



# DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Land at De Braose Close, Danescourt, Cardiff

## 1.0 Introduction

The statement is prepared in support of a full planning application by Taff Housing Association Ltd for the development of land accessed from De Braose Close, Danescourt, Cardiff. The proposals are for 45 residential dwellings together with associated infrastructure, public open space and woodland management.

All the proposed dwellings will be affordable.

### Purpose and Input

This statement is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 and Technical Advice Note 23:Design.

The Statement has been prepared with input from the following design team:

- Philippa Cole: Town Planning;
- EDP: Landscape and Trees, Ecology, Heritage, Archaeology and Green Infra Structure;
- Vectos: Transportation;
- Davies, Llewellyn and Jones LLP: Architects;
- PHG Consulting Engineers: Infra structure Design and Drainage Strategy;
- Land Research Associates: Soil Consultants;
- Hunter Acoustics: Noise and Vibration Assessment;
- SLR Consulting: Air Quality Assessment;
- Integral Geo Technique: Site Investigation Report.



## 2.0 Context

### Site and Surrounds

The site is located to the north west of Cardiff City Centre in the suburb of Danescourt which forms part of the Llandaff Ward.

The application site extends to 2.88 Ha, is generally rectangular in shape except for a 'spur' which will provide the access from De Braose Close.

The site is surrounded by urban development. The Cardiff City Line Railway to the north east, Radyr Court Road and a residential property known as Ty Isaf to the South East, the rear gardens of Nicholson Webb Close and Blethin Close to the South West and woodland to the north . The River Taff lies beyond the railway line to the East of the site.

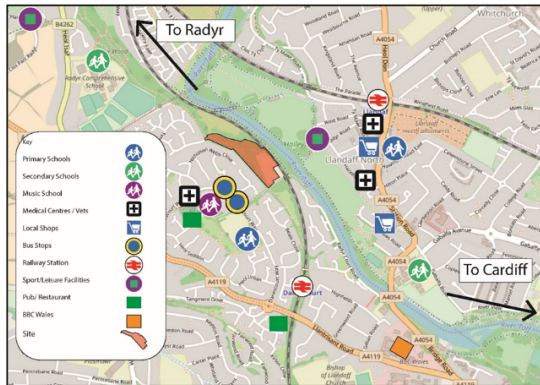
The site is in close proximity to many existing facilities including schools, shops, food outlets and medical facilities. The immediate area offers and excellent framework for non-motorised travel and is served by good quality pedestrian routes within attractive environments. On and within close proximity to the site, there are shared footways/cycleways, local streets conducive to cycling and various Public Rights of Way including the Taff Trail. Two Public Rights of Way: Radyr 48 and 56 cross the site. PROW 48 runs from De Braose Close to Radyr Court Road and PROW 56 from the pedestrian cut through from Nicholson Webb Close to the bridleway to the east of the railway line including the underpass.

Aerial Site Photo



Public Rights of Way

All routes and the proximity to local facilities reviewed in detail in the Transport Statement that accompanies the application.



Local Facilities

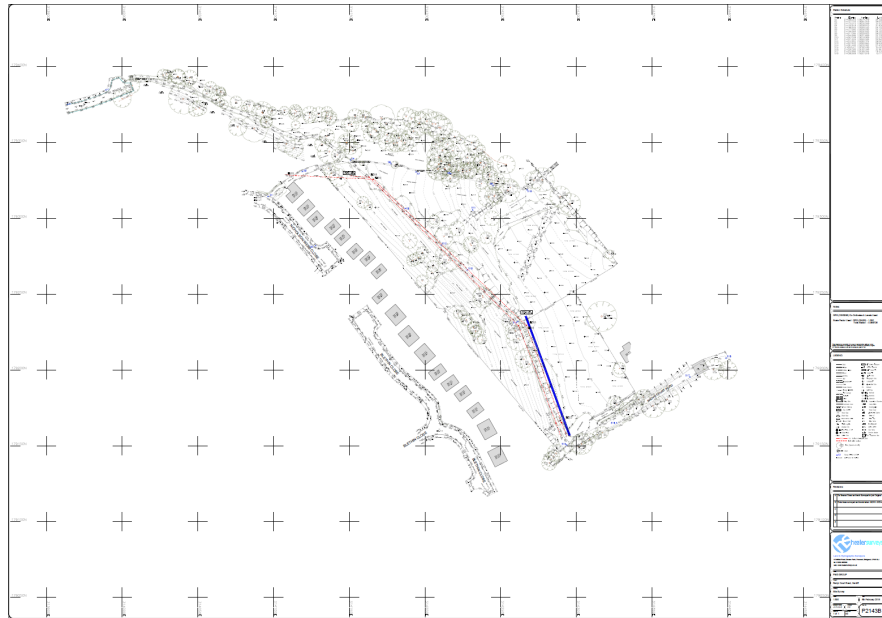


Bus Stops



Cycle Routes

A topographical survey of the site shows that the site is generally flat except for a steep embankment in the south west corner of the site.



*Topographical Survey*

existing semi-form to the south, west and south east.



*South West part of the site*

Two drains run through the site (from south west to north east). Both will be diverted to accommodate the development.

The application site supports two semi-improved neutral grassland fields and encroaching scrub, together with scattered trees and a block of unmanaged woodland comprising its northern extent. The woodland area supports secondary developing woodland predominantly of a relatively young age, with sparse ground flora, and is subject to regular public use, with littering and ground disturbance widespread.

The site is not the subject of any specific landscape or ecological designations and contains no known heritage assets.

The Arboricultural Report and Technical Note and the Ecological Assessment Report consider the quality of trees, woodland and the grassland in detail.

## Planning History

The site has been the subject of 2 previous applications for residential development although in both cases the proposed access was via Radyr Court Road.

### (a) Planning application ref 04/02044

The site is currently vacant and in private ownership. The last known use was agricultural.

There are 2 planning applications recoded in respect of the site.

Planning application ref 04/02044 proposed 5 dwellings on the site. It was refused in December 2004 for the following reason:

‘The proposal would result in the loss of an area of open space which has visual amenity value in forming part of a corridor of open space which separates the Danescourt residential area from the River Taff. Its development would therefore be contrary to Policy 7 of the City of Cardiff Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance to the plan on Open Space. It would also be contrary to policies 1.J and 2.49 of the deposit Cardiff Unitary Development Plan.’

A subsequent appeal was dismissed.

### (b) Planning Application 12/01454/DCO

A further planning application for the development of 48 dwellings was submitted in August 2012 (ref 12/01454/DCO).

The application was recommended for approval by officers of the council subject to conditions and the entering into of a Section 106 agreement. The Council did however refuse the application on the following grounds:

‘1.The proposal would result in the loss of an area of open space which has visual amenity value in forming part of a corridor of open space which separates the Danescourt Estate from the River Taff. Its development would therefore be contrary to the provisions of Policy 7 of the City of Cardiff Local Plan (January 1996), the Open Space Supplementary Planning Guidance (March 2008) and Policies 1.J and 2.49 of the deposit Cardiff Unitary Development Plan (October 2003).

2. The proposed vehicular access to the site, notwithstanding the proposed highway improvements, would be narrow in width and would need further improvement to avoid potential conflict between users of the highway, including pedestrians. It is therefore inadequate to serve the proposed development of 48 no. dwellings, contrary to the provisions of Policies 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 of the City of Cardiff Local Plan (January 1996), and Policy 2.57 of the deposit Cardiff Unitary Development Plan (October 2003) furthermore the necessary improvements to enable two vehicles to pass and the provision of a segregated footway would unacceptably damage the rural character of the area.’

The subsequent appeal was dismissed on grounds of highway safety. The inspector concluded on the matter of open space and the impact on the River Corridor that the proposed development would not be detrimental to open space in the area, that the River Corridor allocation does not amount to a ban on development and that the unique contribution the river valleys make to the character of the city by providing continuous green corridors between the Severn Estuary and the countryside beyond the urban edge would not be significantly eroded by the proposed development.

## **Policy**

The planning policy framework for the determination of the planning application is provided by National Planning Policy, together with the current Development Plan and adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance.

National Planning Policy is contained within Planning Policy Wales (PPW) and is supplemented by 21 Technical Advice Notes (TANs) providing detailed guidance on a range of topics. Planning Policy Wales (PPW) and the Wales Spatial Plan provide the overall strategic direction and may be material to decisions on individual planning applications.

At a local level the policy is set by the Cardiff Local Development Plan 2016. The site is identified as falling within the settlement boundary and within the Taff River corridor. Appropriate development with the River Corridor is permitted and the LDP and supporting SPG is clear that such an allocation is not a barrier to

development. The LDP provides a number of policies against which the proposals should be considered. These are broadly split into two categories i.e. that considering the principle of development and those policies that consider detailed design of the proposals. A number of Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes (SPGs) which support the LDP have been adopted by Cardiff Council including:

- Access, Circulation and Parking Standards
- Green Infra Structure
- Ecology and Bio-Diversity
- Trees and Development
- Public Rights of Way and Development
- River Corridors
- Protection and Provision of Open Space
- Planning Obligations
- Residential Design Guide
- Waste Collections and Storage Facilities

All policies are examined in detail in the planning statement that accompanies the planning application.

## Social and Economic

The 2011 Census - Key Quick Statistics Profile for Llandaff shows that the ward had a population of 8997 usual residents. The largest % of residents range between the ages of 45 and 59. The ward has a higher than Cardiff average of persons gaining higher qualification and a high proportion of residents in good /very good general health.

There are 3,954 dwellings in the ward. The vast majority of these - 80.3% are either owned outright or owned with a mortgage. Those dwellings that are usually defined as affordable housing i.e. those social rented from the Local Authority, those social rented from another party (usually a Registered Social Landlord) and those in shared ownership comprise 3.9% of the total number of dwellings. This compares with the Cardiff average of 17.5%.

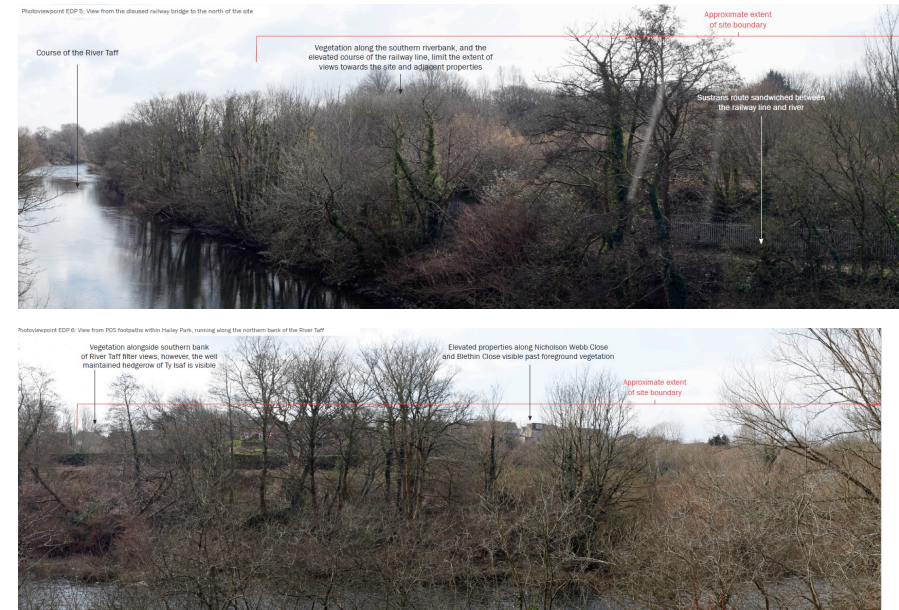
This is set against a waiting list for these types of property in Llandaff and Llandaff North of 2728 people.

## Landscape

The site is located within the City of Cardiff, to the east of Danescourt settlement and sandwiched between this and the Cardiff City Railway line which runs parallel and adjacent to the river Taff in this location.

The site is extremely well screened as a result of topography, vegetation and manmade features such as the railway line which is elevated along the site's eastern boundary and screens the site

from the east. The site slopes upwards along its western boundary which is well treed. Views from outside of the site are therefore limited by topography and vegetation.



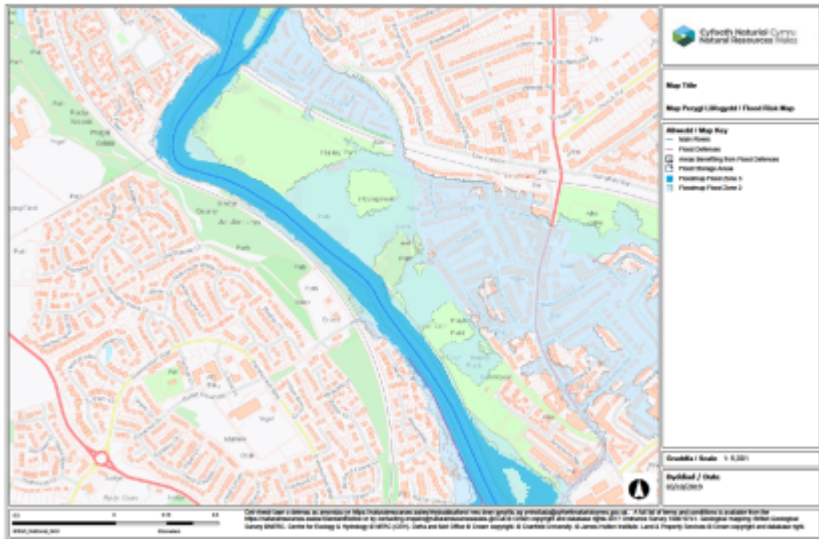
## Flooding and Drainage

The site is in Zone 1 so is at very low risk of fluvial or tidal flooding. The existing built environment and site topography offers natural protection from overland flow in the form of surface water or sewer flooding. The site is not at risk of groundwater flooding.



A site investigation undertaken by Integral Geotechnique measured infiltration rates of 2.0 to 5.1 x 10<sup>-5</sup> m/s. This is sufficient to employ surface water discharge to the ground via infiltration.

An existing adopted sewer crosses the site. DCWW has confirmed capacity in the adopted system for foul flows from this site.



*NRW Flood Risk Map*

## **Heritage and Archaeological**

There are no statutory designated heritage assets within the application site.

An Archaeological and Heritage Assessment accompanies the application and considers the potential effect of the development

on statutory heritage assets with 2 km of the site. It concludes that such assets will not be adversely affected by the proposed development.

The history of agriculture on the site means that any archaeological features beneath the ground are likely to have been disturbed through farming practices.

## **Ecology**

The site itself is not the subject of any statutory ecological designation. However, there are a number of such designations within the sites potential zone of influence, the closest SSSI being the Glamorgan Canal /Long Wood situated circa 1KM from the site.

The site itself is not covered by any non-statutory designations, although there are several within 2 KM of the site. Radyr Community Woodlands Site for Nature Conservation (SINC) Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) and the River Taff (SINC) are considered the most pertinent, located circa 40m to the north west and 50m to the east of the site at their closest points.

The application site supports two semi-improved neutral grassland fields and encroaching scrub, together with scattered trees and a block of unmanaged woodland comprising its northern extent. The woodland area supports secondary developing woodland predominantly of a relatively young age, with sparse ground flora, and is subject to regular public use, with littering and ground disturbance widespread.



### Ecology Survey

A full suite of ecological surveys was undertaken and is provided with the application.

With respect to the ecological value of the application site, the grassland fields are considered to be of poor ecological value, being species poor, limited in extent and subject to significant scrub encroachment. The dense scrub and scattered trees aligning the south western boundary of the site, together with the woodland block forming the northern extent, comprise suitable wildlife

corridors given their connectivity to Radyr Community Woodlands SINC/ASNW beyond.

The application site was found to support a generalist bat assemblage predominantly for foraging. Only one tree was found to have roosting potential. The majority of trees having negligible potential, with a small number having low potential. A low population of slow worm is confirmed as present on site. No evidence of dormouse was recorded through surveys with only wood mouse being identified. The present habitats on site do not support a generalist bird assemblage.

### Noise and Vibration

Noise and vibration Surveys have been carried out on site and accompany the application.

In respect of noise the site is indicated to fall at the boundary of Noise Exposure Category A and B of Technical Advice Note 11.

Garden spaces are indicated to be capable of meeting the 55dB(A) criterion.

In respect of vibration, the measured levels are well within criterion quoted in Cardiff Council’s standard condition (taken from British Standard 6472) and is not an issue on this site.

## **Air Quality**

The site is not located within an Air quality Management Area. The nearest AQMA is the Llandaff Air Quality Management Area on the A4119 circa 1.5 Km from the site.

### **3.0 Constraints and Opportunities**

#### **Opportunities**

##### **Housing Need**

The proposed development is for 45 residential dwellings all of which will be affordable.

There are currently 2728 people on the waiting list for an affordable home in Llandaff and Llandaff North. This represents one of the highest waiting requirements in the Cardiff Area.

The current Joint Housing Land Availability Study 2018 identifies that Cardiff has a 3.5 year supply – significantly below the 5 year supply required by Welsh Government. The Draft Statement of Common Ground for the 2019 study identifies a supply of 2.9 years.

There is therefore a need for development of this type in this location and this is an opportunity to provide much needed affordable homes.

##### **Sustainable Development**

The application site is capable of being well connected and integrated with the existing Danescourt community and the key local services in close proximity to the site including schools, shops, children's play areas, medical facilities and community centre.

Existing Public Rights of Way on the site link to the wider network including well used pedestrian and cycle routes to local area and routes to the city centre. As a result of its location and the

presence of pedestrian and cycle links, the ability of residents to use means of travel other than the private car is maximised.

The site is capable of supporting Sustainable Urban Drainage design as a result of tested infiltration rates on site.

##### **Utilities**

The water mains that cross the site have sufficient capacity for the development.

##### **Topography**

The site is well screened by existing vegetation, the railway embankment and as a result of topography such that visually it will not impact on wider views of the area and the River Corridor.

##### **Woodland Management**

The application proposals present an opportunity to manage adjacent woodland within the applicants control as well as treat Japanese Knotweed and other invasive species and control encroaching scrub.

##### **Constraints**

##### **Ecology**

The application site is considered of relatively low ecological value with few protected or notable species and habitats identified during the surveys. However, foraging bats, slow worms and nesting birds were identified, as was the need to provide a 15m ecotone off set from the woodland to the north of the site.

## Trees

A tree survey identified a number of good quality trees within and surrounding the site, which the proposed development should avoid.

## Water Mains

Two water mains cross the site. Development is restricted by easements either side of the mains unless diverted.

## Public Rights of Way

Two Public Rights of Way: Radyr 48 and 56 cross the site. PROW 48 runs from De Braose Close to Radyr Court Road and PROW 56 from the pedestrian cut through from Nicholson Webb Close to the bridleway to the east of the railway line including the underpass.

The stopping up or diversion of these routes should be avoided.

## Network Rail

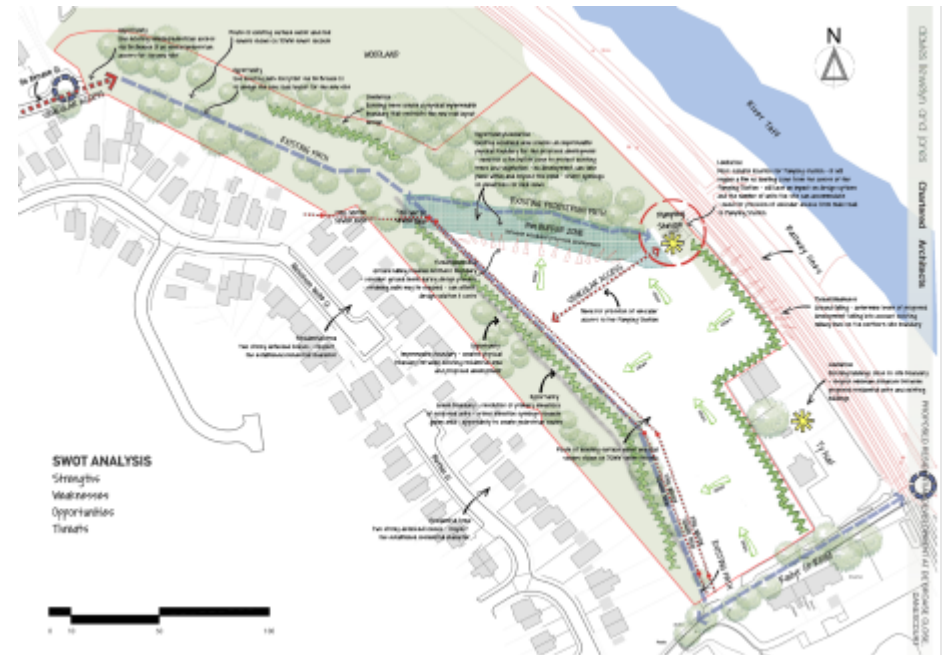
There is a requirement to maintain a 2m strip free of development from the boundary of the site with Network Rails land holding to the east of the site.

## Access

Vehicular access to the site from Radyr Court Road to the south has previously been found to be unacceptable on highway safety grounds.

## Topography

The site is steeply sloping along its south western boundary and not conducive to built development in that location.

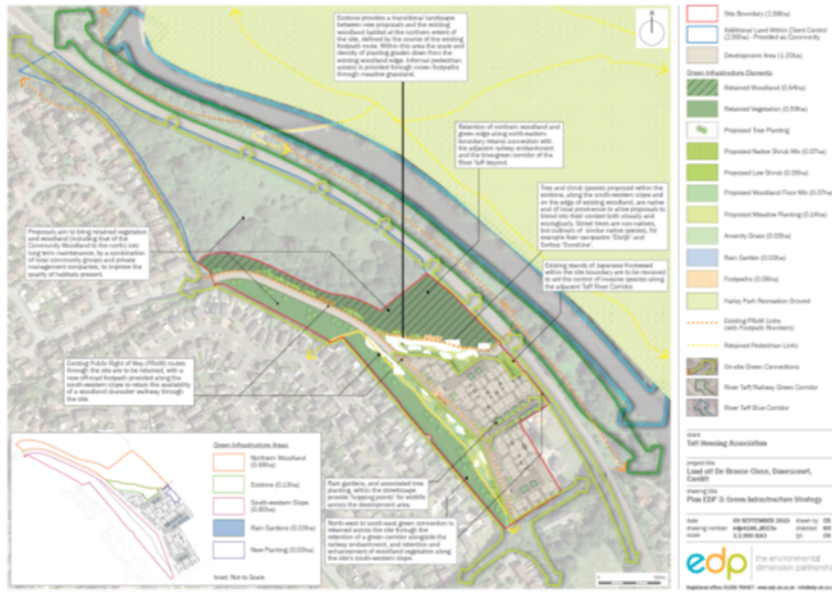


Site Analysis

## 4.0 Design Brief

The design brief was to create a sustainable residential development of affordable homes (to Welsh Government DQR standards) and of a mix that was needed to address demand in the area.

The overall design should work with the landscape character of the area, and the parameters set by the Green Infra Structure Strategy in particular retaining good quality trees where possible and responding to input from the ecologists through off setting of development from the retained woodland to the north and the maintaining of green links through the site.



Green Infra Structure Strategy,

Priority was to be given to pedestrians and cyclists while also providing for demands of the private car and other vehicles.

The principal access to the site is to be achieved via De Braose Close with cycle, pedestrian and emergency access only proposed via Radyr Court Road. Existing Public Rights of Way which cross the site to be retained in situ and supplemented through additional pedestrian links away from the vehicle access.

The development should be largely two storeys reflecting the character of Danescourt, with larger blocks of apartments (3 Storey) facing the main spine road.

The properties and the development should meet the requirements of Secure by Design.

## 5.0 Scheme Evolution

The design evolution of the proposed development has been guided principally by input in respect of transport, green infrastructure, ecology, trees and landscape as well as the previous history of the site.

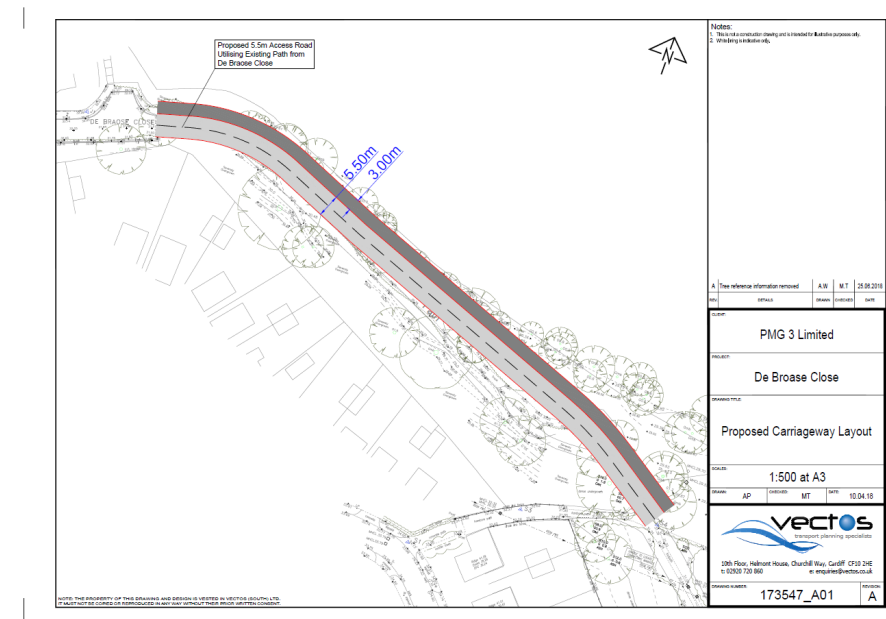
### Access

Previous planning appeal had been refused on ground of highway safety. That application proposed access via Radyr Court Road from the south. It was therefore necessary to look for alternative access options to the site. The access from De Braose close provided the best option.



2014 Illustrative layout- access from Radyr Court Road

The access route into the site was also reviewed on a number of occasions during the design process. The road was narrowed and changed in location to avoid higher quality trees and reduce the footprint of development.



Amended access route to avoid higher value trees.

## Retention of existing trees, vegetation and ecotone

The proposed footprint of built development has been reduced significantly since the 2014 application proposals. The built form of development now reflects the boundaries set by the PROW and the vegetation along the western boundary of the site and the PROW that crosses the site and the off setting from the retained woodland to the north of the site.



2018 Illustrative layout



Current proposals.



## 6.0 Response to the Design Brief

### Affordable Housing

The proposals provide 45 dwellings in a ward where there is significant need. All dwellings are designed to meet required DQR standards.

### Trees, Landscape and Ecology

The proposals maintain all but one high category tree. The required 15 m ecotone offsetting the built development from the retained woodland to the north is provided and proposed to be planted with transitional planting.

Replacement tree planting is proposed on identified land in the applicants control to the north of the site. It is additionally proposed that this area will be the subject of a community woodland management plan which will improve the health and longevity of that woodland. Japanese knotweed in this area will also be treated. It is proposed to gift this land to the community.

The retention of significant vegetation through the site, will maintain foraging routes identified through the ecology surveys.

### Public Rights of Way

The PROWs are maintained in their existing locations as part of the proposals. An alternative woodland walk is provided through the maintained vegetation towards the western boundary of the site.

This will be an informal route made of bark contained in wooden planks.

### Design

The proposal is for traditionally designed properties which reflect the cottage like properties to the south of the site on Radyr Court Road.



*Proposed elevations*

## **Community Safety**

The proposed development accords with Secure by Design. The following design principals have been followed:

- Access to the rear of properties from public space has been avoided;
- The routes on site are legible and existing desire lines are maintained;
- Natural surveillance is promoted by ensuring that all streets and open spaces are overlooked;
- A clear demarcation of public and private space is provided through appropriate boundary treatments;
- Improvements to existing routes off site in terms of improved lighting will be secured through S106 Agreement.

## **Sustainability**

Sustainability in Wales means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well being of Wales by taking action in accordance with the sustainable development principle aimed at achieving well-being goals. Acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle means acting in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

In this case, the development represents significant investment in affordable homes in this part of Cardiff – where there is significant need and provides valuable opportunities for people who cannot access the housing market to either rent or buy their own home.

The total investment in this project will be £10m. The applicants work closely with local Further Education and Higher Education Colleges and the shared 'Yprentice' scheme and can offer a minimum of 10 Apprenticeships and other employment opportunities for local residents.

In addition, a range of unpaid work experience placements both at trade and professional level will be created targeting local residents. Working in partnership with local charities and into work services, employment opportunities will target those who are unemployed or not in education of training (NEET) or face barriers into employment. This maybe supporting individuals with CSCS Cards, workwear or interview coaching. The team will also work closely with local schools. Health and Safety workshops and activities will be delivered at the local primary school. The applicants will arrange various visits with different groups of secondary school students, residents living in hostels and NEETs to widen horizons and deliver on Building Foundations for Better Futures.

As a community-based housing association the applicants are committed to delivering maximum value for the Welsh pound. Taff Housing Association Ltd monitor the use of subcontractors and are proud to report 99% of subcontractors are based in South Wales. During the construction process workers will typically use local facilities including newsagents, supermarkets and cafes boosting those businesses. Similarly the spending power of 182 new residents will boost the local economy.

The proposed development is well connected with the existing suburb of Danescourt. The proposal seeks to minimise journey lengths and to facilitate journeys by means other than the private car by providing and improving existing walking and cycling routes to existing facilities including shops, schools, transport nodes and the wider public foot and cycle network.

The development has protected natural resources and incorporates plans for enhancing biodiversity including the retention and management of land on site and off site within the applicant's control.

Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) has been employed. All surface water is to discharge to ground through infiltration. The scheme will need to comply with SAB (SSUDs Approval Board) legislation. The SAB techniques to be utilised are as follows:

- Rills to the main highways spine road, discharging to swales;
- Porous paving (block and asphalt to internal cul de sacs;
- Rain gardens to manage domestic drainage;
- Water butts to be specified to all properties to aid re-use of water. These measures will allow the scheme to adhere to six standards for SAB requirements including water quality, amenity and biodiversity. Surface water drainage measures will be designed to 1 in 100-year event plus 30% climate change.



*Engineering layout showing SUDs proposals*

## **7.0 Conclusion**

This Design and Access Statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is based on sustainable design principles and national and local policy objectives.

In particular, regard has been had to identified constraints and these have been positively considered in the proposed development.

The proposed development represents a sustainable development of much needed affordable housing in a highly accessible location.