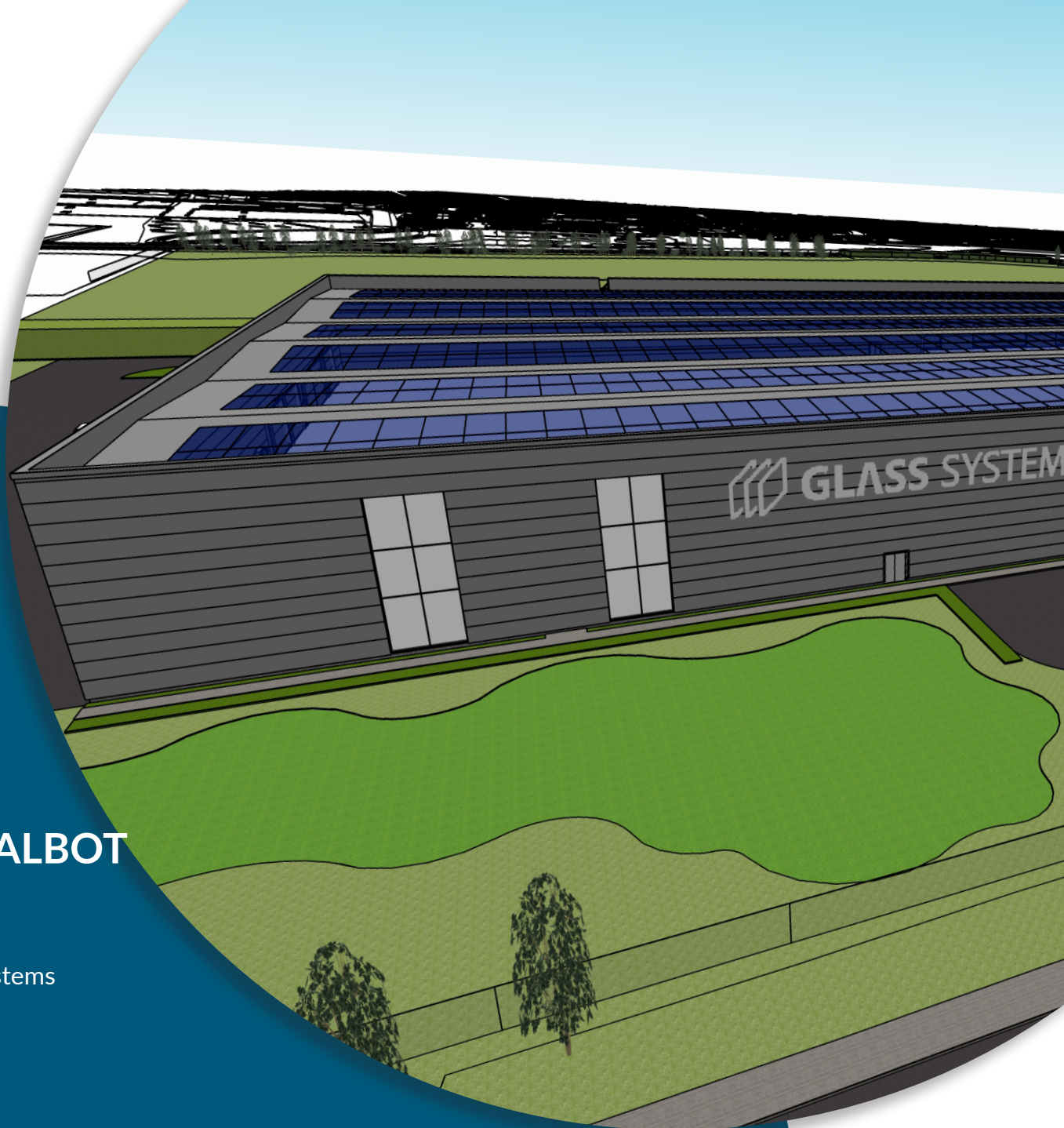




**LRM**  
PLANNING  
LIMITED



# LAND AT BAGLAN WAY, PORT TALBOT

## Design and Access Statement

Prepared by LRM Planning Limited on behalf of Glass Systems Limited

May 2022



Site

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Figure 1 - View of the site from the eastern corner



Figure 2 - Informal tracks within the site



# 1

## Introduction

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement accompanies a full planning application for the development of a glass processing industrial unit (B2 use class) and associated works on land sited at the corner of Moor Road and Baglan Way, north of Baglan Industrial Park, submitted on behalf of Glass Systems Limited.
- 1.2 The development aims to help create new job opportunities by providing a modern, high-quality facility that will increase capacity and the sustainability of Glass Systems Ltd as they look to expand their operations in South Wales.
- 1.3 The site is in the settlement boundary, in an area where the immediate adjoining land uses are employment and industrial, well served by existing infrastructure.
- 1.4 This Design and Access Statement and accompanying documentation justify how the proposed development aims to make use of this vacant site which sits amongst a predominantly industrial context.

### Proposed development

- 1.5 The requirement for a new glass processing facility has been defined after an initial project work stage investigation by Glass Systems Limited found that working across three separate facilities in South Wales (Swansea, Port Talbot and Pontyclun) did not fulfil their requirements for growth and greater efficiencies. Their existing sites were overly constrained with little opportunity to expand area and capacity.
- 1.6 Therefore the site was sought for the proposed development that comprises a single structure that will consolidate many of Glass Systems' existing operations in South Wales into a single headquarters, ensuring provision of best possible products and services, whilst also bringing employment to the area. It will act as the national headquarters for the UK, and improve operations and interface with the international group of companies of which Glass Systems is an integral part of.

- 1.7 The operations within the premises comprise the processing of glass. There will be no manufacturing of glass taking place on site. Glass manufacturing is undertaken via different process, which includes use of furnaces at extreme heat. Moreover, Glass Systems intend to process glass that is already formed in sheets, known as float sheets or annealed sheets.
- 1.8 A summary of the processes proposed on site include the cutting and shaping of glass to the specification of customers, and 'tempering' glass to a specification. Tempered glass, otherwise known as safety glass, is used for its safety and strength properties, including in such uses as vehicle windows, architectural glass, and a wide range of domestic uses. The tempering process ensures that when such glass is broken, it shatters into small, granular pieces as opposed to large, sharp shards, thereby reducing risk of injury.
- 1.9 The tempering process is done by cutting glass



to a specific size, and then dependant on the type and thickness of the glass, it will be processed in accordance of specific thermal parameters/ programs. The glass will be heated to roughly 650/700 degrees so that it is soft, as it exits the heated chamber air is forced into the outer surfaces of the glass forcing a stress into the glass this increases the strength of the glass by around four times, with these stresses causing the glass to shatter in the manner described above.

1.10 Aside from the industrial operations, a large office space is proposed from where the business will be able to be operated most efficiently from one geographical location, as opposed to being spread across Glass Systems' three existing sites across South Wales, in Swansea, Port Talbot and Pontyclun. This will have beneficial impact on costs and efficiencies in processing and carbon footprint of the operations.

1.11 Glass Systems Ltd have an ambition to be as energy efficient as possible which also aligns with a project brief to achieve a rating of Excellent in BREEAM certification for sustainable developments. Another principal driver for the applicant is to expand capacity of the processing facility, This necessitates creating an optimum process for storage and movement. In parallel with this is a better staff experience whilst at work compared to the current facility.

1.12 The new facility will have an internal total gross floor area of 25,545m<sup>2</sup> including a mezzanine office measuring 1,355m<sup>2</sup>. In addition, landscaping, access, car parking, bicycle and refuse storage, sustainable drainage and associated infrastructure are proposed. The facility will accommodate 650 staff with growth in staffing projected over the next few years.

## Purpose

1.13 TAN 12 defines a Design and Access Statement as 'a communication tool which outlines how the design of the proposal has been considered from the outset of the development process and how the objectives of good design have been used to inform this.'

1.14 The purpose of this document is to analyse the context of the site in respect of planning policy and the local character of the area, whilst having regard to each of Welsh Government's five objectives of good design.

## Aim

1.15 The aim of this document is to:

- Provide an overview of the site context, which has aided in shaping the proposals;
- demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and how the design of the development takes that context into account;

- explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development;
- explain the policy or approach adopted for access and how policies relating to access in the development have been taken into account; and
- explain how specific issues which might affect access to the development have been addressed.

Figure 3 - View towards  
Warbuton factory to the south  
of the site



Figure 4 - Southern boundary  
of the site

# Site description and context analysis

## Location

- 2.1 The site is situated on the corner of Baglan Way and Moor Road within the ward of Aberavon, approximately 3.1km to the north-west of Port Talbot town centre. The site measures 11.94 hectares in area and is broadly diamond-shaped. From the site's frontage onto Baglan Way the A4241 which connects to the M4 is some 600m to the west.

## Features

- 2.2 The site is disused former industrial land, now rough ground with areas of grassland and naturally generating shrub. The site has strong deciduous vegetated boundaries separating the site from Baglan Way and Moor Road.
- 2.3 Public access to the site is not permitted, however there is evidence of motorbike scrambling and informal access in parts of the site.

## Boundaries

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

## Access

- 2.6 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 theoretically be gained over landscaped bunds however overgrown shrubs prevent access along the majority of the site and there is no formal pedestrian access point.

- 2.7 Pedestrian footpaths run along the north-western and north-eastern boundary of the site with Moor Road, as well as along the southern side of Baglan Way, along the site frontage to the north-east. These link to surrounding footway network within Baglan and Port Talbot, including nearby bus stops and Baglan train station.
- 2.8 The path along the southern side of Baglan Way is a shared footway / cycleway which links to the A4241 to the west. The cycleway links to other cycle routes and active travel routes to the north and south within Baglan and Port Talbot, including National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 4, a long-distance route between London and Fishguard, which connects to both

- ends of Baglan Way. The site has continuous active travel routes connecting to the key local residential areas.
- 2.9 A bus stop is located 625m west of the site on Village Road and on the A4241. The stops on the A4241 provide a bus shelter and timetable information and are served by services 66, 84 and 87. These provide services to Margam, Port Talbot, Neath, Swansea and Aberavon. The stops on Village Road also provide a bus shelter and timetable information and are served by bus services 9, 66 and 202. These provide services to Sandfields, Margam, Port Talbot, Neath and Baglan.
- 2.10 Baglan Railway Station is located approximately 900m north of the site. The station provides services every two hours to a range of destinations including Cardiff (40-minute direct service) and Swansea (24-minute direct service).
- 2.11 In addition, Port Talbot Parkway Rail Station is situated approximately 3.1km to the south-east of the site and provides more frequent rail services. It can be accessed via the cycle routes connecting to the site, as well as by bus services 66, 87 and 202. The station provides cycle parking. It provides services to a number of local, regional and national locations, including Swansea, Cardiff, Manchester Piccadilly and London Paddington.

- 2.12 In terms of the highway network, Baglan Way is a single carriageway road with a footway on its southern side. At its western end it connects to Village Road and the A4241 at two roundabouts, it also connects to the A4241 at its south-eastern end. The A4241 provides a key route through Baglan and Port Talbot and connects to the A48 and the south Wales to London motorway, M4, at junction 41, which is located 1.1km to the north of the site. The M4 connects to major trunk roads in Wales and England. The A48 provides a strategic link to the wider network and more regional destinations.

## Local facilities

- 2.13 The nearest defined Local Centre is Baglan Road, which is identified in the local plan under policy R2/1. It is located approximately 1.3km walking distance north of the site and includes a convenience store, bakery, post office and takeaways. Additionally, a Morrisons supermarket, Lidl supermarket, and KFC hot food restaurant/takeaway are located 900m walking distance south of the site.

## Local architectural context

- 2.14 The surrounding area is predominantly industrial in nature, with Baglan Industrial Park to the south, supporting a mix of warehousing and industrial uses. These include a variety of scale and form. The character of the industrial

estate is influenced by wide single carriage roads that accommodate HGV traffic related to the surrounding industrial uses. Neighbouring units are conventional in appearance but with some emphasis on design and landscaping.

- 2.15 To the west, the character becomes more residential, typified by late-20th century housing, albeit this is largely separated from the site by allotment gardens.

## Ecology

- 2.16 The site is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) with the main interest being the post-industrial habitat. An Extended Phase 1 survey was completed on 14 June 2021 by the Environmental Dimension Partnership (EDP). The site was found to comprise post-industrial land supporting a mosaic of habitats including areas of marshy grassland supporting common reed and rush species predominantly present along the northern and southern boundaries of the site; 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.
- 2.17 Areas of semi-improved and marshy grassland are particularly species-rich and inherently



considered to be of County value. Scrub and ephemeral/short perennial habitats are comparatively species-poor, albeit contribute to the mosaic of habitats across the site. The boundaries of the site are, in contrast, defined by circa 10-20m strip of plantation woodland of uniform age and structure, typical of a highways planting scheme.

- 2.18 With regards to bats, plantation woodland bounding the site provide a linear feature for bats commuting across the wider landscape, whilst habitats on site are of value for a bat assemblage more generally. Surveys indicated bat activity is dominated by relatively low levels of common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle bats.
- 2.19 Invertebrate surveys identified 211 species, 31 of which were deemed to be of conservation interest. No notable populations of breeding birds were found given the relatively small size of the site and prevalence of tall tree lines and buildings immediately adjacent which would deter many ground nesting species. The presence of badgers, dormouse, otters, and great crested newt were also surveyed but no evidence of their presence was found.

## Trees

- 2.20 Trees line the north-eastern, north-western and south-western boundary of the site.

A tree survey, undertaken by EDP, identified 10 individual trees and 13 groups of trees, totalling 23 items. Of these 23 items, 8 have been identified as category B trees, of moderate quality; and 14 have been adjudged to be within category C and are of low quality. In addition, one specimen was classed as a category U tree and is considered unsuitable for retention irrespective of development.

## Contamination

- 2.21 The accompanying Geotechnical and Geo-Environmental Report prepared by TerraFirma in August 2021 assesses the ground conditions of the site. The sampling of the made ground did not find contaminants of note that exceeded the generic assessment criteria.
- 2.22 Historical maps and borehole/trial pit logs do not indicate the site was used as a landfill. Regarding ground gas, the borehole logs indicate there is a peat layer approximately 5.5 meters below ground level.

## Flooding

- 2.23 Welsh Government's TAN 15 Development Advice Maps, as hosted by Natural Resources Wales, demonstrate that the site is in Flood Zone C1, which signifies areas significant infrastructure, including flood defences.

## Heritage context

- 2.24 In relation to heritage assets, the subject site is remote from anything of value.

## Planning history

- 2.25 A 2007 application (ref. P2007/1685) for the 'construction of a new industrial unit (B1, B2 & B8) with ancillary office accommodation, external car parking / vehicular circulation & service areas' was withdrawn.
- 2.26 A search on the Authority's website resulted in no documents being held online to advise why the application was withdrawn.
- 2.27 The table below summarises the planning history relating to the site.

| Planning reference | Proposal                                                                                                                           | Decision              |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| P2002/0290         | Advertisement Application to erect 6No. Signs to be located around area being used as temporary lapwing reserve.                   | Granted<br>16/04/2002 |
| P1987/6154         | Erection of buildings for the retail sale of gardening materials building and DIY goods motor vehicles and components accessories. | Unknown<br>30/10/1988 |