

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015-2016

**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
COMMITTEE**

18 FEBRUARY 2016

**REPORT OF THE
DIRECTOR LEGAL AND
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

Agenda Item No.5(3)

**SITE MEETING
APPLICATION NO. 12/0929
DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 600
RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS AND
ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT,
INCLUDING RETAIL/COMMUNITY
FACILITIES (MAXIMUM GROSS
INTERNAL FLOOR SPACE 464 SQUARE
METRES), TOGETHER WITH
ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE
WORKS, PROVISION OF FORMAL AND
INFORMAL OPEN SPACE, RETENTION
OF WILDLIFE HABITATS, AND
DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS
AND STRUCTURES AT TRANE FARM
(OUTLINE APPLICATION WITH ALL
MATTERS RESERVED).
APPLICATION ACCOMPANIED BY AN
ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT
RECEIVED 23 AUGUST 2012 PLUS ES
ADDENDUM AND TRANSPORT
ASSESSMENT RECEIVED 6TH
NOVEMBER 2015 (AMENDED PLANS
AND DESCRIPTION OF 6TH NOVEMBER
2015), LAND AT TRANE FARM,
TONYREFAIL**

Author: Mrs.Z.Maisey, Principal Officer, Committee Services

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To consider the outcome of the site inspection in respect of the above-mentioned proposal and to determine the application, as outlined in the report of the Service Director, Planning, attached at Appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATION

To approve the application in accordance with the recommendation of the Service Director, Planning subject to a Section 106 Agreement as outlined in Appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In accordance with Minute No.145(3) (Development Control Committee, 21st January 2016), a site inspection was undertaken on Wednesday, 3rd February, 2016 to consider the impact of the proposed access arrangements to the site.
- 3.2 The meeting was attended by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Development Control Committee (County Borough Councillors G.Stacey and M.Griffiths respectively) and Committee Members - County Borough Councillors P.Jarman, (Mrs) S.J.Jones, R.Lewis, (Mrs) A.Roberts, (Mrs) J.S.Ward, P.Wasley and E.Webster.
- 3.3 Apologies for absence were received from Committee Members - County Borough Councillors L.M.Adams, (Mrs) L. De Vet, S. Rees and G.P.Thomas and Non-Committee/Local Member – County Borough Councillor (Mrs) E.Hanagan.
- 3.4 Members met in close proximity to the roundabout on Gilfach Road, Tonyrefail off which the main access to the site would be gained and were informed by the Development Control Officer that the amended plans now before them had been presented by the applicant in order to address concerns regarding the originally proposed access arrangements via Trane Farm Lane. Members were shown an illustrative master plan that accompanies the application indicating that the development was envisaged in the form of three main Zones (A, B & C) which would provide up to 600 dwellings and ancillary development on site. It was noted that Trane Farm Lane was no longer proposed to provide vehicular access to the development site and as such had been omitted from the application.
- 3.5 The proposed distributor road servicing the site from Gilfach roundabout which it was pointed out had always been part of the the application, had now been updated to show:
 - A carriage width of 7.3m
 - A 2m wide footway to the east of the carriageway
 - A 3.5m wide shared cycle/footway to the west of the carriageway

The proposed vehicular access to the site would include pedestrian facilities leading to and from the development as well as across the

- access. In addition, a new footway would be constructed along the northern kerb line of the A4093 Gilfach Road connecting the western part of the site with the Gilfach Road roundabout and Tonyrefail. Also, as part of the development, it was proposed to maintain and enhance the existing footpath/bridleways across the site.
- 3.6 The Transportation Officer confirmed no highway objection had been raised in respect of the proposal. He stated that the submitted information, documents and plans had been reviewed and considered acceptable subject to mitigation measures in relation to off-site highway improvements as well as within the site curtilage. The mitigation measures and satisfactory provision of infrastructure within the site curtilage would be addressed by means of planning conditions.
- 3.7 Members made reference to the number of serious traffic accidents that had occurred on Gilfach Road and were informed by the Transportation Officer that he was aware of the accident record at this location and mitigation works at the roundabout would be put in place in the interests of road safety. Gilfach Road roundabout would be significantly re-designed to accommodate a new arm to provide access to Zones B & C of the development site and would incorporate safety improvements identified as part of the road safety audit process.
- 3.8 A Member expressed concern about the development proposed for Zone A at the western end of the site which she considered might lead to the coalescence of Hendreforgan and Tonyrefail. She also had road safety concerns about the proposed independent access arrangements to Zone A, off Gilfach Road.
- 3.9 Following queries regarding the impact on footways and the need to facilitate safe and satisfactory pedestrian access to local community facilities such as Schools, Members were informed that provision of a continuous footway along the A4093 Gilfach Road linking with the existing footway network was included in the application. Officers were asked whether a survey had been undertaken in the area to establish the number of users of the footways especially children walking to schools. In response, Members were advised that this would be investigated.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

As amended by

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

18 FEBRUARY 2016

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

SITE MEETING

APPLICATION NO. 12/0929 DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 600 RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS AND ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING RETAIL/COMMUNITY FACILITIES (MAXIMUM GROSS INTERNAL FLOOR SPACE 464 SQUARE METRES), TOGETHER WITH ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS, PROVISION OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL OPEN SPACE, RETENTION OF WILDLIFE HABITATS, AND DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES AT TRANE FARM (OUTLINE APPLICATION WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED).

APPLICATION ACCOMPANIED BY AN ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT RECEIVED 23 AUGUST 2012 PLUS ES ADDENDUM AND TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT RECEIVED 6TH NOVEMBER 2015 (AMENDED PLANS AND DESCRIPTION OF 6TH NOVEMBER 2015), LAND AT TRANE FARM, TONYREFAIL

Minute No.145(3) (Development Control Committee, 21 January 2016)

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015-2016

	Agenda Item No.10
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE	APPLICATION NO: 12/0929 DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 600 RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS AND ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING RETAIL/COMMUNITY FACILITIES (MAXIMUM GROSS INTERNAL FLOOR SPACE 464 SQUARE METRES), TOGETHER WITH ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS, PROVISION OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL OPEN SPACE, RETENTION OF WILDLIFE HABITATS, AND DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES AT TRANE FARM (OUTLINE APPLICATION WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED). APPLICATION ACCOMPANIED BY AN ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT RECEIVED 23 AUGUST 2012 PLUS ES ADDENDUM AND TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT RECEIVED 6TH NOVEMBER 2015 (AMENDED PLANS AND DESCRIPTION OF 6TH NOVEMBER 2015), LAND AT TRANE FARM, TONYREFAIL.
21 JANUARY 2016	
REPORT OF: SERVICE DIRECTOR PLANNING	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

Members are asked to consider the report below and determine the application in accordance with the advice and recommendation.

2. RECOMMENDATION

To **APPROVE** the application in accordance with the advice given and subject to a Section 106 Agreement.

3. BACKGROUND

This application was originally reported to a meeting of the Development Control Committee on 16 April 2015 with a recommendation that it be approved (see **Appendix A**). At that meeting Members deferred determination of the application for a site visit which was held on 28 April 2015 and the matter was reported back to Committee on 14 May 2015 (see **Appendix B**). At that meeting Members resolved in accordance with the oral recommendation of the Service Director Planning to defer the application to receive the outcome of further discussions taking place with the applicant regarding alternative access arrangements (Minute 202 refers).

Since that date the applicant has engaged in further discussions with officers and has amended the planning proposal in response to concerns of the proposed access arrangements insofar as they relate to Trane Farm Lane.

The key changes to the development proposals are as follows:

- **The site is subject to revised access arrangements. It is now proposed that a single point of access is provided from Gilfach roundabout, with Trane Lane no longer proposed to provide vehicular access to the development site.**
- **The proposed distributor road serving the site from Gilfach roundabout has been upgraded to show:**
 - **A carriageway width of 7.3m**
 - **A 2m wide footway to the east of the carriageway**
 - **A 3.5m wide shared cycle/footway to the west of the carriageway**
- **Trane Lane is no longer proposed to provide vehicular access to the development site and as such has been omitted from the application red-line. It will be retained in its current form to provide access to the existing residents and emergency access to the development site. In order to facilitate its use for emergency vehicles Trane Lane will be tied into the distributor road at its northern end where the two would intersect and provided with drop bollards in order to prevent its unauthorised use. The maximum number of residential units has been revised down to 600 units.**
- **The potential uses for the commercial unit has been expanded to include for community use**
- **As a consequence of the omission of Trane Lane from the application red-line the site area has reduced to 32.39 ha.**

An **UPDATED APPLICATION REPORT** that incorporates and considers these changes and the responses to them is presented below.

APPLICATION DETAILS

This application is made in outline with all matters of detail reserved at this stage. The proposals seeks in principle consent for the development of up to 600 dwellings and ancillary development, including retail / community facilities (maximum gross internal floorspace of 464 square metres), together with associated infrastructure works, provision of formal and informal open space, retention of wildlife habitats, and demolition of existing buildings and structures at Trane Farm.

The illustrative master plan that accompanies the application indicates that development is envisaged in the form of three main zones as follows:

- Zone A – 135 residential units on a parcel of land to the west of the site (adjacent to Gilfach Road and north of Mountain View)
- Zone B – 263 residential units on the central portion of the site (north of Gilfach Road roundabout and west of Trane Lane)
- Zone C – 202 residential units on the eastern section of the site (east of Trane Lane and north of Bryngolau).

Zones B and C, which comprise the majority of the development area of the overall site, the illustrative master plan indicates several interconnected parcels of residential development, which could correspond to phases. Much of the existing field boundary hedgerows and trees would be retained as natural breaks and corridors between the parcels of development. Also, the ecologically sensitive wildlife habitat land and features would be retained and managed as part of the proposal.

Zone A would be served by a self-contained access directly off Gilfach Road west of Gilfach roundabout. This zone will be accessed independently of the remainder of the site.

Zones B and C will be served and connected via an internal road network from Gilfach Road roundabout. It is proposed to construct a new arm to the north into the site off the Gilfach Road roundabout, which will serve as the principal access.

The proposed vehicular access to the site will include pedestrian facilities leading to and from the development as well as across the access. In addition, it is proposed to construct a new footway along the northern kerb line of the A4093 Gilfach Road, connecting the western part of the site with the Gilfach Road roundabout and Tonyrefail. Also, as part of the development, it is proposed to maintain and enhance the existing footpath/bridleways across the site.

In accordance with current requirements for outline planning applications the applicant has indicated the scale parameters as follows:

	Width		Depth	
	Min	Max	Min	Max
Standard residential building	5m	50m	5m	15m
Corner residential building (incorporating two elevations)	9m	60m	5m	15m

Building heights are expected to generally be two storeys, though it is expected split level dwellings will be used in the steeper parts of the site where three-storey town houses may be utilised.

The application is accompanied by the following:

An Environmental Statement that covers the following topics:

- The EIA process.
- Planning policy context
- Site context
- Project Description and consideration of alternatives
- Landscape and visual impact
- Ecology and nature conservation
- Noise and vibration
- Ground conditions
- Hydrology and drainage
- Archaeology and Cultural Heritage
- Transport, Traffic and Movement
- Socio-economic context

The Environmental Statement is supplemented with Appendices and a Non-technical Summary (updated November 2015).

In addition to the Environmental Statement the application is accompanied by:

- Design and Access Statement (October 2015);
- Transport Assessment (Revised – September 2015)
- Stage 1 Road Safety Audit August 2014
- Stage 1 Road Safety Audit December 2014
- Stage 1 Road Safety Audit November 2015
- Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey
- Supplementary Ecological Surveys – Summary Report
- Supplementary Mitigation Strategy (Ecology)
- Statement of Community Consultation
- Code for Sustainable Homes – Pre-assessment Report
- Outline Surface Water Strategy

- Existing Surface Water Strategy

SITE APPRAISAL

The application site measures 32.39 hectares and is moderate to fairly steeply sloping greenfield land that straddles the hillside north of Gilfach Road between the western edge of Tonyrefail and east of Gilfach Goch and Hendreforgan. The site generally comprises two broadly rectangular pieces of land on an east-west orientation and connected by a smaller land parcel towards the centre of the site.

The land is a mosaic of primarily improved grazing pasture with areas of marshy grassland, hedgerow, scrub vegetation, willow and birch woodland. Several small streams drain the land, flowing from north to south off the higher ground. Hedgerows on the land form a visually prominent network of vegetation, several of these lie on hedge-banks or alongside dry-stone walling.

Site boundaries to the south are defined by mature hedgerows and tree lines. The northern and eastern boundaries, however, are more open with only post and wire fence with individual trees or dry-stone wall boundaries. The southern boundary is defined by the A4093, the B4278 Gilfach Road and to the south east by the residential estate at Bryngolau and a field parcel. To the eastern boundary, beyond a small cluster of fields, lies the north-eastern core of Tonyrefail. The northern boundary adjoins open countryside. To the west lies the residential area of Hendreforgan and beyond that lies the settlement of Gilfach Goch. Beyond the site boundary to the south, across Gilfach Road, lies the residential estate of Dan-y-Fron and the early phase of the newly constructed residential estate on the former Padfield Court industrial site. Beyond the site boundary to the south-west, across the A4093, lies a relatively new housing development accessed off Mountain View road.

The application site incorporates two parcels of land that are designated as part of the Rhos Tonyrefail Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). In addition the application site encloses Tonyrefail (Trane) Cemetery. Trane Lane, which is a single track lane extending north off Gilfach Road and serving as an access to Trane Farm and several detached dwellings is excluded from the application site and proposals.

PLANNING HISTORY

10/0316	Land At Trane Farm, Gilfach Road, Tonyrefail, Porth CF39 8HN	Variation of condition to extend period of time under Condition 1(b) of consent 08/0398/15 for application for the approval of Reserved Matters to the 27th May 2012.	Pending	-
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08/0398	Land At Trane Farm, Gilfach Road, Tonyrefail, Porth	Variation of condition to extend period of time under condition 1(b) of consent 07/0220/15 (which varied consents 05/0887/15 and 00/2416/13) for application for the approval of Reserved Matters to 27.5.10 (amended description received 25/04/08).	Conditions	11/06/08
07/0332	Land Adjoining Trane Farm, Gilfach Road, Tonyrefail, Porth	Residential Development (Outline Application)(Amended site plan received 19 June 2007)	-	-
07/0220	Land At Trane Farm, Gilfach Road, Tonyrefail, Porth	Variation of condition to extend period of time under Condition 1(b) of consent T/00/2416/13 and Condition 1(b) of consent 05/0887/15 for application for the approval of Reserved matters to 27th May 2008.	Conditions	26/04/07
05/0887	Land At Trane Farm, Gilfach Road, Tonyrefail, Porth.	Removal variation of condition 1B of planning consent 00/2416/13 to extend date of Outline planning permission for residential development to 26th May 2007.	Conditions	27/07/05
03/0897	Land At Trane Farm, Gilfach Rd, Tonyrefail, Porth.	Extension of period of time under condition 1(b) of Consent T/00/2416/13 for submission of the application for the approval of Reserved Matters to 26th May 2005(Residential Development).	Conditions	20/02/04

PUBLICITY

The application has been the subject of an initial programme of publicity, including neighbour notification, site notices and a press notice in October and November 2012. Following revisions to the scheme being submitted in November 2013 a further round of publicity involving neighbour notification, site notices and a press notice has been undertaken. A further round of publicity involving neighbour notification of residents of Trane Lane has been undertaken following amendments submitted in December 2014 showing revised alignment and sections, including retention of a bat roost building, at Trane Lane, and indicative proposals for green corridors, dark corridors and associated highway crossing points within the development site.

As a result of all these rounds of publicity five letters of objection to the proposals have been received. The first of these is a letter countersigned by 8 residents of Penrhiwfer Road, Tonyrefail, who object to the proposals on the following grounds:

- The beautiful glaciated valley Cwm Eirin has been despoiled by existing development and we feel it is time to call a halt to further despoilment;
- Trane Cemetery will be overlooked by houses;
- There are many houses awaiting sale on present sites;
- The question of roads, schools, utilities, surgeries needs to be considered carefully;
- Geologically, Cwm Eirin holds special interest, as it is a valley carved out by a glacier and has major 'head slides' which could move at any time.

The second letter is from a neighbouring resident and proprietor of a local business who is concerned for the following reasons:

- A retail development on the site is too large for the location and will mean that there are too many retail businesses of this type in the area and potentially could put existing businesses in jeopardy;
- The retail need in this area is adequately catered for by existing business including those in Tonyrefail town centre;
- The proposal will cause danger as a result of increased traffic and footfall so close to a busy roundabout;
- The road infrastructure is currently inadequate, non-residential traffic using the retail facility will interfere with residential traffic entering and leaving the estate which will be a hazard to pedestrians.

The third letter is from a resident of Larchwood, Tonyrefail objecting for the following reasons:

- Increased traffic, traffic noise and accident risks;
- Impact on demand for schools and medical services;
- Impact on water pressure;
- Loss of trees and fields.

The fourth letter is from a resident of Bryn Rhedyn, Tonyrefail expressing the following concerns:

- The development will be domineering and imposing, highly visible from many areas of Tonyrefail and will break the natural skyline.
- Development will create considerable demand for school places, yet no doesn't provide the new school included in the Local Development Plan.
- Development will completely surround and prevent future expansion of Trane Cemetery.
- Proposed 5-spur roundabout alteration will be traffic hazard due to geometry and busy traffic flows
- Development will increase traffic flows on congested roads in Tonyrefail town centre.
- Potential adverse affects of ground water, water run-off and drainage from the development during and after its construction.

The fifth letter is from Tonyrefail & District Community Council expressing concern in relation to:

- Access and egress points
- Impacts of this development and others in the Tonyrefail area on schools, GP facilities, parking facilities in the town centre etc;
- Impact on the space for local burials in Trane Cemetery.

CONSULTATION

Transportation Section – No highways objection is raised. The submitted information, documents and plans have been reviewed and considered acceptable subject to mitigation measures in relation to off-site highway improvements as well as within the site curtilage. The mitigation measures and satisfactory provision of infrastructure within the site curtilage shall be addressed by means of planning conditions. It is on this basis above, that the proposal is acceptable.

Education – A development of this considerable scale (700 houses) is likely to generate at least 220 pupils of Primary school age, for whom school places must be provided.

Housing Strategy – Requires provision of affordable housing in accordance with LDP requirements and Local Housing Market Assessment.

Welsh Water / Dwr Cymru – prepared to allow no more than 50 dwellings to be occupied until water supply network upgrades described in the Conclusion and Recommendation the Clean water Hydraulic Modelling Assessment Report issued June 2014 have been carried out in order to protect the integrity of the public water supply. Also, requires no dwellings to be occupied until off-site improvement to the local public sewerage network in accordance with solutions in the Dwr Cymru's Hydraulic Modelling Report issued in November 2012 have been completed in order to protect the integrity of the public sewerage system.

Natural Resources Wales – no objection, providing the following issues are addressed through the implementation of appropriate planning conditions and/or obligations:

Section 106

Details of the financial measures to secure:

- Long term management of the SSSI
- Management of the wildlife corridors through the site
- The retained Natterer's bat roost building and associated monitoring provisions
- Details of management and monitoring of SSSI, wildlife corridors and ecological areas including the retained bat roost building
- Details and assurances should also be provided by the applicant that an appropriately skilled body will be employed to implement the management provisions.

Conditions

- The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with drawings no: 1039503-P-S-003 RevB Sketch Plan-Layout 19 0614.pdf, Green Corridor Sketches Figures 02-04 Rev A Oct 2015, Detailed Sketch Plan – Existing retained bat roost Fig 01 Revision F, Jan 2014
- The preparation of a scheme to monitor the Natterer's bat roost associated with the existing farmhouse at Trane, to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority (LPA) in consultation with NRW. The scheme to be implemented as agreed. Should the monitoring show a decline in population, remedial measures should be agreed in writing and implemented to the satisfaction of the LPA.
- Lighting
We advise a condition to be agreed in writing before the start of any works a scheme for lighting consistent with the requirements of wildlife particularly bats; the lighting plan to include measures to monitor lux levels as part of the need to maintain dark corridors. This scheme should address the construction phase, any phasing of the development and the operational phase and include remedial action to be undertaken where problems are identified by the monitoring scheme. Scheme to be implemented as agreed.
- Management
We advise a condition to agree in writing the preparation and implementation of a management plan, for all existing and new habitats. The plan should include proposals for on-going review of management and consequential amendments to management if these are shown to be necessary by the monitoring scheme. The scheme shall also include details of new plantings associated with the wildlife corridors, shrub planting adjacent to the retained bat roost and the relevant timing of these provisions. The scheme shall be agreed with the LPA and implemented as agreed.

NRW welcomes the retention of the Natterer's bat roost which is now proposed as part of the scheme. NRW considers that the retention of the Natterer's bat roost is not incompatible with the use of the building for another purpose, providing its security can be delivered by appropriate legal agreement.

Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust – notes the acknowledged historic significance of Trane Farmhouse (constructed 1601) and associated building which are to be demolished. No objection offered subject to two conditions to ensure all features in the fabric of Trane Farm buildings and any buried archaeology are suitably investigated and recorded.

Land Reclamation and Engineering – no objection subject to conditions.

Public Health and Protection – no objection subject to comments and conditions covering demolition of existing dwellings, noise arising from demolition and construction, mechanical plant noise, traffic noise, air quality, dust, disposal waste, contaminated land, and lighting.

POLICY CONTEXT

Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan

Policy CS2 - sets out criteria for achieving sustainable growth in the Southern Strategy Area including,

- Promoting residential development with a sense of place that respects the principal towns and key settlements.
- Focussing development within settlement boundaries and on previously developed land.
- Promoting large scale regeneration schemes in Tonyrefail
- Protecting the natural environment.

Policy CS3 - requires land to be allocated in sustainable locations to meet the housing requirements of the County Borough in the plan period.

Policy CS4 – defines the requirement for housing land, to be met in sustainable locations.

Policy CS5 - requires the provision of affordable housing.

Policy AW1 - defines the housing land supply, to be met partly by development of the allocated land in the LDP/.

Policy AW2 - Defines sustainable locations for development including

- Sites within settlement boundaries.
- Sites with good transport accessibility.
- Sites with good access to services and facilities.
- Sites outside of flood risk zone C2 unless there is justification.
- Sites that support principal towns, key settlements and smaller settlements.
- Sites that support the strategic sites, and;
- Sites that are well served by infrastructure.

Policy AW4 - Provides for the securing of community infrastructure and planning obligations which the Council may seek in respect of new development.

Policy AW5 - sets out criteria for new development in relation to amenity and accessibility.

Policy AW6 - requires development to involve a high quality design and to make a positive contribution to place making, including landscaping.

Policy AW7 - Requires new development to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of sites of historic merit. This policy also requires development affecting public rights of way to enhance or replace the route unless there is no need for it.

Policy AW8 – protects natural heritage from inappropriate development. Development affecting protected species is required to protect and manage the species and mitigate any impacts.

Policy AW10 - development proposals must overcome any harm to public health, the environment or local amenity as a result of flooding and other hazards, such as contaminated land, air pollution and noise pollution.

Policy SSA4 – promotes residential development and commercial development in Tonyrefail, subject to criteria including a high standard of design.

Policy SSA5 – requires land for new education facilities to be made available within the Trane Farm development.

Policy SSA10 - Allocates land at Trane Farm as a non-strategic site for the development of 700 residential dwellings. Further details are set out in Appendix 1 of the LDP.

Policy SSA11 - Requires a minimum housing density of 35 dwellings per hectare.

Policy SSA12 - seeks a minimum affordable housing contribution of 20%.

Policy SSA13 - Sets general criteria for housing development within settlement boundaries.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

- Design and Placemaking
- Delivering Design and Placemaking – Access, Circulation and Parking Requirements
- Planning Obligations
- Nature Conservations
- Affordable Housing

National Guidance

In the determination of planning applications regard should also be given to the requirements of National Planning Policy which are not duplicated in the Local Development Plan, particularly where National Planning Policy provides a more up to date and comprehensive policy on certain topics.

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 8, January 2016)

Chapter 2 (Development Plans),

Paragraph 2.1.2. Indicates that Local Development Plans should provide a firm basis for rational and consistent decisions on planning applications and appeals. They are fundamental to planning for sustainable development. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material circumstances dictate otherwise. Conversely applications which are not in accordance with the relevant policies in the plan should not be allowed unless material considerations dictate otherwise.

Paragraph 2.4.4 states that provision for land for schools should be made.

Chapter 3 (Making and Enforcing Planning Decisions),

Paragraph 3.1.2. States that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Local Development Plan unless material circumstances dictate otherwise.

Paragraph 3.1.3. Factors to be taken into account in making planning decisions (material considerations), must be planning matters, that is, they must be relevant to the regulation of development and the use of land in the public interest towards the goal of sustainability.

Paragraph 3.1.8. Indicates that while the substance of local views must be considered, the duty is to decide each case on its planning merits.

Chapter 4 (Planning for Sustainability),

Paragraph 4.7.4 Local Planning Authorities should assess the extent to which new development is consistent with minimising the need to travel and increase accessibility by modes of transport other than the private car.

Paragraph 4.11.8. promotes good design in high density developments.

Chapter 5 (Conserving and Improving Natural Heritage and the Coast),

Paragraph 5.1.1. Indicates that the natural heritage and valued landscapes of Wales are not confined to statutory designated sites but extend across all of Wales.

Paragraph 5.1.2. Indicates that amongst the Welsh Governments objectives for the conservation and improvement of the natural heritage are, promotion of landscape conservation and biodiversity, ensuring that statutory designated sites are properly protected and managed and the safeguarding of protected species.

Paragraph 5.1.3. Indicates that a key role of the planning system is to ensure that society's land requirements are met in ways which do not impose unnecessary constraints on development whilst ensuring that all reasonable steps are taken to safeguard or enhance the environment.

Paragraph 5.3.11. States those non statutory designations such as SINC's should not be allowed to unduly restrict acceptable development.

Paragraph 5.5.1. States that biodiversity and landscape considerations must be taken into account in determining individual applications and contributing to the implementation of specific projects.

Paragraph 5.5.8 states that there is a presumption against development likely to damage a Site of Special Scientific Interest

Paragraph 5.5.11. States that the presence of a species protected under UK or European legislation is a material consideration when a local planning authority is considering a development proposal which, if carried out, would be likely to result in disturbance or harm to a species or its habitat.

Paragraph 5.5.13 states that local authorities must ensure that adequate provision is made for the planting or preservation of trees by imposing conditions when granting planning permission and/or by making TPO.

Chapter 7 (Economic Development),

Paragraph 7.1.5. Effective planning for the economy requires Local Planning Authorities to work strategically and co-operatively steering development and investment to the most efficient and most sustainable locations.

Paragraph 7.6.1. Local Planning Authorities should adopt a positive and constructive approach to applications for economic development. In determining applications for economic land uses Local Authorities should take account of the likely economic benefits of the development based on robust evidence.

Chapter 8 (Transport),

Paragraph 8.1.1. The Welsh Government aims to extend choice in transport and accessibility in a way which supports sustainable development and helps to tackle the causes of climate change by encouraging a more effective and efficient transport system, with greater use of more sustainable and healthy forms of travel and by minimising the need to travel.

Paragraph 8.7.1 Indicates that when determining a planning application that has transport implications, Local Planning Authorities should take into account:

- The impacts of the proposed development on travel demand.
- The level and nature of public transport provision.
- Accessibility by a range of different transport modes.
- The willingness of a developer to promote travel by public transport, walking or cycling, or to provide infrastructure or measures to manage traffic to overcome transport objections to the development.
- The environmental impact of both the transport infrastructure and the traffic generated, and;
- The effects on the safety and convenience of other users of the transport network.

Paragraph 8.7.2 demands that proposals for over 100 dwellings should be accompanied by a transport assessment.

Chapter 9 (Housing),

Paragraph 9.1.1. sets out the Welsh Governments objectives for housing as

- To provide more housing of the right type and to offer more choice.
- To improve homes and communities, including energy efficiency of new and existing homes, and;
- To improve housing related services and support, particularly for vulnerable people and people from minority groups.

And that the Welsh Government will seek to ensure that

- Previously developed land is used in preference to Greenfield sites.
- New housing and residential environments are well designed
- The overall result of new housing development is a mix of market and affordable housing that retains, and where practical enhances important landscape and wildlife features in the development.

Paragraph 9.1.2 advocates residential development that is easily accessible by public transport, cycling and walking, and making the most efficient use of land.

Paragraph 9.2.3. States that Local Planning Authorities must ensure that sufficient land is genuinely available or will become available to provide a five year supply of land for housing.

Paragraph 9.2.14. States that affordable housing need is a material consideration.

Paragraph 9.3.1. Requires that new housing development should be well integrated with and connected to the existing pattern of settlement...Where housing development is on a significant scale, it should be integrated with existing or new industrial, commercial or retail development and with community facilities.

Paragraph 9.3.4. States that in determining applications for new housing, Local Planning Authorities should ensure that the proposed development does not damage an areas character or amenity,

Paragraph 9.3.5. Indicates that where development plan policies make clear that an element of affordable housing, or other developer contributions are required on specific sites, this will be a material consideration in determining applications. . If, having had regard to all material considerations, the Local Planning Authority considers that the proposal for a site that does not contributes sufficiently towards the objective of creating mixed communities, then the Authority will need to negotiate a revision of the mix of the housing or may refuse the application.

Paragraph 10.1.4 advises that individual outlets with a retail function which are not part of established centres can play a vital economic and social role in a local community.

Chapter 12 (Infrastructure and Services),

Paragraph 12.1.4. Indicates that the Welsh Government aims to secure the environmental and telecommunications infrastructure necessary to achieve sustainable development objectives, while minimising adverse impacts on the environment, health and communities.

Paragraph 12.1.5 States that the planning system has an important part to play in ensuring that the infrastructure on which communities and businesses depend is adequate to accommodate proposed development so as to minimise risk to human health and the environment and prevent pollution at source.

Paragraph 12.1.6. States that the capacity of existing infrastructure and he need for additional facilities should be taken into account in the preparation of development plans and the consideration of planning applications. In general Local Planning Authorities should seek to maximise the use of existing infrastructure and should consider how the provision of different types of infrastructure can be coordinated.

Chapter 13 (Minimising and Managing Environmental Risks and Pollution),

Section 13.4. Advises that development proposals in areas defined as being of high flood hazard should only be considered where new development would not increase the potential adverse impacts of a flood event.

Section 13.5. Confirms that the planning system should guide development to lessen the risk from natural or human made hazards. The aim is to ensure that development is suitable and that the physical constraints on the land, including the impact of climate change, are taken into account at all stages of the planning process.

Section 13.7 Confirms that planning decisions need to take account of the potential hazard that contamination presents to the development itself, its occupants and the local environment and; the results of specialist investigations and assessments by the developer to determine the contamination of the ground and to identify any remedial measures required to deal with any contamination.

Section 13.9 Confirms that planning decisions need to take full account of any hazards that might result from land instability.

Section 13.12 Confirms that the potential for pollution affecting the use of land will be a material consideration in deciding whether to grant planning permission.

Section 13.15 Confirms that noise can be a material consideration. Local authorities can attach conditions to planning permissions for new developments that include the design and operation of lighting systems and prevent light pollution.

Other relevant policy guidance consulted:

- PPW Technical Advice Note 2: Planning and Affordable Housing;
- PPW Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning;
- PPW Technical Advice Note 11: Noise;
- PPW Technical Advice Note 12: Design;
- PPW Technical Advice Note 15: Development and Flood Risk;
- PPW Technical Advice Note 16: Sport Recreation and Open Space;
- PPW Technical Advice Note 18: Transport;
- Manual for Streets

REASONS FOR REACHING THE RECOMMENDATION

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that, if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Furthermore, applications that are not in accordance with relevant policies in the plan should not be allowed, unless material considerations justify the grant of planning permission.

MAIN ISSUES

Relationship of proposed development to planning policy

The adopted Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan allocates 37 hectares of land at Trane Farm, Tonyrefail for the development of 700 houses under Policies CS 4 and SSA 10. This application site covers 32.39 hectares of the Local Plan allocation and will implement a large housing development

in a key settlement proposed in the LDP, and will contribute to the 5-year housing land supply. It is therefore supported in principle. However, ecology, affordable housing, education and highways issues are key issues, amongst others, that all have to be considered and are discussed in greater detail later in this report.

Site Boundary: As stated above the application site is just less than 33 hectares, compared to the LDP allocation of about 37 hectares. There are about 5 hectares of allocated land not included, comprising:

- Land off Cae'r Gwerlas
- The Wildlife Sanctuary site (subject of a separate 2007 application)
- Triangle west of cemetery, south of SSSI
- Mr Gibb's land
- O'r Diwedd
- Triangle north of O'r Diwedd

The application site includes about 1 hectare of land outside the allocation, for highway works.

At the pre-application stage Council officers advised against the allocation being planned in a piecemeal fashion. However, it now has to be acknowledged that the applicant has made efforts to reach agreement with landowners. The illustrative masterplan shows how the larger excluded areas could be incorporated as later phases of the development. In view of the 5-year housing land shortage, it is not considered reasonable to delay the whole development while the applicant reaches agreements that have little prospect of being concluded.

Dwelling numbers and density: The allocation is for 700 dwellings on 37 hectares, or 33 hectares excluding the Rhos Tonyrefail SSSI. The LDP gross density is low at 21 dwellings per hectare (i.e. 700/33), compared to the target of 35 dwellings per hectare (dph) in policy SSA 11.

The application is for "up to 600" dwellings without specifying a floor figure. It is understood that around 550 dwellings is the likely final figure. If from the application site of just under 33 hectares, a further 4 hectares are deducted for the SSSI, the remaining area would be 29 hectares. 600 dwellings on 29 hectares would be a gross density of 21 dph (comparing well to the LDP); 550 would be 19 dph. These low gross density figures will equate to higher net densities once land is excluded for reasons of topography and ecology.

The under provision of dwellings compared to the allocation and the low density compared to policy SSA 11 appears, at face value, to weigh against the proposals. However, much of the shortfall is attributable to the exclusion of allocated land from the application, considered above. Also, flexibility is required to properly take account of the identified constraints of topography and ecology. Therefore, provided a figure of around 550 dwellings is specified as a floor, the proposal for "up to 600" dwellings is considered acceptable.

Housing Land Availability: In the 2014 Housing Land Availability Study, the site contributes just 80 dwellings to the 5-year housing land supply, with most dwelling completions forecast to occur beyond the 5-year period, in the absence of any planning permission. The 5-year land supply is in shortfall at 2.8 years, which is a material consideration in favour of the proposals. The grant of planning permission would usefully increase the supply of available housing land.

Retail/Community facilities development: The proposed 464 sq m retail/community facilities floorspace is well below the threshold for retail impact assessment even if the whole unit was to be given over to retail use, and is too small to have a significant effect on dwelling numbers. Planning Policy Wales supports “corner shop” provision. The potential for loss of trade from the nearby shop expressed in representations received is acknowledged, however, this would be offset by the significantly increased numbers of residents in the area, and strictly speaking competition is not a planning consideration. Conditions to limit the net sales floorspace to 464 sq m and to limit sales to convenience goods would be appropriate. If, as is proposed, the unit is developed for community facilities in addition to retail use, then in reality the actual floorspace area of the retail element will more than likely be well below the 464 square metres limitation.

Constraints: The provision of land for education on site, as per policy SSA 5, is no longer required provided that a financial contribution is secured towards off-site schools provision that relates to the impact of the development. This increases the net developable area for housing. A significant area of land is required to form wildlife corridors within the site between the notified SSSI and the countryside to the north. Despite the loss of developable area, this is considered important to comply with national policy for SSSI. The implications of altered drainage for the SSSI need to be assessed. Affordable housing is required at 20% to fulfil policy SSA 12. The adjoining housing land allocation SSA 10.4, on which Hafod Housing association has a long lease from the Council but no funding for development, gives potential for off-site provision of some affordable housing. Housing Strategy would accept 5% on site and 15% off-site. Open space provision should include 1 NEAP, 4 LEAP and contributions to the maintenance of existing off-site sport pitches. Contributions are required under the SPG towards provision of school places, habitat management, affordable housing provision, highways tariff and open space provision and management. CIL is now approved and operational in Rhondda Cynon Taf therefore replaces the education and highways tariff liability. Viability has been considered, including the possibility of a mechanism for review of the contributions package at prescribed intervals.

Conclusion on relationship of proposals to planning policy: The proposal is considered to be acceptable in relation to the Local Development Plan housing land allocation and to be important for the housing land supply. However, to be acceptable in principle, the development must at the very least provide mitigation for its impacts on areas of national policy (ecology and affordable housing) as well as local impacts (education, open space and

highways). The remainder of this assessment addresses these other material considerations

Transportation, highway safety and accessibility

Although submitted in outline with all matters of detail reserved for subsequent consideration, inevitably for a development of this scale a significant amount of detail and indicative information in relation to transportation, highway safety and accessibility has been submitted at this stage.

Capacity Assessment: The highway assessment of the application proposals discussed below is based on 600 dwellings, with 40 dwellings served off a new access from the A4093 Gilfach Road and 560 dwellings served by a new access from the A4093/B4298/Gilfach Road/Beechwood Drive Roundabout with an emergency only access via Trane Lane with reference to the following new or revised drawings, exchange of e-mails and Road Safety Audits and revised Transport Assessment (TA):

- Figures 01 Rev D, 02, 03, 04 by Soltys Brewster Consulting Ltd. (It should be noted that the layout plans show a roundabout junction of Trane Lane with Bryn Golau which no longer forms part of the proposals).
- Drawing No. 13090/3010/K 'Illustrative Masterplan' by Pad Design Ltd.
- Drawing No. 13090/1000/J by Pad Design Ltd.
- Drawing 13090/4040/E 'Access and Movement' by Pad Design Ltd.
- Drawing No. 104 Rev A04 by Waterman dated December 2014.
- Drawing 0011 Rev A01 by Waterman received 31/7/15
- Drawing 0012 Rev A01 by Waterman received 31/7/15
- Asbri Planning email dated 04/12/2014 confirming provision of 1.8m wide footway along northern side of Gilfach Road by means of a Grampian condition.
- Stage 1 Road Safety Audit August 2014 by Asbri Transport;
- Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (Section of unlit Road) December 2014 by Go-Surveys.
- Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (A4093/B4278 off-road shared Use Facility) November 2015 by The Safety Forum;
- Transport Assessment (Revised September 2015) including Figures 5.1-5.8 and 7.1-7.5.

The proposed allocations of dwellings are set out in paragraph 1.12 of Transport Assessment (Revised September 2015) as follows:

- Zone A – 40 residential units on a parcel of land to the west of the site (adjacent to Gilfach Road). Access via a new junction with the A4093 Gilfach Road

- Zone B & C – 560 residential units on the remainder eastern portion of the site central portion of the site accessed from the A4093/B4298/Gilfach Road/Beechwood Road roundabout with emergency access via Trane Lane.

The proposed revised access arrangements and off-site highway improvements include the following:

- Construct a new priority junction on to the A4093 Gilfach Road, to access the western portion of the site (Zone A);
- Construct a new arm on to the existing A4093/B4278 Gilfach Road roundabout to access the central portion of the site (Zone B & C);
- Trane Lane to be retained in its existing form to serve existing residents and as an emergency access to the new development with works to facilitate this use.
- The proposed distributor road serving the site from Gilfach roundabout to incorporate :-
 - 7.3m carriageway
 - 2m wide footway to eastern side
 - 3.5m wide shared use pedestrian/cycle path to be provided along the western side.
- Provide a 1.8m wide footway along northern boundary of A4093 Gilfach Road fronting the proposed development site and linking to Hendreforgan;
- Provide for carriageway and footway requirements at the junction of Road 1 with Road 2 to cater for safe and satisfactory vehicular and pedestrian movements; and
- Improvements to the A4119 / A4093 / Mill Street Roundabout.

It is intended that Zones B and C will be connected via the internal road network (refer to Illustrative Master Plan, Figure 5.1 of TA (Revised) September 2015) providing a vehicular and pedestrian link as well as a public transport connection.

Also, it is intended to provide commercial/retail/community facilities (maximum gross internal floorspace of 464 square metres) as part of the development.

In arriving at an assessment of the highway implications of the development consideration has been given especially to the Environmental Statement and the Transport Assessment (Revised – November 2015). The latter has been carried out and submitted as part of the application to assess the impact of the proposed development of up to 600 dwellings (80% private and 20% affordable housing) on the local and strategic highway network. The strategic highway network is dealt with under Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL); therefore, no assessment has been carried out. However, the impact on the local highway network has been considered and the following junctions have been assessed in terms of capacity:

1. Proposed A4093 Gilfach Road / New Site Access (Zone A) 3-Arm Priority Junction
2. Modified A4093 / B4278 Gilfach Road / Beechwood Drive roundabout (Zone B & C) 5-Arm Roundabout
3. Proposed B4278 Gilfach Road / Bryn Golau / Padfield Court traffic signal controlled junction (Zone C)
4. Existing B4278 Gilfach Road / B4278 Penrhiwfer Road / Waunrhydd Road 3-Arm Priority Junction
5. Existing Collenna Road / High Street / Mill Street / Waunrhydd Road traffic signal controlled junction
6. Existing A4093 Hendreforgan Link Road/ Wilfried Way / Parc Dan y Bryn 5-Arm Roundabout
7. Existing A4093 / A4119 / Mill Street 4-Arm roundabout

The original Transport Assessment (November 2013) was reviewed and the junctions considered to operate within capacity subject to mitigation measures being carried out. The revised Transport Assessment (September 2015) has been issued to reflect the proposed revised single access serving zones B and C from the A4093 / B4278 Gilfach Road / Beechwood Drive 5-Arm Roundabout and the omission of previously considered accesses which no longer form part of the proposals. The proposed changes are considered to operate within capacity and are therefore considered acceptable.

Collision Data Analysis: The collision analysis for the period 2010-2015 shows 36 accidents as shown in table 4.1.2 of the TA (September 2015) which is reproduced below:

Year	No. of Personal Injury			Casualties
	Fatal	Serious	Slight	
2010	1	0	7	15
2011	0	1	9	17
2012	0	0	9	11
2013	0	0	2	2
2014	1	0	6	10
Total	2	1	33	55

Table 4.1.2 from TA September 2015

Of the two fatal accidents one occurred on the A4093 and the other at the A4093 / B4278 Gilfach Road / Beechwood Drive roundabout. The serious Accident occurred on the A4119.

Table 4.2 of the TA (September 2015) reproduced below shows the likely causation as shown on the investigation report:-

Collision Reference	Location	Causation / Contributory Factors
Fatal		
0200806	A4093 / Gilfach Rd	-Illness or disability, mental or physical
1401107	A 4093	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aggressive driving - Exceeding speed limit - Travelling too fast for conditions - Impaired by alcohol
Serious		
0208347	A4119	-Illness or disability, mental or physical

None of the fatal or serious accidents were as a result of the geometric design of highway links or junctions.

With regard to the accidents resulting in slight injury the accident investigation reports indicates causes due to driver error and therefore no improvements are proposed to the highway network as part of the proposal although the A4093, Gilfach Road roundabout will be significantly re-designed to accommodate a new arm to provide access to part of the development and will incorporate safety improvements identified as part of the road safety audit process.

Access and accessibility: As part of the development, it is proposed to provide vehicular and pedestrian access to the site at the following locations (refer to drawing 13090/3010/K Illustrative Masterplan and TA (September 2015) Figure 5.1 :

1. Priority junction off the A4093 Gilfach Road (Zone A);
2. Additional arm off the existing A4093 / B4278 Gilfach Road roundabout (Zones B & C);
3. Retention of Trane Lane in its current form to provide access to existing residents to facilitate the use of the lane as an emergency access to the development (Zone B & C) only.
4. Provision of a continuous footway along the A4093 Gilfach Road linking with the existing footway network to cater for Safe Routes to Schools and Community facilities in compliance with Learner Travel / Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.

1. A4093 Gilfach Road priority controlled junction (Zone A) (see Fig. 5.4 TA (Revised))

This is to provide a single point of access to Zone A that comprises of 40 dwellings.

The proposed access junction layout is shown on Figure 5.3 contained within the TA (Revised) November 2013 which shows 6m junction radii onto the main road, a road width of 5.61m initially and then down to 5.5m, 2m and 2.48m wide footways either side which is acceptable in principle.

The vision splays at the junction of the access onto the A4093 Gilfach Road where the speed limit is 40mph should be 2.4m by 120m in accordance with Table A of TAN18: Transport.

Details of the vision splays required at the junction are not shown on Fig. 5.3 of the TA (Revised). The provision of 2.4m by 120m vision splays would require the site boundary to be set back with all hedgerow plantation affected removed / re-positioned accordingly. The vision splay requirement is deliverable within the ownership of the applicant.

Sections of footway are shown on the northern boundary of the A4093 Gilfach Road with a width of 1.8m abutting the site frontage as shown on Figs 5.3 5.4 and 5.5 of the TA. This should link to the bus stop on the western boundary of Zone A of the development site and then extended westwards to the junction of Heol-y-Mynydd with the A4093 Gilfach Road and towards the footway at the proposed additional arm off the A4093 / B4278 Gilfach Road / Beechwood Drive roundabout. The provision of such footways would facilitate safe and satisfactory pedestrian access to local community facilities such as Hendreforgan Primary School that would require setting back the site frontage with the potential loss of vegetation.

On-site measurement indicates that 1.02m is available to the back of the footway opposite the proposed access with an existing pedestrian guard rail which is located behind the footway for a distance of 89m. Mitigation measures should be provided to ensure vehicular containment in the interests of the safety of all highway users and third party land and can be conditioned accordingly.

Also, appropriate mitigation measures would be required on the site access to ensure that the speed of traffic approaching the junction would not over shoot onto the A4093 at this location in the interests of highway safety.

2. A4093 Gilfach Road / B4278 Gilfach Road / Beechwood Drive roundabout (Zone B & C) (see Fig. 5.4 TA (Revised September 2015))

In order to access the development from the existing A4093 / B4278 Gilfach Road roundabout it is proposed to:

- To design and construct a new arm to the north into the site to incorporate 7.3m wide carriageway 3.5m wide shared use pedestrian/cycle path to the western side and a 2m wide footway to the eastern side ;
- realign the B4278 Gilfach Road approach to the junction;
- stop-up the existing stub-arm situated between the B4278 Gilfach Road and the A4093 (south) approaches to the junction; and
- provision of new 1.8m wide footways and uncontrolled pedestrian crossings.

The revised junction layout is shown on Figure 5.4 of the TA (September 2015). This incorporates a new arm off the roundabout into the site together with a slip off lane on the western approach to the roundabout onto the new site access together with new sections of shared use footway/cycleway fronting the southern boundary and linking to the site which is acceptable in principle. However, appropriate signage should be provided to ensure that the slip road is not used as a short cut to the detriment of the safety of all highway users and that provision is made for westbound and eastbound cyclists to safely rejoin the carriageway when following the routes along the A4093 / B4278.

A new section of footway must be provided across the redundant stub arm of the roundabout to provide a continuous link footway to provide for safe and satisfactory pedestrian access.

The internal spine road through the site off the new arm of the roundabout should be at least 7.3m wide to provide for a public transport corridor with 2m wide footways along the eastern side and a 3.5m wide shared use pedestrian cycle path along the western side. Beyond the first junction forming a loop within the estate road system the carriageway width could be reduced to provide a 6.1m wide carriageway with 2m footways on both sides.

Two existing farm accesses are served off the former abandoned section of the A4093 on the western approach to the roundabout that would need to be accommodated on the proposed slip off filter lane and designed to ensure safe and satisfactory access and egress. The Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has highlighted one field access only and recommends mitigation measures to ensure safe and satisfactory access / egress. A further Stage 1 Road Safety Audit November 2015 undertaken to consider only the off-road shared use facility has identified issues relating to how cyclists will rejoin the route along Gilfach Road. The review of the Road Safety Audit as well as the designer's response which accepts the auditor's recommendations and the mitigation measures required which can be conditioned accordingly.

3. B4278 Gilfach Road / Bryngolau / Padfield Court Signalised Junction

This has been assessed and considered to operate satisfactorily with base traffic plus committed development traffic plus proposed development traffic for the Design Year 2026 which is acceptable.

4. Trane Farm Track

This track will be retained in its existing form to allow its use as an emergency access to the proposed development to be utilised in exceptional circumstances only.

5. A4119 / A4093 / Mill Street Roundabout

The operation of the existing roundabout has been assessed in the TA (Revised) in relation to the additional traffic generated by the proposed development where it is proposed to modify the layout of the junction. This is shown in Figure 7.6 of the TA (Revised) where the capacity of the approaches has been increased to reduce queuing.

The Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has been reviewed and any mitigation measures required can be conditioned accordingly.

Pedestrian access: Information included in the TA Figure 5.5 indicates the provision of pedestrian access along the northern side of Gilfach Road, however, not all the land may be under the control of the developer and therefore the proposal may not be deliverable, therefore the provision of a 1.8m wide footway along northern side of Gilfach Road would need to be secured by means of a Grampian condition to ensure its future delivery which is acceptable in principle.

Also, the footway should be extended westwards to the junction of Heol-y-Mynydd with the A4093 Gilfach Road at Hendreforgan to facilitate safe and satisfactory pedestrian access to local community facilities such as Hendreforgan Primary School that can be achieved by utilising highway verge.

Where a continuous footway along the northern boundary cannot be provided then safe controlled crossings should be provided at desirable locations to encourage more sustainable modes of travel and interconnectivity.

Internal Road Layout: In terms of the indicative proposals for the internal road layout, the Transportation Section has advised that the spine road must provide for a 7.3m carriageway with a 2m wide footway and 3.5m wide shared use pedestrian/cycle path to the first junction forming an internal loop. The width of the highway envelope is intended to support and reduce the need to utilise Trane Lane as an emergency access in exceptional circumstances. Beyond the first junction forming a

loop the carriageway may be reduced to 6.1m wide with 2m footways on both sides to cater for public service vehicles and on road cycling. The internal estate roads should be at least 5.5m wide with 2m wide footways either side with adequate turning facilities to cater for calling delivery, emergency and service vehicles.

Provision must also be made to accommodate public service vehicles along the looping bus route by the provision of bus stops located appropriately at safe locations.

It is noted that submitted drawing 13090/4040/E 'Access & Movement' by Pad Design Limit indicates that the Primary Estate Road which would potentially accommodate a bus route is restricted to a single loop located within the western part of the site (Zone B). Such limited bus route provision would not facilitate or encourage use of public transport as a sustainable means of transport which is unacceptable although the primary route can be extended to incorporate the highway loop to the eastern half of the development (Zone C) and can be conditioned accordingly.

Local narrowing of the carriageway and on-street parking lay-bys would be considered acceptable subject to no detrimental impact on highway safety and free flow of traffic in particularly delivery, emergency and service vehicles.

Parking: The TA (September 2015) indicates that parking provision will be in compliance with the Council's SPG Access, Circulation and Parking (March 2011) which is acceptable and can be conditioned accordingly.

Safe Routes in Communities: The footway shown on sections of the northern boundary of the A4093 and B4278 Gilfach Road has a width of 1.8m abutting the site frontage. This should link to the bus stop on the western boundary of Zone A of the development site and then extended westwards to the junction of Heol-y-Mynydd with the A4093 Gilfach Road and towards the footway at the proposed additional arm off the A4093 / B4278 Gilfach Road / Beechwood Drive roundabout. The provision of such footways would facilitate safe and satisfactory pedestrian access to local community facilities such as Hendreforgan Primary School that would require setting back the site frontage.

Residential Travel Plan: This would be required to encourage greater use of more sustainable modes of travel which can be conditioned accordingly.

Conclusion on transportation, highway safety and accessibility issues: The submitted information, documents and plans have been reviewed and considered acceptable subject to mitigation measures in relation to off-site highway improvements as well as within the site curtilage. The mitigation measures and satisfactory provision of infrastructure within the site curtilage shall be addressed by means of

planning conditions. Therefore, it is on this basis above, that the proposal is acceptable.

Ecology

The Environmental Statement and the associated Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Supplementary Ecological Surveys submitted as part of the application describe in detail the baseline ecology of the application site. In summary, the application site supports valued ecological features of varying significance. These comprise poor semi-improved grassland, semi-improved neutral grassland, marshy grassland, bracken and scrub, scattered broad-leaved trees, species-rich hedgerow, species-poor hedgerow, stone walls, woodland, and running water. The principal valued habitat within the site is that which supports the Marsh Fritillary Butterfly, and the Protected / Notable Species are Marshy Fritillary, Devil's Bit Scabious (food plant of Marshy Fritillary), Ivy-leaved Bellflower, and Bats, in particular the Natterer's Bat which has a significant maternity colony in a building at Trane Farmhouse.

Within the application site boundary, two parcels of land are designated as part of the Rhos Tonyrefail Site of Special Scientific Interest, a Statutory Designation. The SSSI citation is based in part on the occurrence of Marsh Fritillary Butterfly. These two units are both located in the southern part of the site to the west of the Cemetery. These have been identified as supporting a mix of marshy grassland, acid flush, scrub and semi-improved acid grassland during the applicant's Extended Phase 1 habitat survey of the site in April 2010. As part of the Rhos Tonyrefail SSSI, both units are considered of National Ecological Value, although none of the component habitat types appear to be subject of particularly favourable management based on the applicant's survey. No other statutory or local nature conservation designations exist within or adjacent to the application boundary.

A suite of appropriate protected species surveys have been undertaken. Some limited evidence of Badger was recorded (but no setts); no Great Crested Newt or Dormouse evidence was found. In places the site support good nesting bird habitats and mitigation is required (see conditions), as is a requirement for some precautionary reptile/amphibian mitigation. The Reports highlights the potential for occasional use of streams by otter, although there is very limited potential for regular or significant use. The Survey assessment has identified small areas of potential marsh fritillary habitat which will be lost to development, though the Council's Ecologist suggests this material should be re-used on the SSSI mitigation area.

The ecological features at the site have been assigned a value at a geographical scale range and the potential impact of the development project on these features has been assessed using best practice. The master plan development of the allocated housing site helps to demonstrate that residential development can be accommodated at the site alongside retained features of ecological interest. The master plan layout for the site would retain both the SSSI parcels and the grassland habitats immediately to the north (upstream) outside the application site boundary. Other features that would be

retained, protected and managed in the long term include hedgerow, acid grassland, woodland and streams. The Environmental Assessment concludes, however, that as part of the site preparation works in advance of construction, existing grassland at the site would be lost though none would be of national significance. These works would be certain to result in a significant adverse impact (loss) that could not be mitigated within the application site, with a significant adverse impact on bracken and scrub communities and scattered trees also probable.

The ES predicts no significant adverse impacts on other features and protected species at the site based on the adoption of appropriate mitigation strategies. However, an adverse impact on bats, birds and reptiles within the application site was considered probable in the short / medium term given the loss of habitat and increased disturbance / predation risk though a reduction towards neutral impact was considered probable in the long term with long term management and maturing of new planting.

Whilst acknowledging the findings and mitigation proposals in the submitted ES, it is quite clear that the formulation of residential development proposals that sit alongside and incorporate natural habitat and protected species of significant importance has presented the applicant with a considerable challenge. In general terms the ecological assessment work undertaken by the applicant has identified the following priority concerns / mitigation:

- Retention and management of the Rhos Tonyrefail SSSI and measures to connect and buffer the SSSI against development impacts;
- Retention and management of woodland areas and hedgerows (including hedgerow trees);
- Mitigation and aftercare impacts on the bat roost at Trane Farm, with connected foraging routes (which need to be dark corridors) and potential tree bat roosts elsewhere on site;-
- Various species mitigation measures during construction

The Rhos Tonyrefail impacts and the Trane Farm bat roost mitigation (and other bat issues) are clearly a primary concern of NRW and the Council's Ecologist. With regards these impacts the applicant has developed a surface water drainage strategy that is to be protective of the priority habitats both within and outside the application site boundary. NRW has advised that the surface water drainage scheme should ensure that run-off from the development will not exceed "Greenfield" run-off rates for this area of the catchment. This is illustrated in submitted drawing number CIV 12999-SA-04-SK02. NRW recommends details of the adoption and management of the surface water scheme be submitted to ensure that they remain effective for the lifetime of the development, which is capable of being conditioned. In addition the applicant is seeking to transfer ownership and management of the two parcels of SSSI habitat to the Wildlife Trust for South and West Wales in order to ensure their protection and secure their conservation and long term management. This is the subject of on-going negotiations and will form the basis of Section 106 Agreement.

