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# Planning Statement

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Castle Square, Swansea

Prepared by Savills on behalf Spider Projects &  
Swansea Council

## Contents

1.	Introduction	2
2.	Site Overview	6
3.	Development Proposals	10
5.	Planning Policy Context & Relevant Material Considerations	18
6.	Planning Assessment	25
7.	Summary & Conclusions	33

### Appendix 1 Pre-application response

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## 1. Introduction

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### Introduction

1.1. This Planning Statement (“Statement”) has been prepared on behalf of Spider Projects and Swansea Council (collectively known as “the Applicant”) and is submitted in support of an application for full planning permission for the land known Castle Square, Swansea City Centre (“the site”, “Castle Square” or “the Square”). The site covers an area of approximately 0.875 hectares. The proposed development will provide a modern, functional and well maintained public space through regeneration of the public realm and 366m<sup>2</sup> of new commercial floor space (Use Classes A1 and A3<sup>1</sup>).

1.2. The description of development is as follows:

*“Enhancement of Castle Square to include the erection of up to four commercial units (flexible Use Classes A1, A3 and/or mixed A1/A3), installation of public realm features, hard and soft landscaping and associated works”*

1.3. The application seeks to regenerate the site by securing the long term viable future for Castle Square, raising its quality to make it more active, distinctive and vibrant. In line with other investment taking place in the city, a modern, functional and well maintained public space needs to be delivered which can accommodate a range of events, temporary arts and cultural experiences. There is also an opportunity to introduce more commercial activity.

### Planning Statement Structure

1.4. The purpose of this Statement is to assess the proposal against relevant national and local planning policy, guidance and other material considerations, to assist the Local Planning Authority (“LPA”) to determine the planning application in accordance with Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. To do this, the Statement demonstrates the acceptability of the proposals both in principle and on technical grounds.

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<sup>1</sup> Of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended)

1.5. This Statement describes the application proposals, the context and history of the site, reviews the national and local planning policy which is relevant to the determination of the planning application and provides a detailed analysis of the key planning considerations. It concludes with an overview of the key issues and provides a summary of the principal benefits of the proposals.

1.6. The Statement is structured as follows:

- Section 2: Site Overview
- Section 3: Development Proposals
- Section 4: Pre-application Consultation and Engagement
- Section 5: Planning Policy Context and Relevant Material Considerations
- Section 6: Planning Assessment
- Section 7: Summary and Conclusions

## Planning Application Documentation

1.7. In addition to this Statement, the planning application is supported by a suite of technical studies, the scope of which follows national validation requirements, the LPA's local validation checklist and the benefit of pre-application advice received. These documents should be read in conjunction with this Statement to provide a comprehensive understanding of the application and the benefits that the proposed development will deliver.

- Application Plans;
  - Location Plan Existing 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-0001
  - Location Plan Proposed 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-0002
  - Existing Site Plan 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-0010
  - Proposed Site Plan – Ground 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-0011
  - Proposed Site Plan – Roof 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-0012

- Demolition Plan 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-0020
- Existing Site Section AA 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-0200
- Existing Site Section BB 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-0201
- Existing Site Section CC 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-0202
- Proposed Site Section AA 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-1200
- Proposed Site Section BB 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-1201
- Proposed Site Section CC 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-1202
- Proposed Pavilion A Ground & Roof 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-1100
- Proposed Pavilion B Ground & Roof, Tank 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-1101
- Pavilion A Sections 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-1203
- Pavilion B Sections 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-1204
- Pavilion A Elevations N/S 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-1300
- Pavilion A Elevations E/W 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-1301
- Pavilion B Elevations N/S 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-1302
- Pavilion B Elevations E/W 211-ACME-PLA-ST1-00-1303
- Design & Access Statement;
  - Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Preliminary Ecology Appraisal;
- Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment;
- Tree Survey and Tree Constraints Plan;
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan;

- Drainage Strategy;
- Lighting Strategy
- Travel Plan
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Pre-application Consultation Report

## **Environmental Impact Assessment**

- 1.8. The proposed development is below the thresholds prescribed by Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 which would require an Environmental Impact Assessment (“EIA”) to be undertaken. As such, the proposed development is not considered to constitute EIA development.

## **Pre-Application Consultation**

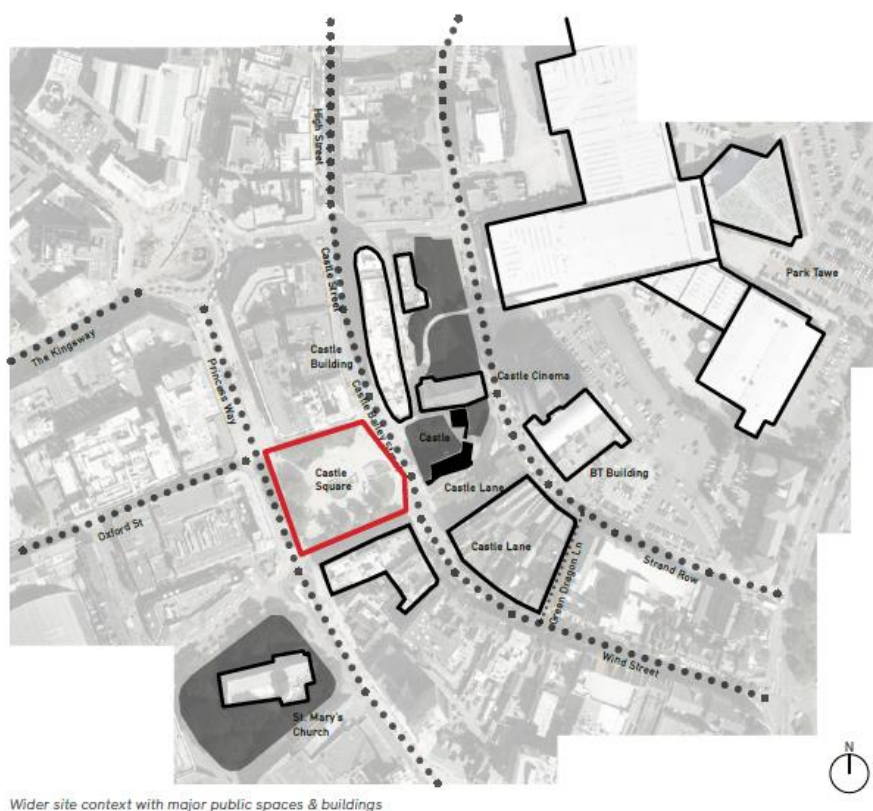
- 1.9. Pre-Application Consultation (“PAC”) is a statutory obligation in Wales where application documents are made available to the public and consultees to comment on for 28 days prior to the formal submission of a ‘major’ planning application. The proposals have been subject to PAC in accordance with the statutory requirements and a PAC Report accompanies this application which outlines the approach taken, records the comments received and provides a response to the consideration given to any comments received.

## 2. Site Overview

### Site Description

- 2.1. The site comprises 0.875 ha of land located in Swansea City Centre. The site is bound by Caer Street to the south, Princess Way to the west, Oxford Street/Castle Square to the north and Castle Street to the east. Just beyond Castle Street to the east are the remains of Swansea Castle, which is a Grade I listed medieval castle.

*Figure 1: Site location (Source: Acme)*



*Wider site context with major public spaces & buildings*

- 2.2. Castle Square is the focal civic space within the city centre, an important node within the city bordered by areas with varied uses and characters.
- 2.3. To the east, across Castle Bailey Street and giving the Square its name, sits Swansea Castle, framing a landscaped courtyard on two sides, with the old Castle Cinema building on the third side.

- 2.4. Running north from the site is High Street, a major, thoroughfare extending to Swansea railway station and with an eclectic mix of businesses, shops and restaurants.
- 2.5. South of the Castle lies Wind Street, with its bars and restaurants forming the focus of Swansea's night time economy, and the recent subject of major public realm improvement works.
- 2.6. South west of Castle Square is St Marys Church, one of the most significant heritage buildings in the city centre and a stepping stone on the route towards the Swansea Central (now Copr Bay) development.
- 2.7. To the west lies the retail heart of the city centre, with Oxford Street, the principle shopping street of the city, meeting Princess Way at the north west corner of Castle Square.
- 2.8. Castle Square itself is a focal currently dominated by hard landscaping although there a number of established trees and grass amenity areas around the perimeters.
- 2.9. Castle Square is located within the Wind Street Conservation Area. The conservation area was designated in 1975 and extends to the south and north of the site along Wind Street and Worcester Place.

### **Historic Environment**

- 2.10. Swansea Castle sits to the east of the Square and is a Scheduled Monument. Other listed buildings in the vicinity include the old Castle Cinema (Grade II) to the north of the Castle, St Mary's Church (Grade II\*) to the south east and various other buildings within the Wind Street Conservation Area, within which the Square itself is located.
- 2.11. The Square does potentially include elements of archaeological interest given its proximity to the Castle and the fact it's location once have stood within the Castle walls. However it is likely that much of archaeological interest on the site will have been destroyed in the course of previous excavation on the site, as the Ben Evans department store that stood on the site between the late 19th and mid-20th centuries had a basement level. This building was destroyed during the 3-night blitz in the second world war and following clearance of the rubble Castle Gardens was created in its place.



- 2.12. Further details can be found in the Archaeological Desk Based Assessment. The report recommends that an archaeological watching brief is maintained during any ground disturbing construction. The Assessment also says that the site is likely to contain agricultural land from the medieval period into the modern period. As such, there is a potential for encountering medieval agricultural remains, e.g., earthworks of field systems and findspots, within the site and would be of limited heritage value.

## **Biodiversity**

- 2.13. There are no sites with European or National statutory designation within the 1km search area. The site does not fall within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zones (IPZ).
- 2.14. The site is located within a B-lines corridor. B-line corridors are a series of 'insect pathways' running through countryside and towns, creating a series of wildflower-rich habitat stepping stones for invertebrates. There are four non-statutory designated sites within 1km of the site. These four sites are as follows. There is a description of each contained within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal:
- Tawe corridor Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) – 491 meters east of the site
  - Swansea Bay SINC – 710 meters south of the site
  - Hillside Wildlife Corridor Townhill SINC – 827 meters north west of the site
  - Kilvey Hill SINC – 941 meters north east of the site.
- 2.15. A phase 1 habitats survey was carried out in October 2021. The site was found to have low ecological value, providing habitat for nesting birds, foraging and commuting bats and invertebrates. The development is expected to have little impact on designated sites near to the development. Local biodiversity policy and compliance with UK legislation for protected species is also reviewed and discussed in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal submitted with the application.

## **Trees**

- 2.16. Castle Square accommodates a significant number of mature trees of various species which lend it an impressively green backdrop during summer months. The majority are deciduous species which means the Square can look comparatively bare during the winter. A Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been carried out to confirm constraints relating to each tree in terms of root protection zones, canopies and levels, and has classified the trees, which are a mix of Category B & C and one Category U. Refer to the Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment for further details.

### **Topography**

- 2.17. There is a total level difference of around 7m from the north east to the south west corner of the site, resulting in fairly steep slopes in some areas of the site, and navigated in part through the sweep of steps in the existing scheme. There is limited scope to adjust existing levels due as they interface with existing premises on three sides of the Square.

### **Access and Highways**

- 2.18. The site is in a highly sustainable and accessible location within Swansea City Centre. The Square is highly accessible by bus with Swansea Bus Station is approximately a 5 minute walk to the south west of the site offering a large number of local, regional and national bus services.
- 2.19. Swansea Railway Station is approximately a 10 minute walk to the north of the site offers regional and national rail connections.
- 2.20. Pedestrian accessibility in the city centre is good and the Square sits at the edge of the pedestrianised area on Princess Way, Union Street and Oxford Street. The city centre benefits from numerous active travel cycle routes and two national cycle routes; route 43 and route 4.

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## 3. Development Proposals

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### Introduction

3.1 Full planning permission is sought for development with the following description:

*“Enhancement of Castle Square to include the erection of up to four commercial units (flexible Use Classes A1,A3and/or mixed A1/A3), installation of public realm features, hard and soft landscaping and associated works”*

3.2 Full details are provided on the submitted drawings. An explanation of the design rationale can be found in the Design and Access Statement but a summary of the proposals is provided below:

- Removal of existing water feature;
- Reconfiguration of existing crescent of steps to omit sloping landing and consolidate into a single flight;
- Creation of terraced seating areas with defined stepped routes;
- Expansion of existing planters to increase planted area and provide flush access points by grading down to ground level;
- Replacement of existing low planter walls with monolithic stone or precast concrete (PCC) bench elements;
- Creation of a new access route through the western planter;
- Creation of a new planter in the south west corner of the Square;
- New planting strategy with introduction of multi-functional green infrastructure including amenity lawns, various landscaping and biodiverse planting, green roofs on the pavilions and integration of Sustainable Urban Drainage in the form of granular storage below lawns;
- Existing trees retained with exception of 6no. category C trees removed to enable the development, planting of 10no. new trees;
- Replacement of existing paving in the central area of the Square, refurbishment of existing paving in the surrounding pedestrian routes;

- Resurfacing of the existing highway incorporating buff chippings;
- Removal of existing bollards along the highway edge, to be replaced by bollards or other landscape features between raised planter edges to prevent vehicle access;
- Construction of two Pavilion buildings of 208m<sup>2</sup> and 158m<sup>2</sup> area, for retail, food and/or beverage uses (Classes A1 and/or A3), one with an accessible green roof, both with projecting canopies;
- New water feature of flush-jet type in the central area to provide interactive play and flexibility of use when switched off;
- Replacement of existing TV screen and construction of a “bandstand” below;
- Introduction of two clusters of “Digital Bamboo” - 12m tall illuminate Glass Reinforced Plastic poles; and
- Associated works.

## The Pavilions

- 3.3 The two pavilions are proposed to provide 366m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floor space. These will most likely be let out to food retailers.
- 3.4 Pavilion A (208m<sup>2</sup>) is located on the east side of the Square, partly submerged within the crescent of stepped seating. The design for Pavilion A takes inspiration from the topography of the Square and the steps, and has been designed to evoke notions of an excavated space. The roof is formed of “contoured” stepping slabs, the layering of timber panels forming an artificial topography on the soffit of the Pavilion internally and below the external canopy.
- 3.5 This contoured timber surface is supported on ten stone columns, standing stones that give the impression they could have been dug from the hillside. The intention is that these are procured from within Wales, as reclaimed glacial boulders dug from farmers fields.
- 3.6 The Pavilion is a single storey building with accessible roof and external canopy, and will be flexible to accommodate either one or two tenancies.

- 3.7 An external demise will be provided for outdoor seating located below the external canopy of the pavilion.
- 3.8 Pavilion B (158m<sup>2</sup>) is located towards the West side of the Square, and sits at the prominent junction with Oxford Street. The design for Pavilion B takes inspiration from the history of the copper industry in Swansea, and is expressed as an arched standing seam copper façade with an vaulting timber interior, creating a welcoming civic appearance.
- 3.9 The pavilion will be single storey and will be able to accommodate one or two tenancies. Like Pavilion A, an external seating area will be provided. Pavilion B will have a biodiverse green roof.

### **Sustainable Design**

- 3.10 The structural solutions for both pavilions utilise timber and stone frames which have been developed with a view to minimising embodied carbon. The stone columns are intended to be sourced from within Wales as glacial boulders extracted from the land so these are close to being a zero carbon material.
- 3.11 Where possible and appropriate, the existing structures and finishing of the Square are being reused in the design. This includes to reuse of the existing stairs and terraced seating and a portion of the raised planter beds. The existing cycle hoops are being reused and relocated within the development.
- 3.12 The pavilions will achieve BREEAM 'Very Good' and a BREAAAM pre-assessment has been carried out to demonstrate this is achievable. There is an aspiration that the 'Excellent' rating will be achieved and there is a pathway to achieving this.
- 3.13 No gas supplies are being provided to either of the pavilions so all heating and cooking will be electric.

### **Green Infrastructure**

- 3.14 Fundamental to the proposed development is an increase in the quantum and diversity of planted areas with associated multifunctional benefits for biodiversity on the site and in accordance with the Council's Regenerating Our City for Wellbeing and Wildlife document published in February 2021. The expanded planting areas have been designed around the existing trees, working with constraints established by the arboriculturist to ensure the existing high quality trees can be retained.

3.15 The following measures to enhance biodiversity on the site have been incorporated into the scheme:

- Installation of least four bat boxes;
- External lighting in line with Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidelines;
- Installation of at least four bird nesting boxes on the site;
- Installation of two invertebrate houses; and
- Native planting.

### **Sculptures and Water Features**

3.16 A new water feature is proposed which will be a key feature within the square creating activity and atmosphere. It will consist of 59 flush jets with integrated colour changing lights, set into the paving of the Square in an oval shape. It will have the ability to be switched off to allow event to take place in the same footprint.

3.17 The fountain feature have been positioned just off centre in the Square within proximity to the bank of terraced seating area to allow for parents to supervise children playing in the fountains. An allowance for splash zones around the water feature has been made based on advice from specialists.

3.18 The existing water raised feature which currently impedes flexible use within the Square will be removed. The 'leaf/boat' sculpture by Amber Hiscott will be relocated to an appropriate new location in the city. Swansea Council in the process for reviewing options for this in consultation with the artist.

### **Planter Design and Planting Strategy**

3.19 Most of the existing planters will be removed and replaced with monolithic stone planter edges, which will be typically 400mm in height and will also provide informal seating and 500mm in some locations to provide a hostile vehicle mitigation function.

3.20 Existing trees retained with exception of 6no. category C trees removed to enable the development, planting of 10no. new trees.

3.21 The new planters have been developed with the following principles:

- Maintain existing soil levels where required to protect existing tree roots
- Extend existing planters to increase the green space within the Square
- Ensure all planters have flush access in at least one location
- Make the raised planter edges multifunctional e.g. by providing seating.

3.22 The planting strategy has been designed to position a large public realm landscaped area centrally with areas of ornamental planting in beds behind bringing colour and interest, while providing a sense of enclosure and acting as buffers to the highway on the south and east edges.

### **Access**

3.23 The site is in a highly sustainable and accessible location in the city centre. Existing pedestrian routes will be maintained and improved by the removal of the central water feature. An additional route through the western planter will be created providing access from Princess Way to the centre of the Square.

3.24 The cycle route along Princess Way (combined with the footpath) will be maintained, with cycle parking stands relocated to the south end of Princess Way.

3.25 Servicing access for the pavilions and for events is proposed to be via the same route as existing, with vehicles entering from the west end of Caer Street and exiting onto Oxford Street.

3.26 Emergency vehicle access is anticipated to be via the same route as above. Princess Street or Oxford Street are alternatives.

3.27 Retractable bollards will be provided to allow for controlled vehicle access.

### **Paving and Seating Strategy**

3.28 The existing paving in the square is predominantly yorkstone which is inherently durable but is currently adding to the hard edged character of the space. The proposed new strategy seeks to retain and reuse the existing yorkstone where appropriate but to introduce new paving in the centre of the Square which will provide pattern and colour.

- 3.29 A bank of stepped seating on the north side of the Square provides a vantage point from which to take in activity on the Square and to sit and relax. Seating will also be provided by the commercial units outside the pavilions and there will be plenty of informal seating opportunities on the edges of the planters.

### **Lighting**

- 3.30 A new lighting scheme for the square has been developed to ensure that suitable levels of illumination for safety as well as biodiversity are achieved in all parts of the Square. A Lighting Strategy has been submitted in support of the planning application.



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## 4. Pre-application consultation and public engagement

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### Public Engagement

- 4.1 A Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared and submitted with the planning application and sets out full details of the extensive public engagement undertaken. An overview of the consultation and engagement that has taken place is provided below.
- 4.2 An initial consultation was undertaken by Swansea Council in 2016 about the principle of new development and upgraded public realm.
- 4.3 A further stakeholder engagement exercise was undertaken by Swansea Council in March 2021. Traditional face to face consultation was not possible because of the Covid-19 pandemic, but the following channels were used to undertake the consultation online:
- Swansea Council's website;
  - Swansea Council's social media channels;
  - Site notices;
  - Flyers sent to individual businesses by email addresses;
  - Web links sent to multiple stakeholder and interest groups;
  - Video clip played on the Castle Square TV screen to make people aware of the consultation .
- 4.4 Further targeted consultations were undertaken which included:
- Targeted consultation with stakeholder groups such as Swansea BID, Wind Street traders representative, Swansea Tree Forum, Swansea Accessibility Group, Police Community Liaison via Microsoft Teams;

- A targeted consultation was undertaken on site with children and young people when covid restrictions eased later in 2021;
- Ongoing consultation with commercial traders regarding external dining and opportunities; and
- Internal Council stakeholders including highways, planning, parks, maintenance, tourism, cabinet and ward members.

4.5 Feedback received during the consultation has been and continues to be reviewed and addressed during design development of the scheme. Changes that have been made as a result of engagement can be found in the Design and Access Statement.

## **Pre-application Consultation**

### **4.6 TO BE UPDATED FOLLOWING PAC.**

## **Pre-application advice**

- 4.7 A thorough pre-application process has taken place with Swansea Council planning team as well as other internal consultees such as Highways Officers, Tourism and Leisure Officers, Design, Heritage and Conservation Officers.
- 4.8 Formal feedback from the Case Officer was received in April 2022. The response confirmed that the development is acceptable in principle. This described the positive planning policy context as well as containing some consultation responses and information to support the planning application. A copy of the pre-application response can be found in **Appendix 1**.

## **Design Commission for Wales**

- 4.9 Early engagement with the Design Commission for Wales (“DCfW”) has been carried out. The design team presented to the DCfW on 12 August 2021. Feedback was largely positive and a breakdown of the suggestions made and how they have been considered is provided in the Design and Access Statement.

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## 5. Planning Policy Context & Relevant Material Considerations

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### Introduction

- 5.1 This section of the Statement reviews the most relevant national and local planning policy context for the site and proposed development. It identifies relevant planning and land use documents which have informed and guided the proposed development from the outset and against which it will be assessed.
- 5.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, the development plan comprises of Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (February 2021) ("Future Wales") and the Swansea Local Development Plan (February 2019) ("LDP").
- 5.3 Whilst not having development plan status, Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11, February 2021) ("PPW") is also a relevant material consideration. Technical Advice Notes ("TANs") support the interpretation and application of PPW and add further detailed guidance on a range of issues which may affect development.

### Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (February 2021)

- 5.4 The Welsh Government has formally published Future Wales. Future Wales outlines the Welsh Government's strategies for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, delivering growth in the right areas, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of communities. Unlike its predecessor, the Wales Spatial Plan, Future Wales now forms part of the statutory development plan. Future Wales sub-divides Wales into four regions with the application site located within the South West Wales region. A total of 36 policies are contained within Future Wales of which 19 are thematic and the remainder relate to the four regions.
- 5.5 The following themes and policies are most relevant to the determination of this planning application.

### *Location and Shape of Growth*

5.6 Policy 2: Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – states that growth and regeneration of towns and cities should positively contribute towards building sustainable places that support active and healthy lives, with urban neighbourhoods that are compact and walkable, organised around mixed-use centres and public transport, and integrated with green infrastructure. It then goes on to identify seven key principles for placemaking:

- creating a rich mix of uses;
- providing a variety of housing types and tenures;
- building places at a walkable scale, with homes, local facilities and public transport within walking distance of each other;
- increasing population density, with development built at urban densities that can support public transport and local facilities;
- establishing a permeable network of streets, with a hierarchy that informs the nature of development;
- promoting a plot-based approach to development, which provides opportunities for the development of small plots, including for custom and self-builders; and
- integrating green infrastructure, informed by the planning authority's Green Infrastructure Assessment.

5.7 Policy 3: Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership – this policy explains that the public sector must show leadership and apply placemaking principles to support growth and regeneration for the benefit of communities across Wales. The policy goes on to explain that the public sector's use of land, developments, investments and actions must build sustainable places that improve health and well-being.

- 5.8 Policy 6: Town Centre First – this policy explains how significant new commercial, retail, education, health, leisure and public service facilities must be located within town and city centres. It explains that they should have good access by public transport to and from the whole town or city and, where appropriate, the wider region.
- 5.9 Policy 28: National Growth Area - Swansea Bay and Llanelli – this policy identifies Swansea Bay and Llanelli as the main focus for growth and investment in the South West region. The policy goes on to state that The Welsh Government will work with regional bodies and local authorities to promote and enhance Swansea Bay and Llanelli's strategic role and ensure key investment decisions support places in the National Growth Area and the wider region.

### *Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure*

- 5.10 Policy 9: Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure – seeks to ensure the enhancement of biodiversity, the resilience of ecosystems and the provision of green infrastructure. This should be achieved by identifying areas to be safeguarded, opportunities for the maximising the value of existing green infrastructure and introducing new green infrastructure. Where possible, existing designated or high value sites should be connected through green infrastructure improvements.

### **Swansea Local Development Plan 2010-2025 (February 2019)**

- 5.11 The LDP covers the plan period between 2010 and 2025. The LDP consists of a Written Statement and Proposal Maps. It guides the future development of the area, providing a clear vision which sets out where, when and how much new development can take place over the plan period. The LDP sets out the vision, objectives and strategy to achieve this.
- 5.12 Most notably, the LDP, under Policy SDJ: Swansea Central Area allocates city centre site J (see figure 2 below) for a range of regeneration projects with the “overall aim of creating a vibrant, distinctive, Central area that capitalises on its unique assets to become a destination of regional and national significance. It includes proposals for a high quality retail and leisure led scheme, mixed use waterfront developments, circa 856 homes, 4 hectares of potential development areas that could accommodate B1 uses, and area initiatives and environmental enhancements during the Plan period”.

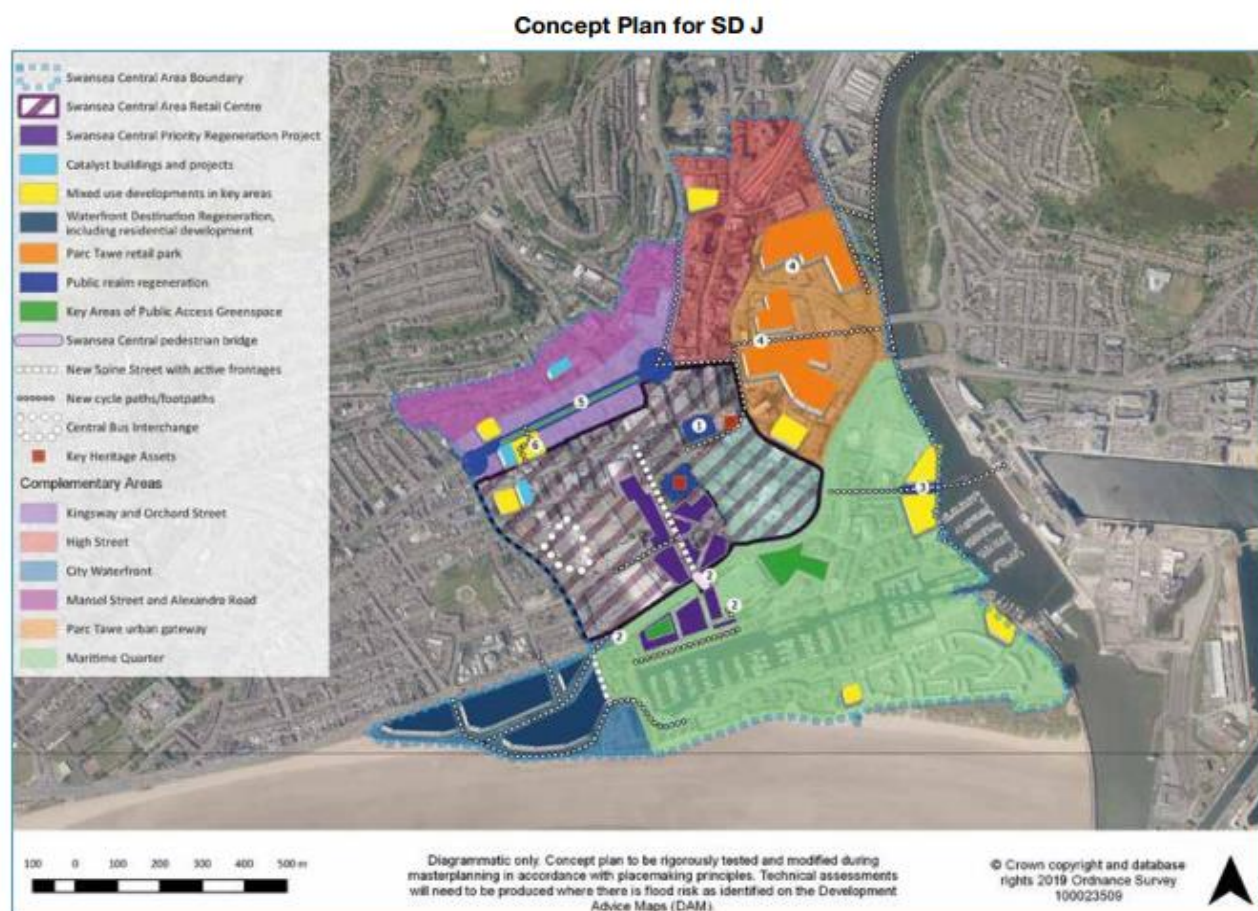


Figure 2: Site J (Source: LDP)

- 5.13 The policy goes on to set placemaking principles and for Wind Street this includes ‘considering the potential for enhancing and reconfiguring Castle Square to create a more usable space which supports activity and interest and responds positively to the setting of the Castle and the Conservation Area.
- 5.14 The concept plan for SDJ shows Castle Square as a “mixed use development and new public realm” (see figure 2 above).
- 5.15 Policy RC3 relates to Swansea Central Area Retail Centre which states that the priority for this retail area, which sits at the top of the retail hierarchy, is for a comprehensive regeneration and redevelopment scheme at the St David’s/Quadrant site. The supporting text of this policy goes on to explain that it will be important to retain any retail capacity for the redevelopment of Castle Square which is not absorbed by Swansea Central Scheme.

5.16 The following policies are also relevant to the determination of the planning application:

- Policy PS1: Sustainable Places
- Policy PS2: Placemaking and Place Management
- Policy HC1: Historic and Cultural Environment
- Policy HC2: Preservation or Enhancement of Buildings and Features
- Policy RC1: Swansea Central Area Regeneration
- Policy RC3: Swansea Central Area Retail Centre
- Policy ER1: Climate Change
- Policy ER2: Strategic Green Infrastructure Network
- Policy ER8: Habitats and Species
- Policy ER9: Ecological Networks and Features of Importance for Biodiversity
- Policy ER11: Trees, Hedgerows and Development
- Policy RP1: Safeguarding Public Health and Natural Resources
- RP2: Noise Pollution
- Policy RP3: Air and Light Pollution
- Policy TR1: Tourism, Recreation and Leisure Development
- Policy T2: Active Travel
- Policy SI1: Health and Wellbeing

### **Material Considerations**

5.17 There are a number of material considerations and guidance documents published by Swansea Council and the Welsh Ministers. A number of these are now dated and their weight therefore varies accordingly. Commentary on these documents is made where appropriate within this Statement, and the wider planning application documentation.

*Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11, February 2021)*

5.18 The PPW (entirely rewrites and restructures Edition 10 in the context of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.



- 5.19 PPW has an over-riding objective to accommodate current and future needs and seeks to maximise delivery of outcomes against all aspects of well-being and sustainable development, with a clear focus on placemaking. The concept of placemaking introduced in the PPW is a key element to deliver the aspirations of the Act and drive plan-making and development management decisions.
- 5.20 The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The key planning principles set out in this document are:
- Growing the economy in a sustainable manner
  - Making the best use of resources
  - Facilitating accessible and healthy environments
  - Creating and sustaining communities
  - Maximising environment protection and limiting environment impact
- 5.21 In summary, PPW establishes the key principles of the planning system and how development should be shaped to deliver the best possible outcomes.

### *Technical Advice Notes*

- 5.22 PPW is supported by a range of Technical Advices Notes (“TANs”). The TANs provide supplementary policy principles and add more detailed content on how a range of issues might affect the development potential of the site. The following TANs are considered relevant to the proposals at Castle Square:
- TAN 4: Retail and Commercial Development (November 2016)
  - TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning (September 2009)
  - TAN 11: Noise (October 1997)
  - TAN 12: Design (March 2016)
  - TAN 13: Tourism (October 1997)
  - TAN 16: Sport, Recreation and Open Space (January 2009)
  - TAN 18: Transport (March 2007)
  - TAN 20: Planning and the Welsh Language (October 2017)
  - TAN 23: Economic Development (February 2014)



- TAN 24: Historic Environment (May 2017)

*Swansea Council Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs)*

5.23 Swansea Council has a number of SPGs which are relevant to the planning application as follows:

- Biodiversity and Development
- Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands SPG
- Planning Obligations SPG
- Planning for Community Safety SPG
- Draft Green Infrastructure SPG
- Swansea Central Area Regeneration Framework (SCARF)

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## 6. Planning Assessment

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### Introduction

6.1. This section of the Statement outlines the key planning considerations relevant to the determination of this application. It is split into two sub-sections as follows:

- 1) the principle of development; and
- 2) compliance with development management policies and technical acceptability.

### The Principle of Development

6.2. The principle of development is firmly established by the site's status within the LDP. The site is part of the wider Swansea Central Area, proposals for which are discussed in Policy SDJ.

6.3. As part of Policy SDJ, various placemaking principles are outlined of which development proposals in the area should accord with. The principles for Wind Street are as follows:

- Reinforce and diversify the mixed use and leisure emphasis of the area with new family focused food and beverage offer.
- Maintain and improve the quality of public spaces and pedestrian routes through the area particularly from the waterfront to the Retail Centre.
- Consider the potential for enhancing and reconfiguring Castle Square to create a more useable space which supports activity and interest and responds positively to the setting of the Castle and the Conservation Area.
- Maintain and improve the quality of the public realm.

6.4. The concept plan included as part of Policy SDJ depicts Castle Square as 'mixed use development and new public realm at Castle Square'.

6.5. Policy SDJ is clearly supportive of the redevelopment of Castle Square and is the main policy justification. The proposals are further supported throughout the LDP policies, especially those relating to the city

centre such as Policy RC3: Swansea Central Area and Retail Centre as discussed above in the policy section of this Statement.

- 6.6. The regeneration of the Square is further supported by the Swansea Central Area Regeneration Framework (SCARF). Within the Development and Design Principles for the Wind Street area it references Castle Square and identifies an opportunity to consider the potential for enhancing and refreshing Castle Square public space with new landscaping, new public realm and street furniture. The policy goes on to state that “reconfiguring this space would allow it to better integrate adjacent areas such as the space around the Castle and Princess Way. There is potential opportunity to fundamentally change the environment to one which is more useable, supports activity and interest and responds positively to the setting of the Grade 1 Listed Castle (and Scheduled Ancient Monument”.
- 6.7. A key theme throughout the LDP, Future Wales and PPW is ‘placemaking’. In particular, Policy PS2 of the LDP relates to this. The policy explains that development should enhance the quality of places and spaces, and respond positively to aspects of local context and character that contribute towards a sense of place. Amongst other things, the policy states that development should:
- Have regard to important elements of the local heritage, culture, landscape, townscape, views and vistas;
  - Enhance public realm quality, incorporating public art where appropriate;
  - Create or enhance opportunities for Active Travel and greater use of public transport;
  - Provide a hierarchy of interconnected streets and spaces;
  - Provide an accessible environment for all.
- 6.8. ‘Placemaking’ and the themes outlined above have been at the heart of developing the proposals. This can be seen through the high quality design features and materials used, the level of detail and thought that has gone into the layout and every aspect of the development. The aim of the proposed redevelopment of the Square is to create a transformation of the character of the existing square, while retaining its place as a focal point in the civic life of Swansea. The new square will be greener, with more diverse uses and more activity.

- 6.9. A number of pre-application discussions with the LPA have taken place which further confirm the acceptability of the proposals in principle.
- 6.10. It is widely recognised that the site is in a very good location and will meet the aspirations for sustainable development set out within PPW and Future Wales. Policy 2: Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration of Future Wales is particularly relevant to the proposals because it talks about *“building places at a walkable scale, with homes, local facilities and public transport within walking distance of each other; establishing a permeable network of streets, with a hierarchy that informs the nature of development; and integrating green infrastructure, informed by the planning authority’s Green Infrastructure Assessment”* – all of which, the proposals set out to do.
- 6.11. It is anticipated that the ongoing Swansea Central/Copr Bay development and potential future phases of the Castle Square scheme will further improve pedestrian connectivity in this area of the city centre
- 6.12. For these reasons, and with the mitigation which form part of the proposals, the application has clear in principle support from planning guidance and policy at all levels. The proposals also perform well against the social, economic and environmental tests of sustainability as set out in the table 6.1 below:

<b>Economic</b>	The development would result in direct construction jobs and indirect supply chain jobs.
	The improved built environment will make the city centre a more attractive place for people to visit which could increase spending in the local area.
	The pavilions will provide commercial opportunity in the Square for a business.
<b>Social</b>	The development would support strong and vibrant city centre, with improved public realm which will last for years to come.
	A well-designed and safe built environment is proposed, which feeds into the overall regeneration of the Swansea Central Area. The key drivers of the design have been to make the space welcoming, accessible, flexible and convenient for all.
	The design of the Square provides a number of elements that have the potential to be inherently playful and interactive, among them the water feature, the planter edges and the paving pattern.
<b>Environmental</b>	Open spaces, green infrastructure and play spaces that support the community's health, social and cultural wellbeing.
	Extensive high quality landscaping will provide ecological enhancement.
	An increase to close to 40% of the Square will be greenspace, made up of grass, planting and trees.
<b>Environmental</b>	Sustainability is at the heart of the proposals. The proposals will achieve BREEAM 'Very Good' and a possible pathway has been identified to reach the 'Excellent' rating. The structural elements have been designed to reduce carbon and reuse what is existing in the Square where possible.

Table 6.1: Social, Economic and Environmental Sustainability

## Compliance with Development Management Policies

6.13. The application proposals also perform very well against the adopted LDP's development management policies, and (where relevant) national policy and guidance. To reinforce general messages about technical and environmental acceptable and development quality, the main topics are summarised in the table 6.2 below:

*Table 6.2 Compliance with Development Management Policies*

Element	Policies	Performance and Compliance
Ecology, Trees and Green Infrastructure	<p>LDP: ER1, ER2, ER8, ER9, ER11</p> <p>Green Infrastructure SPG</p> <p>TAN 5</p> <p>Future Wales Policy 9</p>	<p>A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal ("PEA") has been carried out by Eight Associates and is submitted in support of the planning application. The PEA provides recommendations in order to mitigate against the loss of ecological features, and to enhance the site in line with local and national policies, with the aim to provide biodiversity net gain at the site. The following measures to enhance biodiversity on the site are incorporated in the scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Installation of at least four bat boxes;</li> <li>▪ External lighting in line with BCT guidelines;</li> <li>▪ Installation of at least four bird nesting boxes on the site</li> <li>▪ Installation of two invertebrate houses; and</li> <li>▪ Native planting.</li> </ul> <p>The Square accommodates a significant number of mature trees of various species. An arboricultural survey has been carried out to confirm constraints relating to each tree in terms of Root Protection Zones (RPZ's), canopies and levels, and has classified the trees, which are a mix of Category B &amp; C and one Category U.</p> <p>A Green Infrastructure Strategy which links together all elements and levels of biodiversity is also included within the DAS.</p>
Sustainability	LDP: EU1, EU2, PS1, ER1	<p>The Pavilions will achieve BREEAM 'Very Good', and a BREEAM pre-assessment has been carried out to demonstrate this is achievable. There is an aspiration to achieve 'Excellent' and the Sustainability</p>

Element	Policies	Performance and Compliance
		<p>Consultants BREEAM tracker includes a potential pathway to achieving this if it proves feasible.</p> <p>The structural solutions for both Pavilions, utilising timber and stone frames, have been developed with a view to minimising Embodied Carbon, which is increasingly the dominant factor in carbon emissions as operation carbon reduces as a result of decarbonisation of the grid.</p>
Historic Environment	LDP: HC1, HC2, TAN 24	<p>Swansea Castle sits to the east of the Square and is a Scheduled Monument. Views of the Castle from the surrounding context are an important consideration in the design of the proposals. Other listed buildings in the vicinity include the old Castle Cinema to the north of the Castle, St Mary's Church to the south east, and various buildings within the Wind Street Conservation Area, within which the Square itself is located. The Heritage Impact Statement concludes that the proposals will enhance the setting of the Castle and Conservation Area. For further details refer to the Heritage Impact Statement by Edward Holland.</p> <p>The Square does potentially include elements of archaeological interest given its proximity to the Castle and the fact it's location once have stood within the Castle walls. However it is likely that much of archaeological interest on the site will have been destroyed in the course of previous excavation on the site, as the Ben Evans department store that stood on the site between the late 19th and mid 20th centuries had a basement level. This building was destroyed during the 3-night blitz in the second world war and following clearance of the rubble Castle Gardens was created in it's place. Further details can be found in the Archaeological Desk Based Assessment by GGAT.</p> <p>The report recommends that an archaeological watching brief is maintained during any ground disturbing construction.</p>
Flood Risk/Drainage	LDP: RP4, RP5	<p>A Sustainable Drainage Strategy has been developed for the site, making use of storage in granular subbase below areas of planting. The proposed surface water drainage strategy comprises lined sub-base features within the landscaping areas which act as both</p>

Element	Policies	Performance and Compliance
		attenuation and conveyance of the developments proposed surface water run-off. The proposed surface water ultimately discharges to an existing public surface water sewer taking surface water out of the existing public combined water sewer where the existing surface water discharged to. A 30% betterment has also been provided on the proposed discharge rate when compared to the existing. Refer to the Drainage & SUDs Strategy for more information.
Lighting	LDP: RP3	The existing lighting in the Square is to be replaced with a new system based around multi-use columns. These support spotlights for general lighting, tree canopy lighting, Gobo projectors for projection of images & patterns on the paving, CCTV cameras, and are capable of supporting seasonal festoon lighting. The column arrangement has been developed to ensure that the number of columns is minimised (fewer taller columns preferred to more shorter columns) and that they are positioned as close as possible to existing trees without compromising performance, in order to help them blend into the landscape. A Lighting Strategy has been prepared by Atlier Ten and is submitted in support of the application.
Design	LDP: RC1, RC3, PS1, PS2, SDJ	The design of the proposed Square regeneration has been developed with the needs of users at its heart, with the intention of creating a revitalised public space for Swansea that is more welcoming, flexible, accessible and convenient than the existing space for all.  A Design and Access has been provided by Acme to explain the design rationale and process in full.
Transport	LDP: T1, T2, T5, T7 TAN 18	As would be expected of a city centre location, the site is highly accessible by sustainable modes of transport. The proposals are therefore ideally placed to take advantage of this high level of accessibility and promote the further use of sustainable travel. The Square is highly accessible by bus and coach, with Swansea Bus Station being located only approximately 300-350m to the south west



Element	Policies	Performance and Compliance
		<p>and offering a large number of local, regional and national bus and coach services.</p> <p>Swansea Railway Station is around 10 minutes' walk from the site and offers regional and national rail connections to a large number of destinations across Wales and England. Pedestrian accessibility in the city centre is generally good, and the Square sits at the edge of the pedestrianised area on Princess Way, Union Street and Oxford Street. Swansea City Centre also benefits from numerous Advisory and Active Travel cycle routes, and two National Cycle Routes. A shared pedestrian &amp; cycle route runs north south through the site on Princess Way, with cycle stands to be relocated in the south west corner of the site at the south end of Princess Way.</p>
Social infrastructure	LDP: SI1, IO1, TR1, PS1 TAN 16	<p>The existing Castle Square suffers from issues with anti-social behaviour. One of the main aspirations for the new scheme is to counter that issue through an increase in the level of activity in the Square generally, by increasing the diversity of types of visitor, and by extending the hours of use of the Square with both daytime and evening activities. In this way the intent is to create a welcoming space that feels safe for all users at all times. The Pavilions in particular will provide a level of natural surveillance of the Square and through spill out onto external seating areas in the warmer months, which should in turn discourage anti-social behaviour. The project team have consulted with Wectu and South Wales Police with regards to security considerations for the Square during RIBA Stage 2 &amp; 3 design, some of the measures to be introduced are described below.</p>

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## 7. Summary & Conclusions

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- 7.1. This Statement has been prepared by Savills on behalf of Spider Projects and Swansea Council in support of a planning application for the redevelopment of Castle Square.
- 7.2. The principle of the development is firmly established by the national and local planning policy context explained in this Statement.
- 7.3. The Statement, alongside the supporting documentation that accompanies the application, demonstrates that the proposals are technically sound and that the site can be delivered in a way which is entirely acceptable. Detailed assessments of design, ecology, heritage and transport all explain how that conclusion has been reached.
- 7.4. The proposals represent sustainable development and meet Wales' well-being goals. The Design and Access Statement shows how the site will deliver the strong placemaking by creating a high quality scheme which includes an extensive package of green and blue infrastructure, connectivity to existing active travel links and will create a modern, interesting, functional and usable public space.
- 7.5. For all these reasons, the development proposals – and the work that supports them – are consistent with the relevant policies of the development plans. They build on the allocation in the LDP to show how a scheme can be developed in a way which responds to site conditions and captures the site's potential to deliver a series of clear and measurable benefits. The combination of policy support, site assessment and scheme performance means that planning permission can be granted quickly and confidently to allow the delivery and completion of this important city centre site.

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## Appendix 1

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**CITY & COUNTY OF SWANSEA / DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE**  
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*Date:* 13/04/2022

Dear Portia

**The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (As amended)**  
**The Town and Country Planning (Pre-Application Services)(Wales) Regulations 2016**

**Application No:** 2022/0420/PRE  
**Site Location:** Castle Square Swansea SA1 1DW  
**Proposal:** PRE APP CONFIDENTIAL - Redevelopment of Castle Square

I refer to the above pre-application received on 18 February 2022 seeking advice under the statutory pre-application services provided for under the above Regulations.

**The Proposal**

As outlined in the covering letter, Castle Square is a focal point within Swansea City centre, an important Civic 'place' in the city, overlooked by the landmark Swansea Castle. The existing Square, was refurbished in 1995, and there is now the opportunity to enhance the Square, to raise its quality and to make it more active, distinctive and vibrant, in line with other investment taking place in the City. The scheme will aim to deliver a modern, functional and well maintained public space, which will be accommodate a range of events, temporary arts and cultural experiences, as well as creating the opportunity to introduce more commercial activity.

The pre-application proposes redevelopment of the Castle Square (as outlined in the submission) to include:

- Removal of existing water feature;
- Reconfiguration of existing crescent of steps to omit sloping landing and consolidate into a single flight;
- Creation of seating areas with defined stepped routes;
- Expansion of existing planters to increase planted area and provide flush access points by grading down to ground level;
- Replacement of existing low planter walls with monolithic stone or PCC bench elements;
- Creation of new access route through the western planter;
- Creation of a new planter/rain garden in the south west corner of the Square;
- New planting strategy with introduction of multi-functional greenery including amenity lawns, wildflowers/perennials etc, integration of Sustainable Urban Drainage in the form of rain gardens;

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- Existing trees retained with exception of two smaller trees to enable introduction of Pavilion (see below), planting of new trees;
- Replacement of existing paving in the central area of the Square, refurbishment of existing paving in the surrounding pedestrian routes;
- Resurfacing of the existing highway with beige asphalt and reorientation of the pedestrian crossing at the junction of Caer St and Princess Way to suit introduction of new planters;
- Removal of existing bollards along the highway edge, to be replaced by bollards or other landscape features between raised planter edges to provide secure line prevent vehicle access;
- Construction of two Pavilion buildings of 200m<sup>2</sup> area each, for food, beverage and/or retail uses (Classes A1, A2 and/or A3);
- Up to four 100m<sup>2</sup> units one with an accessible roof;
- Introduction of canopies to provide sheltered areas for seating - either integral to the Pavilion buildings or stand alone;
- New water feature of flush-jet type in the central area to provide interactive play and flexibility of use when switched off;
- Replacement of existing TV screen;
- Introduction of two clusters of "Digital Bamboo" - 12m tall illuminated Glass Reinforced Plastic poles that function as wayfinding devices and link to the Copr Bay scheme;
- Replacement of existing lighting with new poles & downlighters and other public realm lighting elements;
- Potential creation of external seating areas to premises facing onto the Square, including formation of level terraces on steeping sloping Temple Street units; and
- Potential treatment to substation in south west corner of the site - removal of existing steel screen and street furniture in the vicinity, introduction of green wall around the substation and a new bin store area to accommodate bins/trolleys from nearby premises currently stored on street.

### **Relevant planning history**

As outlined there are a number of planning applications relating to temporary advertising and broadcasting permissions for the display of sports events within the Square i.e. existing TV Screen.

### **Development Plan and Relevant Policies**

#### **The National Development Framework: Future Wales - the National Plan 2040**

Future Wales sets out the Welsh Government's land use priorities and provides a national land use framework for SDPs and LDPs. Future Wales concentrates on development and land use issues of national significance, indicating areas of major opportunities and change, highlighting areas that need protecting and enhancing and helping to co-ordinate the delivery of Welsh Government policies to maximise positive outcomes.

Policy 1 - Where Wales Will Grow

Policy 2 - Shaping urban growth and regeneration - Strategic placemaking

Policy 3 - Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration - Public Sector Leadership

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Policy 6 – Town Centre First

Policy 9 - Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure

Policy 28 - National Growth Area - Swansea Bay and Llanelli

**Planning Policy Wales (11th Edition – February 2021)**

PPW (Edition 11) was published by Welsh Government in February 2021 and is the complete land use planning policy document for Wales, providing the foundation for all national, regional and local planning policies. Whilst not part of the Development Plan it has substantial weight in the planning process. The Welsh Government also published in July 2020 Building Better Places which pinpoints the most relevant policy priorities and actions to aid in the recovery. Building Better Places recognises the pivotal role that planners play in shaping our society for the future. They must plan for our priorities around placemaking, decarbonisation and well-being.

PPW is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs), Welsh Government Circulars, and policy clarification letters, which together with PPW provide the national planning policy framework for Wales.

**Swansea Local Development 2010-2025**

The Development Plan for the area is the Swansea Local Development Plan (Adopted February 2019) and within which the following policies are considered to be relevant to your proposal:

- **PS 2: PLACEMAKING AND PLACE MANAGEMENT** - Development should enhance the quality of places and spaces, and respond positively to aspects of local context and character that contribute towards a sense of place. The design, layout and orientation of proposed buildings, and the spaces between them, should provide for an attractive, legible, healthy, accessible and safe environment. All proposals should ensure that no significant adverse impacts would be caused to people's amenity.
- **SD 1: STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT AREAS; SD 2: MASTERPLANNING PRINCIPLES & SD J: SWANSEA CENTRAL AREA.** Placemaking principles include the consideration for the potential for enhancing and reconfiguring Castle Square to create a more useable space which supports activity and interest and responds positively to the setting of the Castle and Conservation Area.
- **HC 1: HISTORIC AND CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT.** The County's distinctive historic and cultural environment will be preserved or enhanced & **HC 2: PRESERVATION OR ENHANCEMENT OF BUILDINGS AND FEATURES.** Proposals which have a relationship to The preservation or enhancement of Scheduled Ancient Monuments and listed building or their setting; and development within or adjacent to a conservation area will only be permitted if it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- **SI 8: COMMUNITY SAFETY;**
- **RC 1: SWANSEA CENTRAL AREA REGENERATION.** In order to enhance the attractiveness, viability and competitiveness of the Swansea Central Area, development must accord with the key strategic aims. **RC 2: RETAIL AND LEISURE DEVELOPMENT** - Retail and leisure proposals must in the first instance assess the suitability of sites and premises within the following Centres of the retail hierarchy, having regard to the nature, scale and location of the proposed development. **RC 3: SWANSEA CENTRAL AREA RETAIL**

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CENTRE. The Swansea Central Area Retail Centre sits at the top of the retail hierarchy and is the sequentially preferred location for all significant retail and leisure development.

- ER 2: STRATEGIC GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK. Green Infrastructure will be provided through the protection and enhancement of existing green spaces that afford valuable ecosystem services. Development that compromises the integrity of such green spaces, and therefore that of the overall Green Infrastructure network, will not be permitted.
- ER 8: HABITATS AND SPECIES. ER 9: ECOLOGICAL NETWORKS AND FEATURES OF IMPORTANCE FOR BIODIVERSITY. Development proposals will be expected to maintain, protect and enhance ecological networks and features of importance for biodiversity. Particular importance will be given to maintaining and enhancing the connectivity of ecological networks which enable the dispersal and functioning of protected and priority species.
- ER 11: TREES, HEDGEROWS AND DEVELOPMENT. Development that would adversely affect trees, woodlands and hedgerows of public amenity or natural/cultural heritage value, or that provide important ecosystem services, will not normally be permitted.
- TR 1: TOURISM, RECREATION AND LEISURE DEVELOPMENT. Tourism, recreation and leisure development that capitalises upon the County's distinctive assets and helps create a year round destination will be supported. Within the Swansea Central Area, proposals must contribute towards the revitalisation and regeneration of the Retail Centre and City Waterfront.
- RP 1: SAFEGUARDING PUBLIC HEALTH AND NATURAL RESOURCES; RP 2: NOISE POLLUTION; RP 3: AIR AND LIGHT POLLUTION; RP 4: WATER POLLUTION AND THE PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES; RP 10: SUSTAINABLE WASTE MANAGEMENT FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

**Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG):**

SPG relevant to the proposed development, which are available to download in full from our website at [www.swansea.gov.uk](http://www.swansea.gov.uk) are as follows:

- Trees Hedgerows and Woodlands (Adopted October 2021)
- Development and Biodiversity (Adopted February 2021)
- Parking Standards (Adopted March 2012)
- Planning Obligations (Adopted March 2010)
- Planning for Community Safety (Adopted December 2012)
- Swansea Central Area: Regeneration Framework – SCARF (Feb. 2016);

**SCARF**

Within the Development and Design Principles for the Wind Street area it references Castle Square - Consider the potential for enhancing and refreshing Castle Square public space with new landscaping, new public realm and street furniture. Reconfiguring this space would allow it to better integrate adjacent areas such as the space around the Castle and Princess Way. There is potential opportunity to fundamentally change the environment to one which is more useable, supports activity and interest and responds positively to the setting of the Grade 1 Listed Castle (and Scheduled Ancient Monument).

As outlined, there are clear positive planning policies which support the principle of the development.

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## **Consultation Responses**

Design Commission for Wales – the proposal was to a consultation in August, 2021 and the following points were made:

### The site in its broader context

The scheme would benefit from further exploration of the relationship between the site and its broader context, beyond the boundary line. The location of the highway, and its treatment, has an impact on the quality and sense of place within the square, and it is worth exploring these links further.

We also urge consideration of the potential of existing and future uses of the buildings immediately surrounding the site, as those properties currently considered to have hard edges may not always have those edges. They may also have a potentially different/ changing relationship with the adjacent space. The design approach should facilitate opportunities for existing and future uses to enhance the levels of activity and natural surveillance, thereby, contributing to a more vibrant space.

### Creating the circumstances

for flexibility for surrounding spaces to change, and for that to positively impact the space is a strategy that should be investigated further.

### Concept of Development

Exploration of an alternative design concepts for the space should be tested to ensure it is a space that can be properly used and moved through rather than simply entered and exited. Some larger interventions as proposed may present barriers to active use and inclusion and would bear testing. The scheme is uniquely positioned adjacent to Swansea castle, and has a number of other culturally significant associations, and any future development of this scheme would benefit from exploring those connections further.

### Accessibility and Inclusivity

The design team would benefit from further exploration of who would be using the square, and how safe they would feel, throughout the day and night and over the period of a week. This should include the potentially repositioned taxi rank. This work should include children – perhaps teenage girls in particular - as well as younger children and older people. The specificity of spaces within the scheme may discourage spontaneous activities which could leave the local community feeling disconnected and unable to use the spaces created in the project. Community engagement is key to understanding these issues.

The merits of retaining the extant public sculpture should be investigated carefully and any proposal for its removal, as currently tabled, should be discussed with the artist Amber Hiscott. 'Leaf Boat' the existing glass and steel piece in the square was commissioned very specifically for Swansea and with detailed reference to Dylan Thomas. The artist is experienced and of international renown and could make a positive contribution to discussion about relocation and to the design team's approach to the square.



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*The project may benefit from exploration of digital sphere work, especially the connections between the physical and digital, such as with walking tour apps. This integration of digital technology may encourage use the space.*

**Curation of Space**

*The scheme would require careful curation of businesses, including a focus on small scale local businesses, rather than large multinational corporations, in order to create a space similar to what was highlighted in the precedents. The project could benefit from appointing an 'area champion' to ensure that the original project vision is held throughout the design, and logistical processes.*

**CADW - Advice**

*The following comments are based on information made available to us as part of the pre-application consultation and we will review our comments when we are consulted on the final planning application.*

*Having carefully considered the information provided, we have no objection to the proposed development in regards to the scheduled monument shown in our assessment of the application below.*

**Assessment**

**GM012 Swansea Castle**

*This non-statutory pre-planning application enquiry is in regard to the proposed redevelopment of Castle Square Swansea.*

*Cadw has been involved in a number of meetings discussing these proposals and has seen the design changed in line with our concerns, in particular the removal of tree planting to the east of the castle and the reduction in the number of lighting columns. As such, it is currently our opinion that the proposals will not have a significant impact on the setting of scheduled monument GM012 Swansea Castle: However, it is our opinion that the proposal to use "megalith stones" to support the roof of the eastern pavilion will be seen as being incongruous in this location. It is therefore suggested that these should be replaced with thinner copper supports that would be more appropriate, continuing the theme of "Copperopolis" used elsewhere in the design, and also make the structure appear much lighter as well as not interfering with views of the Castle.*

*Finally, there may also be undesignated historic assets that could be affected by the proposed development and, if you have not already done so, we would advise that you consult the Historic Environment Record held by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust [www.ggat.org.uk](http://www.ggat.org.uk)*

**Ecology** – *We have been sent a preliminary ecological appraisal report, arboricultural survey and landscape strategy for this scheme, but these appear not to have been included in the pre-application documents. They should be submitted with any full application.*

*The comments regarding the PEA and landscape strategy were as follows:*

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*Just a few things to confirm:*

- *That all existing trees are being retained;*
- *That a green infrastructure assessment will be submitted, to ensure the development achieves a green space factor tool score of at least 0.3;*
- *That a sensitive lighting scheme for bats will be required;*
- *That ecological enhancements will be provided (to be shown on a plan and submitted with the planning application).*

*Regarding the landscaping, the themes are good and quite a few of the species are too. However, there are a lot of non-natives, particularly the trees, which would be better substituted for natives*

*Regarding the list of native flowering plant species found within 1km of the site, and shown on P9 of the report – a range of these should be incorporated into the planting scheme. The addition of lavender and rosemary to the planting mix will also attract pollinators.*

*There are several otter records within 1km of the site.*

*In addition to the proposed bird boxes, swift boxes should also be incorporated at least 5m above the ground and in groups as they are colonial birds.*

*The green roof plants should be of local provenance and not just consist of sedum species. Further details of the proposed planting is required.*

*Trees:*

*The council has now adopted a new Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands SPG, which contains the Swansea Tree Replacement Standard. This should be used to calculate how many trees will need to be planted to replace those proposed for removal: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/treespg>*

*Hedgehog:*

*There is the potential for hedgehogs to be present in the area. Hedgehogs are protected under Schedule 6 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which prohibits killing and trapping by certain methods. They are also listed on Section 7 of The Environment (Wales) Act 2016. This is a list of the living organisms of principal importance for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in relation to Wales.*

*In order to retain habitat connectivity for species of principal importance, such as hedgehogs, boundary treatments should not be flush to the ground, or suitably sized gaps 13 x 13 cm should be left at strategic points. See: <https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/hedgehog-friendly-fencing/>*

*Lighting Strategy:*

*A sensitive lighting strategy for the site will be required to support any application. It should aim to protect bats and other nocturnal species. A plan showing location, light spill and specification for any proposed lights on the site (during construction & operation) must be submitted for approval. The lighting plan should reflect the Bat Conservation Trust's Bats and Artificial Lighting in the U.K. (2018) guidance: <https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting>*

*Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP):*

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*A CEMP for the site will be required to support any application. The document will need to include sufficient detail to demonstrate how construction will be managed to ensure pollution prevention and protection of habitats and species on and adjacent to the site.*

**Ecological Enhancements:**

*The Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) should be referred to for further information: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/biodiversityspg>*

*A scheme to demonstrate that the development will conserve and enhance biodiversity and resilient ecosystems will be required to support any application. This is in line with the Section 6 Duty of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, the Resilient Wales Goal of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015, Planning Policy Wales Edition 11, Future Wales and Technical Advice Note 5.*

**Green Infrastructure:**

*LDP Policy ER2 requires that in order to be acceptable, development must not compromise the integrity of the green infrastructure system. This means that where a development proposal will result in loss in green infrastructure and consequently a loss in ecosystem service provision, mitigation and compensation measures will be required. The LDP policy now requires that compensatory measures should maintain and enhance the green infrastructure network. The policy criteria set out the type of measures that could be incorporated into a development scheme to achieve this.*

**Sustainable Drainage (SuDS):**

*From 7 January 2019, all new developments of more than 1 house or where the construction area is of 100m<sup>2</sup> or more require sustainable drainage to manage on-site surface water. It is advised that reference is made to the Swansea Council LDP.*

*SuDS work by making use of landscape and natural vegetation to control the flow of surface water and reduce the risk of flooding. Designs can include ponds, permeable paving and swales, which slow down the discharge of surface water more than conventional piped drainage.*

*Standard S5 addresses the design of SuDS to ensure, where possible, they create ecologically rich green and blue corridors in developments and enrich biodiversity value by linking networks of habitats and ecosystems together. Biodiversity should be considered at the early design stage of a development to ensure the potential benefits are maximised.*

*Reason: Conserving and enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem resilience.*

**Drainage Engineer** - *To progress this application the applicant is required to submit a SuDS Compliance Statement appropriate to the scale and nature of the development detailing how their development will comply with the 6 statutory standards.*

*Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010 requires su*

*Further details on how to apply and guidance can be obtained from the website*

*<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/sustainabledrainage> and by contacting the SuDS Approval Body via email [Sab@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:Sab@swansea.gov.uk)*

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**Details of any documents required for a subsequent application**

It is noted that in the submitted pre-application cover letter, you indicate that it is intended to submit the following:

- Application form & Ownership Certificates;
- Site location plan;
- Existing and proposed layout plans;
- Existing and proposed elevations;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Planning Statement;
- Heritage Statement;
- Landscape and Public Realm Strategy; and
- Statement of Community Involvement.

Additionally, our Ecologist has requested that the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA report), arboricultural survey and landscape strategy are submitted with the application. It is assumed that the scheme will require a SAB application, and it is recommended that a Drainage Strategy is submitted with the planning application in order to ensure the approved scheme will comply with SAB.

It has been highlighted as well that the planning application should be accompanied by a Green Infrastructure Strategy. The GI strategy for Castle Square needs to explain GI functions such as connectivity at all scales (this is more than just the Green Space Factor score). This could bring together tree planting and retention, SUDs, multi-generational play, active travel, public realm, heritage etc. The overall theme needs to link into the green artery as per the SCARF. They could perhaps use the petal diagrams from appendix 2 of Regenerating our City for People and Wildlife to explain how different areas of the square perform different GI functions to different degrees.

The LPA is currently working on a new Green Infrastructure SPG which is not yet available. However there is the document Regenerating our City for People and Wildlife which is publically available. This focusses on the city centre setting out the 5 principles of GI and the need for multi functionality. See Swansea Central Area: Regenerating our City for Wellbeing and Wildlife – Swansea. The recently updated Placemaking Guidance for Residential Developments SPG also sets out expected GI strategy content.

See Adopted\_Placemaking\_Guidance\_for\_Residential\_Development\_October\_2021 (1).pdf page 45 onwards.

I am aware of a draft GI Strategy submitted 8<sup>th</sup> April, which is written as a chapter within the DAS rather than a standalone report. This may be discussed at the scheduled meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> April.

**Pre-application Consultation (PAC)**

You will be aware, the Wales Planning Act 2015 introduced the requirement for pre-application consultation in respect of applications for major developments which came into force in March, 2016 and the requirement for applicants to submit the pre-application consultation report (PAC) as a validation requirement for applications made after 1 August 2016. The guidance on Pre-application

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Consultation is set out in Article 1 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Amendment Order 2016.

## **Conclusion**

As indicated above, the proposal is supported in principle, and the detailed layout proposals have been subject to several discussions. The planning application will need to address / be accompanied by the supporting documents including the green infrastructure / biodiversity issues / sustainable drainage issues.

Please note that this guidance is given on the basis of the information submitted, and that full consultation with Statutory Undertakers or interested parties, such as neighbours has not been undertaken, and that it is only through the submission of a planning application that full consideration can be given to a proposal.

Additionally, the views expressed are those of an officer of the Authority, which cannot prejudice any final decision the Council may make if an application for planning permission is submitted.

I trust that the above advice is satisfactory for your current purposes. However should you require clarification of any of the above matters, please do not hesitate to contact David Owen on the above number.

Should you wish to obtain further discussion and advice in relation to this pre-application, as part of our pre-application services the Council offers follow-up meetings to pre-application letters.

Yours sincerely

*Ian Davies*

**Ian Davies**  
**Development Manager**