

**Application Number:** DM/2018/00408

**Proposal:** Provision of a new cycle and pedestrian bridge spanning approximately 60m across the River Usk between Llanfoist and Abergavenny, provision of earthwork ramps to cater for disabled access, provision of a new footpath link and enhancement of an existing footpath.

**Address:** Proposed Crossing Across River Usk Between Abergavenny And Llanfoist

**Applicant:** Mr Stephen Baldwin

**Plans:** General DR-CB-0101 - P1, General DR-CB-0102 - P1, General DR-CB-0103 - P1, General DR-CB-0104 - P1, General DR-CB-0105 - P1, General DR-CB-0106 - P1, General DR-CB-0107 - P1, Site Layout DR-CB-0108 - P1, General DR-CB-0109 - P01, General DR-CB-0110 - P01,

## **RECOMMENDATION: Approve**

Case Officer: Ms Kate Bingham  
Date Valid: 10.08.2018

### **1.0 APPLICATION DETAILS**

1.1 This application is for a shared cycle and footbridge across the River Usk between the village of Llanfoist and the town of Abergavenny.

1.2 As background to this application, the Welsh Government (WG) aims to enable more people to walk and cycle as a method of travel, to benefit people's health, the environment, and the economy. Consequently, the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 was introduced by the WG. The Act created new duties for local authorities in Wales and the Welsh Ministers, with the aim of making active travel the most attractive option for shorter journeys. To enable this, local authorities in Wales are required to produce active travel maps and deliver year on year improvements to active travel networks and facilities. The council therefore wishes to provide a modern pedestrian route to current Equality (Act 2010) standard between Llanfoist and Abergavenny. Previous considerations to provide an improved footway on the existing bridge have not been realised.

1.3 In order to improve the existing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists in the area, the following proposals have been put forward:

- A shared cycle / footbridge over the River Usk
- A connecting unsegregated pedestrian cycle path with integrated vehicular access linking the A4143 (Merthyr Road) to the footbridge
- A 3m unsegregated pedestrian cycle path to tie in with the existing NR46 path north of River Usk
- Improvements to NR46 National Cycle Path
- New link between NR46 and Merthyr Road (Castle Meadows)

1.4 Possible Future Phase Improvements also include pedestrian and cyclist improvements on the Waitrose roundabout.

1.5 As part of these overall proposals, Monmouthshire County Council is seeking to obtain detailed planning permission for the construction and operation of a new footbridge over the River Usk between Llanfoist and Abergavenny, approximately 100m downstream of the existing Abergavenny Bridge. The proposed scheme will comprise a new cycle and pedestrian footbridge spanning approximately 60m across the River Usk, and will include the provision of earthwork

ramps to cater for disabled access, provision of a new footpath link and enhancement of an existing footpath.

1.6 The site includes land within and over the River Usk and its floodplain. The River Usk is designated as a Main River by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and has a number of important environmental designations.

1.7 North of the River Usk, the site comprises an area within Castle Meadows, an area of community greenspace between the town of Abergavenny and the River Usk. National Cycle Route (NR46) (also a Public Right of Way) runs through the site along the northern bank of the River Usk. A further Public Right of Way (PRoW) crosses through the Site from the A4143 to Linda Vista Gardens. South of the River Usk, the Site comprises an area of grassland and riverside vegetation between the River Usk and The Bridge Inn Public House beer garden, and Bridge Cottages.

1.8 The River Usk is designated as a Main River by Natural Resources Wales (NRW). The river is also designated for nature conservation as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) due to the habitats and species present.

1.9 Castle Meadows, within which this site is located, is designated in local planning policy as an Area of Amenity Importance, in relation to its importance as an area of green infrastructure offering social, environmental and economic benefits. The site is also located entirely within Abergavenny Conservation Area. Furthermore, within the surrounding area are several designated heritage sites. This includes the existing Abergavenny Bridge, a scheduled monument and Grade II\* listed building located approximately 100m upstream of the Proposed Scheme. North of the site and Castle Meadows is Linda Vista Gardens (a Grade II listed historic park and garden), Abergavenny Castle (a scheduled monument and Grade II listed historic park and garden) and the buried remains and earthworks of the Roman fort of Gobannium (a designated scheduled monument). Llanfoist New Cemetery to the south-west of the Site is a Grade II historic park and garden. Several other listed buildings are located within Abergavenny and Llanfoist.

1.10 In the wider landscape, the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site lies approximately 800m to the south-west of the Site and the Brecon Beacons National Park approximately 700m to the west of the Site.

1.11 The proposed bridge will span 60.4m across the River Usk and carry a 3m wide combined footway and cycleway. The side-walls of the bridge will consist of timber beams covered with external rain-screen timber cladding. Timber shingles used for the cladding will be from a locally (British) sourced species. This cladding will be arranged in a diamond pattern on the exterior face and vertical pattern on the interior face to create the closed side-walls. This pattern has been designed to reduce the visual impact of the bridge; a quality that will be enhanced as each timber shingle weathers with subtle differences over time. With a stainless steel parapet fitted to the top, the side-walls will be up to a height of 1.4m. The deck of the bridge will be timber with an anti-slip surface fitted. The bridge will not be lit. A cow gate / cattle grid will be fitted on the northern entrance of the bridge and a heavy duty bollard at the southern entrance to prevent the access of motor vehicles.

1.12 The bridge will be supported by earthwork abutments on both banks and a central 'Y' shaped pier which will be located in the shingle bar within the river channel, outside of the usual course of the river.

1.13 Earthworks will raise the ground level at either end of the bridge by approximately 2.5m in order to raise the bridge out of the usual water level of the floodplain. The earthwork access ramps will run parallel to the river and be a gradient of 1 in 20. Steeper side slopes (approximately 1 in 2 gradient) will have native riverside vegetation planted.

1.14 In order to improve access to the bridge from Abergavenny across Castle Meadows, a new permanent footpath 100m long and 3m wide will be constructed from the existing Castle Meadows

access gate on Merthyr Road to the existing footpath along the northern bank of the River Usk. This existing footpath (and National Cycle Route) will also be widened and resurfaced.

1.15 The height of the bridge has been designed to be above usual flood levels (with a consideration of climate change). However, the bridge will not be accessible during severe flood events.

1.16 As part of the planning process, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed to understand the likely significant environmental effects that the proposed scheme may have on the surrounding environment and residents during construction and once in use. EIA is a process that identifies the key environmental effects of a development and suggests ways that these effects can be avoided, reduced or managed. It is a requirement of UK law for certain developments that are likely to cause significant environmental effects.

1.17 The site covers an area of 1.29 hectares. The area of temporary construction works is shown by a blue line on Figure 1 within the Environmental Statement. The red line shows the completed extent of the footbridge and its earthworks.

### 1.18 Construction Phase

1.19 During the construction phase, areas within the site will be fenced off to the public and the footpaths and National Cycle Route within the site will be temporarily diverted.

1.20 Once the site is fenced off, a construction compound will be established and working areas cleared. This will require the removal of two trees and two small groups of trees, which have been assessed as being of low quality. All other trees will be retained and where necessary protected.

1.21 The scheme will require some Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) to deliver timber, steelwork and construction equipment. However this is anticipated to only require a low number of infrequent trips. Construction access to the site for HGVs and the contractors will be from Merthyr Road north of the Site, and from the access on the south bank adjacent to The Bridge Inn.

1.22 Various construction vehicles and equipment will be present within the site during the construction phase. This will include cranes, which are required to lift the bridge in to place. In order to construct the foundations of the central pier, some vehicles and equipment will be located within the river channel on the shingle bank at certain stages of construction.

1.23 On both banks of the river the ground level will be raised approximately 2.5m for construction of the earthwork access ramps. Piling will be undertaken at each bank to provide the foundations of the footbridge abutments.

## **2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (if any)**

<b>Reference Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Decision Date</b>
DM/2018/00408	Provision of a new cycle and pedestrian bridge spanning approximately 60m across the River Usk between Llanfoist and Abergavenny, provision of earthwork ramps to cater for disabled access, provision of a new footpath link and enhancement of an existing footpath.	Pending Determination	
DC/2014/01332	Change of use from A1 (shop / hairdressers use) to A2 office use (financial or professional services)		

DM/2018/00408	Provision of a new cycle and pedestrian bridge spanning approximately 60m across the River Usk between Llanfoist and Abergavenny, provision of earthwork ramps to cater for disabled access, provision of a new footpath link and enhancement of an existing footpath.	Pending Determination	
DC/2015/00028	Retention of three logo signs for pub; flat to wall; replace previous signage	Approved	20.03.2015
DC/2012/00083	Ground floor dining room extension incorporating disabled WC & kitchen wash-up area.	Refused	12.12.2013

### **3.0 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES**

#### **Strategic Policies**

S5 LDP Community and Recreation Facilities  
S7 LDP Infrastructure Provision  
S13 LDP Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment  
S16 LDP Transport  
S17 LDP Place Making and Design

#### **Development Management Policies**

SD3 LDP Flood Risk  
GI1 LDP Green Infrastructure  
LC5 LDP Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character  
NE1 LDP Nature Conservation and Development  
EP1 LDP Amenity and Environmental Protection  
EP2 LDP Protection of Water Sources and the Water Environment  
EP3 LDP Lighting  
DES1 LDP General Design Considerations  
HE1 LDP Development in Conservation Areas

### **4.0 REPRESENTATIONS**

#### 4.1 Consultation Replies

Abergavenny Town Council - Recommends approval.

Llanfoist Community Council - Recommends approval.

David Davies MP - Would be grateful if Officers and Members could carefully consider the comments made by residents of Bridge Cottages.

NRW - We have significant concerns with the proposed development as submitted. We recommend that you should only grant planning permission if the scheme can meet the following requirements and you attach the conditions listed below. Otherwise, we would object to this planning application.

Requirement 1. Flood Risk Management - flood modelling to be fully verified and the FCA finalised to demonstrate the risks and consequences of flooding can be managed to an acceptable level in line with TAN15.

Requirement 2. European Protected Species - further information is required to demonstrate that the proposal will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the favourable conservation status of Bats (European Protected Species).

Condition 1. Construction Environment Management Plan - to protect the River Usk SAC/SSSI and the water environment.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION SUBMITTED AND NRW RECONSULTED. AWAITING FURTHER COMMENTS.

Landscape:

We agree with the findings of the LVIA that there would be negligible effects on the landscape character, setting of and views from the National Park due to the scale and nature of the development and distance of receptors within the National Park. The proposed development would not interfere significantly with views towards the National Park.

Water Quality and the River Usk Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI):

We welcome the submission of the Outline Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP), by WSP, reference 70034788\_ CEMP, dated February 2018. We note that the appointed contractor will be required to produce their own CEMP and detailed method statements for elements of the project, following the methods and practices in the draft/outline CEMP but providing additional detail as necessary. This should be provided in advance of the project implementation

Therefore, we advise that a condition securing a CEMP is included on any planning permission granted that ensures adequate protection of the River Usk SAC/SSSI during construction.

Water Quality and the River Usk Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

We welcome that the methods, selected for the pier and abutment foundations, will entirely avoid the use of percussive piling techniques, which can be lethal to individual fish in relatively close proximity to the works. However, we also note some inconsistency and uncertainty within the Environmental Statement (ES) and between it and the draft CEMP regarding the precise methods and environmental risks involved in installing the pier foundations by this method and further clarification on these aspects is required.

Construction of the bridge pier foundations:

We note that the apparent uncertainty may relate to the need to balance the water pressure between the inside and outside of the sealed caisson prior to and during pouring of the concrete, and the differing approaches specified at various places in the ES and draft CEMP involve either 1) the use and potentially the feasibility of placing a concrete 'plug' in the base of the caisson prior to dewatering and then pouring the concrete, or 2) that the concrete will be poured entirely with the water in place, which will be collected and disposed of safely during the pouring operation, and that the ability to vary the rate of concrete pouring is stated as advantage in terms of pollution control. It is also stated that some contamination of groundwater, which is in connection with the flow of the river, is inevitable but this can be controlled and minimised.

In either of the above two cases, but especially where there is likely to be significant contamination of the collected water with cement, the contaminated water must be collected and disposed of safely and not be discharged to the watercourse while there is still significant contamination. The ES/draft CEMP state that contaminated water will be treated in a settlement pond/tank, or potentially removed from site, but no details are provided including where a settlement pond/tank would be located and its required capacity, infiltration rate, residence time etc. The method may be suitable for removing fine sediment but potentially less suitable for cement contamination and we

would need to be assured as to its suitability, especially given the likely free draining nature of the soils. Further details should be provided within the final CEMP.

In terms of monitoring, given the likelihood of some degree of cement contamination occurring during the concrete pouring operation due to connection between the groundwater and river flow, we require that pH is monitored by the Contractor continuously at a suitable point in the river flow downstream of the caisson and that any elevation of pH above pH 9 should be noted and change to the rate of pouring implemented at or approaching this point where feasible, as this is an identified threshold for causing damage to aquatic life. This action should be included in the final CEMP.

Construction of the abutments:

As stated above, we welcome the use of a non-percussive piling method. We note that, as with the pier foundations, the piling will extend well below the water table and so contamination of groundwater and hence the flow of the River Usk is a risk. We note that some specific guidance on avoiding this risk during piling operations is identified in the draft CEMP. While we would assume that the risk is lower with the casting of the piles for the abutments than for the pier, we would also require further clarification on this aspect within the final CEMP.

Construction of the ramps:

We note that for a period of time during construction of the ramps and prior to establishment of vegetation cover they will be highly vulnerable to causing silt laden run-off to the river during heavy rain, and that detailed measures are to be specified in a site drainage management strategy/earthworks strategy to avoid any significant silt pollution from occurring. Similar measures also apply to the entire construction site. This will involve use of silt fences/cut-off drains, covering of stockpiles etc. as necessary. We advise that this is referenced within the final CEMP.

General measures for avoidance of pollution with fuels, oils etc:

We welcome the detailed measures stated in the draft CEMP such as refuelling only in suitable designated areas away from watercourses, ensuring that machines are in a good state of repair, storing fuels, oils, chemicals etc in suitable secure bunded areas, etc. as necessary to prevent pollution of groundwater and surface water. We also note the preparation of detailed contingency plans in the event that flooding of the site is forecast.

Timing of the works:

We welcome the commitment to undertaking those aspects of the works with a higher risk of pollution and disturbance by vibration etc., in particular the construction of the foundations for the pier and abutments, in July to September outside of the main period for fish spawning and migration. The period of highest sensitivity for the fish in the River Usk SAC at this location is in April to June, when spawning of shad occurs at a site adjacent to Castle Meadows a short distance downstream and shad may also be migrating further upstream through the construction site at this time (although generally at night). Although the above-mentioned construction activities will avoid the time of highest risk, other fish, for example Atlantic salmon will be present in lower densities near to or within the construction site at all times of year, and further, any siltation of spawning gravels downstream could cause more lasting degradation of the habitat and is to be avoided as far as possible.

Although the ES covers these points in some detail, there should be further consideration within the CEMP.

Cadw - Until more information is provided by the applicant we are unable to assess the impact of the proposed scheme on the setting of MM010 Abergavenny Bridge.

The developer's Environmental Statement, Chapter 7 'Historic Environment' whilst it endeavours to assess the setting of the designated historic assets following Welsh Government best practice guideline 'Setting of Historic Assets in Wales (2017)' the documentation is considered inadequate.

The assessment conclusions produced for all the designated historic assets are equivalent and in summary are that:

In the constructional phase there will be a temporary loss of inter-relationship between all the assets as a result of the plant and construction compounds and the magnitude of change on the setting of

all the assets is considered to be medium. There is likely therefore to be direct, temporary, short-term effects of moderate negative significance.

The heritage significance of the assets would remain high. No further mitigation is recommended as the impacts will be of a temporary and short term nature. In the operational phase the effects of the proposal are considered to be similar and the conclusions are that the magnitude of change to the setting of the assets would be low. There is likely to be direct, permanent, long-term effect but of minor negative significance. The heritage significance of the assets would remain high.

There is insufficient demonstration of argument for how the conclusions reached in section 7.7 have been developed from the statement of heritage values in section 7.4.9. In particular we are concerned as to the impact on the setting and significance of MM010 Abergavenny Bridge. Whilst the design of the new bridge and its oblique positioning are intended to minimise visual impact; upon the scheduled monument both in views towards it and as a new and prominent structure visible from it, the choice of location will mean that both the setting of the scheduled monument and significant views towards the heart of the medieval town and the castle will be adversely affected. The impact on the scheduled monument may have been underestimated or it may be in error.

Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust - The proposed application area is situated approximately 100m to the southeast of Scheduled Monument of Llanfoist (Abergavenny, or Usk) Bridge (Cadw reference MM010, also Grade II\* Listed), and includes the Essential Setting of the Linda Vista Gardens (Cadw reference PGW (Gt) 59 (MON)). There are no recorded non-designated historic assets within the area directly affected by the proposals, and historic mapping of the 19th century onwards does not show any features. This does not preclude there being the likelihood of unrecorded features or finds. However, the supporting information includes an Environmental Statement, Chapter 7 and Appendix G of which deals with Historic Environment impacts. The details show the bridge will be created using ramped access and following routes that are extant and utilise those used by the Eisteddfod Genedlaethol. The supports for the bridge will be within the river environment and the historic mapping shows that whilst the route of the river has varied, this area has been a channel since the earliest mapping evidence.

Given our understanding of the available information at this time, it is our opinion that there will not be a requirement for archaeological mitigation works. As the archaeological advisors to your Members, we therefore have no archaeological objection to this application. If the detailed proposals alter, please contact us. The Record is not definitive, however, and should any archaeological remains or features be encountered please contact us.

MCC Heritage - Pre-application advice:

Llanfoist Bridge is Grade II\* highly graded due to it being a fine historic bridge of handsome appearance.

It is also a Scheduled Ancient Monument and is within the Abergavenny Conservation Area.

The central location is, on paper, the most balanced of various options considered. However any bridge here will still have a significant impact on the character of the conservation area as well as the setting of the designated heritage assets.

There was an initial desire not to have any supports of the bridge in the water course, however this creates a very large bridge which will have a significant permanent impact on the character and setting of the listed and Scheduled Monument. Therefore suggested looking at alternative bridge designs with support in the river (as now proposed).

The application now proposes a steel footbridge which will be clad in timber. It will be supported by a column that is within the river channel but that is normally uncovered shingle. This approach requires a less engineered structure which will have a reduced visual impact.

MCC Highways - The highway authority would offer no objection in principle and welcome the proposal to provide an independent pedestrian / cycle crossing of the River Usk, but would offer the following comments and observations.

- o The natural desire line would place a pedestrian / cycle crossing directly adjacent to the existing bridge, but this location has been discounted due to various and specific issues with the bridge (CADW & NRW) that prevents the crossing being either on the upstream or downstream of the bridge.
- o The proposed crossing is not on what is considered to be the natural desire line and further investigation to provide through the residential properties at Cooper Way/Riverside Drive/James Jones Close? This would provide connectivity to the proposed crossing and reduce the numbers of NMVs moving along the existing Merthyr Road public highway.
- o The proposed crossing is not to be lit, no lighting is to be provided as "It is considered that lighting of any part of the scheme would not be appropriate due to the impact on the sensitive receptors and the overall impact on visual impact as a result of the scheme". This is likely to restrict the attractiveness of the route particularly during the hours of darkness, winter months, the lack of natural surveillance etc. those wishing to cross the river would then be left with no alternative but to use the existing Llanfoist Road bridge. It is arguable that by not utilising lighting, the proposal will be redundant for a large percentage of the time.
- o Those users travelling from Llanfoist, West of Merthyr Road will undoubtedly utilise the existing A40 underpass and existing footway network but will need to cross Merthyr Road. The current proposal does not include for any improvements to Merthyr Road and the Waitrose roundabout but may be carried out as a possible future phase, reference Llanfoist to Abergavenny Shared Cycle Footbridge, Active Travel Audit, Appendix A1, the lack of such improvements will significantly reduce the crossings attractiveness and not attract increased pedestrian and cycle use.

General;

- o The Walking and Cycling Active Travel audits submitted have been carried out in line with Welsh Government templates and are of a robust nature. Generally in agreement with audit content, however it should be appreciated that scoring of such audits is subjective;
- o The proposed approach ramp, along the southern bank, is to be of shared use with DCWW to allow them maintenance access to their existing apparatus. This will be in conflict with pedestrians and cyclists.
- o Welsh Government Active Travel Design guidance requires unsegregated shared use pedestrian/cycle bridges to be a minimum of 4m wide on primary routes or 3.5m wide on less busy secondary routes. However, a 3m width is acceptable where flows are less than 50/hr. The Submission does not make any reference to predicted flows within the Design and Access Statement and/or Active Travel Audit - how has the 3m width been arrived at.
- o LTN 1/12 Shared Use Routes for Pedestrians and Cyclists states a preferred 3m width where the route is not bounded by vertical features. The presence of vertical features creates the need for additional width as a buffer zone. The 1.4m high bridge parapet and approximately 2.5m high embankment at 1 in 2 side slope should be considered in this respect.

MCC Rights of Way - Although the proposed scheme potentially improves accessibility by creating paths where none presently exist, the applicant should be sure that the proposed development does not have a negative impact on the availability of the existing path network as it is legally recorded.

Not only should any changes to the existing paths comply with the standards set out by the Fieldfare and Sensory Trusts, they should also apply to the proposed new paths. Countryside Access is particularly concerned about the surface of the paths, changes in gradient and the accessibility of furniture.

If the alignment of the paths set out on the application drawing does not match those legally recorded, a Path Order will be required. Importantly, Path Orders are not guaranteed to be successful. Details of the Path Order process are available from Countryside Access.

MCC Biodiversity - No objection subject to conditions.

MCC Green Infrastructure – comments awaited and will be reported as late correspondence.

#### 4.2 Neighbour Notification



Four objections received:

1. A waste of money when a footpath already exists.
2. The new Bridge will cause a complete lack of privacy to the residents in the cottages as the height of the bridge will be higher than the fencing already there.
3. Flooding risk to the properties will increase as the footbridge will need ramp access so the levels will change.
4. No proposed lighting on the footbridge, so will not be ideal to use in the dark, resulting in pedestrians using the existing bridge anyway.
5. I have used the existing bridge with 2 children and a dog without incident or cause for concerns for my safety.
6. This bridge would be a temptation by youths to jump off during the summer months, causing unnecessary risk to life.
7. The view across Castle Meadows is unique and uniquely beautiful. Trees, grass, the Castle, Llanfoist Bridge and perhaps a few cattle. Rare is it to see such an unspoilt vista and I can think of few others in the middle of a town. The proposed cycle bridge would completely wreck this with an oversized and ugly construction.
8. I am a keen cyclist and dislike the existing crossing as much as anyone else, but natural beauty is rare and precious and simply must take priority.
9. Any new cycle crossing should be close to the existing bridge to minimise the visual impact.
10. The increase in foot traffic is as a result of the housing estate built on Coopers site. I believe one of the proposed positions of the bridge was in line with this estate and there is the potential to create access directly from the estate. This would serve their purpose i.e. Where all the increased pedestrian traffic has originated.
11. Realistically how much will it be used? People with pushchairs, wheelchairs etc crossing the bridge onto a meadow that is usually quite muddy. Know there's a footpath but it's probably not wide enough for two pushchair/wheelchairs to pass.

Three representations of support:

1. The current bridge is a hostile and dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. There is simply too much heavy and sometimes fast traffic on the road, and the footway is very narrow. Crossing the bridge on the footway is particularly terrifying if accompanying young children.
2. The new bridge, together with improvements to onward links on the Llanfoist side as identified in the Active Travel Audit report would be a major contribution to improving conditions for walking and cycling in Abergavenny and Llanfoist. In view of the large number of new homes that are being built in Llanfoist, it is particularly important to provide direct, safe and pleasant walking routes to Abergavenny town centre and the leisure amenities of Castle Meadows and Linda Vista Gardens.
3. Safe crossing of the Usk for pedestrians and cyclists is long overdue, and particularly now, with the population of Llanfoist growing as quickly as it is - it is essential that a safe and attractive walking/cycling route between Abergavenny and Llanfoist is established.
4. The current very narrow pavement on the side of the road bridge is not fit for purpose. It is extremely dangerous. I cross the bridge daily to get to and from work and on several occasions have had the frightening experience of vehicles mounting the pavement. This has been a particular problem when I have had my two young children with me using a pushchair and buggy board. Unless something is done very soon there may be a terrible accident. A separate footbridge is long overdue.
5. PLEASE - we need this bridge NOW!!! To anyone who thinks it is unnecessary to protect pedestrians, as I was walking home from Abergavenny towards Llanfoist yesterday an army truck mounted the pavement such that both its nearside wheels were on the footpath. It came from behind me so I had no warning and it was terrifying. Thankfully I came to no harm, but was quite shaken for a while afterwards. I cross the bridge in Llanfoist almost everyday walking to and from work. I often have my young children with me. Had they been with me yesterday whoever was nearest the road would at best have been seriously injured. We need a separate footbridge NOW before someone is killed.

General comments:

1. With regard to the links across Castle Meadows, these should be a good, smooth all-weather surface, and not prone to mud and large puddles of standing water in the winter or after heavy rain.
2. The bridge is a great start, and will improve that journey for many people, but it is essential that improvements to the onward journey to Llanfoist village, Waitrose, the old railway cycle route (and beyond) are also looked at urgently- crossing Merthyr Road at the Bridge Inn or at the Waitrose roundabout can be extremely difficult and unpleasant.
3. The footbridge should be as near as possible to the current road bridge. This would limit any increase in distance to pedestrian journeys, decrease extra work in making new paths and mitigate the objections to local residents whose gardens back onto Castle Meadows and who feel their privacy will be compromised.
4. There need to be substantial footpaths to and from the bridge to allow access especially during the winter months when the Meadows flood and the ground is likely to become muddy.
5. Lighting on the paths and bridge itself is necessary otherwise the bridge will only be of any use during daylight hours.
6. Other pedestrian access points to and from the bridge in order to complete journeys must be improved as a matter of urgency.
7. As a long-term resident of Llanfoist I have been saddened to note that, perversely, the more developed and bigger Llanfoist has become in recent years, the more distant it feels it is becoming from Abergavenny itself. What used to be a pleasant walk into town now feels like running the gauntlet trying to avoid the ever-increasing traffic and adding to this traffic by using the car is becoming a safer option, thereby compounding the problem further. Arguments regarding the aesthetic quality of the proposed bridge have little weight in comparison to the risk to life as a result of unsafe pedestrian access across the current bridge. More and more houses and other developments are being built in the area and safety measures to protect pedestrians have not kept up.
8. A well-designed footbridge should have little impact. Indeed, it could (and should) enhance the local area and allow pedestrians to enjoy the views of the river and the beautiful hills and countryside that surround us, rather than just trying to get across the existing bridge as quickly as possible.
9. Castle Meadows covers a vast area and the impact on wildlife will be minimal if the bridge is built close to the existing structure where there is already substantial traffic, air, noise and light pollution. Encouraging walking by providing safe access, rather than constantly relying on vehicular transport, would have far more positive environmental benefits than any negative aspects of building the bridge.
10. I have attended both public meetings held over recent years as was highly disappointed and surprised to note that what I would consider to be essential practical aspects associated with building the new footbridge appear to be being ignored. The architects seem to have the sole aim of designing the bridge without any thought to other practicalities: connecting paths, onward journeys or lighting. What is the point in providing a bridge if it does not fully link up to other routes? The purpose of a bridge is to assist a journey, not just to provide a crossing from one river bank to the other. Without proper planning of access routes on either side the bridge will just be a very expensive and rather pointless white elephant.
11. As we are all well aware, Castle Meadows is prone to flooding. The paths to and from the bridge through the Meadows therefore need to be adequate such that they can be safely used by pedestrians throughout the year. Again, keeping as close as possible to the existing structure would limit the length of new paths required.
12. Further afield, the whole pedestrian journey between Llanfoist and Abergavenny needs substantial improvement, too. Developments in the area have caused a huge increase in traffic over recent years but little has been done to protect pedestrians walking through this area. The zebra crossing in Llanfoist Village must be replaced with a pelican crossing as so few drivers bother to stop to allow pedestrians to cross. Also, a pelican crossing on the Abergavenny side of the river needs to be installed to allow pedestrians to cross to the far side of the road to access Nevill Hall Hospital. Currently during busy times the only options at this point are to wait until a driver is considerate enough to allow crossing. The vehicular access point from the roundabout into Waitrose is an additional area of concern. Again, due to poor driving, indication is often not given to allow pedestrians warning that a car intends to turn into Waitrose thus making this crossing unsafe, too.

13. Without adequate lighting the bridge will only be of use during daylight hours. Peak travel time during the winter months is in the dark. If the bridge (and linking paths) is not lit it will not be useable for half of the year. The hours of darkness are probably the least safe on the current bridge and so therefore the times a new footbridge is most needed.

14. We are all aware of the current obesity crisis and the future impact this will have on the health of our nation and on health and social care. We need to urgently consider ways to encourage people to be more active. A safe and pleasant walking route between Llanfoist and Abergavenny would be an excellent way to promote walking with the associated health benefits from exercise. It would also lessen the impacts of traffic on the environment. Road routes through Abergavenny are becoming gridlocked at certain points of the day and parking in town is becoming ever more difficult. Giving people an opportunity to walk rather than use the car would bring not only health benefits to those individuals but would also improve traffic flow through busy streets, making them cleaner and safer for everyone. If enough people could be encouraged to walk there would be wider-reaching environmental benefits limiting the effects of global warming and ultimately lowering the likelihood of Castle Meadows flooding. An effective footbridge would be a small step towards this major goal.

15. I really do hope a safe pedestrian route extending all the way from Llanfoist to Abergavenny will soon be provided. We desperately need it. I fear that someone could be badly injured (or worse) if something is not done. The preservation of human life must be considered above all else. Heavy goods vehicles and buses frequently mount the pavement across the bridge making it unsafe for pedestrian use.

## **5.0 EVALUATION**

### 5.1 Principle of the proposed development

5.1.1 The need for a safe pedestrian/cycle crossing over the River Usk is acknowledged and a footbridge will provide this. Strategic Policy S16 refers to transport and supports development that promote sustainable, safe forms of transport which reduce the need to travel, increase provision for walking and cycling and improve public transport provision.

### 5.2 Design

5.2.1 The proposal is for a 3-span glulam (laminated timber) bridge with stainless steel U frames which support a structural timber deck supported on a single pier of V-shaped stainless-steel (upper section comprised of four arms) supported on a concrete plinth. The bridge abutments are concrete and will be held within earth embankments. The bridge span is approximately 60m and will be 3.4m (including 1.4m parapet) above the existing bank level. As the existing and new bridge are located in a meander of the river, constructing a new bridge directly across the river will mean that the new bridge will not be parallel with the existing bridge, but will be perpendicular with the river. This is considered beneficial to achieve a positive relationship with the existing bridge as the structures will not visually overlap when seen from a large area of the Castle Meadows. Competition with the original bridge has also been avoided in terms of scale.

5.2.2 The proposed bridge has been designed so that the vertical alignment of the crossing is as low as possible whilst meeting the hydraulic requirements. Consequently the heights and the extents of the ramps are also minimised as far as practicable. Adding an intermediate pier reduces the main span, limiting the deck depth and allowing for the side structural beams not to exceed the height a parapet would have. This allows them to perform the double parapet / structure role, and for the bridge to be compact and simple in appearance. The relatively long span will allow views of the old bridge from below the deck of the new one. All the materials proposed have a natural appearance that are considered to be in keeping with the environment and will age naturally as they are all non-painted. The materials used and the design itself with cladded structural elements and details that avoid water stagnation provide a bridge that should be durable with low maintenance. The external rain-screen cladding of the structural glulam beams serves two purposes. Its primary function is to protect the timber superstructure from exposure to sun, adverse weather and water penetration, in order that the anticipated design life of these elements is ensured, whilst allowing ease of maintenance as cladding panels can be replaced in small sections. Its secondary function is that of a fitting and attractive architectural finish; this is

important as the elevational view of the bridge is largely comprised of this cladding. The design proposal for this element is to use sawn timber shingles of a locally native species (larch), arranged in a diamond pattern. The Design and Access Statement submitted with the application explains that it was felt that of the patterns for the cladding tested, the simpler vertical or horizontal timber boards would not achieve the appropriate quality of finish required for this bridge, but by breaking up the external elevation further with a more complex pattern, the bridge will appear visually interesting from close views, whilst remaining visually recessive from distant views (shared with its historic neighbour). This is a quality that will be enhanced by the subtle differences in the way in which each shingle will weather over time to create a subtle patina effect. The diamond pattern has also been chosen as an honest expression of the functional requirements of a rain-screen cladding in the traditional sense. Unlike the non-overlapping options explored (such as a herringbone pattern), the overlapping shingles do not require an additional waterproofing membrane beneath.

5.2.3 The internal cladding provides the same function as the external cladding; that of weather protection for the primary structural timber beams. The aesthetic finish chosen for the internal cladding is vertical overlapping timber boards, arranged so that they are spaced between the uprights of the internal steel U-frames. The result is an understated appearance when compared to the sophisticated external cladding which adds a visual hierarchy that is coherent with how the bridge is differently experienced by users from on the deck and from a distance.

5.2.4 Owing to the presence of livestock in the Castle Meadows directly to the north east of the bridge, there is a requirement for the prevention of access to the bridge by livestock, whilst maintaining safe and comfortable access to the bridge for all pedestrian and cycle users. The proposed gate is a combined cattle-grid / pedestrian gate located at the North-East Abutment location. This position has been chosen to minimise the visual intrusion into the surrounding environment, whilst allowing the associated architectural metalwork of gate and grid to be read as a part of the overall bridge proposal.

5.2.5 Throughout the design process, there has been consideration of lighting the new bridge and/or connecting paths. This was also discussed with the Design Commission for Wales (DCfW) in their Design Review Report from November 2016. The proposed site is located across the River Usk Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and SSSI, as well as within the Castle Meadows. It is considered that lighting of any part of the scheme would not be appropriate due to the impact on the sensitive receptors and the overall impact on visual amenity including heritage assets as a result of the scheme. However, infrastructure will be put in place at this stage to allow lighting to be considered in the future.

5.2.6 In order to have a positive relationship with the Castle Meadows, the ramps of the bridge are expected to be perceived as smooth alterations of the topography, keeping the current appearance as much as possible. On both banks, the ramps are planned as earthen embankments with smooth slopes covered with grass, aligned with the existing river paths.

### 5.3 Landscape Impact

5.3.1 The site is located on the south-west fringes of Abergavenny in open meadowland adjacent to the River Usk and lies within NCA31 Central Monmouthshire and there are a number of features which contribute to the landscape setting including topography, vegetation and public right of ways. The landscape around the site is rich in heritage features that contribute to the local landscape character and visual amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site.

5.3.2 It is considered that construction activities will give rise to direct effects on landscape resources within the site alongside indirect effects on local landscape character and views in the wider area. However, the construction activities will be temporary in nature and will incorporate measures such as a tidy site policy within a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). Effects of moderate negative significance are anticipated during the construction period.

5.3.3 In terms of the direct effects of construction activities on selected viewpoints, an effect of negligible to major adverse significance is anticipated. Major adverse effects on views from users

of Abergavenny Bridge and residential and commercial properties along the A4143 Merthyr Road will only occur during limited stages of the construction phase, when construction works are at their peak (i.e. when cranes and other plant are present). All construction phase effects on visual amenity will last only the several month duration of the construction phase.

5.3.4 Measures to reduce landscape and visual effects are designed into the proposed development as primary mitigation. This includes the height of the bridge above the existing ground level, the limited width of the proposed structure and incorporation of native planting into the design of the embankments. Furthermore, glulam laminated timber has been chosen as the material for the bridge cladding because of its non-reflective attributes and natural appearance. The cladding also uses a complex pattern designed to appear visually recessive from distant views.

5.3.5 Despite the incorporated design measures, the introduction of a new bridge, embankments and paths will be a change to the existing open, natural character, although only a small area is affected. The Council's landscape officer considered the information submitted in the Environment Statement in relation to the LVIA and is satisfied that this has been appropriately assessed and broadly concurs with the findings although it is suggested that the sensitivity of the Landscape to the type of development would be high and not medium (ref Monmouthshire landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study). In terms of the overall impacts and the sensitivity of the landscape, it is considered that the mitigation proposed is limited to offset what has been identified as a permanent negative impacts as a result of the structure. These impacts will be significant as set out in the landscape and visual effect of the operational Phase Section 6.7 of the ES and it is considered that more mitigation should be provided to address these issues.

5.3.6 It is therefore recommended that a more detailed landscape plan be submitted which addresses direct impacts of the bridge and the associated new footpaths and the indirect views and vistas and impact upon the landscape character as highlighted in the report. This can be provided via a landscape condition (see below).

#### 5.4 Impact on Conservation Area and Scheduled Ancient Monument

5.4.1 Through consultation with Cadw, the Welsh Government's Historic Environment Service, five heritage assets in the nearby area were considered to be potentially sensitive to changes in their setting (e.g. how they are seen and appreciated). These are: Abergavenny Bridge, Abergavenny Castle, Linda Vista Park and Gardens (and Castle Meadows by association), remains of the Gobannium Roman Fort and Llanfoist New Cemetery. An assessment was therefore undertaken to better understand the value of these assets, how the site of the proposed footbridge contributes to their setting and what effect the scheme may have.

5.4.2 No heritage assets will be physically affected by the scheme (i.e. no alterations will be made to Abergavenny Bridge). Construction of the Proposed Scheme (i.e. the presence of equipment and temporary fencing off of areas of Castle Meadows) will have a temporary negative effect on the setting of the heritage assets identified above. However this will only be on a short-term basis. Once operational, the bridge will have an impact, on the setting of the heritage assets - mainly views of the historic bridge itself. However, due to the scale, design and location of the bridge, is not considered that it will prevent the appreciation of the historic characteristics of the original bridge or surrounding heritage assets.

5.4.3 Notwithstanding the comments from Cadw, it should be noted that the design of the bridge has been developed in conjunction with the MCC Heritage Manager and the Cadw Inspector of Scheduled Monuments. The Design Commission for Wales presentations have also not raised any concerns to date.

#### 5.5 Green Infrastructure

5.5.1 The Council have recently completed a GI Management Plan for Castle Meadows which the Council has just completed working with the Friends of Castle Meadows volunteer group. The

management of the area around the bridge should be in line with this plan. It is also suggested that a £10,000 GI bond is paid (via a Section 106 Agreement) to cover:

- a. Management/ maintenance of the grassland reinstatement
- b. Proposed new mitigation management around the ramp and sections of the new footpath.
- c. Interpretation/leaflets to promote active travel around Abergavenny in relation to key GI assets.
- d. Seating.
- e. Update of the Castle Meadow management plan.

## 5.6 Economic Development Implications

5.6.1 The proposed bridge and associated improvements to the footpath/cycleway network will enable more people to walk and cycle as a mode of travel for part or all of a journey. These changes aim to improve health in communities, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, help address poverty and disadvantage, and help the economy grow by unlocking sustainable economic growth. Increasing rates of walking and cycling will directly contribute to WG aims as enacted in the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 (the Act).

## 5.7 Highway and Footpath Safety

5.7.1 The A4143 connects the communities of Llanfoist and Abergavenny via the Llanfoist Bridge crossing (over River Usk). The Llanfoist Bridge is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Part of the existing structure was built in the 17th century, and subsequently widened in the 19th century. The carriageway width is typically 6m, with a narrow footway on the eastern side, typically no more than 1.5m wide.

5.7.2 The A4143 is used by traffic travelling between Abergavenny town, Llanfoist and the neighbouring villages of Govilon and Gilwern. The road is also the main approach route into Abergavenny for traffic approaching eastbound along the A465 from the Heads of the Valleys area, and vice versa. In addition, the A4143 is signed as an alternative route for light traffic travelling eastbound on the A40 in order to avoid the town centre. Traffic surveys in 2003 indicated Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) flows of 10,580 southbound and 11,377 northbound. Llanfoist Bridge also lies on National Route 46 (NR46) between \*Merthyr Tydfil and Hereford and is an important leisure link between Abergavenny town centre, the World Heritage Site of Blaenavon, and Iron Mountain Trail. The volume of traffic, added with the proximity of southbound vehicles (particularly HGVs) to the kerb line, combined with the limited footway (which is sometimes occupied by fishermen casting their rods from the bridge) creates unappealing and unsafe facilities for pedestrians. Those with impaired mobility are particularly disadvantaged by the current pedestrian facilities.

5.7.3 The natural desire line would place a pedestrian / cycle crossing directly adjacent to the existing bridge, but this location has been discounted due to various and specific issues with the bridge (raised by Cadw and NRW) that prevents the crossing being either on the upstream or downstream of the bridge.

5.7.4 The proposal will provide a much safer route between Llanfoist and Abergavenny than the road bridge for both pedestrians and cyclists and would be in accordance with the Active Travel (Wales) Act and the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

## 5.8 Residential Amenity

5.8.1 The most directly affected residents (i.e. those residents living closest to the bridge on the south side of the river) that engaged in pre-application consultation or have made comments on the application do not support the new bridge. This is on the grounds that these residents will be affected by a change to flooding impacts. A Flood Consequence Assessment submitted with the application has demonstrated that this change will be minimal and is not likely to adversely affect their properties.

5.8.2 These residents also raised other concerns regarding security and potential overlooking from bridge users. In this respect it should be noted that an existing footpath runs along the river bank to the rear of their properties although at present the path does not link up to the wider footpath or cycle network. There will be views to the properties on the south side of the river when crossing the proposed new bridge as the bridge will be higher than the existing banks. The views will be into the rear gardens of these properties at a distance of approximately 25 metres from the near side of the bridge to the garden boundaries and at a distance of around 40 metres to any windows. This is not considered to be close enough to harm the privacy of these occupiers and on balance the wider benefit of the bridge is considered to outweigh these concerns.

## 5.9 Ecology

5.9.1 Based on the current objective survey and assessment available, it is considered that there is enough ecological information to make a lawful planning decision subject to appropriately worded planning conditions. As EIA development requiring a Habitats Regulations Assessment, detailed surveys have been undertaken to inform the assessment of impacts of the scheme.

### **5.9.1 Protected Sites**

#### 5.9.1.1 River Usk SAC

The bridge will span the river with some of construction including one of the piers sitting within the designated site. A Habitats Regulations Assessment was undertaken to inform the scheme. The assessment is required by Regulation 63 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, in accordance with the EC Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EDC) before the Council as the 'Competent Authority' under the Regulations can give consent for the project.

5.9.1.2 A Test of Likely Significant Effect was initially carried out and considered embedded mitigation. Interest features relevant to the scheme include Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachian vegetation communities, Fish species (Sea lamprey, Twait shad, Atlantic salmon, Brook lamprey, Bullhead, River lamprey, Allis shad), and otter.

The following hazards have been screened out as they are unlikely to cause a significant effect:

- o Disturbance during operation (access / noise / recreation / increased activity / litter)
- o Disturbance during operation (lighting)
- o Habitat Fragmentation during construction
- o Changes in Physical/thermal regime
- o Change in surface flooding during operation
- o Change in flow or velocity regime, Siltation/ sedimentation / turbidity during operation

A number of other hazards were taken forward to Appropriate Assessment stage to consider the impacts of the scheme on the integrity of the European site. Avoidance Measures are included in the application and embedding of these has been demonstrated however, due to some uncertainty for some elements and in light of a recent CJEU ruling, a full Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken.

5.9.1.3 The hazards taken forward are associated with the construction phase and include elements that could result in disturbance including vibration, toxic contamination, siltation / sedimentation, risks of entrapment, surface water changes and impacts from non-native species. In order to protect the integrity of the site, two standard planning conditions are recommended; a Contractor's Construction Environmental Management Plan and a Non-Native Invasive Species Management Plan (see below). These are developed from the British Standard BS42020 Biodiversity - Code of Practice for Planning and development.

5.9.1.4 NRW have been consulted on the HRA and we await their comment in line with the legislation.

#### 5.9.1.5 River Usk SSSI

The proposed scheme sits within the Lower Usk SSSI but is just downstream (Llanfoist Bridge) from the Upper Usk site. Mitigation measures associated with the SAC will also protect the reasons for designation of the SSSI.

### 5.9.2 Habitats

Whilst the development itself (piers and abutments) has a relatively small footprint, the compound area is considerably larger and has the potential to have a negative effect on grassland habitats on Castle Meadows. Since the Eisteddfod on Castle Meadows, site management has included measures to increase species diversity in the grassland including the addition of wildflower seed. We would expect to see the restoration of the site to include a good proportion of native wildflower species including yellow rattle. A planning condition to seek the restoration is recommended.

### 5.9.3 Protected & Priority Species

#### Otter

This protected species is known to use the River Usk here however, no resting up sites or holts were identified in the vicinity of the works. Measures to safeguard otter must be incorporated into the Contractor's Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and a condition is recommended below. As an Interest Feature of the designated site, it has also been considered through the Appropriate Assessment process.

#### Bats

Further survey of the trees was undertaken at the request of NRW in their comments dated 18th May 2018. No bat roosts were identified although the potential for the trees to be roosts remains. Ecological supervision has been recommended and shall be included in the CEMP.

#### Reptiles

The preliminary ecological appraisal recommends further survey for common reptile species as suitable habitat is available however, these protected & priority species were screened out of the Environmental Statement as being of value within the context of the study area alone. This is however still an outstanding issue as no avoidance / mitigation measures have been included in the scheme other than staged vegetation clearance. Measures would need to be incorporated into the Contractor's CEMP.

#### Non-native invasive species

In addition to plant species (Giant Hogweed, Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed), Signal crayfish were also recorded. A management plan for non-native species is recommended and would be secured via planning condition.

### 5.9.4 Lighting

5.9.4.1 The Biodiversity Officer has expressed a concern regarding the installation of lighting on the bridge, not least because of the important fish spawning sites and migrating routes but also because of wider implications relating to bats and other nocturnal wildlife. It is noted that no lighting is proposed but infrastructure will be put in place at this stage to allow lighting to be considered in the future.

### 5.10 Flooding

5.10.1 During construction, the presence of equipment within the river channel and floodplain during a flood event would result in changes to flood flows and floodplain storage, which could lead to an increased flood risk to properties and people elsewhere as well as a risk to construction workers and equipment. A Flood Management Plan will be developed and implemented and the Met Office and Natural Resources Wales' Flood Warning service will be used to ensure no equipment is located in the flood channel during flood events. Site offices and stockpiles will also be located on higher ground that is above the level of the most common floods. The floodplain storage that would be lost because of construction activities is also negligible compared to the volume of water that the floodplain can store. As such, construction activities are anticipated to cause a negligible increase in flood risk.

5.10.2 Once operational, the pier will be located within the river channel and the earthwork ramps located within the floodplain. These structures will cause a minor change in flood flows and reduce



floodplain storage, resulting in the displacement of flood waters. Hydraulic modelling indicates this will marginally increase flood risk to adjacent properties within the existing floodplain. The maximum increase would be approximately 100mm (at the Bridge Inn) in a 1 in 1000 year flood event (a flood event that would be predicted only to happen once in every 1000 years). The impact reduces with distance from the Proposed Bridge. No additional properties will be impacted that are not currently impacted, and the hazard rating to properties that are currently at risk will not change. The marginal increased risk of flooding is considered acceptable to enable the positive outcome of having a new bridge crossing for the wider public to use.

#### 5.11 Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

5.11.1 The duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales has been considered, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the WBFG Act). In reaching this recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been taken into account and it is considered that this recommendation is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers' well-being objectives set out in section 8 of the WBFG Act.

### **6.0 RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE**

#### **Conditions:**

1 This development shall be begun within 5 years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the list of approved plans set out in the table below.

REASON: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved drawings, for the avoidance of doubt.

3 No development shall take place (including ground works, vegetation clearance) until a Contractor's Construction Environmental Management plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP shall build upon the principles set out in the submitted Outline Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP), by WSP, reference 70034788\_ CEMP, dated February 2018 and take the points raised by NRW in their consultation response dated 18th May 2018. The CEMP shall include the following as a minimum:

- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
- b) Identification of "protection zones".
- c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction.
- d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features including the River Usk SSSI / SAC.
- e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
- f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
- g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
- h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with

REASON: To safeguard the Integrity of the River Usk SAC.

4 Prior to the commencement of development, an invasive non-native species protocol shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, detailing the containment, control and removal of invasive non-native species on site. The measures shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved scheme

REASON: To safeguard the Integrity of the River Usk SAC

5 No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Details shall include:

1. hard surfacing materials;
2. detail of minor artefacts and structures;
3. proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (e.g. drainage, power, communications cables, pipelines etc. indicating lines, manholes, supports and CCTV installations.);
4. Soft landscape details shall include: planting plans, specifications including cultivation and other operations associated with plant, grass & wildflower establishment, schedules of plants, noting species, sizes, numbers and densities.
5. Details of the Green Infrastructure (GI) Assets and Opportunities plan to include: Existing assets, opportunities and constraints, existing PROW and movement and connections to and from the bridge, existing vegetation and green links and opportunities for connecting to key GI assets.

REASON: To ensure the provision afforded by appropriate landscape design and Green Infrastructure in accordance with LDP policies, LC5, DES1, S13, GI1, NE1, EP1 and SD4. (Legislative background - Well Being of Future Generations Act 2015, Planning (Wales) Act 2015 Environment (Wales) Act 2016)

6 All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and to a reasonable standard in accordance with the relevant recommendations of appropriate British Standards or other recognised Codes of Good Practice. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the timetable agreed with the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants that, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable with others of species, size and number as originally approved, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

REASON: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a reasonable standard of landscape in accordance with the approved designs in accordance with LDP policies, LC5, DES1, S13, GI1, NE1, EP1 and SD4.

7 A schedule of landscape maintenance for a minimum period of five years shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and shall include details of the arrangements for its implementation.

REASON: To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by the proper maintenance of existing and / or new landscape features in accordance with the approved designs in accordance with LDP policies, LC5, DES1, S13, GI1, NE1, EP1 and SD4.

8 No lighting or other means of illumination shall be used on the footbridge.

REASON: To protect the River Usk SAC / SSSI and Important Ecological Features

## **INFORMATIVES**

- 1 CEMP - further to the detail in the condition, the following is included as guidance for what we would expect to see included in the CEMP. As a minimum the CEMP must:
  - o Build upon the principles in the CEMP submitted with the application
  - o Address matters raised by NRW in consultation response
  - o Matters raised through the Appropriate Assessment process
  - o Measures to safeguard otter including survey prior to commencement of works
  - o Measures relating to the felling of trees with bat roost potential
  - o Nesting bird considerations
  - o Detail of lighting during the construction phase
  - o Measures to prevent impacts from siltation/sedimentation and toxic contamination including detailed concrete pouring methods
  - o Reptile, amphibian and mammal considerations