




BARRATT
HOUSING GROUP PLC

Phase II
Land South of Glebe Road
Loughor
Swansea

Welsh Language Action Plan
DRAFT FOR PAC
Barratt Homes South Wales Ltd

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Welsh Language Action Plan has been prepared by Barratt Homes South Wales Ltd (“the Applicant”) in support of a full planning application for 23 homes at Land south of Glebe Road (Phase II), Loughor Swansea (“the Application Site”). The full application description (“the Proposed Development”) is as follows:

“Full planning application for the erection of 23 no. homes with associated access, landscaping, drainage and associated works”.

- 1.2 The Proposed Development will deliver a mix of two, three and four bedroom houses. Three units will be affordable homes and the remaining 20 will be open market dwellings.
- 1.3 The Application Site is situated within the ward of Upper Loughor. Using a figure given by the 2011 Census for the average household size in the Upper Loughor Ward (2.36), the proposed development would result in a population increase of 55 (2.36 x 23).
- 1.4 The Proposed Development is illustrated on the proposed site layout plan reproduced below:



Proposed Site Layout

- 1.5 Section 2 of this report describes the Application Site and Surroundings, Section 3 set out the Planning Policy Context; Section 4 examines the Local Ward context; Section 5 summarises Consultation and Engagement in relation to the proposal and Section 6 discusses whether Mitigation Measures are necessary. Conclusions are set out in Section 7.

2.0 Application Site & Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site is located in the south of Loughor, a village located within the county of Swansea, approximately 11km to the north east of Swansea City Centre. The urban area of Gorseinon is situated 1.5km to the north east and the Loughor Estuary is situated 0.5 km to the west.
- 2.2 The site is fairly regular in shape and in terms of topography, it falls from north to south. The site is bounded to the north by the rear curtilages of residential properties on Glebe Road (B4620), to the west by the rear curtilages of residential properties on Greenfield Place, to the south by undeveloped agricultural fields, and to the east by Barratt Homes' existing residential development ("Chapel Fields"). The wider area is mainly residential in character, although there are a number of local shops, services and facilities.
- 2.3 The Application Site comprises approximately 0.9 ha of greenfield land. The site presently comprises agricultural grassland and is enclosed by hedgerows, trees and dense scrub. The northern part of the site has already been cleared, however, and currently contains the construction site compound for Barratt's adjoining residential development to the west.
- 2.4 Access to the site is via the Phase I Chapel Fields development by Barratt Homes, which is accessed via a mini-roundabout junction with Glebe Road to the north.
- 2.5 The Application Site is accessible to a range of local services and facilities including employment opportunities by a range of sustainable transport modes (i.e. foot, cycle and public transport).
- 2.6 The site is situated in a sustainable location. In summary, there is a Nisa Local Fuel Station and Convenience Store, a Place of Worship and a takeaway adjacent to the site entrance on Glebe Road. The Globe Inn Public House is situated 120m to the north east, a Community Centre is located 150m to the north, and a Post Office is situated 1km to the west.

3.0 Planning Policy Context

- 3.1 The Application Site forms part of a wider allocation for new residential development within the adopted City and County of Swansea Local Development Plan (LDP) (February, 2019). Policy H1.32 (“Land South of Glebe Road”) states that the wider site has an indicative capacity for 130 units in the plan period. Phase I, which is currently under construction, comprises 92 units.
- 3.2 LDP Policy HC 1 *Historic and Cultural Environment* states that the County’s distinctive historic and cultural environment will be preserved or enhanced by safeguarding and promoting use of the Welsh language.
- 3.3 The site is situated within the Welsh Language Sensitive Area as defined in the LDP. LDP Policy HC3: *Development in Welsh Language Sensitive Areas* states that the Welsh Language will be supported and promoted throughout the County. Within the Welsh Language Sensitive Areas it is stated that developments of 10 or more dwellings will be required to submit a **Welsh Language Action Plan** which sets out measures to be taken to protect, promote and enhance the Welsh Language.
- 3.4 The supporting text states that ‘wards located within the Language Sensitive Area are defined on the Constraints Map and comprise: Clydach, Gorseinon, Gowerton, Kingsbridge, Llangyfelach, Mawr, Penllergaer, Pontarddulais, Penyrheol, Pontarddulais and **Upper Loughor**. The wards are located in close proximity to each other, mostly within the Greater North West part of the County and collectively hold the highest percentage of individuals with Welsh language skills. The Plan seeks to protect the integrity of the Welsh language within the identified area, where an average of over 18% of the population speak Welsh.’
- 3.5 As the site is allocated for housing, it has already been subject to an assessment through the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) process. As such, an Action Plan rather than a full impact assessment is deemed necessary.
- 3.6 National Planning Policy and guidance is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. This is set out in Planning Policy Wales (“PPW”) together with a series of Technical Advice Notes (“TANs”).
- 3.7 PPW Edition 10 was adopted by the Welsh Government in December 2018 and is the principal document for planning considerations in Wales. The primary objective of PPW, as set out at Paragraph 1.2, is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation.
- 3.8 One of the key Well-being Goals is “A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.”
- 3.9 *Technical Advice Note 20: Planning and the Welsh Language (2017)* provides guidance on how the Welsh language may be given appropriate consideration in the planning system, both in terms of local plan preparation and development management.

- 3.10 Paragraph 1.7.1 states that the Welsh language is part of the social and cultural fabric of Wales. It is spoken by 19% of the population, and many others have some knowledge of the language or are in the process of learning it. There are substantial variations between the proportions of Welsh speakers in different communities, ranging from less than 8% in Blaenau Gwent to more than 85% in some parts of Gwynedd.
- 3.11 Paragraph 1.7.2 states that the Welsh Government's aims and ambitions for the Welsh language are set out in the Welsh Language Strategy – Cymraeg 2050. The strategy recognises the need to provide Welsh speakers with easily accessible opportunities to use their skills in social and work settings. The strategy also identifies the imperative need to create favourable circumstances to encourage the number of Welsh speakers. This involves securing goodwill towards the language and providing language infrastructure such as technology and legislation, but is also concerned with securing an economic and social future for Welsh speaking communities.
- 3.12 Paragraph 1.7.3 states that the future of the language across Wales will depend on a wide range of factors beyond the town and country planning system, particularly education, demographic change, community activities and a sound economic base to maintain thriving sustainable communities. The planning system can contribute to the future well-being of the Welsh language, by establishing the conditions to allow sustainable communities to thrive. For example, creating conditions for well-paid employment opportunities and a range of quality housing options are integral to planning for sustainable communities.
- 3.13 Paragraph 2.7.1 states that LPAs may define areas within their LDP where the Welsh language is considered to be of particular sensitivity or significance. Any such areas must be made clear on the LDP Proposals Map. Paragraph 2.7.2 advises that defining such areas will enable the LPA to make it clear to communities and developers where the use of the Welsh language may be a consideration. It will also signal the areas where the LPA may outline a need for measures to mitigate the impacts of development on the Welsh language.

4.0 Local Ward Data

- 4.1 The Application Site is situated centrally within the Upper Loughor Ward, which lies approximately 9 kilometres north-west of Swansea City Centre. It consists of the northern and eastern parts of the urban area of Loughor. Loughor forms part of a larger urban agglomeration which includes neighbouring Gorseinon. Neighbouring wards are Lower Loughor (to the west); Penyrheol (to the north-east); and Gorseinon and Kingsbridge (to the east). Part of the ward boundary also adjoins the Carmarthenshire County Boundary along the Loughor Estuary to the west.
- 4.2 In terms of demographics, the 2011 Census shows that of the overall population of 2,771; 2,406 were born in Wales (86.8% compared with 77.7% in Swansea as a whole).
- 4.3 The 2011 Census found that the population of the Upper Loughor Ward was 2,685 (aged 3 and over). Of this population, 546 (20.3 %) were able to read, write or speak Welsh. The equivalent percentage for the City and County of Swansea was only 13.8%. On a national level, this figure was 21.31%. This data is summarised in Table 4.0 below.

Table 4.0 - Upper Loughor Ward - 2011 Census Data

	Upper Loughor	Swansea	Wales
All people 3+	2,685	231,155	2,955,841
Understands spoken Welsh	700 (26%)	37,201 (16.1%)	672,828 (22.8%)
Speaks Welsh	451 (16.8%)	26,332 (11.4%)	562,016 (19.0%)
Reads Welsh	439 (16.4%)	26,668 (11.5%)	539,245 (18.24%)
Writes Welsh	340 (12.7%)	20,632 (8.9%)	459,824 (15.56%)
Either speaks, reads or writes Welsh	546 (20.33%)	31,975 (13.8%)	630,062 (21.31%)

- 4.4 As a result of the fact that the ward within which the site is located has a greater proportion of individuals with an understanding of Welsh than at a County level, it is evident that the Welsh language forms an important role and feature of this community. As a result, any proposed development within this community must wherever possible protect and promote the Welsh Language, as well as mitigate any negative impacts such a development may introduce.
- 4.5 Upper Loughor has a range of local facilities including shops, leisure facilities and open space all located within a short distance of the site.
- 4.6 Further retail and other services and facilities can be found within the defined District Centre of Gorseinon (1.5 km to the north east). Gorseinon is also served by large Asda and Aldi supermarkets and a Home Bargains located just beyond the District Centre to the east.
- 4.7 The nearest bus stop to the site is located adjacent to the wider site entrance on Glebe Road, approximately 100m walking distance from the site. This provides a twice-hourly service to Swansea, Pontardullais, Gowerton and Gorseinon (route no. 16) and 2 hourly services (route no. 111 Kidwelly - Swansea via Burry Port, Llanelli & Gorseinon and route no. 46 Gorseinon - Gorseinon via Gorseinon Hospital). The nearest railway station is located at Gowerton, some

3km to the south east of the site. The railway station is served by hourly trains to the east (to Swansea and Cardiff) and to the west (to Llanelli and west Wales), providing access to a number of employment opportunities.

- 4.8 In terms of education, the Application Site is situated 600m from the nearest primary school (Tre Uchaf) and 600m from Gower College Swansea, Gorseinon Campus. There is also a Welsh Medium Primary School, Y.G.G. Pontybrenin, and a Welsh Medium Secondary School, Y.G. Gwyr, within the catchment of the site.
- 4.9 Y.G.G. Pontybrenin is situated in the adjoining ward of Gorseinon. There are 582 pupils between three and eleven years old on roll, including 115 nursery-age pupils. Pupils are divided between 20 classes, including three mixed-age classes. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work.
- 4.10 Y.G. Gwyr is located in nearby Gowerton. The school's prospectus states that Welsh is a core subject at the school and features therefore in each child's curriculum. Welsh is also used substantially as a teaching medium. All subjects, excluding English and Science, are taught solely through the medium of Welsh.
- 4.11 The pre-application response from Swansea Council's Education Department in relation to the Application Proposal advised that all of the above schools currently have sufficient capacity to serve the pupils generated by the development.
- 4.12 In addition, nearby Gower College, Gorseinon Campus, offers Welsh language courses and an 'A' Level course in Welsh.

5.0 Consultation and Engagement

- 5.1 At the date of preparation of this Draft Action Plan, the PAC exercise has yet to be undertaken. Responses on any relevant issues raised which relate to impact on the Welsh Language and which merit changes will be included in the final version of this WLAP.
- 5.2 During the consideration of the Reserved Matters application for Phase I of Barratt Homes' adjoining development of 92 dwellings (LPA Ref: 2018/1537/RES), no comments were received from either residents or organisations regarding any direct impact of the proposed development on the Welsh Language.
- 5.3 In terms of the pre-application advice received from the LPA in respect of the Application Proposal, it was confirmed that a Welsh Language Action Plan would be required to be submitted with the planning application. It was also confirmed that there was surplus capacity within the local schools to accommodate the likely pupil numbers that would be generated from the Proposed Development.
- 5.4 The design of the Application Proposal has taken into consideration the comments received from the LPA at pre-application stage, and further amendments will be incorporated, if necessary, to take into account any comments submitted during the PAC process.

6.0 Mitigation

- 6.1 This section seeks to establish the extent to which mitigation measures may be necessary for the proposed development. To gain a better understanding of this, recent sales data from Barratt Homes' adjoining development at Phase I Chapel Fields, which is currently under construction, is analysed below.
- 6.2 Barratt's Sales Director has confirmed that as of November 2020, 41 private properties have been sold on the development. The majority of the purchasers (38 in total) previously had addresses in the SA postcode, with the other three purchasers previously having CF postcodes.
- 6.3 It is considered that this trend will be reflected in future sales at both Phase I and the newly proposed Phase II of the development. The number of Welsh speakers is therefore likely to reflect the current percentage within the local ward (16.8%) and it is considered unlikely that the development will attract a high proportion of non-Welsh speakers into the settlement.
- 6.4 On the basis that the site is likely to attract buyers and occupiers from a similar geographical area, significant mitigation measures are not required. The following measures are suggested in order to further promote the Welsh Language:
- Promotion of Welsh education among children and adults in the area, such as highlighting proximity of Welsh schools in sales promotions and, if necessary, having literature available providing details of locally held Welsh lessons;
 - Strong advertising/marketing in the local area;
 - Bilingual sales/marketing to be made available on request;
 - Encouragement will also be given to using traditional Welsh names for the street names within the new development.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 The Action Plan considers it likely that a large proportion of buyers and affordable home occupiers will be Welsh in origin, with the majority from Swansea and West Wales, given the demographics of the purchasers of the adjacent Phase I development. The proportion of Welsh speakers who live in the future development are likely to reflect the existing percentage of Welsh speakers in the local ward area.
- 7.2 In addition, by increasing the existing provision of housing stock within the local area, this will help mitigate issues of affordability and choice by allowing local people to remain in their village or ward, and will therefore assist with maintaining the level of Welsh speakers in the area.
- 7.3 The Proposed Development is therefore likely to have an overall positive impact on the Welsh language and its future in the ward of Upper Loughor. Whilst there is no need for any significant mitigation measures, some reasonable suggestions are however set out in this Action Plan.

