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# Design and Access Statement

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Bible College

Derwen Fawr Road, Swansea



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**Design and Access Statement**

Bible College  
Derwen Fawr Road, Swansea

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Powell Dobson Architects on behalf of Global Horizons, in support of the outline planning application for residential development of the former Bible College Wales Site, on the western side of Derwen Fawr, Swansea. The description of development is as follows:

*"Demolition of all existing structures and outline proposals for residential development including means of access. (Outline Planning Application)."*

This Outline planning application has been subject to significant pre-application discussions with Swansea City Council and various statutory consultees. It has also been subject to appropriate public consultation; full details of which can be found in this Statement and other supporting documentation submitted with this application.

Global Horizons is a charitable Christian Trust whose objective is to take the Christian message to all parts of the world. The Bible College of Wales (BCW) was a Bible college based in Swansea, Wales, founded in 1924 by Rees Howells. However, in September 2009, a review of its operations has resulted in UK training being moved from Swansea to the Midlands. Bible College Wales ceased to exist at the site and staff moved from their premises on the western and eastern sides of Derwen Fawr to Rugby under the name Trinity School of Theology, a non-residential college in England who are committed to the work of the Great Commission. The college retained the two sites on Derwen Fawr Road one of which is the subject of this submission.

Discussions with Swansea Council resulted in Global Horizons Trust selling the eastern site (containing Derwen Fawr House) to the Singapore church, who intends to continue to use the site for religious training and education purposes. However, as there is no prospect of the western site being brought back into beneficial use by Global Horizons or the Singapore Church, residential redevelopment is proposed to ensure that the site is bought back into beneficial and appropriate use within the community.

### 1.2 The Site

The site at Derwen Fawr Road, Sketty is located on the western edge of Swansea approximately 2.4 miles from the centre of the City. The site lies in close proximity to the University and Singleton Hospital. There is a bus service which runs along Derwen Fawr Road in close proximity to the site, linking the area to Swansea City Centre. The site extends to 1.22ha.

The local area is prominently a residential location with existing high quality residential housing within relatively close proximity to the existing former Bible College buildings. The site adjoins existing residential properties to the north and south; these properties are typically two storey in character, with large gardens to the rear. There is very little obvious overlooking in this location due to the dense tree cover along all boundaries. Land to the west of the site extends into the Clyne Valley Park.



SWANSEA, SOUTH WALES



The site benefits from links to mains utilities infrastructure. A utilities assessment has been undertaken by Hyder which confirms that there is sufficient capacity within that infrastructure to serve the proposed development.

There are no public rights of way within or across the land owned by Global Horizons. None of the buildings on the subject site are Listed and the site is not within a Conservation Area.



## 2. Planning Context

### 2.1 Planning Context

This section of the Planning Statement summarises the key National planning guidance and the site specific planning considerations of the adopted Swansea City and County Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the emerging Local Development Plan (LDP).

#### National Planning Policy Wales

The NPPW document contains current land use planning policy for Wales. It provides the policy framework for the effective preparation of local planning authorities' development plans.

This is supplemented by 21 topic based Technical Advice Notes (TANs). Procedural guidance is given in Welsh Office / National Assembly for Wales / Welsh Assembly Government circulars.

Planning Policy Wales, the TANs and the circulars may be material to decisions on individual planning applications. They will be considered by the Welsh Ministers and Planning Inspectors in the determination of called-in planning applications and appeals.

#### Planning Policy Wales, Chapter 4: Planning for Sustainability

Para 4.4.3 states that planning policies, decisions and proposals should:

- Promote resource-efficient and climate change resilient settlement patterns that minimise land-take (and especially extensions to the area of impermeable surfaces) and urban sprawl, especially through preference for the re-use of suitable previously developed land and buildings, wherever possible avoiding

development on greenfield sites (Sections 4.7, 4.8 and 4.9).

- Locate developments so as to minimise the demand for travel, especially by private car (Section 4.7 and Chapter 8).
- Ensure that all local communities - both urban and rural - have sufficient good quality housing for their needs, including affordable housing for local needs and for special needs where appropriate, in safe neighbourhoods (4.11.12 and Chapter 9).
- Promote access to employment, shopping, education, health, community, leisure and sports facilities and open and green space, maximising opportunities for community development and social welfare (Sections 4.6 and 4.7, Chapters 7, 10 and 11).

#### Planning Policy Wales, Chapter 9: Housing

Para 9.1.1 states that a home is a vital part of people's lives; it affects their health and well-being, quality of life and the opportunities open to them. The Welsh Government's approach, set out in the National Housing Strategy, is to provide more housing of the right type and offer more choice.

Para 9.1.1 states that "The Assembly Government will seek to ensure that previously developed land (see definition at Figure 4.1) is used in preference to greenfield sites..." and that "new housing and residential environments are well designed, meeting national standards for the sustainability of new homes and making a significant contribution to promoting community regeneration and improving the quality of life".

Para 9.1.2 states that Local planning authorities should promote sustainable residential environments and avoid large housing areas of monotonous. Local planning authorities should promote:

- development that is easily accessible by public transport, cycling and walking, although in rural areas required development might not be able to achieve all accessibility criteria in all circumstances;
- mixed use development so communities have good access to employment, retail and other services;
- attractive landscapes around dwellings, with usable open space and regard for biodiversity, nature conservation and flood risk;
- greater emphasis on quality, good design and the creation of places to live that are safe and attractive;
- the most efficient use of land;
- well designed living environments, where appropriate at increased densities.

Para 9.2.1 states that "In planning the provision for new housing, local planning authorities must work in collaboration with housing authorities, registered social landlords, house builders, developers, land owners and the community..."

Para 9.2.3 states that Local planning authorities must ensure that sufficient land is genuinely available or will become available to provide a 5-year supply of land for housing judged against the general objectives and the scale and location of development provided for in the development plan.

Para 9.2.10 states that in determining the order in which sites identified in accordance with paragraph 9.2.8 above should be allocated, the presumption will be that previously developed sites or buildings for re-use or conversion should be allocated before greenfield sites.



## 2.2 Local Planning Policy

The City and County of Swansea Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted on 10th November 2008. It is the most up to date Development Plan covering the authorities' administrative area and is used in the determination of planning applications. Eventually it will be replaced by the emerging Local Development Plan (LDP); however the LDP is at the early visioning and strategic options stage, establishing overarching aims of the LDP. As such, until the LDP is formally adopted the UDP continues to be the current planning framework.

There are a series of policies within the document of relevance to the Derwen Fawr Road site and wider area.

Policy EV1 states that new development shall accord with the following objectives of good design, inter alia:

- Be appropriate to its local context in terms of scale, height, massing, elevation treatment, materials and detailing, layout, form, mix and density,
- Integrate effectively with adjacent spaces and the public realm to create good quality townscape,
- Not result in a significant detrimental impact on local amenity In terms of visual impact, loss of light or privacy, disturbance and traffic movements,
- Incorporate a good standard of landscape design,
- Sensitively relate to existing development patterns and seek to protect natural heritage, the historic and cultural environment not only on-site, but in terms of potential impact on

neighbouring areas of importance, and, where appropriate:

- Foster 'inclusive design' by ensuring the development allows access for the widest range of people possible,
- Contribute to the creation of new, and the improvement of existing, spaces and an enhancement of the general street scene,
- Provide a safe environment by addressing issues of security, crime prevention, and the fear of crime in the design of buildings and the space and routes around them,

Policy EV2 states that the siting of new development should give preference to the use of previously developed land over greenfield sites. New development must have regard to the physical character and topography of the site and its surroundings by, inter alia:

- Effectively integrating with the landscape by utilising topography to integrate into the contours of the site and avoiding conspicuous locations on prominent skylines and ridges,
- Retaining important views into and out of the site,
- Taking into account and where possible retaining site features including existing buildings, topography, landscape, archaeological and water features, trees and hedgerows, and, where appropriate:
- Undertaking, at the earliest opportunity, an assessment of species and habitats on site and, where planning permission is granted, implementing any necessary mitigation measures,
- Avoiding detrimental effects on the historic environment,

- Locating near transport nodes to encourage an integrated transport system,
- Determining whether the proposal would be at risk from flooding, increase flood risk off-site, or create additional water run-off, development for infrastructure and services,
- Having due regard to the implications of the development for infrastructure and services,
- Identifying and fully addressing issues of contamination and land instability.

Policy HC2 states that proposals for housing development within the urban area will be supported where the site has been previously developed or is not covered by conflicting plan policies or proposals and provided the proposed development does not result in:

- Cramped/Overintensive development,
- Significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area,
- Significant harm to highway safety, or
- Significant adverse effects in relation to:
  - o Landscape,
  - o Natural heritage,
  - o Security and personal safety,
  - o Infrastructure capacity,
  - o The overloading of available community facilities and services.

Policy HC3 states that in areas where a demonstrable lack of affordable housing exists, the Council will seek to negotiate the inclusion of an appropriate element of affordable housing on sites which are suitable in locational/ accessibility terms and where this is not ruled out by exceptional development costs. In most parts of the Plan area such negotiations will focus on new housing developments

of 25 or more dwellings or sites of 1ha or more or phases of such developments.

Policy HC17 states that in considering proposals for development the Council will, where appropriate, enter into negotiations with developers to deliver planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The Council will expect developers to make contributions towards:

- Improvements to infrastructure, services or community facilities,
- Mitigating measures made necessary by a development, and
- Other social, economic or environmental investment to address reasonable identified needs.
- Provisions should be fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the individual development.

The Swansea City and County Council Planning Obligations SPD states that although the exact amount of affordable housing to be provided on sites will depend on the merits and circumstances of each proposal, negotiations will take into account the factors highlighted above. However, given the housing need identified in the LHMA, the Council will normally expect that 25 - 30% of all dwellings will be affordable housing.

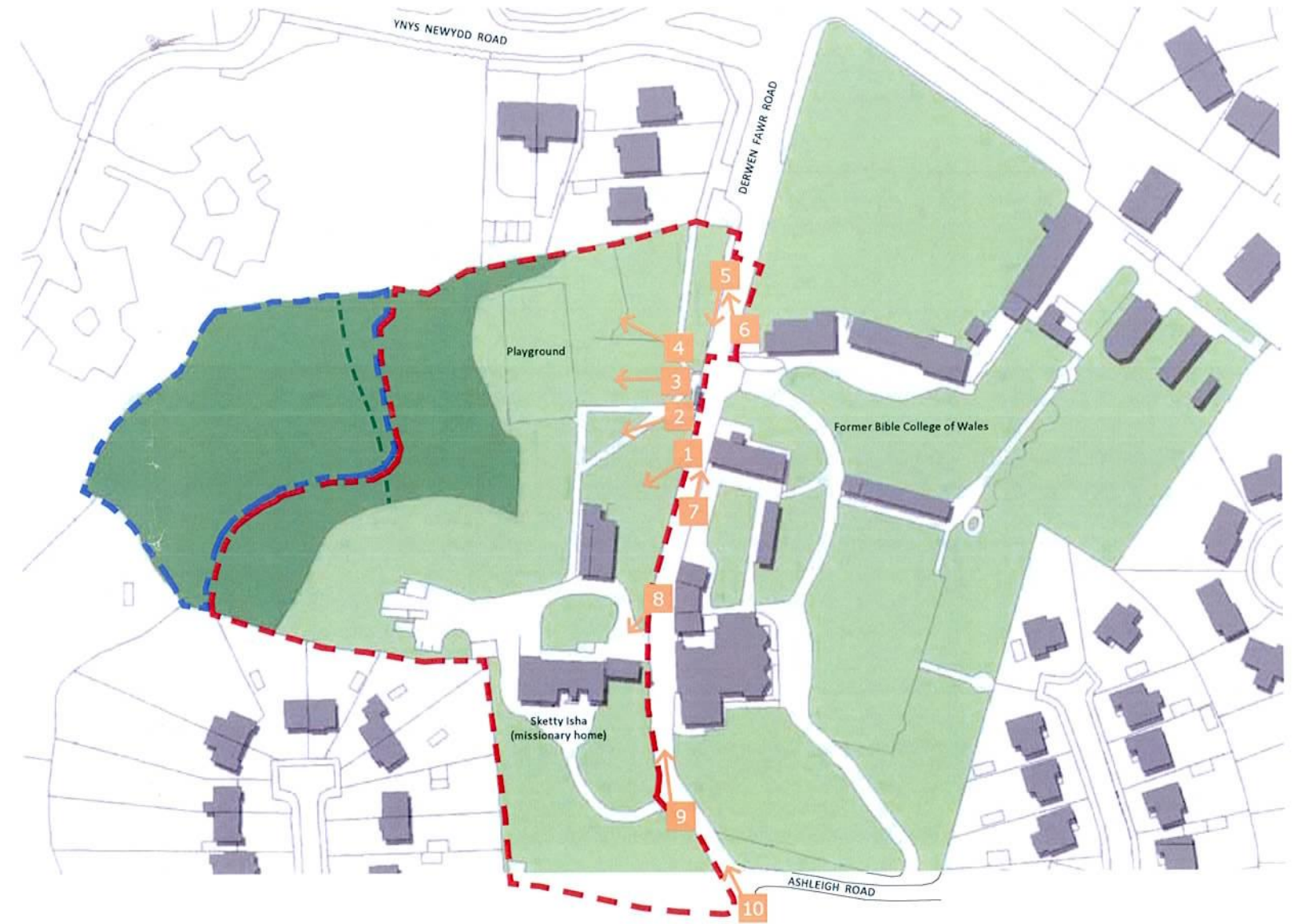


### 3. Context Analysis

#### 3.1 The Site



AERIAL VIEW OF SITE OUTLINED IN RED



Site Location







VIEW LOOKING SOUTHWEST - WEST INTO THE SITE FROM DERWEN FAWR ROAD.



VIEW LOOKING SOUTH ALONG DERWEN FAWR ROAD.



VIEW LOOKING NORTH ALONG DERWEN FAWR ROAD.



VIEW LOOKING NORTH ALONG DERWEN FAWR ROAD.



VIEW LOOKING AT EXISTING SKETTY ISAF FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



VIEW LOOKING NORTH ALONG DERWEN FAWR ROAD.



VIEW LOOKING NORTH-WEST AT SOUTHERN BOUNDARY OF SITE OPPOSITE ASHLEIGH ROAD.



### 3.4 Design Context: Character, Layout, Scale, Appearance

The housing in the Derwen Fawr area is predominantly 20th century development of large detached 2 storey homes set in generous plots. Smaller infill developments of single storey bungalows sit amongst them including those along Ashleigh Road and to the west of the King George V playing fields.

More recent post war developments extend north and west with a small amount of new development taking place in the last 10 years. These include the recent Taylor Wimpey Brynn Newydd development adjacent to the site which includes large 2 & 3 storey family homes with a combination of detached, semi-detached and terraced units.

Where steep changes in levels occur as land falls away from Glynderwen Crescent to Mumbles Road, many of the homes are split level presenting a single storey elevation to the road with 2 storey to the rear. Many of the homes have had rooms in the roof added converting them to 2 1/2 storey. There are very few apartments or smaller homes.

The surrounding residential developments are a mix of brick and render, with some pebble dash render and a combination of clay and slate tiles to roofs. Key elevational features include simple lean to porches or recessed entrances, large bay windows and chimneys, the roofscape is dominated by steeply pitched hipp roofs. There are a number of more distinctive contemporary houses most as infill developments, with the notable exception of the Mill Lane development at Clyne Castle.

The colour palette is fairly neutral consisting of red brick, terracotta clay tiles and cream or white render. Warm browns and greys are provided by the extensive use of local pennant stone for curtilages.

Curtilages are predominantly formed by low level walls in either brick or local pennant stone, often reinforced by mature hedge planting. Mature landscaping plays a key role in the setting of the area with small belts of trees providing landscaped buffers along main routes punctuating the streetscape. As you move into Blackpill and Mumbles beyond, the development becomes denser with more properties accessed either directly off the street or from small front gardens behind low brick walls.







**CHARACTER AND SETTING**

Tight street pattern, mature trees and stone boundary walls come together to form the character of the locality.





**CHARACTER AND FORM**

Local dwellings demonstrating steeply pitched roofs, gables, bay windows and chimneys as key elements to the built form.





**CHARACTER - MATERIALS**

Locally dominant render as the exterior wall finish to the buildings and clay tiles to roof. Natural stone is incorporated into elements of the building and boundary walls.





**CHARACTER - GREEN OPEN SPACES**

The context is very 'green and leafy'. In many instances properties are located around open space.





**CHARACTER - ENCLOSURE**

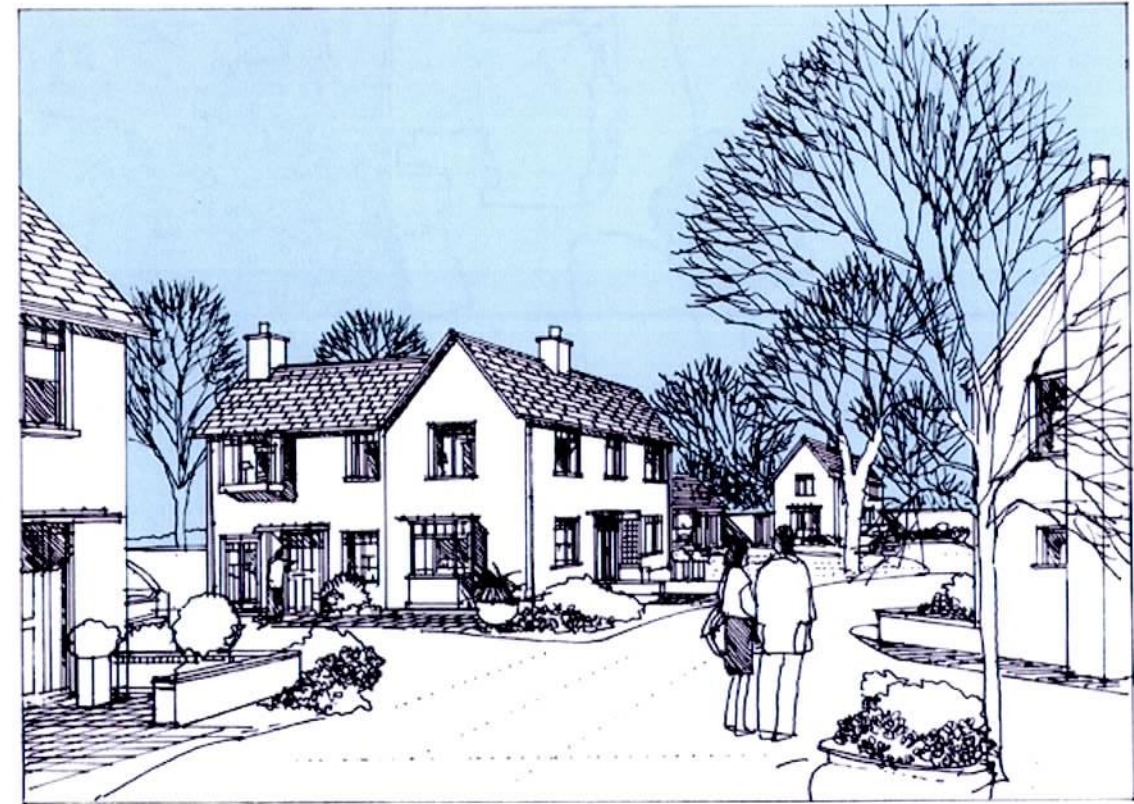
Extensive use of stone and brick walling as boundary treatments. Original stone walls help to give the area an identity and strengthen the character of the surroundings. At times the buildings themselves form the boundary.



### 4.3 Perspective Sketches



Perspective view looking south along Derwen Fawr Road.  
(minimal impact of development onto Derwen Fawr Road - occasional gables of properties onto the existing hedged boundary)



Perspective view looking west towards the woodland from within the development.



## 5. Community and Access

### 5.1 Movement and Transport

This section provides a brief summary of the movement and transport issues for the site and should be read in conjunction with the detailed Transport Assessment that has been prepared by Hyder Consulting to support this outline application.

The proposed residential development will be accessed via a new priority-controlled junction from Derwen Fawr Road approximately 35m north (centre point to centre point) of the existing priority junction that serves the Bible College (eastern land parcel).

The proposed access junction will incorporate a raised plateau to help reduce vehicle speeds and improve highway safety in this location.

All adoptable roads within the internal confines of the proposed residential development will operate under a 20mph speed limit. In addition, the proposed development would also deliver a series of footways that would link into the existing infrastructure that aligns Derwen Fawr Road.

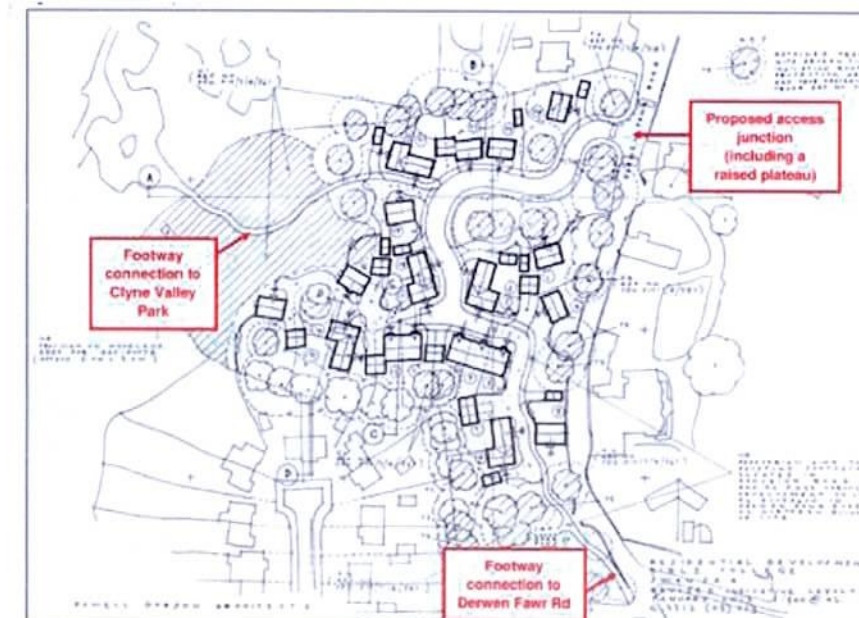
It is acknowledged that the current absence of footways adjacent to the Derwen Fawr Road carriageway in the immediate vicinity of the subject site is an area of concern to the Council and local residents. This provision of a network of footways throughout the development will significantly improve safety for all pedestrians (including those not associated with the proposed development) along the aforementioned section of Derwen Fawr Road and will provide a 'safer route' for children travelling on foot from the local area to/from Parkland County Primary School and Bishop Gore Secondary School, thereby supporting CCS' 'Safe Routes to School' projects.

#### Parking

There is provision for 77 No. parking spaces within the site of which 5 are identified as visitor. For a more detailed breakdown refer to the Transport Assessment.



SRS = Swansea Railway Station, SBS = Swansea Bus Station, PCP = Parkland County Primary School, BGS = Bishop Gore Secondary School, SMP = Sketty Medical Practice





## 5.2 Access

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### **Pedestrian Approach**

Provision for and improvements of the pedestrian footways allowing access through the site will greatly improve the pedestrian movement along Derwen Fawr Road, avoiding the need for pedestrians to walk in the carriageway.

External Lighting will be provided to the access route and external areas in accordance with BS 5459. The materials and design of the features ensuring access for people with disabilities and those with mobility difficulties are robust, permanent and are in accordance with current legislation.

### **Access for Emergency Services and Utilities**

The site is directly serviced from the Derwen Fawr Road with a turning space large enough to accommodate a fire tender designed into the layout.

## 5.3 Community Safety

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The following key principles have been considered, or should be considered at reserved matters stage.

- Design of the houses to achieve a sense of place and security to be developed at reserved matters stage.
- Public and Private routes are well defined with spaces and entrances that provide convenient movement.
- Public pedestrian routes are clear, legible overlooked and well lit.
- Physical security measures such as entrance doors, opening windows and locking system should be carefully considered and incorporated into the scheme at reserved matters stage.



## 6. Environmental Sustainability

### 6.1 Environmental Sustainability

A number of basic core design principles have informed the framework plan at outline stage in order to support the creation of a high quality sustainable environment . The objectives follow guidance from best practice urban design documents including 'Creating Sustainable Places' (WAG):

1. **Compactness** – providing an appropriate density of development close to public transport links that creates places for people whilst also recognising the need for the car with priority given to pedestrians.
2. **Accessibility** – Accommodate all users including considering the needs of those with visual and hearing impairments. Connecting into the existing movement network with consideration for local desire lines
3. **Legibility** – Create legibility by having a clearly marked entrance point, using existing and proposed features and the need for public open space to create identity. Create a clear hierarchy of streets.
4. **Context** – Scale, massing and character should respond to the surrounding context, drawing on and interpreting key elements including landscape and materials.
5. **Enclosure** – Providing active frontages to the public realm whilst considering the relationship between building scale and the street width .
6. **Variety** - Create distinctive spaces that add character.

In line with current planning policy any development proposal at reserved matters stage will need to achieve a minimum Code for Sustainable Homes level 3+.



## 7. Conclusion

### 7.1 Conclusion

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This is a site that presents the opportunity to create a new place to live and provide community wide benefit in terms of connectivity and open space.

The vision for the site is to create a development with an organic street pattern using the existing landscape and setting to maximise the site potential. The pedestrian route through the development has the potential to connect the site into the wider community facilities through the woodland.

The style and type of architecture should draw on some of the traditional local design features but could also interpret them in a innovative and contemporary manner thus helping to create a distinctive development

To conclude, the proposed development should provide a sustainable living place based around an open space strategy and pedestrian safe street network which links to the existing community where possible.