
Penrhos Farm, Penrhos

Design and Access Statement

Prepared on behalf of James Owen, Rebo UK Ltd

July 2021

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Design & Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared by Barton Willmore LLP on behalf of James Owen the Director of Rebo UK Ltd (the 'Applicant'). Rebo UK Ltd specialises in the sale of large outdoor toys, such as climbing frames, through online retail.
- 1.2 The DAS accompanies an application for full planning permission for employment development (retrospective), and retention of a haulage yard in haulage yard use, at Penrhos Farm (incorporating Deytheur Yard), Penrhos, Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain SY22 6QH (the 'Site').
- 1.3 The DAS communicates the design as shown on the plans prepared by Roger Parry and Partners and refers to technical reports prepared by the Consultant Team. These plans and documents are also submitted in support of the application and should be read alongside this Statement.

Development Summary

- 1.4 The employment development comprises 3,353.23sqm of floorspace predominantly within a new steel portal frame building (2,893.23sqm) with the remainder within a former agricultural building (460sqm). These buildings are used for storage (Class B8), with an element of manufacturing (Class B1, light industry) within the change of use building. The employment development is supported by a site office and the also includes associated access and landscaping works. The existing haulage yard is to be retained in haulage yard use.

Development Description

Change of use of land and buildings from agricultural to storage use (Class B8), with ancillary business use (Class B1), erection of a steel portal frame building (including demolition of agricultural buildings), associated access, fence and gate, hardstanding, and landscaping, and retention of haulage yard in haulage use.

Statement Scope and Structure

- 1.5 There is a requirement to submit a DAS with all planning applications for major development, with exceptions including applications for change of use of land or buildings. As such, the focus of this DAS is on the new steel portal frame building and associated works.
- 1.6 The *Development Management Manual* (Welsh Government, May 2017) advises (paragraph 7.3.11) that the content of a Design and Access Statement should be proportional to the complexity of the development. Taking account of this, and further guidance within *Design and Access Statements in Wales* (Welsh Government, April 2017), the remainder of this Statement is structured as follows:
- **Section 2 Background** sets out the development vision and project brief.
 - **Section 3 Application Site and Context** provides an analysis of the Site and context with reference to Site specific planning policy, designations and planning history.
 - **Section 4 The Development** provides an overview of the development and how the design has interpreted and responded to the brief and vision (Section 2) and Site and context (Section 3).
 - **Section 5 Design Assessment** demonstrates how the design of the development responds to the five objectives of good design as set out in national planning policy.
 - **Section 6 Response to Planning Policy** concludes the Statement by demonstrating how the development responds to local planning policy.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Rebo UK Ltd are a local business that prior to locating at Penrhos Farm operated from four sites around Welshpool and Trewern in North Powys. The multi-site location was failing the business, including as staff were travelling between sites costing the business time and money and the warehouses were substandard and not fit for purpose. Overall, the multi-site solution was unsustainable and consolidation onto a single site was required for stability and growth. With a commitment to the local area and to safeguard the jobs of current employees a location within North Powys was required.

"I owe everything to the people who work within my business, the team we have built is our most highly valued asset. It is my responsibility to maintain stability and provide a platform for growth and security."

Mr James Owen, Director Rebo UK Ltd

Vision

- 2.2 The vision of Rebo UK Ltd is to retain and create employment opportunities and contribute to the rural economy of North Powys, with a high-quality development that integrates with its surroundings and delivers environmental sustainability and a healthy working environment.

Project Brief

- 2.3 Against this background, the starting point for the development was:
- A floorspace of 2,850sqm (30,000sqft) and a minimum eaves of 6.5m to allow use of high bay racking systems and to optimise storage capabilities.
 - A soundly constructed, single building with a regular layout and multiple service doors for efficiency of operations.
 - A sufficient yard area for delivery vehicles to manoeuvre, which together with the building footprint requires a minimum site size of 0.75 hectares.
 - Immediate access to fibre optic broadband.

3.0 APPLICATION SITE AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Site prior to development is shown on the **Aerial Boundary Plan**.
- 3.2 The Site is in a rural location, around 2 miles from the A483, accessed along the C2035/C2034. The Site, shown edged red on the Aerial Boundary Plan, totals 1.63 hectares. Of this, around 1 hectare comprises a former farmyard, accessed from the C2304. The employment development has taken place on the former farmyard. Prior to the employment development, the former farmyard comprised a series of redundant agricultural buildings. The remainder of the Site comprises an established operational haulage yard with associated buildings and a separate access from the C2034. The Site forms part of a larger area of land, shown edged blue on the Aerial Boundary Plan, that is within the control of the Applicant.
- 3.3 The C2304 bounds the Site to the east with agricultural fields beyond. Agricultural fields are also to the north, beyond the haulage yard. Penrhos Coppice lies to the west and Ash Coppice and two dwellings lie to the south beyond the C2034.
- 3.4 The Site is located in the open countryside. Policy SP6 (Distribution of Growth across the Settlement Hierarchy) of the *Powys Local Development Plan 2011-2026* (the 'Local Plan') exercises strict control over new development in the open countryside but acknowledges that employment development may come forward and may be acceptable where it is justified and complies with policy. Design policies, notably Local Plan Policy DM13 (Design and Resources), are of particular relevance to the DAS.
- 3.5 Taking account of the technical reports submitted in support of the application:
- There are no national or local landscape designations within a 3km radius study area¹.
 - There are two ponds within the vicinity of the Site, but these were not likely to support breeding populations of Great Crested Newts (GCN) and the buildings demolished to make way for the development were not suitable bat roost sites².
 - There are five listed buildings within a 1km radius, of which only one has any form of intervisibility, that is the Grade II listed Holy Trinity Church to the southwest of the Site³.

¹ *Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (Viento, April 2021).

² *Protected Species Assessment* (Arbor Vitae, April 2021).

³ *Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment* (Trysor, July 2021).

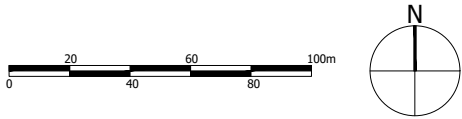
- 3.6 The application follows previous applications for employment development, from which it is clear that landscape/ visual impact and impact on built heritage are key considerations.



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Revision	Date	Drn	Ckd
-	-	-	-

- Site boundary
- Other land in clients ownership



Project
Penrhos Farm

Drawing Title
Aerial Boundary Plan

Date	Scale	Drawn by	Check by
24.05.21	1:2,500 @ A3	SM	LH
Project No	Drawing No	Revision	
32123	BM-M-01	-	

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4.0 THE DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The development is shown on the plans submitted in support of the application and on the **Photosheet**, with the use, amount, layout, scale, appearance, landscaping and access summarised below.

Use

- 4.2 The steel portal frame building, and change of use building, are used for storage (Class B8) in association with the Applicant's toy supply business, which specialises in the sale of large outdoor toys, such as climbing frames, through online retail. There is an element of manufacturing (Class B1, light industry) within the change of use building, and a site office. For avoidance of doubt, the Class B1 uses are ancillary; there are no primary B1 uses on the Site. The established haulage yard is to be retained in haulage yard use.

Amount

- 4.3 The employment development, excluding the ancillary site office, totals 3,353.23sqm of floorspace. The steel portal frame building forms the significant part of this comprising 2,893.23sqm of floorspace, which responds to the project brief for a single building of 2,850sqm. A further 460sqm of floorspace is within a former agricultural building.

Layout

- 4.4 The steel portal frame building has been erected on the western side the former farmyard in part on land that was previously occupied by agricultural buildings of a smaller footprint. It is situated adjacent to existing built form comprising the agricultural building that is also in storage use as part of the employment development to the east and the established haulage yard to the north, which assists it to integrate with its surroundings.
- 4.5 The siting of the building and wider layout meets operational needs, with hardstanding wrapping around the building to provide for vehicle circulation, servicing, and parking, as detailed in the *Transport Statement* (The Hurlstone Partnership, May 2021) submitted in support of the application.

Scale

- 4.6 The steel portal frame building measures 36.6m in depth by 79.05m in width, which responds to the project brief to provide the required floorspace within a single building with a regular layout. The building height of 9.56m at the ridge, falling to 7m at the

eaves, also responds to the project brief and the operational requirements for minimum eaves height of 6.5m to allow for high bay racking systems.

Appearance

- 4.7 The steel portal frame building has a concrete panel base and box profile metal cladding walls and roof. This responds to the project brief for a soundly constructed building, and delivers environmental benefits as demonstrated in the *Energy and Sustainability Appraisal* (Scotch Partners, December 2020) submitted in support of the application.
- 4.8 The steel portal frame building was grey in colour but has, in part, been changed to a green tone to assist it to integrate with its surroundings. The building in respect of its appearance and scale is typical of the range of rural development found locally. This is demonstrated in the report *Typical Built Development in Powys, Visual Matters* (Viento, April 2021) submitted in support of the application.

Landscaping

- 4.9 An earth bund has been provided to the south/ southwest of the steel portal frame building and hardstanding area with leylandii and semi-mature deciduous trees planted along the bund. In addition, four semi-mature birch trees have been planted within the field to the south of the building. As demonstrated in the *Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (Viento, April 2021) submitted in support of the application, these landscape enhancements, together with the change to the colour of the building, have assisted the building to integrate with its surroundings. This process will continue with further proposed landscape enhancements, including a sizable native woodland block wrapping around the southern and western sides of the Site, as detailed in the *Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (Viento, April 2021).

Access

- 4.10 The employment development utilises the former farmyard access which has been provided with a sliding gate, set back from the highway, and close boarded fencing. Parking for cars, motorcycles and cycles is available in the vicinity of the access, as detailed in the *Transport Statement* (The Hurlstone Partnership, May 2021) submitted in support of the application. This includes spaces for disabled people adjacent to the site office and close to the steel portal frame building and former agricultural building that has been utilised, both of which have level thresholds.



Photo 1
Steel portal frame building in use for storage, showing east elevation with entrance bays and hardstanding for servicing



Photo 2
Former agricultural building in storage use with ancillary light industry



Photo 3
Established haulage yard to be retained in haulage yard use



Photo 4
Access with sliding gate and close boarded fencing, into parking area with former agricultural building and steel portal frame building beyond



Photo 5
Parking area at access with haulage yard buildings beyond

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Revision	Date	Drn	Ckd
-	-	-	-

Project
Penrhos Farm

Drawing Title
Photosheet

Date	Scale	Drawn by	Check by
24.05.21	NTS	SM	LH
Project No	Drawing No	Revision	
32123	BM-M-02	-	

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5.0 DESIGN ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 *Planning Policy Wales* (Edition 11, February 2021) and *Technical Advice Note 12: Design* (March 2016) set five objectives for good design. This section demonstrates how the development responds to each objective in turn.

Character

- 5.2 The steel portal frame building meets operational needs and responds to the existing built form within the Site and the character of the surrounding area. The building is located adjacent to existing built form, comprising the agricultural building that is also in storage use as part of the employment development to the east and the established haulage yard to the north, which assists it to integrate with its surroundings. Moreover, the building in respect of its scale and appearance is typical of the range of rural development found locally. This is demonstrated in the report *Typical Built Development in Powys, Visual Matters* (Viento, April 2021) submitted in support of the application and which shows a number of large buildings are located within and visible from the local area, including a barn at Ty Top which stands out locally due to its elevation, position and colour.
- 5.3 The development balances the hardstanding required to meet operational needs for vehicle circulation, servicing and parking, with a strong landscape framework. This includes an earth bund to the south/ southwest of the steel portal frame building and hardstanding area with leylandii and semi-mature deciduous trees planted along the bund, and four semi-mature birch trees planted within the field to the south of the building. As demonstrated in the *Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (Viento, April 2021) submitted in support of the application, these landscape enhancements assist the building to integrate with its surroundings. Moreover, this process will continue with further proposed landscape enhancements, including a sizable native woodland block wrapping around the southern and western sides of the Site, as detailed in the *Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (Viento, April 2021).
- 5.4 Overall, the amount, scale and appearance of the development, together with the layout and landscape design, meets operational needs whilst responding to the Site and its context, resulting in a development that sustains and enhances local character.

Access

- 5.5 Details of access, circulation and parking are provided within the *Transport Statement* (The Hurlstone Partnership, May 2021) submitted in support of the application. This

demonstrates that parking for 57 vehicles can be accommodated within the Site based on *CSS Wales Parking Standards for Distribution Centres*, which is significantly above actual parking demand. These spaces include car parking spaces for disabled people adjacent to the site office and close to the steel portal frame building and former agricultural building that has been utilised, both of which have level thresholds. As such, the development ensures ease of access for all.

Movement

- 5.6 The *Transport Statement* (The Hurlstone Partnership, May 2021) submitted in support of the application demonstrates adequate arrangements for access, parking and circulation, including for servicing by large articulated HGVs. Moreover, the *Transport Statement* demonstrates that the Site is in a relatively accessible location, with average journey to work distances and modal choice for staff travel to/ from the employment development being comparable to those for the County as whole. Notwithstanding this, the Applicant is committed to reducing car travel and proposes to operate the *Travel Plan Statement* (The Hurlstone Partnership, December 2020) submitted in support of the application. This includes measures to support cycling, including a Cycle to Work Scheme and parking facilities, and to promote car sharing to reduce single occupancy car journeys. As such, the development promotes sustainable means of travel.

Environmental Sustainability

- 5.7 The steel portal frame building is of a high quality and built to last. The environmental benefits of this building, with comparison to the buildings it replaced, are demonstrated in the *Energy and Sustainability Appraisal* (Scotch Partners, December 2020) submitted in support of the application. In summary, the building:
- Achieves high thermal performance and efficient lighting to reduce carbon emissions.
 - Provides a healthy internal environment, including good indoor air quality, good thermal comfort and good access to natural daylight.
 - Uses materials chosen for their resilience, durability and recyclability.
- 5.8 In addition, the development takes opportunities to improve the landscape and biodiversity quality of the site, as demonstrated in the *Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (Viento, April 2021) and *Biodiversity Enhancement* (Arbor Vitae, April 2021) reports submitted in support of the application. These improvements include:

- The planting of a sizable native woodland block, totalling around 7,250sqm, around the southern and western sides of the Site linking to the existing Penrhos Coppice.
- Construction of a pond, fed by drainage from the steel portal frame building, and creation of two GCN refuges.
- Erection of three bat roosting boxes and three nest boxes for breeding birds.

5.9 Overall, environmental sustainability is integrated into the development with the steel portal frame building being built to last and incorporating measures to reduce its environmental impact, and the wider development taking opportunities to enhance both the landscape and biodiversity.

Community Safety

5.10 The former farmhouse, which lies outside of the Site but within land in the control of the Applicant, is occupied by an employee of the Applicant, which provides security through natural surveillance. External lighting is limited and carefully designed to minimise light pollution, as set out in the *Lighting Design Scheme* (Roger Parry and Partners, July 2021) submitted in support of the application. This approach balances safety and security with the Site's rural location, the amenities of occupiers of nearby dwellings, and interests of biodiversity.

6.0 RESPONSE TO PLANNING POLICY

6.1 Section 5 demonstrates how the development responds to the five objectives for good design set by national planning policy; this section concludes the DAS by demonstrating how the development responds to local planning policy. This focuses on design, in particular Local Plan Policy DM13 (Design and Resources), with a full assessment of the development and its compliance with the development plan and other material considerations set out in the *Planning Statement* (Barton Willmore, July 2021) submitted in support of the application.

6.2 Policy DM13 requires developments to demonstrate good quality design, with regard to the qualities and amenity of the surrounding area, local infrastructure and resources. Acceptable development is defined by a series of criteria, and this section demonstrates how the development satisfies each criteria, in so far as it is relevant, in turn:

"1. Development has been designed to complement and/or enhance the character of the surrounding area in terms of siting, appearance, integration, scale, height, massing, and design detailing." – As set out at Section 5, the steel portal frame building is of a scale and appearance typical of the range of rural development found locally, and it is sited adjacent to existing built form which, together with landscape enhancements, assists it to integrate with its surroundings.

"2. The development contributes towards the preservation of local distinctiveness and sense of place." – The design of the steel portal frame building, being of a scale and appearance typical of the range of rural development found locally, together with a strong landscape framework, ensures that the development complements the character of the area and, as such, preserves local distinctiveness.

"3. Any development within or affecting the setting and/or significant views into and out of a Conservation Area has been designed in accordance with any relevant adopted Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Conservation Area Management Plans, or any other relevant detailed assessment or guidance adopted by the Council." – The development does not affect the setting and/or significant views into and out of a Conservation Area. The impact on the historic environment is assessed within the *Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment* (Trysor, July 2021) and, in respect of the potential impact on the setting and significance of the Holy Trinity Church, a Grade II listed building, the *Impact on the Setting and Significance* (Trysor, July 2021) report, both of which are submitted in support of the application. This work demonstrates, in accordance

with Local Plan Policy SP7 (Safeguarding of Strategic Resources and Assets), that the development has not resulted in an unacceptable adverse impact on the Holy Trinity Church.

"4. The development does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on existing and established tourism assets and attractions." – Not relevant.

"5. The layout of development creates attractive, safe places, supporting community safety and crime prevention." – As set out at Section 5, the development provides security through natural surveillance, with limited use of carefully designed external lighting to balance safety and security with the Site's rural location, the amenities of occupiers of nearby dwellings and interests of biodiversity, in accordance with Local Plan Policies DM7 (Dark Skies and External Lighting) and DM2 (Natural Resources).

"6. It contains an appropriate mix of development that responds to local need, includes a flexibility in design to allow changes in use of subsequent buildings and spaces as requirements and circumstances change." – The location of the employment development adjacent to an established haulage yard use which is to be retained in haulage use is an appropriate mix for the Site, and the employment development utilises both a former agricultural building and purpose-built building – that is, the steel portal frame building – to meet its needs and in doing so provides local employment opportunities as demonstrated in the *Economic Benefits of Rebo UK Ltd's Activities at Penrhos Farm* (Pegasus, April 2021) report submitted in support of the application.

"7. It is inclusive to all, making full provision for people with disabilities." – As set out at Section 5, the development ensures ease of access for all, including provision for car parking spaces for disabled people adjacent to the site office and close to the steel portal frame building and former agricultural building that has been utilised as part of the employment development, both of which have level thresholds.

"8. It incorporates adequate amenity land, together with appropriate landscaping and planting." As set out at Section 5, the development includes a strong landscape framework, including a native woodland block of around 7,250sqm wrapping around the southern and western sides of the Site, providing significant amenity value to the development and the surrounding area.

"9. The public rights of way network or other recreation assets listed in Policy SP7 (3) are enhanced and integrated within the layout of the development proposal; or appropriate mitigation measures are put in place where necessary." – Not relevant.

"10. The development has been designed and located to minimise the impacts on the transport network - journey times, resilience and efficient operation - whilst ensuring that highway safety for all transport users is not detrimentally impacted upon.

Development proposals should meet all highway access requirements, (for all transport users), vehicular parking standards and demonstrate that the strategic and local highway network can absorb the traffic impacts of the development without adversely affecting the safe and efficient flow of traffic on the network or that traffic impacts can be managed to acceptable levels to reduce and mitigate any adverse impacts from the development."

– As outlined at Section 5 and detailed in the *Transport Statement* (The Hurlstone Partnership, May 2021) submitted in support of the application, the development makes adequate arrangements for access, parking and circulation and the traffic associated with the development can be accommodated on the road network whilst ensuring the safe and efficient flow of traffic for all uses. Moreover, in accordance with Local Plan Policy T1 (Travel, Traffic and Transport Infrastructure), the *Transport Statement* (The Hurlstone Partnership, May 2021) demonstrates that the Site is in a relatively accessible location with further opportunities to encourage sustainable forms of travel through the operation of a Travel Plan, as detailed in the *Travel Plan Statement* (The Hurlstone Partnership, December 2020) submitted in support of the application.

"11. The amenities enjoyed by the occupants or users of nearby or proposed properties shall not be unacceptably affected by levels of noise, dust, air pollution, litter, odour, hours of operation, overlooking or any other planning matter." – The application is supported by a *Noise Impact Assessment* (Matrix, July 2021) and *Lighting Design Scheme* (Roger Parry & Partners, July 2021), which demonstrate that the amenities of occupants of nearby dwellings are not unacceptably affected by levels of noise or external lighting.

"12. Adequate utility services exist or will be provided readily and timely without unacceptable adverse effect on the surrounding environment and communities." – The Site is adequately serviced and, as set out at Section 2, a prerequisite of site selection was immediate access to fibre optic broadband.

"13. It demonstrates a sustainable and efficient use of resources by including measures to achieve:

- i. Energy conservation and efficiency.*
- ii. The supply of electricity and heat from renewable sources.*
- iii. Water conservation and efficiency.*
- iv. Waste reduction.*

- v. *The protection, where possible, of soils, especially important carbon sinks such as thick peat deposits."*

– As outlined at Section 5 and detailed in the *Energy and Sustainability Appraisal* (Scotch Partners, December 2020) submitted in support of the application, the development delivers environmental benefits, including high thermal performance and efficient lighting to reduce carbon emissions, and use of materials chosen for their resilience, durability and recyclability.

"14. Investigations have been undertaken into the technical feasibility and financial viability of community and/or district heating networks wherever the development proposal's Heat Demand Density exceeds 3MW/km2." – Not relevant.

- 6.3 In light of the above, it is demonstrated that the development, which delivers significant economic benefits to the County, is of a good quality design that accords with the Local Plan and meets the objectives for good design set by national planning policy.