



DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

SANDFIELDS COMMUNITY HUB

Sandfields Primary
School, Lillian Street,
Port Talbot,
Neath Port Talbot.
SA12 6AJ

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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 single storey building on part of the Sandfields Primary 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.
- 1.2.2 It is anticipated that the building would accommodate a maximum of 3 staff with 15 pupils at one time.

The proposed site is at Sandfields Primary School in Sandfields.

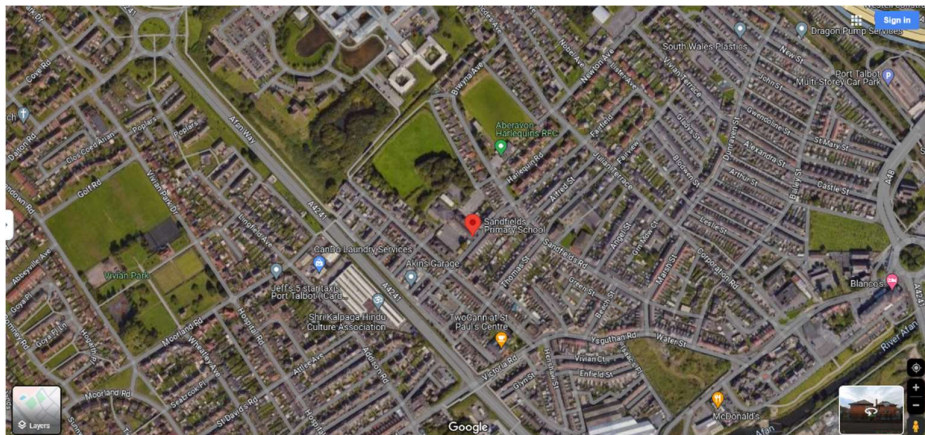


Figure 1 – Site Context Plan

- 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 115m² “Community Hub” as an addition to the existing School and wider community.
- 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 Lilian Street, Sandfields, Port Talbot.
- 2.1.2 The site covers an area of approximately 162m² and comprises of a existing storage outbuilding. The proposal is to replace the existing outbuilding and within the existing playground area.
- 2.1.3 To the immediate North West of the site is green area, situated between houses on Pendarvis Street and Brwyna Avenue.
- 2.1.4 To the north-east, East, South, and South 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 are small level changes within the site application boundary, mainly the existing pavement below the existing play area.

Access

- 2.3.2 Pedestrian and vehicular access to the site is currently accessed via a lane off Pendarvis Street.

Ecology & Trees

- 2.3.3 There is no vegetation on the existing site. This is to be improved as highlighted in the Green Infrastructure Statement

Climate

- 2.3.4 There are a number of trees located to the North West, adjacent to the school grounds, but offer limited protection.

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.s A1286_101_LocationPlans&FloorPlans & A1286_102_Elevations&3DView

- 2.4.3 The officers comments are as below:

The proposed building would be located within the existing yard area, would sufficient playground remain on site? I am of the understanding that there is a area calculation of playground space to children numbers required within schools. While this may not be a planning matter it could impact the school requirements.

Would the building be a classroom or more of a hall space?

The proposed window details appear to extend out over the footpath, and as the footpath is relatively narrow it is advised that the building is either set back into the site or the overhang from the windows is reduced.

I note that no parking is proposed within this proposal, with the site also having a separate pedestrian access off the footpath. Opening hours would be required should a planning application be submitted.

The application site is located within a C1 flood zone and within the new Flood Maps for Planning Zone 3 – as such a Flood Consequence Assessment would be required if a planning application was submitted.

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 community 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 community 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 community 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. Amount & Scale

3.2.1 The proposed development includes:

- 115m² single storey building comprising of;
- 58m² of floorspace for class use with 6m² Kitchenette;
- 11m² of Meeting Room space
- 7m² Office Room and;
- 14m² of Toilets/Lobby/Storage space

3.2.2 The building form is designed to nod to the existing structure, whilst fitting in with the surrounding architecture. The maximum height of the eaves is 4m and the minimum is 2.4m

3.2.3 The scale of the building responds to the need to provide a community 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.

3.3.4 **Plinth Walls:** Red common brickwork plinth to match existing.

3.3.5 **Upper Level Walls:** Grey cladding panels.

3.3.6 **Doors:** Metal faced doors with glass vision panels.

3.4. Movement to, from and within the site

Introduction

3.4.1 The proposal does not affect the existing movement to, from and within the site. It will introduce a scheme where pupils/members of the community, attend the school, to use the space, and then leave the site. 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 Victoria Road to the South East of the site and Port Talbot Parkway Railway Station is 1 mile 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.

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 (2009)** includes advice on how promoting sustainability through good design may be facilitated through the planning system. Paragraph 4.1 of 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.

5.6. Drainage and Flooding

- 5.6.1 The site is located within Development Advice Map Zone C1 (Served by significant infrastructure, including flood defences)
- 5.6.2 As the application site is situated within a C2 flood zone, a Flood Consequences Assessment has been undertaken. Please refer to this document for further information regarding Flooding.

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.