

Active Travel Route: Sully to Cosmeston

Design & Access Statement

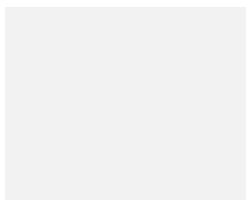
Vale of Glamorgan Council

Document Ref: 10056562-ARC-XX-XXX-TR-ZZ-00002

Revision: V02

OCTOBER 2024

Contacts

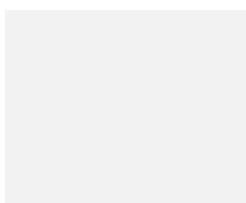


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Document Ref. 10056562-ARC-XX-XXX-TR-ZZ-00002
Date OCTOBER 2024

Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Checker	Reviewer	Approver	Changes
1	September	TR	CJ	DJ	MG	First Draft
2	October	TR	CJ	DJ	MG	Final

This report dated 21 October 2024 has been prepared for Vale of Glamorgan (the “Client”) in accordance with the terms and conditions of appointment between the Client and Arcadis Consulting (UK) Limited **Arcadis (UK) Limited** (“Arcadis”) for the purposes specified in the Appointment. For avoidance of doubt, no other person(s) may use or rely upon this report or its contents, and Arcadis accepts no responsibility for any such use or reliance thereon by any other third party.

Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
2	Planning Policy Context.....	10
3	Design Objectives of the Proposal	15
4	Conclusions	24

1 Introduction

1.1 Proposed Development

- 1.1.1 Arcadis, on behalf of our client, the Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council (VoG) (the 'Client'), has prepared a Design and Access Statement (DAS) to accompany an application for planning consent under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended (the 1990 Act), for creating a new Active Travel Route (ATR), hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development' located between Sully and Cosmeston.
- 1.1.1 A detailed description of the Proposed Development is provided in Section 3.3 of this Design and Access Statement (DAS) in relation to the following works, as set-out within the planning application:
'The provision of a shared pedestrian and cycle route (Active Travel Route), earthworks, landscaping and associated works from Sully to Cosmeston'.
- 1.1.2 Section 42 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 substituted a new Section (62) into the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requiring a DAS to be prepared to accompany certain types of development to explain the design principles and concepts that have informed the development and how access issues have been dealt with. These provisions were supplemented by amendments to the Development Management Procedures published by the Welsh Government in February 2016. The procedural changes require a DAS to be produced for the Proposed Development, classed as a 'major' development.
- 1.1.3 This DAS therefore accompanies this planning application as a 'major' development owing to the site area and provides details of the design principles that have influenced the Proposed Development and the access issues associated with the development site. References made within the DAS to Drawing Numbers relate to those plans and elevations submitted in support of the planning application.

1.2 Purpose and Structure of the Statement

- 1.4.1 The structure of the Design and Access Statement is as follows:
- **Chapter 2** sets out the local and national planning policy context of relevance to the proposal.
 - **Chapter 3** sets out the design objectives for the scheme and describes in detail each of the components of the Proposed Development, as well as the accessibility principles associated with the proposals in line with the planning policy framework applicable to the proposals.
 - **Chapter 4** reaches conclusions on the overall compliance of the development proposals with planning policy.

1.3 The Site

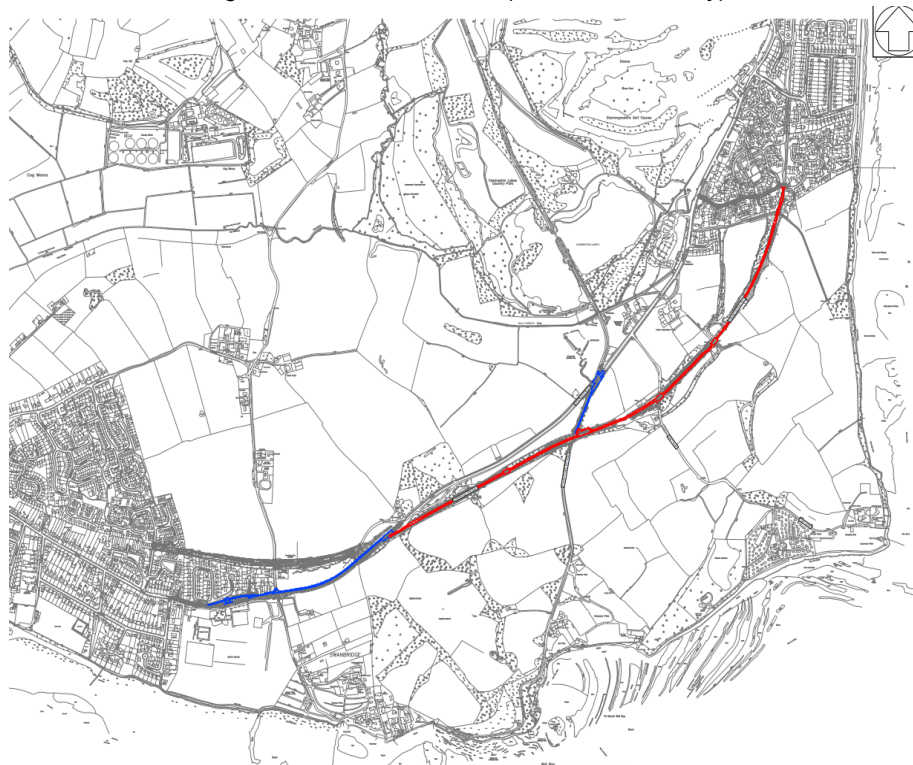
- 1.3.1 The Proposed Development site encompasses an area of 1.33 hectares, as indicated in red on the proposed Active Travel Route General Arrangement Overview (Drawing. 10056562 – ARC – AT – 110 – DR – C – 00003) see Figure 1, and further detailed by Active Travel Route General Arrangement Sheet (1 – 10) (Drawings. 10056562-ARC-XX-010-DR-C-00004, 00005, 00006, 00007, 00008, 00009, 00010, 00011, 00012). The Proposed Development is located at approximate National Grid Reference (NGR) ST 17460 68498.

Figure 1: Site Location Plan



1.3.2 As presented in the Site Location Plan (Ref. 10056562-ARC-XX-010-DR-C-00002), see Figure 2, the Proposed Development links Sully to Cosmeston, commencing southeast of Sully, on South Road (B4267), and terminating at Cosmeston Drive, Penarth. The path follows a northeast alignment, beginning on a 0.76 km stretch of the current footway/cycleway on South Road, and then continues along the existing shared use route adjacent to Lavernock Road towards 'The Vineyards', crossing Lavernock Road and joining a disused railway. The route continues for about 2km before reaching Cosmeston Drive, where it will link up with an existing shared use route referred to as 'Railway Walk'.

Figure 2: Site Location Plan (Red Line Boundary)



1.3.3 The following figures illustrate the existing viewpoints across the proposed route:

Figure 3: Viewpoint (facing west) at beginning of ATR at South Road



Figure 4: Viewpoint (facing west) of existing cycle route at South Road



Figure 5: Viewpoint (facing west) of existing Swanbridge bus stop at South Road



Figure 6: Viewpoint (facing east) of Lavernock Road



Figure 7: Viewpoint (facing northeast) of Lavernock Road



Figure 8: Viewpoint of 'overgrown' disused railway entranceway and proposed Toucan crossing location off Lavernock Road



Figure 9: Viewpoint of existing disused railway



Figure 10: Viewpoint of existing disused railway continued



Figure 11: Viewpoint (south facing) of St Mary's Well Bay



Figure 12: Viewpoint (south facing) of ATR from Fort Road



Figure 13: Viewpoint (south facing) at end of ATR on Cosmeston Drive



1.4 Proposed Development

1.4.1 The Proposed Development, consisting of a shared footway and cycleway from Sully to Cosmeston, will include the following works:

- **Dedicated cycle lanes:** Separate lanes for cyclists to provide a safe space from cars.
- **Pathways:** Pedestrian and cycle path creation through widening of existing paths.
- **Pedestrian crossings:** Safe crossing points for pedestrians at key intersections and crossings along the route, as well as the provision of tactile.
- **Signage and markings:** Clear signage, road markings, and signals to guide cyclists and pedestrians along the route.
- **Lighting:** Adequate lighting along the route to improve visibility, especially during darker hours.
- **Accessibility:** Ensuring the route is accessible for users of all abilities, including those with disabilities.
- **Pedestrian ramp:** A new pedestrian 1:20 ramp with landings at St Marys Well Bay, to be installed at a shallow gradient for ease of movement. A new retaining wall is included to accommodate the ramp which will be DDA compliant.
- **Means of enclosure:** Across the length of the disused railway, the erection of a 1.2m high 3 timber post and rail Fencing, with 0.9m bollards at both ends of the disused railway.

1.4.2 In order to comply with the requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2021, the shared footway and cycleway proposes:

- A 4m wide footpath along the railway.
- A minimum 3m wide shared footway/ cycleway width on primary routes (namely along the adopted highway), with a 0.5m verge width for routes with speed limits up to 40mph.

- 1.4.3 The requirement for an increased verge width up to 1.5m and shared footway/cycleway up to 3m wide requires the removal of existing trees and vegetation. It will also require potential land purchase, earthworks, along with the widening and altering of the existing highway embankment.
- 1.4.4 Crossing the disused railway, the proposal will require vegetation and habitat removal, requiring appropriate mitigation. Furthermore, the route will integrate with existing bridge structures with low level lighting for safety and security.
- 1.4.5 In terms of proposed landscaping, existing vegetation will be retained, where possible, aided through the use of no-dig construction techniques, utilising the existing compacted ballast from the historic railway embankment as a build-up for the pedestrian route, woodland and hedgerow planting adjacent to the ATR, with an access ramp from St Mary's Well Bay Road. Species proposed include a native mix of local provenance, including Oak, Field Maple, Silver Birch, Hawthorn and Hazel, with seeding of species-rich grassland to verges and areas of embankment to provide additional habitat for pollinators. The proposals also provide rain-gardens within areas of existing grass verges. All areas of hard landscape have been designed such that they are consistent with adjoining areas of existing highway infrastructure including tactile paving.
- 1.4.6 These infrastructure improvements will promote the proposed route as a sustainable mode of transportation, prioritise safety, and create a user-friendly environment that will encourage walking and cycling as a viable transport option between Sully and Cosmeston.

2 Planning Policy Context

- 2.1.1 This Chapter outlines the planning policy framework applicable to the design aspects of the Proposed Development providing an overview of the relevant national and local planning framework.
- 2.1.2 At a national level, Planning Policy Wales (PPW) provides relevant planning guidance informed by the Well Being Future Generations Act, together with the National Development Framework: Future Wales – The National Plan 2040, as well as The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 for the provision of green infrastructure and supporting Technical Advice Notes (TANs). The content of national guidance must be taken into account by local planning authorities when deciding planning applications.
- 2.1.3 In addition to the above, the Active Travel Act Guidance (ATAG) was published by Welsh Government in 2021. It supports local authorities in fulfilling their duties under the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 to plan and design networks of walking and cycling routes. The ATAG includes best practice on infrastructure design and gives guidance on related facilities such as cycle parking, which the proposals have had due regard to.

2.2 National Planning Policy

National Development Framework: Future Wales – The National Plan 2040

- 2.2.1 The National Development Framework (NDF): Future Wales represents the Welsh Government's primary national development framework, strategically addressing key national priorities through the planning system for the next two decades. These priorities encompass sustaining and enhancing a robust economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate resilience, fostering strong ecosystems, and enhancing the health and well-being of our communities.
- 2.2.2 This Framework operates as a spatial strategy, avoiding involvement in decisions better suited for regional or local authorities. Instead, it offers strategic guidance for planning at all scales and outlines policies and significant concerns to be pursued at the regional level. A primary goal of this document is to tackle issues that the Welsh Government deems high priority, with a particular emphasis on making positive contributions towards the national placemaking objectives for Wales.

Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 (February 2024)

- 2.1.1 PPW states that meeting the objectives of good design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process and applied to all development proposals. These objectives can be categorised into 5 key objectives of good design, shown as follows:
- Environment sustainability.
 - Movement.
 - Character.
 - Community Safety.
 - Access.
- 2.1.2 These and their associated explanations are presented in the following diagram:



Source: PPW, Edition 12 (February 2024) – Objectives of Good Design

- 2.2.3 PPW states clearly that the design principles and concepts that have been applied to development proposals should be reflected in the content of any DAS and are material considerations in the determination process.
- 2.2.4 PPW also considers that the visual appearance of the proposed development, its scale and relationship to its surroundings, and context are material planning considerations. Whilst noting that LPAs should reject poor building and contextual designs, guidance makes clear that LPAs should not attempt to impose a particular architectural taste or style arbitrarily and should avoid inhibiting opportunities for innovative design solutions.
- 2.2.5 In preparing a DAS, applicants are advised that an integrated and inclusive approach to sustainable design should be followed, proportionate to the scale and type of the development proposal.

Technical Advice Note 12: Design (March 2016)

- 2.2.6 Alongside PPW, Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12 ‘Design’ is the principal source of design guidance for Wales in providing a broad framework with which to steer design standards and principles at the local level. It fully advocates those aspects of good design identified in PPW and presents a series of guidelines to deliver these elements.
- 2.2.7 TAN 12 offers guidance and details on various interconnected aspects, encompassing the definition of design for planning purposes, considerations of design in planning determinations, and design policy and advice for local planning authorities. Good design and placemaking sentiments lie at the heart of the document, advising that the successful delivery of development requires a holistic approach in achieving sustainable development.

Active Travel Act Guidance (July 2021)

- 2.2.8 The ATAG sets out design details for improvements to active travel infrastructure to help local

authorities meet their key duties under the Active Travel (Wales) Act, including:

- Making continuous improvements to active travel infrastructure.
- Enhancing provision for walkers and cyclists when constructing, improving or maintaining highways.
- Having regard to the needs of walkers and cyclists when putting in place traffic management arrangements.

2.2.9 To ensure that user needs are accommodated, the ATAG sets out the following design principles:

- Develop ideas collaboratively and in partnership with communities.
- Facilitate independent walking, cycling and wheeling for everyone, accommodating the needs of an unaccompanied child of secondary school age, someone pushing a double-buggy, an adapted cycle, or a less experienced cyclist.
- Design places that provide enjoyment, comfort and protection.
- Ensure access for all and equality of opportunity in public space.
- Ensure all proposals are developed in a way that is context-specific and evidence-led.
- Schemes should separate people walking, cycling and wheeling from motor vehicles or prioritise them.

2.3 Local Planning Policy

Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan

2.3.1 The Development Plan material to the proposed Development is provided by the VoGC Local Development Plan (Adopted 2017). The Adopted LDP provides the following policies of relevance to the design and access aspects of the Proposed Development and are referred to below:

Policy SP1 - Delivering the Strategy

'The strategy will seek to improve the living and working environment, promote enjoyment of the countryside and coast and manage important environmental assets. This will be achieved by:

1. *Providing a range and choice of housing to meet the needs of all sectors of the community.*
2. *Promoting a range of employment sites intended to meet the needs of the Vale of Glamorgan and the wider capital region.*
3. *Reinforcing the role of Barry, service centre settlements and primary settlements as providers of cultural, commercial and community services.*
4. *Promoting sustainable transport.*
5. *Delivering key infrastructure linked to the impacts of development.*
6. *Protecting and enhancing the built, natural and coastal environment.*
7. *Promoting opportunities for sustainable tourism and recreation.*
8. *Favouring development that promotes healthy living'.*

Policy SP10 – Built and Natural Environment

'Development proposals must preserve and where appropriate enhance the rich and diverse built and natural environment and heritage of the Vale of Glamorgan including:

1. *The architectural and / or historic qualities of buildings or conservation areas, including locally listed buildings.*
2. *Historic landscapes, parks and gardens.*
3. *Special landscape areas.*

4. *The Glamorgan Heritage Coast*

5. *Sites designated for their local, national and European nature conservation importance.*

6. *Important archaeological and geological features.*

Policy MD2 - Design of New Development

'In order to create high quality, healthy, sustainable and locally distinct places development proposals should:

1. *Be of a high standard of design that positively contributes to the context and character of the surrounding natural and built environment and protects existing features of townscape or landscape interest.*
2. *Respond appropriately to the local context and character of neighbouring buildings and uses in terms of use, type, form, scale, mix, and density.*
3. *Where appropriate, provide new or enhanced areas of public realm particularly in key locations such as town centres, major routes and junctions.*
4. *Promote the creation of healthy and active environments and reduce the opportunity for crime and anti-social behaviour. In the case of retail centres, developments should provide active street frontages to create attractive and safe urban environments.*
5. *Provide a safe and accessible environment for all users, giving priority to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.*
6. *Have no unacceptable impact on highway safety nor cause or exacerbate existing traffic congestion to an unacceptable degree.*
7. *Where appropriate, conserve and enhance the quality of, and access to, existing open spaces and community facilities.*
8. *Safeguard existing public and residential amenity, particularly with regard to privacy, overlooking, security, noise and disturbance.*
9. *Provide public open space, private amenity space and car parking in accordance with the council's standards.*
10. *Incorporate sensitive landscaping, including the retention and enhancement where appropriate of existing landscape features and biodiversity interests.*
11. *Provide adequate facilities and space for the collection, composting and recycling of waste materials and explore opportunities to incorporate re-used or recyclable materials or products into new buildings or structures.*
12. *Mitigate the causes of climate change by minimising carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions associated with their design, construction, use and eventual demolition, and include features that provide effective adaptation to, and resilience against, the current and predicted future effects of climate change'.*

Policy MD8 - Historic Environment

'Development proposals must protect the qualities of the built and historic environment of the Vale of Glamorgan, specifically: 1. Within conservation areas, development proposals must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area; 2. For listed and locally listed buildings, development proposals must preserve or enhance the building, its setting and any features of significance it possesses; 3. Within designated landscapes, historic parks and gardens, and battlefields, development proposals must respect the special historic character and quality of these areas, their settings or historic

views or vistas; 4. For sites of archaeological interest, development proposals must preserve or enhance archaeological remains and where appropriate their settings'.

3 Design Objectives of the Proposal

3.1 Design Evolution

- 3.1.1 The design evolution process for the ATR has had regard throughout to the importance of site context and surrounding character as well as the operational requirements of the Proposed Development in meeting safety and accessibility requirements.
- 3.1.2 The starting point for the design of the proposed ATR has been a desire to create a sustainable means of travel that not only has regard to its location and surroundings but has a natural 'fit' within its setting in terms of its scale and appearance, recognising that a route of this nature has the opportunity to facilitate safe movement having regard to the visual amenity of its surroundings (as depicted below).
- 3.1.3 The route and appearance of the Proposed Development has been strongly influenced by site context, in particular the existing built form, sensitive visual receptors along the route and the generally low-lying landscape comprising of enclosed fields and the disused railway line. At the same time, the existing roads including South Road and Lavernock Road largely define its immediate environment, forming its own key transport feature within the area.
- 3.1.4 From the initial designs, the current proposals have responded to a number of detailed site issues, resulting in revisions to the scheme layout, access and landscaping which are discussed in turn below.
- 3.1.5 As a result of these design iterations, the scheme proposals have achieved a sustainable, compliant ATR, informed by the findings of the various site studies undertaken, including ecology, hydrology and landscaping, thereby providing a scheme solution that is considered appropriate and acceptable within this area.

3.2 Design Proposal

- 3.2.1 The ATR route will comprise a number of key components, described below and shown on the submitted Active Travel Route General Arrangement Overview (Drawing. 10056562 – ARC – AT – 110 – DR – C – 00003) and further detailed by Active Travel Route General Arrangement Sheet (1 – 9) (Drawings. 10056562-ARC-XX-010-DR-C-00004, 00005, 00006, 00007, 00008, 00009, 00010, 00011, 00012), accompanying the planning application.
- 3.2.2 The spatial arrangement of the scheme elements include the following, as described below:
- Landscaping
 - Security / Lighting
 - Drainage
 - Materials
 - Biodiversity
 - Fencing
 - Bollards
 - Ramp

3.3 Scheme Elements

- 3.3.1 The new ATR route has been designed to ensure safe travel and improve pedestrian and cycle access from Sully to Cosmeston. This includes designated pedestrian crossings, well-marked bike lanes, traffic calming measures, and adequate lighting to ensure the safety of active travellers consist of the following components.

Landscaping

- 3.3.2 The landscape design seeks to complement the ATR with native species vegetation planting, providing visual mitigation and screening of proposed embankments, hard landscape works and lighting. Woodland and hedgerow planting is proposed adjacent to the Proposed Development to integrate the scheme into the surrounding landscape. Species will be a native mix of local provenance, including Oak, Field Maple, Silver Birch, Hawthorn and Hazel. Seeding of species-rich grassland to verges and areas of embankment to provide additional habitat for pollinators. Rain gardens will be planted with predominantly native species are proposed within areas of existing grass verges to manage rainwater runoff.
- 3.3.3 All areas of hard landscaping have been designed such that they are consistent with adjoining areas of existing highway infrastructure.

Security/Lighting

- 3.3.4 The proposed lighting has been designed in accordance with the following standards and has sought to balance the needs of the user to safely navigate the cycleway, increase a sense of security and avoid adverse impacts on key receptors such as wildlife.
- BS5489-1 (Lighting of roads and public amenity areas, Code of practice)
 - ILP PLG 23 - lighting for cycling infrastructure
 - LTN 1-20 Cycle Infrastructure Design
 - ILP GN01-20 guidance note 1 for the reduction of obtrusive light
 - ILP GN08-08 23 Guidance note 8 bats and artificial lighting
- 3.3.5 Where the proposed cycleway is adjacent to existing highways, current street lighting has been minimally adjusted to suit the proposed cycleway alignment and to ensure lighting levels are compliant with relevant standards, the existing column height and longitudinal positions have remained unchanged with the setback of the columns being updated to avoid being an obstacle for the cycleway users. The proposed route would continue to benefit from existing lighting along South Road and Lavernock Road. This approach minimises the net gain in street lighting and increases in light spill. Obtrusive lighting will be negligible compared to existing street lighting installations.
- 3.3.6 For the off-highway sections, bollard lighting is proposed due to the mature tree canopy which covers the majority of the ATR, which will be operational throughout the calendar year. Column mounted lighting would have required the removal of the tree canopy and annual tree maintenance to prevent the tree canopy from causing shadowing of the lighting. The proposed bollard lighting has a colour temperature of 2700K which reduces the impact of artificial lighting at night for most bat species. The bollard lighting projects lighting on one side only helping to reduce light spill. The bollards have been located in a single sided arrangement positioned to face away from key receptors, such as the housing along Cosmeston Road. The proposed lighting along the disused railway line will assist with navigation and safety for users and at a low level will not impact local wildlife.

Drainage

- 3.3.7 The accompanying Surface Water Drainage Strategy demonstrates how surface water runoff from the Proposed Development will be managed sustainably, ensuring that flood risk is not increased on or off-site through an increase in surface water runoff. The Proposed Development will utilise existing highway drainage infrastructure along Lavernock Road, consisting of a traditional gully and chamber sewer setup, to handle runoff from the footway/cycleway. The disused railway section will utilise permeable paving to manage runoff and maintain the original railway drainage. This method will prevent any rise in runoff from the proposals.

Materials

- 3.3.8 Paving material will consist of two different types along the ATR. Along South Road and Lavernock Road, paving will consist of Asphalt. Along the disused railway, Trailflex will be used as the paving option.

South Road and Lavernock Road

- 3.3.9 Across South and Lavernock Road, the proposed surface treatment for this section of the ATR is Asphalt. The choice of asphalt is preferred as it provides a robust paving solution which matches the existing footway construction. The use of permeable paving along the existing highway is not suitable.

Disused Railway

- 3.3.10 Across the disused railway, the proposed surfacing material for the ATR is TrailFlex paving (See Figure 14). Trailflex is a low cost and completely SUDS compliant water management solution, which is the most appropriate for this location as permeable paving is not suitable adjacent to the existing highway. Trailflex uses recycled car tyre and stone bound with specially developed resin to create a sustainable paving solution. The system will minimise any risk of root intrusion and subsequent cracking, will not clog and requires virtually no maintenance, ensuring fast and efficient drainage of rainwater and the replenishment of groundwater.

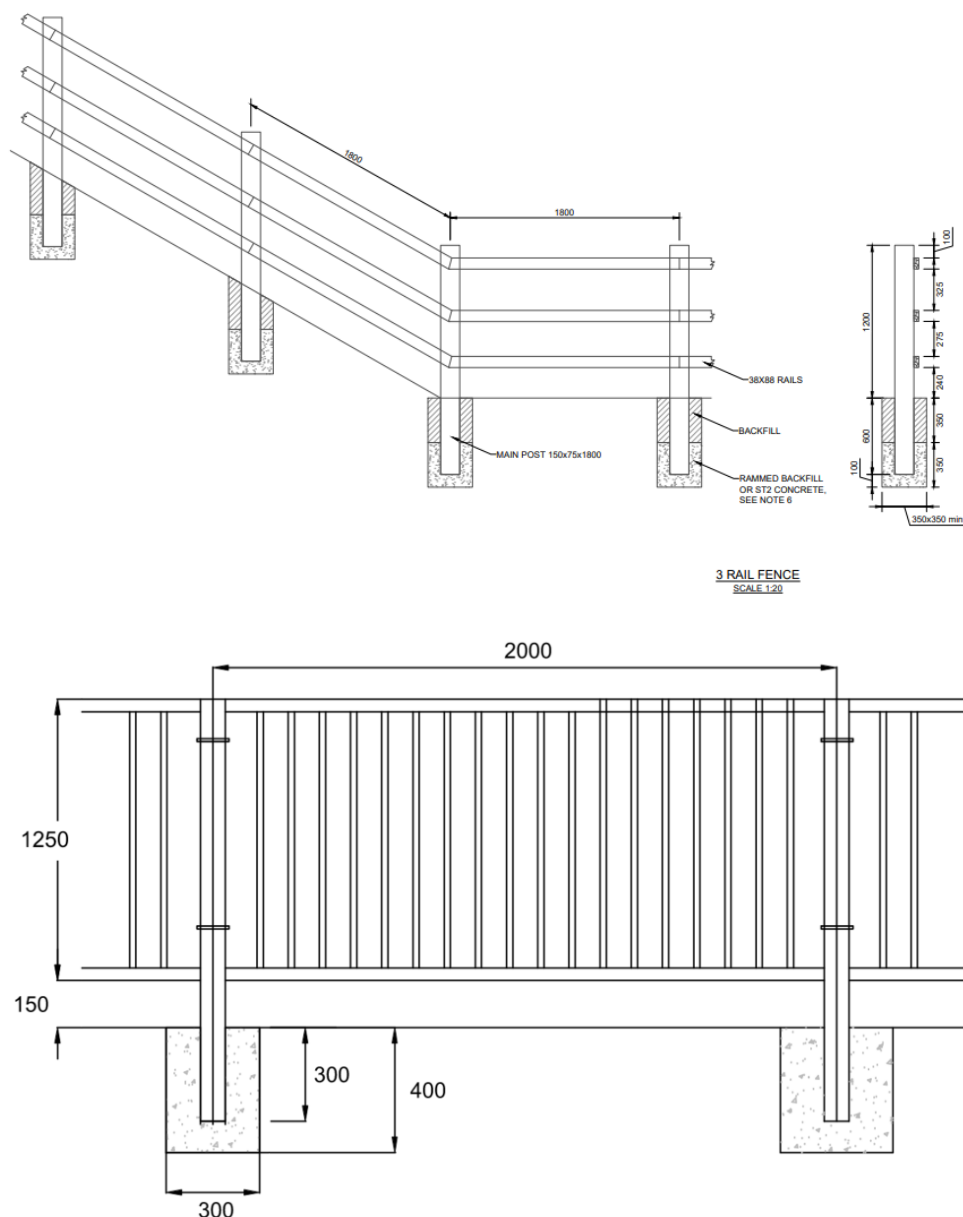
Figure 14: Trailflex example



Fencing

3.3.11 Across the disused railway, the site will feature 1.2m high Timber Fencing, as shown in Figure 15 and the use of galvanized steel pedestrian guardrailling across the bridge sections. Fencing is proposed to separate the ATR with the surrounding landscape to enhance safety. Timber fencing has been chosen to reflect that used in the area and to blend-in adhere to character with the existing landscape and is erected for safety purposes. As the disused railway progresses towards the existing bridge structures, the implementation of galvanized steel pedestrian guardrailling will be fitted to ensure that the users of the new ATR do not climb atop of the bridge, risking their safety. Galvanized steel has been chosen as it is sturdier and safer, in tandem with preventing people from climbing.

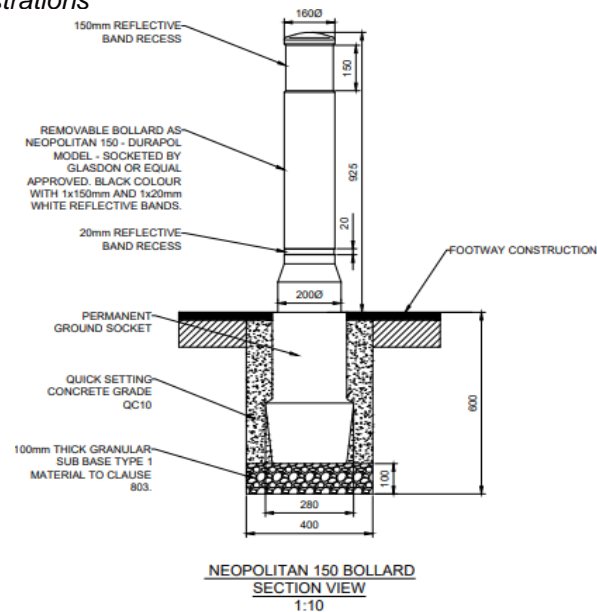
Figure 15: Fencing illustrations



Bollards

3.3.12 The scheme will also feature removable bollards located at both ends of the disused railway for operational requirements. There will be 4 bollards, situated in a 'U' arrangement at either end of the disused railway. These will be 0.9m in height and will spaced at an approximate 1.5m distance apart from each other. Bollards will comply with accessibility requirements that allow wheelchair access. The bollards will be comprised of a recyclable black plastic material as shown in Figure 16.

Figure 16: Bollard illustrations

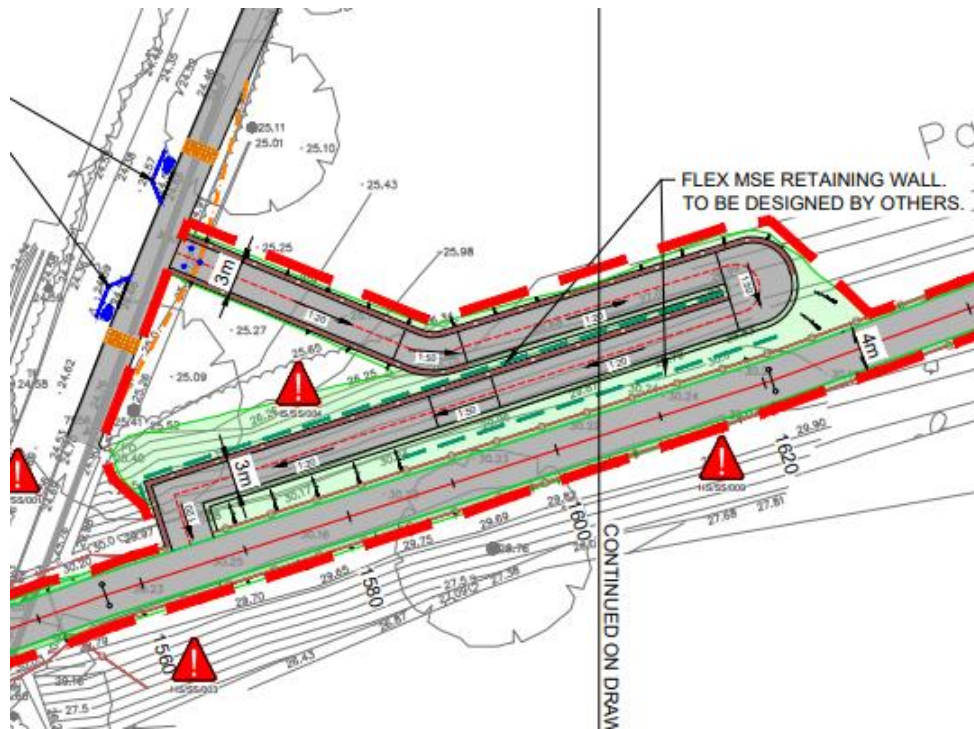


Ramp

3.3.13 The proposed ATR route will require a ramp to allow access from St Mary's Well Bay Road onto the disused railway, as shown on Figure 17. A new ramp at St Marys Well Bay, which will be installed at a shallow gradient to allow ease of movement.

3.3.14 The new ramp will be lined by native hedgerow planting, with native deciduous woodland and species-rich grassland planting adjacent to St Mary's Well Bay Road and the disused railway. The TrailFlex surfacing will allow vegetation to regrow through the ramp to assist in maintaining the natural appearance of the site.

Figure 17: Ramp layout



3.4 Design Approach

3.4.1 The structure of this section reflects the contributory elements to good design as set-out in TAN 12 as well as aiming to achieve placemaking sentiments set by PPW. Given the nature of the Proposed Development there is a limit on the extent to which the scheme design is able to fully respond to all aspects of the guidance provided, as set-out below, although each one has been considered in-turn:

- Character.
- Community Safety.
- Environmental Sustainability.
- Access.
- Movement.

3.4.2 The following sub-sections address each of the above design elements:

Character

3.4.3 The following sub-sections address each of the character elements of the Proposed Development in-turn:

Amount

3.4.4 The application site measures approximately 1.33ha in total, of which 0.65ha is covered by Permitted Development Rights under the General Permitted Development Order 1995 (as amended) and the Highways Act 1980.

3.4.5 The disused railway will feature landscaping/ecological mitigation being provided in the form of hedgerow planting and trees (including prunus spinosa, Quercus palustris, acer campestre, Crataegus laevigata) to be planted around the perimeter of the site as well as along the proposed route, together

with a native hedge mix.

- 3.4.6 The Proposed Development is not considered to be detrimental to the immediate locality or surrounding landscape due to these chosen design parameters and having regard to the extent of land given over to environmental enhancements of the work.

Layout

- 3.4.7 The scheme layout has made efficient use of existing land within the application boundary, largely utilising existing routes, including the disused railway and existing built structures along the route. Siting and layout are essential considerations in any development, affecting whether the proposals can be successfully integrated into their surroundings. The layout of the site has been influenced by the safety and accessibility requirements of pedestrian and cycle whilst also incorporating environmental mitigation.
- 3.4.8 The layout of the Proposed Development is identified on the Active Travel Route General Arrangement Sheet (1 – 10) (Drawings. 10056562-ARC-XX-010-DR-C-00004, 00005, 00006, 00007, 00008, 00009, 00010, 00011, 00012) submitted in support of the planning application. This shows that those aspects of the scheme proposals that are the subject of this planning application are aligned with the disused railway line between St Mary's Road and the Cosmeston Drive housing estate. The alignment of the proposed route will allow a natural 'fit' within its rural setting, in keeping with the character of the wider landscape.

Scale

- 3.4.9 Proposed structures comprise fencing, bollards and lighting columns. The positioning and size of these features allow the ATR to meet accessibility and safety requirements.

Proposed Structure	Height, Width and Depth (approx)
Timber fencing	1.2m X 1.8m (per panel) X 0.15m
Steeling fencing	1.4m x 2m (per panel) X 0.3m
Bollard	0.9m X 0.2m X 0.15m
Lighting column	1.1m

- 3.4.10 Furthermore, the scale of the Proposed Development has been limited to that which is necessary for the operation of the ATR. The route will generally form a low-lying feature within the landscape and as such will blend in with its surroundings

Appearance

- 3.4.11 The appearance of the proposed ATR consists of simple functional forms that respond, through consideration of external finishes and the use of sensitive colours that have allowed structures to blend in with their surroundings, thus reducing their overall impact on the surrounding countryside.

- 3.4.12 Well-designed features can enhance the overall appearance of the ATR, contributing to a more appealing and cohesive scheme. For example, the use of timber fencing is an appropriate choice in-keeping with the natural aesthetic of the area.
- 3.4.13 The material specifications for the other structural elements use a similar palette of materials, namely a mix of timber wood, galvanised and Trailflex paving (which is recycled rubber paving). The colour finishes predominantly replicate those used on existing structures within the surrounding highways, whilst also completing natural colour schemes found in the immediate vicinity through the use of timber fencing, and the use of Trailflex paving which is favoured for this type of setting owing to the aesthetic appeal, and ability to create durable and low-maintenance pathways in a number of outdoor settings, including parks, nature trails, and recreational areas.

Landscaping

- 3.4.14 The site is largely screened due to existing topography and from vegetation planting along surrounding roads and existing overgrown vegetation along the disused railway. The accompanying Planting Strategy Plan shows trees marked for removal from a parallel line of scattered trees (mainly hazel and hawthorn), that are the remnants of two hedgerows.
- 3.4.15 The proposed landscaping planting strategy proposes a number of woodland planting (including prunus spinosa, Quercus palustris, acer campestre, Crataegus laevigata) around the perimeter of the site as well as along the proposed route, together with a native hedge mix. Further enhancement planting is provided by means of native planting of the development site by means of screening the proposals and also providing landscaping compensation.
- 3.4.16 The site does not sit within any designated landscapes although it does lie within a Green Wedge (Local Policy MG18). It is accepted that the proposal will be visible from wider viewpoints and is considered to have a positive localised impact on the character of the rural and residential areas. However, the site does utilise an existing disused railway line (brownfield land). Furthermore, the existing vegetation and proposed planting would serve to strengthen existing landscape characteristics, limit visibility of the Proposed Development, and integrate the proposals with the surrounding landscape and views.

Community Safety

- 3.4.17 Ensuring the route is safe for all users, the proposals provides separate lanes for cyclists and pedestrians, signage, well-marked crossings, and lighting. Fencing is proposed in order to provide a physical barrier between the ATR and adjacent roads, railways and steep drops, reducing the risk of accidents and enhancing user safety. The proposed fencing will also act as a visual guide for users, delineating the boundaries of the route and helping them stay on the designated paths.
- 3.4.18 Under the Permitted Development section of the proposals, a toucan crossing is provided to create a designated space for cyclists and pedestrians to cross the road to gain access to the continuation of the ATR, reducing potential conflicts and improving overall safety for all road users.
- 3.4.19 To ensure community safety the scheme will incorporate lighting bollards across the length of the route. Its aim is to deter potential criminal activity, provide improve visibility and add to the readability and navigability of the route.

Environmental Sustainability

- 3.4.20 The design principles adopted for the scheme have been underpinned by good practice in environmental sustainability. The alignment of the route has provided an effective and efficient layout

occupying an area of some 1.3ha, much of which is brownfield land as the proposals seek to utilise a disused railway line. Landscaping proposals as highlighted above, incorporate green infrastructure, such as trees and native planting, contributing to overall sustainability goals. The choice of hard materials include TrailFlex and Asphalt as surface treatments, which both surfaces allow for a high degree of permeability, ensuring that surrounding trees and plants will receive rainwater. It is also proposed to use environmentally sustainable bollards, made of recyclable plastic bollards.

- 3.4.21 The widening of the footway along Lavernock Road has addressed the loss of green verge space by incorporating Rain gardens. These are designed to capture, absorb, and manage stormwater runoff effectively and by implementing Rain gardens along the widened pathways, this green infrastructure will help mitigate the environmental impact of the Proposed Development. This approach to sustainable development, not only addresses the issue of space loss but also adds ecological value by promoting biodiversity and sustainable water management practices in an urban environment.
- 3.4.22 The proposed biodiversity enhancement measures include the provision of bird and bat boxes, along with onsite hibernaculum/habitat piles. The submitted Construction Management Plan includes practical pollution prevention control measures, root protection zones and sensitive site clearance.
- 3.4.23 The proposed landscaping and ecological mitigation for the scheme plays a key role in securing the environmental sustainability of the scheme. These measures will not only enhance the aesthetic appearance of the site but also contribute significantly to the preservation and restoration of natural ecosystems. By incorporating these sustainability principles, the scheme has sought to promote a balanced coexistence between the Proposed Development of the site and its environmental qualities.

Access

- 3.4.24 The proposal will be open and available to all users. These access points will be accessible to all users and will be legible and easy to navigate. The entranceways propose removable bollards preventing vehicular access, other than maintenance vehicles to access the route. The proposed route allows for accommodating various modes of transportation including walking, cycling, and other means such as scooters and wheelchairs. The route has been designed to ensure the use of smooth surfaces, lighting, adequate signage, and gentle gradients through being DDA compliant and to ensure all users of all abilities can utilise the ATR safely and comfortably.

Movement

- 3.4.25 The proposed Sully to Cosmeston ATR provides many advantages to the general public who might use it. Primarily, the route will provide a safe passage for cyclists and pedestrians away from the public highway between Sully to Cosmeston.
- 3.4.26 Further, the ATR will encourage physical activity by offering an alternative to vehicular travel. This will also assist in alleviating traffic congestion along this section of highway by offering alternative modes of transport. Finally, the ATR will offer improved liveability in creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment, thus enhancing the overall quality of urban spaces, leading to more inclusive and community driven environments.

4 Conclusions

- 4.1.1 This Design and Access Statement supports a full planning application on behalf of VoG for permission to provide an ATR between Sully and Cosmeston. This Statement has covered the key design and access aspects of this development, offering a comprehensive explanation of how the proposals align with both national and planning design policies.
- 4.1.2 Regarding design principles, the proposal complies with policy and guidance at a local and national level by providing a site layout that meets safety and accessibility requirements and is appropriate to its setting and local character. Additionally, the proposals include landscaping and biodiversity enhancement, to integrate the Proposed Development within the surrounding landscape.
- 4.1.3 The land-take requirement within the site provides an efficient utilisation of space, utilising a vacant railway line, integrating the various elements of the development, through the design principles adopted. It is therefore considered that the proposals will provide a high-quality ATR respectful of the wider area and providing a functional, safe, and pleasant environment for active travel participants.

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