

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

For

New Private Housing Development

at

**Land adjacent to Trevor Close
(Phase 2)
Pant,
Merthyr Tydfil**

For

Kevin Jones

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Revision 0

SGA

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Introduction

This statement has been prepared by Stephen George Architects on behalf of Kevin Jones in support of a full planning application for the construction of a new housing development on vacant land adjacent to Trevor Close in Pant, Merthyr Tydfil. This is the only access to the site, and is an extension of the original Trevor Close this extension has been created to include a development of 28 houses. The access to the new housing development will serve both vehicular and pedestrian access, the proposal includes footpaths to both sides of the entrance to the site, one of which will extend the full length of the site for pedestrian safety.

There are a number bus stops within walking distance of the site, from these bus stops it is possible to get to Merthyr Tydfil town centre where there is the main bus and train stations which give direct links to Cardiff city centre amongst other towns along the route.

The scheme proposes that the development will consist of 4No 2 bedroom semi-detached houses, 10No 2 bedroom terraced houses and 9No 3 bedroom terraced houses, these houses will have parking for 2 or 3 cars per dwelling depending on the number of bedrooms as per CSS Wales Parking Guidelines.

Access

Access to the site is gained by an adopted road which will be located to the North-West of the site and run the length of the site. This access will be positioned in order to maximise the housing potential of the site and take into account the topography of the site. Careful consideration has been given to the position of where the road crosses the culvert.

The majority of the dwellings will have a ramped access to the front of the dwelling, however due to the topography of the site this is not achievable in all cases. Where ramps are used they will have a gradient of in 12 and a finish of paving slabs and level thresholds to the front entrance which will give access to wheelchair users. All main entrance doors will have clear openings of 775mm minimum in accordance with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations 2004. The rear entrances will have a 150mm step up into the dwelling from a paved patio. The above is in accordance with Policy BW7 of the LDP 2006-2021 which states that a new development should foster 'inclusive design' by ensuring the development allows access for the widest range possible.

Policy BW12 of the LDP 2006-2021 states that all development proposals are to demonstrate how they will, help reduce the need to travel, encourage the use of public transport other than the private car, avoid increasing traffic to unacceptable levels, avoid causing or exacerbating highway safety problems. This can be achieved by the development being approximately 0.03 miles from the bus stop on Edward Street, which gives the site links to both Merthyr Tydfil town centre and Cardiff city centre, these destinations also give it good public transport links to a wide area, enabling the residents of the proposed development to access public transport easily. It also enables the public to refrain from using a private car for a higher proportion of journeys. Using public transport also has the added bonus of being more energy efficient and causes less pollution, which will benefit the local area.

Policy BW16 section 3.16.9 of the LDP 2006-2021 mentions the rights of way networks in Merthyr Tydfil CBC e.g. Taff Trail. The Taff Trail runs through Cefn Coed, which is approx 2.5 miles from the site, this is a well used walk and cycle route ensuring safe access to recreation opportunities within Merthyr Tydfil. The Route 46 cycle route passes along the bottom of Trevor Close, this National Route 46 of the National Cycle Network will connect Bromsgrove to Neath when complete.

The road design proposed for use within this development including the crossover from Trevor Close will be designed in accordance with MTCBC's adopted Highways Design Guide. All of which will be in accordance with MTCBC's Highways Design Guide and Policy TB11 of the LDP 2006-2021.

Street layouts should meet practical needs such as access for emergency vehicles whilst including clear connections, and ease of access for all, particularly pedestrians and cyclists. This can be achieved by ensuring the new adopted road is constructed to Merthyr Tydfil CBC Highways design guide, this will ensure the road is of an adequate width for refuse and emergency vehicles as well as ensuring there is a sufficient sized footpath for pedestrians.

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The adopted road within the site will have a gradient suited to the topography of the site. The surface of the adopted road will be tarmac. The width of Trevor Close adjacent to the site is approximately 5.5m between footpaths, the width of the new adopted road is 5.5m between footpaths.

Policy TB11 of the LDP 2006-2021 also states that the access needs and mobility requirements of all sections of the community, particularly those with special needs and disabilities are met. This is satisfied as mentioned elsewhere in this document by providing level/ramped access from the majority of parking areas to the majority of all the front entrances of the dwellings as well as throughout the building internally the ramped access is to have a gradient of 1 in 12, due to the overall height of the ramp no handrails are required.

The proposed development is located on vacant land, the site will consist of 4No 2 bedroom semi-detached houses, 10No 2 bedroom terraced houses and 9No 3 bedroom terraced houses.

Surrounding the site there are a number of residential streets, these vary from recently constructed dwellings to the old mining terraces, due to the large timespan between the construction of the surrounding dwellings there are a number of different finishes and house types.

There is a wide variety of finishes within the surrounding area, they consist of red, brown or blue/black concrete roof tiles, pebble dash, render or brick walls, wood effect or white upvc windows and doors, brick or stone quoins and black or white upvc rainwater goods.

Where possible the dwellings will have a ramped access to the main entrance doors where topography of the site allows, the ramps will have a gradient of 1 in 12, where this is not possible the dwellings will have ambulant steps to access the main entrance. The finish will be paving slabs with a level threshold to the entrance door and will be accessible by wheelchair users and or ambulant disabled people. The entrance will have a clear opening of 775mm minimum in accordance with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations 2004, this is also in accordance with Policy BW7 of the LDP 2006-2021 which states that a new development should foster 'inclusive design' by ensuring the development allows access for the widest range possible.

Tan 12 states that developments should have layouts which meet practical needs such as access for emergency vehicles whilst including clear connections, and ease of access for all, particularly pedestrians and cyclists. This can be achieved by ensuring the road layout is of a sufficient width and complies with the Manual for Streets, in order to safeguard both pedestrians and cyclists.

The surface of the parking areas and private drives are to be permeable brick paving, it is anticipated there will be alternate colours used in order to differentiate between each area. The surface of the road through the site will be tarmac.

Within the village of Pant there are a few amenities, these include a church, a public house, a Chinese takeaway, a post office and a corner shop. The adjacent village of Dowlais has a larger range of amenities, these include a cake shop, a motor components shop, a fish and chip shop, a corner shop, a wine bar, a fruit and vegetable shop, a florists, a barbers shop, a public house, a gift boutique, a tea room/cafe, a butchers, a financial advisors, a hairdressers, a veterinary practice, a launderette, pharmacy and coffee shop.

Merthyr tydfil town centre has a wider range of shops and goods for sale, this is approx. 2 miles from the site. Approx. 2.5 miles from the site is Cyfarthfa Retail Park, this has a range of shops including Argos, B & Q, Boots, Currys, Debenhams, Game, JD Sports, Matalan, Next, Marks & Spencer, TK Maxx, Costa, KFC, Mc Donald's and Pizza Hut, all the above gives a wide range of retail and employment opportunities which can be reached by public transport and so reduce the overall need for using private car for the majority of journeys.

Policy BW1 section 3.1.3 of the LDP 2006-2021 focuses on public transport and public footpaths and cycleways, as shown below.

3.1.3 Whilst the main settlement comprises many separate and distinct communities, there is considerable interdependence between them. The geographical character of the main settlement makes it an ideal unit for a sustainable future. All suburban areas are in close proximity to the town centre which has a good range of accessible services within a compact area. This central core is served by improving levels of public

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transport including bus and train services which operate within the County Borough and also provide access to destinations further afield. A number of strategic footpaths and cycleways also traverse the town making it accessible to modes other than the car. Focused development within the Primary Growth Area therefore has the greatest potential for reducing the overall need to travel and developing the capacity of sustainable transport links.

As mentioned previously there is adequate access to the town centre which has a good range of accessible services, and good links to public transport and footpaths, and cycleways within the area.

Policy TB11 of the LDP 2006-2021 states that any new highways are constructed in accordance with the Council's adopted Manual for Streets and include operational and non-operational parking provisions according to adopted standards set out in CSS Wales - Wales Parking Standards, and the land use, density and location proposed.

The parking provision will comply with CSS Wales and the parking and turning area will comply with the Highways Design Guide.

The above policy also states that the access needs and mobility requirements of all sections of the community, particularly those with special needs and disabilities are met. This is satisfied as mentioned elsewhere in this document by providing level, ramped and ambulant stepped access from the parking areas and also from the footpaths to the main entrance as well as throughout the houses internally, the gradient of the ramp leading to the main entrance door is 1 in 12 as previously mentioned.

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Character

The site is a parcel of vacant land within the residential area of Trevor Close, the surrounding area consists of Edward Street to the South and South-East, Trevor Close is located to the West and South-West. Currently the land is not utilised, therefore the proposed housing scheme is more in keeping with the surrounding area and a better use of the site.

The surrounding dwellings are a mixture of terraced houses, semi-detached houses, detached houses and bungalows. The houses to Edward Street and Gwladys Street were built in approximately 1900, the housing to Trevor Close and the surrounding streets were built in approximately 1970, Amelia Close was built in approx 2005, the appearance of the surrounding dwellings are as previously mentioned.

The proposed development consists of a mixture of semi-detached and terraced dwellings, the finishes are a mixture of fully rendered dwellings with brick quoins, full brick dwellings with brick quoins and banding, and half render and half brick with brick banding. The brickwork will be red-multi bricks, the banding and quoins will be blue/black bricks, the render will be k-rend, polar white. the windows will be white upvc, the rainwater goods will be black upvc and the doors will be composite doors, colours to be agreed. The boundaries to the rear of and between dwellings within the site will be constructed of 1.8m close boarded timber fencing. Retaining walls to be brickwork or crib lock depending on location, all retaining walls to have either 900mm or 1200mm closed boarded fence guarding on top.

The site is surrounded by dwellings to the South-East, South and South-West and to the North-West, North and North-East there is open grassland and some trees.

The proposed development consists of 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings, the size and layout of which are similar to that of the surrounding dwellings, this is to ensure the dwellings remain in context with the character of the area. The siting of the dwellings on the site is due to the size and shape of the site, the proposed layout of the site has been achieved by taking into account the topography of the site, the surrounding local area and the current housing market requirements.

The dwellings have all been arranged on the site in order to make the most of the space, and avoid any over looking issues between the dwellings. Due to the linear shape of the site, there was not a great deal that could be achieved with the sighting of the dwellings with regard to the dwellings being South facing.

There are proposed to be no boundary treatment to the fronts of the dwellings to give the site an open and spacious feel. The frontage of the dwellings are to be grassed, this will give the site a uniformed appearance.

The site is a vacant parcel of land within the village of Pant, as previously mentioned there are a large and varied range of local amenities within the adjacent village of Dowlais, and there is also the town of Merthyr Tydfil within 2 miles of the site.

Prince Charles Hospital (with A & E) is the main hospital for the Heads of the Valleys Region and is a short bus journey from the site. The site benefits from being approximately a 45 minute walk or a short bus ride from the town centre, which has a wide range of shops including Tesco the local supermarket. From the bus station there is a bus to Asda, the other supermarket in the immediate area of Merthyr Tydfil. Cyfarthfa High School is located in the Thomastown area on the outskirts of the town centre. All the above relate to Policy BW15 of the LDP 2006-2021.

As previously mentioned the site is surrounded by residential dwellings, the proposed site is within 2.5 miles of the Cyfarthfa Retail park, and 2.7 miles from Rhydycar Leisure Village, which houses restaurants, a cinema, an hotel and a leisure centre, approximately 2.0 miles from the site is Cyfarthfa Park, which has a children's playground, a miniature railway, Cyfarthfa Castle housing Cyfarthfa castle museum & art galley, a 9 hole golf course all situated in 158 acres of grass and woodland with a lake the majority of which is for recreational use.

The proposed houses are to have 2 & 3 bedrooms, the size and layout of which is similar to that of dwellings within the Pant area, this is to ensure the dwellings remain in context with the character of the area. The siting of the houses on the site is due to the size and shape of the site, the proposed layout of the site has

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been achieved by taking into account the topography of the site, the surrounding local area and the current housing market requirements.

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Community Safety

The proposed layout has an open feel to the site, this is in order to reduce the likelihood of crime that could occur, most areas of the site, can be over looked, this includes parking areas as well as open areas of land.

The dwellings are surrounded by residential dwellings, so therefore the natural surveillance during certain times of the day is quite high. This can be in the form of passing cars and pedestrians as well as from within surrounding buildings.

TAN 12 states that there must be a sense of ownership for every part of the development, this is achievable as all rear gardens are enclosed with retaining walls and/or an 1800mm close boarded timber fence. All dwellings have frontages over looking the associated parking areas, which are proposed to have a different surface finish to the mews court.

Policy BW7 of the LDP 2006-2021 is concerned with crime prevention, the likelihood of crimes being committed on the site can be reduced by keeping the front boundaries at a low height, having as many large open spaces as possible and avoiding any narrow, shadowed dark spaces will reduce the number of places that crime can occur unnoticed.

The incorporation and use of external lighting can also help to improve natural surveillance and reduce the risk of crime to a property itself. It is proposed external lighting will be included on both the front and rear of each dwelling.

Policy BW12 of the LDP 2006-2021 expresses the need for all new developments to demonstrate how they will help reduce the need to travel, encourage the use of transport other than the private car, avoid increasing traffic to unacceptable levels, avoid causing or exacerbating highway safety problems.

As mentioned throughout this design and access statement there are bus stops within the vicinity of the site which allows residents to choose a more sustainable mode of transport. The development is on a relatively small scale, therefore it is not anticipated that the traffic produced will increase the overall flow of traffic significantly enough to cause additional congestion or highway safety problems.

The works will be fenced off at the start of the contract in order to protect the public using the adjacent road and public footpath to the South. This fencing will be left secured at the end of everyday in order to stop the unauthorised admittance by of members of the public. This is especially important as there is likely to be children living in the vicinity of the site who might try to access the site.

As mentioned previously it is essential that Trevor Close remains accessible throughout the duration of the works to avoid any unnecessary disruption to the occupants of the surrounding dwellings.

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Environmental Sustainability

All housing developments are required to achieve an 8% improvement on the 2010 energy performance of buildings as set out in Approved Document L1A of the Building Regulations 2014.

Policy BW5 of the LDP 2006-2021 states that development proposals where their use, siting and design will not have an unacceptable impact on the character and quality of the landscape, Ecology and habitat of acknowledged importance at designated and non-designated sites, trees of high amenity value or wildlife importance, the quality of natural resources including water, air and soil and the natural drainage of surface water.

The site is a greenfield site, and is likely to have limited ecological value, as there are not likely to be any trees of high amenity value or wildlife of any importance. The site is covered in grass with a wooded overgrown area to the North. As the majority of the site is currently soft landscaped there will be a small reduction in the natural drainage of the surface post construction, it will be suggested that the brick paving to the parking spaces be a sustainable paving system, and soakaways be located on site, for the surface water drainage from the houses.

Policy BW7 of the LDP 2006-2021 outlines a number of issues with regard to sustainable design and place making. The issues and solutions are discussed below. The development should not result in detrimental impact on local amenity in terms of visual impact, loss of light or privacy, disturbance and traffic movement.

The site currently has no parking or need for cars to be parked nearby, once the development has been constructed there will be an additional 61 cars using the surrounding roads, this includes 6 No visitor parking spaces, therefore there should be no reason for residents or visitors to be parking on the highway or footpath and causing accessibility and safety issues. This statement can be adhered to as the proposed development will enhance the visual impact of the area, due to the existing site being derelict land within the village of Pant, which is a residential area. It is not anticipated that there will be any alteration to light levels or privacy to the surrounding dwellings once the development has been built. The development has been designed so there are no over looking issues between dwellings within the new development, where overlooking could occur obscured windows have been designed into the development to avoid overlooking. There will be limited disturbance during construction, this however will have restricted working hours in order to reduce this as much as possible. Traffic movement should not be unduly affected as the proposed development incorporates the required number of car parking spaces to serve the development. The only disturbance will come during construction, and this will be planned to cause minimum disruption in the greatest number of residents.

To be in keeping with the immediate area all material colours and finishes will match the surrounding dwellings. The surrounding dwellings have a mix of brick, pebble dash and render with brick detailing. In order to reduce the environmental impact of the proposed construction works, all materials are to be locally sourced and have as little embodied energy as possible.

All windows are to be upvc double glazed, all doors are to be composite, this will ensure the buildings are secure and will also reduce the emissions of the dwelling and ensure the building is as air tight as possible to avoid unnecessary heating. The heating systems are to be an eco combi-condensing boiler and to have a SEDBUK energy rating of A, this will ensure the heating system is as economic as possible.

To ensure environmental sustainability materials used should have low embodied energy, be sustainably sourced, be sourced locally to avoid transportation costs and harmful exhaust fumes being pumped into the atmosphere, delivery miles as well as energy consumption on site during construction should be monitored, this incorporates the CO2/ energy use produced from the site and site related transport being monitored.

In accordance with Planning Policy Wales 2002 section 1.4.14 there is a need for water to be handled correctly. This incorporates surface water run-off, on this site at present there is soft landscaping where water can gradually permeate through the soil, in order to avoid the risk of flooding due to excessive surface water run-off being moved into one place too quickly it is important that the majority of the soft landscaping is retained. It also incorporates the need for water to be retained and used sensibly as due to climate change predictions Wales is likely to suffer with increased flooding during the winter months and increased dry weather which could lead to drought during the summer months.

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The above points have been addressed by ensuring as much soft landscaping as possible is retained and also water management to reduce the surface water run off. In accordance with Approved Document G of the Building Regulations 2009 it is proposed that a low capacity bath will be installed, flow restrictors will be fitted to all taps and dual flush toilets will be installed. Water management is an issue also referred to in Policy BW7 of the LDP 2006-2021.

Policy BW8 of the LDP 2006-2021 relates to development and the water environment. This policy gives regard to developments not being built on flood plains, developments not having an adverse affect on quality/ quantity of surface waters or ground water sources, that adequate water and sewerage systems exist in close proximity to the development.

In accordance with Policy BW7 of the LDP 2006-2021 all construction waste should be sorted on site and as much material as possible should be reused on the site. If this is not possible it may be possible to take it to a reclamation yard/recycling plant to be reused or recycled there. Carrying out these measures will reduce the need for materials being taken to landfill sites unnecessarily and reduce the costs during construction.

Merthyr Tydfil has a number of recycling options in place, this includes kerbside collection of materials such as, Plastic bottles e.g. milk, drink, shampoo bottles, Food containers – e.g. yoghurt pots, margarine tubs, Food trays (e.g. ready meal trays), Punnets, Foil trays and containers, Food and drink cans, Aerosols, Newspaper & magazines, Telephone directories, Catalogues, Junk mail, Flattened cardboard boxes, Cardboard packaging, Food and drink cartons, Glass bottles and jars, All food waste, Cooked and uncooked food, Meat, Tea bags, Fish, Bones, Egg shells, Liquids (e.g oil, drinks etc), Leaves, Flowers, Plants, Weeds, Grass cuttings, Hedge clippings, Tree and shrub prunings, Small branches.

There is a collection scheme in place for redundant and bulky household items, such as washing machines, beds, fridge/freezers etc., this is done by prior appointment with the council only. These schemes will commence on the site after completion and when the houses are occupied.

In order to increase energy efficiency and also in accordance with Policy BW9 of the LDP 2006-2021 and Approved Document L1A of the Building Regulations 2006 energy efficient light fittings are to be installed, these are to be either one in every four fixed light fittings or one per 25m² of floor space, on this scheme we are aiming to achieve 100% energy efficient lighting.

Policy BW7 of the LDP 2006-2021 states that the development should contribute to national and local energy efficiency target through the promotion of energy and resource efficient/ adaptable buildings and layouts using sustainable design/construction techniques and materials. This can be achieved as the 2014 Building Regulations in Wales ensures that a dwelling should be at least 8% more energy efficient than the 2010 Building Regulations. The above information is also relevant to policy BW9 of the LDP 2006-2021.

The dwellings will be required to have a Green Guide rating of A+, this will ensure that the dwellings are as energy efficient as possible. SAP calculations will also be carried out on the dwellings.

Due to the location of the site working hours are to be restricted to avoid unnecessary noise pollution and disturbance to the residents of the neighbouring dwellings.

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Movement

Pant is regarded in the LDP 2006-2021 as being in the Primary Growth Area. Policy BW1 section 3.1.3 states that the development within the Primary Growth Area has the greatest potential for reducing the overall need to travel, as well as developing the capacity of sustainable transport links. This is illustrated previously in this document.

TAN 12 states that there needs to be a shift from car use to walking, cycling and public transport, as previously mentioned this can be achieved with relative ease, as the site is within walking distance of bus stops, which due to the ease of access could encourage the use of public transport instead of private car as public transport is a more environmentally friendly approach. As previously mentioned in this design and access statement there are bus stops within walking distance of the proposed site. They can be reached over existing footpaths which are not necessarily of a width for wheelchairs and or pushchairs to pass each other.

The majority of the proposed dwellings can be accessed from 3 sides via paths. The dwellings have 2/3 parking spaces per dwelling in accordance with CSS Wales Parking Guidelines. From these parking spaces there is a level, ramped or ambulant stepped access to the front entrance of each of the dwellings, the gradient of the ramp is a maximum of 1 in 12. There will be handrails on approach to the dwellings only where there are ambulant steps, the surface finishes of the site vary from block paviors on the parking areas, tarmac on the road and concrete paving slabs on the footpaths. The footpath along Trevor Close will have drop kerbs and tactile paving at the crossover to ensure all members of the public can use the footpath and crossing safely.

As mentioned elsewhere in this design and access statement access to the houses from the parking areas will be via a ramp with a gradient of 1 in 12 or ambulant steps, this is due to the topography of the site. The houses will have entrance doors with a 775mm minimum clear opening in accordance with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations 2004 and rollover thresholds to enable easy access to the dwellings for all potential users. The ground floor of the houses will have corridors and doors wide enough for wheelchair access and also have a WC, all of which are in accordance with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations 2004.

Movement along Trevor Close will not be adversely affected during the construction of the proposed dwellings, however there will be some disruption when deliveries are made to the site. This will be co-ordinated at times which will cause the least disruption possible to others using Trevor Close and the surrounding roads.

Policy BW7 of the LDP 2006-2021 states that the development should foster 'inclusive design' by ensuring the development allows access for the widest range of people possible. This is easily achievable as the development must also adhere to Approved Document M of the Building Regulations 2004 which requires the development to be accessible to people with disabilities, parents of young children and people with impaired mobility, the dwellings have been designed to incorporate the following features to make this possible.

Circulation within the ground floor of the houses has been designed for wheelchair access, i.e. the corridor widths within the houses will be 1050mm minimum & door widths will give a minimum clear opening of 775mm. A wheelchair accessible wc is provided within the ground floor of each house again complying with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations 2004.

All light switches, sockets etc. within the building are to be located between 450mm and 1050mm above finished floor level to permit easy access by wheelchair users, again in compliance with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations 2004.