

CLEANER COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19th September 2018

THE BRITISH: MASTERPLAN APPROACH

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Report Summary

- Before remediation works can commence on the British regeneration site, Officers are required to produce a Development Framework which includes a “Masterplan” of intended future uses. This is a requirement of the Local Development Plan (LDP) and was an action in the Council report of 18th October 2016.
- Engagement has been at the heart of the masterplan. A working group has been established to develop the masterplan, with representation from relevant TCBC Officers, Gwent Wildlife Trust and the British Liaison Group Committee. As well as attending working group meetings (approximately every 2 months), community representatives attend the inception meetings with any consultants (where the consultants brief is clarified) and have sight of draft reports / presentations. This process is ensuring that community views are being aired and fully considered by the project team.
- The project team has also undertaken substantial engagement activities in the wider community. These included a series of informal “vision” workshops were held in August 2017 to debate and discuss a vision for the masterplan and to ask the community for their ideas on land uses. These ideas were then “screened” by the Working Group to consider how they fit with the vision and the LDP aspirations for the site.
- A further series of community workshops, supported by online consultation, has taken place in August 2018. These session provided feedback on earlier community ideas and how these were reflected in the current masterplan. Feedback was provided where it was not possible to include an idea in the draft masterplan. The results of the subsequent consultation are detailed in this report.
- Subject to final approval through the Planning process, Officers will finalise the Masterplan. It will then become the main driver of future project development relating to the British.

1. Introduction and Scrutiny Activity

- 1.1 The key question for scrutiny is: what is the outcome of the public consultation on the masterplan, how have the responses influenced progress and how do you intend on delivering the ongoing management of the masterplan.

Committee’s role is to monitor the management of any identified service risks so

they do not threaten service provision or result in lost opportunities. Therefore, the Committee should scrutinise and offer recommendations on the Masterplan and the responses to the public consultation on that document.

1.2 Project Background

1.2.1 The reclamation of “the British” is a strategic priority within the Local Development Plan. The site is allocated as a Strategic Action Area (SAA5). The SAA5 summary states:

“Land is allocated at the British Strategic Action Area, Talywain for a major land reclamation scheme. The land reclamation scheme will prepare the land required for future redevelopment as part of a long term regeneration scheme and make safe the surrounding land. The subsequent land form and extent of compaction required to enable redevelopment will be informed by a Development Framework.”

1.2.2 In 2016 a “once-in-a-generation” opportunity presented itself to acquire the British regeneration site at a reasonable purchase price and end the cycle of private sector speculation that had been the largest barrier to remediation and regeneration for over 30 years.

1.2.3 In October 2016, Council took the decision to (a) proceed with the purchase, (b) to allocate up to £2M from its Capital Programme, and (c) to accept a grant of £1.7M from Welsh Government’s Vibrant and Viable places programme. This would allow the Council to proceed with the purchase and treat the highest risk hazards.

1.2.4 Specifically, the hazards that the project aims to address are:

- The highest priority shafts & adits;
- Flood risk;
- Unauthorised access to potentially dangerous buildings;

Further information on hazards and risks is included in section 1.4.6

1.3 Project Structure, Outputs and Timescales

1.3.1 To aid day-to-day management, the project has been broken down into 4 workstreams.

- Site acquisition and hazards monitoring
- The design and delivery of the remediation works
- Landscape management
- The development framework “Masterplan”

1.3.2 The project outputs for each workstream are provided in Appendix 2.

1.3.3 Each workstream is represented by a Working Group of officers/partners who have relevant expertise or experience. Partners’ involvement on the working groups is covered in sections 1.5 – 1.7

The Working Groups discuss the following:

- Live contracts (including key issues and instructions)

- Upcoming contracts and their proposed outputs
- Draft reports
- Funding opportunities

1.3.4 The project will involve 5 key decisions (plus Planning Consent). Officers are working to the following timetable for these decisions.

1. Decision to purchase site & allocate funding (Oct 2016)
2. Decision to complete the purchase (Dec 2016)
3. **Decision to proceed with preferred masterplan & preferred remediation approach (expected Sep 2018)**
4. Decision to award remediation contract (expected Sep 2019)
5. Project Closure (expected March 2023)

1.4 Risks: Mitigation and Impact on Masterplan

1.4.1 Section 8 of the report to Council in October 2016 considered the principal risks associated with the British. This included risks associated with the site and its management (“site hazards”) as well as risks which might impact on the successful delivery of the remediation project or masterplan (“project risks”).

1.4.2 In line with the October ’16 Council report, the project team have produced a risk register for the British which is kept under regular review. This comprises the following:

1.4.3

- A baseline risk assessment which considers the likelihood of a risk occurring and the impact should it occur. It is based on the condition of the site hazard/risk as it is found (i.e. before any proposed action is taken).

1.4.4

- When any project risk / site hazard is entered onto the risk register, the project team considers whether any immediate mitigation can be undertaken. Immediate mitigation actions to date have included:

- Warning signage erected at entrances to the site
- Robust fencing erected around key structures
- Stock fencing as a barrier to particular drops
- Permissive route marking to guide users away from mine entries
- Monitoring visits for tips and culverts
- Coal Authority review of mine entry prioritization

1.4.5

- Finally, the project team considers whether the risk can be further mitigated by the remediation works. An impact assessment considers how each risk would be affected by suggested remediation approaches / designs.

1.4.6 There are a number of site hazards which the project will not remediate and which will therefore remain with the Council following the Phase 1 works. These include:

1. Hazards associated with the Listed Buildings.

As identified in section 5.3.3 of the October ’16 Council Report, the remediation funding will not repair/restore the listed buildings. Funding has however been utilized to install robust fencing and warning signage.

2. Hazards associated with Pant Glas slip.

As identified in section 5.3 of the October '16 Council Report, no remediation works will be undertaken to the Pant Glas landslip itself. Consideration will be given to fencing off areas if required.

3. Hazards associated with tip spoil

The remediation project does not allow for the removal of tip spoil from the site. Council officers monitor the three principal tips ("Black Patch", British Top Tips, and Cwmybyrgwm Tips) through visual inspection and photo recording.

4. Lower Priority Shafts and Adits

As identified in section 4.8 of the October '16 Council Report, only the high priority mine entries will be treated as part of the remediation project. To arrive at a proposed list of entries for treatment, officers have commissioned a prioritization based on a full review of previous proposals for the site, coal authority data, mine abandonment plans and mine entry records searches. Warning signage has been erected at all entrances to the British which states that there are still mining hazards in the area.

5. Shafts & Adits included in purchase

As part of the site purchase, the responsibility for 22 shafts and 17 adits was transferred to TCBC. Of these, 11 shafts and 7 adits are considered high priority in the Risk Ranking and so are included in the remediation proposals. A further 3 shafts require discussion with Cadw as they are part of the Scheduled Ancient Monument. The remaining 8 shafts and 10 adits are a lower priority and so are excluded from the proposed treatment because:

- They are away from open spaces / principal walking routes
- They are away from watercourse proposals
- They are no longer visible on the latest historical maps

6. Remaining Culverts

There remain a number of bridges/culverts on the British which will remain outside of the remediation project. The entrances are now monitored as part of the Council's culverts monitoring schedule. All culverts which will remain on site have been surveyed at the start of the project to determine their condition and identify defects that will require future maintenance/repair work.

1.4.7 Officers have also introduced a monitoring regime. This includes regular site visits to check for any deterioration in the condition of the visible site hazards.

1.5 Partnership Working: External Stakeholders

1.5.1 Officers have actively sought to engage as wide a range of partners as possible in the development, design, delivery and management of the British site and project. This brings additional resources and expertise into the project.

Gwent Wildlife Trust: A Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the Trust was created in 2017. This sets out a framework for working together

to encourage residents to take an active role in monitoring and managing the landscape on the British and to raise the profile of ecology on the site. The Trust are an active member of all 4 working groups and will be taking on site management actions once the management plan is in place.

Keep Wales Tidy: Officers have organized a series of community litter picks in an effort to deter littering and fly-tipping, both of which were identified as community priorities. These litter picks have included students from Garnteg School. Further litter picks are planned for 2018. The outcome of these litter picks has been publicized in the local press to try to deter future littering / flytipping.

Cardiff University: For the past 2 years the British has been part of the Places and Plans Module in Cardiff University's Urban Planning and Development BSc qualification. Each year, groups of students produce "indicative" masterplans for the British. This has been a good source of ideas for the draft masterplan. In addition, MSc students have researched whether the tips can store carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and have undertaken monitoring visits to Pant Glas Slip. Further research projects are being explored.

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service: South Wales Fire and Rescue Service have met with members of the Landscape Management working group to explore actions to deter arson. This has included the erection of signage and increased monitoring via drones. Discussions are now taking place about regular cutting of fire breaks on the British.

Local Partnerships: Officers have been working closely with Local Partnerships (a joint venture between the Local Government Association, HM Treasury and Welsh Government) to establish the viability of green energy proposals on the British. This has included assessments of solar irradiance, wind speeds and high level financial modelling all of which can now inform a request for feasibility funding.

Coal Authority: The Coal Authority are currently considering the potential for a joint funding application to explore the feasibility of a mine-water district heating system.

Coalfield Regeneration Trust: Officers have discussed the draft masterplan with the Trust and will be sending the Trust a brochure of the potential projects that they could become involved in.

Welsh Government: As one of the project funders, Welsh Government have a key monitoring role. However, officers are also working together to look at additional funding opportunities for the masterplan projects.

In addition, officers have updated Cadw and Natural Resources Wales on the proposals and will continue to do so throughout the development. Consequently, officers have submitted an expression of interest to Cadw to stabilize the engine house and/or air furnace should funding become available.

- 1.6 Partnership Working: The British Liaison Group
- 1.6.1 The Committee of the British Liaison Group has been involved in the project since

its inception. At the start of the project, officers were invited to provide updates at quarterly meetings of the Committee in Talywain.

The Liaison Group have since been invited to send 2 representatives to each of the Working Groups. There were initial issues with this model, with concerns on the part of officers around confidentiality and the status of draft documentation; and concerns on the part of the Liaison Group around their role in decisions affecting individuals in the community. To alleviate these concerns, a Memorandum of Understanding has since been signed with the Committee to provide a framework for this relationship.

1.6.2 As part of their role, Liaison Group Committee Members have attended the Masterplan working group. Their role has included:

- Suggesting possible land uses proposals / ideas
- Assisting with the screening of community project ideas
- Challenging land use proposals and the impact that they may have

1.7 Partnership Working: Wider Community Engagement

1.7.1 Officers are also keen to work with the wider community in the design, development, delivery and management of the project and site:

Workshops: There are three sets of community drop-in workshops in the programme: “*Setting the Vision*” (held in August 2018); “*The Phase 1 Works and Draft Masterplan*” (the current consultation); and “*The Detailed Designs*” (provisionally due to be held in March 2019). Each drop-in runs from 2.00pm – 7.00pm.

The “Setting the Vision” workshops were held in Garndiffaith Millennium Hall, Noddfa Chapel (Talywain), Talywain Hall and Varteg Community Hall. There were no attendees at the Varteg Community Hall session and so this venue was removed from future sessions.

School Engagement: Garnteg Primary School have been heavily involved in the project. They have attended regular litter picks (in collaboration with Keep Wales Tidy), taken part in a Forest Schools activity, and run a waste recycling project in collaboration with the Council’s Waste team. Further engagement activities are planned throughout the project.

Torfaen Play Services undertook a consultation and awareness raising activity in Garnteg and Cwmffrwdor schools during the “setting the vision” project stage.

Officers have not yet engaged with Abersychan Comprehensive School but will seek to do so as designs develop.

In addition, regular “on-site” activities have been organised with the nearest primary school Garnteg including a series of litter picks in collaboration with Keep Wales Tidy, a Forest Schools activity, and a recycling project in collaboration with TCBC Waste team.

Events & Activities: As part of the promotion of the project, Officers have arranged a series of ecological, historical and nature walks on the British and

have provided support and assistance for the second annual “Carols under the Arch” – a December event at the Big Arch entrance.

2. Information/Results

2.1 Approach to Producing the Masterplan

2.1.1 A planning application is required before remediation works can commence. In accordance with the LDP, the application must include a “Development Framework”.

The Development Framework should justify how the proposed remediation works will address the constraints of the British site, and how it will enable future land use opportunities (taking into account technical and economic constraints). The opportunities in the LDP for consideration are:

- Residential development of a quantity to be determined
- Employment development of a size to be determined
- Provision of education
- Local neighbourhood centre including shops
- Consideration of internal circulation governed by the principles of a sustainable movement hierarchy
- Primary access routes to the north and south
- Green infrastructure through the development and enhancement of biodiversity
- Provision of formal and informal recreation space
- How the wider area to the west of the British can be incorporated into the scheme

The Development Framework will therefore conclude with a “Masterplan” showing proposed land uses once the remediation works have been completed.

The LDP policy on the British Strategic Action Area is provided in full in Appendix 3.

2.1.2 To inform the development framework, Officers commissioned a Remediation Options Appraisal to assess whether the proposed remediation approach (targeting individual hazards) was the most appropriate in light of the changing economic climate, environmental situation, legislative context and available budget.

The report recommends that TCBC proceed with a targeted approach to the remediation of surface waters and mine entries. The consultants have proposed a concept scheme that focuses on the high priority mine entries and greatest flood risk.

The approach does not allow however for compaction of the surrounding mine workings. As such, the extent of potential development land within the draft masterplan is more limited than in previous undelivered proposals and this has consequences for the opportunities envisaged in the LDP, including:

- Residential: There will be significantly less land which is suitable for housing under the proposed remediation approach than would have been

the case had compaction been viable.

- Employment: In the absence of significant strategic road infrastructure improvements, it is unlikely that this site will be able to attract demand for industrial space.
- Education provision: With less housing land than previously envisaged it is unlikely that there will be sufficient additional pupil numbers from the site to require the construction of a new primary school.
- Local Neighbourhood Centre: With less housing land than previously envisaged it is unlikely that there will be sufficient additional footfall and disposable income without creating a negative impact on the existing shops on Commercial Road (Talywain) and Stanley Road (Garndiffaith).
- Green Infrastructure: the remediation approach will create new features that can enhance the green infrastructure beyond that envisaged in the LDP.

2.1.3 Community engagement is one of the main drivers of the masterplan. In August 2017, officers organized the first round of community drop-in workshops (“*setting the vision*”). The aim of this first round of workshops was to:

- (a) Agree a vision – a general direction of travel – for the masterplan taking into account the constraints and opportunities envisaged by the LDP.
- (b) Ask the community how they felt that this could translate into uses for the land/buildings

2.1.4 The Workshops were well-attended. 146 comments and suggestions were made at the sessions.

2.1.5 The following vision has subsequently been agreed for the Masterplan:

“A Sustainable Community; a Dramatic Natural Landscape with a Wealth of Historic Character”

2.1.6 The Masterplan Working Group including community representatives and representatives from Gwent Wildlife Trust met in late January 2018 to screen the ideas.

The group considered whether the idea was in line/conflicted with the vision, whether it was likely to attract funding, whether it was likely that a delivery partner could be found, and whether the idea would likely be affected by the emerging constraints. A summary of the ideas and conclusions is provided in Appendix 4

2.1.7 Between March 2018 and July 2018 officers produced a draft masterplan. This takes into account the LDP, the vision, the outcomes of the screening, the constraints mapping, and the concept scheme for water management. This is considered in section 2.2

2.1.8 There has been extensive engagement with the community and with planning stakeholders, as set out in sections 1.5-1.7, in developing the draft masterplan. However, it should be noted that the masterplan has not yet progressed through the formal planning process which will commence after the current engagement activities are concluded and may require some amendments.

2.2 Public Consultation: Responses

2.2.1. Officers have undertaken a wide range of public consultation activities at this “draft masterplan” stage. These include:

- Community drop in workshops held on the 25th July, 26th July and 1st August across Garndiffaith and Talywain. **(44 attendees)**
- A full meeting of the British Liaison Group on 15th August. **(c.30 attendees)**
- Online publication for comment on the Public Service Board’s “Get Involved” website. This was advertised via TCBC’s social media, the Liaison Group’s social media and the Free Press/Argus. **(64 responses)**
- Youth engagement sessions at Noddfa Play Scheme (5-11 year olds), Garnteg Play Scheme (5-11 year olds), Garnsychan Youth Club (13-16 year olds). An event was also scheduled for Ty Cyfle (16-24 year olds) but this had to be cancelled due to low attendance. **(27 responses)**

TOTAL: 165 responses/attendees

2.2.2 The consultation material is provided in full in Appendix 5.

The objectives of the consultation were:

1. To ensure that members of the public were aware of the proposed Phase 1 remediation work, to make clear that this was subject to further planning and design stages, and to summarise the remaining risks.
2. To showcase the masterplan and to ask members of the public for their comments and to identify whether anything was missing
3. To breakdown the masterplan into manageable “projects” that could seek partners/funding and to ask the public how they would prioritise these projects.
4. To show the initial “landscape management” priorities and to ask members of the public whether they felt these were the right priorities. Also to try and create interest in a group which can start to take forward some of these early actions now.

2.2.3 Three questions were developed in collaboration with the Council’s lead engagement officer.

Q1: Taking ideas from workshops with the local community, we’ve put

together this masterplan. What do you think of it? Have we missed anything?

Over 70% of responses raised no concerns at all about the draft masterplan. Of the remainder, 24% were largely positive but with some specific reservations. The remaining 3% of comments were not supportive of the draft masterplan. The comments are provided in Appendix 6.

2.2.4 Q2: Are these the right priorities for Landscape Management. Have we missed anything?

89% of responses felt that the draft masterplan had identified the right priorities (or raised no comment). Alternative priorities include:

- *“If it were possible it would be nice to see more woodland as well as picnic areas and an open air theatre for plays and concerts.”*
- *“Happy with landscaping but concerned that listed buildings need work asap”*
- *“Clearing of overgrown grass from Big Arch entrance”*
- *“Consideration will need to be given to ongoing maintenance and protection from vandalism.”*
- *Local schools can help. Set up a community group*
- *I think some focus on preserving and increasing the current buzzard / kite population should be considered too*
- *Removing poisonous weeds. Ragwort for one that can poison animals and people*
- *One suggestion could be to offer student internships for studies of biodiversity and species audits. This could be attractive to students undertaking environmental/ zoological / biological / entomological, etc degree courses.*
- *Missed opportunity to build in hydrological and geological/geomorphological features as learning aspects so that the site can become a beacon for environmental process education.*

2.2.5 Q3: Which of the future projects interests you the most? Have we missed anything from our discussions?

Consultees were presented with the specific projects that make up the draft masterplan and asked to identify which ones interested them the most. This provides us with an indication of priorities. 60% of consultees named specific priorities which were as follows:

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Entrance to the British | 6 |
| Ironworks Heritage Trail & Café | 30 |

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Accessing the British | 14 |
| Road Improvements | 1 |
| Landscape Corridor | 22 |
| Potential Development Areas | 4 |
| Community Food Growing Zone | 8 |
| Discovery Trail Hub | 7 |
| Sustainable Energy Generation | 12 |
| Cwmybyrgwm Heritage Trail | 8 |
| Trekking Centre | 7 |

The British Liaison Group voted unanimously on the following resolutions:

1) to form a "Friends of The British" volunteer group (see details below)

and

2) agreed this resolution relating Torfaen Council's recently exhibited plans:

** Notes and supports the recent plans publicised by Torfaen Council at 3 local exhibitions to provide for two leisure\wildlife ponds located above the old "Otties" ponds and for water flows to be brought to the surface

** Confirms our support for the "cleaning and greening" perspective outlined to Councillors when the land was purchased

** Notes and reserves judgement on all other aspects of the recent proposals

3. Discussion

3.1 Impact and Influence of Consultation

3.1.1 The concerns raised in this latest consultation will be addressed as follows:

1. School placements & traffic resulting from additional homes.

The land allocated for potential development in this masterplan is significantly smaller than that put forward by previous owners of the British. This recognizes the challenges of developing a large housing scheme in this area and the feedback from the community engagement sessions.

Officers initially intended to use the project budget to procure impact assessments to assess the extent of these issues. However, following discussions with the Liaison Group Committee, it was felt that it would be appropriate for these issues to be considered by a housing developer as part of future planning discussions for the potential development areas on the site.

2. Investigating dangers and “gentrifying” the site.

The remediation project includes some targeted investigation and treatment of the highest priority shafts and adits. Prior to issuing a permit for treatment, the Coal Authority will insist on borehole investigations therefore some investigation will be required.

3. ETM Building as a leisure facility.

The Colliery Engine/Pumping House at ETM Steel Fabrication is not in the Council's ownership. Officers will continue discussions with the property owners around their aspirations for the building and will share the findings of the public engagement with the owners.

4. Allotments

There are areas proposed in the masterplan for small-scale community food growing activities (fruit trees and bushes). However, larger scale food growing is likely to be constrained by contaminants in the tip material on site. These contaminants will not be removed by the project.

5. Woodland Planting

Woodland planting is being considered as part of the discussions with Gwent Wildlife Trust on the Landscape Management plan. Two areas – one in the Cwmsychan and one in the Cwmbryrgwm valleys – have been identified as having potential for woodland expansion.

6. Grassed Area at Big Arch

This will now be discussed by the Landscape Management Working Group to review whether this should become a priority area.

7. Work to Listed Buildings

Repairs to the listed buildings are outside the scope of the current funding. Officers have submitted an expression of interest to Cadw (should funding become available) for the stabilization of buildings. However, this action is dependent on further funding becoming available.

8. Ongoing Maintenance & Protection from Vandalism

The project team are working closely with the Rural Development Land Management Officer to look at opportunities to deter landscape crimes. These will be considered as part of the discussion with Gwent Wildlife Trust in shaping the Landscape Management Plan

9. School / Community Group for Landscape Management

The British Liaison Group are currently seeking volunteers for a new "Friends of the British" group to seek funds for the masterplan projects, and to assist with the landscape management activities. The group are receiving support from Torfaen Voluntary Alliance.

3.2 Delivering the Masterplan

3.2.1 The funding received from Council and the Welsh Government is for the Phase 1 remediation works only and so will not extend to the delivery of the wider masterplan. Recognising the need for further external funding and/or partnerships, the Masterplan has been broken down into a series of stand-alone "projects" (see Appendix 5).

3.2.2 Due to resource levels, officers will not be able to explore/develop all projects at the same time and so the projects will need to be prioritized. The top 4 community priorities identified at the consultation were:

- Ironworks Heritage Trail & Café
- Landscape Corridor

- Accessing the British
- Sustainable Energy Generation

3.2.3 Ironworks Heritage Trail and Café:

Officers have already undertaken a structural survey of the Cornish Engine House and Air Furnace to identify the remedial works required. In addition, officers have also secured additional funding from the Rural Development Programme to appraise demand for end uses.

The next step for this project is preparing funding applications in conjunction with the Friends of the British group

3.2.4 Landscape Corridor:

Officers from the Council's Environmental Projects team are seeking a partnership with the Friends of the British Group and Gwent Wildlife Trust. Once established, the partnership will prepare an application for funding from the Landfill Disposals Tax Community Fund

3.2.5 Accessing the British:

Officers from the Economy, Regeneration and Culture team will liaise with Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales to discuss potential sources of funding. In addition, officers are supporting the Friends of the British who are keen to seek funding to deliver the wider masterplan.

3.2.6 Sustainable Energy Generation:

Officers are currently seeking feasibility funding to progress the development of either wind or solar technology. The project team are in discussions with TCBC Property Services in relation to the proposed solar farm on Ty Coch so that any lessons learnt can be shared.

The advice received on hydro-electric power is that whilst there is potential to generate energy on the British site, it would require an identified end user on the site in order to be economically viable.

4. Implications

4.1 Policy

4.1.1 The draft masterplan is closely aligned to the Clean and Green corporate plan priority. The Masterplan vision focusses on promoting a dramatic natural landscape and creating sustainable communities. Moreover, the masterplan includes specific projects to improve the management, ecological value and accessibility of the site such as the landscape corridor, community food growing zone, ironworks heritage trail and cwmybyrgwm heritage trail.

4.2 Wellbeing of Future Generations

4.2.1 The Wellbeing Assessment for the project is provided in full in Appendix 1. The following progress has been made in delivering the suggested mitigation/promotion activities:

4.2.1.1 *Maximise positive impacts of development areas by exploring partnerships with RSLs, community renewable energy generation companies and the Welsh School*

of Architecture at Cardiff University.

- As above, “Local Partnerships” have assisted officers in scoping the viability of a green energy scheme. This work has identified potential and now requires feasibility funding to progress further.
- Preliminary discussions have been held with the Welsh School of Architecture who have expressed an interest in working on a project on the British once a developer has been identified.
- Discussions with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) have been postponed until a draft masterplan is in place indicating the potential development areas.

4.2.1.2 Maximise positive impacts of the natural environment by working in partnership with Gwent Wildlife Trust and Natural Resources Wales

- A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with Gwent Wildlife Trust. This partnership has already led to the Heritage Lottery Fund “Where’s your Wildlife” project on the British: a citizen science project which will also raise the profile of the British and encourage volunteers
- GWT are involved in the landscape management plan for the site.
- Natural Resources Wales will provide feedback on the draft Masterplan.

4.2.1.3 Working with the existing community to promote the area in a positive fashion in partnership with the existing community, highlighting its potential as a way of promoting healthy lifestyles.

- “Permissive route” marker posts have been installed to highlight safe walking routes.
- Keep Wales Tidy, Gwent Wildlife Trust and Garnteg School have worked with the Council to organize a series of community litter picks.
- “Where’s your Wildlife” has encouraged people to explore and walk the British through a series of guided heritage and nature walks.

4.2.1.4 Maximise positive impacts by engaging with Communities First team through the process and explore all opportunities to include local training within any contracts

- Since the wellbeing assessment was completed the Communities First programme has come to an end. As a result, the project team will now work closely with the Employability & Skills team to deliver local training outcomes. This will be considered during tender stage.

4.2.1.5 The team will work in partnership with the communities of North Torfaen to develop strong connections between themselves and the opportunities on the British site

- As set out above, partnership working has been a major driver of the project.

4.3 **Financial Implications**

- 4.3.1 Each project in the draft masterplan will require a source of funding. Officers will support project partners including Gwent Wildlife Trust and the emerging Friends of the British group to seek external funding for the priority projects.
- 4.3.2 As identified in paragraph 3 of the October 2016 Council report, the Council will be responsible for issues / maintenance arising post acquisition and the cost of this will need to be part of our medium term financial considerations.

The extent of these ongoing cost will be reviewed once the final designs of the remediation works and the final management plan have been produced.

4.4 **Strategic Risks**

- 4.4.1. The principal site hazards remaining after the remediation works are discussed in section 1.4.6 above.

The most significant risks are as follows:

| Risk | Risk Control |
|---|---|
| Undersized channels leading to failure of the water transport system (culvert / channel) leading to flooding in Abersychan | A structural survey of the culverts was commissioned to determine the condition of the culverts. The worst damaged culverts along the Blaengafog watercourse will be bypassed as part of the remediation works, with the water being kept at surface on that route. |
| Insufficiently protected channels leading to a build up of eroded material and blockages within the in water transport system (channels / culverts) | The detailed design of the watercourse channels will consider appropriate channel protection for the Blaengafog Route. The Cwmsychan and Cwmbyrgwm watercourses will remain. Culvert entrances will be monitored for build up of blockages / silt |
| Collapse of shallow mine workings during works | Abandonment plans show the location of workings for known pits in the area at the time of their closure. These will be used to inform the detailed design of the works and access routes for heavy machinery. |
| Injury from fall through untreated/ sub-standard treated shaft in TCBC ownership | AECOM (a multidisciplinary consultancy) were appointed to undertake a prioritization exercise as part of the remediation options appraisal. This has been undertaken and has informed the proposals for the remediation works. The remaining risks are identified in Section 1.4.6. |
| Collapse of listed building following deterioration | The funding does not allow for the repair of the listed structures. A structural |

| | |
|---|---|
| | survey has been commissioned and robust fencing has been erected to prevent vandalism. Further funding will be sought from Cadw and other sources in line with the objectives of the masterplan. |
| Injury or damage resulting from uncatalogued or unknown hazards | Permissive route marking has been erected to identify the safest walking routes. Contractors and consultants are required to provide risk assessments to indicate which areas of the site they will be accessing. |
| Tendered rates increase as a result of on-site abnormalities | A contingency has been allocated which will be reviewed as designs progress. The consultation has clearly indicated that some features may need to be removed from the watercourse route should other issues emerge. |
| Changes required to the scheme as a result of the planning process | Planning consultees are aware of the proposed works and masterplan. The Coal Authority are undertaking a peer review and NRW have early sight of the proposed concept and masterplan for comment. |
| Inlets continue to discharge into culvert network leading to build-up of hydraulic pressure and breach | This will be considered as part of the detailed design process. |
| Failure of water transport network (Channels / Culverts) due to insufficient maintenance leading to flooding downstream | A structural survey of the culverts was commissioned to determine the condition of the culverts. The worst damaged culverts along the Blaengafog watercourse will be bypassed as part of the remediation works, with the water being kept at surface on that route. |

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The British Project involves the design and delivery of remediation works to address the worst hazards (culverted watercourses and mine entries) on the site.
- 5.2 The remediation works for the British are required to submit a planning application and that planning application must be supported by a Development Framework “Masterplan”
- 5.3 A vision for the masterplan was set following extensive community consultation. This has informed the development of the proposed draft.
- 5.4 The draft masterplan seeks to balance the objectives of the LDP with the feedback from community consultation to propose a sustainable regeneration project for The British. It recognizes the constraints caused by the previous uses of the site which cannot be rectified under the current budget.
- 5.5 The draft masterplan has been publicly displayed online, at a meeting of the British Liaison Group, in community halls across the Abersychan Ward and at

focus group sessions with Children and Young People.

5.6 A total of 165 people responded at these events. Over 70% of responses were fully supportive of the masterplan with 24% of responses largely supportive but raising specific concerns.

5.7 Subject to approval, the technical design work for the remediation project will now commence and will be submitted alongside the masterplan as part of a planning application. The Masterplan will be submitted to Cabinet for approval as the preferred approach for the British site.

6. Scrutiny activity

6.1 What is the outcome of the public consultation on the masterplan, how have the responses influenced progress and how do you intend on delivering the ongoing management of the masterplan

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| Appendices | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Well-being Assessment Template.2. Working Group Outputs and Progress3. LDP policy on the British Strategic Action Area4. Feedback on ideas not included in the draft Masterplan5. Consultation Material6. Full Consultation Responses |
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| Background Papers | Note: Members of the public are entitled, under the Local Government Act 1972, to inspect background papers to reports. The following is a list of the background papers used in the production of this report. |
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| For a copy of the background papers or for further information about this report, please telephone: David Leech, North Torfaen Regeneration Programme Manager: 01495 766084 |
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Appendix 1: WELL-BEING ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

Project Description (key aims):

To acquire and remediate “The British” site in Talywain, in order to maximise the opportunities from this site for the well-being of communities in North Torfaen by:

- Addressing the health and safety risks on the site,
- Re-greening and promoting the site as an opportunity for outdoor recreation and biodiversity enhancement
- Exploring the longer-term opportunities for clean energy generation and potential for reasonably-priced housing

The project offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity to acquire the largest remaining site of industrial dereliction in South East Wales, ending the “cycle of speculation” that has for so long been the greatest barrier to its regeneration. The initial project objectives are:

- **IO1:** Appropriately manage the health and safety risks
- **IO2:** Strengthen the aspirations of communities to provide opportunities for future generations
- **IO3:** Support health and wellbeing goals by improving green infrastructure and promoting access to the natural environment
- **IO4:** Enhance environmental resilience by safeguarding and improving biodiversity
- **IO5:** Explore potential longer-term opportunities for private/third sector investment, jobs & growth
- **IO6:** Explore potential longer-term opportunities for future housing development
- **IO7:** Explore potential longer-term opportunities for latent green energy
- **IO8:** Protect and promote heritage and culture

Section 1) Complete the table below to assess how well you have applied the 5 ways of working.



Integration

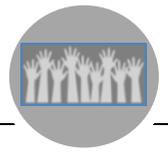
1. How does your project / activity deliver economic, social, environmental & cultural outcomes together?

The objectives set out to deliver an holistic project which: improves the **economic** wellbeing of the communities of North Torfaen (through the creation of temporary construction jobs, and the economic opportunities associated with potential housing development); creates opportunities to develop **social** capital (including boosting community aspirations), enhances the **environment** (through the re-greening of the site encouraging people into the natural environment, and enhancements to biodiversity); and protects the **cultural heritage** (by creating opportunities for the historic scheduled ancient monuments and listed buildings on the site). It will also facilitate and support green energy regeneration opportunities.

Given the multi-disciplinary nature of the proposal, it will be necessary to establish a project management group, bringing together

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| | <p>relevant interests from across the Council to form an integrated cross portfolio team as recommended in the Aligned Resource Management Report prepared for Neighbourhood Services by external consultants. The team will include officers from regeneration, economic development, environment, energy, heritage, Communities First, drainage, housing, asset management, legal, education, arts and culture.</p> <p>2. Are there any potential conflicts between your objectives – if so how will you resolve, manage and mitigate them?</p> <p>The various objectives are complementary rather than competing and can all be accommodated on a site of this size. Whilst there are minimal opportunities for conflict, it will be essential to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the opportunities on the site to ensure that any reclamation work maximises future renewable energy generation and biodiversity potential rather than curtailing these. The layout of the site allows for potential small-scale housing development and economic opportunities in the East of the site. To the west there is approximately 500 hectares of non-developable areas to be managed for the purposes of promoting environmental and cultural access, recreation and biodiversity.</p> <p>3. Will your objectives impact on the well-being objectives of another organisation?</p> <p>The objectives will be achieved by taking a partnership approach where possible, and working in accordance with WCFG Act, Environment Act, Active Travel Act and, where relevant, the Planning Act. The scheme will comply with the Wellbeing objectives of the Council and will support the well-being objectives of Welsh Government, and Natural Resources Wales. Discussion are taking place with Gwent Wildlife Trust around the management of areas of the site.</p> |
|  <p>Long-term</p> | <p>4. How does your project / activity balance short-term need with the long-term and planning for the future?</p> <p>The project will work in partnership to establish sustainable long-term management arrangements for the site. The project will seek to establish partnerships to sustain the objectives beyond the project period, particularly in the following areas::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Energy generation: to ensure the most beneficial use of the energy generating potential of the site for existing and future communities on the site and in the wider North Torfaen area - Housing: working with RSLs and other partners to ensure that housing is appropriate, high quality and will cater for the demands of future generations, including exploring opportunities for low or carbon neutral homes, and exploring opportunities for the site to be an exemplar of sustainable development. The development of housing is not a direct output of this project and any viable housing opportunities will be delivered outside the project period. <p>Environmental Management: exploring partnership opportunities with Gwent Wildlife Trust and others to ensure that the biodiversity of the area is protected and enhanced, and that public access to the outdoors is secured and extended,</p> |

| | <p>providing long-term benefits for both the current community and communities across Torfaen in future. Equality: by creating economic development opportunities, improving the aesthetic appearance and encouraging investment/purchase of new homes, the scheme will help to reduce inequality between that part of Torfaen and areas to the South. Within any contracts, we will incorporate appropriate social procurement clauses to support local contractors and examine the potential for training schemes that encourage local unemployed people to gain skills that make them more employable</p> | | | | | | |
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|  <p>Prevention</p> | <p>5. How does your project / activity put resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse?</p> <p>The project aims to address long-standing challenges that are having a significant impact on the health, well-being and economic potential of communities in North Torfaen.</p> <p>Key problems identified in North Torfaen that this project will help to address include:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="504 595 2190 1409"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="504 595 1350 632">Problem</th> <th data-bbox="1350 595 2190 632">Impact that this project is aiming to make</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="504 632 1350 967">Public health challenges. For example, Torfaen currently has the second highest obesity rate in Wales at 26% of the population</td> <td data-bbox="1350 632 2190 967">This project will enable the Council, for the first time, to actively promote the British as a source of outdoor recreation opportunities. The site contains two valleys and almost 500ha of land that is not currently promoted due to safety concerns but which would become available for open access activities. This will include walking, cycling, horse-riding and potentially watersports activities. Increased public involvement will deliver a wide range of health benefits for physical and mental health</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="504 967 1350 1409">The value of the environment and of biodiversity is not widely understood or valued.</td> <td data-bbox="1350 967 2190 1409">By sustainably managing access to the natural environment, this project will seek to increase public understanding of the rich variety of habitats, flora and fauna found in Torfaen. Working with partners, the Council will empower the local community to act as champions in preserving the unique habitats of the British, ensuring that the site will remain an attractive venue for future generations. Moreover, with the land in public ownership, the Council will be better equipped to ensure that any development of the site is sympathetic to its ecology and seeks to manage its natural resources sustainably.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Problem | Impact that this project is aiming to make | Public health challenges. For example, Torfaen currently has the second highest obesity rate in Wales at 26% of the population | This project will enable the Council, for the first time, to actively promote the British as a source of outdoor recreation opportunities. The site contains two valleys and almost 500ha of land that is not currently promoted due to safety concerns but which would become available for open access activities. This will include walking, cycling, horse-riding and potentially watersports activities. Increased public involvement will deliver a wide range of health benefits for physical and mental health | The value of the environment and of biodiversity is not widely understood or valued. | By sustainably managing access to the natural environment, this project will seek to increase public understanding of the rich variety of habitats, flora and fauna found in Torfaen. Working with partners, the Council will empower the local community to act as champions in preserving the unique habitats of the British, ensuring that the site will remain an attractive venue for future generations. Moreover, with the land in public ownership, the Council will be better equipped to ensure that any development of the site is sympathetic to its ecology and seeks to manage its natural resources sustainably. |
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| | <p>There is a shortage of high quality reasonably priced housing across Torfaen</p> | <p>Opportunities to work in partnership with housing associations to deliver an appropriate mix of reasonably priced housing on the eastern part of the site. Opportunities for energy efficient properties which minimise fuel poverty and provide resilience against rising energy prices will be explored through the project</p> |
| | <p>Employment and income levels are lower than other areas of South East Wales. This is linked to skills levels, community aspirations and employment opportunities.</p> | <p>This scheme aims to raise community aspirations by tackling head on one of the greatest blights that has faced this community for over 3 decades. Through the remediation work, the scheme has the potential to create employment and training outcomes. Long-term, opportunities will be explored for potential small-scale employment uses on the site. In addition, the energy generating potential of the site will be explored.</p> |
|  <p>Collaboration</p> | <p>6. How does your project / activity involve working together with partners (internal and external) to deliver well-being objectives?</p> <p>The governance structures for the project encompass a wide range of Council service areas, including officers from, regeneration, economic development, environment, energy, heritage, Communities First, forward planning, drainage, housing strategy, asset management, legal, education, arts and culture and finance.</p> <p>Delivery of the project will involve a wider collaboration with external agencies, including the Welsh Government, local Registered Social Landlords, potential regeneration companies, Natural Resources Wales, and Welsh Water. Partnership discussions are already taking place with regional Registered Social Landlords, Gwent Wildlife Trust and there is potential for further collaboration with regeneration companies and energy generation companies.</p> <p>We will seek to work with the Welsh School of Architecture within Cardiff University to explore potential opportunities for innovative sustainable homes utilising the latest research to implement the most recent technological methodologies in sustainable housing design. Adjoining local authorities of Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly will be engaged as part of the site falls within the SE Wales Upland Natural Resource Management Plan.</p> | |
|  | <p>7. How does your project / activity involve stakeholders with an interest in achieving the well-being goals? How do those stakeholders reflect the diversity of the area?</p> <p>Working closely with the community to develop and deliver the aims and objectives of this project is going to be essential to its</p> | |

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| <p>Involvement</p> | <p>success, particularly as the community is passionate about the site and it's potential. The Council will design and implement a formal communications plan as part of the project.</p> <p>The project will also sustain the long-standing consultative relationship with the British Liaison Group. This group has been established for over 20 years and has wide representation from the local community. It frequently hosts public meetings in relation to the British which are often attended by over 50 residents.</p> <p>In late August 2016, the Chief Officer, Neighbourhoods, Planning and Public Protection Service met with the BLG and outlined the proposals that were being considered. Following this presentation, the BLG voted by 54 to 1 in favour of the following resolution:</p> <p><i>"This meeting of the Liaison Committee supports Torfaen Council acquiring land at The British so that may be transformed into a community asset and welcomes the offer of Gwent Wildlife Trust to manage the area to maximise its wildlife features."</i></p> | |
| <p>Section 2) Assess how well your project / activity will result in multiple benefits for our communities and contribute to the national well-being goals (use Appendix 1 to help you).</p> | | |
| <p>Description of the Well-being goals</p> | <p>How will your project / activity deliver benefits to our communities under the national well-being goals?</p> | <p>Is there anyway to maximise the benefits or minimise any negative impacts to our communities (and the contribution to the national well-being goals)?</p> |
| <p>A prosperous Wales An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p> | <p>This project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide over 30 acres of land that could be suitable for development, including potential opportunities for housing and small-scale commercial uses after the project period. These opportunities will be fully explored during the project period - Will raise community aspirations and develop social capital by addressing a major blight on the communities of North Torfaen - Provides opportunities for training through the remediation work, creating new skills - Will explore opportunities in potential growth sectors such as green energy generation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximise positive impacts by exploring partnerships with RSLs, community renewable energy generation companies and the Welsh School of Architecture at Cardiff University. |

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| <p>A resilient Wales A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p> | <p>The project will promote and support the sustainable management of the rich and varied natural landscape of the site. Actions will enhance and maintain biodiversity locally and help contribute to a resilient Wales.</p> <p>It will promote the importance of eco-system services for a wide range of public benefits such as encouraging tourism, community food / food tourism projects, promoting healthy lifestyles and employability projects, pollination, managing flooding and using water and ground heat for energy</p> <p>Proposals will be subject to ecological surveys before being finalised and contracts prepared.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximise positive impacts by exploring partnerships with Gwent Wildlife Trust and Natural Resources Wales |
| <p>A healthier Wales A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</p> | <p>The project will improve access to over 500ha of green space.</p> <p>The project will promote public access to and use of the outdoors for recreation, including walking, cycling, horse riding and potential for other activities such as low-level watersports.</p> <p>Volunteering will also provide opportunities for local people to undertake physical activity to improve their physical and mental well-being.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximise positive impacts by exploring partnerships with Registered Social Landlords, and Communities First. - Other potential partnership opportunities will be explored in this area with Natural Resources Wales, Visit Wales and Gwent Wildlife Trust. - Working with the existing community to promote the area in a positive fashion in partnership with the existing community, highlighting its potential. |
| <p>A more equal Wales A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).</p> | <p>This scheme will promote access for all to the natural environment. It will target investment at communities within a Communities First area and seek to address the specific indices of deprivation affecting those communities.</p> <p>The project team will seek to incorporate appropriate social procurement clauses to support</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximise positive impacts by engaging with Communities First team through the process - Working with the existing community to promote the area in a positive fashion in partnership with the existing community, highlighting its potential |

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| | local contractors and examine the potential for training schemes that encourage local unemployed people to gain skills that make them more employable | - Exploring all opportunities to include local training within any contracts | |
| A Wales of cohesive communities Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities. | This project will create attractive and safe new public spaces on a site that is currently largely inaccessible because of safety constraints. | - Any housing opportunities on the site will be considered with the aim of creating attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities. - The team will work in partnership with the communities of North Torfaen to develop strong connections between themselves and the opportunities on the British site | |
| A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation. | The site includes a number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Listed buildings. By acquiring the site, this project will pave the way for potential future funding applications to restore and promote these sites of historic/cultural interest. | | |
| A globally responsible Wales A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being. | The scheme will maximise opportunities for renewable energy generation and carbon capture with the aspiration of creating a carbon neutral scheme. Materials will be used efficiently and any waste minimised. Where relevant, contracts will include a site waste management plan to minimise the waste produced from any development activities | | |
| Section 3) Will your project / activity affect people or groups of people with protected characteristics? Explain what will be done to maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impacts. | | | |
| Protected characteristics | Will your project / activity have any positive impacts on those with a protected characteristic? | Will your project / activity have any negative impacts on those with a protected characteristic? | Is there any way to maximise any positive impacts or minimise any negative impacts? |

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| Age | Yes | No | Specific engagement sessions with children and young people to identify their priorities |
| Disability | Yes | No | Consideration of access issues as part of the design of masterplan and management plan projects |
| Gender | N/A | No | |
| Gender reassignment | N/A | | |
| Marriage and civil partnership | N/A | | |
| Pregnancy and maternity | N/A | | |
| Race | N/A | | |
| Religion or Belief | N/A | | |
| Sexual orientation | N/A | | |
| Section 4) Identify decision meetings for project/ activity e.g. Cabinet, Council or delegated decisions taken by Executive Members and / or Chief Officers. | | | |
| Council | | | |
| Officer Name and Job Title: Dave Leech, Team Leader, Economy and Renewal (Pontypool) | | Date: October 2016 | |

Working Group Outputs & Progress

Site Acquisition and Hazards Monitoring Workstream

The following outputs have already been delivered:

- **Pre-acquisition advice**
- **Completion of the purchase**
- **Hazards monitoring schedule**
- **Site risk assessment**
- **Site warning signage**
- **Security fencing around structures**

The following outputs are either underway or ongoing throughout the project

- *Ownership issues including tenancies & grazing rights*
- *Hazards monitoring*
- *Farm Road Barriers*

Masterplan Workstream

The following outputs have already been delivered:

- **Agreed Site Vision**
- **Scoping land use opportunities: green energy, site circulation/Rights of Way; Visitor Facilities; community facilities; residential development; green infrastructure**
- **Masterplan**
- **Ecological Reports**

The following outputs are yet to commence:

- Development Framework
- Funding applications for future projects *

Landscape Management Workstream

The following outputs have already been delivered:

- **Conditions survey of buildings**
- **Memorandum of Understanding with Gwent Wildlife Trust**
- **Permissive route marking**
- **Installation of bins**
- **Identification of priority areas for management**

The following outputs are either underway or ongoing throughout the project

- *Litter picks programme*
- *Countryside/heritage walks programme*
- *Gwent Wildlife Trust's "Where's your Wildlife" programme*

The following outputs have yet to commence:

- Landscape management plan

Phase 1 “Remediation” Workstream

The following outputs have already been delivered:

- **Remediation options appraisal**
- **Culverts survey**
- **Mine entry prioritization**
- **Watercourse concept design**
- **Concept costings**
- **Hydrological assessment**
- **Coal Authority Review**

Subject to approval of the concept and proposed masterplan, the following outputs will commence:

- Topographical surveys
- Hydraulic modelling
- Earthworks engineering designs
- Mine entry engineering designs
- Watercourse channel engineering designs
- Land quality assessment
- Planning Application
- Schedule of works
- Tender documents for remediation contract
- Remediation Works Contract

LDP Policy on Strategic Action Area 5: The British

The British Site is identified as Strategic Action Area 5 in the Local Development Plan. The text in the LDP is reproduced below.

SAA5 The British Strategic Action Area, Talywain, Pontypool

Land is allocated at the British Strategic Action Area, Talywain for a major land reclamation scheme. The land reclamation scheme will prepare the land required for future redevelopment as part of a long term regeneration scheme and make safe the surrounding land. The subsequent land form and extent of compaction required to enable redevelopment will be informed by a Development Framework.

Policy Justification

7.6.1 The British comprises a large area of derelict land that has been the subject of much historical investigation. The Council is actively seeking the reclamation of The British to make safe this derelict site and also prepare part of the area for redevelopment to serve the North Torfaen and Pontypool area in the long term. The Development Framework proposed below will be prepared in parallel with the preparation of the land reclamation scheme and, taking account of the economic and technical constraints exhibited by the site, identify the optimum land form and ground stabilisation required to enable the site's redevelopment. Furthermore, the Council consider that any reclamation scheme advanced should include the making safe and environmental enhancement of the wider area which surrounds the site proposed for redevelopment.

7.6.2 In the long term (beyond the LDP plan period) the vision for The British is a major mixed-use development, which will be brought forward in line with a Development Framework to be prepared for the site. The SAA is located adjacent to the settlement of Talywain and covers a total area of 72 hectares.

7.6.3 The Council's long term vision for the site is one of a comprehensive regeneration scheme of a large brownfield site, which will play an important role in the regeneration of North Torfaen through the provision of quality affordable housing and employment opportunities and the removal of unsightly dereliction. This large area of derelict land and buildings is in need of reclamation. It is well located to provide for long term regeneration aims in the North Torfaen / Pontypool Area. It also presents the opportunity to provide enhanced open space and recreation opportunities on the reclaimed land. Parts of the site are at risk of flooding but this is primarily due to the existing ground conditions which the land reclamation works would be looking to address. Coal recovery may be appropriate to aid in the overall reclamation of the area but the nature and extent of this will need to be fully justified and examined against national policy (as detailed in MTAN2) as part of any planning application for the SAA. The Coal Authority supports the allocation and remediation of the site for its positive benefits which include addressing the mining legacy and hazards.

7.6.4 The site is subject to the following constraints, which will need to be addressed as part of the Development Framework: -

- Flooding;*
- Strategic highway Improvements to service the site;*
- Primary access point to the site (southern and northern end) and the treatment of the Big Arch;*
- The former railway line, cycle and leisure route and its integration into the scheme;*
- Dealing with contamination issues on site;*
- Ground stability issues from previous coal workings;*

- *The conservation and where possible reuse of Listed Buildings; and conservation of Scheduled Ancient Monuments and archaeological resources on site;*
- *Biodiversity constraints, including the need to minimise impacts on the LBAP species and SINC interests on site;*
- *The wider area to the west of the British site as to how this can be positively made safe and used as part of the regeneration scheme; and*
- *Potential for the biodiversity resources and heritage features to be used in the regeneration of the site.*

7.6.5 The site incorporates the existing and former residential terraces to the west of the site as well as the workings associated with the former British ironworks and collieries. The Development Framework will identify the boundaries of development areas, the proposed uses for the site, their quantum, strategic access arrangements and landforms. The area is located within the settlement boundary to show the potential extent of the urban extension in this area and allow for development to come forward on the site potentially before 2021. Developments coming forward on the site will be required to be comprehensively planned, coordinated and phased and be in accordance with a Development Framework prepared for the site. Sporadic or piecemeal development within the site not linked to the comprehensive regeneration in accordance with a Development Framework will be resisted.

7.6.6 As part of the detailed Development Framework that is to be prepared for the site the following land use elements will need to be addressed:

- *Residential development of a quantity to be determined;*
- *Employment development of a size to be determined by the Development Framework);*
- *Provision of education facilities in the form of a 210 place single form entry school;*
- *Local neighbourhood centre, providing local facilities including shops;*
- *Emphasis should be placed on ensuring that internal circulation within the site is governed by the principles of a sustainable movement hierarchy;*
- *Primary Access Routes (north and south) and through routes including the treatment of the Big Arch;*
- *Green infrastructure through the development and enhancement of biodiversity;*
- *Provision of formal and informal recreation space; and*
- *The wider area to the west of the British and how it can contribute to the regeneration scheme.*

Feedback on ideas that have not been included in the Masterplan:**“SETTING THE VISION” CONSULTATION**

- **Allocate land for rare breed livestock grazing**

The project team will allocate land for grazing in the draft masterplan. This will be picked up through the Landscape Management working group.

- **Allocate land for existing nature & wildlife, and consider promoting new activity such as:**

- Bee keeping
- Pigeon lofts
- Picnic areas
- Bird hides

A majority of the British will remain as green space in the draft masterplan. Priority areas for habitat improvement will be identified through the Landscape Management working group. In addition, masterplan projects will be developed to improve and enhance target areas with a view to potential SINC status. These projects will seek to incorporate bee keeping, picnic areas and bird hides. However, the working groups felt that incorporating pigeon lofts would be detrimental to the existing bird populations on site.

- **Allocate land for a “glamping” site**

The project team will explore a land allocation for glamping, particularly if there are opportunities to combine this with an activity centre. Road/pedestrian access will need to be considered as this will require planning consent.

- **Restore the lido**

The working group raised concerns about the cost of reinstating the lido compared to the number of people who might use it. This idea has not therefore been included in the draft masterplan.

- **Restore the Winding Gear as a feature at Cwmybyrgwm**

The project team will include a heritage trail linking the heritage features in Cwmybyrgwm in the draft masterplan. This will include the winding gear renovation.

- **Restore Engine House / NCB as a:**

- Restaurant
- Ironworks Museum / Visitors Centre
- Office Complex
- Craft / Workshop complex
- Youth Centre
- Café
- Bike hire / repair unit
- Consolidate as ruins

The project team have secured additional funding from the Rural Development Programme (RDP) to commission an appraisal of the target markets, likely demand and sustainability of the various options. This appraisal has concluded that a phased approach would be most viable. The first phase will see the consolidation of both structures; the second phase would see the restoration of the Engine House as a café/bike hire venue but would be dependent on the site attracting a sufficient number of site visitors beforehand. The appraisal concluded that other uses are unlikely to be sustained without significant additional site users.

- **Construct a new Health and Wellbeing Centre**

This site is unlikely to meet the health board's requirements.

- **Construct an extension of the Pontypool & Blaenavon Heritage Railway**

The Leisure Route (NCN49) has now been constructed along the old railway line. There is a risk of conflict between users if the heritage railway is reinstated. In some places the railway line would be required to divert from its original route to accommodate the Leisure Route. It is not felt that this is viable in the medium-term and so this has not been included in the draft Masterplan.

- **Create ponds for:**

- Coarse fishing
- Boating
- Wetland habitat

Ponds are included as part of the proposed phase 1 remediation works. However, the working group raised concerns about potential conflict between different end uses for the ponds. The vision intends to create a "dramatic natural landscape" and the wetlands habitat would be most in keeping with this vision.

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- **Portacabin Café / Kiosk**

There is potential to include this in the ironworks area as a short-term project. However, this would require further investigation to identify an operating partner. This will be considered as part of the Ironworks Heritage Trail project.

- **Hub on the site as focal point for Volunteer group**

This will be considered as part of the ironworks heritage project.

- **Zipwire, obstacle course, adventure play parks and Skate Park**

An activity centre was considered as part of the review of opportunities for the listed structures identified above. This noted that the centre was a poor fit with buildings, complex and difficult to secure an operator. The report points out that a number of centres have faced difficulties.