

The Demolition of the Former Caersalem Chapel and the Erection of 4no. Detached Dwellings and Associated Infrastructure at:

Caersalem Chapel, The Rise, Pant, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 2BN

Planning, Design and Access Statement (September 2026)



The Demolition of the Former Caersalem Chapel and the Erection of 4no. Detached Dwellings and Associated Infrastructure

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

This Planning, Design & Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared support of a planning application submission for the demolition of the former Caersalem Chapel and the erection of 4no. detached dwellings and associated infrastructure. As a 'living document' this statement will be updated periodically through the planning process in order to illustrate the evolution of this scheme.

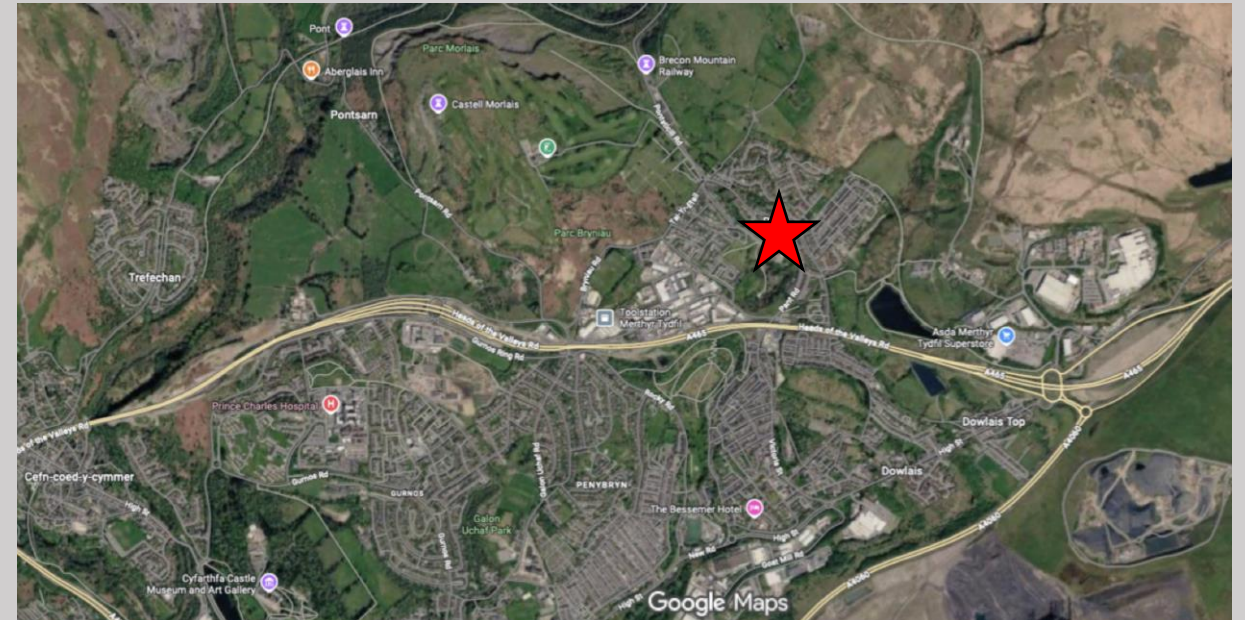
This statement seeks to communicate the proposed development, demonstrate the design process which has been undertaken and detail the policy and design objectives with which the proposed development complies.

Under the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan (2016-2031), Pant is categorized as part of the "Main Settlement of Merthyr Tydfil". Geographically, it is located within the northern part of the County Borough, falling under the Primary Growth Area. This area is designated to absorb the majority of the region's housing, infrastructure, and economic development. The site relates to a large, detached building, known as Caersalem Chapel, and is prominently sited on the corner of The Rise and Trevor Close.

1.2 Location

The application site's location is illustrated by the red star on the image below. It is located in Pant which is a village and community located on the northernmost outskirts of Merthyr Tydfil. Perched at an average elevation of roughly 366 metres above sea level, it occupies a distinct transitional landscape where the industrial valley setting gives way to open countryside. The site location plan extract below serves to demonstrate the shape of the application site and its location in the context of the surrounding dwellings. Pant itself It is well served by community facilities such as schools, local green spaces, places of worship and sports and social clubs as well as local pubs/restaurants and public transport links.

Application Site:



1.0 Introduction

The interior of the building comprises of one large space and a number of rooms all of which are at ground floor level. At the front of the building is a large carpark (north) and trees, shrubs and grass are planted around the building. The external materials of the building are light orange-coloured bricks, concrete tile roof and the window and door frames appear to be brown coloured uPVC.

The site is located in a predominantly residential area, the rear of the building faces Pant Green (open space) and the site is adjacent to a War Memorial which is a grade II listed building.

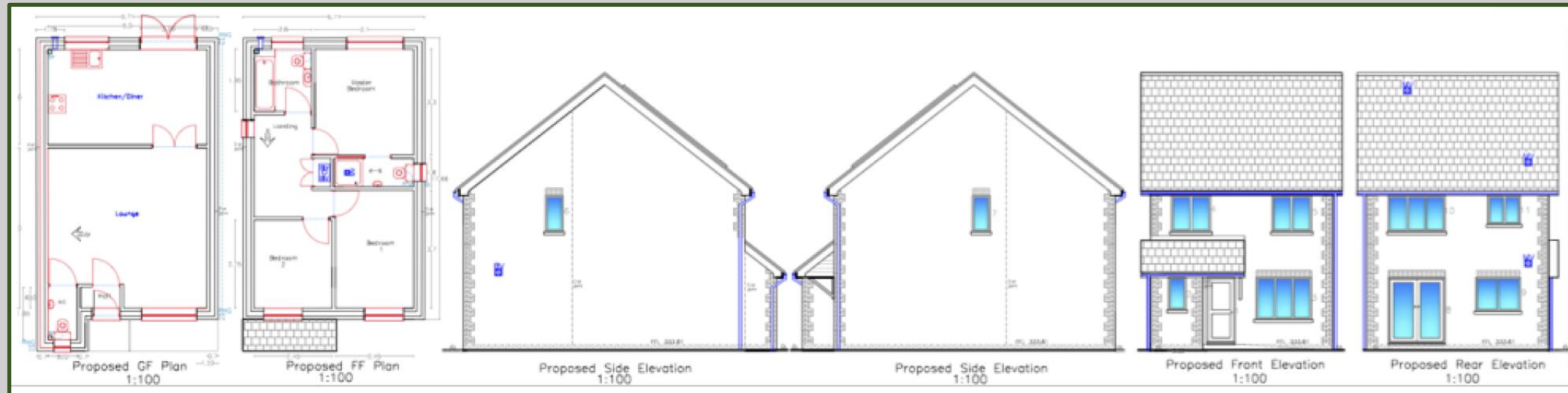
The application site is identified as a community facility which is located within a Primary Growth Area and the settlement boundary as designated within the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031.

1.3 Proposed Development

The proposal is for the demolition of the chapel and redevelopment of the site to provide 4 detached dwellings which would be built in 2 groups and are identified on the site layout plan, with plots 1 and 2 positioned along the southwest boundary and plots 3 and 4 located along the southeast boundary. The existing vehicular access point would be utilised and increased in width, and a stepped pedestrian access to No's 3 and 4 would be provided via Trevor Close.

1.4 Site History

An application for a change of use from chapel (D1 use class) to chapel and undertakers/funeral directors (Sui Generis use class) was granted on 29th June 2020 under planning reference P/20/0107.



1.0 Introduction

1.5 Loss of a Community Facility:

The Council's Planning Officer advised at the pre-application advice stage that the loss of a chapel would need to be assessed against Policy SW13 of the LDP, which states:

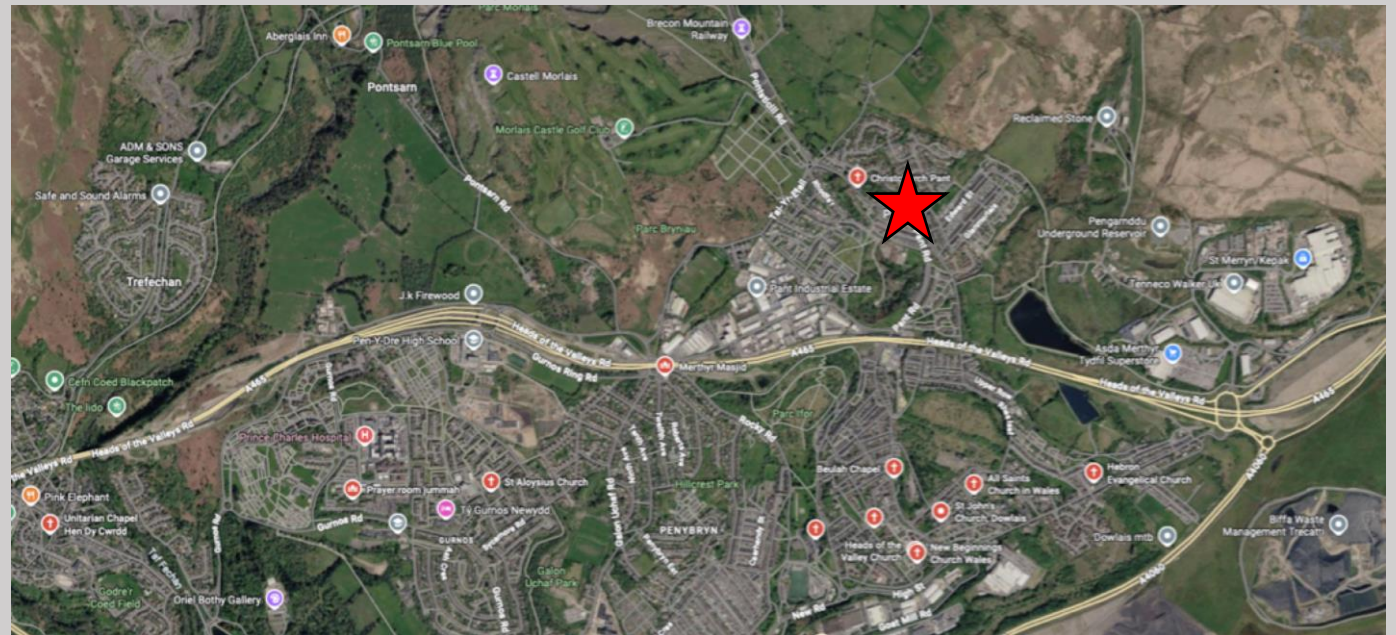
The Council will protect and support the enhancement of the County Borough's existing community facilities. Development proposals that would result in a loss of an existing community facility will only be permitted where:-

- alternative provision of at least equivalent value to the local community can be provided nearby, or
- it can be demonstrated that existing provision is inappropriate or surplus to the needs of the community and is no longer required, or
- it can be demonstrated there is no longer a viable community use for the facility.

Any future planning application would need to be supported by evidence which demonstrates that the chapel is either no longer required for its original purpose and there are suitable alternative community facilities nearby which would satisfy local needs. Proposals would also need to demonstrate that the premises has had no interest for community use(s) by being appropriately and actively marketed for a minimum of 6 months and that genuine effort to sell or let the property over that period have been unsuccessful. Evidence of active marketing of the property should include details of the sales literature, advertisement campaign and buyer interest over the period.

Accordingly, the disused chapel has been marketed since 3rd October 2025 and the application is supported by the marketing literature and confirmation of the marketing period and levels of interest provided by Peter Alan Estate Agents.

The aerial image below denotes the location of the application site with a red star. The red spots denote the location of other places of worship within the vicinity of the site which further demonstrates compliance with Policy SW13 in that alternative provision of equivalent value is available in the community.



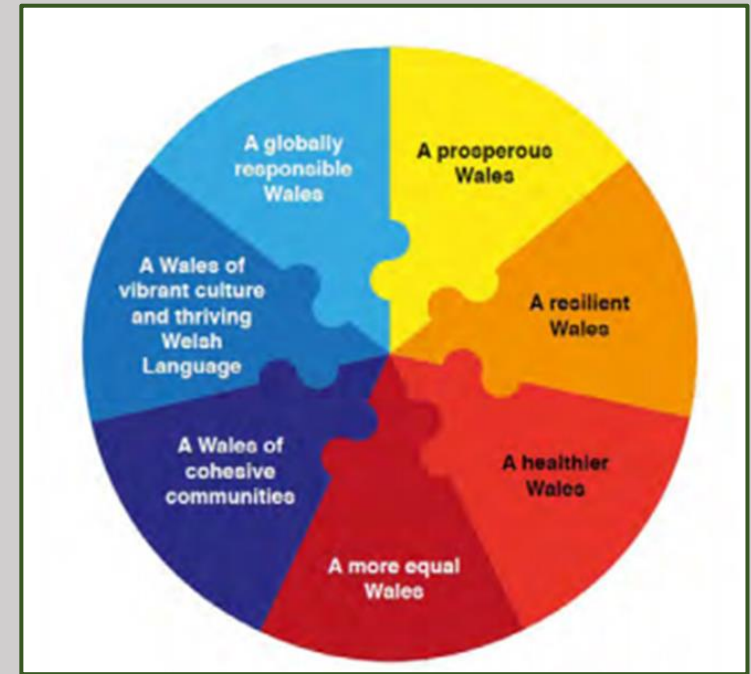
2.0 Policy Context

2.1 Planning Policy Wales

Welsh Government planning policy is contained within Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (February 2021) and Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 which was published in July 2024. PPW 12 is centred around Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Planning Policy Wales establishes the key principles for the planning system in Wales and the Local Development Plans apply these principles to their areas and shape them by evidence. PPW states that 'the planning system should create sustainable places which are attractive, sociable, accessible, active, secure, welcoming, healthy and friendly. Development proposals should create the conditions to bring people together, making them want to live, work and play in areas with a senses of place and well-being'.

Paragraph 3.3 sets out how 'good design is fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. Design is not just about the architecture of a building but the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment and between people and places. To achieve sustainable development, design must go beyond aesthetics and include the social, economic, environmental, cultural aspects of the development, including how space is used, how buildings and the public realm support this use, as well as its construction, operation, management and its relationship with the surrounding area'.



2.0 Policy Context

2.2 Technical Advice Note 12: Design

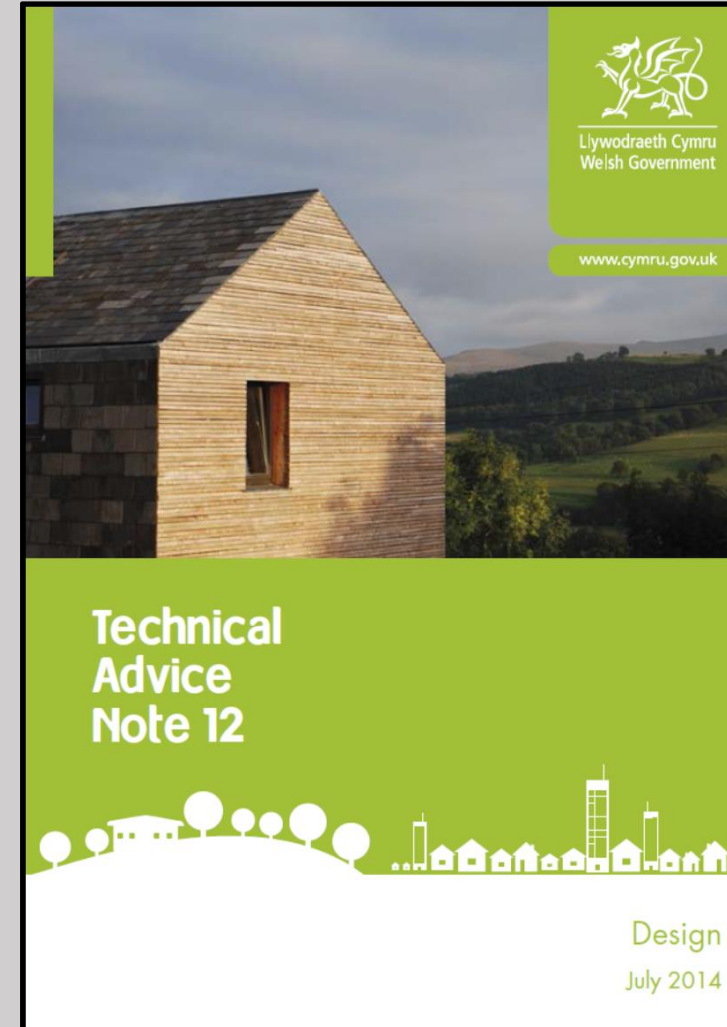
The Welsh Government updated Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design in 2014. It advocates a process model for design drawing from a contextual analysis of the surroundings of a development to achieve a well designed, flexible and adaptable development.

The key aspects are:

- Access;
- Character (Amount, Layout, Scale, Appearance, Landscaping);
- Community Safety;
- Environmental Sustainability; and
- Movement.

It also identifies the objectives of good design as:

- Ensuring ease of access for all;
- Sustaining or enhancing local character;
- Promoting legible development;
- Promoting successful relations between public and private space;
- Promoting quality, choice and variety;
- Promoting innovative design;
- Ensuring attractive, safe public spaces;
- Security through natural surveillance;
- Achieving efficient use and protection of natural resources;
- Enhancing biodiversity;
- Designing for change; and
- Promoting sustainable means of travel.



2.0 Policy Context

2.3 Adopted Local Development Plan

The following policies of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031 would be relevant to the determination of an application for this proposal:

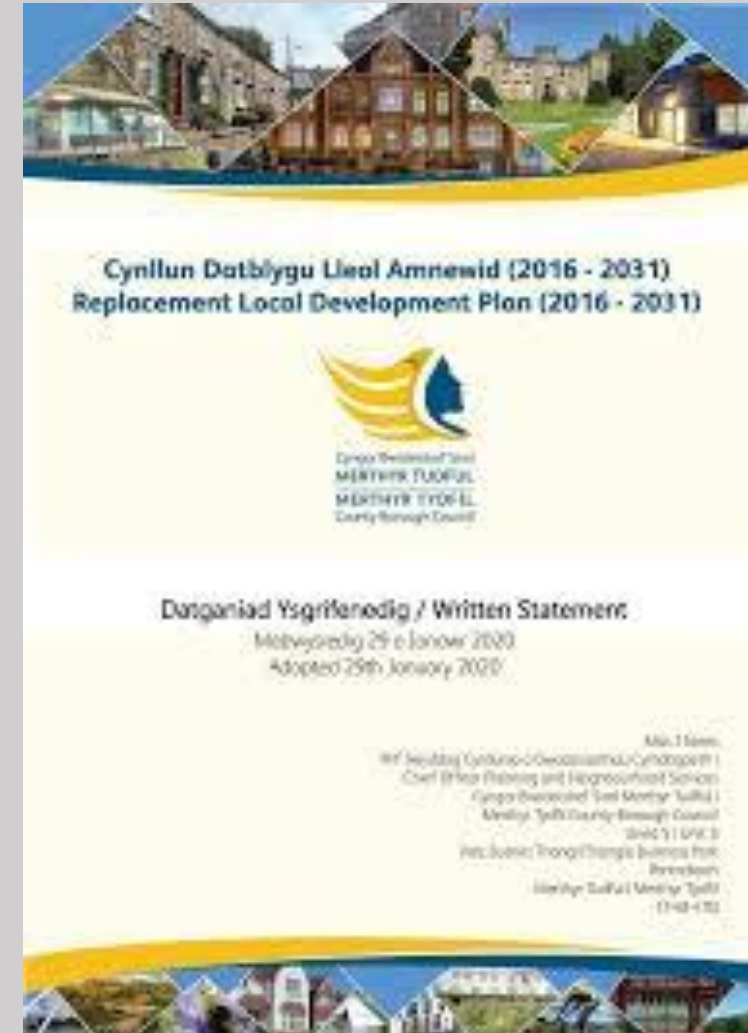
- Policy SW1: Provision of New Homes
- Policy SW2: Provision of Affordable Housing
- Policy SW3: Sustainably Distributing New Homes
- Policy SW4: Settlement Boundaries
- Policy SW9: Planning Obligations
- Policy SW11: Sustainable Design and Placemaking
- Policy SW12: Improving the Transport Network
- Policy EnW1: Nature Conservation & Ecosystem Resilience
- Policy EnW2: Internationally and Nationally Protected Sites and Species
- Policy EnW3: Regionally Important Geological Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Local Nature Reserves and Priority Habitats and Species
- Policy EnW4: Environmental Protection
- Policy EnW5: Landscape Protection
- Policy CW1: The Historic Environment

2.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance

Furthermore, any planning application would be determined having regard to the advice contained within the following Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

Notes:

- Note 1: Affordable Housing (March 2012)
- Note 2: Planning Obligations (March 2012)
- Note 4: Sustainable Design (July 2013)
- Note 5: Nature and Development (May 2015)



3.0 Site Context

3.1 Site Characteristics

The site is within the settlement boundary, as defined in the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031.

At the front of the building is a large carpark (northwest) and trees, shrubs and grass are planted around most of the boundaries of the site. The external materials of the building are light orange-coloured bricks, concrete tile roof and the window and door frames appear to be brown coloured uPVC, and vehicular and pedestrian access/egress is afforded via The Rise.

The site area measures approximately 0.11 hectares and in terms of topography, the ground level of the building and carpark is level for the most part but around the southeast and southwest boundaries of the site, the ground levels slope downwards. The site is located in a predominantly residential area, with the southwest side of the site facing Pant Green (open space) and close to the southwest boundary of the site is a War Memorial which is a Listed Building (Grade II).



3.0 Site Context

3.2 Surrounding Area

The site is surrounded by a variety of property types as illustrated by the images opposite.

There is a bungalow located to the north of the site (top left), whereas more traditional detached and terraced properties are located immediately to the north of the site along The Rise.

As illustrated, the majority of dwellings in this locality are terraced in nature, although there are numerous examples of new-build detached and semi-detached properties.

A variety of finishes are also prevalent from brick and render to stone and pebbledash.



4.0 Access

4.1 Accessibility

The site is accessed directly from the adopted highway as illustrated by the red arrow opposite and is well served by both the vehicular and pedestrian network,

As per of the pre-application submission, it was apparent that the Head of Engineering and Highways (Highways) did not raise any concerns regarding the utilisation of the existing access point into the site.

In addition to vehicular accessibility into the site, it should be noted that a level threshold access will be provided into all 4 new dwellings in line with the principles of Lifetime Homes, ensuring ease of access for individuals with a variety of physical and sensory impairments.

4.2 Car Parking

Ample parking and turning space is provided within the site with each dwelling afforded 2no. driveway parking spaces. Each space has been discreetly positioned to ensure the proposed development is not dominated, in a visual sense, by car parking.



5.0 Character

5.1 Amount

The application proposes the demolition of the former disused Caersalem Chapel and the erection of 4no. Detached dwellings and associated infrastructure.

In terms of density and built form, the proposed development provides for a more efficient use of this parcel of land without appearing as an overly cramped form of development (see layout opposite).

The proposal seeks to provide appropriate communal and private amenity space for the dwellings.

5.2 Layout

The scheme has been designed to create a high quality environment. Adequate stand-off distances will be provided to all neighbouring residential properties, supplemented by suitable natural boundary treatments which would not serve to adversely impact their amenities in terms of loss of privacy or overbearing effect.

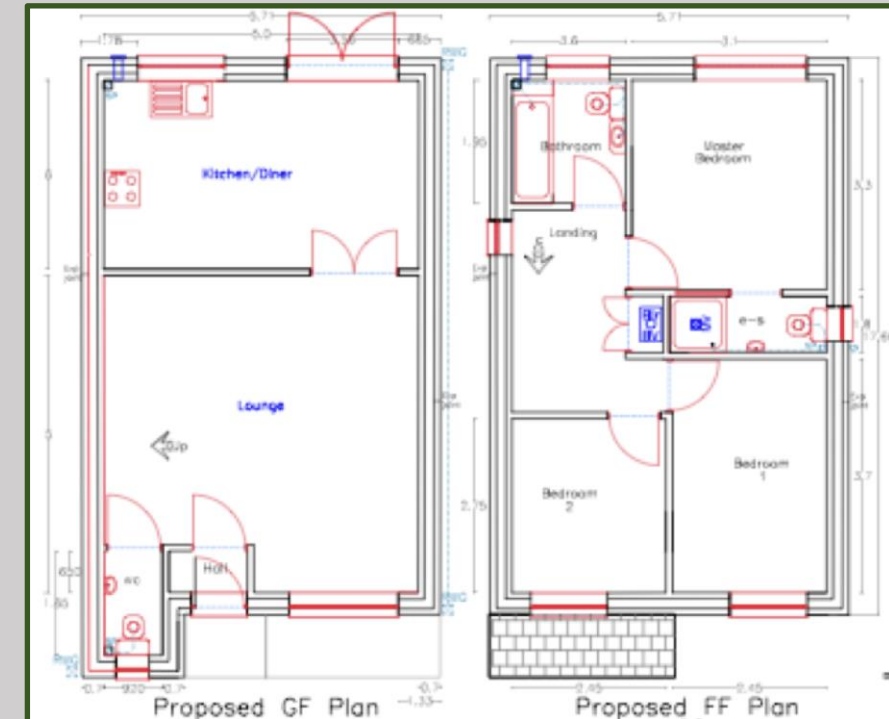
Access is provided to existing footways, including the pavement running immediately adjacent to the application site, as well as to nearby shared surfaces and the local cycling network.

The dwellings are arranged as mirror images of one another and each provide a hall, WC, lounge and kitchen/diner on the ground floor and 3no. Bedrooms, an en suite and a family bathroom on the first floor.

To this end, given the policy context provided by the Adopted Local Development Plan; the nature of surrounding land uses and constraints; as well as the general location, this scheme would represent a positive and sustainable development solution for this site.

5.3 Scale

The scale and massing of the proposed development has been designed to integrate with its surroundings. Indeed the new dwellings would be comparable in height with the existing chapel building.



5.0 Character

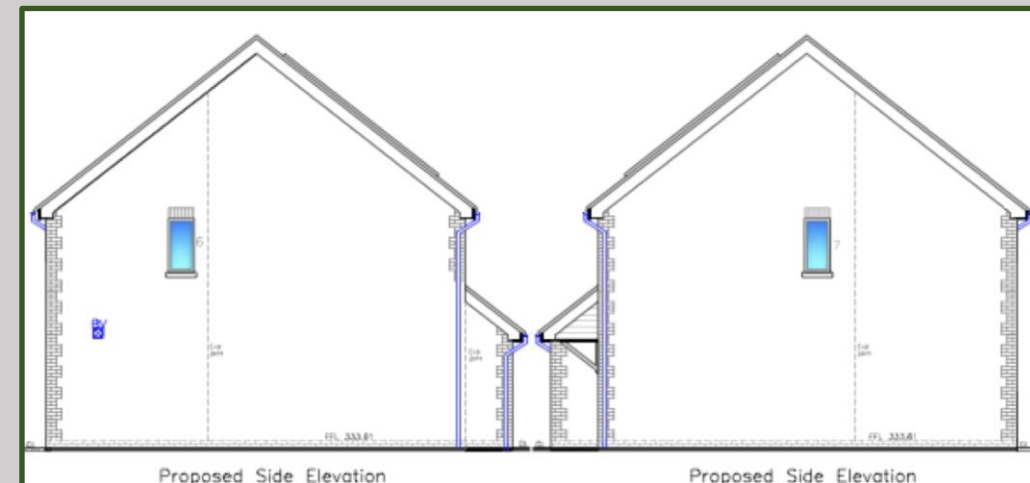
5.4 Appearance

An array of materials are used throughout the surrounding area. Render is the most frequently found exterior material although it should be noted that pebbledash and brick is also prevalent in the area.

However, in this instance, it is considered that a fined down render with brick corner detail best compliments the proposed simple, traditional design.

As set out in the application, the materials proposed for use in this development are as follows:

- Walls – fined down cream render with brick corner detail
- Roof – Artificial Slate
- Fascia/soffit/eaves – White uPVC
- Door – White uPVC/composite
- Windows – White uPVC
- Boundary - Staffordshire blue brick with close boarded timber fencing
- Hard surfaces – tarmac and patio slabs



5.0 Character

5.5 Landscaping

It should be noted that the application is also supported by a Green infrastructure Statement.

It is concluded in this document that appropriate and proportionate mitigation/compensation is to be delivered on site as part of the proposed landscaping scheme.

To mitigate for the potential loss of trees, shrubs, and botanicals, maintain connectivity, and increase biodiversity, a traditional hedgerow mix will be incorporated at the site boundary, together with native trees and shrubs including Downy Birch *Betula pubescens*, Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*, and Hazel *Corylus avellana*. For hedgerows, double-row planting is recommended, with rows at least 40 cm apart and 4–6 plants per metre, reflecting the importance of hedgerows for UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority species. Night-scented, nectar-rich planting should also be incorporated to support foraging invertebrates and, in turn, foraging bats, including Common Evening Primrose *Oenothera biennis*, Night-Scented Stock *Matthiola longipetala*, and Nicotiana *Nicotiana glauca*. A species-rich under-canopy seed mix will be included with the tree and hedgerow planting, and a species rich seed mix will be used for all new green spaces and lawns.

The proposed measures will maintain connectivity, increase local biodiversity, and provide additional nesting and

foraging opportunities, thereby achieving biodiversity net gain for the site.



6.0 Community Safety

6.1 Secured by Design

Secured by Design (SBD) is a police initiative to guide and encourage those engaged within the specification, design and build of new homes to adopt crime prevention measures in new development. The proposal is SBD compliant in that all footpaths, parking areas and open spaces are overlooked for natural surveillance. The proposed development would further enhance the existing situation from a natural surveillance perspective with additional windows overlooking this space.

6.2 Boundary Treatments

The proposal strongly defines and reinforces the boundary between public and private. Notwithstanding this, the site vehicular access will remain open to enable access and egress without stopping in the public highway. Given the nature of the site, where possible defensible space between the 'public space' and the front door will be provided that will clearly remain within the responsibility of the occupier to maintain and keep free from unnecessary urban paraphernalia.

6.3 Surveillance

As above, natural surveillance is provided by the orientation of the dwellings overlooking all public spaces surrounding and within the application site.



7.0 Environmental Sustainability

7.1 Environmental Sustainability

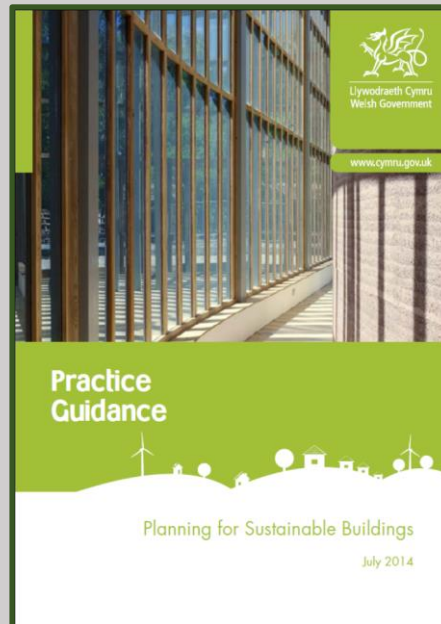
The proposed development has been designed with sustainability in mind and is an important consideration of the overall development.

The proposed development comprises a conversion of an existing building as well as two new dwellings and, as previously outlined, this is considered to be a sustainable location with access to retail, education, recreational space, places of worship, employment opportunities and public transport.

The Welsh Minister for Housing and Regeneration announced major changes to the national planning policy requirements for sustainable building standards following changes to Part L (relating to energy efficiency) of the Building Regulations which came into force on the 31st July 2014.

The primary reason for this change is that the Building Regulations provides a more appropriate vehicle for setting building standards. As such, there has been an amendment to TAN 12 (Design) and TAN 22 (Planning for Sustainable Buildings) has been revoked and practice Guidance on Planning for Sustainable Buildings issued instead.

To this end, the applicant will consider appropriate means of meeting the relevant Building Regulations requirements such as the incorporation PV panels, air source heat pumps and EV charging points. These matters can be agreed in detail by way of a suitably worded planning condition.



8.0 Movement

8.1 Walking

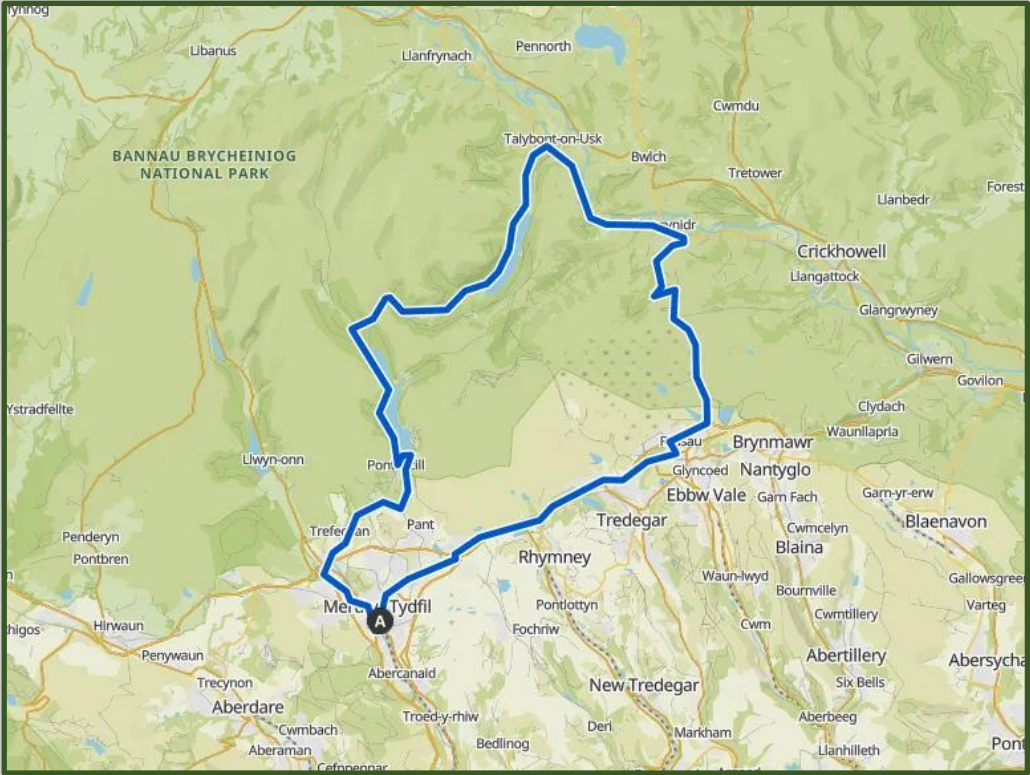
Manual for Streets defines a ‘Walkable Neighbourhood’ as 800m whilst walking distances for pedestrians without mobility impairment as stated in the Institution of Highways and Transportation (IHT) Guidelines for Providing for Journeys on Foot (2000) is up to 2km as summarised below.

There are numerous schools, shops, places of worship and other local facilities within a reasonable walking or cycling distance of the site. Therefore this can be seen as a sustainable site, which will integrate nicely into the existing community with the added benefit of non motor vehicle means of transport being an obvious feature.

8.2 Cycling

The site is located within the Pant settlement which is located within a short distance of numerous facilities suitable for cycling such as the Pontsticill Reservoir-Taf Fechan Forest gravel track loop (illustrated opposite).

	Town Centres	Work/School	Elsewhere
Desireable	200m	500m	400m
Acceptable	400m	1000m	800m
Preferred Max.	800m	2000m	1200m
IHT Walking Distances			



8.0 Movement

8.3 Public Transport

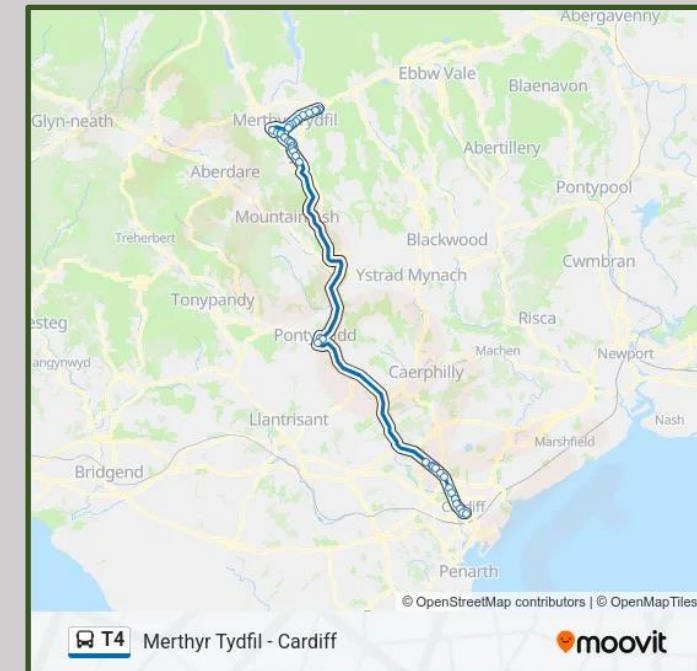
The application site is considered to be well served by public transport.

The nearest bus stops are located immediately to the north east and southwest of the application site. This bus stop provides a regular and convenient service via the number 35 route to Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre and further afield to Cardiff via the number 4 service.

The nearest train station is Merthyr Tydfil Railway Station located less than 3.5km from the site. The station is located on the Merthyr Tydfil to Cardiff line with trains stopping at Pentre-Bach, Troed-y-rhiw, Merthyr Vale, Quakers Yard, Abercynon, Pontypridd, Trefforest, Trefforest Estate, Taffs Well, Radyr, Llandaf, Cathays, and Cardiff Queen Street.

8.4 Vehicular

The vehicular access to the site will be directly from High Street and Elim Street.



9.0 Conclusion

This Planning, Design and Access Statement shows that the proposed development meets the objectives of good design as set out in TAN 12 because:

The accessibility of the site ensures access for all by meeting the relevant policies and regulations with regard to car parking, pathways, entrances and future adaptability.

The amount, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping of the proposed development are all in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.

The proposed development is legible, links public and private space ensuring that both are attractive and safe and promotes quality through innovative design.

In terms of community safety, the proposed development includes secured by design principles, acceptable boundary treatments and natural surveillance as well as the ability to promote ownership and responsibility.

The proposed development is environmentally sustainable in that it meets and exceeds the relevant sustainable design standards required of it, achieves efficient use and protection of natural resources and enhances biodiversity.

There are numerous facilities and amenities within walking and cycling distance of the proposed development. It is also well served by public transport and meets the Council's parking guidelines.