

**BRIDGEND**  
**REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2018-2033)**  
**EXAMINATION**

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**Additional Matter: MAC 047 – Policy COM1(5) Land at Ewenny Road, Maesteg**

*Issue – Is the proposed allocated housing site soundly based and capable of delivering new residential and community development over the Plan period?*

**1.**

**a) What is the current use of the allocated site?**

The site (7.7ha) is a long-term brownfield regeneration site, which has a long history of industrial use. The last factory that occupied the site was Cooper Standard and Budelpack COSi closing in 2007. The site has remained vacant ever since. The standing buildings associated with the previous use have since been demolished leaving the former factory hardstanding bases and a surface car park. The site is an extant allocation within the adopted LDP, allocated by existing LDP Policy PLA3(7) as a Regeneration and Mixed-Use Development Scheme, comprising of residential, employment and local retailing. There are significant remediation and infrastructure constraints associated with the site as result of its past uses, which rendered previous schemes unviable from a commercial perspective. The site has therefore been awarded grant funding by the Cardiff Capital Region in November 2022. The grant will tackle major infrastructure and remediation works, such as diverting a historic mining drain and the backfilling of several mineshafts, which are necessary to unlock the site and enable development in the short-term. As of 11/01/2024, the site benefits from a resolution to grant subject to S106 (application number P/13/808/OUT refers) that is already being actively progressed to completion shortly.

**b) What is the proposed use of the allocated site?**

The position of this site has changed considerably over the course of preparing the RLDP, and it is now considered appropriate to incorporate this site into the housing trajectory. Previous versions of the site masterplan have been revised to ensure it can meet local housing, employment, and transportation needs. The number of houses planned for the site is now 201 dwellings, 15% of which will be affordable, a higher quantum than the affordable policy requirement for the wider area. Land will be reserved to enable a new future transport interchange (featuring both bus links and a park-and-ride facility) at the far northern end of the site to remain close to the railway station. A proposed new enterprise hub will also be relocated to take advantage of the new transport links. The new interchange at Ewenny Road is a key component of the Metro's enhanced services on the Valley Lines via the Maesteg branch.

**c) What are the constraints affecting the site, and are these constraints significant obstacles to development within the Plan period?. This should include an explanation of matters such as:**

The main constraints affecting the site are summarised below for ease of reference. However, none are considered significant obstacles to development within the plan period due to suitable mitigation measures having been identified. The site's supporting evidence has taken all constraints into account to demonstrate the site is both deliverable and viable.

- **Transportation and the impact of the development public footpath level crossings;**

In terms of transport, a supporting Transport Assessment (SD244) accompanies existing planning application P/13/808/OUT. Asbri Transport completed a comprehensive Transport Assessment (TA) in 2013 for a mixed-used development at the same site albeit a different mix and quantum of development – 138 dwellings, public house, restaurants, retail and employment uses. On 26th June 2014, the Development Control Committee resolved to approve the development on the site. A Highway Technical Note (SD246) has since been prepared to demonstrate that the current revised proposals have an impact commensurate with that assessed in the 2013 Transport Assessment, using the TRICS trip generation database to establish a range of surveys that would be representative of the new proposals. The proposed housing element of the new scheme is anticipated to generate 117 movements (two-way) in the AM peak period and 101 movements (two-way) in the in PM peak period; the proposed employment element/B1 use is anticipated to generate 114 movements (two-way) in the AM peak period and 104 movements (two-way) in the in PM peak period and the proposed retail element is anticipated to generate 119 movements (two-way) in the AM peak period and 132 movements (two-way) in the in PM peak period. This results in a slightly lower level of a.m. peak hour traffic and a significant reduction of 195 vehicle trips in p.m. peak hour traffic when compared to the original scheme in 2013.

In consideration of the scheme, and due to all matters apart from access being reserved for future approval when the detailed design will be considered, the Highway Authority has provided a set of conditions in the existing outline consent to mitigate for the impact of the development on the highway network.

This site was also included in the Strategic Transport Assessment (STA) as a committed development. Whilst the proposed development composition has changed since the original masterplan, the site promoter has submitted

a technical note (SD246) which demonstrates that the revised masterplan will generate fewer vehicular trips than the previous proposal.

The site benefits from a sustainable location, adjacent to Ewenny Road (Maesteg) railway station. The station is on the Maesteg line and currently benefits from an hourly service to Maesteg, Bridgend, Cardiff and Cheltenham SPA. Furthermore, Transport for Wales are undertaking further studies to seek to increase in service provision to a minimum of two services per hour and up to four services per hour in each direction. The site will reserve land to enable a future transport interchange and parking area related to the Ewenny Railway Station. This is a key component of the Metro's enhanced services on the Valley Lines via the Maesteg branch and is essential to strengthen public transport connections to and from Maesteg.

The STA has been further interrogated and modelled committed planning consent traffic is deemed to have a negligible impact on the junctions assessed in the study. The inclusion of the site is therefore considered to have no significant adverse impacts on highways after appropriate mitigation at the detailed application stage.

In relation to the impact of the development on public footpath level crossings, Network Rail advise that any development of land which would result in a material increase or significant change in the character of traffic using rail crossings should be refused without certain criteria being met. In consultation with Network Rail, it should either be demonstrated that safety will not be compromised, or, where safety is compromised, serious mitigation measures would be incorporated to prevent any increased safety risk as a requirement of any permission. It must be emphasised that these are existing pedestrian crossings for which Network Rail has not provided any evidence to demonstrate that the crossings are currently unsafe or how any additional footfall would make the crossings unsafe. Whilst additional footfall may result in greater costs to Network Rail in maintaining the crossings, this is not considered to be such a material planning consideration as to warrant refusal and will not impact the overall deliverability of the site.

- **Heritage and the need for a programme of targeted archaeological evaluation;**

The development site is the former site of Maesteg Merthyr (Oakwood) Colliery, Maesteg Isaf Farmhouse and Maesteg Canol farmstead, all of which are of local importance. Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological trust (GGAT) indicate that this will require mitigation, pre-determination archaeological evaluation. As such, an archaeological desk-based assessment (SD257) has been undertaken by Archaeology Wales which

found that there was no trace of any site of archaeological interest existing above-ground. However, the potential for below ground archaeological interest remains. Therefore, a watching brief condition has been included as part of the existing outline consent, to ensure any features of archaeological interest that are discovered during works are identified and recorded in order to mitigate the potential impact of works. However, there is not considered to be archaeological justification to preclude the proposed development. This will not impact upon the overall deliverability of this site.

- **Flood Risk;**

#### Planning Application

The outline planning application (P/13/808/OUT, which benefits from a resolution to grant subject to s106) is supported by a Flood Consequences Assessment (FCA) prepared by WSP. The proposed development at Ewenny Road is considered to have a low risk of flooding from most sources, excepting fluvial sources, with the existing site at risk from the design flood event.

In order to overcome risks associated with contamination and fulfil a capping requirement for public health reasons, the proposal is to raise the central and southern development parcels; the areas that will contain commercial and residential development, respectively. This will have a simultaneous benefit of raising these parts of the site above the extreme flood level. The FCA demonstrates that these remediated levels can have a net overall benefit to flood consequences in Maesteg and that the level of risk and consequences are acceptable when assessed against the requirements of TAN15 (existing and proposed). The proposed scheme also includes a conveyance channel to draw floodwaters off Oakwood Drive in extreme events to an area of public open space, where the flood waters will be attenuated.

Extensive background evidence has been prepared to verify the development can meet TAN 15's proposed acceptability criteria for flooding consequences. Condition 35 of the outline consent specifies that 'no development shall commence on site apart from remediation works until a revised hydraulic model has been developed to inform an updated Flood Consequence Assessment and any flood mitigation works, which shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority'. Active dialogue is at an advanced stage between the applicant and NRW regarding modelling and development of a robust FCA to support the future detailed proposals. It is considered that a feasible solution is wholly implementable to enable the site to come forward in accordance with both the existing and proposed TAN 15.

However, the Council consider the FCA modelling for the existing planning application is a separate exercise to be resolved through the development management process rather than at the plan making stage.

#### SFCAA (JBA Consulting)

The Council consider that the addendum (See Appendix 1) to the Bridgend County Borough Council Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment 2022 (SD63) should be considered in its own right and demonstrates Ewenny Road can come forward as a large mixed-use development. The report revisits and updates the assessment for the appraisal of Ewenny Road in light of additional flood risk information and changes in the draft TAN15 policy. Specifically:

- The FMfP for Maesteg was updated in May 2023;
- Associated with the FMfP update for Maesteg, additional detailed flood model data has become available, allowing for a more accurate and informed site appraisal; and
- Welsh Government have postponed the release of the new TAN15 and published a second consultation on a revised draft. The consultation was released in January 2022 and is now closed. Welsh Government are currently reviewing the consultation responses and the new TAN15 has not yet been published.

The appraisal finds that the proposed allocation is capable of meeting all aspects of the Justification Tests of TAN15. This will require some aspects of site zoning and flood mitigation, but recent studies have demonstrated that this is entirely feasible.

- **Historic Coal Mining Activity and the need for a Coal Mining Risk Assessment or updated coal mining information;**

There are two mine entries within the red line boundary of the site, in addition to areas of recorded and likely unrecorded coal workings at shallow depth. The Coal Authority have advised that they require further information to demonstrate how the access routes proposed within the site relate to the coal mining features present and what further investigations and remedial works are necessary to ensure the safety and stability of this element of the development. Whilst a Site Remediation Works Plan (SD255) has been prepared by WSP, a pre-commencement condition has been included as part of the existing outline consent to ensure the necessary information is submitted. However, it is considered that there is no justification to preclude the proposed development and will not impact the overall deliverability of the site.

- **Remediation;**

There are significant remediation and infrastructure constraints associated with the site, which rendered previous proposed schemes unviable from a commercial perspective. This resulted in past schemes stalling. The required remediation and infrastructure works include diverting an historic mining Adit drain and backfilling of mineshafts stemming from the long history of coal mining in the area. The supporting information accompanying the site is supplemented by a remediation plan (SD255). This sets out several planned remediation measures across the site which will enable its development. Grant funding (£3.5million), which has been awarded by the Cardiff Capital Region, is key in enabling such works to take place.

- **Biodiversity;**

The site is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Reptile Survey (SD252) prepared by Tetra Tech. All habitats on site are secondary and associated with the former industrial use of the site and its demolition. The most diverse habitat is the large extent of scrub which varies in structure and composition across the site. There are no natural habitats present on site. In terms of protected & notable species, the site is relatively isolated in an urban setting with the only connecting habitat being the Llynfi river running to the east. Due to the location and nature of the site, there are limited opportunities for protected species, except potential for reptiles, common species of nesting birds and foraging and commuting bats. A number of enhancement measures are recommended and have been factored into the master planning of the site. These include the enhancement of existing green infrastructure and connectivity to the wider landscape to maintain flows and mobility of species, most notably the Llynfi river to the east and woodland to the south. The development would also install bird and bat boxes on retained trees and/or incorporate them into the new buildings. As such, there are no ecological matters which would prevent the site being developed in line with the proposed masterplan and recommendations.

- **Fire Safety and the need for a comprehensive fire strategy; and**

The Fire Service have advised that a comprehensive fire strategy should be provided. This should indicate the package of fire safety measures that are proposed to satisfy Building Regulations and should address any variations to current guidelines. It should also consider the need for provision of adequate water supplies on the site for firefighting purposes, and access for emergency firefighting appliances. The Council will seek full details at the subsequent reserved matters stage. However, it is considered that there is

no justification to preclude the proposed development and will not impact the overall deliverability of the site.

- **Utilities**

In terms of water supply, Welsh Water indicate that a hydraulic modelling assessment is required due to the size of the development. In relation to sewerage provision, Welsh Water indicate that there are no perceived issues. An existing 225mm combined sewer and 600mm combined sewer transverse the site. Foul drainage will be treated at its Maesteg Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW).

With regards to electrical services, there is an existing electric main located within the southwest section of the site. A plan showing New Service Connections (SD258) indicates that the site will contain two 11kV main sub-stations in the north and south of the site. National Grid indicate that specific development proposals within the local planning authority area are unlikely to have a significant direct effect upon National Grid's electricity transmission system.

For gas supply provision, Wales & West Utilities indicate the nearest main with sufficient capacity is 10m from the site boundary and is located to the west of the site. This is a 125mm PE Low Pressure Main. The New Service Connections plan indicates the positions of the existing main and existing gas governor.

**d) Is the submitted Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment – Site Appraisal Addendum (June 2023) [SD267] based on robust evidence, consistent with national planning policy and are its conclusions sound, if not how can this be ameliorated?**

The Council commissioned JBA Consulting to prepare a Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment Addendum (SFCAA) in June 2023. The report revisits and updates the assessment for the appraisal of Ewenny Road in light of additional flood risk information and changes in the draft TAN15 policy. **This applied the most recent local and national datasets provided by NRW.** The addendum concludes that the proposed development is very likely to be able to satisfy the acceptability of flood consequences. Even when the majority of the site (within Zone 2) floods in the extreme event, flooding remains shallow and within tolerance. The Council considers that this clear evidence demonstrates how Ewenny Road can come forward as a large mixed-use development, capable of meeting all aspects of the Justification Tests of TAN15. This will require some aspects of site zoning and flood mitigation, but recent studies have demonstrated that this is very likely to be achievable. Refer to the Statement of Common Ground between NRW, WG and the Council (M13 (7)).

**e) In light of the constraints, and having regard to the need to provide affordable housing, is the allocated site economically viable?**

Yes, the site has been subject to independent viability testing, at a level of detail that is both meaningful and proportionate to the site's significance in the Replacement LDP.

A site-specific appraisal has been undertaken independently by chartered surveyors at Alder King, which was assessed as part of the CCR bid. This established the site could meet the proposed Replacement LDP policy requirements in full, while delivering a competitive, market risk adjusted return to the developer and a land value that is sufficient to encourage a landowner to sell for the proposed use. This appraisal considers affordable housing transfer values, market values and construction costs plus details from the latest concept masterplan. The appraisal affirms the site's viability based on the latest evidence, coupled with realistic and reasonable assumptions concerning costs and values.

The appraisal evidences the site's ability to deliver 15% affordable housing (a higher quantum than the affordable policy requirement for the area), employment, retail, and public open space in accordance with the Replacement LDP policy framework. The appraisal also includes grant funding (£3.5 million) awarded by the Cardiff Capital Region which will enable the necessary infrastructure and remediation works. This level of grant has been informed by a detailed review undertaken by cost consultants to ensure it is sufficient to cover the work needed.

This evidence demonstrates that the site is financially viable to develop and there are considered to be no impediments to delivery, having full regard to site-specific constraints and the need to provide affordable housing. The appraisal has not only been undertaken by independent chartered surveyors at Alder King but has also been subject to secondary scrutiny and approval by CCR. This double layer of verification provides undoubted assurance that the site is economically viable.

**f) Are the number of residential units proposed realistic and deliverable over the plan period?**

Yes, the site is supported by an illustrative masterplan and proving layout (SD262a), which were informed by a density level considered to respond most appropriately to the site-specific context. The typologies employed in the layout are sensitive to the existing context surrounding the site and have been arranged efficiently on the site whilst also allowing for the creation of high quality public open space. The illustrative masterplan demonstrates the number

of residential units proposed through a mix of houses, flats over garages, flats and maisonettes at an average density of 44 dph. This density level is considered to respond most appropriately to the site-specific context. The masterplan proposes lower densities facing out onto the river corridor green buffer, medium densities along secondary streets and higher densities along the liner park and around a mews street network connecting to the secondary streets. Furthermore, the masterplan proposes higher densities of homes facing the railway line which aims to emulate a traditional row of railway cottages.

The number of residential units proposed is also deliverable and expected to be delivered within the early years of the plan period. The housing trajectory rate has been informed by site-specific evidence on deliverability, viability, and phasing analysis in consultation with the site promoter. 40 dwellings per annum is akin to the delivery rates forecast for other similar sized sites in the same market area, as agreed with the Viability Stakeholder Group. This is considered entirely realistic for a site within this location. With grant funding in place, and the s106 shortly due to be signed for the outline application, there are no barriers to a detailed planning application coming forward in due course and enabling delivery of the site. All residential units are forecast to be delivered by 2030/31; two years prior to the end of the Replacement LDP period.

**g) What are the mechanisms and timescales for delivering the site?. This should include details of the funding arrangements and timescale for the remediation element of the scheme and the granting of planning permission.**

The site was awarded grant funding (£3.5 million) by the CCR in November 2022 to support the remediation and delivery of infrastructure across the site. Details of the grant funding are included in Welsh Governments' Wales Infrastructure Investment Strategy – Project Pipeline (published December 2022). The grant has been provided by CCR as part of their Housing Viability Gap Fund which is designed to provide financial support to bridge evidenced viability gaps and ensure a site is made viable following the delivery of grant funded works. The grant will specifically tackle several major infrastructure and remediation works, such as diverting a historic mining drain and the backfilling of several mineshafts, which are necessary to unlock the site and enable development in the short-term.

The funding contract has been agreed in recognition of the fact that re-development of this brownfield site is of critical importance to Welsh Government, CCR and Bridgend County Borough Council. The funding arrangements will be based on a number of works milestones, which are currently being discussed and agreed between the Council and CCR. These milestones will be linked to: a) contractor tendering for and completion of site preparation works; b) submission and approval of the reserved matters application; and, c) commencement and completion of residential development.

The first two milestones can be progressed in tandem, with residential development to follow accordingly.

The tender for the remediation works package is currently being prepared by the Council, together with its partner landowner, Clowes. The tender process is expected to take place at the start of 2024, with a contractor being appointed and on-site before the Summer of 2024. The proposed remediation and infrastructure works primarily consist of the following:

- Site Clearance
- Construction of new vehicular access points
- Construction of Active Travel route
- Diversion of various existing sewers including historic mining Adit
- Construction of new surface water and foul drainage infrastructure
- Construction of flood conveyance channel / storage area
- Capping of site with inert material where required for human health purposes
- Remediation of mineworkings (capping and grouting)
- New utilities infrastructure within the extent of the enabling works to the edge of development parcels
- Rerouting/disconnection of utilities

The pre-commencement works package is expected to take 6 months to complete and will result in a site primed for development. This will enable the development to proceed rapidly thereafter; expediting construction.

The outline application for this development proposal now benefits from a resolution to grant (as per Item 8, Development Control Committee 11/01/2024), subject to s106. Solicitors have already been instructed and active discussions between both parties are already underway, with the legal agreement expected to be completed prior to the end of February 2024. The reserved matters application will then be progressed in tandem with the remediation element of the scheme. It is envisaged that granting of planning permission will take a total of 7 months, as follows:

- Pre-application is expected to take 6 weeks, with PAC due to take a further 6 weeks (4 weeks minimum with a further 2 weeks to collate and produce a PAC report);
- 10 weeks have been allowed between the submission and determination of the planning application; and
- 8 weeks have been allowed to discharge relevant conditions to enable site construction.

In parallel with the tendering of the works contract, the Council and Clowes will be actively marketing the site in early 2024 with a view to entering into a conditional contract with a developer by the end of summer. The sale contract will include provisions that ensure the developer delivers the housing in a timely manner, reflecting the milestones agreed between the Council and CCR. This

will ensure the objectives of the grant funding, which are to unlock stalled sites for housing and expedite the delivery of housing, are met in full.

With the CCR funding secured, the remediation element and granting of reserved matters permission concluding simultaneously, the residential development will be able to commence at pace. Housing construction is now expected to start no later than Q1 2025/26, with the first dwellings completed by the end of 2025/26 (half rate of delivery – at 20 dwellings per annum) and a full rate of delivery (40 dwellings per annum) in the following years. The residential dwellings are expected to be built out in full by 2030/31, as follows:

Financial Year	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32	32/33
Forecast Completions	20	40	40	40	40	21		

This rate of delivery is akin to rates forecast for other similarly sized sites in this market area (as previously agreed with the Housing Trajectory Stakeholder Group) and is therefore considered wholly appropriate for this development.

It is considered that this brownfield site demonstrates the highest possible credentials in terms of sustainable development and placemaking and should be prioritised for delivery in accordance with the site search sequence outlined in national policy. Inclusion of this site as part of the housing land supply will help to ensure there is additional short-term flexibility in the housing trajectory. The progress made in determining the outline application has placed this site in an excellent position to move forward with the remediation works package, appointment of a developer and submission of a reserved matters application prior to the residential element commencing no later than 2025/26.

**h) Is the allocation of the SDS essential to ensure the soundness of the Plan?**

Yes, the site is a large mixed-use development and is considered appropriate to accommodate regeneration-led growth. Development of this brownfield site will maximise the use of previously developed, under-utilised land, direct growth towards a Main Settlement that exhibits high housing need as identified by the LHMA and will enable delivery of the supporting infrastructure. The site is well serviced by the active travel network which will help foster and promote transit-oriented development (See SD51 - Background Paper 19: 20-Minute Neighbourhood). The site will also reserve land to enable future delivery of a transport interchange related to the Ewenny Railway Station, which is a key component of the Metro's enhanced services on the Valley Lines.

All significant constraints can be mitigated against, and the site is supported by viability and deliverability evidence. The site presents a key opportunity for regeneration-led development to take place over the plan period to help meet the LDP Vision and Objectives and ensure the implementation of the Regeneration and Sustainable Growth Strategy.