

CIVITAS

Planning Limited

Proposed development of 23no. dwellings (affordable homes) on land at Maes Emlyn, Rhyl, Denbighshire, LL18 4AB

Supporting Planning Statement

Prepared by:

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1. Planning Statement

- 1.0. This statement should be read in conjunction with the other documents submitted with the application.

Site Background & Description

- 1.1. The site is located in Rhyl, a coastal town on the north Wales coastline, west of Prestatyn and east of Colwyn Bay.
- 1.2. The site is located approximately 5 miles north of the A55 North Wales Expressway which links towns across North Wales, east to Chester and wider motorway networks beyond. The southern extent of the site is bound by the main rail line running to Rhyl Station approximately half a mile away, connecting towns along the coast with links back to key rail networks.
- 1.3. The site currently houses 59 flats that were used as sheltered accommodation for older people, these have been vacant since August 2021.

Proposed Development

- 1.4. The Applicant proposes the development of the site for 23 dwellings and associated landscaping, gardens, access and infrastructure.
- 1.5. The mix of dwellings is as follows:
 - 6 No - 1 bed 2 person Walk Up Flats
 - 6 No – 2 Bed 4 Person House
 - 5 no – 3 bed 5 person House
 - 3 no - 4 bed 6 person House
 - 2 no – 2 Bed 3 Person Bungalow
 - 1 No – 5 Bed Specialist House
- 1.6. The development would be of a design and character suitable to the local area. See Design and Access Statement for details and analysis in relation to design formulation.
- 1.7. Access to the site is off the existing access, but with improvements, as shown on the associated plans.
- 1.8. The application is being made by Wales and West Housing Association (WWHA). The Housing Association propose that the dwellings will be made available as affordable social rented properties to meet general need.

1.9. The application is supported by the following documentation:

Drawings:

R620	100	A	Site Location Plan
R620	102	B	Topographic Survey Plan
R620	103	D	Site Constraints Plan
R620	105		Proposed/Concept Site Plan
R620	106		Site Sections/Streetscape Elevations
R620	108		3D Views and Map Key
R620	109	A	Garden Arrangement Plan
R620	110		External Finishes Site Plan
R620	111		External Finishes Plan
R620	112		Boundary Treatment Plan
R620	113		Domestic Lighting Plan
R620	114	A	Site Level Plan
R620	115		Renewable Energy Plan
R620	116		Ecology Mitigation Plan
	122		2 Person 1 Bedroom Walk-Up Terraced Flats – Ground & First Floor Plans
	123		2 Person 1 Bedroom Walk-Up Terraced Flats – Elevations & Section
	126		3 Person 2 Bedroom Semi-Detached Bungalows – Floor Plans, Section & Elevations
	127		4 Person 2 Bedroom Semi-Detached House – Floor Plans, Section & Elevations
	128		5 Person 3 Bedroom Semi-Detached House – Floor Plans, Section & Elevations
	129		5 Person 3 Bedroom Terraced Houses – Floor Plans, Section & Elevations
	130		6 Person 4 Bedroom Detached House – Floor Plans, Section & Elevations
	131		6 Person 5 Bedroom Bespoke Detached House – Floor Plans, Section & Elevations

Also:

Existing Site Plan

Existing Elevations

Docs/Schemes:

- Drainage Strategy
- FCA
- Landscape Plan
- Preliminary Ecological Assessment
- Ecological Mitigation Plan
- Green Infrastructure Statement
- Arboriculture Impact Assessment
- Asbestos Survey

- Noise Impact Assessment
- Planning Statement
- Highways Technical Note
- PAC Report and Appendices

Policy Review
Principle

- 1.10. The basis for the local policy is the Local Development Plan (LDP). The LDP provides the rational basis for decisions in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in Planning Policy Wales (PPW).
- 1.11. The main Local Development Plan Policy relevant to the principle of new housing development is Policy BSC 1. This policy seeks to make provision for new housing in a range of locations, concentrating development within development boundaries of towns and villages. It encourages provision of a range of house

sizes, types and tenure to reflect local need and demand and the Local Housing market assessment.

1.12. The site is located within the development boundary of Rhyl where the general principle of development is acceptable. The current local housing figures/waiting list which is made available to the applicant as an affordable housing landlord, state that there is a current need for the following in Rhyl:

- 1 Bed : 345 needed
- 2 Bed : 97 needed
- 3 Bed: 71 needed

1.13. Policy BSC 1 of the Local Development Plan states that developers will be expected to provide a range of house sizes, types and tenures to reflect local need and demand.

1.14. Policy BSC3 of the local development plan sets the basic requirement for development to contribute where relevant to the provision of infrastructure including affordable housing, in line with Policy BSC4.

1.15. Policy BSC 4 seeks to ensure, where relevant, 10% affordable housing either on site on developments of 10 or more residential units or by way of a financial contribution on development of less than 10 residential units.

1.16. There is detailed guidance in the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance on the approach to provision and demand.

1.17. PPW states that a community's need for affordable housing is a material planning considerations which must be taken into account in the determination of planning applications. It states that where development plan policies make clear that an element of affordable housing is required on specific sites, this will be a material consideration.

1.18. The proposal is for 100% affordable housing units which exceeds the recommended threshold of 10% of the number of dwellings on a development in excess of 10 units under Policy BSC4.

1.19. The proposal would ensure a brownfield site is utilised to provide affordable housing to meet specific local housing need.

1.20. With regards to the principle of development, it is clear that the proposals to deliver affordable housing on a brownfield site in a sustainable location within a settlement, is acceptable and supported by Policy.

Density

- 1.21. LDP Policy RD1 test ii) states that a minimum density of 35 dwellings per hectare (d/ha) should be achieved in order to ensure the most efficient use of land, and that these minimum standards should be achieved unless there are local circumstances that dictate a lower density.
- 1.22. The development site area (excluding public open space) in this instance is indicated as 0.84 hectares. The proposal is for the erection of 23 dwellings/apartments, which is slightly below at 27 units per hectare based on the developable area.
- 1.23. The constraints of the site and the need to deliver SUDS, landscaping and garden areas means that the site is developed at a slightly lower density, but nonetheless, it delivers significant amount of affordable units to meet specific need, which should be given considerable weight in the planning balance.

Visual Amenity

- 1.24. Local Development Plan Policy RD 1 test (i) requires due regard to issues of siting, layout, form, character, design, materials, aspect, microclimate and intensity of use of land / buildings and spaces between buildings, which are matters relevant to the visual impact of development; test (iv) requires that development does not unacceptably affect prominent public views into, out of, or across any settlement or area of open countryside; test (vi) requires the incorporation of existing landscape or other features, takes account of site contours, and changes in levels and prominent skylines; and test (xiii) requires the incorporation of suitable landscaping measures to protect and enhance development in its local context.
- 1.25. The proposal would result in a very heavily landscaped scheme, with many natural features such as trees to be retained and added to the front of the site, with the existing access road curving into the site.
- 1.26. The proposed dwellings/buildings would be set back into the site, with landscaping on all site boundaries.
- 1.27. The layout of the site and the design of the buildings, would not appear obtrusive within the street scene and is reflective of its location and surroundings in terms of the general pattern, density and scale of built development. It is also a vast visual improvement on the current layout and design of the older 'Maes Emlyn Flats' which now look worn and outdated and have become an eyesore in the area.
- 1.28. Having regard to the location, siting, scale, form and landscaping details of the proposed development, the proposal would clearly not result in unacceptable impacts on visual amenity.

Residential Amenity

- 1.29. The Residential Design Guidance and the Residential Development SPG offers advice and guidance on the principles to be adopted when designing new

residential development. The Residential Space Standards SPG specifies minimum internal floorspace standards for new developments and requires that 40m² of private external amenity space should be provided as a minimum standard for residential dwellings. This is met by the scheme.

- 1.30. In line with PPW, as the dwellings are all affordable, they must be designed to meet Welsh Government funding requirements and the applicants (a Registered Social Landlord) design standards. This includes the Welsh Development Quality Requirements (WDQR 2021), Lifetime Homes Design criteria and Secured by Design. This process has been fully carried out by the applicant, as is the case with all of their development proposals.
- 1.31. In terms of privacy and overlooking, the Residential Development SPG at 6.41 states:

“Extensions and new built houses should not overlook neighbouring houses or gardens. If habitable rooms such as bedrooms, living rooms, studies or kitchens are proposed on the first floor or above, care should be taken to avoid direct overlooking from windows and balconies particularly where the extension is close to the boundary. In some cases such as sloping sites, care should be taken to avoid overlooking from ground floor extensions.” At 6.43 it states that “Where a proposed window to a lounge, dining room, bedroom or kitchen will directly face a similar window or a neighbouring property the distance between them should be at least 21 metres in a back to back situation. Where direct overlooking of a lounge, dining room, bedroom or kitchen can be avoided by the positioning of the windows then the distance can be a minimum of 18 metres.”

- 1.32. The layout of the proposed development ensures that these distances are met. Furthermore, the proposed development is replacing blocks of flats closer to existing dwellings than the proposed development.
- 1.33. Having regard to the location, siting, scale, form and landscaping details of the development, it is clear that the proposal would not give rise to unacceptable impacts on residential amenity.

Ecology

- 1.34. Local Development Plan Policy RD 1 test (iii) requires development to protect and where possible to enhance the local natural and historic environment.
- 1.35. Policy VOE 5 requires due assessment of potential impacts on protected species or designated sites of nature conservation, including mitigation proposals, and suggests that permission should not be granted where proposals are likely to cause significant harm to such interests. This reflects policy and guidance in PPW.

1.36. PPW, current legislation and the Conservation and Enhancement of Biodiversity SPG stress the importance of the planning system in meeting biodiversity objectives through promoting approaches to development which create new opportunities to enhance biodiversity, prevent biodiversity losses, or compensate for losses where damage is unavoidable.

1.37. PPW includes policies relating to green infrastructure, net benefits for biodiversity and the Step-Wise Approach, protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Trees and Woodlands.

1.38. In terms of 'Green Infrastructure' (GI), a strong emphasis should be put on taking proactive approach to green infrastructure. The proposed development has done this, and a GI statement has been provided.

1.39. There is also a need to demonstrate a Net Benefit for Biodiversity and the Step-wise Approach.

1.40. The proposal is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Preliminary Roost Assessment and Nesting Bird Assessment. These conclude that overall the site had low potential to support bats. The buildings have negligible- low suitability for roosting bats, there were no potential roosting features in the trees and the site had low quality foraging habitat for bats. It is possible that birds could use the building, trees and hedge for nesting. The site had potential for other protected species including reptiles. There were no Habitats of Principle Importance onsite.

1.41. Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) are recommended within the reports and they conclude that provided the recommended mitigation and enhancement measures are undertaken, there should be a net gain in biodiversity, no net loss of roosting or nesting sites nor any danger of harm to any species.

1.42. Subject to the imposition of an appropriately worded and agreed conditions, it is considered that the proposals are in line with the advice contained in PPW and would provide enhancement measures to increase the biodiversity opportunities at the site.

Drainage

1.43. LDP Policy RD 1 test (xi) requires that development satisfies physical or natural environmental considerations relating to drainage and liability to flooding. The drainage / flooding impacts of a development proposal are a material consideration, in line with PPW.

- 1.44. PPW at para states 'The adequacy of water supply and the sewage infrastructure should be fully considered when proposing development, both as a water service and because of the consequential environmental and amenity impacts associated with a lack of capacity'.
- 1.45. A Drainage Strategy has been included with the application which states that foul drainage will be via a network of adoptable foul sewers. Private drains from the properties will connect to the proposed sewer. Surface water drainage will be via SuDS, as shown on the associated plans.
- 1.46. It is accepted that approval will be required from the SuDS Approval Body (SAB).

- 1.47. Given the drainage strategies set out and submitted with this application, it is clear that an acceptable drainage scheme can be achieved on the site and delivered through the SuDS Approval Body process. The proposals are therefore considered acceptable in relation to drainage.

Highways and Access

- 1.48. Local Development Plan Policy RD 1 supports development proposals subject to meeting tests (vii) and (viii) which oblige provision of safe and convenient access for a range of users, together with adequate parking, services and manoeuvring space; and require consideration of the impact of development on the local highway network. Policy ASA 3 requires adequate parking spaces for cars and bicycles in connection with development proposals, and outlines considerations to be given to factors relevant to the application of standards. The Parking Standards in New Developments SPG sets out the maximum parking standards for new developments. These policies reflect general principles set out in PPW and TAN 18.

- 1.49. The application is accompanied by a Transport/Highways Statement
- 1.50. Having regard to the scale of the proposed development, the existing highways network and the submitted highways details, it is considered that the proposals would not have an unacceptable impact on the local highways network in terms of capacity. This is set out fully and confirmed in the Highways statement provided.
- 1.51. Having regard to the location of the existing site and existing arrangements it is considered that the proposals are acceptable in terms of accessibility and the policy requirements identified above.
- 1.52. The site layout and access is of a standard that is more than adequate for the proposed development.
- 1.53. In terms of parking, for private dwellings the Denbighshire Planning Guidance requests a maximum car parking provision of 1 car space per bedroom, up to a

maximum of 3 per dwelling with 1 visitor space per 5 units. The proposed plans show that this standard is met.

- 1.54. It is clear that the on-site highways arrangements are acceptable and taking into consideration the capacity of the existing highway network, accessibility, site access and site layout, there are no reasons why the application should be refused on highways impact reasons.

Open Space

- 1.55. Policy BSC 3 of the local development plan sets the basic requirement for development to contribute, where relevant, to the provision of infrastructure, including recreation and open space, in accordance with Policy BSC 11.
- 1.56. Policy BSC 11 specifies that all new housing developments should make adequate provision for recreation and open space. All such schemes put increased demand on existing open spaces and facilities and therefore the policy applies to all developments including single dwellings.
- 1.57. Table 4 in the Open Space SPG (adopted March 2017) sets out thresholds for on-site provision and financial contributions. It specifies that for schemes of 1 – 30 dwellings, open space obligations should be met through financial contributions rather than onsite provision, however 5.4.9 of the SPG does state that the thresholds are indicative, and onsite provision for sites of less than 30 will be considered on their merits.
- 1.58. Whilst there is provision of open space on the site, the applicant is open to discussion on these matters, and if a contribution is necessary, it can be secured via legal agreement.

Rhyl Conservation Area

- 1.59. The boundary of the Conservation Area is some distance away (approx. 400 metres) There is limited/no visibility of the application site from the Conservation Area. When standing outside the site itself (on the highway), views of the Conservation Area are distant/very limited. There is limited visual connectivity between the site and the Conservation Area. It is not considered that the proposal would have an unacceptable impact on the setting of the Rhyl Conservation Area.
- 1.60. To conclude, it is clear that that the proposal is fully compliant with all relevant policy and that planning permission should be granted.