

Tredegar Town Centre
Place Making Plan
Movement and access appraisal

DRAFT

Transport Vision

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Applicant: Austin Smith Lord

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Offices at:

Unit 9, Oak Tree Court
Mulberry Drive,
Cardiff Gate Business Park,
Cardiff, CF23 8RS
Tel: 029 2073 2652

Suite D, 1st Floor,
220 High Street,
Swansea,
SA1 1NW
Tel: 01792 480535

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Asbri Transport Limited have been instructed by Austin Smith Lord to produce a supporting document for the regeneration place making plan for Tredegar. The Plan will identify and facilitate future regeneration activity within the study area that focuses in and around Tredegar Town Centre, Blaenau Gwent, South Wales. Tredegar Town Centre is located on the banks of the Sirhowy River in the county borough of Blaenau Gwent, in the south-east of Wales.

1.1.2 The Place Making Plan is intended to inform and influence future strategic decision making for regeneration activity within the study area and to act as an evidence base to support Blaenau Gwent CBC with external funding applications.

1.1.3 Sites covered by the study will include the Commercial Street and Castle Street conservation area, Gwent Shopping Centre, Tredegar Business Park, and key transport hubs.

1.1.4 The extent of the study area is indicated in **Figure 1.1**.



Figure 1.1: Tredegar Town Centre Study Area

- 1.1.5 This report will explore how current transport modes including pedestrian, cyclists, car, bus, taxi and integrated regional on-demand transport interact with Tredegar town centre and its strategic sites and how these can be improved.
- 1.1.6 The 2011 Census identified a significant percentage of households in Blaenau Gwent do not own a car or van at 29% which is above the Wales average of 22.9%. Having a multi-modal transport system which does not depend on personal car travel will provide all residents with access to travel enabling them to access employment, education and other key services.
- 1.1.7 The current Local Development Plan refers to the town centre as a District transport hub within Blaenau Gwent. A key element of the LDP strategy is to improve connectivity between Ebbw Vale and the district hubs of Tredegar, Brynmawr and Abertillery.
- 1.1.8 This report explores how all current transport modes interact with Tredegar town centre. In addition, it references the South Wales Metro and how this major transport infrastructure project will benefit the town.

1.2 National Transport Priorities

Llwybr Newydd: The Wales Transport Strategy 2021

- 1.2.1 Llwybr Newydd sets out a vision for how our transport system can deliver priorities for Wales, helping to put us on a pathway to creating a more prosperous, green and equal society.
- 1.2.2 The Transport Strategy aims to bring services to people in order to reduce the need to travel and notes that ‘if more people can walk and cycle for everyday trips, we will reduce our dependency on cars.’
- 1.2.3 It sets a long-term direction and three urgent and immediate priorities:
- **Priority 1** – Bring services to people in order to reduce the need to travel;

- **Priority 2:** Allow people and goods to move easily from door to door by accessible, sustainable and efficient transport services and infrastructure; and,
- **Priority 3:** Encourage people to make the change to more sustainable transport

1.2.4 The thrust of Llwybr Newydd is to achieve a shift away from private car use to more sustainable transport modes for the majority of journeys. Investment will be promoted into low-carbon, accessible, efficient and sustainable transport services and infrastructure that enable more people to walk, cycle and use public transport, and low-emissions vehicles.

1.2.5 Where there is a need for new transport infrastructure, the sustainable transport hierarchy should be considered to give priority to meeting the demand for travel by walking, cycling and public transport ahead of private motor vehicles.

1.2.6 The transport planning recommendation detailed in this report have been informed by the content of Llwybr Newydd and in particular the three headline priorities of the Wales National Transport Strategy.

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

1.2.7 Future Wales – the National Plan 2040 is a national development framework, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a development plan with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.

1.2.8 To breathe new life into town centres, the Welsh Government has adopted a ‘Town Centre First’ approach. This puts the health and vibrancy of town centres as the starting point of locational decision-making. It also directs facilities and services to where intended users can easily walk, cycle and/or use public transport to access them.

- 1.2.9 It is important that developments serving a town, city or region-wide catchment are well served by active travel infrastructure and public transport. Ideally this will be utilising existing public transport facilities, but can be achieved through improvements to services or the creation of a new bus route or train station.

Policy 11 – National Connectivity

- 1.2.10 Policy 11 of the National Plan sets out to support the delivery of the following measures to improve national connectivity:

- “Rail Network – Transform the rail network and improve the quality of rail services for passengers.
- Bus Network – Invest in the development of the national bus network, fully integrated with regional and local bus networks, to increase modal share of bus travel and improve access by bus to a wider range of trip destinations.
- Strategic Road Network – Invest in road improvements to reduce journey times, deliver a safer and more resilient road network, and improve air and noise quality.
- Create a network of rapid-charging points to enable longer distance travel by electric vehicles throughout Wales.
- National Cycle Network – Revitalise the National Cycle Network to create a network of traffic-free paths connecting cities, towns and countryside across Wales.
- Planning authorities should support developments associated with improvements to national connectivity and, where appropriate, maximise the opportunities that arise from them.”

Policy 12 – Regional Connectivity

1.2.11 In rural areas, the Welsh Government’s priorities are supporting the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles and diversifying and sustaining local bus services.

1.2.12 The Welsh Government will work with Transport for Wales, local authorities, operators and partners to deliver the following measures to improve regional connectivity:

- Active Travel – Prioritising walking and cycling for all local travel. We will support the implementation of the Active Travel Act to create comprehensive networks of local walking and cycling routes that connect places that people need to get to for everyday purposes.
- Bus – Improve the legislative framework for how local bus services are planned and delivered. We will invest in the development of integrated regional and local bus networks to increase modal share of bus travel and improve access by bus to a wider range of trip destinations.
- Metros – Develop the South East Metro, South West Metro and North Wales Metro. We will create new integrated transport systems that provide faster, more frequent and joined-up services using trains, buses and light rail.
- Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles – Support the roll-out of suitable fuelling infrastructure to facilitate the adoption of ultra-low emission vehicles, particularly in rural areas.

Bus Emergency Scheme 2

1.2.13 The ‘Bus Emergency Scheme (BES) 2’ is an agreement between bus operators, local authorities, Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government and provides the basis of partnership working to deliver better services.

1.2.14 BES2 will ensure the support provided to bus operators is more closely aligned with Llwybr Newydd, the Welsh Government’s new transport strategy. It will set the foundation for the more detailed National Bus Strategy which will be prepared to support Llwybr Newydd and will set out the Welsh Government’s plans for further reform of the bus industry.

1.3 Local Transport Priorities

South Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan 2015-2020

1.3.1 The five South East Wales Valleys local authorities of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen have jointly developed this Local Transport Plan (LTP).

1.3.2 The vision of the South Wales Valleys LTP is to provide “A modern, accessible, integrated and sustainable transport system for the SE Wales Valleys and beyond which increases opportunity, promotes prosperity for all and protects the environment; where walking, cycling, public transport and sustainable freight provide real travel alternatives.”

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Local Development Plan up to 2021

1.3.3 Bleanau Gwent CBC adopted their Local Development Plan (LDP) in November 2012.

2.0 EXISTING SITUATION

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This section of the report describes the existing transport network and conditions within Tredegar Town centre and outlined study area.

2.2 Highway Network

Commercial Street

2.2.1 Commercial Street comprises of the main retail area of Tredegar Town Centre. Commercial Street provides pedestrian access to Gwent Shopping Centre along with other retail and commercial uses along its length.

2.2.2 It is a one-way single carriageway street with traffic travelling north-bound from Queen Victoria Street to the south. Parking restrictions are in place along its length in the form of double yellow lines and speed calming measures are in place in the form of speed tables.

2.2.3 Loading only bays are located at several points along Commercial Street along with allocated disabled parking bays.

2.2.4 Footways are provided along both sides of the carriageway ranging in width from between 2m to 3m. The street is lit and public seating in the form of benches are dotted along the length of Commercial Street.

2.2.5 Commercial Street is lined with metal bollards preventing any parking on the footway, aside from the footway located at designated loading bays and disabled bays.

Castle Street

2.2.6 Castle Street, formally known as the B4526 is a two-way single carriageway road which forms a roundabout junction with The Circ to the south. To the north, Castel Street merges with Queen Victoria Street.

2.2.7 The retail core of Commercial Street extends down Castle Street which is lined with retail and commercial units, some of which are vacant. On street car parking is provided along both sides of the carriageway and is restricted between Monday – Saturday, 8am – 6pm for 1 hour, no return within 2 hours. Double yellow lines are also in place outside of the designated parking areas.

2.2.8 Footways and street lighting are provided along both sides of Castle Street and a designated signalised pedestrian crossing is located mid-way up the street, approximately 50m to the north of The Circ.

Upper Salisbury Street

2.2.9 Upper Salisbury Street forms a narrow two-way single carriageway which forms a simple priority junction with Queen Victoria Street to the north east and Market Street and Lower Salisbury Street to the south. The street is lined with some residential properties and also provides rear access to car parking for the properties which front onto Castle Street.

2.2.10 Parking is restricted along the length of Upper Salisbury Street. Narrow footways are provided along both sides of the carriageway and street lighting is present. No crossing provision is provided.

2.3 Active Travel Routes

2.4 Walking

2.4.1 The CIHT guidance ‘Providing for Journeys on Foot’ (2000) sets out desirable, acceptable and preferred maximum walking distances for different trip purposes. These are set out in **Table 2.1**.

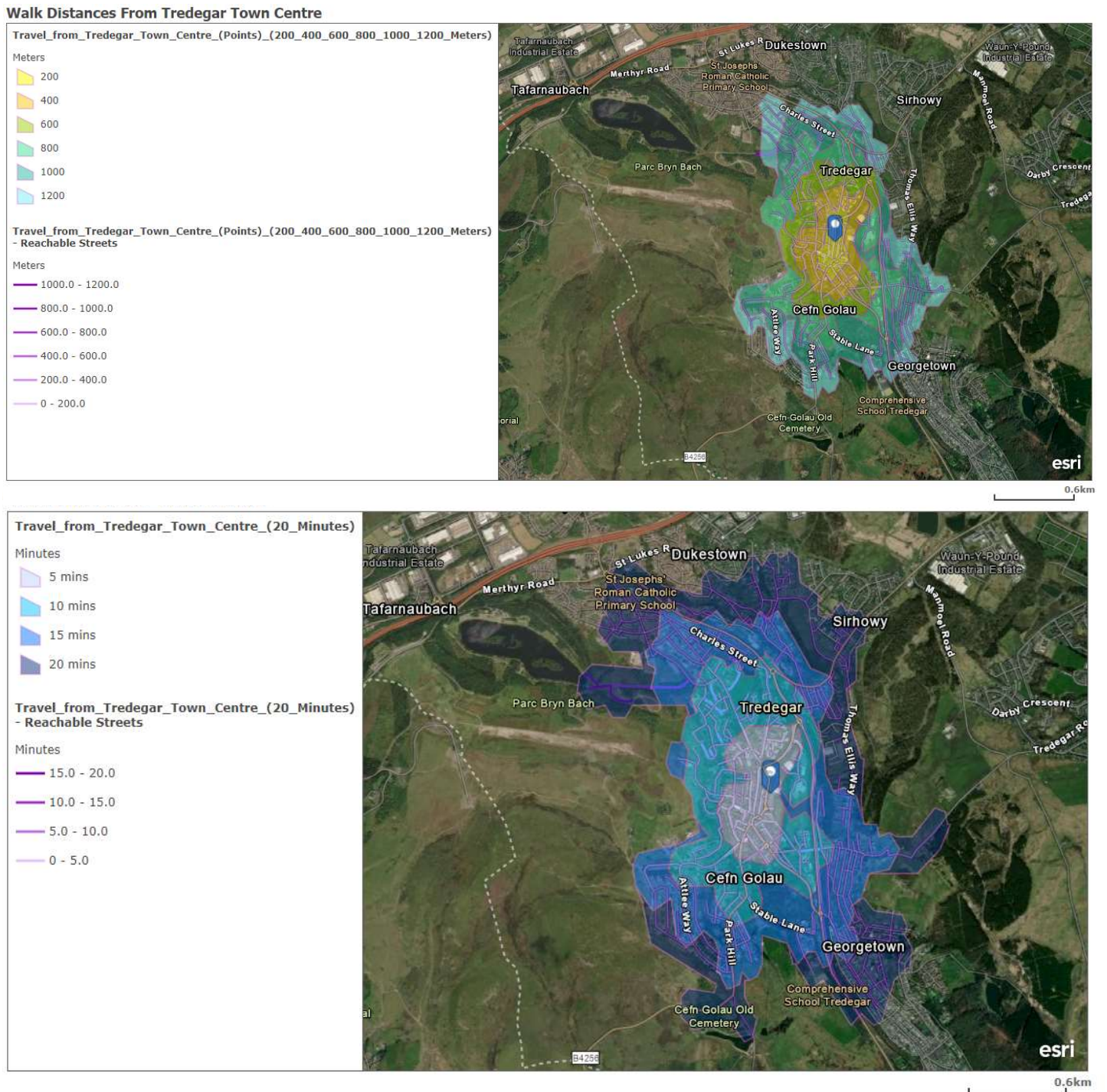
| | Town Centre (m) | Commuting/school(m) | Elsewhere (m) |
|------------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Desirable | 200 | 500 | 400 |
| Acceptable | 400 | 1000 | 800 |
| Maximum | 800 | 2000 | 1200 |

Table 2.1: CIHT suggested acceptable walking distances

2.4.2 Research undertaken by WYG published in Local Transport Today edition 13th – 26th October 2017 states the following:

‘Our other research on walking distances to public transport stops has shown the mean walking distance to a bus stop is 580m and 810m the 85th percentile, notably longer than CIHT’s 400m maximum distance. The average walking distance to a railway station is 1,000m and 1,600m is the 85th percentile, again notably longer than CIHT’s guidance of 800m.’

2.4.3 **Figure 2.1** sets out the walk distances and walk times to areas of Tredegar from the Town Centre.



- 2.4.4 Footways are provided along the majority of carriageways throughout Tredegar Town Centre. Footway provision is of a reasonable standard along Commercial Street, Queen Victoria Street and Castle Street.
- 2.4.5 There are few formal crossing points provided throughout the Town Centre.
- 2.4.6 The Gwent Shopping Centre and car park is open plan in its design and has several secluded entrances and exits that encourage anti-social behaviour.
- 2.4.7 Access to the town Centre from the existing Bus Interchange is via a short alley way onto Commercial Street across the Gwent Shopping Centre underpass road or via a circuitous route through the rear entrance of Gwent Shopping Centre via several steps or a longer distance over the third access point via a ramped access walkway.

Cycling

- 2.4.8 National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 411 runs to the north of Tredegar Town Centre along Church Street and onto Stockton Way before crossing over to a traffic-free section running adjacent to Tredegar Business Park towards the roundabout junction of the A4084. At this point, Route 411 joins with Route 467 which runs parallel to the A4084. To the north, Route 467 provides access to Route 46.
- 2.4.9 Route 46 follows the Heads of The Valleys and provides access locally to Ebbw Vale and Brynmawr.
- 2.4.10 A map indicating the National Cycle Network Routes within the vicinity of Tredegar Town Centre are indicated in **Figure 2.2** below.
- 2.4.11 Currently, there are no dedicated cycle routes within Tredegar Town Centre.

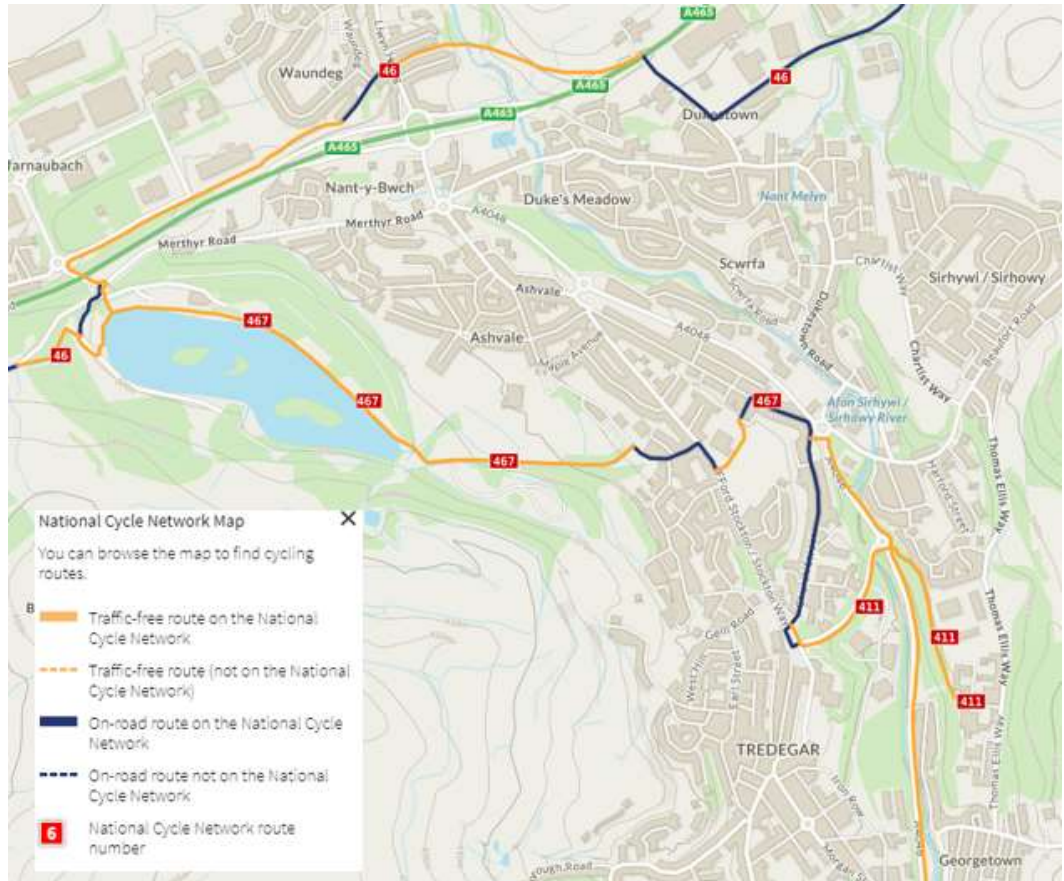


Figure 2.2: NCN Routes

2.5 Public Transport

2.5.1 The bus interchange and taxi rank are bound between the Gwent Shopping Centre car park and the rear of Commercial Street accessed via the Gwent Shopping Centre underpass. The location of the bus interchange is indicated in **Figure 2.3**.



Figure 2.3: Bus Interchange Location

- 2.5.2 The bus interchange comprises of three contemporary glass and steel bus shelters which are provided with seating.
- 2.5.3 The existing bus services currently operating at Tredegar Bus Interchange are summarised below in **Table 2.2**.

| Route No. | Destination | First / Last | Frequency | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------|
| | | | Monday - Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
| 4A | Tredegar – Rhymney (Circular) | 07:12/17:10 | 5 services per day | 5 services per day | No service |
| 4C | Rhymney – Tredegar (Circular) | 09:00/16:05 | Approx. bi-hourly | Approx. bi-hourly | No service |
| 56 | Tredegar | 07:17/19:18 | Hourly | Hourly | Bi-hourly |
| | Newport | 06:25/19:30 | Hourly | Hourly | Bi-hourly |
| 97 | Brynawr | 08:41 | 1 service per day | No service | No service |
| E11 | Tredegar | 09:42/18:07 | Hourly | Hourly | No service |
| | Ebbw Vale | 08:50/17:15 | Hourly | Hourly | No service |
| E12 | Tredegar | 09:45/15:50 | Approx. Hourly | Approx. Hourly | No service |

Table 2.2: Tredegar Bus Interchange Service Summary

2.5.4 As detailed in Table 2.2, there are two services (56 & E11) operating Monday – Saturday on an hourly basis from Tredegar providing access to Newport and Ebbw Vale.

2.5.5 There is no rail service available at Tredegar. The nearest railway stations are located at Rhymney (5.1km) to the west or Ebbw Vale (5.7km) to the east. Services to Cardiff Central are available from both stations.

2.6 Existing Highway Safety Record

2.6.1 Personal Injury Collision (PIC) data has been obtained for the most recent five-year period from CrashMap.

2.6.2 A summary of the collisions that occurred within the study area outlined within this report are shown in **Table 2.3** and the full collision report for each incident is detailed at **Appendix A**. The location and severity of the collisions assessed are shown in **Figure 2.4**.

| Year | No. personal injury | | | Casualties | Vehicles |
|------|---------------------|---------|--------|------------|----------|
| | Fatal | Serious | Slight | | |
| | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2016 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| 2017 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 2018 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| 2019 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| 2020 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 0 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 9 |

Table 2.3: Summary of PIC data



Figure 2.4: PIC locations

2.6.3 It is evident from Table 2.3 that a total of 6 collisions have occurred in the study area during the most recent 5-year period resulting in a total of 8 casualties. Of the 6 collisions, 2 were recorded as serious.

2.6.4 The two serious collisions which occurred along Stockton Way and Castle Street are described in more detail below.

Stockton Way – 7th August 2018, 3:12PM

- 2.6.5 The collision involved a pedal cyclist and a car. The car was in the act of turning right and the cyclist was in the act of turning left. The car was struck on the nearside and the cyclist was struck to the front.

Castle Street – 17th October 2016, 11:25AM

- 2.6.6 The collision involved a car and a pedestrian. A car struck a pedestrian crossing from the drivers nearside. The pedestrian was not utilising a crossing facility.
- 2.6.7 Both of the serious collisions detailed above involved non-motorised users.

2.7 Existing Traffic Levels

- 2.7.1 Daily vehicle flow rates have been provided along Commercial Street by Blaenau Gwent County council. The data provided indicates the total number of vehicles travelling along Commercial Street between 27th January 2021 – 6th May 2021.
- 2.7.2 Over the time period surveyed, on average approximately 1670 vehicles pass through Commercial Street during an average weekday. This average takes into account the weekday AM and PM peak hour period.
- 2.7.3 It is estimated that of the 1670 vehicles, approximately 10% of the traffic will be on the network during the peak hour periods, equating to roughly 167 vehicles travelling along Commercial Street during the AM and 167 vehicles during the PM peak hour period.
- 2.7.4 Over the weekend, it is considered that on average 1351 vehicles travel along Commercial Street throughout the 48-hour period with a greater vehicle flow witnessed on a Saturday.

2.8 Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Study Area

- 2.8.1 At the time of the 2011 Census, Tredegar had a population of 15,103. The socio-economic distribution of the area will be based upon 2011 Census Data for W02000316 : Blaenau Gwent 003 and W02000319 : Blaenau Gwent 006. Key statistics for these areas include:

- 30% of residents in the wards analysed do not have access to a car or van, which is higher than the Blaenau Gwent average (29%)

- The average number of cars owned per household in the area is 1 and across Blaenau Gwent the average is also 1.
- 10% of residents in the wards either walk or cycle to work, which is the same as the borough average of 10%

3.0 IDENTIFIED TRANSPORT CHALLENGES

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section of the report outlines the existing areas of Tredegar Town Centre where there are perceived issues with the existing transport infrastructure.

3.1.2 The Town Centre is split into 4 zones:

- Commercial Street and Castle Street conservation area
- Gwent Shopping Centre
- Tredegar Business Park, and
- Key transport hubs.

3.1.3 The key issues in each zone have been identified below.

3.2 Commercial Street & Castle Street

3.2.1 Commercial Street is currently open to vehicular traffic and is dominated by parked vehicles. Pavements are cluttered and uneven in places with a lack of safe crossing points for disabled and visually impaired users. There is currently a lack of signs guiding pedestrians to transport services and local facilities.

3.2.2 There are a significant number of cast iron bollard located along the footways, which appear to be installed to deter footway parking.

3.3 Gwent Shopping Centre

3.3.1 The Gwent Shopping Centre is located to the east of Commercial Street and in the northern sector of the town centre. It is accompanied by a large surface car park immediately south of the buildings.

3.3.2 A single carriageway road links Stockton Way to the north of the shopping centre by way of a traffic signal-controlled junction and Queen Victoria Street to the south by way of a compact roundabout junction. This roundabout junction provides the access to the centre's surface car park.

3.3.3 The same road provides access to Tredegar Bus Station and also passes under the shopping centre by way of an under-pass that in turn provides access to the under-croft service area of both sides of the shopping centre.

3.3.4 Pedestrian access is via a ramped access on Commercial Street and there is secondary access via steps from the rear car park accessed via the underpass road running under the shopping centre.

3.3.5 The Shopping Centre and car park is open plan in its design and has several secluded entrances and exits that encourage anti-social behaviour.

3.4 Tredegar Business Park

3.4.1 Tredegar Business Park is currently segregated from Tredegar Town Centre. Pedestrian routes are currently available; however, these are indirect, poorly lit and unattractive to pedestrians due to a perceived lack of safety.

3.4.2 It is considered that there are opportunities for enhanced active travel connections linking the Business Park with the town centre. These are detailed in Section 4.

3.4.3 In addition, a high-level appraisal has been undertaken of improving access from the south of the Business Park to the A4084. Consideration would need to be given to the existing land levels and bridging over the Sirhowy River would need to be considered.

3.4.4 There is also considered to be some potential for a second point of access into the Business Park by way of an improved junction at Bridge Street and Iron Row.

3.5 Key Transport Hubs

3.5.1 There are 2 separate bus interchange facilities located in Tredegar. One to the immediate east of the Lidl store accessed via the Stockton Way signal junction and the other to the immediate west of the Gwent Shopping Centre car park and immediately south of the under-pass road.

- 3.5.2 The facility on Stockton Way has two 16m bus stops both accompanied by modern shelters. There is pedestrian provision by way of dropped kerbs and tactile paving that link with the pedestrian crossing provision on the northern arm of the signal junction.
- 3.5.3 At the southernmost facility (adjacent to the Gwent Shopping Centre car park) there is a double length bus lay-by and a single length lay-by located adjacent to the south-bound carriageway. All 3 stops are accompanied by modern shelters and seating.
- 3.5.4 Pedestrian access from the bus interchange to Commercial Street is by way of a short alley way across the Gwent underpass road and Bank Lane. This route is gates and has steps present. There is an alternative route to Commercial Street via the Gwent Shopping Centre.
- 3.5.5 There is a raised zebra crossing located on the road that passes underneath the shopping centre on the northern side of the bus interchange.

4.0 PROPOSED TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENTS

4.1 Key Objectives

4.1.1 The proposal to implement public realm and highway improvements as part of the Tredegar Town Centre Redevelopment will:

- Improve journey times, reliability and journey quality for all road users
- Improve accessibility to Tredegar town centre for pedestrians, cyclists and road users
- Reduce congestion and its environmental impacts
- Improve access between Tredegar's bus interchange and the nearby strategic sites:
- Proposed a consolidated bus facility and
- Enhance the viability of the town centre, support Economic Development and other key areas.

4.2 Active Travel Improvements

4.2.1 Improved wayfinding signs should be provided to ensure a clear route toward Tredegar Bus Interchange from both Commercial Street and Castle Street to promote complimentary multi-modal interchange within the town. An example of a wayfinding totem and signage is indicated in **Figure 4.1**.



Figure 4.1: Wayfinding examples

4.2.2 In addition, the potential for full or partial pedestrianisation of Commercial Street has been investigated and discussed with stakeholders.

4.2.3 Pedestrianisation of Commercial Street would include:

- Removal of all traffic from the street or removal of traffic during certain time periods during the day
- Removal of curbs and footways, addition of new paving.
- Consolidation and removal of existing street furniture to facilitate pedestrian movement.

4.2.4 The quality of the walking environment is a huge factor in people's shopping choices, and people who walk to their high street have been shown to spend more, and in a wider range of shops, than visitors arriving by car, bus or bike.

- 4.2.5 Pedestrianisation aims to improve pedestrian’s safety and mobility. Another important benefit is related to the environment. These schemes can help to reduce both noise and pollution by discouraging or restricting access of non-essential vehicles. Furthermore, it helps to promote walking as a transport mode by making the walking experience more enjoyable.
- 4.2.6 An active travel route linking Tredegar Business Park to Tredegar Town Centre has been considered. A potential active travel route linking the business park and town centre has been identified in **Figure 4.2**.

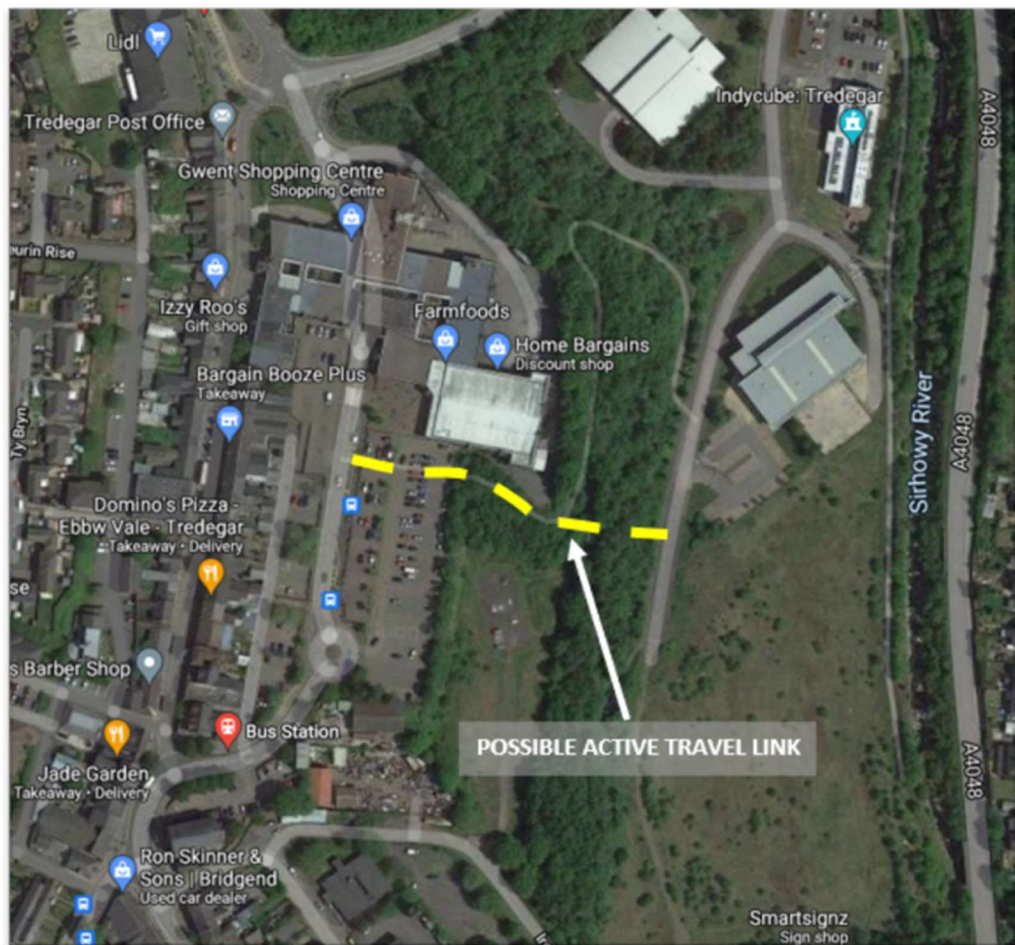


Figure 4.2: Possible Active Travel Link

- 4.2.7 The creation of a bike hub/docking station offering bicycle hire and safe, secure, sheltered bicycle parking should be incorporated alongside the proposed new bus interchange. This would create a consolidated travel hub allowing easy interchange between modes.

- 4.2.8 The signal-controlled junction of Stocton Way, Commercial Street and the access to the bus facility could be improved to deliver cyclist crossing provision and possibly advanced cyclist stop lines for through cyclist movement.
- 4.2.9 It is noted from the collision analysis undertaken that there has been a serious collision involving a cyclist recorded at the junction.

4.3 Bus Interchange & Taxi Rank improvements

- 4.3.1 Developing a modern quality transport interchange to efficiently link commercial development with residential areas that capitalises on and maximises the opportunities being presented through the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, specifically the delivery of the South East Wales Metro.
- 4.3.2 The provision of further Real Time Information (RTI) displays at key bus stops linked to the town centre.
- 4.3.3 Improved shelter provision to ensure passengers are protected from the weather whilst waiting for a bus.
- 4.3.4 Taxi parking provision and access should avoid causing conflict with pedestrian and cycle access in the station area.
- 4.3.5 Pedestrian and cycle safety will be ensured through appropriate design. The future design will ensure a hierarchy whereby pedestrian and cyclists are given priority, shared surface treatments, traffic calming and appropriate signs and demarcation will help to ensure taxi movements are conscious of other users and the busy interaction of users in the area.
- 4.3.6 Appropriate signs should be provided along key routes to and from the station area.

- 4.3.7 A drop-off area could be provided to the rear of Gwent Shopping Centre also providing a servicing facility for the existing retail use of Gwent Shopping Centre.
- 4.3.8 The South Wales Metro is an integrated public transport network that will make it easier for people travel across the Cardiff Capital Region, transforming rail and bus services as well as cycling and walking. The Cardiff Capital Region is made up of 10 local authorities including Blaenau Gwent.
- 4.3.9 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a bus-based system that uses dedicated and/or prioritised highway space, similar to European-style segregated busways. BRT uses high-quality stops, off-vehicle ticketing and high-frequency services that are integrated into a wider regional transit network.
- 4.3.10 The BRT will provide a west - east connection that will complement north - south travel connectivity provided by the railway lines, and provide residents of these communities with direct access to economic opportunities located in the Heads of the Valleys corridor.
- 4.3.11 The BRT will have a particularly positive impact on Tredegar, which is currently disconnected from the railway line through connecting the town to rail links in Ebbw Vale, Rhymney and Merthyr.
- 4.3.12 The BRT will provide access to natural tourism opportunities in the Valleys Regional Park, Brecon Beacons Park (via one of the Heads of the Valleys settlements) and Monmouthshire.

4.3.13 **Figure 4.3** details the proposed Metro routes.

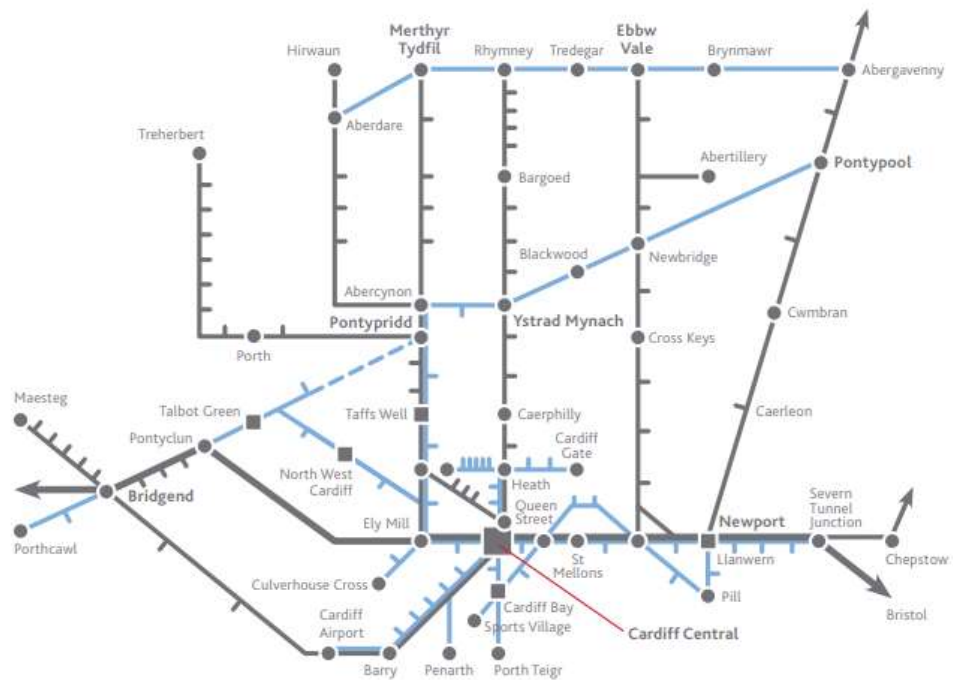


Figure 4.3: Proposed Metro Routes (Source: Capita A Cardiff Capital Region Metro: Impact Study)

4.3.14 Increased frequency and provision of services to key destinations surrounding Tredegar such as Ebbw Vale, Balckwood and Caerphilly should be considered.

4.3.15 Potential introduction of fflecsi services to operate alongside existing services. fflecsi is a new pilot service from Transport for Wales and local bus operators. fflecsi buses pick you up at your request, changing its route so that all passengers can get to where they need to go. As the bus doesn't run to a fixed route or timetable, the route will vary depending on who else has booked at similar times with similar destination.

4.3.16 Discussion with key stakeholders is required to assess the introduction of 'bus only' lanes and priority systems.

4.4 Consolidated Bus interchange

4.4.1 It is considered there is benefit in consolidating the existing 2 bus facilities in one location and subject to changes proposed to the Gwent Shopping Centre, this should be explored further.

4.4.2 A consolidated facility will improve inter-change between all services operational in the town centre but land requirements will be dependent on partial demolition of the Gwent Shopping Centre.

4.4.3 The creation of a new consolidated bus interchange has been discussed with key passenger transport and SW metro officers who were supportive of the proposal. Such a facility could allow better integration with the South Wales metro proposal and would deliver socio economic benefits to the town centre.

4.5 Tredegar Business Park

4.5.1 The Consultant's brief requested that an additional exit only access from the Business Park to the A4048 be investigated. It is considered likely that any such new access would need to bridge the River Sirhowy as the A4048 traverses the river at the southern extent of the Council Land to the south of the Business Park. Beyond this location the river runs between the A4048 and the land associated with the Business Park.

4.5.2 An access into the Business Park from the A4048 would require a detailed engineering appraisal as it is considered from a preliminary review that significant structural work would be required to bridge the river. Such engineering works may incur significant costs, and may prove cost-prohibitive. However, it is recommended that this be investigated further.

4.5.3 The location of the potential access point is indicated in **Figure 4.4**.

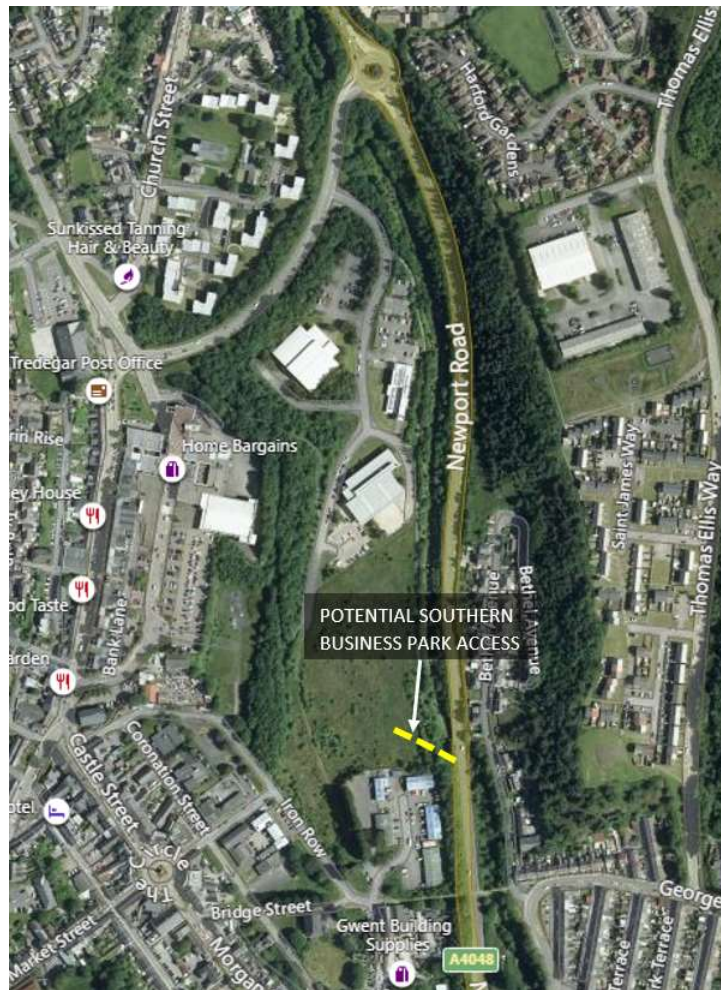


Figure 4.4: Potential Southern Business Park Access

4.5.4 A further option has been investigated in order to provide a second point of access into Tredegar Business Park from the south. This option suggests the provision of possibly a compact roundabout junction with Iron Row. The proposed location of the second access is detailed in **Figure 4.5**.



Figure 4.5: Proposed roundabout access location

4.5.5 It is envisaged that the point of access detailed in Figure 4.5 would possibly prove a more viable access improvement than that proposed in Figure 4.4.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

- 5.1.1 This Transport Vision Document is a high-level review intended to inform and influence future strategic decision making for regeneration activity within the study area outlined. It is intended and to act as an evidence base to support Blaenau Gwent CBC with external funding applications.
- 5.1.2 The report has reviewed current transport planning policy in Wales and undertaken a baseline assessment of the transport characteristics of the study area.
- 5.1.3 The Transport Vision outlines the key areas for improvement within Tredegar town centre and suggests a number of potential transport enhancement strategies for the town.
- 5.1.4 A number of meetings have occurred with key stakeholders and these have included meetings with local councillors and key passenger transport and active travel officers of the Local Authority and those with responsibilities for the South Wales Metro project.
- 5.1.5 It is envisaged that a number of improvements to the pedestrian realm, active travel routes and public transport infrastructure would enhance the overall experience for various users of the town centre. Similarly improved access to the Business Park and improved connectivity with the town centre would contribute to Tredegar's regeneration.
- 5.1.6 This report has discussed relatively low-cost improvements such as increased cycle parking provision throughout the study area to potentially significant infrastructure works such as a new all mode access to the Tredegar Business Park and a new bus interchange facility.