

Pontcysyllte, Cefn Mawr and Surrounding Villages  
Central Parking and Tourist Information Centre  
PKC Group Design & Access Statement

**General Overview:**

This is the Design and Access Statement for the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site central to the WHS corridor including the villages of Cefn Mawr, Trevor, Froncysyllte, Acrefair, Rhosymedre, Plas Madoc, New Bridge and Cefn Bychan by the Plas Kynaston Canal Group. It is for WHS site and Community Infrastructure Improvements that are central and appropriate for the upgrading of tourism for this section of the corridor. These improvements, applied for under this planning application, are the first phase in a planned series to be implemented over the next five to six years, culminating in the completion of the Plas Kynaston Canal and Marina in 2018 and the full remediation and appropriate development of the Solutia Site at Cefn Mawr.

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**Introduction:**

This statement should be read in conjunction with the road maps, plans, drawings and aerial photography submitted as part of this planning application, as well as the following documents held on WCBC files and all relevant guidelines regarding such planning applications. However, to name site specific guidance:

- Pontcysyllte Aqueduct & Canal WHS Management Plan
- Pontcysyllte Aqueduct & Canal Tourism Development Plan 2011-2015
- Pontcysyllte Area Assessment and Management Plan
- Cefn Mawr Schedule 4 Management Plan.

**Location:**

The site which is the subject of this application is central to both the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and the main high street of Cefn Mawr, Crane Street. The Village of Cefn Mawr forms a hub for the surrounding villages of Trevor, Froncysyllte, Acrefair, Rhosymedre, Plas Madoc, New Bridge and Cefn Bychan and is only half a mile in a direct line from the Aqueduct. These villages are central to the World Heritage Site corridor and all lie on the North side of the River Dee apart from Froncysyllte which is on the South side at the opposite end of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. These villages, as a whole, constitute the largest sector of the community along the WHS corridor, outnumbering both Chirk and Llangollen combined.

The site where the main Central Parking and Tourist Information Centre will be built will also constitute the first step in the redevelopment of the former Solutia / Flexsys / Monsanto Chemical works. Therefore this application will not encroach on any of the specially protected sites such as the Scheduled Ancient Monument of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, Trevor Basin Conservation area or Cefn Mawr Conservation area. However, it will make a positive contribution and enhancement to all three which it is central to.

The World Heritage Site corridor is 11 miles or 18 kilometres long following the Llangollen Canal, extending from where the canal draws its head water at the Horseshoe Falls, near Llantysilio, to Gledrid Bridge, near Rhoswiel, on the far side of the River Ceiriog after crossing both the Vale of Llangollen and the Ceiriog Valley via the Pontcysyllte and Chirk Aqueducts respectively.

The whole of the WHS site, along the Llangollen Canal, Vale of Llangollen, River Dee, River Ceiriog and Ceiriog Valley, displays an exceptional combination of post industrial heritage and transport infrastructure, combined with the natural beauty of the surrounding countryside, apart from the former Monsanto chemical works which is central to the whole corridor and lies within the buffer zone for such.

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The Scar in Cefn Mawr

**Inscription of the World Heritage Site:**

On 27<sup>th</sup> June 2009, at the 33<sup>rd</sup> session of UNESCO World Heritage Committee meeting in Seville, Spain, the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal were added to the World Heritage Sites List. This inscription to the list confirmed the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal's place among the World's elite 'Cultural' sites and the case put forward for its authenticity, integrity and Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) was accepted.

It is the OUV for each World Heritage Site (WHS) which defines its very essence and global significance and it is the intention of this planning application to add further value to this by starting the redevelopment and remediation of the former chemical works in a manner that will integrate with, and support, such inscription and promote the local economy in a likewise manner.

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**Conservation Areas:**

The site, that is the subject of this application, is bounded by the two conservation areas of Cefn Mawr and the Trevor Basin. Whilst the site does not lie in either conservation area, it is between, and falls within, the WHS buffer zone. Therefore, due regard is given to special architectural and historic interests, character and appearance, of which all are desirable to preserve and/or enhance each of the conservation areas and the WHS.

The special interests of both Cefn Mawr and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct are recognised in this application which is derived from a combination of characteristics, such as historic street patterns, traditional and notable building styles and structures.

It is recognised that the visual 'quality of place' they possess should be both preserved and promoted. This aspect principally results from the way in which the buildings and spaces relate to each other, together with the inherent quality of the buildings and other structures. Boundaries of existing areas are subject to periodic review, using consistent criteria and consideration given to the designation of new areas. With care and attention the character of Conservation Areas can be maintained, whilst remaining viable places in which to live or work.

It is this exact combination that the PKC Group seek to promote in all the activities they engage in and therefore due consideration is made for WCBC LPG No 4 in this and all applications etc.



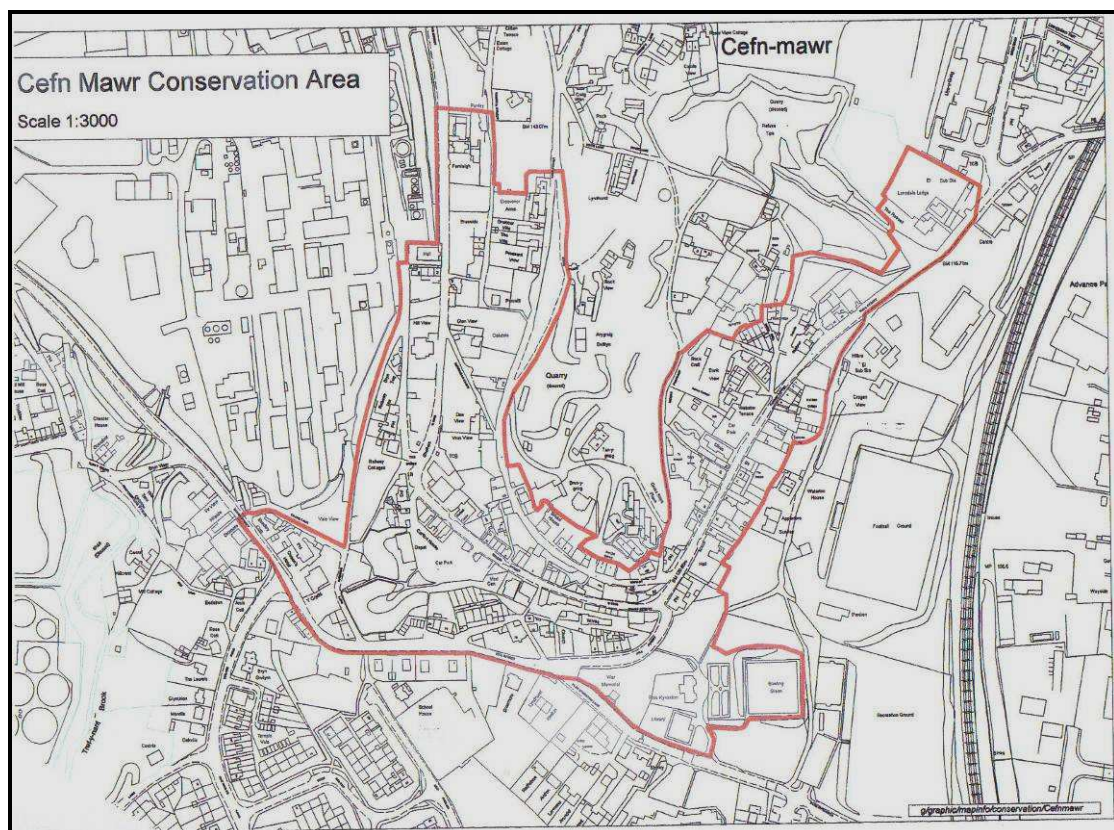
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**Cefn Mawr Conservation Area:**

The Cefn Mawr Conservation Area was originally set up in 2004 to help protect the distinct character of Cefn Mawr, one of Wrexham's most historic villages. The designation was provided to give general control over the demolition and alteration of buildings and also to ensure that any new developments are designed in a way that preserves the distinctive character of the area.

There are two Grade II Listed Buildings within the Cefn Conservation Area, Plas Kynaston Hall and Cefn Kynaston, along with many fine examples of unlisted buildings, in particular commercial properties which date back to the late 19th Century, many of which retain their original timber shop fronts. One particular building, 110 High Street, dates back to the 18th Century and is a rare survivor and excellent example of the first labourers' cottages to be built in Cefn Mawr.

The boundary of the Conservation Area wraps around the quarry, the centre of the area's early industry, from which stone extracted was quarried to construct the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and many of the early buildings and structures in Cefn Mawr.



Cefn Mawr Schedule 4 Conservation Area

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The following extract is taken from a report by Lawrence Isted, Chief Planning Officer, to Council Members:

*"The special character of the area comes from its location, which overlooks the Vale of Llangollen, and has developed on a range of different levels each tier being linked by a network of narrow paths and streets. It has a unique industrial history that began with the discovery of rich resource deposits of stone, iron ore, coal and clay which were all quarried, mined and extracted from the area. This was followed by an effective transport system centred about Thomas Telford's Aqueduct, and a tram system that linked the industrial developments of the area. The area's architecture, developed over the last 200 years with a mixture of local materials, has created a varied townscape with fine examples of commercial and private buildings make the area distinct and one that should be protected and preserved as part of its regeneration."*

To date, £3.5 million pounds has been spent through the THI Townscape Heritage Initiative in Cefn Mawr but unfortunately this has not brought any commerce to the village. In fact, as of close of 2011, the trend is for continued economic decline ahead of the current general recession. This was highlighted by the closure of the HSBC bank in 2011, the only bank left in Cefn Mawr which was once a thriving commercial centre with four banks.

This has further been endorsed by the multiple closures of the Ebenezer Chapel where in excess of £1.5 million has been spent of the THI funding for the restoration and extension and an unknown amount of funding through the DVCP by the WCBC.

The failure of this and the overall spending allocation to date on Cefn Mawr is simply because of a lack of footfall despite being only half a mile away from the top tourist attraction for North East Wales. The simple objective of the application is to redress this problem.

**It is impossible to move either the Aqueduct or the Village of Cefn Mawr but with the right combination of signage and facilities we can move the people.**

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**Trevor Basin Conservation Area:**

The Trevor Basin Conservation Area was first designated in 1998. It is linear in form and based around Trevor Basin on the Llangollen Canal. The basin is where a feeder branch from the Horseshoe Falls connects with the main canal. It includes the setting of the Grade I listed Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and other key structures important in the development of the Basin, such as the wharves, Bridges and the Telford Inn at the North end and part of the embankment at the South end. The canal was developed in the early 1790s when it was promoted as a necessity for the expansion of the ironworks, collieries and associated industries of the district. The centrepiece of the Conservation Area is the Aqueduct itself, completed in 1805.

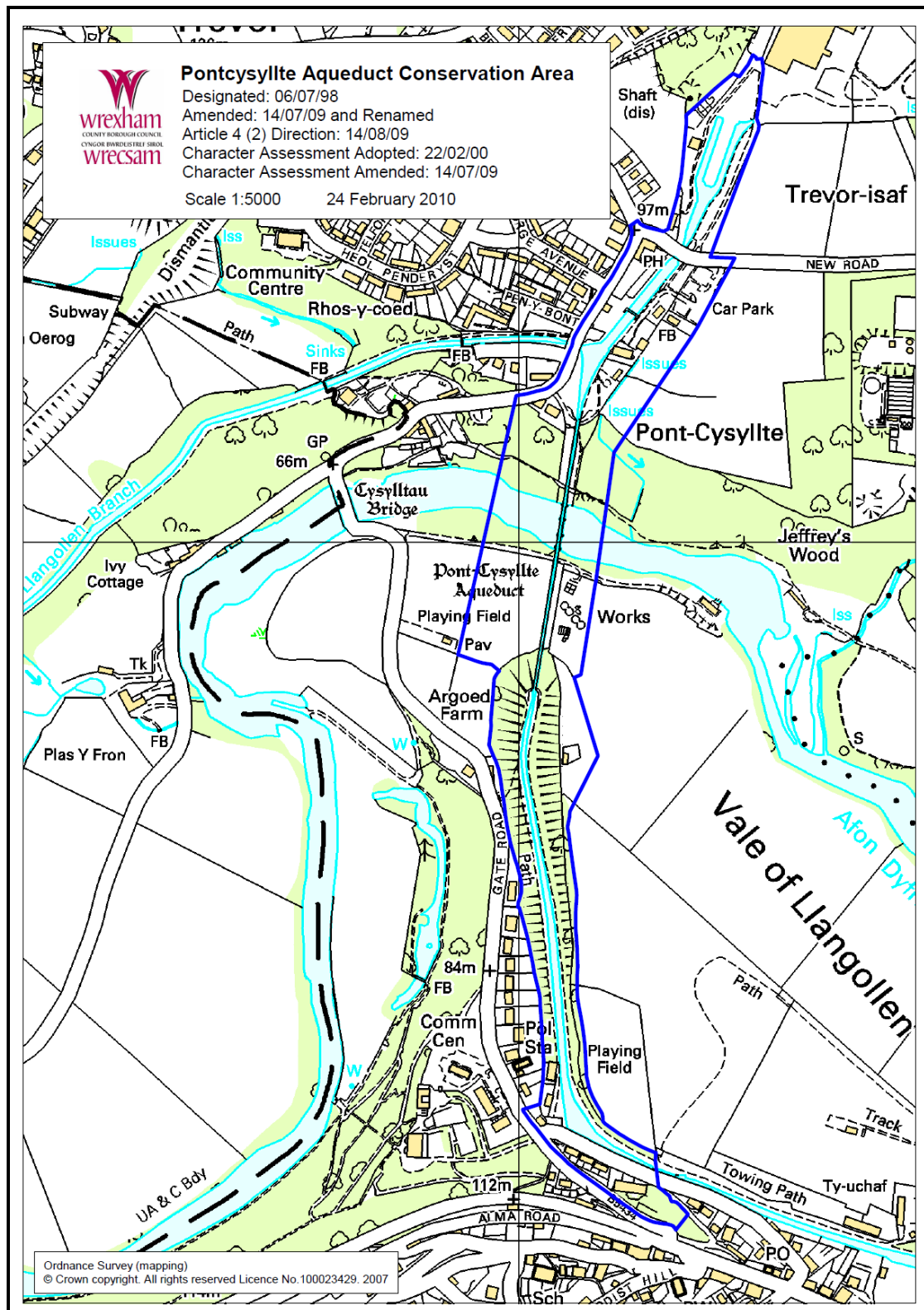
Following the UNESCO World Heritage Committee decision in the summer of 2009 the area was renamed 'Pontcysyllte Aqueduct Conservation Area' and introduction of an Article 4(2) Direction was implemented to ensure minor developments to existing dwelling houses was controlled to conserve the area in parallel with that which had been implemented in Cefn Mawr since 2005.

The revised Conservation Area Character Assessment and Management Plans of Article 4(2) Direction ensure that the special character and appearance of the Conservation Areas can be preserved or enhanced. That document is divided into two parts:

1. Character Assessment providing historical background that defines the qualities that make up the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
2. Management Plan which sets out proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the area and provides design guidance for alterations to existing properties and new construction.

All planning applications submitted by the PKC Group and its members for the betterment of the communities that are central to the WHS corridor will be in accordance with the appropriate Conservation Guidance material and in fact seek to restore and preserve all such Historical Heritage as a feature for increasing the potential tourist attraction of the area, this is simply a commercial necessity.

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Trevor Basin / Pontcysyllte Aqueduct Conservation Area



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**Scheduled Ancient Monument:**

Although the conservation area of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Llangollen Canal contains the scheduled ancient monument of the Aqueduct itself, in the area immediately adjacent to the conservation area and some 400 yards upstream from the aqueduct is the Cysyllte Bridge which predates the Aqueduct by some 300 years.

Unfortunately, this bridge, which is a major feature of the area and clearly visible from the aqueduct, is being damaged by the road traffic on the B5434 trying to get to the aqueduct with the present road signage. Hence the reason for this planning application to redress this traffic problem by establishing the main central parking facilities and central tourist information point at the Winborne Gate on the ex Solutia Chemical Works site which can be serviced by a suitable direct road link from the main road, the A539 without crossing the Cysyllte Bridge. We, the Plas Kynaston Canal Group are also asking for the B5434 to be restricted to access only, for the sake of both the bridge and road safety in the Trevor Housing Estate.



Damage to the Pont Bridge 2011 Section 1

We are currently making enquiries regarding how much the repairs in 2011 have cost the Denbighshire County Council to date and how much more is envisaged for the ongoing repairs and restoration work that is obviously necessary.

This is an obvious distraction from the tourist potential of the area and has to be amended with a practical and viable solution and more than simply placing large lumps of concrete etc around the area! Please restrict access.

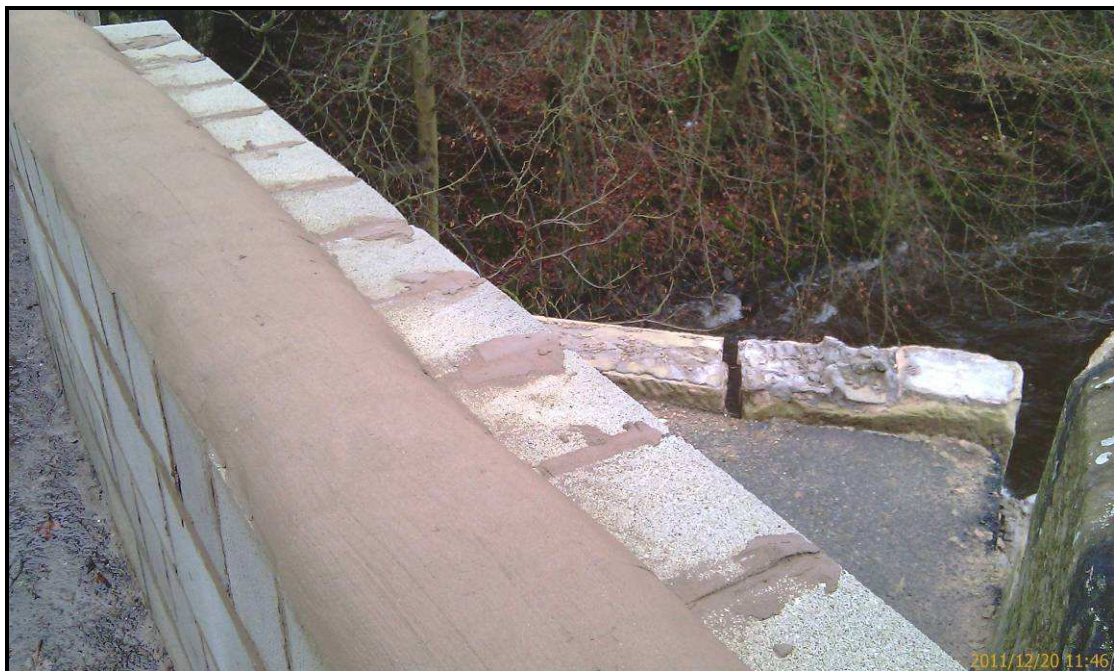




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The temporary repair on the Cysyllte Bridge 2011



The temporary repair on the Cysyllte Bridge 2011

This parapet of the bridge has been knocked down twice in 2011 and the stone work for it currently lies at the bottom of the River Dee which will be expensive to recover and rebuild. This situation needs redress to save the Local Authorities further expense, and once again this is a concern for the PKC Group. The PKC Group seek to work with the Local Authorities in the most efficient manner for the optimum outcome for all concerned, and this kind of destruction to our Heritage has to be addressed. The appropriate road signs will cost far less than the repair bill for this.

### **Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg:**

The Vale of Llangollen in North East Wales presents a remarkable visual combination of stark natural landforms and ancient and modern man-made features.

Geomorphologically the vale is a broad rift valley, dominated on the north by the towering limestone cliffs of Eglwyseg Mountain. The clifftops gradually gain in height from 300m above OD (Ordnance Datum) at their southernmost point overlooking the middle of the vale, to 450m above OD at their northernmost point overlooking the upper reaches of the narrow tributary valley of the Eglwyseg River. On the south side of the vale, the slopes rise steeply to 400m above OD along the summit of the ridge that divides the vale from the Ceiriog valley to the south. The flat floor of the vale is about 100m above OD and contains the winding course of the River Dee, although at Llangollen, the vale narrows into what is more characteristically a river valley, first turning north and then west to continue beyond the part of the vale described here. Overlooking Llangollen from the east are the imposing remains of Castell Dinas Brân, a medieval masonry Castle located within the earthworks of an earlier, Iron Age Hill Fort. The site occupies the summit of a steep sided, conical shaped hill which rises spectacularly to 320m above OD out of the valley floor and is topped by the picturesque ruins of the castle which was possibly built by Gruffydd ap Madoc, son of the founder of Valle Crucis Abbey. The Cistercian abbey of Valle Crucis lies near the confluence of the Eglwyseg and the Dee north of Llangollen, and was founded by Madog ap Gruffydd in 1201 as a colony of Strata Marcella near Welshpool. The now ruined abbey buildings are typical of many Cistercian foundations, lying in a secluded river valley surrounded by farmland. Local folklore associates Valle Crucis with Owain Glyn Dwr who disappeared in about 1410 after the failure of his rebellion against the English.

The fragmentary 9th-century cross, the Pillar of Eliseg, is set on a small circular mound which is perhaps a Bronze Age barrow, just to the north of the Abbey. The cross has a Latin inscription which is now too eroded to read, but according to a transcription of 1696, celebrated the glories of the house of Powys and recorded that the stone was erected by Cyngen in honour of his great-grandfather Eliseg.

At the northern end of the Eglwyseg valley, at World's End, lies the impressive timber-framed manor house Plas Uchaf which bears a date of 1563. West of the Eglwyseg valley, the northern limit of the landscape is dominated by the majestic sweep of the Horseshoe Pass where the road finally climbs over Maesyrychen Mountain, past abandoned 19th century slate quarries that were once linked to Cefn Mawr by the tramways and canal. The early tramway lines that connected these quarries to the canal and the rolling stock that ran on them were made at Cefn Mawr as in fact all the early tramways of the Vale of Llangollen were.



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The Dee valley has always been a major communications route and bears the evidence of successive innovations in the history of transport. Perhaps the most notable of these is the Llangollen branch of the Shropshire Union Canal, constructed by Thomas Telford and opened in 1805. From its source at the Horseshoe Falls the canal follows the northern side of the valley before crossing the Dee with the dramatic Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, overshadowing its medieval 'counterpart' which carried the road over the River Dee the Cysyllte Bridge. At the northern end of the aqueduct is Trevor Wharf where Telford reputedly stayed during its construction. Telford was also responsible for the construction of the new Holyhead Road, now the A5, which runs through the vale and has been officially marked as a historic route.

The vale also bears the scars of an industrial past. The limestone cliffs of Eglwyseg have been quarried for centuries both for building stone and as a source of lime. Several lead mines drove adits directly into the cliffs, and the remains of both industries are still to be seen. The north west of the area displays the remains of slate quarrying, including inclines and parts of an embanked tramway, while its southern end is dominated by the industrial complexes of Cefn Mawr and Acrefair.

Llangollen itself straddles the Dee via the arched bridge built about 1500ad. The historic core of the town lies on the southern side, focusing on the church and the river crossing. Later development occurred largely because of the woollen industry, which used the natural power source of the Dee to drive several mills, and then during the 19th century because of the coming of the railway which, although finally closed to traffic in 1968, has now been partly reopened for tourists, as the Dee Valley Railway. On the outskirts of the town is Plas Newydd, the home of the Ladies of Llangollen who at the turn of the 19th century were renowned patrons of the arts and did much to promote a resurgent interest in Welsh culture. Llangollen has built on these artistic traditions and is now known throughout the world for the International Eisteddfod held annually in the town.



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**Chirk:**

The border town of Chirk stands on the escarpment above the point at which the rivers Ceiriog and Dee meet. The name Chirk is thought to be an English corruption of the name Church, however its Welsh name 'Y Waun' means 'the moor'. Chirk's strategic position gave rise to a motte and bailey castle built by the Normans in the early 12th Century. In 1310, the Marcher fortress of Chirk Castle, was completed and today proudly guards the entrance to the Ceiriog Valley.

In the 19th century vital road, rail and canal links were developed. Chirk became a staging post on the London to Holyhead mail road, whilst the Llangollen branch of the Shropshire Union Canal reached Chirk in 1801. The Llangollen canal is perhaps Britain's most popular cruising canal and Chirk Marina is well situated between Thomas Telford's two magnificent aqueducts at Chirk and at Pontcysyllte. Chirk Aqueduct built between 1796 and 1801 by Telford and William Jessop, is 70 feet high with 10 arches. At the northern end of the Aqueduct, the canal enters Darkie Tunnel which is wide enough for a single barge and walkway. Using the walkway it is possible to walk through the quarter mile long tunnel.

The area's main visitor attraction is Chirk Castle, a magnificent 700 year old marcher fortress built by King Edward I. Owned by the National Trust, the castle is open to the public and has a shop and licensed tea room. Chirk's railway station established in 1846 by the Scottish engineer Henry Robertson provides a useful starting point for exploring Chirk, Chirk Castle, Llangollen, The Ceiriog Valley and the surrounding areas.

The River Ceiriog rises in the Berwyn Mountains at 1,800 feet and then, swiftly and impetuously, descends eastwards for some 18 miles to confluence with the more sedate River Dee. During its length, the Ceiriog Valley provides a myriad of different landscapes and every turn in the valley's meandering road brings something new and unexpected. The lush, pastoral valley floor 300 yards across at its widest point is home to sheep and cattle; they quietly graze beside the fast flowing, trout filled waters of the Ceiriog. Further up the valley, remote romantic rocky glens, and wooded

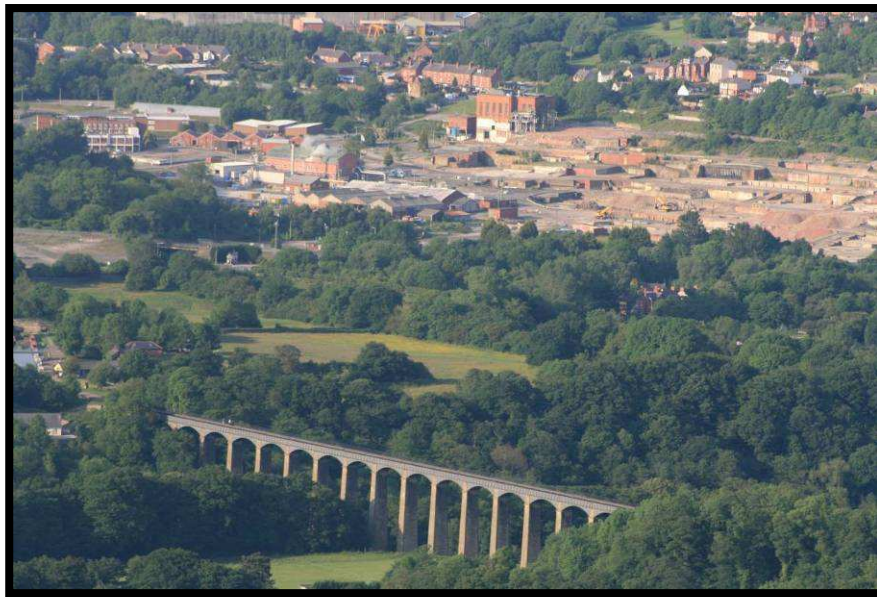


slopes are overlooked by bare mountain summits and heather clad moorland. Here, the overwhelming feeling is of the impressiveness of the mountain slopes and a sense of peacefulness. This silence may only be broken by the call of a buzzard or the bleating of a lamb.



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The Vale of Llangollen and Eglwyseg is one of twenty-two landscapes included in the Register of Landscapes of Special Historic Interest in Wales, issued in 2001 by CADW, the Countryside Council for Wales and ICOMOS UK. This covers the whole of the western half of the buffer zone and inscribed site, including the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and its environs. In practice, given the topography of the inscribed site and formation of the canal, it protects all those areas where extensive views of and from the inscribed site are of importance. Inclusion on the register highlights the area as one of the best historic landscapes in Wales and this strengthens consideration of landscape issues (vital for protection of the buffer zone) in planning decisions.



Here the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct can be clearly seen in the foreground of this picture crossing the River Dee and the remains of the former Monsanto – Flexsys – Solutia Chemical works can be seen to the rear

on a pleasant summer's afternoon. It is obvious that former works of the Solutia Site does not fit the criteria of CADW, the Countryside Council for Wales or ICOMOS UK recommendations.

The River Dee and Bala Lake are designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and the River Dee also holds the status of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are designated under the European Community Habitats Directive as part of a European network of high quality sites that will make a significant contribution to conserving the 189 habitat types and 788 species most in need at a European level (excluding birds). They are protected in the UK by the Conservation (natural habitats) Regulations 1994.

It is the intention of the PKC Group to provide natural habitat for wildlife within all redevelopment of the former Solutia site and the present application includes the provision of tree planting and landscaping for screening that will provide suitable habitat corridors for colonisation by wildlife within the site. This is another must for the commercial viability of the site to raise the Tourism Appeal in general.

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**The Proposals:**

The proposals presented here are, we believe, what is needed for both the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct as identified by the WHS Management Plan and what is needed for the local communities of Cefn Mawr and Surrounding Villages.

This is further confirmed by the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct & Canal Tourism Development Plan. Destination Management is clearly identified as a key objective for planning applications that will enhance the visitor experience through the opening up the whole area of both the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, Cefn Mawr and Surrounding Villages and engaging with the visitors on a much wider scale. This will provide a host of facilities that are just not obtainable by any other means, and will serve to stimulate the struggling economies of Cefn Mawr and Surrounding Villages.

What is applied for in this planning application:

The Tourist Information Centre which will have:

- 25m<sup>2</sup> of floor space for Tourist Information for the whole of the WHS site and additional literature.
- 25m<sup>2</sup> of floor space for Historical Site Interpretation
- 25m<sup>2</sup> of floor space for Plas Kynaston Canal & Marina modelling
- 25m<sup>2</sup> of floor space for Eco Friendly and Site Specific Acceptable Housing Development Information that is suitably chosen to co-ordinate with the WHS Buffer Zone and the Historical Heritage Character of Cefn Mawr. The promotion and use of natural materials in construction for such will be openly conveyed such as sandstone walling and slate roofing, which the tourist information centre will be an example of.
- A bicycle hire and drop off point for Derek's Cycles
- Suitable tree planting and landscaping will be undertaken to provide both tree-lined screening for the Monsanto Chemical works site during remediation over the years of 2012 to 2018 and a natural habitat and corridor for wildlife within the presently sparse site.
- A full public toilet block facility will be provided with four numbers of toilets for both Ladies and Gentlemen by converting the present Winborne Gatehouse into such. This will be finished in traditional materials of Sandstone, Render, Timber and Slate Roofing.
- Main road signage indicating how to get to the main central parking and tourist information centre without transiting through housing areas.
- Local hardwood sign posting for the whole area indicating how to explore the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, Cefn Mawr & Surrounding Villages which will be co-ordinated with local mapping and guidance material.
- Direct foot path and cycle way access to the Trevor Basin Area.
- Appropriate seating and picnic table areas.

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It has been assumed that planning permission is only required for the Tourist Information Centre and Public Toilet Block facilities adjacent to the Winborne Gate parking area which is central. This is because the WCBC has already designated this as a parking area for such purposes. However the proposals for the whole site under Phase One have been included in this planning application to show how this planning application will co-ordinate with and support all local businesses by providing the most effective tourist destination management for the area, whilst also complying with all requirements for the WHS and adjacent Conservation Area requirements of Cefn Mawr and Trevor Basin.

The Tourist Information Centre will provide a hub for the dissemination of information to the visitor that will encourage migration from the central point at the Winborne Gate parking area radiating out to both the Aqueduct and Cefn Mawr.

This will then address all of the main criticisms regarding the current Trevor Basin and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct site, and the two most pertinent to this application being the lack of facilities at the Trevor Basin and consequently the short visitor dwell time within the central area of the WHS Corridor. If Cefn Mawr is brought on line as is the intention of this planning application and further phase developments over the next five to six years these problems are being directly addressed in the most cost effective and socially acceptable manner that will provide a tourist destination value that is unobtainable by any other means. This will also pave the way for the remediation of the Solutia Site and provide Solutia Chemicals with the solution that they require.

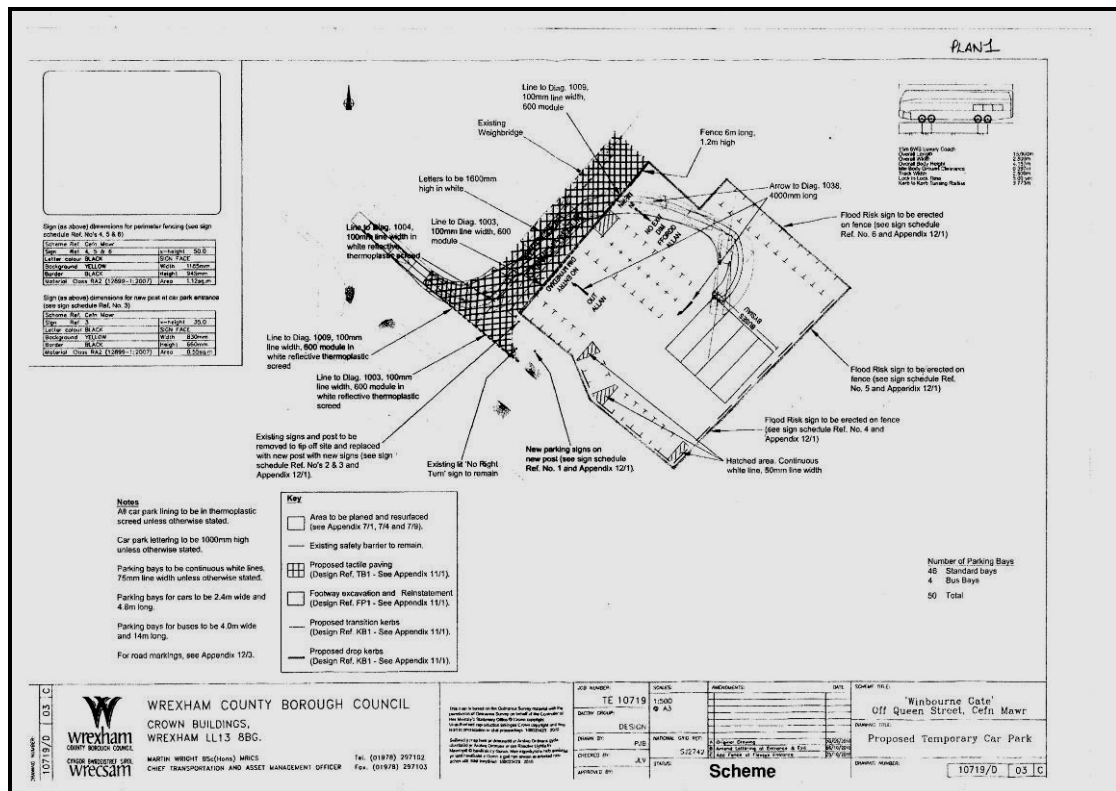
The main purpose of the Tourist Information Centre will be to:

- Provide local area information regarding the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Cefn Viaduct which will include Cefn Mawr and Surrounding Villages, Ty Mawr Country Park and Plas Madoc Leisure Centre and the British Waterways Museum to name but a few.
- Provide educational reference for the area regarding both historical and industrial development over the years and the possibilities and opportunities for the future.
- Provide a tourist information service for the wider area of the WHS Corridor, Wrexham and North East Wales.
- Provide information on the future housing development of the Solutia site.
- It will be conducting surveys for customer base, response and opinion on the PKC proposals, and actively seeking input from the public sector.

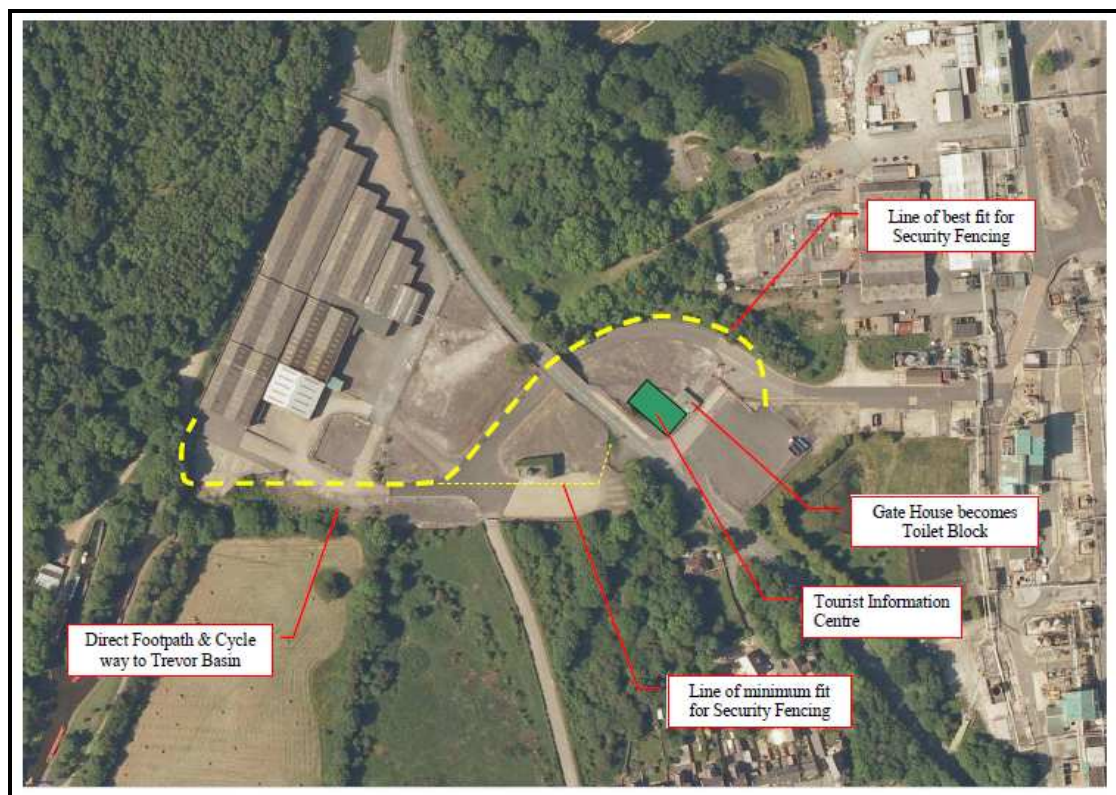




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The Winborne Gate Parking area on lease to WCBC



How the proposed Tourist Information Centre and Public Toilet facilities will be positioned relative to the Winborne Gate parking area and linked to the Trevor Basin.

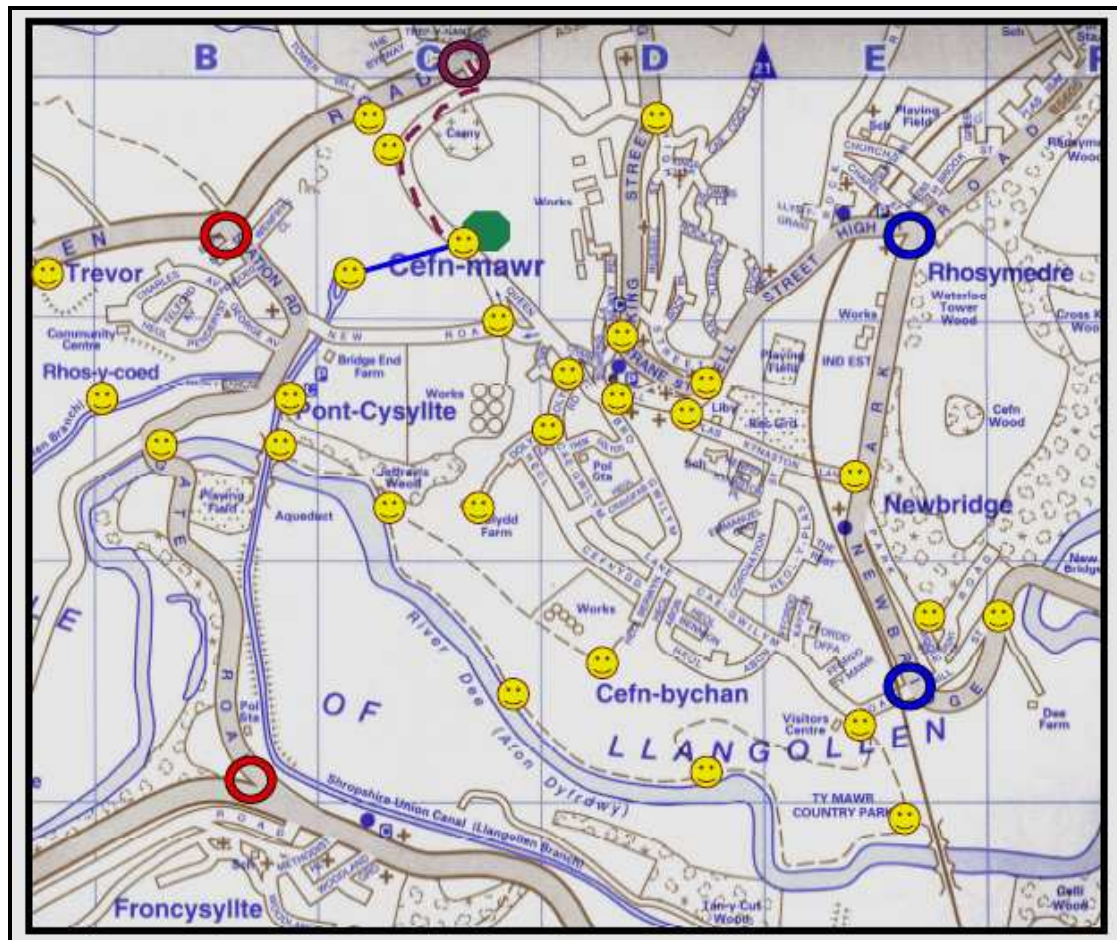


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## ACCESS:

Access to the site of this proposal is an extremely important part of this application as it addresses the current problems of excessive traffic flow on the B5434 trying to get to the parking areas at the Trevor Basin. This traffic congestion is a serious road safety issue transiting through the Trevor Housing Estate and adjacent to a childrens' play area. This needs redressing which is exactly what this planning application does.

Safety first should be a priority, and this application resolves this issue by re-routing the traffic flow from the A539 to the central parking area as shown below.



The **magenta** dashed line indicates the main traffic access route for the Tourist Information Centre at the Winborne Gate parking area to and from the A539. The **green** octagon is the Tourist Information Centre. The **magenta** circle indicates A539 main road sign posting for the central parking area. The **red** circles indicate restricted traffic flow for access only along the B5434. The **blue** circles indicate access for Cefn Mawr and Ty Mawr Country Park.

The **happy smiling yellow faces** indicate the local signage that will be co-ordinated with the local mapping and guidance material promoting local business and areas of interest for the tourist. The sign posting will be made locally in Cefn Mawr by our tradesmen and is in addition to the Heritage Trail.

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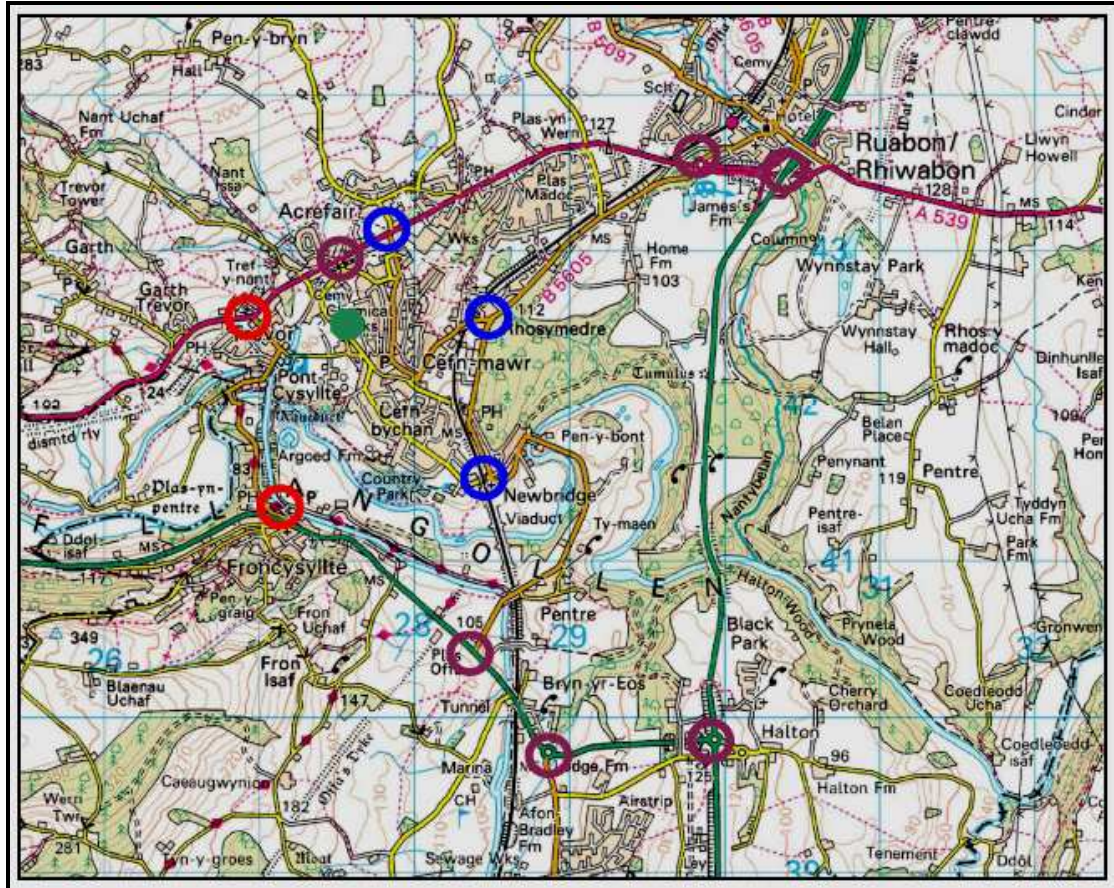


This is an example of the sign posting that will be supplied locally in Cefn Mawr for Cefn Mawr and Surrounding Villages that will co-ordinate with the PKC Group Mapping and Guide Book material that will promote the area and all local businesses.



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An important part of destination management is for the Tourist to be able to find the right location. This is a topic that the PKC Group have asked for and still require support from the WCBC regarding signage on the main roads.



1. The magenta circles indicate sign posting on the main roads directing traffic to the central parking area, Cefn Mawr and Ty Mawr Country Park.
2. The blue circles indicate sign posting for access to Cefn Mawr and Ty Mawr Country Park.
3. The red circles indicate restricted road access along the B5434 to improve road safety and prevent further destruction of the Cysyllte Bridge.
4. The green circle is the Central Parking Area and Tourist Information Centre for the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, Cefn Mawr and Surrounding Villages.
5. The central location is easily accessed by public service transport vehicles linking Cefn Mawr, Llangollen, Ruabon, Wrexham, Chirk, Oswestry and Glyn Ceiriog and even Barmouth with the X94 service.

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In addition to the immediate proposals of Phase One which is the subject of this present planning application, the PKC Group are looking to the future and further improvements in the tourist destination handling infrastructure facilities. Phase 2 of the Economic Bridging Package for Cefn Mawr which the PKC Group hope to be able to bring online in 12 to 24 months time will be for a cable car system linking the central parking area directly to the Crane, on Crane Street, the high street of Cefn Mawr.

This will require a significant capital investment of £3.5m which will only be made on the successful application of Phase One, the subject of this application. The simple answer being if it is not commercially viable, the investment will not be made. To achieve commercial viability there has to be a critical mass of visitors at the central parking area and one of the main functions of the tourist information centre in 2012 will be to monitor this number very carefully for that market assessment.

It is estimated that with the correct road signage as asked for by the PKC Group the current figures of 200K tourists per year can be increased to 300K. This would make the cable car investment a viable prospect.

Further to this the PKC Group are seeking communications with all organisations, groups and businesses along the WHS corridor to promote the whole area.

It is a stated objective of the PKC Group to establish the WHS corridor as a destination for tourists from London that can be transported to site by train for the benefit of all. The PKC Group estimate that the tourist count can be increased to 500K annually by the completion date of the PKC & Marina in 2018.

Now that is Tourist Destination Management.

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**Environmental Sustainability:**

The Tourist Information Centre will be built to all the relevant building specifications and will be provided with the most efficient thermal insulation that cost effective planning will permit. This will then deliver the best combination of thermal efficiency against initial capital outlay.

This will consist of thermal lagging and triple glazing etc to give a thermal insulation rating that is of the highest order.

Waste management will be in accordance with WCBC recommendations regarding such and wherever possible materials and buildings etc will be re-used such as the gatehouse for the public toilet block facilities.

**Renewable Heat Incentive**

The Renewable Heat Incentive (the RHI) is a payment system for the generation of heat from renewable energy sources introduced in the United Kingdom on 28 November 2011. The RHI replaces the Low Carbon Building Programme, which closed in 2010. The RHI will operate in a similar manner to the existing Feed-in Tariff system, and was introduced through the same legislation - the Energy Act 2008. In the first phase of the RHI incentive payments will be eligible to owners who install renewable heat generation equipment in non-domestic buildings. This should be applicable to the Tourist Information Centre.

**Operation**

Through the RHI, generators of renewable heat can be paid up to 8.5p/kWhr for hot water and heat which they generate and use themselves. The RHI tariff depends on which renewable heat systems are used and the scale of generation. The annual subsidy will last for 20 years. As such, users may earn enough money from the tariffs to pay off their installation costs in five to ten years. According to the Government, which has set the tariff levels, users will earn a return of 12% per annum. The RHI provides support for community and district heating schemes where a single renewable heat system provides heat or hot water to more than one property. The renewable heat technologies which are eligible under the first phase of the RHI are solar thermal (heating) panels, ground or water source heat pumps, biomass boilers, and bio-methane.

It is planned that the main heat source will be by a ground source heat pump backed up with a solid fuel heating system for extreme and prolonged cold weather. This backup heating system will be a cast iron solid fuel stove (biomass boiler), which will deliver the highest heat input for the lowest CO<sub>2</sub> production, and can be fuelled from locally sourced materials, hence reducing the carbon footprint yet again.

Heating for the toilet block will be supplied from the heat sources at the Tourist Information Centre to prevent frost damage during the winter months.



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**Character:**

One of the main themes of the character of the Tourist Information Centre and toilet block buildings will be to provide a good example of practical construction for the future development of the Solutia site that will be in accordance with and sympathetic to the surrounding sites of Cefn Mawr and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. Therefore this has influenced the decision making process in selecting the building type design.

The layout of the building is for simplicity and ease of use by both the general public and the staff that will be manning the centre. A good design feature of the building is the use of natural light from sky lights that provide interior lighting to the building during daylight hours. The building will be suitably situated adjacent to the entrance for the Winborne Gate parking area along with the toilet block and a bicycle shed for the bike hire facility. All of which will be suitably blended with landscaping and tree planting.

**Design and Materials:**

The buildings will be finished in traditional materials as previously stated using locally supplied sandstone and welsh slate roofing. All doors, door frames, windows and window casements etc will be in hardwood suitably finished to match a Victorian Style conservatory for the main modelling display area set in a timber frame.

The toilet block will be finished in similar materials giving a common identity to both buildings, and the bicycle shed will be of an all timber construction with a slate roof.

This will present a mix of traditional materials used in accordance with relevant building codes, regulations and guidance for thermally efficient housing / construction that has a low carbon footprint in terms of both building cost emissions and running costs. This will then set a typical example for the housing redevelopment component of the Solutia Site.

<b>Tourist Information Centre</b>	
Site	The Tourist Information Centre will be situated as indicated on the site map of this paper adjacent to the Winborne Gate Central Parking area. The physical footprint of the TIC is 95m <sup>2</sup> including the conservatory.
Walls	This is a timber framed building and will be skinned with natural sandstone at the gable ends for finishing and thermal breeze block rendered along the side walls finished in white.
Roof	Natural welsh slate.
Windows	Hardwood windows and casements
Doors	Harwood doors and framing to match
Conservatory	Hardwood framed to match
Porch	Timber framed to match

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<b>Public Toilet Facilities</b>	
Site	This will be situated as indicated on the site map of this paper adjacent to the Winborne Gate Central Parking area and next to the TIC. The physical footprint of the toilet facilities is 50m <sup>2</sup> .
Walls	This is a conversion of the Winborne Gatehouse and will be skinned with natural sandstone at the gable ends for finishing and rendered along the side walls finished in white.
Roof	Natural welsh slate.
Windows	Hardwood windows and casements
Doors	Harwood doors and framing to match
Ventilation	A forced ventilation system will be installed in the attic space to ensure a regular and predictable exchange of air volume in the facility.

<b>Bicycle Shed</b>	
Site	This will be situated as indicated on the site map of this paper adjacent to the Winborne Gate Central Parking area and next to the TIC. The physical footprint of the toilet facilities is 25m <sup>2</sup> .
Walls	This will be a timber framed and clad building for the storage of bicycles for hire.
Roof	Natural welsh slate.

### Community Safety:

One of the main reasons for this planning application is to improve community safety by changing the traffic flow to a safe routing rather than the current arrangement where excessive traffic is being sent through the Trevor Housing Estate. There is also a childrens' play area adjacent to one of the car parks where large coaches park during



the summer months and this is not acceptable.

This planning application will directly address this problem by moving the traffic flow and parking away from this area to a safe location thereby increasing community safety.

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**Security:**

The site is central to the whole area and security will be provided by a combination of systems to ensure minimum vandalism and petty theft which has been a problem for Cefn Mawr and Surrounding Villages over recent years. If the tourist potential for the area is to be developed to its full extent this kind of anti-social behaviour has to be curbed or it will have a negative effect on the overall programme.

Over the past few years both the Community and Solutia have suffered losses at the hands of a few individuals, and this has to be stopped. Lead flashing was stolen from the roof of the George Edwards Hall and the recent theft of electrical cable from Solutia's works are just two examples of such behaviour during 2011.

Therefore to help reduce this kind of activity the PKC Group are taking an active role in the prevention of it. The TIC, toilet block and bicycle shed will be covered by state of the art CCTV systems that can provide positive ID of both individuals and vehicle registration numbers even in the dark by the use of low light level camera technology.

The initial security package will be for the TIC and Central Parking area, but could easily be extended into other areas such as the Trevor Basin and Cefn Mawr itself with minimal disruption to any services or businesses.

The CCTV system will also have a dual function of recording to hard disc the number of tourists frequenting the area. This will be a useful market analysis tool and will provide a firm indication of the critical mass requirement for the pursuance of Phase 2 of the PKC proposals. If it can be proved that there is a visitor count of 300K annually this will make the cable car option a commercial viability.

The security aspect of the building is made in compliance with WCBC LPG No 24 Designing out Crime and takes into account Public Open Space and Landscaping.

- Comprehensive - design is considered in conjunction with other security measures e.g. CCTV, locks, Night Safe and registration and informal policing by the community.
- Collaborative – extending responsibility for safety to all interested organisations and parties including the North Wales Police, the CCTV and Security System can provide a direct link for such.

**Services:**

There is sufficient service infrastructure to support the TIC and public toilet block facilities as proposed at the site.

All services are available at the site via the current gatehouse, electricity, water and drainage although re-routing will be necessary for hook up etc.

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**Tourism Development:**

The PKC Group see tourism as a key to the regeneration of Cefn Mawr and Surrounding Villages and in the wake of the loss of both main employers, i.e. Solutia and Air Products in recent years it should be sought in a positive manner.

This then is the main driving force behind the PKC Group proposals along with the WCBC the PKC Group sees possibilities for future employment provision and the generation of revenue from the tourist industry.

The gaining of the WHS status and a tourist count of 200K annually at present is timely and provides a genuine opportunity to achieve a positive outcome to help mitigate the effects of the job losses. One of the focuses for the future should be on the development of tourism for all the area and not restricted to the Trevor Basin, hence the key proposal for the PKC & Marina by the PKC Group. However this will only be available in 2018 and therefore in the meantime the PKC Group are putting forward a number of interim phases. The first of which is the Economic Bridging Package for Cefn Mawr and Surrounding Villages and this planning application is the first step in that process.

Once again, by placing the TIC adjacent to the Winborne Gate parking area this gives a central location for both the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Cefn Mawr and Surrounding Villages. This improves road safety and will allow for the increasing road traffic to access the site safely. The current visitor count is 200K but if correct road signs are erected as asked for by the PKC Group it is the belief of the PKC Group that that figure would climb to 300K this coming season.

It is further estimated that 10–15% of that tourist count will migrate from the central parking area into Cefn Mawr and Surrounding Villages guided by the TIC. This would then deliver approximately 30K more tourists than Cefn Mawr and Surrounding Villages have ever seen, in the coming season of 2012. This should be enough to begin the regeneration of Cefn Mawr High Street in preparation for the following season of 2013 where if the tourist count is 300K the PKC Group are looking towards Phase 2 which will be the installation of a cable car system. This would then deliver some 200–300K tourists into Cefn Mawr and Surrounding Villages as well as frequenting the Aqueduct. This obviously would then also address the visitor dwell time with a significant increase in duration.

The PKC Group would estimate that this would provide upwards of 20 people employed by the PKC Group enterprises and a further 50 or so people employed in the retail and service businesses of Cefn Mawr and Surrounding Villages.

However to make this happen this planning application for the central Tourist Information Centre at the Winborne Gate parking area is a key element, along with the other items as mentioned. The overall package is intended to work in compliance with and support the Tourism Development Plan for the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site, whilst also supporting the adjacent communities.

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**National Policies:**

At a regional and local level, the strategies note the poor quality of both the existing tourism product and visitor experience, emphasising the need for the provision of higher quality visitor attractions and facilities through more investment that will attract people to the area. The strategies emphasise the importance of the heritage and culture of the local area and the role it can play in developing the tourism product, noting in particular, the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct's potential as a tourism hub and its ability to attract not only visitors to the area but also inward investment. There is a recognition that Pontcysyllte Aqueduct is an important heritage asset to the area but that its World Heritage Status is not presently optimised, pointing the way for future development. The development of visitor facilities at the site would raise the profile of the area as a visitor destination thus contributing to the local economy and indeed reaching wider, positively affecting the national visitor economy.

This extract is taken from the WCBC Design & Access Statement.

It is notable from this statement that the WCBC have identified the need for more investment in the area to promote the potential of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct further.

The anticipated capital expenditure on Phase One of the PKC proposals is indicated in the Design and Access Statement is £250K over the next 12 months.

If Phase One is successful as we expect, Phase Two will be implemented with a Capital Expenditure of £3.5m, and over the next five to six years with the full remediation of the Solutia Site at Cefn Mawr the PKC Group are expecting to be making in the region of £20m worth of investment in to the area for the promotion of the tourist industry.

Now that is investment on how to get the footfall right.



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### Cycling:

As a part of the service of the TIC adjacent to the Winborne Gate parking area there will be comprehensive cycling facilities offered in accordance with the WCBC LPG No 15 Notice.

There will be a row of ten parking slots of the “Sheffield” stand type for visitors arriving by bicycle, which will be provided free of charge. If the WCBC chooses to work with us, the bicycle lockers they have will also be fitted free of charge at appropriate locations.

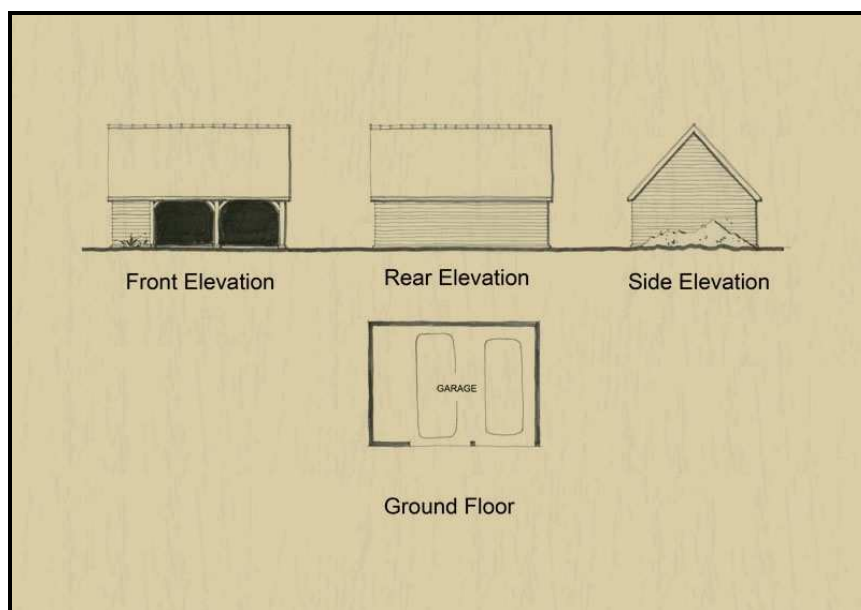
There will also be a cycle hire facility run from the centre in conjunction with Derek’s Cycles in Cefn Mawr for a hire and drop off facility. The cycle storage for this will be in the Cycle Shed as previously mentioned in the statement and will have a footprint of approximately 25m<sup>2</sup>.

The PKC Group is an active member in seeking to open up the footpaths and cycle ways around the area as this mode of transport is ideal for a tourist destination experience that will promote the area. The cycle ways could provide links for both Penycae and Ruabon with the WHS via Jessop’s Tramway, also called the Ruabon Brook Tramway.

It is hoped by the PKC Group that this facility will be extended to Llangollen and Chirk thereby joining the main community centres along the WHS corridor in a meaningful and commercially viable way.

To this end the PKC Group are seeking to work with Sustrans, please see:

<http://www.plaskynastoncanalgroup.org/contacts/sustrans>



An example of the Bicycle Shed design produced as a standard garage.

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**Sustainability 2:**

Sustainable development is a key objective of the PKC Group planning. All schemes sought by the PKC Group must be environmentally sustainable and commercially viable. The Council's quality of life Development Plan is in accordance with guidance and policy from the Welsh Assembly Government, requiring sustainable building principles to be adopted in order to reduce the impact upon the natural environment and reduce reliance on non-renewable energy resources. The PKC Group will be implementing these principles.

Sustainable development is an integral part of the design process and these aspects must be considered at the earliest stage. In achieving an environmentally sustainable design solution it is important that new development incorporates measures to ensure an efficient use of land, energy and water, minimises wastage and encourages recycling of materials.

An ideal example of such conduct is indicated in this application to re-use the Gate House at the Winborne Gate parking area as a public toilet facility.

Furthermore the section on cycling in this design and access statement provides evidence of the maximisation of the least harmful forms of movement and transport that can help protect and enhance the natural and built environment.

The design process should also ensure that development contributes to tackling the causes of climate change and is designed to meet zero carbon standards from the outset. Again the primary heat source for the TIC will be by a ground heat exchange pump unit which is an ideal example of such, providing a heat source for a thermally efficient building.

A further development on this line which is not a subject of this planning application but will constitute another prime example of sustainability planning and carbon reduction by the PKC Group is re-use of the old pump house on the River Dee. On completion of the PKC & Marina a water flow will be required to prevent stagnation of this section of the canal as it is a dead end.

It has therefore been considered by the PKC Group that the old pump house could be re-used as a small hydro-electric scheme driven by the headwater from the PKC & Marina. However this is long term planning option and there are many bridges to cross on this road, but it is given as a further example of the appreciation of the sustainability aspect by the PKC Group.

Due consideration is given to the WCBC LPG No 30.

Further to this is the overall package of the remediation of the Solutia Site and subsequent redevelopment.

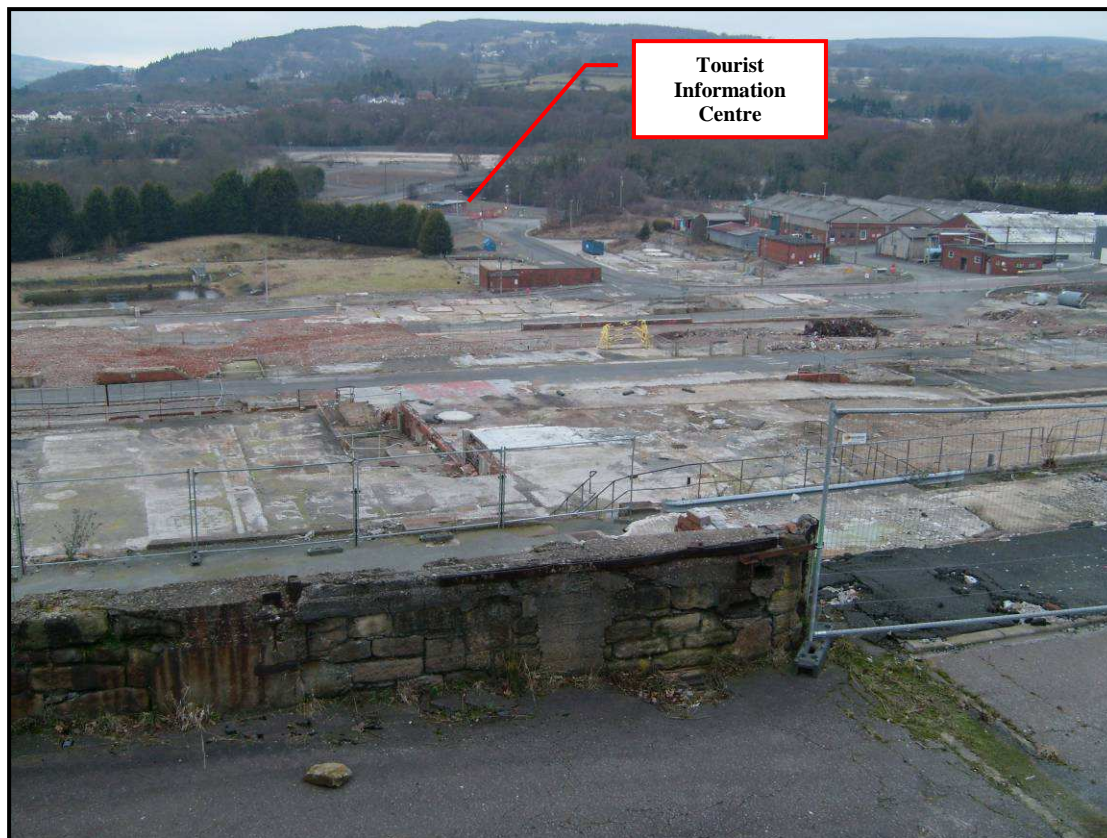




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**Landscaping of Previous Industrial Sites:**

The current planning application is the first step in the remediation of the former Solutia Chemical Works Site at Cefn Mawr.



The Solutia Site in 2011 looking towards Trevor Basin from Cefn Mawr

The following extract is taken from the WCBC LPG No 7 Landscaping:

*“There is a diverse landscape character and settlement pattern within the County Borough, with rural landscapes of particularly high quality or special historic landscape interest designated as Special Landscape Areas in Wrexham's Unitary Development Plan. In these areas it is especially important for any development to fit in with its surroundings.”*

The Solutia Site at Cefn Mawr is an obvious example of the two extremes in the above text. The proposals that the PKC Group make are in compliance with the WCBC guidance notes and seek to remediate the Solutia site in an appropriate manner that will be in keeping with the two conservation areas that the site lies between and the WHS Buffer Zone that it is within.



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**Contaminated Land:**

The PKC Group has spoken to the Solutia offices regarding the current application and it is generally thought that the area of land in question for this planning application will be contaminate free. Solutia are currently cross-checking this information against their latest site investigation database and will provide a suitable confirmation of such in due course.

It is the PKC Groups and Baynon Property Services intended direction as lead company on this issue to work with both Solutia and the WCBC under all relevant guidelines and legislation to deliver the solution for Solutia and the full remediation of their site at Cefn Mawr.

This it is realised will be a long process over the coming years and this planning application represents the first step in that process that will enable Baynon Property Services and the PKC Group to meet the strict criteria for such task undertaking as stipulated by Solutia, and subsequently be in a position to take responsibility for the site in 2015.

It is a prerogative of Baynon Property Services and the PKC Group to ensure that any potential contamination is adequately dealt with so that the land is made suitable for its new use without risk to the environment - ensuring there is no danger to the health and safety of people likely to be working or living on or visiting the site.

The steps needed when considering the potential for land contamination will vary with this site. One of the first steps is to assess the history of land uses which might have resulted in contamination. Baynon Property Services has already compiled perhaps the most comprehensive collection of historical maps regarding this area worldwide and has also obtained copies of title deeds for the property.

A full survey of local knowledge will be conducted and local people will be invited to supply whatever information they have at a drop in facility at the TIC regarding such, in addition to a public consultation to be held at the George Edwards Hall. This will further engage the local community and possibly provide a more comprehensive and accurate picture of the current state of affairs regarding any contamination issues. This information if corroborated by field sampling etc will be stored on a database and will be freely available to all who require such for their reference.

It will also be combined with the results from the Solutia URS Report to form the basis of BPS & PKC Group Risk Management Register and reference for the Planned Remediation Programme of the Solutia Site at Cefn Mawr.

This is an extremely important aspect of the TIC for the whole programme.

Please refer to WCBC LPG No 23 Development of Sites with Land Contamination for a basic introduction.

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**Biodiversity:**

In 1992 the UK signalled a commitment to "conserve and sustainably use biological diversity for the benefit of present and future generations". Biodiversity is the variety and richness of all living things. It describes the number and variety of species of plants and animals within a habitat and also the diversity of habitats within an ecosystem.

Biodiversity has economic importance, adds to our quality of life, contributes to local distinctiveness and also has an intrinsic value and worth. By conserving biological diversity now, we give future generations the option to value and benefit from it too.

This is strongly supported by the PKC Group and has merit not only in the aspects stated above but is also related to the requirement to provide a tourist destination. It is the places that are seen to be in balance that people want to go to and come back again and therefore as a fundamental part of the PKC Group planning approach this has and will continue to be included. The Plas Kynaston Canal itself will be a biodiversity lifeline straight into the heart of Cefn Mawr, bringing new life back as opposed to the current concrete desert that was once the mighty Monsanto Chemical Plant.

The biodiversity aspect will always be a consideration in the landscaping and tree planting programmes for the remediation of the site.

