

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

May 2026

V02

**Sgwd Gwladys, Pontneathvaughan Road,
Glynneath, Neath Port Talbot SA11 5NR**

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1. INTRODUCTION

This statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the proposed extension to the Sgwd Gwladys Pub. The proposal includes the creation of associated outdoor amenity space, a new boundary wall, and a live wall cladding system. The extension is for additional storage and a space for serving from inside to out.

The purpose of this report is the comprehensive analysis and careful consideration of the impact the proposed development would have on the existing building and the surrounding area.

This statement explains the concept and principles of the development in relation to accessibility, character, community safety, environmental sustainability, movement and assesses the proposal against the relevant Planning Policy framework. The document demonstrates how the proposal accords with relevant national and local Planning Policy, as well as other material planning considerations.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the drawings and all other documents submitted as part of the application.

2. SITE INFORMATION

- Located on the edge of Pontneddfechan village within Neath Port Talbot.
- Adjacent to a key access point for the Elidir Trail, leading to Sgwd Gwladys waterfall.
- Within an area commonly known as Waterfall Country, attracting high visitor numbers.
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Sgwd Gwladys is accessed off the Pontneathvaughan Road (B4242) main road. Right on the edge of the Brecon Beacons National Park. The site boundary is a stone wall with vegetation all around the external seating areas. The vegetation adds character and softens the space compared to the adjacent B road.

Access to the establishment is step free through the wooden gate into the external seating space and then onto the step free access into the main restaurant.

The overall configuration of the site—including the orientation and positioning of the amenity space—creates a good connection between out and in. The layout creates an opportunity for an extension to carry on the out / in connection with the further addition of a service hatch to help staff deliver with more ease.

The development site consists primarily of managed ornamental garden space, including lawned areas, flowerbeds, low shrubs and evergreen trees located within the footprint of the site. Despite its ornamental nature, the existing vegetation contributes to local biodiversity by providing foraging habitat, nesting opportunities.



3. CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Pontneddfechan is a small rural settlement located within the Vale of Neath, positioned on the south-western edge of the Bannau Brycheiniog (Brecon Beacons) National Park. The village functions as a gateway to “Waterfall Country”, a nationally and internationally significant landscape renowned for its waterfalls, wooded gorges, and geological features.

The proposed development site lies at the end of a low-density residential setting, being the perfect place for the footfall that travel to visit the waterfalls.

The space surrounding the site is currently under development for the ‘Levelling Up Project’ run by Neath Port Talbot Council.

4. MOVEMENT AND ACCESS

The application site at Sgwd Gwladys is located within Pontneddfechan, a rural village functioning as a key gateway to Waterfall Country. The site plays a significant role in accommodating visitor movement between the built settlement and the surrounding landscape, which attracts high seasonal footfall.

Movement within the area is influenced by:

- Rural road infrastructure

- High visitor demand
- Strong pedestrian links to surrounding trails

Vehicular access to the site is provided via:

- Pontneathvaughan Road (Pontneddfechan Road) – the main route through the village

This route connects directly to:

- The A465 Heads of the Valleys Road, approximately 1–2 miles south-west, providing strategic links to the regional road network and the M4 corridor

5. PROPOSAL

A formal pre-application application enquiry (reference number Q2025/0393) was submitted and a response by Jessica King was sent to Chris George of George & Co.

The pre app meeting raised concerns regarding the original proposals North East extension. The submitted design was not considered to relate or complement the new visitor centre development (P2024/0586) and as such did raise concerns.

The Southwestern extension did not result in any unacceptable overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing issues, and the level of noise and disturbance associated with the use would be comparable to that of the existing site, the proposed visitor development and the Public House opposite.

As such, it is considered that the proposed development would have no detrimental impact upon the amenity of the occupiers of the adjacent properties subject to suitably worded conditions in terms of opening hours and restricting the A3 use.



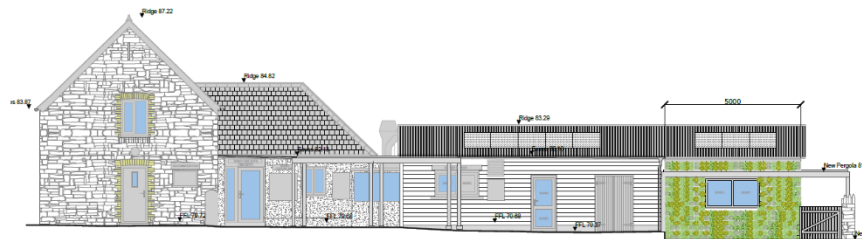
FIGURES TO SIDE

3D view of the pre application scheme that was previously submitted (reference number Q2025/0393)

In response to the pre-application feedback there were a number of changes made, informed by the written comments received from the planning officer. These changes are described later in this document.

The proposal is now submitted as a full planning application. The submission includes updated site plans, elevation, proposed floorplans which demonstrates the extent of the development. As well as supporting information including a GI Report, and 3D renders.

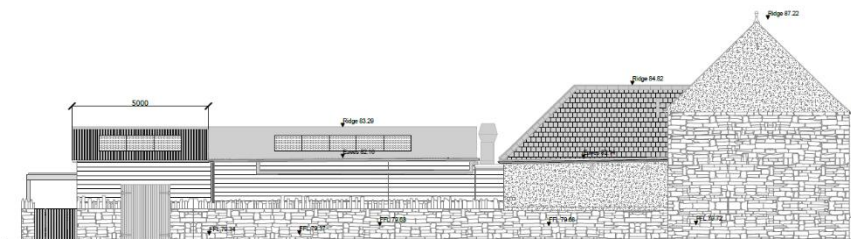
The proposal is for a 5-meter extension to the kitchen area with a patio seating area. The extension is to be constructed of live wall construction, and the boundary walls of the new patio area will mimic the existing stone wall with planters to match.



PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION

*FIGURES TO SIDE AND
BELOW*

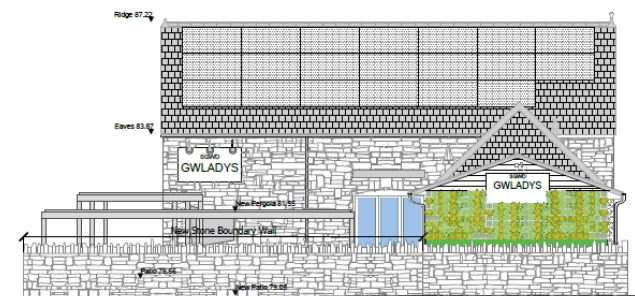
*Plans and Elevations of
the proposal.*



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION



PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION

Internally, a step down into a serving area and an additional storage space is proposed to accommodate the additional seating of the external patio space.

The proposal incorporates roof-mounted photovoltaic (PV) panels as part of the site's sustainability and energy reduction strategy. The panels comprise Trina Vertex S+ 440W Black Framed N-Type Mono photovoltaic modules, each measuring 1,134 mm x 1,762 mm.

A total of 36 panels are proposed across the site, comprising 20 panels mounted on the roof of the existing restaurant building, 10 panels mounted on the existing single-storey kitchen roof, and 6 panels mounted on the roof of the proposed kitchen extension. The existing restaurant roof has a pitch of approximately 44 degrees, whilst the existing kitchen roof and proposed extension roof have pitches of approximately 20 degrees.

The panels will be mounted flush with the roof slopes and integrated within the roof planes. The total photovoltaic installation covers approximately 72 square metres. Whilst the panels will be visible from the adjacent public highway, they are viewed in the context of the existing buildings and have been designed to minimise visual impact through the use of black-framed modules. The installation will contribute towards reducing operational energy consumption and supporting the sustainable operation of the restaurant.

6. PLANNING POLICY

In response to the pre-application advice and with consideration to all relevant planning policies, the design has been carefully reconsidered, as described in the following paragraphs.

Strategic Policy SP2 – Health, Well-being and Sustainable Communities

Strategic Policy SP2 seeks to ensure that development proposals contribute positively towards the creation of sustainable communities, promoting health, safety and well-being.

The proposal supports this objective through:

- The provision of enhanced visitor facilities within an established tourism location
- The creation of high-quality outdoor amenity space
- Improved functionality of the existing public house, which serves both residents and visitors

As such, the development contributes positively to the social and economic vitality of the local area.

Strategic Policy SP14 – The Countryside and the Undeveloped Coast

The site lies within a rural location at the edge of the settlement boundary. Policy SP14 seeks to protect the countryside from inappropriate development whilst allowing for small-scale proposals that are appropriate in scale and directly related to an existing use.

The proposed extension is modest in scale, contained within the existing curtilage of the site, and directly supports the ongoing operation of the established public house. The proposal is

therefore considered compliant with the aims of this policy.

Policy BE1 – Design, Scale and Visual Impact of Development

Policy BE1 requires that development proposals demonstrate high quality design which:

- Responds appropriately to the character and appearance of the surrounding area
- Respects the scale, form and massing of neighbouring buildings
- Avoids unacceptable impacts on residential amenity

The proposal has been carefully designed to:

- Integrate seamlessly with the existing building through continuation of the roofline
- Use materials and design approaches (including the living wall) that reflect the site's natural setting
- Ensure that there are no unacceptable impacts in terms of overlooking, overshadowing, or overbearing impact

The scale and form of the extension are considered proportionate and appropriate, and the proposal therefore accords with Policy BE1.

Policy BE15 – Retention and Enhancement of Existing Green Infrastructure

Policy BE15 seeks to protect and enhance green infrastructure assets and ensure development contributes positively to ecological networks.

The proposal incorporates a living wall system, which will:

- Introduce additional vegetation within the site
- Provide habitat opportunities for insects and pollinators
- Enhance the visual integration of the development within the surrounding landscape

In addition, the existing planting within the site is largely retained, as set out within the accompanying Green Infrastructure Assessment.

The proposal therefore results in a net enhancement of green infrastructure in accordance with Policy BE15.

Policy CW3 – Design Considerations: Highways

Policy CW3 requires development to ensure safe and appropriate access, parking provision, and movement arrangements.

The site benefits from:

- Established vehicular access from Pontneathvaughan Road
- Strong pedestrian connectivity to surrounding tourist routes

Parking provision is supported by:

- Existing arrangements within the locality
- The recently approved visitor infrastructure scheme (P2024/0586), which includes a public car park

The proposal does not intensify the use of the site to a degree that would result in unacceptable highway impacts and is therefore compliant with Policy CW3.

Policy EN8 – Pollution and Land Stability

Policy EN8 ensures that development does not result in unacceptable levels of disturbance, including noise.

The proposed extension will:

- Operate in association with the existing A3 use
- Not introduce new noise-generating uses beyond those already established
- Maintain activity levels consistent with the surrounding context

Subject to appropriate planning conditions, the proposal will not result in adverse impacts on neighbouring amenity and is therefore compliant with Policy EN8.

7. COMMUNITY SAFETY

The site is located at the edge of an established residential neighbourhood that generally benefits from a sense of natural surveillance due to the presence of active frontages and regular pedestrian activity. The surrounding streets are well-lit and support good visibility, contributing positively to perceptions of safety during evening hours. The wider estate layout provides clear and direct routes for pedestrians, with limited opportunities for concealed or isolated spaces.

The main entrance to the proposed site is positioned within a defined secure space and will be appropriately lit to ensure a strong sense of personal safety.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The proposed site has been designed with a strong emphasis on environmental sustainability and responsible integration into the site landscape. The proposed design responds directly to the site, stepping down the extension to match the contours of the site instead of building up. This minimises the need for extensive groundworks and allowing the development to sit comfortably within the existing contours.

A green wall is incorporated to enhance biodiversity. They support insects and pollinators. The development will be constructed to modern energy-efficient standards and will incorporate low-carbon technologies to reduce emissions, where possible.

These measures ensure that the proposal delivers a highly sustainable form of development that supports both environmental performance and landscape sensitivity.

9. CONCLUSION

This application seeks planning consent for the construction of a proposed extension to the Sgwd Gwladys Pub. The proposal includes the creation of associated outdoor amenity space, a new boundary wall, and a live wall cladding system. The extension is for additional storage and a space for serving from inside to out.

The proposed development has been carefully designed to respond to the site's challenging topography and to integrate sensitively with the surrounding built and natural environment.

By following the pre-app advice, we have added a boundary to the site, which matches the existing build up, added a live wall to enhance biodiversity, and created a further space for the footfall of the waterfall trails to occupy.

The design also ensures that the privacy, daylight and amenity of neighbouring properties are maintained.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to be a proportionate, well-designed, and policy-compliant development that supports the continued viability of the site while enhancing its environmental and functional performance. It is therefore considered that planning permission should be granted.