





CONTROL SHEET

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Document Issue Register

Issue	Date	Description of Amendment	By	Checked
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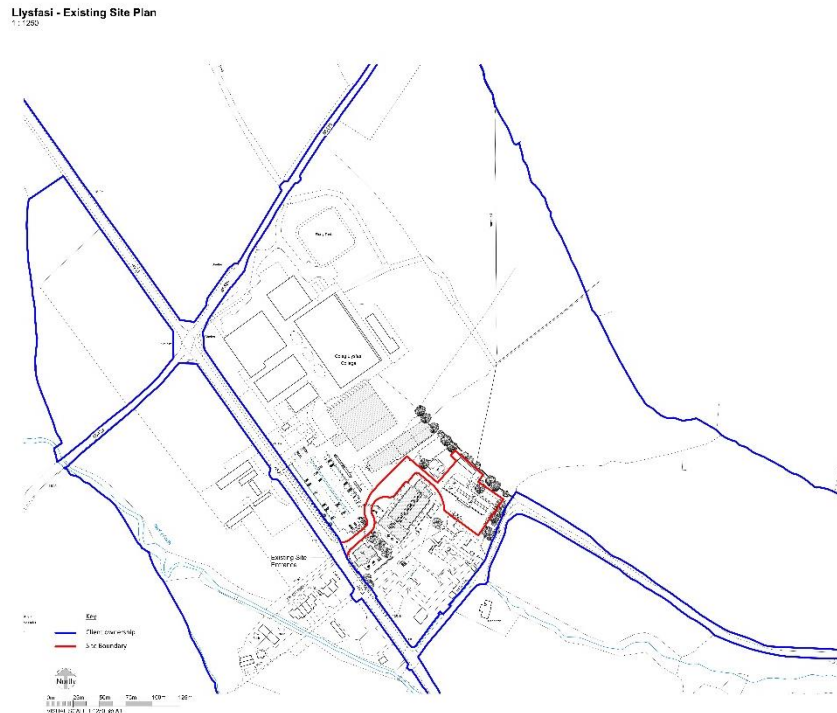
1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by TACP Architects Ltd on behalf of Coleg Cambria to support a full planning application for the new student accommodation block at Llysfasi Campus for Coleg Cambria.
- 1.2 Coleg Cambria is a Further Education college serving 6 campuses across mid and North-East Wales. It has approximately 7,000 full time and 20,000 part time students making it one of the UK's largest colleges. The Llysfasi campus has been delivering land-based education courses for over 100 years and is regarded as a centre of excellence, delivering practical education in Agriculture, Agricultural Engineering, Countryside and Forestry and Animal Care and Management.
- 1.3 TACP Architects Ltd. were commissioned in 2021 by Coleg Cambria to carry out a feasibility study to investigate the options to facilitate the required accommodation. Extensive analysis was carried out and numerous options explored, culminating with all interested parties supporting the proposed redevelopment works which form the basis of this planning application.
- 1.4 The purpose of this Design and Access Statement is to explain the context of the college, the project intent and the design requirements with regard to the site constraints, regulatory framework and client brief. It accompanies a drawing package which supports the full planning application.

2.0 Context

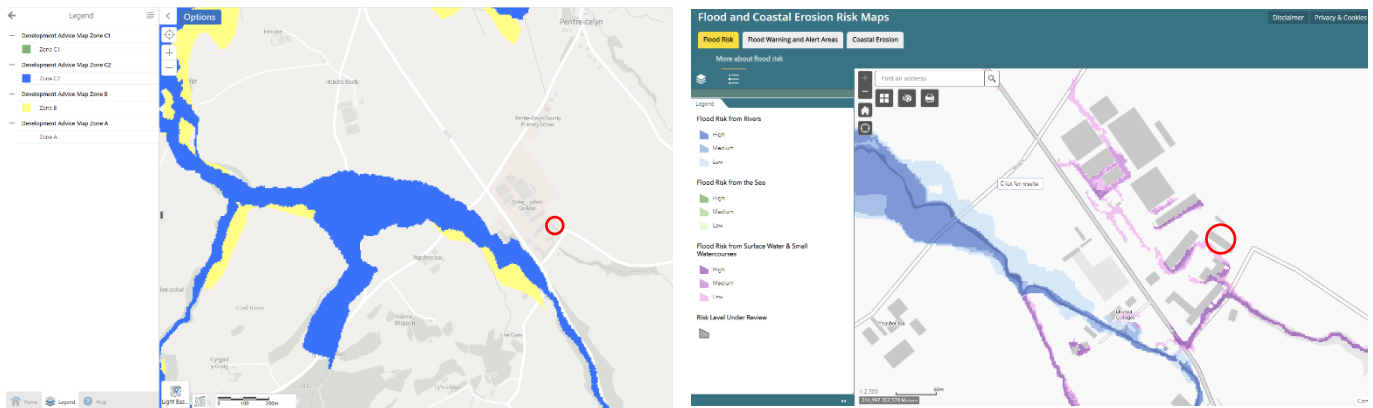
Physical Context

2.1 The image below identifies the application site in the context of its surroundings.



- 2.2 The Llysfasi campus is located in a rural location four miles south-east of Ruthin and includes buildings and surrounding farmland extending over 350 hectares of both lowland and upland areas including woodland.
- 2.3 The college at Llysfasi was established in 1921 and provides a wide range of land based and related studies for learners from across North Wales. The College's estate buildings have developed around the original Manor house and milking shed and includes a range of teaching and residential blocks and a number of agricultural sheds which have been erected at various times. The most recent addition is the community hub completed in 2020 and a new Teaching Block is currently under construction.
- 2.4 The site context is sparsely populated with the college campus being the largest development in the area. The neighbouring buildings include farms, domestic buildings and a school.
- 2.5 Llysfasi campus sits within the Clwydian Range & Dee Valley area of outstanding natural beauty. Located on the western edge of the AONB.
- 2.6 The site is surrounded by agricultural land, most of which is owned by the college and forms part of the wider training campus.

2.7 The below maps taken from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) confirm that the proposed location for the new accommodation block does not lie within an area at risk of flooding.



Social Context

- 2.8 The site serves a wide catchment area and so there is a provision of on-site accommodation for those who would otherwise need to commute long distances.
- 2.9 The site also provides important community facilities supporting events and activities for the local and wider rural community.
- 2.10 The college site also serves as a hub for bus services to the nearby Primary School.

Economic Context

- 2.11 The provision of improved educational facilities will support the next generation of rural community, encourage people to both remain and move into the area. Educating current and future students in the latest technology and techniques will greatly improve the skills and opportunities from learners, which in turn will support local businesses and thus the local economy.
- 2.12 In the short term, the proposals will provide improved facilities for Coleg Cambria. This will enable a standard of education to be achieved, increasing student access to education and ultimately employment.
- 2.13 In the long term, improved facilities will provide economic benefit to the local area via the increase in employment opportunities. The college works in partnership with over 1,000 employers across the region to deliver the skills required for employment.
- 2.14 The proposals will also provide employment for those contracted to carry out the construction works.

Planning Policy Context

- 2.15 With regards to the efforts outlined by the Local Authority to maintain positive development and growth of the local areas, this section provides a summary of the key policies against which the proposed development is expected to be assessed. It has been our endeavour to ensure that the development will align with the objectives of the relevant policies.

Policies identified within the adopted Denbighshire LDP:

Policy BSC12 – Community facilities

Policy PSE5 – Rural economy

Policy VOE2 – Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Area of Outstanding Beauty

Policy VOE5 – Conservation of natural resources

Policy VOE6 – Water management

Policy ASA3 – Parking standards

Policies identified within the adopted suite of Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes (SPGs)

SPG – Access For All

SPG - Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

SPG - Planning for Dark Skies – SPG for lighting in the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

SPG - Conservation and Enhancement of Biodiversity

SPG - Parking Requirements In New Developments

SPG - Residential Space Standards

SPG - Trees & Landscaping

National Planning Policies

Planning Policy Wales, Edition 12 (PPW 12)

Technical Advice Notes (TANs)

TAN 5 Nature Conservation and Planning (2009)

TAN 6 Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (2010)

TAN 12 Design (2016)

TAN 18 Transport (2007)

3.0 Existing Facilities

Campus-wide facilities

- 3.1 The existing campus site has provided further education for many years. There are currently several buildings, detached structures and infrastructural elements that facilitate the delivery of the land-based education courses available at Llysfasi Campus.
- 3.2 There are a wide range of existing buildings across the site, both in terms of age and character.
- 3.3 Existing buildings date from the 17th century onwards, through to the most recently completed building in 2020. Several extensions have also been completed over different periods and as a result the campus has a varied appearance and character. The buildings express a range of finishes including stone and render, buff brickwork and slate, timber and metal cladding. In 2020 a new two storey Community Hub was completed in timber cladding and feature stonework with areas of glazing and metal roof and the new Teaching Hub currently under construction is finished in these same materials.
- 3.4 Coleg Cambria organises buses along several routes through Flintshire, Denbighshire and Wrexham to-and-from the campus. These routes alight on the Llysfasi campus at the dedicated bus terminal.

Facilities of particular relevance to the proposed development

- 3.5 The new accommodation block will be located on the footprint of the existing Learning Resource Centre (LRC) which is to be demolished as part of this development.
- 3.6 A covered storage area at the yard to the rear of the LRC will be demolished as part of this development.
- 3.7 A Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) is located on the campus which is used by students during free time.
- 3.8 There is an existing residential block on site which provides 44 single-occupancy rooms, 2 of which are for wardens. These rooms are used for on-site term time accommodation for students. Each block of 8-10 bedrooms shares a communal kitchenette and there is also a separate canteen for all students to have meals. With the addition of a further 50 students using on-site accommodation, the existing canteen could accommodate these students if separate meal sittings are employed. The existing residential block also includes areas for welfare, a common room, a TV room and a gym.
- 3.9 There are no laundry facilities on-site. Students who use the on-site accommodation provide their own bedding and are encouraged to take all of their washing home to clean over weekends.
- 3.10 There is a Forestry workshop on the campus. The operating hours for the workshop is 9am to 4pm during term time. The workshop includes power tools e.g. table and circular saws but these are only ever used sporadically.

4.0 Project Intent

- 4.1 The project intent is to provide suitable accommodation facilities to support the out-of-hours curriculum provided by Coleg Cambria, in particular the daily milking of cows which is done during early morning hours. It is therefore not practical for many students to commute to site daily, especially those living further afield.
- 4.2 The proposals will ensure that the provision of accommodation facilities can meet the current and foreseeable demand. The client has found that on-site accommodation is very conducive to improved outcomes and positive experiences for students. The existing accommodation is already used at full capacity and the client has found that a greater proportion of their students need access to on-site accommodation, and therefore the current provision is unable to meet current/future requirements.

5.0 Design Principles and Proposed Character

- 5.1 Planning Policy Wales and TAN 12 are the principal planning documents of the Welsh Government which set out the context for the consideration and evaluation of all types of development. The main thrust of the documents is to promote sustainable development by ensuring that the planning system provides for an adequate and continuous supply of available and suitable land to meet societies' needs in a way that is consistent with overall sustainable principles.
- 5.2 A key element of sustainable development is good design, which should contribute positively to making places better for people. National Planning Policy also states that it is important to plan for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.
- 5.3 Planning Policy Wales also seeks to promote resource-efficient settlements that minimise land-take and urban sprawl, locates development to minimise the demand for travel and promotes access to employment, shopping, education, health, community, leisure and sports facilities and open space.

Proposed New Building

- 5.4 The proposed accommodation block will comprise of 50no. en-suite bedrooms for students spread evenly across three storeys. A total of 4no. of these bedrooms are wheelchair accessible.
- 5.5 The rooms will be grouped into flats each with their own communal breakout room comprising of kitchenette, dining and lounge area.
- 5.6 Each en-suite bedroom will accommodate: bed, desk study space, wardrobe/ storage, en-suite toilet with shower cubicle and hand-wash basin.
- 5.7 Externally there will be new amenity space to the rear of the new building. This will also include areas for bin storage and bicycle and car parking.
- 5.8 The development incorporates plans for enhancing the hard and soft landscaping on the site.
- 5.9 External cladding materials to be in-keeping with the style of existing buildings on site, including natural stone and timber.

Perspectival images below of the proposed Accommodation Block.



Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

5.10 The following assessment provides information on the visual impact that the proposed accommodation block is expected to have on its surrounding context, in particular with respect to its siting within the AONB.



Key:

- Proposed building location
- ➔ Images 01, 02
- ➔ Images 03, 04
- ➔ Image 05

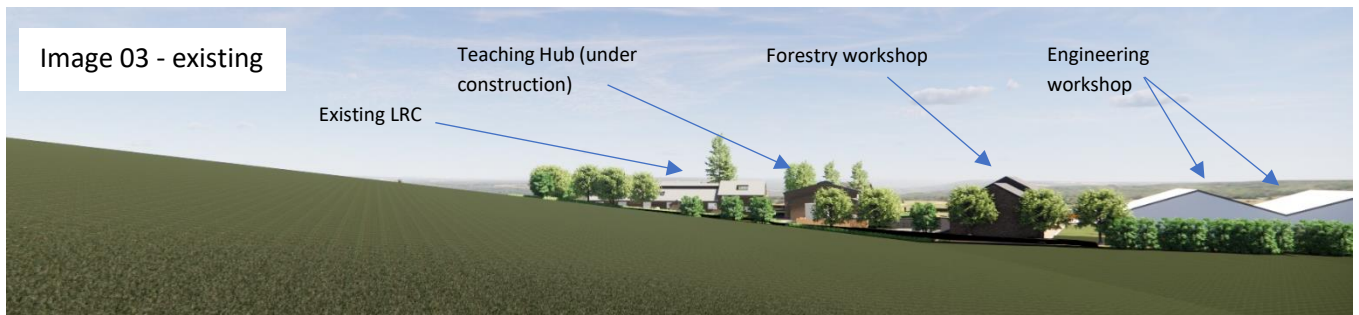
- 5.11 Image 01 shows the scale of the upward-sloping field which looks down onto the proposed location for the building. Image 02 shows the scale and density of the existing hedgerow which lies between the new building and the sloping field behind.
- 5.12 Image 03 and 04 illustrate the existing and proposed views of the proposed building location as seen from the top of the closest field to the site. This location is also highlighted in red on the above map. It is from this direction that the site is most overlooked.
- 5.13 Image 05 shows the existing view towards the proposed building location as seen from the nearest point of public access to the site. As the image shows, the campus is not visible from this location and the view will be unaffected by the proposed development.

Image 01



Image 02





- 5.14 The following measures have been taken to minimise the visible impact the new development has on the openness and character of the AONB.
- 5.15 The proposed building is positioned within the existing cluster of farm buildings and this helps to minimise the perceived scale of the development. Impact on the openness of the area is also minimised since it does not cause the building complex to further-encroach on the natural landscape.
- 5.16 The scale of the proposed building is in-keeping with that of the existing buildings within the complex, helping to embed the site within the landscape.
- 5.17 The building's positioning behind a substantial hedgerow will provide natural screening to help obscure its presence from where it may be overlooked.
- 5.18 The addition of the proposed building is unlikely to cause any further impact for any neighbouring properties than is caused by the existing site complex.
- 5.19 The proposed form and materials for the building are in-keeping with traditional palettes in an effort to preserve the natural character of the area.

- 5.20 Employment of a similar ridge height to existing buildings within the farm complex avoids causing any breakages in the skyline.
- 5.21 Images 03 and 04 illustrate the views in the direction of the site from the adjacent field and even from a relatively short distance, the proposed building does not impact on long-distance views any more than the existing building cluster.

6.0 Accessibility and Equality - Vehicles and Pedestrians

6.1 Planning Policy promotes that Local Authorities should consider the opportunities of ‘accessibility to all’ including the needs of those with visual and hearing impairments and those of limited mobility, the elderly and people with young children.

Pedestrian accessibility

6.2 The proposal incorporates a provision of fully accessible accommodation so as to promote inclusive learning.
 6.3 A priority for the project is to maintain and/or improve the safe pedestrian access across the campus, utilising the site to improve connectivity for students across the campus.

Vehicular access and parking

6.4 Site accessibility for vehicles will remain unchanged in principle. All vehicular traffic will continue to access the campus via the A525. This accommodates all vehicles including cars, buses, delivery vehicles and farm vehicles.
 6.5 Car parking on site is mainly in one area, located adjacent to the North East boundary of the A525 and North of the main entrance to the campus. There are an existing 155 spaces including 8 accessible parking spaces.
 6.6 Extract from Planning Guidance below on the provision of car parking spaces for new student accommodation is provided below:

Purpose built student accommodation under College/ University control	1 space per 25 beds for servicing, wardens and drop-off areas	1 space per 10 beds (for students &/ or visitors)
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6.7 In line with these recommendations and the proposed 50 bedrooms, we include plans for an additional 8 car parking spaces in order to support the additional site users. The proposed site plan included within this application shows the location of these additional spaces.

Bus access

6.8 Existing access for buses is more than adequate and will be unaffected by the proposals.

Cycle parking

6.9 Existing cycle parking within the campus site will be retained and the proposal incorporates plans for a provision of additional cycle parking. Please see the relevant plan drawings for details on this provision.

7.0 Accessibility - Movements to, from and within the development

- 7.1 Paved routes within the campus benefit from dropped kerbs in appropriate locations to enable level access. The proposals will maintain this approach.
- 7.2 Sufficient clear widths will be provided to door openings to meet current building regulations.
- 7.3 Where new toilet facilities are provided, they will comply with current Building Regulations in terms of access and fittings.
- 7.4 Proposed external circulation routes will have a hardstanding finish providing a surface appropriate for wheelchairs.
- 7.5 Flooring appropriate to wet areas, providing a suitable slip resistance will be used where applicable.
- 7.6 The proposals will incorporate contrasting colours and trims to differentiate doors, doorframes and floors from walls to aid visually impaired users in compliance with BS 8300.
- 7.7 All proposed glazing within 300mm of a door and up to 1500mm above FFL to be impact resistant safety glass.

8.0 Community Safety

- 8.1 It is not anticipated that there will be any adverse effect on security or increase of risk on the site as a result of the development.
- 8.2 Early consultations with an approved Secure By Design (SBD) Designing Out Crime Officer (DOCO) will be carried out to support an application for an SBD Gold Award for the scheme.
- 8.3 During the design process, layout, appearance and landscaping have been carefully assessed to help to maintain and improve where possible existing crime prevention measures. The following safety measures have been considered in the design:
 - Maintaining existing and creating additional natural surveillance.
 - The new building will benefit from modern doors and windows that minimise the potential for intruders and break-ins;
 - External environment design to avoid inadvertent creation of opportunities for crimes, for example, providing hiding places.
 - Appropriate external lighting and creating clear lines of sight in external areas where possible factoring in the existing buildings;
 - External design to separate vehicular traffic and pedestrians, with clearly defined pedestrian routes;
 - Existing boundary treatments will be maintained.

9.0 Environmental Sustainability

Green Infrastructure Statement

9.1 In accordance with Section 6 of Planning Policy Wales, the design of this project has taken specialist advice so as to avoid, minimise and mitigate any adverse effect on existing green infrastructure that pertains to the application site. Moreover, we also incorporate plans for how the proposed development will contribute a net benefit to the local ecological network.

9.2 Full details of these plans for net ecological benefit are outlined in the following consultant's reports which are included in this application:

- Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement by Tree Solutions Ltd.
- Preliminary Roost Assessment, Nesting Bird Assessment and Emergence Surveys by Enfys Ecology Ltd.

10.0 Land Use

10.1 The site will remain for educational use, providing all the facilities required to sustain education at the site.

11.0 Noise Pollution

11.1 Some noise will be generated during construction works but every effort will be made to keep this to an absolute minimum in the interests of the continued operation of the college and of the neighbouring properties. Once complete it is anticipated that the additional facilities will create no greater noise levels than that which exists with the current campus. Additional air handling plant associated with the development will be attenuated.

12.0 Air Quality

12.1 There may be a limited amount of dust resulting from the construction works but this will be minimised by the contractor. Maintaining air quality and reducing dust will be important for the continued activities of the college during the works.

12.2 The proposed uses do not generate any additional air pollution.

For the reasons set out above it is considered that the proposals represent a well-designed scheme that accords with the relevant Development Plan Policies.