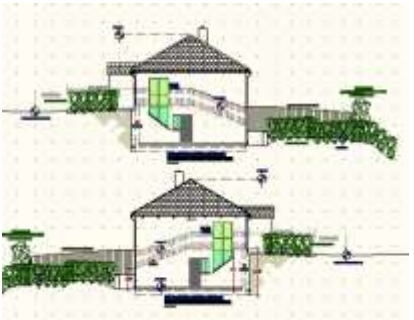




Design and Access Statement



Plot adjacent to
24 Curwen Close, Pontrhydyfen, SA12 9UT

Site Location and Description.

The 0.055 ha site is located at approximate National Grid Reference 278785E, 195365N, in the hamlet of Efail-Fâch around 1.5 km to the north of Pontrhydyfen and is currently derelict land. It is proposed to develop the site with semi-detached residential properties. The site is situated between existing residential properties at the end of a cul-de-sac, and slopes from 95.5 to 86.5 m AOD, east to west.

Grid Reference

278785E	195365N
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Statement Prepared for :

Mrs Amanda Boucher,

Lletty Cariard

Curwen Close

Pontrhydyfen

Neath SA12 9UT

Contents

Vision

Introduction and site location

Site Analysis – Opportunities and Constraints

Involvement and Consultation

Design

Community Safety

Character

Environmental Sustainability

Movement and Access

Development Site

The client (Mrs Amanda Boucher) has lived in Neath Port Talbot since 2003, Mrs Boucher moved from Ebbw Vale to Cilfrew, Neath, in May 2003 with her husband and three teenage sons. Mrs Boucher's husband sadly passed away in August 2014, since then Mrs Boucher had struggled to keep their family home in Cilfrew, but unfortunately was not able to sustain the income to meet the overheads, Mrs Boucher is now living in Mariners Quay, but has to move due to that property being sold. The proposed development will if successful allow Mrs Boucher to secure her own home for the future and also provide her with a small income for her retirement. It is considered that these dwellings will provide much needed affordable housing in the area too

The site currently has full planning for a contemporary single dwelling over 3 floors, however this fails to meet the requirements of the current owner. Mrs Boucher needs to provide for her future and secure a long term home into her retirement.

The proposal is to build two three bed semidetached properties; Mrs Boucher will live in the one and either rent (preferred) or sell the other to provide her with an income and the security she requires going forward.

The properties are to be of highly efficient timber frame construction, the fenestration layout to the properties are utilised to provide the properties with as much natural sunlight as possible allowing passive solar gain by the inclusion of glazed areas on the South facing elevation. Solar panels are to be fitted to the roof on the South West side of the property. Supporting the required heating will be individual air to heat source units. The ethos of the design is to achieve a highly insulated thermal envelope that will reduce the energy demand and reduce the carbon emissions produced.

The landscaping will improve the bio-diversity of the site, which will include indigenous trees and shrubs to form hedging, bird nesting boxes, bat boxes etc. (Please refer to Biodiversity enhancement report attached).

To provide further biodiversity and following the clients required ethos a SUDs strategy has been site specifically design and incorporated into the landscape design. FDL have engaged by means of Pre Planning application with Mr Nicholas Waters of NPT SABs .(Please refer to FDL SUDs report attached along with Mr Waters reply, & FDL further information provided).

Introduction and Site Location

The proposed development is situated in a cul-de-sac known as Curwen Close in the hamlet of Efail-Fâch around 1.5 km to the north of Pontrhydyfen, which is situated approximately four miles east of the town of Neath on the B4287.

There is planning on the site already, for a large three storey, three bed, property. (Ref: P20180098).



The village consists largely of one main street, with terraced housing immediately adjacent to the road on either side. There has been a number of larger new builds in the area of recent years, enhancing the look of the street and bringing a new updated feel to the area.

This proposal aims to blend into the existing properties of old and new builds and is intended to be more in keeping with the surrounding area. At the moment the plot of land is the only remaining area to be developed and sits as a infill site between a recently approved Dormer bungalow of high quality design and build, and a long established ex council owned 2 storey which forms the end link of the main terrace of properties alongside the main access road.

The site is as purchased by Mrs Boucher in August 2021, as in, clear of any overgrowth and is fenced off for safety reasons.

It's considered this proposal will enhance the look of the village and the environment in which it sits. Furthermore helping to address the considerable shortage of affordable housing in the Neath Port Talbot area.

The site occupies a infill elevated position above the B4287, which is the main artery into the Afan Valley. The design intent is to provide an architectural design of suitable high quality, but with an aesthetic that blends into the established architectural forms in which it sits.



Local and National Planning Policy

The following Local Authority policies have been identified as relevant criteria for consideration in this application:

- ENV 17 The proposal is for an “eco” house that will incorporate various techniques and elements of design to reduce carbon emissions, the waste water and energy that it uses and will embrace many other issues contributing to it’s overall satiability.
- H 8 The development will be constructed to the Lifetime Homes Standard.
- T1 The development is set in an established community served by good public transport links, walkways and cycle ways, all of which offer a sustainable alternative mode of transport to the motor car.
- EC6 The layout of the living space is conducive to working from home, whilst acknowledging this is now a common practice or” the norm”, the layout includes break out space for open or fresh air relaxation. This is incorporated in the design without compromising the essential primary use as a family home.

The design has been developed to meet a local housing shortage of high quality efficient affordable homes. The design evolved through numerous engagements and liaisons with the planning offices “pre planning facility”

The following Welsh Assembly Government Policies have also been identified as relevant for consideration:

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 4, February 2011)

Chapter 4 – planning for sustainability

Chapter 9 – Housing

Technical Advice Note 12: Design

Technical Advice Note 22: Sustainable Building

SABs authority NPT County Council / Environmental Countryside and Wild life team

National Resources Wales (NRW) / Dwr Cymru Welsh Water / Coal Authority

Further resources utilised in this design.

Policy SP3 Sustainable Communities • Policy SP7 Housing Requirement Topic based Policies • Policy SC1 Settlement limits • Policy BE1 Design. • Policy EN7 Important Natural Features • Policy TR2 Design and Access of New Development • Policy WL1 Development in Language Sensitive Areas
Supplementary Planning Guidance: The following SPG is of relevance to this application: - • Parking Standards (October 2016) • Biodiversity and Geodiversity (May 2018) • Design (July 2017)

Boundaries – Eastern

To the east of the development site, the boundary is shared with the adopted highway of Curwen Close.

A vehicle crossover exists onto the development site, it is proposed to extend a dropped kerb entrance across the width of the site to provide access and egress as part of the scheme. Further to consultation with Highways and Building regulations of NPT CC.

The highway has a tarmac footpath to its perimeter and it abuts the development site.

Boundaries – Western

To the west of the development site, the boundary is shared with the gardens of the houses set along the B4287. The difference in elevation between the ground floor of these properties and the development site is approximately 10.500 meters.

The properties consists of a pair of detached houses and half of a further pair, making three houses in total.

The boundary consists of a mix of post and wire fencing in a state of complete disrepair, self-seeded Laurel hedging. (Set in Neighbours side of boundary)

It is evident that due to safe working access no maintenance of this boundary has been undertaken for many years.

Boundaries – Southern

To the South of the development site, the boundary is shared with a newly built dorma bungalow.

The boundary is in the form of a new to be erected timber fence measuring 1.8m high,

A BT openreach distribution pole is also situated along this boundary.

Boundaries – Northern

To the North of the development site, the boundary is shared with 24 Curwen Close. The property is end of terrace ex-council house now purchased by the owner.

The boundary is in the form of a timber panel fence, measuring 2.4m high above the lower garden level, also there's a single storey brick outbuilding along the first section of land. Though this appears to be constructed on top of the original boundary wall, having no windows to the adjoining or front elevation, it seems to be in habitual use.

A western Power Distribution pole is also situated along this boundary.

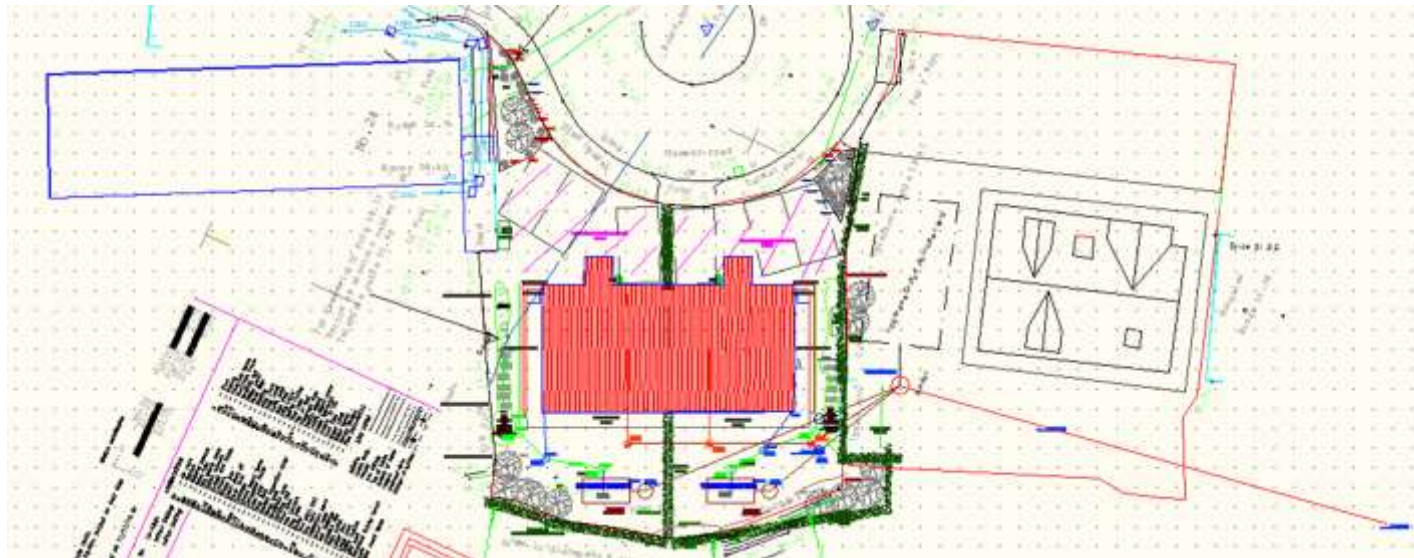
Site Analysis – Constraints

The proposed development is set within an established street scene, and it is important that the final design is sympathetic to this, whilst at the same time utilising modern building methods, technologies and materials.



The height of the proposed dwelling should be set such that there is a synergy in elevation of the adjacent terrace housing and the subsequent dwelling under construction against the adjoining South boundary. This will limit or omit overshadowing to the properties to the North and create a more acceptable aesthetic in the street scene.

The location of the dwellings on the site and the setting out of fenestration needs to have a due consideration for the properties to the West and South in particular. Opaque glazing is used to the side elevation to maintain privacy, whilst still permitting the new dwellings to benefit from passive solar gain and natural daylight.



The current western boundary offers an overgrown self-seeded Laurel hedge that has grown over 2m high, the hedge needs some attention but by keeping the hedge in place offers privacy to the owners on either side. Its treatment in the final scheme will need to be designed to satisfy both these issues, but also to create a screen for the views from the properties below. A proposed 1.8m high close board fence will also support safety and privacy of this boundary whilst the hedge is retained.

The image belows represents a street view from the lower B4287 at the location of the Collier Public house. The red Line is the Western boundary screen by the self seeded Laurels growing upon the stone outcrop.



The site is also occupied by pole mounted apparatus from both Western Power and BT openreach, together with associated cables. Whilst it is possible and intended to relocate the overhead BT cables, the overhead electric cables and buried mains cable on the northern boundary will have some impact on any construction works proposed in this area.

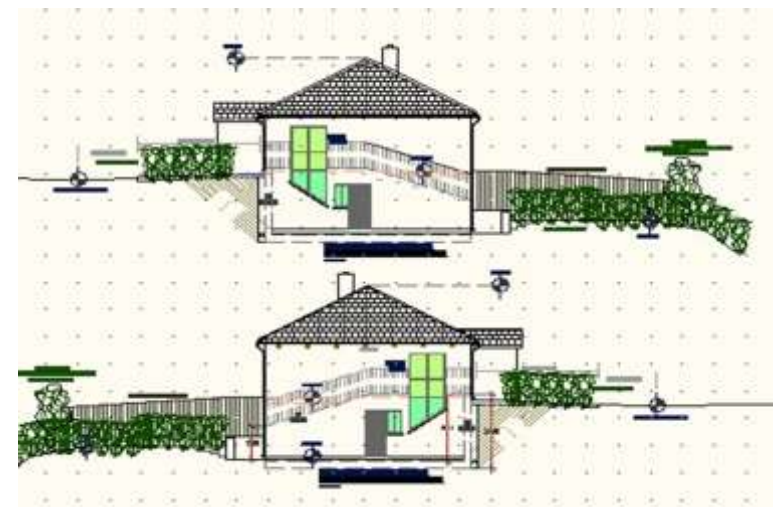
Site Analysis – Opportunities

The proposed development site enjoys prolonged exposure to direct sunlight from the south from early morning into the late evening, this creates an opportunity to maximise passive solar gain by the inclusion of glazing to the south and western elevations.

The elevation of the site offers panoramic views across the Afan Valley, and this is to be capitalised upon. Large windows and areas of glazing will frame these views from several different positions within the dwellings.

The fenestration design will also ensure that maximum amounts of natural daylight will flood the dwellings at all times of the day.

The site was originally mountainside, sloping down from the east to west. This was filled to create a level grassed area in the early 1970's, but it appears the previous owners have removed approximately three meters of this made up ground to reveal the original ground level, this provides an opportunity to introduce a split level element into the scheme.



The landscaping scheme which will improve the bio-diversity of the site will include indigenous trees and shrubs to form various hedging. The express wish of the client is to substantially incorporate and improve biodiversity within the landscape design. A commissioned report is included within the planning application noting the strategy to be included.

Involvement and Consultation

The client has owned the site for approximately 18 months, as no work have actually started on site there has been little involvement with any contractors, service engineers etc.

FDL have been appointed to the role of PM for the design stage.

Pre Planning application was prepared and issued by FDL, with a further clarity request. Nicola Lake, Eastern Team leader with NPT Planning, has been very informative and the direction received has been acted upon.

FDL prepared and issued a pre planning request to SABs section of NPT CC and Nicholas Water returned generally favourable review of the strategy, with some further direction subject to planning. (All communications are attached).

.FDL issued a Pre Planning application to Dwr Cymru Welsh Water and they have provided us with their direction / preference for connection of the development to their combined sewer & mains water supply along with direction for further information in relation to SABs application subject to planning. This information was supported with up to date drawings of their services within the location of the site and the surrounding area.

FWS Geotechnical and Environmental Consultants were appointed to prepare the coal mining Risk assessment, in conjunction with

Coal Authority and have provided an up to date coal mining risk assessment as a reflection of the coal mining report

Wales and West Utilities have provided us with their up to date plan of existing services situated on and around the site.

Our topographical survey identifies visible services including overhead BT Openreach services.

As part of the final design and prior to the construction phase commencing, the development will be registered for the Secure By Design Standard and advice will be sought from the Architectural Police Liason Officer (APLO).

The design intent includes the following measures to address safety and security on site

- Harris fencing will block access to the site when no contractors are present
- Signs will be erected to comply with health and safety issues in connection with any construction works.
- While works are in progress there will be a locked container on site to lock away any dangerous machinery
- Onsite welfare facilities will be provided at all stages of construction.
- The ethos of considerate contractors will be implemented and liaison with local residents prior and during construction will be paramount to the success of the development.

The proposed development sits in a private cul-de-sac which has seen a negligible level of crime over the past fifteen years, none of which has been related to property burglary. This is largely attributable to the fact that the properties are positioned facing each other, so that the street becomes self-policing. The proposed development continues with this philosophy in so much as the main entrance doors and social area windows are facing into the street and are unobstructed from the site line from numerous other properties.

The buildings character will be one that sits sympathetically within the street scene, with its classic but modern frontage and sloping roof lines.

The fenestration of the front, rear and side elevation has been designed to allow maximum exposure to the introduction of natural light into the heart of the property.

The vertical glazed window to the side elevation have been designed to allow natural light to flow to the ground floor elevation, these areas will include opaque glazing panels for privacy of the neighbouring properties. They will also convey a sense of continuity of the glazing in the vertical plane.

Within the street scene, the character will demonstrate an unobtrusive blend of classic modern design; it will give a feel of a single storey dwelling from the road as a mirror of the properties it faces, while the gentle slope to the side elevation will allow the property to benefit from a two story dwelling without the height of such a construction. The

The landscaping design and strategy has been produced to move away from blank grass and fence gardens and compliment the dwelling design, with the inclusion of indigenous species of trees that convey a sense that the surrounding landscape and the new dwelling are joined and share a bio diversity of flora and fauna, with the inclusion of bird boxes, bat boxes and badger boxes.



Environmental Sustainability

This development will adopt a strategy of delivering a super-efficient thermal envelope that will in turn have a reduced energy demand that will by default, lead to a greatly reduced carbon emissions.

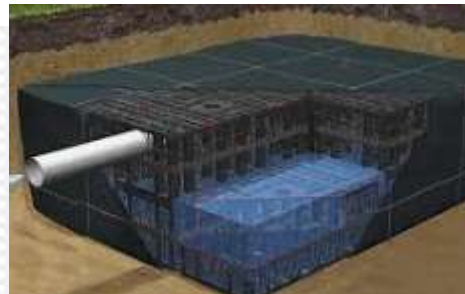
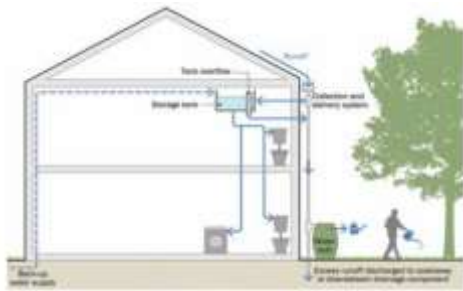
A timber frame construction is proposed, with insulation that is carbon neutral, highly insulated glazing and a number of energy saving systems and features to reduce energy demand.

The energy provision will be satisfied using a system of renewable energy through roof mounted photo voltaic cells.

Electric charging points for EP vehicles are included within the design.

Internal air quality and ventilation will be managed through a system of mechanical ventilation.

Water use will be reduced by the inclusion of a rainwater harvesting system that captures the rainwater from the main house roof, for use flushing toilet and garden irrigation. This being part of the overall SUDs design and strategy.



Reduced water use may also be increased by the inclusion of some grey water recovery systems, subject to calculations.

Materials will be locally sourced from sustainable sources.

FDL have endeavoured to ensure by design the complete dwellings will demonstrate what can be achieved and what benefits can be gained by adopting sustainable building techniques, in an informed and holistic approach, with the correct level of knowledge and application.

Movement and Access Location

Vehicular access is gained from the B4287, which is approximately 300 meters from site. From here easy access is available to all areas of the county borough and beyond, using a network of roads and infrastructure.

A regular bus route exists locally with the nearest bus stop within 200 meters of the site, there are two buses travelling from Pontrhydyfen daily, an hourly bus from the area into Neath town and Swansea centre, along with a bus from Pontrhydyfen into Aberavon Tesco Port Talbot. bus no 59 and no 83.

Neath and Port Talbot both have railway stations which can be easily accessed by private and public transport links.

A network of cycle routes offer a sustainable alternative to transport in and around the county borough and are in easy access to the site.

The village of Tonmawr and Pontrhydyfen both offer amenities such as Convenience Stores, Post Office, Community Centre, Public House, Restaurant Sports Field and groups.

The nearby towns of Neath and Port Talbot offer a greater variety of shopping provision through their retail centres.

FDL have produced a transport and amenity report which is site specific to this proposed development.

The design will comply with Document M of the building regulations.

The principal point of entry into the site is defined by a secure pedestrian gate adjacent to the driveway which connects to the public footpath off Curwen Close. The front doors are defined within the front elevation being a glazed front porch and lighting. The means of access to the front porch will be along a level path to comply with building regulations.

The ground floor is set 3m below the public footpath on Curwen Close, ground floor access has level paths to all external doorways.

Vehicle access are dedicated parking lots at front of the property.

Once on the site access is restricted to the frontage. Access to the rear of the property will be controlled and gained via a gate and external steps leading down to the rear garden paths and lawn to comply with building regulations.

The driveways will be of sufficient size to facilitate the parking of three cars per property, however with regards to the environment pollution we would hope that we can reduce the parking spaces to two per property, when consideration is given to the transport amenity report prepared by FDL and submitted with this application.