

Neath Port Talbot Council

By email

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Eich cyfeirnod
Your reference

P2026/0253

Ein cyfeirnod
Our reference

Dyddiad
Date

2 July 2026

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Dear Sir/Madam

Planning Application – Proposed construction of 2 outdoor padel courts, Briton Ferry Steel Cricket Club, Ynysmaerdy Road, Briton Ferry, SA11 2TE

Thank you for your letter of 10 June inviting our comments on the information submitted for the above planning application.

Advice

This response is based on the advice provided by Cadw's Senior Historic Environment Planning Officer and Cadw's Inspector of Registered Historic Parks and Gardens.

We consider that the application is inadequately documented, and we recommend that additional information is required to enable a balanced decision to be taken against Planning Policy Wales, Technical Advice Note 24 Historic Environment and associated guidance. Full details of the additional information that is required are explained in the below assessment.

The national policy and Cadw's role in planning are set out in Annex A.

Assessment

This planning application is for the proposed construction of two outdoor padel courts including a raised platform to enable them at Briton Ferry Steel Cricket Club, Ynysmaerdy Road, Briton Ferry.

Scheduled Monument

GM489 Ynysmaerdy Railway Incline

The proposed development is located some 5m north of scheduled monument GM489 Ynysmaerdy Railway Incline. The applicants should be aware that it is their responsibility to inform all contractors about the nature and extent of the scheduled area, and the restrictions which scheduling imposes.



If any ground works, service trenches, works compounds, temporary storage etc. are planned to take place within the scheduled area or in its boundary, then the applicant should contact Cadw to ascertain whether scheduled monument consent will be required.

Scheduled monument GM489 Ynysmaerdy Railway Incline consists of the remains of a 19th century railway system. It opened in 1863 and is one of the last generations of rope hauled railway inclines, designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel in the 1850s. It was constructed for the broad-gauge South Wales Mineral Railway to link the collieries of the upper Afan Valley with a new dock at Briton Ferry. The incline was operated by a steam winding engine and was 1 mile in length. It was constructed to form a straight plane over its whole distance despite the steep hillside, by way of cuttings, embankments and bridges. Winding engine bases and rope routes among low walls in a level cutting remain at its eastern end. The incline begins in a cutting and traverses a short embankment and another cutting. The large embankment is cut by a minor road, which passes under the incline through a fine stone skew bridge. The lower parts of the incline are in Jersey Park, where a footpath overbridge retains fixings for signalling wire underneath. The incline ends with a level area for disconnection of trains on an embankment.

Views to and from the incline did not have an influence on its' location, which is due to its' position on the route to the Briton Ferry dock and the local topography and these are the significant factors relating to its' setting.

The proposed development is for two outdoor uncovered padel courts. The two courts will be sited side by side in the centre of the site. Each padel court comprises a dedicated playing area enclosed by a combination of wire mesh fencing and tempered glass panels. The enclosure heights range from some 3m along the sides to 4m behind each end of the courts. Each individual court will measure 20.2m x 10.2m.

The proposed development be screened from the monument by existing intervening vegetation, if visible it will cause a slight visual change but as noted above views from the incline are not a significant part of its' setting and therefore this will not have any effect on the way that the monument is experienced, understood and appreciated. Consequently, the proposed development will not have an unacceptably damaging effect upon the setting of scheduled monument GM489.

Registered Park and Garden

PGW(Gm)62(NEP) Jersey Park

The application area is entirely inside the boundaries of the registered Jersey Park historic park and garden. This consists of an exceptionally well preserved urban public park, opened in 1925. Its original layout of formal and informal areas remains complete and includes sports facilities. Planting in the park is diverse and interesting, with an emphasis on evergreen trees and shrubs.

The proposed development is for two outdoor uncovered padel courts located on an area of existing hard standing. The two courts will be sited side by side and comprise a dedicated playing area enclosed by a combination of wire mesh fencing and tempered glass panels. The enclosure heights range from some 3m along the sides to 4m behind each end of the courts. Each individual court will measure 20.2m x 10.2m.

This area of the registered historic park and garden is already dedicated to sporting activity. Therefore, the use on an existing area of hardstanding for sporting activity will not therefore, in general, alter the way that this part of the historic park and garden is experienced, understood and appreciated. However, it is understood that open Padel courts can generate high noise levels during their use (65-70dB(A) near to source) and this could have an adverse effect on the public enjoying the quieter more formal areas of the Park less than 50m to the southwest of the application area.

It is therefore recommended that the applicants should be requested to provide information on the impact of noise on the formal part of the historic park and garden and measures that will be included in the development to ensure that the peaceful enjoyment of the formal garden can continue.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Cooper
Historic Environment Inspectorate / Arolygiaeth yr Amgylchedd Hanesyddol

Annex A

Our role

Our statutory role in the planning process is to provide the local planning authority with an assessment concerned with the likely impact that the proposal will have on scheduled monuments, registered historic parks and gardens, registered historic landscapes where an Environmental Impact Assessment is required and development likely to have an impact on the outstanding universal value of a World Heritage Site. We do not provide an assessment of the likely impact of the development on listed buildings or conservation areas, as these are matters for the local authority.

It is for the local planning authority to weigh our assessment against all the other material considerations in determining whether to approve planning permission.

National Policy

Applications for planning permission are considered in light of the Welsh Government's land use planning policy and guidance contained in Planning Policy Wales (PPW), Technical Advice Notes and related guidance.

PPW [Planning Policy Wales - Edition 12](#) explains that it is important that the planning system looks to protect, conserve and enhance the significance of historic assets. This will include consideration of the setting of an historic asset which might extend beyond its curtilage. Any change that impacts on an historic asset or its setting should be managed in a sensitive and sustainable way.

The conservation of archaeological remains and their settings is a material consideration in determining a planning application, whether those remains are a scheduled monument or not. Where nationally important archaeological remains are likely to be affected by proposed development, there should be a presumption in favour of their physical protection in situ. It will only be in exceptional circumstances that planning permission will be granted if development would result in a direct adverse impact on a scheduled monument (or an archaeological site shown to be of national importance)

[Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment](#) elaborates by explaining that when considering development proposals that affect scheduled monuments or other nationally important archaeological remains, there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ, i.e. a presumption against proposals which would involve significant alteration or cause damage, or would have a significant adverse impact causing harm within the setting of the remains.

Historic Parks and Gardens

PPW also explains that local authorities should value, protect, conserve and enhance the special interests of parks and gardens and their settings included on the register of historic parks and gardens in Wales and that the effect of a proposed development on a registered park or garden or its setting should be a material consideration in the determination of a planning application.