



PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT
PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (10 UNITS)
AT THE FORMER GWAUN CAE GURWEN COUNTY PRIMARY
SCHOOL, WATER STREET, GWAUN CAE GURWEN,
NEATH PORT TALBOT, SA18 1HA

On behalf of
Messrs. D. & D. Davies

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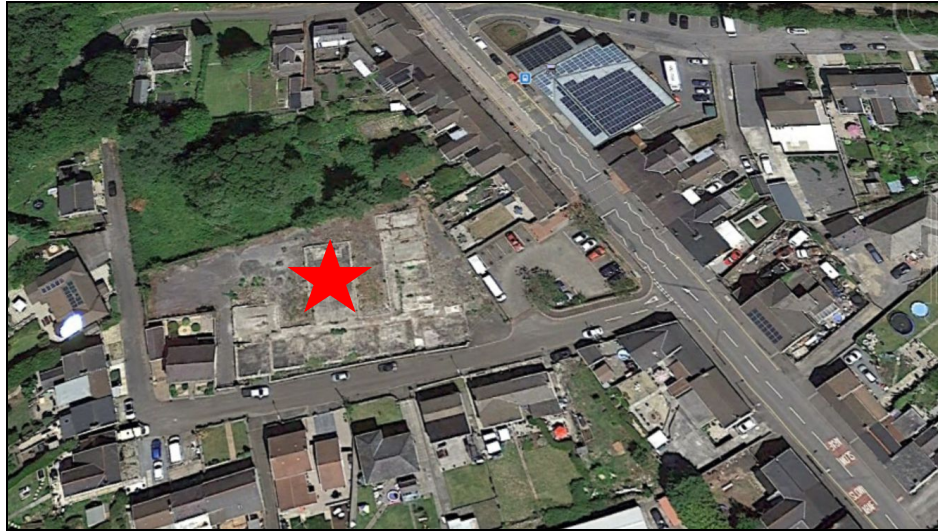
1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Outline planning permission is sought for residential development (10 units) at the site of the former Gwaun Cae Gurwen County Primary School site at Water Street, Gwaun Cae Gurwen, Ammanford, Neath Port Talbot, SA18 1HA.
- 1.2 This Planning, Design and Access Statement therefore forms part of the application submissions to be considered by the Authority, and in compliance with the requirements of TAN12 provides information on the following points:-
- A brief description of the site and surrounding area
 - A description of the proposed development
 - Consideration of relevant planning policy
 - Accessibility
 - Character
 - Community Safety
 - Environmental Sustainability
 - Movement to, from and within the development
- 1.3 Further to the above, the application is also accompanied by an Ecological Appraisal Report and a Welsh Language Action Plan, the contents of which should be read in conjunction with this statement.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 THE SITE

- 2.1.1 The application site comprises that of the former Gwaun Cae Gurwen County Primary School, marked with the red star in Photograph 1.



Photograph 1

- 2.1.2 The original buildings have been demolished and removed and this brownfield site is now dominated by areas of hardstanding (southern portion), together with a smaller area of undeveloped, now somewhat overgrown land, which was formerly the school's grassed play area (northern portion). The hardstandings comprise a mix of the original internal floor coverings from the various school buildings and external tarmacadamed areas.
- 2.1.3 The application site measures approximately 0.35 ha and is relatively flat, fronting onto Water Street, from which vehicular access is obtained at two existing points. The site is surrounded by residential development, with a public car park adjoining its south-eastern corner. The site boundaries are clearly defined by a mix of fencing, hedgerows and walls.

- 2.1.4 The application site is located centrally within Gwaun Cae Gurwen and is situated only approximately 30 metres from the village's commercial core along the main A474 road (Heol Cae Gurwen) where a relatively wide range of retail outlets, community facilities and local services are located.

2.2 THE SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.2.1 Gwaun Cae Gurwen has a strong mining heritage, as do the majority of villages in the area. It is located in the upper Amman Valley, approximately four miles to the east of the Carmarthenshire town of Ammanford, and approximately four miles to the north of Pontardawe in the Swansea Valley, with their extensive range of facilities and services.
- 2.2.2 Gwaun Cae Gurwen has good public transport links with many nearby settlements. A number of bus stops are located within convenient walking distance of the application site, with bus services linking the settlement with Ammanford to the west, Pontardawe and Swansea to the south, and Ystalyfera to the east. The settlement however is typical of a West Wales village community that has seen a decline in primary industry and manufacturing and which is now reliant on service industries, largely located elsewhere.
- 2.2.3 In terms then of the existing residential housing stock of the settlement, this is somewhat mixed. There are examples of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties found in the locality, some of which are illustrated below.



Photograph 2



Photograph 3



Photograph 4

2.2.4 Notwithstanding the above mix, there is some commonality with regards to external finishes used for each of the identified dwelling types, which are as follows:

Walls – Painted or textured render

Fenestration – White or coloured Upvc

Roofs – Slate or tile

2.2.5 The above will be taken into consideration during the detailed design stage of the proposed dwellings.

2.3 PROJECT DESIGN PARAMETERS AND PRINCIPLES

2.3.1 In light of the above, the following design principles and parameters have influenced the design subject of this planning application:-

- **Design** – To be fit for purpose, but respectful of its position within the local setting through the use of sympathetic materials and finishes.
- **Scale** – To be sufficient in size so as to provide the required level of residential accommodation to recognised standards.
- **Access** – To ensure that the safe vehicular and pedestrian movement is incorporated within the overall scheme.
- **Biodiversity** – To ensure that the proposal does not result in harm to any recognised biodiversity interests.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The outline proposal is for the construction of 10 no. semi-detached dwellings arranged in five pairs on a 0.35 ha area of brownfield land. The following information should therefore be read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings and information.

General Siting and Layout

- 3.2 The proposed scheme comprises 6 no. three bedroom dwellings located towards the frontage of the site along Water Street, and 4 no. four bedroom properties situated towards the rear of the site, as reproduced in Plan A below.



Plan A

- 3.3 Whilst the layout is indicative, it has nevertheless been produced following pre-application discussions with the local planning authority, who's comments have been given full consideration. As a result, the indicative layout demonstrates that the site is capable of accommodating the proposed number of units at a density and form that is respectful of its immediate urban context, whilst also making efficient use of this brownfield site.

Scale

- 3.4 It is proposed that the scheme will include 6 no. three bedroom dwellings and 4 no. four bedroom dwellings, with the indicative scale parameters as follows:

- Width 6m min - 8m max
- Depth 8m min - 10m max
- Height to ridge 8m min - 8.5m max

Access

- 3.5 Access is proposed direct from Water Street with 3 no. shared driveways serving the six frontage properties. A new shared private driveway also from Water Street will then provide access to the four dwellings at the rear.

Parking

- 3.6 Each dwelling will be served by 3 no. parking spaces located within paved/tarmacadamed amenity areas at the front of each property. Visitor spaces have also been included as part of the proposals.

Boundary Treatments

- 3.7 It is proposed that the site boundaries could be defined by a mix of fencing (1.8 metre high close timber board), hedgerows and walls - retaining the original school boundary walls where possible.

Landscaping

- 3.8 Landscaping proposals would include specimen tree and shrub planting, together with the provision of informal grassed areas/street landscaping.

Drainage

- 3.9 All foul water will be disposed of via the existing public sewer. Surface water will be disposed of in a sustainable manner following current guidelines, as depicted on the accompanying Drainage Layout drawing.

4.0 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

4.1 In terms of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the adopted development plan for the area within which the application site is situated is the *Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan (2011 – 2026)* (LDP). It is therefore the policies of this document that have been referred to in the preparation of the proposal subject of the planning application in question, including the following:-

- Strategic Policy SP3 – Sustainable Communities
- Policy SC1 – Settlement Limits
- Policy TR2 – Design and Access of New Development
- Policy BE1 – Design
- Policy WL1 – Development in Language Sensitive Areas

4.2 The LDP places sustainable development at its core. Fundamental to the LDP's strategic approach is the development of sustainable communities. Policy SP3 is underpinned by the LDP's settlement hierarchy, which categorises Gwaun Cae Gurwen as a 'Large Local Centre' in the LDP's settlement hierarchy, due to its public transport links, retail units, local services, community facilities and employment provision.

4.3 The application site lies within the settlement limits for Gwaun Cae Gurwen, as defined by Policy SC1. Therefore, the principle of development is already established for this site. Furthermore, the redevelopment and regeneration of a central brownfield site is supported by both national and local planning policy and will bring a previously community-significant site back into efficient use through high quality design (Policy BE1).

4.4 Gwaun Cae Gurwen as a settlement has good public transport links. It is well served by bus routes, with several bus stops being within convenient walking distance of the application site on the main A474 road. The bus routes linking Gwaun Cae Gurwen

with the wide range of services and facilities in settlements both nearby and further afield include:-

64	Ammanford – Ystradgynlais
124	Ammanford – Brynamman
905	Cwmtwrch – Pontardawe
X26	Brynamman - Swansea

- 4.5 The sustainable credentials of the application site are further reinforced by its close proximity to the local retail outlets and facilities within Gwaun Cae Gurwen, the majority of which are located within walking distance along the A474 road, including supermarkets, cafes, public houses, Places of Worship, a library, takeaways, doctors surgery, dentist, etc. Several local businesses are also based in Gwaun Cae Gurwen, providing valuable employment opportunities for local residents.
- 4.6 Furthermore, primary school education is provided by Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Gwaun Cae Gurwen, a Welsh medium school situated within convenient walking distance of the application site (approximately 350 metres). A choice of secondary education is available at Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera (Welsh medium) and Cwmtawe Community School in Pontardawe (English medium). Schools bus services 995 and 909 provide transport from Gwaun Cae Gurwen to each respective school.
- 4.7 The application site's key sustainable accessibility characteristics and limited potential traffic generation also ensure its compliance with LDP Policy TR2.
- 4.8 Policy WL1 requires planning applications for residential developments of 10 dwellings or more, and which are located within 'Language Sensitive Areas' (LSAs), to be accompanied by a Welsh Language Action Plan (WLAP). Gwaun Cae Gurwen is considered to be an LSA and therefore a WLAP has been prepared which sets out

the measures to be taken to protect, promote and enhance the Welsh language and which will mitigate any potential negative impact on the language.

- 4.9 In conclusion therefore, it is evident that the proposed scheme supports the aims and objectives of both national and local planning policy and satisfies all relevant criteria.

5.0 ACCESSIBILITY

5.1 ACCESSIBILITY

- 5.1.1 All inclusive design issues identified have been addressed wholly in compliance with the requirements of the Disability Rights Commission Code of Practice “Rights of Access: Services and Premises” and Part M of the Building Regulations, 1991, as amended. The requirements of all ambulant and semi-ambulant persons will be satisfied by the proposed development where required.

5.2 MOVEMENT TO, FROM AND WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT

- 5.2.1 The application site is located centrally within Gwaun Cae Gurwen and is within convenient walking distance of several bus stops, retail outlets, services and facilities. As a result, the application proposal represents a sustainable development opportunity which will discourage use of the private motor car.

6.0 CHARACTER

Landscape Design

- 6.1 The application site comprises brownfield land which is currently a detriment to visual amenity. Its proposed redevelopment provides an opportunity to bring this locally significant site back into efficient use whilst also making a positive contribution to the streetscene.
- 6.2 The proposal has taken existing boundary features into careful consideration and will retain the original boundary walls where appropriate. A future reserved matters application will provide further details on the specific details of all aspects of landscaping.

Scale

- 6.3 The scale of the proposal is 10 no. semi-detached dwellings, together with amenity and parking areas, which can be readily accommodated within the application site, without causing detriment to the local setting.

Number

- 6.4 The proposal is for 10 no. units of residential accommodation.

Layout of Development

- 6.5 The layout of the proposed development has been largely governed by the existing boundaries of the application site. The 10 no. dwellings make full and efficient use of a centrally located brownfield site and give full consideration to guidance provided by the Authority at the pre-application stage.

Appearance

- 6.6 All materials used in the scheme will be respectful of and sympathetic to the locality.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

- 7.1 The proposal has given full consideration to community safety. The layout of the proposed development is such that each new dwelling will promote and secure a sense of natural surveillance. It should also be noted that the proposed development will facilitate the removal of a large brownfield site that could otherwise be the target for anti-social behaviour.

8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Landscaping/Townscape Setting

- 8.1 The proposed development represents a harmonious and respectful addition to the townscape, while also being complimentary to the local setting.

Biodiversity and Local Environment

- 8.2 The 'Ecological Appraisal Report' prepared by 'I&G Ecological Consulting' noted that no signs of European protected species were recorded on site. The majority of the application site was found to be of low local ecological value.
- 8.3 Through appropriate mitigation, the proposal will have no detrimental impact on biodiversity or ecological interests in the area, as detailed in the accompanying supporting documentation.

Energy Efficiency/Carbon Reduction

- 8.4 We are advised that the following measures will be taken into consideration to maximise energy efficiency and carbon reduction of the proposal during its construction:-

- Use local suppliers and labour wherever possible
- Use recycled products wherever possible
- The dwellings will be insulated to current targets
- Maximise use of daylight in key rooms through fenestration
- All fenestration will be insulated to current targets
- Energy efficient internal and external lighting units will be installed

Sustainable Materials

- 8.5 We understand that recycled or reclaimed products will be used in the construction wherever possible.

Water

- 8.6 We understand that the existing water supply will be used.

Waste Management

- 8.7 The dwellings will have access to standard domestic recycling facilities.
- 8.8 A connection will be made to the public sewer for the disposal of foul waste.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposed development represents an opportunity to regenerate a sustainable, centrally located, brownfield site, thereby making an important positive contribution, by means of environmental improvement and the provision of much needed quality housing.
- 9.2 The provision of ten quality dwellings will help in sustaining local services, facilities and businesses.
- 9.3 The application proposal has been influenced by a number of factors, particularly the site's proximity to existing residential development. As a result, the proposal and its individual elements have been designed to ensure that they are fit for purpose and sympathetic to the general townscape.
- 9.4 The proposal represents a respectful and sympathetic redevelopment scheme which will have no detrimental effect on adjoining land uses or any ecological or highway interests. As a result, it therefore adheres to the requirements of all relevant elements of both national and local planning policy and we respectfully request that planning permission be granted for the proposed development.