



Oak Field Primary School, Barry
Planning, Design & Access Statement

Vale of Glamorgan Council

Stride Treglown job no.	70166
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1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to support the Vale of Glamorgan Council planning application for the development of improved education facilities at Oak Field Primary School, Barry.
- 1.1.2 The purpose of this Design and Access Statement is to inform the reader of the background to this planning application and provide a clear description and justification of the design intent for the proposals. This report:
- Details the site and surroundings;
 - Demonstrates the background to the proposed development;
 - Identifies the relevant planning policy framework;
 - Provides details of the design ethos, landscaping concept and access arrangements for the proposed development; and
 - Addresses the impacts of the development proposals.
- 1.1.3 This report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements for Design and Access Statements in Wales, explaining the design concepts and principles in relation to access, character, community safety, environmental sustainability and movement.
- 1.2. Background**
- 1.2.1 At present, Oak Field Primary School and Ysgol Gymraeg Gwaun-y-Nant share an existing building at the site. In order to meet demand and improve education facilities it is proposed to develop a new standalone primary school to serve as Oak Field Primary School. Ysgol Gymraeg Gwaun Y Nant will then occupy the whole of the existing school building.
- 1.2.2 The Vale of Glamorgan has identified a section of land on the existing school site, near to the site entrance and existing access road as suitable for the development of the new school.
- 1.3. Proposed Development**
- 1.3.1 The proposal is to develop a new standalone two storey single form entry primary school building with associated playground, lighting, sprinkler tank and landscaping.
- 1.3.2 This new school will accommodate up to 230 pupils and include all relevant facilities including hall, kitchen and resource areas for all ages.
- 1.3.3 The vacated existing building will initially accommodate the 233 pupils of Ysgol Gwaun-y-Nant, with numbers potentially increasing to a maximum of 273 in 2017.
- 1.3.4 The site will remain in operation throughout the duration of the construction works. The new school has been designed so that the existing school can be safely segregated from the construction work of the new building.
- 1.3.5 The new building will deliver a long lasting solution that will become an important local community facility and further support primary education in the Vale of Glamorgan.

1.4. Pre-application advice

- 1.4.1 Pre-application discussions took place on 18th June 2014. The design of the proposed school was discussed and the site constraints affecting the location of the school acknowledged.
- 1.4.2 Officers noted that the relationship between the school and the adjacent properties would need to be assessed but did not appear to be a problem. The scope of the Transport Assessment and the impact on open space were also discussed.



Figure 01: Existing school building - Ysgol Gwaun Y Nant & Oak Field Primary.



Figure 02: Existing site access

2. Context

2.1. Site & Surroundings

- 2.1.1 The proposed site is located within the existing grounds of the shared Oak Field & Gwaun-y-Nant schools. The site is bordered by residential areas to the west, north and east. To the south is an area of shrub-land and to the south east there is an area of parkland.



Figure 03 - Site Analysis

- 2.1.2 The site is accessible via the residential cul-de-sac, Amroth Court. This is the only vehicular access point for the site, whilst there is an additional pedestrian access point coming from the north and Carew Close.
- 2.1.3 The site has its own car park which is currently shared between the two schools, surrounding parking areas at Camrose Court and Neyland Court are also used.



Figure 04 - Existing Access Road

2.2. Topography

- 2.2.1 The proposed site for the new school is relatively flat with a change in level of approximately 1 metre across its 58 metre width.



Figure 06 - Existing school building



Figure 07 - Existing playground / site for new school.

2.3. Constraints and Opportunities

2.3.1 The following constraints have influenced the design of the proposals:

- In response to the limited site area included in the brief, a 2 storey building is proposed in order to minimise the footprint of the building and reduce the amount of external space.
- The existing school building will remain in operation throughout the proposed construction period, so the location of the new building has been placed adjacent to it, maintaining a safe margin for construction access, whilst still relating the existing access road configuration;
- Existing drainage routes. There are 2 drains that cross the proposed site; a combined sewer to the south and a surface water drain to the north. The building footprint cannot avoid both drains and has therefore been positioned to avoid the combined sewer to the south.
- Distance to residential properties. - The building has been positioned as far as is practical from the boundary that faces neighbouring residential properties.
- Trees - some trees will need to be removed from the north eastern corner of the site, however the design intends to retain as many of the existing trees along the northern boundary as possible.

2.4. Social & Economic Context

2.4.1 The proposals result from the need to increase and improve primary school capacity within the local area.

2.4.2 The Vale of Glamorgan Council envisages the development of the expanded primary school as a means of providing real economic benefits to the local community and the wider area. With funding from the Welsh Government, it is critical that the scheme delivers sustainable benefits to those living in the area, particularly those currently out of work.

2.4.3 With a strategy of targeted recruitment and training, the Council is committed to creating opportunities for local residents and long-term workless people to move into sustainable jobs. Vale of Glamorgan Council intends that for every £1m in contract value provided, the Contractor will provide a minimum of 80 weeks of employment for a new entrant recruited from a source to be agreed with the Council. The main principles of targeted recruitment and training are to ensure that:

- New opportunities are provided for new entrants, trainees and those leaving education, including those currently not in employment, education or training;
- The development by the contractor, in conjunction with the Client and local agencies, of realistic recruitment and training processes, to ensure successful implementation of the Client's requirements;
- The contractor uses and promotes local procurement and looks to work with local suppliers to develop their capacity;
- Benefits to the local community of the scheme are maximised; and
- Working with local education providers and training bodies, including but not limited to, Cardiff and Vale College, local schools and 6th forms.

3. Design

3.1. Amount

3.1.1 Oak Field Primary currently provides approximately 1193m² of floor space and is a 1 form entry capacity school. The proposal is to develop a full 1 form entry, two storey primary school, providing a total of 1460m² of floor space, with space for up to 210 pupils plus a nursery of 20 places.

3.2. Layout

3.2.1 The existing site has an established access point for pedestrians and vehicles via Amroth Court. This will remain as existing and serve the new building, which will be located to the north of the current school in an area of playground currently made up of grass and tarmac.

3.2.2 There is an established car park on the site which will continue to serve both schools. A new deliveries lay-by and accessible parking area will be provided off the access road to serve the new school.

3.2.3 The proposed building will be located approximately 19 metres from neighbouring residences of Amroth Court at its closest point. In order to provide visual and acoustic screening from the houses and a public walkway, a buffer of trees is proposed along the northern boundary to reflect the current line of vegetation here.



Figure 08 - Proposed Site Plan (not to scale)

3.3. Plan Layout

3.3.1 The proposed layout locates the main entrance at the front of the building, overlooking the main access route into the site. A reception office overlooks the entrance waiting area providing an access control point for visitors wishing to progress further in to the building.

3.3.2 The layout of the building allows the kitchen and plant room to be accessed externally without affecting other parts of the school.

3.3.3 The building is arranged over 2 floors and the teaching wing consists of 4 classrooms per floor located either side of a central resource area, which is a taller space with floor voids at upper level and natural light provided from of high level clerestory windows. The ground floor includes the Nursery, Reception and Years 1 and 2 classrooms, whilst the first floor has the Years 3-6 classrooms. Placing the nursery and reception classrooms on the ground floor at the front of the building allows it to have its own external play area at the front, which can be easily accessed by parents for pick up and drop off.

3.3.4 The central resource space is a generous open plan area that is subdivided in to group areas, learning resource, ICT and practical areas. This will be a valuable resource that is accessible to all pupils in the school through timetabled use. A local artist will be commissioned to work with the children to produce artwork to be displayed on the building, possibly in the form of glass art to the clerestory windows. In addition to the learning resource areas in the central space, there will be a Life Skills room at first floor.

3.3.5 The staff room is located at first floor with good views of the playground for supervision, and the Head Teacher's office is at ground floor at the rear of the building. There are stores and WCs on both floors and the building will be served by 2 staircases and a lift.



Figure 09 - Proposed floor plan (not to scale)

3.4. Scale

3.4.1 The proposed building is 2 storeys with a height of approximately 10.5 metres at its tallest point. The eaves level is set at 7.2metres.

3.5. Appearance

3.5.1 The proposal is for a predominantly brick faced building with a lightweight insulated composite panel to high level areas on the hall and above classroom windows. It is intended that the brick will be a buff colour, whilst the composite cladding will be a feature colour to be confirmed.

3.5.2 The windows and doors are intended to be grey framed PPC aluminium units, with some coloured insulated panels below classroom windows in a colour to be confirmed, possibly reflecting the colours of the school's emblem.

3.5.3 Brushed stainless steel signage displaying the school's name is proposed to the front of the building.



Figure 10 - Proposed perspective view of Oak Field Primary



Figure 11 - Proposed building elevations (not to scale)



Figure 12 - Proposed materials (final colours tbc.)

3.6. Landscape

- 3.6.1 It is proposed that there will be a buffer zone of trees along the northern border of the site, providing additional visual and acoustic screening from the neighbouring walkway and residences.
- 3.6.2 There is a requirement for a sprinkler tank in order to meet fire safety requirements, and this will be located in a fenced off compound at the rear of the playground on the eastern site boundary.

3.7. Movement to, from and within the site

- 3.7.1 Capita were commissioned by the Vale of Glamorgan to complete a Transport Assessment for the development. The full report accompanies this planning application.

Pedestrians

- 3.7.2 The site is accessed through the residential area of Gibbonsdown by various routes arriving at Ramsey Road, Caldys Close and Amroth Court to the school entrance.
- 3.7.3 There are continuous footways through Gibbonsdown to the site and due to the nature of the built-up highway and on-street parking in the area traffic speeds are likely to be generally low.

Cyclists

- 3.7.4 The site is not currently served by any cycle parking facilities and it is proposed to provide 14 spaces in accordance with the County Surveyors Society (CSS) Wales Parking Standards 2008.

Public Transport

- 3.7.5 Cardiff Bus services 97 and 97A serve the site from Barry Town centre and through Gibbonsdown that travel through Gibbonsdown in different circular directions.
- 3.7.6 There are bus stops on Ramsey Road, approximately 270m from the school, for route 97 buses arriving from Barry and travelling anticlockwise through Gibbonsdown and bus stops on Treharne Road, approximately 400m from the school for both bus routes 97 and 97A the latter that travels clockwise through Gibbonsdown.
- 3.7.7 Route 97A commences from Winston Square at 07:40 and runs every 30 minutes until 15:40. Route 97 commences from Winston Square at 07:45 and runs every 30 minutes until 15:45.

Vehicles

- 3.7.8 The site is accessible from Amroth Street, which is subject to a 30mph speed limit and traffic calming measures. The vehicle access into and out of the school is considered to be adequate.
- 3.7.9 The existing on site car parking areas will remain unchanged, while 2 additional accessible car parking spaces are proposed adjacent to the proposed new building. A deliveries lay by is also proposed.

3.8. Community Safety

- 3.8.1 The design has considered community safety, ensuring that:
- The landscape strategy will be designed to allow clear views across the site;
 - The building and surroundings will be well lit;
 - CCTV coverage serves the whole building;

- Canopies have square posts, making them difficult to climb;
- Flush fitting drain pipes; and
- Lockers provided for staff.

3.9. Environmental Sustainability

- 3.9.1 Stride Treglown Management have been commissioned to undertake a BREEAM assessment for the development. The potential score and rating for the project, generated at pre-assessment stage is 72.95% which represents an "excellent" rating. The "excellent" score is a Welsh Government funding requirement.

- 3.9.2 The design incorporates numerous environmental features which will benefit the school in terms of reducing energy use and lowering running costs. The primary measures include:

- Specifying high levels of insulation in the building fabric to reduce heating demand;
- Designing for natural ventilation, wherever possible, in teaching spaces that do not require cooling; and
- Photovoltaic panels to provide a percentage of the school's electrical power.

4. Access

4.1. Policy and Approach

- 4.1.1 Planning Policy Wales emphasises that: “*Good design is also inclusive design. The principles of inclusive design are that it places people at the heart of the design process, acknowledges diversity and difference, offers choice where a single design solution cannot accommodate all users, provides for flexibility in use and provides buildings and environments that are convenient and enjoyable to use for everyone.*”
- 4.1.2 Similarly, TAN 12 (section 5.3 Inclusive Design) notes that “*the Assembly Government expects all those involved in the design process to foster a culture of inclusion, whereby design solutions provide access to the widest possible range of people*”.
- 4.1.3 UDP Policy ENV28 requires all new developments used for education purposes to provide suitable access for pupils, visitors or employees with mobility difficulties.
- 4.1.4 In accordance with these policies, the scheme has been designed to provide access for all. This section covers the philosophy and approach to inclusive design, the key issues and sources of advice and guidance used.
- 4.1.5 The scheme has been designed to comply with the Building Regulations Approved Document M so far as is possible at planning stage. It highlights the external access issues for disabled persons along with any divergence from these Approved Documents.

4.2. References for Design

- 4.2.1 The following have been key reference materials for design:
- BS8300:2001;
 - Building Bulletin 91: Accessibility Audit Checklists;
 - Building Bulletin 77: Designing for pupils with SEN.

4.3. Management Policies

- 4.3.1 The physical environment forms only one part of access. In order that full access is achieved, it is important that management policies are established and implemented. These are important for responding to disabled people as individuals and for the avoidance of discrimination.
- 4.3.2 An accessible environment cannot in itself guarantee against discriminatory practice. Management policies can lead to the avoidance of someone feeling aggrieved – particularly where physical access has not yet been implemented.
- 4.3.3 A full access statement, developed as the detail design progresses, will be included within the building manual so that the appropriate management policies can be developed by parties involved in managing the site.

4.4. Specific Issues

4.4.1 The design of the new school has considered accessibility by:

- Provision of 2 new accessible parking spaces;
- Providing lift access to the upper level of the building;
- Providing level approaches and thresholds throughout; and
- Considering specific pupil needs and providing accessible WCs and an accessible hygiene room.

5. Planning Policy Context & Assessment

5.1. Planning Policy Wales

5.1.1 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) is the Welsh Government's principal statement of national policy and sets out the land use planning policies that should be taken into account by local planning authorities in Wales and may be material to decisions on individual planning applications.

5.2. Technical Advice Notes

5.2.1 Technical Advice Note 12 (TAN12) Design (2014) includes advice on how promoting sustainability through good design may be facilitated through the planning system. Paragraph 4.1 of TAN 12 states: "*Design is a process of analysis and synthesis: analysing, identifying and diagnosing problems and barriers, then solving them through critique, research, development and testing. Design is a creative means by which to realise innovation and add value*"

5.2.2 The proposed development has followed the process of identifying the constraints and opportunities on the site. The proposals have, therefore, been carefully considered to respond to the surroundings. Section 3 on Design provides detailed information in relation to this process.

5.2.3 In terms of public buildings, TAN12 notes, "*the public sector has a responsibility and an opportunity to set high standards in achieving good design in its own buildings and achieving low carbon targets or zero carbon where possible*". The TAN goes on to state that "*in the design of schools.....the aim should be to achieve fitness for purpose, value for money over the whole life of the building, and a positive impact on the lives of those who use it and on its surroundings*". The guidance in TAN 12 therefore puts the emphasis on publically funded buildings to set benchmarks in terms of their design, with sustainability as a fundamental aim.

5.2.4 TAN18 Transport (2007) contains advice on the location of development, parking design, walking cycling and public transport.

5.2.5 A Transport Assessment has been undertaken and this is discussed in sections 3.7 and 5.7.

5.2.6 TAN 16 Sport Recreation and Open Space (2009) provides advice on the provision and protection of sport/recreational facilities and informal open spaces. The advice note calls for the protection of open space, which has a "significant amenity, nature conservation or recreational value" and requests that Local Planning Authorities identify and establish criteria to protect these spaces. The guidance goes on to state that it is important that areas of land are not unnecessarily protected from development as the land could have potential to relieve development pressures in less sustainable locations. TAN 16 also notes that "only where it can be clearly shown that there is no deficiency, should the possibility of their use for alternative development be considered".

5.2.7 The Council's Open Space Background Paper (September 2013) identifies a surplus of open space provision in the Gibbonsdown ward, with 4 schools having a combined 11.53ha of playing fields. A full appraisal of the impact of the development on the playing fields is included in Section 5.5.

5.3. Local Planning Policy

5.3.1 The Development Plan for the area comprises the Vale of Glamorgan Adopted Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011, which was formally adopted by the Council on 18 April 2005, and within which the following policies are of relevance.

5.4. Improved Education Facilities

5.4.1 Policy 14 refers to developments associated with community services, and states that these will be permitted if there is no unacceptable impact on a series of issues, including residential amenity.

5.4.2 The proposed development will improve the existing facilities on the site and intensify its use, leading to a 24% increase in pupil numbers by 2017. The proposals will, therefore, provide more space and improved learning facilities for pupils, while addressing local demand for primary school places on an established site.

5.4.3 The siting of the proposed new building would be over 19 metres from properties to the north on Amroth Street. A single storey element has been included on the elevation fronting Amroth Road, with the 2 storey element sited over 25 metres from these properties. No windows are included in this elevation and the development will, therefore, not affect privacy.

5.4.4 The proposed building is sited over 35 metres away from properties to the east, which are sited below the development site. This boundary is also subject to existing planting and this will be enhanced to improve the buffer between the two.

5.4.5 The proposed development will intensify the use of the site but is sited a suitable distance away from residential properties so as not to cause harm to amenity.

5.5. Loss of Open Space

5.5.1 Policy 11 refers to the need to protect existing areas of open space and playing fields from inappropriate development.

5.5.2 The expansion of an existing primary school is not considered to be inappropriate development as it seeks to meet the education needs of the locality.

5.5.3 Policy REC1 states that developments involving the loss of existing recreational facilities, whether in public or private ownership, will be permitted, if:

- Alternative provision of equivalent community benefit is made available. Or
- There is an excess of such provision in the area; and
- The facilities are not important to the setting of the town.

5.5.4 Policy ENV24 favours the conservation and enhancement of open spaces which are important for amenity, recreation and/or nature conservation.

5.5.5 The proposals will involve the removal of the existing hard standing playground and part of the amenity grassland that forms part of the boundary of the site. This area is not considered to have any significant amenity or recreational value.

5.5.6 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been carried out by Wildwood Ecology which concluded that the ecological value of the site is assessed as low. This is discussed further in section 5.8.

5.5.7 The proposals include the development of a replacement hard standing play area and will not involve the loss of any sports pitches.

5.5.8 Amenity grassland will be lost as a result of the development, however, this space is not considered to be of any particular importance to the setting of the town. This loss is also considered to be outweighed by the community benefit provided by the school. The proposed development is, therefore, considered to be in accordance with Policies 11, REC1 and ENV24.

5.6. Design

- 5.6.1 Policy 1 notes that the Vale of Glamorgan's distinctive rural, urban and coastal character will be protected and enhanced.
- 5.6.2 Policy ENV27 requires proposals to have full regard to the context of the local natural and built environment and its special features. It also lists a series of design considerations, including seeking development that:
- Complements or enhances the local character of buildings and open spaces;
 - Ensures existing soft and hard landscaping features are protected and complemented by new planting, surface or boundary features;
 - Has regard to energy efficiency in design, layout, materials and technology; and
 - Has regard to measures to reduce the risk and fear of crime.
- 5.6.3 A two storey solution is proposed to respond to the site constraints and drainage easement areas in order to maximise external play areas and the distance from the adjacent boundaries.
- 5.6.4 The varied scale of the proposed new building has sought to reduce its impact on the surrounding residential areas, and the proposed materials are considered to be durable and suitable for a community building of this type.
- 5.6.5 The overall design of the building provides a self-contained facility which will significantly improve the school's facilities in contrast to the existing shared facilities.
- 5.6.6 The building will provide significant sustainability gains from the current facility and features including photovoltaic panels and natural ventilation to ensure that the school not only benefits from an improved learning environment but also reduced running costs. Separate buildings for the two schools will also improve the sense of ownership for the staff and pupils.
- 5.6.7 The proposals are, therefore, considered to be in accordance with UDP policies 1 and ENV27, by enhancing education facilities in the County and contributing to the improved appearance and operation of the site.

5.7. Transport

- 5.7.1 The UDP includes a series of policies relating to transport impacts as outlined below.
- 5.7.2 Policy TRAN9 refers to the provision for safe and convenient links within the Vale of Glamorgan, and cycle parking facilities. Similarly, Policy TRAN10 requires the provision of parking facilities in accordance with the approved parking guidelines.
- 5.7.3 Policy 2 supports development which encourages sustainable practices including those which are located to minimise the need to travel, especially by car and proposals which improve the quality of the environment through high standards of design.
- 5.7.4 Policy 8 favours developments which are highly accessible by means of travel other than the private car and which minimise traffic levels and associated harmful environmental effects.
- 5.7.5 The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment, which assesses the proposals using traffic, parking and pedestrian surveys. Traffic count modelling concludes that there is considerable spare capacity in the highway network with the development in place.

- 5.7.6 An on street car parking survey indicates the need to restrict parent access to the school car park during school hours. The school car park would, therefore, be used for staff and visitors *and has* been assessed by the Transport Assessment as being capable of accommodating additional staff cars. Additional off site demand for car parking is proposed to be accommodated at Camrose Court or Neyland Court (200 metres from the site). With the exception of 2 new disabled parking spaces, no further car parking is proposed within the site.

- 5.7.7 A Travel Survey illustrates a clear desire for pupils to travel to the site by alternative modes other than by car and a Travel Plan will be produced to reflect the additional staff and pupils to be accommodated at the site. The Travel Plan will assist in reducing the number of car based journeys and encourage sustainable travel patterns.

- 5.7.8 The proposed development is, therefore, considered to be in accordance with UDP policies TRAN9, 2, 8 and ENV28.

5.8. Ecology

- 5.8.1 Policy ENV11 seeks to protect important landscape/nature conservation features such as trees and hedgerows from unacceptable affects cause by new developments.
- 5.8.2 A tree survey has been commissioned to minimise tree removal and advise on appropriate mitigation measures.
- 5.8.3 Policy ENV16 states that permission will only be given for development that would cause or threaten the continued viability of a protected species if it can be clearly demonstrated that there are exceptional circumstances that justify the proposals, there is no satisfactory alternative; and effective mitigation measures are provided by the developer.
- 5.8.4 The amenity grassland nature of the site is such that it has been assessed as being of low ecological value. Additional ecological surveys are to be undertaken to assess the trees to be removed. Mitigation measures and a new habitat area for educational use will be created.

5.9. Flooding & Drainage

Flooding

- 5.9.1 The site is located within flood zone B (areas known to have been flooded in the past). It is noted that the site is underlain by Alluvium.
- 5.9.2 TAN15 requires that the classification of sites within Zone B be 'Used as part of a precautionary approach to indicate where site levels should be checked against the extreme (0.1%) flood level. If site levels are greater than the flood levels used to define adjacent extreme flood outline there is no need to consider flood risk further.
- 5.9.3 Based on the EA's Flood Zone mapping the site is shown to be outside the 1 in 1,000 year floodplain, i.e. above the extreme (0.1%) flood level as required by TAN15, and subsequently flood risk need not be considered further.

Foul water

- 5.9.4 The proposed foul drainage will be via a conventional gravity pipe systems discharging to an existing public combined sewer which crosses within the site boundary.

Surface water

- 5.9.5 Two existing public sewers have been identified crossing the site. The first is a 450mm diameter Combined concrete sewer. The location of the building has been determined to provide an adequate easement to this pipe.
- 5.9.6 The second sewer crossing consists of 2 no. storm pipes, a 225mm diameter and a 300mm diameter. The pipes are shown on the public sewer map and run in tandem between manholes at each end. Following discussions with Welsh Water the configuration of the pipes could be to provide additional capacity, perhaps to accommodate an upstream development. It is proposed that the existing storm sewers will be diverted as part of the works. Welsh Water has indicated, in principle, if the capacity of the pipe is maintained it would be acceptable. As a preliminary estimate a single 600mm diameter pipe would be proposed.
- 5.9.7 It is proposed that a new storm drainage will be collected by a dedicated storm system which outfalls via a new headwall into the existing drainage ditch.
- 5.9.8 Discharge rates and flood volume will need to be controlled in accordance with standard practices and a discharge min rate of 5 l/s and 150m³ attenuation for 100yr + 30% Climate Change storm event has been agreed in principle with Vale of Glamorgan Drainage Authority.

6. Summary

- 6.1.1 The proposed development will significantly enhance the primary school facilities for the area, replacing a shared facility and providing a purpose built modern building, which will enhance the site and seek to enhance teaching and learning.
- 6.1.2 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development takes into account its impact on the site and surrounding area. It is, therefore, considered that the proposals are consistent with Welsh Assembly Government guidance and local planning policy.

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