

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No:	P/24/0033
Site Address:	Quakers Yard Railway Station Treharris CF46 5NJ
Development:	Vary the wording of Conditions 1, 3 and 4, and remove Condition 2 of planning consent P/23/0125 to enable an alternative proposed landscaping scheme and flexibility in the delivery of the proposed planting scheme.
Case Officer:	Kate Glover
Site Visit:	21st February 2024
Application Expiry Date:	10th April 2024
Consultation reply date expired:	13th March 2024

APPLICATION SITE

The application relates to Quakers Yard Train Station, within the settlement of Treharris. The site is situated to the south of the residential estate, Taff Vale. The station originally consisted of a single platform with a shelter and a single railway track. There is evidence from Transport for Wales that there was an historic platform on the southern side of the existing track, and historic mapping shows that there was extensive railway infrastructure to the north and south of the existing station in the past which has subsequently been removed.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Permission is sought to remove and vary conditions on planning permission P/23/0125 which granted retrospective planning 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.

Planning application P/23/0125 was granted with conditions listing the approved documents (condition 1) and three other conditions. Condition 2 related to the submission and approval of details relating to soft landscaping, condition 3 sets out a timetable for the implementation of the approved soft landscaping and condition 4 related to the approval of a landscape management plan in relation to the approved soft landscaping plan.

At some point after the granting of planning permission and a previous approval for conditions 2 and 4, a fence was erected in the area to the south of the railway station. The erection of the fence was enabled through permitted development rights. However, the erection of the fence has prompted a change in the approach to soft landscaping. The change involves an increase in planting of meadow grassland and a decrease in the area

for planting in relation to the transition from meadow to woodland. Subsequently there is a change in the species planted for each area. There has been no change in the provision or type of biodiversity enhancement.

This section 73 application seeks to vary conditions 1, 2 and 4 and list the soft landscaping and landscaping management plans to reflect the changes to the landscaping scheme. In relation to condition 3, the variation sought is to set out an alternative timescale for implementation of the approved alternative landscaping and management plans. Condition 3 required the planting scheme to be carried out in the first planting season following the approval of the landscaping scheme. To allow for some flexibility in delivering the landscaping scheme, it is proposed that some of the woodland planting would start as soon as possible (prior to Nov 2024) to help alleviate some visual impacts for residents. The remaining elements of the landscaping scheme would then commence in the next planting season (Nov 2024 to March 2025) and would be completed by the end of March 2026.

PLANNING HISTORY

The relevant planning history is detailed below:

- P/23/0125 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
GRANTED on 30 Nov 2023
- P/24/0032 Discharge of conditions 2 (details of proposed soft landscaping works) and 4 (landscape management plan) of planning consent P/23/0125
GRANTED on 26 Jul 2024

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, a site notice was erected in the vicinity of the site.

CONSULTATION

The following bodies were consulted, and their responses are presented below:

Head of Engineering and Highways – No objection.
Planning Division's Ecologist - No objection.

POLICY CONTEXT

National Development Framework

Future Wales: the National Plan 2040 (February 2021) (Future Wales) sets out a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.

The National Plan sets out 36 policies as part of the spatial strategy and the following are considered most relevant to this proposal:

- Policy 11 National Connectivity
- Policy 12 Regional Connectivity
- Policy 33 National Growth Area – Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys
- Policy 35 Valleys Regional Park

In particular, Policy 12 refers to Regional Connectivity which the Welsh Government will support and invest in. The policy states the Welsh Government will work with Transport for Wales, local authorities, operators and partners to deliver measures to improve regional connectivity including developing the South East Metro, creating new integrated transport systems that provide faster, more frequent and joined-up services using trains, buses and light rail.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 11 (February 2021) sets out the land use 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, and environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and other key legislation.

Chapter 3 (Strategic and Spatial Choices) and Chapter 4 (Active and Social Places) of PPW both highlight the need to minimise the need for travel and reliance upon the car, and to increase walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

Paragraph 3.61 of PPW states that “Adequate and efficient infrastructure, including services such as [...] transport [...] is crucial for economic, social and environmental sustainability. It underpins economic competitiveness and opportunities for households and businesses to achieve socially and environmentally desirable ways of living and working. Infrastructure which is poorly designed or badly located can exacerbate problems rather than solving them.”

Paragraph 4.1.1 of PPW sets out that “The planning system should enable people to access jobs and services through shorter, more efficient and sustainable journeys, by walking, cycling and public transport.”

In relation to transportation infrastructure specifically, paragraph 5.3.1 notes that “The provision of sustainable transport infrastructure is essential in order to build prosperity, tackle the climate emergency, reduce airborne pollution and to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The planning system should facilitate the delivery, decarbonisation, and improvement of transport infrastructure in a way which reduces the need to travel, particularly by private vehicles, and facilitates and increases the use of active and sustainable transport”.

Paragraph 5.3.2 of PPW goes on to state that “Planning authorities should support necessary transport infrastructure improvements, where it can be demonstrated that such measures are consistent with Welsh Government policy to encourage and increase use of sustainable transport and reduce reliance on the private car for daily journeys.”

The policies in PPW are supported by Technical Advice Notes (TANs). The most relevant TAN to this application is as follows:-

- Technical Advice Note 5 Nature Conservation and Planning (September 2009)
- Technical Advice Note 12: Design (March 2016)
- Technical Advice Note 18: Transport (March 2007)

TAN 12 – Design advises that the Assembly Government is strongly committed to achieving the delivery of good design in the built and natural environment, which is fit for purpose and delivers environmental sustainability, economic development, and social inclusion at every scale throughout Wales.

Local Planning Policies

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:

- SW4 Settlement Boundaries
- SW11 Sustainable Design and Placemaking
- SW12 Improving the Transport Network
- SW13 Protecting and Improving Local Community Facilities
- EnW1 Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience
- EnW3 Regionally Important Geological Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Local Nature Reserves and Priority Habitats and Species
- EnW4 Environmental Protection
- EnW5 Landscape Protection
- EcW10 Sustainably Supplying Materials
- EcW13 Mineral Safeguarding

In addition, the application will be determined having regard to the advice contained within the following Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) Notes:

- Note 4, Sustainable Design
- Note 5, Nature and Development

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

This development has already been considered and found to be acceptable under the original planning application (Planning Ref: P/23/0125). Landscaping and landscape management plans were previously agreed under application reference P/24/0032.

This application seeks permission to vary conditions on planning decision notice reference P/23/0125. The implications of this on the relevant policies and material planning considerations must therefore be re-assessed to ensure that the development would still be acceptable with the alterations proposed.

These were considerations relating to impacts on:

- residential amenity
- visual amenity
- landscaping
- ecology
- highway safety

It is noted that planning permission reference P/23/0125 sought retrospective consent for the development and the majority of which had been carried out prior to the determination of the planning application. The impact of the whole development and the matters listed above were considered in the officers delegated report. This variation of condition relates to soft landscaping and the landscape management plan in relation to the development. The report below considers the impact on the matters listed above. In addition, the details of the soft landscaping plan and landscape management plan previously approved under application ref P/24/0032, are noted and the differences between the schemes considered.

The plans, reports and details that have been submitted with this application illustrate a change to the previously approved landscaping details. The changes relate to an increase in meadow grassland planting and a decrease in the area for planting for the transition from meadow to woodland. The alternative scheme results in a change in the number of plant species. The areas set aside for tree planting and the biodiversity enhancement has not changed.

Further to this, when comparing the proposed landscape and landscape management plans with those allowed under application P/24/0032, it is noted that there is no significant difference. Indeed, the change in the approach to soft landscaping and biodiversity enhancement is not materially different.

In terms of the time period for implementation of an acceptable scheme of landscaping and management. The landscaping would not be significantly altered by extending the time for implementation. It is considered appropriate to also include a deadline for completion.

The amendments would not have any additional impact on residential amenity, visual amenity, landscaping, ecology or highway safety.

In conclusion, the proposal would still comply with policies listed above.

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.

Accordingly the following recommendation is made:

RECOMMENDATION: BE APPROVED subject to the following **CONDITIONS:**

1. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:
 - Site Location Plan 2511-01-01
 - Statutory Plan 2511-01-02
 - Planning Drawing TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-C-CV-000101-P01.1
 - Planning Sections TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-C-CV-000151-P01.1
 - Taff Vale Access TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-C-CV-000102-P01.1

- Proposed Steelwork Arrangement TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-S-ST-000104-P01
- Main Span Steelwork Arrangement TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-S-ST-000105-B01
- Ramp Bridge Steelwork Arrangement TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-S-ST-000106-B01
- Upside Ramp Steelwork Arrangement TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-S-ST-000116-B01
- Upside Ramp Unit Steelwork Details A TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-S-ST-000117-B01
- Upside Ramp Unit Steelwork Details B TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-S-ST-000118-B01
- Upside Ramp Unit Steelwork Details C TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-S-ST-000119-B01
- Upside Ramp Unit Steelwork Details D TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-S-ST-000120-B01
- Upside Ramp Unit Steelwork Details E TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-S-ST-000121-B01
- Upside Ramp Unit Steelwork Details F, G and H TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-S-ST-000122-B01
- Down Platform Cross Sections TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-C-CV-000115-B01
- Down Platform Cross Sections TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-C-CV-000116-B01
- Down Platform Tie in Detail TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-C-CV-000119-B01
- Up Platform Cross Sections TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-C-CV-000141-P01
- Up Platform Cross Sections TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-C-CV-000142-B01
- Up Platform Waiting Shelter Details TRAN01-FJD-R1-MER-DDR-C-CV-000147-B01
- Drainage General Arrangement TRAN01-KAW-R1-MER-DDR-D-HW-000001-P02
- Planning Statement (Transport for Wales - April 2023)
- Planning Statement Addendum (Transport for Wales - November 2023)
- Bat Constraints Technical Note: Quakers Yard Station - A01 - 02/11/21
- Bat Tree Report: RS1MER Trees - P03.1. Most recent survey dated 31/05/22
- Dormouse Survey Report: Quakers Yard Station - A01 - 12/10/21
- Ecological Impact Assessment: Quakers Yard Station - P02.1 - 08.03.23
- Planting details containerised species, CODWBD15EMER-AMEY-ELS-XX-DR-LL-005 P02, dated 21/05/2024
- Standard seeding details CODWBD15EMER-AMEY-ELS-XX-DR-LL-004 P02, dated 21/05/2024
- Standard planting details CODWBD15EMER-AMEY-ELS-XX-DR-LL-003 P02, dated 21/05/2024
- Landscape plan CODWBD15EMER-AMEY-ELS-XX-DR-LL-008 P03, dated 23/08/2024
- Location plan & Planting Schedules CODWBD15EMER-AMEY-ELS-XX-DR-LL-001 P03, dated 31/07/2024
- Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan for Quakers Yard Footbridge, CODWBD15EMER-AMEY-00-XX-LX-RP-0001 /P02, dated 27/08/2024
- Series 3000 Specification Quakers Yard CODWBD15EMER / -AMEY-ELS-XX-SP-001 / P03 dated 13/08/2024

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

2. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping as listed in condition 1 shall be completed by 31 March 2026; and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Reason - To ensure that the new development will be visually attractive in the interests of amenity and to accord with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

3. The management of the approved soft landscaping works as listed under condition 1, shall be carried out in accordance with the Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan for Quakers Yard Footbridge (Ref CODWBD15EMER-AMEY-00-XX-LX-RP-0001 /P02, dated 27/08/2024) and Series 3000 Specification Quakers Yard (Ref CODWBD15EMER / -AMEY-ELS-XX-SP-001 / P03 dated 13/08/2024).

Reason - To ensure that the new development will be visually attractive in the interests of amenity and to accord with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED


Director of Neighbourhood Services

DATE: 15.10.2024