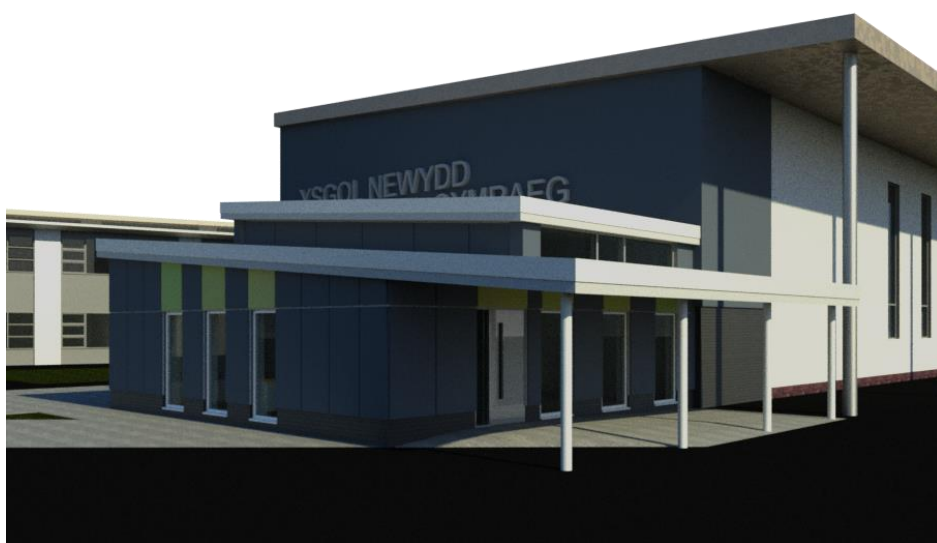




Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Dur,
Seaway Parade,
Neath Port Talbot.
SA12 7EQ

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Bro Dur School Skills Hub – Rev A

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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 extension on part of the Bro Dur 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 School improvement programme aims to improve education and link with the community through existing schools. This project aims to provide a facility for Tir Morfa users.
- 1.2.2 It is anticipated that the extension would accommodate 3 staff.

The proposed site is at Bro Dur School in Baglan.



Figure 1 – Site Context Plan

- 1.2.3 The Council aims to create a new skills 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 135.4m² “Skills Hub” as an addition to the existing School.
- Associated works in the immediately surrounding area to ensure level access.
- Associated landscaping including drainage/servicing works that will include a compound area adjacent to the proposed structure.

2. Context & Site Analysis

2.1. Site and Surroundings

- 2.1.1 The site is located off Seaway Parade, Sandfields, Port Talbot within the Sandfields West ward.
- 2.1.2 The site covers an area of approximately 135m² and comprises of a flat existing walkway. The proposal is directly adjacent to the existing school hall and large canopy.
- 2.1.3 To the immediate north and west of the site is the highway, Seaway Parade, opposite Bae Baglan Through School.
- 2.1.4 To the north-east, South, South West, and West of the site are residential properties.

2.2. Site Photographs



Figure 2 – Site Context Photo



Figure 3 – 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 it's boundaries.

Access

- 2.3.2 The site is currently accessed via two separate entrances on Seaway Parade. These are split between a small car park and bus lay-by area, and a larger carpark 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 West/South West 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. A101A

- 2.4.3 The officers comments are as below:

"It is noted that pupils would be bussed in from the Tir Morfa skills site, should a planning application be submitted we would require information of pick up and drop of times, opening times and where on site the buses would park to ensure they do not conflict with the existing bus drop off and pick ups.

The proposed building would be sited on the site elevation and would appear to result in the loss of some planting (triangular area), this should be re-located on site.

The proposed building appears to impact upon the existing signage of the building, this may need to be moved or altered on site."

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

As will be noted within the highway comments, we are aware of highway issues in this area due to the two schools being in close proximity and as such any application would have to carefully consider and assess any impact on parking and highway safety.

- 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.
- Approximately 15 pupils are to utilise the space at one time, with a maximum of 3 staff members.

Community Use

- This new skills hub will be situated at heart of the community; aiming to increase attainment, motivation 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 skills 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.
- Pupils would attend registration at their existing school before being transported to the skills hub. Pupils are then to return to their registered school before the end of the school day.

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:
- 135.4m² single storey extension comprising of;
 - 57m² of floorspace for class use;
 - 12m² of Office/Meeting Room space and;
 - 12m² of Toilets/Lobby/Storage space
- 3.2.2 The building form is designed to gradually rise from a single storey pod, to the double height space of the existing school hall. The maximum height of the eaves is 5m and the minimum is 2.4m
- 3.2.3 The scale of the building responds to the need to provide a skills 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 **Plinth Walls:** Dark grey engineering brickwork plinth to match existing
- 3.3.5 **Upper Level Walls:** Grey metal panels and coloured metal panels above windows to match existing colour palette on site.
- 3.3.6 **Doors:** Metal faced doors with glass vision panels.

3.4. Movement to, from and within the site

Introduction

- 3.4.1 It is proposed that the extension is to slightly affect the existing movement to, from and within the site. It will introduce a scheme where members of the community, are brought to the new extension via a bus, to use the space, and then leave the site via bus also. Monitoring is recommended to obtain this is maintained as a long term commitment.

Pedestrians & Cyclists

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

Public Transport

- 3.4.3 The site is considered to be well placed for local public transport. Existing bus stops are located along Seaway Parade/Western Avenue to the south of the site and Baglan Railway Station is less than a kilometre walk from the main entrance of the site.

Vehicles

- 3.4.4 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 pupils, 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 are likely to be Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm, however this could change as service needs are identified and develop further to include early evenings and weekends.

Highways

- 3.5.7 As a result of pupils registering at their existing school prior to being transported to the skills hub, drop off times would be after the existing drop offs in Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Dur. Then, as previously mentioned, they are to return to their existing school prior to the end of the school day, prior to the Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Dur pick up.
- 3.5.8 There are to be no cross over periods between the skills hub and Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Dur pick up/drop off times.
- 3.5.9 Pick up and drop off are to utilise the existing bus bay.
- 3.5.10 Any additional parking requirements are to be accommodated on site.

4. Access

4.1. Policy and Approach

- 4.1.1 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.”*
- 4.1.2 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”*.
- 4.1.3 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.
- 4.1.4 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.

5. Planning Policy Context & Assessment

5.1. Planning Policy Wales

- 5.1.1 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.

5.2. Technical Advice Notes

- 5.2.1 **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”
- 5.2.2 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.

5.3. Local Planning Policy

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

5.4. Sustainable Design

- 5.4.1 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.

5.5. Ecology

- 5.5.1 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*”.
- 5.5.2 The extension proposes bird boxes in accordance with RSPB standards.

6. Conclusion

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