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Residential Travel Plan

**Cefn Isaf Flats
Pontycapel Road
Cefn Coed y Cymmer**

May 2024

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Revision History

A	31 st May 2024	First Issue

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Acstro has been appointed by Merthyr Valleys Homes to prepare a Residential Travel Plan to support a planning application for the redevelopment of the Cefn Isaf Flats site at Pontycapel Road, Cefn Coed y Cymmer. The location of the site is shown in Figure 1 below.

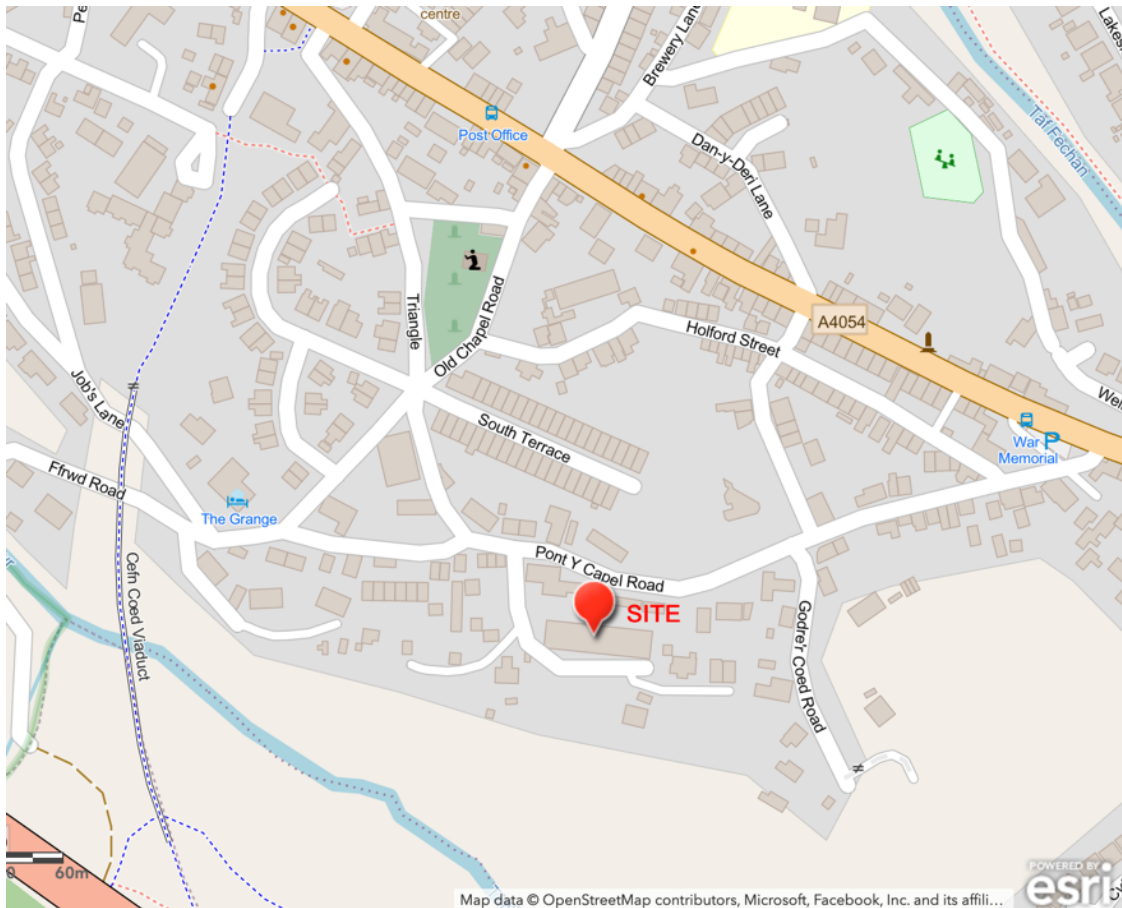


Figure 1 Location Plan

- 1.2 Currently the site accommodates 34 flats with some off-street parking accessed from Wern Road to the rear.
- 1.3 The proposal is to redevelop the site to provide 40 affordable flats with 30 off-street car parking spaces.
- 1.4 The ultimate aim of any Travel Plan should be to influence long-term changes in travel behaviour by providing the right package of measures that promote and value sustainable transport initiatives. It is crucial to the success of a Travel Plan that the measures are site specific and tailored to the needs of the users of the development.
- 1.5 A Travel Plan is a dynamic process that will grow and develop with time, and with the changing circumstances of the site and the environment in which it works. It should be stressed that the Travel Plan will be flexible in which measures are implemented, and allow for changes to be made in line with Travel Plan performance.

- 1.6 This Travel Plan has been prepared to ensure that sustainable modes of transport are promoted to all residents from first occupation of the site. It is supportive of reducing the need for single occupancy car journeys to and from the development, which is achievable given the range of sustainable options which should be available to residents.

Benefits of a Travel Plan

- 1.7 Travel Plans support planning policy in their objective to deliver sustainable development. Travel Plans reduce the number of single occupancy car trips and promote greater use of sustainable modes of transport such as public transport, cycling or walking.
- 1.8 A reduction in the number of private vehicle journeys has the potential to reduce the type and volume of pollutants released into the atmosphere, which are contributing to climate change and having a detrimental effect on health.
- 1.9 A reduction in single occupancy car trips can result in a reduction in peak period traffic congestion, fewer road traffic accidents, reduced stress, healthier lifestyles, better productivity, environmental protection, improved access for residents, visitors, and deliveries, and genuine reduction in social exclusion through the provision of choice between modes of transport.

2 Policy Context

[Future Wales - The National Plan 2040](#)

- 2.1 This is the national development framework that sets out the direction for development in Wales to 2040.
- 2.2 Policies 11 and 12 relate to national and regional connectivity, respectively. These seek to encourage longer-distance trips to be made by public transport, while also making longer journeys possible by electric vehicles. In urban areas, to support sustainable growth and regeneration, the priorities are improving and integrating active travel and public transport. In rural areas the priorities are supporting the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles and diversifying and sustaining local bus services. Active travel must be an essential and integral component of all new developments.

[Planning Policy Wales \(12th Edition\)](#)

- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 PPW advocates a sustainable transport hierarchy for planning, the hierarchy being, from top to bottom:
- Walking and Cycling
 - Public Transport
 - Ultra Low Emission Vehicles
 - Other Private Motor Vehicles
- 2.5 It is Welsh Government policy to require the use of a sustainable transport hierarchy in relation to new development, which prioritises walking, cycling and public transport ahead of the private motor vehicles.

[Llwybr Newydd – The Wales Transport Strategy 2021](#)

- 2.6 This document sets out the Welsh Government's vision for how the country's transport system can help deliver on a pathway to creating a more prosperous, green and equal society. It lists its priorities as being:
1. Bringing services to people in order to reduce the need to travel. To this end a target has been set that of 30% of the workforce works remotely on a regular basis.
 2. Allow people and goods to move easily from door to door by accessible, sustainable and efficient transport services and infrastructure.
 3. Encourage people to make the change to more sustainable transport.
- 2.7 Modal shift is at the heart of Llwybr Newydd. This means the proportion of trips made by sustainable modes increases and fewer trips are made by private cars.
- 2.8 The Welsh Government has set a target of 45% of journeys to be made by public transport, walking and cycling by 2040. This represents an increase of 13 percentage points on the estimated baseline (2021) mode share of 32%.

TAN18 Transportation

2.9 Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note 18 (TAN18) details the Welsh Government's policies in terms of transportation and repeats the general principles advocated in PPW i.e. that development is encouraged in sustainable, accessible, locations that will reduce the need to travel by car. Its aim is to promote an efficient and sustainable transport system and to counter the negative impacts associated with road traffic growth, for example increased air pollution, green house gases and congestion (2.1). It sees the integration of transport and land use planning as key (2.3) in achieving the Welsh Government's sustainable development policy objectives by:

- promoting travel efficient settlement patterns;
- ensuring new development is located where there is good access by public transport, walking and cycling thereby minimizing the need for travel and fostering social inclusion;
- managing parking provision;
- ensuring that new development includes appropriate provision for pedestrians, cycling, public transport, and traffic management and parking/servicing;
- encouraging the location of development near other related uses to encourage multi-purpose trips; and
- ensuring that transport infrastructure necessary to serve new development allows existing transport networks to continue to perform their identified functions.

The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013

2.10 The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 is Welsh Government legislation aimed to support an increase in the level of walking and cycling in Wales; to encourage a shift in travel behaviour to active travel modes, and to facilitate the building of walking and cycling infrastructure.

2.11 The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 makes it a legal requirement for local authorities in Wales to map and plan for suitable routes for active travel, and to build and improve infrastructure for walking and cycling every year. It creates new duties to consider the needs of walkers and cyclists and make better provision for them. It also requires the consideration of walking and cycling as a mode of transport and the Act focuses on the promotion of walking and cycling for purposeful journeys, rather than as a purely recreational activity.

2.12 The Act is supported by the Active Travel Action Plan Wales (2014), and many of the actions of the Active Travel Action Plan Wales document also benefit recreational or competitive walking and cycling. 'Walking' in the Active Travel Action Plan for Wales includes the use of wheelchairs and mobility scooters and 'cycling' includes the use of electric bikes, but not motorcycles.

Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan (2016-2031)

2.13 In terms of highway and transport related policies it is considered that the following are relevant.

2.14 Policy SW11 (Sustainable Design and Placemaking) requires that development should, amongst other requirements:

- integrate effectively with adjacent spaces, the public realm and historic environment to enhance the general street scene and create good quality townscape;
- allow access for the widest range of people possible, and demonstrate that any traffic movements will not have an unacceptable impact on local amenity or highway safety and satisfy the Council's parking standards;
- provide adequate facilities and space for waste collections and recycling;
- promote the creation of healthy and active environments and reduce the opportunity for crime and anti-social behaviour

CSS Wales Parking Standards (2014)

- 2.15 The Council has no formally adopted Parking Standards. However, we understand that the Parking Standards published by CSS Wales are used in place of any formal supplementary planning guidance.
- 2.16 For residential developments the CSS Wales Parking Standards recommend that one car parking space per bedroom be provided up to a maximum of three spaces per dwelling. In addition, one visitor parking space per five dwellings is recommended.
- 2.17 The Parking Standards do however allow a more flexible approach to the number of parking spaces provided in new development where "clear evidence has been supplied that car ownership levels will be lower than normal". In this case clear evidence will be provided that car ownership levels will be lower than normal. This evidence has been gathered by way of a survey of car ownership levels within nearby properties owned and managed by Merthyr Valleys Homes.
- 2.18 The Parking Standards recommends that a minimum of 1 cycle stand per 5 bedrooms be provided for apartment developments.

3 Existing Conditions

Existing Use

- 3.1 The site is located at the junction of Pontycapel Road and Wern Road in Cefn Coed y Cymmer. The site comprises of a block of 34 flats with a parking area to the rear accessed from Wern Road. The existing flats are a mixture of one and two-bed units that provide a total of 49 bedrooms.

Proximity to Services and Accessibility

- 3.2 The site is shown in context in Appendix 1.

Appendix 1 Site Context

- 3.3 Nearby amenities include Ysgol y Graig Community Primary School located immediately to the east. Cefn Coed y Cymmer's High Street is located some 250m to the north of the site and includes a number of amenities including a pharmacy, dental practice, bus stops and several food and drink businesses. Also within a 5-minute walk of the site are the community and leisure amenities provided at Cefn Community Centre, Cefn Coed rugby club and Godre's Coed field.
- 3.4 There is therefore a good range of amenities available within Cefn Coed y Cymmer that can be accessed on foot by residents of the development site.
- 3.5 A broader range of amenities is available in Merthyr Tydfil, whose town centre is some 3km to the east.

Pedestrian & Cycle Links

- 3.6 There are footways adjacent to the site along its Wern Road and Pontycapel Road boundaries. Pontycapel Road varies in width along its length and footway provision is sporadic.
- 3.7 To access the facilities concentrated along High Street from the application site would require that pedestrians walk along Pontycapel Road where, for much of the journey, there is no segregated footway provision. In this case it is considered that the absence of segregated footways does not pose a danger to pedestrians nor is it likely to dissuade residents of the site from accessing these amenities on foot. Nevertheless, in response to a request from the Highway Authority, signs warning drivers of the presence of pedestrians in the road ahead will be delivered as part of the development. This is described in more detail in the following chapter.
- 3.8 Pontycapel Road is lightly trafficked, inter-visibility between pedestrians and drivers is generally good and street lighting is provided. The environment along Pontycapel Road is not considered to be unduly hazardous or threatening to pedestrians.
- 3.9 The shared use of the road space is considered to work well in this case and this is reflected in guidance provided in *Manual for Streets* (page 83), which references research undertaken by TRL into shared space streets. The research found that where traffic flow is below 100 vehicle movements per hour, pedestrians use shared space streets as spaces to occupy. Traffic flows above 100 vehicle movements per hour tends to induce a feeling in pedestrians that the path taken by cars is a road to be crossed.
- 3.10 This is reflected too in Welsh Government's Active Travel Act Guidance's discussion on home zones and quiet lanes (quiet lanes are the rural equivalent of home zones). It states in 11.5.5 that these are "streets in which the design speed is set very low, at less than 20mph and maximum motor traffic flows of 100 vehicles per hour are the norm. Often, the whole highway is shared between all road users".

- 3.11 In this case Pontycapel Road traffic speed is low and, from our observations during site visits, flows appear to be comfortably below the 100 vehicles per hour threshold.
- 3.12 The safe operation of Pontycapel Road is reflected in the results of injury accident records, which is described in more detail later in this chapter. There have been no recorded injuries to pedestrians or cyclists over the latest 5-year period for which data is available.
- 3.13 The site is located near National Cycle Network Route 8, which runs across the Cefn Coed Viaduct. The nearest access point to the cycle route is at the Triangle, some 300m, a 2-minute cycle ride, to the north west of the site. The cycle route provides a high quality, largely traffic free, route that links the site to Merthyr Tydfil's town centre. The figure below shows the areas that can be reached within a short, 20-minute, cycle ride of the site and demonstrates that the wide range of services and facilities available in Merthyr Tydfil can easily be reached by this form of transport.

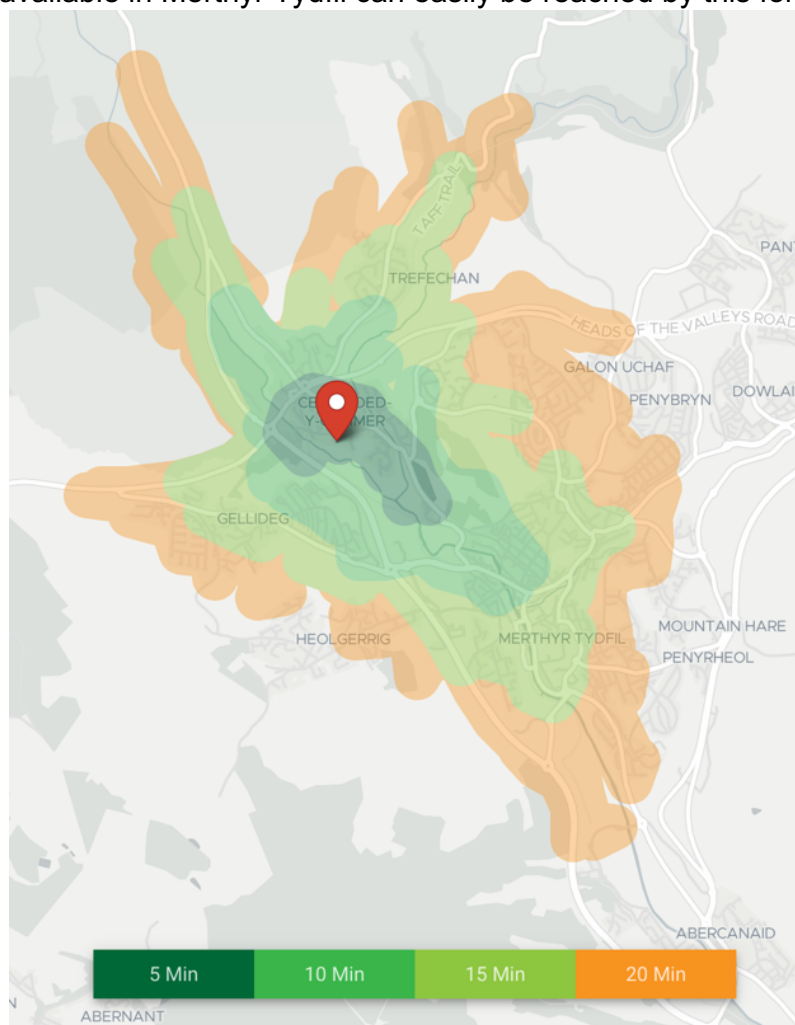


Figure 2 20-Minute Cycle Catchment

Public Transport Network

- 3.14 The nearest bus stops are located on High Street, some 250m from the application site. They provide access to the number 25 bus service that provides an hourly service in each direction between Trefechan and Merthyr Tydfil bus station in the town centre. Journeys to and from the town centre take around 12 minutes.

- 3.15 Connecting services to a wide range of destinations can be made at the bus station. Merthyr Tydfil's railway station is a 2-minute walk from the bus station and provides access to half-hourly services to and from Cardiff.

Summary

- 3.16 The site is in a sustainable and accessible location where there is a good selection of amenities available within walking and cycling distance. Public transport links between the site and Merthyr's town centre are available. This increases the possibility that journeys generated by the development can be made by sustainable forms of transport and that future occupiers of the proposed development will not be wholly reliant on car travel to access day-to-day services.

4 Proposed Development

- 4.1 Planning permission is sought for the redevelopment of the site development comprising of 40 flats (55 bedrooms in total).



Figure 3 Proposed Development

Access & Highway Improvements

- 4.2 Access to the development will be from Pontycapel Road and Wern Road, as per existing arrangements. The access and parking arrangement is shown in greater detail in Appendix 2.

Appendix 2 Proposed Access & Parking

- 4.3 The development of the site provides the opportunity to deliver improvements to Pontycapel Road, which will be widened to provide a 5.5m wide carriageway along the site's frontage. This will better accommodate two-way traffic flow on this street.

- 4.4 In addition, signs warning of pedestrians in the road ahead (Traffic Sign Manual Diag. 544.1) will be provided on the approaches to the section of Pontycapel Road approached from High Street. It is envisaged that this will be secured by way of a planning condition and that the precise location and detail of the signage will be agreed with the Highway Authority.
- 4.5 The accesses to the four dwellings located off the Wern Road parking area are unaffected by the proposed layout.

Parking

- 4.6 A total of 30 car parking spaces will be provided; 9 accessed from Pontycapel Road and 21 from Wern Road. The 30 car parking spaces includes 5 accessible spaces for blue-badge holders.
- 4.7 26 cycle parking spaces are to be provided; 6 at three Sheffield stands located externally and 20 in two-tier racks located in a cycle store-room.
- 4.8 This equates to almost 1 cycle space per 2 bedrooms (55 bedrooms in total) and far exceeds the 1 space per 5 bedrooms recommended by the CSS Wales Parking Standards.

Trip Generation Modal Split

- 4.9 The 2011 Census¹ provides information on the method of travel to work for Cefn Coed y Cymmer's² population, which is summarised below. Some 22% of trips are made by sustainable forms of transport and 78% by car (65% as a driver and 13% as a passenger).

Method of travel to work	Proportion
Public Transport	12%
Motorcycle, scooter or moped	<1%
Driving a car or van	65%
Passenger in a car or van	13%
Bicycle	<1%
On foot	10%

Table 1 2011 Census Data – Method of Travel to Work

- 4.10 It is assumed that, without intervention, the modal split of the proposed development will match the census data. It is considered reasonable to attempt to generate a modal shift that reduces the number of driven car journeys use by one-tenth i.e. from 65% to 59% over the course of the first 5-years of the development.

¹ 2021 Census travel to work data has not been used due to that Census taking place during Covid restrictions when travel patterns were greatly impacted.

² Super Output Middle Layer – Merthyr Tydfil 003

5 Travel Plan Aims

5.1 It is important that the Travel Plan has a focus and direction in what it is trying to achieve. This can be accomplished through the identification of Travel Plan aims, which are realistic and site specific. The aims of this Travel Plan are:

- To widen the travel options available to all users of the development. It is vitally important that the users of the development are made fully aware of the sustainable transport choices available to them from the opening of the site so that sustainable travel habits are established from the outset. The focus of the Travel Plan will be to inform the residents of the proposed development of the travel options available to them.
- To improve the health of all residents. Current Government advice for living a healthier lifestyle is to engage in moderate exercise (that raises your breathing and heart rate) for 30 minutes a day. This Travel Plan aims to encourage greater take up of walking and cycling.

5.2 The objectives of the Travel Plan will be to:

- Reduce to a minimum the number of single-occupancy car traffic movements to and from the residential site;
- Reduce the need for travel to and from the residential site;
- Address the access needs of residents and visitors by supporting walking, cycling and the use of public transport;
- Implement good urban design that opens up the site to walking, cycling and the use of public transport;
- Enable residents and visitors to have an informed choice about their travel options.

Modal Shift Targets

5.3 It is assumed that, without intervention, the modal split of the proposed development will match the census data described earlier. It is considered reasonable to attempt to generate a modal shift that reduces the number of driven car journeys use by one-tenth i.e. from 65% to 59% over the course of the first 5-years of the development.

6 Travel Plan Measures

6.1 This Travel Plan comprises a range of initiatives and measures to promote sustainable travel choices. These measures will be funded by the developer for a period of 5 years following the point that 10% of the development becomes occupied.

Welcome Packs

6.2 The main elements of the Travel Plan will include the preparation and dissemination of information and publicity material to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport. These will take the form of a Welcome Pack that will be provided to all new residents of the development.

Measures to Encourage Active Travel

- Level access to the properties;
- Good quality paths within the development connecting to the footway on Pontycapel Road;

- Signage on Pontycapel Road to warn drivers of presence of pedestrians walking in the road where no footway exists;
- Provision of safe and secure cycle storage space.
- Welcome Packs to include:
 - Promotion of the health benefits of active travel;
 - Map showing location of, and safe walking and cycling routes to, local amenities;
 - Links to websites that offer further advice on active travel e.g.
 - <https://activetravel.merthyr.gov.uk/>
 - www.sustrans.org.uk

Measures to Encourage Public Transport Use

- Welcome Packs to include:
 - Promotion of public transport as a form of transport;
 - Details of bus stop locations, route maps, timetables and fare information;
 - Details of the Council's free school transport policies and relevant contact details provided;
 - Websites that provide bus service information and route planning will be promoted e.g.:
 - www.traveline.cymru

Measures to Reduce Car Use & Emissions

- Encourage residents to choose to travel on foot, by bicycle or on public transport wherever possible. Where journeys must be made by car the benefits of car-sharing will be promoted car-sharing.
- Potential car-sharers will be encouraged to visit car-sharing database websites, for example <https://liftshare.com/uk/community/wales>

7 Summary

7.1 The aims of this Travel Plan are:

- To widen the travel options available to all users of the development.
- To improve the health of all residents by encouraging greater take up of walking and cycling.

7.2 The objectives of the Travel Plan will be to:

- Reduce to a minimum the number of single-occupancy car traffic movements to and from the residential site;
- Reduce the need for travel to and from the residential site;
- Address the access needs of residents and visitors by supporting walking, cycling and the use of public transport;
- Implement good urban design that opens up the site to walking, cycling and the use of public transport;
- Enable residents and visitors to have an informed choice about their travel options.

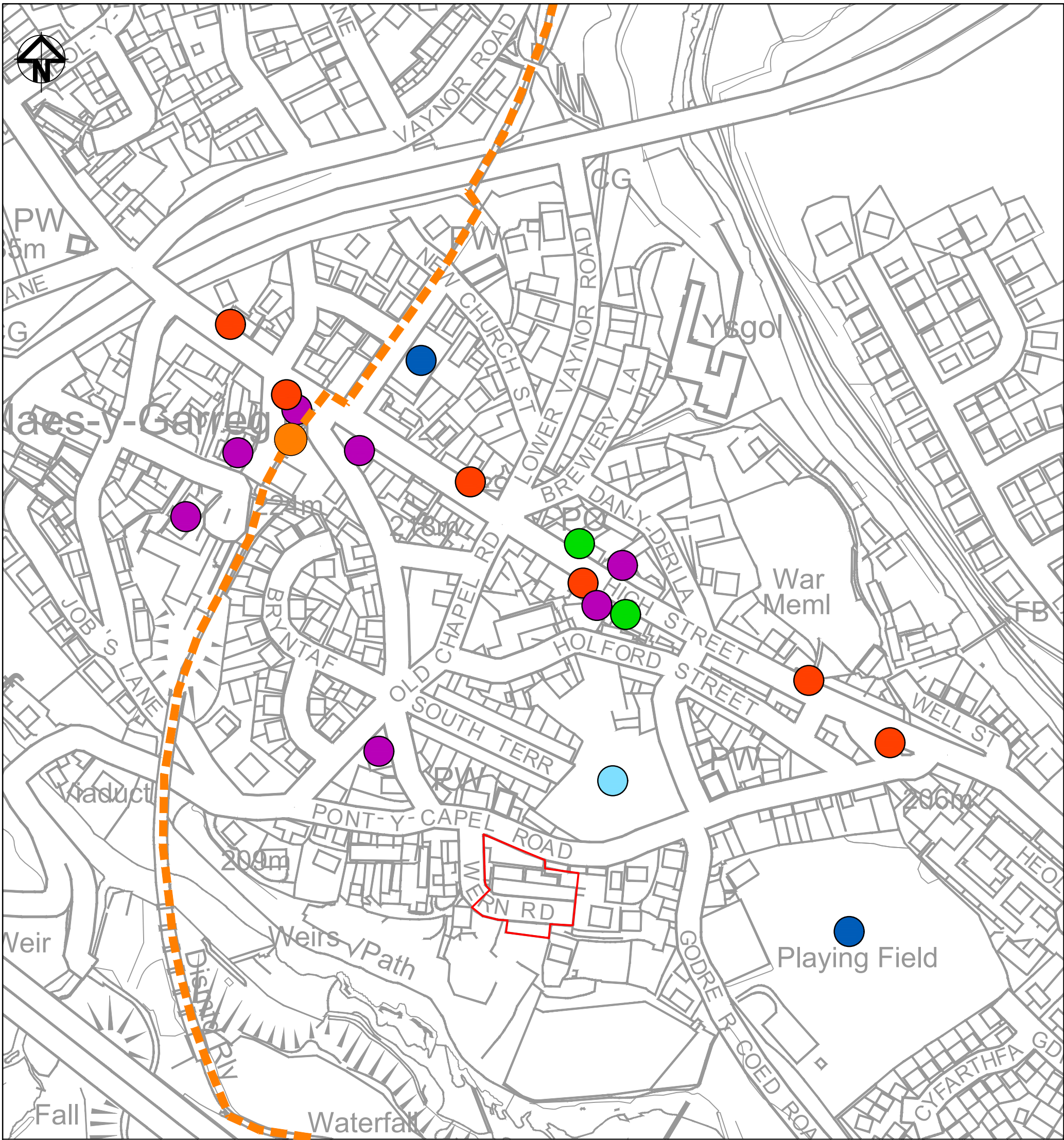
7.3 It is assumed that, without intervention, the modal split journeys made by residents will approximate to census data, which shows that some 22% of trips are made by sustainable forms of transport and 78% by car (65% as a driver and 13% as a passenger).

7.4 The target of this Travel Plan will be to reduce the number of driven car journeys by one-tenth i.e. from 65% to 59% over the course of the first 5-years of the development. To achieve this the following actions will be undertaken.

Timetable	Action
Prior to the first occupation of the development.	Prepare Travel Plan Welcome Packs
Upon occupation	Distribute Travel Plan Welcome Packs to new residents.
Ongoing from the start of the occupation	Promotion and marketing of the Travel Plan

Table 2 Travel Plan Actions

Appendix 1 Site Context



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KEY

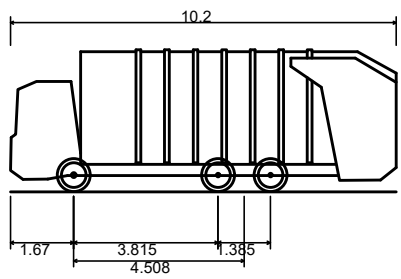
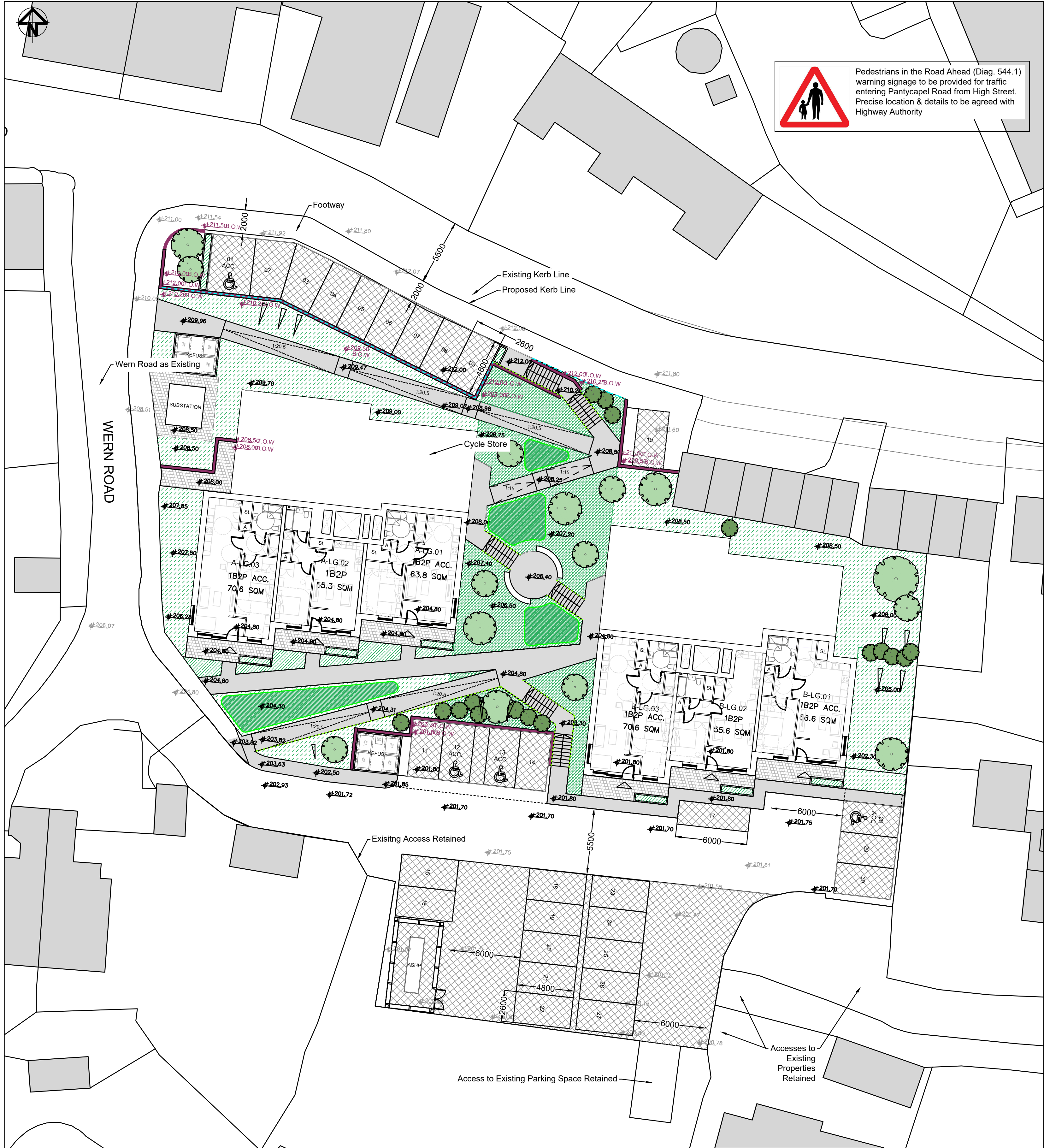
- Site
- Bus Stop
- National Cycle Network Route
(Circle shows nearest access point)
- School
- Pharmacy / Dental Surgery
- Community / Recreation
- Food & Drink Businesses

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B	NCN Access Point		25-05-24
	A	First Issue	25-01-24
Project			
CEFN ISAF FLATS			
Drawing			
SITE CONTEXT			
Drawing No.			
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Scale			
1:2500 @ A3			

Appendix 2 Proposed Access & Parking



Phoenix 2 Duo (P2-12W with Elite 6x4 chassis)
Overall Length 10.200m
Overall Width 2.530m
Overall Body Height 3.751m
Min Body Ground Clearance 0.304m
Track Width 2.500m
Lock to lock time 4.00s
Kerb to Kerb Turning Radius 7.800m

B	Revised Layout	25-05-24
A	First Issue	25-01-24
acstro Unit 19, Yr Hen Farchnod, Carmarthen Street, Llandello SA19 6BJ E-mail: mail@acstro.com www.acstro.com Tel: 01558 824021		
Project	CEFN ISAF FLATS	
Drawing	ACCESS & PARKING ARRANGEMENT	
Drawing No.	1645-ACS-XX-ZZ-DR-T-004-B	
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