

I wish to object to the planning application by Redrow Housing for the land between Windmill Lane, Llanblethian, and St Athan Road, Cowbridge on the basis of:

Cowbridge Town Council's own objections:

Cowbridge Town Council unanimously rejected the inclusion of Site 370 in the RLDP on 24 February 2026 which makes me infer that little or no involvement of the local council in identifying and discussing the local placemaking criteria and assessment of the various Cowbridge sites has been taken into account.

We live here: we as residents should have our views taken into consideration. Cowbridge Town Council has done this; the Vale Planning Department and its officers rides rough-shod over this by including the site in the RDLP.

In short, this development neither adds to the character of Llanblethian and in particular the Thaw Valley, a Special Landscape Area, nor to the societal well-being of current residents.

Environmental and Landscape Impacts

Planning Policy for Wales 2021: 6.3.4 Where adverse effects on landscape character cannot be avoided, it will be necessary to refuse planning permission

The proposed development impacts a Special Landscape area and, in my opinion, would damage aesthetic aspect on the land character of the whole Thaw Valley; approaching from St Athan, the new development would be highly visible. The extant housing is well screened by mature hedging and trees from the same approach. Land character may arguably be subjective; however, what is not subjective is the impact on the rural environment which would result from this development. For example, the land slopes towards an area of wetland cum marsh which not only provides a widely-vanishing habitat but also a natural soak-away for the land on all sides; the plans show no acceptable protection for this area. (Consider also the increased likelihood of high rainfall events which we are experiencing.)

Further more, I believe the proposed development would destroy high quality (Grade 1, 2 and 3a) agricultural land at a time when food-security is of growing importance.

The impact on the wider environment must also be taken into consideration; as an example, consider the impact of CO₂ generation and increased NO_x concentrations (unless of course all transport and machinery during that time is electric?) during construction.

Finally, the archaeological importance is as yet not fully understood. Cowbridge prides itself in its historical significance, with not only extensive medieval remains but Roman occupation evidence. Removing from the local area history as-yet undefined Iron-age remains would be a tragedy, which would occur if this was not comprehensively investigated and protected if found to be as predicted.

Character, Place and local Significance of Site:

The application appears to have considerable flaws of suitability when compared with other sites proposed in and around the area, especially as Bryn Mellin has many features consistent in impact with others, such as 367 south of Llantwit Major Rd (Amber), 455 Primrose Hill (Red) but is designated Green or "more suitable for development". This is despite Bryn Melin having very poor access to pedestrian, cycle and bus routes and therefore will result in significant increase in car usage (see further discussion below). This will also likely have significant impact on the residents of

Windmill Lane and residents will have their privacy and security impacted by the increased pedestrian traffic caused by the development of the site trying to access Broad Way/Love Lane for the easiest pedestrian access to Cowbridge.

Housing Density

The application for 105 dwellings is on the basis of a “need” for new housing in Cowbridge. This in itself is not accurate, given the current +450 dwellings with permission to be developed in Clare Gardens, Cowbridge, not all of which have been built. The actual density of housing on the proposed development offers very minimal amenity space (compared to the adjacent Brookfield Park as shown on the Site Location Plan 01), especially for the largest of the proposed dwellings. Environmentally, this also offers little in the way of compensation for the loss of habitats by the destruction of the site in its current agricultural usage, not to mention for the would-be residents. Furthermore, the site is sloped towards a wet land area (adjacent to the sewage works) so either runoff will reduce due to extensive areas of hard paving resulting from so many dwellings (impacting this seasonally variable habitat) or it will be increased due to the same hard paving, extending the boundaries of the wet land, which could require curtailing by intervention. In either case, there are obvious impacts, although the habitat impacts are by far the most concerning. On this note, while the Welsh Water document (16aa926b-40b8-11ed-9ff3-000000273616.doc) suggests the sewage works below this wet land area is capable of supporting the proposed development it does note conditions for this and also for potable water supply, especially pre-existing problems with supply. Considering the density of proposed dwellings at 105 (therefore, conservatively, in excess of 300 additional users), this is a lot of extra potable water usage from a supply that at present is considered to have issues and suggests extra reticulation would be required, with its inherent disruption. (The Energy Savings Trust estimates the average UK person uses 142 litres of water per day and a household of four uses around 349 litres per day. They estimated this increased by 25% during the COVID lockdowns.)

Given the range of house sizes (the designs of which are, incidentally, unsympathetic and intrusive, especially for Windmill Lane itself), the probable population increase is also of concern in respect of the ability of local schools (both primary and secondary) and medical practices, including dentistry, to cope with the increased numbers.

Road Traffic

The proposed development density also gives rise to a higher density of cars with the associated environmental and road traffic impacts. Of the 105 dwellings, a number are so-called “affordable” which implies “restricted” incomes: however, so far from amenities such as shops and even a bus stop, these 46 units would still require access to a car. (I could find no reference to access to public transport close to or within the proposed development. At present, the nearest bus stops are at the end of St Athan Road, on Cardiff Road.)

At best, 105 dwellings means 105 extra vehicles. In reality, it would mean considerably more. The impact on the narrow access to St Athan Road and on the existing traffic densities is easily imaginable, notwithstanding the findings of the traffic survey as this survey entirely failed to take into account traffic accessing St Athan Road at the junction of Broadway prior to the junction with Cardiff Road. Access from Broadway to the aforementioned junction is managed with a “yellow box” on St Athan Road; however, in “normal” weekday morning traffic conditions cars attempting to exit Broadway to access the junction can be delayed through more than one change of lights. If the

density of housing is as planned, then traffic out of Broadway to this junction can reasonably be expected to be severely impacted, most especially during term-time. Similarly, traffic intent on accessing Broadway from Cardiff Road must slow immediately on turning into St Athan Road which, given the expected increase in traffic expecting to continue along St Athan Road to the proposed development, increases the likelihood of road traffic collisions. On the subject of term-time traffic, with the development of a primary school on the comprehensive school site, almost all the children from the proposed development would be driven to school along this route. There is a possibility that some children will walk, but my personal experience is that this isn't a common occurrence, especially in wet (or cold) weather. Cycling even for older pupils would be out of the question due to (perceived?) road safety issues.

It should also be noted that Cowbridge would not provide many employment possibilities for the new residents which presumably means increased commuter traffic on the A48. The current eastbound "on ramp" is inadequate as it stands and access to the westbound A48 would require use of the High Street, which can be congested during peak hours especially during termtime, or using Broadway as a cut-through to access the A48 via Constitution Hill to avoid the bulk of the High Street.

Despite the availability of routes to walk into Cowbridge, it is unlikely that many residents of the proposed site would do this when intending to shop, so road traffic use would remain high as it is a stiff uphill climb! It's also improbable that many if any would cycle into Cowbridge for the same reason.

The environmental impact of (an extremely conservative) 105 extra vehicles should also be weighed. It cannot be supposed that many would be electric when occupancy first takes place therefore the emissions impacts, especially for slow moving traffic held at the aforementioned choke point of the junction with Cardiff Road should be of concern and should be quantified.

Vehicular activity during the construction phase should also be considered. The access is, as noted, very narrow and on a dangerous corner. The HGV which will need to access the site on a daily basis, not to mention earth moving plant, during the construction phase will increase the potential for road traffic collisions and disruption. This disruption will impact St Athan Road, especially at the traffic light at the junction with Cardiff Road, and likely conflict with school children being taken to the Cowbridge Comprehensive and associate primary school.

Highway Safety: child safety

Active Travel guidance Wales: The application assumes cycle and walking access to both schools and amenities. In both cases this is flawed: it might be a down-hill approach to the town centre, but it is decidedly uphill which would preclude all but an enthusiastic cyclist and certainly not a child from attempting the return journey on a regular basis (and especially with shopping), whilst it would be impossible for children to walk to school as the access onto St Athan Road would remain narrow and dangerous. Couple this with the fact that all new primary school places will be at the new primary school based at the site of the secondary school (not Broadway, as currently, except for Welsh speaking pupils) which would require the children to walk along an acknowledged narrow and hazardous footpath, after using a pedestrian crossing on a very busy four-way intersection. The impact of the additional cars taking these children to and from school would not improve general pedestrian safety, especially since vehicular access is acknowledged to be restricted to a single

access point: this cannot be a safe option for 105 dwellings and is not conducive to pedestrian or cycle safety.

Existing “new” developments

The development known locally as “Darren Farm” has not yet been fully built: does this not show that Cowbridge is at a point of new-housing limit if not saturation? That site has safer access to amenities and road transport links than the proposed development on Windmill Lane and yet remains incomplete. There are a number of bus stops within easy walking distance of the “Darren Farm” development: the closest to the proposed development is at the busy intersection of St Athan Road and Primrose Hill/High Street which makes it inaccessible (or at best difficult) for those with mobility issues and children.