



Client. Coleg Cambria

Job No. 15077

Date. February 2016

**Coleg Cambria,
Bersham Road Campus Development
Design and Access Statement**



CONTROL SHEET

The following table lists the current issue number of each section and appendix contained within this document. An update of this control sheet will be issued with any updated Document

Please ensure when referencing this document that you are using the most recent Issue in accordance with the table below.

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Job Title: Coleg Cambria, Bersham Road Redevelopment

Job Number: 15077

Report Title: Design and Access Statement

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1.0 Context

1.1 Physical Context

1.1.1 Coleg Cambria is a Further Education college serving 5 campuses across North East Wales. It has roughly 27,000 students making it one of the UK's largest colleges.

1.1.2 Coleg Cambria's Bersham Road Campus is situated on Bersham Road, Wrexham, Wales. Approximately 1 mile from Wrexham town centre.

1.1.3 The campus offers predominantly vocational courses in areas including;

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| ▪ Bricklaying | ▪ Painting & Decorating |
| ▪ Plastering | ▪ Motor Vehicle |
| ▪ Joinery | ▪ Electronics |
| ▪ Electrical Installation | ▪ Engineering |
| ▪ Plumbing | ▪ Welding |
| ▪ Gas Installation | |

1.1.4 The site is primarily accessed from Bersham Road to the South. There is secondary access for pedestrians along a footpath from Ruthin Road to the North.

1.1.5 The Wrexham-Ruabon rail line passes alongside the site immediately to the west and to the east are residential properties along Alexandra Road. To the North East there are allotments. To the south lies Wrexham cemetery.

1.1.6 To the east of the site is a public footpath linking Ruthin Road to the North with Bersham Road to the South.

1.1.7 The residential property to the east is largely red brick & welsh slate traditional terraced homes. To the west the residential properties are of a more recent period with brick facades and tile roofs.

1.1.8 The existing topography and landscaping within the site are of an industrial nature and respond to the activities taking place. Primarily hard landscaping, a large car park for both staff and students is located to the South of the college opposite the main vehicular access. The majority of external landscaping is tarmac and concrete with vehicular routes through and around the site serving various buildings.

1.1.9 The site itself offers limited vegetation, a number of trees of assorted varieties and quality have developed around the periphery of the site with soft landscaping marking the entrance to the South and a small section to the North. An elongated section of undeveloped land abuts with the railway line and forms the North Western boundary of the College.

1.2 Social Context

1.2.1 The proposed development will offer a new engineering teaching facility along with enhancement to the existing buildings. This will allow for improved teaching facilities and facilitate future growth of Coleg Cambria.

1.2.2 The college provides continuing assessments for a range of individuals including apprentices, secondary school students, and professionals requiring annual

registrations with various governing bodies which requires flexibility and room for expansion. The college plans to introduce advanced courses for students and intends to become a centre of excellence in North Wales.

1.2.3 In the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (UDP), Coleg Cambria (formerly Yale College) is highlighted as an institution of growing stature. The UDP also makes reference to improving quality of life for its residents with an emphasis on supporting access to a variety of education and employment opportunities.

1.2.4 The site is a short distance from Wrexham town centre, which offers strong travel links across North Wales, and to the surrounding areas of Oswestry (14.3miles), Whitchurch (15.3miles) and Chester (14miles).

1.3 Economic Context

1.3.1 In the short term, the proposal will provide improved facilities for Coleg Cambria. This will enable a standard of education to be achieved, increasing students access to education and ultimately employment.

1.3.2 In the long term, the college plans to enhance the range of courses and qualifications offered.

1.3.3 In the long term, the construction of the new block will provide economic benefit to the local area via the increase of employment opportunities. The college currently works in partnership with over 1000 employers to deliver the skills required for employment. Coleg Cambria is continually seeking to add to and improve these ongoing relationships.

1.4 Policy Context

1.4.1 The National Planning Policy Guidance that has been taken into consideration in relation to the proposals is set out within;

- Planning Policy Wales (Edition 7, July 2014)
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 11: Noise
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 13: Economic Development
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 18: Transport

1.4.2 The Local Planning Policy Guidance that has been taken into consideration in relation to the proposals is set out in the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 1996 – 2011 which was adopted in February 2005. The proposals fully consider the guidance contained within;

- **Policy PS4** Development should maintain the existing settlement pattern and character and be integrated with the existing transport network to help reduce the overall need to travel and encourage the use of alternatives to the car.

- **Policy PS8** The transport network will be developed by providing an integrated range of travel options to and from principal residential, commercial, employment and education centres by making the best use of the existing road and rail network, including, where necessary, the provision of facilities for both passenger and freight interchange and by the encouragement of public transport, cycling and walking.
- **Policy PS12** Proposals for the generation of energy from renewable sources will be supported provided that the wider environmental benefits are not outweighed by any detrimental impacts of the proposed development (including any electricity transmission facilities needed) on the landscape, public safety, and the local environment.
- **Policy GDP1** All new development should:
 - a) Ensure that built development in its scale, design and layout, and in its use of materials and landscaping, accords with the character of the site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality
 - d) Ensure safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to and from development sites, both on site and in the nearby locality.
 - e) Ensure that built development is located where it has convenient access to public transport facilities, and is well related to pedestrian and cycle routes wherever possible
 - f) Ensure the safety and amenity of the public and safeguard the environment from the adverse effects of pollution of water, land or air, hazards from industry and quarrying, and associated noise, odour or vibration arising from development.
 - i) Ensure that development does not result in, or is subject to, flooding, soil erosion, landslides or contamination, either on or off the site
 - k) Secure the development of sustainable communities, through the promotion of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

2.0 Existing Usage

- 2.1 The existing campus site has provided further education for many years. There is currently a number of buildings and detached structures that facilitate the delivery of the courses available on the Bersham Road site.
- 2.2 Block A is situated to the South of the site, adjacent to the carpark. It is the campus's primary administration building that offers teaching spaces alongside the main entrance for the campus. This relatively new two storey brick building provides welfare and supporting accommodation for the majority of the students on site.

- 2.3 Block's B & C are situated to the North of Block A. They are both of an industrial nature consisting of steel frames and clad in brick at low level and vertical profiled cladding panels above. Internally they are sub divided into their respective teaching categories. Blocks B & C currently provide teaching workshops for the majority of the vocational courses as listed at the beginning of this document.
- 2.4 Block B was re-roofed and the cladding replaced during the summer of 2015. It is proposed that Block C will also be re-roofed and re-clad in a similar style as part of the works undertaken to bring the building up to current standards.
- 2.5 Through years of modification and adaption, the buildings currently do not offer adequate teaching facilities. Departments are fragmented throughout both structures and currently offer inadequate & inflexible teaching space.
- 2.6 A number of detached buildings have been erected around the site as the campus has expanded. These buildings have limited uses and currently provide storage for materials, assessment areas, and student welfare facilities. It is intended that these buildings are removed and their functions provided within the remaining and new buildings.
- 2.7 The current site layout has resulted in departments being fragmented around the site. It is also confusing for students to navigate and ineffective in the way in which it responds to the various departmental needs of the college.

3.0 Design Principles

- 3.1 Planning Policy Wales and TAN 12 are the principle 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 society's needs in a way that is consistent with overall sustainable principles.
- 3.2 Planning Policy Wales also seeks to promote resource efficient settlements that minimise land-take and urban sprawl, locates development so as to minimise the demand for travel, ensures that all communities have good quality housing for their needs in safe neighbourhoods and promotes access to employment, shopping, education, health, community, leisure and sports facilities and open space.
- 3.3 A new specialist engineering building with a gross internal area of circa 2400m² over 2 floors will be constructed to the south of the site on the existing car park. It is anticipated that this new specialist centre will help to improve upon the current partnerships with over 1000 employers.
- 3.4 The new building will also contain teaching classrooms, teaching labs and a CAD Suite at first floor level. These will be used by a range of different courses and allows for the expansion of Coleg Cambria's Further Education curriculum.
- 3.5 There is an opportunity for the new building to be architecturally appealing and improve the visual character of the site. The new building will be visible from

Bersham Road and presents the opportunity for the college to create a new impressive face to the campus entrance.

- 3.6 The standalone structures around the site will be demolished, leaving the site with 4 core buildings.
- 3.7 Block C will receive external works similar to those undertaken on Block B in 2015. The building will be re-roofed and receive new external cladding to match the new Block B cladding. The single storey roof extension to the south of Block C will be replaced with a matching pitched roof.
- 3.8 To the North of Block C there will be a new enclosed area which will serve as a material store for the different courses within the campus.
- 3.9 A new covered walkway will be introduced between Block A & B. This will encourage a direct route from the site entrance through Block A, B and C respectively. In order for this to be achieved, the internal stairs in Block A will be altered and new doorway formed in the lobby. The new entrance to Block B will receive work to increase its prominence within the façade.
- 3.10 The teaching spaces will be reorganised accordingly within Block B, C to better serve students.
- 3.11 The existing car park will be relocated to the North of the site, beyond block C. A through road will allow for a direct route from Bersham Road to the car park at the other end of the site. The potential for car parking spaces will be maximised around the site, with much of the land vacated by the demolition to be reallocated as car parking.
- 3.12 In terms of topography the site is primarily flat. However, the existing car park currently is split level, with a retaining wall passing through the centre of it.

4.0 Accessibility – Vehicles and Pedestrians

- 4.1 Site accessibility will remain unchanged in principle. All vehicular traffic will continue to access the site via the South entrance. This accommodates all vehicles including cars, buses and delivery vehicles.
- 4.2 The majority of car parking is relocated to the North west of the site. There will be several smaller parking zones around the site. Visitors have allocated parking in front of Block A, which is to remain along with accessible parking which is to be distributed around the site to best serve the 4 buildings.
- 4.3 The site road system will accommodate the largest of vehicles expected at the site including fire tenders to allow access across the whole development.
- 4.4 The site currently has parking space for about 170 vehicles. The proposed scheme encompasses circa 260 spaces of which 20 are accessible spaces.
- 4.5 The aim of the project is to maximise safe pedestrian access across the campus. Clear routes between the 4 blocks will be maintained, with the aim of allowing easy navigation around the site for all users.
- 4.6 Pedestrian access into the site will remain unchanged. Footpaths and hard landscaping allow pedestrian access from Bersham Road along the front of the site

as well as along the Eastern boundary from Ruthin Road. A pedestrianized gate currently allows access from the Eastern boundary and this will be preserved.

5.0 Accessibility - Movements to, from and within the Buildings

- 5.1 The approach to the new building will offer clear and level access from the existing road leading to the site.
- 5.2 Sufficient clear widths will be provided to door openings to meet current building regulations.
- 5.3 The property will have a level external perimeter to facilitate maintenance access and emergency escape routes.
- 5.4 Level door thresholds will be incorporated throughout.
- 5.5 A lift is proposed to provide access between floors.
- 5.6 The new building will be designed and constructed in line with Building Regulations Part M.

6.0 Proposed Character

- 6.1 The design process included an analysis of the context of the application site. This analysis informed the design process and as such it is considered that the proposal offers development that complements the character of the existing buildings and surrounding area.
- 6.2 It is proposed that the work to Block C will be completed to match the work undertaken in August 2015
- 6.2 It is proposed that the façade will be a composition of curtain wall glazing and insulated cladding panels. This provides the opportunity for natural daylight to easily penetrate the spaces and also enables views both in and out of the building. The cladding enables the new construction to share characteristics with the existing buildings on the site. Both vertical and horizontal cladding panels will be used to break down the large linear elevations, and to a scale appropriate for the local context.
- 6.3 It is proposed that the roof is to be clad with insulated panels similar to those currently used on Block A. A series of pitches will create a varied roof line that shares characteristics with the existing buildings whilst having its own defining features.
- 6.4 The building will benefit from natural lighting in the teaching spaces and in the large communal space in the entrance. This will be achieved through curtain walling at ground floor and through the ribbon windows at first floor. Artificial lighting will be required for evening classes as will emergency illumination.
- 6.5 The overall design approach is one of simplicity with emphasis and detailing on the end users of the building. The front elevation is a long linear façade which is broken down to emphasize the change of use between the large multi-use entrance area,

transitioning into the new engineering teaching space. This is achieved through a change of cladding orientation and colour along with defined breaks in the glazing.

6.6 All of these design features have been carefully considered to ensure the building has an attractive appearance and suitable for its function and location.

6.7 The proposal, therefore, is considered appropriate for the site and wider area, providing new flexible teaching facilities which respond to the character of the adjacent blocks, the surrounding area and provides teaching facilities to suit current and future needs.

7.0 Community Safety

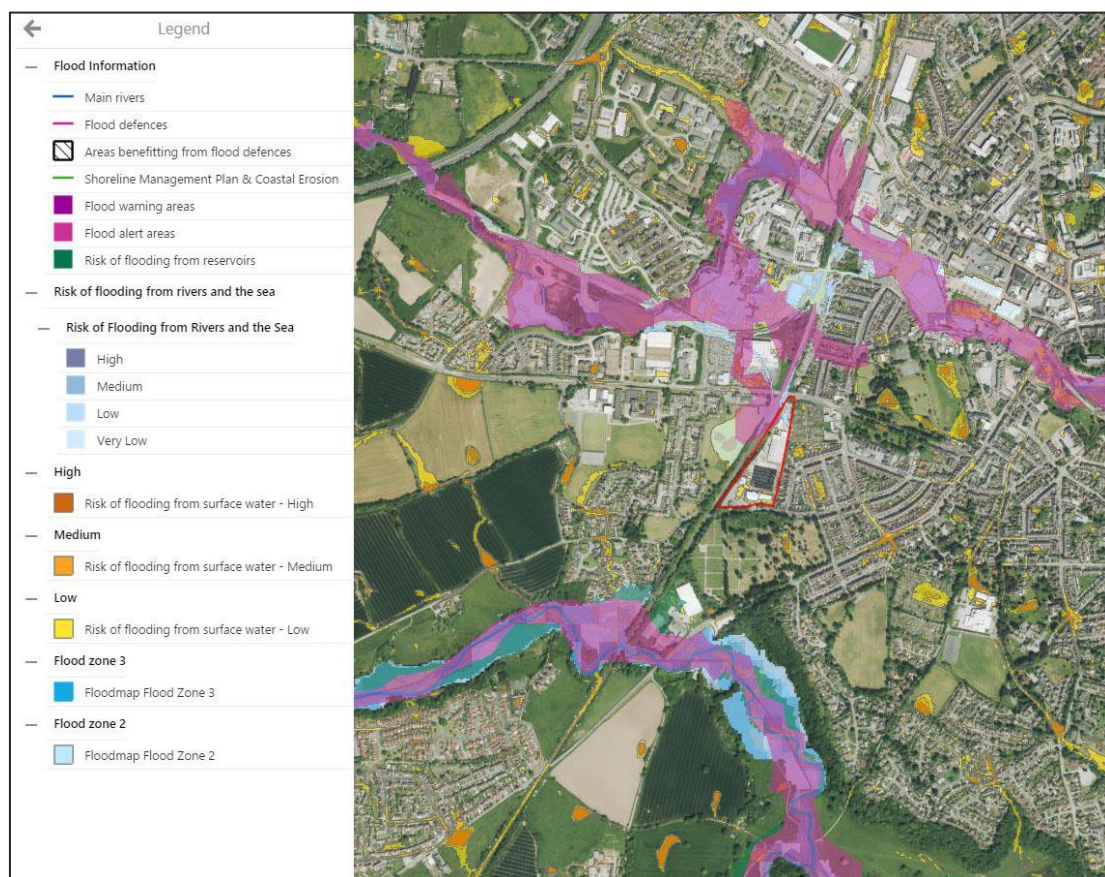
7.1 During the design process design measures such as layout, appearance and landscape have been carefully assessed to help to prevent crime. It is proposed that the fully designed scheme will be assessed under the Secure by Design Scheme and the recommendations adhered to where possible.

7.2 The following safety measures have been considered;

- Security through natural surveillance.
- Sense of ownership through clearly defined boundaries.
- External environment designed to avoid the inadvertent creation of opportunities for crime.
- Segregation of traffic and pedestrians.
- Segregation of cars and commercial vehicles.

8.0 Environmental Sustainability

- 8.1 The development will be constructed to fulfil current Building Regulations standards where applicable.
- 8.2 The below image shows the flood risk for the immediate area from Natural Resources Wales;



- 8.3 It has been established via Natural Resources Wales that the site poses a very low risk from flooding due to rivers or reservoirs. This is to the north of the site and this area is to become Car Parking.
- 8.4 The site has a low risk of surface water flooding towards the south. This area currently serves as car parking but will be developed as part of the new block.
- 8.5 A total of 4 trees and a group of small shrubs require removal for the development. Please refer to the attached tree survey report. There will be replaced by significantly more trees which will be placed strategically within the site.

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9.0 Land Use

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

10.0 Noise Pollution

- 10.1 Some noise may be generated during construction works but once complete it is anticipated that the proposed use will not create any greater noise levels than those currently created on the site.

11.0 Air Quality

- 11.1 There may be a limited amount of dust resulting from the construction works.
- 11.2 The proposed uses do not generate any additional air pollution. Extraction systems are provided to the motor vehicle and welding areas, along with a dust collection system to the joinery areas.