

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

**REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING,
REGULATORY & GENERAL LICENSING
COMMITTEE**

**SUBJECT: PLANNING, REGULATORY & GENERAL LICENSING
COMMITTEE - 12TH NOVEMBER, 2020**

**REPORT OF: COMMITTEE AND DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT
OFFICER**

PRESENT:

Councillors W. Hodgins (Vice-Chair)
D. Bevan
G. L. Davies
S. Healy
J. Hill
C. Meredith
K. Rowson
T. Smith
B. Thomas
G. Thomas
B. Willis

WITH: Service Manager Development & Estates
Team Manager, Development Management
Team Leader, Development Management
Team Manager Built Environment
Planning Officer
Solicitor

AND: Public Speaker
Llinos Hallett, Former Brynmawr Clinic,
Lower Bailey Street, Brynmawr
Construction of supported living accommodation
comprising 5 no. 1 bed flats communal,
staff accommodation and associated works

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<p><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
No. 2	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>The following apologies for absence were received from:-</p> <p>Councillor D. Hancock Councillor L. Winnett</p>	
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>LIST OF APPLICATIONS DECIDED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS BETWEEN 18TH SEPTEMBER 2020 AND 22ND OCTOBER 2020</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Senior Business Support Officer.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information therein be noted.</p>	
No. 5	<p><u>QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE INFORMATION</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Service Manager Development and Estates.</p> <p>The Service Manager Development and Estates spoke to the report and outlined the key points. It was noted that Quarter 1 covered lockdown period and it was advised that the performance was not necessarily representative of the service in Blaenau Gwent and across Wales. The Planning Department had been subject to sickness absences, adapting to remote working and a</p>	

number of officers had been redeployed to assist with the emergency situation. In this context the Service Manager felt that the reduction in performance was acceptable.

The Chair wished to express thanks to the Planning Department as the report was a credit to the Department for the maintained performance during Quarter 1 due to challenges faced by the service.

The Service Manager confirmed that the development industry had continued to work through the lockdown period and staff had worked hard to ensure these frontline services had been available and continued during the pandemic.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information therein be noted.

No. 6 **APPEALS, CONSULTATIONS AND DNS UPDATE NOVEMBER 2020**

Consideration was given to the report of the Service Manager Development and Estates.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information therein be noted.

No. 7 **PLANNING APPEAL UPDATE: FOR THE PROPOSED CONVERSION OF EXISTING 3 BEDROOM, 2 STOREY TERRACED HOUSE INTO A 5 BEDROOM HOUSE OF MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY (HMO) AND TO DEMOLISH EXISTING GARAGE TO PROVIDE A PARKING SPACE AT:30 MARINE STREET, CWM, EBBW VALE**

Consideration was given to the report of the Planning Officer.

The Service Manager Development and Estates spoke to the report and reminded Members that the application had been refused at February Planning Committee contrary to the officer's decision. It was noted that the Inspector felt that one car parking space was acceptable as the development was near transport

links.

The Ward Members noted their disappointment in the approval of this appeal as similar facilities had caused problems for residents in other areas.

Discussion ensued around transport links in this area, as Members were of the opinion that public transport across Blaenau Gwent was not sufficient. A Member was of the opinion that the Cwm Ward was no different to other areas in Blaenau Gwent and therefore asked for an explanation on the transport links available.

It was reported that an explanation was provided in the Inspector's Report.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the appeal decision in relation to planning application C/2019/0308 be noted.

No. 8

PLANNING APPEAL UPDATE: MILL FARM, POCHIN CRESCENT, TREDEGAR REF.: C/2019/0279

Consideration was given to the report of the Planning Officer.

The Service Manager Development and Estates referred to the Appeal against at application which had been determined under delegated powers. The Service Manager outlined the findings of the Inspector and noted that due to the flood risk the appeal was dismissed.

A Ward Member welcomed the appeals decision of the inspector.

	<p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the appeal decision in relation to planning application C/2019/0279 be noted.</p>	
<p>No. 9</p>	<p><u>PLANNING APPEAL UPDATE: LAND AT 3 GLANDWR STREET, ABERTILLERY</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Planning Officer.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the appeal decision in relation to planning application C/2019/0219 be noted.</p>	
<p>No. 10</p>	<p><u>PLANNING APPLICATIONS REPORT</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Team Manager Development Management.</p> <p><u>Application No. C/2020/0148:</u> <u>The Bridge, Station Approach, Pontygof, Ebbw Vale</u> <u>Change of use to nursery, bin storage, escape stair, landscaping and associated car park</u></p> <p>It was reported that this application had been placed before Committee in October and a long debate had ensued around the flood risk of the development.</p> <p>The officer recommendation had been for refusal based on the flood risk of a highly vulnerable development, however the Planning Committee granted planning permission subject to appropriate conditions. The Committee had agreed to defer the decision in order for officers to present a list of relevant planning conditions to be drafted and present those conditions to this Committee for consideration.</p> <p>A Member referred to the condition which related to business hours of 8.00 am to 6.00 pm and asked if this was normal procedure or an additional condition only applicable to this application. The Service Manager Estates and Development advised that these hours were suggested by the applicant and</p>	

officer added extra hours to provide flexibility for the business. The condition related to opening hours of the facility and was normal practice and did not prevent staff being on site before and after this time, although the condition could be removed if Members wished.

The Member felt that as long as the applicant was not at a disadvantage the condition could be included.

Following a discussion and vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED that Planning Permission be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions contained in the report.

**Application No. C/2020/0156: Former
Brynmawr Clinic, Lower Bailey Street, Brynmawr
Construction of Supported Living Accommodation
Comprising 5 No. 1 bed flats, communal areas, staff
accommodation and associated works**

The Service Manager Development and Estates informed the Committee that correspondence had been received from Councillor Lyn Elias, Ward Member and outlined the correspondence, as follows:-

“Please would you put my observations before the Committee on this development.

The developer met with Ward Members in January with initial proposals. There was concerns expressed re the development mainly around vehicle access, parking and what client and supervision on site.

Lower Bailey Street was a narrow road 9 feet wide and already suffered from limited parking places. I agree with points raised in 1-3,3-2 to 3-6 in the report I also support the response in 3-18. I did suggest to the developer because of parking issues they look at the parcel of ground at the rear of this development which may

allay the concerns regarding parking.

Please would the committee consider a deferment until questions are answered or a site visit so that they could have sight of the problems that additional vehicle movements would cause.

Thank you for taking mine concerns before committee.”

The Service Manager also reported a second late correspondence from a resident who had previously raised similar objections in earlier correspondence which had been received.

At the invitation of the Chair, the Planning Officer outlined the application for the construction of Supported Living Accommodation Comprising 5 one bedroomed flats, communal areas, staff accommodation and associated works in the residential area in Lower Bailey Street, Brynmawr.

The Planning Officer spoke to the application and highlighted the illustration contained in the report which provided an overview of the design of the 2 storey building and an annex to north side and rear of the development. It was advised that the development would contain 5 flats, a lounge and kitchen area. It would house 5 residents and staff who would on a shift basis.

It was added that no objections had been received from consultees, however a number of objections had been received from local residents around parking and the disturbance to residents from tenants.

There was also points made about trade vehicles frequenting the building, visitors to the flats and how the communal kitchen would be used. The Planning Officer advised that the objections had been raised with the applicant and the officer was satisfied that the concerns had been addressed.

The response was shared with the objectors, however it was felt

that the response did not address the issues raised.

The Planning Officer further spoke to the report and noted that the development made good use of the site and was in keeping with the surrounding area. The Officer reiterated that the main concerns raised by local residents was the lack of parking due to the affect this would have on residents and the highways. The Officer noted that a development of this nature should provide four car parking spaces, however there was no parking allocated to the former surgery and a view from highways was requirement due to the fact that it did not meet the requirements set out in the Access, Car Parking and Design SPG. The proximity to the town centre would mean the site met the sustainability criteria and reduce the need for car parking provision. The Planning Officer also pointed out that residents had not experienced parking problems with the former surgery. The Planning Officer advised that the lack of parking should not be the reason to refuse the application.

Further concerns raised by residents had also been addressed and were detailed in the report.

The Planning Officer stated that in terms of occupants we must not assume that they would cause concerns to local residents, however if this did this happen it would be a matter for the Police and not the Local Planning Authority.

In conclusion, the Planning Officer reiterated that the proposal was to provide living accommodation in an established residential area that was designed to make good use of brownfield land in line with national planning policies. It had been designed in keeping with the local area and had been designed to minimise overlooking and overbearing impact on nearby residential properties.

The Officer added that whilst the development provided no off-street parking it had been considered that the needs of the development could be adequately met by on-street and public parking in the locality. This would minimise the impact on the highway network and the amenity of local residents.

Therefore, the officer noted that the recommendation was for planning permission to be granted.

A representative for the Applicant, Llinos Hallet was invited by the Chair to address the Planning Committee.

Ms Hallett thanked the case officer for a thorough report and welcomed the officer recommendation. At this juncture she wished to address the late representation received by Councillor Elias with regard to car parking spaces, site visit and clarity around users and supervision.

In terms of car parking, Ms Halley advised that the former clinic generated 9 car parking spaces during peak times and 7 during quicker times. The living accommodation required 4 car parking spaces, 2 for staff and 2 for visitors. The residents would not have access to cars and therefore it was felt that there would be considerably less cars with the development than the former surgery. The development supported by travel plan had hoped to reduce reliance on cars and use alternative transport.

Ms Hallet added that a request to use the rear of the property to accommodate car parking had been discussed with the landowner. However, it was informed that the current land owner wanted approximately excess £180,000 for the land. This was not feasible for only 4 spaces and the land had not been offered in gift of the applicant, therefore this area could not be used for car parking for the scheme. The highway officer agreed that the required car parking spaces would be accommodated on the highway network.

The Applicant did not feel that a site visit was required as it was felt that local Members would know the site and the deferment would mean the loss of funding which was needed to complete the scheme.

Ms Hallet advised that within this supported living accommodation the residents with learning difficulties would learn life skills, increase friends and build social skills. There were other facilities

of this kind within Blaenau Gwent which worked well within their areas.

Ms Hallett noted that all planning conditions had been considered and asked that Members to agree the officer's recommendation to grant the application.

A discussion ensued around land in the surrounding area which could be used for parking by residents.

A Member referred to front of the building with the assistance of photos and noted that there was small area west to the development which could be used as off street parking as there was a dropped kerb in place. In response, it was informed this area of land would be used as a rain garden for new surface water for the site in line with WG legislation. If these changes were to be explored it would need further consultation with highways, therefore Ms Hallett asked Members to give consideration to the application as presented.

In response to a question raised in relation to a condition to ensure that staff use local public car parks, it was advised that that would be hard to impose and it was hoped that staff would park considerably.

An Officer referred to the parking issues raised and advised that the application had been taken on its merit. The location of the facility had assisted with the decision as there was no parking restrictions in the immediate areas and public car parks nearby. The amount of vehicles associated with the scheme was low there was no objections and it would be hard to defend it being refused on parking issues.

A Member raised concerns around parking issues faced by residents in all towns and it was felt that the Planning Committee should not inflict further parking problems in allowing facilities without designated car parking space. This would only increase problems in town centres and residential areas.

	<p>The Member stated that if an application for a 5 bedroomed property had been placed before the Planning Committee it would require the appropriate car parking spaces. Although the former surgery had generated more traffic in the area, the Member stated that it would not have operated the same number of hours.</p> <p>The Member advised that he could not support this application based on the lack of adequate car parking spaces and proposed that the Officers recommendation be rejected, this proposal was seconded. Following a vote, 2 Members voted to reject the application and 8 Members were in favour of the officer's recommendation, it was therefore</p> <p>RESOLVED that Planning Permission be <u>GRANTED</u> subject to the conditions contained in the report.</p>	
No. 11	<p><u>AREAS FOR MEMBER BRIEFINGS/TRAINING</u></p> <p>No areas for training and Members Briefing were brought forward.</p>	