

Design and Access Statement

TREDEGAR HOUSE REPLACEMENT PLAY PARK

July 2025

v2



SUMMARY

Proposal

Tredegar House Replacement Play Park

Location

Tredegar House, Pencarn Way, Duffryn, Newport NP10 8YW

Date

July 2025

Project Ref

AA035

Applicant

National Trust

Planning Authority

Newport City Council

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Planning and Listed Building Consent Statement has been prepared by Hughes Architects on behalf of the National Trust in support of an application to install a replacement children's play area within the grounds of Tredegar House, a Grade I listed property set within a Registered Historic Park and Garden. All illustrations included within this document are the copyright of Hughes Architects unless otherwise credited.

1.2 The existing play area at Tredegar House Gardens has reached the end of its usable life and no longer meets modern safety standards or accessibility expectations. The proposed replacement play park represents a significant opportunity to enhance the visitor experience at Tredegar House, particularly for families, while aligning with the National Trust's wider aims of improving inclusive access to heritage sites. The new play equipment has been carefully selected to reflect the character and heritage setting of the gardens, with a design that is sympathetic to the historic environment while offering a safe, stimulating, and durable play space.

1.3 The purpose of this statement is to set out the planning, design, and heritage considerations relevant to the proposal, and to demonstrate how the replacement play park supports the continued sustainable use and enjoyment of Tredegar House by a wide range of visitors, in line with local and national planning policy.

2.0 Site Description

2.1 The application site is located within the grounds of Tredegar House, a Grade I listed 17th-century mansion situated on the western edge of Newport, South Wales. The site falls within the registered Grade II* Tredegar House Historic Park and Garden and is under the custodianship of the National Trust. The house and its associated grounds are a nationally significant heritage asset, attracting an estimate of 500,000 visits a year to the parkland.

2.2 The existing play area is situated to the north-west of the main house, set within the wider landscape of set, beyond the formal walled gardens. It is accessed via the main pedestrian circulation routes from the visitor car park and visitor welcome area. The play park is partially screened by mature planting and lies adjacent to informal open lawn spaces. Its location benefits from natural surveillance, good access, and proximity to key visitor facilities including toilets and seasonal café kiosk.

2.3 The existing play equipment is of a modest scale and low visual impact but has deteriorated due to age and weathering. Much of the equipment is outdated, with limited inclusive features or sensory elements. It is surrounded by a metal fence. The surrounding landscape includes a mix of grass surfacing, timber edging, and soft planting.

2.4 The setting is semi-enclosed by mature trees and hedging which provide a sense of containment, whilst allowing filtered views across the gardens. The play area sits outside the formal axial alignment of the house and does not intrude on the principal sightlines from or towards the mansion.

3.0 Relevant Policy

- 3.1 Future Wales – The National Plan 2040. As the national development framework, Future Wales sets the direction for development in Wales until 2040 and influences Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) and Local Development Plans (LDPs). Planning decisions at every level must conform to the development plan as a whole.
- 3.2 Overall Strategy and Well-being: Future Wales aims to deliver a prosperous and fairer Wales by promoting sustainable living and efficient resource use, creating places that support healthy and active lifestyles, and contributing to the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales.
- 3.3 Placemaking: The plan supports “Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking” (Policy 2), which emphasises the creation of better places.
- 3.4 Historic and Cultural Assets: The plan recognizes that outstanding historic and natural resources are important parts of local fabric and contribute to economic benefits. It implicitly supports their protection for future enjoyment.
- 3.5 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) PPW is the complete land use planning policy document for Wales, serving as the foundation for national, regional, and local planning policies. It establishes what development plans and decisions must achieve and how development should be shaped. PPW should be read as a whole.
- 3.6 Placemaking and Well-being: PPW places at the heart of the planning system the commitment to delivering and maximising planning’s contribution to the Well-being of Future Generations Act, requiring improvements in social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being. Development plans and proposals must seek to deliver developments that address the national sustainable placemaking outcomes.
- 3.7 The Historic Environment (Chapter 6.1): This is highly relevant for a listed building and its garden. The planning system must protect, conserve, promote, and enhance the historic environment as a resource for the general well-being of present and future generations. Decisions on proposals affecting historic assets must be based on an understanding of the impact on their significance.
- 3.8 For Listed Buildings, there is a general presumption in favour of their preservation or enhancement and that of their setting. The primary material consideration is the building, its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses. The aim is to protect and enhance their special qualities, retaining them in sustainable use.

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- 3.9 For Historic Parks and Gardens, planning authorities should value, protect, conserve, and enhance their special interest and settings included on the register. The effect of a proposed development on a registered park or garden, or its setting, is a material consideration.
- 3.10 Green Infrastructure (Chapter 6.2): Planning authorities should adopt a proactive approach to green infrastructure planning, drawing from evidence and integrating outcomes into development plans. This facilitates maximizing contributions to well-being goals and ecosystem service provision. Biodiversity and Ecological Networks (Chapter 6.4): Planning authorities must take all reasonable steps to maintain and enhance biodiversity. The presence of a protected species is a material consideration.
- 3.11 Sport, Recreation and Open Space (Chapter 4.5): Planning authorities should provide a framework for well-located, good quality sport, recreational, and leisure facilities, and develop clear policies for their provision, protection, and enhancement.
- 3.12 Technical Advice Notes (TANs) TANs provide practical guidance that supplements PPW.
- 3.13 TAN 24: The Historic Environment (May 2017): This TAN directly supplements PPW on the historic environment. It outlines “Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales” as the basis for assessing impacts on historic assets. It details procedures for listed building consent, emphasizing the need to consider the building’s significance, setting, and any features of special architectural or historic interest. Carrying out works without consent is a criminal offense. It covers Registered Historic Parks and Gardens, stating that their significance and the impact of proposals on them are material considerations. It highlights the inextricable links between the natural and historic environments and the potential impacts on wildlife during works on historic buildings or archaeological sites. It mentions that Historic Environment Records (HERs) are key sources of information.
- 3.14 TAN 16: Sport, Recreation and Open Space (January 2009): This TAN is directly relevant to the play park. It advises on the planning system’s role in the provision and protection of sport and recreational facilities and informal open spaces.
- 3.15 Newport Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026 (January 2015) This local plan provides specific policies and designations for Newport, guiding development within its area.
- 3.16 SP9 Conservation of the Natural, Historic and Built Environment: This strategic policy seeks the conservation, enhancement, and management of recognized natural, historic, and built environment sites in all proposals. It specifically mentions Newport’s rich diversity of sites, including Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens, and Scheduled Ancient Monuments, and the need to protect them from inappropriate or damaging development. Development affecting these should be of the highest quality.

- 3.17 CE4 Historic Landscapes, Parks, Gardens and Battlefields: This policy explicitly states that sites on the Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest should be protected, conserved, enhanced, and, where appropriate, restored, with attention given to their setting. Newport has 11 such sites listed.
- 3.18 GP5 General Development Principles – Natural Environment: This policy requires development proposals to be designed and managed to protect and encourage biodiversity and ecological connectivity, avoiding or mitigating negative impacts on nature conservation interests.
- 3.19 CF1 Protection of Playing Fields, Land and Buildings Used for Leisure, Sport, Recreation and Play:

4.0 Proposal

4.1 This application seeks consent for the removal of the existing play equipment and the installation of a new, sensitively designed children's play area within the same footprint in the parkland at Tredegar House. The proposal has been developed in collaboration with the National Trust and specialist play designers to ensure the scheme aligns with heritage sensitivities while significantly enhancing the visitor experience, particularly for families and younger children.

4.2 The new play area will include a variety of inclusive, naturalistic play structures made from durable, sustainable materials such as timber and rope, with forms and finishes designed to complement the historic garden setting. Equipment will provide opportunities for physical, imaginative, and sensory play, catering to a wide age range and a diversity of needs, including accessible elements for children with limited mobility.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 This application proposes the sensitive replacement of the existing, outdated play equipment within the grounds of Tredegar House, a nationally significant Grade I listed property set within a Grade II* Registered Historic Park and Garden. The proposed scheme has been carefully designed to enhance the visitor experience, particularly for families, while ensuring that the heritage significance and setting of Tredegar House are preserved and respected.

5.2 The design responds positively to its context, using natural materials and low-impact construction methods that are sympathetic to the historic garden landscape. The proposal maintains the current footprint of the play area, avoids intrusion into formal parkland spaces, and protects key views and mature planting. As such, the development is considered to have a neutral to low impact on the heritage asset, balanced by a clear public benefit in supporting inclusive access and long-term site engagement.

5.3 The scheme aligns with national and local planning policies that promote sustainable tourism, inclusive design, and the enhancement of heritage settings where appropriate. It forms part of the National Trust's commitment to improving access to heritage sites for all visitors, particularly children and young people.

5.4 In summary, the proposed replacement play park represents a well-considered and proportionate enhancement to the visitor facilities at Tredegar House, contributing to the long-term viability and public enjoyment of this important historic site. Planning permission and listed building consent are therefore respectfully sought.

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