

Application No.
P/16/0048

Date
15th February 2016

Determining Authority
MTCBC

Proposed Development

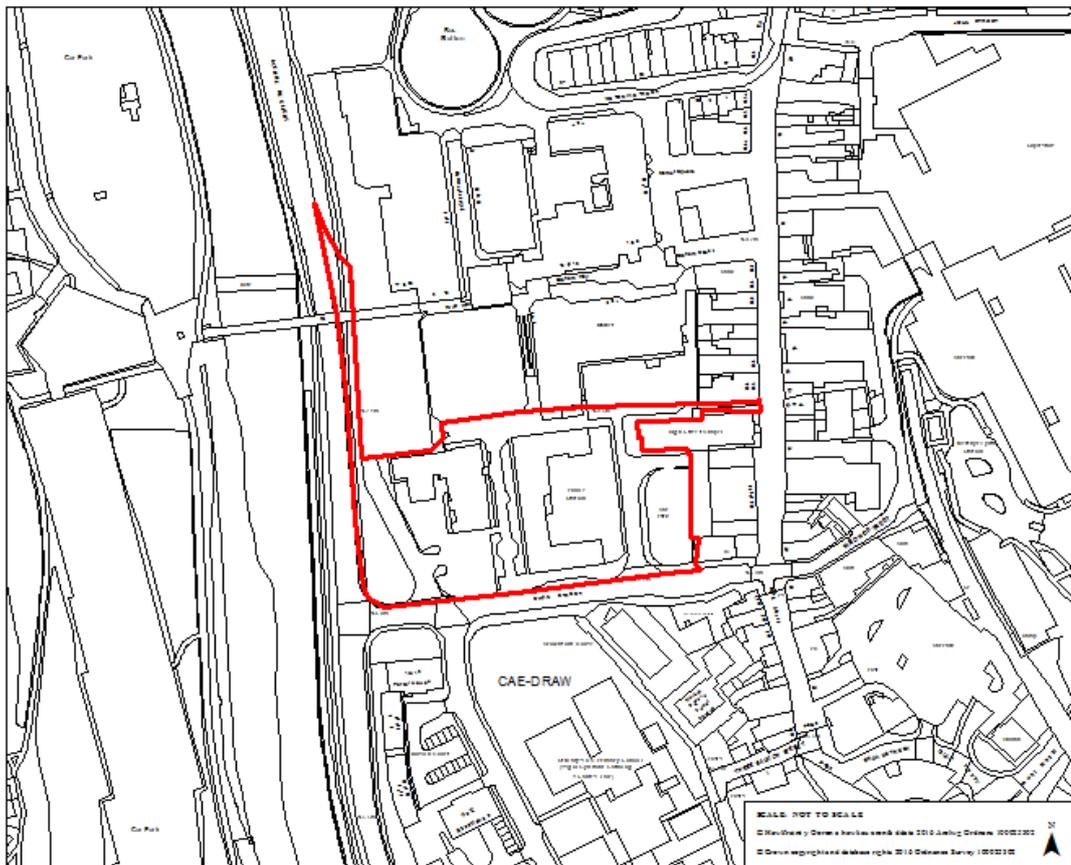
Location

Name & Address of Applicant/Agent

Construction of a new bus station and public realm improvements through the provision of hard and soft landscaping and associated works

Land North Of Swan Street
(Former Police Station And
Hollies Health Centre Site)
Merthyr Tydfil

Merthyr Tydfil County
Borough Council
c/o Capita
F.a.o. Mr I Pritchard
St Davids House
Pascal Close
St Mellons



APPLICATION SITE

The application site is an irregular shaped parcel of land measuring approximately one hectare. The land which once accommodated the Police Station and Hollies Heath Centre forms the majority of the site. The remainder of the site includes the disabled car park to the rear of 136 to 139 High Street, part of a service yard (D) of St. Tydfil's Shopping Centre, a footpath leading to High Street (to the north of High Street Chapel), the access road leading to another service yard (C) of the shopping centre from Swan Street and part of service yard C and the highway verge of Avenue De Clichy.

There are two vehicular accesses to the site. One, located in the south western corner of the site, provides access from Swan Street to service yard C (and the demolished Hollies Health Centre). The other, located in the south eastern corner of the site, provides access to service yard D, the demolished Police Station site, the disabled car park and parking/servicing areas at the rear of 136 to 139 High Street. As well as these vehicular routes, pedestrian access to the site can be gained from a footpath located between 135 High Street and High Street Chapel (to the north east of the site), from the southern entrance to St. Tydfil's Shopping Centre, from Swan Street via a route which dissects the former Heath Centre and Police Station site and from the south eastern corner of service yard C via a set of steps.

The application site is bound by St. Tydfil's Shopping Centre and its service yards to the north, High Street Chapel and the properties that front High Street to the east, Swan Street to the south (with the Caedraw flats, UVOHI college building, St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, Caedraw Primary School beyond) and Avenue De Clichy to the west.

The site slopes gently from north to south with the majority of it being hard surfaced. There are however a number of trees within the application site primarily located along the western boundary, to the rear of the shopping centre, on part of the footpath link between Swan Street and the shopping centre and along the boundaries of the disabled car park.

This site is located within the Primary Growth Area, settlement boundary and Town Centre boundary as defined by the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan. A small section of the site is located within the Town Centre Conversation Area (land to the north of High Street Chapel) and forms part of a Grade II Listed building (High Street Chapel).

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks full planning permission for the construction of a new bus station. It would replace the existing facility which currently operates from the site to the north of St Tydfil's Shopping Centre. The bus station building would be located approximately 7 metres (not including the roof overhang) away from the southern part of the St. Tydfil's Shopping Centre. Including the roof, it would have a maximum width of 81 metres and a maximum depth of 20.8 metres. It would have a maximum height of 11.8 metres and be constructed over two stories. The roof, with a hidden rainwater drainage system, would be covered with a metal sheet flat-lock tile system. Its design, which draws reference from the natural landscape and industrial heritage of Merthyr Tydfil, would result in a feature roof which varies in height as a result of its numerous 'folds' and undulations. Its 'pavilion style' lightweight form would provide both internal and external shelter. It would also extend all the way to the ground, in two triangular sections, on the northern elevation of the building.

The southern elevation would be glazed from the ground to the underside of the roof (i.e. full height glazing). This part of the building would accommodate the 14 bus stands. Of the 14 stands, 11 (numbers 1 to 11) would be directly linked to the pedestrian doors which automatically take passengers into the bus station building during normal operating hours (likely to be the times of the current bus station of between 06.45 and 18.15). The stands would not be accessible outside of these times as the bus station building would be closed. Those bus services which operate into the evening would be able to utilise the 3 remaining stands (numbers 12 to 14). Although passengers would not be able to gain access to the building from these stands (outside of normal operating times) shelter would be provided by

the significant overhang of the roof at this location. It should also be noted that stand 1 would have dedicated facilities for any coach facilities that may, in the future, be introduced to Merthyr Tydfil (e.g. National Express service).

The northern elevation of the bus station building would contain the main exit and entry point for those departing or arriving. The main entry/exit doors have been deliberately sited opposite the southern entrance of the St. Tydfil's shopping centre. This enables quick and easy access into the heart of this shopping facility. The main doors would form part of a 21 metre wide, full height glazed entry and exit point. Apart from the triangular roof to floor elements, the remainder of this elevation would be clad with Pennant stone.

The external materials of the side elevations would consist of a mixture of Pennant stone and full height glazing. The glazing frames, louvre panels and doors would be constructed from powder coated aluminium. The eastern side elevation would also contain entrance/exit doors.

The building has a long linear foot print. The southern and central section of the building would consist of a two storey high open public concourse. This would have a maximum length of 55 metres and a maximum depth of 7 metres. The northern section of the building would be split into two sections. The ground floor of the eastern section would accommodate an office, interview room and public desk for South Wales Police, a manager's office (and associated rooms) and an Inspector's office. Internal stairs would also enable access to the first floor.

The ground floor of the eastern section would accommodate public toilets, a lift, plant room, storage facilities, a coffee shop and small kiosk. Internal stairs would also enable access to the first floor.

The first floor accommodation would mainly contain facilities for the bus operators such as toilets, office accommodation, a kitchen and a driver's mess room. The two blocks of accommodation would be connected at first floor by a bridge. This separation of the accommodation enables a full height open waiting area to be created in a central location within the building. This waiting area links to a concourse to provide a significant public space. Indeed, the concourse has been designed to accommodate up to 700 people per hour.

In addition to the 14 bus stands, there would be 10 layover bays (i.e. bays available for buses to park prior to commencing their service). The layover bays would be located along the southern boundary of the site. They have been designed and positioned to ensure the most efficient and effective manoeuvres can take place.

A new access is proposed off Avenue De Clichy to enable buses/coaches to enter the site. The mid-point of this access would be approximately 37 metres north of the mid-point of the Swan Street junction. This access would only enable buses/coaches entry at this point. The buses/coaches would exit the site via the service yard D access road, onto Swan Street and then back onto Avenue De Clichy. In order to accommodate these movements, the junctions along Swan Street would require modification; this includes the main junction with Avenue De Clichy. The junction serving the road leading to service yard D would be re-aligned slightly. In this location, the Swan Street car park would also undergo alteration. It would be reconfigured and reduced in size. Four linear disabled car parking spaces are

proposed along with a limited pick-up/drop-off bay. The car park would operate a one-way system with vehicles entering (via a new junction) from Swan Street and departing via the service road D access road. To accommodate the needs of cyclists, 10 cycle stands are also proposed in this area. The proposal would also block up the existing access from Swan Street to service yard C. To overcome this, new access and egress junctions are proposed along Avenue De Clichy.

A comprehensive hard and soft landscaping scheme has been submitted with the application. A large area of public realm would be provided which aims to enhance connections within and outside the town centre. It is proposed to improve the quality of the existing pedestrian access to the east of the site by increasing its width and masking large parts of service yard D by constructing a 1.8 metre high Pennant stone wall. In order to increase the width of this route to the High Street, the proposal includes the demolition and relocation of a boundary wall and railings which currently enclose High Street Chapel (the demolition and reconstruction of the wall and railings also required listed building consent which has recently been granted). A further pedestrian route would be provided by means of a ramped access to the west of the bus station building. This would link to the Avenue De Clichy footpath.

The proposed bus station access, parking and turning facilities would have a tarmac finish. Likewise, the exit from the bus station to the Swan Street junction would also continue to be covered with the same durable material. The remainder of the majority of the site (including the concourse and waiting area within the building) would be covered with a mixture of 3 colours of Granite paving with a different colour Granite banding.

A Pennant stone wall would be erected to the southern boundary of the site with a band of shrub planting and individual specimen trees. Existing trees would be felled to accommodate the development, however, some would be maintained along Avenue De Clichy and enhanced by further tree and shrub planting. The landscaping scheme also proposes individual tree planting with the hard surface areas mainly along Swan Street.

A Close Circuit Television (CCTV) scheme is proposed to cover the external and internal areas of the proposed bus station. In addition, an external lighting scheme (with light spillage diagrams) has been provided which indicates that LED lights mounted on columns which vary in height from 6 – 12 metres would be strategically placed throughout the site.

This application has been supported by the following documents:

- A Design and Access Statement (DAS) (December 2015).
- A Technical Note (bus station layout) (August 2015).
- A Flood Consequences Assessment (FCA) (May 2016).
- A Noise Assessment Report (Residential Amenity) (December 2015).
- An Air Quality Assessment (May 2016).
- An Aerial Survey of Bat Boxes at the former Hollies Health Centre, Swan Street, Merthyr Tydfil (November 2015).

PLANNING HISTORY

The following planning history is relevant to this application:

P/16/0049	Realignment of the boundary wall and railings along the northern side of High Street Chapel, High Street, Merthyr Tydfil	Listed Building Consent 22.06.2016
P/15/0129	Demolition of St Tydfil's Shopmobility Unit & Accessible Toilet, Swan Street / Graham Way, Merthyr Tydfil	Prior Approval not required 18.05.2015
P/14/0298	Demolition of Central Police Station, Swan Street, Merthyr Tydfil	Prior Approval not required 12.11.2014
P/13/0135	Demolition of Hollies Health Centre, Swan Street, Merthyr Tydfil	Prior Approval not required 22.05.2013

CONSULTATION

The following bodies were consulted and their responses are summarised below.

Internal

Engineering and Traffic Group Leader	No objection
Town Planning Division's Group Leader Policy and Implementation	No objection
Town Planning Division's Design, Heritage And Conservation Officer	No objection
Town Planning Division's Countryside Officer	No objection subject to conditions
Town Planning Division's Landscape Architect	No objection subject to conditions
Environmental Health Officer	No objection subject to conditions

External

Natural Resources Wales	No objection subject to conditions.
Welsh Water	No objection subject to conditions
Wales and West Utilities	No objection
Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd	No objection subject to a condition.
South Wales Police (Designing out Crime Officer)	No objection

PUBLICITY

This planning application has been publicised by means of a notice in the Merthyr Express on 25th February 2016, displaying 15 site notices within the vicinity of the site and by sending individual letters to local properties. As a result of these publicity exercises, no letters of objection have been received.

POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 8 (January 2016) sets out the land use policies of the Welsh Government. The most relevant sections to the proposal are:

Section 2.1.2 – Planning applications must be considered in light of the strategy and policies in the adopted development plan.

Sections 4.11.9 – 4.11.12 sets out the principles of good design in new development proposals, which should take into account its relationship to its surrounding context. Regard should be given to the appropriate scale, appearance, landscaping and the quality of building design, as well as its accessibility.

Section 5.2.9 – Trees, woodlands and hedgerows are of great importance, both as wildlife habitats and in terms of their contribution to landscape character and beauty. Local planning authorities should seek to protect trees, groups of trees and areas of woodland where they have natural heritage value or contribute to the character or amenity of a particular locality.

Sections 5.5.1 – 5.5.3 note that the impact a development proposal may have on wildlife or the landscape is an important consideration in determining applications. Where ever possible adverse effects on the environment should be avoided or acceptably minimised.

Section 6.5.9 states that *'Where a development proposal affects a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'*.

Section 6.5.17 suggests that *'Should any proposed development conflict with the objective of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area, or its setting, there will be a strong presumption against the grant of planning permission'*.

Section 8.3.1, states that *'Local authorities should promote public transport as a means to achieve environmental objectives, to assist in relieving congestion and to encourage social inclusion Appropriate public transport measures include improved facilities for railway and . . . measures to encourage better services. Local authorities may wish to explore the potential for new rail lines (including light rail), the re-opening of rail lines, the provision of new stations and enhanced passenger services on existing lines. Rail services, with their fixed infrastructure, can provide a focus for regeneration and new development, as can bus services, especially in urban areas where supporting facilities and priority schemes, such as bus lanes, are provided'*.

Section 8.7.1 sets out the criterion that should be considered where transport implications may occur, such as impacts on local travel demand, public transport provision, accessibility and highway safety.

Section 13.4.1 states that '*Development proposals in areas defined as being of high flood hazard should only be considered where:*

- *New development can be justified in that location, even though it is likely to be at risk from flooding; and*
- *The development proposal would not result in the intensification of existing development which may itself be at risk; and*
- *New development would not increase the potential adverse impacts of a flood event'.*

Section 13.4.3 points out that '*it is essential that Natural Resources Wales' advice is obtained and given due weight as a material consideration by planning authorities in determining individual planning applications'.*

The policies in PPW are supported by Technical Advice Notes (TANs). The most relevant TANs to this application are as follows:-

TAN 5: Nature, Conservation and Planning provides advice about how the land use planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological conservation.

TAN 11: Noise provides advice on how the planning system can be used to minimise the adverse impact of noise without placing unreasonable restrictions on development or adding unduly to the costs and administrative burdens of business.

TAN 12 - Design advises that the Assembly Government is strongly committed to achieving the delivery of good design in the built and natural environment, which is fit for purpose and delivers environmental sustainability, economic development, and social inclusion at every scale throughout Wales.

TAN 15: Development and Flood Risk. It provides a framework within which risks arising from both river and coastal flooding, and from additional run-off from development in any location, can be assessed.

Local Planning Policy (Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan (LDP) 2006-2021.

The following LDP Policies are relevant to the determination of this application.

Policy BW1: Development Strategy – Primary Growth Area

The LDP targets the majority of new development towards the main Merthyr Tydfil settlement, which is classed as the Primary Growth Area.

Policy BW4: Settlement boundaries/location constraints

The policy encourages development within the settlement boundaries provided it is compatible with other relevant plan policies and material planning considerations.

Policy BW6 Townscape and built heritage

The policy aims to protect and support the enhancement of the unique built heritage of the County Borough.

Policy BW7 Sustainable design and place making

This policy, amongst other criteria, supports and encourages good quality sustainable design, requires development to be appropriate to its local context, enhance the street scene, create a good quality townscape and not result in an unacceptable impact on local amenity.

Policy BW8 Development and the water environment

This policy points out that development will only be permitted where it avoids identified river flood plains in order that these areas continue to fulfil their flood and water storage areas.

Policy BW11: Transport, cycling and pedestrian proposals.

This policy encourages proposals for new transport, cycling and pedestrian facilities.

Policy BW12: Development proposals and transport

This policy encourages the use of transport other than the private car.

Policy AS12: Public transport – road

This policy points out that proposals that lead to the improvement of bus services in the County Borough will be supported.

Policy AS19: Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre

This policy supports development proposals in the town centre boundary where they maintain or enhance the retail, business, leisure, tourism, entertainment, arts, and culture functions of the centre particularly with regard to improving its viability and attractiveness.

Policy AS20: Retail allocations

The policy allocates the existing bus station site for retail purposes.

Policy TB11: Access, parking and accessibility of local facilities

This policy ensures highway design standards are met.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG):

SPG4 – Sustainable Design, July 2013

SPG5 – Nature and Development, May 2015

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The application site is located within the Primary Growth Area and settlement boundary. Therefore, the principle of the proposal is acceptable, provided it satisfies other relevant LDP policies and material planning considerations.

It is considered that a modern bus station, developed at the proposed location, which has been specifically designed to enrich the travel experience of all its users, when compared to the existing facility, would enhance the town centre and improve its viability and attractiveness. As such, it is considered that the proposal complies with policy AS19 of the LDP. It also accords with part of policy AS12 of the LDP which supports development proposals that lead to the improvement of bus services in Merthyr Tydfil. However, policy AS12 also supports the remodelling of the existing bus station as part of town centre regeneration. As highlighted by the Group Leader Policy and Implementation '*at the time of preparing the LDP, it was anticipated that bus service improvements would be achieved through the remodelling/reconstruction of the existing bus station*'. It is clear that the regeneration aspirations of the Council are now to relocate the bus station to the proposed site and as such there is no support for this outdated objective. It is appreciated that the justification of policy AS20 does suggest that the application site could be developed for retail uses in the future. This is not surprising (given its location in the Town Centre boundary) but nevertheless there is no justification for objecting to the proposal on a site which is not allocated for any use in the LDP. Furthermore, policy AS20 allocates all the existing bus station site and land to the west of this facility for retail development. There is no mention within this policy of a new/remodelled bus station being required as part of any redevelopment. This further highlights the Council's hopes at that time rather than firm commitment to such a proposal. The principle of developing a bus station at this site is therefore considered acceptable.

Given the above, the main issues in the assessment of this application are:

- The impact of the development on the character and appearance of the area, conservation area and listed building (High Street Chapel).
- The impact on highway/pedestrian safety.
- The impact of the development on flooding.
- The impact on the amenity of surrounding residents and occupiers.
- The ecological impact of the proposed development.

The impact of the development on the character and appearance of the area, conservation area and listed building (High Street Chapel).

It is considered essential that the design of the new bus station not only has a responsive and positive impact on the built environment and its residents but also provides its users with an experience they would wish to repeat. It is for this reason, a considerable amount of time has been spent gathering information and views from many stakeholders and interested parties. These consultation and community involvement processes commenced in June 2014 and culminated in August 2015. The scheme was also presented to the Design Commission for Wales on three separate occasions. Furthermore, a Project Artist was employed to work collaboratively with the project team to help shape and influence the design development process. His research also involved engagement with the public, from

local schools and historians, to talking to local retailers. These processes took place before the planning application was submitted but were pivotal in the final design of the bus station.

The result is a building and public realm which would undoubtedly have a hugely positive impact on the appearance of this part of the town centre. Indeed, it would be a development, which when combined with the other recent impressive developments in the area, would help enhance the growing reputation of Merthyr Tydfil as an important destination.

The design of the bus station building and public realm areas draw reference from the past whilst attempting to continue the success and provide links to recently completed regeneration schemes such as the gyratory system (and its bridge), college buildings/plaza, the pedestrian link to the railway station, the improvements to key/important buildings and the award winning Penderyn Square.

The striking roof, which has been designed to create a new significant 'landscape' within the town centre, would be impressive when viewed from outside and inside the building. Its generous southern overhang would also provide essential solar shading. The large expanse of powder coated aluminium framed glazing to both southern and northern elevations provide sleekness and allow the maximum amount of light to penetrate the building to the newly created street beyond (i.e. public realm between the building and St. Tydfil's shopping centre). The use of Pennant stone walling to the building would provide an important contrast and not only ensures locally sourced traditional materials are used but also provides a consistency with recently completed schemes (e.g. the boundary walling to parts of the River Taff Central Link Road).

The view of the building from all sides has been carefully considered. The route from St. Tydfil's Shopping Centre into the building is both legible and provides an opportunity to view both the internal arrangements and glimpses of the scenery beyond. The building would be easily visible and recognisable from the improved widened access from High Street. The improved access would, by providing a wider public realm area, create a new 'street'. This not only creates a sense of place but also improves access to the south of St. Tydfil's shopping centre. The roof on the eastern side of the building has been deliberately lowered to respect the scale of the listed chapel. Conversely, the roof on the western side of the building has been raised slightly to address Avenue de Clichy and the rising hills beyond. Whether arriving by bus or viewing the proposed building from Avenue de Clichy, Swan Street or other southern locations it would be seen as an impressive landmark building with the clear function of facilitating a busy bus station.

The building has been designed to create a facility with a low carbon footprint and low energy demand. A number of techniques are proposed, such as passive design (use of the form and orientation of the building to naturally heat and cool a space) and rainwater harvesting, to not only ensure the building complies with building regulations but also help to reduce running costs.

Internally, the use of the building would significantly enhance the public's experience when compared to the existing bus station. The concourse and waiting area would provide a relaxed, comfortable space which is open, easy to move around in and full of natural daylight. It would bring the outdoors inside. The proposed coffee shop, information centre,

toilets and other facilities would simply add to the ease and enjoyment of using the facility. Likewise, the other intended users of the building (e.g. the Police, bus drivers, Inspectors etc) would be working in a modern up-to-date environment which would provide significant benefits to their working day.

The quality of the scheme does not stop at the bus station building. The public realm areas and landscaping have received an equal amount of research, assessment and scrutiny. The vast hard surfaced landscaped areas have been designed following an analysis of town centre directional and priority links and then overlaying historical activity routes and current day desire lines. This has resulted in intersecting lines within the paved areas. The use of high quality durable granite is consistent with that used in Penderyn Square.

The hard surfaced area, combined with a number of strategically placed crossing points, would ensure that pedestrians are aware of the safe areas to walk and cross the busier sections of the roads. The public realm areas also provide important desire lines and connect the proposed development to other parts of the town centre and wider area (e.g. St. Tydfil's Shopping Centre, High Street, the railway station, Merthyr Learning Quarter and local schools etc). The improvements proposed to the north of High Street Chapel and Service Yard D would also have a positive impact on the listed chapel and this small part of the Town Centre Conservation Area. In respect of the impact on High Street Chapel it is noted that Listed Building Consent has already been granted by the Welsh Government for the proposed boundary changes that form part of this application.

The landscaping scheme and Pennant stone walling not only connects the development to Avenue De Clichy but would also help soften the appearance of the buses in the layover spaces and mass of tarmac when viewed from south, east and west. The walling also provides a physical barrier to deter anyone from walking into the bus turning area.

Given the above, the bus station development would provide a modern, landmark gateway facility which would not only respond to the demanding functional needs of a busy station but would also bring about positive connections between the town centre and bus and railway transport hubs. As such, the proposal complies with policies BW6, BW7 and BW11 of the LDP.

The impact on highway/pedestrian safety.

It is anticipated that the proposed bus station would operate on a similar frequency of buses per hour (i.e. 60) as the existing bus station. The impact on the local highway network has been modelled and assessed. It is concluded that although there will be increases and decreases in bus journey times, the overall impact of the relocation of the bus station would be minimal. The greatest impact would be the additional traffic that would use Swan Street. This would result in more queuing at the junction with Avenue de Clichy than currently exists. However, the DAS points out that this would result in minimal delays of between 15 to 20 seconds. The roads leading to the site would easily accommodate the traffic movements from the proposed development. Indeed, Avenue De Clichy already successfully accommodates all vehicular movements associated with the existing bus station and therefore there would be little change if this proposal were to be permitted. Furthermore, the proposed bus turning and manoeuvring facilities within the site are acceptable.

There is some potential conflict between buses exiting the station and vehicles accessing/exiting service yard D and the parking areas to the rear of some properties along High Street. However, the reconfiguration of the roads and car park in this area (as highlighted above) would ensure that the safety of pedestrians and other road users is secured and that the use of service yard D and other off-road parking/service facilities for existing buildings (i.e. those to the rear of High Street) are not compromised. As stated above, new accesses are proposed and existing junctions and roads would be modified to cater for the proposed development. Ultimately, the safe movement of buses and pedestrians both within and surrounding the site is essential. The hard landscaping scheme (which would clearly define desire lines) combined with other improvements and specifically designed crossing points would enable pedestrians easy and quick access to and from the bus station.

Finally, the alterations to the access serving service yard C are considered acceptable and would not compromise highway/pedestrian safety on Avenue De Clichy or hinder the efficient operation of the service yard and associated parking areas.

The details and information submitted with the application have been carefully considered by the Engineering and Traffic Group Leader who has raised no objection to the bus station development. The proposal therefore accords with policies BW7, BW11 and TB11 of the LDP.

The impact of the development on flooding.

The application site lies within Zone C2 as defined by the Development Advice Map (DAM) referred to in TAN15. NRW Flood Map information confirms that the site is within the 1% (1 in 100 year) and 0.1% (1:1000 year) annual probability fluvial flood outlines of the River Taff, which is a designated main river, and the Nant Morlais, an Ordinary watercourse.

The construction of a bus station is highlighted as 'less vulnerable development' in section 5 of TAN15. In terms of the justification tests that need to be considered for such development in Zone C2 areas, the proposal is clearly part of Merthyr Tydfil's regeneration strategy, which has undergone extensive public consultation before this planning application was submitted. The bus station would be also constructed on previously developed land. Given it fulfils these tests, section 7.2 of TAN15 states '*whether a development should proceed or not will depend upon whether the consequences of flooding of that development can be managed down to a level which is acceptable for the nature/type of development being proposed, including its effects on existing development*'. NRW has considered the FCA (amended May 2016) and has raised no objection to the proposal provided a condition be attached to any permission requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with this report.

The FCA concludes that the bus station building is not predicted to flood in the 1:1000 year event and although there maybe some flooding across the north west corner of the site (proposed landscaping and paved area), there would still be safe access and egress from the site into Swan Street during such a flood event. Given the above, the application accords with TAN15 and policy BW8 of the LDP.

NRW has also requested that conditions be attached to any permission that would aim to prevent any contamination from the site entering controlled waters.

The impact on the amenity of surrounding residents and occupiers.

Given the location of the proposed bus station building, to the southern blank elevation of St Tydfil's Shopping Centre, there would be no significant loss of light, overbearing impact or loss of privacy to any surrounding properties. Although the application site is located in the defined Town Centre Boundary (i.e. where you would expect it to be sited), the impact of the proposal, in terms of noise and disturbance, has to be carefully considered particularly as it would be located in close proximity to Caedraw flats. The Noise Assessment Report has been fully assessed by the Environmental Health Officer who has concluded that the increased noise caused by the proposed development, would be within acceptable levels, and thus would not result in any adverse impact to the amenity of the residents of Caedraw flats or any other surrounding occupiers.

Given the increase in traffic movements that would arise in and immediately surrounding the application site as a result of the proposal, an Air Quality Assessment was submitted with the application. An air quality monitoring exercise (which included Nitrogen Dioxide - NO₂ diffusion tube monitoring) was undertaken during a six-month period in 2015 to establish baseline conditions. Using this and other information (e.g. anticipated traffic movements), detailed modelling was undertaken to highlight predicted NO₂ concentrations in and surrounding the site when the bus station would be operational. Given the close proximity of the flats, schools and other properties on Swan Street and High Street, it was important to ensure the monitoring (and subsequent assessment) was undertaken at these specific locations.

The Environmental Health Officer has undertaken a rigorous assessment of the report submitted and used this data to carry out her own calculations. The officer has determined that, when the bus station is operational, there is a 95% probability that the NO₂ concentrations would be at an acceptable level. She concludes that this is an acceptable level of risk for the protection of public health.

Given this, and the fact that there have been no objections to the proposal from neighbouring residents or occupiers, it is considered that the proposal accords with policy BW7 of the LDP.

The ecological impact of the proposed development.

The proposal involves the felling of some trees to the west of the former Hollies Health Centre and adjacent to Avenue De Clichy. Five bat boxes have been installed in one of the trees to be felled as mitigation for the demolition of the health centre. A recent survey (September 2015) found that there was no evidence of bats using the boxes. The submitted report (An Aerial Survey of Bat Boxes at the former Hollies Health Centre, Swan Street, Merthyr Tydfil) has been considered by both the Councils Countryside Officer and NRW and neither has raised an objection to the loss of the boxes provided a suitable alternative roosting resource is provided for the bats. The report recommends that this could be provided in the proposed bus station building. If Members are minded to permit this application this could be secured by an appropriately worded condition. It should also be noted a further/amended derogation license, from NRW, would be required to undertake the removal of the boxes and creation of new roosting facilities. Therefore, it is not

considered that the proposal would have an adverse impact on bats and is acceptable in terms of policy BW5 of the LDP.

Conclusion

The bus station development would introduce a much needed modern facility with an impressively designed and unashamedly imposing building as its focal point. It would also add another very important piece to the ambitious development/enhancement jigsaw which is undoubtedly improving both the appearance and overall attractiveness of Merthyr Tydfil to both its residents and many visitors. The lack of any objections to the proposal speaks volumes and highlights the fact that it could be accommodated on the site without causing any detriment to highway/pedestrian safety, flooding, the amenity of surrounding residents and occupiers and ecology. It would also enable easy and convenient access to St. Tydfil's shopping centre, the town centre, local schools, the college and other facilities as well as bolstering essential linked trips with the railway station.

For the above reasons, the proposal is considered acceptable as it complies with the relevant national and local development plan policies.

RECOMMENDATION: BE APPROVED subject to the following **CONDITIONS:**

1. The development shall begin not later than five years from the date of this decision.

Reason - To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

CS/74270/PA/103/B	-	Proposed Bus Station and General Arrangement
CS/74270/PA/106/D	-	Proposed Bus Station Drainage Layout
CS/74270/PA/107/B	-	Proposed Bus Station Drainage Areas
CS/74270/PA/108/C	-	Proposed Bus Station Traffic signs & Road Markings
CS/74270/PA/109/B	-	Street Lighting
CS/74270/PA/110	-	Proposed Access to Service Yard C
CS/74270/PA/111/C	-	Proposed Bus Station & Access to Service Yard D Swept Path Analysis
CS/74270/PA/113/B	-	Landscaping Proposals
CS/74270/PA/114.1	-	Landscape Proposals (Swan Street Elevation and Section)
CS/74270/PA/116	-	Proposed Works to High Street Baptist Church Location Plan
CS/74270/PA/117/A	-	Proposed Works to High Street Baptist Church Elevations
CS/74270/PA/118	-	Proposed Works to High Street Baptist Church Cross Sections
CS/74270/PA/119/B	-	Proposed Works to High Street Baptist Church Landscaping
CS/74270/PA/120/B	-	Proposed Wall Service Yard D
CS/74270/PA/121	-	Retaining Wall at Service Yard C
PR1-CAP-00-GF-DR-E-0001	-	CCTV Installation
PR1-CAP-00-GF-DR-E-0002	-	Internal CCTV Installation

- 061 000-P01 - Masterplan Proposed
- 061 001-P02 - Proposed Floor Plans
- 061 002-P02 - Proposed Roof Plan
- 062 002-P01 - Proposed Site Elevations
- 062 003-P01 - Proposed Building Elevations
- 063 002-P01 - Proposed Site Sections
- 063 003 P01 - Proposed Building Sections
- 210002 P00 - External Fabric - Stone/Zinc Interface
- 210009 P00 - External Fabric - Stone Base
- 210010 P00 - Stone Window Detail
- 210011 P00 - Typical Zinc Base Detail
- 210012 P00 - Eaves Detail - Stone wall Cladding
- 210013 P00 - Eaves Detail - Zinc Wall Cladding
- 210014 P00 - Zinc Window Detail

Technical Note (bus station layout) (August 2015).

Flood Consequences Assessment (May 2016).

Noise Assessment Report (Residential Amenity) (December 2015).

Air Quality Assessment (May 2016).

Aerial Survey of Bat Boxes at the former Hollies Health Centre, Swan Street, Merthyr Tydfil (November 2015).

Reason - To ensure compliance with the approved plans and clearly define the scope of the permission.

3. **Prior to the construction of the bus station building**, hereby approved, the external materials to be used in the construction of the walls and roof of the building shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason - To ensure that the external appearance of the proposed development will be in keeping with the character of the area in the interests of visual amenity and to accord with Policy BW7 of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan.

4. The proposed walling of the building and boundary walls shall be constructed in strict accordance with details of coursing, jointing, texture relief and colour to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and such details shall be demonstrated by the prior construction of a sample panel. The panel shall be retained on site until the completion of the walling.

Reason - To ensure the proposed development will be in keeping with the character of the area in the interests of visual amenity and to accord with Policy BW7 of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan.

5. The development, hereby permitted, **shall not be commenced** until full details of the paving materials proposed to be used, as indicated on drawing no. CS/74270/PA/113/A, have been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The bus station shall not be brought into use until the works have been completed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason - To ensure the proposed development will be in keeping with the character of the area in the interests of visual amenity and to accord with Policy BW7 of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan.

6. Notwithstanding the submitted plans, **no development or site clearance shall take place** until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping. The scheme shall include indications of all existing trees (including spread and species) and hedgerows on the land, identify those to be retained and set out measures for their protection throughout the course of development. The scheme shall also include the specification for the tree planting in the resin bound paving.

Reason - To ensure that the new development will be visually attractive in the interests of amenity and to accord with Policy BW7 of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan.

7. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Reason - To ensure that the new development will be visually attractive in the interests of amenity and to accord with Policy BW7 of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan.

8. **No development shall take place** until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured agreement for a written scheme of historic environment mitigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local planning authority. Thereafter, the programme of work will be fully carried out in accordance with the requirements and standards of the written scheme.

Reason - In order that the archaeological operations are undertaken to an acceptable standard and that legitimate archaeological interest in the site is satisfied in accordance with Policy BW6 of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan.

9. **Prior to the commencement of development**, the following components of a scheme to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site shall each be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the local planning authority:

1. A preliminary risk assessment which has identified:

- all previous uses;
- potential contaminants associated with those uses;
- a conceptual model of the site indicating sources, pathways and receptors;
- potentially unacceptable risks arising from contamination at the site.

2. A site investigation scheme, based on (1) to provide information for a detailed assessment of the risk to all receptors that may be affected, including those off site.
3. The results of the site investigation and detailed risk assessment referred to in (2) and, based on these, an options appraisal and remediation strategy giving full details of the remediation measures required and how they are to be undertaken.
4. A verification plan providing details of the data that will be collected in order to demonstrate that the works set out in the remediation strategy in (3) are complete and identifying any requirements for longer-term monitoring of pollutant linkages, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action.

Any changes to these components require the express consent of the local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented as approved.

Reason - To protect controlled waters in accordance with Policy BW8 of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan.

10. **Prior to the bus station being brought into use**, a verification report demonstrating completion of the works set out in the approved remediation strategy and the effectiveness of the remediation shall be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the local planning authority. The report shall include results of sampling and monitoring carried out in accordance with the approved verification plan to demonstrate that the site remediation criteria have been met. It shall also include any plan (a "long-term monitoring and maintenance plan") for longer-term monitoring of pollutant linkages, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action, as identified in the verification plan, and for the reporting of this to the local planning authority. The long-term monitoring and maintenance plan shall be implemented as approved.

Reason - To protect controlled waters in accordance with Policy BW8 of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan.

11. Reports on monitoring, maintenance and any contingency action carried out in accordance with a long-term monitoring and maintenance plan shall be submitted to the local planning authority as set out in that plan. On completion of the monitoring programme a final report demonstrating that all long-term site remediation criteria have been met and documenting the decision to cease monitoring shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason - To protect controlled waters in accordance with Policy BW8 of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan.

12. If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted, and obtained written approval from the local planning authority for, a remediation strategy

detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.

Reason - To protect controlled waters in accordance with Policy BW8 of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan.

13. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the amended FCA Merthyr Bus Station, Flood Consequence Assessment', Job No CS/074270, dated May 2016, prepared by Capita and specifically the development proposals included in Appendix B.

Reason - To ensure the building is flood free during a 1% (1 in 100 year) plus climate change annual probability flood event in accordance with Policy BW8 of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan.

14. **Prior to the commencement of development**, in accordance with the Arial Survey of Bat Boxes at the former Hollies Health Centre, Swan Street, Merthyr Tydfil (November 2015), details for the provision of bat roosting boxes/facilities shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be completed in accordance with the approved details and maintained as such thereafter.

Reason - To protect and support priority species in accordance with Policy BW5 of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan.

15. Construction works shall not take place outside the hours of 08.00 to 18.00 Mondays to Fridays and 09.00 to 14.00 on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Public Holidays.

Reason - To ensure that the noise emitted/activities are not a source of nuisance to occupants of nearby properties in accordance with Policy BW7 of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan.
