
Land to the north of Maes Meurig Meliden Welsh Language Impact Assessment

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) has been prepared in support of a full planning application for residential development comprising 35 dwellings, arranged as a mixture of one bedroom cottage flats and two/ three bedroom dwellings (Class C3), including car parking, landscaping and a new access ('the Proposed Development') on 2 acres of land to the north of Maes Meurig, Meliden ('the Application Site').
 - 1.2 The planning validation requirements for Denbighshire County Council, the local planning authority (LPA) states that a Community and Linguistic Statement or Community and Linguistic Impact Assessment (in accordance with the adopted Gwynedd Supplementary Planning Guidance: Planning and the Welsh Language (November 2009) must be part of the planning application submission.
 - 1.3 As the application is for a proposed development on an allocated site for a large-scale (major) housing development, the planning application is supported by a WLIA. This Assessment follows the methodology set out within SPG1.
 - 1.4 This assessment should be read in conjunction with the various reports, surveys and technical information submitted in support of the planning application. The assessment attempts to demonstrate and convey that consideration has been given to the Welsh language during the formulation of the development proposal. This report also seeks to identify measures to mitigate and positively enhance the impacts of the proposed affordable housing development.
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2.0 Application Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The Application Site covers an area of approximately 2 acres and is located north of Maes Meurig in Meliden, Prestatyn.
 - 2.2 The Site is composed of scrub, grassland and overgrown brambles, but was formerly used as a horse paddock. The site is surrounded by residential housing to the north, east and south, with open fields and scrub/ grassland to the west.
 - 2.3 Within the wider context, Meliden village centre is located to the southeast, Prestatyn is located to the north and Rhyl is located to west.
 - 2.4 The site sits within an area of mixed character with various architectural styles and periods of construction in Meliden. There are a range of material palettes used within the village, from brickwork, to render and pebble dash. There is not a precedent design style or type of construction that dominates the landscape or village, although the precedent design form in the immediate area to the south of the Application is characterised by the brick and rendered bungalows.
 - 2.5 The surrounding townscape contains a mix of uses, including residential, commercial and industrial uses. The surrounding area contains a mixture of one and two storey residential developments, with the Application site set back from the surrounding land uses by Maes Meurig.
 - 2.6 The site is considered to sit within a sustainable location with good access to public transport and the wider highway network via the A547 to the south.
 - 2.7 The A547 is a major bus route into Prestatyn, Rhyl, Abergelle, Colwyn Bay and Llandudno Junction with a service every 30 minutes.
 - 2.8 The nearest train station is in Rhyl. Rhyl railway station is on the Crewe to Holyhead North Wales Coast Line, this provides services into Anglesey, Bangor and Chester.
 - 2.9 The site itself is allocated for residential development within the Denbighshire Local Development Plan (Ref. BSC1).
 - 2.10 The site contains no statutory environmental, landscape or heritage designations.
 - 2.11 There are a number of trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) along Maes Meurig and to the eastern boundary of the site.
 - 2.12 There is a County wildlife site to the north and west of the site. The wildlife site also encroaches onto the development site from the west, though this is held to be GIS error as the land contains no characteristics of the adjacent county land designation (wetland).
 - 2.13 The Application Site has a general fall from south to north.
 - 2.14 Pedestrian access is currently taken from an informal access point to the south on Maes Meurig.
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- 2.15 The site itself does not lie within any identified flood risk zone however the area immediately to the northern boundary of the site is currently Zone C2 as shown on the development advice maps contained in TAN 15: Development and Flood Risk. The adjacent site is shown as a Zone 2 and 3 on the most up to date flood maps for planning (FmFP).

3.0 Proposed Development

- 3.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the development of 10 x one-bedroom cottage flats, 9 x 2-bedroom houses and 16 x 3-bedroom houses, with associated landscaping and vehicular access.
- 3.2 The Indicative Massing Plan (C1109.008), Proposed Site Layout Plan (Ref. C1109.010) and Floor plans (Ref. C1109.100 – 115) have been provided to show the layout of the Proposed Development within the Application Site.
- 3.3 The Sections (Ref. C1109.012 – 016), Site Elevations (Ref. C1109.100 – 115) have also been provided in support of the Application to illustrate the scale and massing of the housing within Proposed Development.
- 3.4 The layout, scale, design and massing has been developed in response to the surrounding context. A thorough assessment of the site and its benefits has allowed a design which will maximise the sites opportunities and characteristics. This is presented in the Design and Access Statement accompanying this application.
- 3.5 The following headings provide further information on the proposed development and should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement and supporting planning application drawings:
- Numbers and Density.
 - Access and Parking.
 - Landscaping.
 - Trees.

Numbers and Density

- 3.6 The Site Plan and supporting floor plans detail how 35 houses and cottage flats (Class C3) would be delivered on the Application Site. The proposed scheme has been developed in accordance with Policy RD1 and the aspiration of the Council to provide a suitable mix of dwellings that contribute to creating an attractive and sustainable place to live.
- 3.7 The scale and massing of the development will respect the prevailing scale of the surrounding built form. The proposed building heights will be predominantly 2 storey, with an element of 2.5 storey dwellings. The buildings have been designed to embed within the surrounding landscape and topography, not detracting or impacting upon the amenity of adjacent residents.
- 3.8 It is considered the supporting package of drawings demonstrates a high-quality design and one which accords with the prevailing development plan policies RD1 & BSC1 which requires a development to deliver high quality design and is of a scale that is consistent with the character of the settlement.
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- 3.9 Please see the submitted Design and Access Statement for further detail on the proposed floor plans, elevations and the indicative design layout of the residential apartments.

Welsh Language

- 3.10 With respect to the Welsh language, although the Applicant is based in England this is the fifth housing development Kingscrown Land & Commercial Ltd are working upon in North Wales and the first in Denbighshire.
- 3.11 Kingscrown Land & Commercial Ltd are looking to deliver the scheme with a local housing provider. The Registered Providers (RP) business language is Welsh. Their customers, tenants and homeowners are those who live in their homes and are from a wide cross section of the community including families, single people and those requiring extra care. The RP encourages its employees to use Welsh throughout their daily lives. This is reinforced through innovative methods, actions and behaviours within the neighbourhoods and communities that they build.
- 3.12 Their Welsh Language Scheme identifies that in terms of its corporate identity, the applicants will use their name on all occasions. Public image, including address, corporate slogan, visual identity and any other standard information used on the Association's material and goods (such as promotional materials, publications etc.) and in other circumstances such as signs, and buildings will be bilingual. The RP will use Welsh branding only for some enterprises.
- All information signs owned by the RP, including internal locations will be fully bilingual;
 - The size, standard of clarity and prominence of the words on the signs will respect the principle of language equality;
 - All materials aimed at the public will be bilingual with both languages appearing in the same document; and
 - All the information to be published on their public website will be bilingual, and material will be available to read on both languages at the same time.
- 3.13 The following objectives will be implemented by the Applicant, Principal Contractor, RP and the Management Company in relation to advertising and publicity activities:
- Produce all materials in Welsh and English;
 - Conduct advertising campaigns in the press in Welsh and English;
 - Advertise on posters and information boards in Welsh and in English;
 - Conduct public surveys bilingually, whether through the post or face- to face;
 - Conduct direct marketing campaigns in Welsh and in English; and
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- Setup bilingual information stalls and notices.

4.0 Policy Context

- 4.1 This Section summarises the policies relevant to the likely impact of the development proposal against the Welsh language. It considers policy documents at both the national and local level. A full account of the planning policy context of the site is provided within the Planning Statement submitted in support of this application.

National Policy

Planning (Wales) Act 2015

- 4.2 The Planning (Wales) Act introduced legislative provision for the Welsh language in the planning system. The Act requires the Welsh language to be considered as part of the sustainability appraisal of all documents within the LPA development plan. The Act explains that impacts on the Welsh language should be a consideration in the determination of planning applications, as long as they are relevant to the application.

Planning Policy Wales (February 2021)

- 4.3 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. PPW seeks to create sustainable communities which enable the Welsh language to thrive.
- 4.4 Paragraph 3.25 of the PPW states that “the Welsh language is part of the social and cultural fabric and its future well-being will depend upon a wide range of factors, particularly education, demographic change, community activities and a sound economic base to maintain thriving sustainable communities and places. The land use planning system should take account of the conditions which are essential to the Welsh language and in so doing contribute to its use and the thriving Welsh Language well-being goal.”
- 4.5 Paragraph 3.28 specifies that “considerations relating to the use of the Welsh language may be taken into account by decision makers so far as they are material to applications for planning permission. Policies and decisions must not introduce any element of discrimination between individuals on the basis of their linguistic ability and should not seek to control housing occupancy on linguistic grounds.”
- 4.6 Paragraph 3.29 continues in that “if required, language impact assessments may be carried out in respect of large developments not allocated in a development plan which are proposed in areas of particular sensitivity or importance for the language. Any such areas should be defined clearly in the development plan.”

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- 4.7 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 was adopted in April 2016. It requires public bodies such as Gwynedd Council to consider not only the present needs of local communities but also how their decisions affect people in the future.
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- 4.8 The Act contains seven well-being goals, including, a “Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language”.

Technical Advice Note 20 (TAN 20) – Planning and the Welsh Language (October 2017)

- 4.9 TAN 20: Planning and the Welsh Language (2017) provides guidance on how the Welsh language may be given appropriate consideration in the planning system.
- 4.10 With regards to unallocated development sites paragraph 3.2.2 states that “sites should be assessed against the strategy and policies of an adopted development plan, and with regard to relevant national planning policies. When an LPA receives a proposal for a large development on a windfall site in an area it has defined as linguistically sensitive or significant, an assessment of the likely impact of the development on the Welsh language may be undertaken.”
- 4.11 Paragraphs 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 identify the circumstances that mitigation measures should be applied to reduce or eliminate potential adverse impacts of development on the Welsh language.

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

- 4.12 The Future Wales – the National Plan 2040 is the development framework for Wales, setting the pathway for development in Wales to 2040. One of aims of the spatial plan is to:
- “have a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 – an increase of almost 80% on current levels. The language will be an embedded consideration in the spatial strategy of all development plans. Where Welsh is the everyday language of the community, development will be managed to ensure there are jobs and homes to enable the language to remain central to those communities’ identities. Elsewhere development will be a positive force towards encouraging the creation of education and social infrastructure to enable the language to develop as a natural, thriving part of communities.”
- 4.13 Policy 1 (Where Wales will grow) drives the delivery of the Future Wales outcomes and ensures Future Wales’ policies and the planning system in general are committed to their achievement. Key issues such as the Welsh language, are core elements of Policy 1 and are common threads underpinning all Future Wales policies.

Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy

- 4.14 The Welsh Government’s Cymraeg 2050 strategy builds on the aspirations of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 and sets out the commitment to work towards one million people speaking Welsh by 2050. It is a guidance document for various disciplines within Wales, including land use planning.
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- 4.15 The strategy explains that: “the land use planning system should contribute to the vitality of the Welsh language by creating suitable conditions for thriving, sustainable communities, supported by an awareness of the relevant principles of language planning... Decisions regarding the type, scale and exact location of developments within a specific community has the potential to have an effect on language use, and as a result on the sustainability and vitality of the language. This calls for strengthening the relationship between language planning and land use planning.”

Local Policy

Denbighshire Local Development Plan 2006 - 2021

- 4.16 The Local Development Plan covers the period 2006 - 2021 and was adopted by the Council in January 2013. The Local Plan sets out the vision and spatial strategy for the region during the plan period. The LDP has now expired but will remain the adopted Development Plan until the replacement plan is approved.
- 4.17 **Policy RD5** (The Welsh language and the social and cultural fabric of communities) confirms that in determining all planning applications, the needs and interests of the Welsh language will be taken into account. Development could be refused if its size, scale or location would cause significant harm to the character and language balance of a community.

To be able to make an informed decision on applications that may have an effect on the future of the Welsh language within communities, applicants will normally be expected to submit a:

- i) Community Linguistic Statement to accompany a planning application for smaller developments within villages, hamlets or the open countryside comprising proposals of the following kind: 5 residential units or more, commercial, industrial or leisure/tourism development with a floor area of 1000m² or more, development likely to lead to the loss of community facilities or employment opportunities, infrastructure projects with long term community impacts;
 - ii) More detailed assessment in the form of a “Community and Linguistic Impact Assessment” to accompany a planning application in all settlements where developments are on a larger scale comprising proposals of the following kind: 20 residential units or more, commercial, industrial or leisure/tourism development with a floor area of 3000m² or more, large scale infrastructure projects with long term community impacts.
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5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 The methodology for considering the effect of the Proposed Development on the Welsh language and culture is based on the guidance provided in the adopted SPG in relation to 'Maintaining and Creating Distinctive and Sustainable Communities'.
- 5.2 Figure 1 below (Diagram 3 – Flow Chart) is taken from the SPG (Maintaining and Creating Distinctive and Sustainable Communities). It provides an 8-stage process that informs the required steps to take before a planning application is submitted and assessed – prior to decision making.

Diagram 3 Flow chart: formulating a development, its assessment and decision making

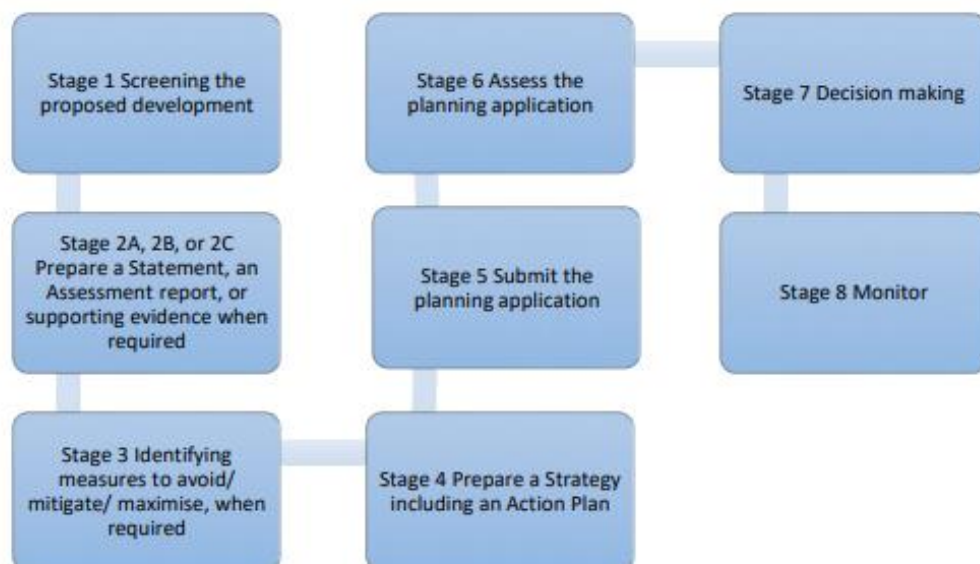


Figure 1 WLIA Flow Chart

- 5.3 Stages 1 – 5 are to be undertaken by the Applicant prior to the submission of the planning application. Stages 6-8 are the LPA requirements during the pre and post planning application process.
- 5.4 Stages 1 to 5 are considered in further depth below:
- Stage 1 – Screening the development**
- 5.5 The SPG reiterates the importance of engaging with the LPA's planning service and key stakeholders early on during the pre-application stage. This process should be proportionate to the scale and type of the proposed development.
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- 5.6 The Proposed Development of 35 cottage flats and dwellinghouses is considered major development, pre-application consultation (PAC) is therefore required prior to the submission of a planning application. Comments received during the PAC and the applicants' response to those comments will be set out in the PAC report that is to be submitted as part of the planning application.
- 5.7 The extent of engagement undertaken prior to the submission of this planning application is considered to be proportionate for the proposal.
- 5.8 Based upon the details outlined above, the Proposed Development has been screened in accordance with guidance set out in the adopted SPG.

Stage 2 – Prepare a Statement, an Assessment, or supporting evidence when required

- 5.9 In accordance with the planning policy requirements, it has been determined that a WLIA is required. The WLIA is prepared in accordance with the guidance set out at Appendix 8 of the Maintaining and Creating Distinctive and Sustainable Communities' SPG. Sections 6 to 9 of this report details the Assessment undertaken.
- 5.10 Appendix 8 of the SPG encourages good practice relating to balancing the effects of the development with the use of a risk matrix.
- 5.11 The SPG stipulates that "in order to assess the proposed development against the Sustainability Assessment Objective relevant to the Welsh language, the relevant parts of the Welsh Language Impact Assessment matrix (shown in table 8.3 below) should be completed. You will need to consider the inter-relationship between the factors, e.g. the Welsh language population and the housing market and the area's economy. The template must be used in your report on the Assessment. If a positive or negative impact is identified, it will be necessary to consider if any positive effect can be improved, or how you will control negative effects. Those activities must be recorded in Stage C below. The SPG provides a sample risk/benefit to identify the risk and likelihood of the effects. The risk matrix within the SPG, is provided below for reference:
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				← EFFECT OVER 20 YEARS →				
				Area	Small	Medium	Substantial	Significant
				All speakers in the Upper Area Lower Layer	Decrease of up to 2% than the projected speakers (usually business)	Decrease of over 2% to 5% than the projected speakers (usually business)	Decrease of 5% to 10% than the projected speakers (usually business)	Decrease of 10% and over than the projected speakers (usually business)
					1	2	3	4
					Small	Medium	Substantial	Significant
LIKELIHOOD ↑	Probability	Frequency	Likelihood					
	It would be expected to occur in almost all similar developments	History of it occurring 9 times out of 10 in the last x (say 20 years) years	4	Almost certain	4	8	12	16
	It would be expected to occur in the majority of similar developments.	History of it occurring 5-8 times out of 10 in the last x (say 20 years) years	3	Likely	3	6	9	12
	It would be expected to occur in the minority of similar developments	History of it occurring 2-4 times out of 10 in the last x (say 20 years) years	2	Possible	2	4	6	8
	It would be expected to occur in a very small number of similar developments	History of it occurring 1 time out of 10 in the last x (say 20 years) years	1	Unlikely	1	2	3	4

Figure 2 WLIA Risk Matrix

Stage 3 – Identifying measures to avoid/ mitigate/ maximise, when required

- 5.12 Sections 6 to 9 of this WLIA demonstrate the consideration that has been given to the potential effect of the development on the local community in Meliden and the Welsh language. Section 9 presents measures to mitigate adverse effect and enhance beneficial effects (where these are considered necessary) based on the consideration of effects.

Stage 4 – Prepare a Strategy including an Action Plan

- 5.13 Following the consideration of effects at Sections 6 to 9. If enhancements measures are deemed a requirement to mitigate against any perceived negative impacts, a strategy will be presented in Section 9.

Stage 5 – Submit the Planning Application

- 5.14 The application is to be submitted following completion of the PAC process. The application will consider all the comments made by the local community and statutory consultees and where appropriate consider, address or encompass them within the submitted planning application.

6.0 Relevant Baseline Information

Identifying the context

- 6.1 It is important that the Welsh Language Impact Assessment process, like any other assessment, starts early to enable the applicant and his/ her advisers to identify the appropriate issues and analyse them as they prepare the details of the proposed development.
- 6.2 The site is allocated for development (30 units) and is considered a large (major) development as it that would involve constructing 10 or more dwellings.
- 6.3 The Application Site covers an area of approximately 2 acres and is located off Maes Meurig in Meliden. The site lies on the northern periphery of Meliden and is within walking distance to retail shops, bus stops, schools and other services.
- 6.4 The latest data in February 2023 (from ukcensusdata.com) describes the built-up area of Meliden as containing a population of 2,066 people within a total of 862 dwellings.
- 6.5 The house types are divided as such:
- Detached – 324
 - Semi- detached – 370
 - Terraced – 145
 - Flat - 23
- 6.6 The Denbighshire Local Housing Market Assessment (2019) identifies a need for a total of 775 additional affordable homes over the plan period (2018- 2023), which equates to 155 units per year. The need is for 105 homes for social rent and 50 homes for intermediate needs.
- 6.7 There is a clear need for affordable housing in Denbighshire, 57% of newly emerging households are unable to rent or buy a property on the open market. 34% are in need of social housing and 23% in need of intermediate housing. Household projections predict that the number of households in Denbighshire will increase by 199 per annum over the period 2018 - 2023. It is predicted that by 2033 almost 70% of Denbighshire's households will be made up of 1 and 2 person households.
- 6.8 There is a mismatch between the limited social housing stock in Denbighshire, which is predominantly 3 bedded properties, and the social housing need which is for 1 and 2 bedded properties. For intermediate housing the demand is for 3 bedded properties which reflects aspiration as well as actual need.
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- 6.9 There has been a growth in the proportion of households living in private rental accommodation and a decrease in the number of households owning a property with a mortgage. Analysis shows that private rents for households with a lower quartile annual household income (£16,447) are unaffordable as the household would need to pay more than 30% of their household income on their housing costs.
- 6.10 The housing statistics (census data) and LHMA demonstrate that the proposed development of 35 dwellings, arranged as a mixture of one -bedroom cottage style flats and two-/ three- bedroom dwellings, is appropriate in the setting and represents only a marginal addition to the current level of housing and population within the local area.
- 6.11 The site is allocated for 30 dwellings within the adopted Development Plan. Therefore, the demand for these units, for affordable, social and intermediate rent, has already been assessed and considered appropriate by the Council.
- 6.12 With respect to the affordable housing demand, within the ward of Meliden alone there are sufficient applicants on the waiting list for affordable and social accommodation to fill the proposed units, without looking for applicants from other wards. Occupants of affordable accommodation are expected to be living in the community at present but cannot fulfil their need for a house on the open market.
- 6.13 This illustrates that the development proposal will provide appropriate housing opportunities for existing Meliden residents, it will not lead to an influx of residents outside of the local area. Therefore, the potential uplift in the local population and households will be minimal in this case and the area of influence will be the immediate Meliden population.

Population: 2001 and 2011

- 6.14 Table 1 and 2 shows the total population of the Meliden and Denbighshire as a whole for the years 2011 to 2021 (Denbighshire) and 2001 to 2011 (Meliden). The changes are shown as numbers and in percentages.

Area	2011	2021	Change Number	% Change
Denbighshire	93,732	95,800	2,068	2.2

Table 1 Numbers, change in number and percentage change in population

- 6.15 As seen from the table above, the total population of Denbighshire increased slightly over the 10-year period.

Area	2001	2011	Change Number	% Change
Meliden	2,175	2,066	109	-5

Table 2 Table 2 Numbers, change in number and percentage change in population

- 6.16 The 2021 census data is not available yet for Meliden, but as seen from the table above, the total population of Meliden decreased slightly over the preceding 10 year period.

- 6.17 It is considered that the likely cause of this reduction is the result of demographic changes in the population which entails a reduction in the number of children, increase in the number of older people, migration of people and the difference in the skills of its population within the 10 years.

Welsh Speakers: 2001 – 2020

- 6.18 The Census of Population is the key source used to measure the number of Welsh speakers in Wales. However, as the Annual Population Survey (APS) provides quarterly results, it is useful to use the APS to look at trends in the Welsh language between censuses, see Figure 3 for reference.

Number of people aged 3 or over able to speak Welsh, 2001 to June 2020

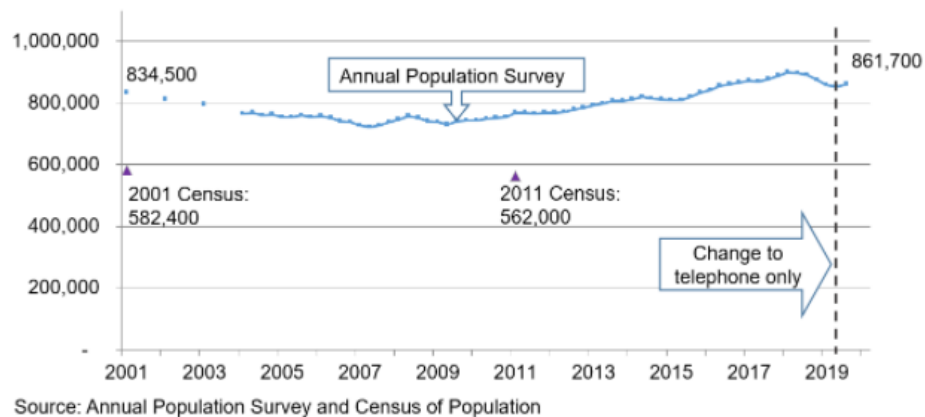


Figure 3 Population Survey Data

- 6.19 The Welsh Language data from the Annual Population Survey: July 2019 to June 2020 concludes the following:

“For the year ending 30 June 2020, the Annual Population Survey reported that 28.5% of people aged three and over were able to speak Welsh. This figure equates to 861,700 people.

This is 1.1 percentage point lower than the previous year (year ending 30 June 2019), equating to 29,400 fewer people.

The chart shows how these figures have been gradually increasing each year since March 2010 (25.2%, 731,000), after they had been gradually declining from 2001 to 2007. However, the number of people reporting to be able to speak Welsh has declined each quarter from December 2018 to March 2020, before increasing slightly in the most recent quarter. This increase should be treated with caution due to the change of survey mode since mid-March because of the coronavirus pandemic. See ‘Changes to the survey’ below.

The highest numbers of Welsh speakers continue to be found in Carmarthenshire (90,600), but for the first time since the survey began, Cardiff (89,700) has overtaken Gwynedd (with 89,200) to have the second highest number of Welsh speakers in Wales.

The lowest numbers of Welsh speakers are in Merthyr Tydfil (11,800) and Blaenau Gwent (11,600).

The highest percentages of Welsh speakers can be found in Gwynedd (75%) and the Isle of Anglesey (66%).

The lowest percentages of Welsh speakers are in Bridgend (17%) and Torfaen (17%).

16.2% (489,300) of people aged three and over reported that they spoke Welsh daily, 4.8% (146,400) weekly and 6.0% (182,200) less often. 1.4% (43,800) reported that they never spoke Welsh despite being able to speak it, with the remaining 71.5% not able to speak Welsh.

32.7% (990,300) reported that they could understand spoken Welsh, 25.5% (777,400) could read and 23.3% (705,500) could write Welsh."

6.20 The results of the 2011 Census show that 22,236 people in Denbighshire can speak Welsh, which equates to 24.6% of the population. The total number of Welsh speakers in 2011 was 23,760, which is 26.4% of the population. Over a ten year period there has been a drop of 1,524 in the number and 1.8% in the percentage of Welsh speakers in the county.

6.21 The geographical distribution of Welsh speakers in Denbighshire is slightly more even than in Conwy County. The 2011 Census data shows that the highest percentages of Welsh speakers are found in the south-west of the county, in the electoral wards of Llandrillo (59.2%), Efenechtyd (53.7%), Llanrhaeadr yng Nghynmeirch (50.0%) and Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd (48.3%).

6.22 The electoral wards with the lowest percentages of Welsh speakers are Prestatyn North (12.6%), Rhyl West (12.7%) and Rhyl East (13.0%), which are coastal areas.

Welsh speakers (age 3 and over): 2001 and 2011

6.23 The ability to speak Welsh varies significantly according to age. As shown in Table 3 below from the Denbighshire County Council Welsh Language Community Profile, according to the 2011 Census over 40% of 3-15 year-olds can speak Welsh in Denbighshire. This figure drops to 26% for the 15-30 age group and drops even further for the 30-50 age group (21.3%). The 50-70 age group contains the lowest percentage of Welsh speakers of all age groups at 18.3%. The 70+ age group is slightly higher with 22.4% who can speak Welsh. As can be seen, the highest percentages are in the 4-15 age group. This probably reflects the influence of the education system on the linguistic skills of school-aged children.

- 6.24 The numbers in the 20-70 age groups are fairly constant and vary from 1,032 to 1,340. The average for all age groups is 1,174 Welsh speakers.

Age Group	% Welsh speakers 2001	% Welsh speakers 2011	Number of Welsh speakers 2001	Number of Welsh speakers 2011
All those aged over 3 years	26.4	24.6	23,760	22,236
3-4 years	19.6	27.6	417	584
5-9 years	39.4	45.3	2,273	2,248
10-14 years	46.3	47.2	2,865	2,581
15-19 years	36.6	32.5	1,990	1,950
20-24 years	24.8	23.0	1,115	1,198
25-29 years	24.2	22.8	1,174	1,032
30-34 years	22.0	23.1	1,295	1,039
35-39 years	21.5	22.7	1,425	1,215
40-44 years	21.6	20.6	1,271	1,320
45-49 years	20.5	19.1	1,202	1,326
50-54 years	21.0	18.6	1,471	1,158
55-59 years	22.1	17.3	1,283	1,034
60-64 years	22.8	18.7	1,212	1,340
65-69 years	25.0	18.6	1,175	1,079
70-74 years	24.4	20.3	1,109	972
75-79 years	24.6	22.4	1,011	832
80+ years	26.9	24.6	1,472	1,328

Table 3 2011 percentage of Welsh speakers

- 6.25 Within Meliden the following number of people have Welsh language skills (based on data obtained from ukcensusdata.com):

Topic	Number
All usual residents aged 3 and over	1989
Can understand spoken Welsh	490
Can speak Welsh	383
Can write Welsh	301
Can speak, read or write Welsh	431

Table 4 Meliden Welsh Language Skills

- 6.26 Based upon the figures above, from 2011, Meliden has a slightly lower than average number of Welsh speakers within the Ward – when compared against the percentage of Welsh speakers throughout the County, with 19.25% of the population speaking Welsh. However 24.6% of the population understand spoken Welsh and 21.6% can speak, read or write in Welsh.

Local Infrastructure Profile

- 6.27 Meliden is identified as a Village in the adopted LDP. The LDP recognises that villages are expected to contribute around 900 new dwellings over the Local Development Plan period to meet local needs. All villages have defined development boundaries to control the amount of potential development. Where sites capable of accommodating around 10 or more units have been identified; these are shown as housing allocations on the proposals maps. The Application Site being one of these (Ref. Rear of Maes Meurig, Meliden).
- 6.28 Meliden benefits from being highly accessible via Meliden Road (A547), the A525 and Gronant Road which provide quick access to the North Wales Expressway and the A548. Both roads provide residents with easy access to the services and facilities provided throughout North Wales, including Rhyl, Prestatyn and Llandudno. Rhyl is a strategic sub-regional retail centre and performs as cross boundary Centre providing for opportunities for small, medium and large-scale employment opportunities on established and new sites; and leisure and health facilities/services.
- 6.29 The Application Site is within walking distance to a range of local services and facilities, including a schools, shops and local services.
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7.0 Welsh Language Impact Assessment

- 7.1 This section of the statement considers the proposal against national and local policies and against the assessment identified set out within Section 4 of this document. This is based on the matrix included within Appendix 8 of the Anglesey and Gwynedd adopted SPG 'Maintaining and Creating Distinctive and Sustainable Communities'.

Policy Background

- 7.2 The Proposed Development seeks consent for the development of 35 dwellings, arranged as a mixture of houses and cottage flats on a parcel of land off Maes Meurig in the Meliden development boundary.
- 7.3 In accordance with Policy RD1 (Development Boundaries), proposals within development boundaries are approved if they comply with other policies and proposals in the LDP, national policies and other relevant planning considerations.
- 7.4 Policy BSC1 (Settlement Strategy) states that the Application Site is allocated for 30 dwellings and that in total 900 new dwellings will be delivered in villages during the plan period.
- 7.5 In 2019, the Denbighshire County Council Joint Housing Land Availability Study confirmed that of the total housing requirement from the adopted LDP (2006 – 2021) -7500, only 2728 houses had been completed between 2006 – 2019, which showed a residual requirement of 4772 and an annual need of 1254 dwellings. The Council can therefore only demonstrate a 1.55 year supply of housing.
- 7.6 The proposal is for 100% affordable, in a mix of tenures including: social, intermediate and affordable.
- 7.7 The Local Housing Market Assessment Need, Demand and Affordability in Denbighshire (LHMA) states that developers are encouraged to include a mix of housing sizes and types to reflect this need, as well as the aspiration for additional bedrooms. Figure 4 defines the recommended mix of market housing types on residential sites.

Table 24 Recommended Housing Mix – Market Housing			
1 + 2 bed	3 bed	4 bed+	Total
30%	35%	35%	100%

Figure 4

- 7.8 Where a developer proposes an alternative mix of housing sizes a robust evidence base must support the need for a deviation from this recommended mix.
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7.9 The Proposed Development contains a deviation from the recommended mix of units, as the scheme contains no 4 bedroom units. The reason and justification for this is that the proposed mix of units is based upon the registered providers demand profile and requirement for social, intermediate and affordable rent accommodation in Meliden. The demand is weighted heavily in favour of smaller units (1-3 bedroom), with little demand identified for 4 bedroom properties. Therefore no 4 bedroom units are proposed.

7.10 The LHMA confirms in Chart 9 the number of bedrooms required by all applicants for social housing within each LHMA area. The majority of applicants require a one bedroom property, which is particularly high within the Rhyl and Coast and Prestatyn and Meliden areas. Social housing tenants are penalised for under occupying their properties by the 'bedroom tax' where they must pay additional rent on any additional bedrooms they have in their home which are more than their household requires. For this reason applicants on the social register are not able to apply for housing with more bedrooms than their household needs.

7.11 The following figures have been provided by Denbighshire County Council in February 2023 demonstrating the waiting lists for affordable and social rent for the area of Meliden:

Ward	Housing Type	Social Demand	Rent	Affordable Demand	Rent
Meliden	1-bedroom dwelling	238		1	
	2-bedroom dwelling	183 (flat) / 184 (house)		2 (flat) / 45 (house)	
	3-bedroom dwelling	98		54	

7.12 It can be seen from the table above that there is a high demand for one-, two- and three- bedroom dwellings in Meliden.

7.13 The Proposed Development would provide the following housing mix:

- 10 x 1 bedroom dwellings (29%);
- 9 x 2 bedroom dwellings (42%); and
- 16 x 3 bedroom dwellings (29%).

7.14 It is considered that the Proposed Development would respond to the housing need figures for Meliden and therefore would comply with the LDP in this respect.

7.15 The Proposed Development would help meet the housing requirements for all ages and profiles within the community. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal complies with local and national strategies in terms of delivering housing to meet an identified need within identified settlements.

Consideration of the effects on Welsh Language

7.16 The consideration of effect on the Welsh language is set out below as required by the adopted SPG.

Language and mobility of population	Consideration of potential effects
<p>How is the development going to ensure opportunities for people to stay in their community?</p>	<p>The Proposed Development seeks to provide 35 dwellings, as 100% affordable, providing housing for local people and helping to meet an identified need for suitable housing.</p> <p>The Proposed Development would seek to provide a mix of one-, two- and three-bedroom dwellings.</p> <p>Denbighshire County Council have confirmed that in February 2023 there were 805 applicants for 1-3 bedroom affordable and social rent dwellings in the Meliden ward. It is accepted that there may be duplicates within this figure; however, it is clear that there is a demand for affordable units.</p> <p>Providing housing within this location offers the possibility for residents to be within walking distance to several local facilities, amenities and the public transport network, which is useful for those who are unable to drive as they would not require a car to go about their day-to-day life.</p> <p>Providing a good mix of housing which meet an identified need would provide opportunities for local people to remain within their communities in the Meliden and the Prestatyn area.</p>
<p>Is there a likelihood that the development will attract additional people to the community? If it will, how many are expected? Where will they come from? How many and what percentage are likely to be Welsh speakers?</p>	<p>In 2011, 19.25% of the population of Meliden ward and 27.6% of the population of Denbighshire were Welsh speakers.</p> <p>The affordable housing units would be restricted to local people (on the local housing register) and would therefore be unlikely to attract additional people to the community. Given this, it is expected that most of future occupants are highly likely to be local people and therefore there is the possibility that a higher proportion of the future occupants would be Welsh speakers.</p>

Is there a likelihood that local people will migrate from the community as a result of the development?	The development would enable local people who are in need of affordable properties to live in an accessible and sustainable location, meeting an identified need. The proposal is not expected to lead to out-migration from the local community.
Is the development likely to result in a change in the age structure of the community: more or fewer children, young people, middle-aged people, older people?	The Proposed Development provides a suitable mix of housing types and sizes to meet the needs of various individuals, families and housing groups. There are smaller housing options for elderly people wishing to downsize and young couples/ individuals wanting their first smaller property. However, there are only 35 units proposed, therefore it is not considered that the additional population generated by the dwellings would result in a significant impact upon the age structure of the existing community, noting that the site is already allocated for 30 units.
Is there a likelihood that there will be a change in the balance between Welsh speakers (including learners) and individuals with no ability in Welsh?	Given that the dwellings are expected to be occupied by local people within Meliden, or on the local housing register (within Denbighshire), the proposal is not expected to lead to a change in the number of Welsh speakers in the wider area. In any case, there are multiple Welsh learning resources available within the area for adult residents. Therefore, it is likely that any initial imbalance reverts back after the initial occupancy.
Is the change likely to be permanent or temporary?	The Proposed Development is for the construction of 35 dwellings; therefore, the change would be permanent.
<p>Composite Score – Impact of the proposed Development on language and mobility of population over 20 years</p> <p>Effect - Neutral effect because the proposal will allow affordable housing for people that currently live in the 'area of influence'. It will enable movement within Meliden, not in migration from communities that has a lower percentage of Welsh speakers. On the other hand, these will not be 'new' Welsh speakers in Meliden as they will already be residing in the town and speaking the language. Therefore, the impact would be neutral.</p> <p>Probability - There is a low probability that other housing developments that would be brought forward would provide the same provision of affordable housing for local people within the area.</p> <p>Frequency – As the affordable units would be controlled in the first instance and in perpetuity by the Registered Social Landlord (RSL) –the housing mix and local populace is expected to remain as it currently is.</p>	

As no identifiable change to the number of Welsh speakers is expected, an overall neutral effect when considering the Welsh language and the mobility of the population will be experienced as a result of the proposed development.	
Whether the development will increase the visibility of the language	The Proposed Development would retain a Welsh name for the development and street names. Therefore, the Proposed Development has the potential to contribute towards maintaining and increasing the visibility of the Welsh Language in the area.
Corporate image and branding - signs and advertisements on the site that are within the planning remit, e.g., advertising/marketing sign for a new housing site, signs and advertisements to customers in public places on employment sites.	Any advertising/branding/ signage within the public domain in relation to this proposed development would be bi-lingual. This key issue is mainly relevant to commercial and industrial developments rather than residential developments.
The name of the site or development –will it retain an old Welsh name or will any new name be derived from historic, geographical or local ties to the area, if practical.	The name of the development will be a Welsh name and will have regard to historical, geographical or local ties to the area.
<p>Composite Score – Impact of the Proposed Development on visual elements over 20 years</p> <p>The proposal is expected to contribute towards the visual elements of the Welsh language within Meliden.</p> <p>Probability: This is the effect that would be expected to occur in almost all similar developments.</p> <p>Frequency: This is the effect would be expected to occur in almost all similar developments.</p> <p>Likelihood: There is a high likelihood that the proposed development would have a beneficial effect on the visual elements of the Welsh language in Meliden (score of 4/almost certain).</p>	
Quality of Life including Community Infrastructure	Consideration of Potential Effects

<p>Is there a sufficient supply of childcare and pre-school places in the locality?</p>	<p>As most nurseries and pre-schools are run privately it is not possible to attain capacity numbers. However, there are three Nurseries and Preschools close to the Application Site: Tiny Tots, Little Rascals and Daisy Chains.</p> <p>Residential development is expected to generate an average of 0.03 pupils per unit for nursery and pre-school education. Based on this, the proposed development is likely to generate 1.05 pupils, rounded to 1. Therefore, it is considered that there is sufficient Welsh medium childcare within the area to support the proposed development</p>
<p>Is there sufficient capacity in schools in the locality? Is the development likely to require more school places or is the provision already sufficient? Are there sufficient resources to ensure that the schools are able to carry on to accomplish their role of producing fluent Welsh speakers?</p>	<p>The adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on Housing Developments and Educational Provision confirms that residential development is expected to generate an average of 0.17 pupils per house for primary education. Based on this, the proposal would likely generate 5.95, rounded to 6 requiring primary education.</p> <p>The Proposed Development of 35 units (10 of which are 1 bedroom flats) in theory is expected to generate an average of 0.16 pupils per house for secondary education (years 7-11). Based on this, the proposed development would likely to generate 5.6, rounded to 6, pupils requiring secondary education (years 7-11).</p> <p>As the residents of the proposed development are likely to already be living within Meliden, any children will likely already be enrolled in local schools. Therefore, the number of required primary and secondary school places are already accounted for within the Meliden school numbers.</p> <p>However the Applicant agrees to pay the requisite S106 contribution, where and if required, towards improving and maintaining existing infrastructure and provision in schools.</p>

<p>How would the development be likely to affect the balance between non-Welsh speaking pupils and Welsh speaking pupils at school? Would more places be needed in the immersion unit? Are there enough resources to provide facilities and opportunities so that children from non-Welsh speaking homes and those who have learned Welsh as a second language can use and improve their Welsh and become part of the Welsh community?</p>	<p>The development has the potential to give rise to 12 pupils from the Proposed Development; 6 primary school and 6 within secondary school.</p> <p>As all of the two and three bedroom dwellings would be for local people in need of affordable housing or local people in need of market housing. Children would be expected to be already attending a local school and therefore this wouldn't affect the balance of Welsh and non-Welsh speakers.</p>
<p>Would the development increase the demand for local facilities and services?</p>	<p>Meliden is identified as a Village in the adopted LDP. The LDP recognises that Service Villages provide essential service needs of their own population and immediate rural catchment area, as well as some employment and retail opportunities. They also have a good degree of accessibility of public transport to the higher order Centres.</p> <p>Given the location of the units, it is expected that any future occupants would utilise local facilities, which would benefit the local economy (for example, increase spending in local shops and eateries) within Meliden and the wider area. It is expected that the existing facilities as services available within Meliden and the surrounding areas would be able to accommodate the population of the proposed development.</p>
<p>The extent to which the development will have a positive or negative impact on existing facilities or services?</p>	<p>As above.</p>

<p>To what degree will the development create new opportunities to promote the Welsh language in local facilities and services such as halls, shops and so on?</p>	<p>Given that the development is for 35 residential dwellings, it is unlikely to create significant opportunities to promote the Welsh language within the area.</p>
<p>Composite Score - Impact on quality of life including community infrastructure over 20 years</p> <p>Based on the considerations presented above, the proposed development would be expected to have a minimal effect on quality of life including community infrastructure over 20 years.</p> <p>Probability: This is the effect that would be expected to occur in the majority similar developments.</p> <p>Frequency: This is the effect that would be expected 5-7 out of 10 times for similar developments in the last 20 years.</p> <p>Likelihood: This is the effect that would be likely to occur.</p> <p>The proposal would support the growth proposed in the LDP within Meliden without leading to a demand which would adversely affect the community infrastructure, services and facilities that could be offered to the local population. This would be a beneficial effect in terms of the quality of life. However, the proposal is not expected to lead to a change to the projected number of Welsh speakers.</p>	
New Housing	Consideration of Potential Effects
<p>Expected market price for the houses and how this compares with the income of local households and average house prices in the area</p>	<p>100% of the units would be affordable units offered as social or intermediate rental properties. The rent would reflect that which would be affordable to a local person. This would be managed by an RP as the owners and management company.</p>
<p>Would the development be likely to have a positive or negative impact on the average house price in the area affected?</p>	<p>As the proposed development would meet an identified need for housing, being an allocated housing site, and that all of the dwellings would be controlled initially and in perpetuity as affordable dwellings, this would contribute towards the demand for housing in Meliden in the long-term. By increasing the supply of affordable housing, this would reduce the demand on the open market.</p>

Affordable housing provision and how that compares with policy requirements.	The scheme is for 100% affordable of 35 units, located on land within the settlement boundary of Meliden. This more than complies the requirements of Policy BSC4.
Expected or proposed rate of development. Would it happen slowly?	The proposal relates to the development of only 35 dwellings and therefore the units will be developed in one phase.
Housing mix and how that compares with policy requirements, county or local surveys, or other sources of information.	Details of housing need and the identified need for housing has been presented in this document. The proposed number and type of units will contribute towards meeting an identified need within Meliden.
Number of houses and how that compares with the demand for housing and the supply of housing set out in the Plan and granted consent since the Plan's adoption.	<p>There is an identified need for one-, two- and three bedroom dwellings, as confirmed through the LHMA and the housing need figures provided by the Councils Housing Options Team.</p> <p>Therefore, it is considered that there is capacity and demand for the proposed development within Meliden to meet the identified housing need.</p>
<p>Composite Score – Impact of the Proposed Development on the housing market over 20 years</p> <p>Probability: - Overall, the proposed development is expected to lead to a neutral effect on the Welsh language when considering the housing market as it would provide at least 19 affordable dwellings, for local people. As these people already contribute to the percentage of Welsh speakers in Meliden, it is essentially a movement of people within the town. It would not increase the percentage of Welsh speakers across Meliden.</p> <p>Likelihood - It is likely that the proposed development would have a beneficial effect on the housing market in the area of Meliden.</p> <p>Frequency – It is likely that the proposed development would have a beneficial effect on the housing market in the area of Meliden.</p>	
Employment	Consideration of Potential Effects
How will the development contribute to current employment opportunities in the area, e.g., will it foster economic variability in the local area or not?	The proposal is for housing, and whilst the proposal would offer employment opportunities during the construction phase and some maintenance work post-completion, this key issue is considered to be more relevant to commercial and employment developments, rather than housing developments.
Number of full and/ or part time jobs	The proposal relates to a residential development and any employment opportunities would be through in-direct effects. The number of employment opportunities during construction is not known.

Skills which are necessary for the business or organisation and how that compares with the labour skills of local people (within the travel to work area).	n/a – as above
Salaries that will be offered and how that compares with average wages in the area.	n/a – as above
The labour skills of local people (within the travel to work area) and how likely it is according to the above assessment the posts will be filled from among the local population	n/a – as above
Is it likely that you will need to search outside the local area for employees, e.g. to obtain specialist skills?	The proposal is for housing, and therefore this is not a key consideration.
What type of Welsh language skills are essential and desirable for the jobs that will be created by the development? These will need to be defined as part of the development's Welsh language Plan (voluntary or statutory).	The proposal is for housing, and therefore this is not a key consideration.
The possible cumulative impact that the development could have, taking account of any other relevant recent development in the local area.	The proposal is for housing, and therefore this is not a key consideration.

Welsh language skills that will be necessary for the workers and their dependants to integrate into the local community.	The proposal is for housing, and therefore this is not a key consideration.
<p>Composite Score – Impact of the Proposed Development on Employment over 20 years</p> <p>Whilst the proposal relates to housing, it also provides the opportunity to beneficially contribute towards local employment for the local construction industry.</p> <p>Probability: This is the effect that would be expected to occur in almost all similar developments.</p> <p>Frequency: This is the effect that would be expected to occur 5-7 out of 10 times for similar developments in the last 20 years.</p> <p>Likelihood: It is almost certain that the proposed development would have a beneficial effect on employment in locale and the surrounding area.</p> <p>The employment opportunities offered as part of the development are beneficial for local people including Welsh speakers, however they are of a scale that are not expected to lead to a change in the number of Welsh speakers and therefore a neutral effect on the economy is expected.</p>	

Summary of Findings – Benefits and Risks

- 7.17 The Proposed Development seeks to provide 35 residential dwellings on a site within the development boundary.

Meeting an identified need

- 7.18 There is an identified need for both market and affordable housing within both Meliden and Denbighshire, as confirmed through the site allocation, the LHMA and housing need figures provided by the Councils Housing Options Team. The Proposed Development would therefore contribute towards meeting the identified need for dwellings within the Meliden area.
- 7.19 Providing properties in a suitable locations, within walking distance of many local services and facilities will reduce car dependency.
- 7.20 The proposal for 35 units of different types, sizes and tenures would enable local people to meet their identified need for housing and stay in the local area. In turn, this maintains the percentage of Welsh speakers within Meliden. As the potential residents will be moving from one location to another within the city itself, the proposal will have a neutral impact on the Welsh language.

Visual Elements of the Welsh Language

- 7.21 The proposal is expected to beneficially contribute towards the visual elements of the Welsh language in the local area.

Employment

- 7.22 Whilst the proposal relates to housing, it also provides the opportunity to beneficially contribute towards local employment during construction, supporting local construction businesses.

8.0 Mitigation and Improvement

- 8.1 Consideration of the effects of the proposed development on Welsh language and the community presented in sections 5-6 have identified an overall beneficial effect. No mitigation measures are considered to be necessary to make the proposed development acceptable.

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1 It is concluded that the proposed development would have beneficial effects on the Welsh language and the community within Meliden through the provision of affordable and market housing to meet an identified need, although no identifiable change to the overall number of Welsh speakers is expected.