

# The Works Design and Masterplan

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE - OCTOBER 2013

YGWEITHFEYDD  
THE WORKS  
EBBW VALE GLYN EBWY





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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

**1.1** The purpose of this Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is to inform and guide potential developers on the remaining development platforms at the former Steelworks site, now known as The Works (the site will be referred to as 'The Works' from this point forward). The guidance seeks to establish the Council's aspirations for the further development of the site in terms of bringing forward high quality development at a prominent location in Ebbw Vale.

**1.2** Following adoption by the Council, this SPG will be a material consideration in the determination of all planning applications at this site.

### HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT?

#### Format of the SPG

**1.3** This Chapter sets out the background to the guidance and this section provides a brief explanation of how to find your way around the document.

**1.4** **Chapter 2** sets out the key elements of National, Regional and Local Policy that have influenced the guidance note.

**1.5** **Chapter 3** outlines the site context.

**1.6** **Chapter 4** sets out the design principles and concepts to the development of the site.

**1.7** **Chapter 5** sets out the site layout and land uses that have been built, under construction or are planned on the site.

**1.8** **Chapter 6** sets out the planning requirements for future development schemes.

### BACKGROUND

**1.9** The closure of the Ebbw Vale Steelworks in July 2002 resulted in a fundamental change to the economic structure of Blaenau Gwent and represented a need to plan for a new future for Ebbw Vale and the wider area. The project is a joint venture between Blaenau Gwent and Welsh Government.

**1.10** In December 2005, the Council commissioned consultants to undertake master planning for 'The Works'. In 2007, the Masterplan Design and Access Statement, Energy Strategy and Design Codes were approved as part of the outline planning application.

**1.11** In 2010, the 2007 Masterplan was revised and updated to take into account for changes in economic circumstances.

**1.12** Due to further significant changes to the scheme, the 2007 and 2010 outline planning permissions are no longer extant. Therefore there is a need to guide the development of the remainder of the site hence the preparation of this Supplementary Planning Guidance note.

**1.13** The Masterplan Design and Access Statement firstly as approved in 2007 and subsequently updated in 2010 sets the context for this guidance note. The vision and main design principles of a mixed use, sustainable development, with character areas and principle access strategy remain. Sections 3, 4 and 5 provide more detail on this.

**1.14** The Design Codes and an updated Energy Strategy document will be used as guiding documents alongside this Supplementary Planning Guidance note.

**1.15** The Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan (2012) identifies the following Vision for the site:



### Vision

*“The Works is the regeneration of the former steelworks site in Ebbw Vale which is transforming the site into a vibrant and distinctive area. The Works is widely recognised across Wales and the UK as a major sustainable regeneration project driven by four objectives; economic, social, resources and environmental, all of which give the project its sustainable credentials. These objectives include retaining the history and heritage of the area, involving the community in developing the site and creating wider employment and commercial benefits for Blaenau Gwent.” It’s a multi million pound project that will create new places for learning, working and recreational. It will be integrated into the existing town centre to make stronger connections and links to important landmarks. The scheme includes delivering new houses, primary and special education needs school, hospital, commercial floor space, an arts centre, office accommodation, a learning zone, Central Valley Wetland Park, 2 km railway extension and a mechanical link.*

## 2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

**2.1** This SPG has been prepared in accordance with guidance contained in Planning Policy Wales, Technical Advice Notes and the adopted Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan.

### NATIONAL CONTEXT

#### Wales Spatial Plan Update (July 2008)

**2.2** The Wales Spatial Plan sets out the Welsh Government's vision for Wales. In the Wales Spatial Plan 'The Works' site is located in the South East Wales – Capital Region. The Vision for the area is:

*'An innovative skilled area offering a high quality of life – international yet distinctively Welsh. It will compete internationally by increasing its global visibility through stronger links between the Valleys and the coast and the UK and the rest of Europe, helping to spread prosperity within the area and benefiting other parts of Wales.'*

**2.3** Blaenau Gwent along with the neighbouring authorities of Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Torfaen, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Bridgend, Newport and The Vale of Glamorgan have worked together to identify more detail on how the area is to develop in the future. The Capital Region has been broken down into three areas: Heads of the Valleys Plus, Connections Corridor and the City Coastal Area.

**2.4** Blaenau Gwent is within the Heads of the Valleys Plus Area: an area recognised as facing some of the greatest economic and social change challenges created by economic restructuring of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Ebbw Vale is identified as being a key settlement that has a critical role to play in the success of the Capital Region. It must be successful in its own right and, where appropriate, function as a service and employment hub for smaller settlements. It will provide the central framework around which high capacity sustainable transport links will be developed. Other settlements in the area need modern shopping, leisure, community and cultural facilities, more attractive and affordable housing, clean vibrant town centres, accessible open countryside and employment opportunities.

**2.5** In addition to being in the Heads of the Valleys Plus Area Blaenau Gwent is within one of the three Strategic Opportunity Areas (SOA) which have been identified in the Capital Region. Linked to the dualling of the Heads of the Valleys road (A465) the idea of identifying the SOA is to allow greater coherence to the areas development.

### REGIONAL CONTEXT

#### Turning Heads...A Strategy for the Heads of the Valleys 2020 (June 2006)

**2.6** Turning Heads...A Strategy for the Heads of the Valleys 2020 is set within the context of the Wales Spatial Plan, it sets out a shared vision for what the area will look and feel like by the year 2020. The strategy provides a

framework for regenerating the area with a focus on 5 priority themes:

- An attractive and well-used natural, historic environment;
- A vibrant economic landscape offering new opportunities;
- A well-educated, skilled and healthier population;
- An appealing and coherent tourism and leisure experience; and
- Public confidence in a shared bright future.

**2.7** The development of The Works site offers the opportunity to support the themes above for Ebbw Vale. The illustrations set out in this guidance note are aimed at delivering key components of the strategy. It builds on the principles of improving access to education, healthcare, amenities and employment for both the existing and new communities, for example, with the new Learning Zone, Local General Hospital, Central Valley Wetland Park, Arts Centre, Leisure Centre and business that form part of the scheme.

### LOCAL CONTEXT

#### **Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan (LDP) (November 2012)**

**2.8** The Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan was formally adopted on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2012. This Plan supersedes the Blaenau Gwent Unitary Development Plan.

**2.9** The Works site is identified as a key brownfield site in the LDP under policies SP1 and MU2 (see Appendix 1 for a copy of the policies in full).

**2.10** Policy SP1 identifies 'The Works' as a strategic sustainable regeneration 'flagship' scheme capable of accommodating significant new development to help regenerate the area.

**2.11** Policy MU2 allocates land at The Works site for mixed use development including; the construction of a new hospital, learning zone, leisure centre, playing pitches, arts centre, approximately 520 homes, business hub, family history & genealogy visitor centre, environmental resource centre and wetland park.

#### **Blaenau Gwent Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan – Draft First Revision (December 2010)**

**2.12** The Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan identifies an overarching aim and six principles along with the proposals to translate them into action. The overarching aim is to 'Share Benefits of Regeneration widely.' The six principles are:

- Principle 1: Diversify the economy and develop manufacturing;
- Principle 2: Boost business support and enterprise;
- Principle 3: Promote learning and modern skills;
- Principle 4: Focus investment in key communities;
- **Principle 5: Deliver 'The Works' as a National flagship; and**
- Principle 6: Develop the transport infrastructure.



**2.13** Under principle 5, the aim is to:  
Drive the transformational project forward and promote the changes and opportunities widely to maximise the benefits for the entire Borough.



### 3.0 SITE CONTEXT

**3.1** 'The Works' runs along the bottom of the Ebbw Valley to the South East of Ebbw Vale town centre. It is about 3 kilometres from north to south and half a kilometre from east to west. To the north, the site is bounded by residential developments with a mixture of traditional and more modern properties. The B4486 Steelworks Road bounds the site to the east and separates the site from the largely undeveloped hillside with the exception of Ty Llwyn Village and Cwm Draw employment area.

**3.2** The site tapers at its southern end and terminates just north of the A4046. Victoria Business Park bounds the south-western border of the site. The A4046 Ebbw Vale bypass runs at a high level along the majority of the western boundary of the site.

#### Topography

**3.3** There are distinct level changes between the site and its surroundings on all sides either resulting from the natural valley shape or the various earthwork embankments; historically constructed to bring the railway into and past the site.

**3.4** At the closest point to the town centre (on the western edge of the site) a slope separates the site from the road and varies in height between 9 and 24m, the highest point of the embankment being at the northern end

close to the town centre, which is approximately 250 metres away.

**3.5** Much of the surrounding road infrastructure has been built on top of the embankments reinforcing the physical separation of the steelworks site from adjacent land and creating a barrier to movement onto and off the site.

**3.6** Along the periphery of the site there is a woodland, albeit young plantation which are an asset to the site and require long term management. Also beyond the site boundary there is significant woodland on the eastern and western slopes. There is an opportunity to connect these areas into and through the site which would aid biodiversity, permeability and connectivity.



## 4.0 PROPOSED LAND USES

**4.1** The Design and Access Statement approved in 2007 and subsequently updated in 2010 established the context and background to the mix of uses on the site and has informed this document.

**4.2** The mix of uses proposed on the land use plan constitutes a comprehensive response to the identified issues and opportunities addressed in the Masterplan Design and Access Statements, sustainability targets and objectives of TAN 12.

The site was granted outline planning permission in 2007 for the mixed use redevelopment of former industrial land comprising of:

- Residential units up to a maximum of 720, including affordable and live/work units, and a range of residential units/dwellings in the form of houses and apartments. (approximately 400 units will be provided in residential only areas and approximately 320 units will be accommodated within the mixed use areas).
- Associated mixed use of up to 12,500 sq m including local amenities and services for retail, food and drink, leisure, office (Use Class A1, A2, A3 and B1) and day centre (Use Class D1). The split within the mixed use will be approximately 86% residential and up to 14% mixed use/non-residential with the overall retail mix of up to 1,000 sq m. The maximum size of unit (Use Class A1, A2 and A3) will not exceed 250 sq m.

- Hospital (Use Class C2) up to 16,450 sq m
- Learning Campus (Use Class D1) up to 14,000 sq m
- Employment Use (Use Class B1) up to 10,413 sq m (Business Areas 1 and 2 as defined in the Masterplan.
- Theatre up to 2,000 sq m (Use Class: sui generis)
- Leisure Centre (Use Class D2) up to 1,485 sq m and sports pitches up to 1.6 hectares
- Primary School and associated play areas (Use Class D1) up to 2 hectares
- Open green space as extension to Wetland Park and associated education; and training facilities 1 hectare (Lower Sidings)
- Environmental Resource Centre
- Railway Terminus
- Together with associated car parking, public transport facilities and highway infrastructure and improvements including a new public bridge and town centre link, associated landscaping and public squares and associated engineering, enabling earthworks to facilitate the development.

## SITE PROGRESS

**4.3** The site has undergone a range of reclamation activities aimed at providing construction platforms and improving the topography of the site for future development. In particular the reclamation has focussed on removing redundant structures, locating and treating contamination, re-grading of the site surface and backfilling of all but two of the basement structures.

4.4 A number of developments have also been completed on the site, including the Learning Zone; Primary Phase of Ebbw Fawr Learning Community; an Integrated Children's Centre; the Local General Hospital; Energy Centre, Multi Storey Car Park, Environmental Resource Centre; Future Welsh Homes, the Leisure Centre and Sports Pitches; the 11-16 phase of the Learning Community and the refurbishment of the General Offices.

4.5 Appendix 3 and 4 identifies the plots that have been developed and those that are available for development.

### FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE

4.6 The following paragraphs refer to sites identified in the Masterplan at Appendix 2.

#### Residential

4.7 The Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan identifies capacity for approximately 520 houses at varying densities across the site built to higher than nationally required standards and including 20% affordable housing. The delivery of the Ebbw Fawr Learning Community on the Works site, achieved through a separate planning permission, has resulted in a reduction in development parcels for residential development and this means that the estimated figure for housing units is now unlikely to be delivered.

4.8 There are four residential areas (as shown at Appendix 3) identified on the site:

- North-east of the Learning Campus - Residential plots B (1.2 ha) and C 0.8 ha)
- South of the Learning Campus - Residential plots K (0.6 ha) and L (0.3 ha)
- South of the Ebbw Fawr Learning Community and Special School on the Hot Mill Plateau - Residential plots E, (0.3 ha), F (1.3 ha), G (0.4 ha) and
- East of the Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan Hospital - Residential Plots H (0.3 ha) , I (0.4 ha) and J (0.4 ha)

4.9 Residential development at the northern end of the site (plots B and C) complements existing residential development close to the town centre and introduces 24 hour activity to complement the Learning Zone, office accommodation, arts centre and General Offices. It is also located close to the proposed Terminus Station at Station Square, bus stops at the Learning Zone and on Steelworks Road and has good pedestrian links to the town centre.

4.10 Residential development south of the Learning Campus (plots K and L) creates a gateway into the site along the Christ Church Link and should reflect local architectural character and urban grain with houses providing active frontages onto the street.

4.11 Residential development (plots E, F and G) on the Hot Mill Plateau (refer to Figure 1) should complement existing residential development in Ty Llwyn and support the new learning community.



**4.12** Homes on plots H, I and J will face the Central Valley and Main Street, providing active frontages and a constant source of street life and activity.

**4.13** There are a number of mixed-use sites where residential development will be delivered.

## **Employment**

**4.14** There are two employment sites identified for commercial and business space on 'The Works' and three mixed use sites where employment may form part of the use.

**4.15** The two employment sites form part of the Ebbw Vale Enterprise Zone where specific incentives are offered to attract new business to prime locations in Wales. The Ebbw Vale Enterprise Zone focuses on the advanced manufacturing centre.

**4.16** Ebbw Vale is already home to a number of successful manufacturing companies. The aim is to expand on the industrial base and attract major companies to the area. This will create critical mass and a range of employment opportunities. The vision for Ebbw Vale Enterprise Zone will be of a vibrant, high technology hotspot of Welsh based manufacturing. Planning permission has been granted for an off-site inward investment project to create an international motor bike racing circuit hosting MOTOGP. This will provide a major spur to the project by creating its own centre of excellence for the sector.

**4.17** The employment sites within 'The Works' are located in the Basement Park and Westgate character areas (refer to Figure 1 and Appendix 2) –The location of business uses relates to:

- The opportunity to create a business area of unique character and appropriate scale around the large linear retained open basement structure.
- Recognition of the need to accommodate some lower density business uses on the site and to place these in the lower density area at the southern end of the site – adjacent to the existing businesses in Victoria Business Park on Festival Drive and near the hospital which is in a landscaped setting.
- The design objective to create a vibrant mixed-use site and to introduce a greater level of residential uses in the northern end of the site to balance the Learning Campus, Arts Centre and Leisure Centre uses.

## **Rail Corridor**

**4.18** The 2007 outline planning permission safeguarded the rail corridor running through 'The Works' site. The proposed new rail link is an extension to the existing line running from Cardiff to Ebbw Vale Parkway. The rail extension and new station are identified in the National Transport Plan post 2015. It is anticipated that a planning application will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority in the Autumn 2013.

## **Terminus Rail Station**

**4.19** The Terminus Station is located to the south of the General Offices. This will maximise the proximity of the station to the town centre and the Learning Campus.

**4.20** The detailed design of the Terminus Rail Station will need to respond to the setting of the General Offices (a listed building) and Central Valley Wetland Park.

**4.21** Appendix 4 sets out the extent of land developed and land remaining including details of site area and where possible the estimate number of houses.

## DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

**5.1** The 2007 and 2010 Masterplan Design and Access Statement and parent documents provided detailed guidance on the design concepts and principles of development at The Works site. This section draws on this detail and identifies the key design requirements relative to the further development of the site.

**5.2** The key design principles are formulated under the following headings:

- Character
- Movement & Access
- Community Safety
- Environment Sustainability

The key urban design principles include:

- Creating a permeable network of streets and reflecting the movement hierarchy in enclosure and character of streets throughout the network.
- Creating a movement spine through the development that is designed with integral traffic calming features such as carriageway deflection, changes in material, narrowing and urban form.
- Promoting pedestrian and cycle movement and public transport use through nodes of mixed use development on key movement routes.

- Retaining and integrating the character of the industrial heritage and landscape of the site with the proposed development.
- Integrating new development with existing by establishing good movement links and drawing the character of the local environment into the site, for example in terms of urban grain and topography.
- Creating flexible mixed use development parcels that can respond to market demands whilst maintaining the desired character and fine urban grain.
- Creating a sequence of nodes and vistas that establish a legible hierarchy of public spaces and mark key gateways to the town as a whole and enhance strategic views into and out of the site.
- Establishing clear definition between the public and private realm.
- Creating a strong landscape network to promote and protect the natural ecology and wildlife of the area.
- Concentrating higher densities and massing in the northern area of the site to link into the existing town centre and provide the critical mass to support initial phases of development.

## CHARACTER

**5.3** The objectives of TAN 12 in relation to character are as follows:

- Sustaining or enhancing local character
- Promoting legible development
- Promoting a successful relationship between public and private space
- Promoting quality, choice and variety
- Promoting innovative design

## Character Areas

**5.4** Six Character Areas make up 'The Works' site. The Masterplan Vision was to establish a coherent urban hierarchy ranging from a higher density core at the northern end of the site to less dense development at the southern end of the site. All streets and public spaces fall within each of the character areas and details of how their character changes through this transect is provided in the Design Codes document.

**5.5** The six Character Areas are: Urban Centre; Christ Church Link; Basement Park; Westgate; Central Valley Wetland Park; and Hot Mill. Figure 1 below identifies the spatial location of these Character Areas and Table 1 provides further detail of the character and land use of each area.

**Figure 1: Character Areas**

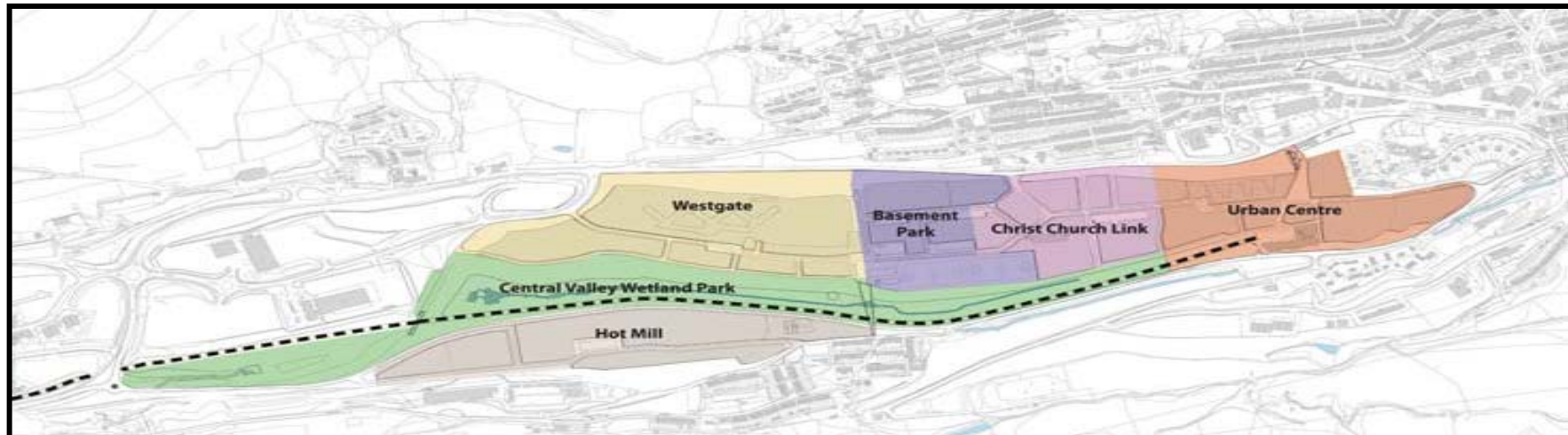














Table 1: Description, Land Use and Development Requirements of each of the Character Areas

						
	<b>Urban Centre</b>	<b>Christ Church Link</b>	<b>Basement Park</b>	<b>Westgate</b>	<b>Central Valley Wetland Park</b>	<b>Hot Mill</b>
<b>Description</b>	Busy mixed use area close to the town centre designed around the Main Square. Buildings are taller for visual impact and to make the physical connection to the town. The residential areas have more apartments	A medium density residential area with some non-residential uses on key corners and around 'Leisure Square'. Christ Church Link, a gently sloping street, creates a new junction onto the A4046 and is orientated towards the spire of the church.	Mixed use and business area defined by the large linear open basement structures to be retained.	Low rise mixed use area dominated by the new hospital in its landscaped setting adjoining low rise residential and B1 uses.	Long linear landscaped park with educational and activity area, wetland ponds and wooded slopes.	A medium to low density residential extension with new 3-11 learning community and special school that responds in character and scale to the adjacent houses in Ty Llwyn.
<b>Land Use</b>	Learning Zone (and expansion area) Arts Centre Terminus Station	Residential Leisure Centre Community facilities Multi-storey Car	Sports Pitches Active leisure Art galleries Community	Hospital Low rise (B1, live work and newsagents etc) Residential	Wetland Park	3 -11 Ebbw Fawr Learning Community Residential Special Educational

						
	<b>Urban Centre</b>	<b>Christ Church Link</b>	<b>Basement Park</b>	<b>Westgate</b>	<b>Central Valley Wetland Park</b>	<b>Hot Mill</b>
<b>Land Use</b>	General Offices Commercial (B1 , live work and newsagents) Residential Energy Centre	Park 11-16 Ebbw Fawr Learning Community and playing fields Mixed Use	gardens B1 Business use			Needs Environmental Resource Centre Integrated Children Centre Car Park
<b>Housing Density</b>	High 35-50 DPH	High 30-45 DPH	Low (no residential areas)	Low 30-35 DPH	Low (no residential areas)	Mid-Low 35 DPH
<b>Maximum Heights</b>	2-5 storeys	2-3 storeys	1-5 storeys	2-3 storeys	2-3 storeys	2-3 storeys
<b>Main Building Types</b>	Commercial blocks, town houses and semi-detached properties and apartments	Town houses, semi-detached properties, some apartments	Commercial office blocks	Low rise detached and semi-detached properties	Not applicable	Semi-detached and detached properties
<b>Parking</b>	Multi-storey, on plot, in lanes and parking courts	On plot, in lanes and in parking courts	Multi-storey, on plot, in lanes and parking courts	On plot and in lanes and parking courts	Not applicable	On plot
<b>Public Realm</b>	Learning Link Mechanical Link & Steps	Leisure Square Christ Church Gateway	Basement Square	Hospital Square	Footbridge	Hot Mill Square

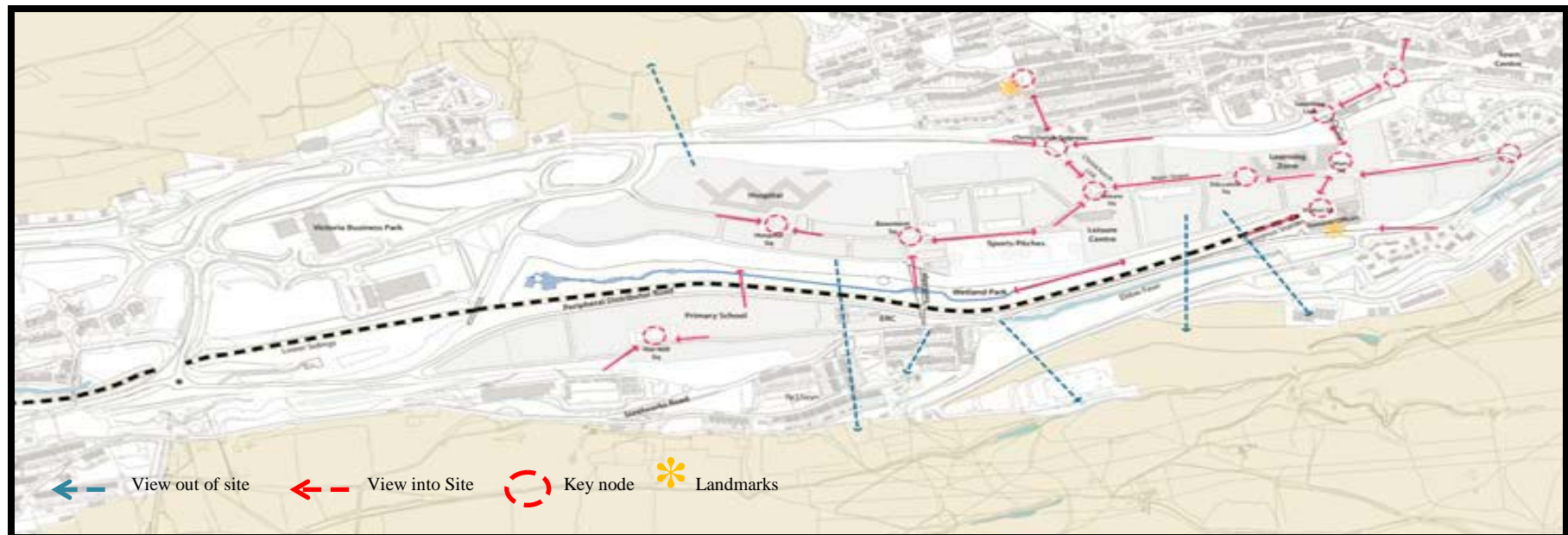
## Views and Vista

**5.6** A key aim of the 2007 Masterplan was to maximise the views and vistas both to and from 'The Works' site, creating a positive relationship between the built and natural environment. The land use plan (Appendix 2) responds to the views to surrounding landscapes, recognising the quality of the adjacent topography. Views and vistas also contribute to creating a highly legible place, responding to the hierarchy within the built environment.

**5.7** The key views toward the site, as shown at Figure 2 are:

- From the town centre: "The Walk" and "Market Street", Ebbw Vale (LDP Allocation R1.4) spaces and intermediate views from the proposed Belvedere, at the top of the mechanical link towards the General Offices building.
- From Ty Llwyn towards the footbridge and sports pitches.
- From Christ Church.

**Figure 2: Views and Vistas**



5.8 Within the site there are local views along Lime Avenue towards the main public squares such as Hospital Square and Education Square and approach views along the Peripheral Distributor Road (PDR). The key views from within the site are:

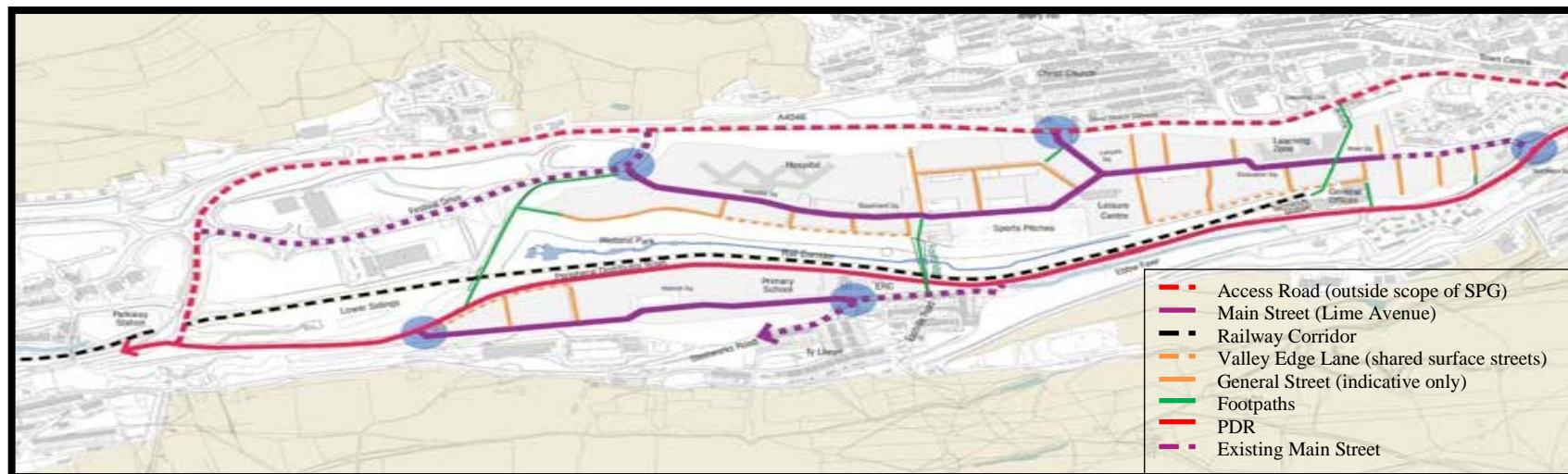
- Towards Christ Church; and
- Towards the landscape features of the wider valley to the south which is predominantly undeveloped and towards the upper valley sides above Ty Llwyn.

## MOVEMENT AND ACCESS

5.9 The objectives in relation to Movement and Access are as follows:

- Promoting sustainable means of travel; and
- Ensuring ease of access for all.

**Figure 3: Street Hierarchy**





## Street Hierarchy

**5.10** The access hierarchy for the site comprises a sequence of routes with different roles:

- New strategic route – peripheral distributor road which becomes the new north-south route bypassing the town.
- Reclassified strategic routes – the A4046 which becomes the town centre access.
- Lime Avenue is the main spine to each of the development plateaus connecting into the wider road network.
- Street – other streets within the developments to provide access to development blocks.
- East West Green Links – like streets but with landscaped corridors integrated into them.
- Central Valley Edge – shared surface route.
- Lanes and courtyards – shared surface routes.

**5.11** The principal road access is the Peripheral Distributor Road (PDR), sections of this road are complete. Upon completion the road will provide a new strategic bypass to the town centre for through traffic, including HGV's. The existing main road towards the town centre will be downgraded.

**5.12** The road network within the site comprises:

- Lime Avenue, which forms the spine of the development and incorporates a number of public squares, including the Main Square and Hospital Square.

- Christ Church Link – a new street that links the site from leisure square to the A4046 to the west.

## Connectivity

**5.13** Historically walking and cycling routes across the site have been limited. New connectivity across the site is proposed with a footbridge for cyclists and pedestrians that link Ty Llwyn and the site.

**5.14** Typically pedestrian and cycle routes on the site follow on from the street network. A bus service will run on Lime Avenue and the surrounding existing road network. Rail services will run through the site to the Terminus Station at Station Square near the General Offices.

**5.15** The majority of the site is flat, taking advantage of the existing earthworks that were undertaken to build the concrete raft foundations for the steel works. The plateau nature of the sites will allow free movement for the mobility impaired within each site.

- For access to the site the main entry points have been designed to allow access for all.
- Christ Church Link – this route has been designed with a gradient of 1:20 which is accessible for wheelchairs and those pushing buggies.
- Learning Link – this route will be facilitated by a mechanical link device that will be accessible by all.
- Footbridge from Ty Llwyn – this route will allow at-grade access directly across from Ty Llwyn to the site.

- The Central Valley Wetland Park has been configured with access ramps along the main routes.

### COMMUNITY SAFETY

**5.16** The objectives in relation to Community Safety are as follows:

- Ensuring attractive, safe public spaces; and
- Security through natural surveillance.

**5.17** High quality public realm is at the core of the site. Attractive communal spaces are designed to encourage street activity throughout the day and encourage a varied and diverse range of people to mix and interact. This will meet the needs of all members of society and is inclusive in its design concept and objectives.

**5.18** This has largely been achieved by creating a truly mixed use development centred on public spaces as well as the streets which are seen as equally important elements of the public realm. The Masterplan envisages that, for example, office workers will sit and enjoy the public squares alongside students from local educational facilities and residents will interact with their neighbours in the local shop and in the streets outside their homes.

**5.19** The development also connects with the existing surrounding settlements such as Ty Llwyn and Ebbw Vale town centre, ensuring that The Works becomes fully

integrated with its surrounds and the potential for isolated districts is minimised.

**5.20** By creating a mixed use neighbourhood where activity is present throughout the day, natural surveillance will increase, reducing the opportunities for crime as well as the fear of crime. The feeling of safety will be enhanced by ensuring streets and spaces are overlooked by active frontages such as public buildings, schools, leisure centre, college, doorways and windows that create much activity as well as people's homes. The Masterplan's Design Code specifies that buildings also have to front streets with minimal setbacks.

### ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY

#### Biodiversity

**5.21** An ecological assessment was undertaken as part of the 2010 Masterplan Update. The assessment confirmed that there are no sites suitable for designation for their nature conservation importance. There are, however a number of habitats and species of nature conservation importance which are considered significant to the scheme.

**5.22** The ecological assessment also found a very low level of bat activity around the site. There are no confirmed records of Great Crested Newt from the site or surrounds. Common amphibians, palmate newt and common toad were recorded from the cooling ponds. There have been

few records of protected species on the site and surrounding area. The proposals, however, include the creation of habitat and wildlife corridors which once established, could attract protected species such as these.

**5.23** There is some woodland, scrub and grassland habitat on the periphery of the site and in immediate surrounds. Habitats in the surrounding area include broad-leaved plantation woodland, dense scrub and semi-improved neutral grassland. Further up the valley sides, the grassland grades into semi improved acid grassland and heath habitats.

## 6.0 PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

**6.1** Any future development on the site needs to comply with:

- This Supplementary Planning Guidance
- The Design Principles (at a minimum) of the Design Codes for the site (September 2010)
- The Sustainable Energy Strategy, where appropriate
- The approved Strategic Code of Construction Practice for the site

**6.2** A list of relevant approved documents that developers will need to refer to and where they can be obtained is provided at Appendix 5.

### Development Briefs

**6.3** Development Briefs are to be prepared by the Council for each of the future development plots. Planning applications will need to comply with the development briefs. Where a site comes forward before a development brief is prepared a developer will be required to produce a development brief in discussion with the Local Planning Authority for the site which gives full regard to the requirements of this SPG, the Design Codes and Energy Strategy. The Design Brief will be submitted for the approval of the Local Planning Authority prior to the submission of a planning application.

### Housing Density

**6.4** Table 1 provides details on the density per hectare of housing sites.

### Affordable Housing

**6.5** As set out in the Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan Policy MU2, the overall aspiration is to achieve 20% affordable housing on the site.

**6.6** Policy DM7 of the adopted Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan (as set out in Appendix) seeks to ensure that there are secure mechanisms in place to ensure that affordable housing is accessible to those who cannot afford market housing, both on first occupation and for subsequent occupiers.

**6.7** The policy states that where there is evidence of need the Council will seek 10% affordable housing on all residential properties sites that contain 10 or more dwelling; or exceeds 0.28 ha in gross site area; or exceed the threshold of the above for adjacent sites. This will now be the policy approach for the site.

Subject to need and viability 10% affordable housing will be sought. In accordance with national guidance 100% affordable housing will be considered on small plots.



**6.8** Further advice on affordable housing requirements is contained in the Authority's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance on Planning Obligations.

### **Biodiversity and Landscape**

Each planning application must be accompanied by a Local Landscape and Biodiversity Management Plan for the development area which has regard to the strategic document.

**6.9** The ecological assessment prepared for the 2010 Masterplan update concluded that there are no sites designated for their nature conservation importance within the site or immediate surrounds, although there are a number of habitats and species significant to the scheme.

**6.10** Development proposals should have regard to the approved Strategic Landscape and Biodiversity Management Plan. Proposals will need to demonstrate that they contribute to biodiversity enhancement through the use of tree and shrub planting, use of grassland and wetland features as appropriate. Clear linkages need to be made with the surrounding identified habitats along with the creation of niches for birds, bats etc.

### **Contamination**

A site investigation report will be required to support applications for each development site.

**6.11** The reclamation phase of the Regeneration of The Works Site comprised the removal of hard obstructions to a depth of 1.5m below finished ground level. Materials excavated were graded and/or crushed to an appropriate engineering specification and re-engineered in controlled layers. Areas of hydrocarbon contamination identified across site were removed and treated where possible using a bio-remediation process. Where materials were deemed untreatable, they were removed off-site and disposed of at a suitable licensed facility. Following the remediation process, a validation exercise was carried out to ensure the treatment of materials was successful. Any hotspots identified during this stage were subsequently removed under infrastructure contracts.

**6.12** The site is underlain by surface coal resources that have been subject to past mining activities, which has left a legacy. There are areas of shallow underground mine workings and a number of recorded mine entries (shafts and adits) within 'The Works' site, which will need to be afforded due consideration as part of site investigations and inform site layouts.

**6.13** Prior to the development of individual plots at the works, a ground investigation is required to ensure the ground conditions are suitable for development in terms of ground stability and environmental and human health.

### Site Environmental Management Plan

A Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) will be required for each development site, which shall be generally in conformity with the principles of the Strategic Code of Construction Practice.

### Energy Efficiency / Carbon Reduction

Nationally identified requirements for energy efficiency / carbon reduction will apply.

**6.14** An Energy Strategy has been prepared for the Design and Access Statement Masterplan (2010) approach to energy.

**6.15** As demonstrated in policy SP1 and MU2 of the LDP, the overall aspiration for the site is to incorporate high standards of design and for development to be built to higher than nationally required standards.

**6.16** Planning Policy Wales Edition 5 requires residential development to meet the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 and obtain the 1 credit under issue *Ene1 - Dwelling Emission Rate*. However, there are plans to replace this requirement with new phased improvements to Part L Building Regulations in order to improve energy performance of new homes. In light of these proposed changes and concerns regarding viability it is considered more appropriate to rely on national requirements rather

than the previous approach of higher than nationally required standards.

**6.17** For non-residential development which will either have a floorspace of 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> or more, or will be carried out on a site having an area of one hectare or more, to meet the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) 'Very Good' standard and achieve the mandatory credits for 'Excellent' under issue *Ene1 - Reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions*. Again this requirement will be replaced by proposed changes to Building Regulations. In light of these proposed changes and concerns regarding viability it is considered more appropriate to rely on national requirements rather than the previous approach of higher than nationally required standards.

### Travel Plan

A Travel Plan shall be submitted for the approval of the Local Planning Authority for each planning application. Works shall not commence on the development until the Travel Plan is approved, and the recommendations/requirements of that Travel Plan have been adhered to.

### Play Facilities

Play facilities and open space provision to comply with adopted FIT Standards.

**6.18** The provision of play facilities and open space throughout the development site will be required to comply with the adopted FIT Standards.

### Secured By Design Initiative

Secured by Design Principles will be encouraged.

**6.19** This shall include pro-actively encouraging all developments to embody the principles of Secured by Design and wherever possible and practical to ensure schemes achieve full Secured by Design accreditation.

**6.20** The Local Planning Authority and Gwent Police have an agreed protocol advocating Secured by Design.

### Flood Consequence Assessment (FCA)

A reviewed and potentially amended Flood Consequence Assessment (FCA) will be required for each development site.

**6.21** Since the original Flood Consequences Assessment for the Steelworks redevelopment was undertaken by Halcrow in 2005, the methods of deriving hydrology have

been improved. Therefore a reviewed and potentially amended Flood Consequence Assessment will be required for each development site.

### Public Art

Public art should be incorporated into the development proposal.

**6.22** The objective for public art on the site is to integrate artwork into hard and soft landscaping, and engage with the local community.

**6.23** Developers should include proposals for public art in their submissions. Public Art should be considered for public spaces and in particular in relation to major public areas such as the Terminus Station.

### Employment and Enterprise

New development must contribute towards ensuring that the local workforce and businesses are actively involved in the development of the area.

**6.24** This may be through the provision of recruitment initiatives, job opportunities and facilitation of skills training, or active consideration of local suppliers and sub-contractors in procurement process. This approach will ensure that the benefits of development are realised for the

local community. The Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guidance provides further detail on this.

### **Education**

**6.25** There may be a need for educational requirements.

## CREATE A NETWORK OF SUSTAINABLE VIBRANT VALLEY COMMUNITIES

### SP1 Northern Strategy Area – Sustainable Growth and Regeneration

Proposals in the Northern Strategy Area will be required to deliver sustainable growth and regeneration that benefits the whole of Blaenau Gwent. This will be achieved by: -

- a. Supporting the creation of a network of sustainable hubs around the principal hub of Ebbw Vale.
- b. Promoting Ebbw Vale as the principal hub for Blaenau Gwent, where the majority of social and economic growth will be accommodated including major retail expansion, administrative and cultural developments.
- c. Delivering strategic sustainable regeneration flagship schemes at 'The Works' and 'Ebbw Vale Northern Corridor'.
- d. Supporting new roles for district and local town centres: -
  - Tredegar District Town Centre will expand its tourism offer through maximising the benefits of local heritage;

- Brynmawr District Town Centre will explore opportunities to develop complementary roles around tourism; and
- Blaina Local Town Centre will build on and exploit its local heritage.

- e. Enabling diversification of the economic base through mixed-use development in the district hubs of Tredegar and Brynmawr where it supports and reinforces the roles of the town centres.
- f. Supporting a major destination attraction that would draw large numbers of people to the area and provide a significant number of jobs.

**6.2** The Northern Strategy Area has experienced high levels of public investment in its infrastructure and this has been accompanied by private sector investment. The development strategy of the Plan seeks to build on major regeneration opportunities in this area to ensure that Blaenau Gwent as a whole benefits.

**6.3** The Wales Spatial Plan identifies Ebbw Vale as a key settlement that has a critical role to play in the success of the Capital Region. The Strategy recognises

the importance of Ebbw Vale and identifies it as the principal hub at the centre of the network of linked hubs across the County Borough. The recent opening of the rail connection to Cardiff, ongoing construction of the Heads of the Valleys Road and the availability of two strategic sites provides major opportunities for Ebbw Vale.

**6.4** The Principal Town Centre of Ebbw Vale is expected to perform a sub regional retail role (Policy SP3) similar to Merthyr Tydfil and Aberdare. Ebbw Vale will be the main retail centre where the emphasis will be on a good balance between comparison (non-food) and convenience (food) shopping. Land is allocated for new comparison and convenience retailing within the town centre of Ebbw Vale, under policy R1. Ebbw Vale will be the focus for service provision in Blaenau Gwent, and provide services such as the Hospital, Learning Zone, Arts Centre and main Civic Centre. The cultural role of Ebbw Vale will be developed through plans to extend and refurbish the historic General Offices at the former Ebbw Vale Steelworks into a family history and genealogy visitor attraction, which will also include the relocation of the Gwent Records Office. There are also plans for the Ebbw Vale Institute to be used for cultural activities, learning and social enterprise.

**6.5** The Strategy also recognises the potential of two key brownfield sites located in the principal hub of Ebbw Vale which are capable of accommodating significant

new development to help regenerate the area. The former Steelworks Site, now known as 'The Works', already has outline planning permission for housing, a hospital, Learning Zone, Leisure Centre, Arts Centre, Environmental Resource Centre, Employment, new rail station and open space including a Wetland Park. The reclamation work of this 80 ha site is well underway.

**6.6** The Ebbw Vale Northern Corridor site is allocated for mixed-use including housing, employment and leisure. One of the strengths of the site is its position relative to the Heads of the Valleys Road and its role as a Northern gateway into the centre of Ebbw Vale. Over 70 hectares of land is or will become available over the Plan period part of which is a strategic employment site located in a prime position along the Heads of the Valleys Road. The site offers opportunities to respond to community needs and integrate environmental aspects for positive benefits.

**6.7** Both sites will be flagship schemes and incorporate high standards of design.

**6.8** The role of Town Centres have been identified as a key issue by stakeholders and residents. The Plan seeks to identify new roles for the District and Local Town Centres in order for them to benefit from planned tourism and recreation growth. Tredegar District Town Centre will maximise the opportunities to develop complementary roles around tourism. The planned

investment in Bedwellty House and Park and development at Parc Bryn Bach provides an opportunity for Tredegar to attract visitors and for the town to benefit by catering for the needs of the visitors. The historical legacy provides opportunities to build tourism opportunities around heritage trails such as the Aneurin Bevan Trail and Ironmakers trails.

**6.9** The location of Brynmawr, at a gateway to the Brecon Beacons National Park, Valleys Regional Park and Blaenavon World Heritage Site provides an opportunity to service visitors either through providing a stop over facility (directing and informing travellers), or by encouraging people to stay over in Brynmawr. Brynmawr is also the starting point of the Ebbw Fach Trail and has a museum that reflects the rich local heritage.

**6.10** Blaina Local Town Centre will look to build on and exploit its local heritage. The town's historical legacy provides opportunities to build tourism opportunities around heritage trails in connection with the Chartist Movement in the area. A Chartist Exhibition and Information Centre has already been established at Salem Chapel in the town centre. The area also has strong links to mining and ironworks given that, Nantyglo and Blaina was at one point the largest iron-producing centre in the world.

**6.11** Tourism, leisure and cultural events in the town centres will play a key role in raising the profile of Blaenau Gwent and attracting visitors to the area.

**6.12** In the hubs of Tredegar and Brynmawr mixed-use schemes which meet the needs of their respective districts and support the roles of the towns will be encouraged. Particular support will be given where schemes enhance town centre based employment in the retail, service, leisure or tourism sectors.

**6.13** If tourism is to play a greater role in the economy and regeneration of the area Blaenau Gwent needs a major destination attraction. Being well located in terms of access to the Heads of the Valleys Road and Brecon Beacons National Park there is great potential for an attraction that could draw large numbers of people to the area and provide a significant number of jobs.

**6.14** Any proposals will be expected to create a strong image of Blaenau Gwent and increase its profile in the national and international arena. It must also be acceptable in terms of its impact on the natural and built environment and surrounding land uses.

### MU2 'The Works'

**In accordance with Policy SP1 land is allocated at the former steelworks site for mixed use including; the construction of a new hospital, learning zone, leisure centre, playing pitches, arts centre, approximately 520 homes, business hub, family history & genealogy visitor centre, environmental resource centre and wetland park.**

**8.10** The former Steelworks runs along the bottom of the Ebbw Valley to the South East of Ebbw Vale Town Centre. It is about 3 kilometres from north to south and half a kilometre from east to west. The site has the benefit of outline planning permission. The original Masterplan Design and Access Statement sets out a 10-year programme for development divided into 5 phases between 2008 and 2018. The revised masterplan incorporates an amended indicative framework with four phases allowed to run to a maximum of 4 years each to allow development flexibility although the 2018 date continues to be a broad indication of the time-scale envisaged for the delivery of the scheme. Development of the site will be guided by the latest Masterplan and supporting documentation.

**8.11** The Vision is:

*"The Works is the regeneration of the former steelworks site in Ebbw Vale which is transforming the site into a*

*vibrant and distinctive area. It's a £350 million project that will create new places for learning, working and recreational. It will be integrated into the existing town centre to make stronger connections and links to important local landmarks. The scheme includes delivering new homes, primary and special education needs school, hospital, commercial floor space, a learning zone, basement park, central valley wetland park, 2km railway extension and a mechanical link. Already some of the projects have been completed (e.g. Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan and the environmental resource centre) and others are ongoing (The learning zone and general offices). The Works is widely recognised as a sustainable exemplar project across Wales and the UK and is driven by four key objectives; economic, social, resources and environmental, all of which give the project its green credentials. These objectives include retaining the history and heritage of the area, involving the community in developing the site and creating wider employment and commercial benefits for Blaenau Gwent."*

**8.12** Key elements are:

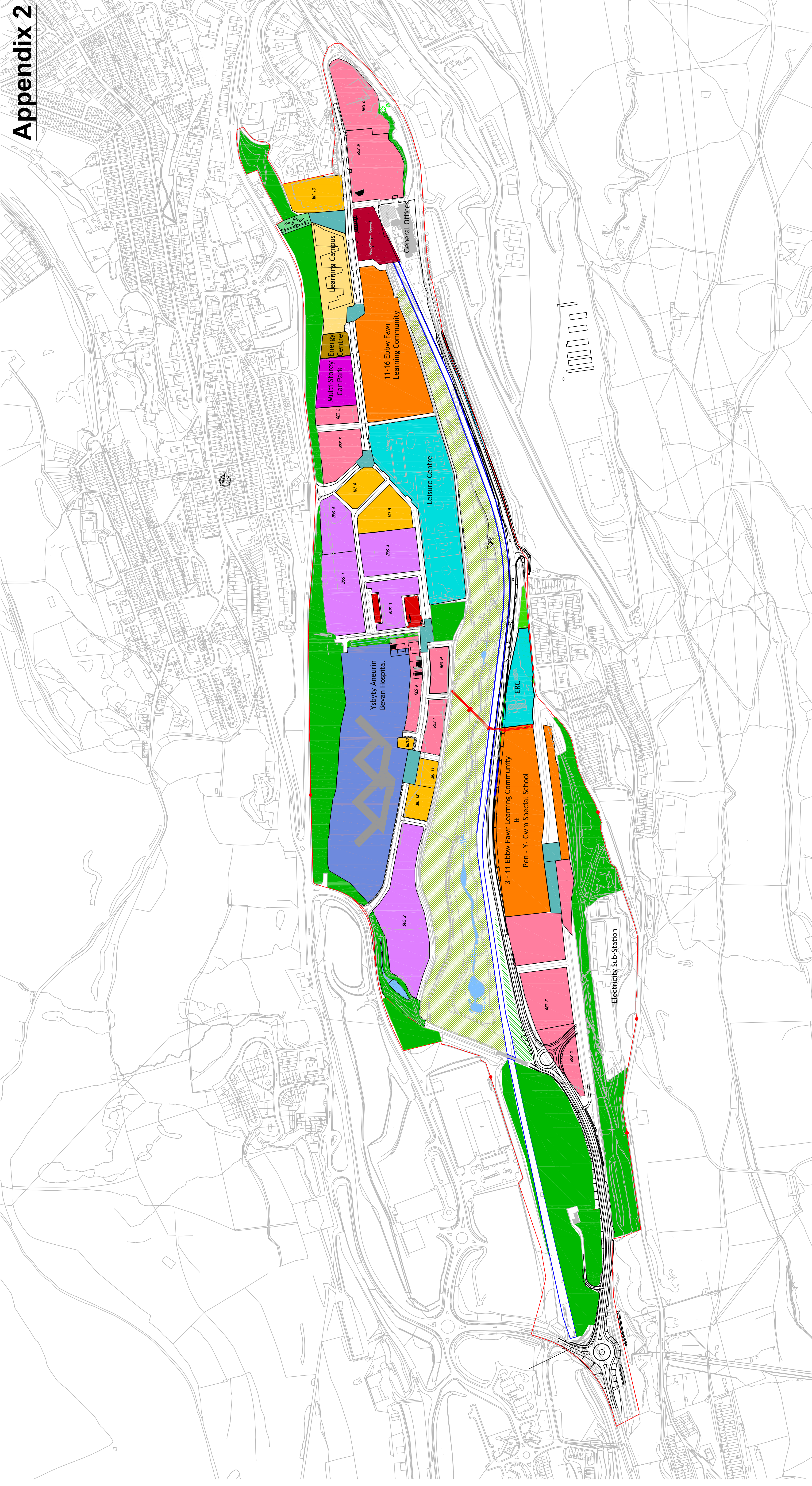
- **Aneurin Bevan Hospital** – a 96 bed Local General Hospital;
- **The Central Valley & Wetlands Park** – a green corridor running through the site;
- **Environmental Resource Centre** – Provides an education facility for local children and the



- community to explore the heritage and ecology of the site;
- **Employment** – 5 ha of commercial and business space primarily located adjacent to the hospital site;
  - **Residential** – Approximately 520 homes at varying densities across the site built to higher than nationally required standards and including 20% affordable housing;
  - **Learning Zone** – The Learning Zone includes the provision of education and training for 14-19 year olds. The Works site will also include a 21<sup>st</sup> Century 3-16 School over two sites that will provide; primary education; an integrated children's centre, secondary education and the relocated Pen y Cwm Special School
  - **Leisure Centre and Sports Fields** – A new leisure centre and sports pitches will be developed to provide new leisure amenities for the community;
  - **Arts Centre** – A new arts centre will be developed to provide a community and professional arts/cultural event programme;
  - **Basement Strategy** – A range of uses are being considered for the basements including sports and leisure, exhibition space, summer markets for food & craft including a café, education and recreation facilities;
  - **Retail** – The retail element will only consist of local convenience facilities, including local shops and smaller commercial units;
  - **Energy Centre** – A centralised energy hub.
  - **Family History & Genealogy Visitor Centre** – The Former General Offices (Grade II\* Listed Building) is to become a visitor centre bringing industrial heritage to life and showcasing one of the largest archives in Wales.
  - **Public Realm** – Focus on a sequence of public squares running through the site.







## Boundary Key:

- The Works Boundary
- Rail Corridor
- Highway
- Central Valley Wetland Park
- Landscape

Retained Basements	Leisure, Educational Use	Car Park	Station Square/Arts Centre
Hospital	Residential	Energy Centre	Rolling Mill (Heritage Feature)
Ebbw Fawr Learning Community	Business	Mechanical Link	Footbridge
Learning Campus	Mixed Use	Squares	

This drawing is for information purposes only and is subject to change.













**Appendix 4: Table showing Developed / Committed Land and Land Remaining (as at September 2013)**

Area	Use	Site Area (ha)	Approximate Number of Houses (based on residential density in Table 1)	Comment
<b>LAND DEVELOPED</b>				
Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan Hospital	Hospital	1.2	N/A	
BUS 3 Regain Building	Business	0.2	N/A	
Energy Centre	Energy Centre	0.2	N/A	
Environmental Resource Centre	Commercial	0.1	N/A	
General Offices Refurbishment	Refurbished Office	N/A	N/A	
Learning Zone	Education	0.9	N/A	
Leisure Centre and Sports Pitches	Leisure	3.1	N/A	
Multi Storey Car Park	Car Park	0.5	N/A	
11-16 Ebbw Fawr Learning Community	Education	2.1	N/A	
Primary School	Education	2.5	N/A	
Special Educational Needs (3-16 Primary School	Education	0.9	N/A	
RES J	Residential	0.1	5	
Central Valley	Open Space / Landscape	10.4	N/A	
Peripheral Distributor Road (PDR)	Infrastructure			Nearing completion
<b>LAND REMAINING</b>				
BUS 1	Business	1.0		
BUS 2	Business	1.9		
BUS 3	Business	0.3		
BUS 4	Business	0.4		
BUS 5	Business	0.6		
BUS 6	Business	0.5		
MU 4	Mixed Use	0.4	15	

Area	Use	Site Area (ha)	Approximate Number of Houses (based on residential density in Table 1)	Comment
MU 8	Mixed Use	0.5	20	
MU 10	Mixed Use	0.06	2	
MU 11	Mixed Use	0.2	8	
MU 12	Mixed Use	0.3	10	
MU 13	Mixed Use	0.7	30	
RES B	Residential	1.2	60	Site Investigation in preparation Marketing of plot expected to commence early 2014
RES C	Residential	0.8	40	Site Investigation in preparation Marketing of plot expected to commence early 2014
RES E	Residential	0.3	10	
RES F	Residential	1.3	45	
RES G	Residential	0.4	10	
RES H	Residential	0.3	10	
RES I	Residential	0.4	15	
RES J	Residential	0.4	15	
RES K	Residential	0.6	30	
RES L	Residential	0.3	15	
Rail Corridor				Planning Application expected in the Autumn 2013
Terminus Station				
Footbridge				
Mechanical Link				Funding committed – expected to be completed by August 2014



**Appendix 5: A List of Relevant Approved Documents**

- Masterplan Design and Access Statement (September 2010)
- The Design Codes (September 2010)
- Sustainable Energy Strategy
- Strategic Code of Construction Practice
- Strategic Landscape and Biodiversity Management Plan
- Strategic Travel Plan
- Flood Consequences Assessment (Halcrow, 2005)
- Supplementary Planning Guidance on Planning Obligations

**These documents are available on the planning policy pages of the Blaenau Gwent website alternatively contact Planning Policy via email [planningpolicy@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk), via telephone on (01495) 355538 or visit the Team at Blaina District Office, High Street, Blaina, NP13 3XD.**

