

DC/2015/00606

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF ALLOCATION SITE SAH11 (XII) TO PROVIDE 10 DWELLINGS (INCLUDING 60% AFFORDABLE)

LAND TO THE SOUTH WEST OF PENALLT, MONMOUTH, NP25 4SB

RECOMMENDATION: Approve

Case Officer: Jo Draper

Date Registered: 13th July 2015

1.0 APPLICATION DETAILS

- 1.1 The site is allocated in the Local Development Plan for around 10 dwellings under Policy SAH11. Policy S4 relates to Affordable Housing Provision and states that in 'Main Villages' there is a requirement for at least 60% of the dwellings to be affordable. The proposal relates to six affordable dwellings and four market dwellings and therefore in principle complies with both S4 and SAH11.
- 1.2 The application site is currently in agricultural use (identified as being poor semi-improved grassland). The site does not have the benefit of an existing access into the site. There are no defensible boundaries to the west and south of the site as this application proposes to sub-divide an existing field. A new hedgerow is proposed to the south and west which together with the existing hedgerow along the northern and eastern boundary forms the strategic landscaping around the perimeter of the site. This is proposed to be managed separately outside of private ownership. A section of hedgerow to form the highway entrance is being translocated within the site.
- 1.3 This application has been subject to pre-application discussions and further negotiations during the course of this application. The proposed development seeks to deliver affordable provision through a ten unit mixed tenure scheme with 60% being identified as affordable housing; plots 5, 6 and 7 will be for social rent and will remain so in perpetuity, whereas plots 8, 9 and 10 will be 'intermediate' housing.
- 1.4 There are a mix of house types within the area; in the immediate vicinity there are two storey dwellings and modern bungalows situated on generous plots. In this case the application proposes three house types. The private detached dwellings comprise of two types of dwelling, both are similar in form and design, and in the case of plots 1, 2 and 3, the gable projects forward of the main elevation with a lower ridge whilst plot 4 is a traditional dwelling with a symmetrical frontage.
- 1.5 There are two rows of three terraced properties proposed and all have the same floor layout and design, the only exception being plot 10 that fronts the highway which has been treated differently on the external frontage as it forms a corner plot with primary frontages facing the highway and the access road

into the site. Whilst the scale of the market and affordable dwellings differ, the form of both the market and affordable dwellings is very similar. The eaves and ridge height are 4.5m and 8.2m high respectively, the roof gradients vary from 45 degrees on the prominent frontages with a minimum of 38 degrees on the other roof slopes. The walls are a mix of natural stone and brick with all prominent frontages on both private and affordable dwellings finished in natural stone with the 'Audley Antique' brick being used on the less prominent frontages. The external materials are the same throughout the site, there having been no compromise made for the affordable housing as all six affordable units match the materials proposed for the private dwellings on this site and comprise of the following:

Roof: natural slate

Rainwater goods: black plastic

Chimneys to be faced with brick slips to match main walls

Walls: Bricks 'Audley Antique' or natural stone (laid to random rubble pattern, mortar joints to be flush pointed or slightly recessed)

Sills and Lintels: reconstituted stone

Joinery: timber windows and exterior doors painted opaque finish (colour cream or off white)

- 1.6 With regard to car parking, each plot has a minimum of one space per bedroom up to a maximum of three spaces where there are three or more bedrooms (without including integral garages). Visitor spaces are to be largely accommodated on street. The boundary materials comprise of hedgerows to the front boundaries with a 1.8m high boundary to the rear gardens. The rear boundaries adjacent to the strategic landscaping on the 'garden side' would be a 1.2m high post and rail fence to demarcate ownership boundaries.
- 1.7 With regard to foul drainage a septic tank is provided for each private unit whilst a private package sewage treatment plant is proposed to serve the affordable units.
- 1.8 This application has been subject to revisions with subsequent changes in house design and layout. The dwellings have been lowered with the eaves and ridge height measuring 4.5m and 8.2m in height respectively for the private detached and affordable dwellings. External materials have been changed to natural materials; chimneys have been added; external chimneys replaced by more traditionally designed internal stacks; a hierarchy of windows has been introduced; hipped roofs on garages have been replaced by traditional pitched roofs; hedgerows demarcate front boundaries; a small informal open space has been created within the site and the layout has been altered to provide a more open aspect when accessing the plots to the south-east of the site.
- 1.9 The application site is within the Wye Valley AONB.

2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

3.0 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Strategic Policies

S1 – Spatial Distribution of New Housing Provision
S4-Affordable Housing Provision
SAH11(xii)-Main Villages Land to the south west of Penallt -around 10 dwellings
S13 – Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment
S16 Transport
S17 – Place Making and Design

Development Management Policies

NE1 – Nature Conservation and Development
DES1 – General Design Considerations
EP1 – Amenity and Environmental Protection
MV1 – Proposed Developments and Highway Considerations
LC4 – Wye Valley AONB

4.0 REPRESENTATIONS

4.1 Consultations Replies

Trellech Community Council: Refuse

- Plans represent an over-development of the site. The density of the housing is quite different to the existing pattern in the village and not in keeping with it.
- The density requires a separate shared parking area with hard surface at the lowest point. This will exacerbate existing problems with drainage
- Social housing should be integrated, not segregated from the open market properties
- Additional landscaping should be required to minimise the impact on the neighbours

Gwent Glamorgan Archaeological Trust: No objection to the positive determination of the application

Monmouthshire Biodiversity Officer: The ecological assessment is sufficient. Welcome the addition of planting of fruit trees on the site which will be of benefit to pollinators and contribute to the GI approach. Further Green Infrastructure Plans have been provided; comments to be reported as Late Correspondence.

Natural Resources Wales: No objection to proposed foul water drainage or ecology of the site subject to relevant planning conditions being imposed that require the following to be submitted:

- A method statement based on the recommendations outlined in Section 6.0 (Conclusions and Mitigation) of the report 'Land at South West Penallt Monmouthshire- Phase 1 Habitat Survey & Ecological Impact Assessment' as

modified by advice on timing of the translocation of the hedgerow to September – October or mid-April – May to minimise risk/harm to dormice.

- Lighting plans

Monmouthshire Housing and Community Services: Fully supports this development; it will provide much needed affordable housing for those in housing need in the Trellech Community Council area.

Monmouthshire Highways and Drainage Officer: Having reviewed the submission and with particular regard to the supporting technical information, namely:

Transport Assessment May 2015

Drawing No. PG/03/D - Site Layout as Proposed

Drawing No. PG/14/A - Drainage Layout Plan as Proposed

There are no objections to the proposed development from a highway standpoint subject to the following:

Junction Visibility: The traffic speed and volume surveys indicate that although the main road is subject to the national speed limit the actual speeds are significantly less and on average in either direction the speed of vehicles is circa 35/37mph. Transport, the actual visibility requirements should be 2.4m x 90.0m. The junction visibility indicated on Drawing No PG/03/D demonstrates that the required visibility of 2.4m x 90.0m is achievable.

Shared Surface: The proposal to serve the 10 dwellings via a shared surface access road is deemed acceptable in the circumstances considering the limited impact the development will have.

Highway and Surface Water Drainage: Following discussions with the applicant the applicant has considered the highway surface water drainage associated with the shared surface and submitted revised drainage details as indicated on Drawing No. PG/14/A - Drainage Layout Plan as Proposed. The applicant has considered the drainage sustainability issue and promoted the use of roadside swales to both store and control discharge of surface water to the ground and to the existing roadside ditch. The proposal also provides a degree of betterment and a balancing regime for the surface water run-off from the existing highway and proposed shared residential road.

I would offer no objection to the proposed Highway Surface Water Drainage as submitted.

Car Parking: The development provides adequate parking provision and is in accordance with the Councils Parking Standards 2012.

Highway Adoption: The proposed shared access road lends itself for consideration for adoption as a publically maintained highway under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980. Although the applicant may be willing to offer the shared surface road for adoption, conditions to be imposed are recommended accordingly.

Walking & Cycling: The site and Penallt itself is not well placed in respect of walking and cycling, although the area does not benefit from footways the ability for pedestrians and cyclists to share the highway with other users is achievable due to the low number and low speeds of vehicles that use the network on a daily basis. Although walking and cycling should be actively encouraged and promoted, regrettably it is unrealistic to secure off-site improvements to encourage and promote walking and cycling as there are no discernible locations in the vicinity of the development that people could legitimately walk or cycle to.

Public Transport: Penallt is on the local bus link between Monmouth and Chepstow, bus stops are located within walking distance of the site and the frequency of service is reasonable considering its predominantly rural location; the bus service provides wider opportunities to travel further afield from either Monmouth or Chepstow. Considering the scale and number of dwellings promoted the increase in passenger demand is likely to be low and enhancement of the existing bus service is unlikely.

4.2 Neighbour Notification

There have been 17 representations received to date, the points raised are summarised below:

- Questioned transport assessment – queries the notion that the absence of accidents is evidence that the pedestrian environment is safe where it is, it says nothing about how the safety is being achieved or what effect this have upon the development
- Monmouth being reached by cycle is very impractical and this form of transport cannot be considered an option when assessing sustainability of transport from this site
- The bus schedule is wholly inappropriate for normal commuting and it runs at the wrong time
- The infrastructure needed to serve and deliver sustainable transport is not in place
- Using percentiles and averages is misleading
- Potential overflow from septic tanks and cascading effect on run-off down to the cross roads in the village
- The proposed development is prominent in an open landscape and is more than 4 dwellings
- Proposed site is out of character with the surrounding landscape and village form being tightly knit, not of a stone/render combination and not set back from the roadside; brick is inappropriate
- Houses in Green Pastures are overlooked - growing hedges higher will block sunlight
- Site is sloping with copious amounts of water in wet weather; this is due to the water table and numerous natural springs within the land
- Road access is dangerous and is too close to the cross roads with cars travelling at speed; this will be too dangerous
- Over-development of the site – the site would work better with 5 affordable and 3 market
- Questioned the timing of the porosity test as it was undertaken during an unusually dry extended period
- Lighting should not spill out
- Little green space
- Noise pollution arising from the site layout splitting the affordable units and spreading across the site would help.
- Construction vehicles would be noisy
- Impact upon tourism/ visitors by blocking views of the AONB
- Parking area is poorly designed with little turning area and cars parked nose to tail

- Questioned the necessity of 10 new houses when there are currently 14/15 houses for sale within a mile of the centre of Penallt which have been on the market for a significant period of time.
- The outcome of the Local Development Plan sessions regarding this plot of land was that it would not support 10 houses – oversight of the staff to include this number
- Too much visible segregation between affordable and market use of different materials
- No effort to soften the view of the scheme
- The encroachment of the development onto agricultural land creates a precedent for ribbon development
- The house types reflect the current demand in the area; there is a shortage of low maintenance , high quality apartments
- Site is prone to flooding
- The village has no amenities - school, shop surgery, infrequent bus service, etc.
- Layout reflects an urban context not a rural one
- Cramped conditions will force families out onto the main road, skateboarding etc.
- Poor soil is unable to take the effluent as none of the culverts are maintained; this shows that further properties will exacerbate the problem
- The driveways and access road should be a permeable surface

5.0 EVALUATION

The principle of developing on this site with ‘around 10 dwellings’ has been established with the allocation of this site under LDP Policy SAH11(xii) . Policy S4 relates to Affordable Housing Provision and states that in Main Villages there is a requirement for at least 60% of the dwellings to be affordable. The proposal relates to six affordable dwellings and four market dwellings complying with Policy S4 and SAH11 in principle. The detailed issues that arise in the consideration of this application are as follows:

Landscape and Visual Impact

Neighbour Impact

Highways and Surface Water Drainage

Foul Drainage

Other Issues Raised

Response to Community Council Comments

5.1 Landscape and Visual Impact

5.1.1 The site is located in the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and as such Policy LC4 is applicable and the proposal must not detract unacceptably from its setting. A high standard of landscaping is therefore required for this site, particularly as there are no existing ‘defensible boundaries’ on the southern or western edges of the site. The landscaping that has been proposed around the perimeter of the site works well, serving to establish a strong indigenous hedgerow boundary that provides a sense of enclosure and containment without the introduction of hard settlement features

that would adversely affect the surrounding landscape. The hedgerow continues within the site and provides a softer rural frontage to all the proposed dwellings.

5.1.2 This development will be visible from surrounding viewpoints, so it is important that the built form works visually both from outside the site looking in and from within the site looking out. The site slopes from the east rising up to the west, and the proposed dwellings gradually rise up, with plots 1 and 2 at the highest point of the site while the higher density houses are situated in the lower part of the site. The section drawing of the site (Drawing PG04 Rev B) shows how the proposed dwellings gradually step up from the highway viewpoint. The garages are strategically placed to provide relief in the built form, and there is more than adequate spacing between the dwellings and the outside boundaries for the proposed scheme to not appear as an over-development of the site.

5.1.3 There has been concern raised by neighbours regarding the proximity of the dwellings to the highway. In the case of plot 1 the house is set at an angle to the highway frontage, and it sits comfortably within the plot, relating well to main viewpoints into the site. Plot 10 has been revised so that this dwelling reflects the characteristic of a traditional cottage both in form and design and its relationship with the highway. It is not uncharacteristic to find traditional cottages that almost 'hug' the highway frontage and this proposed stone-fronted dwelling will reflect such a development.

5.1.4 Finally, concern has been raised about the use of brick; this has been predominantly used on the secondary frontages with natural stone being the dominant, primary material. The proposed brick has a traditional 'reclaimed' appearance that compliments the other high quality materials and is welcomed in this case. The proposed dwellings are of a simple, traditional form and design that work well within this rural aspect. This, coupled with the proposed high quality external materials and a strong landscaping scheme, effectively delivers a site that assimilates well into the surrounding landscape and forms an attractive development, as well as a sense of place. The proposal is visually acceptable within this setting and complies with the relevant planning policies in this case.

5.2 Neighbour Amenity

5.2.1 The main potential impact relates to the dwellings immediately opposite the application site. The layout has been designed to meet the privacy guidelines between first floor habitable windows and the boundaries for private amenity spaces. There is no direct overlooking caused by this development, the closest neighbouring property to this site is Stone Barn House, and a distance of approximately 27m separates the frontage of the proposed dwelling on plot 10 from the front of this neighbouring dwelling. In addition, mature foliage that forms the frontage to the neighbouring property softens any viewpoints into this site. The impact of the proposed development upon the amenity of this neighbouring property would be minimal.

5.2.2 The size and position of the proposed gardens vary, although they are proportional to the size of the dwellings that they serve. When considered with the small informal open space that is proposed on site, the amenity of the future occupiers of these dwellings is more than acceptable in this case.

5.3 Highways and Surface Water Drainage

5.3.1 The proposal has been revised to satisfy highway and drainage concerns. The details submitted are now satisfactory. A neighbour has raised concern regarding the transport assessment and sustainability of the site. It is recognised above by MCC Highways that *“the site is not well placed in respect of walking and cycling, although the area does not benefit from footways the ability for pedestrians and cyclists to share the highway with other users is achievable due to the low number and low speeds of vehicles that use the network on a daily basis. Although walking and cycling should be actively encouraged and promoted, regrettably it is unrealistic to secure off-site improvements to encourage and promote walking and cycling as there are no discernible locations in the vicinity of the development that people could legitimately walk or cycle to.....Penallt is on the local bus link between Monmouth and Chepstow, bus stops are located within walking distance of the site and the frequency of service is reasonable considering its predominantly rural location, the bus service provides wider opportunities to travel further afield from either Monmouth or Chepstow.”*

5.3.2 With regard to surface water drainage a revised scheme has been submitted wherein the applicant has considered the sustainable drainage issue and promoted the use of roadside swales to both store and control discharge of surface water to the ground and to the existing roadside ditch. Representations received from neighbours have raised concern regarding the potential for flooding. This proposal offers a degree of betterment and a balancing regime for the surface water run-off from the existing highway and proposed shared residential road. The proposal satisfies both highway and surface water drainage concerns.

5.4 Foul Drainage

5.4.1 This proposal is located in an area where there is no mains drainage which is why an on-site sewage treatment plant is proposed. Welsh Water commented to this effect during the Local Development Plan process but did not raise any concern. Concern has been raised by neighbours regarding the potential of flooded septic tanks and effluent issues which currently exist in the village being further aggravated by the proposed development. The applicant has submitted a Ground Investigation Report (Core Geotechnics Ltd SW of Penallt Monmouth 16 March 2015). Natural Resources Wales have assessed the drainage proposals including the assessment of the risks to the water environment, there is no objection to the findings of the report for the purposes of this application. Further control and specification is issued through the application for a permit to discharge which is covered under separate legislation. It can be concluded therefore that information provided for foul drainage is acceptable for the purposes of this planning application.

5.5 Response to the Representations of the Community/ Town Council

- i) Over-development of the plot – this has been addressed in Paragraph 5.1.2 above.
- ii) Density requires a separate shared parking area with hard surface at the lowest point that will exacerbate drainage – this issue has been addressed in Paragraph 5.3.2 above.
- iii) Social Housing should be integrated not segregated from the open market properties.
MCC Planning Response: plots 8, 9 and 10 are situated at the entrance point to the site, and the aspect of these properties face the highway, a highway that is shared and immediately overlooked by the market dwellings. These plots are viewed as an integral part of the development. Plots 5, 6 and 7 are served by the same access road with a frontage that faces north and a south-facing rear garden; this sits broadly level with the adjacent plot 4 which is a market dwelling and shares the same aspect as that of plots 2 and 3. In this case the affordable units are not visually distinct, and functionally relate well to all other dwellings as the informal open space that serves the overall site is located to the front of these affordable units. The development is considered to be integrated and works successfully with the constraints of the site to provide an efficient yet non-segregated form of development.
- iv) Additional landscaping required to minimise the impact on neighbours – this has been addressed in paragraph 5.1.1 above.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Subject to a Section 106 agreement that secures the following:

- (i) 60% Affordable Housing (Plots 5 - 10)
- (ii) Maintenance and management of the strategic landscaping by Seren Housing Group (Strategic landscaping that forms the boundary to the affordable dwellings and vendor in accordance with approved maintenance and management schedule to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority)
- (iii) Maintenance and Management of the 'Informal Open Space' by Seren Housing Group

Conditions:

1. Time Condition (five years in which to commence development)
2. Implementation in accordance with approved plans
3. Compliance with agreed external materials
4. A method statement based on the recommendations outlined in Section 6.0 (Conclusions and Mitigation) of the report 'Land at South West Penallt Monmouthshire- Phase 1 Habitat Survey & Ecological Impact Assessment' (as modified by advice on timing of the translocation of the hedgerow to September – October or mid-April – May to minimise risk/harm to dormice)
5. Submission of a Lighting scheme
6. Implementation of landscaping scheme.
7. Protection/ maintenance of landscaping.

8. Removal of Permitted Development Rights for solar panels.
9. No boundary materials other than that approved as part of the planning application.
10. No development shall be commenced until details of the proposed arrangements for future management and maintenance of the proposed streets within the development have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. [The streets shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the approved management and maintenance details until such time as an agreement has been entered into under section 38 of the Highways Act 1980 or a private management and maintenance company has been established].