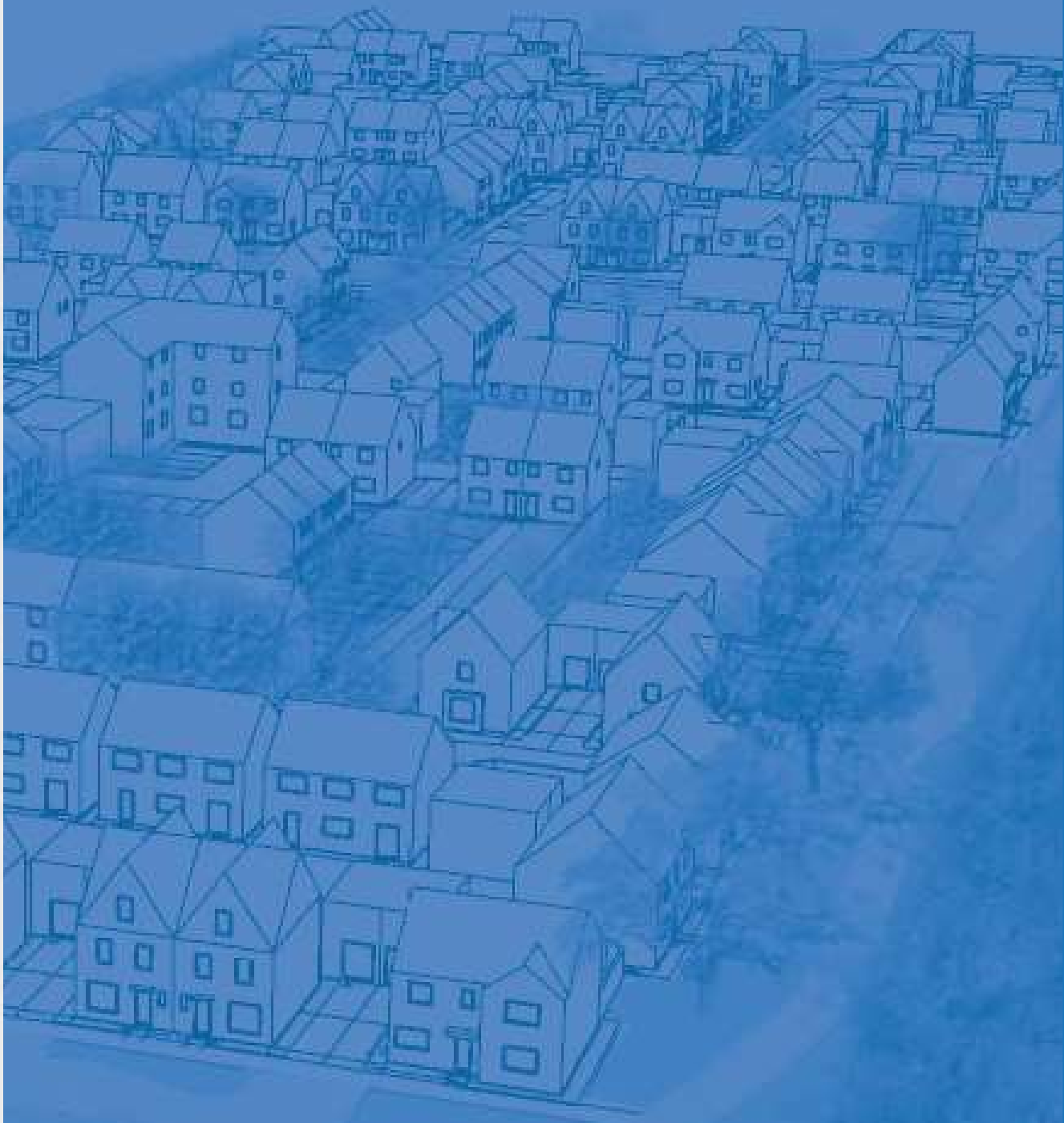




DAVIES
HOMES 

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



DRAGON PARK

ABERCANAID, MERTHYR TYDFIL

ISSUE 02 | FEBRUARY 2023

PROJECT TEAM

Developer



Designer



Planning



Engineering



Transport



Ecology



Landscape



DOCUMENT STATUS

Report ref: 2124_DP_DAS_Feb 2023

Issue: 02

Date: February 2023

Status: Planning

CONTENTS

1. OVERVIEW

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Scope & Structure
- 1.3 Site & Location
- 1.4 Development Summary

2. VISION

3. SITE CONTEXT ANALYSIS

- 3.1 Site Connectivity
- 3.2 Historic Settlement
- 3.3 Neighbourhood
- 3.4 Urban Form & Character
- 3.5 Site Description
- 3.6 Constraints & Opportunities
- 3.7 Key Design Influences

4. CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 Placemaking Principles
- 4.2 Design Development

5. THE PROPOSAL

- 5.1 The Proposed Layout
- 5.2 Land Use & Amount
- 5.3 Character & Place
- 5.5 Access & Movement
- 5.6 Built Form & Townscape
- 5.7 Architectural Detailing
- 5.8 Public Realm Strategy
- 5.9 Landscape, Biodiversity & Amenity
- 5.10 Proposed Mitigation & Enhancement

- 5.11 Proposed Surface Water & Drainage Strategy
- 5.12 Community Safety
- 5.13 Energy & Resource Efficiency

6. PLANNING & TECHNICAL

- 6.1 Policy Context
- 6.2 Topography & Use
- 6.3 Geology & Soils
- 6.4 Flooding
- 6.5 Surface Water
- 6.6 Flood Mitigation
- 6.7 Noise & Vibration
- 6.8 Landscape & Views
- 6.9 Ecology
- 6.10 Arboriculture
- 6.11 Movement & Access
- 6.12 Utilities & Infrastructure

7. SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Design & Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared by Hammond Architectural Ltd on behalf of Davies Homes. It supports a full planning application for the comprehensive redevelopment of the former Hoover factory site, Abercainaid, Merthyr.

The scheme is herein referred to as "Dragon Park" and will deliver 200 new homes, 20 (10%) of which will be affordable homes, including public open space, landscaping, access, parking, and associated works.

1.2 SCOPE & STRUCTURE

TAN 12 defines a DAS as 'a communication tool which outlines how the design of the proposal has been considered from the outset of the development process and how the objectives of good design have been used to inform this'.

The purpose of this statement is to provide an overview of the design journey undertaken to date, describing and illustrating how the design proposals respond to the character and context of the site and meet the objectives of good placemaking and design.

This document is organised into seven parts and covers the key requirements outlined within the Welsh Government (WG) Guidance: Design & Access Statements in Wales, April 2017:

- Section 1: Introduces the document, the site and provides a summary of the proposed development.
- Section 2: Presents the vision for the site, explaining the aims and objectives that should guide the development.
- Section 3: Summarises and interprets the site and context analysis, undertaken in accordance with Welsh Government guidance.
- Section 4: Describes and illustrates the concept development stage, maps out a framework for the development.
- Section 5: Presents the proposal, explaining how the scheme meets the objectives of good design.
- Section 6: Documents planning and technical considerations which have been an integral part of the design process. An overview of the design development and engagement process is provided.
- Section 7: Concludes the DAS with a summary of the development.

1.3 SITE & LOCATION

The site lies within the settlement of Abercainaid, south of Merthyr Tydfil and directly adjacent to the River Taff.

The site is immediately surrounded by light industrial units to the north and west with residential housing to the south. A small area of woodland and the Taff Cycle Trail are located to the southwest of the site.

The land within the proposed site boundary is fairly flat with a lower-level plateau present to the southern half of the site.

The site was formerly used for light industrial purposes. The site has been cleared leaving behind foundations and rubble piles across the site.

A new flood alleviation drainage swale and discharge point into the River Taff has been constructed around the northern, western and southern perimeter of the site. The drainage works help to reduce the risk of flooding within the proposed development site.

THE SITE

River Taff

THE SITE

Factory

Taff Trail
Cycle Path

Pond Row

Unnamed Road



1.4 DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

Mixed tenure residential homes

Dragon Park will provide 200 new homes. The residential development will comprise 1 and 2 bed apartments, flats over garages, 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedroom dwellings. The scheme will include 20 (10%) affordable homes to meet local needs.

Movement & Connectivity

The main site access will be from the Unnamed road in the south.

A secondary pedestrian and potential emergency vehicle access point will be provided via the existing northern access, connecting to the unnamed road. A right of way for Mon Motors will be provided.

Foot and cycle path provision will connect to the wider movement network. A new western pedestrian and cycle connection is proposed, with the potential for an additional riverside connection to the north identified.

A clear street hierarchy integrated with street level green infrastructure and suDS will encourage sustainable travel and aiding legibility and wayfinding.

Infrastructure

The proposed development incorporates and adheres to utility easements and no-build zones.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), comprising a mix of rain gardens, swales, and water attenuation areas will be integrated across the site.

The development will include highway, shared surfaces and incorporate new utilities.

Landscape & Open Space

The landscape proposals will provide an attractive setting to the proposed housing and integrate the development into the surrounding community.

Large areas of multifunctional open space and green corridors will be provided, incorporating recreational routes and natural, active play areas across the site.

- The '[Southern Gateway](#)' will provide a welcoming entrance to the site. At this key corner location existing vegetation will be retained and a diversity of new habitats will be created.
- The Southern Gateway, forms the southern entrance to '[Channel Park](#)', a new multifunctional, recreational wildlife corridor wrapping around the western edge of the site. This combined flood diversion channel; service easement and swale has been recently seeded with wildflower mix and will enhance wildlife connectivity around the site and to wider countryside.
- '[Central Park](#)' will traverse the site east to west and could form part of a wider cross valley GI corridor.
- Along the eastern boundary a new '[Riverside Trail](#)' will provide an attractive walking and cycling experience, events along the route will celebrate the relationship with the River Taff.
- The '[Northern Gateway](#)' will be attractively landscaped to mark a pedestrian link to Taff and Trevithick Trails, Rhydycar Leisure Centre and Merthyr Tydfil.



Accommodation Schedule					
House Name	Code	Beds	(N/A) ft ²	No of Units	Total Area
Open Market Units					
1 Bed Apartment	APT1	1	545	9	4905
Warwick	WAR	2	681	13	8853
Flat Over Garage	FOG	2	774	2	1548
Baglan	RAG	3	818	15	12270
Ascot	ASC	3	1018	18	18324
Hereford	HER	3	1055	4	4220
Chepstow	CHE	3	1057	28	29596
Rockfield	RDC	3	1024	17	17408
Cottage	COT	3	1040	7	7280
Canterbury	CAN	3	1274	14	17836
Harrowgate	HAR	4	1360	4	5440
Radleigh	RAD	4	1534	14	21476
Lynton	LYN	4	1520	15	22800
Windermere	WIN	4	1517	14	21238
Kingsbridge	KNI	5	2043	6	12258
Sub Total				180	205487
Affordable Units					
House/Flat Name	Code	Beds	(N/A) ft ²	No of Units	Total Area
Social Rented Units					
Flats					
1 Bed Apartment	APT2	1	545	9	4905
2.1.1 GF	2.1.1	1	557	2	1114
2.1.1 PF	2.1.1	1	624	2	1248
Houses					
4.2.1	4.2.1	2	861	7	6027
Sub Total				20	18294
Total				200	218781

ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN

2 VISION

Dragon Park will be an accessible, inclusive and resilient neighbourhood community set within a distinctive, enriched environment that celebrates the areas natural and cultural connections.

URBAN SQUARE



Creating a clearly defined, legible townscape, where the relationship between the buildings and landscape support community interaction and stewardship.

HEALTHY LIFESTYLES



COMMUNITY STREET

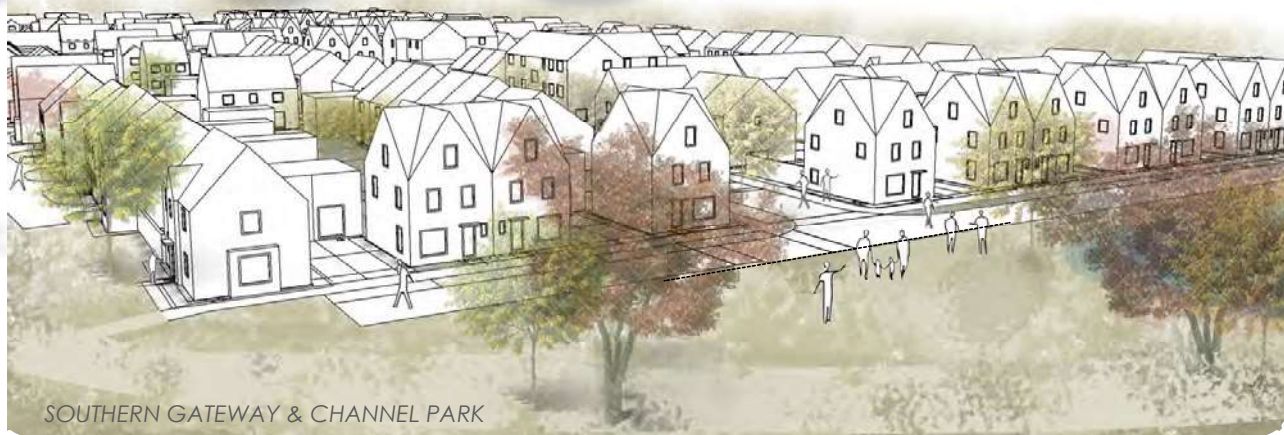


Delivering a range of high-quality homes set within a highly appealing, greener and resilient landscape setting.



PEOPLE & NATURE OVERLAP

DRAGON PARK
DESIGN & ACCESS
STATEMENT



SOUTHERN GATEWAY & CHANNEL PARK



Strong sense of place and identity, drawing reference to the areas natural and cultural heritage in a distinctive and unique way.



A SENSE OF BELONGING



Seamlessly connecting with the wider GI network, creating a variety of multifunctional green spaces that support people's well-being and happiness.

SUPPORTS A DIVERSE COMMUNITY



SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL



Supporting sustainable behaviours, where residents can walk or cycle to school, shops and access community facilities.



CENTRAL PARK

3.1 SITE CONNECTIVITY

The development site is situated at Dragon Parc, Abercanaid. Abercanaid is a small village in the county borough of Merthyr Tydfil in South Wales,

The site forms part of the former Hoover Factory Strategic Regeneration Area. It is located approximately 500m north of the centre of Abercanaid and approximately 1.8km south of Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre.

Two access points currently exist to the site, one to the north via the Abercanaid Industrial Estate roundabout and one from the south via the roundabout connecting to Stanfield Close. Both roads are unnamed.

The majority of roads within the vicinity of the site have a footpath on one or both sides of the carriageway that provides a continuous link between the site and the surrounding areas and facilities.

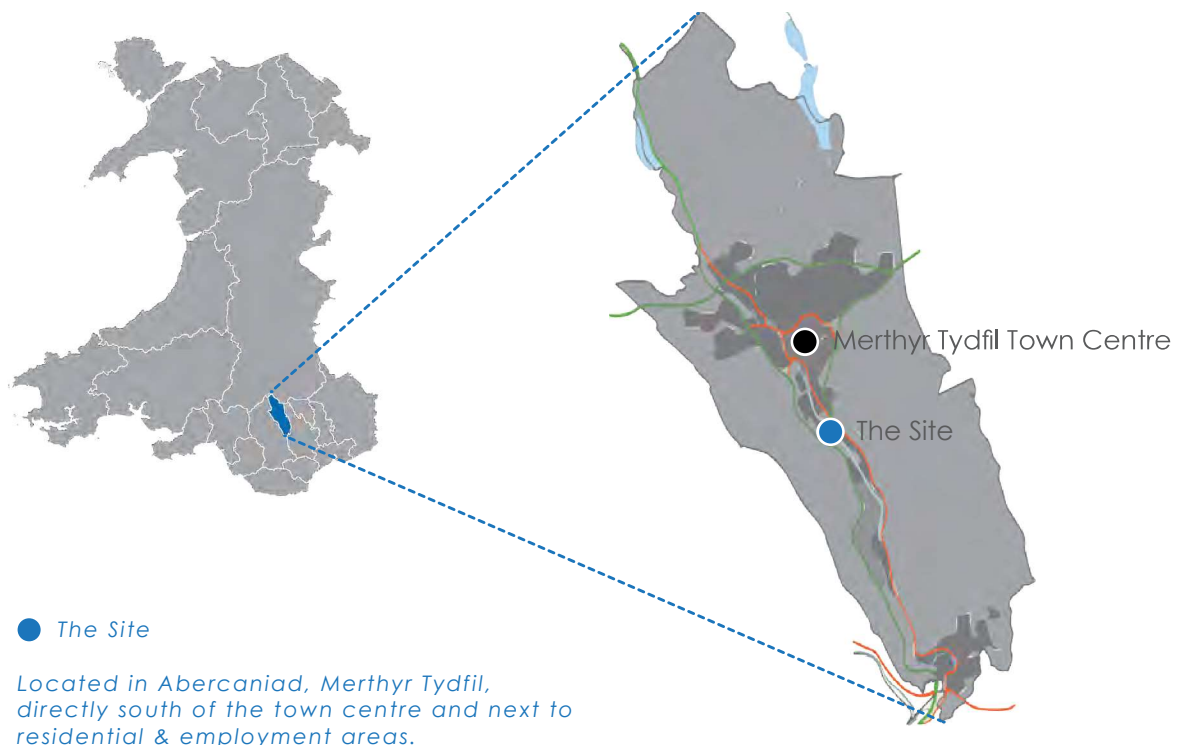
There are several cycle routes within the vicinity of the site, including National Cycle Network Route 8 (to the west) and 477 (to the east).

The existing foot and cycle routes provide a largely traffic free routes between the site and Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre (to the north); Local employment areas to the north, south and east of the site; and Local facilities within Abercanaid, Troedyrhiw and Aberfan to the south.

There is a bus stop situated immediately to the south of the site. The closest train station to the site is Pentre-Bach, which is located approximately 950m southeast of the proposed development site. The station is located on the Merthyr Line, with services to Merthyr Tydfil (to the north) and Cardiff and Barry Island (to the south).

The site is thereby highly accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.

Site Location



3.2 HISTORIC SETTLEMENT

The site is located to the south of Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre, north of Abercanaid village and west of Pentrebach.

Merthyr Town Centre

Merthyr Tydfil is the main town in Merthyr Tydfil County Borough, Wales. It is located circa 23 miles (37 km) north of Cardiff.

Merthyr was once the economic capital of Wales, the heart of a thriving iron and coal industry that was the most advanced in the world.

The demand for iron led to the rapid expansion of Merthyr's iron operations and supported the establishment of the settlement, with schools for their workers.

Several railway companies established routes linking the works with ports and other parts of Britain. They included the Brecon and Merthyr Railway, Vale of Neath Railway, Taff Vale Railway and Great Western Railway.

The population of Merthyr reached 51,949 in 1861, but then went into decline for several years.

After the Second World War, declining coal and iron industries gave space for new businesses to start up. Hoover and other light industrial companies located in Merthyr.

Abercanaid

The site is located to the north Abercanaid village, Merthyr Tydfil. The majority of the residential area was built in the 1860s to sustain the collieries.

The Taff Trail runs through the village, adjacent to the path of the disused Glamorganshire Canal.

The canal was constructed around 1800 and formed an important transportation corridor for iron and coal. The route fell into decline following construction of the railways and eventually became disused.

Abercanaid rail station was one of the stations on the Quakers Yard and Merthyr Railway. The line and the station became disused in the 1960s.

Pentre-Bach

Pentrebach is a small village that lies on the eastern side of the River Taff opposite Abercanaid.

The village was founded at the time the Plymouth Ironworks was built in 1763. The original Merthyr Tramroad, built in 1802, ran alongside the settlement.

Pentrebach railway station opened in 1886 on the standard gauge Taff Vale Railway which runs from Cardiff to Merthyr Tydfil alongside the River Taff. The original purpose of the railway was to carry iron ore to Cardiff Docks.

The Plymouth Ironworks closed in 1882 and the South Duffryn Colliery ceased production in 1940.

After the war, new industries were attracted to the village.

Hoover Factory

The area was previously home to the Hoover factory. The initial workforce consisted of only 350 people but throughout the years, the growth of the company saw this figure rise to 5,000 in the 1960s and 70s. At its peak, the Hoover Factory was the largest employer in the borough.

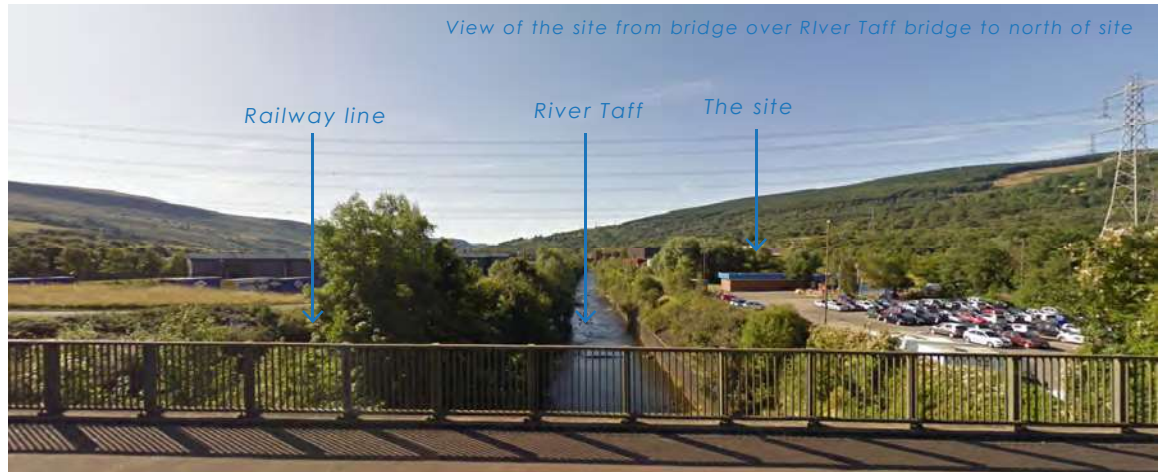
In March 2009, Hoover confirmed that it was to cease production of washing machines and other laundry products at the factory. More than 330 jobs were lost at the site in 2009, and since then large sections have stood empty.

Following the closures on site, the buildings were left to deteriorate and became viewed as an eyesore. Ambitions to regenerate the area and create a new neighbourhood were formulated.

3.3 NEIGHBOURHOOD

Community Facilities

The local amenities within walking distance of the site include:





An aerial shot of the Hoover factory at Pentrebach, Merthyr in 1988. Website source: <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/local-news/gallery/archive-images-hoover-factory-merthyr-7495736>



Aerial view of plan showing former Hoover Factory buildings © Google Earth 2001



Aerial view of plan showing single redundant Hoover building © Google Earth 2016



Aerial view of site showing cleared brownfield site © Google Earth 2022

- Leisure facilities
- Retail facilities
- Recreational ground
- Places of worship
- Public Transport infrastructure
- Supermarket
- Education facilities
- Post Office
- Police station
- Library

Local Schools

Abercanaid Community School was opened in January 2003. The school is situated on the site of Abercanaid Park.

Greenfield Special Education School and Integrated Children's Centre is located to the south of Pentrebach.

The schools act feed into Afon Taf High School, Cyfarthfa High School and Bishop Hedley High School.

Employment

The strong growth of employment in Merthyr remains evident, with many light manufacturing and consumer-based businesses located around the site.

Hoover Regeneration Area

The site is located within the 'Hoover Strategic Regeneration area'.

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Welsh Government and Transport for

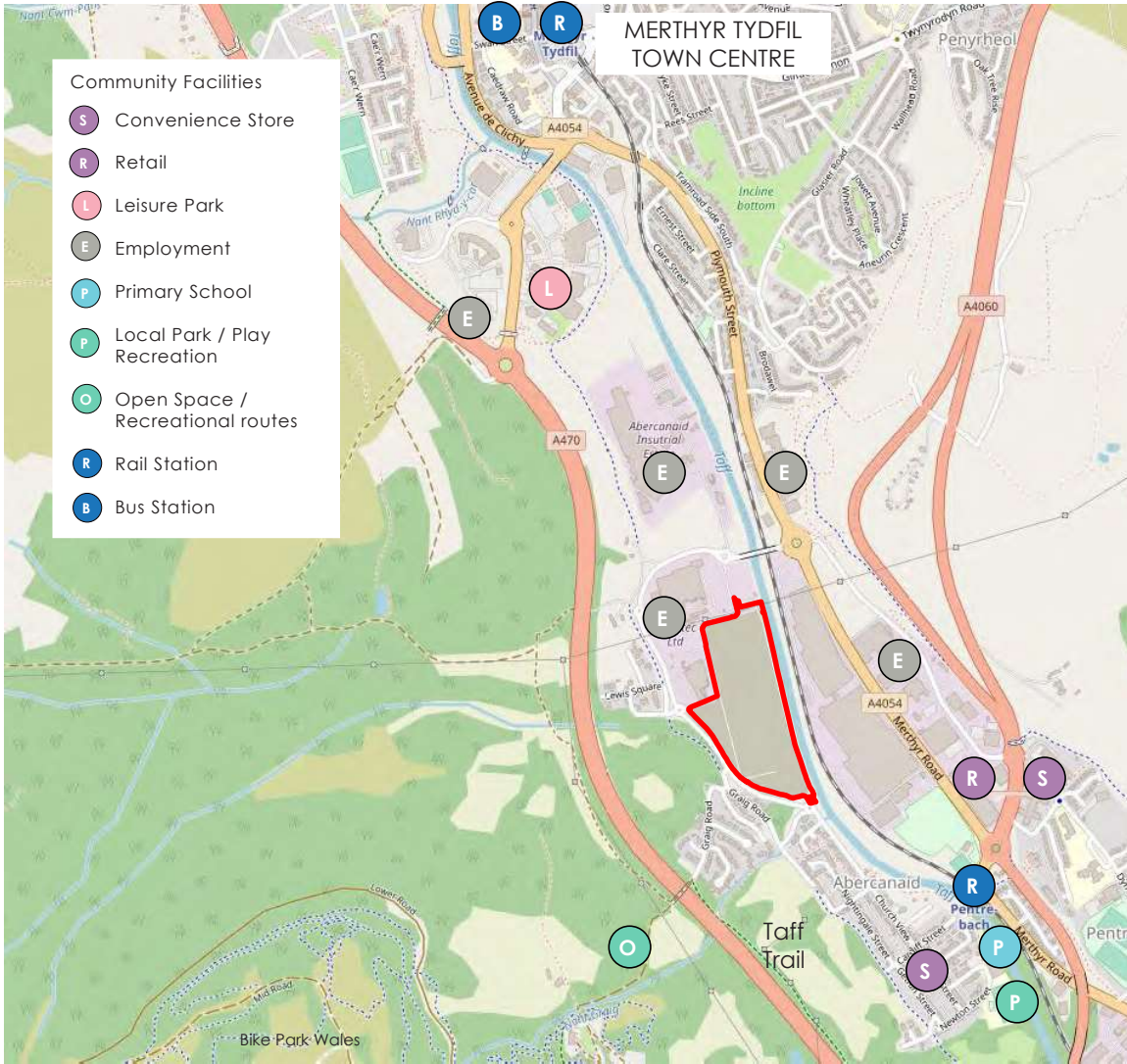
Wales commissioned a mixed-use masterplan and development case which led to the formal recognition of the area as a key strategic development site within the Local Development Plan.

As part of the allocation of the Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area (HSRA), 9 hectares of land is allocated to contribute 440 dwellings towards the LDP strategy. This 9 hectares forms part of the larger Hoover Factory Site (approximately 16 hectares), bounded to the West by the River Taff, and the east by the A4054.

Master planning work has been undertaken to demonstrate that the 440 dwellings proposed are deliverable on the site to the east of the River Taff; alongside other proposed uses including public transport improvements associated with the South Wales Metro scheme; substantial open space provision; and new convenience retail floorspace.

Redevelopment of the Hoover Factory Site is a key part of the wider HSRA and is integral to success of the LDP strategy.

SITE CONTEXT



Aerial view of Abercainid School, playing field and play area located to south of site

Rhyd Y Car Leisure park



Merthyr Tydfil Bus Station



3.4 FORM & CHARACTER

The site is located to north of Abercanaid, an area characterised by two storey terraced housing. The dominant street pattern of the area is broadly set on a grid, with long street. The grid is fragmented in several locations.

Streets are typically narrow, with on-street parking and void of front gardens, privacy strips or greenery (e.g. Chapel Street).

The more recent development is characterised by lower density detached and semi-detached housing served of lower order streets and cul-de-sacs, with front gardens and drives.

These areas lack a clearly legible network of spaces and streets and contain limited areas of green space and planting. (e.g. Anthony Grove). Homes within Abercanaid are typically 2-storey, with the occasional bungalows interspersed.

Houses typically have pitched roofs. With ridge lines typically running parallel to the street with the occasional gable fronted property.

The terraced properties are typically a mix of stone and render with occasional brickwork detail or contrasting cills. The more recent development is typically a

mix of brick and render (e.g. Waunwyllt Court).

There is a large colour palette in the surrounding area due to the range of renders used to personalise properties. These tend to be pastel shades, although there are some bolder colours.

A variety of brown and red brick colours exist. Roof colours vary with a mix of red, brown and/or grey slate / concrete tiles.

Chimneys are an occasional feature of terraced properties, although they are absent from the newer properties.

Where front boundary treatments exist, they are typically low stone/brick walls or the occasional open boundary/ fence.

Properties towards the edge of the settlement typically back onto green space.

Light industrial sheds are located north and north-west of the site.

Church View leading to Chapel Street

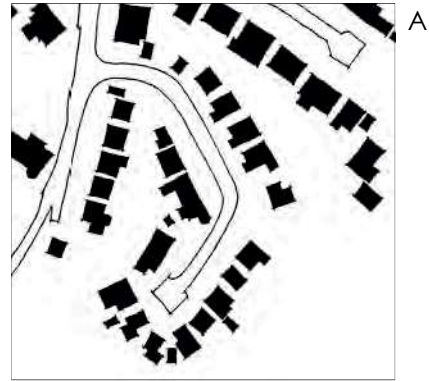


Anthony Grove

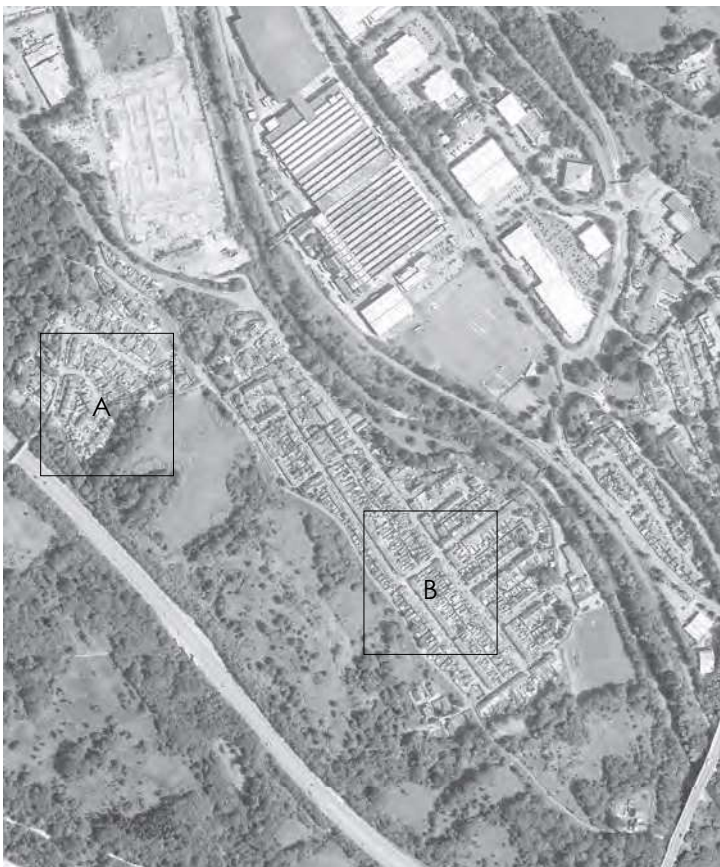


FIGURE GROUND

Anthony Grove



Gethin Street



Lessons for Dragon Park:

- Create a masterplan framework for the site that learns from the past.
- The proposed development should have a cohesive, townscape character.
- A strong network of green streets and spaces should be created that make the area legible and permeable.
- Homes form should positively front and activate the outlying edges of the site.
- Opportunities to connect into the existing movement network should be maximised.
- Building heights should be typically 2 storeys, in keeping with the surrounding area. Opportunities to increase to 3 storeys could be considered to help create a sense of place and aid legibility and wayfinding.

3.5 SITE DESCRIPTION

The land at Dragon Parc was formerly a factory site in Abercanaid, Merthyr Tydfil.

Informed by site walk over surveys, the site can be described as follows (see also aerial plan, page 19):

- 1 The brownfield site comprises a roughly rectangular shaped parcel of land with the southern end of the site approximately 4m lower than the rest. Both areas of the site are generally flat.
- 2 The site is bound by an unnamed road to the north, west and south, leading to Abercanaid from the A4054. The character of the road is urban with predominantly residential properties to the south and commercial/employment uses to the north.
- 3 The River Taff forms the eastern boundary to the site.
- 4 The south-western edge of the site slopes steeply upwards to the adjacent road which lies outside of the site boundary.
- 5 The site has been cleared leaving behind foundations. The majority of the site is concrete hardstanding and rubble which is present mainly in the centre to the southern half of the site.
- 6 Buildings which previously stood within the site boundary have now been demolished.
- 7 Some walls and hardstanding areas exist to the south and west of the site boundary.
- 8 A tarmac road runs around the entire site boundary in a rectangular shape.
- 9 A tree line is present along the west and south-western edge of the site. This thickens into a narrow corridor of woodland along the spur of land westwards.
- 10 Parcels of semi-improved grassland are present between the tree line and road along the western edge of the site. The grassland appears to be currently unmanaged and bramble scrub is beginning to encroach across it.
- 11 A small pond is located along the western side of the site. The pond is densely overgrown and difficult to access fully around its perimeter. The pond appeared to be choked with leaf litter from overhanging trees with a layer of water potentially 10cm deep on top.
- 12 The land to the north of the site creates a varied mosaic due mostly to a lack of on-site management. Marshy and neutral grassland are present with a band of scrubby woodland encroaching into the grassland areas. A section of marshy grassland to the north of this area appears to be wetter in nature and dominated by bulrush. Based on its small size this parcel of land is thought to be marginal vegetation.
- 13 Metal fencing forms the very northern and eastern boundary of the site.
- 14 New fencing has been erected along the very north-eastern edge of the site which allows parking for an adjacent factory.
- 15 A dense stand of Japanese knotweed was noted to the south-east of the site along the access road off the adjacent small roundabout. Some scattered stands of knotweed were also observed along the banks of the River Taff to the south east of the site. Knotweed appears to be present along most of the riverbank adjacent to the site.
- 16 Development enabling flood mitigation works were completed in early 2022 along the northern, western and southern perimeter of the site (not shown on aerial map, refer to photographs on page 20).

THE SITE



Factory

River Taff

THE SITE

Taff Trail
Cycle Path

Pond Row

Unnamed Road

Site access from south



View along recently constructed drainage channel (western boundary)



View of mature vegetation to west of drainage channel

