

Development of a Grant Bid for Levelling-Up Funding

The most recent design study on this area was carried out in order to attract Levelling-Up Funding.

Here, initial exploration looks to arrange a series of buildings connected by covered colonnades, which formed a series of public courtyards. The scheme also helped link the carpark, through enhanced public realm, to the entrance point to the Eledir Trail.

Proposed buildings aimed to:

- Form an edge to new public realm in the centre of the village;
- Provide a gateway for visitors;
- Simultaneously screen the carpark from view within the village;
- Provide colonnades that gave an element of protection from wet weather and enabled covering of interpretation panels set amongst the buildings;
- Provide space for activities that would bring economic gain to the local area.

The scheme was submitted for Levelling-Up Funding and was successful in attracting the grant. This enabled the conceptual scheme to be further developed and refined, in conjunction with community consultation.



Concept 3D views showing the proposed layout and landscaping of the initial scheme before the significant site constraints were identified.

Constraints and Buildable Areas

The Levelling-Up Funding allowed for further surveys to be undertaken on the site. Key spatial constraints were mapped as a result of these additional surveys most notably the high pressure water main that cuts through the centre of the site, the Root Protection Zone around the Ash tree to the north of the proposed site area and further RPZ running along the river bank protecting the riparian edge.

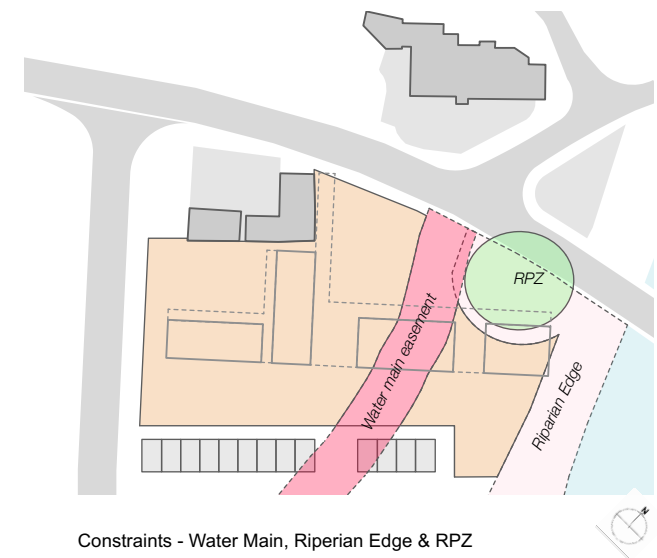
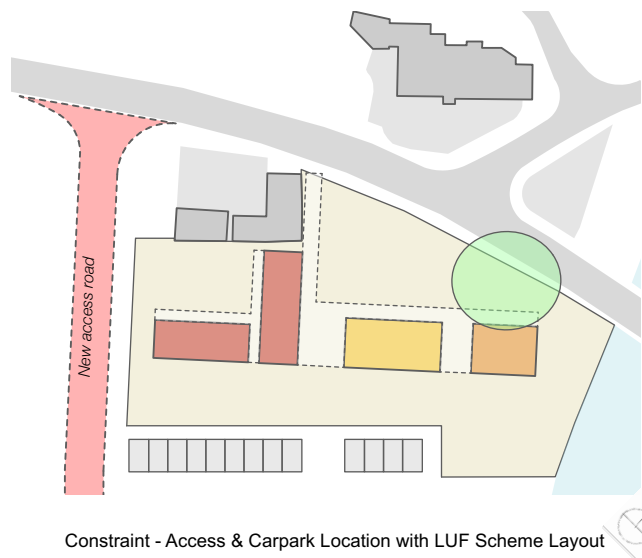
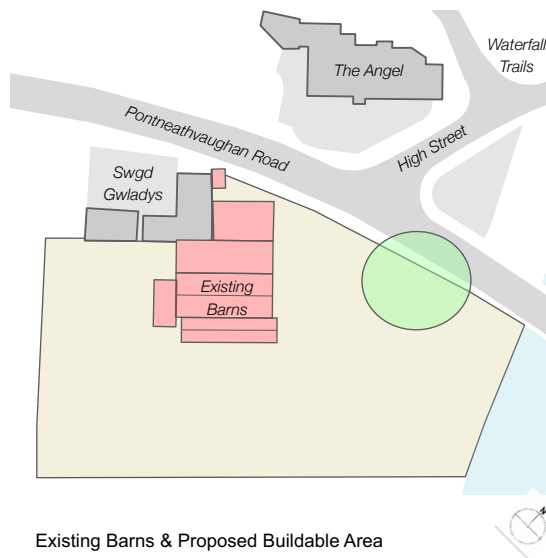
Also highlighted in red running along the south west boundary is the proposed access route into the site serving the new car park. The position of this route is

fixed to ensure minimum visibility splays to Sgwd Gwladys to form a safe vehicular access route onto site within the proposed land purchase boundary.

The high pressure water main imposed the following restrictions on the layout:

- a 4.8m easement zone required on each side of the pipe;
- no buildings or roofs to be built over the pipe/ easement zone in order to allow access when required.

The diagrams below show the initial steps to determine the buildable area within these new site constraints, identifying the existing barns to be removed, the new access track to serve the car park, the water main easement zone and RPZs, demonstrating the impact on the initial proposed layout.



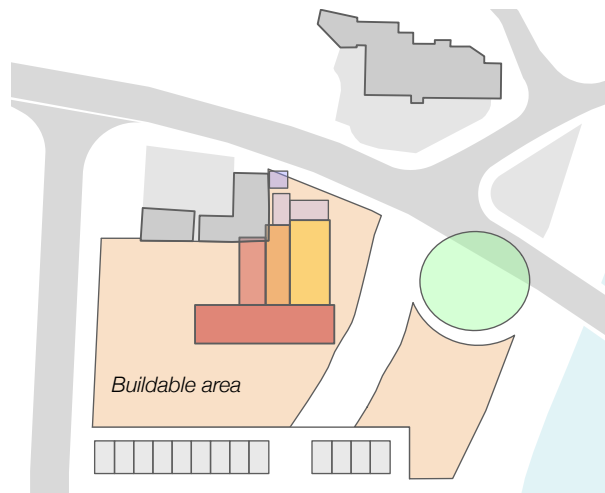
Development of building arrangement

Taking into consideration the positive development steps that had resulted in the scheme presented at LUF, the key aims for the site and buildings were maintained with a focus on creating a central courtyard framed by the proposed buildings, but also refining the layout in relation to the additional site constraints and community consultation feedback.

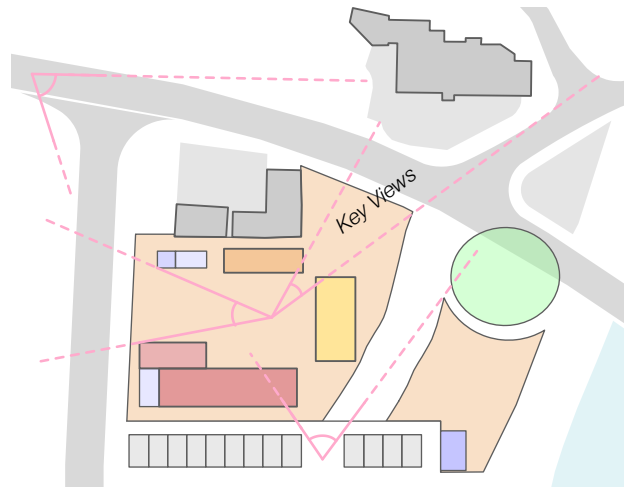
Notably, in response to the proximity of houses to the east of the river, the majority of the development has been deliberately concentrated to the north west of the site, away from the private residences. The layout of buildings was shifted to account for the immovable

positions of the water main easement zone and the RPZs. The realignment of buildings focused on key routes and views through the buildings. Drawing reference from the Character Context analysis and particularly focusing on the traditional layouts of local farmsteads, a key pedestrian route was defined through the building forms to focus on the new courtyard space, the designated 'locally important' Angel Inn and the entrance point to the waterfall trail. In this manner, the site layout highlights and directs visitors to these key defining elements of the locality.

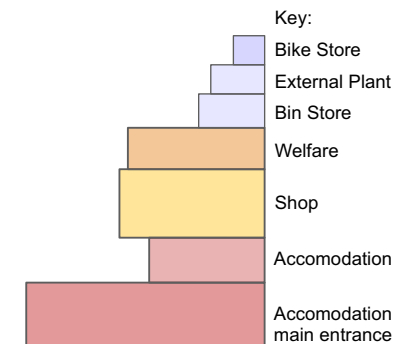
The function of each built block was carefully considered and the arrangement further refined to respond to existing and proposed site use. Placement of different uses was considered in relation to pedestrian movement through and within the site, views in and out of the development area and the different levels of public and private designation of the various proposed functions.



Constraints - Concentrating footprint to the north west of buildable area and simply comparing this to existing barn footprint shows the resulting large mass, creates a deep plan and form out of character with the setting

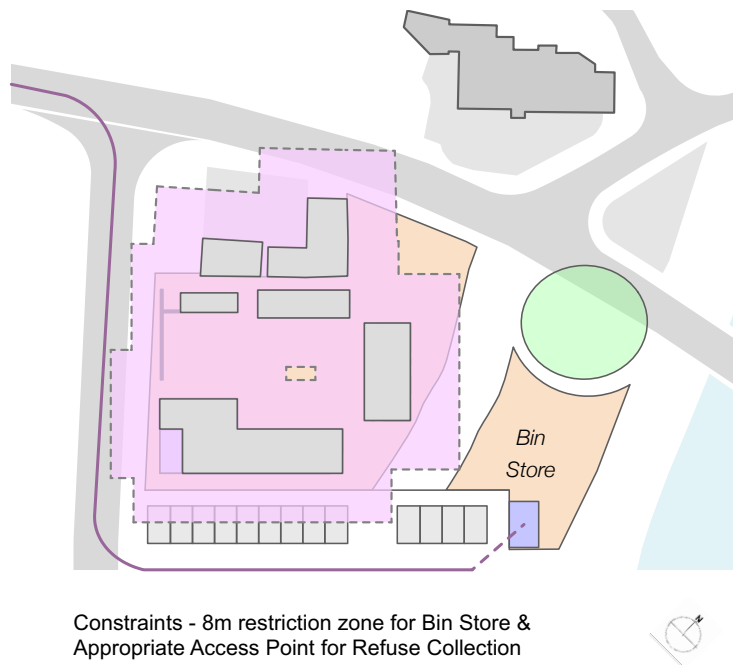


Opportunity - Referencing the character of the area and agricultural layouts of local and historic farmsteads allows the mass to be pulled apart, forming clear routes and a central courtyard with distinct buildings

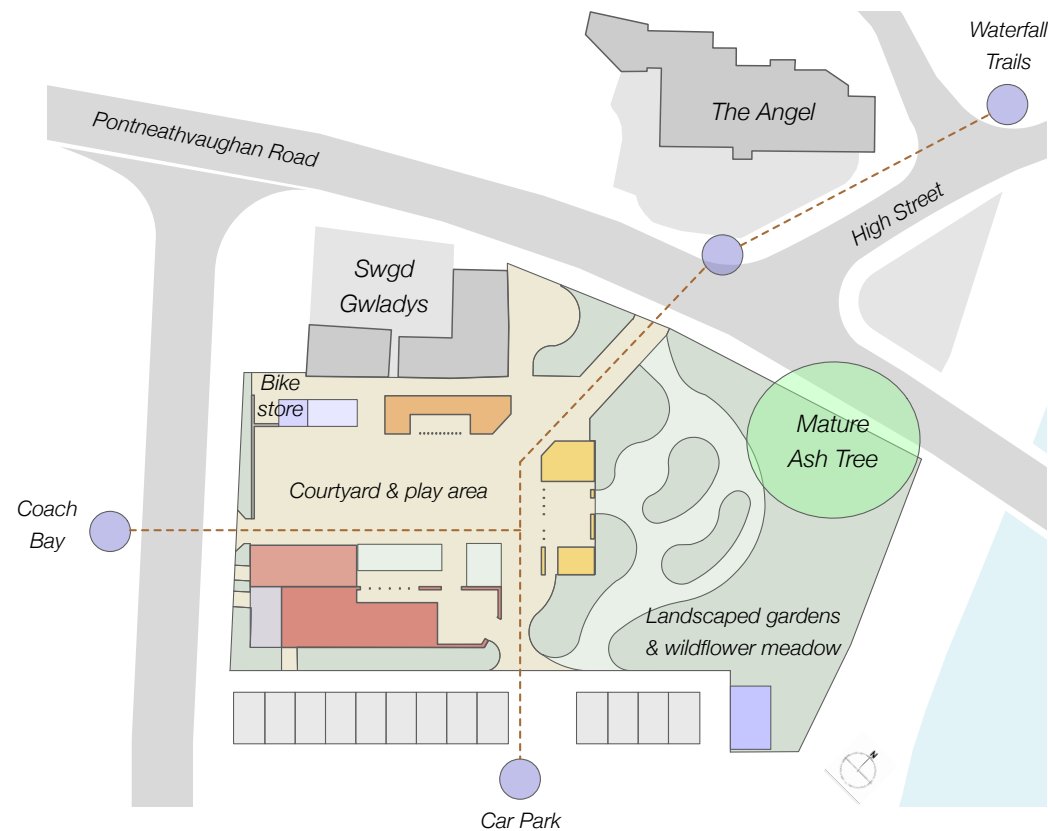


Housing/Locating Additional Ancillary Facilities

A key requirement for the external bin store was to ensure it is located in an area 8m from any buildings, in line with best practice and insurance requirements, but the store must also be easily accessible to bin lorries, not set too far away for staff to access and located where it would not compromise the overall layout of the scheme. As shown on the diagram below, the 8m restrictions (in pink) heavily dictate where the bin stores could be sited.



A secure bike store was also required to be easily accessible for staff and those staying in the accommodation block. This was paired with the requirement for an external 9 cubic meter sprinkler tank and associated pump enclosure to serve the accommodation block. Due to the necessary technical requirements at this stage of design, which dictated a fixed footprint, it was prudent for these stores to be fully considered as key pieces of the building layout and integrated sensitively within the scheme, to ensure the efficiency of the systems without appearing incongruous within the central courtyard.



THE PROPOSAL: Response to Objectives of Good Design

The proposals are driven by a desire to attain a high standard of design quality that both compliments and enhances the strengths and special qualities of the site, whilst seeking to address the important issues that currently undermine quality of life for members of the local community.

Amount

Through thoughtful development, the scheme has been developed into a well resolved proposal that includes a collection of buildings, providing an offer that will benefit the local community and visitors, combining:

- a shop and coffee kiosk to the south east of Sgwd Gwladys, welcoming pedestrians into the central courtyard and play park. The space includes: staff accessible WC; ground floor storage room; coffee kiosk; and an open plan shop floor. The shop could be community run, subject to agreements, and stock a variety of items from local produce and basic groceries to tourism related retail.
- a welfare building containing a Warden's Office, providing a base for a ranger/warden and forming a point of contact/ information for tourists. This, alongside improved signage will help educate visitors about the opportunities and dangers of the Waterfall Country. A covered waiting area serving a series of externally accessed public wash rooms which provide:
 - 3no. female toilets (with hand wash facilities in each WC)
 - 2no. male toilets (with hand wash facilities in each WC)
 - 1no. dedicated accessible WC (with hand wash facilities in the WC)

- 1no. Unisex baby change cubicle (with WC and hand wash facilities)
- External dog / bike / boot wash down area, due to the muddy nature of the waterfall trails.
- Plant room

- An accommodation building to compliment the existing offer provided by Sgwd Gwladys and to generate an income stream for the longer term sustainability of the proposals. This targets couples/ family market in its design and size provides:

- 8 no. self contained bedrooms all with en-suites; comprising 4 no. accessible 2 person rooms (which can if required also become adjoining rooms resulting in 2no. 4person suites to suit changing visitor requirements), 4 no. 2 person rooms
- Drying room for guests
- Reception area with office, small gathering space and accessible WC
- Associated internal and external plant, cleaners cupboards and stores.

In addition to the main buildings there are dedicated enclosures for waste disposal, bike storage and necessary plant for the development.

Also key to the proposals are highways amendments, new car parking provision and the creation of new and improved public squares and landscapes, taking into consideration a need to minimise the visual impact of this development as a whole within the wider area.