

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

PROPOSED REIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (42 DWELLINGS)

LAND AT SWANSEA ROAD, MERTHYR TYDFIL



INTRODUCTION

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared to support our Client's planning application to create a new residential development comprising 42 dwellings on land at Swansea Road, Merthyr Tydfil.

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 statement demonstrates the proposal accords with relevant National and Local Planning Policy and other material planning policy considerations.

The statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted plans and illustrations comprising the application submission.

The application has been supported by the following professional reports which should be read in conjunction with this statement:

- Topographical Survey
- Ecological Statement
- Draft SAB and SUDS Strategy

Summary of Proposal

The proposal will provide 42 apartments, terraced, semi detached and detached dwellings served by a new access road with dedicated off road parking and private amenity space.

The application site is located on the southern side of Swansea Road, in the Clwydyfagwyr district of Merthyr to the west of Merthyr Tydfil centre. The site comprises a relatively flat plateau set above Swansea Road, which raises east to west. The western part of the site has been colonised by scrub and small trees

At present there is no direct vehicular or pedestrian access to the site from Swansea Road, with access limited to tracks / lanes to the east and west, Waunbant Court and Old Winch Fawr Road.

The site is within close proximity of the A470 carriageway from Cardiff and the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road which links to the M4 motorway in Swansea in the west and Hereford in the east.

Outline planning consent for 39no dwellings within the application site was granted on the 4th July 2019. The proposed scheme has evolved following the specialist advice of the civil and structural engineers and mandate of the applicants.

Objectives of the Brief

To deliver a high quality housing development that provides a range of modern apartments and dwellings in an accessible location, including:

- A mix of 2,3 and 4 bed apartments, terraced , semi detached and detached dwellings, all compliant with Welsh Government DQR.
- Secure private garden areas.
- Integrated SuDs design.
- A development that reflects excellent urban design principles in particular:
 - The layout influenced by the characteristics of the site itself such as topography, existing and potential routes (pedestrian, cycle and vehicular); open spaces; natural features; view corridors; and site access.
 - A legible layout that is conducive to walking and cycling including pedestrian access / connectivity to the surrounding area.
 - Design measures that ensure homes engage positively with the street.
 - Thoughtful integration with the surrounding area fostering a positive relationship with the surrounding built form.
 - A development maximising natural light and ventilation that meets or exceeds Council's energy efficiency and sustainability standards.

- A landscaped public realm and thoughtful consideration of the existing trees
- Secure on-site parking.
- Designing for waste management by ensuring that sufficient space is provided for waste bins from the outset – reducing street clutter

The provision of a Sustainable Urban Design Systems (SuDS) was an integral part of the design process from day one to ensure rainfall management is integrated with amenity, biodiversity and site layout and ensuring land is used efficiently and provides multi-functional benefits in terms of environmental, community and cost. The drainage strategy designed to accord with advice and recommendations of the SuDs Approving Body (SAB) will be submitted for approval following determination of this planning application

SITE ANALYSIS

The application site is located on the southern side of Swansea Road, in the Clwydyfagwyr district of Merthyr to the west of Merthyr Tydfil centre. The majority of the site comprises a relatively flat plateau set above Swansea Road, which raises east to west.

The western part of the site has been colonised by scrub and small trees.

The site is allocated for residential use in the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan 2006 – 2011 under Policy AS1: Housing Allocations in the primary growth area (H6 Clwydfagwyr, Swansea Road).

At present there is no direct vehicular or pedestrian access to the site from Swansea Road, with access limited to tracks / lanes to the east and west, Waunbant Court and Old Winch Fawr Road.

The site is within close proximity of the A470 carriageway from Cardiff and the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road which links to the M4 motorway in Swansea in the west and Hereford in the east.

The surrounding area is primarily residential in nature, characterised by a mix of bungalows and 2 storey dwellings. A small recent development of 2 storey dwellings has been constructed adjacent to the site on Waunbant Court to the west. There is no clear architectural style or distinct pallet of materials to dwellings in the vicinity of the application site.

To the east of the site is Harp Funeral Services, with Cyfartha Mews, a new development of 2 and 3 storey town houses, set above it on the hillside.

The area is served by regular public transport to and from Aberdare and Merthyr Tydfil with main bus routes along Swansea Road, with a bus stop immediately adjacent to the northern site boundary.

Visual Catchment

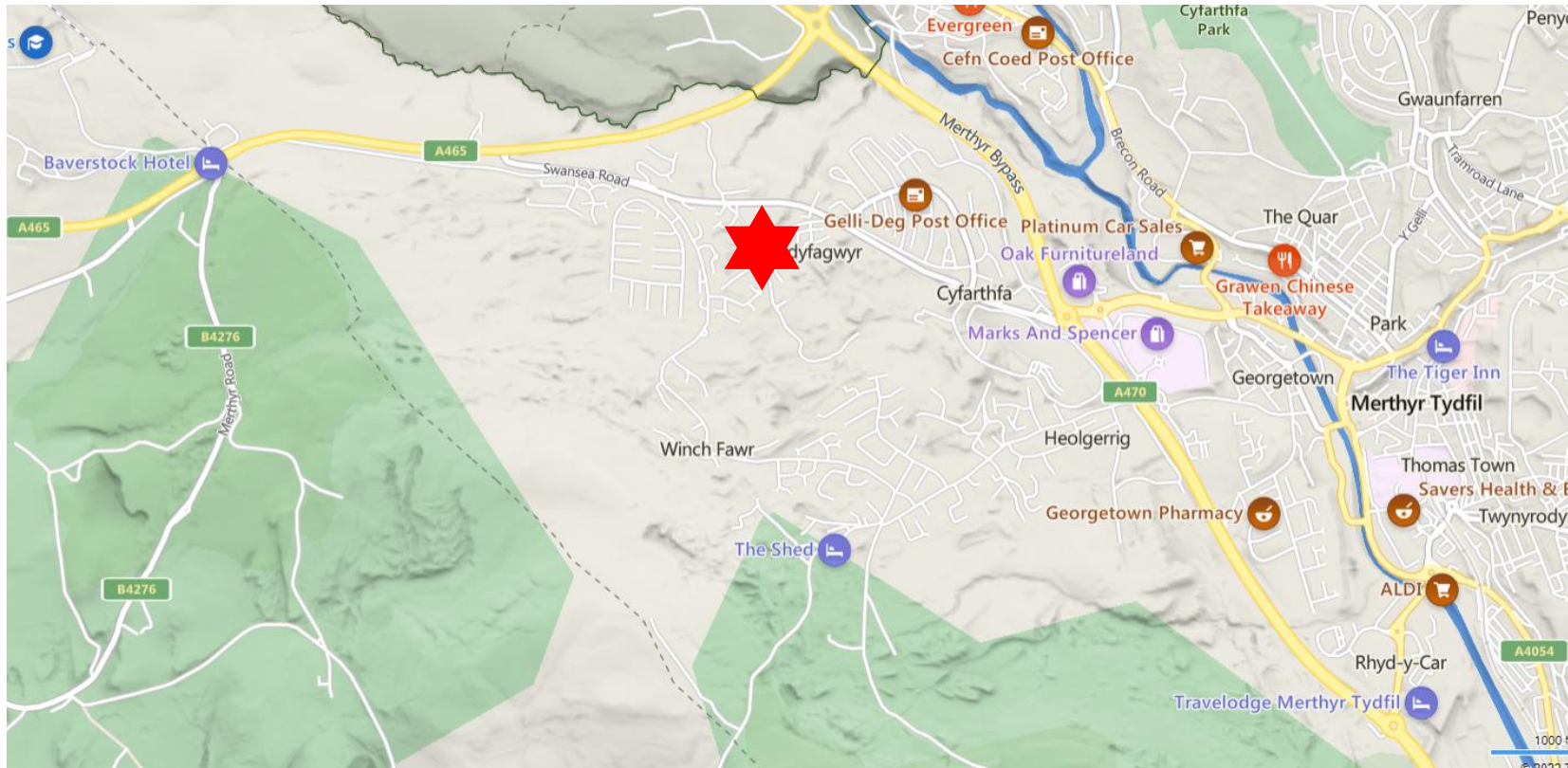
Due to its topography, the site is readily seen from numerous points along Swansea Road and points along Waunbant Court.

Local facilities

The application site is ideally located for both pedestrian and vehicular access from business uses at Cyfarthfa Retail Park and the recently constructed Trago Mills store to the east. Prince Charles Hospital is located to the north east. Cyfarthfa Castle Museum and Park are located within close proximity to Cyfarthfa Retail Park.

The site is within close proximity to Coed Y Dderwen Primary School, Cyfarthfa Junior School, Cyfarthfa Lower Comprehensive School, Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful and Merthyr Tydfil College.

The area is served by a number of religious establishments, community centres and leisure facilities.



PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy

The Wales Spatial Plan People, Places, Futures sets a strategic framework to guide future development and policy interventions. It integrates the spatial aspects of National strategies for social inclusion and economic development, health, transport and environment, translating the Assembly Government's sustainable development duty into practice.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW Edition 11) February 2021 sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Assembly Government. It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes. Procedural advice is given in circulars and policy clarification letters.

Section 3 states '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. Meeting the objectives of good design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process and applied to all development proposals, at all scales.'

With regard to environmental sustainability, PPW states 'Good design promotes environmental sustainability and contributes to the achievement of the well-being goals. Developments should seek to maximise energy efficiency and the efficient use of other resources (including land), maximise sustainable movement, minimise the use of non-renewable resources, encourage decarbonisation and prevent the generation of waste and pollution.'

Section 4 states 'The planning system should enable people to access jobs and services through shorter, more efficient and sustainable journeys, by walking, cycling and public transport. The Welsh Government is committed to reducing reliance on the private car and supporting a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport. 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.

With regard to housing, section 4 continues 'New housing development in both urban and rural areas should incorporate a mix of market and affordable house types, tenures and sizes to cater for the range of identified housing needs and contribute to the development of sustainable and cohesive communities. Maximising the use of suitable previously developed and/or underutilised land for housing development can assist regeneration and at the same time relieve pressure for development on greenfield sites.'

Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note 12: Design, sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's detailed advice on how to achieve good design in all development at every scale throughout Wales.

The guidance sets out the Assembly's objectives for good design, namely

- Access – ensuring ease of access for all.
- Character – sustaining or enhancing local character. Promoting legible development. Promoting a successful relationship between public and private space. Promoting quality, choice and variety. Promoting innovative design.
- Community safety – ensuring attractive, safe public spaces. Security through natural surveillance.
- Environmental sustainability – achieving efficient use and protection of natural resources. Enhancing biodiversity. Designing for change.
- Movement – promoting sustainable means of travel.

TAN 2 - Planning and Affordable Housing, TAN 4 – Retail and commercial development, TAN 18 – Transport, are all considered relevant to the site.

Local Planning Policy

The Adopted Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan 2016 – 2031 provides the local planning policy framework for the area and was adopted by Council on 29th January 2020. Policies relevant to the application proposal include:

SW1 - Provision of New Homes

SW2 - Provision of Affordable Housing

SW3 - Sustainably Distributing New Homes (25 Clwydyfagwr)

SW4 - Settlement Boundaries

SW9 – Planning Obligations

SW11 – Sustainable Design & Placemaking

SW12 – Improving the Transport Network

EnW4 - Environmental Protection

The site is identified as an allocated housing site under policy SW3 (25).

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG):

SPG 1 Affordable Housing, March 2012

SPG 2 Planning Obligations, March 2012

SPG 4 Sustainable Design, July 2013

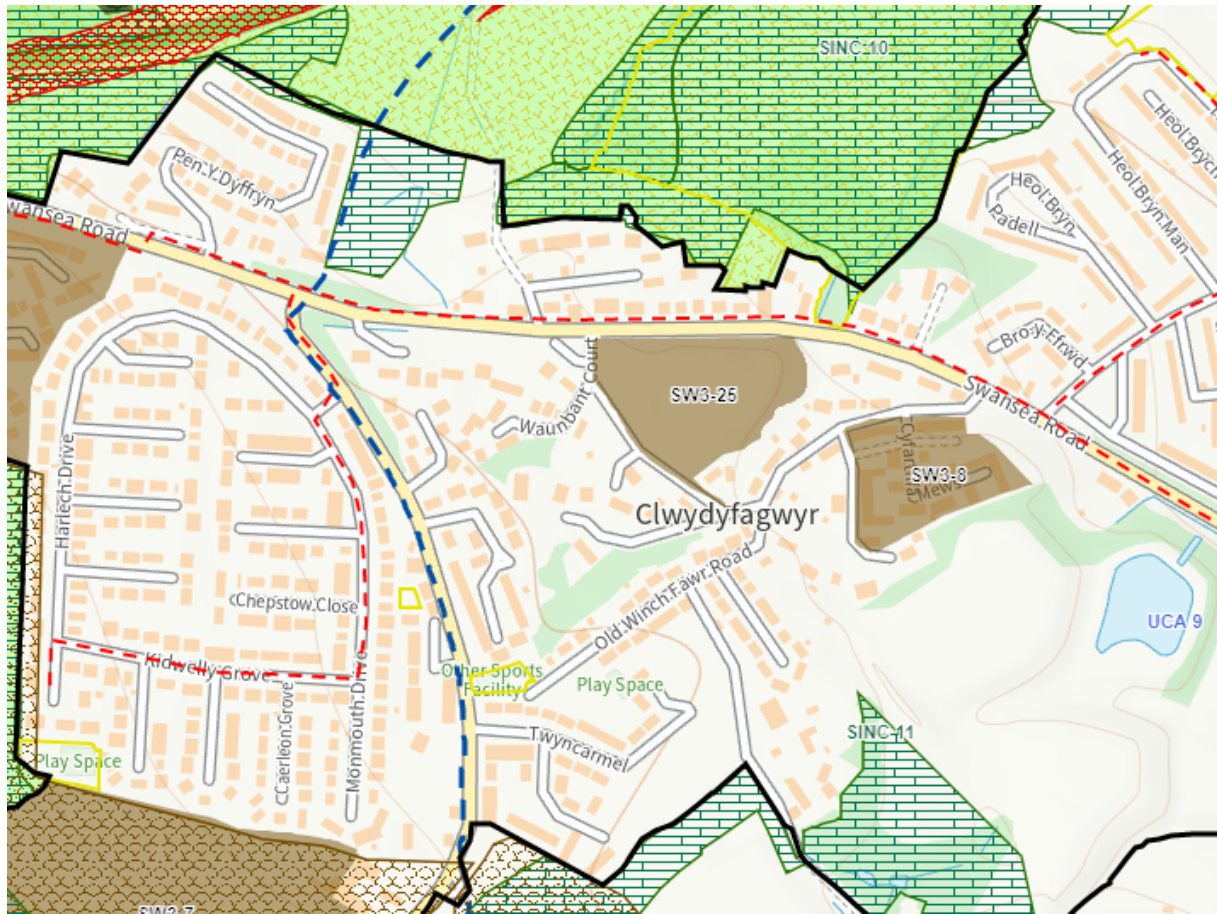
SPG 5 Nature and Development, May 2015

Planning History

Outline planning consent for 39no dwellings within the application site was granted on the 4th July 2019 (P/18/0316).

The application was subject to several planning conditions, of significance was the requirement of a slope stability assessment.

LDP Proposals Map Extract



P/18/0316 : Outline Planning Consent Layout



DESIGN OBJECTIVES

Design Objectives

In line with Applicant's development brief, the Key Design Principles of the development were identified as: A mix of 2, 3 and 4 bed apartments, terrace, semi detached and detached dwellings all compliant with Welsh Government DQR.

- Secure private garden areas
- Integrated SuDs design.
- A development that reflects excellent urban design principles in particular:
 - The layout influenced by the characteristics of the site itself such as topography, existing and potential routes (pedestrian, cycle and vehicular); open spaces; natural features; view corridors; and site access.
 - A legible layout that is conducive to walking and cycling including pedestrian access / connectivity to the existing area
 - Design measures that ensure homes engage positively with the street.
 - Thoughtful integration with the surrounding area fostering a positive relationship with the surrounding built form.
 - A development maximising natural light and ventilation that meets or exceeds the Local Authority's energy efficiency and sustainability standards

- .A landscaped public realm comprising verge tree planting and retention and thoughtful consideration of the existing trees.
- Secure on-site parking.
- Designing for waste management by ensuring that sufficient space is provided for waste bins from the outset – reducing street clutter

Principle of development

The site is located within the settlement boundary within which development is normally permitted subject to the requirements of other relevant LDP policies and material planning considerations (see Policy SW4). The LDP Proposals Map indicates that the site is protected for residential development (Policy SW3 – 25 Clwydyfagwr).

Flooding

The site is within Zone A, an area which is unlikely to flood. A Flood Consequences Assessment is not required.

PROPOSALS

Constraints / opportunities

A full assessment of the physical characteristics of the site and its context in relation to surrounding development was undertaken to identify opportunities and constraints presented by the site.

The site is not located within or adjacent to a conservation area, and there are no listed buildings affected by the proposal.

The key opportunities/constraints the site presented were considered to be:

- Ease of access to public transport and local facilities,
- Ease of access to local highway and footpath networks,
- The full potential of the site has not been met.

Design evolution

The design brief was to develop a scheme to take maximum advantage of the site's position within this sought after residential area.

Detailed Proposals

The scheme incorporates a mix of 12 x 1 bed walkup apartments, 3 x 2 bed bungalows, 14 x 2 bed terraced houses, 2 x 3 bed semi detached houses and 3 x 4 bed detached houses.

The walkup apartments will each comprise a dedicated entrance, kitchen, living room, bedroom, bathroom and store.

The bungalows will each comprise an entrance hallway, open plan kitchen / dining / living room, 2 bedrooms and a bathroom.

The houses will provide a mix of 2, 3 and 4 bed accommodation set over 2 or 3 floors, with a range of kitchen, dining and living room layouts, utility and wetroom to the ground floor. On the upper floors, accommodation will include 2, 3 or 4 bedrooms, family bathroom and an ensuite to the 4 bed dwelling.

Each dwelling will have access to a dedicated parking space and private secure outdoor amenity space.

Consideration has been given to the orientation of the site and available daylight, with any potential private amenity space to be positioned to maximise natural light.

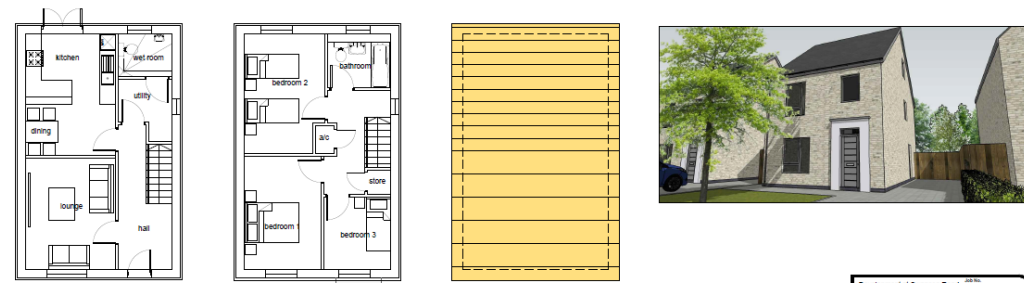
As the submitted elevation drawings and visualisations confirm, the elevation treatment is a combination of light facing brick, render detailing, dark grey windows and doors and pitched synthetic grey slate roofs.

Proposed Layout

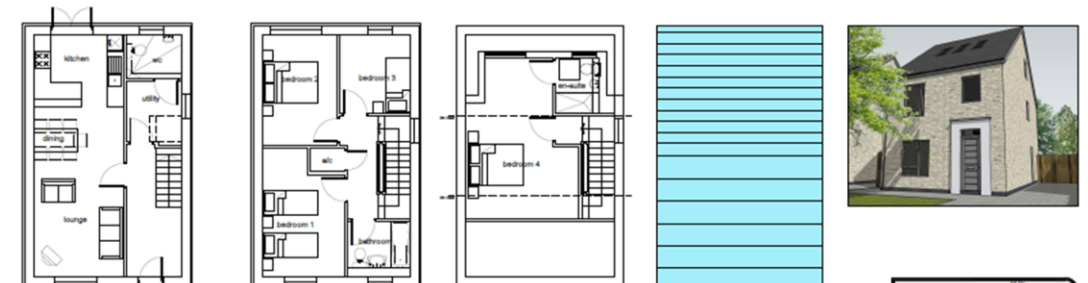
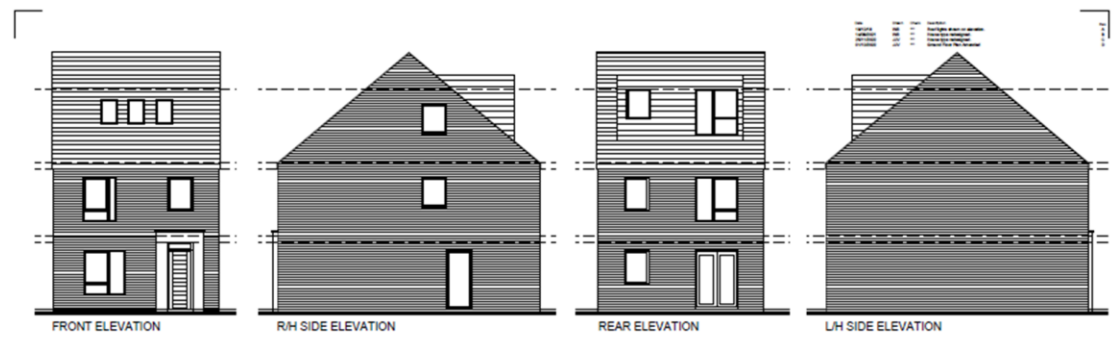




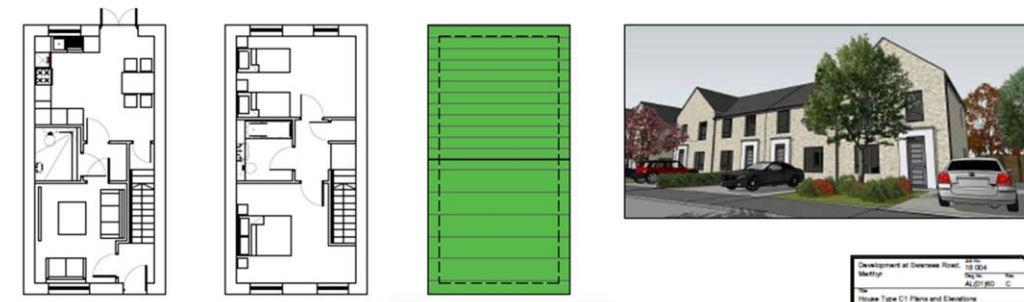
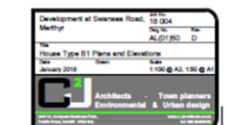
Proposed House Types



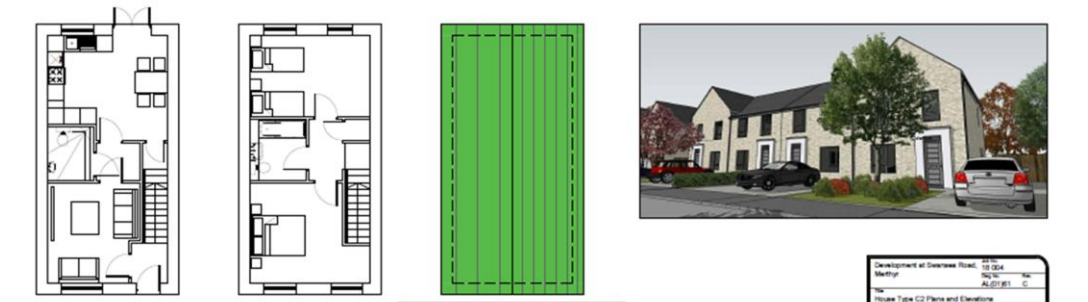
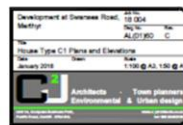
Type 'A1' House
3 Bed, 5 Person
2no. 96m² / 1030 sqft



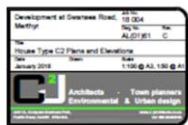
House type 'B 1'
4 Bed, 7 Person
118m²/1270 sqft



Type 'C1' Terraced House
2 Bed, 4 Person
14 no. 82m²/886 sqft



Type 'C2' Terraced House
2 Bed, 4 Person
14 no. 82m²/886 sqft





Movement & Access

The design approach adopted by the Applicant is 'to provide a barrier free environment for all'. Access will be interpreted to include access into and within buildings and the curtilage of the application site, in accord with advice set out in PPW10, TAN 12, Part 'M' of the 1990 Building Act and the Equality Act 2010.

The scheme has been designed to provide access for emergency vehicles to all parts of the development.

Access

Access for all modes will be via the proposed new junction along Swansea Road. Within the site the main spine road is 5.5m in width with a two-metre footway on either side of the access road.

Visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m in either direction, are provided at the access. This is in accordance with the posted speed limit of 30mph

Non-vehicle modes

Access to the site for pedestrians will be via the proposed junction along Swansea Road, a road which benefits from an existing footway along the majority of its southern side. A 2m footway will be provided to link along the site frontage and will continue into the site, as illustrated on site plan, providing access to all dwellings. There will be vehicle crossovers at the access to each dwelling's driveway, providing priority for pedestrians at these points.

Parking

The site is situated in a sustainable location. Potential future residents can walk or cycle to a significant number and range of facilities, services and employment uses within appropriate distances via good quality routes, reducing the need to own a car. In this regard, the site location is consistent with the sustainable transport policies in PPW11 (in particular paras 4.1.10 – 4.1.17).

The site also has excellent public transport links, which provide a suitable, attractive and realistic alternative to travelling by car. This will benefit and attract residents that would prefer to travel by public transport.

The site location will encourage and promote sustainable travel behaviour, be attractive to residents who do not own a car or have low car ownership and is fully in accordance with transport policies in TAN18, PPW11 and Future Wales.

The development proposes a maximum of 3no. off street parking spaces for 3 bed dwelling, reducing to 1no. off street space for the 1 bed flats.

Community Safety

The design has been developed to create a safe and secure environment for future residents. The application site is positioned within an existing established residential area, with a strong sense of community / ownership, leading to natural surveillance of the site and immediate surroundings.

The scheme has been designed with habitable windows positioned to afford natural surveillance of the building entrances and private parking areas.

The proposed development will be defined by existing site boundaries and new fencing.

The development seeks to comply with the principles set out by Secured By Design, in designing out crime and the incorporation of crime prevention ideas at the design stage

Drainage

Foul Water Drainage

An existing drain sewer runs to the north of the site along Swansea Road and will be utilised as the preferred off-site connection to serve the development.

Surface Water Drainage

A pre-application has been submitted to the LA detailing the proposed SAB and SUDS strategy for the site.

Ecology

Ethos Environmental Planning have been appointed to undertake an updated Ecological Assessment of the site.

Landscaping

Tir Collective have been appointed to provide a comprehensive soft and hard landscaping strategy for the development. The team will work closely with the appointed engineers to ensure the SUDS and landscape strategies align.

Slope stability

A detailed slope stability has been undertaken by Integral Geotechnique. The recommendations have been integrated within the current proposal, inclusive of slope regrading to the northern boundary.

CONCLUSION

The application seeks planning permission for the construction of 42 apartments, terraced, semi detached and detached dwellings served by a new access road with dedicated off road parking and private amenity space on land at Swansea Road, Merthyr Tydfil.

The development would contribute to the ongoing regeneration and economy of the area and town and would provide a highly sustainable form of accommodation. The proposal would not have a detrimental impact upon highway and pedestrian safety.

The proposal would create an attractive and vibrant sustainable development which would utilise an existing site, alleviating the current pressures placed on greenfield sites in accord with the objectives of Planning Policy Wales and current LDP Policies.

The proposed application adheres to National and Local policies and guidelines and does not adversely affect the highway safety or residential amenities of the area as to warrant a refusal