

# RCT School Walking Route Assessment

Cross Inn to Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive  
School

March 2025





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## Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Policy Alignment	2
3. Procedures	4
4. Site Location & Walking Route	5
5. Pedestrian / Traffic Survey Results	20
6. Social Issues	23
7. Collision Data	24
8. Route Overview	25
9. Conclusions and recommendations	27

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Redstart has been commissioned by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council to undertake an assessment to determine the availability of the walked route between Cross Inn and Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School.
- 1.2 A route is considered to be available and safe for a learner to walk alone or, if appropriate for the age of the learner, accompanied by an adult. In determining the comparative safety of a walking route, an assessment of the risks that escorting parents/guardians and learners might encounter along the route between home and school needs to be made.
- 1.3 Such assessments will follow the Welsh Government Statutory Provisions on the Risk Assessment of Walked Routes to School, as laid down within the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014.

## 2. Policy Alignment

- 2.1 The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 sets out the legal framework within which travel provisions are made for learners travelling from home to school. In June 2014 the Welsh Government published the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance to aid local authorities in the implementation of the Measure.
- 2.2 Local authorities are under a legal duty to assess the travel needs of learners who walk to school. The Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance enables local authorities to determine whether a route to school is 'available' (safe) to walk or is deemed 'unavailable' (unsafe) and the safeguards that could be put in place to ensure that the route is or can become 'available' (safe) to walk.
- 2.3 The Welsh Government document requires the following issues to be considered in assessing a route;

For a route to be classed as available (safe) the route needs to be;

- A continuous adequate footway on roads which carry medium to heavy traffic; **or**
- "Step offs" on roads which have low traffic flow but adequate sight lines to provide sufficient advance warning to drivers and pedestrians; **or**
- On roads with very low traffic flow, no "step offs", but sufficient good sight lines to provide adequate advance warning.

If there is a need to cross roads it is recommended that there should be one of the following safety measures:

- Pedestrian refuge; **or**
- Visibility – it should be good enough to allow vehicles to stop safely (given the 85th percentile speed rule, vehicle stopping distances are as those set out in the Highway Code); **or**
- Sufficient gaps in the traffic flow and sight line to allow enough opportunities to cross safely; **or**
- Sufficient crossing facilities (for example, zebra, pelican crossings); **or**
- Sufficient pedestrian phases at traffic lights (including necessary refuges); **or**
- Sufficient School Crossing Patrols (lollipop people).

- 2.4 The following information should be considered as detailed in the Learner Travel document and summarised below:
- a) Speed limits around or near schools;
  - b) Two-way traffic flows recorded in Passenger Car Units (PCUs) - low traffic flow is determined below 400 vehicles in a 1 hour period, medium traffic flows between 400 to 840 and heavy traffic flows over 840 vehicles per hour. Below 240 vehicles per hour is assessed as safe to cross, equivalent to 1 vehicle every 15 seconds;
  - c) An analysis of gaps in traffic during 5 consecutive minutes is required. 4 gaps within such a 5-minute period is considered acceptable. At a walking speed of 1 metre per second most people will be able to cross two lanes of normal urban traffic in 4 to 6 seconds whilst others may need a larger gap of around 10 to 12 seconds;
  - d) A minimum of previous collision history for 3 years;
  - e) Footpath / footway width, condition, and visibility. On roads of low traffic flow a verge that can be stepped on by a child and accompanying parent when traffic is passing can normally be assumed to provide an available route;
  - f) Where roads need to be crossed, it is recommended that the availability of crossing facilities such as central refuges, pedestrian crossings or traffic signals be taken into consideration;
  - g) Potential flooding and, if necessary, safety features including signing, lighting, safety barriers should be considered;
  - h) Any planned changes to the area that may have an impact on pedestrian routes;
  - i) Level crossings;
  - j) Social danger caused by any potential anti-social behaviour;
  - k) Any changes to the characteristics of the people walking the route.
- 2.5 Social Danger is open to different interpretations and is subjective. In terms of quantifying social danger, the existence of any such dangers should be supported by evidence.
- 2.6 In conducting risk assessments, it is recommended that local authorities work in partnership with organisations/agencies which have expertise in (including responsibility for) tackling and quantifying social danger. The Police or Police Community Support Officers have responsibility for crime, disorder, and anti-social behaviour, whilst the Local Safeguarding Children Boards have responsibility for safeguarding/child protection matters.
- 2.7 Their involvement includes the exchange of information, assessment, and management of any such risks. Therefore, Redstart have not been commissioned to identify issues of social dangers caused by anti-social behaviour.

## 3. Procedures

### 3.1 Site Visit

3.1.1 A walking site assessment was undertaken to investigate the route and to identify hazards / possible remedial works required in order to provide a safe walking route. The route was walked at times to capture typical traffic conditions during the time that school children were walking the route.

3.1.2 Listed below are examples of typical site hazards that will be considered as a result of the walking assessment:

- Inter-visibility between drivers and pedestrians, both along the route and at minor junctions;
- Potentially high volumes of traffic at crossing points and types of vehicles using the route;
- Condition of footway surface, usable width, and connectivity between adjacent footways;
- Any overgrown foliage hindering pedestrian movements/narrowing the usable width;
- Vehicles parking on the footway causing an obstruction/narrowing the usable width.

### 3.2 Information to be provided

3.2.1 The following information is to be provided as part of the assessment:

- a) A plan showing the routes assessed;
- b) A report identifying potential hazards/risks and possible remediation for each potential hazard identified.

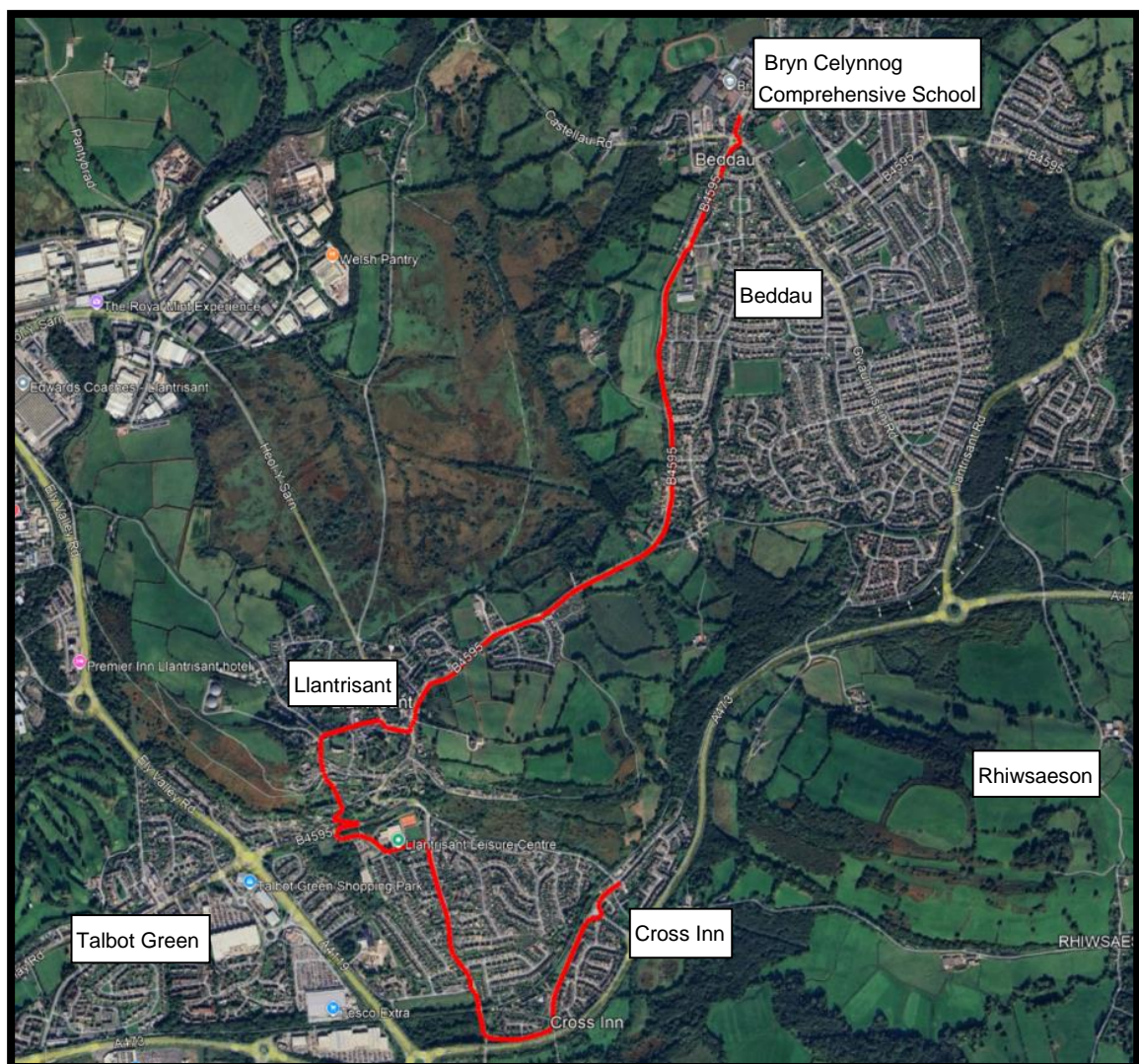


## 4. Site Location & Walking Route

### 4.1 Route Overview

- 4.1.1 The route is between Main Road, Cross Inn, Llantrisant CF72 8AZ and Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School, Beddau CF38 2AE, as shown in **Image 4.1** below. The route is along the following roads Main Road, Cardiff Road, Tir Meibion Lane, footpath through Llantrisant Leisure Centre, B4595 Talbot Road, Insole Terrace, Heol Sticil-y-Beddau, Heol-Y-Beilliau, The Mews, School Street, Swan Street, Heol Y Sarn, High Street, Commercial Street, Newbridge Road, B4595, Llantrisant Road, Penyrcoedcae Road, Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School.

**Image 4.1 – Route 7 – Cross Inn to Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School (Image © 2024 Airbus)**



- 4.1.2 Footways along the route for the most part are sufficiently wide, allowing pedestrians to pass each other without issue. This reduces for some short sections with the requirement for pedestrians to either give way to each other, cross to the other side of the road, or 'step-off' into the carriageway to pass. These areas occur at the following locations:

- The footway outside no. 58 Cardiff Road
- The footway outside no. 30 Cardiff Road



- Various locations along Swan Street
- Outside the Bull Ring General Store

- 4.1.3 Connectivity between footways for the most part is provided by signal control, central refuge islands, and other defined uncontrolled crossing points. However, sections of footway through 'Old Llantrisant' are narrow and end abruptly. This results in a dis-jointed / discontinuous footway network along the walking route between the B4595 Talbot Road (Insole Terrace) and the B4595 Newbridge Road (at the Cross Keys Public House). Traffic flow along this section is recorded as medium, with between 581 and 636 vehicles per hour. Notwithstanding the above, it is noted there are between 6 and 27 gaps of 6 seconds during each 5-minute period (considered within the Learner Travel Statutory Guidance and Operational Guidance to be sufficient to cross safely) and the route through High Street is currently available.
- 4.1.4 Notwithstanding the determination in **paragraph 4.1.3** above, the alternative is to use Insole Terrace, Heol Sticil-y-Beddau, Heol-Y-Beiliau, The Mews, School Street, Swan Street, Heol Y Sarn and High Street (where the route joins the B4595 Newbridge Road). Some of these streets appear as 'for access only' to the surrounding residential areas, with very low traffic flows and speeds noted, requiring pedestrians 'give way', 'step-off' or walk along the carriageway to continue along the route. They are currently already available and in daily use by pupils attending Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School and Penygawsi Primary School.
- 4.1.5 Where side roads were required to be crossed vehicular/pedestrian conflict was considered low risk.
- 4.1.6 The Main Route lies within a 20/30mph speed limit, with vehicle flows observed to be moderate to high, and pedestrian volumes were low to moderate during the time of the assessment.
- 4.1.7 In places, vegetation needed clearance to improve the usable footway width and visibility for pedestrians, especially at the B4595 Llantrisant Road, where overhanging trees and vegetation locally reduce the usable width to less 1.0m, with similar conditions noted along Cardiff Road.

- 4.1.8 Photographs 4.1 to 4.27 were taken along the route from Cross Inn to Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School and are shown below.

**Photograph 4.1 – Start of route at Main Road, Cross Inn near the Cross Inn Public House**



**Photograph 4.2 – Uncontrolled crossing (with pedestrian refuge) at the roundabout on Main Road linking to the A473 Church Village Bypass**



**Photograph 4.3 – Uneven footway surface around manhole cover at the roundabout on Main Road**



**Photograph 4.4 – Localised footway narrowing on the approach to Cardiff Road**



**Photograph 4.5 – Leaf debris causing localised footway narrowing on Cardiff Road, where pedestrians are required to step into the road to pass one another**



**Photograph 4.6 – Overhanging trees causing localised footway narrowing on Cardiff Road**





**Photograph 4.7 – Footway access to Llantrisant Sports Centre from Tir Meibion Lane**



**Photograph 4.8 – Footway access through Llantrisant Sports Centre carpark where both walking routes are noted to be available (the entrance footway route is less steep than the ramp access)**



**Photograph 4.9 – Uncontrolled crossing (staggered with pedestrian refuge) on the B4595 Talbot Road, adjacent to Llantrisant Sports Centre**



**Photograph 4.10 – Lane approach to Old Llantrisant along Insole Terrace off the B4595 Talbot Road, with surface water run-off noted over the entrance to the lane**





**Photograph 4.11 – On-street parking along Heol-Y-Beiliau reducing the usable road width, it is noted that traffic flows and speeds are very low with step-off available to let vehicles pass**



**Photograph 4.12 – Discontinuous footway network through Old Llantrisant (School Street) with limited usable road width. It is noted that traffic flows and speeds are very low with step-offs available to let vehicles pass**



**Photograph 4.13 – Narrow, disjointed / discontinuous footway network through Old Llantrisant (Swan Street) with limited usable road width. It is noted that traffic flows and speeds are low with step-offs available to let vehicles pass**



**Photograph 4.14 & 4.15 – Narrow, disjointed / discontinuous footway network through Old Llantrisant (High Street). It is noted that traffic speeds are low with good visibility to approaching vehicles. Step-offs are available to let vehicles pass and there are also opportunities to cross to the wider footway; however, these options are currently restricted by shop displays/produce at this location**



**Photograph 4.16 – On street parking on footways noted along High Street narrowing the usable width and potentially causing pedestrian crossing safety issues**



**Photograph 4.17 – Signal controlled crossing at The Cross Keys Public House**

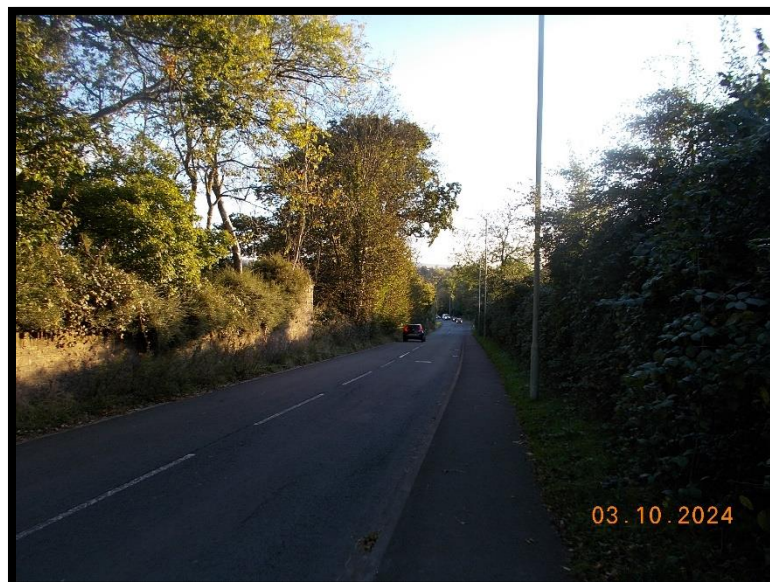




**Photograph 4.18 – On-street parking reducing the usable width along the B4595 Llantrisant Road, It is noted however that the opposite footway is available**



**Photograph 4.19 – Footway alongside the B4595 Llantrisant Road with overhanging trees and vegetation locally reducing the usable width**



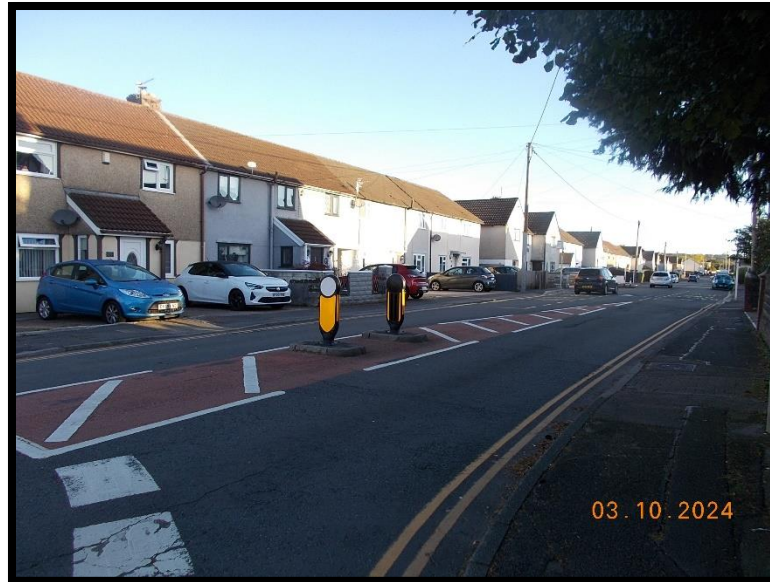
**Photograph 4.20 – Uncontrolled crossing with pedestrian refuge island on the B4595 Llantrisant Road near the junction with Brynteg Lane**



**Photograph 4.21 – Overhanging trees and vegetation locally reducing the usable width along the B4595 Llantrisant Road**



**Photograph 4.22 – Uncontrolled pedestrian crossing with pedestrian refuge island on the B4595 Llantrisant Road**



**Photograph 4.23 – Uncontrolled crossing with buildout on the B4595 Llantrisant Road**





**Photographs 4.24 & 4.25 – Uncontrolled crossings with pedestrian refuges on the B4595 Llantrisant Road and Gwaunmiskin Road approaches to the roundabout**



**Photograph 4.26 – Uncontrolled crossing point on the Penycodcae Road approach to the roundabout**



**Photograph 4.27 – Footway approach to Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School main entrance**



## 5. Pedestrian / Traffic Surveys

- 5.1 Learner Travel Guidance states: Where roads need to be crossed, it is recommended that the availability of crossing facilities such as central refuges, pedestrian crossings or traffic signals be taken into consideration. Where there are no crossing facilities, the route's risk assessment ought to consider each required road crossing, bearing in mind traffic speed and flows, sight lines etc.
- 5.2 If there is a need to cross roads there ought to be:
- Sufficient gaps in the traffic flow and sight lines to allow enough opportunities to cross safely. The gap time analysis should be used where necessary **or**
  - Pedestrian refuges **or**
  - Crossing facilities (e.g., zebra, pelican, puffin crossing etc.) **or**
  - Pedestrian phase at traffic lights **or**
  - School Crossing Patrol.
- 5.3 If a road needs to be crossed the visibility at the location should allow a vehicle to stop, given the 85th percentile speed (the speed at which 85% of the vehicles travel below) of the traffic flow. Vehicle stopping distances should be taken as those given in the Highway Code. In many rural areas, the exercise of continuous judgement is likely to be required. No criteria can provide all the guidance or answers to every situation that may be encountered.
- 5.4 If roads have to be crossed to use a footway or to improve sight lines, it may be necessary to advise on safe crossing places. On some country roads the footway may not be continuous.
- 5.5 An informed judgement will have to be made about the availability of "step off" points.
- 5.6 The difficulty of crossing at a site can be assessed by considering the number of gaps in the traffic flow that are acceptable to pedestrians. Free flowing traffic may provide gaps randomly and fairly frequently, but speeds tend to be higher, and gaps would need to be longer in order to cross the road safely.
- 5.7 An acceptable gap to cross from kerb to kerb varies with each person. Most people will be able to cross two lanes of normal urban traffic in 4 to 6 seconds. Others may need larger gaps of around 10 to 12 seconds.
- 5.8 It is recommended that the survey records the number of gaps in each 5 minute period that are longer than the road crossing time, using one metre per second as the walking speed. 4 gaps in each 5 minute period indicate a road that can be crossed without too much delay. Longer gaps could be classified as multiple gaps rather than as just one gap.

5.9 With the above criteria in mind, traffic surveys were undertaken to establish flows, 85th%tile speeds and crossing gaps at the following locations:

- **Location 1** – B4595 Llantrisant Road between the junction of Heol Sticil-Y-Beddau and The Cross Keys Public House.
- **Location 2** – Main Road, Cross Inn

5.10 RCT Transport Officers undertook traffic counts at these locations.

5.11 The Learner Travel Statutory Guidance and Operational Guidance – June 2014 outlines what is required when assessing Traffic Flow on Roads.

5.11.1 Low Traffic flow occurs on roads that have a traffic flow below 400 vehicles in a 1-hour period; medium traffic flow occurs on roads with traffic flow between 400 to 840 vehicle per hour; and heavy traffic flow occurs on roads with a traffic flow of over 840 vehicles per hour.

5.11.2 Most people will be able to cross two lanes of normal urban traffic in 4 to 6 seconds. Four such gaps within a 5 minute period are considered acceptable. For this report, we have used 6 seconds and where the gap is more than or equal to 12 seconds this has been counted as 2 or more gaps.

5.12 Traffic counts were undertaken at this location on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024 with counts carried out between 07:45 and 08:45 and 15:15 and 16:15. In accordance with Learner Travel Guidance the period that recorded the highest traffic volumes has been “revisited” to confirm reliability of the data.

5.12.1 **Location 1 – B4595 Llantrisant Road between the junction of Heol Sticil-Y-Beddau and The Cross Keys Public House – 15/10/2024**

- ❖ **AM:** 581 vehicles per hour, medium traffic flow. Gaps of 6 seconds during each 5-minute periods only totalled 178 gaps over the 1-hour period.
- ❖ **PM:** 636 vehicles per hour, medium traffic flow. Gaps of 6 seconds during each 5-minute periods only totalled 170 gaps over the 1-hour period.

5.12.2 **Location 1 – B4595 Llantrisant Road between the junction of Heol Sticil-Y-Beddau and The Cross Keys Public House – 18/10/2024**

- ❖ **AM:** 629 vehicles per hour, medium traffic flow. Gaps of 6 seconds during each 5-minute periods only totalled 210 gaps over the 1-hour period.

**The traffic flow and gaps at this location for both AM and PM meet the criteria outlined in the Learner Travel Guidance**

5.12.3 **Location 2 – Main Road, Cross Inn – 11/10/2024**

- ❖ **AM:** 378 vehicles per hour, low traffic flow as <400. Gaps of 6 seconds during each 5-minute periods only totalled 292 gaps over the 1-hour period.
- ❖ **PM:** 416 vehicles per hour, medium traffic flow. Gaps of 6 seconds during each 5-minute periods only totalled 273 gaps over the 1-hour period.

5.12.4 **Location 2 – Main Road, Cross Inn – 11/10/2024**

- ❖ **PM:** 380 vehicles per hour, low traffic flow as <400. Gaps of 6 seconds during each 5-minute periods only totalled 301 gaps over the 1-hour period.

**The traffic flow and gaps at this location for both AM and PM meet the criteria outlined in the Learner Travel Guidance.**

## 6. Social Issues

- 6.1 No areas along the route were noted or showed signs of Anti-Social Behaviour during the times when school children would be walking to school.
- 6.2 There may be other issues that are not obvious from a walked assessment, which may be identified by other user groups. The local authority would need to consider these aspects with the Police and other safeguarding agencies.



## 7. Collision Data

- 7.1 Pedestrian collision data for the 5 years from 2020 to 2024 (verified) have been investigated through Crashmap.co.uk and Police Recorded Road Collision data. Note that the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance requires assessors to incorporate 3 years of collision history into the assessment of a route.
- 7.2 The collision data has been investigated during the times that school children would be walking the route to capture typical traffic conditions during the time. These times have been set at 07:00 – 09:30 for the AM journey, and 14:30 – 17:00 for the PM journey
- 7.3 There were no collisions that involved pedestrians along the route during the period assessed.

## 8. Route Overview

### 8.1 Main Route – Cross Inn to Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School

- 8.1.1 There are continuous lengths of footway present in a reasonable condition along most of the route. Connectivity between footways for the most part is provided by signal control, central refuge islands, and other defined uncontrolled crossing points. It is noted however, that sections of footway through 'Old Llantrisant' are dis-jointed, discontinuous and narrow, therefore pedestrians are required to cross the road or step into the carriageway to continue.
- 8.1.2 The section of the route through 'Old Llantrisant' between the B4595 Talbot Road (Insole Terrace) and the B4595 Newbridge Road (at the Cross Keys Public House) is particularly disjointed, requiring the need for pedestrians to cross the carriageway several times. Traffic flow along this section is recorded as medium, with sufficient gaps in traffic to be crossed safely and therefore is within the Learner Travel Statutory Guidance and Operational Guidance. Whilst this is the main route for vehicular traffic, it is not the preferred route for pedestrians walking to school.
- 8.1.3 The alternative/preferred route for pedestrians walking to school uses Insole Terrace, Heol Sticil-y-Beddau, Heol-Y-Beiliau, The Mews, School Street, Swan Street, Heol Y Sarn and High Street (where the route joins the B4595 Newbridge Road). Some of these streets are '*for access only*' to the surrounding residential areas, hence they have very low traffic flows and speeds, and require pedestrians 'give way', 'step-off' or walk along the carriageway to continue along the route. Heol Sticil-y-Beddau and Heol-Y-Beiliau were noted to be steep and of uneven, cobbled stone construction. Pedestrians may need to use these sections with caution during wet or icy conditions.
- 8.1.4 Footways along the Main Route for the most part are sufficiently allowing pedestrians to pass each other without issue. This reduces to less than 1m for some short informal 'pedestrian give way sections', 'step-offs' or the need for pedestrians to cross to the other side of the road at the following locations:
- Outside no. 58 Cardiff Road
  - Outside no. 30 Cardiff Road
  - Various locations along Swan Street
  - Outside the Bull Ring General Store
- 8.1.5 It is noted however that the footway along Cardiff Road between nos.46 and 47 is narrowed to less 1.0m locally due to leaf debris and overgrown vegetation. This requires pedestrians to step into the carriageway to pass one another. It is also noted that the verge at the rear of the footway is steep and is not suitable as a 'step-off'. However there does appear to be scope to remove some of the vegetation/leaf debris from the rear of the footway to maximise the usable width and potentially achieve a minimum width of 1.2m.
- 8.1.6 There are discrete sections of footway along Cardiff Road and the B4595 Newbridge Road/Llantrisant Road where trees and vegetation overhanging the footway require cutting back to improve route width and pedestrian comfort levels.
- 8.1.7 Street lighting is present throughout the route. However, there are discrete sections of footway along Cardiff Road and the B4595 Llantrisant Road where trees and vegetation overhanging the footway require cutting back to ensure that lighting levels are not compromised.

- 8.1.8 There are localised sections of footway along the length of High Street (opposite the Cross Keys PH) and the B4595 Newbridge Road, where vehicles obstructing footways can impact upon the walking routes. Local neighbourhood policing teams are working with residents to help reduce the risks posed to pedestrians by indiscriminately parked vehicles.
- 8.1.9 Investigation into pedestrian collisions has been undertaken between 2020 and 2024. There were no collisions that involved pedestrians during the times assessed.
- 8.2 At side roads, the observed conditions were considered to provide a safe environment for pedestrians to cross with vehicular / pedestrian conflict assessed to be low risk noting sufficient crossing gaps to comply with Learner Travel Guidance. At the time of the site visit, when pedestrians were observed to cross, they were able to do so without issue.
- 8.2.1 There are controlled/uncontrolled crossing facilities at the following locations:
- Uncontrolled Crossing (refuge island) – Across the A473 exit arm of Cross Inn roundabout.
  - Signalised Crossing – Outside no. 107 Talbot Road (staggered crossing).
  - Signalised Crossing – Over the dual carriageway on the A4119 Ely Valley Road.
  - Uncontrolled Crossing – Outside no. 29 on the B4595 Talbot Road on the A4058. (pedestrian refuge on a staggered crossing).
  - Signalised Crossing – Outside no. 112 Talbot Road on the B4595.
  - Signalised Crossing – Outside The Cross Keys Public House on High Street.
  - Uncontrolled Crossing – Outside the detached property, just north of the junction of Brynteg Lane with the B4595.
  - Uncontrolled Crossing – Outside no.61 Llantrisant Road on the B4595.
  - Uncontrolled Crossing – At the Gwaunmiskin Road arm of the roundabout with the B4595 Llantrisant Road (pedestrian refuge).
  - Uncontrolled Crossing – At the Pencoedcae Road arm of the roundabout with the B4595 Llantrisant Road.
- 8.2.2 No areas along the route were noted to or showed signs of Anti-Social Behaviour during the times when school children would be walking to school.

## 9. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 9.1 Cross Inn to Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School

9.1.1 The route meets the criteria and is considered available to walk to school in line with the Learner Travel guidelines.

9.1.2 In undertaking the assessment, the following route conditions through 'Old Llantrisant' met the Learner Travel guidelines, but were worthy of note:

- Footways are not continuous or of 'sufficient width', which required pedestrians to cross more frequently and/or walk in the carriageway to achieve connectivity.
- No controlled pedestrian crossing facilities are present due to narrow footway widths.
- Enclosed nature of the street alignment.
- Traffic flows were low during the time of the assessment. With frequent informal 'give ways' being required by traffic in order to keep flows moving, due largely to the constrained carriageway widths, vehicle speeds were within the 20-mph speed limit.
- There were no recorded collisions involving pedestrians along this section of the Main Route, and pedestrian activity was low. Where vehicles were encountered, pedestrians were noted to wait at the side of the road (where no footway was available) to allow them to pass.
- This area has been subject to previous studies and potential improvement schemes, with little or no scope for highway improvements to further aid pedestrian movements.

9.1.3 Further enhancements to the walking route ***should be undertaken*** to improve conditions for route users:

- Monitor footway obstructions. Where footways are present, widths continue to be restricted by parked cars and shop frontages, action be taken in conjunction with the appropriate Council Department / local neighbourhood policing team. with two locations requiring immediate action at:
  - The footway opposite the Cross Keys Public House on High Street.
  - The frontage of Bullring General Store on High Street.
- Where trees and/or foliage overhang or encroach into footways, these areas should be cut back to improve the usable width, sight lines and natural surveillance. In addition to this leaf debris and overgrown vegetation should be removed from footways when required to maximise the usable width.
- Monitor the condition of overhanging trees and foliage. Where trees and/or foliage overhang or encroach over footways, these areas should be cut back to improve street lighting levels along the route.



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