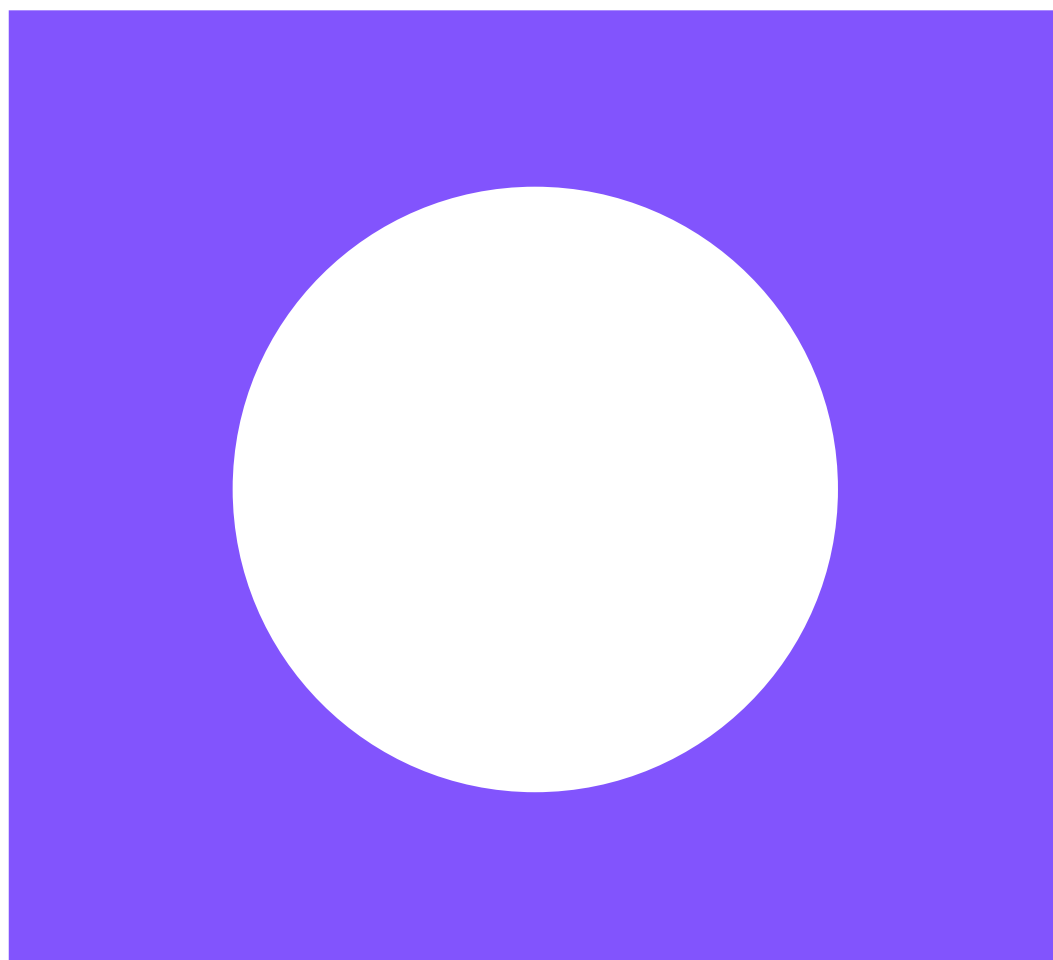




Bassaleg Bridge

Planning, Design and Access Statement

August 2025

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Bassaleg Bridge

Planning, Design and Access Statement

August 2025

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Overview	1
1.2	Structure of this Report	1
1.3	Background to the Scheme	1
1.3.1	Bassaleg Bridge and the Scheme	1
1.3.2	Environmental Impact Assessment	2
1.3.3	Habitat Regulations Assessment	2
1.4	Planning Application Submission	2
2	Application Site	4
2.1	Site Location and Description	4
2.2	Environmental Context and Consideration	5
2.2.1	Flood Risk	5
2.2.2	Heritage	5
2.2.3	Ecology	6
2.3	Planning History	6
3	Proposed Development	7
3.1	Overview	7
3.2	The Proposed Scheme	7
4	Pre-application Advice	9
4.1	Overview	9
4.2	Principle of Development	9
4.3	Design	9
4.4	Residential Amenity	9
4.5	Highways	10
4.6	Heritage	10
4.7	Ecology	10
4.8	Flood Risk/Drainage	11
5	Planning Policy	12
5.1	National Planning Policy	12
5.1.1	Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12)	12
5.1.2	Future Wales: The National Plan 2040	13
5.1.3	Technical Advisory Notes	14
5.1.4	Other legislation	14
5.2	Local Planning Context	14
5.2.1	Newport Local Development Plan (LDP) 2011-2026	15

5.2.2	Proposals Plan	16
5.2.3	Constraints Plan	17
6	Material Considerations	18
6.1	Introduction	18
6.2	Principle of Development	18
6.2.1	Need for Development	18
6.2.2	Location of the Development	19
6.3	Design	19
6.4	Residential Amenity	21
6.5	Transport and Access	22
6.5.1	Highway Layout	22
6.5.2	Active Travel	23
6.6	Ecology and Biodiversity	24
6.6.1	Ecology	24
6.6.2	Net Benefits for Biodiversity	24
6.6.3	Arboriculture	25
6.7	Heritage and Archaeology	27
6.7.1	Introduction and methodology	27
6.7.2	Site conditions and historic environment	27
6.7.3	Impact assessment	29
6.8	Flood Risk and Drainage	29
6.8.1	Flood Risk	29
6.8.2	Drainage	30
7	Conclusion	31

Tables

Table 1.1: Application Submission Documents	2
Table 1.2: Application Submission Plans	3
Table 2.1: List of Planning Applications within 500m of the site within the Last 3 Years	6
Table 5.1: Planning Policy Wales 12 Policies List	12
Table 5.2: Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 Policies List	13
Table 5.3: Local Development Plan Policies	15
Table 6.1: Proposed Ecological Enhancements and their Compliance with the DECCA Framework	25
Table 6.2: Tree Survey Summary	26

Figures

Figure 2.1: Site Location Plan	4
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Figure 2.2: Flood Map for Planning	5
Figure 3.1: Extract of Site Layout Plan	7
Figure 5.1: Newport LDP Proposals Plan Extract	17
Figure 5.2: Newport LDP Constrains Plan Extract	17
Figure 6.1: Proposed Cladding Slips for Replacement Bridge	20

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Mott MacDonald, on behalf of Newport City Council (NCC) to support a full planning application for the proposed development, the demolition of the existing Bassaleg Bridge and provision of a replacement bridge across the Ebbw River to connect Forge Mews with Viaduct Way. This statement outlines the proposed development and explains how it is acceptable in planning terms.

This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared as part of a suite of documents to support the application for planning consent for the proposed Scheme and should be read in conjunction with the other documents and plans that have been submitted as part of this application. This planning application has been prepared in accordance with the validation checklist provided by NCC as part of their pre-application advice provided in February 2025.

A planning application is to be submitted to NCC, as the Local Planning Authority, seeking planning permission for the following:

“Demolition of the Old Bassaleg Bridge and construction of a replacement single span bridge structure across the Ebbw River to facilitate vehicular access to Forge Mews from Viaduct Way”

Further detail of the proposed works (hereafter referred to as the ‘Scheme’) is set out in Section 3 of this Planning Statement.

1.2 Structure of this Report

This Planning Statement is submitted to accompany the planning application and is structured as follows:

- **Section 1** – introduces the application and provides background information for the Scheme;
- **Section 2** – provides a description of the application site and its surrounding area;
- **Section 3** – explains the Scheme and associated works;
- **Section 4** – sets out the pre-application advice received from NCC relating to the Scheme in February 2025;
- **Section 5** – sets out the relevant development plan policies, national planning policy and other material considerations;
- **Section 6** – assesses the relevant planning issues relating to the Scheme; and,
- **Section 7** – summaries key planning matters and other material considerations to the determination of the planning application.

1.3 Background to the Scheme

1.3.1 Bassaleg Bridge and the Scheme

The Old Bassaleg Bridge (‘the existing bridge’) is owned by NCC and carries a single carriageway over the Ebbw River. The existing bridge is located at National Grid Reference (NGR) ST 27846 87042 and was constructed in 1943. It is a three-span continuous reinforced concrete structure with a total bridge deck width of 13.25 metres (m).

Following investigations into severe cracking in the structure in June and August 2021, emergency repairs were carried out to the bridge pier foundation in September 2021. However, the existing bridge was closed for vehicular use as it could not be confirmed as safe for bearing a live load. Further deterioration of the structure was identified in Spring 2022, and a structural assessment carried out by Mott MacDonald in January 2023 rated the structure as 'Dead Load Only'.

The existing bridge has remained closed for vehicular use for more than four years at the time of submitting this application, and only the downstream footway is open for pedestrian use. The existing bridge had previously provided the only vehicular access to the 19 properties on Forge Mews, on the east side of the river. Alternative access for emergency vehicles only was provided from the A467 in 2021.

1.3.2 Environmental Impact Assessment

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a process that identifies the potential significant environmental effects (both beneficial and adverse) of a proposed development. The process of EIA, in the context of the Scheme, is governed by the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) 2017, hereafter referred to as the 'EIA Regulations'.

Under these EIA Regulations, the proposed development falls under Schedule 2, Section 10f as 'Construction of roads'. For this section of developments, an EIA Screening is required to be undertaken if the proposed development exceeds one hectare. As the proposal does not breach any of the above thresholds, it is considered that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required.

1.3.3 Habitat Regulations Assessment

There is a requirement under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) ("the 2017 Regulations") to determine if a plan or project (either alone or in-combination) may affect the interest features and objectives of protected nature conservation sites at a European and International level (referred to in this report as Designated Sites). The process of undertaking this assessment is known as a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

A HRA (Document Reference: 100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-EC-0002) has been undertaken for the Site, which seeks to assess the potential for effects of the proposed development on National Sites Network (NSN) Sites (formerly Natura 2000 sites), as required by Regulation 63(1) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the Habitats Regulations). The HRA concludes that on the basis of its assessment and the implementation of the mitigation measures proposed, the proposed development would have no appreciable effect on the integrity of the River Usk Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Severn Estuary SAC or Severn Estuary Ramsar, or their designated interest features. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would not contribute to any in-combination effects with other plans or projects.

1.4 Planning Application Submission

This planning statement forms part of a full planning application to Newport City Council. This Statement should be read in conjunction with the other documents and drawings that form part of the planning submission, identified in Table 1.1 and Table 1.2.

Table 1.1: Application Submission Documents

Document	Reference Number
Planning, Design and Access Statement	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-PL-0001

Document	Reference Number
Traffic Geometrical Lighting Review	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-LI-0002
Flood Consequence Assessment	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-FL-0002
Transport Statement	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-TP-0003
Green Infrastructure Statement	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-EC-0003
Habitat Regulations Assessment	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-EC-0002
Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA)	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-EC-0001
Arboricultural Impact Assessment	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-EN-0001
Water Framework Directive (WFD) Impact Assessment	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-GM-0002

Table 1.2: Application Submission Plans

Document	Reference Number
Location Plan	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-DR-CE-0001
Existing Plan and Elevation	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-DR-PL-1001
Demolition Plan & Elevation	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-DR-PL-1002
Site Layout Plan	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-DR-PL-1201
Proposed Elevations	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-DR-PL-1301
Proposed Sections	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-DR-PL-1302
Existing Utilities	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-DR-UT-5001
Highway General Arrangement	100119581-MMD-XX-XX-DR-HW-0101

2 Application Site

2.1 Site Location and Description

The application site ('the site') comprises hardstanding, an existing watercourse and open space and vegetation. This includes the River Ebbw and the local highway including Bassaleg Bridge, Forge Mews, Viaduct Way, Station Approach, Churchmead and Caerphilly Road. The site boundary is outlined in blue and red on the submitted Site Location Plan (Drawing Reference: 100119581-MMD-XX-XX-DR-CE-0001), an extract of which can be seen in Figure 2.1 below. The site is located entirely within NCC's administrative area.

Figure 2.1: Site Location Plan



Source: Mott MacDonald (2025)

The total site area is 0.34ha.

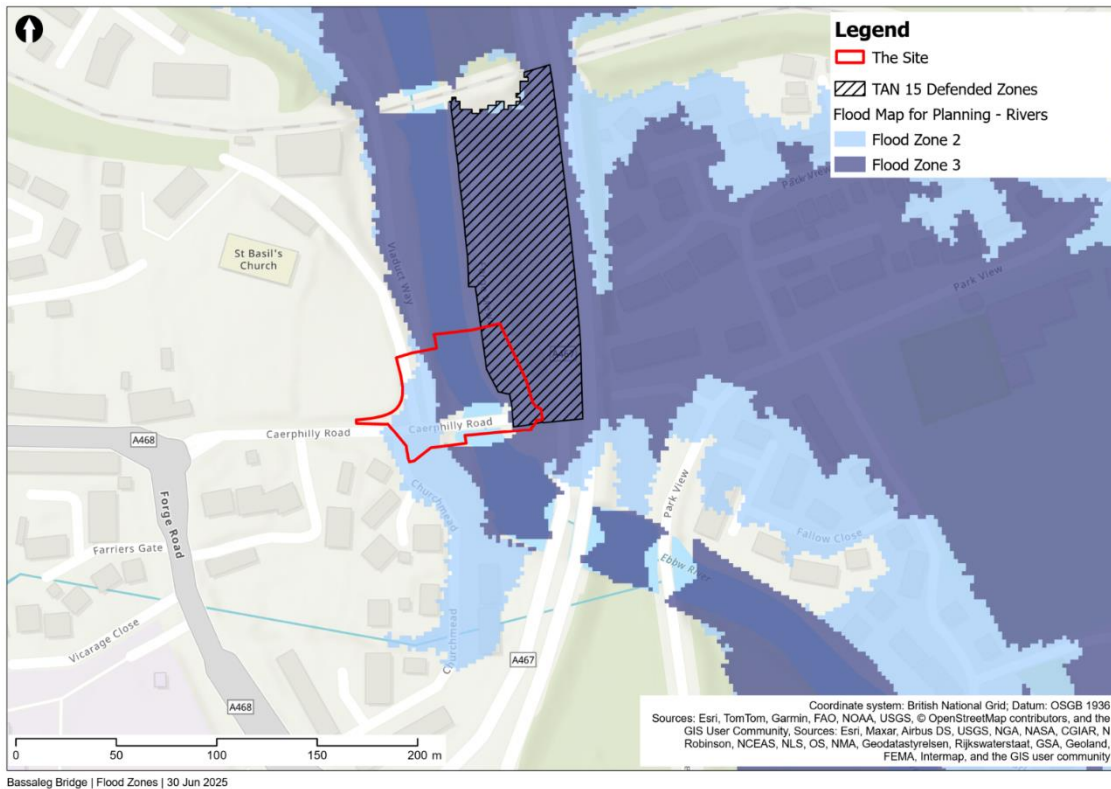
The surrounding area is predominantly residential in nature, including residential properties located along Forge Mews. St Basil's Church and cemetery are located nearby to the west of the site. The River Ebbw and river banks traverse beneath the site in roughly a north – south direction. Nearby highways include local roads and the A467. The surrounding area is interspersed with trees and green space.

2.2 Environmental Context and Consideration

2.2.1 Flood Risk

The Natural Resources Wales (NRW) Flood Map for Planning shows that parts of the site are located in Flood Zone 3 (for rivers). Land in Flood Zone 3 (for rivers) is defined as having greater than 1 in 100 (1%) of flooding from rivers in any year. The Flood Map for Planning includes climate change information to show how this will affect flood risk extents over the next century.

Figure 2.2: Flood Map for Planning



Bassaleg Bridge | Flood Zones | 30 Jun 2025

Source: Natural Resources Wales – additional labels inserted by Mott MacDonald (2025)

2.2.2 Heritage

There are no World Heritage Sites, scheduled monuments, conservation areas, registered battlefields, registered parks and gardens, or registered historic landscapes within the site boundary or within the vicinity of the site.

There are six listed buildings situated within 250m of the site:

- Church of Saint Basil, grade II* listed, (Cadw: 2913), approximately 100m north-west of the site;
- Lychgate, churchyard walls and railings to Church of Saint Basil, grade II listed, (Cadw: 81799), approximately 20m west of the site;
- Railway viaduct over Afon Ebwy (partly in Graig community and partly in Rogerstone community) grade II* and grade II. (Cadw: 81801 and 81343), approximately 120m north of the site;
- Coach House to the Tredegar Arms Inn (Cadw: 81794), approximately 175m west of the site;
- The Cottage (Cadw: 81803), approximately 180m west of the site; and

- Tower at southwest corner of churchyard, attached to Tredegar Arms (Cadw: 81806) (Cadw: 81806), approximately 130m west of the site.

Section 6.7 explores the potential for these assets to experience impacts caused by the proposed scheme.

2.2.3 Ecology

The following designations/protected areas are located within the site boundary:

- Afon Ebbw River Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

A total of 21 non-statutory SINC's have been identified within 2.0km of the site and are of local conservation importance.

The following statutory designated sites are located within the wider area:

- Allt yr yn Local Nature Reserve, 1.3km north east;
- River Usk Special Area of Conservation (SAC), 3.55km east;
- Severn Estuary Special Protection Area, 4.35km south east ;
- Severn Estuary Ramsar site, 4.35km south east; and
- Severn Estuary SAC, 4.34km south east.

There are no other sites identified nearby, including statutory SSSIs or National Nature Reserves (NNR).

2.3 Planning History

Table 2.1 outlines the relevant planning history of Bassaleg Bridge. The planning history was compiled on 01/05/2025.

Table 2.1: List of Planning Applications within 500m of the site within the Last 3 Years

Reference	Address	Description	Decision and Date
22/1162	6 Caerphilly Road, NP10 8LE	Listed building consent to increase size of front garden area, change boundary treatment from hedge to stone wall	Approved April 2023
22/0604	River Bridge Cottage Forge Mews, NP10 8NE	Demolition of existing building and construction of 7 no. self contained flats with parking, amenity, refuse and cycle storage facilities	Refused May 2023
23/0306	Bassaleg Ambulance Station Park View	Demolition of a mortuary building to create additional staff vehicle parking	Approved June 2023
23/0462	Whiteheads Sports Club, NP10 8LA	Construction of a covered spectator stand alongside the football pitch	Approved August 2023
24/0008	Land To South East Of And Adjacent Glebe House Forge Lane	. Construction of 2 no. new dwellings	Refused August 2024

There is no committed development in the local area that is expected to have an impact on the proposed development at the replacement Bassaleg Bridge.

3 Proposed Development

3.1 Overview

This planning statement forms part of an application that is seeking full planning permission for the construction of a replacement Bassaleg bridge across the Ebbw River. Figure 3.1 contains an extract of the proposed Site Layout Plan. The proposed Site Layout Plan (Drawing Reference: 100119581-MMD-XX-XX-DR-PL-1201) has been submitted as part of the full planning application.

Figure 3.1: Extract of Site Layout Plan



Source: Mott MacDonald (2025)

3.2 The Proposed Scheme

The proposal consists of the construction of a replacement Bassaleg Bridge to provide access across the River Ebbw, between Forge Mews and Viaduct Way and will replace the existing access along Caerphilly Road.

A new single span bridge structure is proposed of 13.16m in width. The bridge will be constructed from pre-cast concrete for constructability and maintenance purposes. Visible elements of the parapets, abutments and wingwalls will be clad in stone slips, formed of natural Welsh stone. The

parapets will be topped with a grey coping stone and galvanised steel handrailing. The handrailing will be finished in a black powder coating and extend a minimum height of 1.4m above the finished ground level in accordance with CD 377 – Requirements for pedestrian restraint systems and Welsh Government Active Travel Act Guidance. The top of the wingwalls will be chamfered concrete to mimic the coping stone on the parapet. The wing walls will also be topped with galvanised steel handrails with a black (RAL 9005) powder coating finish and will extend a minimum height of 1.15m from the adjacent ground level.

On both downstream approaches, pedestrian guardrails will provide edge protection for pedestrians and cyclists. These guardrails will be galvanized and finished with a black powder coating. The guardrail on the west bank will connect to the existing masonry wall at the west-downstream corner of the bridge. Similarly, the guardrail on the east bank will tie into the east downstream balustrade of the existing bridge.

The carriageway is proposed to be 7.5m wide, with a maintenance verge at the north of the bridge deck of 0.6m in width. An additional 3.5m wide verge (back of kerb to face of parapet) is also proposed at the south of the bridge deck for shared pedestrian and cyclist usage which will link into the existing cycle network. Tactile paving 400mm wide will be used at the rear face of the trief kerbs on the south verge to warn users of the height difference between the verge and road carriageway level. N1 vehicle containment will be provided on both sides of the carriageway using GTS2 trief kerbs. These will act as a vehicle restraint system. Three bollards will also be placed at the southeastern corner of the bridge to further contain errant vehicles.

The junction between Caerphilly Road, Station Approach, Viaduct Way and Churchmead will be realigned to improve junction safety and create provisions for the active travel verge to be continued off the structure.

Scour protection will be provided beneath the overbridge which will consist of rock bags with a layer of overlain rip rap by the bridge piles and rip rap along the centre of the channel.

In addition, it is proposed that a gabion retaining wall will be installed along the line of the gabions under the existing bridge. This is required to stop-up the end of the existing Bassaleg Bridge.

A portion of the existing flood wall located along the eastern bank of the River Ebbw is to be demolished to facilitate the construction. The bridge wingwalls and parapet will be of sufficient height to provide the same level of protection as the existing wall. Downstream of the bridge, the ground beam of the proposed pedestrian guardrail will be extended by approximately 0.5m so its top level matches that of the existing flood wall.

Pedestrian access across the existing Bassaleg Bridge will be maintained during the construction of the proposed bridge. Following the completion of the new bridge the existing bridge will be demolished and the end of Caerphilly Road stopped up. The length of the construction period is unknown as a contractor has not yet been appointed for the scheme. The construction programme is likely to be determined by funding allocations and environmental constraints. A Construction Environmental Management Plan is proposed to be secured by appropriate condition.

4 Pre-application Advice

4.1 Overview

Pre-application advice was sought from Newport City Council. A pre-application request letter was submitted to the Council in December 2024 and subsequently the Local Planning Authority (LPA) responded in writing on 10th February 2025 (application number: PRELET/ PS/24/0121).

The following sections provide a brief overview of the key pre-application advice received.

4.2 Principle of Development

The application site comprises of an existing bridge located within the settlement boundary as defined by the proposals maps that accompany the Newport City Local Development Plan (LDP). The bridge provides access across the River Ebbw linking the properties located on Forge Mews to Bassaleg and the wider highway network. The only other means of accessing Forge Mews is via a footbridge that crosses the A467. Currently there is no vehicular access to Forge Mews with residents having to park on the wider highway network and cross the bridge by foot, this raises significant concern not only for the everyday inconvenience to residents but particularly when considering Emergency Services Vehicles and their limited accessibility.

There is obvious merit in providing access across the River Ebbw whether in the form of repairs to the existing bridge or in providing a replacement structure therefore, no objection to the principle of the proposed development is raised.

4.3 Design

The proposed bridge adopts a more contemporary, utilitarian design when compared with the existing. The external elevations are proposed to be finished in stone cladding and topped with railings, this is considered to be acceptable as it compliments the listed structures within close proximity of the application site.

Concern is raised in respect of the scale of the bridge relative to its required purpose and function. It is understood that the bridge as proposed is circa 2M wider due to its proposed position as to achieve suitable swept path for vehicular users. It is understood that if the bridge was replaced in its current location as a continuation of Caerphilly Road there would not be a need for such a wide bridge to cater for such a limited number of dwellings. As proposed, it is considered that the bridge appears to be disproportionately scaled for its purpose and appears as an over engineered solution, instead it is recommended that the bridge be replaced in situ and the overall width reduced.

4.4 Residential Amenity

The structure as proposed in respect of its scale and design is not considered to result in any unacceptable adverse impact upon the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.

However, significant concern is raised over the position of the proposed bridge relative to the property known as 'River Bridge Cottage' which would be located opposite the proposed crossing and at a lower level. The proposed bridge would be significantly closer to the cottage than the existing and would result in a much greater level of disturbance to its occupiers. Particular concern is raised in respect of disturbance from car headlights during the evening and winter months when light levels are reduced. There are 2 windows located on the gable end of the cottage one at ground and one at first floor which would face the proposed crossing point. It is currently unknown

what rooms these windows serve however if they are primary habitable rooms the concern will be greater. Due to the proposed alignment of the bridge and the lower level of the cottage it is expected that impact from headlights would be felt at a significant level within the property. For this reason, an alternative location would be strongly encouraged as to overcome this concern.

4.5 Highways

Whilst there are issues with the existing arrangement, the proposed would result in an overall worsening of the general arrangement. This raises significant concern as although the Local Planning Authority would seek to support a scheme that provides access to Forge Mews this cannot be at the expense of highway or pedestrian safety and any replacement structure should be viewed as an opportunity to provide a betterment to the local highway network this accords with the aims and objectives of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. The scheme as currently proposed raises significant concern, it would be essential that any application for planning consent fully satisfied the requirements of the Local Highways Authority in respect of highway and pedestrian safety.

A Public Right of Way (PROW) currently runs north-south along the western side of the River Ebbw and links with the existing bridge, any alterations to the alignment or accessibility of the PROW will need to be considered and full details provided at application stage, any works impacting upon the PROW will be subject to a separate consent.

4.6 Heritage

The proposed bridge would sit slight closer to the viaduct and would be slightly wider than the existing. It would be of pre-cast concrete, with visible elements being the capping beams, abutments and wall wings. The parapets would be cladded to give them a stone like appearance, however the details of this cladding have not been given and should be provided at full application stage. Nevertheless, the use of this type of cladding is supported. Whilst it would be a clear contemporary element which contrasts the historic landscape, the proposed type of cladding would ensure that the bridge has taken the notable surrounding landscape features, particularly the heritage assets, into account. It would be ideal if the stone used was similar in colour and form to that of the viaduct or church. The continuation of the use of stone clad along the sweeping walls would be supported and would reflect the adjacent churchyard walls.

An element that should be addressed would be the pre-cast concrete finish to the wing walls and underside of the bridge. I do have concerns as to how these elements would appear after a year or two of weathering. They could end up blackened or green after a year or two of weathering.

4.7 Ecology

The River Ebbw is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) (reference GR13) therefore consideration will need to be given to the impact of the development upon the special features of the river during construction/demolition and once completed.

The Council's Ecologist has identified the need for an EcIA to be completed and submitted in support of any application for planning consent. The EcIA would need to account for otters, fish and birds likely to be impacted by the proposed development.

Additionally, it is noted that a number of existing trees would need to be removed to accommodate the proposed development. A comprehensive tree survey is required in accordance with BS5837:2012. This should include trees proposed for removal and mitigation for any tree loss ie replanting and naturalistic landscaping.

Any application for planning consent would need to deliver a net benefit for biodiversity, this is separate to any mitigation or compensation that may be required. Details of a net benefit for biodiversity should be clearly demonstrated in the proposal and informed by a Green Infrastructure Statement that is informed by the DECCA principles and that follows the stepwise approach contained within chapter 6 of PPW12.

4.8 Flood Risk/Drainage

The application site crosses the River Ebbw and therefore the risk of flooding is present, the Development Advice Maps that accompany the existing TAN15 designate the area as flood-zone C2 and the Flood Maps for Planning which are maintained by Natural Resources Wales designate the site as Zone 3. Given these designations any application will need to be supported by a Flood Consequence Assessment detailing the extent and level of flood risk on site and demonstrating that the development would not have a detrimental impact upon flooding/flood risk elsewhere nor that it will be detrimental to river ebbs/flows.

Proposals will need to be accompanied by information detailing the sustainable drainage system to serve the development in line with Schedule 3 of the Flood & Water Management Act.

5 Planning Policy

5.1 National Planning Policy

5.1.1 Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12)

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) was published in 2018 and was most recently amended in February 2024. It sets out the overarching policy for planning and planning related decision-making in Wales. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. PPW 12 must therefore be taken into account in preparing the development plan and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

Table 5.1 outlines the policies from PPW 12 relevant to the proposal.

Table 5.1: Planning Policy Wales 12 Policies List

Policy	Description
2.3	The planning system should create sustainable places which are attractive, sociable, accessible, active, secure, welcoming, healthy and friendly. Development proposals should create the conditions to bring people together, making them want to live, work and play in areas with a sense of place and well-being, creating prosperity for all.
3.3 Good Design Making Better Places	Good design is fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. Design is not just about the architecture of a building but the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment and between people and places.
4.1.34 Active Travel	In determining planning applications, planning authorities must ensure development proposals, through their design and supporting infrastructure, prioritise provision for access and movement by walking and cycling and, in doing so, maximise their contribution to the objectives of the Active Travel Act.
5.3.4 Transportation Infrastructure	Great care must be taken to minimise the adverse impacts of new or improved transport infrastructure on the natural, historic and built environment and on local communities, including on public health resulting from community severance and airborne pollution.
5.3.13 Strategic Road Network	The process of designing new road schemes and road improvements should take into account the transport hierarchy, whereby active and sustainable transport is considered before private motor vehicles. This will help to minimise community severance from a scheme and its impacts on the safety, convenience and amenity of routes for journeys on foot, bicycle and public transport.
6.1.5 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment and Its Assets	The planning system must take into account the Welsh Government's objectives to protect, conserve, promote and enhance the historic environment as a resource for the general well-being of present and future generations.

Policy	Description
6.4 Biodiversity and Ecological Networks	Development should not cause any significant loss of habitats or populations of species (not including non native invasive species), locally or nationally and must work alongside nature and it must provide a net benefit for biodiversity and improve, or enable the improvement, of the resilience of ecosystems. A net benefit for biodiversity is the concept that development should leave biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems in a significantly better state than before, through securing immediate and long-term, measurable and demonstrable benefit, primarily on or immediately adjacent to the site. Planning authorities must follow a step- wise approach to maintain and enhance biodiversity, build resilient ecological networks and deliver net benefits for biodiversity by ensuring that any adverse environmental effects are firstly avoided, then minimized, mitigated, and as a last resort compensated for. Enhancement must be secured by delivering a biodiversity benefit primarily on site or immediately adjacent to the site, over and above that required to mitigate or compensate for any negative impact.
6.4.42 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerow	Permanent removal of trees, woodland and hedgerows will only be permitted where it would achieve significant and clearly defined public benefits. Where individual or groups of trees and hedgerows are removed as part of a proposed scheme, planning authorities must first follow the step-wise approach as set out in paragraph 6.4.15. Where loss is unavoidable developers will be required to provide compensatory planting (which is proportionate to the proposed loss as identified through an assessment of green value including biodiversity, landscape value and carbon capture). Replacement planting shall be at a ratio equivalent to the quality, environmental and ecological importance of the tree(s) lost and this must be preferably onsite, or immediately adjacent to the site, and at a minimum ratio of at least 3 trees of a similar type and compensatory size planted for every 1 lost.
6.6.18 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Development	The provision of SuDS must be considered as an integral part of the design of new development and considered at the earliest possible stage when formulating proposals for new development.

5.1.2 Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

The Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 sets out the Welsh government's framework, 'setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040'. Table 5.2 outlines relevant policies to the development:

Table 5.2: Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 Policies List

Policy	Description
Policy 9 - Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure	Action towards securing the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity (to provide a net benefit), the resilience of ecosystems and green infrastructure assets must be demonstrated as part of development proposals through innovative, nature based approaches to site planning and the design of the built environment
Policy 12 – Regional Connectivity	The Welsh Government will work with Transport for Wales, local authorities, operators and partners to deliver the following

Policy	Description
	measures to improve regional connectivity. This includes prioritising walking and cycling for all local travel. We will support the implementation of the Active Travel Act to create comprehensive networks of local walking and cycling routes that connect places that people need to get to for everyday purposes.

5.1.3 Technical Advisory Notes

The following Technical Advisory Notes are of relevance to the proposed development:

- Technical advice note (TAN) 5: nature conservation and planning
- Technical advice note (TAN) 12: design
- Technical advice note (TAN) 15: development and flood risk
- Technical advice note (TAN) 18: transport
- Technical advice note (TAN) 24: the historic environment

5.1.4 Other legislation

Other legislation relevant to the Scheme is set out below:

- Historic Environment Wales Act (2023)
- Environment (Wales) Act (2016)
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015)
- The Active Travel (Wales) Act (2013)
- Flood Water Management Act (2010)

5.2 Local Planning Context

The following documents comprise the Development Plan:

- The Newport Local Development Plan (LDP) 2011-2026;
- Proposals Plan; and
- Constraints Plan.

This is considered the starting point for assessing a planning application on the site.

A Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) is currently being prepared which will set out how Newport should be developed over the next fifteen years. It is noted that the Preferred Strategy (Pre-Deposit Plan) was published for consultation from October – December 2023. As this document represents a partial draft and has not been independently examined, we have attributed very limited weight to the emerging RLDP at this stage.

5.2.1 Newport Local Development Plan (LDP) 2011-2026

The policies highlighted in Table 5.3 are considered to be of most relevance to the proposed development.

Table 5.3: Local Development Plan Policies

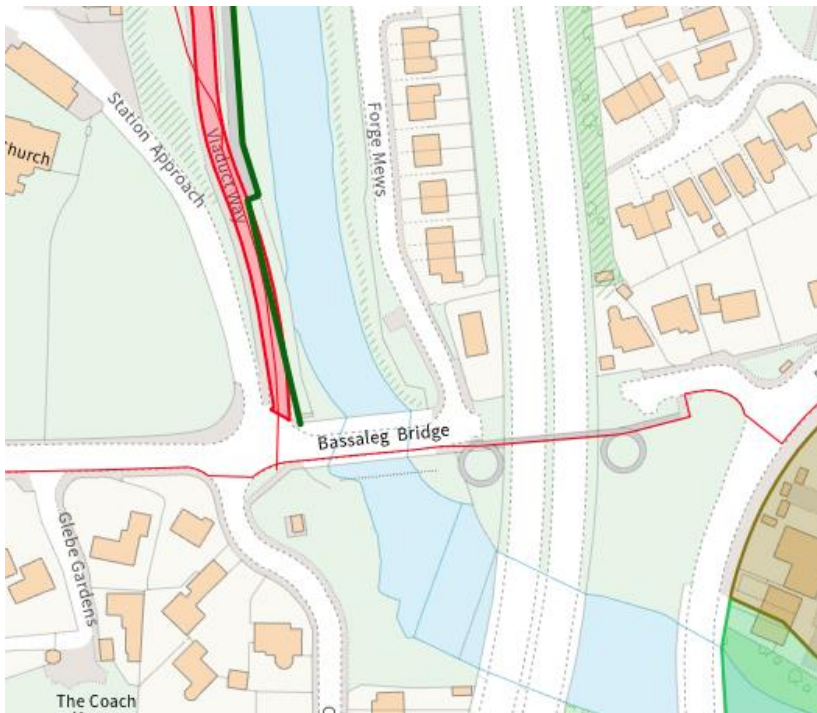
Policy	Description
SP14 Transport Proposals	Transport Proposals will be supported where they: i. Provide for traffic-free walking and cycling facilities and expansion of the network; ii. Encourage the use of public transport and other modes which reduce energy consumption and pollution; iii. Improve road safety; iv. Improve the quality of life of residents; v. Assist the local economy; vi. Assist urban regeneration; vii. Provide access to new development areas which incorporate sustainable transport modes; viii. Relieve traffic congestion in the long-term; ix. Result in other environmental improvements including air quality, noise reduction, sustainable drainage and enhanced biodiversity.
GP2 General Development Principles – General Amenity	Development will not be permitted where there will be an adverse effect on local amenity including in terms of noise, disturbance, privacy, overbearing, light, odours and air quality.
GP4 General Development Principles – Highways and Accessibility	Development proposals should: i. Provide appropriate access for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport in accordance with national guidance; ii. Be accessible by a choice of means of transport; iii. Be designed to avoid or reduce transport severance, noise and air pollution; iv. Make adequate provision for car parking and cycle storage; v. Provide suitable and safe access arrangements; vi. Design and build new roads within private development in accordance with the Highway Authority's design guide and relevant national guidance; vii. Ensure that development would not be detrimental to highway or pedestrian safety or result in traffic generation exceeding the capacity of the highway network.
GP5 General Development Principles – Natural Environment	Development will be permitted where, as applicable: i. The proposals are designed and managed to protect and encourage biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including through the incorporation of new features on or off site to further the UK, Welsh and/or Newport Biodiversity Action Plans; ii. The proposals demonstrate how they avoid, or mitigate and compensate negative impacts to biodiversity, ensuring that there are no significant adverse effects on areas of nature conservation interest.

Policy	Description
GP6 General Development Principles – Quality of Design	Good quality design will be sought in all forms of development. The aim is to create a safe, accessible, attractive and convenient environment. In considering development proposals the following fundamental design principles should be addressed: i. Context of the site: all development should be sensitive to the unique qualities of the site and respond positively to the character of the area; ii. Access, permeability and layout: all development should maintain a high level of pedestrian access, connectivity and laid out so as to minimise noise pollution; iii. Preservation and enhancement: where possible development should reflect the character of the locality but avoid the inappropriate replication of neighbouring architectural styles. The designer is encouraged to display creativity and innovation in design; iv. Scale and form of development: new development should appropriately reflect the scale of adjacent townscape. Care should be taken to avoid over-scaled development; v. Materials and detailing: high quality, durable and preferably renewable materials should be used to complement the site context. Detailing should be incorporated as an integral part of the design at an early stage; vi. Sustainability: new development should be inherently robust, energy and water efficient, flood resilient and adaptable, thereby facilitating the flexible re-use of the building. Where existing buildings are present, imaginative and sensitive solutions should be sought to achieve the re-use of the buildings
CE8 Locally Designated Nature Conservation and Geological Sites	Proposals affecting locally designated sites will only be permitted where: i. There would be no overall loss of the nature conservation resource for which the site has been designated; ii. There would be no significant adverse effect on the geological interest of the site; iii. Appropriate mitigation or compensatory measures can be achieved.

5.2.2 Proposals Plan

A review of the Newport LDP Proposals Plan has been undertaken and has confirmed that a Public Right of Way (PRoW), Footpath 393/111, falls partly within the site boundary and continues northwards adjacent to the western bank of the Ebbw River (green line on Figure 5.1). The Proposals Plan also identifies a Long Distance Cycle Walkway which traverses across the existing Bassaleg Bridge from Park View toward Viaduct Way and Forge Road (red line). The plan also identifies housing under construction along Viaduct Way, however, it is understood that this site has since been developed and is no longer considered to be under construction (red shaded area). There are no further designations relevant to the site which are shown on this plan. An extract of the plan can be viewed below in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Newport LDP Proposals Plan Extract

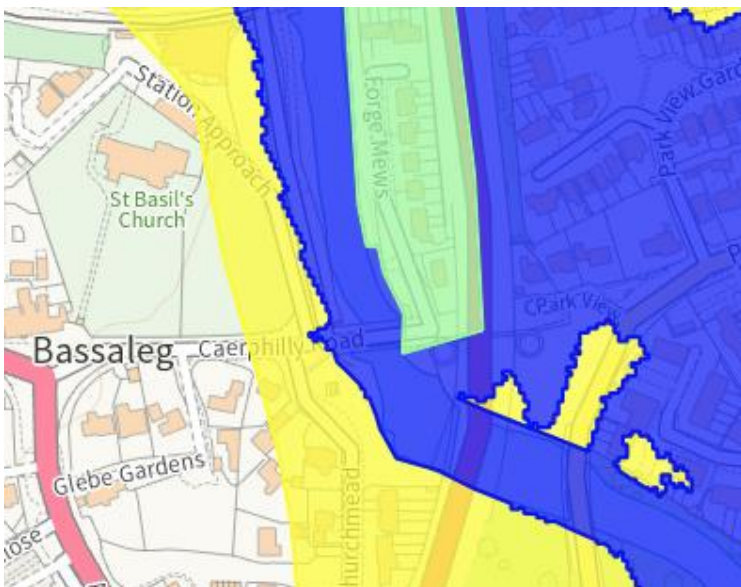


Source: Newport City Council (2015)

5.2.3 Constraints Plan

A review of the Newport LDP Constraints Plan has been undertaken. An extract of the plan is shown in Figure 5.2. The constraints identified within the site include Flood Zones B (yellow shading), C1 (green shading) and C2 (blue shading). No other constraints are located within the site. Flood zones are discussed in paragraph 2.2.1 of this Planning Design and Access Statement. Site specific Flood Consequences Assessments (FCA) are required where the development is within a Flood Zones 2 and 3. An FCA has been provided to support this planning application.

Figure 5.2: Newport LDP Constraints Plan Extract



Source: Newport City Council (2015)

6 Material Considerations

6.1 Introduction

The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 requires applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that the local planning authority shall have regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations.

The following section outlines the key planning issues considered as part of this application and provides analysis of how they are addressed in accordance with the development plan and material considerations:

- Principle of Development;
- Design;
- Residential Amenity;
- Transport and Access;
- Ecology and Biodiversity;
- Heritage and Archaeology; and
- Flood Risk and Drainage.

6.2 Principle of Development

6.2.1 Need for Development

PPW 12 Paragraph 2.3 considers how the planning system should create sustainable places which are attractive, sociable, accessible, active, secure, welcoming, healthy and friendly. Newport LDP Policy SP14 states that development should contribute to road safety and LDP GP4 further emphasises the need for suitable and safe access arrangements and a reduction of transport severance.

As set out above, the existing Bassaleg Bridge has provided the sole vehicular access to 19 residential properties on Forge Mews, located on the east side of the Ebbw River. The closure of the bridge to vehicles in 2021 owing to safety concerns has left residents isolated and unable to access their homes by car. This restricted access represents a major concern for house maintenance, emergency vehicles and refuse services. Further severance is created for both residents and wider community due to the lack of a coherent and compliant active travel route across the Ebbw River, which affects pupils and staff travelling to Bassaleg School.

A temporary access for emergency and delivery vehicles from the A467 was created in 2021. However, the access and egress provided from the A467 is not suitable in the long-term owing to traffic management issues, and could therefore not be extended to an access for residents. Provision of a replacement bridge would therefore re-establish safe access to Forge Mews, the principle of which is supported under PPW 12 and LDP Policies SP14 and GP4. NCC further confirmed their support for the principle of the development as part of the pre-application advice provided.

The principle of the development is therefore considered acceptable in planning terms.

6.2.2 Location of the Development

There is no specific policy relating to new bridges, or that allocates the site for development. However, national and local policy both make it clear that there is a requirement to reduce transport severance and the need for suitable and safe access arrangements.

The replacement bridge is proposed to be located upstream from the existing bridge. This was developed as the preferred option following the outcome of the WelTAG Stage 2 study. As part of the study, the following six longlist options, as well as a 'Do Nothing' scenario were investigated:

- 1) Demolition of the existing bridge only (no replacement)
- 2) Online bridge replacement
- 3) Offline bridge replacement
- 4) Offline Road bridge with an online footbridge
- 5) Acquisition of Forge Mews properties with online footbridge
- 6) Provision of a highway junction on the A467 with an online footbridge

For information, online refers to the existing location and offline refers to an alternative location.

The study assessed the options against the policy objectives set out in the Wales Transport Strategy, the Newport LDP and the Newport Local Transport Plan, as well as the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act goals and the well-being objectives of the Programme for Government and the Newport Public Service Board. Stakeholder engagement was also undertaken to support the study. The outcome of the WelTAG Stage 2 study was to recommend that Option 3 (Offline replacement upstream of the existing bridge) be developed as the preferred option as it was the best performing option when assessed against the scheme objectives and key policy. The offline bridge replacement further performed the strongest against the well-being objectives as it would provide consistent active travel provision, particularly during the construction phase and will allow emergency vehicles and refuse vehicles to access the road during construction, to ensure severance to Forge Mews is reduced sooner. An offline replacement allows pedestrian access to be maintained from Caerphilly Road to Forge Mews throughout the construction, without the need to install a temporary pedestrian bridge. It also enables the construction programme for the new bridge to proceed in isolation from works required to divert the numerous utilities crossing the existing bridge.

Based on this, an Options Appraisal Report was presented to NCC's Cabinet in October 2023¹. Cabinet subsequently voted to pursue Option 3, an offline bridge replacement, as this would allow for services to be diverted across the new bridge prior to demolition of the existing bridge, as well as offer less ecological disruption and implications on flood risk arising from greater flexibility with site levels. This planning application has been prepared on this basis.

Further information regarding how the proposed alignment offers benefits in terms of design and the local highway network are set out below.

6.3 Design

The importance of design quality is emphasised throughout PPW 12, and on this subject Paragraph 3.3 specifically states that 'Good design is fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. Design is not just about the architecture of a building but the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment and between people and places'.

Newport LDP Policy GP6 sets out key principles required to achieve good quality design. Specific to the proposed development, this includes a high level of access and permeability, development

¹ [Newport City Council - Agenda item - Bassaleg Bridge](#)

that appropriately reflects the scale of the adjacent townscape and the use of high quality, durable and preferably renewable materials to complement the site context.

At pre-application stage, NCC expressed support for the chosen materials and finish but raised a concern in respect of the scale of the bridge relative to its required purpose.

The existing bridge is 13.25m in width, whereas the proposed bridge is a total of 13.16m in width. Therefore, the bridge offers a more compact arrangement than the existing scale. The width of the bridge is largely governed by the provision of a shared cycle/pedestrian verge on the downstream side of the carriageway. To minimise width, active travel provision has only been provided on the downstream side of the bridge. The width of the road carriageway has been governed by vehicle tracking, specifically a bin lorry or fire engine accessing Forge Mews from Caerphilly Road.

It is proposed to clad the replacement bridge in Callow slips, which will be formed of natural Welsh sandstone. A sample of the proposed cladding can be seen below in Figure 6.1. It is considered that the proposed cladding allows for a more natural finish which reflects the materials used within the listed buildings in the vicinity of the site. The traditional finish and materials appropriately consider the surrounding context and character and have been selected in collaboration with NCC heritage officers.

Figure 6.1: Proposed Cladding Slips for Replacement Bridge



Source: Black Mountain Quarries (2025)

The handrails located on top of the bridge parapets will be black and formed of metal. This material and colour were chosen to match the railings located around the St Basil Church cemetery, thereby ensuring the proposed development is in keeping with the surrounding area. The proportions between stone clad wall and railing on the parapet have been selected to maximise forward visibility at junctions, and allow users views upstream to the adjacent Bassaleg Viaduct.

The structural elements of the bridge will be formed of precast concrete beams. This structural form has been chosen over a steel alternative as it has less maintenance requirements and

requires less onsite fabrication, which is advantageous given the tight logistical constraints of the site.

Pedestrian guardrails will be installed on the downstream approaches to the bridge. These will have a black powder coating finish, again to match the adjacent graveyard wall railings. Guardrails provide a cost-effective and aesthetic alternative to extending the stone clad masonry parapets along the back of the verge on the bridge approaches.

The layout has been designed to consider users desire lines, and to future proof the bridge accounting for any further active travel improvements in the area. The primary desire line for active travel users on the proposed structure is accessing the footbridge crossing the A467, consequently the widened verge has been located on the downstream side of the carriageway to facilitate this. The bridge has also been located as close to the existing structure as practicable. Trief kerbs have been used to prevent errant vehicles from accessing this area, which protect pedestrian and cyclists, but also protects the utility ducts buried under the verge, which allows a shallower construction depth to be used, which is important to maximise the available aperture under the bridge for flood water.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposed Scheme achieves the high standard of design required in PPW 12 and LDP Policy G6. High quality materials have been chosen in consultation with NCC. The external appearance and arrangement of the bridge has also been designed to consider users and the local context and vernacular, including local heritage assets.

6.4 Residential Amenity

Newport LDP Policy GP2 sets out that development will not be permitted where there will be an adverse effect on local amenity including in terms of noise, disturbance, privacy, overbearing, light, odours and air quality.

During pre-application discussions with NCC, concern was expressed about the proposed alignment of the replacement bridge worsening disturbance from car headlights to River Bridge Cottage, Forge Mews, located opposite the proposed crossing point. A Traffic Geometrical Lighting Review (Document Reference: 100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-LI-0002) has subsequently been prepared by Mott MacDonald and is submitted as part of this planning application. The Traffic Geometrical Lighting Review considers the impacts of changing artificial lighting paths resulting from vehicle headlights from the existing to the proposed arrangement on residential amenity. The analysis specifically uses light distribution modelling to demonstrate the extent of light projection from car headlamps on the existing and proposed bridge arrangements.

In terms of the existing bridge arrangement, the review demonstrates that when vehicles are performing turning manoeuvres off Caerphilly Road onto Forge Mews, the extent of light emitted from the vehicle headlamp engulfs both the two windows on the south side and the window on the west side of River Bridge Cottage. It is unclear if these are habitable rooms. Relating to the proposed bridge arrangement, the review finds that the extent of the light projection is directed away from the front of the property to the western face. Specifically, the centre line of the left lane on the bridge is aligned with the most westerly window of the cottage, which is suspected to be a bathroom and therefore a non-habitable room. Moreover, this window is a higher and a smaller window, set back from the road and is at an angle facing upwards. Given the downward angle of standard dipped headlights, this further mitigates the likelihood of vehicle headlamps directly projecting onto the most westerly window.

It is therefore considered an improvement on the existing scenario as the proposed arrangement directs light spill from vehicle headlamps from the front of the property to a non-habitable room at the west of the property, where the impacts are not considered to have a detrimental effect.

As the proposed development is replacing an existing bridge, it is also considered that traffic or usage of the bridge would not increase from the existing alignment. Therefore, it is concluded that there would be no impact on noise or air quality as a result of the Scheme.

Accordingly, it is considered that the Scheme complies with LDP Policy GP2 as the proposed bridge alignment offers an improvement on residential amenity in terms of light emitted by vehicular headlamps. The Scheme would also not impact on noise or air quality.

6.5 Transport and Access

6.5.1 Highway Layout

Newport LDP Policy SP14 seeks to ensure that new development seeks to meet strategic objectives relating to transport such as improving road safety, relieving traffic congestion in the long-term and bettering the quality of life of residents.

LDP Policy GP4 further adds to this by setting out consideration of development proposals including, relevant in part to this proposal, that development will, where appropriate:

- Be designed to avoid or reduce transport severance, noise and air pollution;
- Provide suitable and safe access arrangements; and
- Ensure that development would not be detrimental to highway or pedestrian safety or result in traffic generation exceeding the capacity of the highway network.

At pre-application stage, the LPA raised concerns that the proposal represented an overall worsening of the existing general arrangement and sought further clarity regarding:

- Adequate visibility for highway and crossing users
- Vehicle tracking and swept paths
- The status of parking in the area

A Transport Statement (Document Reference:100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-TP-0003) has subsequently been prepared by Mott MacDonald and is submitted with this planning application.

The Transport Statement provides a detailed analysis of the existing highway network, including the existing layout and provision. The Transport Statement finds that there are a number of issues with the existing highway layout, which includes a confusing layout for vehicles on Caerphilly Road (east of the Forge Roundabout) accessing either Station Approach or Viaduct Way, poor signage and constraints on intervisibility between the Station Approach and Viaduct Way approaches onto the Caerphilly Road junction, including some impact on forward visibility from parked vehicles. In relation to parking, the Transport Statement states that temporary resident parking has been provided on Viaduct Way (approximately 15 spaces) and Caerphilly Road (approximately 10 spaces) for residents of Forge Mews. This contributes to poor visibility due to parked vehicles on either side of the road.

As a result of the proposed development, changes to the existing highway layout are proposed. This is shown on the Highways General Arrangement Plan (Document Reference: 100119581-MMD-XX-XX-DR-HW-0101). The proposed reconfiguration of the highway layout consists of a stop line for Station Approach and a give way line for the new road access from Forge Mews onto Viaduct Way. Viaduct Way will have priority through the layout.

On this basis, the Transport Statement concludes that reconfiguration of the highway layout will offer an improvement to the existing layout, as a clearer demarcation will be provided between Station Approach and Viaduct Way from Caerphilly Road. It further considers that the proposed changes to the layout would improve visibility splays, provide clearer priority for all users and consequently improve highway safety. Re-establishing access to Forge Mews further reduces the

need for on street parking on Caerphilly Road, which would restore visibility for crossing users and provide an opportunity for widening as appropriate.

The Transport Statement confirms that swept paths through the junction are satisfactory for a 12m rigid HGV. Vehicle tracking analysis can be viewed in Appendix A3 of the Transport Statement.

On balance, it is considered that the Scheme complies with the LDP as the revised layout will remove the need for on street parking, improve visibility and provide clear priority, thus improving highway safety in accordance with Policy SP14. In this context, it is also considered that the proposal complies with LDP Policy GP4 as reconfiguration of the layout would not be detrimental to highway safety, rather it would offer an overall improvement to the existing layout and provision.

6.5.2 Active Travel

The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 places a legal duty on local authorities in Wales to promote active travel journeys and secure new and enhanced active travel routes.

Paragraph 4.1.34 of PPW 12 states that development proposals, through their design and supporting infrastructure, must prioritise provision for access and movement by walking and cycling and, in doing so, maximise their contribution to the objectives of the Active Travel Act. Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 Policy 12 further refers to the Active Travel Act, by stating that its implementation will be supported to create comprehensive networks of local walking and cycling routes that connect places that people need to get to for everyday purposes.

Newport LDP Policy ST14 sets out that new development should provide for traffic-free walking and cycling facilities and expansion of the network and LDP Policy GP4 states that development will provide appropriate access for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport in accordance with national guidance.

A Public Right of Way (PRoW) falls within the site boundary, which is shown above in Figure 5.1. An existing active travel route also runs north-south through the study area, along Viaduct Way and Caerphilly Road (National Cycle Network Route 4).

At pre-application stage, NCC expressed concern about potential impacts on active travel as a result of the Scheme, which has been addressed as part of the Transport Statement (Document Reference: 100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-TP-0003). The Transport Statement provides an analysis of the existing issues with the existing layout and provision for pedestrians and cyclists. This includes the existing dropped kerb crossing on Caerphilly Road, which has poor visibility and a pinch point on NCN4 created by the overgrowth of a mature tree to the southwest of the existing bridge. Moreover, it is noted that the positioning of tactiles on Station Approach encourages an east-west crossing of approximately 20m across the mouth of the Station Approach and Viaduct Way junctions (four lanes of two-way traffic), which does not comply with the Active Travel Act Guidance (ATAG).

The proposed Scheme seeks to improve the active travel network in the area by providing a shared use path for active travel across the Ebbw River on the southern side of the bridge, which connects to NCN4 on Viaduct Way and the active travel bridge over the A467 from Forge Mews. Footways, crossings and shared use routes through the layout are designed to ATAG compliant standards (a brief exception near the existing Bassaleg Bridge abutment). This includes vertical clearance around trief kerbs on the proposed bridge. The revised junction layout would also seek to improve to the two uncontrolled crossing points on Station Approach and Viaduct Way.

The Transport Statement confirms that forward visibility from the pedestrian crossings on Station Approach and Viaduct Way are to a 25m standard.

It is unknown at this stage if there would be any temporary impacts on the PRow and NCN4 as a result of future construction activities. It is proposed that this should be addressed through a Construction Traffic Management Plan as a pre-commencement condition.

Therefore, it is considered that the Scheme complies with the national legislation and policy and LDP Policies ST14 and GP4, as the proposed development seeks to enhance the active travel network by offering a connection for pedestrians and cyclists between NCN4 and the active travel bridge over the A467, which are currently severed by the Ebbw River. The proposal will directly support the aims of the Active Travel Act by bringing the local active travel infrastructure up to an ATAG compliant standard. Improvements to visibility for pedestrians and cyclists using the junction further ensure that the Scheme complies with national and local policy through improving access to Forge Mews.

6.6 Ecology and Biodiversity

6.6.1 Ecology

Newport LDP Policy CE8 seeks to protect locally designated sites from inappropriate development and ensure that effective mitigation is provided.

The Afon Ebbw River SINC lies within the site boundary.

An Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) (Document Reference: 100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-EC-0001) has been undertaken by Mott MacDonald in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) 'Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal' (2017) and 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland' (2018, updated in April 2022) to provide an assessment of the protected and/or notable habitats and species which occur or have the potential to occur on or near to the site, and therefore could be impacted by the proposed works.

The EclA concludes that there could be potential for construction impacts on the SINC and the SAC, as well as on commuting and foraging bats, otters, fish and breeding birds. The EclA also notes the potential for the spread of invasive non-native species (INNS) arising from construction. Mitigation is proposed as part of the assessment in accordance with LDP Policy CE8.

Further information about ecological enhancements is set out below in Section 6.6.2.

6.6.2 Net Benefits for Biodiversity

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Section 6 duty places a legal obligation on public bodies in Wales to 'maintain and enhance biodiversity' whilst carrying out their functions.

Section 6.4 of PPW 12 further sets out that development must provide a net benefit for biodiversity and improve, or enable the improvement, of the resilience of ecosystems. Paragraph 6.4.10 outlines the DECCA framework, which should be applied as part of implementing the duty. Paragraph 6.4.11 of PPW 12 requires a step wise approach to be taken to maintain and enhance biodiversity, build resilient ecological networks and deliver net benefits for biodiversity by ensuring that any adverse environmental effects are firstly avoided, then minimised, mitigated, and as a last resort compensated for. It specifies that enhancement must be secured by delivering a biodiversity benefit primarily on site or immediately adjacent to the site, over and above that required to mitigate or compensate for any negative impact.

Policy 9 of Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 further requires new development to provide a net benefit for biodiversity.

Newport LDP Policy GP5 adds that development will be permitted where proposals are designed and managed to protect and encourage biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including through the incorporation of new features on or off site. Policy GP5 further adds that proposals must demonstrate how they avoid, or mitigate and compensate negative impacts to biodiversity, ensuring that there are no significant adverse effects on areas of nature conservation interest.

Accordingly, a Green Infrastructure Statement (Document Reference: 100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-EC-0003) has been prepared by Mott MacDonald to support this planning submission. The Green Infrastructure Statement sets out how the step wise approach has been followed as part of the proposed works in line with Paragraph 6.4.11 of PPW 12.

It further details how the Scheme will provide a net benefit for biodiversity in line with the Section 6 Duty, the DECCA Framework and the principles embedded in PPW 12. The measures proposed to achieve a net benefit for biodiversity include a new two-cut management regime for the modified grassland on the eastern bank, planting of 24 native trees, installation of bat and bird boxes, inclusion of an otter ledge under the new bridge structure, installation of coir rolls and removal of invasive non-native species. Table 6.1 below provides a summary of how the proposed biodiversity enhancement measures accord with the DECCA Framework.

Table 6.1: Proposed Ecological Enhancements and their Compliance with the DECCA Framework

Diversity	The proposals include planting of species of local provenance where possible, and of a range greater than is currently present, in order to support maintenance and enhancement of diversity. Structural variation will occur due to planting of new trees where there are currently none, and management of grassland areas will promote a more varied sward height than is present currently.
Extent	The current habitats are limited in their diversity and so the proposals will increase the extent of more natural features, and linkages between existing areas of such features within the wider area.
Condition	The proposals include installation of planted coir rolls which will increase the resilience of the river bank with respect to potential increases in rainfall, as a result of climate change and construction. The proposed management of the grassland to reduce mowing frequency and increase diversity aims to afford better resilience to dry or hot conditions which may become more frequent due to climate change.
Connectivity	The additional planting of trees within the site will provide stepping stone linkages and strengthen existing vegetative links along the riverbanks and into surrounding habitat. The installation of pre-planted coir rolls will improve the floral diversity of the riverbanks and improve habitat connectivity along the banks.
Adaptability	The addition of more varied plant species within the trees and grassland will support invertebrate (and other species) foraging resources and their resilience to disease or local loss of a food source.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposals provide a net benefit for biodiversity in accordance with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, PPW 12 and the Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 Policy 9 as measures are proposed within the Green Infrastructure Statement which comply with the DECCA Framework and seek to provide significant ecological enhancements. In accordance with PPW 12 and LDP Policy GP5, the step wise approach has been followed to ensure adverse effects on biodiversity are firstly avoided, then minimised, mitigated, and as a last resort compensated for.

6.6.3 Arboriculture

The starting point for planning purposes relating to arboriculture is PPW 12 Paragraph 6.4.42, which seeks to resist the permanent removal of trees, woodland and hedgerows unless it would achieve significant and clearly defined public benefits. Where loss is unavoidable, PPW 12

requires compensatory planting at a ratio equivalent to the quality, environmental and ecological importance of the tree(s) lost. It is further added in Paragraph 6.4.42 that replacement planting should preferably be onsite, or immediately adjacent to the site, and at a minimum ratio of at least 3 trees of a similar type and compensatory size planted for every 1 lost.

The proposal will incur the loss of eight trees, which is required in order to facilitate construction on the eastern riverbank. As a result, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Document Reference: 100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-EN-0001) has been prepared in accordance with the relevant BS 5837:2012 standards to accompany this planning application and should be read in conjunction with this planning justification. The need for an Arboricultural Impact Assessment was identified at pre-application stage.

A review was undertaken as part of the assessment to determine the presence of ancient, veteran and notable trees using the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Inventory which confirmed that none of these were present and therefore affected.

The surveys undertaken as part of the Arboricultural Impact Assessment identified nine individual trees on the site during the survey. During the survey it was determined that the condition of the trees on site are predominantly 'low quality', with the exception of one mature sycamore tree which has been identified as 'high quality'. A summary of the tree survey undertaken as part of the Arboricultural Impact Assessment is shown in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Tree Survey Summary

Tree Category	Description	Total Number Surveyed
Category A	Trees or groups of high quality	1 tree
Category B	Trees or groups of moderate quality	0 trees;
Category C	Trees or groups of low quality	8 trees;
Category U	Trees recommended for removal irrespective of the proposed Scheme	0 trees

In order to facilitate the current design, 8 trees will require removal including removal of the stumps. The location of these trees is shown on the submitted Site Layout Plan (Drawing Reference: 100119581-MMD-XX-XX-DR-PL-1201). The eight trees identified as being necessary for removal were assessed as Category C and therefore of low arboricultural quality. This is because they are non-native species and semi-mature.

The Category A tree identified is proposed to be retained.

The Arboricultural Impact Assessment outlines protection measures for tree protection and tree pruning to facilitate development. This includes protection barriers to be erected during construction to protect retained trees in close proximity to the works, including the Category A tree that was identified as part of the survey.

Replacement tree planting is proposed at a 3:1 ratio in accordance with Paragraph 6.4.42 of PPW 12. 24 native trees will be planted in local streets, including Laurel where significant gaps have been highlighted. The final planting locations will be determined in conjunction with NCC's ecologists, with the aim to enhance the surrounding habitat. A maintenance plan will also be created to ensure that the planted trees are regularly watered and replaced if they fail to thrive.

The Scheme therefore accords with PPW 12 as while the loss of 8 non-native, semi-mature trees is considered unavoidable to facilitate the Scheme, 24 trees will be planted as a compensatory measure. This meets the 3:1 ratio required by PPW 12. The replacement trees will be native species to further enhance the quality of the local habitat and achieve the ambitions set out in the DECCA framework.

6.7 Heritage and Archaeology

6.7.1 Introduction and methodology

The Historic Environment Wales Act (2023), PPW 12, and the Newport LDP set out the importance of the historic environment and the need to consider potential impacts upon it when planning new development. Accordingly, this section assesses the potential for the proposed Scheme to impact upon the historic environment.

A study area of 250m from the boundary of the proposed Scheme has been used as part of the methodology to identify historic assets in the surrounding area. This is an appropriate study area due to the low impact nature of the proposed Scheme, the built-up residential area which screens views between some of the historic assets and the Site, and the low-lying topography where the Site is located among the Afon Ebwy valley. Furthermore, due to the low-impact nature of the works which includes provision of a new bridge, as well as the anticipated limited impact on the historic environment, the research undertaken to inform this planning statement is considered to be proportionate and therefore requires desk-based study only. This excludes a search of Historic Environment Records, archives, or a site visit. Thus, an understanding of non-designated historic assets is considered to be sufficient to understand the impact on the importance of the bridge. However, as detailed below, the low impact nature of the works is not considered to impact upon the three designated historic assets that exist among the surrounding area.

6.7.2 Site conditions and historic environment

As noted in section 2.2.2, there are six listed buildings situated within 250m of the proposed Scheme. Of these, three do not have the potential to be affected. These are:

- Coach House to West of the Tredegar Arms Inn (Cadw: 81794), approximately 175m west of the site;
- The Cottage (Cadw: 81803), approximately 180m west of the site; and
- Tower at southwest corner of churchyard, attached to Tredegar Arms (Cadw: 81806) (Cadw: 81806), approximately 130m west of the site.

It is considered that these listed buildings do not have the potential to be impacted because their setting does not extend to the Site and there is a lack of intervisibility between these assets and the Site. Therefore, they will not be discussed further within this document.

There is also a registered historic park and garden partially within the 250m study area, the Grade II* Tredegar Park (Cadw: PGW(Gt)48(NPT)). Tredegar Park does not have the potential to be affected due to the lack of intervisibility between the Site and the park as well as the low impact nature of the Scheme. Therefore, Tredegar Park will not be discussed further in this chapter.

However, three assets within the 250m study area do warrant further discussion. These are:

- Grade II* listed Church of Saint Basil (Cadw: 2913) (c.120m north-west of bridge)
- Grade II listed Lychgate, churchyard walls and railings to Church of Saint Basil (Cadw: 81799) (c. 20m west of bridge)
- Grade II* Railway viaduct over Afon Ebwy (partly in Rogerstone community) (Cadw: 81801) (c. 155m north of bridge)
- Grade II* listed Railway viaduct over Afon Ebwy (partly in Graig community) (Cadw: 81343) (c. 155m north of bridge)

The closest known designated historic asset to the Site is the Grade II listed Lychgate, churchyard walls and railings to the Church of Saint Basil (Cadw: 81799), approximately 20m west of the Site, which demarcates the perimeter of the associated churchyard of the Church of Saint Basil (Cadw:

2913). The churchyard walls and railings likely date between 1902 to 1903 during which time Charles Busteed Fowler restored the Church. The walls are constructed of stone with roll-topped sandstone ashlar copings, and the railings are of wrought iron with trefoils and quatrefoils as well as finials of alternating fleurs-de-lys with spearheads. The Lychgate was constructed in 1926 as a First World War memorial, comprising an oak timber frame, base walls of purple squared stone, grey sandstone dressings, and a plain tile roof with terracotta ridge tiles. The Lychgate features an inscription *'They were as a wall unto us both by night and day'* and bronze panels listing the names of those who perished in the First and Second World Wars between 1914 to 1918 and 1939 to 1945.² A carved figure signed by Gilbert Bayes is also featured. The Lychgate holds communal value serving as a memorial for those who lost their lives during the First and Second World Wars, and plays a role in remembrance and collective memory related to both wars. Its significance also lies in its historical and aesthetic value as a 20th century oak Lychgate which features a carved figure by prominent 20th century sculptor, Gilbert Bayes.

The setting of the asset is formed by the Grade II listed Tower at SW corner of churchyard, attached to Tredegar Arms (Cadw: 81806) which is immediately adjacent to the asset. The setting is also formed by the Church of Saint Basil (Cadw: 2913) and its associated churchyard.

The Grade II* listed Church of Saint Basil (Cadw: 2913) exists approximately 120m north-west of the Site. The existing church dates to the 14th or 15th century and was constructed of rubble stone with ashlar dressings and slate roofs with coped gables. The asset was later in use as an Anglican parish church and features a mausoleum constructed c.1800 for the Morgans of Tredegar. The church was restored between 1878 and 1879 by Habershon Fawckner & Company and again between 1902 to 1903 by Charles Busteed Fowler. The Morgan chapel was rebuilt in 1916 by W.D. Caroe.³

The significance of the Church lies in its evidential value through the ability to illustrate construction and change in use since the Medieval period. Its historical value lies in its ability to inform about religious practices and how people worshiped from the Medieval period and its subsequent use as an Anglican parish church. Its historical value is further demonstrated by its association with the Morgans of Tredegar, as well as the Habershon Fawckner & Company, Charles Busteed Fowler, and W.D. Caroe who completed later restoration works. Its aesthetic value lies in its construction as a substantial Medieval church with subsequent restorations during the 19th and 20th centuries. The church also holds communal value in serving as a place for religious gatherings which foster collective experiences and memories for the local community. The setting of the asset comprises the associated churchyard as well as the Lychgate, churchyard walls and railings (Cadw: 81799).

Snaking across the wider landscape in a rough east-west alignment, the Grade II* Railway viaduct over Afon Ebwy (Cadw: 81801 and 81343) is located approximately 155m north of the Site. The railway viaduct was constructed in 1826 for the Rumney Railway Company in line with designs drawn by their company surveyor, George Overton. The railway viaduct is constructed of squared rubble stone with four round arches featuring cut stone voussoirs and splayed abutments with raised piers and iron strapping. The viaduct was later widened in 1863 for the Brecon & Merthyr Railway.⁴

² Cadw (2003). Lychgate, churchyard walls and railings to Church of Saint Basil. Reference: 81799. Available online at: <https://cadwpublic-api.azurewebsites.net/reports/listedbuilding/FullReport?lang=en&id=81799> [accessed 29 April 2025]

³ Cadw (1963). Church of Saint Basil. Reference: 2913. Available online at: <https://cadwpublic-api.azurewebsites.net/reports/listedbuilding/FullReport?lang=en&id=2913> [accessed 29 April 2025]

⁴ Cadw (2003). Railway viaduct over Afon Ebwy (partly in Rogerstone community). Reference: 81801. Available online at: <https://cadwpublic-api.azurewebsites.net/reports/listedbuilding/FullReport?lang=en&id=81801> [accessed 29 April 2025]

The railway viaduct demonstrates evidential and historical value as the largest surviving early railway viaduct in South Wales, built in 1826.⁵ Therefore, the viaduct has the potential to provide additional information about the construction of early railway viaducts and how the introduction of later railway locomotives and transport routes influenced its alteration. The setting of the asset is formed by the Afon Ebwy which meanders beneath the asset in a rough north-south alignment.

6.7.3 Impact assessment

The Church of Saint Basil (Cadw: 2913) exists approximately 120m north-west of the Site. It is not considered that there will be any impact upon the form, function, or setting of the Church (Cadw: 2913), due to the nature of the proposed Scheme.

The Lychgate, walls and railings (Cadw: 81799), located approximately 20m away, and railway viaduct (Cadw: 81801 and 81343) located approximately 155m away from the Site. Although these two designated historic assets are located nearby to the Site and visibly form part of their setting, the proposed Scheme will not alter the qualities of their setting which contributes to their significance nor the ways in which these assets are experienced. Furthermore, the geographical relationship between the railway viaduct and Afon Ebwy, and the Church and Lychgate, walls, and railings and will not be altered with the introduction of the new bridge. As such, the historic character and appearance of the designated historic assets will remain legible following construction of the proposed Scheme. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed Scheme will not impact upon the ability to understand their historic function, their significance, nor their setting.

6.8 Flood Risk and Drainage

6.8.1 Flood Risk

As set out in Section 2.2.1 above, the site is located in Flood Zone 3 (for rivers).

Section 9 of TAN 15 assigns development vulnerability classifications which influences where it is acceptable to locate development. As the proposed development involves replacing an existing bridge with a new one, and given that the bridge is necessary for crossing a river, the scheme could be classified as 'water-compatible redevelopment', in terms of TAN15. However, due to the road infrastructure included within the Scheme boundary, the decision was taken to classify the proposal as 'less vulnerable redevelopment' to take a precautionary approach.

On less vulnerable redevelopment in Flood Zone 3, Paragraph 10.23 of TAN 15 states that development proposals are only appropriate if they are essential to the Development Plan Strategy to regenerate an existing settlement or achieve key economic or environmental objectives. It is also stated that 'In zones 2, 3 and TAN 15 defended zones, developers must undertake a flood consequences assessment proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal. Before granting planning permission, decision makers should be satisfied the scheme is justifiable in accordance with the principles set out in section 11, which refers to acceptability criteria for flood consequences. Therefore, subject to demonstrating the acceptability of flooding consequences in accordance with TAN 15, the location of the proposed development within Zone 3 is considered justified, as the proposed development is required to improve existing infrastructure.

In accordance with TAN15, a Flood Consequence Assessment (FCA) (Document Reference: 100119581-MMD-XX-XX-RP-FL-0002) has subsequently been prepared to support this planning application. The FCA assesses the risk and consequences of flooding on the proposed

⁵ Cadw (2003). Railway viaduct over Afon Ebwy (partly in Graig community). Reference: 81343. Available online at: <https://cadwpublic-api.azurewebsites.net/reports/listedbuilding/FullReport?lang=en&id=81343> [accessed 29 April 2025]

development and any impacts caused by the Scheme on flooding elsewhere, and has been undertaken using hydraulic modelling.

The FCA finds that the Scheme results in a change to the local flood risk impacts. However, since betterment is generally predicted—particularly in vulnerable residential areas—and areas of detriment are largely confined to green spaces and council-owned parkland, the overall flood consequences elsewhere post-development are considered to improve as a result of the development in general terms up to the 0.1% (1 in 1,000) Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) fluvial plus climate change flood event. An exception occurs during the 0.1% (1 in 1000) AEP plus 25% climate change flood event, where a localised increase in flood depth of 0.09m (8% over the existing) is predicted to affect a small residential area on Forge Mews. It should be noted that this area is shown to flood pre-development to a depth of up to 1.2m, and the post development change in flood depth is limited to the 0.1% (1 in 1000) AEP plus 25% allowance for climate change flood event.

To help mitigate the risk of flooding downstream of the new bridge a flood bund/wall will be constructed as a flood mitigation measure. This is located approximately 60m away from the Site on Churchmead. However, due to its low height and the fact that the bund is completely segregated from the proposed bridge, it is proposed that this will be constructed under Part 2, Schedule 2, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.

The evidence and assessments contained within the FCA confirm that the Scheme (redevelopment) has either met or is consistent with the acceptability considerations outlined in TAN15.

6.8.2 Drainage

Paragraph 6.6.18 of PPW 12 sets out that the provision of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) must be considered as an integral part of the design of new development and considered at the earliest possible stage when formulating proposals for new development. This is echoed in TAN 15. The SuDS National Standards are also referred to in TAN 15, which sets a hierarchy for management of surface water discharge.

The provision of SuDS was considered at an early stage of the design development. However, due to space constraints on the site, it was not considered possible to either collect surface water run off for use or to infiltrate surface water run off to ground. Accordingly, the next step on the hierarchy was taken to discharge the surface water run off to a watercourse. The proposed approach to manage surface water within the site is discharge to River Ebbw via gullies. Three gullies are required to effectively capture the additional flow generated by the proposed development. Therefore, two gullies are positioned at the southeast corner to optimise the collection of water from the bridge. The surface water collected by these gullies is directed into a chamber at the verge and eventually discharged into River Ebbw. The third gully, located at the low point near two existing gullies, can be connected to the current surface water network. In determining this solution, engagement with the Drainage team at NCC has been undertaken.

A Drainage Strategy Report will be submitted to the SuDS Approving Body (SAB) for approval separately to this planning application.

7 Conclusion

To summarise, Mott MacDonald Limited ('the Agent') has been instructed by NCC to submit an application seeking planning permission for works to construct a replacement Bassaleg Bridge.

A planning application is to be submitted to NCC, as the Local Planning Authority, seeking the following:

“Construction of a replacement single span bridge structure across the Ebbw River to facilitate vehicular access to Forge Mews from Viaduct Way”

The proposed Scheme will reestablish vehicular access to Forge Mews over the River Ebbw, which has remained severed from the road network since it was closed for safety concerns in 2021.

The policies within the Local Development Plan have been carefully considered. Newport LDP Policies SP14 and GP4 set out clear support for the reduction of transport severance and the need to provide safe and suitable access. The Scheme will also improve active travel by providing a shared use path across the bridge that will connect into the National Cycle Network. The revised junction layout will further remove the need for on street parking, improve visibility and provide clear priority, thus improving the existing layout and provision.

The proposed bridge alignment has been selected based on the WelTAG Stage 2 study and was subsequently voted on and approved by NCC's Cabinet. It has also been shown to offer a lesser impact on residential properties in terms of amenity than the existing arrangement. On design, the Scheme will use high quality materials that have been selected alongside NCC to ensure that the bridge assimilates with the local context and the setting of the heritage assets in the vicinity.

The flood consequences of the Scheme have also been demonstrated to be acceptable in accordance with TAN 15.

Whilst the Scheme does result in a small area of direct habitat loss and potential impacts on ecological sites of importance during the construction phase, effective mitigation measures are proposed. This includes replacement tree planting in line with the 3:1 ratio set out in PPW12, and the provision of a net benefit for biodiversity across the Scheme.

Overall, the Scheme will reduce severance for residents of Forge Mews by re-providing access from Viaduct Way. This application should be assessed on balance, taking into account the material provisions of the Local Development Plan, and other material considerations when read as a whole. On this basis, it is respectfully requested that this planning application be approved, subject to the attachment of suitably worded planning conditions.

