

Design and Access Statement
Arvonía Bakery
14 Heol Maengwyn
Machynlleth
Rev A January 2024



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Summary

The proposal is for the demolition of the dilapidated stone / timber buildings plus more recent brick extensions which house the ovens and equipment for Arvonía bakery, and the construction of a pair of stone faced / timber boarded dwellings for affordable rental and a refurbished storage facility. The dilapidated storage building at the end of the row will be rebuilt to closely resemble what is there now, but with a slate roof. Its use will remain as existing.

The buildings are situated to the rear of the shops on the South side of Heol Maengwyn and in proximity to the Wynnstay Hotel (listed building), in the centre of Machynlleth and within the boundary of the conservation area. Full planning and conservation area consent are being sought.

This is a resubmission of application 23/0682/FUL and 23/0774/CAC which was for the construction of three dwellings. There is not enough space to provide the required parking spaces for the proposal so the revised application seeks approval for two dwellings with two spaces each, and the rebuilding of the storage building with the use retained as existing.

Brief and Vision

The brief was to utilise the site to create simple but comfortable and attractive living accommodation for an affordable rent. Conversion of the existing buildings was considered but due to the advanced state of deterioration plus the amount of the original frontage that had already been removed, in addition to the roof timbers and slates, it was decided that rebuilding would be necessary.

The vision is to create comfortable, sustainable two bedroomed homes with outdoor amenity space which will be aesthetically pleasing and utilise a neglected town centre site.

Site and Context Analysis

The site lies to the rear of no.s 14 and 16 Heol Maengwyn, to the south side of the main shopping street in Machynlleth. The buildings fronting the road are mixed use, being retail on the ground floor with living accommodation above. There is pedestrian access from the site to the main road via an alleyway between the two buildings.



Heol Maengwyn. The site lies behind the shops with orange and red paintwork.

There are currently buildings on part of the site; a slightly taller property with a steeper pitched slate roof and bay windows adjoins the rear of 14 Heol Maengwyn. This does not form part of the proposal and is to be repaired and retained. The buildings to be demolished appear to be a terrace of 4 stone cottages and a stone / timber barn at the southern end. These buildings have been drastically altered with much of the frontage and possibly a separating wall having been removed completely, and a brick extension has been added to the front. The roofs would have been slated originally but are now clad with corrugated asbestos sheeting. Due to the fact that little of the original buildings remain, and what internal walls there are would not fit into a practical design, it was decided that demolition is the practical option.



View of the southern half of the site .

Following a site meeting with a senior archaeologist from CPAT he offered the following information: “The overgrown garden and the area below the concrete floor of the existing building is all within one, or possibly two, medieval burgage plots extending back from the frontage. These rear plots typically contained former timber framed or stone extensions, wells, rubbish pits, burgage plot boundary ditches, gardens and potentially even light industrial features such as pottery or corn drying kilns. site lies within what is thought to be a medieval burgage plot”. Due to this fact a watching brief will be carried out by an archaeologist during any excavations.

The buildings are likely to have been late C18th or C19th cottages but may have had some industrial use - an archaeological survey will be carried out before any demolition so more may be revealed at that time.

To the south and west of the site is the car park for the Wynnstay Hotel and to the east a blockwork wall, behind which is the garden of no. 18 Heol Maengwyn. The rear wall of the existing buildings is a solid rubblestone wall which will be retained (structural stability permitting) for both the privacy of the residents and of the patrons of the Wynnstay Hotel.



View of the yard and the rear of 16 Heol Maengwyn

Machynlleth is listed as an Area Retail Centre and therefore proposals that undermine the retail hierarchy will not be permitted. In this case it is considered that although in a town centre location the buildings would not be practical for retail use due to the secluded location. Approached via a door to the alleyway all that will be visible will be a stone wall which not be appealing in terms of attracting custom. Another mitigating factor is that there are multiple empty shops in Machynlleth which suggests that demand for retail units isn't high. There is however high demand for residential accommodation, especially that which is affordable. Also an increase in residents equals an increase in potential customers for the current local businesses, rather than competition which is not welcome in the current economic climate.

Design Development

The design started with the intention to improve the aesthetic of the site and provide practical living accommodation which will be offered for an affordable rent. The rear wall has no openings and it was decided not to introduce any, for both the privacy of the residents and the patrons of the neighbouring Wynnstay Hotel. Conservation roof lights will provide natural light and ventilation to the rear of the properties.

Traditional external materials were chosen - stone facing for the wall (to be salvaged from the demolition) and natural slate roofing. The end building will also have timber cladding to the upper floor to resemble the existing building. Originally some wider windows and bifold doors were proposed to compensate for the lack of windows in the west elevation, but following advice from the Built Heritage Officer the design was amended and the windows and doors will now be of a more traditional appearance.

The dwellings will be highly insulated and heat pumps will provide heating and hot water. The dwellings will each have privacy screens between their external space but the individual plots will not be fenced off.

Various practical aspects were considered and in addition to an open plan living room / kitchen and two bedrooms each dwelling will have space for the storage of cycles / buggies.

Proposal

I. Character

The form of the original existing buildings will be retained (minus the unsightly later brick addition) which in addition to the reintroduction of good quality, traditional materials will sustain / improve the local character. The site is private and secluded and will remain that way.

II. Access

Access to the dwellings will be via a paved surface from the parking spaces, which are situated just outside the Wynnstay car park. Another access is via an alleyway between nos. 14 and 16 Heol Maengwyn directly onto the high street in the centre of Machynlleth.



View of the parking spaces to be provided for the dwellings.

III. Movement

Vehicle access is via a side road off the A489 which leads to the car parking spaces and another access via the Wynnstay car park.

There is good access for pedestrians and cyclists via the path through the alleyway which leads directly onto Heol Maengwyn. There are a multitude of shops within a short distance of the site and the primary school is about a 10 minute walk away.

There are regular bus services from Machynlleth to Caernarfon in the north and Cardiff (via Aberystwyth) in the south. The station is about a 5 minute walk from the site with destinations of Aberystwyth and Pwllheli on the coast and Shrewsbury inland; Birmingham and London can be reached in 2.5 and 4 hours respectively.

IV. Environmental Sustainability

Landscape/ Habitat

An ecology survey has been carried out and around eight pipistrelle bats were found to be using the dilapidated timber clad building at the end as a day roost (Laura Cottrell, October 2022) . A mitigation strategy has been prepared and a licence will be required from NRW before any work is carried out (See drawing 12-17_P03 Bat Mitigation). Wall mounted boxes will be fitted to the south elevation of 14 Heol Maengwyn prior to work starting. Crevice roof boxes accessed via gaps in the ridge mortar of the larger roof, plus 5 further wall mounted boxes in different locations will cater for the displaced pipistrelles.

As the yard is currently covered with debris and hardstanding the introduction of grass and gravel porous surfacing plus a sustainable drainage system with associated planting will enhance the site for biodiversity.

Energy and Resource efficiency

The end building is south facing and will have photovoltaic panels fitted to assist with sustainable energy provision for the building, with any surplus being supplied to the national grid. The houses will be highly insulated to minimise heat loss in the winter and gain in the summer; heating will be provided by heat pumps which will heat the houses via an underfloor heating system. The windows, doors and screens will have low 'U' values and low emissivity glazing which reduces overheating in the summer and prevents heat loss in colder months.

Water and Waste Management

The use of porous surfaces will allow rainwater to drain to the ground rather than into the public sewer as existing. Water butts will be installed near the houses to collect water for the gardens, with the overflow going to a soakaway as designed by a sustainable drainage technologist. SAB approval has been obtained, ref 2300326.

The dwellings will have low water use fittings as required by part G of the building regulations.

Household waste will be separated and collected by the local authority waste / recycling facility, from a collection point adjacent to the highway at the end of the parking spaces.

V. Community Safety

The development is for private dwellings and there are no public spaces on the site.