

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

CYNWYL ELFED
CARMARTHENSHIRE

JUNE 2025

amity
planning consultants



PROPOSAL

SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSAL

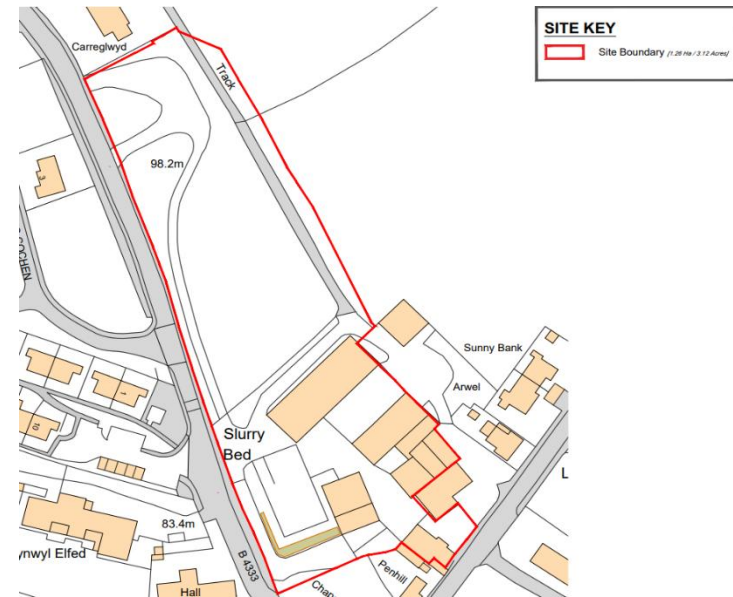
This document has been prepared by Amity Planning Ltd on the behalf of Obsidian Homes. This statement supports the submission of a full planning application that seeks permission for *"Residential development with landscaping, access, drainage and associated works at Land off Surgeon Street, Cynwyl Elfed"*.

The objective of this Design and Access Statement (DAS) is to demonstrate how the principles of good design and placemaking have been applied, and how the proposed planning submission has been developed in a thoughtful, logical, and innovative manner, that considers the site, its context and the character of the wider area.

The statement identifies how the scheme responds to the relevant policies and guidance on design and placemaking. The statement also explains how the design evolution has responded positively to the comments and input from a wide range of local authority departments and demonstrates how we have collaborated with the local authority to produce this scheme.



FIGURE 1



1.0 SITE LOCATION PLAN

SITE CONTEXT

The application site is located within the village of Cynwyl Elfed, approximately 5 miles north of Carmarthen, in the county of Carmarthenshire. It lies on Surgeon Street (B4333), which connects directly to the A484, offering strategic links between Swansea, Carmarthen, and Cardigan. The site occupies a central position in the village, opposite Cynwyl Elfed Primary School and the Community Hall, ensuring strong integration with existing community infrastructure.

The wider settlement also includes the nearby villages of Blaenycloed and Cwmdud, contributing to a well-established rural community. The River Gwili runs just south of the village, adding to the area's natural character. The site's location provides good connectivity, local amenity access, and a context that supports sustainable, village-scale development.

VISION STATEMENT

DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

This proposal seeks to deliver a high-quality residential development comprising a mix of 31 affordable and market homes, which will create a logical and sensitive extension to the existing settlement, reflecting local character while addressing the identified need for sustainable housing within the area.

SITE OPPORTUNITIES

The site presents a valuable opportunity to deliver a balanced mix of affordable and market housing. Its location also allows potential for positive and seamless integration with the existing village, respecting the established scale, layout, and character while improving connectivity to key amenities. There is also strong potential to achieve high-quality, context-sensitive design through appropriate architecture, materials, and landscaping that reflect Cynwyl Elfed's rural identity. The site also can accommodate well-designed public and private open spaces. In addition, the development presents opportunity to enhance biodiversity through habitat creation, hedgerow retention, and sustainable drainage features. The use of existing, consented access points from Surgeon Street (B4333) provides a clear and safe route for vehicular and pedestrian access, supporting a well-connected and sustainable scheme.

SITE CONSTRAINTS

The site's sloping topography to the south and west presents design and drainage challenges that will need careful consideration. The absence of a footpath along the western boundary limits pedestrian connectivity, particularly across Surgeon Street, highlighting the need for improved access and movement. Additionally, the site is closely bounded by existing residential properties, requiring sensitive layout and design solutions to protect privacy and prevent overlooking.

OBJECTIVES



MEETING HOUSING NEED

The creation of a new residential area for Cynwyl Elfed that provides 9 open market units and 22 affordable housing units, going some way in meeting an identified demand in the area, making a positive contribution by the provision of further dwellings towards the LDP targets for housing supply.



SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

The delivery of a residential scheme within a well-linked and easily accessible area, promoting active travel and well-being.

A landscape-led approach, embracing the site's natural topography, incorporating Landscape buffers, swales, and green corridors.



DISTINCTIVE DESIGN FOR A LOCAL CONTEXT

Providing a sense of place-making and opportunities for social and community cohesion with both on & off-site open space provision.

Delivering high quality housing and built form that have been informed by site and context assessment.

PLANNING POLICY

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The planning policies and guidance which are relevant and influential to the design of the proposed development have been identified as follows.

CCAMARTHENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2006-2016

The site and its wider location fall within the administrative boundaries of Carmarthenshire County Council and form part of a strategic housing allocation. The Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted in December 2014. The LDP sets out the spatial vision for the future of Carmarthenshire and a framework for the distribution and delivery of growth and development. It sets out land-use planning policies and proposals which are used in the determination of planning applications and in guiding future opportunities for investment and growth.

MOST RELEVANT LDP POLICIES

SP1 – SUSTAINABLE PLACES AND SPACES

SP5 – HOUSING

SP6 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING

SP13 – PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE BUILT AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

SP14 – PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

SP17 – INFRASTRUCTURE

GP1 – SUSTAINABILITY AND HIGH-QUALITY DESIGN

GP2 – DEVELOPMENT LIMITS

H2 – HOUSING WITHIN DEVELOPMENT LIMITS

AH1 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING

EQ1 – PROTECTION OF BUILDINGS, LANDSCAPES AND FEATURES OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE

EQ4 – BIODIVERSITY

TR3 – HIGHWAYS IN DEVELOPMENTS – DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

EP2 – POLLUTION

EP3 – SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) exists to provide further detail on policies and proposals contained within Cardiff's Development Plan. They help ensure policies and proposals are better understood and applied effectively. Supplementary Planning Guidance does not hold the same weight as the adopted Development Plan policies. However, they need to be taken into account when making material consideration to determine planning applications.

MOST RELEVANT SPG DOCUMENTS

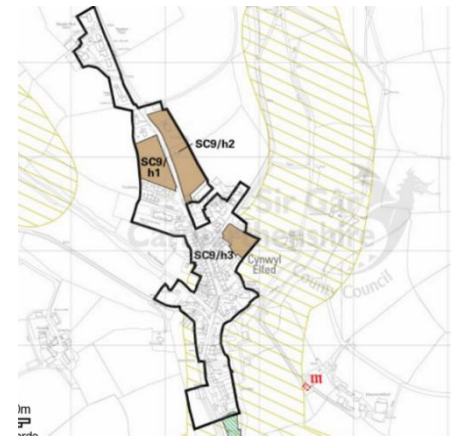
NATURE CONSERVATION & BIODIVERSITY

PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

PLACE MAKING & DESIGN

ARCHAEOLOGY



POLICY CONTEXT

For the purposes of the Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan, the site is:

- Partially allocated for Residential Development (SC9/h2) allocated for 15 dwellings) and re-allocated in RLDP.
- Adjacent to designated Recreation/Open Space (REC1)
- Near Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SP13) to the southeast
- Lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area – Sand and Gravel (MPP3)

POLICY

PLANNING POLICY WALES

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) forms the overarching national planning policy document within Wales, providing guidance to Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) for the preparation of development plans and the determination of planning applications through their development management functions.

Paragraph 2.8 acknowledges that “planning policies, proposals and decisions must seek to promote sustainable development and support the well-being of people and communities across Wales”.

2.0 NATIONAL PLACEMAKING OUTCOMES



FUTURE WALES NATIONAL PLAN 2040

Future Wales is the national development framework and sets out the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a development plan with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system. Urban growth and regeneration should be based on the following strategic placemaking principles:

1. Creating a rich mix of uses.
2. Providing a variety of housing types and tenures.
3. Building places at a walkable scale, with homes, local facilities, and public transport within walking distance of each other.
4. Increasing population density, with development built at urban densities that can support public transport and local facilities.
5. Establishing a permeable network of streets, with a hierarchy that informs the nature of development.
6. Promoting a plot-based approach to development, which provides opportunities for the development of small plots, including for custom and self-builders; and
7. Integrating green infrastructure, informed by the planning authority's Green Infrastructure Assessment.

TECHNICAL ADVICE NOTES

Planning Policy Wales is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs) which provide further national advice and guidance on specific areas of the planning system. The following TANs are relevant to this scheme:

TAN 2: PLANNING & AFFORDABLE HOUSING
TAN 5: NATURE CONSERVATION & PLANNING
TAN 10: TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS
TAN 12: DESIGN
TAN 15: DEVELOPMENT & FLOOD RISK
TAN 16: SPORT, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE
TAN 18: TRANSPORT

INTERPRETATION

CONCEPT DESIGN

The findings of the site and context analysis, in combination with the content of the relevant policies and guidance provide the framework to deliver the design of the development in line with the vision objectives of the scheme.

1. Provision of 31 homes to cater to the demand of housing within the area.
2. Seamless connection to the existing highway infrastructure that will be adapted to the site constraints.
3. Biodiversity/ecology measures to retain and enhance valuable elements of the site and provide step wise approach to green infrastructure.
4. A loose, informal layout with varied building orientations and generous planting to reflect the gradual shift from linear village core to countryside, reinforcing a soft settlement edge.

FIGURE 4



3.0 & 4.0 STREET SCENES

FIGURE 3



DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

DESIGN EVOLUTION

The design of this scheme has undergone evolution taking on board valuable input from advice regarding mix/affordable housing need from the local housing team through the partnering with a local RSL to deliver a larger quantum of affordable housing with a proposal comprising of the following mix:

- 9no. 2 and 3 bedroom open market houses
- 6no. 2, 3 and 4 bedroom WDQR affordable flats
- 16no. 1 bed WDQR affordable homes

As part of the process, the Architect has also engaged with the local Designing Out Crime Officer to inform the scheme's approach to safety and support potential achievement of the Secured by Design Gold Standard.

From the outset, a landscape-led approach has guided the development with particular focus on embracing the site's sloping topography and rural setting. Importantly, the retention and enhancement of existing hedgerows has also been prioritised in the design. These linear green features have been preserved and incorporated into the layout as defining edges and ecological assets, contributing to both character and habitat connectivity.

In response to the site's position, the design also saw the inclusion of shared private driveways. These driveways help to reduce the visual dominance of roads and hard surfacing, allowing for a softer, more informal streetscape that is more in keeping with the rural character of Cynwyl Elfed.

5.0 INITIAL EVOLUTION



5.1 PROPOSED LAYOUT



FIGURE 5

THE PROPOSAL

CHARACTER

A full analysis of the site and its context has been undertaken and it has been thoughtfully concluded that there is sufficient capacity to comfortably fit 31no. housing units with no compromise to high quality design standards.

The proposed buildings do not differ greatly in architectural terms from the housing units within the adjacent residential settlements and the external street scene is very in-keeping with the local area. The traditional buildings in Cynwyl Elfed exhibit classic Welsh vernacular character. Many older cottages are constructed of local stone or rubble, often whitewashed or rendered and painted in light pastel tones. The architectural response reflects the local vernacular, adopting appropriate materials, roof forms, and scale that resonate with the established character of Cynwyl Elfed. The proposed use of two-storey homes finished in cream and white render is appropriate and in keeping and ensures the development sits comfortably within its context, maintaining consistency with the surrounding built form and supporting a coherent and responsive design.

The proposed layout adopts a, informal arrangement of dwellings, avoiding a rigid or overly uniform street pattern. This approach responds positively to the rural village context and helps to create a more natural, organic extension to the existing settlement. Parking provision is carefully integrated, with spaces located on-plot or within small, discreet parking courts, ensuring that the public realm remains pedestrian-friendly and not visually dominated by vehicles. A key design feature is the southern corner of the site, which forms a prominent part of the local street scene. This area has been retained as open space, incorporating a SuDS basin that not only serves a functional drainage purpose but also contributes to a visually attractive and welcoming approach to the development. The surrounding homes are enveloped in structured landscaping, helping to soften the built form and maintain a strong landscape character. To further mitigate the visual impact of the new development and deliver environmental benefits, the scheme introduces new planting zones, wildflower meadows, and biodiversity-rich landscape features. These will enhance local ecology, create valuable habitat opportunities, and significantly increase the amenity and recreational value of the site for future residents and the wider community.

FIGURE 6



6.0 LANDSCAPING PROPOSAL

THE PROPOSAL

ACCESS & MOVEMENT

The site is currently accessed off Surgeon Street (B4333) which connects to the A484, linking Swansea to Cardigan, runs through Cynwyl Elfed with connections to Carmarthen, Swansea and Cardigan.

Two separate accesses are proposed. The northern access will serve plots 1 to 9 and the southern access will serve plots 10 to 31. Both accesses provide at least 2.4m x 43m visibility in both directions (appropriate for a design speed of 30mph) and will be to adoptable standards, with 5.5m wide carriageways and 2m wide footways on both sides. Turning areas capable of accommodating refuse vehicles are provided at appropriate locations within the development.

Plots 6 to 9 and 23 to 28 will be accessed via shared private driveways, supporting a less formal, low-traffic layout that contributes to a more attractive and pedestrian-friendly streetscape.

Parking provision has been designed in accordance with the CSS Wales Parking Standards, with one space allocated per bedroom to ensure sufficient provision for each household. In line with best practice and local experience, dedicated visitor parking bays have not been provided. This is based on observed patterns where visitors typically choose to park as close as possible to their destination, often disregarding marked visitor bays. Such spaces can also be informally claimed by nearby residents, rendering them ineffective. Instead, visitor parking will be accommodated informally on-street, which is considered both practical and safe within the proposed layout.

The scheme also includes one apartment block comprising six flats, for which a secure and covered cycle storage facility will be provided. This complies with the CSS Wales standard of one cycle stand per five bedrooms, promoting sustainable travel choices among residents.

There are a number of amenities in the village, including a primary school, convenience store and post office. These are all within easy walking distance to the proposed development. A wider range of services can be accessed in Carmarthen, which can be reached within around 25 minutes by the hourly No. 460 bus service. The ability to access day-to-day services by sustainable modes of transport reduces the need to travel by car and ensures that future residents without access to cars are not socially excluded.

7.0 PROXIMITY TO KEY SERVICES

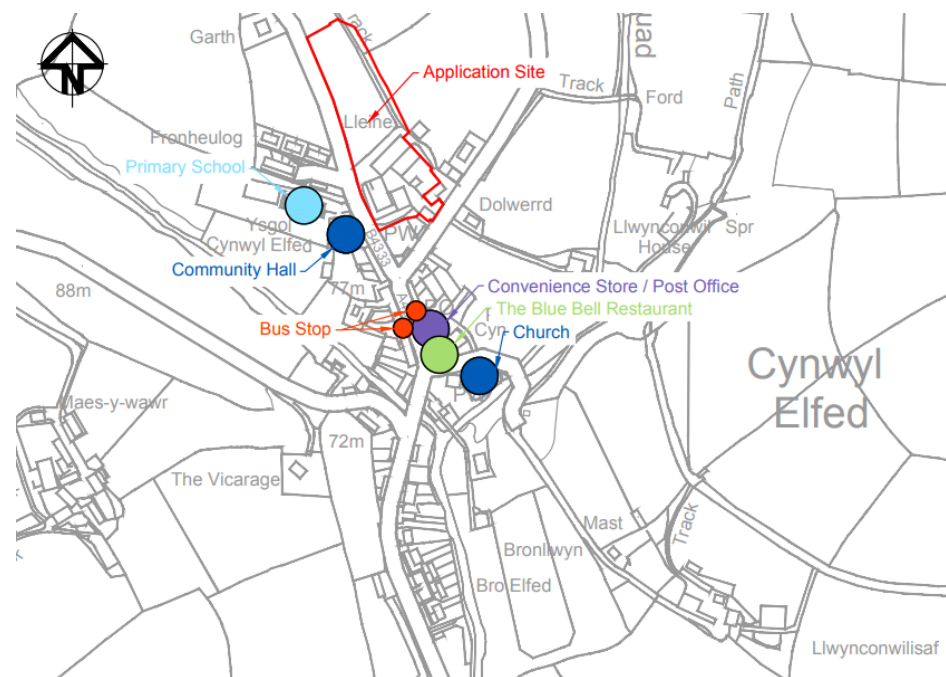


FIGURE 7

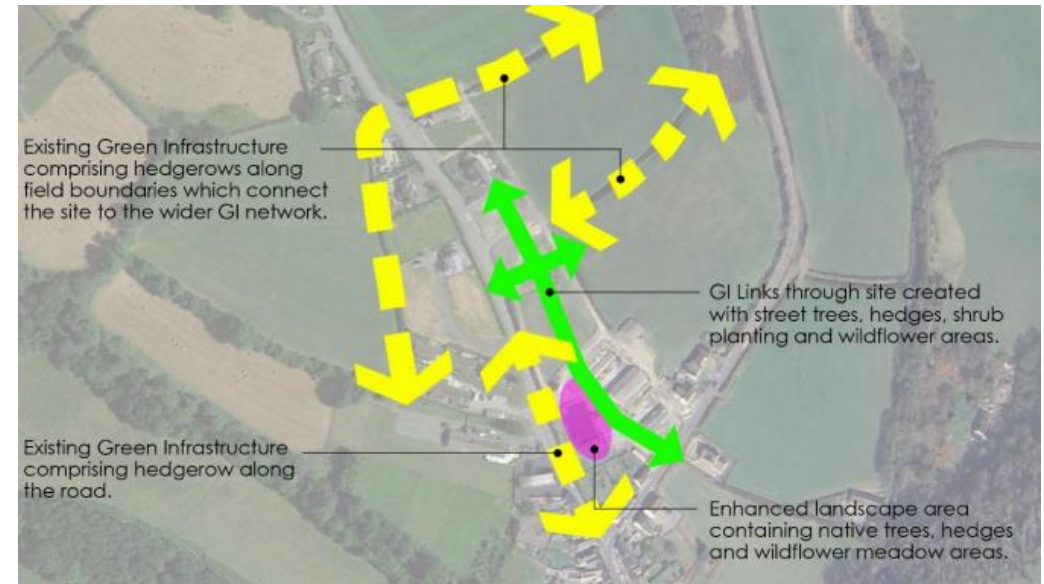
THE PROPOSAL

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINIBILITY

The site layout for this residential scheme incorporates green and blue infrastructure with the aim of delivering a sense of place; contributing to the preservation and enhancement of habitats and biodiversity; and the infiltration of surface water runoff to prevent and reduce flooding.

The site currently offers limited landscape or green infrastructure features, dominated by hardstanding and former farmyard buildings. The central area consists of improved grassland, with minimal existing vegetation limited to a single tree and two species-poor hedgerows. To facilitate development, the single tree, all grassland, and the eastern hedgerow will be removed, while the western hedgerow along Surgeon Street will be retained where possible, subject to visibility requirements at the site entrance. To enhance and compensate for the loss of existing vegetation, the proposals include extensive native tree planting around the site, creating an attractive setting and strengthening the landscape framework. Native hedgerows will define boundaries, providing valuable food and nesting habitats for birds. Native structural planting on sloped areas will create new ecological habitats, while wildlife-friendly shrub planting will soften building frontages and boost biodiversity.

Additionally, wildflower meadow areas are integrated within the SuDS features and throughout the site, supporting pollinators and enriching the external environment. Together, these measures will deliver a resilient, biodiversity-rich green infrastructure network that complements the development, enhances ecological value, and aligns with local planning policies on sustainable, nature-inclusive design.



ECOLOGICAL IMPACT

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been produced by Wyndrush Wild to identify any potential ecological constraints to development within the site; identify requirements for any additional ecological surveys needed to determine potential ecological impacts; and describe measures to mitigate or compensate for any impacts on the ecological interest of the site. The preliminary ecological appraisal found that the site is of low ecological value, with limited habitats and no evidence of protected species. No significant ecological constraints to development have been identified. The proposals can be designed to comply with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 by avoiding harm to Priority Habitats and promoting net biodiversity gain through appropriate landscaping and habitat enhancements. With the recommended mitigation and enhancement measures, the development is unlikely to negatively impact local wildlife and offers opportunities to improve biodiversity on site.