

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Cwm Brombil School Community Hub

Ysgol Cwm Brombil
Bertha Road,
Port Talbot,
Margam SA13 2AN

Contents

1.	Introduction	2
1.2.	Background.....	2
1.3.	Proposed Development	3
2.	Context & Site Analysis	4
2.1.	Site and Surroundings	4
2.2.	Site Photographs	4
2.3.	Constraints and Opportunities	6
2.4.	Pre-application Advice	6
3.	Design	7
3.1.	Aims & Objectives.....	7
3.2.	Size & Scale	8
3.3.	Appearance	8
3.4.	Movement to, from and within the site	9
3.5.	Community Safety	9
4.	Access	10
4.1.	Policy and Approach.....	10
5.	Planning Policy Context & Assessment.....	10
5.1.	Planning Policy Wales	10
5.2.	Technical Advice Notes	10
5.3.	Local Planning Policy.....	10
5.4.	Sustainable Design	11
5.5.	Ecology	11
6.	Conclusion	11

1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to support the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council planning application for a new Community Hub building on part of the Cwm Brombil School Site.
- 1.1.2 The purpose of this Design and Access Statement is to inform the reader of the background to this planning application and provide a clear description and justification of the design intent for the proposals.
- 1.1.3 This report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements for Design and Access Statements in Wales, explaining the design concepts and principles in relation to access, character, community safety, environmental sustainability.

1.2. Background

- 1.2.1 Neath Port Talbot's strategic Community Hub improvement programme aims to improve education and link with the community through existing schools. This project aims to provide a facility for Cwm Brombil users.
- 1.2.2 It is intended that the hub will be used by school children/ staff and the wider community. The central meeting space will be timetabled for school use and use by other support services (i.e. Health, Social Services, ALN, Parenting Support) in order to provide support for parents and pupils. The food bank and cafe will be open to the public during set times (weekdays and during sporting activities on the current school playing fields outside of school hours-existing community use hours are between 9am and 8pm). It will be run by the volunteers and staff currently in the school.

The proposed site is at Cwm Brombil School in Margam.

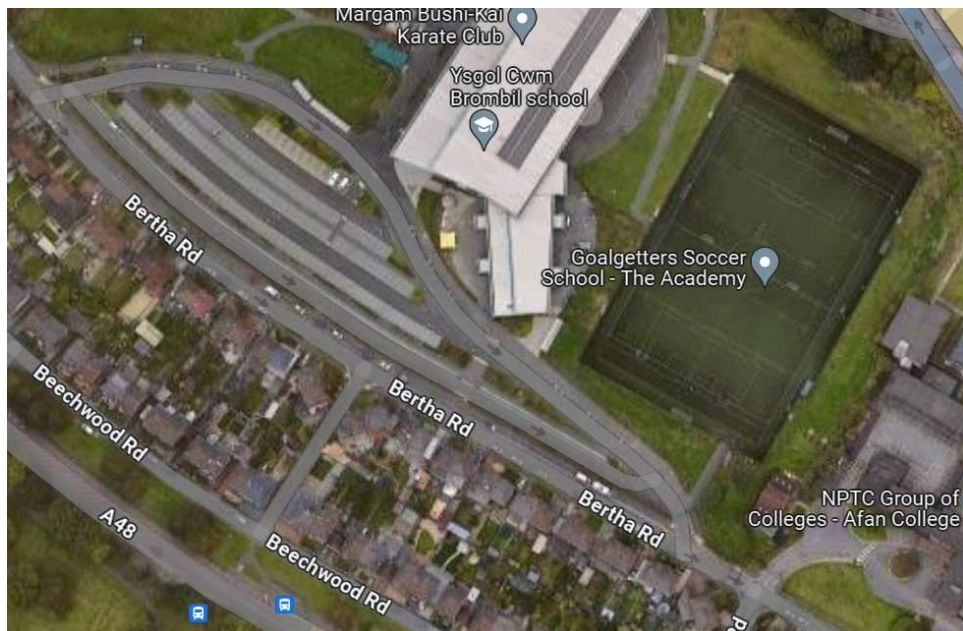


Figure 1 – Site Context Plan

1.2.3 The Council aims to create a new Community hub that is fit for 21st century teaching and learning. To achieve this it has been determined that the development must:

- Feature high quality design;
- Be highly functional and sustainable;
- Be fit for a modern curriculum by being adaptable to future needs;
- Promote a culture of lifelong learning within communities; and
- Serve as a source of pride for both present and future generations.

1.3. Proposed Development

1.3.1 The proposed development consists of:

- Construction of 184m² “Community Hub” as an addition to the existing School but in a new building located in the existing school grounds.
- Associated works in the immediately surrounding area to ensure level access.
- Associated landscaping including drainage/servicing works to provide ecological works and a sustainable drainage system.

2. Context & Site Analysis

2.1. Site and Surroundings

- 2.1.1 The site is located off Bertha Road, Margam, Port Talbot.
- 2.1.2 The site covers an area of approximately 371m² and comprises of an existing grass bank leading up to the artificial football pitch. The proposal is adjacent to the existing school field and within a two minute walk to the school.
- 2.1.3 To the immediate north is the school field and the M4 motorway and west of the site is the school, to the east is buildings which form part of the Neath Port Talbot Afan Campus.
- 2.1.4 Opposite the site is drop off / parking bays as well as the bus bays which back onto Bertha Road and the residential properties that face onto the road.

2.2. Site Photographs



**Figure 1 – Site Context
Photo**



Figure 2 – Site Photo

2.3. Constraints and Opportunities

Topography

- 2.3.1 There is minimal differences in levels due to the small scale of the total site and its boundaries.

Access

- 2.3.2 The site is currently accessed via entrances off Bertha Road. These are split between a small car park and bus lay-by area, and a larger carpark for staff with accessible parking adjacent to the proposal. This scheme allows for users to arrive via bus, and access the facility directly from the existing bus drop-off point.

Ecology & Trees

- 2.3.3 There is limited vegetation, comprising of small grassed area. The small area that is affected by the proposal is to be relocated on site as highlighted in the Green Infrastructure Statement.

Climate

- 2.3.4 There are a number of trees located to the east of the school grounds, and offer some protection from the prevailing winds generally from the West and South West direction.

Noise

- 2.3.5 Road traffic is the main source of noise nuisance. Due to the scale of the proposal we believe an acoustic survey is not required.

2.4. Pre-application Advice

- 2.4.1 An informal email was issued to the Local Planning Authority highlighted the proposals and initial intentions on 5th February, 2024.
- 2.4.2 Advice was provided in respect to supporting information: Drg No. A1287 - 102
- 2.4.3 The officers comments and queries with are responses are as below:

Ysgol Cwm Brombil

- Should a planning application be submitted, please clarify which car park would be used, as it is my understanding that some areas are fenced off and closed outside school hours. Existing gates would be relocated and fencing would be placed to allow access to the current drop off/ parking area if required. This would allow public access to the hub (including during out of school hours) but would also allow the school to segregate/ secure the pupil site when needed.
- I note that the building is intended to be run by volunteers with no permanent members of staff, however further information would be required to identified whether the site would be for children of the school or the wider community with open booking arrangements and opening times. It is intended that the hub will be used by school children/ staff and the wider community. The central meeting space will be timetabled for school use and use by other support services (i.e. Health, Social Services, ALN, Parenting Support) in order to provide support for parents and pupils. The food bank and cafe will be open to the public during set times (weekdays and

during sporting activities on the current school playing fields outside of school hours-existing community use hours are between 9am and 8pm). It will be run by the volunteers and staff currently in the school.

- Should a planning application be submitted, I would require section plans due to the changes in levels on site.
- There appears to be a dwelling to the east of the site, which might be used in association with the college, should a planning application be submitted consideration would be given to the impact upon that building should it be a residential building. **Don't think it's residential but need to check with college.**

The application would require the submission of a Green Infrastructure Statement and biodiversity enhancement, as requested by chapter 6 of PPW12.

- 2.4.4 Following the informal advice from the planning officer, each point was noted and addressed where applicable to support the application.

3. Design

3.1. Aims & Objectives

- 3.1.1 The following aims for the proposed new skills hub have been identified:

Community Learning & Teaching Spaces

- Adaptable learning spaces that accommodate whole classes, collaborative group work, paired learning and individual study
- Flexibility of learning spaces to allow day to day changes in the delivery of the class depending on its users.

Community Use

This new Community hub will be situated at heart of the community; aiming to increase attainment, interaction and aspirations of all users.

- Extended services will impact positively on local communities, providing access to a wide variety of opportunities and learning.
- The new hub will be committed to working in partnership with a range of services to ensure that Young People, Adults and Community Groups are supported in achieving their aims and potential.

Design Principles

- 3.1.2 In order to achieve these aims/objectives, the following design principles have been identified:
- 3.1.3 **Site and Location:** Good use of the site, balancing the needs of pupils and the public, enhancing the school's presence in the community.
- 3.1.4 **Access and Inclusion:** Easy to locate the facility, and clarity to any user who wishes to use the proposal. The building provides good access for everyone in line with national and local inclusion policies.

- 3.1.5 **Organisation and Layout:** Good organisation of spaces in plan and section, easily legible and fully accessible, with circulation that is well organised and imaginatively designed, with good arrival space to suit the community as well as the school.
- 3.1.6 **Internal Space:** Learning spaces should be the right size for their functions, well proportioned, fit for purpose and meet the needs of the curriculum. Sufficient spaces to provide the number of users places planned.

3.2. Size & Scale

- 3.2.1 The proposed development includes:
- 184m² single storey extension comprising of;
 - 57m² of floorspace for class use;
 - 14m² of Food bank (currently housed within the school);
 - 19m² of Toilets/Lobby/Storage space;
 - 23m² separate meeting rooms;
 - 39m² café including servery and staff / storage areas.
- 3.2.2 The building form is designed to be complimentary to the main Cwm Brombil school buildings in style and colouring. The maximum height of the eaves is 7.5m (to allow access to a viewing platform to the adjacent pitch) and the minimum is 2.8m
- 3.2.3 The scale of the building responds to the need to provide a mixed use hub and reduce the extent to which the existing school will be affected.

3.3. Appearance

Form

- 3.3.1 The approach to the form of the building has been heavily influenced by the existing school and also one which reflects the character of the surrounding landscape.

Materials

- 3.3.2 It is proposed to use the following materials, as noted on the elevation drawings:
- 3.3.3 **Roof:** Aluminium standing seam system over the teaching accommodation with the canopies being protected by a light grey single membrane roofing system to match the existing.
- 3.3.4 **Walls:** Grey metal / PPC coloured panels to complement the existing colour palette on site.
- 3.3.5 **Doors, Windows and Lobby:** Aluminium PPC doors with glass vision panels, glass lobby and windows.

3.4. Movement to, from and within the site

Introduction

It is proposed that the new building is to slightly affect the existing movement to, from and within the site as noted previously “Existing gates would be relocated and fencing would be placed to allow access to the current drop off/ parking area if required. This would allow public access to the hub (including during out of school hours) but would also allow the school to segregate/ secure the pupil site when needed. “

Pedestrians & Cyclists

- 3.4.1 There are no alterations to the pedestrian and cycle routes within the site.

Public Transport

- 3.4.2 The site is considered to be well placed for local public transport, existing bus stops are located along Margam Road to the south of the site and has numerous different bus operators serving the area.

Vehicles

- 3.4.3 There are no alterations to the vehicle access to and from the site.

3.5. Community Safety

Lighting

- 3.5.1 Points of arrival and all pedestrian areas are to be well lit. All fittings shall be vandal resistant and positioned in elevated positions. The lighting will be controlled by photo electric cells or time switches and will complement and enhance the CCTV coverage on site.

CCTV

- 3.5.2 A fully operational CCTV system is already installed to serve the school site.

Layout

- 3.5.3 The shape and form of the building is such that there are few hiding places around the perimeter. This reduces the risk of vandalism as well as the incidence of bullying.
- 3.5.4 The landscape proposals seek to create a high quality public realm for all, encouraging a sense of ownership and responsibility for their school.

Bike Store

- 3.5.5 Proposed bike storage areas are available at the existing school.

Opening Times

- 3.5.6 Initially, opening hours for the food bank and cafe will be open to the public during set times (weekdays and during sporting activities on the current school playing fields outside of school hours-existing community use hours are between 9am and 8pm). It will be run by the volunteers and staff currently in the school.

- 3.5.7 Any additional parking requirements are to be accommodated on site. Access

3.6. Policy and Approach

- 3.6.1 Planning Policy Wales emphasises that: *“Good design is also inclusive design. The principles of inclusive design are that it places people at the heart of the design process, acknowledges diversity and difference, offers choice where a single design solution cannot accommodate all users, provides for flexibility in use and provides buildings and environments that are convenient and enjoyable to use for everyone.”*
- 3.6.2 Similarly, TAN 12 (section 5.3 Inclusive Design) notes that *“the Assembly Government expects all those involved in the design process to foster a culture of inclusion, whereby design solutions provide access to the widest possible range of people”*.
- 3.6.3 In accordance with these policies, the scheme has been designed to provide access for all. This section covers the philosophy and approach to inclusive design, the key issues and sources of advice and guidance used.
- 3.6.4 The scheme has been designed to comply with the Building Regulations Approved Document M so far as is possible at planning stage. It highlights the external access issues for disabled persons.

4. Planning Policy Context & Assessment

4.1. Planning Policy Wales

- 4.1.1 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) is the Welsh Government’s principal statement of national policy and sets out the land use planning policies that should be taken into account by local planning authorities in Wales and may be material to decisions on individual planning applications.

4.2. Technical Advice Notes

- 4.2.1 **Technical Advice Note 12 (TAN12) Design** includes advice on how promoting sustainability through good design may be facilitated through the planning system. TAN 12 states: “Design is a process of analysis and synthesis: analysing, identifying and diagnosing problems and barriers, then solving them through critique, research, development and testing. Design is a creative means by which to realise innovation and add value”
- 4.2.2 The proposed development has followed the process of identifying the constraints and opportunities on the site. The proposals have, therefore, been carefully considered to respond to the surroundings.

4.3. Local Planning Policy

- 4.3.1 The site is allocated in the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan (LDP Adopted 2011-2026) within the settlement limit.
- 4.3.2 The site does not contain any listed buildings and is not located within a conservation area or special landscape area.

4.4. Sustainable Design

- 4.4.1 Policy ENV17 refers to design and notes that “*any proposal should be well designed*” and refers to a series of issues including having regard to the character of the area, ensuring the proposals would not have any unsatisfactory impacts on the occupants of any other properties, addressing climate change/sustainability issues and ensuring the safety and security of people and property.

4.5. Ecology

- 4.5.1 Policy ENV4 states that there is a “*presumption against proposals that would be likely to result in disturbance to a species protected under European or UK legislation or its habitats*”.
- 4.5.2 The extension proposes bird boxes in accordance with RSPB standards.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1.1 The proposed development creates an additional community used space within the school grounds, beneficial to the local community.
- 5.1.2 It is therefore considered that the proposed development is more than suitable for the site, with its number of beneficiary aspects highlighted above, and should be looked upon favourably by the Local Planning Authority.