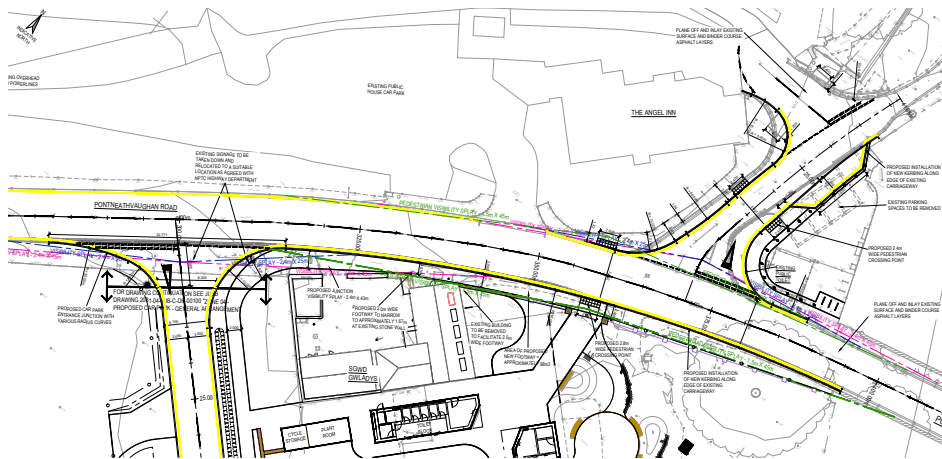


Highways and the Car Park

The existing WC block and parking facilities within the current High Street square will be replaced with a designated emergency vehicle pull-in bay to assist emergency services in their work with those who get into difficulty in the vicinity of the Waterfall Trails. The current car parking spaces will be provided for within the new car park allocation. This will create an opportunity to return this central island to a more natural and biodiverse asset at the entrance to the village, where simple amendments soft landscaping and removal of areas of hard landscaping are proposed to improve the aesthetic and environmental benefits for the village and visitors.

A new vehicular entrance road will be created from the Pontneathvaughan Road (B4242) providing access to the new car park and coach drop-off lay-by to the south of the development site. It will also allow access to the bin store for refuse vehicles. Further to the west of this



Proposed highways amendments to the main Pontneathvaughan Road, refer to Engineer's drawing pack for full details

main access road a new field gate and junction is proposed, which will create a convenient new access into the agricultural land adjacent for the landowner. This is set back from the road to allow for farm vehicles to pull off the road to open the gate, in order to minimise disruption to traffic flow into the village and proposed facilities.

The entrance road has been designed to sit as close as possible to the west of Sgwd Gwladys, whilst ensuring it can be constructed with appropriate visibility splays to ensure safe ingress and egress. This requires the removal of existing stone planters to the northern edge of Sgwd Gladys.

The road and pavement at the junction of Pontneathvaughan Road and High Street, adjacent to the Angel Inn, will be amended to improve pedestrian safety and movement.

Additionally, a continuous pavement will be provided to the south side of Pontneathvaughan Road. This will run from the new entrance road to the car park, along the north of Sgwd Gladys, and to the new crossing point at the key pedestrian entrance of the development site. The new pedestrian crossing point has been provided where visibility splays have been proven to be adequate. Natural desire lines towards the waterfall entrance can be safely focused towards this crossing point through the use of key landscape features and building placement.

The design of the car park facility has been developed by respecting the existing landscape features and understanding the operational requirements of the site. The following paragraphs provide further detail on the design.

Capacity

The new car park will provide the following parking numbers:

- Coach parking: 1nr parking lay-by (3.5m x 25m)
- Accessible parking: 10nr bays (3.6m x 6m)
- Designated parking for larger vehicles: 10nr bays (3.6m x 7m)
- Standard parking: 126nr bays (2.6m x 4.8m), inc. 13nr EV bays
- Motorcycle parking: 12nr spaces (1.3m x 2.8m)

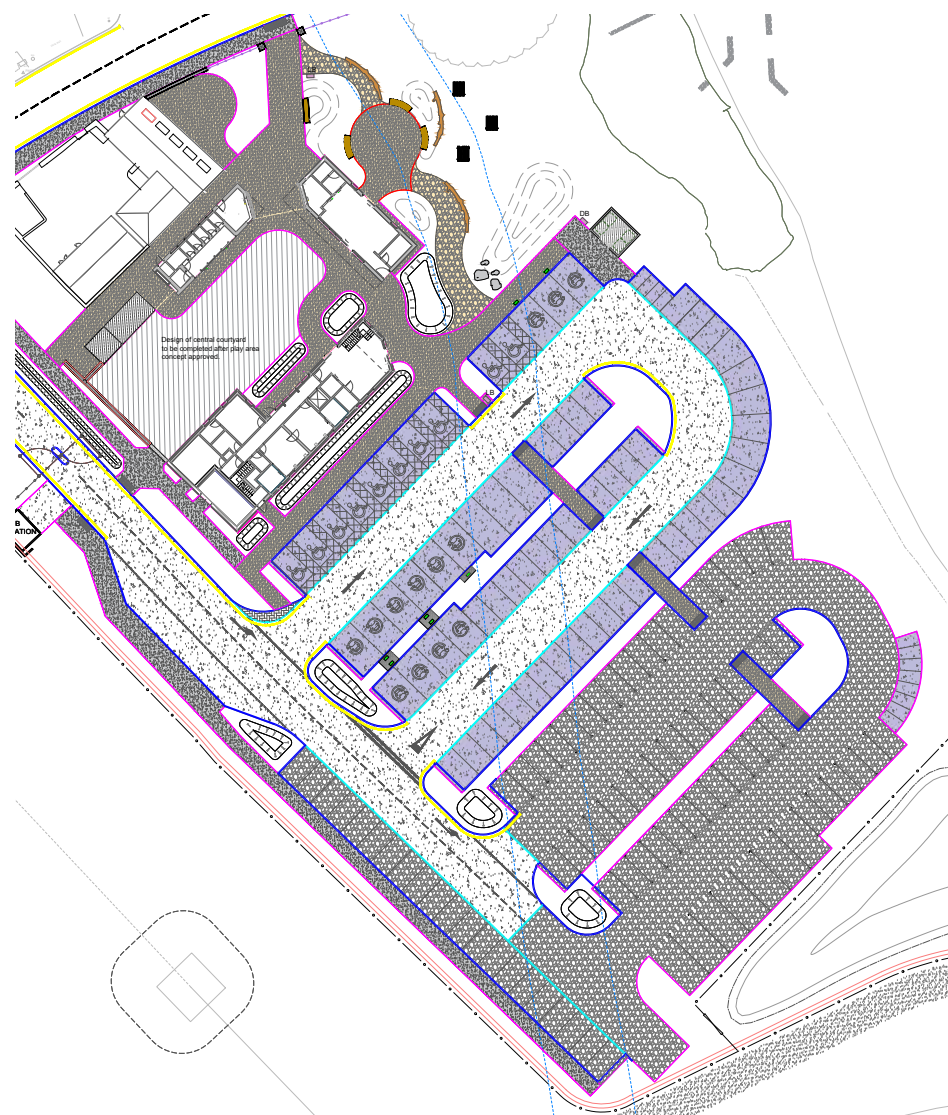
The breakdown of the parking types across the site are explained below for each area. Circulation roads within all parking areas will be constructed to a width of 6m. Vehicle tracking has been undertaken to ensure that coaches can leave the site in a forward gear and refuse vehicles can service the bin store.

Coach parking area

A coach parking lay-by has been located along the access road, and is provided with a pedestrian connection route into the play park courtyard and visitors square. The placement of the coach parking area will provide appropriate separation from the main car park, with coaches able to use the first loop of car parking to turn the vehicle before parking in the bay facing the access junction, avoiding the need for any reversing to exit.

Car park

The new car park will be constructed on the current field to the south of Sgwd Gwladys, between the access road and Afon Need/River Neath. The design has been detailed to maximise the efficiency of the car park, to ensure retention of trees and vegetation along the river and to provide good pedestrian access to the proposed buildings.



Proposed car park arrangement showing two parking loops for peak and off peak use, refer to Engineer's and Landscape Architect drawings for full details

The accessible and EV parking bays have been located to the north of the car park, adjacent and closest to the new buildings to reduce conflict with traffic and provide safe access to the visitor hub. Thirteen parking bays have been designated as charging points for visitors with electric vehicles. These have also been positioned to the north of the car park, close to the utilities provision. Motorcycle parking bays have been split between the first and second loop of the car park.

Minibus parking has been provided in 2 locations: 3 spaces are provided close to the main buildings to allow for easy access to the site and facilities for those with impaired mobility arriving in larger vehicles/ mini-buses; a further 7 spaces are provided to the south of the car park. It is envisaged the latter will only be used at peak times.

The main entrance roads and the first vehicular circulation 'loop' will be surfaced with an asphalt finish. Accessible, EV, minibus, motorcycle and standard bays associated with this first 'loop' will be constructed of permeable tarmac. By providing a mix of car, motorcycle and mini-bus parking to the north all vehicle types are provided for close to the buildings. Access paths will be constructed of resin bound gravel.

The second 'loop' has been designed to service peak time visitors only. As such both vehicular access route and adjacent spaces will be constructed with compacted gravel. The strip of parking bays along the southern edge of the development, in line with the coach bay, will be constructed with reinforced grids filled with grass seed. The different surface treatments are appropriate to the setting and will lessen the visual impact of the development by reducing the perceived area.



Precedent image showing car park using landscape bands and planting to demarcate parking bays as per the proposed second loop.

Site Access

The project seeks to address a number of critical issues in relation to visitor movement. At present, movement from the available dedicated parking areas to the waterfall trail requires walking alongside and crossing the main road. Currently there are no highlighted areas to cross; provisions of dropped kerbs; or tactile paving. Whilst this is fitting for a typical edge of settlement location, the sheer demand and close interaction of cars presents considerable concern.

The project therefore looks to directly address this by creating a sequence of movement, from entering the visitor car park to the waterfall trail gateway which includes:

- a compact parking arrangement with delineated routes back to the central square. A central axis cuts through the car park area with pedestrian route clearly distinguished between the parking bays, bands of planting and trees providing areas of greenery to break down the row of parking bays. Pedestrian footfall is focused to the central axis to discourage visitor movement along the river bank and tree line to reduce impact on existing neighbouring properties and wildlife.
- An additional pedestrian route connects from the new coach parking bay across the main vehicular access road, converging with the car park route at the centre of the development.
- New landscape features include the provision of bike loops and a dedicated bike secure lockup for the accommodation. There is an aspiration to make the centre a destination for cyclists, both as a sustainable means of local travel and tying into the National Cycle Network Route 46 which passes 0.5km to the south of the village. There is further opportunity to expand on the cycling offer if there becomes increased demand from cyclists.
- The proposed buildings act as a gateway providing considered spaces between the car park and main Pontneathvaughn road - enabling groups to congregate and set down / prepare kit if necessary within safe zones – activities that typically currently occur on road edge.
- Landscape paths direct visitors through the new public spaces towards a dedicated point for crossing, with the addition of low walls and fencing to further reinforce these routes and wayfinding.
- The structured courtyard pathway defined by the buildings is also complimented by an informal route through wildflower planting and meandering grassland to provide a further level open space to regroup, have picnics or simply catch your breath!
- The waterfall trail gateway is reached by a widened pavement, leading visitors alongside the Angel Inn, creating a safe and inviting arrival at the gateway.
- Although remaining a public highway, by amending the pathways High Street is designed to become a distributary clearly prioritising pedestrian over vehicular movement.
- Removal of the existing WC block on the central island, reducing the size and prominence through highways works and returning this to a biodiverse natural landscape further supports and encourages visitors to utilise the crossing points and paths to the west side of the High Street.

Character

As demonstrated through the design development, an understanding of the distinctive character of the site setting, both in built form and broader landscape has played a key role in the development of the proposals, which look to achieve a high standard of design and enduring quality, whilst seeking to avoid the pitfalls of creating poor quality anonymous places or pastiche.

Sensitivity to the existing buildings within the village centre was key when developing the proposals. Analysis of the local form and scale of significant buildings directly adjacent to the site, paired with points of reference within the wider locality, drove the proposals to reference traditional agricultural and vernacular massing. Further justified due to the constrained buildable area of the site, coupled with the required scope of design brief, led the forms to become agricultural in scale.

Key Principles that have driven the character of the buildings are:

- Formal arrangements of the buildings to create a central courtyard reminiscent of a farmstead typology, with key routes used to carve and divide the massing to allow carefully considered movement and flow through the site;
- Building scale, materiality and form take reference from the local agricultural vernacular alongside the natural palette of the surrounding landscape, with elevations and roof eaves which respond to the spaces within to reduce height and extent of roofscape;
- Key routes and views are curated to focus visitors on the 'locally distinctive' Angel Inn and entrance to the Waterfall Trails.

Using traditional agricultural forms as a driving concept has been continued into the refinement of the internal layout and curated atmosphere/ environment, which further reinforces the character of the proposals:

- Within the central shop area the exposed ceiling honestly expresses the structure and height of the vaulted space, reserving dropped ceilings for private staff and store areas. Careful use of rooflights has created pockets of light which break into the back of house rooms, helping to create a pleasant, naturally lit environment, whilst a larger central roof light to the main shop coupled with a barn size doors reference the scale and aesthetic of the traditional threshing barns;
- The entrance/ internal public gathering space in the accommodation block is double height, again expressing the roof form internally.
- Accommodation bedrooms are modest in scale but efficiently designed to provide flexibility and adaptable use, with a focus on punched views towards key landscape features.