has a key role to play in reducing the need to travel and supporting sustainable transport, by facilitating developments which:*

- are sited in the right locations, where they can be easily accessed by sustainable modes of travel and without the need for a car;*
- are designed in a way which integrates them with existing land uses and neighbourhoods; and*
- make it possible for all short journeys within and beyond the development to be easily made by walking and cycling.*

- 4.7 The objectives of good design can be summarised into 5 key aspects illustrated on the attached figure.



- 4.8 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. Meeting the objectives of good design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process and applied to all development proposals, at all scales.'
- 4.9 With regard to environmental sustainability, PPW states 'Good design promotes environmental sustainability and contributes to the achievement of the well-being

goals. Developments should seek to maximise energy efficiency and the efficient use of other resources (including land), maximise sustainable movement, minimise the use of non-renewable resources, encourage decarbonisation and prevent the generation of waste and pollution.’ Wherever possible, PPW encourages the use of brownfield sites in preference to greenfield sites where it is suitable for development.

4.10 Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note 12: Design, sets out the Welsh Assembly Government’s detailed advice on how to achieve good design in all development at every scale throughout Wales

4.11 The guidance sets out the Assembly’s objectives for good design, namely:

- Access – ensuring ease of access for all.
- Character – sustaining or enhancing local character. Promoting legible development. Promoting a successful relationship between public and private space. Promoting quality, choice and variety. Promoting innovative design.
- Community safety – ensuring attractive, safe public spaces. Security through natural surveillance.
- Environmental sustainability – achieving efficient use and protection of natural resources. Enhancing biodiversity. Designing for change.
- Movement – promoting sustainable means of travel.

Technical Advice Notes

4.12 PPW is supported by a series of more detailed Technical Advice Notes (TANs), of which the following are of relevance: -

- TAN 2: Planning and Affordable Housing;
- TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning;
- TAN 11: Noise
- TAN 12: Design
- TAN 18: Transport
- TAN 22: Sustainable Buildings

Local Planning Policy

4.13 The current Development Plan is the adopted Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021.

4.14 The relevant Strategic Policies are:

- SP1 – Development Strategy – Development within the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area (HOVRA);
 - SP4 – Settlement Strategy;
 - SP5 – Settlement Boundaries;
 - SP6 – Place Making;
 - SP7 – Planning Obligations;
 - SP8 – Minerals Safeguarding;
 - SP10 – Conservation of Natural Heritage;
 - SP14 – Total Housing Requirements;
 - SP15 – Affordable Housing Target; and
 - SP21 – Parking Standards.
- Countywide Policies

The relevant Countywide Policies are:

- CW1 – Sustainable Transport, Accessibility and Social Inclusion;
- CW2 – Amenity;
- CW3 – Design Considerations – Highways;
- CW4 – Natural Heritage Protection;
- CW5 – Protection of the Water Environment;
- CW6 – Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerow Protection;
- CW7 – Protection of Open Space;
- CW10 – Leisure and Open Space Provision;
- CW11 – Affordable Housing Planning Obligation;
- CW15 – General Locational Constraints; and
- CW22 – Locational Constraints – Minerals.

4.15 Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) has been produced to support policies in the LDP. They give further detail on some of the policies included within the LDP.

- 4.16 SPG's of relevance to the application proposal include:
- LDP1 - Affordable Housing Obligations (Revision) - Updated November 2020
 - LDP5 - Car Parking Standards
 - LDP4 – Trees and Development
 - LDP6 - Building Better Places to Live
- 4.17 Other documents of relevance to the site include:
- Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area Masterplan

5. Pre-Application Advice

- 5.1 Prior to the submission of the current planning application, the Applicant engaged in formal pre-application discussions with Caerphilly County Borough Council in relation to the proposed redevelopment of land at Station Road, Bargoed. The Council's written pre-application response was issued on 29 January 2026 under reference **SPA/25/0107** and considered proposals for the construction of 29 self-contained apartments with associated parking, cycle and refuse storage.
- 5.2 The Council's advice confirmed that the site is located outside, but immediately adjacent to, the Bargoed settlement boundary. Whilst the proposal would therefore technically represent a departure from the Development Plan and would be contrary to Policy CW15 on the basis of its location outside the settlement boundary, **the Council recognised a strong planning case for residential development on the site.**
- 5.3 In particular, the Council recognised that the site comprises previously developed land and can be considered a **brownfield site**. The Council also acknowledged its highly sustainable location, being immediately adjacent to Bargoed Railway Station and in close proximity to Bargoed Town Centre and the Bus Interchange. On this basis, the Council concluded that there was **no objection to the principle of residential development in this location.**
- 5.4 The Council further identified the local housing land supply position as a material consideration, noting that the **2024 Annual Monitoring Report identified an urgent need to increase housing land supply to deliver market and affordable housing**. This was considered to provide further support for the principle of bringing the site forward for residential development.

Design and Landscape

- 5.5 In respect of design and landscape, the Council considered that the proposed five-storey building could be acceptable in principle, particularly given the site's sustainable location and the appropriateness of higher-density development in such locations. It was noted that, as a consequence of the building being set at a lower level than Station Road, it would appear as approximately **four storeys when viewed from Station Road.**

- 5.6 The Council nevertheless identified the site's relationship with the **Parc Coetir Bargoed Country Park** and the wider countryside as an important consideration. It recognised that the building would be prominent when viewed from the Country Park towards the north-east elevation and that part of the development would sit on backfilled land supported by a substantial retaining wall.
- 5.7 The Council therefore identified the treatment of the **north-east elevation and associated landscaping**, including measures to screen and integrate the retaining structure, as key considerations in determining the acceptability of the proposal. The Council's Landscape Architect recommended reducing the perceived mass and scale of the building through façade articulation and roofline variation, together with the use of natural materials and muted tones and the integration of planting and green buffers. The potential use of climbing plants was also identified as a means of softening the building's appearance.
- 5.8 The Council advised that a **Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA)** should accompany any future planning application. A Design Approach Statement was also recommended to demonstrate how the identified landscape and design principles had informed the final scheme.
- 5.9 The Council also identified an opportunity to provide **shared amenity space** for residents, particularly to the north-east of the building, taking advantage of the outlook towards the Country Park. A Design and Access Statement and Green Infrastructure Statement were identified as requirements for the planning application.

Transport and Parking

- 5.10 The Council acknowledged the constraints on providing parking on the site and recognised that, given its sustainable location, a provision below one space per bedroom could potentially be appropriate. However, it advised that **a sustainability calculation in accordance with Schedule 6 of the Council's Parking Standards SPG** should be undertaken to justify the proposed level of parking. The Council also noted that the proposed tenure could be relevant to parking demand.
- 5.11 The Council's Transportation Engineering Manager initially identified the proposed 20 parking spaces as below the requirements of LDP5, indicating that a minimum of 34

spaces would ordinarily be required, subject to the demonstration of at least seven sustainability points. Adequate vehicle turning facilities and appropriate cycle parking were also identified as requirements.

- 5.12 The Council also advised that any access arrangement from the A469 would need to provide a **2.4m x 25m visibility splay**, having regard to Manual for Streets and the relevant speed environment. Refuse collection arrangements and access for collection vehicles were also identified as matters requiring consideration.

Ecology, Drainage and Environmental Matters

- 5.13 The Council's Ecology Officer advised that a planning application should be accompanied by an **Ecological Assessment**, including any surveys identified through preliminary ecological work, together with a **Green Infrastructure Statement, lighting plan and biodiversity conservation and enhancement strategy**. The Council also specifically recommended consideration of **12 integrated swift boxes** within the rear elevation.
- 5.14 In relation to drainage, the Council confirmed that the development would require **Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB) approval**.
- 5.15 The Council reviewed the Natural Resources Wales Flood Map for Planning and confirmed that the site appeared to fall outside **Flood Zones 2 and 3 for both river flooding and surface water/small watercourses**. On the basis of the information available at pre-application stage, the Council therefore advised that a Flood Consequences Assessment would not be required.
- 5.16 The Council also identified that the site lies within a **Sandstone Safeguarding Area**, although this was not considered to represent a significant constraint given the site's proximity to the existing built-up area. The Council further advised that the majority of the site falls within a **radon affected area** and that mitigation measures should be considered. A contaminated land assessment was also identified as likely to be required.
- 5.17 Given the site's proximity to Station Road and the railway, the Council advised that appropriate measures should be considered within the building design to protect future residents from **road and railway noise**.

Affordable Housing, CIL and Planning Obligations

- 5.18 The Council confirmed that the site falls within the **lower viability area for CIL**, where the residential CIL charge is zero. Accordingly, no CIL contribution would be sought.
- 5.19 In relation to affordable housing, the Council advised that although there is no specific affordable housing target for the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area under Policy CW11, up to **10% affordable housing would be expected where the scheme is viable**. For a market-led development, this would ordinarily be secured through a Section 106 Agreement unless a viability assessment demonstrated that such provision was unviable.
- 5.20 The Council further advised that where a **100% social rented scheme** is proposed, this could potentially provide justification for a lower level of parking and could remove the requirement for a viability assessment in relation to affordable housing, subject to the Council being satisfied that the scheme would be delivered on that basis.

Response to Pre-Application Advice

- 5.21 The current application has been developed having regard to the Council's pre-application advice and the matters identified by its specialist consultees. In particular, the submitted scheme and supporting technical information have been developed to address the Council's observations regarding **the principle of development, site context, building scale and massing, the north-east elevation, landscape and visual effects, retaining structures, residential amenity, parking and accessibility, ecology, Green Infrastructure, drainage, biodiversity and environmental considerations**.
- 5.22 The pre-application process has therefore played an important role in informing the evolution of the proposals. The current application represents the next stage in that design and planning process, with the matters identified by the Council considered through the submitted drawings, Planning Statement and accompanying technical assessments.

6. Proposal

- 6.1 The planning application seeks permission the redevelopment of the previously developed land at Station Road, Bargoed, to **provide 29 self-contained residential apartments, comprising 24 one-bedroom and 5 two-bedroom units**, together with associated access, parking, cycle storage, refuse and recycling storage, communal external amenity space, landscaping, ecological enhancement and sustainable drainage infrastructure.
- 6.2 The proposal retains the fundamental principles established at pre-application stage, namely the redevelopment of a previously developed site, a five-storey residential building responding to the site's steep topography, and the retention of the existing vehicular access from Station Road. The scheme has, however, been substantially further developed in response to the Council's pre-application advice and the findings of the supporting technical assessments.
- 6.3 In particular, greater emphasis has been placed on the landscape-led integration of the development, the treatment of the retaining structure and north-east elevation, the provision of communal amenity space, ecological and green infrastructure enhancement, sustainable drainage, residential amenity, sustainable transport and the detailed justification of the proposed parking provision.

Design Response and Evolution

- 6.4 The proposed five-storey building has been designed to respond to the site's steeply sloping topography, allowing the development to be set into the valley side and reducing the extent to which the building appears as an isolated structure within the wider landscape.
- 6.5 The architectural approach seeks to provide a contemporary, high-quality residential development that responds positively to its surroundings. The building incorporates articulation, changes in materials and a considered roofline to assist in breaking down the perceived mass of the development. The design establishes a clear distinction between public, communal and private areas, while providing active frontages and natural surveillance across the site.

- 6.6 Particular attention has been given to the north-east elevation and the relationship between the building and the retaining structure. The landscape strategy incorporates structured planting, native hedge planting and climbing vegetation associated with the vegetated retaining structure, helping to soften the built form and improve its visual integration with the valley landscape.
- 6.7 The approach responds directly to **Policy SP6 (Placemaking)**, which seeks high-quality design that responds to local context, including form, scale, movement, natural heritage and green infrastructure. It also has regard to **Policy CW2 (Amenity)** through the consideration given to the relationship between the development, neighbouring uses and the wider environment.
- 6.8 The Landscape and Visual Appraisal confirms that an LVA represents an appropriate and proportionate level of assessment for the scheme, having regard to its scale, nature and the limited magnitude of potential landscape and visual effects identified.

Landscape, Green Infrastructure and Ecology

- 6.9 Landscape and green infrastructure have been incorporated as fundamental components of the development. Existing woodland and vegetation of value along the site boundaries will be retained and protected where practicable, while new native shrub, grassland, hedge and climbing planting will be introduced throughout the site.
- 6.10 The landscape proposals provide a combination of structural planting, softer landscape areas and communal external amenity space. The treatment of the retaining structure through vegetation and planting will assist in integrating the development with the surrounding landscape and provide a more appropriate transition between the built form and the River Rhymney corridor.
- 6.11 The ecological strategy incorporates a range of biodiversity enhancement measures, including native planting, bird and bat boxes, deadwood habitat and measures to strengthen ecological connectivity. The proposals have been informed by the site's relationship with the wider green infrastructure network associated with Bargoed Woodland Park, the River Rhymney corridor and surrounding designated ecological assets.

- 6.12 The proposals respond to the objectives of **Policy SP10 (Conservation of Natural Heritage)** through the retention, protection and enhancement of existing ecological and landscape features. The scheme also addresses **Policy CW4 (Natural Heritage Protection)** and **Policy CW6 (Trees, Woodland and Hedgerow Protection)** through the retention and integration of existing vegetation and the introduction of additional structural planting.
- 6.13 The Landscape and Ecological Management Plan identifies the retention of the woodland corridor, native planting, ecological connectivity and the creation of an attractive residential landscape as key objectives.
- 6.14 The proposal also has regard to **Policy NH3 (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation)**, particularly given the site's relationship with the Rhymney River SINC corridor. The development incorporates measures to protect the ecological function of the corridor while providing additional habitat and planting within the site.
- 6.15 The Green Infrastructure Statement confirms that the development seeks to maintain and reinforce functional ecological connectivity between the River Rhymney corridor, Bargoed Woodland Park and nearby designated sites.

Sustainable Drainage and Water Management

- 6.16 Sustainable drainage has been incorporated as an integral component of the landscape strategy. The proposals include rain gardens, swales and shallow attenuation and bio-retention features to manage surface water runoff while providing additional ecological and landscape benefits.
- 6.17 The drainage approach has been informed by the site's made ground and localised contamination constraints. Infiltration is therefore appropriately limited, with the proposed system providing controlled attenuation and conveyance while avoiding unnecessary disturbance of underlying ground conditions.
- 6.18 The approach accords with **Policy SP6**, which promotes sustainable development and appropriate sustainable drainage, and **Policy CW5 (Protection of the Water Environment)**. The Green Infrastructure Statement confirms that the proposed SuDS features provide both surface water management and additional ecological value, with moisture-tolerant planting contributing to biodiversity and water quality.

- 6.19 A separate **Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Approval Body (SAB) approval** will be secured in accordance with the statutory requirements.

Access, Parking and Sustainable Transport

- 6.20 The existing vehicular access from Station Road will be retained. The development provides **21 on-site parking space**, together with **22 cycle stands providing capacity for 44 bicycles**.
- 6.21 The access and internal layout have been designed to provide safe vehicle and pedestrian movement. The Transport Statement demonstrates that appropriate visibility can be achieved at the site access and that sufficient manoeuvring space is available within the site to allow vehicles to enter and leave in forward gear.
- 6.22 The site's location is a significant sustainability benefit. It is situated immediately opposite Bargoed Railway Station and within convenient walking distance of Bargoed town centre and local bus services. The location therefore provides residents with realistic opportunities to travel by rail, bus, walking and cycling, reducing reliance on the private car.
- 6.23 The proposal accords with **Policy CW1 (Sustainable Transport, Accessibility and Social Inclusion)** through its highly accessible location, provision of cycle parking and pedestrian connections. The proposal also responds to **Policy SP6**, which promotes sustainable transport and recognises the efficient use of land in locations with good access to public transport.
- 6.24 In relation to **Policy SP21 (Parking Standards)** and **LDP5 – Car Parking Standards**, the proposed 21-space provision is supported by the site's accessibility, the submitted sustainability assessment and the Transport Statement. The parking assessment has regard to the opportunity to reduce reliance on private vehicles arising from the site's proximity to the railway station, bus services and local facilities.
- 6.25 The Transport Statement will be updated to reflect the revised accommodation mix of **24 one-bedroom and 5 two-bedroom apartments**, with the associated Schedule 6 sustainability calculation checked against the final unit and bedroom mix prior to submission. This will ensure that the parking assessment is fully aligned with the final development proposals.

Residential Amenity and Noise

- 6.26 The proposed apartments have been designed to provide a good standard of internal residential accommodation, with appropriate outlook and access to natural light. The arrangement of the building and its relationship with neighbouring uses have been considered to ensure that the development provides an appropriate residential environment.
- 6.27 The Environmental Noise Assessment considers the potential effects of road traffic, railway and surrounding commercial noise sources. The assessment considers the external building fabric, glazing, ventilation and associated acoustic measures to ensure that appropriate internal noise conditions can be achieved for future residents.
- 6.28 The proposal therefore responds to **Policy CW2 (Amenity)** by ensuring that the development does not result in unacceptable effects on neighbouring properties and that future occupants are appropriately protected from relevant environmental impacts. The acoustic assessment provides an appropriate technical basis for the consideration of noise arising from the surrounding transport and commercial environment.

Communal Amenity and Open Space

- 6.29 The development incorporates communal external amenity space within the landscaped setting of the site, together with seating, planting and accessible green infrastructure. This provides residents with usable external space while also contributing to the landscape integration and ecological value of the development.
- 6.30 The provision of communal amenity space responds to **Policy CW10 (Leisure and Open Space Provision)** and the wider placemaking objectives of **Policy SP6**. The Green Infrastructure Statement confirms that the communal space, amenity lawn and seating areas form part of the wider green infrastructure strategy and provide opportunities for interaction with nature, social interaction and improved residential wellbeing.

Housing Provision

- 6.31 The proposal provides **29 new residential units**, comprising 24 one-bedroom and 5 two-bedroom apartments, on a previously developed site. The development therefore

makes efficient use of an existing development opportunity and contributes to the delivery of additional housing within the Bargoed area.

- 6.32 The provision of housing accords with the strategic objectives of **Policy SP4 (Settlement Strategy)** and **Policy SP14 (Total Housing Requirements)**, which seek to support the role and function of established settlements and provide appropriate housing opportunities.
- 6.33 The site's location immediately opposite Bargoed Railway Station and within walking distance of local services further supports its suitability for residential development, having regard to the principles of sustainable settlement patterns and reducing the need to travel by private car.
- 6.34 Affordable housing provision will be addressed in accordance with **Policy SP15, Policy CW11 and LDP1 – Affordable Housing Obligations**, with the final requirement to be established having regard to the Council's requirements and any relevant site-specific considerations.

Settlement Boundary and Locational Considerations

- 6.35 It is acknowledged that the site is located immediately outside the defined settlement boundary of Bargoed. This is a relevant policy consideration and is not presented as a matter of technical compliance.
- 6.36 However, the site is previously developed land, is physically and functionally closely related to the established urban area and is located immediately opposite Bargoed Railway Station. It is therefore a highly accessible brownfield development opportunity with a strong relationship to the existing settlement.
- 6.37 The redevelopment would bring a previously developed site back into beneficial residential use and make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and services. The development also avoids the need to establish a new residential settlement or extend infrastructure into an otherwise isolated rural location.
- 6.38 The Council's pre-application response accepted the **principle of residential redevelopment**, with the principal matters identified for further consideration relating to the scale and visual prominence of the building, landscape integration, treatment of

the retaining structure and north-east elevation, amenity space, ecology, parking, highways, drainage and waste management.

- 6.39 The current proposals have been developed specifically to address these matters. The landscape strategy, Green Infrastructure Statement, Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, Transport Statement, Environmental Noise Assessment and drainage strategy collectively provide an evidence base demonstrating that the principal environmental and technical considerations associated with the redevelopment can be satisfactorily addressed.

Waste and Servicing

- 6.40 Dedicated refuse and recycling storage is incorporated into the development. The storage arrangements are designed to provide sufficient capacity for the residential development while allowing collection to take place in a safe and practical manner.
- 6.41 The proposals respond to **Policy SP9 (Waste Management)** through the provision of appropriate facilities for refuse, recycling and food waste. Waste infrastructure has been integrated into the overall site layout to avoid visual clutter and ensure that servicing does not compromise the quality of the public and communal areas.

Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Long-Term Management

- 6.42 The Green Infrastructure Statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of **Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12)** and the **Environment (Wales) Act 2016**, demonstrating how green infrastructure has been incorporated into the development.
- 6.43 The proposals adopt the established hierarchy of avoiding, minimising and mitigating environmental impacts, followed by on-site enhancement. The strategy retains important existing vegetation, introduces new native planting, incorporates biodiversity features and integrates SuDS into the landscape framework.
- 6.44 The landscape proposals also provide an opportunity to address existing site conditions, including invasive species and areas of disturbed or made ground. The Green Infrastructure strategy therefore provides wider environmental benefits beyond simply landscaping the proposed building.

- 6.45 Long-term management arrangements are proposed to ensure that planting, ecological features and SuDS infrastructure are properly maintained. The Green Infrastructure Statement provides for an initial aftercare period, a wider maintenance period and subsequent transfer of responsibility to an estate management body.

Sustainable Design and Placemaking

- 6.46 The development has been designed having regard to the principles of sustainable development, efficient use of land, biodiversity enhancement, climate resilience and sustainable movement. The location opposite Bargoed Railway Station is a particularly important factor in reducing dependence upon the private car.
- 6.47 The incorporation of green infrastructure, native planting, communal amenity space and multifunctional SuDS contributes to the creation of a distinctive and attractive residential environment. The Green Infrastructure Statement confirms that the proposals provide accessible green space, strengthen ecological connectivity and incorporate climate-resilient water management.
- 6.48 The approach is consistent with the placemaking principles of **Policy SP6**, together with the relevant provisions of **Planning Policy Wales, TAN 12: Design, TAN 18: Transport and TAN 15: Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion**. The Green Infrastructure Statement confirms that the proposals have been developed having regard to PPW12 and the requirement to integrate green infrastructure and biodiversity into development proposals.
- 6.49 The Green Infrastructure Statement concludes that the proposal provides a coordinated approach to landscape, biodiversity, drainage and residential amenity, retaining the southern woodland corridor, introducing native planting and integrating SuDS and biodiversity measures into the development.
- 6.50 Overall, the proposal represents an appropriate redevelopment of a previously developed site in a highly accessible location. It provides 29 new homes while incorporating a comprehensive package of landscape, green infrastructure, ecological, drainage, transport and residential amenity measures.
- 6.51 The development has been carefully evolved in response to the Council's pre-application advice and the subsequent technical assessment of the site. In particular, the current proposals seek to ensure that the building is appropriately integrated

within the sensitive valley landscape, that existing ecological and landscape features are retained and enhanced, and that the development provides a high-quality and sustainable residential environment.

- 6.52 The proposal is therefore considered to be consistent with the principal objectives of **Policies SP1, SP4, SP6, SP9, SP10, SP14, SP15, SP21, CW1, CW2, CW3, CW4, CW5, CW6, CW10, CW11 and NH3**, together with relevant supplementary planning guidance including LDP1, LDP5 and LDP6, subject to the detailed matters identified above. The principal policy consideration is the site's position immediately outside the defined settlement boundary; however, this is balanced against its previously developed character, strong physical and functional relationship with Bargoed, exceptional accessibility to public transport and the Council's acceptance of the principle of residential redevelopment at pre-application stage.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The proposed development represents an appropriate and sustainable opportunity to redevelop a previously developed site at Station Road, providing **29 new residential apartments comprising 24 one-bedroom and 5 two-bedroom units**. The scheme makes efficient use of an existing development opportunity in a highly accessible location, immediately opposite Bargoed Railway Station and within convenient walking distance of local services and facilities.
- 7.2 The design has been carefully evolved in response to the site's topography, landscape setting and the matters identified through the Council's pre-application advice. Particular attention has been given to the scale and visual integration of the five-storey building, the treatment of the retaining structure and north-east elevation, the provision of communal amenity space, and the retention and enhancement of existing landscape and ecological features.
- 7.3 The proposal is supported by a comprehensive package of technical information addressing landscape and visual effects, green infrastructure, ecology, drainage, highways, parking, sustainable transport and noise. The proposed mitigation and enhancement measures are integrated into the development, including native planting, biodiversity enhancements, communal green space and multifunctional SuDS. Collectively, these measures will ensure that the development provides a high-quality residential environment while responding positively to its wider landscape and environmental context.
- 7.4 Overall, the proposal is considered to accord with the relevant objectives of the **Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan, Planning Policy Wales and associated supplementary planning guidance**. While the site's position immediately outside the defined settlement boundary is acknowledged, this is outweighed by its previously developed character, strong relationship with the existing settlement, exceptional accessibility and the Council's acceptance of the principle of residential redevelopment at pre-application stage. The proposal therefore represents an appropriate, landscape-led and sustainable form of development that should be supported.



**Architects and
Town Planners**

Unit 1A, Compass Business Park,
Pacific Road, Cardiff CF24 5HL

19 Goodge Street,
London W1T 2PH

029 2045 2100
c2jarchitects.co.uk