

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No: P/25/0272

Site Address: Cyfarthfa Castle
Cyfarthfa Park
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8RE

Development: The proposed works comprise:

- Refurbishment of main WCs and secondary, currently disused, WCs.
- Upgrades to and expansion of CCTV provision internally.
- Upgrades to 2 no. external CCTV cameras - existing fixings to be reused.
- Introduction of improved and more energy efficient exhibition lighting.
- Installation of Wi-Fi throughout the museum spaces

Case Officer: Gareth Davies

Site Visit:

Application Expiry Date: 11th December 2025

Consultation reply date expired: 20th November 2025

APPLICATION SITE

This application relates to Cyfarthfa Castle and its grounds. Cyfarthfa Castle is a Grade I Listed Building located within the Cyfarthfa Park Conservation Area. The grounds and surroundings of the property is also on the Cadw ICOMOS Register of Listed Registered Parks and Gardens with a grade II* listing.

Cyfarthfa Castle is located within 160 acres of mixed parkland, on a plateau overlooking the site of the Former Cyfarthfa Ironworks to the north of the town centre. To the rear of the castle is woodland, whilst to the front is the car park and parkland with the lake on the western edge of the site. The park is bound by Brecon Road to the west and south-west, Gurnos Road to the north-west and north, and residential streets to the east and south-east. The park slopes towards the River Taff to the west.

Cyfarthfa Castle was designed by the London Architect Robert Lugar in 1824-25 in the picturesque style. The building is constructed from coursed ashlar masonry set beneath a crenelated parapet. The castle layout is broadly rectangular in shape, and the arrangement of the buildings is asymmetrical with the family rooms located on the southeast side of the building and the former school on the northwest. The castle museum

also occupies part of the building. The two main elevations of the castle remain unaltered from their original construction and therefore are of considerable architectural and symbolic importance. However, the overall value of the building is reduced by the extensive changes made to both the interior and exterior in the early 20th century.

In this instance the proposals relate solely to internal works within the Castle.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The current application seeks listed building consent for further internal works to the castle and comprises the following four elements: -

Refurbishment of the Main and Secondary WC's

The existing male and female WCs currently contain a number of heritage sanitaryware fittings which will be retained and refurbished as part of the development. The works include the replacement of an existing (modern) cistern with one that is in keeping with others within the castle. A new floor finish will be introduced in a more neutral colour appropriate to the historic setting. The existing tiled wall finish will be retained and restored. All woodwork, including ceiling panels will also be restored with wax.

The secondary WCs are currently not in use and are used for storage. The intention is to return these facilities to active service. Works will include the renewal of the floor, wall, and ceiling finishes alongside the installation of new WC's and cubicles.

The accessible WC will be refurbished to improve its suitability for use. A new sanitary pack will be installed that is compliant with part M of the Building Regulations and the floor walls and ceilings will be replaced.

Upgrades to and Expansion of CCTV Provision

On the ground floor the intention is to be as discreet as possible. In the Museum spaces on the ground floor cabling will be routed through existing floor grilles where possible. Where cameras are to be positioned near windows cabling will run in conduits alongside architraves and be concealed behind curtains, and where this is not possible surface mounted trunking will be used which will either be covered with wallpaper or painted to match the established decorative scheme.

Elsewhere on the ground floor, including the cafe and caretakers house, existing cabling routes will be used where possible. Trunking will otherwise be wall mounted and painted to match the wall.

In the basement., existing cable trays run around the centre of the room and can be used for new cabling. Elsewhere new conduits will need to be installed on the walls and will be painted to match the existing or proposed decorative scheme.

Introduction of Improved and Exhibition Lighting

All proposed lighting tracks are to be a direct replacement of existing tracks with updated fittings. No new fixings are proposed, and all wiring will be reused. The rooms affected are the Entrance Hall, Yellow Gallery, Dining Room, Wedding Room, and Play Room.

Installation of Wi-Fi Throughout the Museum Spaces.

It is anticipated that cabling for wi-fi will share other cabling routes where possible. Call points and discs will be located as discreetly as follows: -

In the basement they will be fixed to the high-level existing cable trays.

In the museum spaces they will be located: -

- In the cupboard of the Wedding Room
- In the shop adjacent to the large shelving unit
- In the staff room adjacent to the key Yellow Gallery and Round Room
- In the Red Gallery above a cabinet
- In the Lobby above a cabinet, and
- In the Dining Room above a cabinet.

This application is supported with the following documents: -

- Heritage Statement
- Lighting Report and
- Listed Building Consent Report.

PLANNING HISTORY

P/25/0178 – installation of surface water drainage around the perimeter of the castle with associated manholes and gullies – Approved 28th July 2025.

P/25/0087 – repair, replacement and installation of new drainage pipes, attenuation tank, and manholes – Approved 23rd May 2025

P/23/0051 – Install new timber door and 2 flues on the front elevation of the boiler room at Cyfarthfa Castle (Listed Building Consent) – Approved 18th April 2023

P/22/0055 - Opening works to ascertain the condition of the structure (Listed Building Consent – Approved 13th May 2022

P/20/0216 - Patio / terrace decking extension to Canolfan Building and Splash pad plant room extension, new changing room pod, bin store, footpaths, and bridge – Approved 4th February 2021

P/12/0270 - Creation of new footpaths and re-surfacing of existing paths with associated drainage works and stone walls – Approved 21st January 2013

P/12/0268 - Hard landscape works to castle forecourt – Approved 7th March 2013

P/10/0009 - Variation of Condition 1 of planning consent P/09/0167 (erection of Woodland Centre) relating to amended materials – Approved 11th March 2010

P/09/0343 - Toilet and plant room building (associated with the Woodlands Centre and splash play pad) – Approved 11th February 2010

P/09/0167 - Proposed Woodland Resource Centre, terrace cafe, wet and dry play areas, and landscaping – Approved 26th October 2009

P/08/0108 - Erection of new gates to west and south elevations of main entrance portico – Approved 11th November 2008

P/08/0107 - Erection of new gates to west and south elevations of main entrance portico (Listed Building Consent) – Approved 4th November 2008

CONSULTATION

Highways & Engineering Manager – No objection.

Heneb – No objection.

Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales – No response received.

Merthyr Tydfil Heritage Trust – No response received.

Merthyr Tydfil Museum & Heritage Group – No response received.

Joint Committee for national Amenity Societies Members – No response received from any member.

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town & Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 site notices were displayed in the vicinity of the site on 22nd October 2025 and a press notice was published on 30th October 2025.

No objections or observations have been received as a result of the consultation exercise.

PLANNING POLICY

National planning context

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

Paragraph 16. – (1) Subject to the previous provision of this Part, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State may grant or refuse an application for listed building consent and, if they grant consent, may grant it subject to conditions.

(2) In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

(3) Any listed building consent shall (except as far as it otherwise provides) enure for the benefit of the building and of all persons for the time being interested in it.

Paragraph 17. – (1) Without prejudice to the generality of section 16(1), the conditions subject to which listed building consent may be granted may include conditions with respect to-

- (a) the preservation of particular features of the building, either as part of it or after severance from it.*
- (b) the making good, after the works are completed, of any damage caused to the building by the works.*
- (c) the reconstruction of the building or any part of it following the execution of any works, with the use of original materials as far as practicable and with such alterations of the interior of the building as may be specified in the conditions.*

(2) A condition may also be imposed requiring specified details of the works (whether or not set out in the application) to be approved subsequently by the local planning authority or, in the case of consent granted by Secretary of State, specifying whether such details are to be approved by the local planning authority or by him.

The Historic Environment Wales Act 2023 (HEWA 2023)
Section 96(2) of the HEWA 2023

“In considering whether to grant listed building consent, a planning authority or the Welsh Ministers must have special regard to the desirability of preserving—

- (a) the listed building to which the application relates,*
- (b) the setting of the building, and*
- (c) any features of special architectural or historic interest the building possesses.”*

Section 160(1) of the HEWA 2023

“In exercising a planning function in relation to a building or other land in a conservation area, a person must have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”

Future Wales 2040 The National Plan:

Future Wales provides guidance on matters relevant to this application, including, but not limited to: -

- Policy 1 - Where Wales will grow.
- Policy 2 - Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking
- Policy 4 – Supporting the rural economy.
- Policy 33 – National Growth Area – Cardiff, Newport, and the Valleys

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, February 2024) Planning Policy Wales sets out Welsh Government’s requirements on matters relevant to this application:

Paragraph 6.1.6 The Welsh Government’s specific objectives for the historic environment seek to:

- protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Sites.

- conserve archaeological remains, both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure, and the economy.
- safeguard the character of historic buildings and manage change so that their special architectural and historic interest is preserved.
- preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas, whilst the same time helping them remain vibrant and prosperous; 101 preserve the special interest of sites on the register of historic parks and gardens; and
- protect areas on the register of historic landscapes in Wales.

Paragraph 6.1.7 It is important that the planning system looks to protect, conserve and enhance the significance of historic assets. This will include consideration of the setting of an historic asset which might extend beyond its curtilage.

Paragraph 6.1.10 There should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of a listed building and its setting, which might extend beyond its curtilage. For any development proposal affecting a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the building, its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Paragraph 6.1.11 For listed buildings, the aim should be to find the best way to protect and enhance their special qualities, retaining them in sustainable use. The continuation or reinstatement of the original use should generally be the first option, but not all original uses will now be viable or appropriate. The application of planning and listed building controls should recognise the need for flexibility where new uses have to be considered to secure a building's survival or provide it with a sound economic future¹.

Welsh Government Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment

Paragraph 5.9 requires that any works of demolition, alteration and/or extension which would affect the character of a listed building to be authorised through the process of Listed Building Consent...When considering any application for listed building consent, the local planning authority or the Welsh Ministers must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Paragraph 5.13 When determining a listed building consent application, the local planning authority should consider the following issues:

- The importance and grade of the building and its intrinsic architectural or historic interest.
- The physical features of the building which justify its listing and contribute to its significance, (for example its form and layout, materials, construction and detail) including any features of importance such as the interior, which may have come to light after the building's inclusion on the list.
- The contribution of curtilage and setting to the significance of the building, as well as its contribution to its local scene.

- The impact of the proposed works on the significance of the building.
- The extent to which the proposed works would bring substantial community benefits for example, by contributing to the area's economy or the enhancement of its local environment

Local planning context

The following policies of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031 (LDP) are relevant to the determination of this application:

The relevant LDP Objectives are:

- LDP Objective 4 Regeneration: To promote the suitable reuse of previously developed land and the continued regeneration of local communities.
- LDP Objective 5 Infrastructure: To ensure that community infrastructure and open space support the regeneration of local communities.
- LDP Objective 6 Sustainable Design: To promote high quality, sustainable and inclusive design and support measures which mitigate the predicted effects of climate change.
- LDP Objective 8 To support existing community facilities and suitable community led development.
- LDP Objective 9 To protect, enhance and promote all heritage, historic and cultural assets.
- LDP Objective 10 Biodiversity: To improve ecosystem resilience and connectivity which support habitats and species of principle importance.

The following development plan policies would apply:

- Policy SW4: Settlement Boundaries
- Policy SW9: Planning Obligations
- Policy SW11: Sustainable Design and Placemaking
- Policy SW13: Protecting and Improving Local Community Facilities
- Policy CW1: The Historic Environment
- Policy CW2: Cyfarthfa Heritage Area
- Policy EnW1: Nature Conservation & Ecosystem Resilience
- Policy EnW4: Environmental Protection
- Policy EnW5: Landscape Protection

The following Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is applicable:

- Guidance Note 4 Sustainable Design (July 2013)

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The key considerations in the determination of this application for Listed Building Consent are that the proposed development meets the requirements in legislation as cited above, and those of planning policy at the national and local level that aim to preserve and enhance the unique qualities of Cyfarthfa Castle, a grade I listed building, and its

surrounding listed grounds. As, in this instance, all works are internal, highways, ecological and landscape considerations do not feature in establishing the acceptability or otherwise of the proposed works.

The castle and grounds are central to the history and development of Merthyr Tydfil and notably have high evidential, historic, aesthetic, and communal value in itself and the wider setting, and group value of the listed building and grounds to the town and beyond is considerable. Furthermore, the estate is also recognised as an archaeologically sensitive area as elements of the estate such as stables, kitchen gardens and icehouse have been lost over time and there may be potential for remains to exist. This should not prevent the works proposed within the castle itself.

The proposed works have been assessed in relation to their impact on the significance of the listed building, considering the nature of the proposed intervention and workmanship and the degree to which historic fabric or character is affected.

The proposed works are modest, largely reversible interventions focused on upgrading building services and improving visitor facilities within the Museum and Art Gallery. These areas comprise some of the most significant surviving interiors of the former Crawshay mansion, retaining original joinery, plasterwork, decorative schemes, and spatial arrangements. As such, careful attention has been given to ensuring the continued protection of their special architectural and historic interest.

The lighting report is a technical document that outlines the nature extent and impact of the proposed updating of lighting within the building.

The Listed Building Consent Report first sets an overview of the historic background of the Castle and then goes on to define the extent and limitations of the proposed works. The proposed works are defined as described above, and the document then goes on to detail the extent of the proposed works to the WC's and CCTV, along with what works will be involved with the introduction of Wi-Fi into the building. The document is entirely descriptive and leaves consideration of the impacts of the proposed changes to the Heritage Statement.

The Heritage Statement submitted in support of the application sets out in detail the context of the site and its importance. The report addresses the site's various statutory designations and the relevant national and local planning policies that need to be considered. The report then goes on to consider the development of the site and its historical significance. The report then briefly outlines the proposed development before undertaking a Heritage Impact Assessment in respect of the proposed changes. The methodology evaluates the impact of any measures on the special interest of the identified historic assets, verifying the harm or benefit that would result from the proposed changes, and in the case of the former, the ameliorating effects of any mitigation offered. The level of impact of any proposed alteration is then evaluated against a scale which ranges from High Positive through neutral to High Negative. All of the lighting works and those to the WC's are considered to have no impact. The installation and replacement of CCTV cameras and cabling along with the wi-fi installation is considered to have an impact between minor negative and none.

The proposed WC upgrades will affect what is already modern sanitary ware and historic joinery, though of relatively low value, will be retained. CCTV and Wi-Fi will result in very minor and localised disturbance to the fabric of the building minimising its overall effect.

Existing service routes are used wherever possible and elsewhere new trunking will be discreetly located to minimise its impact. New cameras and discs will also be discreetly located to minimise visual impact. The proposed lighting upgrades will not impact the historic fabric using existing tracking and upgrading existing fittings. Moreover, the upgrades and improvements improve the security and useability of the museum.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposed development aims to upgrade facilities at the castle making the public areas of the building accessible to more people through improvements to the WC's. The overall experience of visitors will be improved through better lighting and by providing Wi-Fi throughout those areas, offering the potential for a greater interactive experience. The improved and increased CCTV is a necessity given the need to improve security at the premises in light of recent theft from the museum. It is notable that the works are considered to have a neutral effect on the historic asset with the exception of the provision of Wi-Fi which has a minor negative impact. However, this minor negative impact is justified on the basis of the improved offer it brings to the function of the building as a museum and learning resource.

The duty to improve the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WBFG Act") has been taken into consideration when determining this application. In reaching the following recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been considered and thus the proposal is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives set out as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

RECOMMENDATION: BE APPROVED subject to the following CONDITIONS

CONDITIONS:

1. The development hereby granted consent shall be begun not later than the expiration of five years beginning with the date of this consent.

Reason - To comply with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents: -

- Site location plan drawing no CCTS-PUR-01-00-DR-A-0001
- Proposed basement plan internal works drawing no. CCRW-PUR-01-01-Dr-A-0199
- Proposed ground floor plan internal works drawing no. CCR-PUR-01-00-Dr-A-0200
- Toilet refurbishment drawing no. 2024-124-001
- Listed Building Consent Report. Version 1. October 2025
- Internal Works Heritage Statement. Issue 1. October 2025
- Lighting Report Cyfarthfa Castle 05.09.2024

Reason - To ensure compliance with the approved plans and clearly define the scope of the permission

3. **Prior to installation** detailed drawings showing the routes for all new cabling shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No new openings shall be formed in historic fabric unless agreed in writing. All works shall be undertaken only in accordance with agreed details.

Reason To preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building in accordance with Policies CW1 and CW2 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

4. All new lighting tracks, CCTV cameras, and Wi-Fi access points shall be installed to allow future removal without damage, reusing existing fixings wherever possible.

Reason - To preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building in accordance with Policies CW1 and CW2 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED

p.p. 

Director of Neighbourhood Services

DATE: 8th December 2025