

EIA Screening Opinion (Stand-alone Document)
Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales)
Regulations 2017 (as amended)
Screening under Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 selection criteria ("the 2017 Regulations")

Application Reference and Description:

P/26/0068 - Proposal: Surfacing (tarmac overlay) of an existing dirt/gravel track (approx. 3,830m long x 7m wide; area approx. 2.68ha).

Site:

Gethin Woodland Centre, A470 Pentrebach To Rhydyar Northbound Abercanaid, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 1YZ

****Delete or complete underlined areas as appropriate.***

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council has considered the application in accordance with Regulations **5(1)** of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017.

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The development proposed, falls outside the scope of the Regulations.

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The development proposed, falls within the description of Schedule 2 of the 2017 Regulations:

- Schedule 2, paragraph 13(b) – “Changes and extensions”: the proposal may also be characterised as a change/extension to existing recreational infrastructure within the wider bike park context. Screening still turns on likely significance of effects.

Site Context and Sensitive Receptors

Designated sites and heritage assets in proximity:

- Cwm Glo a Glyndyrys Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): approximately 645.45m to the north of the proposal.
- Carn Castell y Meibion ring cairn (Scheduled Ancient Monument): approximately 30m to the west of the proposal.
- Woodland / trees and watercourses: present within the wider site context; construction-phase controls are addressed via the submitted CEMP.

Other information

- Natural Resources Wales (NRW): supportive of the proposal in their pre-application advice. NRW advice indicates that tarmac surfacing is likely to result in less polluted runoff than the existing dirt/gravel track, and NRW requested a CEMP to manage construction-phase risks.

- Cadw: in their pre-application advice offered no objection to the proposal in relation to the nearby Scheduled Ancient Monument subject to contractors being notified of the SAM and measures to protect the SAM
- Planning Ecologist: in relation to the planning application received by the LPA, raises no objection and no significant adverse comments on the proposal

Schedule 3 Screening Assessment (Selection Criteria)

Characteristics of the Development

- Size and design: Surfacing of an existing track corridor; no widening or realignment stated. Works are linear and confined to the existing track footprint.
- Cumulation: The works form part of an established recreational site. The proposal itself does not introduce new land uses or new major built infrastructure.
- Use of natural resources / waste: Typical construction materials and arisings associated with surfacing works; these can be managed through standard site controls and the CEMP.
- Pollution and nuisance: Temporary noise, dust and traffic during construction. Pollution risk (e.g. fuels, silt, asphalt works) is controllable through the CEMP and good practice.
- Human health: The proposal is not considered likely to give rise to significant effects on human health. Potential short-term construction effects (e.g. noise, dust and risks of water contamination) are localised and temporary and can be effectively managed through compliance with the submitted CEMP.

Location of the Development (Environmental Sensitivity)

- SSSI: The Cwm Glo a Glyndyrys SSSI lies approximately 645.45m north. Given distance, the nature of works (surfacing existing track) and the absence of adverse ecological advice, significant effects on the SSSI are not considered likely.
- Woodland/trees: along a length of approximately 717m of the proposed surfacing works are a group of TPO trees, along other areas of the proposed works are sporadic trees and forestry. The proposal does not include engineering works that would materially impact on these trees and is confined to the existing track.
- and water environment: The submitted CEMP provides measures to avoid or prevent construction-phase impacts (e.g. pollution prevention, working methods, incident response).
- Historic environment: The Scheduled Ancient Monument lies approximately 30m west. Cadw has no objection. The proposal does not include engineering works that would materially change landform and is confined to the existing track.
- Human health (people and users): Potential effects on people (including users of the recreational facility and any nearby receptors) would principally relate to temporary construction disturbance (noise/dust) and construction traffic; these effects are time-limited and can be effectively controlled through the CEMP such that significant effects on human health are not anticipated.

Types and Characteristics of Potential Impacts

- Construction phase: Impacts are localised, temporary and reversible. The CEMP provides a mechanism to effectively reduce risks of pollution, disturbance and nuisance.

- Operational phase: NRW advises the surfacing is likely to reduce polluted runoff compared with the existing dirt/gravel track. The operational effects are therefore unlikely to be significant and may be beneficial.
- Decommissioning: Any future removal would be capable of being managed through a removal/decommissioning management plan/method statement to control waste handling and protect environmental receptors.
- Human health (sensitive receptors): The pathways relevant to human health (notably air quality/dust and water contamination) are not considered likely to be significant given the separation distances to designated sites, the limited scope of works (surfacing only) and the construction controls secured through the CEMP.

In the Authority's opinion, having taken into account the criteria in Schedule 3 of the 2017 Regulations, the development **would not be likely** to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors set out above.

Accordingly, in exercise of the powers conferred by the 2017 Regulations, it has been decided that the development for which planning permission is sought **is not EIA development**.

A copy of this screening opinion is placed on Part 1 of the Planning Register and relates to the application in question.

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The development proposed, falls within the description at paragraph ____ of Schedule **1 or 2*** of the 2017 Regulations and is located within a "sensitive area", as defined in Regulations 2(1).

In the Authority's opinion, having taken into account the criteria in Schedule 3 of the 2017 Regulations, the development **would be likely** to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors as specified in the attached screening opinion.

Accordingly, in exercise of the powers conferred by the 2017 Regulations, it has been decided that the development for which planning permission is sought is an EIA development.

An Environmental Impact Assessment has therefore been requested for this application to address the attached issues. (A more detailed scoping exercise will be addressed to the applicants).

A copy of this screen opinion is placed on Part 1 of the Planning Register and relates to the application in question.

Signed: Kate Glover

Date: 23 April 2026