

Our Ref: 2511/01/s96a

16 April 2025

Planning Service
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Civic Centre
Castle Street
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8AN

Dear Sir/Madam

FULL PLANNING PERMISSION – RETROSPECTIVE PERMISSION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW FOOTBRIDGE, WORKS TO DEMOLISH, ALTER AND EXTEND EXISTING PLATFORM NORTH OF THE RAILWAY LINE AND CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW PLATFORM SOUTH OF THE RAILWAY LINE WITH ASSOCIATED ANCILLARY WORKS (FULL) – P/24/0033

APPLICATION UNDER SECTION 96A (POWER TO MAKE NON-MATERIAL CHANGES TO PLANNING PERMISSION OR PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE) OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 TO AMEND THE WORDING OF PLANNING CONDITIONS 1 AND 3 (APPROVED DOCUMENTS) OF PLANNING PERMISSION P/24/0033

Overview

I write on behalf of Amey Infrastructure Wales (AIW) (the Applicant) to submit this application under Section 96a of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to seek amendments to the wording of Condition 1 and Condition 3 of planning permission P/24/0033 to refer to revised landscape proposals. This application comprises the following:

- Site Location Plan.
- This cover letter which sets out, amongst other things, details of the application.
- Location Plan & Planting Schedules (CODWBD15EMER-AMEY-ELS-XX-DR-LL-001 P06, dated 27/01/2025).
- Landscape Plan (CODWBD15EMER-AMEY-ELS-XX-DR-LL-008 P06, dated 27/01/2025)
- Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan for Quakers Yard Footbridge, CODWBD15EMER-AMEY-00-XX-LX-RP-0001 /P01, dated 20/03/2025.
- Series 3000 Specification Quakers Yard CODWBD15EMER / -AMEY-ELS-XX-SP-001 /P05 dated 20/03/2025.

Further information regarding the relevant planning history at this site together with the justification for the amendments sought is provided below.

Planning History

Planning permission was granted for redevelopment works at the existing Quakers Yard Station on 30 November 2023 under planning reference P/23/0125. Planning conditions 2 and 4 (landscaping details) were discharged on 26 July 2024 (planning reference P/24/0032).

An application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 was subsequently submitted to MTCBC to seek an amendment to the previously approved landscape scheme; this was granted on 15 October 2024 (Planning reference P/24/0033) and resulted in a new planning permission with previous planning conditions 1, 3, and 4 varied and previous condition 2 removed.

Request for Pre-Application Advice (February 2025)

Since the approval of the revised landscape scheme for this station, the project team (including the contracted landscape specialists) has since visited site to enable implementation methods and procurement to be finalised.

It is clear from the site visits that there is substantial evidence of natural regeneration, to the extent that a revised approach to the landscape scheme may be more appropriate (both in terms of the natural ecosystems that are present and future maintenance) which seeks to maintain the visual impact and biodiversity objectives of the currently approved scheme.

Subsequently, a request for formal pre-application advice was submitted to MTCBC on 17 February 2025 to obtain advice regarding the acceptability in principle of a revised scheme (issued in draft form to MTCBC) to implement a landscape scheme that combined natural regeneration with planting interventions (including but not limited to hedgerow, woodland, and specimen tree planting).

The revised landscape proposals better suit the current ecological conditions of the Site; promotes natural regeneration and would reduce further ecological risks associated with bracken clearance that would now be required for more intensive woodland whip/edge planting e.g. impacts to reptiles, nesting birds, invasive species etc.

MTCBC issued its pre-application advice on 06 March 2025. The pre-application advice concluded that the revised landscape proposals could be considered acceptable subject to:

- Bracken control measures to be included in the Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan.
- Distinction to be made between invasive non-native species that can be effectively controlled without the use of chemical pesticides and those that cannot.
- The documents must make it clear that the management of the on and off-site habitats must be undertaken in perpetuity in accordance with Planning Policy Wales.

The pre-application advice also provided commentary on the ongoing light spill issues at the station, particularly with respect to biodiversity impacts. However, it was also stated that such matters would not be pursued by MTCBC (with respect a revised landscape scheme). The Applicant is separately pursuing solutions to reduce light spill at the station in collaboration with the MTCBC environmental health team.

MTCBC also expressed concern regarding the lack of proposed tree planting in its pre-application advice. A follow up email was issued by MTCBC on 01 April 2025 to acknowledge the (draft) revised landscape proposals incorporate a combination of natural regeneration and planting.

Amendments sought under Section 96A (April 2025)

Overview and Justification

The (revised) landscape proposals are as set out in the 'Overview' section of this cover letter. A summary of the proposed changes (to the currently approved landscape proposals) is set out below:

Northern Section

- Plant a double staggered native hedge, with seven plants to each linear metre along the bank slope within the current boundary fence to screen residential properties on Taff Vale.
- Remove proposed Woodland Edge and Woodland Whip planting.
- Let the existing felled plants continue to regenerate naturally. The Applicant's project team has observed this Site for the last four years and natural regeneration is taking place naturally.
- Retain the planned specimen tree planting with slight modifications in their locations to support best screening of the station works.
- Allow the bracken to regenerate naturally.
- Additional topsoiling and meadow mix planting to the rear of the platform area/bottom of the embankment.

Southern Section

- Preserve the proposed woodland edge with minor adjustments in numbers and positioning, amendments to the proposed spacing increasing from 1.5m ctrs to 2m ctrs. Whilst the creation of dense woodland edge habitats around core planting areas might be beneficial for certain species i.e. dormice, this can be achieved by planting at 2500/Ha (2m spacing) and allowing natural colonisation of "rough" woodland edge species such as bramble, and natural regeneration of native shrubs and trees between those planted.
- Strategically position specimen trees in gaps, considering the steep embankment where suitable.
- Avoiding many areas of Himalayan Balsam plants present.
- Allow the bracken to regenerate naturally.

Proposed Amendments to Conditions 1 and 3

The proposed amendments to Condition 1 are set out in the table below.

Condition 1

Current Approved Plans/Documents	Proposed Amendment
Location plan & Planting Schedules CODWBD15EMER-AMEY-ELS-XX-DR-LL-001 P03, dated 31/07/2024	Location plan & Planting Schedules CODWBD15EMER-AMEY-ELS-XX-DR-LL-001 P06, dated 27/01/2025
Landscape plan CODWBD15EMER-AMEY-ELS-XX- DR-LL-008 P03, dated 23/08/2024	Landscape plan CODWBD15EMER-AMEY-ELS-XX- DR-LL-008 P06, dated 27/01/2025
Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan for Quakers Yard Footbridge, CODWBD15EMER-AMEY-00-XX-LX-RP-0001 /P02, dated 27/08/2024	Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan for Quakers Yard Footbridge, CODWBD15EMER-AMEY-00-XX-LX-RP-0001 /P01, dated 20/03/2025
Series 3000 Specification Quakers Yard CODWBD15EMER / -AMEY-ELS-XX-SP-001 / P03 dated 13/08/2024	Series 3000 Specification Quakers Yard CODWBD15EMER / -AMEY-ELS-XX-SP-001 / P05 dated 20/03/2025

All other plans and documents referenced in Condition 1 are to remain unchanged.

Condition 3

The current wording of Condition 3 refers to two of the Condition 1 documents (highlighted yellow in the table above). The proposed amendment is to instead refer to the updated versions of those documents (highlighted green in the table above).

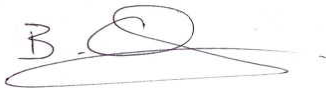
Conclusion

I trust the content of this letter together with accompanying plans and documents is sufficient for this Section 96a application to be validated and subsequently considered.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any queries or require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Bobby Clayton



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