

RCT School Walking Routes Assessment

Ynysboeth to Mountain Ash
Comprehensive School

March 2025





GENERAL DISCLAIMER:

This report has been prepared by Redstart in favour of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council ("the Client") and is for the sole use and benefit of the Client in accordance with the agreement between the Client and Redstart under which Redstart's services were performed. Other than in respect of liability which cannot be excluded by law, Redstart accepts no liability to any other party in respect of the contents of this report.

Whilst care has been taken in the construction of this report, the conclusions, and recommendations which it contains are based upon information provided by third parties ("Third-Party Information"). Redstart has for the purposes of this report relied upon and assumed that the Third-Party Information is accurate and complete and has not independently verified such information for the purposes of this report. Redstart makes no representation, warranty or undertaking (express or implied) in the context of the Third-Party Information and no responsibility is taken or accepted by Redstart for the adequacy, completeness, or accuracy of the report in the context of the Third-Party Information on which it is based.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION:

Redstart understands and acknowledges the Authority's legal obligations and responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the "Act") and fully appreciates that the Authority may be required under the terms of the Act to disclose any information which it holds.

Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Policy Alignment	2
3. Procedures	4
4. Site Location & Walking Route	5
5. Pedestrian / Traffic Surveys	17
6. Social Issues	22
7. Collision Data	32
8. Route Overview	33
9. Conclusions & Recommendations	37

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Redstart has been commissioned by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCT) to undertake an assessment to determine the availability of the walked route between The Feel Good Factory (near Ynysboeth) and Mountain Ash 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 crossroads 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:

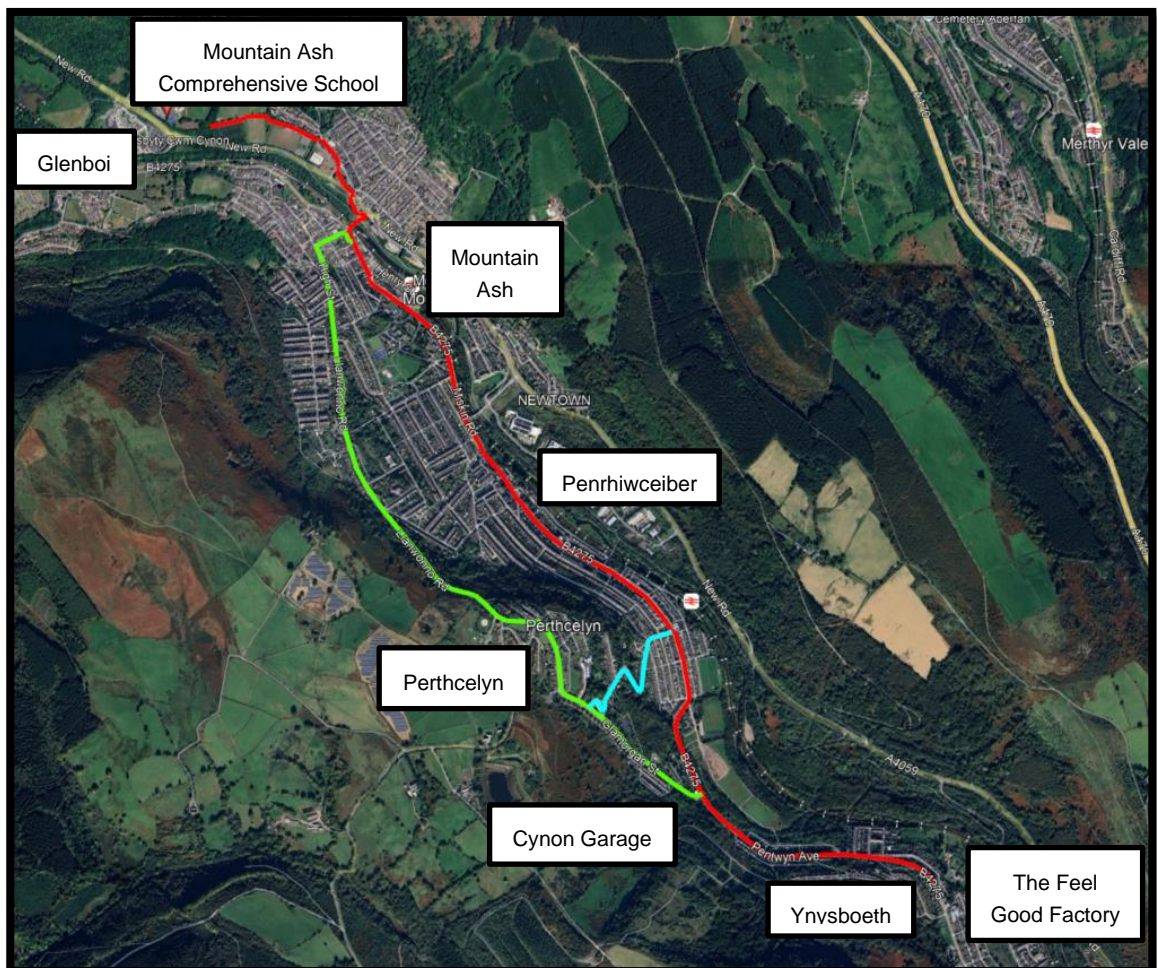
- a) A plan showing the routes assessed;
- b) A report identifying potential hazards/risks and possible remediation for each potential hazard identified.

4. Site Location & Walking Route

4.1 Route Overview

- 4.1.1 The **Main Route** is between The Feel Good Factory in Ynysboeth, CF45 4XZ and the rear gates of Mountain Ash Comprehensive School, New Road, Mountain Ash CF45 4DG. A further two Sub Routes have also been assessed as part of the report, with all three routes shown in **Image 4.1** below.

Image 4.1 – The Feel Good Factory to Mountain Ash Comprehensive School (Image © 2024 Airbus)



- The **Main Route** - The Feel Good Factory to Mountain Ash Comprehensive School (rear entrance) via, Abercynon Road, Main Road, Pentwyn Avenue (B4275), Abercynon Road, Vaughan Terrace, Rheola Street, Penrhiwceiber Road, Miskin Road, Oxford Street, Mountain Ash Town Bridge, Ffrwd Crescent, New Road, Dyffryn Road, footpath behind Rugby Ground to the rear gates of Mountain Ash Comprehensive School.
- **Sub Route 1** – Pentwyn Bridge to Mountain Ash Town Bridge via, Glamorgan Street, (leaves the **Main Route**) Hawthorn Terrace, Llanwonno Road, High Street, and Pryce Street, to rejoin the **Main Route** at Mountain Ash Town Bridge.
- **Sub Route 2** – Glamorgan Street to Penrhiwceiber Road via, Penybryn Road, (leaves **Sub Route 1**) Harris View, Cross Street, to rejoin **Main Route** at Penrhiwceiber Road).

4.2 **Main Route** – The Feel Good Factory to Mountain Ash Comprehensive School (rear entrance)

- 4.2.1 There are continuous lengths of footway, with crossing opportunities and street lighting present along the length of the route. Generally, footways along the route 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 or cross to the other side of the road. Pupils already walk this route from Lee Gardens Paddling Pool to Mountain Ash Comprehensive School and links to Ynysboeth, Penrhiwceiber and Perthcelyn Primary Schools are already available and in daily use.
- 4.2.2 Where side roads were required to be crossed vehicular/pedestrian conflict was considered low risk.
- 4.2.3 Connectivity between footways is provided throughout by zebra, signal control, central refuge, and other defined uncontrolled crossing points.
- 4.2.4 A 20mph speed limit is in place along most of the route, where vehicle flows were observed to be moderate.
- 4.2.5 In places, vegetation needed clearance to improve the usable footway width and visibility for pedestrians.
- 4.2.6 Photographs 4.1 to 4.19 taken along the walking route are shown below.

Photograph 4.1 - Steps at the junction with Walsh Street (northern footway)



Photograph 4.2 – Zebra Crossing west of the junction with Walsh Street



Photograph 4.3 – Pentwyn Avenue northern footway on refuse collection day



Photograph 4.4 – Pentwyn Avenue southern footway on-street parking issues



Photograph 4.5 – B4275 Pentwyn Avenue approach to Vaughan Terrace with footway narrowing on the approach to the bend



Photograph 4.6 – Wide ‘desire line’ crossing at the junction of Rheola Street with Vaughan Terrace



Photograph 4.7 – B4275 Penrhiwceiber Road Eastern Footway



Photograph 4.8 – B4275 Penrhiwceiber Road Zebra Crossing at Lee Gardens



Photograph 4.9 – B4275 Penrhiwceiber Road Eastern Footway on Refuse/Recycling Collection Days



Photograph 4.10 – B4275 Penrhiwceiber Road Zebra Crossing at Pengeulan Primary School



Photograph 4.11 – B4275 Penrhiwceiber Road Eastern Footway Narrowing



Photograph 4.12 – B4275 Penrhiwceiber Road western footway, vegetation narrowing the footway on the approach to the Cross Valley Link Road.



Photograph 4.13 – Short section of footway narrowing on the B4275 Miskin Road



Photograph 4.14 – B4275 Miskin Road into Mountain Ash Town Centre



Photograph 4.15 – Uncontrolled raised crossing point in Mountain Ash Town Centre



Photograph 4.16 – Uncontrolled crossing point on the access road to Dyffryn Road



Photograph 4.17 – Footway link into Mountain Ash RFC car park area



Photograph 4.18 – Footway link behind Mountain Ash RFC main stand area



Photograph 4.19 – Footway link to the perimeter of Mountain Ash Comprehensive School



4.2 Sub Route 1 – Pentwyn Bridge to Mountain Ash Town Bridge

- 4.2.1 There are continuous lengths of footway, with crossing opportunities and street lighting present along the length of the route. Generally, footways along the route 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 or cross to the other side of the road. Pupils already walk this route from Lee Gardens Paddling Pool to Mountain Ash Comprehensive School and links to Ynysboeth, Penrhiwceiber and Perthcelyn Primary Schools are already available and in daily use.
- 4.2.2 Where side roads were required to be crossed vehicular/pedestrian conflict was considered low risk.
- 4.2.3 Connectivity between footways is provided throughout by zebra, signal control, central refuge, and other defined uncontrolled crossing points.
- 4.2.4 20mph and, 30mph speed limits are in place along the route, where vehicle flows and speeds were observed to be low to moderate for the most part, and high along the A4059 New Road.
- 4.2.5 In places, vegetation needs to be cleared to improve the usable footway width and visibility for pedestrians.
- 4.2.6 Photographs 4.20 to 4.32 taken along the walking route are shown below.

Photograph 4.20 Road crossing from the B4275 footway to the junction with Glamorgan Street to access Perthcelyn



Photograph 4.21 – Footway buildouts to improve pedestrian crossing facilities on Glamorgan Street



Photograph 4.22 – Footway buildouts to improve pedestrian crossing facilities on Glamorgan Street



Photograph 4.23 – Footway buildouts to improve pedestrian crossing facilities on Glamorgan Street



Photograph 4.24 – Footway buildouts to improve pedestrian crossing facilities on Hawthorn Terrace



Photograph 4.25 – Footway buildouts to improve pedestrian crossing facilities on Hawthorn Terrace



Photograph 4.26 – Parking on footways reducing the usable width at Ash Grove



Photograph 4.27 – Footway buildouts to improve pedestrian crossing facilities on Hawthorn Terrace



Photograph 4.28 – Overhanging tree branches near the interface of Hawthorn Terrace and Llanwonno Road



Photograph 4.29 – Llanwonno Road footway



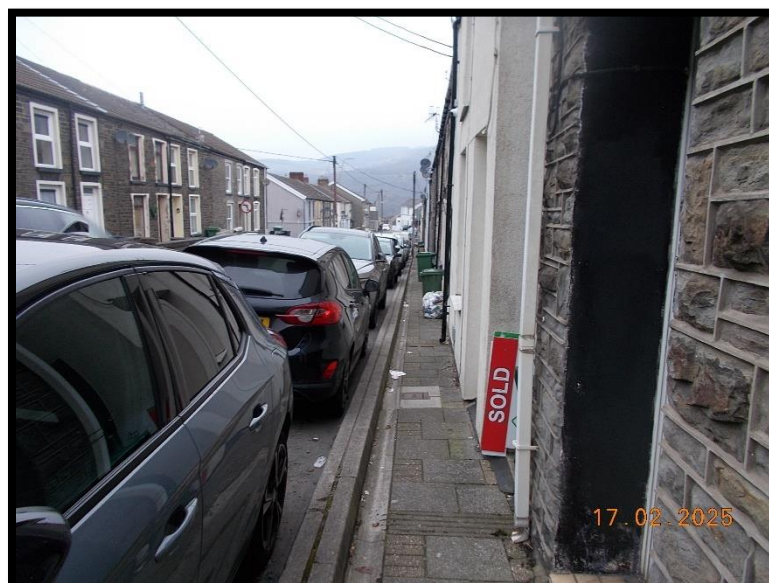
Photograph 4.30 –Parking on footways reducing the usable width on Llanwonno Road



Photograph 4.31 – Footway on Llanwonno Road only available on one side



Photograph 4.32 – Localised narrowing to the footway by refuse bins on Llanwonno Road reducing the available footway width



4.2 Sub Route 2 – Glamorgan Street to the B4275 Penrhiwceiber Road (rejoins the Main Route)

- 4.2.1 There are continuous lengths of footway, with crossing opportunities and street lighting present along the length of the route. Generally, footways along the route are sufficiently wide allowing pedestrians to pass each other without issue. Pupils already walk this route to Mountain Ash Comprehensive School and links to Ynysboeth, Penrhiwceiber and Perthcelyn Primary Schools are already available and in daily use.
- 4.2.2 Where side roads were required to be crossed vehicular/pedestrian conflict was considered low risk.
- 4.2.3 Connectivity between footways is provided throughout by zebra, signal control, central refuge, and other defined uncontrolled crossing points.
- 4.2.4 A 20mph speed limit is in place along the route, where vehicle flows and speeds were observed to be low.
- 4.2.5 In places, vegetation needed clearance to improve the usable footway width and visibility for pedestrians.
- 4.2.6 Photographs 4.33 to 4.37 taken along the walking route are shown below. The initial section of the route from Pentwyn Bridge is as show in the photographs for Sub Route 1.

Photograph 4.33 – Junction from Glamorgan Street (Sub Route 1) into Penybryn Road



Photographs 4.34 – Footway along Harris View where pedestrians are required to cross to achieve connectivity, traffic speeds and flows were noted to be very low



Photographs 4.35 – Steps along the footway of Harris View



Photographs 4.36 – Footway along the western side of Harris View only



Photographs 4.37 – Zebra crossing link from Cross Street to the B4275 Penrhiwceiber Road (Main Route**)**



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 1 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 1 gap.
- 5.9 It is recommended that traffic surveys be undertaken at the following locations:

- 5.9.1 The narrow footway in advance of the steps on the approach to the junction the B4275 with Walsh Street where there is a potential need for pedestrians to cross at this location to achieve connectivity between adjacent footways to avoid the narrow footway and steps.



- 5.9.2 Near the bus stop to the north of no.92 Pentwyn Avenue where there is a need for pedestrian to cross to achieve connectivity between adjacent footways.



- 5.9.3 Along the southeastern side of the B4275 Abercynon Road (between Pentwyn Avenue and Vaughan Terrace), there is no adjacent footway or 'step off' present. Due to the narrow footway width in places (circa 1.0m), pedestrians may have to step into the carriageway to pass one another on the footway approach to Vaughan Terrace. This is further exacerbated due to limited forward visibility to approaching vehicles at the bend.



- 5.10 RCT Transport Officers undertook traffic counts at various locations along the B4275, with 85thtile speed data also collected on both the northbound and southbound approaches to Vaughn Terrace.
- 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. 4 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 3 different locations as detailed below, 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 data.
- 5.12.1 **Location 1 – Junction of Walsh Street and B4275 – 24/09/2024**
- ❖ **AM:** 343 vehicles per hour, low traffic flow. Gaps of 6 seconds during each 5 minute period ranged from 18 to 36, with a total of 352 gaps over the 1 hour period.
 - ❖ **PM:** 428 vehicles per hour, medium traffic flow as 400>. Gaps of 6 seconds during each 5 minute periods ranged from 17 to 30, with a total of 287 gaps over the 1 hour period.
- 5.12.2 **Revisit Location 1 – Junction of Walsh Street and B4275 – 27/09/2024**
- ❖ **PM:** 398 vehicles per hour, low traffic flow. Gaps of 6 seconds during each 5 minute periods ranged from 14 to 26, with a total of 241 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 – 92 Pentwyn Avenue – 25/09/2024**
- ❖ **AM:** 354 vehicles per hour, low traffic flow. Gaps of 6 seconds during each 5 minute period ranged from 16 to 37, with a total of 305 gaps over the 1 hour period.
 - ❖ **PM:** 391 vehicles per hour, low traffic flow as <400. Gaps of 6 seconds during each 5 minute period ranged from 19 to 38, with a total of 306 gaps over the 1 hour period.
- 5.12.4 **Revisit Location 2 – 92 Pentwyn Avenue – 26/09/2024**
- ❖ **PM:** 424 vehicles per hour, medium traffic flow. Gaps of 6 seconds during each 5 minute period ranged from 17 to 27, with a total of 267 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.**

5.12.5 Location 3 – Approach to Vaughan Terrace – 03/10/2024

- ❖ **AM:** 230 vehicles per hour, low traffic flow. Gaps of 6 seconds during each 5 minute period ranged from 12 to 38, with a total of 325 gaps over the 1 hour period.
- ❖ **PM:** 267 vehicles per hour, low traffic flow. Gaps of 6 seconds during each 5 minute period ranged from 19 to 45, with a total of 352 gaps over the 1 hour period.

5.12.6 Revisit Location 3 – Approach to Vaughan Terrace – 08/10/2024

- ❖ **PM:** 342 vehicles per hour, low traffic flow. Gaps of 6 seconds during each 5 minute period ranged from 8 to 37, with a total of 322 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.

- 5.13 The section of the Learner Travel guidance relating to the ***Risk Assessment Procedure in Relation to Physical/Traffic Risks***, covers the relationship between learners and traffic. As pedestrians, learners face a number of hazards when walking the route. When assessing ***Route Conditions*** for a route to be classed as available Welsh Ministers recommend that the route needs to be:

- A continuous adequate footway on roads which carry medium to heavy traffic flow 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 sufficiently good sight lines to provide adequate advance warning.

5.13.1 85th%tile Speed Data was collected at Vaughan Terrace between 18/10/2024 to 24/10/2024, where the following was noted:

- ❖ **Northbound towards Mountain Ash:** 85th%tile Speed of 39.1mph with a 5 day average of 1964 vehicles per day.
- ❖ **Southbound towards Ynysboeth:** 85th%tile Speed of 37.7mph with a 5 day average of 2223 vehicles per day.

Traffic flows lie within the low to medium range at this location. However, recorded 85th%tile vehicle speeds were noted to be above the posted 20mph speed limit for vehicles entering and exiting Vaughan Terrace.

6. Social Issues

- 6.1 The section of footway along the B4275 between Pentwyn Avenue and Vaughan Terrace has no overlooking buildings (apart from a garage which may not be open during travelling times) or natural surveillance for circa 500m, other than by passing traffic or other pedestrians. A section of footway on Llanwonno Road also has no overlooking buildings or natural surveillance, other than by passing traffic or other pedestrians, see **photographs 6.1 and 6.2** below. There is also a short section of footway behind the stand at the rugby field which would benefit from vegetation clearance to improve pedestrian comfort and lighting levels, see **photograph 6.3**.

Photograph 6.1 – B4275 Abercynon Road Footway - Pentwyn Ave to Vaughan Terrace



Photograph 6.2 – Llanwonno Road footway



Photograph 6.3 – Footpath Located Behind Mountain Ash RFC Main Stand



- 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 any of the routes during the period assessed.

8. Route Overview

8.1 **Main Route** – The Feel Good Factory to Mountain Ash Comprehensive School (rear entrance)

- 8.1.1 The route lies within 30/20mph speed limits.
- 8.1.2 There are continuous footways present in reasonable condition along the route.
- 8.1.3 There is a section of narrow footway along the eastern side of the B4275 Abercynon Road (between Pentwyn Avenue and Vaughan Terrace) with no adjacent footway or 'step offs' present. Whilst pedestrians may be required to step into the carriageway to pass one another at this location, vehicle flows are low (230 vehicles per hour in the morning and 267 in the afternoon) with a total of 325 gaps of 6 seconds per hour in the morning and 352 in the afternoon. On the approach to Vaughan Terrace, as the road bends sight lines are reduced and this is compounded by a change in speed limit from 20mph to 30mph on exiting Vaughan Terrace, with vehicles likely to be accelerating into Abercynon Road. In addition to this, recorded traffic speeds are noted to be significantly above the posted limits, at 39.1mph Northbound towards Mountain Ash and 37.7mph Southbound towards Ynysboeth.
- 8.1.4 Trees were observed to be overhanging sections of the footway along Abercynon Road (between Pentwyn Avenue and Vaughan Terrace), Miskin Road and the footpath to the rear of the stand at Mountain Ash RFC.
- 8.1.5 There is a wide crossing at the junction of Penrhiwceiber Road and Rheola Street, though a safer alternative is available by crossing further into Rheola Street at its narrowest point.
- 8.1.6 There are sections along Penrhiwceiber Road where wheeled bins further restrict the usable footway width. However, a forthcoming change in waste collection methodology from the collection of wheeled bins to black bin bags may help to reduce the number of obstructions on the footway. Vehicles obstructing footways (southern footway) can also impact upon walking routes, but the local neighbourhood policing teams are working with residents to help reduce the risks posed to pedestrians by indiscriminately parked vehicles.
- 8.1.7 There is a localised section of footway on the B4275 Penrhiwceiber Road (north of Pengeulan Primary School) where the footway width reduces, which may require pedestrians to cross to the other side of the road to avoid the narrow footway.
- 8.1.8 Street lighting is present throughout the route although ongoing tree maintenance is required in some areas to ensure that lighting levels are not compromised.
- 8.1.1 Investigations into pedestrian collisions have been undertaken between 2020 and 2024. There were no collisions that involved pedestrians during the times assessed.
- 8.1.2 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.
- 8.1.3 There are controlled crossing facilities at the following locations:

- Zebra Crossing – B4275 West of the junction of Halswell St & B4275 Abercynon Road.
- Zebra Crossing – Lee Gardens on B4275 Penrhiwceiber Road.
- Zebra Crossing – Pengeulan Primary School on B4275 Penrhiwceiber Road.
- Zebra Crossing – Mountain Ash Town Centre outside ABC Domestic
- Zebra Crossing – Ffrwd Crescent Centre outside Mountain Ash Town Hall
- Signalised Crossing – Junction of Ffrwd Road and A4059 New Road
- Signalised Crossing – Junction of Cross Valley Link Road and B4275 Miskin Road

8.1.4 Two sections along the route are not overlooked by residential or commercial properties but are well used either by passing traffic or pedestrians:

- The footway along Abercynon Road between Pentwyn Ave and Vaughan Terrace for circa 500m.
- The footpath to the rear of the stand at Mountain Ash RFC for circa 180m.

8.1.5 Traffic counts were undertaken at 3 different locations on 3 different days, with counts carried out between 07:45 and 08:45 and 15:15 and 16:15. Traffic counts were undertaken at the following locations as detailed in Section 5:

- **Location 1** – Junction of Walsh Street and B4275 – 24/09/2024
- **Location 2** – 92 Pentwyn Avenue – 25/09/2024
- **Location 3*** – Before Vaughan Terrace – 03/10/2024

*85th%tile speed data was also collected on both the north and southbound approaches to Vaughan Terrace.

The traffic flow and gaps at these locations for both AM and PM times, meet the criteria outlined in the Learner Travel Guidance. However, the recorded traffic speeds were noted to be above the posted 20mph speed limit for vehicles entering and exiting Vaughan Terrace.

8.1.6 There are no areas that raised concerns for anti-social behaviour during the site walkover visit along the Main Route.

8.2 Sub Route 1 – Pentwyn Bridge to Mountain Ash Town Bridge (joins the Main Route)

- 8.2.1 The route lies within 20/30 mph speed limits.
- 8.2.2 There are localised sections of footway along Llanwonno Road and High Street where the footway ends and pedestrians will either be required to step into the carriageway, or cross over to the adjacent footway to continue. Where pedestrians are required to cross to the other side of the road, at the time of the site visit, they were able to do so without issue.
- 8.2.3 Trees were observed to be overhanging discrete sections of the footway along Llanwonno Road.
- 8.2.4 There is a convoluted walking route at the signalised junction of Pryce Street and the B4275 (through Mountain Ash town centre), which requires pedestrians to walk away from the junction to a raised crossing point to cross safely.
- 8.2.5 There are sections along Llanwonno Road and High Street where wheeled bins restrict the usable footway width. However, a forthcoming change in waste collection methodology from the collection of wheeled bins to black bin bags may help to reduce the number of obstructions on the footway. Vehicles obstructing footways can also impact upon walking routes, but the local neighbourhood policing teams are working with residents to help reduce the risks posed to pedestrians by indiscriminately parked vehicles.
- 8.2.6 There is a localised section of footway near no. 18 Llanwonno Road where the footway width reduces, which may require pedestrians to cross to the other side of the road to avoid the narrow footway.
- 8.2.7 Street lighting is present throughout the route although ongoing tree maintenance is required in some areas to ensure that lighting levels are not compromised.
- 8.2.8 Investigations into pedestrian collisions have been undertaken between 2020 and 2024. There were no collisions that involved pedestrians during the times assessed.
- 8.2.9 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.
- 8.2.10 There is a controlled crossing facility at the following location:
- Zebra Crossing – On the B4275 West of the junction with Ffrwd Crescent.
- 8.2.11 One section along the route is not overlooked by residential or commercial properties but appears as well used either by passing traffic or pedestrians:
- The footway along Llanwonno Road between Hawthorn Terrace and junction of Arthur Street with Llanwonno Road for circa 550m.
- 8.2.12 There are no areas that raised concerns for anti-social behaviour during the site walkover visit along the Sub Route.

8.3 Sub Route 2 – Glamorgan Street to the B4275 Penrhiwceiber Road (rejoins the Main Route)

- 8.3.1 The route lies within a 20mph speed limit.
- 8.3.2 There is a section of footway along Harris View (Penybryn Road) where the footway ends and pedestrians will be required cross over to the adjacent footway to continue. Where pedestrians are required to cross to the other side of the road, at the time of the site visit, they were able to do so without issue.
- 8.3.3 Trees were observed to be overhanging discrete sections of the footway along Harris View.
- 8.3.4 Street lighting is present throughout the route although ongoing tree maintenance is required in some areas to ensure that lighting levels are not compromised.
- 8.3.4 Investigations into pedestrian collisions has been undertaken between 2020 and 2024. There were no collisions that involved pedestrians during the times assessed.
- 8.3.5 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.
- 8.3.6 There is a controlled crossing facility at the following location:
- Zebra Crossing – On the B4275 Penrhiwceiber Road opposite Lee Gardens pool.
- 8.3.7 There are no areas that raised concerns for anti-social behaviour during the site walkover visit along the Sub Route.

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

9.1 **Main Route** – The Feel Good Factory to Mountain Ash Comprehensive School (rear entrance)

9.1.1 In its current condition the **Main Route**, in its entirety, does not meet the criteria and is only considered to be available to walk in line with the Learner Travel guidelines between 1 Vaughan Terrace and Mountain Ash Comprehensive School. For those living south of 1 Vaughan Terrace, the route from the Feel Good Factory can be walked via **Sub Route 1** and **Sub Route 2** to rejoin the Main Route after 59 Penrhiwceiber Road, and as such is available.

9.1.2 Further enhancements to the walked route **could be considered** to improve conditions for route users and for the whole route to become available. These include the following:

- Undertake an assessment of the footway as it narrows along the eastern side of the B4275 (between Pentwyn Avenue and Vaughan Terrace) to provide improvement measures for enhanced pedestrian safety. One or more of these measures will be required to be implemented before this section of the route between the Feel Good Factory and 1 Vaughan Terrace is deemed available, and may include the following:
 - Footway improvement/widening measures.
 - Speed reduction measures to reduce vehicle approach speeds to the bend to 20mph or less.

9.1.3 Further enhancements to the walked route **could be considered** to improve conditions for the whole route users. These include the following:

- Monitor the condition of overhanging trees and foliage. Where trees and or foliage overhang or encroach into footways these areas should be cut back to improve sight lines and natural surveillance. In addition to this, leaf debris should be removed from footways when required.
- Monitor footway obstructions. Where footway widths continue to be restricted by bin bags and parked cars, action be taken in conjunction with the appropriate Council Department / local neighbourhood policing teams.

9.2 Sub Route 1 – Pentwyn Bridge to Mountain Ash Town Bridge (joins the Main Route)

9.2.1 The route meets the criteria and is considered available to walk in line with the Learner Travel guidelines. However, further enhancements to the walked route **could be considered** to improve conditions for route users. These include the following:

- Monitor the condition of overhanging trees and foliage. Where trees and or foliage overhang or encroach into footways these areas should be cut back to improve sight lines and natural surveillance. In addition to this, leaf debris should be removed from footways when required.
- Monitor footway obstructions. Where footway widths continue to be restricted by bin bags and parked cars, action be taken in conjunction with the appropriate Council Department / local neighbourhood policing teams.

9.3 Sub Route 2 – Pentwyn Bridge to the B4275 Penrhiwceiber Road (rejoins the Main Route)

9.3.1 The route meets the criteria and is considered available to walk in line with the Learner Travel guidelines. However, further enhancements to the walked route **could be considered** to improve conditions for route users. These include the following:

- Monitor the condition of overhanging trees and foliage. Where trees and or foliage overhang or encroach into footways these areas should be cut back to improve sight lines and natural surveillance. In addition to this, leaf debris should be removed from footways when required.

REDSTART

Quest House
St Mellons Business Park
Fortran Rd, St. Mellons
Cardiff
CF3 0EY

www.redstartwales.com

