

Date: 17th December 2021

Our Ref: SH/21.177

Planning Division
The Quays
Brunel Way
Baglan Energy Park
Neath
SA11 2GG

SENT VIA EMAIL

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Town And Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment)(Wales)
Regulations 2017**

Request for a Screening Opinion

**Full planning application for proposed development of industrial unit and associated works
on land at Baglan Way, Port Talbot**

LRM Planning is instructed by Glass Systems Ltd to request a formal screening opinion from the Council to confirm whether or not the above proposals, which will be subject to a full planning application in due course, would require Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This request is made in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017.

The Regulations state that the extent of information required to inform the current screening request, which comprise the following:

- a) A plan sufficient to identify the land;
- b) A brief description of the location of the development including:
 - i. a description of the physical characteristics of the development and, where relevant, of demolition works;
 - ii. a description of the location of the development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected;
- c) A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development;
- d) A description of likely effects to the extent of the information available on those effects on the environment resulting from
 - i. the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant; and
 - ii. the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity; and

- e) Any such other information or representations as the person making the request may wish to provide or make including any features of the proposed development or any measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.

In respect of the first item, you will find enclosed a site location plan (please refer to appendix A) that can be used to identify the location of the site. The other matters are discussed below against a consideration of the criteria set out under schedule 3 of the regulations.

Proposal

The proposals are to develop a new manufacturing unit, storage building, and new welfare facilities for staff. It will also incorporate an office block. The ground floor measures 21,288m², with a mezzanine office space fronting onto Moor Road that includes a first-floor space measuring 1,219m² internally. The height of the building ranges between 7.35m and 11.35m, in order to integrate with the prevailing scale. The elevations comprise typically industrial materials, which prioritise functionality and longevity. In this regard, the structure comprises of steel frame cladding with composite 1m wide panel cladding and a small brickwork plinth, planar glazing to the office and administrative quarters, insulated sectional doors, steel personnel doors and single ply roof membrane.

Site description and context The site is broadly square in shape, measuring approximately 12.4 hectares in area. It is disused former industrial land, now rough ground combined with areas of species rich grassland and naturally generating scrub. The character is that of a large, partially enclosed field with scrub and grass, with strong deciduous vegetated boundaries separating the site from Baglan Way and Moor Road.

The boundaries of the site are defined by Moor Road to the north and west, and Baglan Way to the east, with a security fence to the Warbutons bakery industrial unit to the south. Landscaped bunds also line the east, north and western boundaries, located within the site boundary. The M4 runs beyond Baglan Way to the east, with allotments and a greenfield open space beyond Moor Road to the north and Llys y Seren assisted living residence, and Port Talbot Resource Centre to the west. Baglan Industrial Estate extends south from the site comprising a number of industrial units.

A vehicular access gate is located to the south-eastern corner, however, there is no junction or dropped kerb thus no formal vehicle access is available. Similarly, regarding pedestrian access the site is open on all sides apart from to the south and access can be gained over landscaped bunds however overgrown shrubs prevent access along the majority of the site and there is no formal pedestrian access point. The site is conveniently located with junction 41 of the M4, the south Wales to London motorway, located 800m north of the site, connecting to major trunk roads in Wales and England.

In terms of wider context, the site is located in a predominantly industrial area with Baglan Industrial Estate to the south, supporting a mix of employment and employment uses.

Categorising the development and summary of assessment criteria

This Screening Request is made in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017, which requires planning applications for forms of



development within certain categories specified in Schedules 1 and 2 of the Regulations to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

Whilst all development which falls within Schedule 1 will require an Environmental Impact Assessment to be undertaken, this is not mandatory for development listed in Column 1 of Schedule 2. For development listed therein it will be for the Local Planning Authority to make its own formal determination of whether or not there are likely to be “*significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location*”. If it is concluded that the proposed development would lead to significant effects on the environment by virtue of such factors such as its nature, size and locations then an Environmental Impact Assessment would be required.

The development, which is described above, does not fall within Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations, for which an EIA would be mandatory.

Part 5 of Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations references “*Installations for the manufacture of glass including glass fibre*” and specifically where “*the area of new floorspace exceeds 1,000 square meters.*” This proposal does not include manufacturing of glass, moreover, it comprises a facility for *processing* glass that has already been formed off-site and delivered to the premises, so this development would not fall with the definition.

Part 10 of Schedule 2 references “*industrial estate projects*” and provides a site area of in excess of 5 hectares. This proposal would fall within that category.

In this regard, the proposed development has been considered against Schedule 3 of the Regulations, which identifies three criteria for screening Schedule 2 developments:

1. Characteristics of the development (including size, cumulative impact, use of natural resources, waste production, pollution and risk of accidents).
2. Location of the development (in relation to the environmentally sensitivity of the area).
3. Types and characteristics of the potential impact (including its extent, trans frontier nature, magnitude, complexity, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility).

Given the characteristics of the development and its potential impacts, we are of the view that the proposal does not constitute EIA development. In regard to Schedule 3, each criterion is assessed in turn below (in addition we provide the relevant information required by the regulations in respect of any likely impacts):

1.Characteristics of the development

The proposals are to develop a new manufacturing unit, storage building, and new welfare facilities for staff. It will also incorporate an office block. The ground floor measures 21,288m², with a mezzanine office space fronting onto Moor Road that includes a first-floor space measuring 1,219m² internally. The height of the building ranges between 7.35m and 11.35m, in order to integrate with the prevailing scale. The site is in the settlement boundary, in an area where the immediate adjoining land uses are employment and industrial, that is well served with existing infrastructure. The site has strategic access to the mainline railway, the A48 and the M4, being ideally located for a manufacturing industry use and will support employment growth in the area.



The location of the development, adjacent established industrial area, forming a logical infilling and in close proximity to transport network minimises the impact of the development on the wider area. The spatial extent of the building has been kept to a minimum. The proposed end use is highly specialised, thus the dimensions of the building have been guided by the space requirements, which in turn have been arrived at through detailed critical analysis of other industrial units operated by the same operator worldwide.

On site operations include cutting and shaping glass to order, and tempering/toughening glass to specification. The proposed facility would not include any manufacture of float glass. Production of waste from the facility, alongside pollution and nuisances, are minimal. Waste glass is shipped from the site to a remote manufacturing facility where it is recycled for future use. All operations are contained within the facility using equipment established at three other sites in South Wales, meaning that health and safety regimen is highly refined and risk of major accidents or impact upon human health is minimal, even more so when considered any such impact outside of the proposed building.

2. Location and environmental sensitivity of the site

A desk study has identified three statutory designated sites present within the potential zone of influence of the site, these include Crymlyn Bog Ramsar Site and SAC (3.8km); and Kenfig SAC (8.5km). Given the distance and spatial separation no significant effects are like to arise upon the designations following the development of the site.

In addition, a desk study identified several Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) within the vicinity of the site, the most pertinent of which is Panasonic SINC, designated for its post-industrial land and which overlaps with the boundaries of the site. Of this 14.5 ha SINC, circa 4.5ha will be lost/damaged to facilitate development. Habitat loss is anticipated to facilitate the development of the site. The provision of compensatory habitat to offset negative effects will be required with an overall mitigation strategy, to be informed by the results of a further detailed botanical assessment.

The table below summarises the location of the site in relation to designated features.

Topic	Designation	Reference	Distance from the Subject Site
Conservation Areas	None within 1km of the subject site.		
Listed Building	Church of St Catharine Grade I	Ref no: 14171	620m NE from the site
	Footbridge and walls of Baglan brook around churchyard of St Catharine Grade II	Ref no: 22810	620m NE from the site
	The Vicarage Grade II	Ref no: 22811	670m NE from the site



	Sunray Grade II	Ref no: 22813	690m E from the site
	Old church of St Baglan Grade II	Ref no: 14146	760m NE from the site
	No other listed building within 1km of the site.		
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	Ruins of St Baglan's Church	SAM No: GM428	700m NE of the site
	Plas Baglan	SAM No: GM358	900 NE of the site
	Cwm-Clais Castle Mound	SAM No: GM289	1.8km E of the site
	Craig Ty-Isaf Camp	SAM No: GM263	1.8km NE of the site
The Registered Landscapes of Outstanding and of Special Interest	None within 1km of the subject site - Margam Mountain (Rec No: HLW (WGI/MGI) 2) 3.4km SE of the site		
Registered Parks and Gardens	None within 1km of the subject site.		
World Heritage Site	None within 1km of the subject site.		
Green Belt	None within 1km of the subject site.		
Local Nature Reserve	None within 1km of the subject site.		
National Nature Reserve	None within 1km of the subject site.		
Ramsar Sites	None within 1km of the subject site.		
Special Area of Conservation	None within 1km of the subject site.		
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	None within 1km of the subject site.		
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	None within 1km of the subject site.		
National Park	None within 1km of the subject site.		

3.Types and characteristics of potential impacts

The potential effects on the site and the surrounding environment have been considered within this section using the criteria set out within Schedule 3.

Highways and car parking – The site is situated in a sustainable location, with a proliferation of industrial uses in immediate site proximity. It is well suited to accommodate the proposals, being located



in an area surrounded by existing industrial uses. It is connected by existing pedestrian, cycle and public transport networks. Initial analysis of trip distribution by our appointed transport consultant demonstrates that there is a minimal level of vehicle movements across all nearby junctions as a result of the proposed development, therefore it is unlikely to lead to a material impact on the capacity or operation at any of these junctions. There are not any clear highway issues, given that the adjoining units are served by existing infrastructure which can comfortably accommodate the proposed development. Notwithstanding this, the application will be accompanied by a Transport Statement to detail all relevant highways issues.

Landscaping – The accompanying Landscape and Visual Assessment baseline report, by the Environmental Dimension Partnership (EDP), demonstrates that the proposal causes no unacceptable harm to the landscape and character of the area, subject to the scheme incorporating a degree of integrated (or embedded) mitigation designed to avoid or reduce potential landscape and visual effects. The measures embedded to the overall design concept include retained areas of on-site SINC being brought into regular long-term management. Provision of structural landscaping, a mix of native and non-native trees and shrubs are proposed throughout the site for biosecurity, diversity of ecosystems and habitat creation, as well as strengthening of screening and protection of visual amenity.

Additionally, the retention of existing landscape features (hedgerows and trees) is a priority of the emerging proposals as it forms a desirable strong green framework that links with the wider green infrastructure to the north, west and east of the site. Adequate replacement planting of local species is sought to compensate for the loss of any trees and hedgerows.

Noise – Careful consideration has been given to neighbouring properties and the noise generated from rail and road traffic in the vicinity. InAcoustic has been commissioned to assess the impact of noise. The noise assessment is based upon environmental noise measurements undertaken at the site and a subsequent model-based predictive exercise.

A background noise survey has been undertaken in the area, which is robustly representative of the prevailing acoustic conditions at the closest identified noise-sensitive receptors to the site; being the residential properties to the northeast and northwest, plus the care home located on Moor Road, to the southwest of the site. This survey has yielded results that are conducive to an area including major transport infrastructure.

The conceptual development has been designed such that it optimises separation distances between the potential noise-generating elements and off-site receptors and is also oriented such that off-site noise exposure is minimised, particularly with regard to loading and unloading areas.

The noise assessment will ensure that noise is designed out of contention, by ensuring that the building fabric and any external plant items are appropriately specified, such that noise effects at receptors will accord with the guidance set out in Planning Policy Wales and British Standards 4142: 2014 and A1: 2019, the recognised methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial noise.

As a result of the noise assessment process, noise from the proposals will not materially affect the amenity of the closest residential areas. Consequently, it is concluded that there are no technical constraints to this proposed development from the perspective of noise impact.



Flooding – The site's location within Flood Zone C1 under TAN 15 criteria necessitates need for a Flood Consequences Assessment (FCA). Accompanying this submission is an FCA prepared by JBA Consulting (July 2021) which considers the risk of flood. It is anticipated that the site will need to be raised by approximately 300mm to bring flood depths in line with the tolerable flood depths indicated within TAN 15.

Ecology – A desk study by EDP has identified three statutory designated sites present within the potential zone of influence of the site, these include Crymlyn Bog Ramsar Site and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (3.8km from the site); and Kenfig SAC (8.5km). Given the distance and spatial separation it is concluded by EDP that no significant effects are likely to arise upon the designations following the development of the site.

In addition, as identified above, some 4.5ha of the Panasonic SINC, which overlaps with the boundaries of the site, will be lost/damaged to facilitate development. This will be sought to be offset through the detailed submitted with a future full planning application. A further detailed botanical assessment, invertebrate survey, and a reptile and bat survey have been undertaken to assess the condition and quality of habitats on site. The summary of findings that have been reported thus far are provided within the accompanying Ecological Briefing note. These will be assessed and reported upon in detail for the full application including a full assessment of potential impacts and mitigation.

Remaining non-statutory designations situated within 2km of the site are sufficiently distant from the proposed construction footprint such that no direct nor indirect effects are anticipated given the commercial nature of proposed development.

An Extended Phase 1 survey was completed on 14th June 2021 by the suitably qualified ecologists at EDP. The site comprises post-industrial land supporting a mosaic of habitats including areas of marshy grassland along the northern and southern boundaries; ephemeral/short perennial vegetation typically across the centre of the site and along former tracks and access points; scattered and dense scrub along site boundaries and across grassland habitats; and species-rich semi-improved grassland. The boundaries are defined by circa 10-20m strip of plantation woodland of uniform age and structure typical of highways planting scheme. Habitat loss is anticipated to facilitate the development of the site. The provision of compensatory habitat to offset negative effects will be required with an overall mitigation strategy, to be informed by the results of a further detailed botanical assessment.

Arboriculture – A tree assessment has been undertaken by EDP, which is submitted herein, demonstrating that there are 10 individual trees and 13 groups of trees, totalling 23 items identified on site. Of these 23 arboricultural assets, 8 have been assessed to be category B specimens, of moderate quality; and 14 have been adjudged to be category C trees/groups and are of low quality. In addition, one item has deemed to be of category U quality and is therefore considered unsuitable for retention irrespective of development. The majority of the trees are located along the landscaped bunds on the southern, western and northern boundaries. It is proposed to remove one category B tree, nine category C trees and the category U tree. Additionally, two further category B trees will be affected by the proposal through encroachment into the root protection area as well as three category C trees. Mitigation will be provided through a planting plan.

Heritage and Archaeology - The accompanying Archaeology and Heritage Assessment by EDP states that the site does not contain any scheduled monuments, registered historic parks and gardens or listed



buildings, nor is it part of any area-wide designations such as a conservation areas or World Heritage Sites. Further, whilst the site has not been subject to previous intrusive archaeological or geophysical survey, aerial photographs have identified that the site was heavily disturbed in the late 20th century. This disturbance removed extant features related to the former agricultural landscape and may have damaged or destroyed any buried archaeological remains within the site. As such, given the likelihood that any archaeological remains in the site would be of very limited significance, the report concludes that the loss of previously unknown or unrecorded archaeological remains, due to development, will not constrain the development of the site and is not a matter that should require mitigation.

Further Considerations: It is considered that the proposed development would:

- Extend over a relatively small geographic area, affecting only a small proportion of the residents of the local ward;
- Have no transfrontier effects;
- Not be of a significant magnitude or complexity;
- Have a typical probability of impact to that of other urban development projects; and
- Have a similar duration, frequency and reversibility to other urban development projects.

Accordingly, the character of the potential impact(s) would not cause a significant environmental effect that would require an EIA.

On the basis of the information provided above, it can be concluded that the proposed development will not give rise to any significant effects on the environment.

Planning application technical information

Whilst it is unlikely that the environmental effect of the proposed development will warrant an EIA, the potential impacts will be assessed through the following technical assessments which will accompany the application:

- Planning application forms
- Suite of drawings:
 - Site Location Plan (scaled at 1:1250)
 - Block Plan
 - Floor plans/elevations
 - Boundary treatment plans
 - Heights plan
 - Sections – proposed and existing
 - Street elevations
 - 3D/perspective images
- Design and Access Statement
- Pre-application Consultation (PAC) Report
- Transport Assessment
- Framework Travel Plan
- Landscape and Visual Assessment
- Landscape Strategy
- Detailed Hard and Soft Landscaping Design



- Landscape Management Plan
- Tree Survey
- Arboriculture Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan
- Preliminary Ecological Assessment
- Full Ecological Appraisal
- Archaeology & Heritage Assessment
- Noise Technical Report
- Flood Consequence Assessment
- Geotechnical and Geo-environmental report
- Air Quality Assessment
- Drainage Scheme
- Pre-application Consultation (PAC) Report

This technical work will provide a full understanding of the environmental impacts of the proposed development and will meet national and local planning application validation requirements. It is considered that this evidence will not identify an environment impact that would be considered as being significant within the context of the 2017 EIA Regulations.

Conclusion

In our opinion, having regard to the above, the Proposed Development does not fall within Schedule 1 and although it is Schedule 2 development, it is not ***“likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location.”*** Accordingly, an Environmental Statement should not be required.

I trust that you find this Screening Request to be in order. I note that, in accordance with Regulation 5(5), your Authority has three weeks from receipt in which to adopt a Screening Opinion.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



Steffan Harries
Associate Director
LRM Planning Ltd
Tel: 02920 349 737
Email: steffanharries@lrmplanning.com

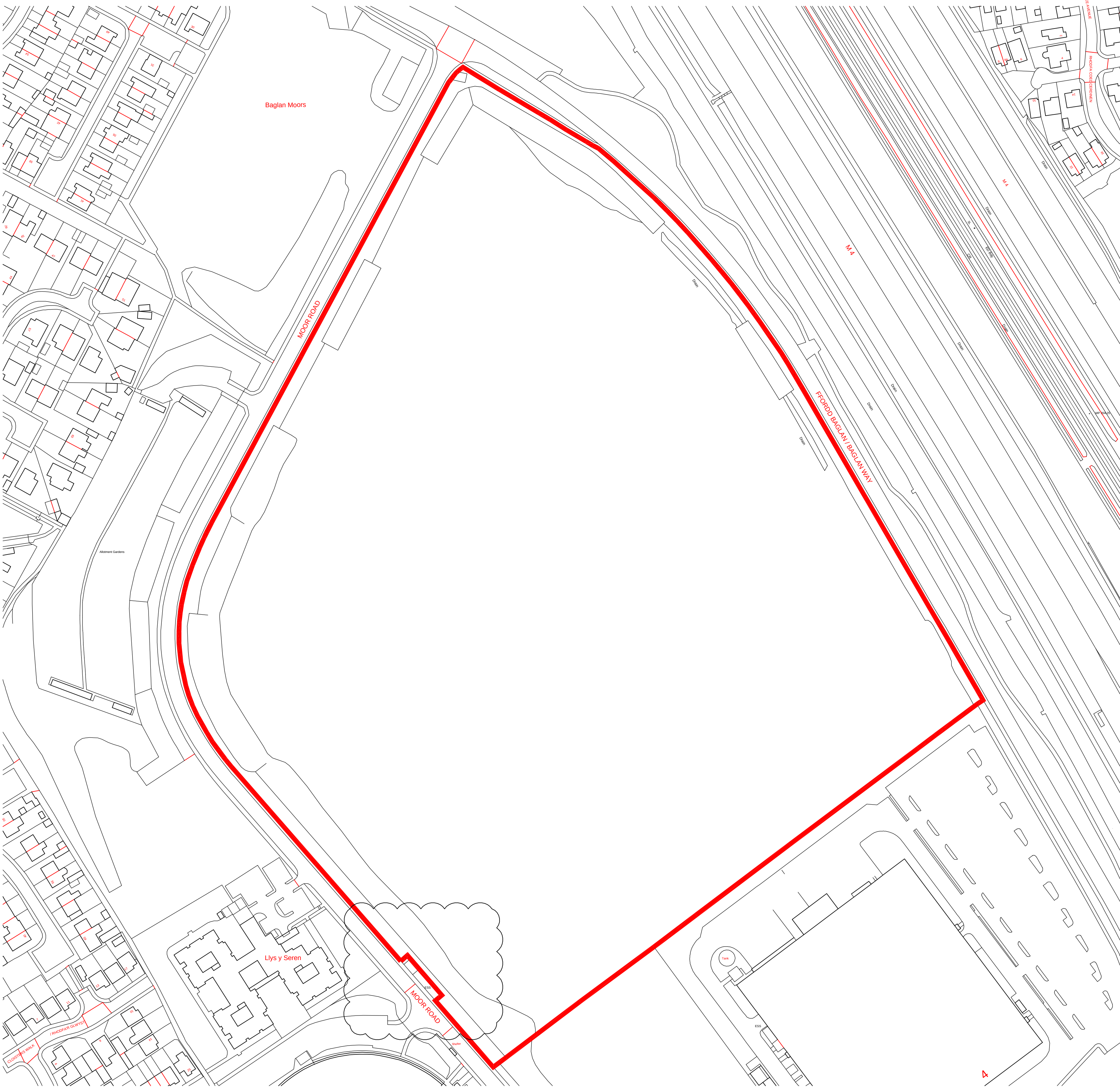
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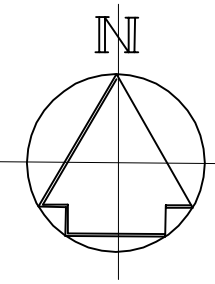


Appendix A – Site Location Plan

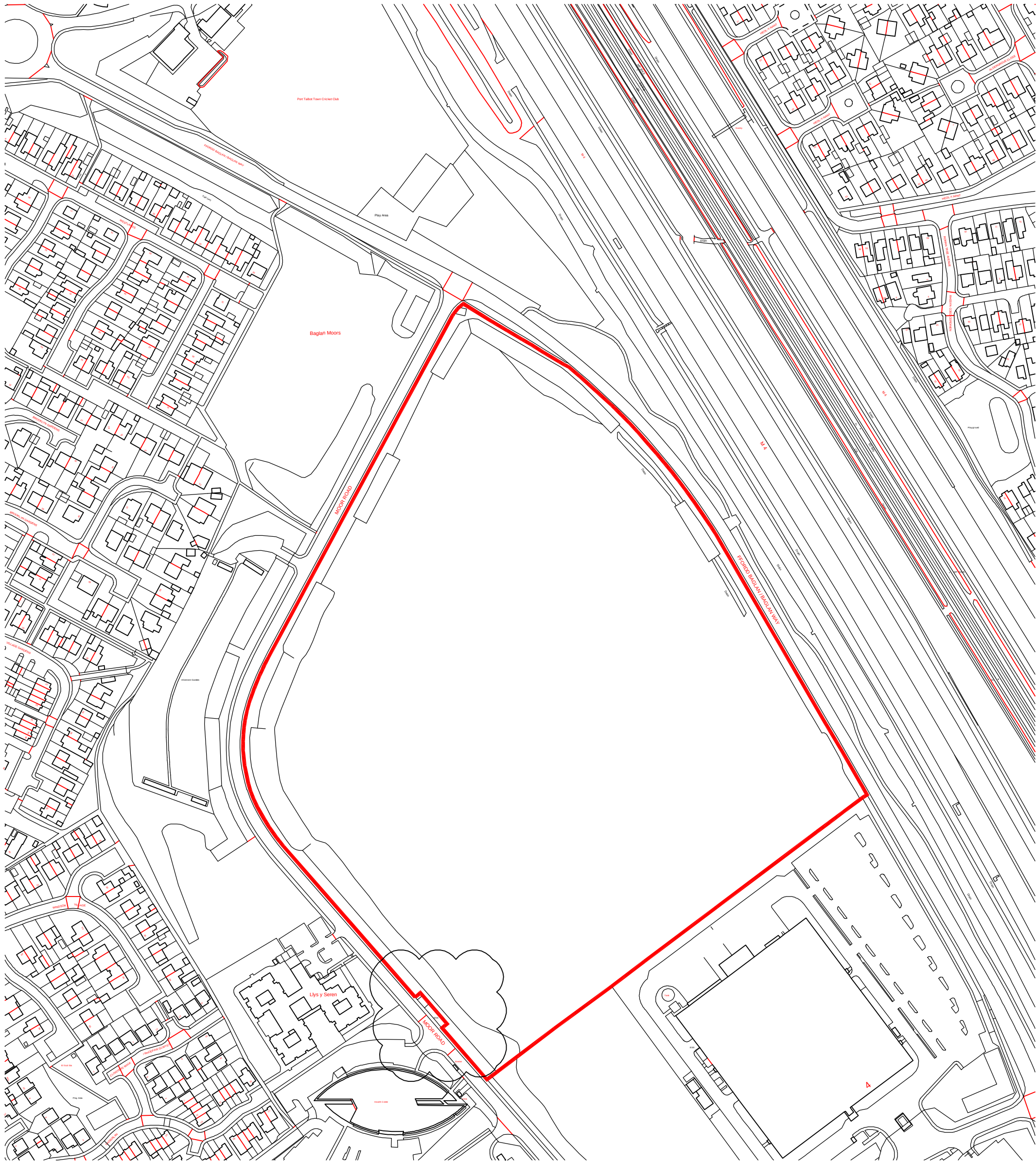




BLOCK PLAN
SCALE 1:1250 @ A1



LEGEND
SITE BOUNDARY



SITE LOCATION PLAN
SCALE 1:2500 @ A1

Rev: A
Drawing No: A01
cd No: 21.49
scales: 1:1250, 1:2500 @ A1

No.	REVISION	by	date	No.	REVISION	by	date
A	SITE BOUNDARY AMENDED TO EXCLUDE WELSH WATER PUMPING STATION.	AP	18.08.2021				

NOTES
1 Do not scale from this drawing
2 All dimensions to be checked on site
3 'As built' drawings are prepared, in part, based upon information furnished by others. While this information is believed to be reliable, James & Nicholas LLP assume no responsibility for the accuracy of 'As built' drawings or for any errors or omissions that may have been incorporated into them as a result of incorrect information provided to us by others. Those relying on an 'As built' drawing are advised to obtain independent verification of its accuracy.

STAGE
APPROVAL

REFER ALSO TO THE FOLLOWING:
Drawings:

Bending Schedules:

CLIENT

**CJ CONSTRUCTION**
(WALES) LTD

**GLASS SYSTEMS**
UK'S NUMBER ONE

james&nicholas

Grove House, Grove Place, Port Talbot SA13 1XA ð Tel 01639 885431 ð Fax 01639 891687
admin@jamesandnicholas.com ð www.jamesandnicholas.com
James & Nicholas Limited Liability Partnership. Registered in the UK No. OC303071

by date

drawn	J.M.	01.07.21
checked	A.P.	01.07.21
approved	K.J.T.	01.07.21

Job title
NEW PRODUCTION UNIT, BAGLAN INDUSTRIAL PARK, PORT TALBOT, CJ CONSTRUCTION

Drawing title
SITE LOCATION AND BLOCK PLAN

Job No: 21.49
Drawing No: A01
Rev: A

scales: 1:1250, 1:2500 @ A1

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