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South Wales Metro

TO028-I - Taffs Well Depot Hybrid Planning
Application - Planning Statement

March 2018

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TO028-I - Taffs Well Depot Hybrid Planning
Application - Planning Statement

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Executive Summary

Mott MacDonald has been commissioned by Transport for Wales (TfW) (*the Applicant*) to prepare and submit a hybrid planning application for a new rolling stock depot and associated works at the Garth Works Industrial Estate at Taffs Well, Cardiff, Wales.

Land at Taffs Well has been secured by the Welsh Government in connection with the procurement phase for the next 'Wales and Borders Rail Service', which will include the development of the South Wales Metro Phase 2, focusing specifically on the Core Valley Lines (CVL).

This programme of works, funded by the Welsh and UK Governments and the European Commission, will transform the rail network involving extensive investment in new rolling stock, stations and associated infrastructure. It will deliver a step change in the public transport offer bringing about improved connectivity between the CVL communities and Cardiff, and providing a much needed modern, reliable and efficient public transport system.

As part of the investment required to transform the rail network, additional depot and stabling facilities are required to accommodate the new fleet of rolling stock. As such, Welsh Government undertook a comprehensive site search process to find suitable and available land. This has resulted in Welsh Government acquiring the former 'Forgemasters' building and associated land at Garth Works Industrial Estate in Taffs Well. The whole site area, including the associated works to Taffs Well Station, extends to some 5.4 hectares and is shown on drawing number 367590-28I-XX-DR-C-0005.

The proposed development comprises the construction of a new rolling stock depot consisting of stabling lines, maintenance workshop, wash down point, sand replenishment plant and delivery track, along with ancillary offices and staff/ public parking provision. A series of associated works are also proposed which comprise of the demolition of existing structures, highways and rail infrastructure improvements, construction of a new railway station footbridge, extension to the existing station platform and enhanced park and ride provision.

A **Hybrid Planning Application** is submitted to Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council for the construction of the Taffs Well Depot. It seeks **full planning permission** for the demolition and site clearance works associated with the existing buildings and structures on the Garth Works Industrial Estate. **Outline planning permission with all matters reserved** is sought for the depot facility including: multiple stabling lines; a maintenance workshop with offices above; a rolling stock washing facility; a sand replenishment plant; delivery track; a substation; staff parking and increased park and ride spaces; highways and rail infrastructure improvements; modifications to Taffs Well Station and associated landscaping. This hybrid approach provides flexibility for TfW in allowing demolition and site clearance works to commence in advance of works for the main depot and then the detailed design of the depot and associated works being dealt with through a Reserved Matters Planning Application by the successful Operator and Development Partner (ODP).

A clear need for the Scheme has been demonstrated through its integral role and necessary component in the wider operation of the CVL. The Scheme will ensure that rolling stock is maintained which in turn assists with the efficient operation and contributes to delivering the wider transport improvements to the railway network. The Scheme will also contribute to the delivery of the wider public transport offer, through enhancements to and expansion of, park and ride facilities at Taffs Well Railway Station. The Scheme will result in a net gain in park and ride which will further promote/encourage the use of more sustainable forms of transport and reduce the need to travel by motorised vehicles.

Various technical and planning considerations relevant to the Scheme have been fully assessed as part of the application, including; design, noise, air quality, highways and transportation, flood risk, heritage, ecology and biodiversity, lighting, demolition, construction and ground conditions/ contamination. All of these environmental and engineering considerations are dealt with in the application submission, but acknowledging further details will need to be submitted and approved at the Reserved Matters stage by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.

The development is supported by both national and local planning policies, as well as other regional strategies. There are no material considerations which indicate that planning permission should not be granted and on this basis, it is respectfully requested that Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council approves this hybrid planning application, subject to the attachment of suitably worded planning conditions.

1 Introduction

1.1 Application Overview

1.1.1 Mott MacDonald Limited (the Agent) has been instructed by Transport for Wales (TfW) ('the Applicant') to prepare and submit a Hybrid Planning Application for a rolling stock depot and associated works on land at the Garth Works Industrial Estate in Taffs Well, Cardiff, Wales.

1.1.2 The development proposed involves the construction of a new rolling stock depot consisting of stabling lines, maintenance workshop, wash down point, sand replenishment plant and delivery track, along with ancillary offices and staff/public parking provision. A series of associated works are also proposed which comprise the demolition of existing structures, highways and rail infrastructure improvements, construction of a new railway station footbridge and extension to the existing station platform.

1.1.3 A Hybrid Planning Application for the proposed Scheme is submitted to Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council as the local planning authority. It seeks Full Planning Permission for the demolition of the existing buildings within the industrial estate and Outline Planning Permission for the works associated with the construction of the rolling stock depot, with all matters reserved for subsequent approval. The full development description is as follows:

“Hybrid Planning Application to deliver a rolling stock depot on the existing Forgemasters Industrial site comprising of the following:

Part A: Full planning application for the demolition of existing warehouses on the existing Forgemasters industrial site.

Part B: Outline planning application to provide a rolling stock depot comprising of a warehousing building, stabling area accommodating rolling stock, substation, wash down point, sanding facility and delivery tracks, ancillary workshop and offices, decked car parking providing a maximum of 214 car parking spaces, demolition and relocation of existing railway footbridge and platforms, and associated landscaping, highways and access infrastructure works.”

1.1.4 The Planning Statement submitted to accompany the Planning Application is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** – provides a description of the Application Site and the surrounding area;
- **Section 3** – explains the proposed development and associated works;
- **Section 4** – includes a comprehensive review of the relevant development plan policies and other material considerations;
- **Section 5** – provides an assessment of the relevant planning issues; and
- **Section 6** – sets out a summary of the key planning matters and other considerations material to the determination of the planning application.

1.2 Background to the Application and Proposed Development

- 1.2.1 Land at Taffs Well, as shown on drawing 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0001, has been secured by the Welsh Government to provide a new rolling stock depot and stabling facility in connection with the *Wales and Borders Rail Service* and will involve the transformation of the South Wales Metro ('South Wales Metro').
- 1.2.2 This programme of works, funded by the Welsh and UK Governments and the European Commission, will transform the rail network involving extensive investment in new rolling stock, stations and associated infrastructure. It will deliver a step change in the public transport bringing about improved connectivity between the CVL communities and Cardiff, providing a much needed modern, reliable and efficient public transport system.
- 1.2.3 Phase 2 specifically relates to the transformation of the CVL which the depot development is an integral component for the future operational requirements. As such, Welsh Government undertook a comprehensive site search process to find suitable and available land. This has resulted in Welsh Government acquiring the former 'Forgemasters' building and associated land at Garth Works Industrial Estate in Taffs Well. The whole site area, including the associated works to Taffs Well Station, extends to some 5.4 hectares.
- 1.2.4 In order to ensure early delivery of investment for the CVL and minimise risk to the preferred bidder, (who will be named the Operator and Development Partner (ODP)) once the procurement process is concluded, Welsh Government and TfW are seeking to secure planning permission for the depot and associated works.
- 1.2.5 In order to accommodate the specific operational requirements of the preferred ODP, the planning permission needs to have flexibility and as such, a 'Hybrid' Planning Application for the depot and associated works is being sought from Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council as the Local Planning Authority. The hybrid planning application will seek full planning permission for the demolition of the existing buildings within the industrial estate and outline planning permission for construction of the depot and associated works. This approach provides flexibility for TfW in allowing demolition and site clearance works to commence in advance of works for the main depot and then the detailed design of the depot and associated works being dealt with through a Reserved Matters Planning Application. It is anticipated however, that the outline element of the planning permission for the depot and associated works will be subject to maximum parameters in terms of built floorspace, car parking and general alignment of highway infrastructure. These parameters and principles will then need to be reflected in the preferred ODP's detailed design solution through any Reserved Matters application.

1.3 Environmental Impact Assessment and Planning Application Submission

- 1.3.1 The proposed development has been reviewed against the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 and provisions set out in Circular 11/99 to determine whether and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required to accompany the application. The key environmental effects relevant to the development and Application Site are considered to be limited to the following:
- Potential impacts associated with noise and air quality; and
 - Increases in traffic movements in connections with the Scheme.
- 1.3.2 An EIA Screening Opinion Request was submitted to Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council on 4th December 2017 seeking to confirm whether EIA is required, on the basis that the total proposed site area exceeds the 5-hectare threshold contained in the Regulations.

1.3.3 However, taking account that the extent of the proposed development does not exceed the threshold of 20 hectares as set out in Circular 11/99 and in view of the factors outlined below, it was considered that significant environmental effects are unlikely to occur and therefore, an EIA is not required to accompany the Planning Application:

- The Site does not exceed the threshold of 20-hectare threshold as set out in paragraph A17 of the Welsh Circular 11/99 and is only marginally over the 5-hectare threshold set out in the Regulations;
- The main built development of the Rolling Stock Depot is confined to an area of previously developed land (Garth Works Industrial Estate) with an area of circa 3.6 hectares. The remainder of the site relates to the associated infrastructure works in connection with the Scheme;
- The Site is an existing operational industrial estate that already generates noise, emissions and highway movements. The proposed development is not expected to give rise to any significant adverse environmental impacts in relation to these technical disciplines taking into account the baseline position and potential mitigation measures;
- The proposed development will be located within an existing industrial area which is bound to the east by the A470 (in an elevated position) and to the west by the Rhondda and Merthyr Railway Line. Taking into account these characteristics and the proximity of nearby residential properties, it is not envisaged that the scheme will give rise to any adverse impacts on amenity that could not be suitably mitigated;
- The Site is not the subject of any site specific ecological or landscape designations. There is a nearby Site of Importance for Nature Conservation and a Special Landscape Area, however; taking into account the characteristics of the Site and the proposed development, and proximity, it is not considered to give rise to any impacts on the designations that could not be appropriately mitigated; and
- There are no heritage assets located within the Site, but there are a number of assets within a 1km of the Site. However, taking into account the nature of the development, the characteristics of the Site, the distance to these assets and existence of landscaping, it is not considered that the development will give rise to any adverse impacts with regards to the setting of heritage assets.

1.3.4 A Screening Opinion was subsequently received from Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council on 15th February 2018 which confirmed that the Scheme does not constitute EIA development as it is unlikely to have any significant impacts on human health or considerations of environmental sensitivity.

1.4 Pre-Application Consultation

1.4.1 An extensive and comprehensive pre-application engagement process has been undertaken by TfW and fully complies with the pre-application requirements set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012. This process is documented in full in the submitted Pre-Application Consultation Report accompanying the planning application and the table below provides a summary of how the Applicant has met the requirements of the 2012 Order:

| Pre-Application Consultation Actions | Requirement Actioned | Requirement Satisfied |
|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Display a site notice | 17 th January 2018 | ✓ |
| Write to "any owner or occupier of any land adjoining the land to which the proposed application relates" | 17 th January 2018 | ✓ |
| Consult "community" and "specialist" consultees | 17 th January 2018 | ✓ |
| Make the draft application available publicly | 17 th January 2018 | ✓ |

1.4.2 In preparation of the proposals, TfW has been committed to a programme of stakeholder and community engagement that goes beyond the statutory requirements. The consultation included extensive discussions with the Local Planning Authority regarding the design of the proposals, and the scope and content of the application submission. Additional discussions were held with other key stakeholders to inform the design and various technical studies required to accompany the planning application submission.

1.4.3 A Public Exhibition event to display the proposed development and provide the public with an opportunity to discuss the proposals was held on 24th January 2018 between 12:00 noon and 7:00pm. Representatives from both Mott MacDonald and TfW were available at the event to discuss the proposals with interested members of the local community.

1.4.4 Full details of all pre-application consultation undertaken in connection with the scheme is set out in the Pre-Application Consultation Report accompanying the planning application submission.

1.5 Planning Application Submission

1.5.1 The Application Submission for the proposed development comprises the following suite of documents and drawings:

- Application Forms;
- Plans and Drawings:
 - Location Plan – Drawing No. 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0001
 - Ground Level Masterplan (Sheet 1 of 2) – Drawing No. 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0002
 - Upper Level Masterplan (Sheet 2 of 2) – Drawing No. 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0003
 - Red Line Boundary – Drawing No. 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0004
 - Parameters Plan – Drawing No. 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0005
 - Sections and Elevations (Sheet 1 of 2) – Drawing No. 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0006
 - Sections and Elevations (Sheet 2 of 2) – Drawing No. 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0007
 - Indicative Construction Phasing Plan – Drawing No. 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0008
 - Ground Level Illustrative Masterplan – Drawing No. MMD-367590-28I-XX-DR-L-0002
 - Upper Level Illustrative Masterplan – Drawing No. MMD-367590-28I-XX-DR-L-0003

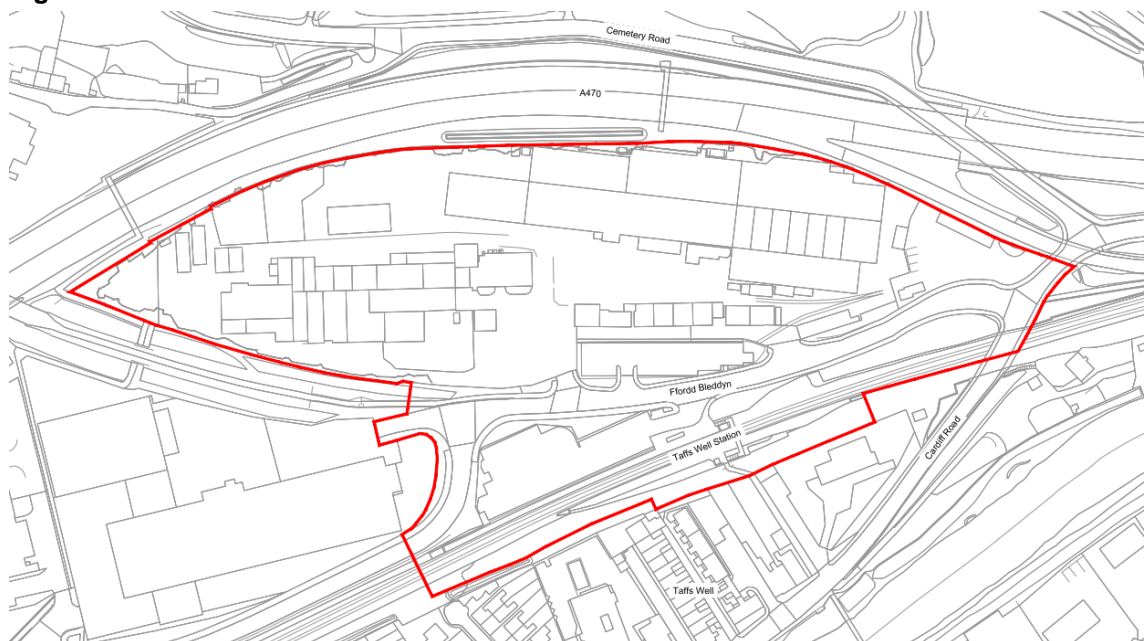
- Illustrative Sections and Elevation (Sheet 1 of 2) – Drawing No. MMD-367590-28I-XX-DR-L-0006
- Illustrative Sections and Elevation (Sheet 2 of 2) – Drawing No. MMD-367590-28I-XX-DR-L-0007
- Planning Statement;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Pre-application Consultation Report;
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal;
- Flood Consequences Assessment;
- Transport Assessment;
- Noise Impact Assessment;
- Air Quality Impact Assessment;
- Heritage Statement;
- Demolition Management Plan;
- Construction Strategy;
- Geo-environmental Desk Study; and
- Lighting Strategy.

2 Site Context

2.1 Site Location and Description

- 2.1.1 The Application Site (*the Site* hereafter) has a site area of 5.4 hectares and is located wholly within the administrative boundary of Rhondda Cynon Taf Borough Council. It sits within the Taff Valley to the south of Taffs Well between the A470 and A4054 (Cardiff Road).
- 2.1.2 A large part of the Application Site includes the existing Garth Works Industrial Estate which is now under the ownership of the Welsh Government. The Estate includes a number of commercial and industrial units and ancillary buildings, together with associated areas for parking storage. The Site is bound to the north by National Cycle Route 8, east and south by the A470 which is in an elevated position. The boundaries to the industrial estate are defined by a mixture of trees and palisade fencing.
- 2.1.3 The extent of the Application Site also includes Ffordd Bleddyn and land associated with Taffs Well Railway Station which includes the existing car park and the overspill park and ride facility. It also incorporates part of the operational land associated with Rhondda and Merthyr Railway Line, including platforms and the footbridge.
- 2.1.4 The extent of the Planning Application boundary is shown in red on the submitted Red Line Boundary Plan (Drawing No. MMD-367590-28I-XX-DR-C-0004), as shown in **Figure 2.1.1**.

Figure 2.1.1: Site Location Plan Extract



Source: Mott MacDonald – Drawing No. MMD-367590-28I-XX-DR-C-0004

2.1.5 **Figures 2.1.2 to 2.1.5** below provide images of the Site and the surrounding area in its current form:

Figure 2.1.2: Entrance to Forgemaster Site



Source: Mott MacDonald (2016)

Figure 2.1.3: Buildings on Site



Source: Mott MacDonald (2016)

Figure 2.1.4: Surrounding Road Network



Source: Mott MacDonald (2016)

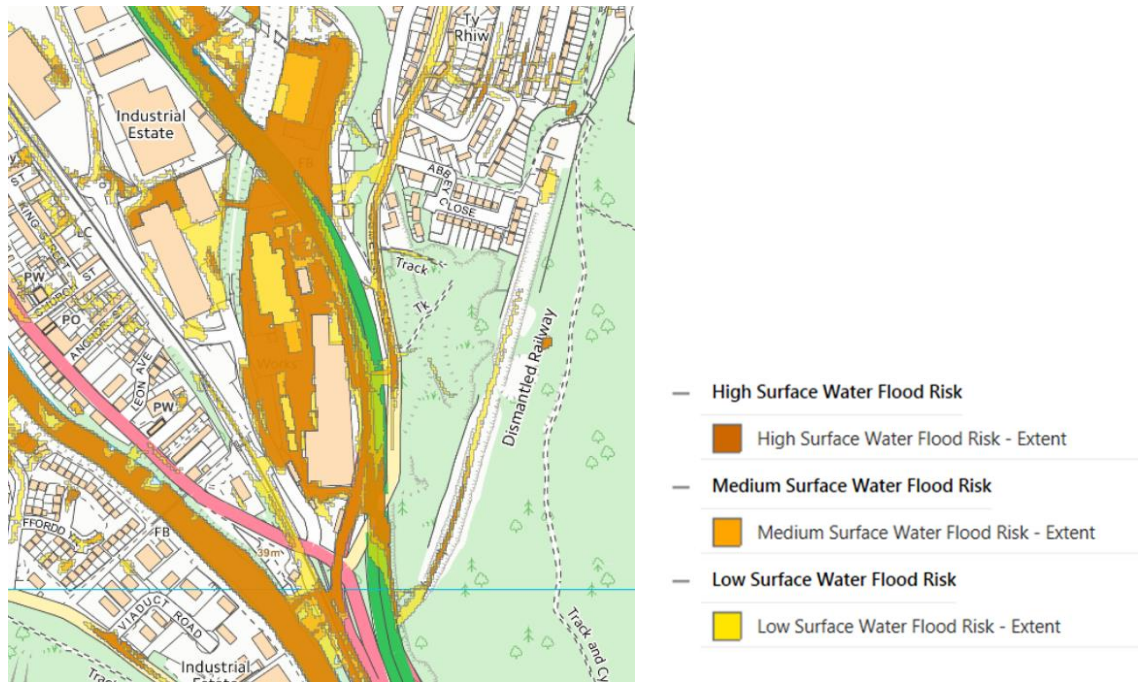
Figure 2.1.5: Adjacent A470



Source: Mott MacDonald (2016)

2.1.6 **Figure 2.1.6** shows that the majority of the site, in particular the Garth Works industrial Estate, falls within a zone of high surface water flood risk and is at risk of flooding from reservoirs. The Site is not at risk of flooding from sea or reservoirs.

Figure 2.1.6: Flood Risk Map



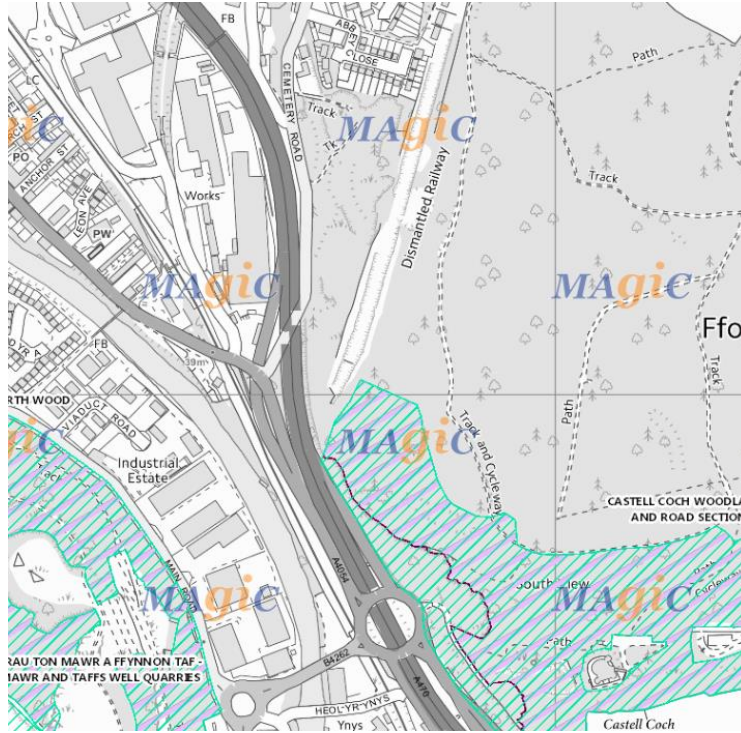
Source: Natural Resources Wales

2.1.7 The Site is not located within a Conservation Area, nor does it contain any statutorily listed buildings or scheduled monuments. There are however a number of heritage assets located within the surrounding area and the following listed buildings are situated within 1km of the Site. These are described in further detail in the accompanying Heritage Statement:

- Ardwell Cottage (Grade II);
- Terrace of Buildings known as Garth Terrace (Grade II);
- The Well House (Grade II);
- Gwaelod-y-garth School (Grade II);
- Bethlehem Capel yr Annibynwyr (Grade II);
- Ynys Bridge (Grade II); and
- Castell Coch (Grade I).

2.1.8 **Figure 2.1.7** below shows that land to the south-east and south-west of the site is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (Purple) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (Green). Further details on the nearby ecological assets are contained in the accompanying Ecological Appraisal.

Figure 2.1.7: Site Designations



Source: www.magic.gov.uk

2.2 Planning History

2.2.1 A Planning History Search of the Proposed Site has been undertaken using the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's online database. A summary of the planning history search for the Application Site is provided below in **Table 2.2.1**.

Table 2.2.1: Relevant Planning History

| Application Reference | Proposal Description | Submission Date | Decision |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------|--|
| 16/0233/23 | Demolish industrial office and retail units | 7 March 2016 | Permission Required (24 March 2016) |
| 14/1055/23 | Demolition of former industrial, office and retail units | 5 August 2014 | Permission Required (4 September 2014) |
| 14/0200/10 | Demolition of existing buildings and site clearance to allow for the erection of 140 no. residential dwellings, 50 space extension to the existing car park and ride overflow to serve Taffs Well Railway Station, access, landscaping and associated works | 14 February 2014 | Withdrawn by Applicant |
| 13/0967/13 | Outline application for redevelopment of the site for residential, additional park and ride spaces to serve Taffs Well railway | 24 September 2013 | Withdrawn by Applicant |

| Application Reference | Proposal Description | Submission Date | Decision |
|-----------------------|--|------------------|---------------------------|
| | station, site access and associated works (Amended Plans Received 17th December 2013 and 20th February 2014) | | |
| 11/0043/13 | Proposed redevelopment of the site to provide Class B1 offices, residential dwellings, a residential care home, Class A3 public house/restaurant and extension to Taffs Well Station Park & Ride facilities together with all associated access, parking and landscaping (outline) | 21 January 2011 | Withdrawn by Applicant |
| 12/1220/09 | Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for an Existing Use as an Industrial Estate (B1, B2, B8) | 21 November 2012 | Granted (8 February 2013) |
| 06/0002/09 | Certificate of Lawfulness B2 use (General Industry) | 6 January 2006 | Granted (8 March 2006) |
| 16/0657/23 | Proposed construction of an Access for All footbridge incorporating lifts. Removal of the existing stepped footbridge | 2 January 2016 | Granted (5 October 2016) |
| 12/0380/23 | Prior approval of design and external appearance of works to Taffs Well Railway Station, including modular station building and replacement footbridge | 2 April 2012 | Granted (28 May 2012) |
| 05/2302/10 | Re-construction and extension of former warehouse and creation of new first floor extension for conference room (Amended plans received 14/02/06) | 4 January 2006 | Withdrawn by Applicant |

Source: Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

- 2.2.2 One of the most recent planning application (Reference: 16/0233/23) was submitted on the 7th of March 2016 by Castell International Ltd to demolish industrial office and retail units. The Decision Notice confirmed that Prior Approval of the Authority is required for the demolition of the units permitted by Part 31, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Permitted Development) Order 1995.
- 2.2.3 Similarly, another planning application (Reference: 14/1055/23) was submitted on the 5th of August 2014 by Castell International Ltd to demolish the former industrial, office and retail units. The Decision Notice for this application also confirmed that Prior Approval of the Authority is required for the demolition of units permitted by Part 31, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.
- 2.2.4 In 2014 (Reference: 14/0200/10) and 2013 (Reference: 13/0967/13) a planning application for a mixed-use development at the proposed site was submitted. The 2014 application was submitted in full soon after the 2013 application. This proposed 140 dwellings to be erected and a 50-space extension of the park and ride to serve the overflow of Taffs Well Station. In 2013, an outline planning application for redevelopment of the site consisting of residential units with additional park and ride spaces was proposed. Both applications were withdrawn.
- 2.2.5 A planning application for a mixed-use development was submitted in 2011 (Reference: 11/0043/13) for a mixed-use development. This was also withdrawn. However, in comparison to the 2014 and 2013 planning applications, this proposal differed as it included both the proposed site and also an area of land to the North (including Rhys Davies Transport Depot).
- 2.2.6 In 2012, a Lawful Development Certificate was submitted (Reference: 12/1220/09). The certificate was issued on the 23rd of February 2013 confirming the existing use as an Industrial Estate comprising of B1, B2 and B8 uses are acceptable.

- 2.2.7 A most recent application within the site related to a prior approval application submitted by Network Rail for the construction of an access for all footbridge with incorporated lifts and removal of the existing stepped footbridge at Taffs Well Railway Station (Reference: 16/0657/23). The application got granted on the 5th of October 2016.

3 Proposed Development

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Mott MacDonald Limited has been instructed by TfW to prepare and submit a Hybrid Planning Application for a rolling stock depot on the Garth Works Industrial Estate in Taffs Well, Cardiff. The full development description is as follows:

“Hybrid Planning Application to deliver a rolling stock depot on the existing Forgemasters Industrial site comprising of the following:

Part A: Full planning application for the demolition of existing warehouses on the existing Forgemasters industrial site.

Part B: Outline planning application to provide a rolling stock depot comprising of a warehousing building, stabling area accommodating rolling stock, substation, wash down point, sanding facility and delivery tracks, ancillary workshop and offices, decked car parking providing a maximum of 214 car parking spaces, demolition and relocation of existing railway footbridge and platforms, and associated landscaping, highways and access infrastructure works.”

3.1.2 The planning application is supported by a suite of drawings and main components of development which are described in detail below and should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement, as well as the plans noted in **Table 3.1.1** which form part of the planning application submission:

Table 3.1.1: Schedule of Planning Application Drawings

| Drawing Title | Reference | Scale |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Location Plan | 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0001 | A1 @ 1:2500 |
| Ground Level Masterplan (Sheet 1 of 2) | 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0002 | A1 @ 1:1250 |
| Upper Level Masterplan (Sheet 2 of 2) | 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0003 | A1 @ 1:1250 |
| Red Line Boundary | 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0004 | A1 @ 1:1250 |
| Parameters Plan | 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0005 | A1 @ 1:1250 |
| Sections and Elevations (Sheet 1 of 2) | 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0006 | A1 As Shown |
| Sections and Elevations (Sheet 2 of 2) | 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0007 | A1 As Shown |
| Indicative Construction Phasing Plan | 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0008 | A1 @ 1:2000 |
| Ground Level Illustrative Masterplan | MMD-367590-28I-XX-DR-L-0002 | A1 @ 1:1000 |
| Upper Level Illustrative Masterplan | MMD-367590-28I-XX-DR-L-0003 | A1 @ 1:1000 |
| Illustrative Sections and Elevation (Sheet 1 of 2) | MMD-367590-28I-XX-DR-L-0006 | A1 @ Various |
| Illustrative Sections and Elevation (Sheet 2 of 2) | MMD-367590-28I-XX-DR-L-0007 | A1 @ 1:500 |

Source: Mott MacDonald, 2018

3.2 Summary of Proposed Development

3.2.1 A summary of the proposed development is detailed below and descriptions of each element are discussed in the following subsections:

- Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment of the eastern part of the Site into the Taffs Well Depot for the South Wales Metro, comprising; stabling and maintenance facilities for rolling stock, associated workshop and offices, car parking, and an electrical substation;
- Extension of one platform, a new railway station footbridge at the existing Taffs Well station and reconfiguration of the station's access and parking areas;
- Construction of new rail links to connect the Taffs Well Depot with the Cardiff to Merthyr railway line; and
- Construction of elevated sections of access road, to bridge over the new rail links to the depot and maintain road access between the Site and the A4054.

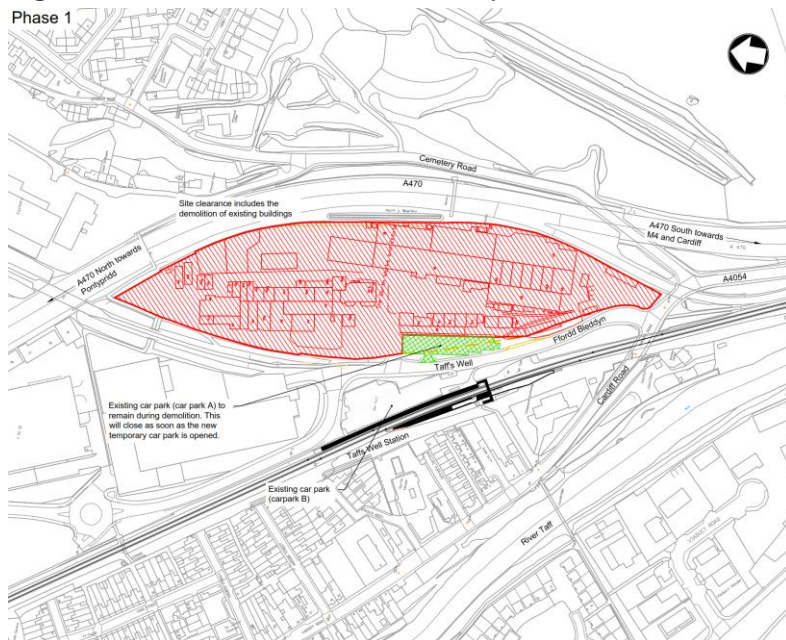
3.3 Demolition Works and Temporary Infrastructure

3.3.1 The initial phases of the development include site clearance works including the demolition of the existing buildings on the Garth Works Industrial Estate. It is proposed that demolition is undertaken prior to any construction works commencing in connection with the rolling stock depot.

3.3.2 A Demolition Management Plan (December 2017) is submitted with the application and confirms that most of the buildings on site have become unoccupied and sets out the buildings to be demolished as shown in drawing 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-1002 appended to the Plan. It is anticipated the demolition of the buildings will be undertaken in phases as detailed in DMP.

3.3.3 The existing car park (referred to as 'Car Park A') located on the southern boundary of the industrial estate will remain during the demolition phase, as shown in Phase 1 of the Indicative Construction Phasing Plan (Drawing No. 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0008) (see **Figure 3.3.1**). The car park will remain open during the phase of demolition and will remain in use until the temporary car park is constructed, as shown in Phase 2 of the Construction Phasing Plan.

Figure 3.3.1: Phase 1 of Construction (Demolition and Site Clearance Works)



Source: Mott MacDonald – Drawing No. 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0008

3.3.4 Following the demolition works, a temporary road and car park is to be constructed to divert traffic from Ffordd Bleddyn which is to be closed to allow the construction of the two bridges which will allow new rail tracks to pass beneath.

3.4 Rolling Stock Depot

3.4.1 The Depot will be designed to provide stabling for 25x50m Core Valley Line (CVL) rolling stock vehicles. Whilst the exact size and configuration of the Depot Building is not known at this stage due to the specific requirements of the future operator, it has been assumed for the purposes of this application and the associated technical assessments, that it be no greater than 6642m².

3.4.2 The proposed stabling sidings are to be used for the storage of rail vehicles and will also include a rolling stock washing facility, sand replenishment plant, substation and a delivery track where rolling stock will be delivered on HGVs and lifted onto the depot tracks. These will occupy approximately 0.37 hectares.

3.4.3 Ancillary uses have been incorporated into the depot including an office and maintenance workshop to complete the planned and corrective maintenance of the fleet of vehicles and are shown on the Indicative Masterplan drawings 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0002 and 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0003.

3.5 Car Park Provision

3.5.1 A summary of the proposed parking provision at the Depot and Taffs Well Railway Station is provided at **Table 3.5.1**.

Table 3.5.1: Parking Provision

| Parking Areas | Existing Provision | Proposed Provision | Net Provision |
|---|--|--------------------|---------------|
| Taffs Well Station Main P&R Provision | 93 | 84 | + 30 |
| Taffs Well Station Overflow P&R Provision | 55 | 94 | |
| Depot Staff and Visitor Parking | 104 Approx. marked Parking Bays + ad hoc parking | 120 | + 16 |
| Operational Vehicle Parking | Ad hoc spaces throughout the site for operational vehicles | 20 | + 20 |

Source: Mott MacDonald

3.5.2 Park and Ride provision in the Taffs Well Railway Station car park will be reduced from 93 spaces to 84 spaces. However, the proposed decked car park will provide 94 spaces to offset the loss in provision at the main P&R site and will resultantly provide a net gain in P&R provision of approximately 30 spaces.

3.5.3 Parking at the Depot facility will be provided using a decked car park above the stabling of the rolling stock. The decked car park will provide a maximum of 120 staff and visitor car parking spaces and 94 parking spaces for public use to offset the loss of park and ride provision at Taffs Well Railway Station. A further 20 spaces for operational vehicles will be provided at ground level to provide parking for plant, delivery and other operational related vehicles

3.6 Works to Taffs Well Railway Station

- 3.6.1 The Scheme also proposes works to the existing Taffs Well Railway Station. This includes the demolition of the existing footbridge and platform edges at the southern of the station. To offset the loss of these structures, it is proposed that the platforms at the northern end are extended by 100 metres. A new footbridge over Taffs Well Station will be implemented alongside new stairs and lifts at the southern extent of the new platform. A covered cycle shelter and taxi drop off area are also proposed. These are shown on drawings 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0002 and 0003.
- 3.6.2 Taffs Well Station Car Park (referred to as Car Park B) is to be amended to include 5 additional parking spaces, additional 8 parking spaces for disabled users, additional cycle stands to accommodate 15 cycle spaces and incorporate a new drop off turning circle. Associated hard and soft landscaping is also proposed around the perimeter of the car park. As part of these works, the existing access is to be closed. These are shown on drawings 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0002 and 0003.

3.7 Associated Highways and Infrastructure Works

- 3.7.1 Road access into the depot site is proposed on the western edge of the Site from the existing mini roundabout on Ffordd Bleddyn. To facilitate the Depot operation, it is proposed to upgrade the roundabout and add an additional arm to provide direct access into the Site.
- 3.7.2 To gain rail track access into the Depot Site it is proposed to modify Ffordd Bleddyn. The road will be vertically re-aligned, to pass over three rail tracks connecting the proposed depot and main railway line. It will follow the level of Cardiff Road junction, starting to fall to ground level after passing the last of the three depot tracks, with a maximum gradient of 1:20. It will reach the ground level close to the existing roundabout junction. The elevated road section will be placed either on a viaduct structure, or an embankment with underpasses for the new tracks.
- 3.7.3 A secondary access will be constructed from a decked car park off the re-aligned Ffordd Bleddyn. This access will cater for both depot staff parking and the relocated rail station Park and Ride facility.
- 3.7.4 Pedestrian and cycle access will be through the main site access, designed with a segregated footway / cycleway into the Site. A new pedestrian route and crossing will be created between the site entrance and new rail station Park and Ride site. The revised access arrangements and configuration are shown on drawings 367590-MMD-28I-XX-DR-C-0002 and 0003.

4 Planning Policy Context

4.1 Introduction

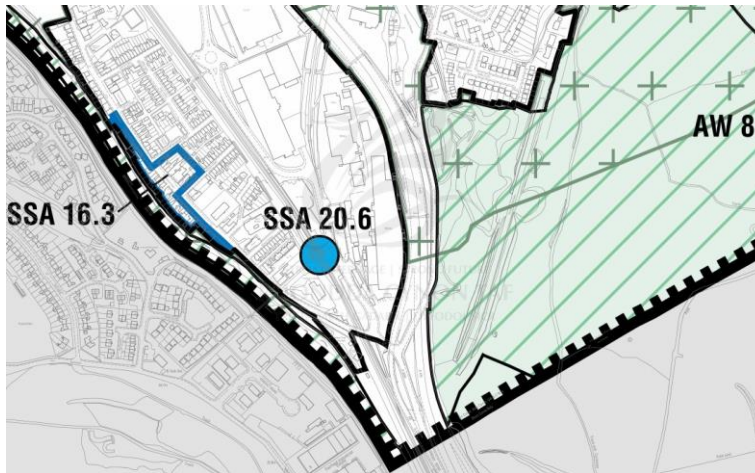
- 4.1.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires that proposals are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan comprises of local planning documents which have been the subject of examination in public or testing through public inquiry, and are adopted having been through due process.
- 4.1.2 The Application Site falls within the administrative boundary of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council. The Statutory Development Plan is comprised of the following documents.
- Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan up to 2021 (March 2011);
 - Proposals Map; and
 - Constraints Map.
- 4.1.3 In addition to the Statutory Development Plan, the application should also be assessed against Planning Policy Wales and relevant Technical Advice Notes which is a material consideration in any determination.

4.2 Statutory Development Plan

Proposals Map

- 4.2.1 The Rhondda Cynon Taf Proposals and Constraints Maps forms part of the development and sits alongside the LDP. A review of the Constraints Map confirms that there are no constraints present on the site, however land to the south east is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It also shows that land further west is situated within Flood Zones C1 and C2 but does not spill over onto the application site.
- 4.2.2 The Proposals Map (see **Figure 4.2.1**) confirms that the Site is located within the South Strategic Area (SSA) of Rhondda Cynon Taf and therefore policies relating to the North Strategic Area (NSA) are not relevant. The Site is situated within a Settlement Boundary as per Policy SSA 13 but has no designations. Land adjacent to the east is safeguarded for mineral purposes under Policy AW 14 and is a Special Landscape Area under Policy SSA 23. Land further west of the site is designated as a Local and Neighbourhood Centre in the Retail Hierarchy contained in Policy SSA 16.
- 4.2.3 The site of the current Taffs Well Station to the west has been strategically selected for Park and Ride / Park and Share Provision within Policy SSA 20.

Figure 4.2.1: Rhondda Cynon Taf Policies Map Extract



Source: Rhondda Cynon Taf (2011)

Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan up to 2021 (Adopted March 2011)

4.2.4 The Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted in March 2011 and provides the development strategy and spatial policy framework for a 15-year period from 2006 to 2021. The LDP contains detailed policies which control the form of new development and set out what new development should look like.

4.2.5 Relevant policies follow:-

- Policy AW 11 (Existing Employment and Retail Uses)
- Policy AW 5 (New Development)
- Policy CS 2 (Development in the South)
- Policy SSA 20 (Park and Ride / Park and Share Provision)
- Policy SSA 19 (Rail Network and Station Improvements)
- Policy AW 4 (Community Infrastructure & Planning Obligations)
- Policy CS 8 (Transportation)
- Policy AW 6 (Design and Placemaking)
- Policy AW 2 (Sustainable Locations)
- Policy AW 7 (Protection and Enhancement of the Built Environment)
- Policy AW 10 (Environmental Protection and Public Health)

4.2.6 **Policy AW 11 (Existing Employment and Retail Uses)** confirms that development proposals promoting alternative uses for existing employment sites will be permitted in accordance with the following criteria;

4.2.7 Employment Sites and Retail Units:

- The site is not identified by allocating policies NSA 7, NSA 14, NSA 17, SSA 7, SSA 8, SSA 9, SSA 14 and SSA 15
- The retention of employment sites for employment purposes and retail sales for retail purposes have been fully explored without success by way of marketing for appropriate employment / retail purposes at a reasonable market rate for 12 months; or

- The redevelopment of derelict, unsightly, underused and vacant land / premises for alternative uses will have significant regeneration benefits.

4.2.8 Employment Sites:

- A land bank of employment sites suitable to accommodate a range of employment uses across the plan area is maintained; and
- The proposed alternative use would not prejudice adjoining employment land; or
- The proposed use is for sui generis use, which exhibits the characteristics of B1, B2, and B8 uses which could appropriately be accommodated on an employment site; or
- The proposed use is a small, ancillary use which falls outside the B-Class uses but which supports the wider function of an employment site without effecting the integrity of the sites.

4.2.9 Supporting notes acknowledge that employment sites can be scarce and are valuable, however it is also recognised that an existing employment site may not be suited to the present needs of the community. In reaction, the policy aims to be flexible to sites no longer appropriate and will assess proposals for other uses on the existing land in industrial / business use.

4.2.10 The Council will scrutinise the evidence put forward to demonstrate that sites are no longer required for employment purposes and will consider short and medium scale demand. In exceptional cases, if the Council believes that the amenity benefit will significantly benefit outweigh retention of the site, a marketing period demand may not be required.

4.2.11 **Policy AW 5 (New Development)** confirms that new development is supported when it complies with the following:-

4.2.12 Amenity:

- Scale, form and design of the development would no unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area;
- Where appropriate, existing site features of the built and natural environmental value would be retained;
- There would be no significant impact upon the amenities of neighbouring occupiers;
- The development would be compatible with outer uses in the locality;
- The development would include the use of multi-functional buildings where appropriate;
- The development designs out the opportunity for crime and anti-social behaviour.

4.2.13 Accessibility:

- The development would be accessible to the local and wider community by a range of sustainable modes of transport;
- The site layout and mix of uses maximises opportunities to reduce dependence on cars;
- The development would have safe access to the highway network and would not cause traffic congestion or exacerbate existing traffic congestion;
- Car parking would be provided in accordance with the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Delivering Design and Placemaking: Access, Circulation and Parking Requirements.

4.2.14 Supporting notes acknowledge that multiple uses will further reduce the requirement to travel and maximise locational advantages of existing buildings.

- 4.2.15 **Policy CS 2 (Development in the South)** seeks to emphasis sustainable growth which will benefit the region of Rhondda Cynon Taf. Amongst other aspects, this will be achieved through the following:
- Providing opportunities for significant inward investment in sustainable locations which will benefit the economy of not only Rhondda Cynon Taf but the entire Capital region;
 - Reduce the daily commute by private cars and promote sustainable transport;
 - Protect the cultural identity of the Strategy Area through protection of the historic built heritage and natural environment;
 - Promote and enhance transport infrastructure services to support growth and investment.
- 4.2.16 Supporting notes highlight the role of the Southern Strategy Area and its vital role in ensuring the future economic prosperity of Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 4.2.17 **Policy SSA 20 (Park and Ride / Park and Share Provision)** confirms the provision for Park and Ride facilities to be located at Taffs Well Station.
- 4.2.18 **Policy SSA 19 (Rail Network and Station Improvements)** promotes the safeguard of rail network improvements along the identified routes.
- 4.2.19 Additional notes state that through the implementation of improvements along the identified route, this will reduce congestion and increase accessibility. Despite the site not being an allocated site, the proposed development scheme will provide this.
- 4.2.20 **Policy AW 4 (Community Infrastructure & Planning Obligations)** notes that planning obligations may be sought where the development will require the provision of new infrastructure. A number of conditions apply to make this acceptable. Amongst others, the following will note those which apply to this scheme:
- Physical Infrastructure Works
 - Management of Strategic Transport Corridors
 - Public Transport Facilities and Services
 - Any other contribution which the Council considers appropriate to development.
- 4.2.21 Supporting notes acknowledge that new development will often require new infrastructure, services and facilities. Through ensuring that the needs of the existing and future communities are fully considered, the Council will ensure that development is sustainable, well-designed and the needs and promotion of the well-being of the community are supported.
- 4.2.22 **Policy CS 8 (Transportation)** recognises the need to improve the strategic public transportation network in Rhondda Cynon Taf. It notes the allocated networks which are targeted for development. Additionally, it also promotes the idea of improvements elsewhere to public transport provision in accordance with policies SSA 18 to SSA 21 (SSA 19 only relevant).
- 4.2.23 **Policy AW 6 (Design and Placemaking)** states that development proposals will be supported where, amongst others meets the following requirements:
- Development Proposals are of a high design standard, reinforcing the attractive qualities and local distinctiveness and improves areas of poor design and layout;
 - The development proposal is appropriate to the local context in terms of sitting, appearance, scale, height, massing, elevational achievement, materials and detailing;
 - In the public realm and key locations such as public spaces, the character and quality of the built form is of a high standard of design;

- A high level of connectivity and accessibility to existing centres, by a wide range of modes of sustainable transport;
- The development reflects and enhances the cultural heritage of Rhondda Cynon Taf;
- The design protects and enhances the landscape and biodiversity.

4.2.24 **Policy AW 2 (Sustainable Locations)** notes the requirements for development proposed on site where they have not been allocated. To support non-allocated proposals, sites will be supported if they are in sustainable locations. Amongst others, the definition of sustainable locations includes the following.

- Would not unacceptably conflict with surrounding uses;
- Have good accessibility by a range of sustainable transport options;
- Have good access to key services and facilities;
- Support the roles and functions of the Principal Towns, Key Settlements and Small Settlements.

4.2.25 Supporting notes state that all development sites must contribute to delivering the objectives of the plan.

4.2.26 **Policy AW 7 (Protection and Enhancement of the Built Environment)** notes the importance of architectural, historical merits and sites of archaeological importance. Development will be permitted where it preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the site.

4.2.27 **Policy AW8 (Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment)** confirms that Rhondda Cynon Taf's distinctive natural heritage will be preserved and enhanced by protecting it from inappropriate development.

Development proposals will only be permitted where:-

1. They would not cause harm to the features of a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) or Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS) or other locally designated sites, unless it can be demonstrated that:-
 - a. The proposal is directly necessary for the positive management of the site; or
 - b. The proposal would not unacceptably impact on the features of the site for which it has been designated; or
 - c. The development could not reasonably be located elsewhere and the benefits of the proposed development clearly outweigh the nature conservation value of the site.
2. There would be no unacceptable impact upon features of importance to landscape or nature conservation, including ecological networks, the quality of natural resources such as air, water and soil, and the natural drainage of surface water.

All development proposals, including those in built up areas, that may affect protected and priority species will be required to demonstrate what measures are proposed for the protection and management of the species and the mitigation and compensation of potential impacts. Development proposals must be accompanied by appropriate ecological surveys and appraisals, as requested by the Council. Development proposals that contribute to the management or development of Ecological Networks will be supported.

4.2.28 **Policy AW 10 (Environmental Protection and Public Health)** states that development will not be permitted if it has potential to cause or result in a risk of unacceptable harm to health and / or local amenity because of:-

- Air Pollution;

- Noise Pollution;
- Light Pollution;
- Contamination;
- Landfill Gas;
- Land Instability;
- Water Pollution;
- Flooding;
- Any other identified risk to the environment, local amenity and public health or safety.

4.2.29 If risk is possible, development will only be permitted if it can demonstrate that measures can be taken to overcome any significant adverse risk to public health, the environment and / or impact upon local amenity.

4.2.30 **Policy SSA 21 (Cycle Network Improvements)** confirms that the existing network of cycle path and community routes will be extended, improved and enhanced to include schemes at:

1. Treforest Connect 2;
2. Extension of Connect 2 scheme to Pontypridd;
3. Maesycoed to Porth;
4. Glyntaff to Nantgarw;
5. Trallwn to Cilfynydd;
6. Pontypridd to Tonyrefail via Llantrisant; and
7. Gyfeillion to Llanwonno route.

4.3 Material Considerations – National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales – Edition 9 – November 2016

4.3.1 National Planning Policy is contained within Planning Policy Wales ('PPW' hereafter) which sets out the land use planning policies directed by the Welsh Government and how they are expected to be applied. It provides guidance for the appliance of national planning policy in Local Development plans, ensuring that in the drafting stage, the relevant policy statements are accounted for.

4.3.2 The central purpose of the planning system is to contribute to 'sustainable development'. Its contribution highlights the role it plays managing and regulating development and land use, through 'reconcile the needs of development and conservation, securing economy, efficiency and amenity in the use of land, and protecting natural resources and the historic environment'. The format of the PPW is structured in accordance to its sector. The following will indicate those of relevance to this application.

Chapter 7 - Economic Development

4.3.3 **Chapter 7** of the PPW sets out the government's commitment to generate wealth, jobs and income to meet the needs of the entire economy, whilst also taking into consideration the social and environmental context. In doing so, the framework states that the planning system should support economic development and opportunities for employment growth.

4.3.4 **Paragraph 7.1.3** states that 'wherever possible, local planning authorities should seek to guide and control economic development to facilitate regeneration and promote social and environmental sustainability'. This should be done through a variety of manners which amongst others include:

- Supporting local, regional and national economic policies and strategies;
- Promotion of re-using developed land (which is previously vacant and underused); and
- Delivering physical regeneration and employment opportunities to areas of disadvantage.

4.3.5 **Paragraph 7.1.4** states that economic development should not be discouraged, development should be delivered in the most appropriate location.

4.3.6 **Paragraph 7.1.5** seeks to reinforce the local authorities' role. Investment and development should be sought efficiently and sustainably and 'make adequate provision for their role in the regional and sub-regional economies of Wales'.

4.3.7 When planning for economic development, the framework states that local planning authorities are required to ensure that benefits associated with a development proposal are well understood and that occasions will occur where the economic benefit will outweigh considerations to the social and environment context.

4.3.8 **Paragraph 7.6.1** notes that when applications for economic development are proposed, the local planning authority should 'adopt a positive and constructive approach'. This should be assessed by key factors, which amongst others includes:

'whether and how far the development will help redress economic disadvantage or support regeneration priorities, for example by enhancing employment opportunities...'

Chapter 8 - Transport

4.3.9 **Chapter 8** of PPW seeks to increase the choice of sustainable transport options, minimising the need to travel by private car and improving accessibility, and social inclusion in doing so.

4.3.10 The Welsh Government sets out a transport hierarchy whereby different modes of transport are prioritised, public transport is positioned in the second tier of this list (**Paragraph 8.1.4**).

4.3.11 **Paragraph 8.3.1-3** reinforces the importance of public transport and states that the local planning authority should promote and support it to achieve environment objectives identified, relieve congestion problems and promote social inclusion.

4.3.12 **Paragraph 8.5.4** sets out the need for local planning authorities to consider the potential of railways. This includes identifying new infrastructure, multi-modal facilities (including park and ride sites) and major sites of employment (where appropriate). The use of roads should be reduced (**Paragraph 8.5.1**).

Chapter 4 - Planning for Sustainability

4.3.13 **Chapter 4** promotes the goal of sustainability to 'enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising the quality of life of future generations'. Sustainable development must be carried out.

4.3.14 The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 enforces the duty of public bodies to ensure sustainable development. In doing so, 7 well-being goals are in place. Some of which include:

- 'A prosperous Wales' giving people the opportunity for employment in turn generating wealth;
- 'A healthier Wales' which maximises physical and mental well-being;
- 'A more equal Wales' which enables everyone to fulfil their potential regardless of their circumstances.

- 4.3.15 In reference to 'A Prosperous Wales' the framework emphasises the enhancement of economic success whereby all opportunities are maximised.
- 4.3.16 As part of this strategy, **Paragraph 4.7.1** sets out the role of new developments in creating sustainable communities. It notes that not only do the needs of the existing community need considering, but future relationships with other areas too. Linkages between urban and rural areas should be improved (**Paragraph 4.7.2**).
- 4.3.17 **Paragraph 4.6.5** highlights that to achieve sustainable planning; social, economic and environmental policies are fully integrated.
- 4.3.18 Direct reference is made to the role that public transport should play. **Paragraph 4.7.4** states that local planning authorities should assess their development strategies and how this minimises the need to travel by private car. **Paragraph 4.7.7** directly recognises the limited transport mechanisms in rural locations.
- 4.3.19 In relation to re-using sites, the framework recognises the ability to promote sustainability objectives through re-use of vacant or under-used land (**Paragraph 4.9.2**).
- 4.3.20 **Section 4.11** seeks to promote sustainability through good design and states that design must go beyond aesthetics and include the social, environmental and economic aspects of the development, including its construction, operation and management and its relationship to its surroundings. Paragraph 4.11.2 provides five key objectives in achieving good design, these include:
1. **Movement** – promoting sustainable means of travel.
 2. **Access** – Ensuring access for all.
 3. **Character** – Sustaining local character; promoting legible development; promoting a successful relation between public and private space; promoting quality, choice and variety; and promoting inclusive design.
 4. **Community Safety** – Ensuring attractive, safe public spaces and security through natural surveillance.
 5. **Environmental Sustainability** – Achieving efficient use and protection of natural resources; enhancing biodiversity; designing for change.
- 4.3.21 **Paragraph 4.11.5** reaffirms that Good design should promote the efficient use of resources, including land. It should seek to maximise energy efficiency and the efficient use of other resources, minimise the use of non-renewable resources and minimise the generation of waste and pollution. Ways to achieve this include, for example, site selection and treatment and the application of whole life costing in construction
- 4.3.22 With regards to climate change, **Paragraph 4.11.6** confirms that Good design should ensure that development contributes to tackling the causes of climate change (by reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and to effective adaptation to the consequences of climate change. An integrated and flexible approach to design, including location, density, layout and built form, will be an appropriate way of contributing to climate responsive development.
- Chapter 6 – The Historic Environment**
- 4.3.23 **Chapter 6** notes the importance of the historic environment and the way this should be protected, managed and conserved. The Welsh Governments sets out the following objectives.
- To conserve and enhance the historic environment which is acknowledged as a finite and a non-renewable resource and plays a vital part in the historical and cultural identity of Wales;

- Recognise its value and contribution to the economic vitality, culture, civic pride, local distinctiveness and quality of Welsh life, and its importance in the future;
- Base decisions on the significance of Wales' historical assets;
- Contribute to knowledge of the past by appropriately recording historical assets which are affected by proposed change and ensuring that all records are archived securely and made available to the public;
- Protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Sites, conserve archaeological remains, safeguard the character of historical buildings and manage the preservation of these in relation to their special architectural and historic interest, preserve SIS and registered historical landscapes.

4.3.24 Direct reference is made to specific historic environments. Amongst others, the details of relevant paragraphs will follow.

4.3.25 **Paragraph 6.4.5** notes the contribution that World Heritage Sites make to a national and local sense of community and to sustainable economic development and regeneration. Planning guidance should be implemented in the most effective way for the conservation of World Heritage Sites.

4.3.26 **Paragraph 6.4.9** sets out the importance of conserving and protecting the built environment, and conservation areas. Development proposals should be judged on the potential effect on the designation.

Chapter 5 – Conserving and Improving Natural Heritage and the Coast

4.3.27 **Chapter 5** acknowledges and embraces the significance of the natural heritage for both ecology purposes, economic and social purposes. The Welsh Government have set out the following objectives for the conservation and improvement of the natural heritage. These are listed as follows.

- To promote and conserve the landscape and biodiversity, particularly focusing on native wildlife and habitats;
- Ensure action in Wales contributes to meeting the responsibilities and obligations for the natural environment internationally;
- Protect and manage statutorily designated sites;
- Safeguard protected species;
- Promote the functions and benefits of soil, particularly their functions as a carbon store.

4.3.28 **Paragraph 5.1.3** highlights the role of the planning system and its responsibility to not impose any unnecessary constraints on development but also ensure that the environment is safeguarded/enhanced reasonably.

4.3.29 **Paragraph 5.1.4** states that development management should consider the importance of biodiversity and landscape in the early process of planning.

4.3.30 In relation to statutorily designated sites, local planning authorities should be considerate of their local, national, and international significance and take care to consider the weight attached to their significance and to avoid any significant constraints on development. **Paragraph 5.3.1** notes that statutorily designated sites can play a vital role in the landscape and biodiversity of the area but also can open up opportunities to sustainable social and economic development. Proposals can minimise conflict and also create new opportunities for sustainable development.

4.3.31 **Paragraph 5.3.8 – 5.3.10** notes guidance in regard to Statutory Nature Conservation Designations. This includes Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). The Welsh Government are obliged to ensure that conservation of these are met in accordance with international responsibilities. Sites should be appropriately managed to protect them from damage and deterioration, with important features conserved.

4.3.32 **Paragraph 5.5.13 – 5.5.14** notes the local authorities' duty to the preservation of trees. When granting planning permission, Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) can be imposed in the interests of amenity.

Chapter 13 – Minimising and Managing Environmental Risks and Pollution

4.3.33 Chapter 13 of PPW confirms that the planning system has an important role in avoiding or minimising the adverse effects of any environmental risks on present or future land use.

4.3.34 With regards to flood risk, **Paragraph 13.4.1** states that local planning authorities should ensure that development does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere by loss of flood storage or increase the problem of surface water run-off.

4.3.35 When managing the impact of contaminated land, **Paragraph 13.7.1** requires planning decision to take into account the potential hazard that contamination presents to the development itself, its occupants and the local environment. They should also consider the results of a specialist investigation and assessment by the developer to determine the contamination of the ground and to identify any remedial measures required to deal with any contamination.

4.3.36 Where significant contamination issues arise, **Paragraph 13.7.2** states that the local planning authority will require evidence of a detailed investigation and risk assessment prior to the determination of the application to enable beneficial use of land. Where acceptable remedial measures can overcome such contamination, planning permission may be granted subject to conditions specifying the necessary measures. If contamination cannot be overcome satisfactorily, the authority may refuse planning permission.

4.3.37 In respect of water and air quality, **Paragraph 13.12.1** confirms that the potential for pollution affecting the use of the land will be material consideration in deciding whether to grant planning permission. Material considerations in determining applications for potentially polluting development are likely to include:

- Location, taking into account such considerations as the reasons for selecting the chosen site itself;
- Impact on health and amenity;
- The risk and impact of potential pollution from the development, insofar as this might have an effect on the use of other land and the surrounding environment (the environmental regulatory regime may well have an interest in these issues, particularly if the development would impact on an Air Quality Management Area or a SAC);
- Prevention of nuisance;
- Impact on the road and other transport networks, and in particular on traffic generation; and
- The need, where relevant, and feasibility of restoring the land (and water resources) to standards sufficient for an appropriate after use. (Powers under the Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999 require an operator to return a site to a satisfactory state on surrender of an Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Permit).

4.3.38 When managing the impacts from noise and lighting, **Paragraph 13.5.1** confirms that local planning authorities should make a careful assessment of likely noise levels and have regard to

any relevant Noise Action Plan before determining such planning applications and in some circumstances, it will be necessary for a technical noise assessment to be provided by the developer.

- 4.3.39 **Paragraph 13.15.2** requires special consideration where noise-generating development is likely to affect a protected species, or is proposed in or near statutorily designated areas, including urban 'quiet areas' designated in Noise Action Plans

Technical Advice Notes

- 4.3.40 Technical Advice Notes ('TAN' hereafter) should be taken into account when preparing local development plans and should be read alongside the PPW. The following will summarise the key TAN's relevant to the proposed development.

Technical Advice Note 23 – Economic Development (2014)

- 4.3.41 **TAN 23** provides a framework of how development and its economic benefit should be positively sought, balancing social, economic and environmental considerations in doing so. This particular TAN directly focuses on B-class development.

As part of the High Level Planning Objectives, **Paragraph 1.2.1** notes that economic benefit of developments may be geographically widespread which should be captured and that in this instance, planning should be targeted towards communities particularly disadvantaged (**Paragraph 1.2.4**). For instance; Jobs accommodated (**Paragraph 2.1.9-2.1.10**). When releasing existing employment sites, they should only be released by reason of multiple choices. Amongst others, this includes:

- Poor performance of the current use predicted
- The proposal does not compromise sites neighbouring

Technical Advice Note 18 – Transport (2007)

- 4.3.42 **TAN 18** recognises the transport issues in Wales and the potential opportunity which can accumulate from this. This relates to the following:

- Greenhouse gas emission levels
- The local populations health
- Social inclusion
- Congestion

- 4.3.43 For this reason, the TAN notes that planning authorities development plan strategies should provide more choices of travel than a private car.

- 4.3.44 In relation to rural areas, transport options are substantially restricted in comparison to larger settlements. The car is subsequently an important means of transportation and accessibility. Transportation which is efficient and sustainable is key for 'a modern, prosperous and inclusive society'. For this reason, accessibility is a key focus for reducing rural isolation (**Paragraph 3.2 and 3.10**).

- 4.3.45 **Paragraph 7.3** states that in the determination of planning applications, planning authorities should consider the potential of opening up rail and provide interchange facilities including multiple transportation modes in close proximity. **Paragraph 7.5** outlines the role that park-and-ride can play in encouraging public transport use. Supplementing this, it also notes that such facilities should not be planned in isolation, but should be supported with other measures to maximise use.

Technical Advice Note 12 – Design (March 2016)

- 4.3.46 The purpose of TAN 12 is to equip those involved in the design of development with advice on how ‘Promoting sustainability through good design’ and ‘Planning for sustainable building’ may be facilitated through the planning system.
- 4.3.47 **Paragraph 2.5** confirms that good design is not inevitable and requires a collaborative, creative, inclusive, process of problem solving and innovation – embracing sustainability, architecture, place making, public realm, landscape, and infrastructure.
- 4.3.48 **Paragraph 2.7** highlights a holistic approach to design requires a shift in emphasis away from total reliance on prescriptive standards, which can have the effect of stifling innovation and creativity. Instead, everyone involved in the design process should focus from the outset on meeting a series of objectives of good design (See paragraph 4.3.20). The design response will need to ensure that these are achieved, whilst responding to local context, through the lifetime of the development (from procurement to construction through to completion and eventual use). This analysis and the vision for a scheme can be presented in a design and access statement where one is required.

Technical Advice Note 15 – Development and Flood Risk (July 2004)

- 4.3.49 TAN 15 provides technical guidance and supplements the policy set out in PPW in relation to development and flooding. It advises on development and flood risk as this relates to sustainability principles, and provides a framework within which risks arising from both river and coastal flooding, and from additional run-off from development in any location, can be assessed.
- 4.3.50 Figure 1 of Tan 15 set out three development advice zones (A, B and C) which require different planning actions depending upon which zone a site sits within.
- 4.3.51 The overarching aim of TAN15 is to ensure that new development is “directed away from zone C and towards suitable land in zone A, otherwise to zone B, where river or coastal flooding will be less of an issue”.
- 4.3.52 Furthermore, Section 6 of TAN 15 states that “highly vulnerable development... in zone C2 should not be permitted”, and that all other new development should only be permitted within zones C1 and C2 if determined by the planning authority to be justified in that location.

4.4 Other Material Considerations

People, Place, Futures: The Wales Spatial Plan (2008)

- 4.4.1 The Wales Spatial Plan (2008) provides an overarching framework for Wales for a whole range of aspects including economic development, transport, and environmental considerations. This acts as a key mechanism for joining up Wales nationally, regionally and locally.
- 4.4.2 The vision of this plan is to ‘...sustain our communities by tackling the challenges presented by population and economic change. We will grow in ways which will increase Wales’ competitiveness while assisting less well-off areas to catch up on general prosperity levels and reducing negative environmental impacts. We will enhance the natural and built environment and we will sustain our distinctive identity.’
- 4.4.3 The framework sets out strategies for each spatial plan area. In South East Wales the overarching role is stated as follows:
- 4.4.4 ‘An innovative skilled Area offering a high quality of life – international yet distinctly Welsh. It will compete internationally by increasing its global visibility through stronger links between the

Valleys and the coast and with the UK and the rest of Europe, helping to spread prosperity within the Area and benefitting other parts of Wales’.

4.4.5 To achieve this, the following aspects are essential:

Transport

4.4.6 Paragraph 19.17 notes the importance of accessibility. A fully integrated and high-quality transport system will provide this. It acknowledges the restricted geography of the Heads of the Valleys region and the need to develop in a sustainable manner to meet future challenges of population growth putting pressure on transport and the environment (Paragraph 19.19).

4.4.7 Paragraph 19.18 notes the South-East Wales Transport Alliance Regional Transport Plan as the main instrument to achieve this.

4.4.8 Cardiff is developing its function, but the region interconnecting this function too as a networked city will be critical to economic competitiveness (Paragraph 19.5). 14 key settlements have been identified to play a vital role in this. This includes Aberdare, Abergavenny, Barry, Blackwood, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Chepstow, Cwmbran/Pontypool, Ebbw Vale, Llantrisant, Merthyr Tydfil, Newport and Pontypridd. It is acknowledged that these do not stand in isolation and interface/inter-relationships with neighbouring areas should occur (Paragraph 19.5).

One Wales: Connecting the Nation – The Wales Transport Strategy (2008)

4.4.9 The One Wales: Connecting the nation is the National Strategy for transport in Wales which sets out how it intends to achieve social, economic, and environmental outcomes. Five key areas have been identified which require improvements. These are set out in the following.

- Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts;
- Improving public transport and better integration between modes;
- Improving links between key settlements as well as other links within Wales;
- Enhance international connectivity; and
- Increase safety and security.

4.4.10 **Chapter 3** of the strategy sets out what future achievements are being sought. It notes the imperative contribution transport makes to wider social, economic and environmental outcomes.

4.4.11 **Chapter 4** identifies strategic priorities to achieve this. Amongst others, transport will be essential to achieve economic, social and environmental outcomes set out in the agenda. The following principles are stated in **Paragraph 4.1** set out how to achieve this.

- Make maximum use of existing infrastructure networks, making them more reliable and ensure better integration of all modes of transport;
- Promote travel which is sustainable and healthy. This includes the use of public transport, cycling and walking;
- Reduce the demand on the transport system through making effective use on demands to travel by providing good public transport access to major destinations;
- Use the Welsh Transport Guidance (WelTAG) to ensure a systematic cost and benefit of transport system is considered; and
- All six equality strands are considered through establishing the potential impacts on them and developing policies and actions in response to this. This is considered under the Human Rights Act.

4.4.12 Strategic priorities have been identified to deliver this:

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts (Paragraph 4.3)

- 4.4.13 This priority recognises the need to reduce the threat posed by climate change. Transport will need to be less carbon intensive through a better use of existing infrastructure including switching from road to rail, modal shifts to public transport and park and ride.

Integrating Public Transport (Paragraph 4.4)

- 4.4.14 The role of public transport is significant in terms of access. The aim is to develop sustainable transport across Wales through supporting public transport operators in both rail and bus to ensure better national and local connectivity. Barriers to accessing the transport network will need to be prevented.

Improving access between key settlements and sites (Paragraph 4.5)

- 4.4.15 The most effective and efficient way to increase access to services will be to improve links between key settlements and employment sites. A better quality public transport system is increasingly important to facilitate this and tackling the barrier to prevent access to the network.

Enhancing international connectivity (Paragraph 4.6)

- 4.4.16 Reliability on rail services will play a key part in creating an attractive environment and economy facilitating the achievement of an innovative and competitive business setting.

Increased safety and security (Paragraph 4.7)

- 4.4.17 Perceptions on the transport system are highly important, especially when using public transport. This may deter many people from using the service. Acknowledging this, the improvement of security is important to encourage use.

South East Wales Transport Alliance (SEWTA) Regional Transport Plan (March 2010)

- 4.4.18 The South-East Wales Transport Alliance (Sewta) is an alliance of 10 South-East Wales local authorities working with others to deliver a better transport system in the region. This is established through a joint local government committee. In accordance with the Transport Act (Wales) 2006, it is required that a regional transport plan for all modes of travel is produced. Sewta therefore produced an outline Regional Transport Plan (RTP) in January 2007 followed by a draft in the summer of 2008 and a finalised version released in March 2010. The RTP sets out how the Wales Transport Strategy will be delivered (**Paragraph 1.1-1.7**).

- 4.4.19 The vision of this document is to provide a sustainable transport system for South-East Wales which increases opportunity, prosperity whilst protecting the environment. Sustainable uses of transport including public transport, walking, cycling and sustainable freight will be promoted (**Paragraph 3.1**).

- 4.4.20 **Paragraph 3.4** highlights the priorities of the RTP as set out in the following:

- 4.4.21 Improving accessibility to services, facilities and employment particularly through the use of public transport, walking and cycling;

- Providing a transport system which encourages the use of sustainable modes of travel;
- Reduce demand for travel;
- Develop an efficient and reliable transport system which reduces congestion and improves travel links with the Sewta region and to the rest of the UK and Europe;
- Provide a transport system which promotes a healthy and active lifestyle, is safe, and supports the local community;

- Reduce greenhouse gases and air pollution resultant of transport significantly;
- Ensure land use development in the South-East Wales region is supported with sustainable transport; and
- Use the transport system better.

4.4.22 **Chapter 4** sets out the preferred strategy of the Plan. The following will indicate policies of relevance to this application

Planning

4.4.23 PLP1: Supports improved transport links between the 14 WSP key settlements & other areas.

4.4.24 PLP3: Seeks to ensure the Local Development Plans, supplementary planning guidance and development control processes establish land use which reduces the need to travel and maximises sustainable transport infrastructure and services.

4.4.25 PLP5: Supports transport elements of regeneration and development programmes which benefit RTP objectives which amongst others includes public transport provision.

Smarter Choices

4.4.26 SCP1: Supports promotion, development and marketing of sustainable transport travel choices.

Rail

4.4.27 RAP1: Supports improvements and further extensions to regional rail system.

Bus

4.4.28 BUP1: Supports improvements to the regional bus network.

4.4.29 BUP2: Supports the introduction to an efficient and effective bus transport system.

Flexible Transport

4.4.30 FTP1: Supports flexible transport services which includes enhancing the mainstream transport system.

Integration, Interchange and Information

4.4.31 IIP1: Supports further improvements and expansion to public transport interchanges and Park and Ride facilities. In accordance with this, Taffs Well station has been identified to facilitate the Park and Ride facility.

4.4.32 IIA3: Sewta will develop plans for Park & Ride facilities across the region.

Accessibility and Equality Policy

4.4.33 AEP1: Sewta will take into account needs of people/groups that experience difficulties more than most when using the transport system when developing plans, programmes or projects

4.4.34 AEA1: Equality Impact Assessment should be undertaken to address the Accessibility and Equality Policy.

External Connection Policies

4.4.35 ECP1: Sewta supports improved links between South East Wales and other parts of Wales & the UK. Amongst others, this includes rail.

Economic Renewal: A New Direction (July 2010)

4.4.36 The Economic Renewal: a new direction sets out the role government and the wider public sector can play in encouraging private and third sector economic success (Chapter 1).

4.4.37 The vision of economic renewal for the Welsh economy builds upon strengths and skills of its people and the environment recognised within Wales and further afield as a confident, ambitious and great place to work and live. In doing so, it sets out five priorities to achieve this vision (Chapter 1, p. 3). This includes the following;

- Investing in a high quality sustainable infrastructure;
- Making Wales a more attractive place for business;
- Broadening the scope and deepening the skills base;
- Encouraging innovation; and
- Targeting business support offered.

4.4.38 In relation to investing in a high quality sustainable infrastructure, transport plays a fundamental part in achieving this. It notes that Wales needs a well-connected infrastructure facility and service which is sustainable and modern to underpin economic growth and the wellbeing of people (p.10). Transport will enable this.

Turning Heads – A Strategy for the Heads of the Valleys (2006)

4.4.39 Turning Heads – A Strategy for the Heads of the Valleys (2006), sets out the vision for the Heads of the Valleys region within the context of the Wales Spatial Plan. By 2020, it plans to be an area rich in culture, a dynamic network of vibrant and safe communities, a place where people want to work and live allowing the population to be thriving and sustainable, and finally drive the success of South East Wales as an internationally recognised region.

4.4.40 It sets out the opportunities which the region can benefit from. This includes the upgrading of rail links and accessibility. It notes that one of the significant challenges the regions faces is the lack of transportation links in some areas. The strategy has compounded a list of strategic goals and programmes developed in a form of five priority themes. Transport plays an integrate role in a number of these Strategic Programmes (SPs). The following will address the strategic goals identified to achieve this in relation to transport.

An attractive and well-used natural, historic and built environment

4.4.41 SP3: Well-Used and Easily Accessed Amenities includes the encouragement of public transport use.

A Vibrant Economic Landscape Offering New Opportunities

4.4.42 SP6: Linked Opportunities for Businesses and Individuals will ensure that active programmes are in place to grow and create opportunities to grow and develop businesses in the area. Major investment activities will be required in order to enable this, which amongst others, includes roads and infrastructure.

Environment Strategy for Wales

4.4.43 The Environment Strategy for Wales sets out the need to build a sustainable future for Wales through effectively managing the pressures on the environment. It sets out key priorities:

- Minimise greenhouse gas emissions and adaptability to impacts of climate change;
- Conserve and enhance biodiversity;
- Monitor and regulate known hazards;

- Tackle unsustainable practices;
- Conserve and enhance the built environment and natural resources.

4.4.44 Amongst others, transport will act as a considerable challenge. Not only are transport demand emissions a key issue which will need to be reduced, but accessibility to rural areas should be encouraged and enjoyed. The strategy notes that appropriate access for managing an increasing volume of people will need to be ensured minimising the impact on the environment. The role of public transport is important to facilitate this.

5 Planning Assessment

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 A Hybrid Planning Application is submitted to Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council which seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing buildings on the Garth Works Industrial Estate and outline planning permission for a rolling stock depot and associated highways and infrastructure works.
- 5.1.2 The purpose of this section of the Planning Statement is provide an assessment of the planning matters within the context of the Statutory Development Plan and other material considerations as set out in Section 3.3.
- 5.1.3 The key planning matters addressed in this section are as follows:
- Principle of Development;
 - Design of Development;
 - Noise;
 - Air Quality;
 - Highways and Transportation;
 - Flood Risk;
 - Heritage;
 - Ecology and Biodiversity; and
 - Ground Conditions and Contamination.

5.2 Principle of Development

Introduction

- 5.2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals are determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan to which this planning application is to be determined by consists of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan up to 2021 (2011), proposals map and constraints map.
- 5.2.2 A hybrid planning application is submitted to Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTBC) seeking full planning permission for the demolition and site clearance works associated with the existing buildings and structures on the Garth Works Industrial and outline planning permission for a rolling stock depot and associated works. The rolling stock depot consists of multiple stabling lines; a maintenance workshop with offices above; a rolling stock washing facility; a sand replenishment plant; a delivery track; a substation; staff parking and increased park and ride spaces; highways and rail infrastructure improvements; modifications to Taffs Well Station, landscaping and associated engineering works.

5.3 Need for Development

- 5.3.1 In **Chapter 8 of PPW**, the Welsh Government aims to extend choice in transport and secure accessibility in a way which supports development and help to tackle the cause of climate change by encouraging a more effective and efficient transport system with greater use of the more sustainable and healthy forms of travel, and minimising the need to travel.

- 5.3.2 **Section 8.3** seeks to support public transport and confirms that local authorities should promote public transport as a means to achieve sustainable environmental objectives, to assist in relieving congestion and to encourage social inclusion. Appropriate public transport measures include improved facilities for railway and bus passengers, park and ride schemes, and measures to encourage better services. In addition, **Section 8.3** reinforces that park-and-ride should be considered as one element of a comprehensive planning and transport strategy designed to improve the relative attractiveness of public transport and reduce the dependence on cars.
- 5.3.3 Evidence of national support for transport improvement is shown in the **Wales Transport Strategy** which confirms improving public transport and better integration between modes is an area which requires substantial improvement. It notes that the railway network is experiencing significant levels of commuter patronage and in some cases demand exceeds supply. The Strategy also sets out a series of economic, social and environmental outcomes which it seeks to achieve in Wales. These include, improving access to employment opportunities; improve connectivity within Wales and internationally; and improve the efficient, reliable and sustainable movement of people. The importance of improvements to the railway network in achieving these outcomes is highlighted throughout the strategy including strengthening road and rail integration and better use of Park and Ride Schemes.
- 5.3.4 Further national support for public transport schemes are found is evidenced in the **Wales Spatial Plan (2008)**. In respect of South Wales and the Capital Region, the Plan affirms that the area will function as a networked city region and states that a fully integrated transport system is necessary for this to happen and that all the area's key settlements should be linked to Cardiff or Newport by suitable high capacity public transport.
- 5.3.5 Regional support for the Scheme is evident in the **Sewta Regional Transport Plan (2010)** which seeks to protect the environment by minimising transport emission and consumption of resources and energy through quality public transport. The Plan also aims to improve connectivity by sustainable transport between South-East Wales and the rest of Wales, the UK and Europe. To achieve its objectives the plan also sets out a series of supporting policies. Of these, **RAP1** confirms that Sewta supports improvements and further extensions to the regional rail system.
- 5.3.6 Benefits of the South Wales Metro are evidenced in the **Cardiff Capital Region Metro: Impact Study (October 2013)**. The study sets out how the metro can deliver long-term economic benefits and confirms that the delivery of the Metro by 2030 will support the creation of 7,000 jobs; over 30 years, contribute an additional £4bn to the regional economy; and, deliver a one-off construction impact from Metro and contingent developments of £4bn. This will be achieved as a result of increasing the catchment of the regional transport network by 420,000 (60%); reducing average door-to-door journeys across the region; and better connecting people to major employment and development locations.
- 5.3.7 **Policy CS 2** of the Local Development Plan relates to development in the south of the District and states that emphasis will be on sustainable growth that benefits Rhondda Cynon Taf as a whole. This will be achieved by, amongst other things, reducing daily out commuting by private car and promoting sustainable forms of transport; and promoting and enhancing transport infrastructure services to support growth and investment.
- 5.3.8 **Policy SSA 20** of the LDP supports the provision of Park and Ride facilities and confirms that this will be provided at Taffs Well Station.

- 5.3.9 The principle aim of the Scheme is support of the operation of the South Wales Metro through the provision of stabling of the rail rolling stock serving the Core Valley Lines. This is to be achieved through the development of a rolling stock depot in Taffs Well on the Garth Works industrial estate. The Scheme will ensure that the rolling stock is maintained which in turn assists with the wider operation of the wider network and ensure that the benefits of the Cardiff Capital Region are realised, as a result from enhanced public transport provision and infrastructure.
- 5.3.10 The development of the depot will also contribute to the economic benefits of the metro as the Scheme will deliver regeneration effects to the immediate surroundings including employment gain which is discussed further in the following subsection.
- 5.3.11 The Scheme will also contribute to the delivery of the wider public transport network, as it involves a series of works to the surrounding car park provision at Taffs Well Railway Station. This will result in a net gain of approximately 30 park and ride spaces serving Taffs Well Railway Station which will further promote/ encourage the use of more sustainable forms of transport and reduce the need to travel by car.
- 5.3.12 As per the reasons above, it has been demonstrated that the proposed Scheme for a rolling stock depot is in accordance with Section 8 of Planning Policy Wales, as well as other supporting strategic documents including the Wales Transport Strategy, Wales Spatial Plan (2008), Sewta Regional Transport Plan (2010) and Policies CS 2 and SSA 20 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

5.4 Location of Development

- 5.4.1 **Section 7 of Planning Policy Wales** seeks to boost economic development and in particular, **Paragraph 7.1.13** confirms that the planning system should support economic and employment growth alongside social and environmental considerations with the context of sustainable development. As part of this, local planning authorities should aim to, amongst other things; support national, regional and local economic policies and promote the reuse of previously developed, vacant and underused land. **Paragraph 7.1.4** also requires local planning authorities to steer economic development to the most appropriate locations, rather than prevent or discourage such development.
- 5.4.2 **Policy AW 2** of the LDP ensures that development is steered towards sustainable locations and ensures that development proposals on non-allocates sites support the objectives of the plan. It confirms that development proposals will only be supported in sustainable locations which are defined as sites that, amongst others; would not unacceptably conflict with surrounding uses; and, have good accessibility by a range of sustainable transport options.
- 5.4.3 **Policy AW 11** of the LDP relates to land used for existing employment and retail uses. The Policy permits alternative forms of development on existing employment sites in accordance with the following criteria:
- A land bank of employment sites suitable to accommodate a range of employment uses across the plan area is maintained; and
 - The proposed alternative use would not prejudice adjoining employment land; or
 - The proposed use is for sui generis use, which exhibits the characteristics of B1, B2, and B8 uses which could appropriately be accommodated on an employment site.
- 5.4.4 The Site to which the development relates is currently used for a mixture of commercial and industrial operations and the planning history search shows that an application on the land for a lawful development certificate for an existing use as an industrial estate (B1, B2, and B8) was granted on 26 February 2013. A review of the RCTBC Employment Land Review (ELR) (2008)

also confirms that the Garth Works Estate (Reference: TP25) is categorised of 'average' quality within the range set out in the Study.

- 5.4.5 The ELR states that the relative total supply of employment space in Rhondda Cynon Taf (defined as space per 1,000 residents) is second only to Cardiff and is higher than all of the other local authorities in South East Wales. The relative level of factory space in Rhondda Cynon Taf is the highest in South East Wales. In addition, it states that set against a high level of existing employment provision, the development plans in Rhondda Cynon Taf provide for a very high amount of land potential development (280ha) and is considerably more than is likely to be required in the Plan Period.
- 5.4.6 The Policy also requires that the proposed alternative use would not prejudice adjoining employment. An analysis of the Scheme's design is contained in the submitted Design and Access Statement (March 2018) which has taken into consideration certain design aspects including impacts on community safety, environmental sustainability, movement to, from and within the Site, and character of the proposed development in the surrounding area to ensure that a best design solution is delivered by the ODP.
- 5.4.7 Key adjoining employment uses, such as, Rhys Davies Logistics have been considered in the design of the Scheme to ensure disruption to their existing operation is minimised both through the construction phase and during operation of the Depot facility. In particular, access arrangements have been designed in such a way to accommodate the logistics movement associated with Rhys Davies and these are reflected in the submitted drawings and Transport Assessment.
- 5.4.8 The proposed use for a rolling stock depot is a Sui Generis use and it is anticipated that the development of the Depot facility will generate significant employment opportunities during both the construction and operational phases of the Scheme. As such, whilst the Depot facility does not fall within a formal B Class Use, it will be a significant generator of skilled and non-skilled jobs providing much needed investment into the local economy.
- 5.4.9 On this basis, it is considered that the employment generating use characteristics of the proposed development is considered to meet the requirements of Policy AW 11 of the RCTBC Local Development Plan and more broadly Policy AW 2, alongside Section 7 of the PPW.

5.5 Design of Development

- 5.5.1 **Section 4.11** of the **PPW** seeks to promote sustainability through good design and states that design must go beyond aesthetics and include the social, environmental and economic aspects of the development, including its construction, operation and management and its relationship to its surroundings.
- 5.5.2 **TAN 12** provides further guidance on design and confirms that good design is not inevitable and requires a collaborative, creative, inclusive, process of problem solving and innovation. Good design also embraces sustainability, architecture, place making, public realm, landscape, and infrastructure.
- 5.5.3 **Policy AW 6** of the LDP relates to design and placemaking and requires that development proposals of a high design standard and are appropriate to the local context in terms of siting, appearance, scale, height, massing, elevations, achievement, materials and detailing.
- 5.5.4 An analysis of the Scheme's design is provided in the submitted Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Mott MacDonald (March 2018) and should be read in conjunction with the submitted plans and drawings. The Statement sets out the design of the Scheme and details how

certain design considerations have been applied to the Scheme and how the best design solution has been provided.

- 5.5.5 The Statement demonstrates how the Scheme has taken into consideration certain design aspects including impacts on community safety, environmental sustainability, movement to, from and within the Site, and character of the proposed development in the surrounding area to ensure that a best design solution is delivered by the ODP. Due to the nature of the Outline Application and taking account that development parameters are only being established at this stage to provide flexibility at detailed design stage by the ODP the Design and Access Statement is limited to establishing design principles.
- 5.5.6 Nevertheless, on the basis of suitably worded planning conditions being applied to the grant of outline consent in relation to the details required at the Reserved Matters stage, the development is deemed to be in accordance with Section 4.11 of the PPW, TAN 12 (Design) and Policy AW6 of the Local Development Plan.

5.6 Noise

- 5.6.1 **Paragraph 13.5.1.** of the **PPW** confirms that local planning authorities should make a careful assessment of likely noise levels and have regard to any relevant Noise Action Plan before determining such planning applications and in some circumstances, it will be necessary for a technical noise assessment to be provided by the developer.
- 5.6.2 **Policy AW 10** of the LDP relates to environmental protection and public. It confirms that development proposals will not be permitted where they would cause or result in a risk of unacceptable harm to health and/or local amenity because of, amongst other things, noise pollution unless it can be demonstrated that measures can be taken to overcome any significant adverse risk to public health, the environment and/or impact upon local amenity.
- 5.6.3 A Noise Assessment (December 2017) has been prepared by Mott MacDonald and considers operational and construction sources of noise and their potential impact on sensitive noise receptors.

Construction Impacts

- 5.6.4 The Assessment confirms that there is potential for significant effects to sensitive noise receptors during the construction of the Scheme, particularly with works that must be undertaken during night time hours. However, all noise levels have been predicted on a 'worst case' basis which assumes the closest distance of the works to sensitive receptor. It is noted that the plant may gradually move along the area impacting different receptors at different intensities and times depending on when the plant is closer and further away from receptors. As the assessments have been calculated as a worst case, it is considered that with no mitigation and no intervening screening, actual impacts upon receptors is considered to be less than is presented in the assessment.
- 5.6.5 A series of mitigation measures will be implemented reduce the impact of construction noise on sensitive receptors in the area. The approach for controlling construction noise will to reduce source levels where possible, selection of suitable plant equipment, and through considerate construction work hours. Where works are required on a 24 hours basis, all noisy works would be completed during daytime hours to avoid disturbance to potential sensitive receptors.
- 5.6.6 Temporary barriers which remove line of sight between the receptor and the construction works would also be implemented and would be likely to reduce the resultant noise levels by up to 10 dB. This would ensure that most of the resultant noise level do not have the potential to have

significant impacts. Where line of sight cannot be removed, noise levels are not to exceed 70dB(A) at the receptor.

- 5.6.7 It is acknowledged that construction noise is likely to be disruptive at nearby residences at times, however, noise impacts could be controlled through the implementation of a Construction Noise Management Plan (CNMP) or Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) through the imposition of a suitably worded planning condition.

Operational Impacts

- 5.6.8 The operational noise assessment considers the impact from permanent fixed plant equipment associated with the everyday operation of the depot, such as air conditioning units. Any fixed plant is subject to noise criteria so that the combined noise from all operational equipment does not exceed a specified level at the nearest noise receptor.
- 5.6.9 The current operational noise predictions are based on preliminary design and conservative calculations. The Assessment therefore notes that the fixed plant be designed at detailed design stage to comply with the night-time criteria of 34 dB LA_{eq,T} through the use of a series of enclosures or screening and by re-siting the output of noisy equipment away from sensitive receptors.
- 5.6.10 The Assessment also provides an acoustic model to determine the noise impacts associated with maintenance activities associated with cleaning, sanding and maintaining of the rolling stock as well as the change in traffic flows on surrounding roads. Results from the acoustic modelling show that at the majority of the sensitive noise receptors, there is no significant impact anticipated from the operation of the depot. In addition, with further refinement to the layout of the depot at the detailed design stage, operational impacts are anticipated to be further reduced.

Summary

The submitted Noise Assessment demonstrates that there is potential for the significant impacts on sensitive receptors during the construction phase of the Scheme. However, through the implementation of a series mitigation measures it considered that the impact can be reduced to less than significant. Further control over the impacts from construction noise could also be implemented through the use of a CNMP or CEMP, imposed by planning condition on the grant of consent. The Assessment finds that there are no significant operational noise impacts anticipated with the Scheme and could be reduced further at the detailed design stage of the depot. For these reasons, the Scheme is deemed to be in accordance with Chapter 13 of PPW, TAN 11 and Policy AW 6 of the Local Development Plan.

5.7 Air Quality

- 5.7.1 **Section 13.10 of PPW** seeks to improve the quality of air and **Paragraph 13.10.1** confirms that the planning system should determine whether a development is an acceptable use of land and should control other development in proximity to potential sources of pollution rather than seeking to control the processes or substances used in any particular development. **Paragraph 13.10.3** states that where pollution considerations, which may be relevant to a pollution control authorisation or licence or result from the need to comply with any statutory environmental quality standards or objectives, affect the use and development they be can material considerations. The weight attached to such considerations will depend on the scope of the pollution control system in each and the effect on land use and amenity.
- 5.7.2 With regards to air quality, **Policy AW10** of the LDP states that development proposals will not be permitted where they would cause or result in a risk of unacceptable harm to health and/or

local amenity because of, amongst other things, air pollution unless it can be demonstrated that measures can be taken to overcome any significant adverse risk to public health, the environment and/or impact upon local amenity.

- 5.7.3 An assessment of Air Quality has been undertaken by Mott MacDonald and is submitted as part of the planning application. It provides an assessment of the key impacts on air quality on key receptors affected by the proposed Scheme. The Assessment considers concentrations of NO₂ and particle matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) only as these are key pollutants of concern associated with the study area. The assessment also confirms that the Site is not located in an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

Construction Phase

- 5.7.4 In accordance with the guidance of the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM), the assessment has split the construction phase into four separate categories; *demolition*, *earthworks*, *construction*; and *track out* (the transport of dust and dirt onto the public highway network). A qualitative assessment of construction effects confirms that dust soiling effects for the proposed development are assessed to be 'High Risk' for demolition only, with 'Medium Risk' for earthworks and construction phases with 'Low Risk' for track out. PM₁₀ effects are deemed to be 'Medium Risk' for demolition and 'Low Risk' for earthworks, construction and track out without mitigation.

- 5.7.5 To overcome the above risks on air quality, Section 6.1 of the assessment sets out a series of mitigation measures to be implemented in all four categories of the construction phase. Following the implementation of the mitigation works, the assessment confirms that the scheme will result in a 'low-negligible' risk on air quality.

Operational Phase

- 5.7.6 With regards to operational effects on air quality, traffic data supplied by Mott MacDonald was interrogated to determine whether there was a requirement to provide an operational phase assessment. As the changes in traffic flow resulting from the proposed development are below the screening thresholds set out in Environmental Protection UK (EPUK) and IAQM's '*Land-use planning & development control: planning for air quality*' (2017), no assessment of the operational phase was required.

- 5.7.7 Due to the above reason, the assessment finds that no mitigation measures are required for the operation of the proposed development.

Summary

- 5.7.8 It has been demonstrated that following the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, the Scheme will not adversely impact on health and local amenity due to its impact on air quality. On this basis, it is considered that the proposed development is in accordance with Chapter 13 of the PPW and Policy AW10 of the RCTBC Local Development Plan.

5.8 Highways and Transportation

- 5.8.1 **Section 8 of PPW** seeks to increase the choice of sustainable transport options, minimising the need to travel by private car and improving accessibility, and social inclusion in doing so. This is supplemented by **TAN 18** which sets out thresholds at which planning applications should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment and confirms that applications relating to 'industry' with a gross floor area exceeding 5,000sqm require a Transport Assessment.

5.8.2 **Policy AW5** of the LDP relates to new development and supports Schemes that would be accessible to the local and wider community by a range of sustainable modes of transport.

5.8.3 The submitted Transport Assessment (TA) prepared by Mott MacDonald provides an assessment of the likely traffic impact of the development proposals on the local highway network.

Construction Phase

5.8.4 During the construction phase, the Assessment indicates that there will be deliveries of plant, equipment, and materials, with peak flows matching the site activities. It recommends that where possible, the contractor will be constrained to making deliveries at times which avoid general peak traffic flows.

5.8.5 Site worker access is to be limited as far as possible by employing measures such as lift share, park and ride, and encouraging cycling and other forms of sustainable transport. It is recommended that a Construction Management Plan is approved by planning condition and sets out how the contractor will minimise the impact construction vehicles and staff vehicles during the development works.

Operational Phase

5.8.6 The Assessment confirms that the location of the Site benefits from excellent transport infrastructure with easy access from the local trunk road network, good pedestrian access from local centres and public transport; good cycle access via the National Cycle Network running through the Site; and good bus and rail service provision within 200m of the Site.

5.8.7 The Assessment has undertaken a capacity analysis on several of the junction located on the surrounding highway network as detailed in section 8.1 of the TA. It confirms that the Site entrance, car park entrance and Moy Road junction will operate well within the desirable capacity level up to 2031 with the development in place. At the Ffordd Bleddyn / Cardiff Road signalised junction, the Assessment indicates that by 2031 the junction will operate within capacity within capacity with or without the development in place.

5.8.8 In respect of car parking, the Scheme will provide a total of 120 parking spaces for staff and visitor parking, including 6 bays for disabled users as required by Rhondda Cynon Taf's Parking Standards. 20 operational spaces will be provided at ground level to provide parking for plant, delivery and other operational related vehicles. The Scheme also comprises 20 cycle parking spaces on site.

5.8.9 Park and Ride provision at Taffs Well Railway Station will be reduced from 93 spaces to 84 spaces. However, the proposed decked car park which will provide 94 spaces to offset the loss in provision at the main P&R site and will resultantly provide an overall net gain of approximately 30 spaces in the overall P&R provision.

5.8.10 The Assessment has also considered access to the development by sustainable transport modes. It confirms that the proposals look to enhance access by bus, rail, walking and cycling through the provision of new and improved pedestrian and cycle access into the Site and to public transport services. The enhancement of on-site cycle parking provision will also encourage the use of cycling to the development. The implementation of a travel plan is also considered to further encourage the use of sustainable transport. The Assessment provides an indicative Travel Plan, however it is anticipated that a detailed version would be approved through appropriate planning condition.

Summary

- 5.8.11 The findings of the Transport Assessment show that the Scheme can be accommodated within the current highway network without significant impacts and demonstrates that the key junctions surrounding the Site would be capable of the increase in traffic flow. The Assessment has demonstrated that the Scheme is well suited for access by sustainable modes of transport and is further encouraged by improved pedestrian and cycle facilities. For these reasons the Scheme is deemed to be in accordance with Section 8 of PPW, TAN 18 and Policy AW 5 of the Local Development Plan.

5.9 Flood Risk

- 5.9.1 **Chapter 13.4 of PPW** relates to the management of flood risk and seeks to ensure that surface water run-off is to be controlled as near to the source as possible by the use of sustainable drainage systems. Local planning authorities should also ensure that development does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere by loss of flood storage or flood flow rate or increase the problem of surface water run-off.
- 5.9.2 A Flood Consequences Assessment (September 2017) has been prepared by Mott MacDonald and is submitted as part of the application. It confirms that the entire Site falls within development advice zone A as set out in **TAN 15** Development Advice Map (DAM) and therefore, all development uses are appropriate at this location.
- 5.9.3 **Policy AW8** of the LDP confirms that developments will not be permitted where, amongst other things, there would be an unacceptable impact upon the natural drainage of surface water.
- 5.9.4 The report notes that the Site is identified by the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) as having a high risk of surface water flooding. It also states that the development will generate significant rates and volumes of surface water run-off which could increase the flood risk to the Site and surrounding areas of land if suitable mitigation measures are not implemented.
- 5.9.5 Surface water could be safely managed through a suitable surface water drainage system to ensure that the development is not at risk of flooding from surface water run-off from within the site and does not increase the risk if such flooding elsewhere. Surface water run-off is currently being discharged to an adjacent public combined sewer. However, a full assessment of the SuDS techniques suitable for Scheme should be undertaken and considered in the detailed design stage and implemented where they will be best effective. It is anticipated that a surface water attenuation storage of 5000m³ will be required and that buried tank storage is likely the best solution to provide the required storage.
- 5.9.6 The Report recommends that a Flood Management Plan should be produced to ensure that the contractor is aware of the on-site flood risk and practicable measures taken to mitigate the risk. It is anticipated that full details of a Flood Management Plan would be the subject of a suitably worded planning condition.
- 5.9.7 The report confirms that, if the above mitigation measures are implemented, the flood risk and consequences for the proposed development are acceptable and that there is no justification in terms of flooding for the development not to proceed. On this basis, it is considered that the Scheme accords with section 13.4 of PPW and Policy AW8 of the Local Development Plan.

5.10 Heritage

- 5.10.1 **Chapter 6** of the **PPW** relates to the historic environment and confirms that where a development proposal affects a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest.
- 5.10.2 **Policy AW 7** of the seeks to protect and enhance the built environment and confirms that development proposals which impact upon sites of architectural and/or historical merit and sites of archaeological importance will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposals would preserve or enhance the character of the appearance of the Site.
- 5.10.3 A Heritage Statement (December 2017) prepared by Mott MacDonald is submitted and identifies the key heritage assets which have the most potential to be affected by the proposed development. It confirms that within the application Site, there is one undesignated heritage asset present in the form a railway building and terraced buildings from the Garth Iron Works.
- 5.10.4 The Statement finds that that assets on Site have now lost their historical connection with the Garth Iron Works and has therefore reduced their historical and communal value in which they provided. Due its low value in heritage terms, the Statement finds that the weight given to the preservation is considered to be low.
- 5.10.5 There is also presence of numerous heritage assets outside of the application boundary but have the potential for setting impacts. This includes the cottages on Alfred's Terrace, however, these are currently screened by the development site by vegetation.
- 5.10.6 With regards to the Sites archaeological value, the Statement notes that the proposed development would have a significant impact on any surviving archaeology through construction activities. It therefore recommends, that an archaeological watching brief of the proposed ground investigation survey be conducted. This would indicate whether any further archaeological investigation would be required prior to the commencement of the development. It is considered that details of this could be approved via a suitably worded planning condition.
- 5.10.7 On this basis, it considered that the proposed Scheme will result in less than substantial harm on the setting heritage assets and that any minor harm that does occur could be further mitigated at the detailed design stage of the Scheme. For these reasons, the development is in accordance with Chapter 6 of the PPW and Policy AW 7 of the Local Development Plan.

5.11 Ecology and Biodiversity

- 5.11.1 **Chapter 5 of PPW** seeks to conserve and improve natural heritage and sets out a series of objectives for nature conservation including promoting the conservation of landscape and biodiversity, in particular the conservation of wildlife and habitats; ensuring that action in Wales contributes to meeting international responsibilities and obligations for the natural environment; ensuring that statutory designated sites are protected; safeguard protected species; and, promoting the functions and benefits of soils, and in particular their function as a carbon store.
- 5.11.2 **Policy AW 8** of the LDP seeks to protect and enhance the natural environment and states that Rhondda Cynon Taf's distinctive natural heritage will be preserved and enhanced by protecting it from inappropriate development. Development proposals will only be permitted where, amongst other things, there would be no unacceptable impact upon features of importance to landscape or nature conservation including ecological networks, the quality of natural resources such as air, water and soil, and the natural drainage of surface water. It also requires development proposals to be accompanied by ecological surveys and appraisals, as requested by the Council. Support

also given to proposals that contribute to the management and development of ecological networks.

- 5.11.3 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Bat Survey Report (October 2017) has been prepared by Mott MacDonald and is submitted as part of the planning application. It provides an initial appraisal of the ecological importance of the habitats in the areas relevant to the proposed works at the site. The report also assesses the potential for the area to support protected ecological features and species and reports the findings of the bat survey work undertaken at the Site.
- 5.11.4 The report confirms that a total of seven designated sites at national level have been identified within 2.0km of the Site. This includes six sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and one Special Area of Conservation (SAC). No non-statutory designates sites have been identified within or adjacent to the Site, however, a number of non-statutory designations have been within 2km. The closest of these include Forest Fawr and the River Taff. As these designations are located well outside of the application boundary, there will be no direct or indirect effects on ecological assets resulting from the proposed development.
- 5.11.5 The PEA shows that a bat walkover, PEA Survey and further bat emergence / re-entry survey were undertaken to inform the potential impact on protected and notable habitats and species from the development. The PEA finds that the Site is dominated by habitats considered to be of low ecological value, although there is potential to support breeding birds, reptiles and bats.
- 5.11.6 The proposed development will result in the loss of buildings and hardstanding within the depot, whilst boundary habitats could be affected by construction works. As such, the proposed works could have an adverse effect, in the absence of mitigation, on boundary habitats and protected or notable species, whilst consideration also needs to be given during construction to invasive species.
- 5.11.7 To offset any impacts, the PEA provides a series of recommended mitigation measures and ecological enhancements on Site. These include new landscape planning to incorporate native species or species of wildlife value; bat and bird boxes installed on new buildings structures and trees to provide enhanced nesting opportunities; and the installation of insect boxes in new landscape planting or retained areas of woodland. Again, these mitigation measures can be dealt with via a suitably worded planning condition.
- 5.11.8 It considered that the with the implementation of the recommended measures set out in the PEA the impacts on wildlife will be sufficiently mitigated and is therefore, in accordance with Section 5 of the PPW and Policy AW 8 of the Local Development Plan.

5.12 Ground Conditions and Contamination

- 5.12.1 **Paragraph 13.7 of PPW** relates to the management of contaminated land and requires planning decisions to take into account the potential hazard that contamination presents to the development, its occupants and the local environment. Decisions also need to consider the results of a specialist investigation and assessment by the developer to determine the contamination of the ground and to identify any remedial measures required to deal with any contamination.
- 5.12.2 **Policy AW 8** of the Local Development Plan states that development proposals will be supported where would be no unacceptable impact upon features of importance to landscape or nature conservation, including soil.

- 5.12.3 **Policy AW 10** also states that development will not be permitted if it has potential to cause or result in a risk of unacceptable harm to health and / or local amenity because of, amongst other things, contamination.
- 5.12.4 An assessment of the on-site contamination is provided in the submitted Geo-Environmental Desk Study (December 2017) prepared by Mott MacDonald. The report contains observed and published information on the topography, geology, hydrogeology, geomorphology, man-made features and historic development of the Site to inform a qualitative contaminated land risk assessment.
- 5.12.5 The Study demonstrates that the risk to human health receptors is considered to be moderate to low. There is low risk attributed to future end users of the Site the extensive development will likely minimise the pathways for which contaminants can interact with receptors.
- 5.12.6 During the construction phase, moderate risk is given to the construction workers as they are more likely to be exposed to contaminants due to the nature of their work and handling potentially contaminated material. However, this risk is to be mitigated through the adoption of good working practice and controlled via a Code of Construction Practice and/or CEMP.
- 5.12.7 In terms of risks to water, this is considered to be moderate and the risk of contamination on construction materials is also considered to be moderate. The main contaminant identified is a concentration of sulphate which poses the potential for sulphate attack on concrete and could affect the stability, integrity and strength of concrete structures. However, the use of an appropriate class of concrete will mitigate the adverse effect of the sulphate.
- 5.12.8 It has been demonstrated that the proposed Scheme has a low to moderate risk from contamination. However, upon the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, it is considered that this risk will be reduced satisfactorily and for these reasons, the development is in accordance with Section 13 of the PPW and Policies AW 8 and AW 10 of the Local Development Plan.

6 Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1.1 Mott MacDonald Limited has been instructed by Transport for Wales (TfW) to prepare and submit a Planning Application for a rolling stock depot and associated works on land at the Garth Works Industrial Estate in Taffs Well, Cardiff, Wales.
- 6.1.2 The development proposed involves the construction of a new rolling stock depot consisting of stabling lines, maintenance workshop, wash down point, sand replenishment plant and delivery track, along with ancillary offices and staff/ public parking provision. A series of associated works are also proposed which comprise the demolition of existing structures, highways and rail infrastructure improvements, construction of a new railway station footbridge and extension to the existing station platform.
- 6.1.3 A Hybrid Planning Application for the proposed Scheme is submitted to Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council as the local planning authority. It seeks Full Planning Permission for the demolition of the existing buildings and Outline Planning Permission for the works associated with the construction of the rolling stock depot. The full development description is as follows:
- “Hybrid Planning Application to deliver a rolling stock depot on the existing Forgemasters Industrial site comprising of the following:**
- Part A: Full planning application for the demolition of existing warehouses on the existing Forgemasters industrial site.**
- Part B: Outline planning application to provide a rolling stock depot comprising of a warehousing building, stabling area accommodating rolling stock, substation, wash down point, sanding facility and delivery tracks, ancillary workshop and offices, decked car parking providing a maximum of 214 car parking spaces, demolition and relocation of existing railway footbridge and platforms, and associated landscaping, highways and access infrastructure works.”**
- 6.1.4 TfW is submitting a Hybrid Planning Application which seeks full planning permission for the demolition of buildings and site clearance works. To provide flexibility and accommodate for the specific requirements of the ODP, outline permission is sought for the construction of the depot and associated works. Outline Permission will provide the maximum parameters for the Scheme which need to be reflected in the detailed design of the Scheme at the Reserved Matters Stage.
- 6.1.5 The proposed development has been reviewed against the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 and provision set out in Circular 11/99 to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required to accompany the application.
- 6.1.6 The proposed Scheme is required in connection with the operation and development of the South Wales Metro Phase 2 which will focus specifically on the CVL. The programme of works has been funded by the Welsh and UK Governments and the European Commission to transform the rail network through substantial investment in new rolling stock, stations, and infrastructure. This Scheme, will contribute towards a step change in public transport and bring about improved connectivity between the CVL communities and Cardiff to achieve a much needed modern, reliable and efficient public transport system.

- 6.1.7 Following a thorough Site identification process, the Welsh Government has acquired the former Forgemasters building and associated land at the Garth Works Industrial Estate in Taffs Well. As part of the investment in the rail network the Site is proposed to be developed into a stabling depot to accommodate a fleet of new rolling stock. The Site is currently used as employment land which considered to be 'average' quality in the ELR.
- 6.1.8 It has been demonstrated that there is an oversupply of employment land in the Borough and it is considered that the loss of employment/employment land is supported in accordance with Policy AW 11 of the Local Development Plan, with it demonstrating the characteristics of an employment generating use.
- 6.1.9 An overview of the design of the Scheme is provided within the submitted Design and Access Statement. The Statement sets out the design of the Scheme in the context of key design considerations taking into account impacts on community safety, environmental sustainability, movement to, from and within the Site and character of the proposed development in the context of the surrounding area. The Statement demonstrates that the best design solution has been prepared for the development and subject to the appropriate level of details being submitted at Reserved Matters stage, the development is deemed to be in accordance with and TAN 12 (Design), Policy AW6 and Section 4.11 of the Local Development Plan.
- 6.1.10 A Noise Assessment submitted with the Application confirms that there is potential for impacts on sensitive receptors during the construction phase of the Scheme. However, through the implementation of a series of mitigation measures, the impact is reduced to less than significant. It is recommended that to further control the impact from noise, a Construction Noise Management Plan (CNMP) or Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) is approved through the imposition of an appropriately worded planning condition. During the operation of the depot, the Assessment confirms that no significant impacts from noise are anticipated and that noise impacts could be further reduced at the detailed design stage of the Scheme. For these reasons, the development is in accordance with Chapter 13 of PPW, TAN 11 (Noise) and Policy AW 6 of the Local Development Plan.
- 6.1.11 An assessment of the of likely traffic impact of the development proposals on the local highway network is provided in the submitted Transport Assessment (TA). The Assessment confirms that the existing highway network can accommodate the proposed Scheme without significant impacts and demonstrates that the key junctions surrounding the Site are capable of absorbing the increased traffic flow. The TA also finds that the Site is well served by sustainable modes of transport through local bus and rail provision, and will be enhanced further by pedestrian and cycle facility provision. It is therefore considered that the development is in accordance with Section 8 of PPW, TAN 18 (Transport) and Policy AW 5 of the Local Development Plan.
- 6.1.12 The submitted Flood Consequences Assessment confirms that Site is identified by the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) as having a high risk of surface water flooding. It also states that the development will generate significant rates and volumes of surface water run-off which could increase the flood risk to the Site and surrounding areas of land if suitable mitigation measures are not implemented. To offset the risk of flooding, a suitable surface water drainage system would ensure that the development is not at risk of flooding from surface water run-off from within the site and does not increase the risk of such flooding elsewhere. It is anticipated that buried tank storage is likely the best solution to mitigate the risk of surface water flooding to ensure that the risk of flooding would be acceptable. Details of the final drainage solution will be provided through approval of a suitably worded planning condition. On this basis, the development is in accordance with Section 13.4 of PPW, TAN 15 (Development and Flood Risk) and Policy AW8 of the Local Development Plan.

- 6.1.13 The submitted Heritage Statement identifies the key heritage assets on and surrounding the Site which have the potential to be affected by the Scheme. It notes that the only heritage assets on Site are the railway outbuilding and associated structures. However, these are deemed to have limited value to warrant preservation. The Statement highlights that there are a number of heritage assets outside of the Site boundary. However, these are currently screened by vegetation and could be mitigated further at the detailed design stage of the Scheme through appropriate building heights. The Statement also indicates that there is potential for impacts on archaeological assets during construction and recommends that further archaeological investigation is undertaken. For the above reasons and through the implementation of appropriate mitigation secured by planning condition, it is considered that proposed development is in accordance with Chapter 6 of PPW and Policy AW 7 of the Local Development Plan.
- 6.1.14 The submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) confirms the Site has limited ecological importance but the proposed development could give rise to the loss of existing vegetation and habitats. To offset any detrimental impacts, the PEA provides a series of recommended mitigation measures and ecological enhancements on Site. These include new landscape planting to incorporate native species or species of wildlife value; bat and bird boxes installed on new buildings structures and trees to provide enhanced nesting opportunities; and the installation of insect boxes in new landscape planting or retained areas of woodland. It is considered that with the implementation of the recommended measures set out in the PEA which would be secured by planning condition, the impacts on wildlife will be sufficiently mitigated and is therefore, in accordance with Section 5 of PPW and Policy AW 8 of the Local Development Plan.
- 6.1.15 An assessment of the on-site contamination is set out in the submitted Geo-Environmental Desk Study. Moderate risk is attributed to the construction phase of the development due to the potential handling of contaminants by workers. However, this risk can be mitigated through adoption of best working practice and measures detailed in the submitted COCP or CEMP. On this basis, the Scheme is in accordance with Section 13 of PPW and Policy AW 10 of the Local Development Plan.
- 6.1.16 As outlined above, the development is supported by both national and local planning policies, as well as other regional strategies. As there are no material considerations which indicate that planning permission should not be granted, on this basis, it is respectfully requested that Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council approves this hybrid planning application, subject to the attachment of suitably worded planning conditions.

