

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT
TO
ACCOMPANY PLANNING APPLICATION
FOR
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR
FORMER INFANTS SCHOOL, BRODOG LANE,
FISHGUARD, PEMBROKESHIRE SA65 9NR
FOR
ATEB GROUP
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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This document has been prepared in accordance with WAG Technical Advice Note 12, published/required by Planning Law in Wales on 1 June 2009 and complies with The Town and Country Planning General Development Order – Amended – Wales No. 2009 that requires this document to form part of nearly all planning applications.

The document complies with Statutory Instrument 2009/No. 1024 (W.87) and the content covers the following topics in order to explain the **Design** principles and concepts that have been applied to the development, and this DAS explains the principles and concepts in relation to:-

- Environmental sustainability
- Movement to, from and within the development
- Character (including layout, scale, appearance and landscaping)
- Community safety

and in addition to the above, this DAS also seeks to:-

- Demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the physical, social, economic and policy context of the development
- Explain how the design of the development takes that context into account in relation to its proposed use and each of the aspects specified above

With regard to **Accessibility** this DAS does the following:-

- Explain the policy or approach to access
- Explain how any policies relating to access in the statutory development plan have been taken into account
- Explain how any specific issues which might affect access to the development have been addressed
- Details how features which ensure people's access to the development will be maintained

It is the intention of this DAS that an 'inclusive design' approach as set out in Section 3 of TAN 12 is complied with and that due regard has been made to other local and relevant design guidance documents.

DESIGN

DESIGN STATEMENT

1. VISION

Historically the site was the former Infants School which was run by Pembrokeshire County Council, but which has been empty for several years (decommissioned in 2006). The site has recently been acquired by Ateb Group.

The existing buildings comprise a brick faced, single-storey block of 1960's design with varying levels of flat roofs and large areas of tarmacadam (road, car parking and playground). All have reached the end of their useful life and it is proposed to demolish the school to make way for the new development.

The site sits within a residential area with a police house/station and offices to the south.

The vision is to demolish the existing structure and provide 18 new semi-detached social rented, fully wheelchair accessible bungalows for the elderly for Ateb as a natural expansion of their stock in the Fishguard area. The positions of the new dwellings on the site are arranged as a perimeter development to one site road with the majority of the trees on site boundaries being retained.

The completed development will provide much needed accommodation for elderly wheelchair users, on the edge of town, and has easy access to Fishguard's facilities.

2. INTRODUCTION AND SITE LOCATION

2.1 The application seeks to provide an appropriate creative re-use of a site that is now vacant. It is within settlement limits of Fishguard. Note: PCC applied in principle in December 2005 for residential use, which was approved on 13 February 2006.

2.2 THE PLANNING CONTEXT

The site, which currently sits within settlement limits, was formerly a school and thus has an established use but not for housing purpose. This application seeks to formalise residential use, C3, which is more in keeping and sympathetic with its neighbours. The most recent planning application by PCC confirms this (05/1171/PA). The proposed construction methods will minimise waste and produce environmentally efficient dwellings, in line with the current Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 as a minimum requirement.

The proposal complies with LDP Parts 1 to 7 in its relevant sections with regard to housing in particular and Policies SP1, SP7, SP8, SP12, SP13, GN.1, GN.2, GN.4, GN.26, GN.28, GN.30 AND GN.37 etc. The scheme complies with LDP Policies in that the proposals take account of the topography and landscape value of the site, have a negligible effect on the amenity of neighbours and do not increase the risk of flooding. The site is designed to minimise adverse impacts on the character of the area, will not significantly increase traffic generation of heavy vehicles (its

main use will be for initial construction period and thereafter a weekly bin collection and the occasional removal lorry), and it complies with all other relevant parts of policy documents for dwellings for the elderly.

The design of the proposal has been carefully considered to take the character of the area, the limited views from outside the site, the amenity of neighbours, sustainability issues and reduction of crime fully into account.

External lighting will be designed so as to comply with the requirements of PCC's adoption and bat/ecology guidelines, and drainage will connect via new pipework to the existing main sewer. The roads/sewers and lighting will all be adopted by PCC upon satisfactory completion.

2.3 IDENTIFICATION OF SITE

Please refer to the O.S. location plan on the application drawings.

3.0 SITE ANALYSIS – OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

The site is roughly rectangular in shape and slopes gently downward from north to south. It is to be accessed off the existing access road to Brodog Lane and will not therefore require a new access. The entrance will be altered to suit adoptable housing standards. The proposed road layout includes a turning head to adoptable standards, plus ample parking for residents and visitors.

The site is well screened to its eastern and northern boundaries by mature trees, with further screening by trees along its north western boundary. It is proposed that a very small number of trees, identified on plans, be removed, but none of these are protected by TPO's and their removal will not adversely affect either the ecological value of the level of screening provided by the tree banks to the east.

The site layout minimises overlooking to existing neighbours and leaves mature trees to all boundaries except those few to be removed, as indicated on the plans, and new landscaping will further enhance the layout and give it an established feel immediately upon completion, with the existing trees providing a high level of privacy to gardens

The proposed layout will afford an opportunity for some dwellings to take advantage of the south or south west facing roof slopes, to give sustainable technology opportunities on the roof slopes of the proposed dwellings for solar/pv technologies etc. the proposal offers a unique opportunity to develop this brownfield site to provide a fully wheelchair accessible dwelling for independent elderly people. The site is relatively flat.

4.0 CONTEXT ASSESSMENT

The physical context of the site and its immediate surroundings is described in Section 3 and the site sits within the town and is within settlement limits. The mature trees and hedges are to remain with the site accessed via the existing access road to the former school which is long established.

The neighbourhood is predominantly residential in this part of the town, with a large residential area, accessed Brodog Lane to the south east, a convenience store, post office and other facilities are within approximately 300 metres. The nearby primary and secondary schools are all within approximately half a mile of the site. The town centre shopping area is about a 1/4 mile away to the south east via a level walk, whilst the Fishguard Leisure Centre is approximately half a mile away.

5.0 INVOLVEMENT/CONSULTATION

Ateb Group have identified a need for fully wheelchair accessible bungalows for independent elderly people and has recognised that the site of the former Pembrokeshire County Council Infants School, having been empty for some years, offers the perfect location for this development. The Housing Association has recently acquired the site, following negotiations with the Local Authority, with the intention of developing it within a short period of time.

The social context is that this proposal will add to the housing stock of Fishguard that will support the local amenities, provide more people to attend events in the town, and hopefully join and support the local sports and social clubs, the W.I. and other organisations that meet in the area regularly, and all are a short distance away, with a main bus route service to the town and beyond (via the bus stop in town) several times a day for both local and national networks. The town's railway station is about 1 mile to the north west at Goodwick.

The economic context is that the proposals will provide much needed employment during the construction period, and will increase the precept to the town/county council and police authority on an annual basis as well as support the towns educational, community, cultural and sporting events.

The proposal we believe provides a good layout of much needed dwellings which will replace unattractive existing buildings which have reached the end of their life.

6.0 DESIGN

The physical constraints of the site, the main vehicular access (off the existing access road to Brodog Lane), privacy of the existing adjoining owners together with accepted layouts and gradients for the adoption of roads mean that the likely best option on this site is as proposed, orientated for the most part to maximise the sun/daylight hours for sustainable measures and to keep the impact on the neighbours and each new unit to a minimum, whilst sympathetically following the contours of the land to minimise excavation during construction.

The units are all single storey, and will hug the contours of the site, all as shown on the attached site plan/dwelling type drawings. The site layout is intended to be permeable, interesting spatially, and clearly defines where public spaces end and private spaces start, and a maximum of 1 storey prevails, with a domestic scale of dwelling spans, giving the site a highly legible layout and an excellent density that will be reinforced by the use of good quality materials, and interesting building lines for the major elements of the development.

The layout as submitted provides 18 dwellings which have all been specifically designed to provide fully accessible social accommodation for wheelchair users and follow the Lifetime Homes design principles, to suit all levels of the market, each dwelling will have a bicycle store, and 1½ or 2 parking spaces (including 1 disabled parking space per dwelling). The layout will easily accommodate emergency vehicles/dust carts etc., with the adopted road layout and good sight lines being achieved, and visitor parking being shown on the site plan near the entrance to the site.

In working towards the proposed solution, the applicant has taken the following fully into account:-

- increased and safer traffic visibility and public access
- be easy and cost effective to build, maintain and adapt as following the sites natural contours
- be sustainable with minimal environmental impact
- be fully wheelchair accessible
- meet all statutory requirements and regulations such as the Equality Act (formerly DDA)
- be a pleasure to use and visit
- add to and enhance the towns residential offer
- help meet specific housing needs
- be a better and more sympathetic neighbour to adjacent dwellings
- be close to the towns schools/leisure amenities/shops etc.,
- minimise its carbon footprint as developing a brownfield site
- continue similar spans/roofscapes from the one used in the adjacent residential developments
- provide an acceptable framework to view from the north and west in long distance vista terms and add to the urban landscape of the town

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

Secured by Design principles have been followed in arriving at the final layout for the site, and suitable boundary fences/hedges etc., will give added security to the proposed dwellings. The very fact that the site, once developed, will then be occupied and not remain as vacant and derelict buildings will add to the overall safety of the area.

The site roads are intended to be adopted, and as such will be well lit at all times, have adoptable gradients, and suitably wide pavements for pedestrian safety. The foul sewers will also connect to the existing system and DCWW should in principle support the proposal. Storm water drainage from the roads will connect to the existing system on site, with soakaways to take roof drainage from the houses, along with permeable paving to the dwellings.

The layout, as proposed, follows manual for streets and PCC's design guidelines and has been prepared by experienced engineers and architects.

8.0 CHARACTER

The existing redundant school buildings on site sit a little uncomfortably within this predominantly residential area, and detracts from the accepted form of housing in this part of the town.

Our proposals can only enhance the character of the area and provide a much more suitable aesthetic to better complement its neighbours and reaffirm its logical addition within the towns settlement limits, and give it a more solid urban feel when viewed from afar.

It is hoped that this proposal will aspire not only to meet, but exceed those standards of design and to provide some interesting spaces and give it a civic pride of its own, whilst meeting criteria to meet the Local Authority's policies.

9.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There is increasing awareness of the need for social, economic and environmental sustainability. Goals for sustainability have to be set high. This places an obligation on clients and their designers to ensure that environmentally friendly buildings place minimal pressure on resources by avoiding excessive energy use, waste, pollution (including greenhouse gas emissions), and resource depletion, (e.g. water use), while making the best possible long term contribution to the local environment and community.

The dwellings as constructed will all be highly insulated in order to comply with current day building regulations and Code 3 level for Sustainable Homes and ENE1 (dwelling emission rates for CO² and energy use) and are highly likely to be mainly timber framed from a local sustainable source, which is the easiest way to meet, and indeed surpass, the current statutory requirements. The storm drains, wherever possible, will be highly sustainable using SUDS systems.

Roof slopes and windows to most of the dwellings will face east or west, giving ease of solar gain split to supplement energy use of the dwellings, and to provide a reasonable orientation to maximise a variety of sustainable energy types, to work at maximum efficiency throughout the day, especially when roof mounted systems, e.g. solar/pv panels etc., are utilised.

It is intended to utilise local labour and locally sourced materials in the project as far as reasonably practicable.

The location of the site in the town centre close to both local and national bus/train routes enables the site users to walk, cycle or take public transport nearby, to help reduce car journeys and hence carbon emissions. Similarly, it is hoped that the car parking will minimise the need for unnecessary manoeuvres of both cars and service vehicles etc., further cutting down on carbon emissions for those visiting the site.

10.0 MOVEMENT AND ACCESS

The access will be via the existing access road off the existing Brodog Lane to the east of the site. The site road will have adequate gradients and sight lines as required by the highways engineers for safety and a footpath from the site will also be incorporated to act as links to the nearby educational, ecclesiastical, retail, community, leisure, health and welfare facilities and bus stops.

As the road/pavement/lighting will all be installed to an adoptable standard, then safe movement and access for those on foot, on cycles or in a vehicle will be achieved.

Fishguard is located on the A40 trunk road, giving easy links to Haverfordwest and to the south of the County, and the A40 continues east to Carmarthen and on to the M4 national motorway network beyond. Bus stops on the trunk road give excellent links to both local and national routes, and the town's railway station is about a 1/2 mile to the north. The National Cycle route system passes near to the site and links to the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park coastline.

Please refer to Access Statement for further details regarding the inclusive design principles incorporated into the proposals.

Movement throughout the site has been maximised with a range of roads/pavements that connect to the town and allow ease of access to the many facilities that already exist nearby.

ACCESS STATEMENT

ACCESS STATEMENT

In all aspects of the access requirements of this DAS, the applicant has adopted an '**inclusive design**' approach as set out in Section 3 of the Tan 12/WAG guidelines. The site is in the centre of the town of Fishguard close to public bus routes and to the National Cycle Network, and has good access to the national road network via the A40 and M4. The closest railway station is in nearby Goodwick, a mile away to the north, with an easy car/taxi/mini-bus journey to get there.

It is a common misconception that inclusive design is primarily a matter for those with mobility impairments. On the contrary, designing for all means that consideration should include the needs of all, including people with mobility impairments, people with sensory impairments and people with learning difficulties. The Equality Act 2010 (previously the DDA Act) makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled people when living their lives.

Good practice for all involved in the design process means:-

- Increasing the awareness of inclusivity by all
- Consultancy with disabled people and groups representing them
- Identifying physical and non-physical barriers to access
- Making adjustments to deal with identified barriers
- Drawing adjustments to the attention of disabled people
- Regular reviews of effectiveness of measures taken

It is within the above guidelines that this DAS:-

- **Explains the policy approach to access** for this application as being quite straightforward and simple, in that it comprises of a new residential development site for social housing for independent elderly persons, with all proposed dwellings being fully wheelchair accessible. As dwellings, they are governed by the building regulations/Equality Act etc. The proposals show that level thresholds are provided on ground floor external doors, a ground floor toilet and shower room suitable for wheelchair use is incorporated into the design, external and internal doorways are of adequate width. The kitchen and all living and bedroom spaces and circulation routes are all suitable for wheelchair users. All ramps will be 1:12 maximum gradient, all steps (as required) will be wide, with adequate handrailing and all external areas will be adequately lit with lighting at night, so as to make movement in and around the dwellings as safe as possible for all. Contrasting colours will also be used where appropriate, to demarcate any level changes/doorways.

More specifically:

- The site is accessed off the existing access road, Brodog Lane to the southeast, and each dwelling will have two car spaces immediately outside the dwelling, including one parking space suitable for wheelchair users.
- Level access to the buildings will be provided at the doors. These doors will provide the clear opening widths required by Building Regulations.
- A wheelchair accessible w.c. and shower including all necessary grab rails, wheel-in shower access etc is to be provided at ground floor level in all dwellings.
- All kitchens are adaptable for wheelchair users, incorporating height adjustable units and worktops
- All dwellings allow for the future installation of a hoist and track system, should this be necessary
- All finishes and materials will provide a good visual contrast, with good levels of illumination, both internally and externally
- Light switches and power points will be located at heights accessible to wheelchair users where possible in the dwelling
- There is adequate space for internal storage of a mobility scooter/bicycles etc., within the dwellings
- The external paving will be pavements, tarmac, concrete, or paving slabs, to allow safe usage by wheelchairs
- Be designed in accord with 'lifetime' homes parameters – i.e. include space for home working in a bedroom/study as appropriate

- Explains how any policies relating to access in the statutory development plan have been taken into account by complying with PCC's LDP Policies, PPW (Planning Policy Wales) and WAG TAN 19 (Technical Advice Note – for transport) as it achieves:-

- Adequate vehicular and pedestrian access and parking (2 spaces per dwelling)
- Adequate provision for access by public transport (both bus and trains), cyclists and pedestrians (including cycle/motorbike spaces on site)
- Adequate access is achievable for those with special needs, restricted mobility or sensory impairments
- Visitor parking spaces are provided on the site
- Adequate road capacity is available to serve the development

- Overall access provision that is appropriate to the locality and is safe, and can incorporate measures to ensure safe traffic speeds are maintained at all times
- The links to the existing roads/footpaths are safely accessible to all and will be well lit

- Explains how any specific issues which might affect

access to the development have been addressed:-

- Safe access to the site for the construction and use of the dwellings
- Detailed method statements will be prepared and developed regarding working practices during each phase of the construction, taking on board the need to keep the adjacent roads and adjacent access road operational during the works, and the public safe from working areas at all times
- All plot access points, whether for vehicles/pedestrians/cyclists will be designed for the ease of use by people with special needs, restricted mobility or serious impairments at the detailed design stage

- Details how features which ensure people's access to the development will be maintained by complying with the following:-

- The dwellings described above will be maintained and kept in a good state of repair at all times by the client, Ateb Group
- The roads/pavement/lighting/drainage will all hopefully be adopted and will then be maintained by the Local Authority/DCWW respectively