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Transport Statement

**Oak Cottage
High Street
Pontardawe**

May 2025

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Revision History

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Acstro has been appointed to prepare a Transport Statement to support a planning application for development at Oak Cottage, High Street, Pontardawe SA8 4JN.
- 1.2 The planning application is for the change of use from old church school, hall and teacher's house (D1/C3) to a dwellinghouse (C3) and cafe and multi-use retail/exhibition space and workshop space (D2) and associated works.

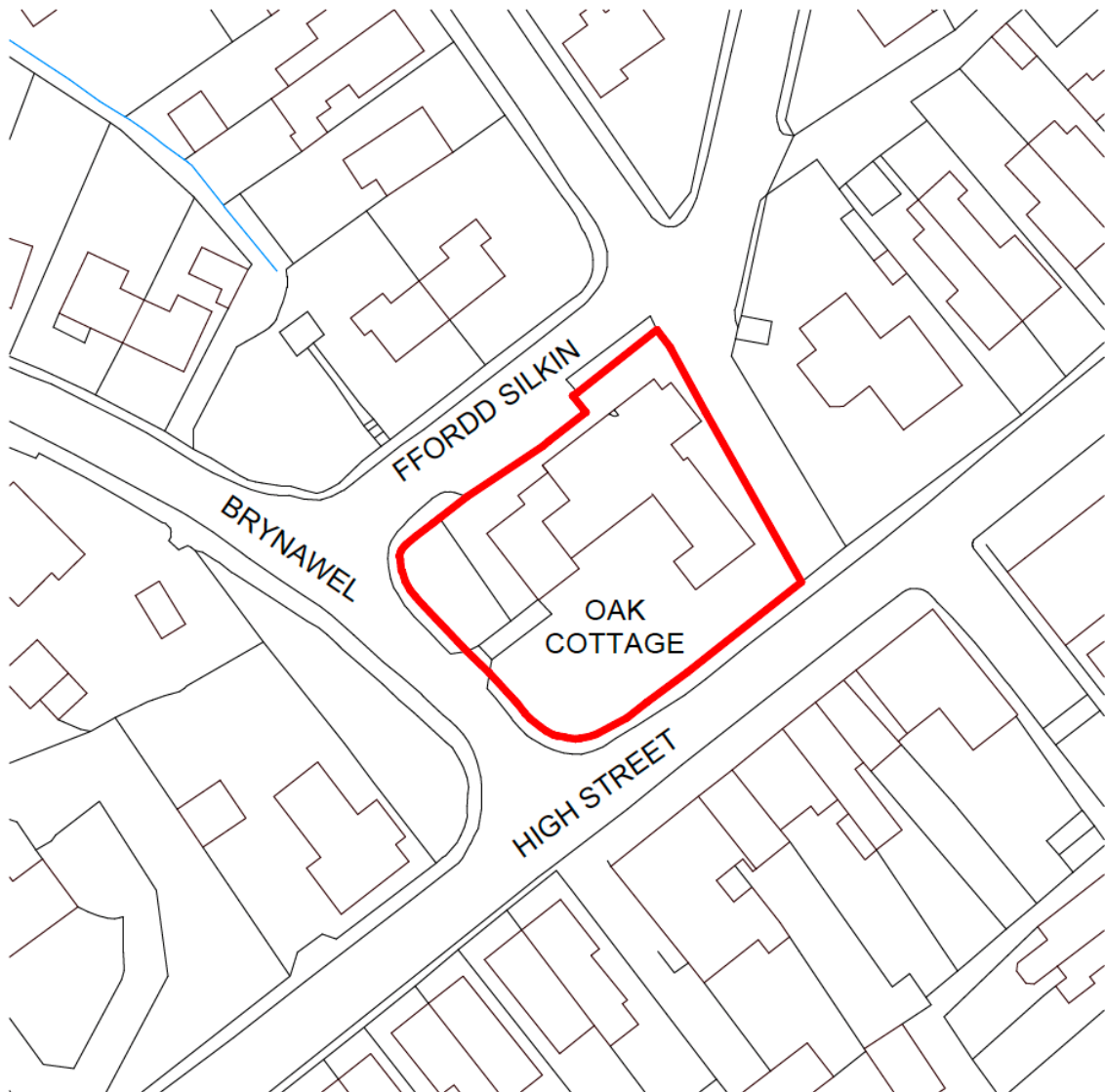


Figure 1 Location Plan

- 1.3 This document considers the transport implications of the proposed development. It demonstrates that the site is in a sustainable location that is closely related to existing facilities and services and is accessible to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. It is also demonstrated that safe vehicular access to the site can be provided and adequate parking provision is made for the future occupiers and users of the site.

1.4 The structure of the Transport Statement is as follows:

- Section 2 describes the relevant planning policy context that is relevant in terms of transport issues;
- Section 3 describes the site's location and its accessibility by all forms of transport.
- Section 4 describes the proposed development
- Section 5 considers the development's likely traffic generation and parking demand.
- Section 6 provides a summary and conclusion.

2 Policy Context

Future Wales - The National Plan 2040

- 2.1 This is the national development framework that sets out the direction for development in Wales to 2040.
- 2.2 Policies 11 and 12 relate to national and regional connectivity, respectively. These seek to encourage longer-distance trips to be made by public transport, while also making longer journeys possible by electric vehicles. In urban areas, to support sustainable growth and regeneration, the priorities are improving and integrating active travel and public transport. In rural areas the priorities are supporting the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles and diversifying and sustaining local bus services. Active travel must be an essential and integral component of all new developments.
- 2.3 Planning authorities must act to reduce levels of car parking in urban areas, including supporting car-free developments in accessible locations and developments with car parking spaces that allow them to be converted to other uses over time. Where car parking is provided for new non-residential development, planning authorities should seek a minimum of 10% of car parking spaces to have electric vehicle charging points.

Planning Policy Wales (12th Edition)

- 2.4 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.
- 2.5 In terms of transport related policies paragraph 4.1.1 states that “the planning system should enable people to access jobs and services through shorter, more efficient and sustainable journeys, by walking, cycling and public transport”.
- 2.6 Paragraph 4.1.10 states that “the planning system has a key role to play in reducing the need to travel and supporting sustainable transport, by facilitating developments which:
 - are sited in the right locations, where they can be easily accessed by sustainable modes of travel and without the need for a car;
 - are designed in a way which integrates them with existing land uses and neighbourhoods; and
 - make it possible for all short journeys within and beyond the development to be easily made by walking and cycling.”
- 2.7 PPW advocates a sustainable transport hierarchy for planning, the hierarchy being, from top to bottom:
 - Walking and Cycling
 - Public Transport
 - Ultra Low Emission Vehicles
 - Other Private Motor Vehicles
- 2.8 It is Welsh Government policy to require the use of a sustainable transport hierarchy in relation to new development, which prioritises walking, cycling and public transport ahead of the private motor vehicles.
- 2.9 The transport hierarchy recognises that Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) also have an important role to play in the decarbonisation of transport, particularly in rural areas with limited public transport services.

- 2.10 To this end the provision of ULEV charging points is encouraged within new developments.
- 2.11 PPW recommends (4.1.51) that “a design-led approach to the provision of car parking should be taken, which ensures an appropriate level of car parking is integrated in a way which does not dominate the development. Parking provision should be informed by the local context, including public transport accessibility, urban design principles and the objective of reducing reliance on the private car and supporting a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport. Planning authorities must support schemes which keep parking levels down, especially off-street parking, when well designed”.

[Llwybr Newydd – The Wales Transport Strategy 2021](#)

- 2.12 This document sets out the Welsh Government’s vision for how the country’s transport system can help deliver on a pathway to creating a more prosperous, green and equal society. It lists its priorities as being:
1. Bringing services to people in order to reduce the need to travel. To this end a target has been set that of 30% of the workforce works remotely on a regular basis.
 2. Allow people and goods to move easily from door to door by accessible, sustainable and efficient transport services and infrastructure.
 3. Encourage people to make the change to more sustainable transport.
- 2.13 Modal shift is at the heart of Llwybr Newydd. This means the proportion of trips made by sustainable modes increases and fewer trips are made by private cars.
- 2.14 The Welsh Government has set a target of 45% of journeys to be made by public transport, walking and cycling by 2040. This represents an increase of 13 percentage points on the estimated baseline (2021) mode share of 32%.

[TAN18 Transportation](#)

- 2.15 Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note 18 (TAN18) details the Welsh Government’s policies in terms of transportation and repeats the general principles advocated in PPW i.e. that development is encouraged in sustainable, accessible, locations that will reduce the need to travel by car. Its aim is to promote an efficient and sustainable transport system and to counter the negative impacts associated with road traffic growth, for example increased air pollution, green house gases and congestion (2.1). It sees the integration of transport and land use planning as key (2.3) in achieving the Welsh Government’s sustainable development policy objectives by:
- promoting travel efficient settlement patterns;
 - ensuring new development is located where there is good access by public transport, walking and cycling thereby minimizing the need for travel and fostering social inclusion;
 - managing parking provision;
 - ensuring that new development includes appropriate provision for pedestrians, cycling, public transport, and traffic management and parking/servicing;
 - encouraging the location of development near other related uses to encourage multi-purpose trips; and

- ensuring that transport infrastructure necessary to serve new development allows existing transport networks to continue to perform their identified functions.

2.16 The needs of walkers and cyclists must be taken into consideration and the use of these most sustainable forms of transport encouraged in all developments (TAN18 Chapter 6). Similarly, all development should be accessible by public transport (Chapter 7).

The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013

2.17 The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 is Welsh Government legislation aimed to support an increase in the level of walking and cycling in Wales; to encourage a shift in travel behaviour to active travel modes, and to facilitate the building of walking and cycling infrastructure.

2.18 The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 requires local authorities in Wales to produce maps of walking and cycling networks in their local area, known as Active Travel Network Maps (ATNMs). These maps are designed to show two main things:

- Existing routes** – those current walking and cycling routes that already meet Welsh Government active travel standards, meaning they can be readily used for everyday journeys, and
- Future routes** – new routes that the local authority proposes to create in the future, as well as current routes that are planned for improvement to bring them up to the standards.

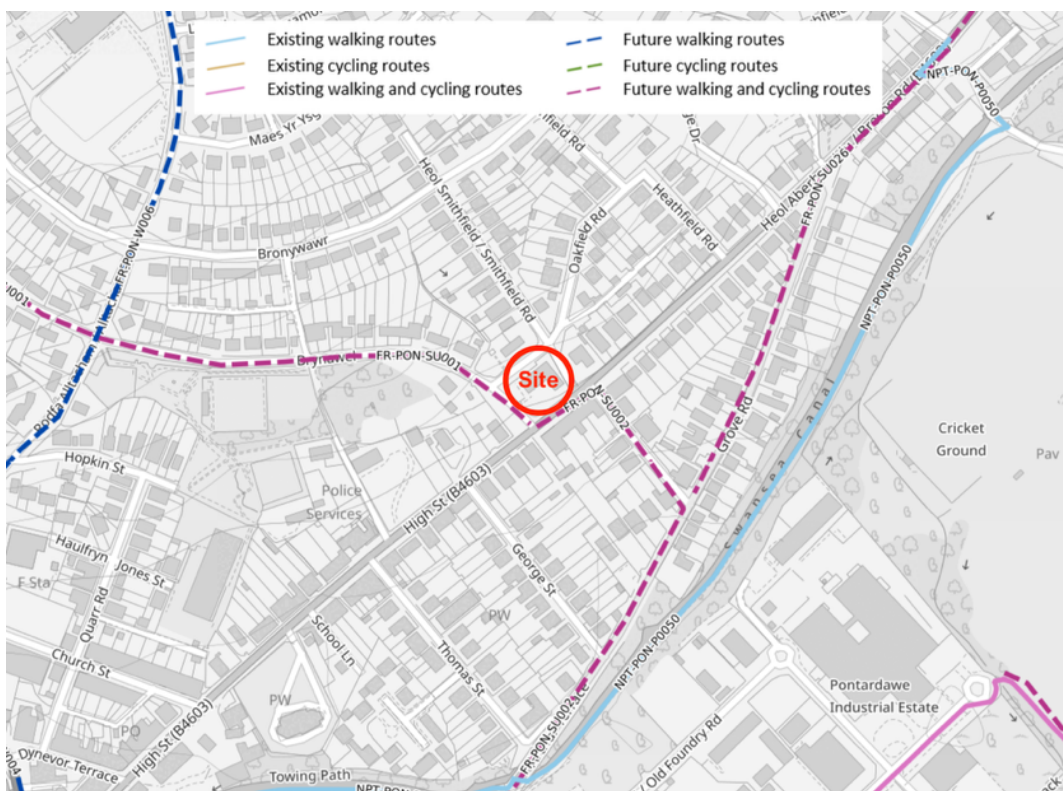


Figure 2 Extract from Active Travel Network Map (Source: DataMapWales)

2.19 There are future walking and cycling routes shown passing the western and southern boundaries of the site (FR-PON-SU001 and FR-PON-SU001, respectively).

3 Location & Accessibility

- 3.1 The application site comprises of a 2-bedroomed dwelling house and a disused church school hall (approximately 220m² floor area). The site is surrounded by High Street to the south, Brynawel to the west, Ffordd Silkin to the north and Smithfield Road to the east.
- 3.2 The proposal involves the change of use of the church school hall site to a café and multi-use retail/exhibition space and workshop space. The site is well placed for such an use, located centrally within Pontardawe and closely related to the other amenities provided within the town. This will encourage that trips to the development are linked with other purposes, reducing the number of trips that would otherwise be made to access services and amenities. The location of the development is also accessible by active modes of travel.

Active Travel

- 3.3 Active travel is a term used to describe walking and cycling for purposeful journeys (also referred to as utility journeys) to a destination, or in combination with public transport. Whilst walking and cycling are in themselves healthy activities that are to be encouraged, it is when they displace car journeys that they deliver significant benefits. The Welsh Government's *Active Travel Act Guidance* (2021) suggests that many people will walk up to 2 miles (approximately 3km) or cycle up to 5 miles (approximately 8km) for utility journeys.

Mode	Less than 1 mile	Up to 2 miles	Up to 3 miles	Up to 4 miles	Up to 5 miles	Up to 7.5 miles	Up to 15 miles
							
							
							
Colour	Average active user likelihood						
	Many users likely to travel this distance for utility journeys						
	Some users likely to travel this distance for utility journeys						
	Few or no users likely to travel this distance for utility journeys						

Figure 3 Typical Distance Range for Active Travel

(Source: Active Travel Guidance Table 4.1)

- 3.4 Figure 4 shows the areas that are within a 2 mile walk or 5 mile cycle ride of the application site and is an indication of the areas from where trips to the proposed development could be made by active travel modes.

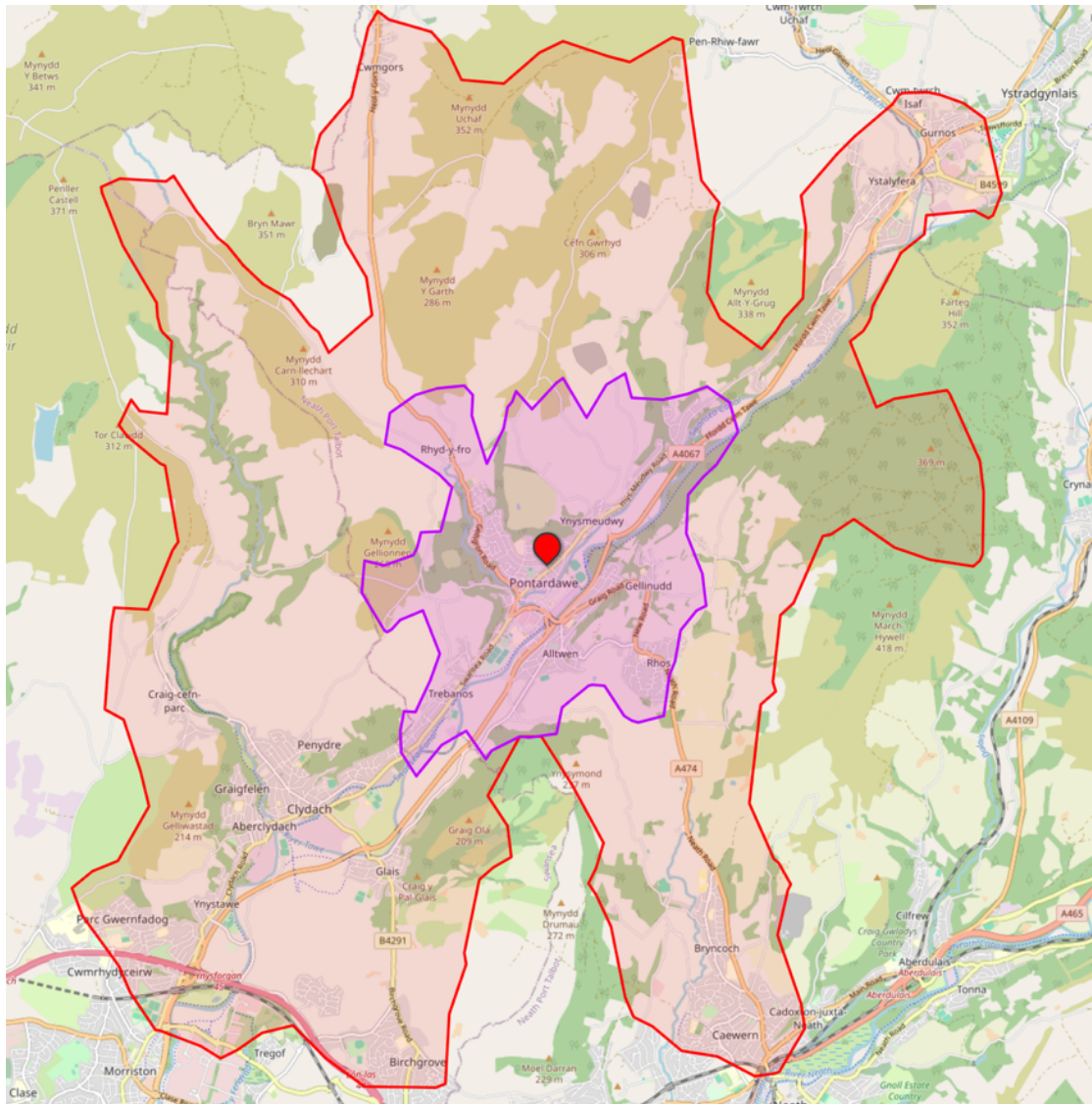


Figure 4 2-Mile Walk & 5-Mile Cycle Catchment

- 3.5 There are segregated footways adjacent to the site that provide safe pedestrian access to it. These link with the wider pedestrian network that provide for safe movement in all directions
- 3.6 National Cycle Network Route 43 (NCN43) runs through Pontardawe and provides a largely traffic-free route south to Trebanos and Swansea or north to Ystalyfera.

Public Transport

- 3.7 The application site has good connections to public transport services. There are bus stops in close proximity on Brynawel and on High Street / Brecon Road that provide access to the X6 bus service. This provides an hourly service between Swansea and Ystradgynlais on Mondays to Saturdays. The service runs at a reduced frequency on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

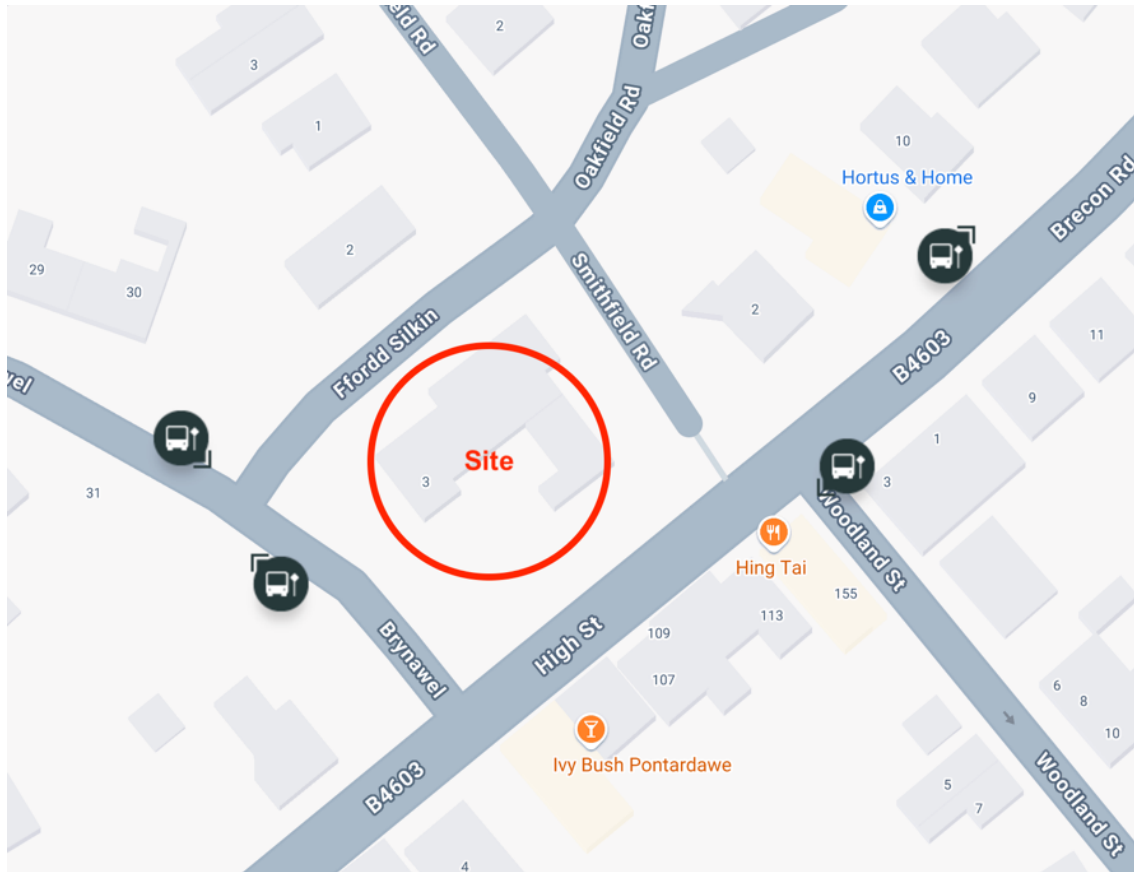


Figure 5 Bus Stop Locations

Highway Access & Parking

- 3.8 There is a gateway that provides vehicular access to the site from Brynawel.
- 3.9 There is no formal parking provision within the site.
- 3.10 To the north of the site there is an area for perpendicular parking on Ffordd Silkin. There are no parking restrictions on any of the streets that adjoin the site. The level of on-street parking observed during site visits has been light with ample spare capacity.



Figure 6 The Site Viewed from High Street / Brynawel Junction



Figure 7 The Site Viewed from Ffordd Silkin / Smithfield Road Junction

4 Proposed Development

- 4.1 The proposal is to retain the existing two-bed dwelling albeit with some alteration to the dwelling's layout.
- 4.2 In addition, the proposal includes for the change of use of the existing church school hall to become a café, workshop and multi-use retail/exhibition space (214m² total floor area).

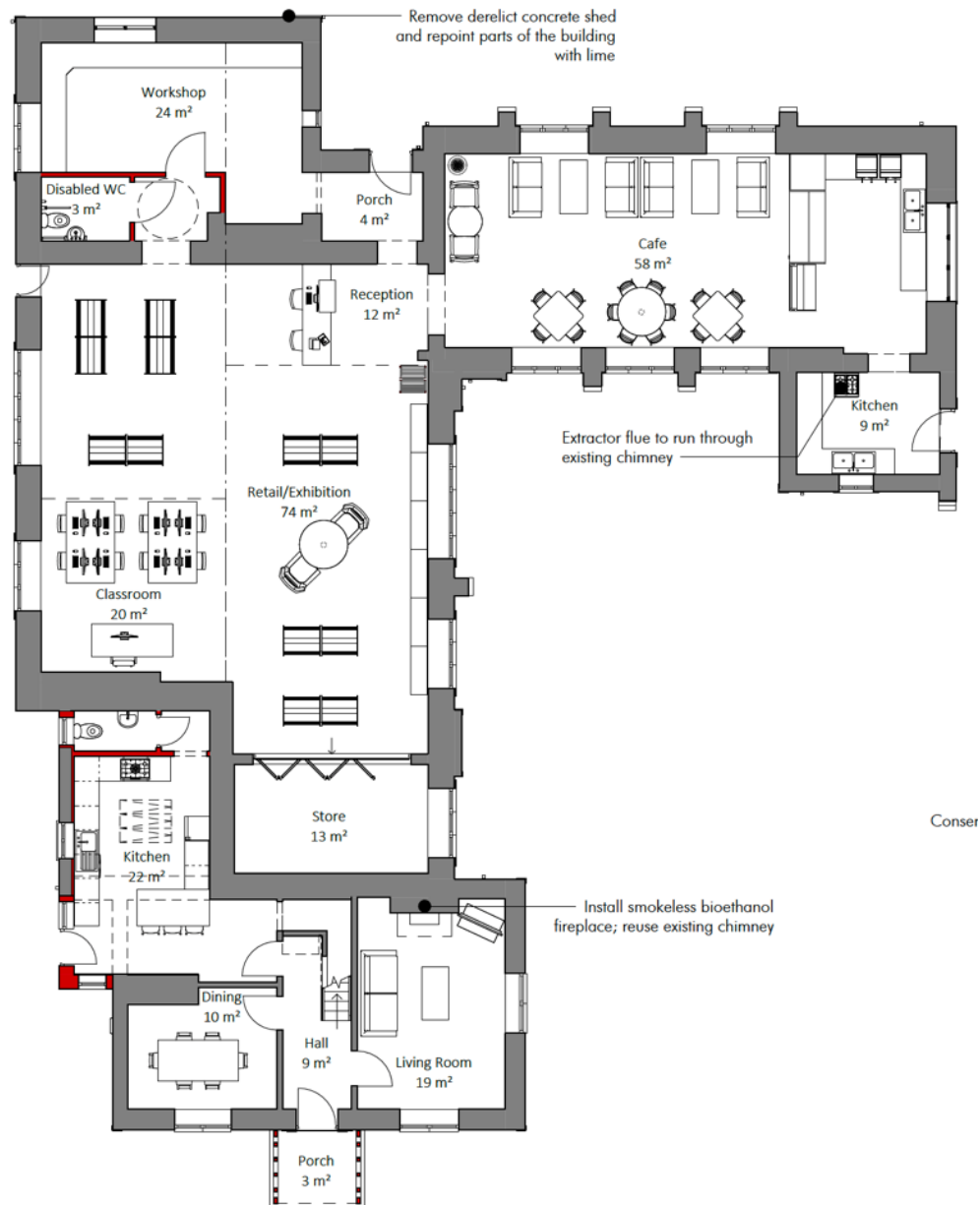


Figure 8 Proposed Ground Floor Layout

- 4.3 It is envisaged that the opening hours for the café, workshop and multi-use retail/exhibition space will be from 10am to 4pm.

5 Trip Generation & Parking Demand

- 5.1 The development will result in no change to the number of trips generated by the dwelling.
- 5.2 It is difficult to quantify the likely level of trips that will be generated by the proposed uses for the former school hall. Investigation of the TRICS trip rate database has been undertaken in an attempt to find trip surveys undertaken at similar developments elsewhere in the UK. However, no comparable sites have been identified from within the database.
- 5.3 It is, however, considered that the proposed use of the former school hall as a venue for exhibitions, workshops and retail space (D2 use) is not dissimilar to the uses that can be made of the hall under the existing D1 permitted use. Those uses include clinics, health centres, crèches, day nurseries, day centres, schools, art galleries (other than for sale or hire), museums, libraries, halls, places of worship, church halls, law court, non-residential education and training centres. To that end, the proposed change of use of the building is unlikely to have a trip generation that is materially different to that which can be realistically expected from the fallback planning position.
- 5.4 The Council's adopted Parking Standards specify parking provision rates for various land uses. The proposed mixed and flexible use of the building makes it difficult to apply one rate across the entire building. However the following Parking Standard rates are considered useful in assessing the building's likely parking demand.

Land Use	Operational Parking	Non-Operational Parking (Zone 2 Locations)	Applied to Building's 214m ²
Retail (201m ² – 1000m ²)	1 Commercial Vehicle	1 space per 40m ²	5 Spaces
Cafe	1 Commercial Vehicle	1 space per 3 non-resident staff & 1 space per 14m ² of dining area	15 Spaces (plus staff parking)
Library (in lieu of any specified rate for exhibition / workshop space)	1 Commercial Vehicle	1 space per 45m ²	5 Spaces

Table 1 Adopted Parking Standards Assessment

- 5.5 The application of the various Parking Standard rates suggest that the proposed uses generate demand for between 5 and 15 car parking spaces. The higher end of that range is only arrived at if it is assumed that the café will accommodate the entirety of the building's floor area whereas the floor plan shown in Figure 8 indicates that the café will only occupy 58m² of the overall 214m². Demand for 15 car parking spaces can therefore be considered a robust but worst-case assessment.
- 5.6 The parking generated by the proposed use will be accommodated on-street, as is the case for the current permitted uses. There are no parking restrictions on the streets adjacent to the site and it is considered that there is ample spare capacity to accommodate that demand safely.

- 5.7 Deliveries to the development will be from the kerbside as is the case for the existing permitted uses of the building. The highway arrangements around the site allow for delivery vehicles to safely stop to unload.
- 5.8 The applicant's intended 10am – 4pm opening hours dictate that the development's traffic and parking generation will occur outside of the usual highway network peak hours. This is in contrast to some of the building's current permitted uses as a school, day nursery or creche, for instance, whose peak traffic and parking generating periods would coincide with highway peaks. The change in use will therefore result in improvements in highway conditions when compared to the fallback position.

6 Summary & Conclusion

6.1 In summary this Transport Statement has demonstrated that:

- The application site comprises of a dwelling and a school hall building. The proposal includes for the retention of the dwelling, albeit with some alterations to its layout, and the change of use of the hall to become a café, workshop and multi-use retail/exhibition space.
- The site is in a sustainable and accessible location with good access for pedestrians and close to a cycle route and bus stops. Users of the development could therefore access it by sustainable modes of transport and would not be reliant on the car.
- It has been assessed that the development will generate demand for between 5 and 15 car parking spaces. There is no off-street parking provided at the site and its users will be reliant on on-street parking. There are no parking restrictions on the streets adjoining the site and ample capacity exists to accommodate the predicted demand.
- In terms of traffic generation it is considered that the proposed use of the site is unlikely to exhibit significantly different levels than those that can be expected from the existing permitted uses of the site.

6.2 It is considered that the application site meets planning policy requirements in terms of being in an appropriate location that is safely accessible by all forms of transport and that the impacts of the development on the continued operation and safety of the surrounding highway network would be acceptable.

6.3 It is concluded therefore that there are no transport related issues that should prevent planning permission for the proposed development from being granted.

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