



Planning Statement



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Pontyclun
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Contents

1.0	Introduction	2
2.0	The Site and Context	4
2.1	Site Description.....	4
2.2	Site Surroundings.....	5
2.3	Planning History.....	5
2.4	Pre-Application Enquiry.....	6
2.5	Statutory Pre-Application Consultation (PAC).....	6
3.0	Proposed Development – Option 1: Light Industrial	9
3.2	Proposed Use.....	9
3.3	Layout, Scale and Design.....	9
3.4	Access.....	10
3.5	Parking.....	11
3.6	Landscaping and Green Infrastructure.....	11
3.7	Drainage.....	11
3.8	Construction / Operation.....	11
3.9	Waste.....	12
4.0	Proposed Development – Option 2: Data Centre	14
4.2	Proposed Use.....	15
4.3	Layout, Scale and Design.....	15
4.4	Access.....	16
4.5	Parking.....	16
4.6	Landscaping and Green Infrastructure.....	17
4.7	Drainage.....	17
4.8	Construction / Operation.....	17
4.9	Waste.....	17
4.10	18
5.0	Planning Policy & Legislation	19
5.1	Introduction.....	19
5.2	The Development Plan.....	19
5.3	Other Material Considerations.....	21



6.0 Assessment of Development Proposals27

6.2 Principle of Development 27

6.3 Design 27

6.4 Access and Transport..... 28

6.5 Arboriculture 30

6.6 Ecology and Biodiversity..... 31

6.7 Landscape and Green Infrastructure 33

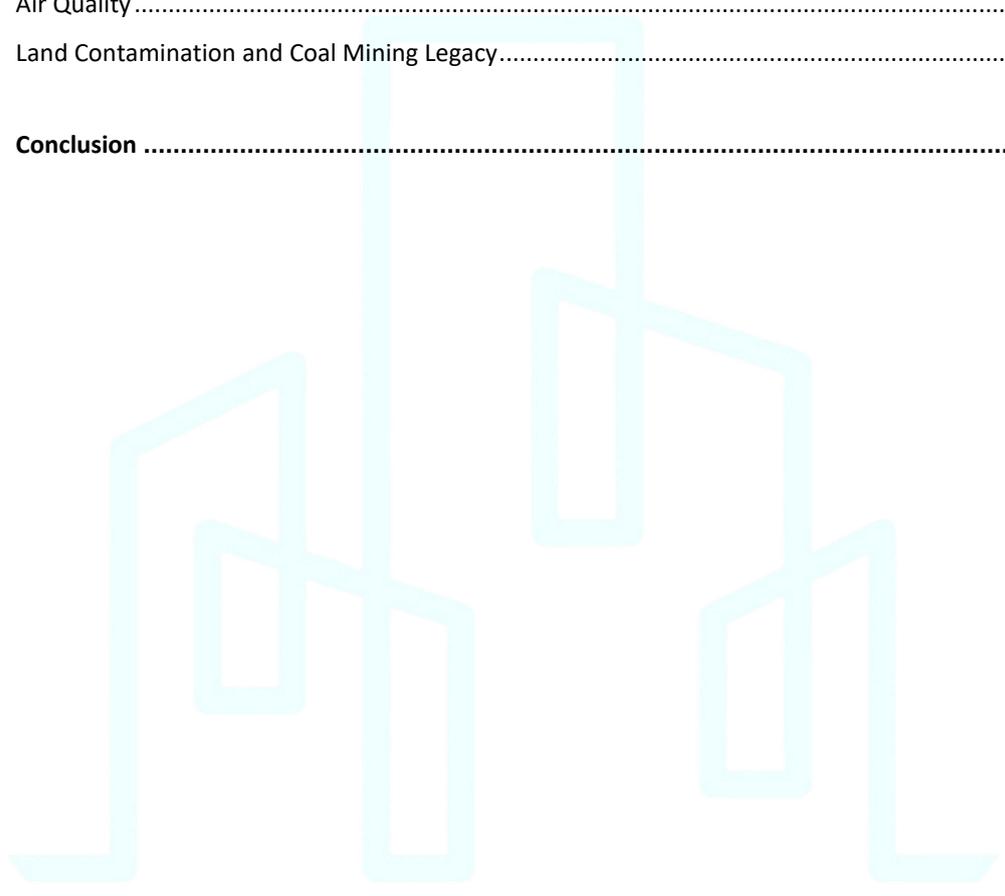
6.8 Flood Risk and Drainage 34

6.9 Noise 35

6.10 Air Quality 35

6.11 Land Contamination and Coal Mining Legacy..... 37

7.0 Conclusion40





SECTION 1

Introduction



1.0 Introduction

1.1.1 This Planning Statement is prepared by CarneySweeney on behalf of Talbot Green Developments Ltd ('TGDL') (the applicant) in support of a two full planning applications for two alternative employment development proposals on land to the east of Mwyndy Cross, Pontyclun. The descriptions of development are as follows:

Option 1: "Erection of employment facility Option 1: Erection of a 9,980sqm Class B1c light industrial building with associated access, parking, drainage, landscaping, services and utilities."

Option 2: "Erection of employment facility Option 2: Erection of a 21,490sqm Class B8 data centre with associated access, parking, drainage, landscaping, services and utilities."

1.1.2 The applications are being submitted on the same day by the same applicant in order to meet the requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications and Site Visits) (Wales) Regulations 2015, Schedule 1, Part 1, Paragraph 9.

1.1.3 The application site is allocated under strategic policy allocation SSA 8 (Mwyndy/Talbot Green) for an employment use within Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) adopted Local Development Plan (LDP).

1.1.4 This application is made further to discussions with Officers at RCT Council and statutory consultees.

1.1.5 The remainder of this Planning Statement comprises the following sections:

- **Section 2: The Site and Context** – provides a description of the application site, surrounding context and the relevant planning history;
- **Section 3: Proposed Development** – details the proposed development(s);
- **Section 4: Planning Policy and Legislation** – provides an overview of the relevant local and national policy and legislation context applicable to the consideration of this proposal;
- **Section 5: Assessment of Development Proposals** – addresses the key considerations material to the proposals, summarising and drawing from other supporting technical information submitted with the application; and
- **Section 6: Conclusion** – provides a summary and concluding statement.

1.1.6 This Planning Statement is not a standalone document and should be read in conjunction with all other technical supporting documents.



SECTION 2

The Site and Context



2.0 The Site and Context

2.1 Site Description

2.1.1 The application site comprises a broadly rectangular parcel of land extending to an area of c.4.65ha, located east of Mwyndy Cross and south of the A473. The site spans two field parcels, divided by a row of small trees and hedgerows. The site represents greenfield land which has historically been used for agriculture and the boundaries of the site are defined by trees and hedgerows. There is a group of larger trees in the north eastern corner of the site. Access to the site is currently provided via an agricultural field gate along Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery Road at the south western corner of the site.

2.1.2 The site is within the administrative boundary of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC). According to the current adopted Local Development Plan (LDP), the site falls outside but adjacent to the settlement boundary which extends to the western side of the A4119; and within the strategic site allocation SSA 8 (Mwyndy/Talbot Green). The wider allocation comprises land for up to 500 dwellings, employment, retail, leisure, school, community facilities and open space (see Figure 1 below). However, the site itself is specifically allocated for employment development.

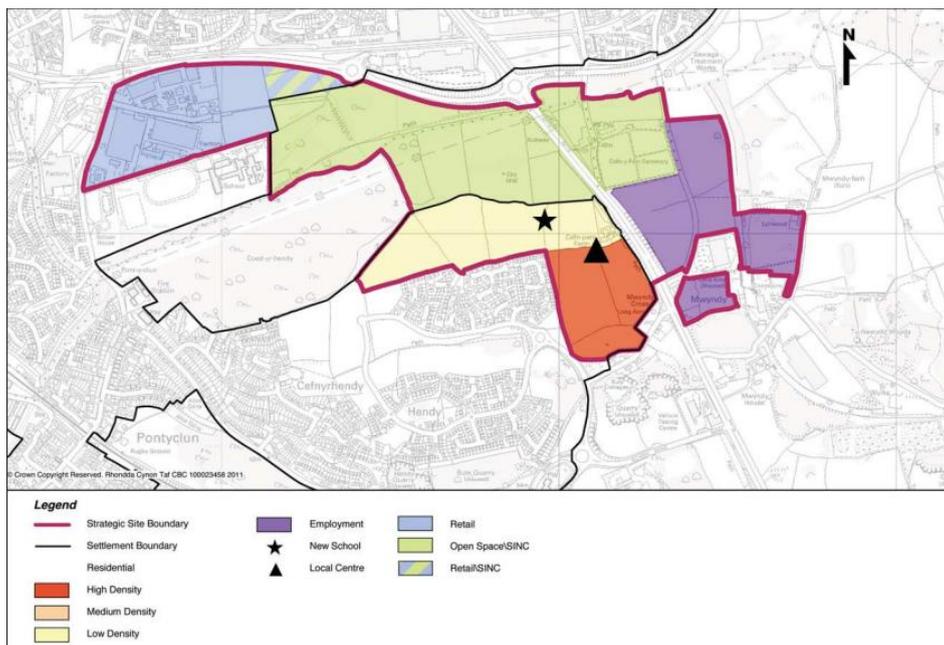


Figure 1: SSA 8 Indicative Concept Plan (extracted from the Adopted LDP).

The application site falls within the land identified for employment use (shaded purple)

2.1.3 The site lies within the Afon Clun Valley and Rhiwsaeson Hill Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) (Policy AW 8.147).

2.1.4 According to NRW’s Flood Map for Planning, the site lies partly within Flood Zones 2 and 3 (rivers and sea) along the north-eastern boundary margins. Small parts of the site, also contained to the north east, are within Zones 2 and 3 for surface water and small watercourses flooding.



- 2.1.5 The site is located within a Coal Mining Reporting Area which spans much of South Wales. According to the Mining Remediation Authority, the site is also within a Surface Coal Resource Area and partly within a Coal Outcrops area.
- 2.1.6 The site's topography slopes downwards from south to north (by c. 8m); and from west to east (by c. 7m) and there are no other known physical constraints.
- 2.1.7 There is a Public Right of Way (PRoW) footpath which crosses the site east to west (Route Code: ANT/298/1).
- 2.1.8 The site is not located within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory historic designations.

2.2 Site Surroundings

- 2.2.1 An existing adopted road (Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery Road) forms the site's western boundary. Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery Road connects to the A4119 (west) and (for pedestrians and cyclists only) Cross Inn (north).
- 2.2.2 The site is bound to the east by woodland and open countryside. Immediately south there is a large standalone furniture store (Arthur Llewellyn Jenkins); a small number of properties on Mwyndy Terrace; a lake; and Mwyndy Industrial estate. Directly west of the site lies Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery and a parcel of agricultural land with permission for data centre development. A small watercourse travels east of the site boundary, from the Afon Clun river to the north.
- 2.2.3 The site lies adjacent to a Special Landscape Area (Policy SSA 23.4).
- 2.2.4 The surrounding context is mixed in terms of land use, with commercial/industrial development to the south; residential development including areas under construction for residential development to the west beyond the A4119; retail and commercial development to the north-west; residential to the north beyond A473; and open countryside to the east.

2.3 Planning History

- 2.3.1 Of most relevance to this application is the EIA Screening Opinion (ref: 24/0846/SSO) which was issued in October 2024 relating to the proposed employment development at this site. The response confirmed that the proposed employment building within class B1 and/or B2 and/or B8; comprising erection of new building(s) (max floorspace circa 24,000 sqm GIA), plant, parking, delivery/servicing areas and sub-station, drainage, access works and all associated building and engineering works and utilities connections, would not constitute EIA development.
- 2.3.2 The site formed part of an outline planning permission for a 19.1ha mixed-use development comprising employment use (up to 30,000 sqm net Class B1 floorspace on the land including the application site) and residential use (west of the A4119 on land outside this site), which was refused by the LPA in November 2005 (Application Ref: 03/1674). The decision was however later allowed at appeal in October 2008 (Appeal Ref: APP/L6940/A/06/1198879).



2.3.3 As outlined above the site benefits from the current LDP SSA8 strategic employment allocation; this together with the previous allowed appeal demonstrates the acceptability of employment generating development of this site, in principle.

2.3.4 Noteworthy applications on other land within the wider allocation include:

- full planning permission for a c. 2,100sqm data centre (Class B8) on the parcel of land to the immediate west of the site (ref: 24/5041/41), granted in May 2025;
- outline planning permission was granted in February 2018 for the erection of up to 460 homes, a primary school, local centre and open space on land west of the A4119, Cefn yr Hendy (ref: 16/1385/13). This permission is currently being built out on site and includes improvement works to the junction of Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery Road with the A4119 immediately south of the site, which have now been undertaken and completed.

2.4 Pre-Application Enquiry

2.4.1 A Pre-Application enquiry was submitted to RCTCBC in May 2024 (ref: 24/5038/41), for proposed Development of Class B8 employment and all associated development, which at the time was described as likely to comprise a data centre. Notwithstanding this, the pre-app meeting held with officers involved discussion about potential B1, B2 or B8 use.

2.4.2 The LPA's response refers to LDP policy CS6 which identified land for B1 employment development and indicates that B8 use had not been allocated for this site. However, it acknowledged that LDP paragraph 6.137 indicates the Council's vision for strengthening Principal Towns through provision of employment development. The LPA response acknowledges that data centres are commonly treated as B8, which may be appropriate if it were to present characteristics of a B1 employment use, regarding effects on traffic, noise, emissions.

2.4.3 It was noted that the whole pre-application site is a designated Site of Importance to Nature Conservation. Any development on the site would need to propose a solution that was in accordance with Policy AW8 and acceptable to the Council's ecologist, as well as the wider biodiversity net benefit considerations outlined within PPW12.

2.4.4 The key matters to address in a forthcoming application were noted to be scale, design and appearance; traffic and access arrangement; the site's designation within a SIN; drainage; and coal mining history.

2.5 Statutory Pre-Application Consultation (PAC)

2.5.1 The proposed development constitutes major development under the definition in Article 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 (as amended), as it proposes the creation of more than 1,000sqm floorspace.

2.5.2 Section 61Z of the Town and Country Planning (Wales) Act 1990 (as amended) imposes a statutory requirement to undertake consultation on major developments. Further provision is contained within



Part 1A of the Development Management Procedure (Wales) Order, which states that the applicant must make draft planning application documents available to review for a minimum 28-day consultation period; consult the relevant neighbour, community and statutory consultees; display site notices; and provide a Pre-Application Consultation Report as part of the application.

- 2.5.3 In accordance with the requirements, the PAC consultation period ran throughout March 2026.
- 2.5.4 Full details of the consultation process, responses and outcomes are provided within the accompanying PAC Report.



SECTION 3

Proposed Development
Option 1: Light Industrial



3.0 Proposed Development – Option 1: Light Industrial

3.1.1 This full planning application proposes new employment development to deliver part of the Strategic Allocation SSA 8 (Mwyndy/Talbot Green). The proposal is for erection of a light industrial (B1) building, which will contribute towards meeting employment needs within Mwyndy and the surrounding areas, by delivering a multi-unit building that can support a range of employment opportunities.

3.1.2 The proposal will include the following elements:

- Cut and fill engineering to address site levels and create a level development plateau
- Erection of a multi-unit light industrial building extending to c. 9,980sqm floorspace (GIA)
- A new vehicular access from Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery Road
- Surface car parking and cycle storage
- Servicing areas including loading/unloading and turning apron
- Sub-station compound
- Internal roadways and footpaths
- Hard and soft landscaping
- Sustainable drainage system (SuDS) features including attenuation ponds

3.2 Proposed Use

3.2.1 The proposed development is for a light industrial building (Use Class B1(c)). This accords with Policy SSA8 which allocates land for employment use.

3.3 Layout, Scale and Design

3.3.1 The proposed site layout has been informed by a comprehensive assessment of the site's constraints and opportunities, including the existing topography, landscape and arboriculture; alongside the operational requirements for a light industrial building.

3.3.2 The light industrial building is located along the western boundary of the site, allowing space for the service road and vehicular apron on the eastern part of the site; and two attenuation ponds at the northern and western boundaries. The existing copse of trees and landscape buffer along the boundaries of the site are proposed to be retained for their amenity and arboricultural value, as well as for their use in screening the proposed development.

3.3.3 The building itself will be formed of two 'parts': one smaller part in the north western part of the site, sized to allow the retention of the existing copse of trees in the north eastern part of the site; and the larger part of the building which extends across the remainder of the site.



- 3.3.4 The building is proposed to allow for the potential of multi-tenanted occupation, so in order to retain flexibility for future end users. The internal layout is indicatively shown as a grid with subdivisions to create separate units which will extend the full depth of the building. Each have space for management and welfare facilities, service connections, an access door and parking/delivery area on the eastern (front) elevation, and a fire exit door at the (rear) western elevation.
- 3.3.5 As for scale, the larger/primary part of the building is proposed to be a maximum 14m height and the smaller building in the north west will be a maximum 12m height. This is considered appropriate to the proposed employment use for which the site is allocated and has regard to operational requirements for internal height of light industrial units.
- 3.3.6 The primary section of the building is 162m in length by 54m in depth, indicatively subdivided into 18no units of 9m in width by 54m in depth. The secondary section of the building will be 45m in length by 24m in depth, subdivided into 5no. units, each also 9m in width. There will be a short area of separation between the two parts of the building, such that the building's total floorspace amounts to 9,980sqm.
- 3.3.7 The larger/primary section of the building will feature a shallow pitched roof and parapet with solar panels, whilst the smaller building block will have a flat roof and accommodate roof mounted services and equipment.
- 3.3.8 The primary building will be formed of a portal frame with envelope grid and will be clad in silver aluminium panels on a blue engineering brick plinth. The secondary building will be a castellated beam with envelope grid and will be clad in dark grey metal cladding for contrast, whilst also on a blue engineering brick plinth for cohesion.
- 3.3.9 A sub-station compound for c. 4no. units is proposed behind the north western elevation of the building, to provide for the future energy requirements of operators.
- 3.3.10 A cribb-lock retaining wall is required to be provide at the south west corner of the car park area, to address the site levels.
- 3.3.11 It is proposed that CCTV systems will be installed on site for security purposes.

3.4 Access

- 3.4.1 A new access road to the site is proposed from Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery Road, via a new 'T' junction. The access will be suitable for access and egress for all site visitors, i.e. HGVs, service vehicles, emergency vehicles, private cars, cycles and pedestrians. The access road will be 7.3m wide and positioned a sufficient distance (60m) from the nearby junction providing access to the Arthur Llewellyn furniture store service yard.
- 3.4.2 Internally, there will be a perimeter road around the light industrial building.



3.4.3 The existing public right of way footpath that crosses the site is proposed to be re-directed via the footpath associated with new access road into the site from Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery Road, with the addition of a new spur that leads directly to the existing footpath gate on the eastern boundary.

3.5 Parking

3.5.1 The proposal includes a surface car park for staff and visitors, in the southern part of the site, which will provide 89 spaces including 9 universal access spaces (exceeding the minimum 5% requirement) and 10 spaces for provision of EV charging points (exceeding the Future Wales requirement).

3.5.2 A total 34 cycle parking spaces are proposed, comprising 24 secure, covered spaces using Sheffield stands and 10 external short stay spaces using Sheffield stands. In addition, there will be 10 motorcycle spaces.

3.6 Landscaping and Green Infrastructure

3.6.1 The layout has been designed to retain, as far as possible, existing trees and hedgerows on the site including at the site boundaries and the high quality oak tree in the north eastern corner of the site. The layout also takes account of the oak tree's root protection area.

3.6.2 The existing hedgerow separating the two field parcels is required for removal to accommodate the new building.

3.6.3 Additional proposed landscape planting is proposed along the site boundaries to reinforce the existing buffer and enhance the screening of the building from the surrounding context.

3.7 Drainage

3.7.1 Two SuDS attenuation ponds are proposed at the north western part of the site, which will be separate but connected and have been sized according to the drainage requirements of the new development. Maintenance only access will be provided to the ponds.

3.7.2 Drainage swales are proposed to travel from the new access from Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery Road, along the access road into the site and along the eastern boundary of the development plateau, up to the attenuation ponds.

3.8 Construction / Operation

3.8.1 The proposal will generate new jobs to the local employment market within the light industrial industry, in addition to new construction jobs. As the future tenants of the development are currently unknown, exact employment numbers are uncertain at this stage. However, using the Homes & Communities Agency's Employment Density Guide 2015 (3rd edition), Class B1c floorspace can be expected to generate 1 job per 47sqm of Net Internal Area (NIA). Using a conversion factor of 95% from GIA to NIA, the development can be expected generate approximately 202 jobs Full Time Equivalent (FTE). Construction jobs will be in addition to this.



3.8.2 Due to the future operators of the site being unknown at this stage, 24 hour a day, 7 days a week operation hours are sought to retain maximum flexibility.

3.9 Waste

3.9.1 The proposed building will accommodate a refuse store for the storage and collection of waste from the site, in accordance with RCT collection standards.



SECTION 4

Proposed Development
Option 2: Data Centre



4.0 Proposed Development – Option 2: Data Centre

- 4.1.1 This full planning application proposes new employment development to deliver part of the Strategic Allocation SSA 8 (Mwyndy/Talbot Green). The proposal is for erection of a data centre (B8) building.
- 4.1.2 The UK requires significant new data centre capacity to support its growth as a technology hub, remain competitive in the global data storage landscape, and enable businesses to decarbonise. Future facilities will need to accommodate both cloud computing demand and the increasing need for AI-dedicated data centres.
- 4.1.3 In September 2024¹, the UK Government formally designated data centres as Critical National Infrastructure (CNI), recognising their essential role in powering the digital economy, supporting cloud and AI technologies, and enabling national resilience.
- 4.1.4 The UK Government’s AI Opportunities Action Plan², published on 13 January 2025, sets out a strategic framework to position the UK as a global leader in AI. A key component of the plan is the recognition of data centres as “the engines of the AI age”, essential for powering AI applications, cloud computing, and digital services.
- 4.1.5 The Welsh Government has echoed this commitment, actively supporting the development of hyperscale data centres through strategic partnerships, land leasing, and infrastructure coordination. In a press release dated 13 January 2025³, First Minister Eluned Morgan welcomed the UK Government’s AI Opportunities Action Plan and highlighted Wales’ strategic role in supporting AI and data infrastructure: “Wales is uniquely placed to benefit from the AI infrastructure plans, with work already underway to develop tech hubs, shared resources and data centres.”
- 4.1.6 Our client recognises the strategic importance of such facilities and is proactively bringing forward this proposal to help meet demand and support the UK’s digital and AI-driven economy.
- 4.1.7 The proposal will include the following elements:
- Cut and fill engineering to address site levels and create a level development plateau
 - Erection of a data centre building extending to c.21,490sqm floorspace (GIA)
 - A new vehicular access from Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery Road with gate house
 - Surface car parking and cycle storage
 - Servicing areas including loading/unloading and turning apron
 - Sub-station compound
 - Internal roadways and footpaths

¹ [Data centres to be given massive boost and protections from cyber criminals and IT blackouts - GOV.UK](#)

² [CP 1241 – AI Opportunities Action Plan – January 2025](#)

³ [Wales at the forefront of UK drive to ‘turbocharge’ AI | Welsh Government News](#)



- Hard and soft landscaping
- Sustainable drainage system (SuDS) features including attenuation ponds

4.2 Proposed Use

4.2.1 The proposed development is for a data centre building (Use Class B8).

4.2.2 The proposed land use therefore accords with Policy SSA8 which allocates land for employment use, data centre use being specifically considered in pre-application advice.

4.3 Layout, Scale and Design

4.3.1 The proposed site layout has been informed by a comprehensive assessment of the site's constraints and opportunities, including the existing topography, landscape and arboriculture; alongside the operational requirements for a data centre building.

4.3.2 The data centre building is located in the centre of the site, allowing space for the perimeter service road and vehicular apron on the northern part of the site; and two attenuation ponds at the northern and western boundaries. The existing copse of trees and landscape buffer along the boundaries of the site are proposed to be retained for their amenity and arboricultural value, as well as for their use in screening the proposed development.

4.3.3 The building itself will be formed of three 'parts':

- the north western part of the site will provide for servicing and energy requirements, sized to allow the retention of the existing copse of trees in the north eastern part of the site. This comprises 991sqm GIA over two floors;
- the larger part of the building which houses the data halls extends across the middle of the site, comprising 18,222sqm GIA of accommodation over two floors, measuring 72m x 126m;
- the ancillary office accommodation is located in the southern part of the site, comprising 2,262sqm GIA of space over three floors plus chiller plant deck.

4.3.4 Together with the security lodge, this comprises 21,490sqm GIA.

4.3.5 The proposed storey heights reflect the respective uses of the individual component parts of the new building: 3-storeys at 4m floor to floor for the offices component, 2-storeys at 6m floor to floor for the data centre component, and the servicing/energy centre.

4.3.6 The larger/primary data hall section of the building will feature a shallow pitched roof and parapet with solar panels, whilst the smaller building blocks will have a flat roofs and accommodate roof mounted services and equipment.

4.3.7 The data centre component of the new building will be clad in vertically orientated flat silver cladding panels. Plug-in staircases clad in anthracite-grey, close-centred, saw-tooth profiled metal cladding



sheets, fixed vertically, and stainless steel heat exhaust chimney stacks, will contrast with the silver panels to create additional interest, reference and rhythm to the two long elevations in particular. The two vertical circulation and services 'core' sections, both clad in the same anthracite-grey metal cladding sheets also add a degree of framing and 'book-ending' to the data centre, and the blue engineering brick of the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre) component offers a degree of visual solidity, grounding and balance to the building as a whole.

- 4.3.8 By contrast, the offices, at the southern end of the new building, are designed as two full upper floor plates of alternate panel and glazing curtain walling (horizontal orientation).
- 4.3.9 A cribb-lock retaining wall is required to be provide at the south west corner of the car park area, to address the site levels.
- 4.3.10 It is proposed that the development will incorporate a secure fence line and security lodge. CCTV systems will also be installed on site for security purposes.

4.4 Access

- 4.4.1 A new access road to the site is proposed from Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery Road, via a new 'T' junction. The access will be suitable for access and egress for all site visitors, i.e. HGVs, service vehicles, emergency vehicles, private cars, cycles and pedestrians. The access road will be 7.3m wide and positioned a sufficient distance (60m) from the nearby junction providing access to the Arthur Llewellyn furniture store service yard.
- 4.4.2 The security lodge and compound and associated short section of approach road allows for regular access and egress for all vehicles through a sliding gate. A waiting layby, sized for 2 x HGV's, separated by a grass verge from the main road, has been incorporated to avoid unnecessary queuing on the approach road. Should a vehicle, including an HGV, be refused access into the data centre compound, a turning area has also been incorporated.
- 4.4.3 Internally, there will be a perimeter road around the building.
- 4.4.4 The existing public right of way footpath that crosses the site is proposed to be re-directed outside of the secure fenceline via the footpath associated with new access road into the site from Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery Road, with the addition of a new spur that leads directly to the existing footpath gate on the eastern boundary.

4.5 Parking

- 4.5.1 The proposal includes a surface car park for staff and visitors, in the southern part of the site adjacent to the office accommodation, which will provide 100 spaces including 5 universal access spaces (in line with the minimum 5% requirement) and 10 spaces for provision of EV charging points (in line with the Future Wales requirement).



4.5.2 A total 34 cycle parking spaces are proposed, comprising 24 secure, covered spaces using Sheffield stands and 10 external short stay spaces using Sheffield stands. In addition, there will be 10 motorcycle spaces.

4.6 Landscaping and Green Infrastructure

4.6.1 The layout has been designed to retain, as far as possible, existing trees and hedgerows on the site including at the site boundaries and the high quality oak tree in the north eastern corner of the site. The layout also takes account of the oak tree's root protection area.

4.6.2 The existing hedgerow separating the two field parcels is required for removal to accommodate the new building.

4.6.3 Additional proposed landscape planting is proposed along the site boundaries to reinforce the existing buffer and enhance the screening of the building from the surrounding context.

4.7 Drainage

4.7.1 Two SuDS attenuation ponds are proposed at the north western part of the site, which will be separate but connected and have been sized according to the drainage requirements of the new development. Maintenance only access will be provided to the ponds.

4.7.2 Drainage swales are proposed to travel from the new access from Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery Road, along the access road into the site and along the eastern boundary of the development plateau, up to the attenuation ponds.

4.8 Construction / Operation

4.8.1 The proposal will generate new jobs to the local employment market. Innovation and the digital and knowledge based sectors are key enablers in the Welsh Government economic strategy. Data generation, transmission, storage and processing are vital to success in these areas and play a key role in all eight of the Cardiff Capital Region's (CCR's) eight priority sectors which include Fintech, Cybersecurity and Analytics, AI, the Creative Economy, Life Sciences and Energy and the Environment. While the future tenant of the development is currently unknown, exact employment numbers are uncertain at this stage. However, it is clear from the above that data centres and the jobs/economic activity they facilitate are central to the functioning of the economy more generally. Construction jobs will be generated by the development.

4.8.2 Due to the nature of data centre operations, 24 hour a day, 7 days a week operation hours are sought.

4.9 Waste

4.9.1 The proposed building will accommodate a refuse store for the storage and collection of waste from the site, in accordance with RCT collection standards.



SECTION 5

Planning Policy and Legislation



5.0 Planning Policy & Legislation

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This section details the planning policy context of the development plan and material considerations, taking into account local and national policy.

5.2 The Development Plan

5.2.1 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this application should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan for the site comprises:

- Future Wales: The National Plan 2040; and
- Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan (LDP) (2006-2021).

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

5.2.2 Future Wales is the Welsh Government's highest tier of development plan in Wales. Planning decisions at every level of the planning system in Wales must be taken in accordance with the development plan as a whole. The following policies are relevant to this proposal:

5.2.3 **Policy 1** The Welsh Government supports sustainable growth in all parts of Wales. In three National Growth Areas there will be growth in employment and housing opportunities and investment in infrastructure. The National Growth Areas are:

- **Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys** (which includes RCT)
- Swansea Bay and Llanelli
- Wrexham and Deeside

5.2.4 **Policy 2** 'Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking' notes that growth should build sustainable places that support active and healthy lives, with compact and walkable neighbourhoods with a mix of uses, public transport and green infrastructure.

5.2.5 **Policy 9** 'Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure' notes the importance of enhancing ecosystems, biodiversity and green infrastructure when considering approaches to development proposals through nature-based methods.

5.2.6 **Policy 12** 'Regional Connectivity' refers to improving the connectivity in urban areas by integrating active and sustainable travel and public transport. Active travel is encouraged in all new developments. Furthermore, where car parking is provided for new non-residential development, planning authorities should seek a minimum of 10% of car parking spaces to have electric vehicle charging points.



5.2.7 **Policy 13** ‘Supporting Digital Communications’ sets out the Government’s support for the provision of digital communications infrastructure and services across Wales. Planning authorities must engage with digital infrastructure providers to identify future needs.

5.2.8 **Policy 33** ‘National Growth Area – Cardiff , Newport and the Valleys’ – In respect of the Valleys, Welsh Government supports co-ordinated regeneration and investment in the Valleys area to improve well being, increase prosperity and address social inequalities.

RCT Adopted LDP

5.2.9 LDP Policies considered relevant to this proposal are set out below.

5.2.10 The site falls within the Southern Strategy Area of RCT, where **Policy CS 2** applies. Sustainable growth will be achieved by *inter alia* focusing development within settlement boundaries; realising the importance of Llantrisant / Talbot Green Principal Town as an area of social and economic growth; providing opportunities for significant inward investment in sustainable locations that will benefit the economy of Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Capital Region; and promoting sustainable transport.

5.2.11 **Policy CS 3** – Strategic Sites – allocates several sites as ‘Strategic Sites’ for various development, including the Mwyndy / Talbot Green Area which is identified for 500 dwellings; 15 hectares of employment land; retail; and leisure development. Development proposals on Strategic Sites must have regard to the indicative concept plans identified on the proposals map.

5.2.12 **Policy CS 6** – Employment Requirements – identifies 51ha of new B1, B2 and B8 strategic employment development across two strategic sites, including Land at Mwyndy/Talbot Green, identified for 15ha of B1 use. Supporting text acknowledges recent changes to the economy within RCT, and that “*A key issue is to ensure that the changing needs of businesses in Rhondda Cynon Taf are reflected in the supply of employment sites throughout the County Borough*” (pp. 4.55)

5.2.13 **Policy SSA 8** - Mwyndy / Talbot Green Area - in accordance with **Policy CS 3** land is allocated at Mwyndy / Talbot Green Area for the construction of 500 dwellings, 15 hectares of employment land, 23,400m2 net new retail floor space, 10,000m2 net of leisure floor space, a primary school, library / community facility and informal amenity space in a landscape setting.

5.2.14 **Policy AW 4** – Community Infrastructure & Planning Obligations - planning obligations may be sought where development proposals require the provision of new, improved or rely on existing services, facilities, infrastructure and related works, to make the proposal acceptable in land use planning terms.

5.2.15 **Policy AW 5** - New Development – is a multi-criteria policy whereby development proposals will be supported where amenity and accessibility considerations are suitably addressed. Car parking is to be provided in accordance with the Council’s Supplementary Planning Guidance on Delivering Design and Placemaking: Access, Circulation and Parking Requirements.

5.2.16 **Policy AW 6** - Design and Placemaking Development Proposals – a multi criteria policy setting out the key design and placemaking considerations to be addressed in order for development to be supported.



- 5.2.17 **Policy AW 8** - Protection And Enhancement Of The Natural Environment - distinctive natural heritage will be preserved and enhanced by protecting it from inappropriate development. 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.
- 5.2.18 **Policy AW 10** - Environmental Protection and Public Health - development proposals will not be permitted where they would cause or result in a risk of unacceptable harm to public health and / or local amenity. It must be demonstrated that measures can be taken to overcome any significant adverse risk to public health, the environment and / or impact upon local amenity.
- 5.2.19 **Policy AW 12** - Renewable & Non-Renewable Energy Development - development proposals should be designed to minimise resource use during construction, operation and maintenance.

5.3 Other Material Considerations

- 5.3.1 Other relevant material considerations include the Well-Being of Future Generations Act; Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Notes at a National level in addition to adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance, and RCT's Replacement LDP at a Local level.

Well-Being of Future Generations Act 2015

- 5.3.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a duty on public bodies to place the principles of sustainability and sustainable development at the heart of its decision-making processes. The objectives of the Act are as follows:

A Prosperous Wales

- Promoting resource-efficient and climate change resilient settlement patterns which minimise land take and urban sprawl, especially through the reuse of suitable previously developed land and buildings, wherever possible avoiding development on greenfield sites;
- Play an appropriate role to facilitate sustainable building standards;
- Play an appropriate role in securing the provision of infrastructure to form the physical basis for sustainable communities;
- Support initiative and innovation and avoid placing unnecessary burdens on enterprises so as to enhance the economic success of both urban and rural areas, helping businesses to maximise their competitiveness;

A Resilient Wales

- Contributing to the protection and improvement of the environment, so as to improve the quality of life, and protect local and global ecosystems;



A Healthier Wales

- Contribute to the protection and, where possible, the improvement of people's health and wellbeing as a core component of achieving the well-being goals and responding to climate change;

A More Equal Wales

- Promoting access to, *inter alia*, employment, shopping, education and community facilities and open and green space, maximising opportunities for community development and social welfare;
- Promote quality, lasting, environmentally-sound and flexible employment opportunities;
- Respect and encourage diversity in the local economy;

A Wales of Cohesive Communities

- Locating development so as to minimise the demand for travel, especially by private car;
- Fostering improvement to transport facilities and services which maintain or improve accessibility to services and facilities, secure employment, economic and environmental objectives, and improve safety and amenity;
- Fostering social inclusion by ensuring that full advantage is taken of the opportunities to secure a more accessible environment for everyone that the development of land and buildings provides. This includes helping to ensure that the development is accessible by means other than the private car;

A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language

- Helping to ensure the conservation of the historic environment and cultural heritage;
- Positively contribute to the well-being of the Welsh language;

A Globally Responsive Wales

- Support the need to tackle the causes of climate change by moving towards a low carbon economy.

Planning Policy Wales (12th Edition) (July 2024)

- 5.3.3 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation such as the Socio-economic Duty.



5.3.4 PPW identifies five key planning principles aimed at achieving the right development in the right place. These are:

- Growing our economy in a sustainable manner;
- Making best use of resources;
- Facilitating accessible and healthy environments;
- Creating and sustaining communities; and
- Maximising environmental protection and limiting environmental impact.

5.3.5 PPW Chapter 3 (Strategic and Spatial Choices) refers to ‘Good Design Making Places Better’. Paragraph 3.3 states that good design is fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. To achieve sustainable development, design must go beyond aesthetics and include the social, economic, environmental, cultural aspects of the development, including how the space is used, how buildings and the public realm support this use, as well as construction, operation, management, and its relationship with the surrounding area. Good design should consider: Environmental Sustainability; Movement; Access; Character; and Community Safety.

5.3.6 In terms of locating development, paragraph 3.41 of PPW 11 states: *“An essential component for a sustainable place is where development is to be located. Development plans will provide the basis for this by identifying areas and sites for new development...”*. For instance, through site allocations such as RCT LDP Policy SSA 8 which identifies this site for employment development.

5.3.7 With regards to Sustainable Transport, the Active and Social theme covers the well-connected cohesive communities’ components of Placemaking. Paragraph 4.1.8 indicates: *“The Welsh Government is committed to reducing reliance on the private car and supporting a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport. Delivering this objective will make an important contribution to decarbonisation, improving air quality, increasing physical activity, improving the health of the nation and realising the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act”*. Figure 9 sets of PPWs Sustainable Transport Hierarchy for Planning, this is a key principle when considering and determining planning applications.

5.3.8 Chapter 5 (Productive and Enterprising Places) states that *“Wherever possible, planning authorities should encourage and support developments which generate economic prosperity and regeneration.”* (pp. 5.4.4).

5.3.9 Section 6.2 relates to Green Infrastructure and defines it as *“the network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, rivers and lakes that intersperse and connect places”* and *“at smaller scales, individual urban interventions such as street trees, hedgerows, roadside verges, and green roofs/walls can all contribute to green infrastructure networks”*.

5.3.10 Paragraph 6.2.5 acknowledges the role of green infrastructure in enhancing the design quality of the built environment. It goes on to state that with careful planning and design, green infrastructure can embed the benefits of biodiversity and ecosystem services into new development and places.



5.3.11 Paragraph 6.4.21 establishes that planning authorities must follow a stepwise approach to maintain and enhance biodiversity and build resilient ecological networks by ensuring that any adverse environmental effects are firstly avoided, then minimized, mitigated, and as a last resort compensated for; enhancement must be secured wherever possible.

5.3.12 Paragraph 6.6.25 states that development should reduce, and must not increase, flood risk arising from river and/or coastal flooding on and off the development site itself. With regard to flooding from surface water, Paragraph 6.6.27 advises that developments are designed and planned to minimise potential impacts and goes on to say that development should not cause additional run-off, which can be achieved by controlling surface water as near to the source as possible by the use of SuDS.

Technical Advice Notes (TAN)

5.3.13 The following TANs are considered relevant to the development proposals:

- TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning (2009)
- TAN 11: Noise
- TAN 12: Design
- TAN 15: Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion
- TAN 18: Transport
- TAN 23: Economic Development

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

5.3.14 The following SPG documents are considered relevant to the development proposals:

- Design and Placemaking (2011)
- Nature Conservation (2011)
- Planning Obligations (2014)
- Access, Circulation and Parking (2011) (The site lies in Zone 3 – Suburban or Near Urban).

RCT Replacement Local Development Plan 2

5.3.15 RCT is currently preparing a Replacement LDP (RLDP) to cover the period 2022-2037.

5.3.16 The application site is being promoted for employment generating development in the emerging replacement LDP.

5.3.17 A public consultation on the Preferred Strategy was undertaken in February – April 2024. Whilst the current Delivery Agreement states that a consultation on the Deposit Plan was due to commence in January/February 2025, this is yet to happen. It is understood that delays to the preparation of the



Deposit Plan mean this is likely to take place in early 2026. The Plan is clearly still in its early stages and carries limited weight in decision making.



SECTION 6

Assessment of Development Proposals



6.0 Assessment of Development Proposals

6.1.1 This section of the Planning Statement considers the key material planning considerations relevant to both Option 1: Light Industrial and Option 2: Data Centre development proposals. Where the assessment conclusions or details differ between development options, this is made clear. Otherwise, the assessment below is applicable to both proposals.

6.2 Principle of Development

6.2.1 The site forms part of a strategic mixed-use allocation comprising residential, employment, leisure and community development, under adopted LDP Policy SSA 8. The site in particular falls within an area of the allocation identified for “employment” development (see **Policies CS3 and SSA8** with associated Indicative Concept Plan). Accordingly, the proposed development for B1c or B8 data centre use accords with the allocation in principle. It is recognised that Policy CS6 specifically references Class B1 development, such that the light industrial scheme (Option 1) accords with the policy but the data centre (Option 2) may be seen not to as it falls within Use Class B8. However, where policies of the development plan pull in different directions, the overall thrust of its policies should be taken into consideration. The proposal will contribute towards the delivery of a strategic employment allocation for employment use, i.e. to delivery new employment floorspace to address local need, attract inward investment and deliver sustainably located new jobs to the local and wider market. In this respect, we consider both options to accord with the development plan in principle.

6.2.2 The site lies south of the Principal Town of Llantrisant / Talbot Green, which forms one of the focal settlements to accommodate growth within the Southern Strategy Area (SSA). Many key facilities are therefore accessible without the need to travel privately. There is excellent access to the existing PRoW network, an Active Travel Route and bus stops. Surrounding uses include retail and industrial development to the south, being compatible with the proposed use. Owing to the site’s current LDP allocation, it is inherently considered a sustainable location. The site therefore provides an excellent opportunity to deliver a new employment facility for the local area on a sustainably located site.

6.2.3 The proposed land use for both Option 1 and 2 is considered to accord with the development plan and be acceptable in principle. It has the weight of s38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the presumption in favour of sustainable development in accordance with the development plan (PPW para 1.18) behind it. These are weighty considerations in the determination of the applications.

6.3 Design

6.3.1 As described in the submitted Design and Access Statements, and summarised in sections 3 and 4, the proposed buildings have been designed to afford the most efficient layout possible, cognisant of the proposed access location, levels, surrounding vegetation and habitat. Care has been taken to respect the root protection areas of retained trees, including curtailing the built form to respect the highest



value tree in the north east corner of the site. Drainage has been laid out to meet the requirements of the SuDS regulations and work with the natural topography of the site.

- 6.3.2 The scale of both buildings has largely been determined by the new buildings' internal height which differs between the two Options and between component parts within each scheme. The creation of the development plateau, which has lowered the new buildings relative to external ground levels at the Site's southern end, and the introduction of additional perimeter landscape 'buffering', has appreciably diminished the apparent scale of the development options.
- 6.3.3 The partially hidden nature of the application site, given the existing all-round perimeter landscape 'buffering' provided by the mature hedgerows, trees and the dense sections of woodland, have allowed the architectural appearance of the new buildings to positively 'settle' into its immediate surroundings. The limited palette of materials aims to add a particular dynamic emphasis and visual expression, and at the same time promote a positive connection to its setting.
- 6.3.4 Both development options are considered to be high quality examples of their respective building typologies, to fully meet the requirements of good design and to accord with national planning policy objectives and LDP **Policy AW6**.

6.4 Access and Transport

- 6.4.1 The development site is located east of a significant transport corridor. In the immediate vicinity of the site a 1.5m (approx.) wide footway is provided along the eastern side of Mwyndy Cross for its full length. This provides a continuous footway connection between the A4119 to the south and Cardiff Road in the Cross Inn area of Llantrisant to the north. In addition to the existing footway network, the site benefits from access to a number of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) with these both surrounding and bisecting the site. The development proposals will retain Footpath ANT/298/1, which currently bisects the site, on a revised alignment, and in doing so provide pedestrian connectivity between the site and the wider area east, south and north.
- 6.4.2 The submitted Transport Assessment concludes that there are a number of local towns and villages within an accessible 25-minute walking catchment of the site which provide opportunities for non-car-based travel. These include Miskin, Talbot Green, Cross Inn and Llantrisant, all of which have residential populations from which employees for the proposed development could be drawn. There are a number of bus stops within the 400m and 800m walking distances of the site and that public transport provides a genuine alternative to car-based travel to and from the site, and therefore provide opportunities to reduce the impact of the proposed development on the local highway network.
- 6.4.3 Cycle infrastructure is provided at the Mwyndy Cross signalised junction. This consists of a section of off-road route on the western side of the carriageway and Toucan crossings on the northern and southern arms of the junction. A cycle transition from the off-road route onto the A4119, in a northbound direction, is also provided on the northern arm of the junction. This including a sign plate



confirming to cyclists that they are to rejoin the carriageway. The local cycle provisions are well signposted. The site also benefits from its close proximity to National Cycle Network Route 4 which passes through Cross Inn on a roughly east-west alignment and can be accessed from Cardiff Road approximately 850m north from the site - a three minute cycle.

- 6.4.4 There are a number of local bus stops within walking distance of the site, the closest of which are located on the unnamed road linking Ffordd Cefy-Yr-Hendy and on the A4119 which also forms the western arm of the Mwyndy Cross junction. The closest railway station to Mwyndy is Pontyclun Railway Station. It is located approximately 2.9km west of the site and can be accessed by bicycle and on foot via Station Approach, National Cycle Network Route 4, Cardiff Road and Mwyndy Cross, making it a convenient travel option for commuters who combine rail and cycle travel.
- 6.4.5 Both development options provide for parking, EV charging and cycle parking in line with the Council's standards (albeit recognising that the Council has no directly applicable standards for data centres).
- 6.4.6 Vehicle access to the site is to be delivered in a single location. The proposed access strategy includes a simple priority junction and a new access road leading into the site and the parking and servicing areas. The proposed access has been designed to accommodate the vehicle tracking requirements of a 16.5m articulated vehicle including tapered junction radii and a 7.5m wide carriageway.
- 6.4.7 The posted speed limit along highway is 20mph, with this resulting in visibility splay requirements of 2.4m x 25m in accordance with guidance provided in Manual for Streets (MfS). However, for completeness visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m are shown to be achievable at the access which are in line with MfS requirements for a design speed of 30mph.
- 6.4.8 Development Option 1 (light industry) is predicted to generate up to 20 two-way vehicle trips in the AM peak period and up to 21 two-way vehicle trips in the PM peak, with a total of 306 vehicle movements two-way across the daily profile. Option 2 (data centre) is predicted to generate up to 36 two-way vehicle trips in the AM peak and 26 two-way vehicle trips in the PM peak, and a total of 376 vehicle movements two-way across the daily profile. (It should be noted that during design development the proposed floorspace quantum of the development scenarios have reduced slightly. Modelling was not updated to reflect these reductions and accordingly the assessment of impacts can be considered all the more robust).



6.4.9 The following junctions have been assessed:

- Junction 1: Mwyndy Cross / A4119
- Junction 2: Ffordd Cefyn-Yr-Hendy / A4119
- Junction 3: School Road / A4119

6.4.10 The results of the capacity assessment undertaken identify that traffic associated with either of the proposed development options would have a minimal impact on the operation of the network of signalised junctions on the A4119 to the west of the development site. It is evident that traffic associated with local committed developments have a much greater impact on the operation of the junctions than the proposed development.

6.4.11 The findings of this assessment have highlighted that the A4119 is a busy corridor, and this is most apparent during commuter peak hours. This is expected given that the A4119 provides a connection to Cardiff and the M4 motorway.

6.4.12 As a result of the above, it has been demonstrated that neither of the two proposed development options would have a significant impact on the operation of the local highway network.

6.4.13 It should be noted that the A4119 junction serving the site and adjacent allocated employment land has recently been upgraded to introduce a signal control arrangement, with phase 1 of these works being delivered by the Taylor Wimpey Melin Newydd development on the western side of the A4119. Phase 2 of these works would comprise the delivery of a separate left and right turn lanes and two-lane exit on the Mwyndy Cross arm and is reliant upon third-party land that is not within the gift of the Applicant. Planning permission for a data centre on land to the west of the site, south of the cemetery, was approved in May 2025 (Application ref: 25/0138/FUL) and is subject to the following condition:

“6. No development shall commence until, full engineering design and details of the new vehicular access including road widening, street lighting, maintenance access and footway link to the A4119 have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to works commencing on site....”

6.4.14 Accordingly, the upgrading of this junction cannot be delivered by either of these development options, is not required to render the proposed development as acceptable and, in any event, has been secured via other development which has been permitted (and which controlled the third party land required).

6.4.15 The developments are considered to accord with national planning policy objectives and LDP **Policy AW5**.

6.5 Arboriculture

6.5.1 The applications are supported by a tree survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and Method Statement prepared by TR33.



- 6.5.2 The tree survey identified the presence of a total 158 arboricultural features, including 143 trees, 11 tree groups and 4 hedges. Of those surveyed, there is only 1 Category A (high quality) tree. The remainder are Category B (moderate quality) (10 trees), C (low quality) (90 trees, 11 tree groups and 4 hedges) and there are 42 Category U (poor quality) trees, which are unsuitable for retention. The site contains no TPO trees and is not within a conservation area.
- 6.5.3 The single high-quality tree is an English oak (T103) (*Quercus robur*) which is positioned near the eastern boundary of the Site, and on the edge of a depression in the ground which is potentially associated with the presence of an historic coal pit. This tree is mature in age and has a substantial stem diameter measuring some 1275mm at 1.5m above ground level.
- 6.5.4 The proposed layout for both development options has been designed to incorporate the site's high quality tree, ensuring no construction works within the root protection area (RPA). Retaining the amenity and arboricultural value of T103 has therefore been prioritised and directly informed the proposed design.
- 6.5.5 A stepwise approach has been adopted to the retention of existing trees with both site layouts designed to avoid and minimise the requirement for tree removal, and to provide sufficient space for the robust protection of retained trees during construction.
- 6.5.6 Both development options require the removal of two low quality hedges, partial removal of a third low quality hedge and removal of one very low quality tree, to accommodate the site access and new buildings. These features are replaced in accordance with the relevant policy, noting PPW requires 3 replacement trees planted for every 1 tree removed to facilitate the development.
- 6.5.7 The report includes an Arboricultural Method Statement, setting out the necessary tree protection measures to be implemented on site during construction, which will include best practice measures, monitoring, creation of a construction exclusion zone and installation of tree protection fencing.
- 6.5.8 The proposed development (both options 1 and 2) is therefore considered to minimise potential adverse impacts and presents opportunity for long term benefits in the form of new planting, such that the development is deemed acceptable in arboricultural terms.

6.6 Ecology and Biodiversity

- 6.6.1 An Ecological Assessment has been prepared by Ecology Solutions to inform these planning applications. The assessment includes a full desk study, UKHab survey, National Vegetation Classification (NVC) survey, and protected species surveys covering Bats, Badger, Reptiles, Hazel Dormouse and Great Crested Newt.
- 6.6.2 The site comprises predominantly neutral grassland fields, which are largely agriculturally improved and species-poor. The site contains areas of scrub, a network of hedgerows and small woodland blocks.



6.6.3 The following protected species surveys have been undertaken on site:

- **Bats** – Ground-level tree assessments found one tree with potential to support roosting bats. No further survey work is proposed nor required as this tree (BRP1) is proposed to be retained as part of the development and no works are proposed that would disturb any potential roost. Bat activity surveys identified moderate levels of activity in the northern and southern parts of the site, which are associated with off-site woodland. Static surveys also identified bats utilising the site for foraging and commuting.
- **Badgers** – initial survey work identified two excavations potentially associated with badgers, however updated surveys concluded these are likely to be inactive and disused setts. The site provides suitable habitats for foraging and used pathways were noted on the southeast boundary.
- **Reptiles** – surveys identified presence of grass snake.
- **Hazel Dormice** – the hedgerows on site present suitable habitats for dormouse although site surveys did not confirm presence of dormouse, with no confirmed nests observed, indicating likely absence from the site.
- **Great Crested Newt (GCN)** - The site does not support any aquatic features suitable for use by breeding amphibians, including GCN. Terrestrial habitats on site are suitable for amphibians. There are two off-site ponds and ditches within 500m of the site. No GCN were identified during the reptile survey refugia checks. Consideration was given to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) undertaken for the adjacent development site to the south, which confirmed the absence of GCN within the wider area. As a result, GCN are unlikely to be present within the site or its immediate surroundings.
- **Birds** – hedgerows and trees on site provide potential nesting habitats. No targeted breeding bird surveys were considered to be required, however the habitats present are expected to support a typical assemblage of farmland and hedgerow species. Precautionary measures should therefore be adopted to avoid impacts on any nesting birds potentially using the site.
- **Invertebrates** – habitats on site are expected to support a range of common and widespread invertebrate species typical of farmland edge environments, including pollinators such as bees, butterflies and hoverflies.

6.6.4 The site itself is not located within any statutory ecology or nature conservation designations. The site does however lie within the Afon Clun Valley and Rhiwsaeson Hill Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) (non-statutory).

6.6.5 The nearest statutory designated site is Brofiscin Quarry Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), located approximately 1.6 km to the southeast of the application site, but which is designated solely for its geological features and holds no ecological or biodiversity-related conservation interest. The site is



separated from the SSSI by intervening development, farmland and highway. There are no known direct hydrological connections between the application site and Brofiscin Quarry SSSI, and no surface water features were observed that would suggest a clear pathway for potential pollutants or sediment transfer. Any potential indirect construction effects will be controlled through implementation of best practice measures to be detailed within a future CEMP, such that no significant adverse effects on Brofiscin Quarry SSSI or other statutory designated sites is anticipated.

- 6.6.6 Afon Clun Valley and Rhiwsaeson Hill SINC was designated for its diverse mosaic of high-quality habitats and associated species. Notwithstanding the site's non-statutory designation, recent site surveys have confirmed it no longer contains high-quality grassland habitats for which the SINC was designated (likely as a result from the site's previous agricultural use).
- 6.6.7 It is notable that the site lies within the SSA 8 employment allocation and therefore the acceptability of the incorporation of this part of the SINC into an employment site is considered established in principle by virtue of its allocation.
- 6.6.8 The proposed development (both options) includes mitigation measures in the form of retention of boundary habitats and installation of log and brash piles for refugia; new native planting proposed to compensate for habitat loss. Other mitigation measures recommended include the provision of a sensitive lighting strategy; and installation of bat and bird boxes will further enhance nesting and roosting opportunities within the site.
- 6.6.9 Subject to adherence to the recommended avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures, the proposed development is considered to accord with national planning policy objectives and LDP **Policies AW8 and CS 6**.

6.7 Landscape and Green Infrastructure

- 6.7.1 The Proposed Development seeks to conserve and enhance the area's natural assets as an integral part of its design. The scheme will protect existing woodland, hedgerows, and water features, ensuring that habitats of recognised importance preserve their role as wildlife corridors and natural carbon sinks.
- 6.7.2 A diverse mix of new native trees will be planted throughout the site to provide shading, improve air quality and create habitats that support biodiversity. One hedgerow running east to west across the site will be removed.
- 6.7.3 SuDS will be integrated to manage surface water sustainably, including attenuation ponds planted with seasonal grasses and pollinator-friendly wildflowers. These features will not only mitigate flood risk but also provide vibrant habitats for pollinators and other local wildlife, strengthening ecological connectivity across the site and surrounding area. The slopes along the road will be planted with native clumps of trees, shrubs and grasses, creating a natural and visually appealing environment for users.
- 6.7.4 Where appropriate, new planting and ecological enhancement measures will be introduced to strengthen biodiversity resilience and contribute to the wider green infrastructure network. By



embedding these principles into site planning, the proposal aligns with local and national objectives for sustainable development, delivering employment growth while maintaining and improving the ecological and visual quality of the Mwyndy and Ely Valley landscape and accords with national planning policy objectives and LDP **Policy AW8**.

6.7.5 Furthermore, the Step-Wise Approach has been followed by:

- **Avoid** – habitat retention, protection of woodland, strategic siting on agriculturally improved neutral grassland of low botanical diversity and ecological value, arboricultural safeguards;
- **Minimise** – limited vegetation loss (3.4% of the site’s overall crown area), construction safeguards, sensitive lighting;
- **Mitigation** – replacement planting, two-stage vegetation clearance, pre-commencement checks for active setts and nests, wildlife friendly drainage;
- **Compensation/Enhancement** – new habitat creation (including planting species-rich meadow grassland (using EM3 mix), native scrub, and wetland habitats), realignment of the PRoW and associated planting, invasive species management (control and eradication of Himalayan Balsam).

6.8 Flood Risk and Drainage

6.8.1 The application site is located in flood zone 1 and considered to be at little or no risk of fluvial flooding.

6.8.2 The proposed surface water drainage solution will introduce Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage surface water flows at-source and provide a softer alternative to a traditional “end of pipe” solution. Systems such as permeable paving and shallow perimeter swales will collect run off and provide interception for paved areas and access routes.

6.8.3 The proposed features will treat, attenuate, and mimic greenfield runoff characteristics. These features will also improve amenity and biodiversity benefits of the site by means of the green SuDS infrastructure.

6.8.4

6.8.5 Until further investigation rules out any issues relating to mine working, infiltration to natural ground is not proposed as a primary source for the destination of surface runoff - SuDs features are assumed to be lined.

6.8.6 Permeable surfacing will be installed in as many areas as possible, prioritising lighter trafficked areas such as parking bays. Roofs and hard standing are proposed to drain to shallow swales and soft-engineered attenuation features that will help promote pollution scrubbing and ecological enhancements. Attenuation basins are proposed to the north of the site

6.8.7 In summary, the Concept Drainage Strategy demonstrates that the proposed development at Mwyndy can be served by a sustainable and policy-compliant drainage system. Surface water will be managed



through SuDS features providing interception, attenuation, and controlled discharge at greenfield runoff rates, with exceedance flows directed safely to the floodplain. The proposals accord with national planning policy objectives and LDP **Policy AW6**.

6.9 Noise

- 6.9.1 The applications are supported by a Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) prepared by SLR.
- 6.9.2 The nearest noise sensitive receptors are identified as: A. Cefn Park Farm; B. Mwyndy Terrace; C. Lynwood House; D. Cross Inn, with the closest receptor at Beaufort Court.
- 6.9.3 The NIA is informed by a baseline noise survey undertaken at the site and takes account of typical road traffic noise from the A4119, A473, Cardiff Road and other locations in the vicinity; occasional aircraft noise; distant, intermittent construction noise; and existing community noise.
- 6.9.4 Noise generation anticipated to arise from the proposed employment development includes vehicle movement along the new access; movement of HGVs and forklifts around external loading bays; use of parking areas; breakout noise from buildings; and external plant and equipment.
- 6.9.5 Embedded mitigation includes good acoustic design within the layout and orientation of the development, whereby units are facing away from neighbouring sensitive receptors.
- 6.9.6 The noise assessment has predicted worst-case rating levels at or below the representative background sound levels during any time of the day, evening or night, for both development Options. Predicted noise impacts during these operating hours have been supported as low, when considering the context of the site. Development-related road traffic noise changes are considered negligible (and, as for the transport assessment, it should be noted that during design development the proposed floorspace quantum of the development scenarios (and thus the resultant predicted traffic generation) have reduced slightly. Modelling was not updated to reflect these reductions and accordingly the assessment of impacts can be considered all the more robust).
- 6.9.7 A scheme of boundary screening has been explored in the proposals for Option 2 as encompassing a parapet screen to rooftop chiller units. This would need to be 1.5 m tall. The noise level from flues of Option 2 have been considered attenuated to 75 dB(A) at 1 m. The results in this section have considered embedded mitigation in terms of proposed layout, façade treatment, chiller screening and attenuation.
- 6.9.8 The NIA concludes that the development will not result in unacceptable noise impacts, in accordance with **LDP Policy AW8 and AW10** and that any residual effects can be controlled through standard planning conditions.

6.10 Air Quality

- 6.10.1 An Air Quality Assessment (AQA) prepared by SLR Consulting is submitted in support of these applications.



- 6.10.2 The site is not located within, or within 5km, of any Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The former Mwyndy AQMA located along the A4119 approximately 350m to the south was revoked in 2025 following sustained compliance with the nitrogen dioxide (NO²) Air Quality Objective.
- 6.10.3 Local monitoring data presented in the report shows that annual mean NO² concentrations at nearby diffusion tube locations remain well below the relevant Air Quality Assessment Levels (AQALs).
- 6.10.4 A construction phase dust assessment was undertaken in line with IAQM guidance, relating to demolition, earthworks, construction and trackout activities. Given the short-term nature of the construction phase and the low volume of vehicle movements that will likely arise compared to the operational phase, there is not considered to be any potential for significant air quality effects from construction-generated road traffic emissions. Such potential effects have therefore been scoped out from requiring assessment based on their assumed insignificant impact.
- 6.10.5 The assessment concludes that, without mitigation, both proposed development options would be at medium risk of dust soiling effects and low risk of human health and ecological impacts, resulting from the earthworks, construction and trackout activities. Providing implementation of suitable mitigation in the form of best practice measures set out within the report, the construction phase effects will be not significant.
- 6.10.6 The operational phase assessment considers traffic generation associated with both development options. The maximum traffic flows for both options falls below the EPIC/IAQM screening thresholds and the operational effects on local air quality arising from road traffic emissions is considered 'insignificant'. Accordingly, no detailed dispersion modelling of road traffic emissions is required, and no operational mitigation is necessary beyond measures already included in the proposed design, which includes electric vehicle charging infrastructure for both options. (It should be noted that during design development the proposed floorspace quantum of the development scenarios (and thus the resultant predicted traffic generation) have reduced slightly. Modelling was not updated to reflect these reductions and accordingly the assessment of impacts can be considered all the more robust).
- 6.10.7 For development Option 2 only, which includes standby generators associated with a data centre use, detailed dispersion modelling was undertaken to assess potential impacts on human health and ecological receptors. The modelling considered both routine testing, maintenance and a hypothetical emergency outage scenario, including cumulative effects with the adjacent consented data centre (ref: 24/5041/41). Based on the impacts predicted at human receptors, the overall effect of the assessed routine testing and maintenance schedule is considered 'not significant'. Furthermore, impacts on the SSSI designations are considered to cause 'no likely damage'.
- 6.10.8 The risk of occurrence of an emergency outage is low, and associated impacts are therefore considered unlikely. A potential 2-hour outage scenario has been assessed cumulatively with the adjacent approved data centre, and associated effects on both human and ecological receptors are considered 'insignificant'.



6.10.9 On the above basis, both development options are considered to accord with LDP **Policy AW8 and AW10** regarding public health and environmental protection.

6.11 Land Contamination and Coal Mining Legacy

6.11.1 A Preliminary Site Investigation Report and Coal Mining Risk Assessment Report have been prepared for the site by Intégral Géotechnique. While prepared in December 2024 and based on a slightly larger site and the then proposed concept layout (both of which have been refined since), the findings of the reports remain valid.

6.11.2 The site is located within a coal mining reporting area. The Coal Authority states that there is no past underground mining recorded beneath the site. However, the Coal Authority do indicate the conjectural sub-crops of a number of coal seams including the Two Feet Nine, the Six Feet, the Four Feet, the Bute and the Five Feet Gellideg to be present beneath the northeast and southeast areas of the site. The thickness of the Mercia Mudstone (Marginal Facies) / Dolomitic Conglomerate overlying the coal measures strata beneath the site is currently unknown. As such, these coal seams and any potential associated unrecorded underground mine workings could underlie the site at shallow depths. Likewise, the extent of the lead workings is unknown, and shallow pits / workings for lead (with associated areas of disturbed ground) may be present on site.

6.11.3 The Coal Authority records the presence of a mine entry, comprising a shaft (ref: 305182-003) located on site, within the northeast area of the northern field. This feature is recorded as a 'trial shaft' or an 'old coal pit' on historical maps.

6.11.4 In order to further assess the risk posed to the proposed development from Shaft 305182-003, supplemental targeted intrusive site investigation will be carried out in order to locate this feature and determine the scope of recommended treatment/stabilisation works (which is likely to comprise drilling and grouting stabilisation of any shaft infill, followed by the construction of a reinforced concrete shaft cap at rockhead level).

6.11.5 Representative soil samples were taken from the trial pits and windowless sample boreholes. The samples were tested for a range of contaminants that reflects the historical use of the site, the findings of a previously issued desk study and the preliminary conceptual site model / conceptual exposure model.

6.11.6 The results of the laboratory testing indicate that all analysed chemical elements or compounds are present at concentrations below the appropriate thresholds for a commercial end use. Asbestos was not detected in any of the tested soil samples. Based on the results of the contamination testing, visual observations made during the intrusive site investigations and considering the history of the site, the risks to future site end users from site sourced contamination is considered to be low. Based on the results of the site investigation, no specific contamination remedial measures are considered necessary.



- 6.11.7 The results of the laboratory chemical testing on representative soil samples have not identified any contamination that could pose a risk to controlled waters. Additionally, no visual or olfactory evidence of contamination was observed during the intrusive site investigation works. No contamination remedial measures are considered necessary with respect to controlled waters.
- 6.11.8 During the excavation of the trial pits and the drilling of the windowless sample boreholes, evidence of potential solution features was encountered at several locations. The solution feature risk at the site is considered to be high.
- 6.11.9 There is the potential for shallow unrecorded mine workings associated with these coal seams, which could be a potential source of mine gas. In order to quantify the ground gas and mine gas risk at the site, it is recommended that supplemental site investigation works are undertaken, comprising a series of rotary drilled boreholes (to determine where there are any shallow unrecorded mine workings beneath the site). The results of the recommended supplemental works will inform any requirements for the incorporation of gas protection measures in proposed buildings. Basic radon protection measures are required in all proposed buildings on site.

Subject to suitable conditions reflecting the recommendations of the reports, the proposal is considered to accord with national planning policy objectives and LDP **Policy AW6**.



SECTION 7

Conclusion



7.0 Conclusion

7.1.1 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that, in dealing with an application for planning permission, the authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCPA) states that, if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

7.1.2 Furthermore, the Socio-economic Duty came into force in Wales on the 31 March 2021 by virtue of the Equality Act 2010 (see PPW para 1.17). It requires relevant public bodies when taking strategic decisions, to have due regard to the need to reduce the inequalities of outcome that result from socio-economic disadvantage. In general, strategic decisions will be those which affect how the public body fulfils its intended statutory purpose (its functions in regard to the set of powers and duties that it uses to perform its remit) over a significant period of time, including medium to long term development plans. The proposed developments comprise medium to long term development plans which, given the scale and wide ranging effects in the RCT area, is caught by the Socio-economic Duty. Either option for development will have a significant beneficial economic effect. Accordingly, the proposal will assist in reducing the inequalities of outcome that result from socio-economic disadvantage and this fact is not only a weighty material consideration in s38(6) PCPA terms, but is also a matter which requires consideration as a result of the Socio-economic Duty.

7.1.3 Paragraph 1.18 of PPW notes that legislation secures a presumption in favour of sustainable development in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise to ensure that social, economic, cultural and environmental issues are balanced and integrated. As set out in section 5.3, above, the formulation of the proposed development has sought to achieve the well-being goals and improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action in accordance with the sustainable development principle. The formulation of the proposed development has conformed to the “sustainable development” process and can therefore be considered as sustainable development to which the presumption in favour applies.

7.1.4 Section 6 of this report demonstrates that the proposed development complies with the provisions of the development plan and thus has the weight of s38(6) of the PCPA behind it. This requires the application to be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

7.1.5 Notwithstanding development plan policy compliance, in terms of other matters to consider, the proposed development:

- Accords well with the Welsh Government’s objectives as set out in PPW;
- Accords with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015;



- Meets the objectives of the Cardiff City Region's City Deal vision by creating prosperity and opportunity;
- Incorporate onsite renewable energy generation (photovoltaic panels);
- Result in c200 net additional employment opportunities with further construction jobs also being created;
- Provide a SuDS compliant drainage scheme, with associated biodiversity and amenity benefits;
- Results in a net benefit for biodiversity;
- All of this will be achieved without any unacceptable impacts in terms of climate change and sustainability, ground conditions, ecology, highways, flood risk, landscape, trees, noise and air quality.

7.1.6 The balance lies clearly in favour of planning permission being granted, subject to conditions.