

Old Primary School Site – Ponciau –Responses following Planning Officer's comments

1/ Ecology

The Ecology Mission statement is being dealt with by our Ecologist. We intend to carry out a comprehensive newt survey using official newt handlers in early March, which we believe to be the earliest opportunity when this further survey can be carried out. We would suggest this be made a planning condition as clearly the timescales for securing the WAG grant are a major consideration with this development.

2/ Has there been any progress regarding discussions with the neighbours, re-boundary treatment, trees, etc? Detailed cross section between plots 21 and Eaton would be helpful. The position of the hedge at the side of Eaton should be shown, and the retaining wall. Are you going to remove the self seeded sycamore trees behind plots 11 and 12? Has the Ownership issue been resolved at this location, or by 5 Emlyn Terrace?

Yes, W WHA have visited the neighbours and we believe an agreement has been reached. The gentleman at Eaton has agreed to W WHA removing the trees (W WHA will forward this agreement in writing). No.5 Emlyn Terrace, the matter is being dealt with and will be resolved. A legal agreement will be put in place to deal with the matter and we believe the outcome of this is that the boundary will remain the same as shown on our site plan.

3/ Any chance of showing the visibility splays on the submitted site layout plan so that these splays can be provided and maintained in accordance with the 'approved plan' under one planning condition? Some of the issues would be removed if the pavement is 2m wide along the School Lane frontage. If not the splays should be shown on the plan, and the boundary walls should be set behind these lines.

As requested we have increased the width of the pavement along School Lane frontage to 2m as shown on drawing C741.04C. We believe this resolves highways concerns.

4/ New boundary walls are they 900mm plus piers, or is this the total height of the wall? They have also confirmed that there should be no gates for the vehicular access points within 5m of the public highway, and therefore the gates along School Lane will have to be deleted.

The boundary walls and piers will be no more than 900mm high. The gates have been removed.

5/ No finished levels for the plots have been shown - this information is important for a sloping site.

Proposed levels have been shown on the latest site plan.

6/ Cross section between plot 4 and Emlyn Terrace would be helpful.

Detailed Cross sections between plot 4 and Emlyn Terrace and Plot 21 and Eaton will be sent through to you once we have been given some additional levels from our surveyors. We will endeavour to send you drafts of them by Monday using the information we already have available. We do not anticipate any problems in resolving the level differences and have kept the parking spaces away from the retaining wall. This will keep these structures as low as practicable.

- 7/ Generally, plots 13 and 14 should be in line with School Lane as the use of a splayed arrangement is not so commonly seen in this area.

We have previously explained our reasons why we feel that the two properties (plots 13 & 14) should overlook the site entrance in our earlier e-mail of 12/11/2009. We have major concerns that the rear parking area will be too conspicuous if the properties align with School Lane and Secure by Design problems will result. Too much parking to the rear may create an un-desirable anti-social space which could create problems for the residents.

While we appreciate your comments and there may be examples of local vernacular linear form, there are a number of issues we are trying to address not least is the importance of generating a 'welcoming feel' to this very important social housing scheme. In an attempt to generate more acceptable solution, we feel a compromise can be struck.

Our latest site layout plan therefore pulls together a number of important design considerations. The new properties are placed closer together as you have suggested but using splayed semi's similar to the corner plots 19 and 20 therefore creating a more linear connected terrace effect and providing larger more useable rear garden areas. By better articulating the corner and using the cranked house plan form we have introduced a more linear form while respecting the 'splayed form' of the site entrance of the former school. This will not only provide a more welcoming site entrance it will make the development a more pleasant and safer environment for people to live. By retaining a partial splay to plots 13 and 14 it will provide them with privacy to their rear gardens and enable better surveillance of the parking area to the rear of these properties.

There are examples of local vernacular which depart from the more common terraced form (e.g detached houses/ corner dwellings) and some of these are not parallel/ or perpendicular to the surrounding development.

- 8/ Brick is the most appropriate external material for the development, and the use of render is not so desirable - and so this detail should be deleted from plots 13 and 14 and 21.

Please find enclosed several photographs taken in the area showing a mix of render and brick. We think a little variety will help to break up the development as it does elsewhere in the village. Can you please re-consider this issue.

- 9/ It might also be more appropriate for the School Lane frontage of the scheme to have a more terraced character - perhaps by reducing the width between some of the semi-detached plots, and put the car parking at the rear.

Item 7 explains how we have achieved this. We have reduced the widths between the semi-detached plots where possible and moved the parking to the rear as suggested on our latest plan creating more unifying effect.

Please find enclosed photographs taken around Ponciau showing a mixture of Semi's, terraces and single plot dwellings.

- 10/ The position of the parking space for plot 21 seems too tight to the spaces for plot 20. Perhaps the parking space for plot 21 needs to be moved over a bit, to put the garden path/shed the other side.

As requested we have moved the parking space for 21 over. Unfortunately, the parking and shed cannot swap positions due to levels on the site, the retaining wall, and the parking allows for movement/ turning circles. If we move the parking further over this would also reduce the useable area within the garden and 'load up' the retaining wall which we do not want to do.

- 11/ In accordance with MIPPS 01/2009: Planning for Sustainable Buildings (dated May 09), the scheme is required to meet Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 and obtain 6 credits under issue Ene1 Dwelling Emission Rate under Code for Sustainable Homes Technical Guidance.

In accordance with latest guidance from WAG (and even though this is still draft guidance), please confirm whether the site has been registered with an independent Code Assessor, and please supply details of its registration number. Also has a pre-assessment summary been carried out to verify how Code 3 and the 6 credits will be achieved by this layout, and how do the amended plans impact upon this? Perhaps further explanation is required within the DAS.

Our Assessor has been appointed Philip Oliver of Munro Associates. Contact - Munro Associates, Charlton House, Drayton's Passage, Shoplatch, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY1 1HF.

The site is now registered with BRE. The registration number is BRE-00006423-DS-001-00

Please find attached the Pre Assessment Estimator which demonstrates how the proposed development could potentially achieve Code level 3.

"The Estimator is based on the site plan and house type drawings by Ainsley Gomon, but we have also made a number of assumptions regarding the specification of the dwellings and details of the existing site. Generally we have gone for credits which we consider will be the simplest to achieve based on our experience of this type of development. All credits will be subject to the scheme being developed in line with the CSH Technical Guide (copy attached). The Estimator should be read in conjunction with the Technical Guide which gives details of how credits can be achieved and the evidence required to demonstrate compliance.

Eventually every dwelling on the site will be individually assessed for the Code, but this Estimator assumes a "generic" dwelling on the site. We trust this will be sufficient to accompany the Planning Application'.