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Hay Community Campus

Design Statement

For

Hay & District Sports & Community Association Ltd.

A campus shaped around everyday community life.

Please read this statement in conjunction with watching a fly around Video which can be seen here: https://www.hadscal.org/

The Hay Community Campus brings sport, health, community activity, local enterprise and growing together in one place on the southern edge of Hay-on-Wye. This design statement explains how the proposal has been shaped by its landscape setting and by the practical aim of making a welcoming, legible and lasting place for local people.

The project is promoted by HADSCAL, a local charitable company that has supported sport and community activity on the site for more than 30 years. The campus builds on that established role. It is planned as a connected destination where people can come to swim, play, exercise, meet, learn, grow food, work or simply spend time outdoors.

The site and its surroundings

The site lies beside Forest Road within an established area of community, recreation and employment uses. The football ground and other local sports facilities sit nearby; the medical centre, businesses and homes form part of the wider street setting. Beyond the site to the south and west, fields and hedgerows lead towards the rising landscape at the foot of the Black Mountains. The site is therefore a transition between the town and open countryside, rather than an isolated development in the landscape.

The land rises gently towards the southern boundary. Existing hedgerows and trees give the site a valuable green framework, while a drainage ditch follows the northern edge. A public footpath crosses the north-western part of the wider site. These features have informed the layout and the intention to keep movement, planting and outdoor spaces closely connected.

A practical brief with a wider purpose

The brief brings together community and charitable uses, sport and recreation, and ten small business units. The units are intended to meet demand for local workspace and to provide rental income that can help support the long-term operation of the community facilities. Each

part has a distinct role, but the campus is designed to work as one place, with shared landscape and clear pedestrian connections.

Architecture that reads as part of the landscape

The surrounding landscape is not a decorative theme for the project, it is a way of thinking about how the campus should sit in its setting. As a local company we have always marvelled at our landscape. A landscape that changes by the hour, full of vibrant colours and textures yet has clear layers created by underlying geology, topography and elevation. Please read this statement in conjunction with drawing P17 attached.

The main campus contains some necessarily large spaces, including a sports hall and swimming facilities. Rather than presenting these as one unbroken mass, the building is composed as a series of linked volumes with changing roof lines and elevations. The form is intended to break down the overall scale, create recognisable places within the campus and sit comfortably between the town edge and the open landscape.

The landscape is intended to reinforce this composition. Lower planting and community gardens sit close to people and paths, taller shrubs and trees strengthen the greener edges. Textured vertical timber elements bring depth and changing shadow to the elevations. The aim is to create a contemporary building with a clear local connection, without copying historic forms or turning the landscape reference into a literal motif.

Clear routes of circulation

A public building should be easy to understand as soon as someone arrives. The internal arrangement is organised around a principal circulation spine, with a central entrance and atrium providing a visible point of orientation. From this route, visitors can reach the sports and community areas and continue along a cross-corridor that links the building's main destinations. The arrangement is intended to make it easier to see where to go and to reduce the sense of getting lost in a network of enclosed corridors.

The building's two principal areas are separated by a planted, unheated garden space. This creates a green pause within the campus, brings landscape into the heart of the plan and helps

give the larger building a more human scale. Double-height spaces at the atrium and shared social areas add daylight and a sense of openness where people meet and gather.

A mix of spaces, with room to change

The main building combines sports facilities with flexible community accommodation. The proposed programme includes a sports hall, indoor and outdoor swimming provision, gym and wellbeing space, changing facilities, a café, meeting and function rooms, and permanent accommodation for Hay Youth Club and Dial-a-Ride. The layout also makes provision for first aid, equipment storage and the day-to-day needs of the different activities.

Some spaces are designed for organised sport and programmed events; others can support informal use, small gatherings and activities that may change over time. The community rooms are intended to serve local groups and organisations as well as larger events. This flexibility helps the campus respond to the changing needs of Hay and the surrounding rural communities.

Landscape as a place to spend time

The outdoor spaces are an integral part of the campus experience, not leftover ground between buildings. Paths and planted areas help connect the entrance, community uses, sports facilities and wider recreational land. Seating and quieter places are intended to sit alongside more active areas, so the site can welcome people who are not taking part in organised sport as well as those who are.

The design material explores a planted water garden with a raised timber deck, creating a place to sit close to water and vegetation. The technical drainage strategy also includes sustainable drainage features such as permeable surfaces, swales and attenuation basins. The landscape and drainage design will need to work together so water is managed safely while contributing to the campus's ecology and amenity.

Inclusive access and movement

The campus is intended for people of different ages and abilities. Buildings, paths and outdoor spaces are planned as a connected accessible environment, with routes that make it practical to move between activities. The main entrance and atrium provide a recognisable arrival point, while the lift and central circulation route support movement between floors.

The existing access to the leisure and community facilities is from Forest Road, with a separate access serving the business units. The layout provides pedestrian and cycle connections between the parts of the development, alongside access for emergency vehicles. The site is within walking and cycling distance of Hay's centre and residential areas. Cycle parking, on-site car parking and electric vehicle charging are included for people whose journeys require them.

Small workspaces with a distinct identity

Ten business units are proposed along the Forest Road side of the site. This location gives the units a clear street presence while keeping the larger community and sports facilities set within the campus behind them. The units are intended to offer practical, affordable workspace for smaller local businesses and start-ups, while contributing to the long-term financial resilience of the community facilities.

The units are designed to avoid the appearance of a generic industrial shed. Their scale and grouping mediate between the nearby domestic buildings and the established employment uses along Forest Road. The elevations use vertical timber cladding, dark-framed openings and simple pitched roof forms. Upper windows take cues from the proportions of traditional sliding sash windows found in Hay, interpreted in a contemporary way.

Illustrative visualisation of the Forest Road business units. Material appearance is indicative and should be read with the planning drawings.

Materials, light and detail

Across the campus, the design aims to use a restrained palette of durable materials whose texture and shadow help the buildings sit within the planted setting. On the main building, visualisations show vertical timber elements, dark roof surfaces and generous areas of glazing. At the business units, timber cladding gives warmth and a finer grain to a practical workspace building. Final specifications will be developed with the technical design, with responsible sourcing and lower-impact options considered wherever practicable.

A landscape that does useful work

Existing trees and hedgerows are retained wherever practicable and form the starting point for a stronger landscape structure. New trees, hedges and other planting are proposed to help the campus settle into its setting, define outdoor rooms and improve habitat connections. Planting is planned alongside the buildings, routes and open spaces, rather than being treated as a final decorative layer.

The community growing area extends an existing activity on the site. It includes raised beds, accessible growing beds, a polytunnel, composting and a shed, providing a practical setting for individuals, families and groups to grow food and spend time outdoors. This quieter, hands-on activity complements the more formal sports and community programme.

Sustainability as part of the design

The project is informed by the Living Building Challenge's broad interest in place, water, energy, health, materials, equity and beauty. These ideas support a simple question for the campus: how can it give back to the community and landscape as well as meet its own needs? The project is not presented as Living Building Challenge certified; the framework is being used as a source of design principles.

The planning proposals include a high-performance building fabric using natural materials, ground-source heat pumps for heating and hot water, and photovoltaic panels on building roofs. Solar panels are also proposed over parts of the car park, where they can generate renewable electricity while providing sheltered parking and supporting electric vehicle charging. Together, these measures are intended to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and lower operational carbon as far as practicable. Please refer to the attached technical sustainability statement for more design specific information.

Water is considered as both infrastructure and landscape. The drainage strategy proposes sustainable drainage features to manage surface water, including permeable paving, swales and attenuation basins, with a controlled outfall. Planting and habitat areas can add ecological and amenity value to this network. The detailed relationship between the drainage system, the

water-garden concept and the final landscape design will be resolved through technical coordination and approvals.

The site's location also supports walking and cycling from the town, and the proposals include cycle parking and travel planning measures. External lighting is to be carefully controlled, with the National Park's dark skies in mind. The detailed lighting, landscape, drainage and energy strategies accompanying the planning application provide the technical basis for these design intentions.

A lasting community place

The Hay Community Campus is conceived as a shared civic resource: a place that brings health, sport, community activity, local work and growing together in a landscape people can enjoy. Its design responds to the practical demands of a varied programme while breaking the building forms into a more legible and welcoming composition.

The landscape is central to that experience. It helps the campus meet the town, gives people places to gather and move through, and links the design to the character of the land around Hay. The proposed energy and drainage measures support a more responsible way of operating, while the business units provide workspace and a source of income to help sustain the community offer.

The ambition is straightforward: to make a useful, generous and recognisable place for Hay and its surrounding communities, where architecture, landscape and everyday life belong together.