

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

PROPOSED RETAIL UNIT WITH ASSOCIATED CAR
PARK & SERVICE AREAS

Land previously occupied by

Club House

121 Heol Cae Gerwen

Gwaun Cae Gerwen

SA18 1PD

255458-IDL-01-XX-DR-A-R4063-S3-P06

June 2026

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1.0

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 DOCUMENT SCOPE
- 1.2 THE BRIEF

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 DOCUMENT SCOPE

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Inspire Design Limited on behalf of NMJ Property Developments Ltd, in support of a full planning application for the creation of a retail unit and its associated service areas, car parking and means of access.

This document relates to the area within the red development boundary as shown on the location plan.

The structure of this Design and Access Statement is based on the Design Commission for Wales document: 'Design and Access Statements in Wales: Why, What and How'.

The purpose of this statement is to outline the design process and decision making which has informed the proposed scheme seeking approval.

This statement aims to demonstrate that the principles of inclusive design and access have been considered from the outset of the development process. Section 2 of this statement describes the application site context and scheme brief. Section 3 highlights the constraints and opportunities that have informed the application proposals; section 4 describes the design process and scheme proposals, and the accessibility of the proposed development via various modes of transport. Our conclusions are provided in section 5.

This Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the drawings outlined below, along

with all other reports submitted in support of the application.

Project Number	Number	Description
255458-E1	001	Site Location Plan
255458-E2	002	Existing Site Layout Plan
255458-E3	003	Existing Elevations 1 of 2
255458-E3	004	Existing Elevations 2 of 2
255458-P2	026	Proposed Site Layout Plan
255458-P2	028	Ground Floor Plan GA
255458-P2	029	First Floor Plan GA
255458-P3	035	Elevations 01 GA
255458-P3	036	Elevations 02 GA
255458-P4	039	Site Street Scene + Section A-A



Site location plan - NTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.2 THE BRIEF

Inspire Design have been appointed by NMJ Property Developments Ltd to undertake the architectural services relating to the proposed scheme.

The application site is located in the Gwaun Cae Gerwen area in the County Borough of Neath Port Talbot about 5 miles east of the centre of Ammanford, along the A474 Cwmamman Road.

The proposed development presents an opportunity to regenerate the site and enhance the retail offer along the main route through this part of Gwaun Cae Gerwen.

The provision of the new retail unit will enhance employment and retain expenditure within the area, meeting people's need for local services.

The brief comprises the below key items:

- 1) Erection of 1No retail units with associated car park and servicing.
- 2) Upgrading of an existing vehicle and pedestrian accesses to the site and improving landscaping provision.



Aerial view of the site in its context (image obtained from Google Earth) NTS

2.0

ASSESSMENT

- 2.1 SITE LOCATION AND PHYSICAL CONTEXT
- 2.2 SITE DESCRIPTION
- 2.3 POLICY CONTEXT
- 2.4 PREVIOUS CONSULTATIONS

2.0 ASSESSMENT

2.1 SITE LOCATION AND PHYSICAL CONTEXT

SITE LOCATION

Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen (Welsh: Gwauncaegurwen) is a village and community in the county borough of Neath Port Talbot. It is a former mining village where there were six or seven pits in the early 1920s.

The residential area of Gwaun Cae Gurwen includes small pockets of commercial premises along the linear road Heol Cae Gurwen and is approximately 5 miles east of Ammanford and 5 miles north of Pontardawe.

It was historically a part of Glamorgan and is in the most Welsh-speaking part of Neath Port Talbot. The community is made up of the electoral wards of Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen and Lower Brynamman. The name stems from the Original Gwaun (meaning meadow), Cegir (flower) and Gwen (welsh for white), as before settlement, the land was rich with white meadow flowers.

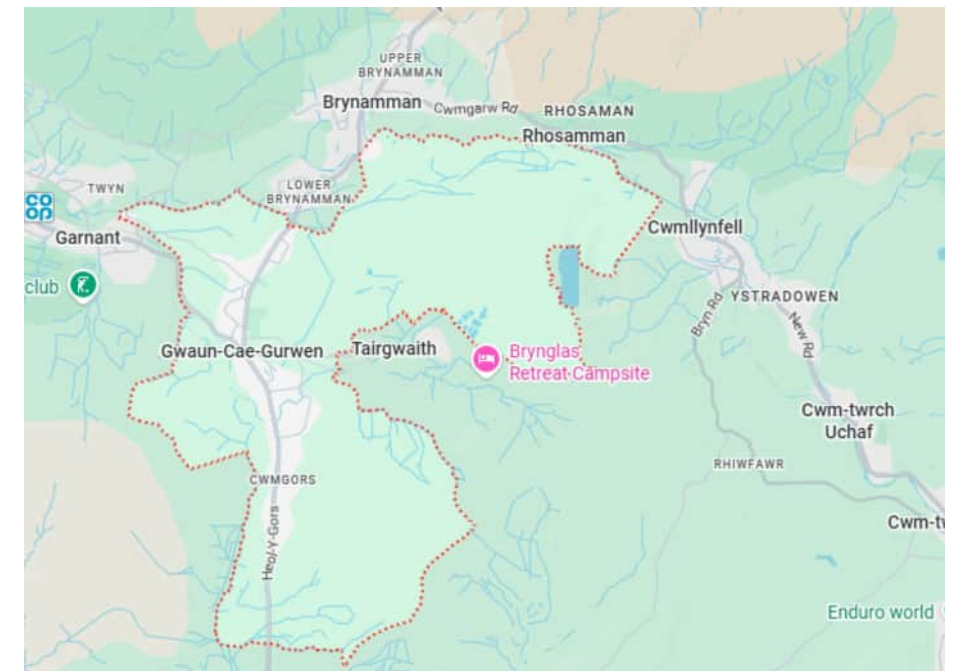
The area is predominantly residential, with a few local traders and stores. Local amenities and services include the Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Gwaun Cae Gurwen a primary school, a number of restaurants and takeaway food outlets, a chemist and a small foodstore as well as the Amman Valley DTRA for dirt bikes and horse chariot racing. which has several playgrounds and two football pitches.

The Ammanford train station is five miles away, providing easy connections with several main cities such as Swansea

Cardiff, Bristol, Manchester and London. Additionally, access to the M4 motorway is less than nine miles south of the application site.

The residential area of Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen is largely made up of linked, terrace and semi-detached houses built at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. These residential developments lie along the linear Heol Cae Gurwen Road with several layers branching off into side streets behind.

The site faces the Heol Cae Gurwen Road giving vehicular access to the site.



Map extract showing the extent of Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen

2.0 ASSESSMENT

2.1 SITE LOCATION AND PHYSICAL CONTEXT



Aerial view of the site in its wider context (image obtained from Google Earth) NTS

2.0 ASSESSMENT

2.1 SITE LOCATION AND PHYSICAL CONTEXT

PHYSICAL CONTEXT

The site lies within an established residential area. Terrace houses represent the majority of the housing type in the area. However, the areas adjacent to the application site have a more diverse character, being mostly surrounded by semi-detached houses and a car repair garage. The mix of uses and styles in the immediate context of the site offers a distinctive variation in form and materials in constructions that generally rise to a maximum of two stories.

Most constructions include a pitch roof design, with some examples tiled, slated and metal pitched roofs.

The material palette is varied and often mixed in various combinations. Buff brick and stone finishes as well as smooth render are prevalent among residential buildings, with some presence of rough render. In commercial buildings, there are examples of brick, render and metal cladding in proximity to the application site.

The closest motorway junction lies some 9.0 miles (a 20-minute drive) south of the site (M4). The A474 is also one of the main link roads between Pontardawe and Ammanford and the M4 corridor via the A4067.



Existing Derelict Club facing A474



Residential properties north along A474



Commercial properties south along A474



Commercial properties south along A474



Types of Residential property on Heol Cae Gurwen.



Types of Residential property on Heol Cae Gurwen.

3.0 ASSESSMENT

2.1 SITE LOCATION AND PHYSICAL CONTEXT



View of the site as seen from the south east. Vehicular access entry point is visible in the foreground of the building.



View of the site seen from the south west. Vehicular access entry point is visible to the right of the building.

2.0 ASSESSMENT

2.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The application proposal is located in the central part of Gwaun Cae Gurwen community, along Heol Cae Gurwen, and falls within the administrative boundary of Neath Port Talbot County Borough.

The site is currently occupied by a derelict club building, a former social club, but over many years the site has fallen into disrepair due to prolonged abandonment.

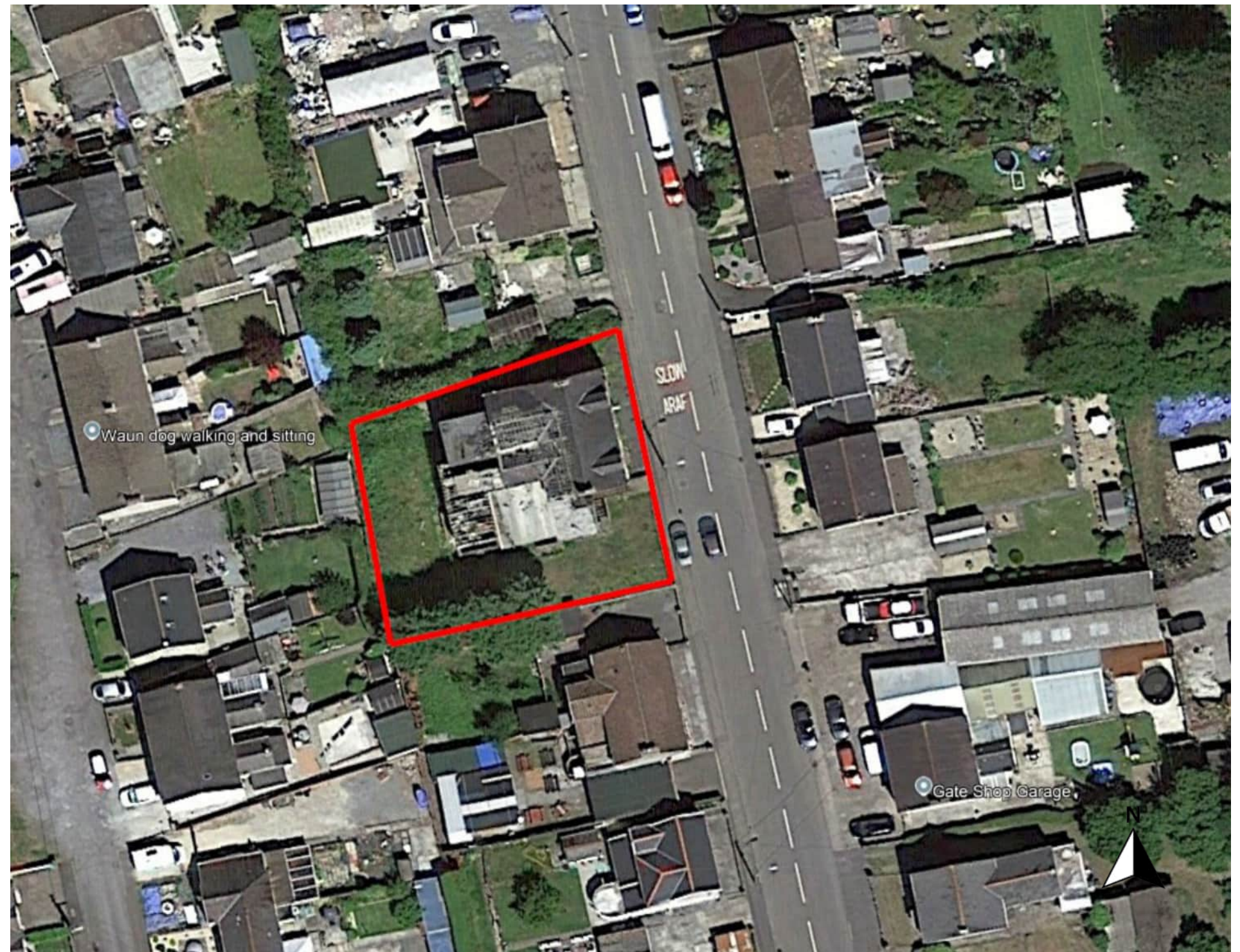
The building is located on its northern boundary with former gardens to the west, east and south of the building with no indication of demarked parking remaining however dropped kerbs exist to the frontage indicating access was used for this purpose.

The existing vehicular access point is located off Heol Cae Gurwen which gives direct access and a combined entrance and exit arrangement.

The main structure on the site is the former club building which is part two storeys and part single storey with a pitched roof covering the main building and a flat roof extension to the left and rear side.

The proposed application entails the demolition of the existing building on site.

The site is generally level across its frontage, with a slope to the rear of circa 1.0m where it adjoins the rear residential properties.



Aerial view of the application Site in its immediate context (image obtained from Google Earth) NTS

2.0 ASSESSMENT

2.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The pedestrian access to the existing building is level with steps located at various points around the building for escape / access as the ground slopes away.

The site boundary along the south, west and north is undefined with a dense vegetation buffer between the site and the northern boundary.



Southern boundary with derelict wall



Western boundary with part breeze block, fencing and leylandii hedging



Northern boundary with overgrowth of mixed planting

2.0 ASSESSMENT

2.3 PLANNING POLICY AND DESIGN GUIDE

This section sets out a summary of the national and local planning policy and guidance as it relates to design and access issues.

National Policy

Good Design

1.1. It is set out within Paragraph 3.3 of PPW that:

'Good design is fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. Design is not just about the architecture of a building but the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment and between people and places. To achieve sustainable development, design must go beyond aesthetics and include the social, economic, environmental, cultural aspects of the development, including how space is used, how buildings and the public realm support this use as well as its construction, operation, management, and its relationship with the surrounding area'.

1.2. Figure 8 adjacent sets out the above in an illustrative / diagrammatic manner of the objectives of good design:

Local Planning Policy

Policy TR 2 - Design and Access of New Development.

Development proposals will only be permitted where all of the following criteria, where relevant, are satisfied:

1. The development does not compromise the safe, effective and efficient use of the highway network and does not have an adverse impact on highway safety or create unacceptable levels of traffic generation;
2. Appropriate levels of parking and cycling facilities are provided and the access arrangements for the site allow for the safe manoeuvring of any service vehicles associated with the planned use;
3. The development is accessible by a range of travel means, including public transport and safe cycle and pedestrian routes;
4. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans are provided for developments that are likely to create significant traffic generation

Figure 8: Objectives of Good Design



2.0 ASSESSMENT

2.3 PLANNING POLICY AND DESIGN GUIDE

Policy BE 1 – Design

'All development proposals will be expected to demonstrate high quality design which fully takes into account the natural, historic and built environmental context and contributes to the creation of attractive, sustainable places.

Proposals will only be permitted where all of the following criteria, where relevant, are satisfied:

- 1. It complements and enhances the character and appearance of the site, building or area in terms of siting, appearance, scale, height, massing and elevation treatment;*
- 2. It respects the context of the site and its place within the local landscape, including its impact on the important arterial gateways into the County Borough, its effects on townscape and the local historic and cultural heritage and it takes account of the site topography and prominent skylines or ridges;*
- 3. It utilises materials appropriate to its surroundings and incorporates hard and soft landscaping and screening where appropriate;*
- 4. It would not have a significant adverse impact on highway safety, the amenity of occupiers of adjacent land or the community;*

5. Important local features (including buildings, amenity areas, green spaces and green infrastructure, biodiversity and ecological connectivity) are retained and enhanced as far as possible;

6. It achieves and creates attractive, safe places and public spaces, taking account of 'Secured by Design' principles (including where appropriate natural surveillance, visibility, well lit environments and areas of public movement);

7. It plays a full role in achieving and enhancing an integrated transport communications network promoting the interests of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and ensures linkages with the existing surrounding community;

8. It uses resources, including land and energy, as efficiently as possible through:

- (a) Making the best and most efficient use of the land available through being of appropriate density taking into account the character and appearance of the area, normally a minimum of 35 dwellings per hectare in the Coastal Corridor Strategy Area or a minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare in the Valleys Strategy Area;*

b) The layout and form of the development does not preclude the reasonable use of other adjacent land;

(c) Developing brownfield land in preference to greenfield land where possible;

(d) Minimising building exposure while maximising solar gain.

9. Its drainage systems are designed to limit surface water run-off and flood risk and prevent pollution;

10. The layout and design of the development achieves inclusive design by ensuring barrier free environments, allowing access by all and making full provision for people with disabilities.'

5.5.16 Good design includes paying regard to general amenity as well as appearance, accessibility and resource use. Where a site is to be developed with a mix of uses, careful consideration will need to be given to the interaction and relationship between the uses to ensure that they are compatible and integrate with one another and existing adjacent uses.

2.0 ASSESSMENT

2.4 PREVIOUS CONSULTATION

A pre-application submission has been made for the site on 28.11.2025 (application No. **Q2025/0378**) for the redevelopment of the site for "Proposed demolition of former club and development of a Tesco Express store".

The primary design feedback response made reference to *"The application site is surrounded on three sides by existing residential development therefore repositioning the proposed building at the front of the site instead of the back is preferable in order to avoid the store from being in close proximity to these neighbouring properties."*

This response noted several historic applications had been submitted for the site:

- **P2023/0586**

Demolition of existing derelict 3 storey building and replacement with 3 storey apartment building (comprising 4no. 2-bed on ground and first floor and 2no 1-bed at top floor) together with a detached dwelling all with associated works and car parking.

Approved 02.10.2023

- **P2022/0912**

Demolition of existing derelict 3 storey building and replacement with 3 storey apartment building

(comprising 4no. 2-bed on ground and first floor and 2no 1-bed at top floor) together with a detached dwelling all with associated works and car parking.

Refused 13.07. 2023

- **P2019/0382**

Prior Notification for the demolition of the former club

Prior notification not required

29.04.2019

- **Several earlier applications were all returned to applicant without completing the planning process.**

- **P2008/0504**

Outline application for four dwellings

Approved 30.11.2008

- **P2004/1389**

Demolition of club and outline for two pairs of semi-detached dwellings

Approved 02.11.2004

- **P2002/1149**

Change of use from former private members club to public house premises

Approved 12.11.2002



Q2025/0378 Extract of drawing 255458-IDL-01-XX-DR-A-C20001-S1-P01 submitted for Pre-Application advice.

3.0

EVALUATION

- 3.1 CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES
- 3.2 PRINCIPLE TO BE ACHIEVED

3.0 EVALUATION

3.1 SITE CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Listed below are some of the constraints & opportunities that need to be considered when assessing the suitability of developing this area of land:

Constraints

- existing building to be demolished (pre 2000 construction, presence of asbestos likely);
- proximity of residential buildings surrounding the site and distances to and disturbance of;
- Overgrown hedges and scrub to be investigated to
- respect neighbouring properties;
- site access location;
- change of levels within the site more significant to the
- western edge of the application site;
- existing noise sources from Heol Cae Gurwen;
- Variable boundary walls and fencing needs to be regularised

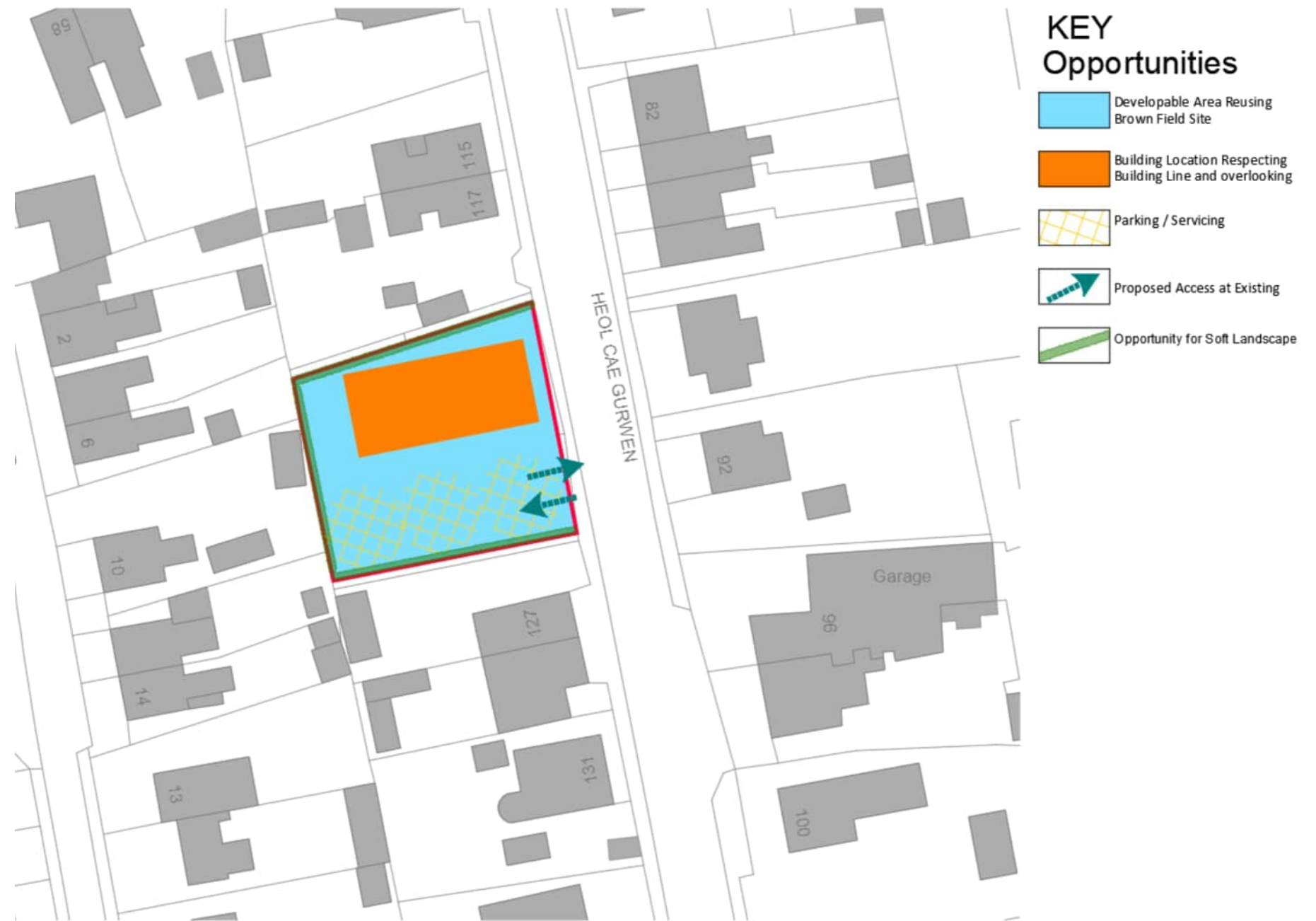


3.0 EVALUATION

3.1 SITE CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities

- to regenerate a neglected site;
- to enhance the street scene along all public aspects of the site;
- to provide much needed retail choice and employment retaining expenditure within the area;
- making best use of a highly visible location;
- to provide a sustainable development for the site;
- to provide a new vehicular access and step-free pedestrian access;
- to create landscaped opportunities that will benefit the street scene and ecology.



3.0 EVALUATION

3.2 PRINCIPLE TO BE ACHIEVED

The diagrams on the previous pages illustrate the opportunities and constraints that are relevant to the application site and inform the design principles. The design should respect and respond to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and the position and massing of the adjacent buildings. The design should also comply with, and satisfy, all the general functional requirements implicit with the provision of retail and restaurant accommodation.

Design principles:

- design buildings of their time that positively responds to the quality of the context;
- Create scale and proportion relevant to people and the surrounding buildings and spaces;
- respond to the proximity and scale of adjacent buildings;
- respond to key focal points, views and vistas;
- clearly distinguish between private and public space;
- use quality materials and detailing.

4.0

THE DESIGN

- 4.1 USE AND AMOUNT
- 4.2 LAYOUT, SCALE AND APPEARANCE
- 4.3 MATERIALS
- 4.4 ACCESSIBILITY

4.0 THE DESIGN

4.1 USE AND AMOUNT

Use and amount

The proposed application site measures circa 0.082 hectares/0.203 acres.

The proposed retail scheme includes:

- a self contained retail unit with ground and first floors measuring circa 372sqm/4,000sqft (GIA)
- 10 total car parking spaces (one accessible parking bays)
- 3 cycle hoops
- Landscaped areas and other associated facilities.



Proposed site plan. NTS

4.0 THE DESIGN

4.2 LAYOUT, SCALE AND APPEARANCE

Layout

This statement's site constraints and opportunities diagram discussed earlier, and the feedback provided as part of the pre-application dialogue with NPT Planning, informed the proposed layout.

Taking these factors into account, the layout has been developed to establish the optimum use of the site and ensure the best access solution for vehicles, pedestrians, and service vehicles.

The proposal locates the main vehicular and pedestrian access point at the location of the existing, off Heol Cae Gurwen. Access to the site has been carefully designed for customer vehicle movements.

The building is located to make it clearly visible from the street maximising the street frontage whilst respecting the site and building line facing the main road.

The car park is located to the south of the site and will provide 10 parking spaces. The accessible space has been located as close as possible to the units' entrances, allowing easy access in and out.

Scale

The proposal will be contextually appropriate taking all of its architectural proportions from the surrounding properties. The scale, height and massing of the building has been influenced by the location and setting of the site, constraints and opportunities posed by the immediate and wider



Proposed ground floor plan. NTS

4.0 THE DESIGN

4.2 LAYOUT, SCALE AND APPEARANCE

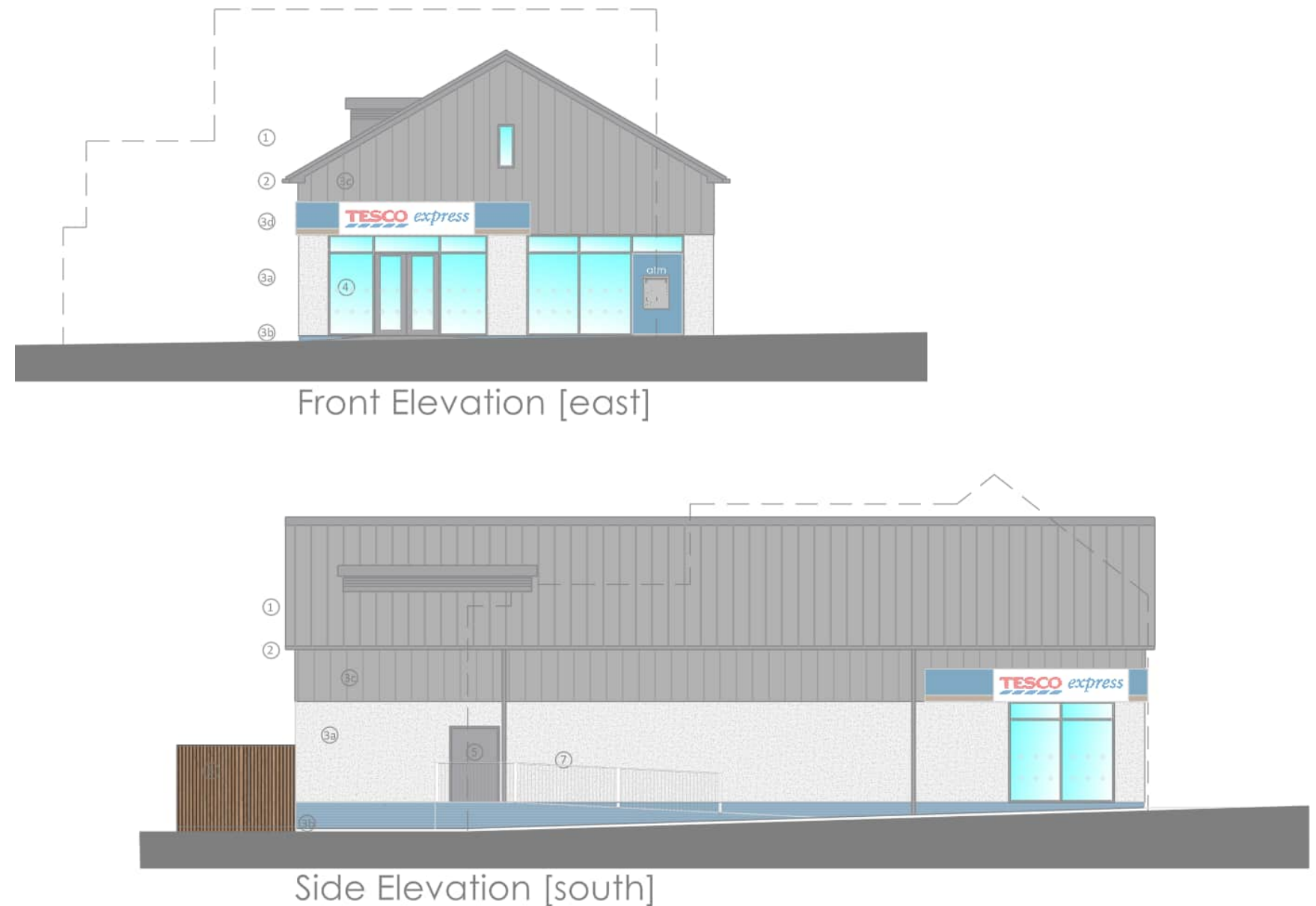
context, sound urban design principles and the local urban design objectives.

Residential properties surround the site, the closest is the gable of the property to the north circa 14m away, 19m away to the east and on the opposite side of Heol Cae Gurwen is the frontage of two houses No 90 and 92 with facing windows, 20m to the south and the properties gable is No 127 where there are two small obscure windows at ground floor, 23m to the west are rear facing elevations of properties on Ger-Yr-Afon. Each are 2 storey residential properties with typical eaves heights of circa 5.0m from floor level. The residential properties are pitched roof designs with and without gable features and faced with either brick, stone or render facades and pocket windows.

Other buildings in the proximity are service trade buildings with mixed finishes and appearance, featuring brick, render, metal cladding and flat and pitch roof styles.

The proposed building is inspired by the form of the residential character using a simple gable design and large windows, and then drawing on the commercial premises where alternate materials are used such as metal roof cladding. The proposal has an eaves height of circa 4.5m to the frontage increasing in height due to the sites existing slope of circa 5.4m.

The building incorporates a mezzanine that is accommodated within the roof slope so that the scale of the building can be kept subordinate to the adjacent residential properties.



Elevations . NTS

4.0 THE DESIGN

4.2 LAYOUT, SCALE AND APPEARANCE

The overall height and massing of the proposal is appropriate to this setting and reinforces local distinctiveness and enhances the area with a considered, contextual response.

Appearance

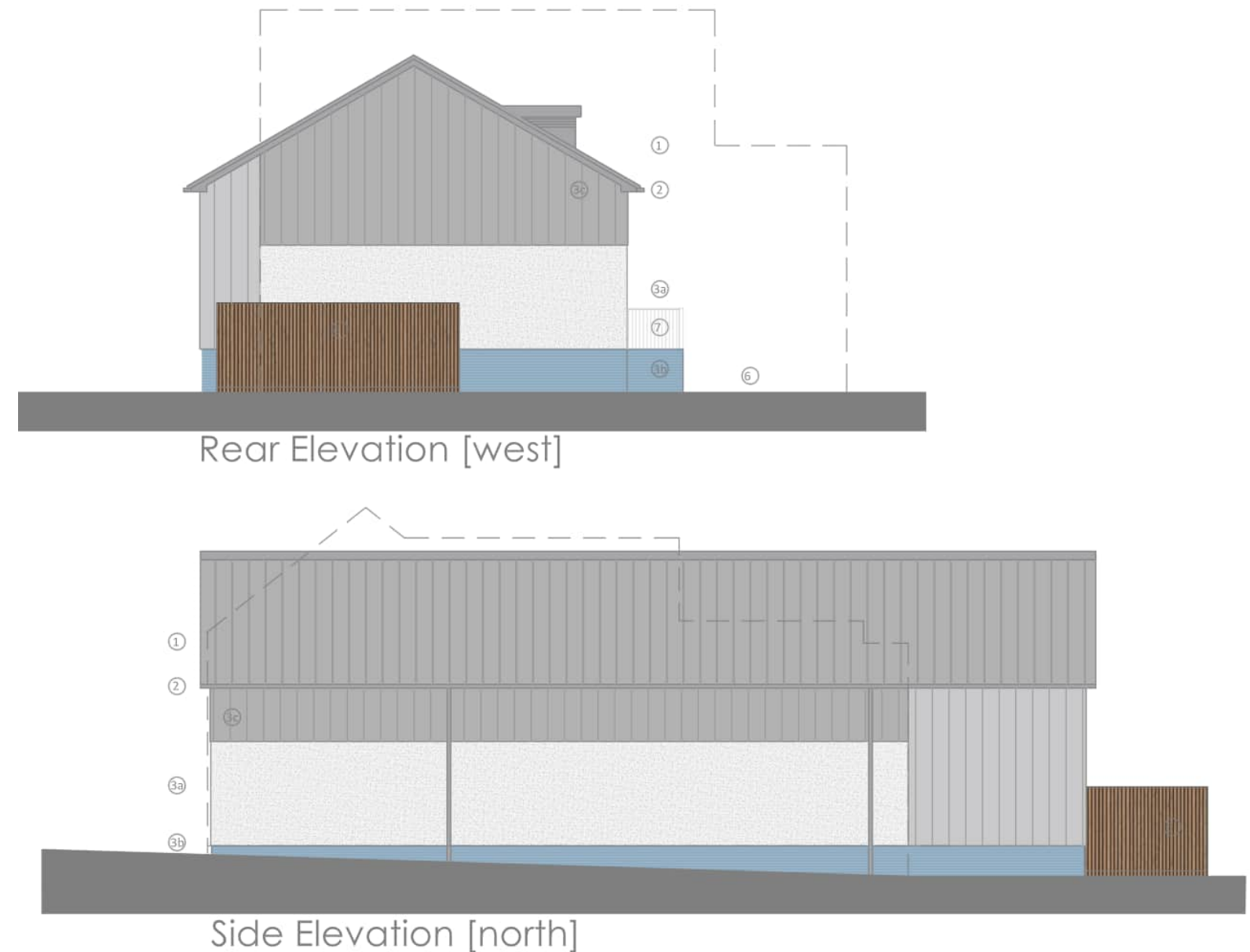
The proposal aims to create a building that positively respond to the local area and is able to integrate with the neighbouring developments. The aim was to create an interesting and vibrant frontage through the articulation of the façade with respect of the scale and choice of high quality materials for the development.

The main entrances to the building is enhanced by a generous and inviting glazed aluminium shopfronts.

A coordinated materials palette further unifies the appearance of the development. A rough cast render finish is employed as the main elevation material, with the upper wall clad with similar material to the roof breaking down further the visual proportion of the elevations.

A metal sheet dark grey coated roof blends with the wall cladding and render finishes, offering a modern appearance to the whole commercial setting.

The proposed building presents simple lines of residential proportion and an overall appearance of modern contemporary design with quality construction materials and methods selected to be sympathetic to the character of the area whilst meeting the end users requirements.



Elevations . NTS

4.0 THE DESIGN

4.2 LAYOUT, SCALE AND APPEARANCE



Indicative perspective view. NTS

4.0 THE DESIGN

4.3 MATERIALS



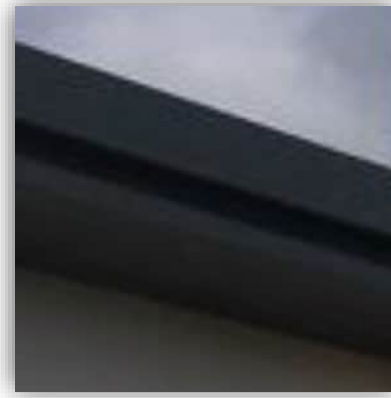
1. Rough Cast Render
Colour White



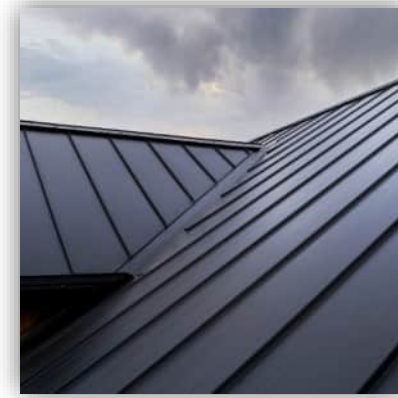
2. Coated profiled metal
wall sheet. Color Dark
grey



3. Plinth in contrasting
blue bricks



4. Fascias and soffit powder
coated aluminium Dark grey
roofing.



5. Coated profiled metal
roofing sheet. Color
Dark Grey



6. Aluminium shop front
window system
Color Dark Grey

4.0 THE DESIGN

4.4 ACCESSIBILITY

Access has been carefully considered to provide inclusion for all and in consideration of:

- Supplementary planning guidance 'Inclusive Design and Access for All
 - Approved documents (incl. building regulations Part M)
 - British standards where applicable
 - Vehicular and pedestrian accesses to the car park and to the service area are proposed via Heol Cae Gurwen.
- Access to the development has been carefully considered enabling all users' full enjoyment of the proposed site. This includes consideration of the needs of:
- The elderly;
 - Those with less than perfect sensory perception;
 - Those with less than perfect mobility and;
 - Those who require further guidance when understanding the world around them.
 - And in consideration of:
 - Supplementary planning guidance, 'Inclusive Design and Access for All;
 - Approved documents. Building regulations Part M;
 - British standards where applicable.

Access to the development for emergency vehicles will be via the main vehicular access off Heol Cae Gurwen.

Kerb radius within the site have been designed to allow an emergency vehicle to efficiently access the buildings.

Car park provision is made for 10 car parking spaces including 1 disabled space, located near the units entrance.

Standard parking spaces are 2.5m wide by 5.0m long with that dedicated to special needs having a 1.2m safe zone. The parking layout has been designed to assist users in following a simple search pattern to locate a free space, and has been designed to give good visibility levels for greater security and safer vehicle manoeuvring.

Gradients within the site are to be no steeper than 1 in 60. No gradient on a pedestrian route will be steeper than 1 in 21 and, where these occur, they will be over short distances only.

Access to the entrances are readily available through the provision of shallow gradients and tactile paving where necessary.

The main entrances will be well sign posted (in line with the JMU sign guide).

The pedestrian layout is simple, logical and legible with minimal kerbs. This enables visually impaired people to memorise the environment, and predict and interpret the layout when encountering it for the first time.

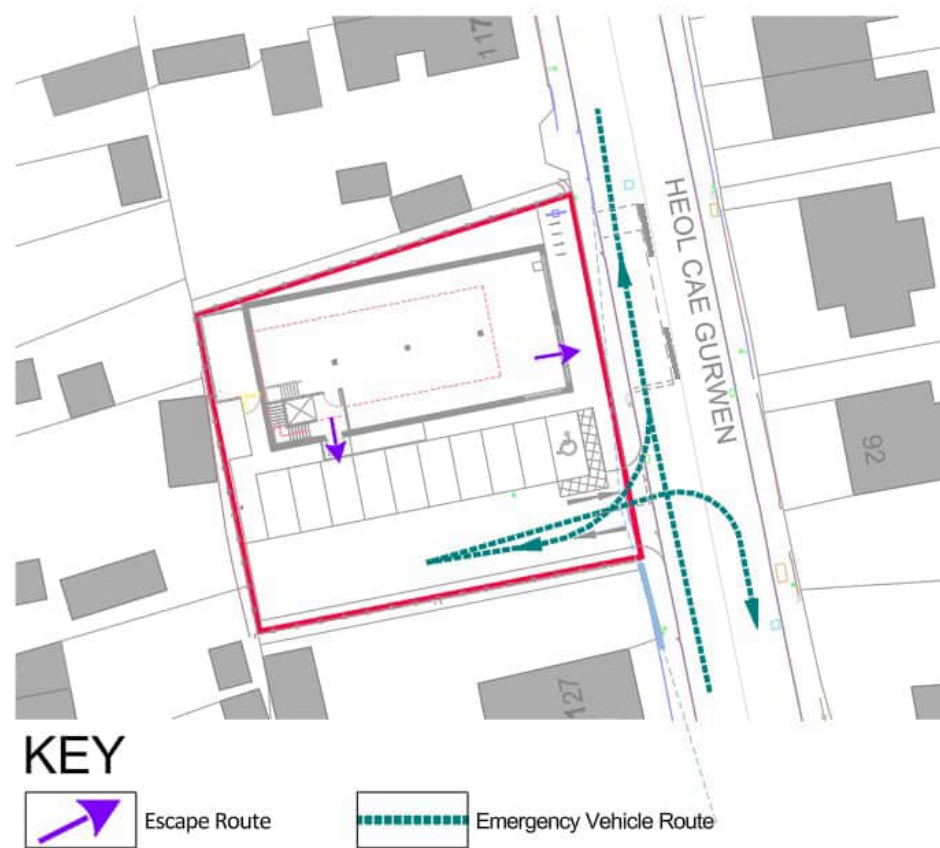
Movements within the units will be aided through the

combination of natural lighting supplemented by clear artificial lighting to develop full spectrum lighting. All internal doors will be fully compliant with Approved Document Part M of the building regulations with regard to vision panels, handles, closers, colour contrast, etc.

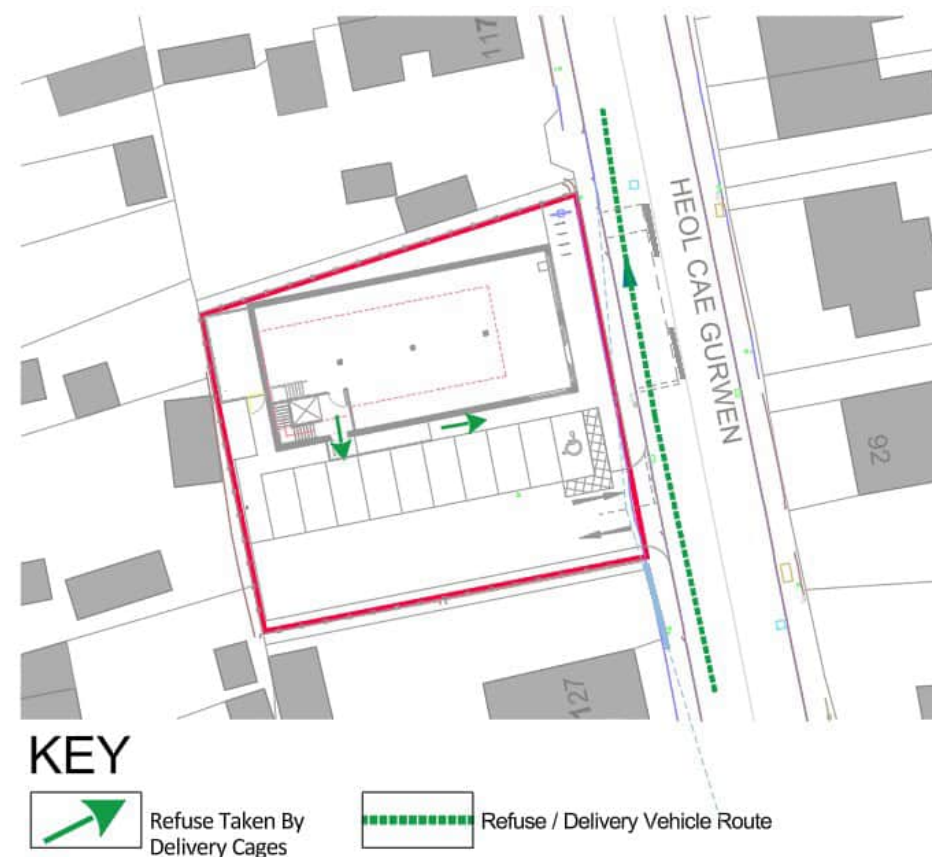
The overall intention is to create an environmentally friendly development with ease of use for all (including the disabled, parents and toddlers, the elderly and young people).

4.0 THE DESIGN

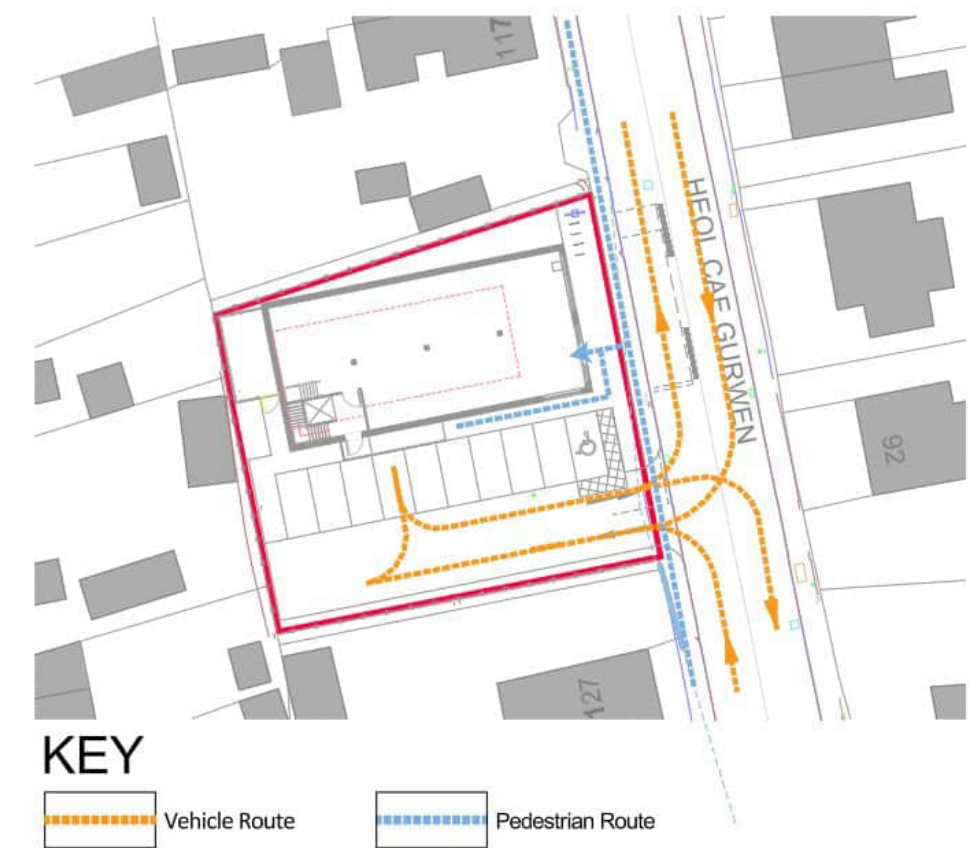
4.4 ACCESSIBILITY



Accessibility plan: Fire fighting & means of Escape



Accessibility plan: Refuse and Delivery vehicles



Accessibility plan: Vehicular and Pedestrian

5.0

SUMMARY

5.1 SUMMARY

5.0 SUMMARY

5.1 SUMMARY

This statement has set out the key principles which have influenced the detailed design of the scheme. The proposals are practical, honest, sustainable and sensitive to the surrounding area and improves the appearance and function of the site.

Use and Amount

The use of the site and the position of the buildings and open spaces have been explained and justified based on the analysis of the site and surrounding areas. The amount of development proposed has been indicated and the density shown to be appropriate for the site and wider community.

Appearance and Scale

The appearance of the buildings and spaces have been explained and it has been demonstrated that the proposal relates to its surroundings.

It has also been evidenced that the scale has been influenced by the existing character of the local area.

Access

It has been demonstrated that the principles of inclusive design and access for all people have been considered from the outset and informed the development process.



Indicative perspective view. NTS