



PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT
PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT FORMER CLUN
PRIMARY SCHOOL SITE, CLYNE ,NEATH

On behalf of
Mr J Slater

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 JCR Planning has been instructed by Mr J Slater (the Applicant) to prepare and submit a full planning application for residential development (26 units) on the former Clun Primary School site at Clyne, Neath.
- 1.2 This Planning, Design and Access Statement therefore forms part of the submissions of the application to be considered by the Authority, and in compliance with the requirements of TAN12 provides information on the following points:
- A brief description of the site and surrounding area
 - A description of the proposed development
 - Consideration of relevant planning policy
 - Accessibility
 - Character
 - Community Safety
 - Environmental Sustainability
 - Movement to, from and within the development
- 1.3 The contents of this document should also be read in conjunction with the accompanying Drainage Strategy, Habitat and Tree Survey and Pre-Application Consultation Statement and associated drawings.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 THE SITE

2.1.1 The application site relates to the former Clun Primary School, which consists of two distinct areas. The first is the school's undeveloped former playing field (Photograph 1), with the second then relating to a series of buildings and hard surfaced areas (Photographs 2 and 3) utilised by the former school.



Photograph 1



Photograph 2



Photograph 3

2.1.2 As can be seen from the photographs above, the buildings are varied in both scale and design, but are largely single storey in form (albeit with high ceilings in some instances). The whole of the site is largely at a higher level than the adjoining public

highway running along the north west of the site and a residential property to its south west, whilst land then in the remaining directions rises away from the site. The result of the former then is that a stone retaining wall runs along the north west of the site, on top of which is then a run or either iron railings or chain-link fencing. The remainder of the site then has its boundaries defined in a similar manner or with stock proof fencing.

- 2.1.3 With regards then to access, the site currently gains access via a gateway to the fore of the aforementioned buildings, leading directly on to the adjoining public highway (Photograph 4).



Photograph 4

- 2.1.4 This access then leads to an existing parking area that then serves the former school. Access to the former playing field area is then gained via the adjoining hard surfaced areas surrounding the school buildings.

2.2 THE SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.2.1 In the immediate sense, as detailed above, the site is adjoined by an existing residential property to the south west, the public highway to the north west and undeveloped land to its north east and south east.
- 2.2.2 Notwithstanding the above, further residential development and the bulk of the urban form of the associated settlement is then found to the site's north west and north east. Within this then can be found a variety of residential properties of varying ages, styles, designs and scales, some of which are illustrated below:



Photograph 4



Photograph 5



Photograph 6



Photograph 7

2.2.3 Notwithstanding the above variation, the existing housing stock does contain similar or common external finishes, which are summarised below:

Walls – Brickwork and painted render

Roofs – Slate or synthetic slate

Windows – Wood or upvc

Rainwater Goods – white or black upvc

Boundary Treatments – Dwarf walls to the fore and solid wooden fencing on the side and rear boundaries.

2.2.4 The settlement of Clyne itself then is largely linear in fashion, consisting of a series of clusters of development along the B4334, with a small number of examples of where development has any 'depth' (e.g. Llys Dwfnant). Whilst the settlement itself does not

contain any community facilities or local services, directly adjoining the application site is a bus stop. This is regularly served by a number of daily services that then provides residents with good access to larger neighbouring settlements (Resolven) and the County Town of Neath, with their associated wide range of local services and community facilities.

2.3 PROJECT DESIGN PARAMETERS AND PRINCIPLES

2.3.1 As a result of the above and the Applicant's own aspirations for the site, the following design principles and parameters have influenced the design subject of this planning application:

- **Design** – To draw on that of the existing dwellings found elsewhere within the settlement.
- **Density** – To utilise the site area to an appropriate level of efficiency, but to not represent a form of overdevelopment.
- **Housing Mix** – To provide a mix of house types and scales to reflect the existing mix of the associated settlement and local market demand.
- **Drainage** – To include a sustainable means of disposal for surface water.
- **Access** – To utilise a means of access that provides an appropriate and acceptable level of safety for all users.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The proposal is for full planning permission for 26 residential dwellings, with associated engineering and drainage works. The following therefore provides details of the various elements of the current application proposal and should be read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

Design Approach and Layout

3.2 The proposal has come about through the closure of the former primary school by the local authority and its desire now to see the site sold and developed for an alternative purpose. The proposal therefore seeks to bring back into beneficial use a brownfield site through its redevelopment for the purposes of 26 new residential dwellings.

3.3 The current proposal represents the result of a series of pre-application discussions and meetings with the Authority. Through this process, a number of key design changes have been adopted in order to satisfy the comments and concerns of the Authority, which can be summed up as follows:

- Inclusion of an equipped area of play.
- Securing of sufficient separation distance between existing and proposed dwellings.
- Introduction of an alternative and safer point of access
- Provision of a sustainable means of drainage for surface water,
- Inclusion of a mix of house types and scales.

3.4 As a result, the general approach and layout of the proposal has given full consideration to the existing topography of the site and adjoining land, as well as surrounding existing uses.

Housing Mix

3.5 As detailed above, the proposal will provide a mix of house types, which are summarised below:

- *House Type 1* - 2 Bed Semi-Detached House (6 no.)
- *House Type 2* - 2 Bed Detached House (3 no.)
- *House Type 3* - 2 Bed Semi-Detached House (4 no.)
- *House Type 4* - 2 Bed Detached Bungalow (3 no.)
- *House Type 5* – 2 Bed Semi-Detached Bungalow (6 no.)

External Finishes

- 3.6 As detailed above, the external design, appearance and finishes of the proposed properties have drawn from the existing housing stock of the settlement of which the application site forms part of. As a result, the proposed dwellings will have the following external finishes:

Walls – Coloured smooth render with brickwork plinth

Roof – Slate or grey flat tile

Fenestration – Coloured upvc or aluminium double glazed units

Weatherboards – White upvc

Rainwater Goods – Black upvc

Landscaping and Boundary Treatment

- 3.7 As the accompanying drawings show, each unit will be served by a private rear and front garden, with a number containing newly planted trees. From a site perspective then, the scheme includes a number of communal landscaped areas, including an equipped children's play area.

- 3.8 It is envisaged that the properties will have open front boundaries, with side and rear boundaries then defined by new wooden fencing.

Parking and Access

- 3.9 As detailed above, to provide a safer and more acceptable means of access to serve the site, a new access is proposed towards its northern point. This will provide a significant improvement in visibility, together with a more satisfactory gradient for the access road, improving the level of highway safety for all road users.

- 3.10 Taking into account the requirements and standards of the Authority, each dwelling will be provided with dedicated car parking spaces on a '1 bedroom-1 space' basis. In addition, the proposal also makes provision for 6 visitor parking spaces.

Drainage

- 3.11 As part of the proposal, there is a requirement for a new foul water pumping station, which will be located at the western extremities of the site.
- 3.12 With regard then to surface water drainage, as the accompanying documentation outlines, this will be dealt with in a sustainable manner through means of attenuation and controlled discharge mechanisms.

Contributions

- 3.13 We understand that through pre-application discussions with the local planning authority it has been agreed that the site will not be required to provide any affordable dwellings. However, it is recognised that further contributions may be required in relation to other matters, which will be discussed in further detail with the Authority during the determination of the application.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY

4.1 The most recently adopted development plan for the area within which the application site is positioned is the *Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan (LDP)*, which is in turn supported by a series of supplementary planning guidance documents. The LDP contains a range of policies relating to a variety of development types and topic areas, with amongst others, the following having been given full consideration in the preparation of this planning application:

- Policy SP1 – Climate Change
- Policy SP3 – Sustainable Communities
- Policy SP7 – Housing Requirement
- Policy SP10 – Open Space
- Policy SP15 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Policy SP16 – Environmental Protection
- Policy SP17 – Minerals
- Policy SP21 – Built Environment and Historic Heritage
- Policy SC1 – Settlement Limits
- Policy SC2 – Protection of Existing Community Facilities
- Policy I1 – Infrastructure Requirements
- Policy OS1 – Open Space Provision
- Policy OS2 – Protection of Existing Open Space
- Policy M1 – Development in Mineral Safeguarding Areas
- Policy TR2 – Design and Access of New Development
- Policy BE1 - Design

4.2 We understand through previous pre-application discussions with the LPA with regard to the re-development of the site for the purposes of residential development that the Authority supported the principle of the proposal. As a result, it is considered that as the current application proposal continues to propose a similar form of development, the majority of the above policies therefore continue to be satisfied. As

a result, the following provides a consideration and assessment of the proposal against those policies dealing with the more detailed aspects of the proposed scheme.

Policy BE1 – Design

- 4.3 Policy BE1 represents the overarching policy of the LDP, the requirements of which apply to all development proposals. The Policy consists of ten criteria, with the requirements of all relevant criterion to a development having to be met if a proposal is to be deemed acceptable. In terms of the application proposal, it is considered that all ten are of relevance and so the following provides an assessment of the proposal against their requirements.
- 4.4 Criterion 1 requires that a proposal “... *compliments and enhances the character and appearance of the site, building or area in terms of siting, appearance, scale, height, massing and elevation treatment.*”. As has been detailed previously in this Statement, the existing urban form of the settlement of which the application site forms part of contains significant variation in terms of dwelling types and designs. However, it is clear that there are common elements in terms of the external finishes palette. As a result, the proposal has struck a respective balance between including a variety of dwelling types, but all drawing from the common finishes palette of the area. The proposal therefore adheres to the requirements of Criterion 1 and through a mix of landscaping also Criterion 3.
- 4.5 The second criterion then deals with the matter of a site’s topography and how it relates to the immediate and wider landscape. As can be seen from the photographs in this Statement, the application site is largely at a higher level than an adjoining residential property and the adjoining public highway. The proposed scheme has therefore respected these current arrangements to ensure that the role of the site in the local landscape context remains largely the same, but without detriment to occupiers of adjoining land uses. This has then ensured that the proposal adheres to the requirements of Criterion 2 and respective elements of Criterion 4.

- 4.6 As detailed previously and shown by the accompanying drawings, the proposal includes provision for a new vehicular and pedestrian access to serve the site. This will be based on a gradual gradient to ensure safe and easy access for all users. In addition, the point at which the new access road is to connect to the adjoining public highway will secure an appropriate and acceptable level of visibility, taking into consideration comments made during pre-application discussions with the Authority. The proposal therefore adheres to all aspects of Criterion 4 and also Criterion 7.
- 4.7 Criterion 5 then deals with important local features – natural or built – that a site may contain. The application site does not contain any Listed Buildings, nor does it form part of a designated Conservation Area. In addition, the site does not include or form part of any nature conservation designation, nor as the accompanying documentation shows does it contain any key biodiversity interests. As a result, it is considered that the requirements of Criterion 5 are satisfied.
- 4.8 In terms then of the layout, the proposal has been steered in particular by the site's topography and its alignment with the adjoining public highway. Taking both these factors into account, the resultant layout is one that provides a level plateau based loosely on dwellings set along two parallel rows, leading to a communal open space. The net result therefore then is a development that delivers a good level of natural surveillance, as well as ensuring all parts of the development are accessible to all. The requirements of Criterion 6 and indeed Criterion 10 in turn are therefore satisfied by the proposal.
- 4.9 The penultimate criterion then for consideration – Criterion 8 – deals with the matter of securing the efficient use of land. The principle of the development of the site due to its brownfield nature is wholeheartedly supported by the Criterion. Furthermore, the delivery of 26 units on a site with an area 0.83ha, which when taking into account the topography of the site, is a density that is supported by Criterion 8. As a result, the requirements of the Criterion are satisfied by the proposal.

4.10 The final criterion then deals with the matter of surface water drainage. At present we understand that all surface water is channelled into a single man-hole that then discharges into a water course to the north of the B4434. As the accompanying information highlights, soakways at the application site are not a viable option for dealing with surface water. As a result, it is proposed that a scheme will be implemented that consists of on-site water storage leading to a controlled discharge point at the existing man-hole point, thus controlling the flow of surface water off-site in an acceptable manner. Through these measures the proposal therefore adheres to the requirements of Criterion 9 and Policy BE1 as a whole.

Policy OS1 – Open Space Provision

4.11 Policy OS1 provides guidance and advice on the requirements for the provision of new open space provision as part of residential developments. The Policy sets out a series of parameters and standards for each form of provision. However, we understand that through pre-application discussions with the Authority that it has been agreed that provision of an equipped area of play with an associated degree of open area will be sufficient to satisfy the policy. As the accompanying drawings show, the scheme therefore includes these facilities, ensuring that the proposed development adheres to the requirements of Policy OS1.

Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guidance

4.12 As a development of greater than 3 residential units, it is recognised that contributions may be sought by the Authority from the development in relation to a range of topic areas. Notwithstanding this, we understand that the Authority has previously advised the Applicant that no requirement with regard to affordable housing will form part of any scheme for the application site, with any financial contributions then being the subject of further discussions during the determination of any submitted planning application.

5.0 ACCESSIBILITY

5.1 ACCESSIBILITY

5.1.1 The following represents a summary of the access considerations made by the Applicant in relation to the proposal subject of this planning application. The design standards followed in doing so are contained within the following documents:

- Approved Document M – Access to and Use of Buildings
- BS8300 - Design of buildings
- DDA1995

5.1 MOVEMENT TO, FROM AND WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT

Philosophy and Approach

5.2.1 The Applicant has an aspiration of inclusive design & seeks to promote high quality accessible and welcoming environments as part of the proposed development. This is reflected in the provision of dedicated legible and safe means of access for all residents and visitors, irrespective of their means of travel to the site.

Movement To the Site

5.2.2 The application site forms part of the settlement of Clyne, which is largely linear in form being located along the B4434. This road, particularly along its built-up elements, includes provision for pedestrians on either or both sides. In addition, a bus stop is located on the application site's north western boundary. The proposed development is therefore able to promote non-car modes of transport for off-site trips.

5.2.3 In the immediate sense, the application will be accessed directly off the adjoining B4434, but via a new point of access, chosen to improve levels of highway safety for all users. All movement from the external areas adjoining the entrances serving the proposed dwellings will then be on a level basis, ensuring an inclusive form of development, as required by Part M of AD.

5.2.4 It is proposed that all hard surfaces will be regularly inspected for defects and managed accordingly.

Movement within the Dwellings

5.2.5 In terms of the proposed building, the access requirements of all users have been given full consideration. As a result, all doors, internal entry points and corridors will enable both able and less-able bodied occupants and visitors to access all relevant areas of the dwellings.

6.0 CHARACTER

Landscape Design

6.1.1 The site has a currently mixed appearance, with half being developed and then half being un-developed by virtue of its former use as a sports field. Its current and historic appearance however, is consistently different to the undeveloped and wooded land to the site's south east.

6.1.2 The approach with regards to landscape design has therefore been to strike a balance with its existing form through providing a mix of hard and soft landscaped areas. Similarly, development has been kept away from the aforementioned un-developed land to the south east, to maintain the site's existing relationship with it.

Scale

6.1.3 As detailed previously, the scale of the proposal has been steered by the existing form of development found in the surrounding area, as well as seeking to make efficient use of a brownfield site.

Number

6.1.4 The proposal is to provide 26 two bed dwellings of varying forms and scale.

Layout of Development

6.1.5 As detailed previously, the layout of the proposal has been steered by existing site attributes, its relationship with adjoining land uses and the objective of securing a safe and inclusive environment.

Appearance

6.1.6 As detailed in earlier Sections of this DAS, the application proposal is for a series of dwellings that will utilise materials and design styles that draw on those found in the surrounding area.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

- 7.1 The proposal will not affect the current level of community safety experienced by the local area. Notwithstanding this, with the proposed dwellings facing the access road, shared parking areas and communal areas, the proposed layout will provide a level of natural surveillance.

8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Landscaping/Townscape Setting

- 8.1 The application site lies at an edge-of-settlement location, but one that is sustainably positioned in terms of a range of means of access options. As a result, it is adjoined by two contrasting landscape character areas – urban and rural.
- 8.2 As a result of the above and as detailed earlier, the proposal has sought to strike a balance between these two landscape character areas through the retention of existing strong natural boundary treatments and an internal layout that fully incorporates soft landscaping.

Biodiversity and Local Environment

- 8.3 Any trees or hedges used in the landscaping of the proposed development will draw from the indigenous species of the area, as detailed in the accompanying drawings.
- 8.4 In addition to the above, the application is accompanied by an ecological appraisal of the site and its buildings that concludes that the proposal will not result in any detriment to any biodiversity interests on the site.

Energy Efficiency/Carbon Reduction

- 8.5 The following measures will be undertaken where possible to maximise energy efficiency and carbon reduction of the dwelling itself and during its construction:
- Maximise use of daylight in key rooms through fenestration
 - Use local suppliers and labour wherever possible
 - Use recycled products wherever possible e.g. reclaimed slate
 - The dwellings will be insulated to current targets.
 - All fenestration units will be double glazed.
 - Energy efficient internal and external lighting units will be installed.

Sustainable Materials

- 8.6 It is proposed that recycled or reclaimed products will be used in the construction of the proposal wherever possible.

Water

- 8.7 We understand that a mains supply will be utilised. In line with this, we would propose that the domestic water and heating system of the dwellings be designed to reduce domestic water wastage, through a range of measures including low water consuming fittings in the bathroom and kitchen.

Waste Management

- 8.8 We understand that the dwellings have access to domestic recycling facilities.
- 8.9 We understand that a connection will be made to the public sewer for the disposal of foul waste.