LRM PLANNING LIMITED



William Price Business Park, The Sidings, Treforest

Design and Access Statement

Prepared by LRM Planning Limited on behalf of Trivallis

November 2026


Site location

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Figure 1 - Endeavour House



Figure 2 -Welsh Institute of Chiropractic building

1 Introduction

1.1 This Design and Access Statement accompanies a full planning application submitted on behalf of Trivallis, the applicant, for the demolition of existing buildings and the proposed development of 34 affordable dwellings and associated works at the William Price Business Park in Treforest.

1.2 The proposals seek to develop brownfield land comprising two vacant office buildings (B1 Use Class) and a vacant Welsh Institute of Chiropractic building (D1 Use Class) into 34 affordable one-bedroom apartments (C3 Use Class). The proposal also includes car parking, cycle storage landscaping, sustainable drainage and associated works.

1.3 This Design and Access Statement and accompanying documentation justify how the proposed development aims to make use of this redundant site which adjoins an established residential context

Purpose

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

1.5 The purpose of this document is to analyse the context of the site in respect of planning policy and the local character of the area, whilst having regard to each of Welsh Government's five objectives of good design.

Aim

1.6 The aim of this document is to:

- Provide an overview of the site context, which has aided in shaping the proposals;
- demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and how the design of the development takes that context into account;
- explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development;
- explain the policy or approach adopted for access and how policies relating to access in the development have been taken into account; and
- explain how specific issues which might affect access to the development have been addressed.

Figure 3 - Innovation House





Figure 4 -Access to the site from The Sidings

2 Site description and context analysis

Location

2.1 The site comprises approximately 0.54 hectares of brownfield land within the settlement boundary, adjacent to Treforest railway station and around 140m walking distance west of Treforest's LDP-defined retail and commercial area. It adjoins established residential development to the north and west and is accessed from The Sidings, with an existing parking courtyard to the north capable of accommodating 23 spaces.

Features

2.2 The site contains three vacant buildings and their curtilages: Innovation House, Endeavour House and the Welsh Institute of Chiropractic building. Innovation House and Endeavour House are understood to have been used as university-related offices falling within B1 Use Class, with the Welsh Institute of Chiropractic building falling within D1 Use Class. The buildings are generally finished in roughcast render and brickwork, with hipped or flat roof forms and associated parking forecourts.

2.3 The surrounding area is mainly characterised by two-storey terraced housing of typical valley vernacular, including properties on Old Park Terrace to the north and Belle Vue Terrace to the west, which face the site from an elevated position, over a narrow lane. External finishes predominantly comprise roughcast render painted in various muted colours or pennant stone, and the properties generally have painted brick detailing around windows and doors. Properties along Belle Vue Terrace feature bay windows and are set behind landscape front gardens. Fenestration to the houses is typically white uPVC, and their shallow pitched roofs comprise ridged interlocking concrete tiles. The Sidings and Treforest railway station lie to the east and offices at Prospect House adjoin the site to the south.

Local services and amenities

2.4 The site is highly accessible and well connected to a range of local services and amenities, including the public transport network. Treforest railway station adjoins the site to the east and provides six services per hour to Cardiff Central and two services per hour to Cardiff Bay, Aberdare, Treherbert and Merthyr Tydfil. Connections to regional and national destinations are able to be made from Cardiff. Furthermore, north and southbound bus stops are located 210m south of the site which are served by the no.90 route, providing six trips a day between Pontypridd Bus Station and Beddau. The defined retail and commercial centre for Treforest features a host of shops and services including convenience stores, a pharmacy, post office, eateries and other day-to-day amenities.

Heritage

2.5 Regarding heritage assets, the Old Park Terrace Conservation Area is located due north of the site, almost immediately abutting the site but separated by a level difference, hard landscaping comprising walls and metal fencing and, presently, overgrown vegetation. The Historic Built Environment Supplementary Planning Guidance states the area contains notable examples of 18th century architecture and townscape illustrating the local social history. The nearest listed building is Mr Snooker's Club (formerly Cecil Cinema), which is Grade II listed for architectural interest as a pre-1914 cinema, noted to be an extremely rare survival in south Wales. It is located approximately 110m northeast of the site, with intervening residential development and the railway line providing substantial separation from this asset.

Flooding

2.6 The Flood Maps for Planning (FMfP), produced by Natural Resources Wales, demonstrate the site to be situated within Flood Zone 1 for river and sea flooding, denoting areas at little to no risk of fluvial/coastal flooding. In respect of surface water, Flood Zones 2 and 3 are present on site, particularly to the north. The latter signifies areas with more than 1% (1 in 100) chance of flooding from surface water and/or small watercourses in a given year, including the effects of climate change. The River Taff flows approximately 140m east, however at a significantly less elevated location

Ecology and trees

2.7 The site comprises predominantly hardstanding, with areas of grassed banking and bramble scrub interspersed with trees along the western boundary. In light of the proposed demolition works, a bat survey prepared by Ecological Services supports this application. No evidence of bats was found within the buildings, and no bats were observed emerging during the emergence surveys. The survey concludes that the proposals would have a negligible impact on bats, and recommends enhancement measures, including bat roosting features, bird bricks and sensitive lighting, to secure a net benefit for biodiversity.

2.8 A tree survey accompanies this submission, conducted by Treescene. It identifies nine trees of relevance to the proposal, which primarily lie along the western site boundary. Eight trees were assessed to be Category C, denoting trees which are of low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10 years. The remaining tree is recorded to be Category U, signifying those in such a condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the context of the current land use for longer than 10 years.

Other material considerations

2.9 There are no planning applications related to the site according to online records of the Authority.

2.10 The site is situated within a coal mining reporting area, but outside of any development high risk area.

2.11 There are no Public Rights of Way on or adjacent of the site

Figure 6 - Movement and transport links from LeTrucco Design



Figure 5 - Treforest railway station

Figure 7 - Site and context analysis from LeTrucco Design

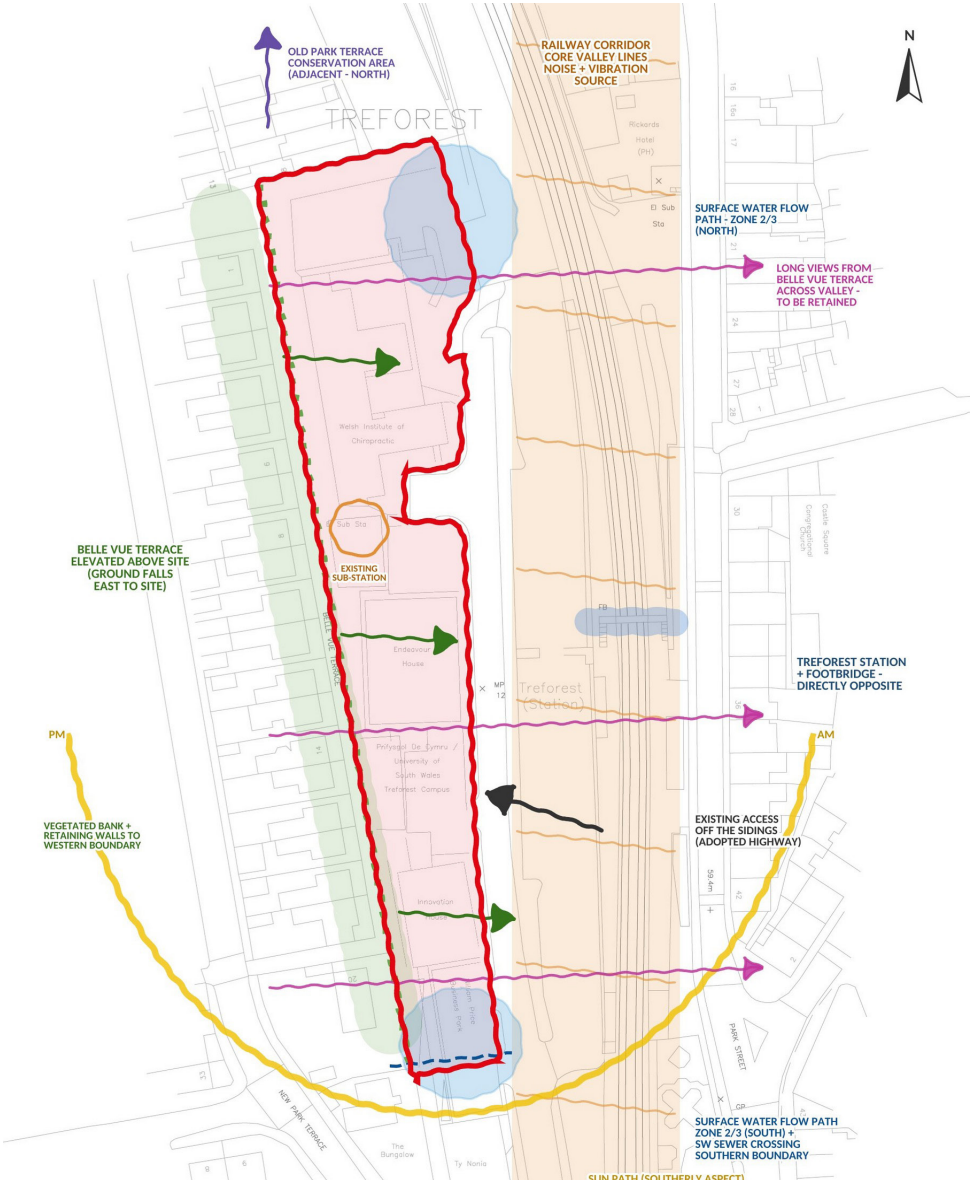




Figure 8 - Treforest railway station



Figure 10 - Welsh Institute of Chiropractic



Figure 9 - The Sidings along the eastern boundary of the site



Figure 11 - Endeavour House

3 Interpretation and design development

Pre-application engagement with Local Authority

3.1 A pre-application enquiry was submitted on behalf of the applicant on the 1st July 2026, and written feedback was received from Robert Price, Planning Officer at Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, on the 9th September (ref. 26/5075/PRE). A meeting was held on the 14th September to discuss the proposals, although the written response, which was broadly supportive, was not subsequently amended. A summary of the key points is set out below:.

Principle

- The officer raised concerns regarding the loss of an existing employment site, as it forms part of the Council's Employment Land Bank and comprises relatively modern purpose-built commercial buildings.
- To justify redevelopment of the site, the officer requested that the application demonstrated either that the continued employment use of the site has been thoroughly explored through a comprehensive marketing exercise of at least 12 months at a realistic market rate, or that the proposed development would deliver significant regeneration benefits for the locality sufficient to outweigh the loss of the employment use.
- Supporting information should also demonstrate that a range of employment uses would still be maintained within the plan area and that the proposed alternative use would not prejudice employment land in the area.
- At the subsequent meeting, it was agreed that a marketing period of under 12 months could be acceptable if supported by extensive evidence, including the instability of previous occupiers and the minimal impact of the loss of the units on the Council's available Employment Land Bank.
- If the loss of the existing employment site can be justified, the Officer advised that residential development at this location could likely be considered acceptable in principle.

Design and residential amenity

- The officer considered that, notwithstanding the scale of the proposed development and its more contemporary appearance, there is scope for the scheme to integrate successfully within both the immediate and wider area given that it is characterised by a varied pattern of development.
- The proposal was therefore not considered to give rise to any fundamental concerns in respect of local character or design.

Figure 12 - Proposed site layout considered at pre-application stage



- The proposed mix of tenures was considered appropriate.
- The officer acknowledged some change in outlook for properties on Belle Vue Terrace but did not consider the impact to be materially harmful.
- The officer also advised that due regard should be given to the relationship between the proposed dwellings and the adjacent railway line, including the provision of appropriate defensible space.
- In terms of noise impacts, the officer acknowledged that locating primary habitable rooms to the rear of each unit may help mitigate the effects of the adjacent railway. However, concerns were raised that this arrangement could compromise residents' outlook and privacy, particularly given the rear retaining wall and the reliance on shared communal garden areas.
- In light of the above, a Noise Assessment was recommended to accompany the full application.

3.2 Written responses were also received from the Highways Authority, the Lead Local Flood Authority, Public Protection and the Council's Ecologist, which are summarised as follows:

- The Highways Authority considered the proposed access to the development off The Sidings to be acceptable. They identified a requirement for 58 resident parking spaces and 7 visitor spaces. As only 30 spaces were proposed, they advised that any future application should include robust justification for this shortfall. A Transport Statement was recommended to assess the impact on the local highway network, together with a Residential Travel Plan to promote sustainable travel choices.
- Whilst the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) accepted that some areas of flood risk may be addressed through site regrading, further assessment within the Flood Consequences Assessment was requested to demonstrate that the development can comply with TAN15 requirements and remain safe from flooding. The LLFA also noted the need for SAB approval.
- Public Protection reviewed the submitted Site Investigation Report and noted the potentially contaminative former railway-related uses. While remediation measures have been proposed to address identified contamination, including elevated contaminant concentrations and localised asbestos, they state that further investigation will be required following demolition to confirm the extent of contamination and the suitability of the proposed mitigation strategy. It was therefore advised that any future permission would likely be subject to standard contaminated land conditions.
- The Council's Ecologist advised that, as demolition is proposed, any future planning application should be supported by appropriate ecological surveys, including assessments for bats and nesting birds, to demonstrate that biodiversity impacts can be adequately mitigated and that suitable enhancement measures can be delivered. In this regard, a Green Infrastructure Statement would also be required to support the application.
- Officers also confirmed that the proposal would constitute major development, requiring statutory Pre-application Consultation, and that the development would be liable for the Community Infrastructure Levy (Residential Charging Zone 2, currently £40 per sqm). A recreation contribution is also likely to be required, either through on-site provision or a financial contribution of approximately £1,000 per dwelling.



Figure 13 - Dwellings along Belle Vue Terrace



Figure 14 - Existing relationship between the site and Belle Vue Terrace



Figure 15 - Dwellings along New Park Terrace



Figure 16 - Detached dwelling along Old Park Terrace



Figure 17 - Dwellings along New Park Terrace



Figure 18 - Dwellings along Old Park Terrace



Figure 19 - Vacant church along Old Park Terrace



Figure 20 - Dwellings along Old Park Terrace

Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) with the community

3.3 A statutory Pre-application Consultation (PAC) exercise is being undertaken in accordance with Articles 2C and 2D of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012. This comprises letters to the owners and occupiers of neighbouring land, a site notice displayed at the site, notification of local Members and specialist consultees (including Transport for Wales and Network Rail, given the site's relationship with the railway), and publication of the draft application on the LRM Planning website. In addition, a voluntary public exhibition will be held within the former Welsh Institute of Chiropractic building on site on Tuesday 1st December 2026, between 4pm and 6.30pm. The comments received will be reported upon, and responded to, in the Pre-application Consultation (PAC) Report that will accompany the planning application.

3.4 Further engagement has also been undertaken with South Wales Police's Designing Out Crime Officer, who reviewed the scheme against Secured by Design principles in November 2026, and with the SuDS Approval Body through a pre-SAB application submitted on 7th October 2026. Dwr Cymru Welsh Water has also confirmed, through pre-planning advice (ref. PPA0010123), that there are no capacity issues in respect of foul drainage.

Interpretation of context and design evolution

3.5 The context to the site, set out in section 2, set the parameters within which the proposals were shaped. The layout has been informed by an iterative process led by LeTrucco Design, which began with a detailed appraisal of the site and its surroundings. This is set out in the accompanying Design Context Analysis (LT2606.05.01).

3.6 The site is a narrow, broadly level plateau of former railway sidings, at approximately 62.0m to 62.8m AOD. It sits between Belle Vue Terrace, which stands on a steep vegetated bank roughly one storey above the site to the west, and Treforest railway station to the east. An analysis of the site's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified three main influences on the design:

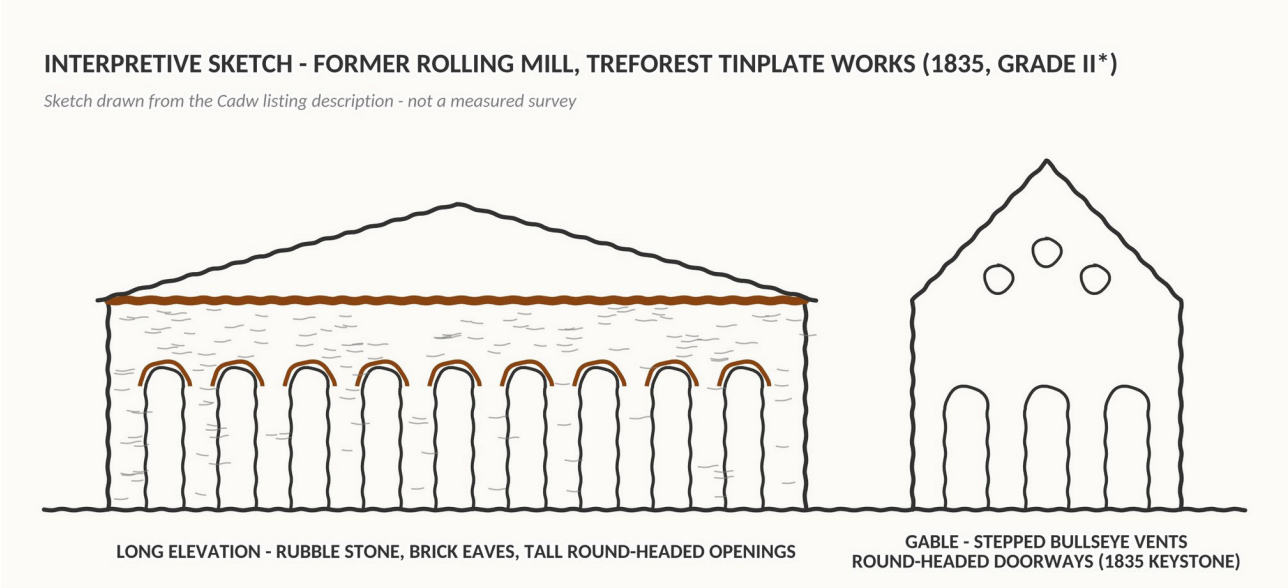
- the frontage to the station and its footbridge;
- the elevated terrace and green bank to the west, and the long views east across the Taff valley from Belle Vue Terrace;
- the surface water flooding, railway noise and ground condition constraints, which dictate finished floor levels and the orientation of rooms.

3.7 The analysis also defined the developable area of the site. The western bank and its retaining walls are kept as an ecological buffer and structural edge. The low point at the southern end, crossed by a surface water sewer, is set aside for sustainable drainage and public open space. The existing car park to the north and the electricity substation are retained.

3.8 From this analysis, the key design drivers are:

- Deliver a well-designed affordable housing scheme that meets identified local need and strengthens the diversity of housing tenure in the area, in a highly sustainable location directly opposite a South Wales Metro station.
- Provide a high-quality living environment for future occupiers, with well-designed homes and usable outdoor spaces that support residents' everyday needs for living, working and leisure, while protecting them from railway noise.
- Create a development with a strong identity and sense of place. It should give the station a new residential frontage, draw on Treforest's railway and industrial heritage, and respond positively to the site's topography and to views from Belle Vue Terrace.

Figure 21 - Local character and materials study from LeTrucco Design



- Retain existing trees, the vegetated bank and ecological corridors where possible, supplemented by new planting and landscaping to soften the visual impact of the development and enhance biodiversity.

3.9 These matters were identified at the outset, and the layout and design were developed to address them from an early stage. The scheme evolved through four stages:

- a feasibility layout in May 2026;
- a pre-application scheme in June 2026, which developed an architectural concept drawing on the area's industrial and wharf buildings and was submitted to the Council on 1st July 2026;
- refinement in response to the Council's pre-application advice of 9th September 2026, including keeping surface water flow paths clear, setting finished floor levels, and providing sustainable drainage and open space at the southern end;
- a final layout prepared for Welsh Government technical scrutiny in September 2026. This confirmed all 34 homes as two-person, one-bedroom apartments of 52 sqm, designed to the Welsh Development Quality Requirements 2021.

3.10 To create a high-quality living environment, the buildings front onto The Sidings and face the station. This gives the street an active frontage and natural surveillance over the access road and parking areas, and provides defensible space to the railway. Living rooms are placed to the rear, facing west, away from the railway. Circulation and service spaces are placed on the railway side and protected by acoustic glazing and ventilation. Shared rear gardens lie to the west, between the blocks and Belle Vue Terrace, where the buildings themselves screen them from the railway and station, giving residents a quieter environment. Refuse stores and secure cycle parking are provided for every home, with a bin collection point on The Sidings. Each apartment also includes a dedicated area for home working.

3.11 The apartments are arranged in a linear form along the length of the site, following its narrow, elongated shape between Belle Vue Terrace and the railway. A two-storey gabled range (Plots 1–16) is stepped along the boundary towards the southern part of the site, where the site is narrowest and closest to existing homes. Two three-storey blocks (Plots 17–25 and 26–34) mark the wider northern end of the site opposite the station, where the additional height can best be accommodated. At this height, their eaves sit at a similar level to the ground floors of Belle Vue Terrace. The blocks are separated by gaps, so that views east from Belle Vue Terrace across the site to the Taff valley are retained.

3.12 The appearance of the buildings draws directly on the local character study. The steep gables and repeated rhythm reflect the valley terraces. The buff clay brick, a warm, stone-toned masonry, complements the Pennant sandstone found locally. The gauged, arched brick window heads recall the chapels of the area and the Grade II* listed 1835 tinplate works rolling mill. Together with the robust, industrial character of the 'Sidings' range and the 'Goods Shed' blocks, this gives the scheme an identity rooted in the site's history as railway sidings serving the Taff Vale industrial corridor.

3.13 The site's change in level has been accommodated by retaining and extending the existing retaining walls along the western boundary, allowing the development to sit comfortably below Belle Vue Terrace without appearing overbearing. The level plateau allows level thresholds throughout. Finished floor levels of +62.05m to +62.65m AOD raise the homes above the existing surface water low points, which are engineered out with minimal cut and fill.

3.14 Existing trees and the vegetated western bank have been retained where possible, in line with the accompanying tree report. The southern end of the site is set aside for sustainable drainage and public open space, creating a green buffer at the entrance to the development. Permeable paving, rain gardens and new tree planting along the street frontage are integrated throughout the layout, and new landscaping is proposed around the existing substation to screen it. The layout also incorporates biodiversity enhancements, including bird and bat boxes to at least half of the homes, hedgehog tunnels within boundary fencing, and native planting to the bank.

3.15 The layout was discussed with officers at pre-application stage, who raised no fundamental concerns in respect of character or design. Officers acknowledged that, given the area's varied pattern of development, the scale and materials of the scheme can integrate successfully. They also noted that the topography limits the impact on the outlook of properties on Belle Vue Terrace.

3.16 The matters raised by officers at pre-application stage have been addressed through the documents accompanying this application:

- a Marketing Statement prepared by Savills, in respect of the loss of the employment use;
- a Noise and Vibration Assessment prepared by Technical Services Consult;
- a Transport Statement and Residential

Travel Plan prepared by Acstro;

- an updated Drainage Strategy and Flood Consequence Assessment prepared by PHG Consulting;
- a Bat Survey prepared by Ecological Services;
- a Tree Survey prepared by Treescene;
- a landscaping scheme and Green Infrastructure Statement prepared by Laird Bailey.

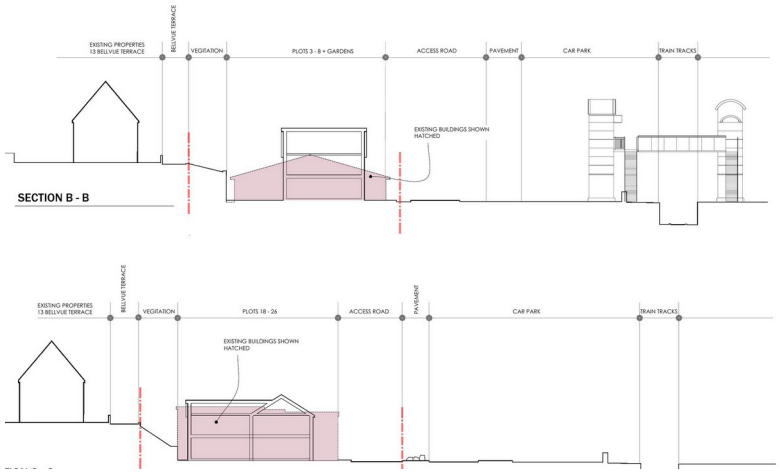


Figure 22 - Site sections illustrating the relationship between the proposed development, neighbouring dwellings and the adjacent railway station

Figure 23 - Scale, height and density study from LeTrucco Design

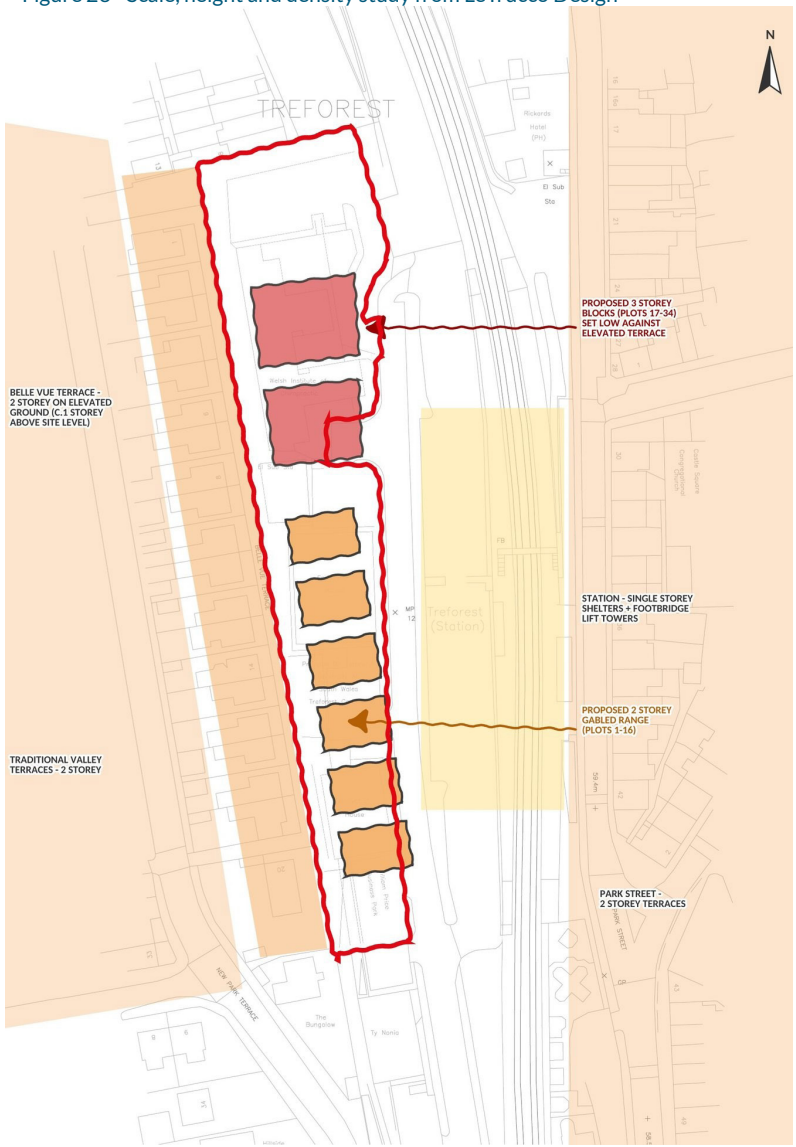
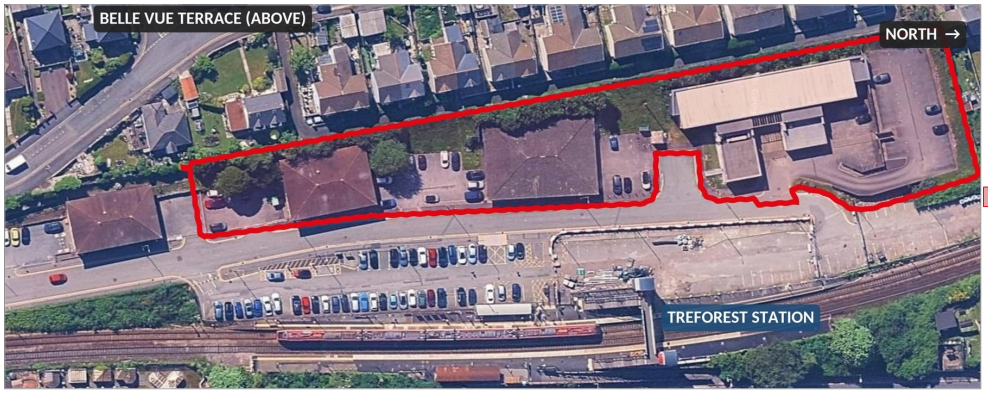


Figure 24 - Design progression from LeTrucco Design



STAGE 0 - EXISTING SITE (NORTH TO RIGHT, AS LAYOUTS)
3 VACANT OFFICE / CLINIC BUILDINGS + SURFACE PARKING ON FORMER RAILWAY SIDINGS.



STAGE 1 - FEASIBILITY LAYOUT (LT2606.03.01, MAY 2026) - 34 HOMES
2-STOREY GABLED RANGE + TWO 3-STOREY BLOCKS; CAR PARK RETAINED; VIEWS FROM BELLE VUE TERRACE PROTECTED.

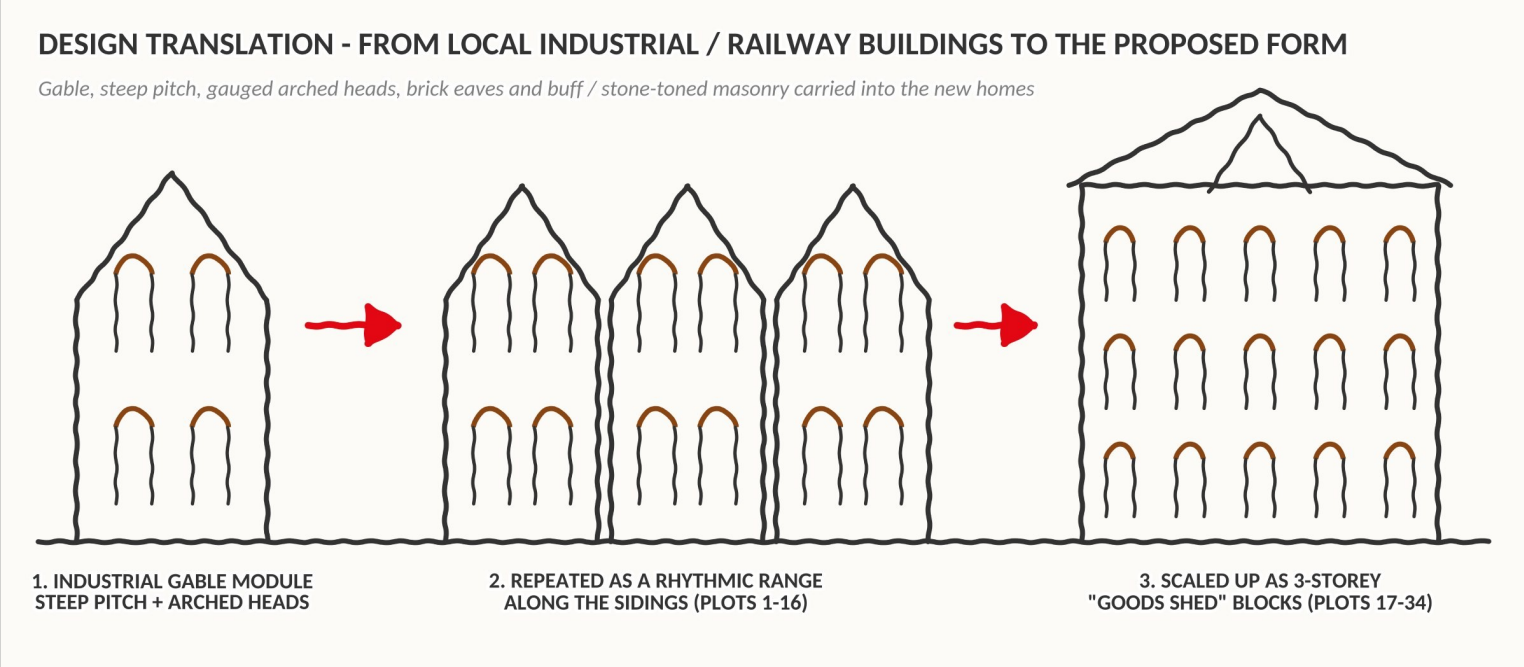


STAGE 2 - PRE-APPLICATION SCHEME (JUNE 2026) - 34 HOMES
WHARF / WAREHOUSE ARCHITECTURAL CONCEPT (LT2606.03.03); SUBMITTED TO RCT 01/07/2026.



STAGE 3 - WG CONCEPT LAYOUT (LT2606.04.01, SEPT 2026) - 34 x 2P1B
LEVELS + FFLS SET; SUDS + POS; RETAINING WALLS; BINS, BIKES + ECOLOGY; MIX CONFIRMED AS 34 X 2P1B.

Figure 25 - Design progression from LeTrucco Design





PLOTS 5-16 - GABLED "SIDINGS" RANGE



PLOTS 17-25 - 3-STOREY "GOODS SHED" BLOCK

4 Planning policy context

Overview

4.1 The planning policy context for the determination of this application is provided by national and local planning policy guidance. National guidance is set out within Future Wales: The National Plan 2040, Planning Policy Wales, and its accompanying Technical Advice Notes. Local policy comprises the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan (2011-2021) and its supporting Supplementary Planning Guidance documents.

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

4.2 Future Wales is the top-tier national development framework produced by Welsh Government (WG). It is a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system over the next two decades, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems, and improving the health and well-being of our communities.

Planning Policy Wales

4.3 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) is the principal national planning policy document which sets out the land use policies of WG, against which development proposals should be assessed. The latest version is the twelfth edition, published in February 2024.

4.4 The main thrust of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales. Placemaking lies at the heart of PPW, with policy and development management decisions required to deliver development that adheres to these principles.

4.5 In a bid to ensure placemaking is prioritised, and in order to aid in implementing the Well-being of Future Generations Act, policy topics within PPW have been grouped under four themes, namely *'Strategic and Spatial Choices'*; *'Active and Social Places'*; *'Productive and Enterprising Places'*; and *'Distinctive and Natural Places'*. Each of the four headed chapters is supplemented by detailed and interwoven policy, which seeks to work together in delivering sustainable places.

4.6 PPW promotes action at all levels of the planning process which is conducive to maximising its contribution to the well-being of Wales and its communities. In this regard it seeks to achieve WG's well-being goals. All statutory bodies in Wales carrying out a planning function must exercise those functions with the principles of sustainable development as defined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Accordingly, paragraph 1.18 of PPW states emphatically that *'legislation secures a presumption in favour of sustainable development'*.

Strategic and Spatial Choices

4.7 Paragraphs 3.3 to 3.18 of PPW highlight the importance of good design in *"creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise"*. To achieve good design development, proposals need to meet the five overarching aims of design which comprise of access, character, community safety, environmental sustainability, and movement.

4.8 PPW seeks to ensure that proposals achieve a broad balance between housing, community facilities, services, and employment opportunities. Major generators of travel demand, such as housing, employment, retailing, leisure and recreation, and community facilities should be sited within existing urban areas or areas which are, or can be, easily reached by walking or cycling, and are well served by public transport.

4.9 PPW indicates at paragraphs 3.61 to 3.63 that development should be located so that it can be well serviced by existing or planned infrastructure.

Active and Social Places

4.10 A key theme of PPW is creating places that are active and social, this includes sustainable transport provision for housing development. The opening paragraphs to this chapter include the following aspiration of PPW:

"New development should prevent problems from occurring or getting worse such as the shortage of affordable homes, the reliance on the private car and the generation of carbon emissions."

4.11 In terms of car parking, paragraph 4.1.50 indicates that *"A design-led approach to the provision of car parking should be taken, which ensures an appropriate level of car parking is integrated in a way which does not dominate the development. Parking provision should be informed by the local context, including public transport accessibility, urban design principles and the objective of reducing reliance on the private car and supporting a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport. Planning authorities must support schemes which keep parking levels down".*

4.12 With respect to housing, WG recognise the importance of a home to the lives of people and indicates that the planning system must:

- *"identify a supply of land to support the delivery of the housing requirement to meet the differing needs of communities across all tenures;*
- *enable provision of a range of well-designed, energy efficient, good quality market and affordable housing that will contribute to the creation of sustainable places; and*
- *focus on the delivery of the identified housing requirement and the related land supply."*

4.13 Paragraph 4.2.25 states that *"a community's need for affordable housing is a material planning consideration which must be taken into account in formulating development plan policies and determining relevant planning applications."*

Productive and Enterprising Places

4.14 This section relates primarily to economic development, tourism, infrastructure, the rural economy, energy, and waste, and is thus less directly applicable to this proposal.

Distinctive and Natural Places

4.15 This chapter of PPW covers a range of topics, including cultural heritage matters, natural assets, and environmental quality. The opening statement of the chapter states that:

"Development proposals should be formulated to look to the long-term protection and enhancement of the special characteristics and intrinsic qualities of places...Problems should be prevented from occurring or getting worse. Biodiversity loss should be reversed, pollution reduced, environmental risks addressed and overall resilience of ecosystems improved."

4.16 Section 6 sets out green infrastructure and how it can be integrated into developments, which should be protected and enhanced due to the

multi-functional roles. A proactive approach to green infrastructure and biodiversity should be adopted to help reverse the decline in biodiversity and increase the resilience of ecosystems.

Technical Advice Notes

4.17 The following Technical Advice Notes (TANs) are of relevance in the consideration of these proposals.

4.18 TAN 2, published in June 2006, is of relevance to affordable housing developments, providing practical guidance on the role of the planning system in delivering affordable housing.

4.19 TAN 11, published in October 1997, relates to noise and development.

4.20 TAN 12 relates to Design and was updated in March 2016. It provides advice and information on a number of related areas including the definition of design for planning purposes; design considerations in planning decisions; and local planning authority design policy and advice.

4.21 TAN 15, updated as of March 2025, provides guidance for development in relation to flood risks and offers a framework to assess risks associated with coastal, fluvial and surface water flooding, including the effects of climate change.

4.22 TAN 18, which was published in March 2007, deals with Transport matters, and advocates locating development where there is good access by public transport, walking and cycling; generally advocating development at sustainable sites.

4.23 TAN 24 published in May 2017, covers the Historic Environment. In relation to listed buildings, this TAN largely reflects the key points addressed through Distinctive and Natural Places chapter of PPW as discussed above.

Well-being of Future Generations Act

4.24 The Well-being of Future Generations Act imposes a duty on public bodies to carry out sustainable development in accordance with the sustainable development principles, and to act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Its content is sought to be delivered through the planning system via the intertwining of the Act through PPW.

Local Development Plan

4.25 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning application decisions should be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan for the site comprises the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan (LDP), which was formally adopted in March 2011 and covers the period up to 2021.

4.26 A Replacement LDP is being prepared, and the Authority is continuing to prepare the Deposit Plan and align the evidence base. Consultation on the Deposit plan is not anticipated until the end of 2026 at the earliest, with timescales in the Delivery Agreement suggesting that this means adoption no earlier than mid-2028. Accordingly, the currently adopted LDP remains in force until such time as the replacement plan is formally adopted.

4.27 The application site is located within the settlement boundary of Treforest, in the *"Southern Strategy Area"* as outlined within the LDP. The site is not subject to any allocations or designations. It can therefore be classed as *"white land"*, whereby the principle of development on this site is acceptable, subject to material planning considerations. Figure 20, an annotated extract of the LDP Proposals Map, displays the status of the site therein.

4.28 Policies with a prefix CS (Core Strategy) provide a land use framework seeking to marry the delivery of new homes and services at local level with an ambitious strategy for growth intended

to promote sustainable regeneration.

4.29 Policy CS4 defines the housing land requirements, identifying a need for 14,385 new dwellings in Rhondda Cynon Taf over the plan period. The strategy focuses opportunities for additional housing in sustainable locations with brownfield land taking preference over the use of greenfield land where possible. This is supported by Policy CS5, which identifies the affordable housing figure requirement over the plan period setting an authority wide target of 1,770 affordable units over the plan period.

4.30 Policies beginning 'AW' are Area Wide policies, which provide a Borough-wide basis for the determination of planning applications. Policy AW1 (Supply of New Housing) supplements policy CS4, and states that the housing land requirement of the county borough will be met (inter alia) by the development of unallocated land within defined settlement boundaries and the provision of affordable housing.

4.31 Policy AW5 (New Development) is an overarching policy outlining design principles. This includes the two broad headings of amenity and accessibility. Amenity principles that are sought to be achieved include those related to scale, form, design, amenity impact, retention of existing site features, compatibility, and security. The tenets of accessibility that are aspired to include proximity to accessible means of travel, reduction in dependence on motor vehicles, suitable vehicular access provision and appropriate car parking provision.

4.32 Policy AW6 (Design and Placemaking) is another broad design policy covering a range of considerations. It supports development proposals that, among other things, are of a high standard of design that reinforces local distinctiveness, are appropriate to their local context in terms of siting, scale, massing, appearance and materials, integrate landscaping that enhances the site and its wider context, and protect and enhance the landscape and biodiversity.

4.33 Policy AW7 (Protection and Enhancement of the Built Environment) states that development proposals which affect sites and buildings of architectural and/or historic merit, including conservation areas and listed buildings and their settings, will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would preserve or enhance their character and setting.

4.34 Policy AW8 (Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment) preserves and enhances Rhondda Cynon Taf's distinctive natural environment by protecting it from inappropriate development. The policy aims to protect and enhance the diversity of wildlife habitats and the native species that depend on them.

4.35 Policy AW10 (Environmental Protection and Public Health) states that development will not be permitted where it would cause or result in a risk of unacceptable harm to health and/or local amenity, including through noise, land contamination and flooding, unless it can be demonstrated that measures can be taken to overcome any significant risk.

4.36 The site is not allocated for employment use within the LDP. Nevertheless, officers advised at pre-application stage that the site forms part of the Council's Employment Land Bank, and Policy AW11 (Existing Employment and Retail Uses) is therefore of relevance. Policy AW11 seeks to retain existing employment sites unless it can be demonstrated that the site is no longer suitable or viable for employment use, that a range of employment land would continue to be maintained within the plan area, and that the alternative use would not prejudice employment uses in the area.

4.37 Southern Strategy Area policies (prefixed 'SSA') provide the framework for development in the southern area of the county borough. Policy SSA11 outlines the requirement for a net residential density of minimum 35 dwellings per hectare and policy SSA12 seeks a minimum of 20% affordable housing on development sites of five or more units.

4.38 Finally, policy SSA 13 (Development within

Settlement Boundaries) supports housing development within settlement boundaries, subject to a series of criteria that this proposal at this location will be able to adhere to.

4.39 A summary of the pertinent LDP policies is provided below, listed in the order they appear in the LDP.

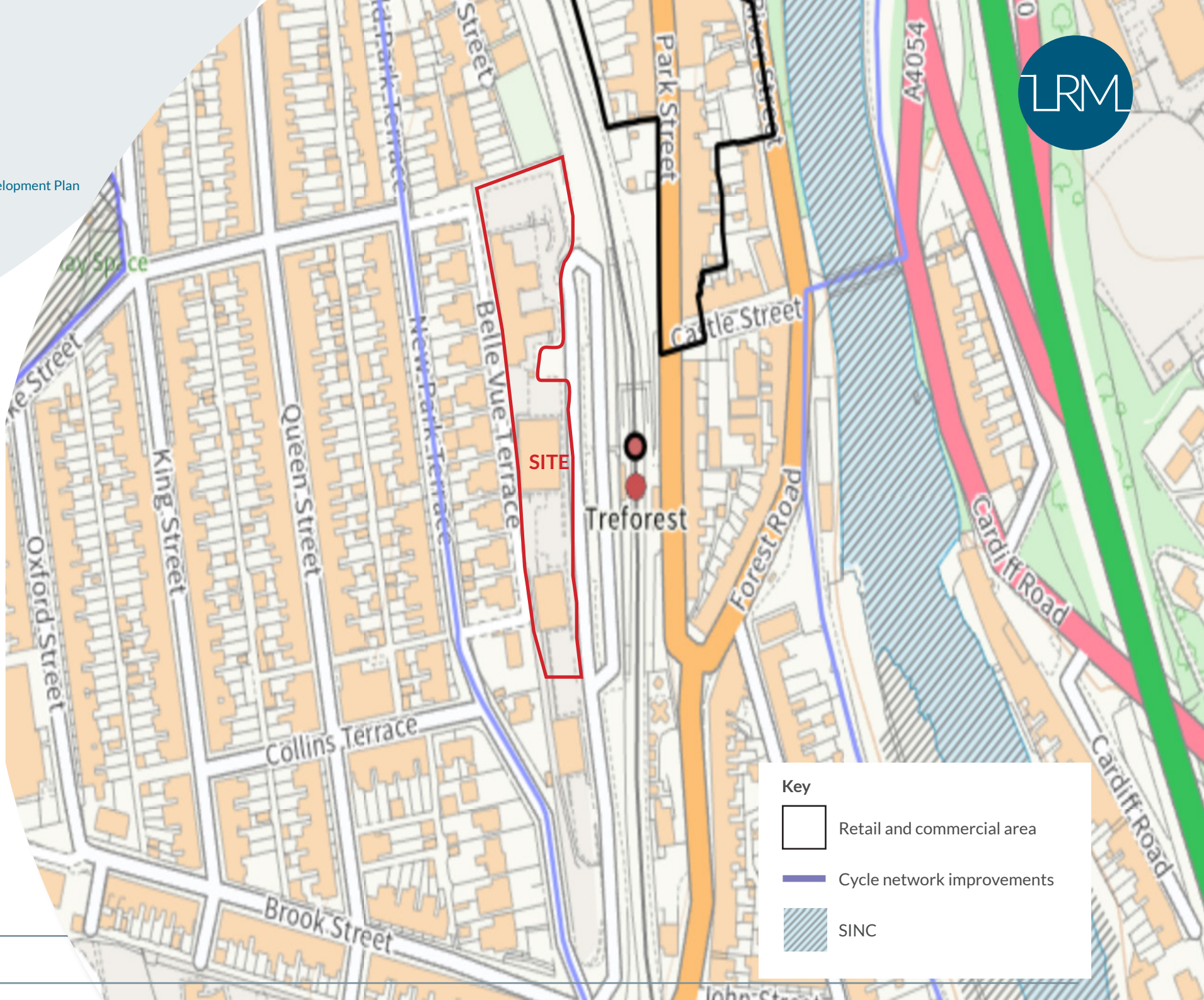
LDP Policy	Relating to
Strategic Policies	
CS2	Development in the South
CS4	Housing Requirement
CS5	Affordable Housing
Area Wide Policies	
AW1	Supply of New Housing
AW2	Sustainable Locations
AW5	New Development
AW6	Design and Placemaking
AW7	Protection and Enhancement of the Built Environment
AW8	Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment
AW10	Environmental Protection and Public Health
AW11	Existing Employment and Retail Uses
Southern Strategy Area Policies	
SSA11	Housing Density
SSA12	Affordable Housing
SSA13	Development within the Settlement Boundaries

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

4.40 The following SPG documents are applicable in consideration of the proposed development:

- Access Circulation and Parking (March 2011);
- Affordable Housing (March 2011);
- Design and Placemaking (March 2011);
- Development of Flats (June 2015);
- Nature Conservation (March 2011); and
- Planning Obligations (December 2014

Figure 26 - Local Development Plan Proposals Map



5 The proposal & assessment against objectives of good design

Character

5.1 The proposal seeks consent for demolition of two vacant office buildings (B1) and a vacant Welsh Institute of Chiropractic building (D1) through redevelopment proposals for the provision of 34 affordable one-bedroom apartments (C3) arranged within a series of two- and three-storey blocks. The proposals also comprise car parking, cycle storage, landscaping, sustainable drainage, and associated works.

5.2 **Layout** - The site layout has been informed by an iterative process, as detailed in section 3, commencing with an assessment of the site context and constraints. In this regard, the layout, prepared by LeTrucco Design, has been organised to make efficient use of the site while responding to its siting adjacent to the railway station, alongside steeply sloping ground, and to the immediate east of existing established residential properties.

5.3 The dwellings are arranged in four blocks, comprising:

- a small block of four walk-up flats featuring front-facing gables and built to two storeys;
- a two-storey terrace, comprising ground and first-floor apartments similarly featuring front-facing gabled roofs; and
- two three-storey apartment blocks with a shallow pitched roof

5.4 Given the constrained nature of the site within an urban setting, the proposed amenity space has been designed to maximise the efficient use of the limited available area, focusing on provisions that offer the greatest benefit to future occupants. In this context, all dwellings are provided with amenity space in the form of shared rear gardens, which feature communal refuse stores.

Figure 27 - Welsh Government's Objectives of Good Design *(source: Planning Policy Wales)*



5.5 In addition, accessible public open space is available in close proximity to the site at Lewiston Park Playground, located approximately 650m walking distance north.

5.6 **Scale, massing and amenity** - The proposed development has been carefully designed in terms of its scale and massing to respond to both the topography of the site and its surrounding context. The apartment blocks, proposed at two and three storeys, will contribute positively to the character of the surrounding area, having been designed to reflect the surrounding residential context. The taller blocks are positioned to the northern part of the site where it can be best accommodated without giving rise to adverse amenity impact.

5.7 The relationship with properties on Belle Vue Terrace has been a key design consideration. The submitted sections demonstrate that these properties sit at a significantly higher level than the application site, with intervening highways and level changes providing substantial separation. This ensures that the development does not appear overbearing or dominant when viewed from these neighbouring receptors. This was confirmed during pre-application engagement, with the Officer acknowledging some change in outlook for properties on Belle Vue Terrace but not considering the impact to be materially harmful. Given the proximity of the site to Treforest railway station, a Noise and Vibration Assessment prepared by Technical Services Consult accompanies this application, as recommended by the Officer at pre-application stage. The assessment confirms that the recommended internal noise levels can be achieved throughout using standard thermal double glazing and acoustic trickle ventilators, and that the external amenity areas to the west of the blocks meet the desirable guideline levels. Ground-borne vibration from the railway was found to be well below the levels likely to cause adverse comment, and no vibration mitigation is required. The assessment concludes that the site is suitable for residential development in terms of noise and vibration.

5.8 Overall, the scale and massing of the development are considered appropriate to the site and its context, with the combination of topography, layout and spacing ensuring that an acceptable level of amenity is maintained for both existing and future occupiers. The accompanying Noise and Vibration Assessment confirms that, with appropriate glazing and ventilation in place, no adverse noise or vibration impacts are anticipated for future occupiers. The design has also been carefully considered to respond sensitively to its context, with the scale and height of development reflecting the surrounding locality. In doing so, it complements the established urban form while also preserving the visual prominence and setting of nearby heritage assets, in accordance with Policy AW7.

5.9 **Character and appearance** - High-quality design and materials will ensure the quality and longevity of the buildings, help them assimilate into their context, whilst also minimising maintenance implications. All blocks will be finished in buff clay brickwork, with buff brick voussoirs above the window and door openings adding visual interest and enriching their character. Blocks one and two are further articulated by front-facing gabled roofs and dark grey cladding to incidental features. Blocks three and four feature a pitched roof with a central projecting gable in dark grey facing brick, rising from ground floor to the ridge. All four blocks have dark grey canopies defining the entrances, complemented by reconstituted dark grey slate roof tiles, dark grey uPVC windows, fascias, soffits and bargeboards, and black rainwater goods and railings to the Juliet balconies, creating a cohesive design.

5.10 The proposed design was discussed during pre-application engagement with the Local Authority and was received positively, with the Officer advising that it did not give rise to any fundamental concerns in respect of local character or design. In general terms, the design proposals at hand demonstrate compliance with LDP policy AW6 and the Design and Placemaking SPG, which provide a series of design principles that development must adhere

Figure 28 - Proposed site layout



N.B. Not to scale - see submitted plans for scaled versions

to. The development provides a high quality of design and makes efficient use of a redundant brownfield site. The development also successfully promotes a placemaking agenda, as highlighted in PPW as being a key principle for successfully delivering sustainable development in Wales. The proposal offers an opportunity to revitalise a vacant and unsightly plot that adjoins an established residential vernacular, demonstrating that the proposed development would be a suitably designed and appropriate addition in this location.

Access

5.11 In respect of access, car travel and parking, the proposals will utilise the existing vehicular access from The Sidings, which the Highway Authority considered acceptable at pre-application stage, with separate pedestrian access points provided to serve the buildings.

5.12 The layout also provides sufficient space within the site to enable manoeuvring by service, emergency and refuse vehicles.

5.13 Most apartments will be served by a secure, covered communal cycle store within the rear garden, while some apartments feature a dedicated internal cycle store positioned centrally within the building. The stores provide two cycle spaces per apartment, significantly exceeding the minimum standard of one space

Figure 29 - Floor plans of the two-storey blocks (Plots 1–16)



N.B. Not to scale - see submitted plans for scaled versions

Figure 30 - Elevations of the two-storey blocks (Plots 1–16)



per five apartments.

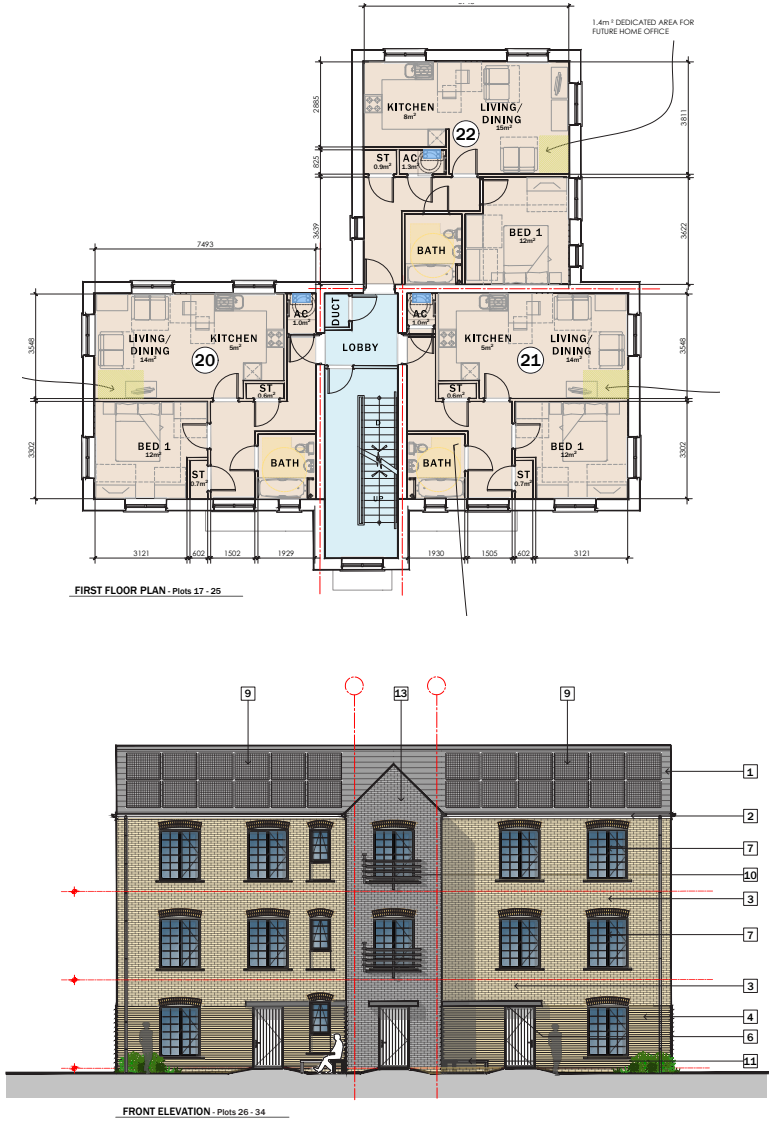
5.14 The development retains the existing parking courtyard to the north of the site, which has capacity for 23 spaces, supplemented by a further seven off-street parking spaces within the site, providing 30 spaces in total. It is acknowledged that, at pre-application stage, the Highway Authority identified a requirement for 58 resident and 7 visitor spaces when applying the standards of the Access, Circulation and Parking SPG, and requested a robust justification for the level of provision proposed. This justification is set out below and within the accompanying Transport Statement.

5.15 In this regard, it should be borne in mind that a fundamental principle of current planning policy states that development occurs in accessible and sustainable locations where residents will not be reliant on car transport to access essential services. This reduces the need for car travel, car ownership and car parking demand. It also prevents social exclusion for people without access to cars. In this respect, PPW states that Local Authorities 'must support schemes which keep parking levels down. Especially off-street parking, when well designed' [emphasis added]. Other national policy, Future Wales: The National Plan 2040, also instructs that planning authorities must act to reduce levels of car parking in urban areas, including supporting car-free developments in accessible locations.

5.16 This is reinforced by the accompanying Transport Statement prepared by Acstro, which demonstrates that the proposals would generate significantly fewer vehicle trips than the lawful office use, with around 30 fewer movements in each peak hour and 269 fewer daily, resulting in a clear benefit to the local highway network. It confirms that the site is within easy walking distance of everyday facilities and frequent public transport services, and that The Sidings itself is designated as an existing active travel route for cycling. Accordingly, the Department for Transport Connectivity Tool places the site among the 10% best connected locations in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The Statement also draws on census data showing that 40% of social rented households in the Treforest Ward do not have access to a car, concluding that the proposed 30 spaces would comfortably exceed the likely demand, while remaining well within the Council's maximum standards.

5.17 Overall, the site occupies a sustainable location, benefitting from opportunities for access by walking and cycling, as reflected in the increased provision of cycle parking. Having regard to these factors, alongside the lawful fallback position of the existing use and the proposed provision of affordable housing, the level of car parking provided is considered to be justifiable on multiple grounds, with the provisions of local policy met, as well as the clear and robust principles of PPW.

Figure 31 - Floor plans and elevations of the three-storey blocks (Plots 17–34)



N.B. Not to scale - see submitted plans for scaled versions

Movement

5.18 The site lies adjacent to a range of facilities and amenities which reduce the need to travel. When traveling further afield is required, the site has excellent connectivity to public transport links and also offers walking routes to those within the development who are able to benefit from these.

5.19 The adjacent Treforest railway station provides frequent services to Cardiff Central, Cardiff Bay, Aberdare, Treherbert and Merthyr Tydfil. Connections to regional and national destinations are able to be made from Cardiff. North and southbound bus stops are located on Llantwit Road, served by the no.90 route and Treforest's retail and commercial centre offers a range of shops and services.

5.20 The accompanying Transport Statement provides further detail on the sustainable credentials of the site and concludes the proposed development will not generate an adverse impact on the surrounding highway network.

Environmental sustainability

5.21 The proposed development makes use of well-located previously developed land and thereby accords with a key consideration of local and national policy. Further, the sustainable location of the site, within the settlement boundary of Treforest, reduces the need for occupiers to travel.

5.22 Means to improve sustainability through building methods and construction will be explored, with the scheme targeting EPC A rating, but at this stage in proceedings, that level of detailed design has not been finalised.

5.23 The accompanying landscaping scheme and Green Infrastructure Statement prepared by Laird Bailey follow the stepwise approach set out in PPW. All existing trees will be retained and the embankments will be enhanced with native grassland and shrub planting. The scheme also introduces five new trees, supplemented by flowering lawns, hedgerows and ornamental planting. Enhancement features will not be directly illuminated and external lighting will be designed to maintain a dark corridor for commuting and foraging bats. These measures will increase habitat diversity and deliver a net benefit for biodiversity, in accordance with Chapter 6 of PPW.

5.24 Sustainable drainage has been considered from an early stage, given that the site comprises predominantly hardstanding. In this regard, design input from PHG Consulting Engineers has informed the site layout, and the accompanying Drainage Strategy and Flood Consequence Assessment confirms that the scheme will adhere to National Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in Wales.

5.25 The small areas of surface water flood risk identified on site are attributed to localised low points within the existing development plateau, which will be engineered out through the regrading and drainage design of the proposed development. The FCA concludes that the reduction in impermeable area and peak runoff rates would provide betterment relative to the existing situation and would not increase flood risk elsewhere, addressing the comments of the Lead Local Flood Authority at pre-application stage.

5.26 As the site investigation identifies made ground, variable infiltration performance and contamination constraints, infiltration is not relied upon as the principal means of surface water disposal. Instead, surface water will be managed through lined bioretention areas and permeable paving, with the southern part of the site draining to a lined attenuation basin with discharge restricted to 4.5 l/s, and the northern part discharging separately to the existing surface water network following SuDS treatment. The proposals would reduce the impermeable area of the site by approximately 50% and reduce peak surface water runoff rates by more than 40% compared with the existing situation, with the system designed to accommodate the 1 in 100-year rainfall event plus a 40% allowance for climate change.

These features will be complemented by soft landscaping to break up areas of hardstanding and enhance biodiversity. Foul water will discharge to the existing public sewer within The Sidings, with Dwr Cymru Welsh Water confirming there are no capacity issues. A pre-SAB application has been submitted and a full SAB application will be submitted in due course.

5.27 A Foundation Assessment prepared by PHG Consulting, informed by the site investigation, confirms that the dwellings can be constructed on conventional strip foundations, typically at depths of 1.0m to 1.2m (up to 2m locally), and that these would impose no loading on the railway line to the east. Remediation of the identified contamination will be undertaken in accordance with the Site Investigation Report, including further investigation following demolition, as advised by Public Protection at pre-application stage.

Community safety

5.28 The proposed site layout demonstrates a series of positive features that will ensure the development creates an attractive, safe and secure place. These include:

- High levels of natural surveillance over the main publicly accessible spaces. The elevations of the building forms multi-aspect outlooks, meaning that the entrances and parking areas to the site are well overlooked.
- Dedicated cycle stores are provided away from the public domain, increasing security.
- There is no permeability through the site to ensure that residents of the development are more attentive to users of the site.
- Communal entrances are provided within the building line, thereby avoiding potential hiding places.

5.29 The scheme has also been reviewed by South Wales Police's Designing Out Crime Officer, who advised that, as an affordable housing scheme, the development should meet Secured by Design (SBD) standards. The recommendations are being incorporated into the layout and specification, including ensuring parking spaces are overlooked from habitable rooms, providing secure and lockable cycle storage for all apartments, low defensible front boundaries and rear and side boundaries of at least 1.8m in height, and external and security lighting designed to BS 5489:2020. Matters of detailed specification, including doors and windows certified to PAS 24, will be secured at detailed design stage.

Response to planning policy

5.30 The proposed design adheres to the relevant planning policy set out in section 4.

5.31 The principle of residential development in this location is acceptable as it makes use of a redundant brownfield site within the settlement boundary of Treforest, in an area where an immediate adjoining land use is residential, with complementary land uses located within short walking distance. Additionally, the brownfield site is identified as "white land" within the LDP, whereby the principle of residential development is acceptable, subject to material planning considerations.

5.32 Officers advised at pre-application stage that the loss of the existing employment use would need to be justified, either through a comprehensive marketing exercise or by demonstrating that the development would deliver significant regeneration benefits sufficient to outweigh that loss. It was subsequently agreed that a shorter marketing period could be acceptable if supported by extensive evidence, including the instability of previous occupiers and the minimal impact of the loss of the units on the Council's Employment Land Bank. The accessibility of the site and its proximity to the defined retail centre and public transport options also provide strong support for residential redevelopment, while the delivery of new affordable housing is a material planning consideration of significant weight, contributing to local housing need and supporting sustainable communities.

5.33 The accompanying Marketing Report prepared by Savills confirms that the offices have been marketed since June 2023 and have attracted only limited interest, even at a low quoting rent. Savills conclude that the buildings are secondary, dated and in need of significant refurbishment, which is unlikely to be viable at the rents achievable locally. They also conclude that there is a sufficient supply of better-quality, better-located office space in Treforest, Nantgarw, Upper Boat and Pontypridd. They therefore consider that there is no reasonable prospect of the premises being fully occupied for office use, and that their loss would have no material adverse effect on the local office market, in accordance with Policy AW11.

5.34 Given the adjoining residential context, the evidence contained within the Marketing Statement and the significant benefits arising from the delivery of 34 affordable homes on previously developed land in a highly sustainable location, the principle of residential redevelopment is considered to be acceptable.

5.35 Policies of the LDP are also considered to be complied with, not least due to the location of the site within the settlement boundary. Policies CS2 and AW1 promote residential development which is suitable for everyone within the county borough and supplies much-needed provision of affordable homes in the right places.

5.36 The provision of housing on this site will aid in addressing the Authority's need for additional affordable housing throughout the County. In this regard, the development aligns with policies AW1, CS2, CS4, CS5, and SSA12 through contributing towards the affordable housing target through the provision of a wholly affordable scheme. The proposal for 34 dwellings on a site of 0.54 hectares equates to a density of approximately 63 dwellings per hectare. This significantly exceeds the minimum density of 35 dwellings per hectare required by Policy SSA11, making efficient use of previously developed land in a sustainable location.

5.37 The sustainable location of the site means that occupants of any prospective development would be in a position where there would be reduced reliance upon private motor vehicles, in line with principles advocated in both national and local policy. The proposed development relates well to the established residential area adjacent, and is in line with policy SSA12 as it provides high-quality affordable accommodation in Treforest, meeting an identified local need. The location of the development reduces daily commuting by private car and promotes sustainable forms of travel, demonstrating compliance with policy AW2.

5.38 The design is of high quality and befitting of the location of the site and its context in respect of scale, design and amenity impact. From the outset, the proposal has taken into account the qualities and amenity of the surrounding area, local infrastructure and resources. The proposal also introduces landscaping that will enhance the ecological and visual credentials of a currently unsightly plot. Policy AW6 outlines broad design criteria which has been fully accorded with through the discussion above under the 'character' subheading. In short, the proposed development will redevelop an otherwise redundant brownfield site.

5.39 Compliance with PPW is also demonstrated, which advocates siting new development within existing urban areas and the use of previously developed land. Further, the development also assists in PPW's aim to tackle the shortage of affordable homes; and assisting in promoting sustainable residential developments.

5.40 PPW brings the objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations Act into clearer focus in a planning context, and it is considered through the analysis of this proposal from a planning policy context that compliance with PPW is demonstrated. The goals of the Act are adhered to through this application as there would be no unacceptable impact upon the achievement of wellbeing objectives as a result of the application being approved.

Figure 32 - Indicative 3D visuals from LeTrucco Design





6 Appraisal & conclusion

6.1 This Design and Access Statement is produced in support of proposals for 34 new apartments, and associated works.

6.2 The site lies within the settlement boundary of Treforest and is identified as 'white land' within the LDP. It is not a protected employment site, and the accompanying marketing evidence addresses the loss of the existing employment use, as requested by officers at pre-application stage. The development proposes a scheme of 100% affordable housing on previously developed land, supporting key principles of both local and national policy. At a density of approximately 63 dwellings per hectare, it makes efficient use of a highly sustainable site adjacent to Treforest railway station.

6.3 The design is befitting of the site and its urban context. The scale and massing of the blocks respond to the site's topography, with the taller blocks positioned to the north and the significant level difference ensuring that the development would not appear overbearing when viewed from Belle Vue Terrace. The scheme would revitalise a redundant site with a high-quality, cohesive design.

6.4 The proposals have been subject to productive pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority. The response was broadly supportive, with officers raising no fundamental concerns in respect of character or design, with suggested amendments having been taken on board in the finalising of the proposal and the matters raised addressed through the supporting information accompanying this application.

6.5 Sustainable transport credentials for the site are strong, with various public transport provision and local amenities within walking distance. Cycle storage is provided well in excess of the Council's standards, and the level of car parking proposed is justified by the site's highly accessible location, as demonstrated in the accompanying Transport Statement.

6.6 The objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations Act are adhered to through this application in that there would be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of wellbeing objectives as a result of the application being approved and development being carried out. By a similar token, the aspirations of PPW, which mirrors the well-being goals, are followed under these proposals.

6.7 In conclusion, the proposal offers an opportunity to provide homes in a sustainable location which will promote active travel and encourage a shift to more sustainable modes of transport whilst providing much needed affordable dwellings to the area. The site accords with sustainable development principles through its location within the settlement boundary and its previously developed status. The development is considered to be a suitable and positive addition to the streetscene and there are no known constraints to the development of this site. On this basis, it is respectfully recommended that Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council puts this application forward for approval.

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