

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

**Proposed Construction of a Detached Dwellinghouse
At Land part of 42 Gnoll Road, Goedre'graig, Swansea**



1. Introduction

1.1 An application for full planning permission has been submitted to Neath-Port Talbot Council. The application seeks approval for the construction of a detached dwelling house at land part of 42 Gnoll Road, Goedre'graig, Swansea.

1.2 This Design & Access Statement has been compiled under the provisions of Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12 "Design" – Appendix 1 (2009) and the Town & Country Planning (GDPO) (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2009, No. 1024: Design and Access Statements: Wales. The Statement is intended to complement the proposals put forward in drawing format within the submission. For clarification that is Plans referenced:

- Site location plan : Scale 1:1250
- Site Layout plan : Scale 1:200
- Proposed Elevations : Scale 1:100
- Proposed Floor Plans : Scale 1:50

2. Site Analysis

2.1 The application site occupies a position off the eastern flank of Gnoll Road, within the village of Goedre'graig. The land forms part of the side and rear garden of No.42, a semi-detached house, which lies tight to an acute bend in the highway. The garden area is found to gently ascend in level to a common boundary with No.34 Gnoll Road, which is a modern detached house, side facing the application site.

2.2 No.42 Gnoll Road is a traditional two-storey construction, with two-storey rear projection, and a rear garden which extends to some 34 metres in depth. The side garden, at its widest point, extends to 14 metres, following the public footway about the plot. Vehicular access is currently found alongside the existing dwelling with surface car parking within the side garden. The boundary with the highway footway is marked with a 1.6 metres high chain link fence, and therefore views into the garden area are relatively open and exposed. Photos 1 & 2 illustrate the frontage of the application site from Gnoll Road



Photo 1



Photo 2

3. Economic, Social & Physical Context Analysis

3.1 This stretch of Gnoll Road is noted for the acute and winding alignment, which ascends from the valley floor and A4067 Swansea Valley link road, up the village of Goedre'graig which is to be found situated along the mid-hillside.

3.2 The buildings to be found along this stretch of highway are predominantly residential, with older, traditional houses tending to be pre-war dated terraced and semi-detached, two storey houses. Car parking is to be found off driveways running along respective side curtilages, or upon the highway itself in terms of the terraced properties. Rear garden space is off the rear and long in depth in comparison to modern standards, falling/ descending in level with the general topography of the locality. Photos 3, 4 & 5 illustrate such properties.



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5

3.3 Modern residential properties tend to set within infill plots, and vary considerably in scale and plot size. Modern properties also vary considerably in design, with densely compacted units exhibiting a range of different house types. Properties at Gnoll Road include individual bungalows, such as that directly opposite the site, as well as large, four bedroomed two-storey properties, set at intervals along the road. Finishes vary considerably from face brick to render and also the use of spar dash. Roof coverings are predominantly saddle roofed with brown or grey cement tiles or slate. Photos 6, 7 & 8 illustrate such properties.



Photo 6



Photo 7



Photo 8

3.4 Public Transport is available at the junction of Graig Road with Gnoll Road. Service 125 operates an hourly bus service between Ystradgynlais, Goedre'grraig, Pontardawe and Swansea City Centre. Bus stops are available after a five minutes' walk from the application site.

3.5 Goedre'grraig Primary School is also to be found within a 5 minute walking distance from the application site, with most local facilities located further

west, in the form of individual convenience shops and public houses, located near Cilmaengwyn. Pontardawe and Ystalyfera are well serviced with supermarkets, secondary schools, community buildings and employment estates, and only 10 minutes journey by bus.

4. POLICY CONTEXT

This application has referred to the following policies of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Unitary Development Plan:

- ☐ GC1 - New buildings / structures
- ☐ ENV3 - Impacts on landscape
- ☐ ENV17 - Design
- ☐ T1 - Location, layout and accessibility

It is considered that the application complies with these policies as well as other relevant policies relating to sustainability under the Planning Policy for Wales – March 2002 (PPW) document.

According to the local authority's Unitary Development Plan (UDP), the proposed development is located within the designated H3 EC3 policy area.

UDP Document 9.3.7

A key focus of this plan therefore is urban regeneration and the use of “brownfield” land for housing development. The use of “brownfield” sites helps limit the amount of countryside needed for development. Typical journey lengths will tend to be shorter from sites within the urban area, and are more likely to be possible by public transport, walking or cycling. Not all land within urban areas will be suitable for housing development. For example there may be local open space or wildlife interests, land may be contaminated, or affected by ‘bad neighbour’ land uses.

UDP Document 9.4.13

Housing allocations will maximise the use of appropriate ‘brownfield’ sites and take account of the potential for rehabilitation, conversion, clearance and redevelopment in a given area. All new housing developments will be well integrated with existing settlements in order to avoid ribbon and fragmented development patterns.

UDP document 9.7

The development of “infill” and “windfall” sites within settlement limits, as defined on the Proposals Map, will generally be permitted for housing subject to the following criteria: -

- A) There is no unacceptable loss of open or green space that is important for its recreational, amenity or conservation value;
- B) Proposals either individually or in combination with existing commitments would not create unacceptable impacts on existing or programmed infrastructure or community facilities;
- C) There will not be a significant detrimental effect on the amenity of the existing residents of the area;

D) There would be no unacceptable highway implications.

The proposed housing unit falls within the limits of the above planning policies, making the best use of the site and the surrounding area. It will strengthen the existing residential fabric on Gnoll Road without placing any undue additional burden on the traffic and transport network.

Policy ENV17 – Design

Any proposal that would include new construction or alteration to an existing building's appearance should be well designed. This will include whether it has:

- a) paid sufficient regard to the character of the area, and to conserve biodiversity and strengthen habitat connectivity;
- b) ensured that its design and operation would not have any unsatisfactory impacts on the occupants of any other properties (including proposals with the benefit of planning permission);
- c) taken sufficient regard of the need to address climate change and sustainability issues;
- d) incorporated good design that addresses the safety and security of people and property, and reduces the opportunities for crime. In assessing development proposals particular attention should be paid towards:
 - (i) natural surveillance of public spaces from existing or proposed development;
 - (ii) the location of footpaths and access points;
 - (iii) secure locations for any associated car and cycle parking;
 - (iv) satisfactory lighting; and
 - (v) provision of CCTV, where the proposal would contribute to a significant increase in traffic or pedestrian activity.

Policy T1 – Location, Layout and Accessibility of New Proposals

A proposal will only be permitted if: -

- a) wherever appropriate it would be well located in terms of reducing the need to travel especially by private car, and have good and easy access by public transport, cycling and walking. Where public transport facilities and services are included as part of a proposal there should be a reasonable expectation that they would continue to be provided;
- b) the proposed layout, design, traffic management and associated offsite works provide a safe, convenient, efficient and attractive transport infrastructure (to, from and within the site) that encourages and maximises the use of walking, cycling and public transport (including where appropriate the provision of facilities for public transport), which minimises the reliance on the use of private cars, which takes fully into account the need of the mobility and visually impaired, and reduces opportunities for crime and disorder;
- c) it would not create or unacceptably worsen highway safety or congestion on the highway network; and d) appropriate car parking and servicing space is provided and whenever appropriate this includes specialised provision for taxis, coaches, cyclists, and people with a mobility or visual impairment.

Policy GC1 – New Buildings/Structures and Changes of Use

Any proposal involving new buildings, structures, change of use, extensions and alterations will not be permitted if it would create an unacceptable impact in failing to:

- a) take into account the topography and the site's role in terms of the landscape,

seascape, biodiversity and archaeology; see policies: ENV3, ENV4, ENV5, ENV22, ENV23 and ENV24

b) address contamination, instability, impacts on health and amenity and proximity or exposure to noise, lighting, pollution or hazard; see policies: ENV12, ENV14, ENV15, ENV16, ENV26, ENV27, ENV 28, ENV29

c) ensure that the proposal would not be at risk from flooding, nor increase flood risk off-site or create additional water run-off; see policy ENV 11

d) ensure that the orientation and exposure of the site maximises both energy efficiency, and the opportunity to integrate energy and water conservation measures into the design and layout of the development;

e) ensure that measures are taken to minimise the adverse impacts of the development on the character and townscape of the surrounding area including building densities, architectural styles, layout patterns, orientation of buildings, scale, height, mass and materials of nearby buildings, structures and infrastructure (including power lines, roads and railways;) see policies: ENV 18, ENV 19, ENV 20

(f) ensure that proposals that could (individually or cumulatively) lead to a significant increase in traffic generation, density of occupation, or which are intended to provide affordable housing, housing for the elderly or for people with disabilities, are well located in terms of access on foot to facilities and public transport.

g) ensure that in residential developments, efficient use is made of the site in terms of the density of development including the size and footprint of the buildings, the extent of gardens and curtilages, and the amount and extent of parking and circulation space;

see policies H2, H3

h) ensure that the layout and design of the development achieves inclusive design by ensuring barrier free environments, giving access to the widest possible range of people by integrating development with existing footpaths, cycle ways and public and private transport infrastructure, and makes full provision for people with disabilities.

see policy T1, T2, T3

i) ensure that the proposal includes appropriate parking, servicing and access provisions and does not create unacceptable hazards or inconvenience for users of highways or rights of way; see policies T1, T9, T10, T12

j) ensure that the layout of the development does not preclude the efficient use of other adjacent land which is either allocated for development in the plan or is located within a settlement limit;

k) ensure that adequate sunlight, and daylight, is available for buildings and amenity spaces both adjacent to and within the site; l) ensure that there are reasonable levels of privacy and amenity for occupiers of properties both adjacent to and within the site;

m) ensure that the proposal includes appropriate landscaping;

n) ensure that wherever a proposal would be likely to generate significant amounts of waste appropriate waste minimisation, recycling, collection, treatment and disposal facilities are provided both during construction and the use or operation of the proposal;

o) ensure that adequate infrastructure and services are available, or can be readily and economically provided, to serve the development; proposals including non mains drainage schemes *must demonstrate that connection to the main sewer is not feasible*. see policy IE1

p) ensure that the development would not impose unacceptable demands upon the community or its facilities including schools, sports, recreation, formal and informal open space, leisure, health and community facilities, nor be likely to create unacceptable problems in terms of crime prevention or the Welsh language; see policies H4, H5

q) ensure that in the case of proposals involving new construction work a design statement is provided explaining the design proposed, how the issues have been considered and solutions derived, and including illustrations of how the proposal would relate to its surrounding area of townscape, seascape or landscape as appropriate

The proposals have also been considered in light of Policy ENV16 of the UDP, which states that:

POLICY ENV16 – CONTAMINATED LAND

Proposals that would affect land, which is, or is likely to be contaminated, will not be permitted unless: -

a) investigations have been undertaken by the applicant to establish whether contamination exists, its nature and extent, any potential hazards to the development, its occupants and the local environment, and to determine the appropriate treatment;

b) the proposals would not have any unacceptable impacts;

c) the site is treated to prevent sources of contamination leaking into watercourses or groundwater; and

d) adequate measures are proposed to monitor the site, any impacts of the proposals, and to undertake remediation action for a specified period in order to ensure that the remediation implemented is appropriate for the end use of the site.

In this regards, the applicant has commissioned a Phase 1 Desk top assessment of the site, the results of which are submitted within this application. Any requirement to carry out remediation of the site will be undertaken in line with the recommendations of that report, prior to the commencement of any works on the site.

5. Involvement

5.1 The applicants have not engaged in any community or neighbour involvement in the preparation of the planning application. However, the site benefits from outline planning permission, granted in May 2012.

Application P2011/0297 also underwent extensive public consultation.

5.2 The applicant and his agent have sought extensive pre-application advice from the Local Planning Authority, in terms of layout, design and access issues. Those discussions have taken place to culminate in this submission for planning permission.

6. DESIGN CONCEPT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The proposals submitted illustrate for a detached dwelling house set along a corresponding front building line with No.42, separated by a one metre wide path, and of a depth which also corresponds with the depth of the adjoining house. The existing garden space will be subdivided,

with the host dwelling retaining a rear garden directly behind the dwelling, and all side garden given over to the proposed dwelling. A new shared vehicular access will be formed at the north-western corner of the plot with Gnoll Road, adjoining the driveway with No.34. The driveway will afford access to not only the plot but also No.42, as the current parking arrangements require relocation.

6.2 ACCESS

6.2.1 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 Regulation 1991 as amended. Thereafter full compliance will be maintained.

6.2.2 Features of Inclusive Design

Outside the Buildings

- (a) The development proposal will ensure, wherever possible, that the maximum gradient of driveways and footways to building entrances will be as level with existing ground levels, and certainly no more than 1:12, together with non-slip pathways and laid to a minimum width of 1000mm being deployed.
- (b) Car parking spaces to the dwelling driveway will be surfaced firm and level, free from loose stones. Every effort will be made to ensure proposed parking facilities are well lit for all users.
- (c) Hard and soft landscaping of garden and amenity areas will be wheelchair friendly and capable of access for all.

Building Structures

The detached dwelling house will be two-storey, and the following will apply:

- (a) If required, access to an external doorway will be made available via a short, shallow ramp. It is unlikely due to the site topography that handrails will be required as accompanying features on the above ramps. Ramps will be flush, with a maximum of 6mm step.
- (b) Both external doorways will be in compliance with Part M of the Buildings Regulations. The entrances shall be clearly identifiable to all users.
- (c) All internal doors will be a minimum of 800mm, with corridors to a minimum width of 900mm to comply with Part M of the Building Regulations.
- (d) Entrance doors will avoid the use of large glass facades, and doors thresholds will be flush. Door handles will be easy to grip in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations, and similarly door closures will require a minimum use of force.
- (e) There will be a sufficiently sized stairwell, together with a turning circle, within the ground floor hallway, being a minimum 1200mm diameter allowing for wheelchair manoeuvrability.

(f) Wherever possible, wheelchair access to a bathroom and kitchen will be encouraged.

(g) The placement of window cills and electrical sockets will have regard to the need for use by all users, and be in compliance with the Building Regulations.

The proposals therefore ensure ease of access for all.

6.3 CHARACTER

6.3.1 Amount of Development

It is considered that the proposals offer a modest development which pays particular regard to the precise townscape and topography of this part of Goedre'graig. In this regard, specific attention has been paid to ensuring that the proposals appear as part of the continuing frontage of Gnoll Road.

The proposed site layout illustrates the detached house set tight to the host dwelling, and along a corresponding building line. The level of footprint to plot size is relatively compatible with neighbouring properties.

6.3.2 Scale

The scale of the proposed dwelling house is set to harmonise with the overall wide mix and types of traditional and modern house types evident along the entire expanse of Gnoll Road.

The precise scales are shown in the submitted plans and are as follows:

Width – 6.5 metres

Depth – 11.5 metres

The proposed detached house will be set at a corresponding level to the adjoining houses, whilst being visually absorbed when viewed by approaching from Gnoll Road by a strong backdrop formed by the established dwellings.

The depth of proposed property complements the traditional rear two storey projections seen upon established dwellings.

6.3.3 Appearance

The roof pitch will be saddled, with flat grey tile, complementing the majority of neighbouring properties. The use of white dashed render will be primarily used upon the house, with decorative raised render around the windows to front elevation. White dashed render offers a sense of a clean and subtle finish, aiding to minimise the dominance and mass of this new unit.

Window openings will be symmetrically aligned, and with a vertical emphasis to complement the style and finish of traditional house openings in the locality. Grey upvc will be used to windows and doors

6.3.4 Layout

The proposals offer a good use of space, ensuring that the site is not overdeveloped, nor places a burden on any facilities such as car parking. In fact, the theme of the new dwelling is to ensure that parking spaces are compatible with that evident at neighbouring, traditional properties, and also sited to the rear to avoid the parking of cars dominating the street scene. Sufficient relief is provided between rear elevations of the proposed house and the side elevation

of No.34 Gnoll Road to the immediate north.

The proposal aims to sustain the character of the immediate locality, by introducing an infill development alongside semi-detached traditional properties on Gnoll Road itself.

The precise siting of the proposed house at Gnoll Road will ensure that those neighbours' privacy and amenities will be safeguarded. This regard is paid to the adjoining No.42 residents, and those above at No.34 which is side facing the northern extremity of the site.

6.3.5 Landscape

The existing adjoining land use, and in particular the existing, retained boundary, will result in a successful relationship between public and private space. The site is inconspicuous in the landscape, as a result of it being enveloped by the adjoining residential properties.

There are no views from higher ground upon which an observer could "look down" upon the site. Views from lower ground, that is from a south-easterly perspective, lower on Gnoll Road, are of a density of residential properties respecting the existing ground levels, ascending with the public highway.

The submission does include a landscaping scheme, with rear lawned garden, and timber fencing to form a new sub-dividing garden boundary will prevail.

6.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY

6.4.1 The detached house will be publicly viewed from the adjacent Gnoll Road. Furthermore, the degree of separation between the built form and boundaries of the site will be retained. This ensures that a healthy degree of natural sunlight will continue to flourish. The complete lack of overbearance between neighbouring existing and proposed properties will be fully exhibited.

A sense of natural surveillance will be actively promoted at the site.

6.5 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

6.5.1 The proposals will allow for residents and visitors to access the site by means of transport other than the private motor car.

Accessing the site by foot or bicycle will be encouraged by virtue of the site's central and easily accessible location, as is the availability to travel to and from the site by public bus, given the site's location near a principle bus route.

6.5.2 The proposed extension will utilise materials which, wherever possible, will be locally sourced, ensuring that minimal importation of materials from outside the County will take place.

6.5.3 The proposals can be adapted to meet the requirements of the Technical Advice Note 22 "Planning for Sustainable Buildings". In particular, in accordance with guidance within the TAN, the proposals meet the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 and obtain 1 credit under issue "*Ene1 – Dwelling Emission Rate*". A Pre-Assessment is appended to this Statement. In summary, the pre-assessment concludes that a "Code Level 3" rating over 57% can be achieved, and specifically highlights the following:

Energy Efficiency

There will be an 8% improvement of the Dwelling Emission Rate (DER) over Building Regulations requirements.

Digital display devices will be installed to monitor electricity and gas consumption.

External drying space will be provided.

The houses will benefit from a Home Office

Water

The properties will consume less than 105 litres per person per day.

An external water butt will be provided linked to a rainwater downpipe.

Materials

The mandatory requirement will be fulfilled with at least 3 of the 5 key building elements achieving Green Guide 2008 Rating of A+ to D.

Surface Water Run-Off

The development will achieve Greenfield run-off rates, resulting in no excess flows to that currently exhibited at the site.

The site is also in an area acknowledged as of very low flood risk.

Waste

The house will be afforded with a high level of internal waste storage, in particular 3 different bins for pre-sorting recyclable waste before collection by the local authority.

Dedicated external surface will also be provided to cater for waste bins.

A Composting bin will be provided within the rear garden.

Pollution

All insulation materials will have substances with GWP of less than 5.

The property will be fitted with a Class 5 boiler, with low emissions of NOx.

Health & Well-Being

The property will be afforded their own private garden space.

Management

The future homeowner will be provided with a Home User Guide to their property's functions and features to promote energy and water efficiency, and also details of the availability of public transport, and proximity of schools, shops and community facilities in the locality.

The developer will liaise with the Police's Architectural Liaison Officer to ensure the dwelling is constructed with Secure by Design features.

Ecology

The site has no features of ecological value, and consequently none will be lost following the construction of a dwellinghouse.

6.6 MOVEMENT

6.6.1 The proposals will allow for uses, be that residents, delivery operatives or general visitors to freely access all available parts of the development, with the house being fully incorporated into the internal mechanics of the site. The

development proposed has been designed to illustrate for change, whilst ensuring that all movement outside and within the building is free from obstruction or hindrance.

6.6.2 The submitted proposals illustrate for a safe and effective vehicular access off Gnoll Road, with visibility splays achieving that required by national standards within a built-up area.

The level of car parking at the site will ensure that there is sufficient off-street parking for residents and visitors. The applicants' focus has also been ensuring that a proportion of parking is also retained for the host dwelling at corresponding levels with that of each respective property, thereby providing easy passage for all users regardless of mobility

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 This Statement has illustrated that the proposals meet the "objectives of good design" as listed within Section 4 of Technical Advice Note (TAN) 4, sustainability principles of TAN22, together with the underlying policies of the Neath-Port Talbot Unitary Development Plan.

Throughout, the focus is made upon ensuring that the proposal is a legible development, well designed to integrate comfortably into its own surroundings and those of the wider locality, and; is freely accessible to all users.