

2020

THE  
CYFARTHEFA  
PLAN

2040

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
FINAL ISSUE V2

The Cyfarthfa Plan Team:

IAN RITCHIE ARCHITECTS	Architects & Urban Designers
GUSTAFSON PORTER + BOWMAN	Landscape Architects
FOURTH STREET	Destination Business Analysts
ARUP	Multi-disciplinary Engineers
JULIA HOLBERRY ASSOCIATES	Public Community Engagement
THE WHOLE STORY	Public Engagement / Narrative Gathering
EQUALS	Cost Consultants

The Cyfarthfa Plan team has worked closely with MTCBC, Design Commission for Wales, key stakeholders, and the public of Merthyr Tydfil throughout the development of this strategic plan.

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## THE CYFARTHFA PLAN - PREFACE

Following an international competition, the team led by Ian Ritchie Architects were appointed by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council in August 2019, to undertake a strategic appraisal of Cyfarthfa Park and its context within Merthyr Tydfil and the wider valleys region of South Wales.

The objective of this study was to imagine ways to reinvigorate the historic assets within the area and imagine outstanding complementary and contemporary ideas which would elevate the park and reenergise the area and the people's pride in their history, culture and environment.

Merthyr Tydfil was the cradle of the industrial revolution producing the first industrial manufacture of cast iron components.

Our approach was to work with the people of Merthyr Tydfil alongside their advisors, including the Design Commission for Wales, and to deliver a comprehensive study which will excite, motivate and help deliver its transformation over the next 20 years.

The outcome of this study is the creation of a plan for a 100-hectare park which substantially enlarges the existing Cyfarthfa Park by reconnecting its historic assets, and presents a synthesis of the past, present and future through old and new physical interventions and an events programme to be realised over the next two decades.

It is an ambitious project that has already engaged with local people, and will, through its newly formed Special Purposes Vehicle, embrace the Valleys Regional Park's ambitions and become a model for outstanding urban, social, and economic renewal that all of Wales will be proud of.

When followed through it will be recognised as a leading exemplar in terms of the necessary will power and vision to remake our cities and towns as living and sustainable habitats in harmony with nature.

On behalf of our design team, we would like to thank the leaders and people of Merthyr Tydfil, the Design Commission for Wales and Geraint Talfan Davies for having the confidence in helping us to deliver this work which we genuinely hope will provide a clear pathway to a sustainable future in every sense of the word.

Ian Ritchie

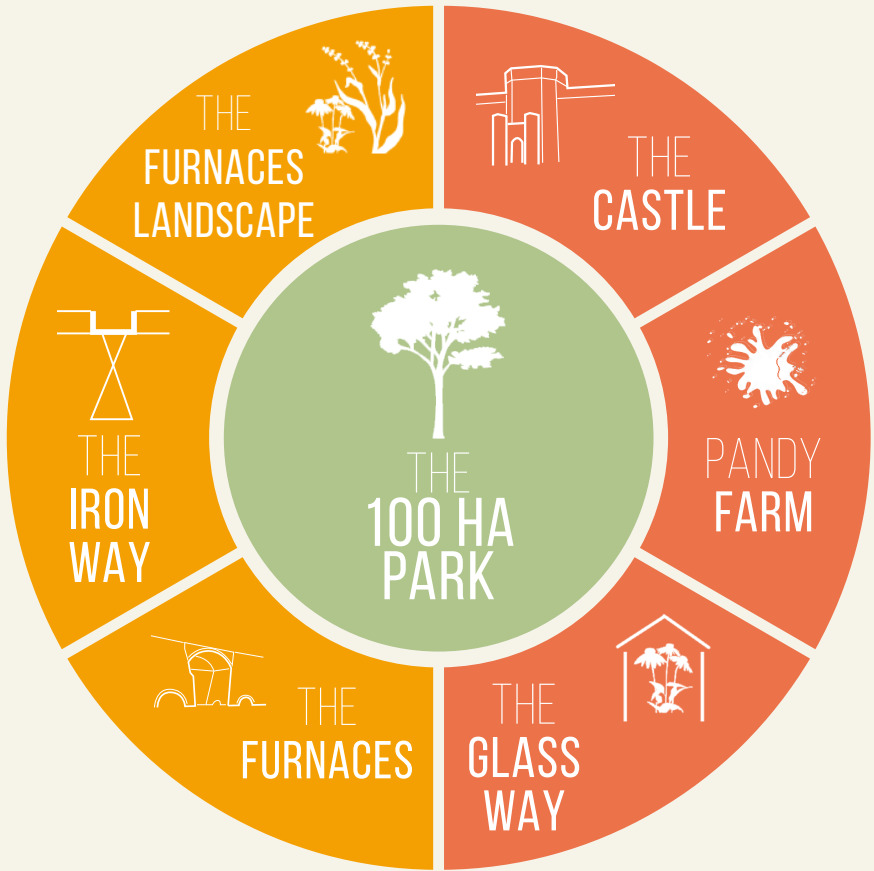
CBE RA Dip Arch (Dist) PCL ARB RIBA RIAI  
MIABSE FRSA FSFE FSHARE  
Hon FAIA Hon FRIAS Hon FRAM Hon MCSA Hon MSc PdiM Hon DLitt

Director of Ian Ritchie Architects Ltd.

# THE CYFARTHFA PLAN

## 2020

### THE FIRST DECADE - 2020-2031



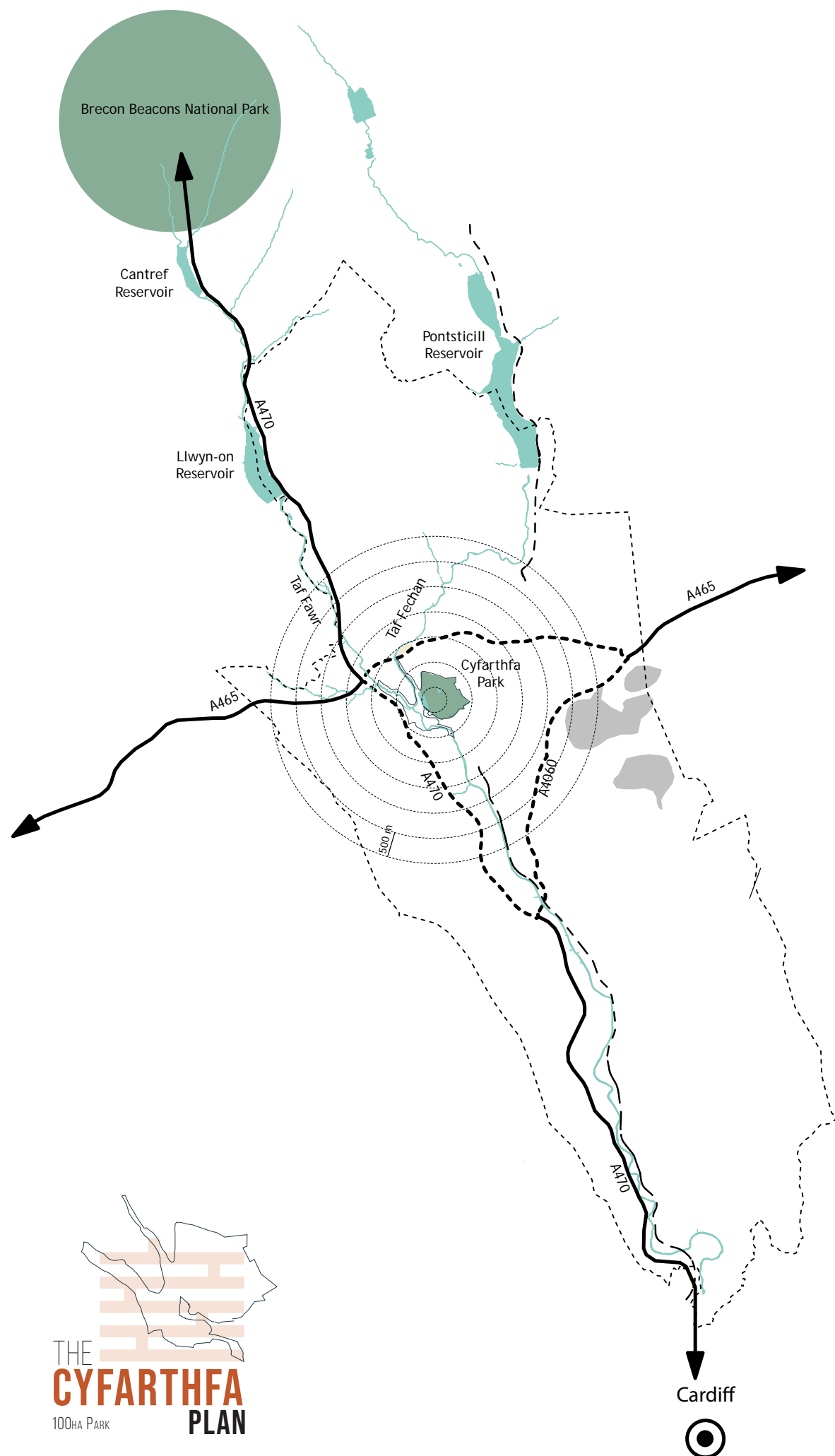
## 2040

THE CYFARTHFA PLAN'S SUCCESS IS BASED ON THE INTERSECTION OF MAPPING HERITAGE, MONUMENTALISM, CREATIVITY, NATURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING IN ONE COHESIVE PLAN, SET WITHIN A 100HA PARK AND THE TOWN.

### THE SECOND DECADE - 2031-2040







## A VISION FOR CYFARTHFA

The Cyfarthfa Plan is a 20-year strategic plan that will reveal the global importance of Merthyr Tydfil's industrial past and work in harmony with nature to transform the Cyfarthfa area. The project will grow in parallel with the lives of the town's youngest generation as they grow into adults.

It draws on the unrivalled social, political and industrial history of Merthyr Tydfil and Wales, its position as a southern gateway to the Brecon Beacons, and its pivotal position in the wider Valleys Regional Park.

It expands on the ideas that informed the Crucible Report of May 2018, which was produced following the Crucible Charrette of October 2017 held at Cyfarthfa Castle.

The Plan is the result of extensive consultation and involvement with the public and key stakeholders in Merthyr Tydfil held over a 5-month period in 2019-2020. This led to the creation of three strategic themes – History & Heritage, Natural Environment, and Contemporary Creativity – that have been translated into more than 70 different projects. This consultation process has been central to the structure and outcomes of the Cyfarthfa Plan, which should now be implemented with the people of Merthyr Tydfil to ensure its success.

The three strands of this strategic approach must be implemented together to make the Plan successful. It is a 21st Century socio-economic approach differentiating the Plan from late 20th Century thinking. It provides a framework for community involvement in its implementation, from co-designed smaller projects, youth focused competitions, events, and opportunities to develop community programmes and projects which will enrich Merthyr Tydfil and the region over the next 20 years.

A 100ha Park, formed around the confluence of the Taff and Taf Fechan rivers, will expand upon the existing 65 hectares to create a 'Greater Cyfarthfa Park', and encompassing some of the town's most important historic assets, including Cyfarthfa Castle, Cyfarthfa Ironworks and Furnaces, the Pont-y-Cafnau Bridge and Pandy Farm.

This is the green stage upon which Cyfarthfa Castle will be developed into a museum of national and international importance. The landscape will be the backdrop against which all the major aspects of the plan will be realised.

It is envisaged that the Castle and Park will be developed incrementally over the next 20 years and punctuated with celebrations of major historic anniversaries.

It is a bold and urgent vision, as much is currently at risk. To do nothing could see the loss of significant and cherished historic assets, and miss a big opportunity to refocus the conversation on climate change to produce substantial and tangible benefits for the people of the town and Wales.

## WHY MERTHYR TYDFIL? WHY NOW?

The history of the industrialisation and deindustrialisation of Merthyr Tydfil is of a progress from green to black to green again. It is about the past, but because it is also a story of extraordinary community endurance, it is about the future too. It is relevant well beyond the boundaries of a single, small local authority.

The Cyfarthfa Plan reminds us that we are at three distinct crossroads:

- we can choose to let one of the poorest communities in Wales decline further in the face of the pandemic, or to propel its recovery
- we can choose to let a scheduled ancient monument and a Grade I castle to deteriorate further (the first already nearing a point of no return) or to give them both a new and creative lease of life
- and we are physically at the crossroads of the A465 and A470, from which one can access every part of the Valleys Regional Park and beyond, and at which we can create one of the most compelling visitor attractions anywhere.

Our plan is to create at Cyfarthfa a people-centred museum, set in an exceptional 100 hectare 'Greater Cyfarthfa Park' park that will

**i) celebrate Merthyr's Tydfil's unique history and heritage**

- as a spur to further social renewal

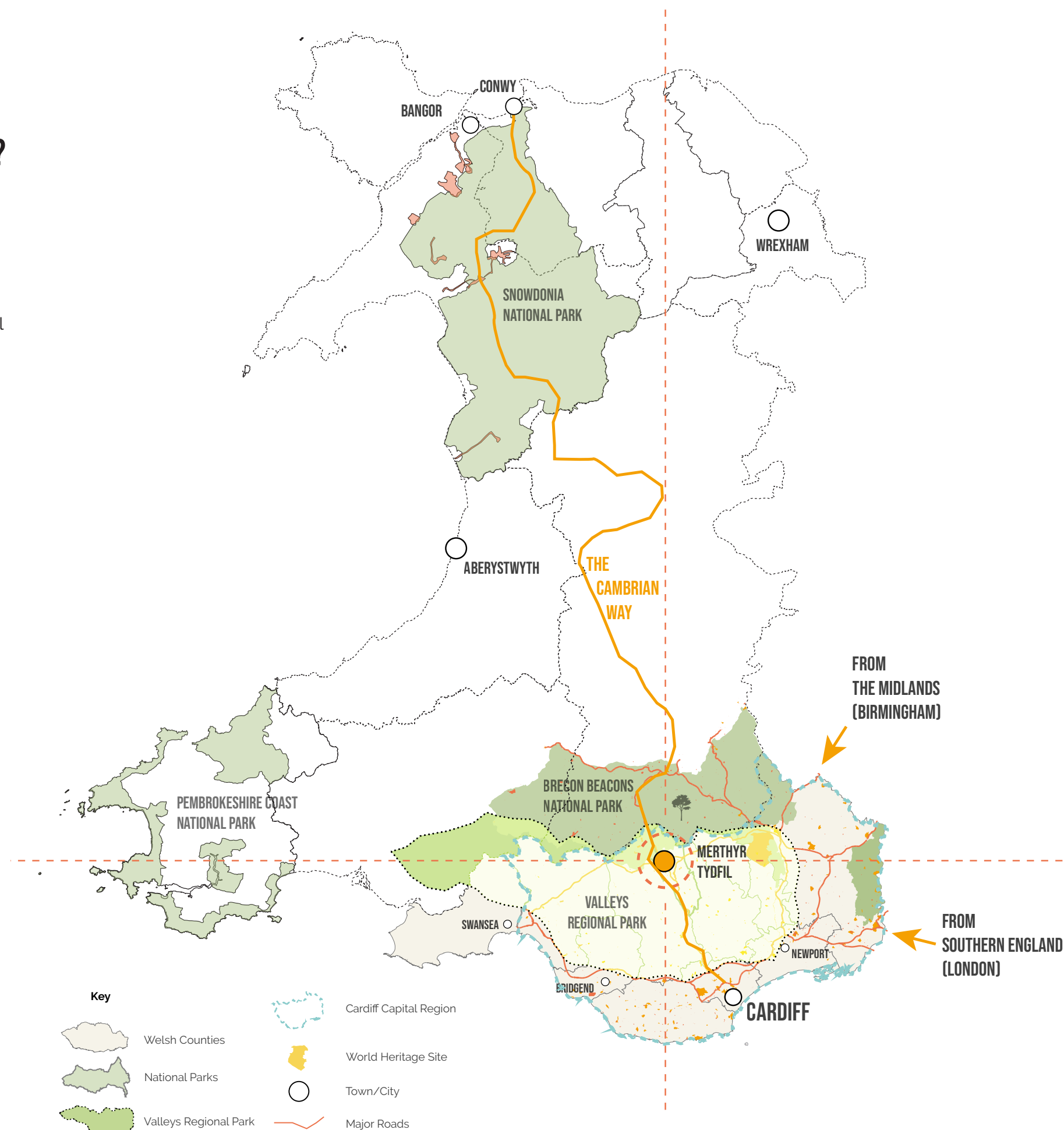
**ii) celebrate and heal the natural environment**

- to provide a beautiful setting for recreation, education and scientific advance

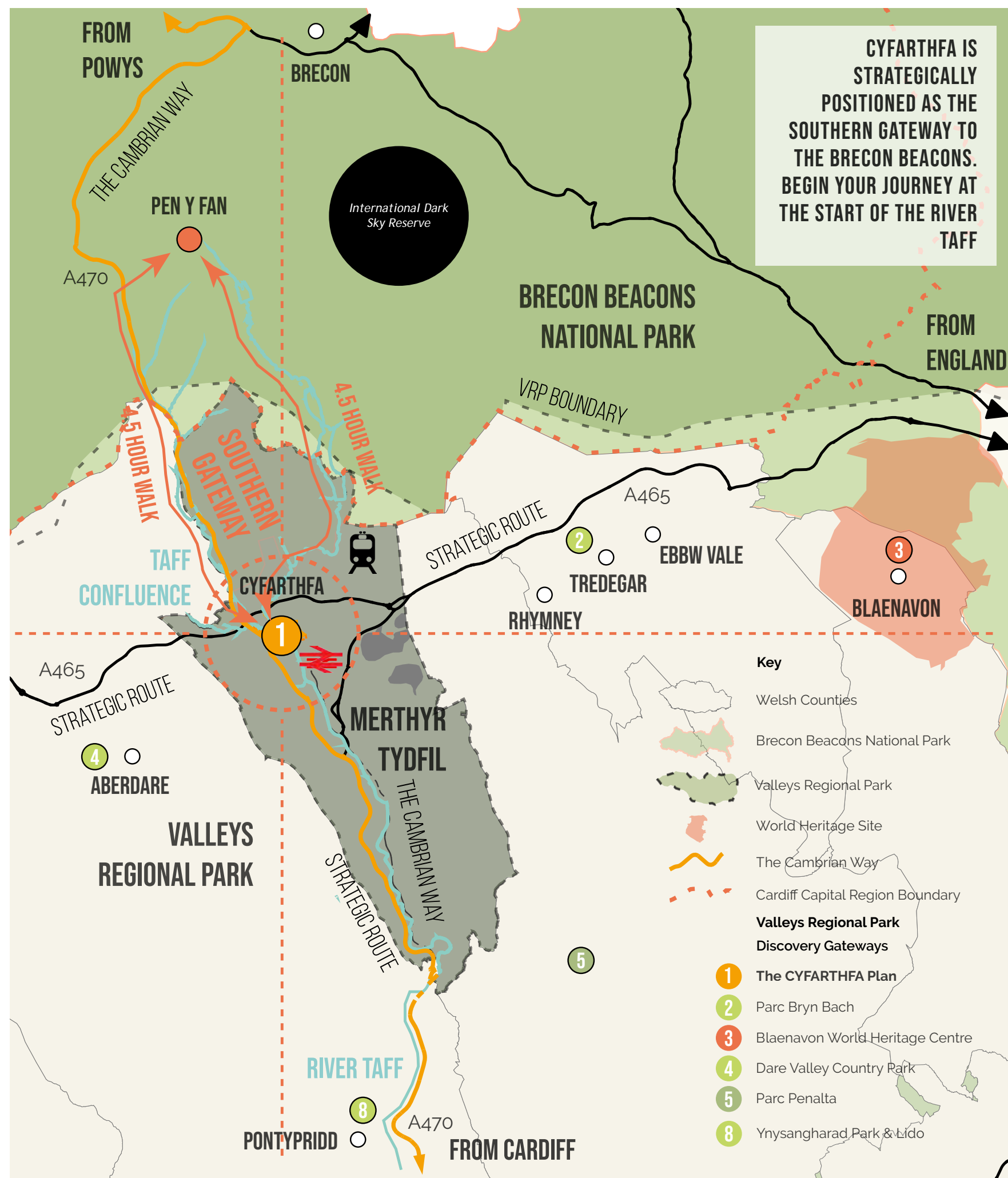
**iii) create an engine of creativity that can embrace the whole community**

In the process this will

- change the rest of the world's view of Merthyr Tydfil and other valley communities
- energise the Valleys Regional Park concept by giving it a core of real scale and impact
- bring something new and compelling to the Cardiff Capital Region economy, with a clear agenda of social purpose
- to create an exemplar project to demonstrate the force and effectiveness of the agenda of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.



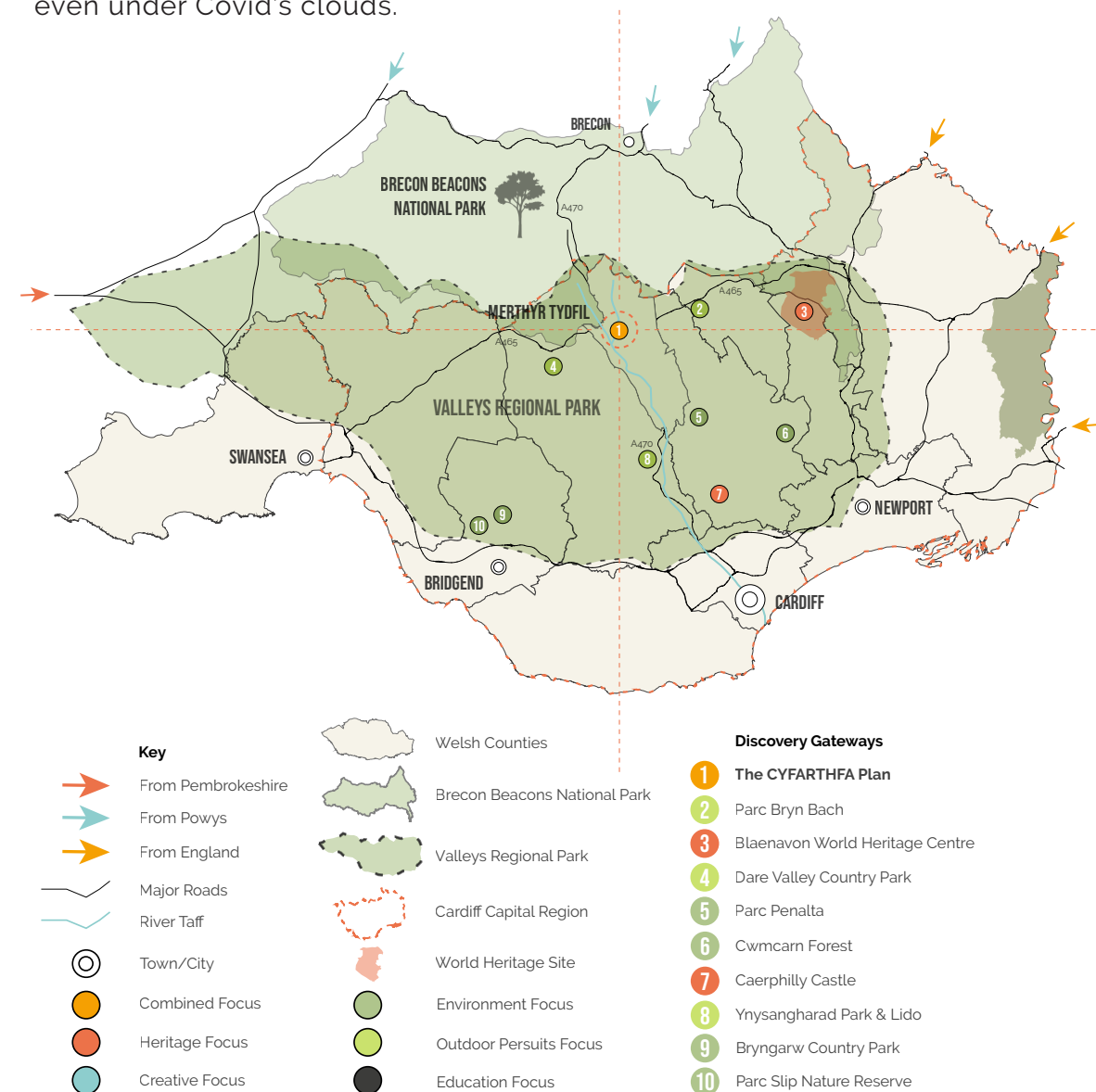
Map of Wales indicating Merthyr Tydfil's strategic location at the centre of the Brecon Beacons and Valley's Regional Park



## WHY MERTHYR TYDFIL? WHY NOW?

Just as Covid-19 forces us to rethink the possibilities of decentralised economic activity, this opportunity arises to assist in some rebalancing of the Cardiff Capital Region – to create a new sense of purpose in a hitherto peripheral community and to entice those further south to travel north – on new Metro services.

This is also a national project, determined to achieve international quality in all respects, while opening new chapters in Welsh tourism, community and cultural development and sustainability. It is a bold project that asks Wales to make a bold commitment an unmistakable statement of faith in the future, even under Covid's clouds.





## THE CYFARTHFA PLAN APPROACH

The Cyfarthfa Plan has been split in to 4 phases across 2 decades:

### The First 10 Years - 2020-2031

- Phase 1: The Castle Projects (includes the Glass Way)
  - Focus on Primary Age Learners
- Phase 2: The Iron Way Projects
  - Focus on Secondary Age Learners

### The Next 10 Years - 2031-2040

- Phase 3: The Creative Arts Projects
  - Focus on College Age Learners
- Phase 4: Tertiary Education Projects
  - Focus on Young Adults,

The 100ha park weaves throughout all phases of the project.

The Plan prioritises projects which are central to its ethos and integrity ('must do'), those that are strongly recommended for the Plan to reach its full potential ('should do'), and suggested projects to enhance and optimise the Plan ('could do').

Over 70 potential projects have been identified for the Cyfarthfa Plan. The projects presented have been selected because they:

- are central to the ethos of the Cyfarthfa Plan and aim to have a transformative effect on Merthyr Tydfil
- are the result of extensive consultation with the public and key stakeholders in Merthyr Tydfil. The Cyfarthfa Plan is a people-centred plan.
- reconnect the historic landscape of the Cyfarthfa Ironworks with Cyfarthfa Park
- provide restored, new or renewed uses for key historic assets - Cyfarthfa Castle, the Cyfarthfa Ironworks Furnaces and Pandy Farm
- build on the current assets of the Castle's collection and education and outreach programmes, while combining materials from many other collections and utilising the best modern display principles and technologies.
- are adaptable and resilient in as much as they can be implemented as and when resources allow while remaining part of a larger and coherent Plan.





**BLACK**

REWILDING  
→

**GREEN**

## GREEN TO BLACK AND BACK AGAIN

The story of the Valleys is a story of change. They were once wild and green environments of forests and farmlands. The 18th, 19th and 20th century saw the complete transformation of the natural environment into a pandemonium of iron, steel and coal.

The removal of these industries in the mid to late 20th century – as well as the spur of tragedy at Aberfan - has seen a natural revival, a wave of 'green to black and back again'. 'A wounded environment is being healed'.

The town's heritage assets and attractions are made more dramatic and picturesque for having grown a green jacket around them. It is now entirely plausible to see Merthyr Tydfil – check by jowl with the Brecon Beacons - as a gateway to a wider, wilder natural world. It is itself now part of the scenic Taff Trail, and Cyfarthfa itself is as popular for its parkland and forest as it is for the Castle.

Successful adventure sport attractors like Bike Park Wales and the Rock UK Summit Centre, as well as new camping, glamping and caravan sites that ably cater to ramblers, bird watchers, stargazers and photographers, all point to the possibility of Merthyr Tydfil serving as the gateway to the natural world.

Nature has reclaimed parts of the town that were once dominated by heavy industry. With an abundance of green spaces and natural, re-wilding environments on the doorstep, the area has multiple designated sites of environmental importance.

The healing of the environment is a compelling notion that speaks to issues that all major towns and cities are facing in today's climate emergency. It is a romantic, inspirational preface to a twentieth and twenty-first century story about rediscovering a sustainable relationship between nature and urban development.

## RESPONDING TO NATIONAL & REGIONAL POLICY AGENDAS

### WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

It is important to place the Cyfarthfa Plan in the context of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015), which requires all public bodies in Wales *‘to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.’*

The Future Generations Act has seven goals to which all public bodies must aspire and that the Cyfarthfa Plan must help to advance:

An understanding of these objectives and outcomes has not only informed the creation of the Plan but have been instrumental in the consideration of implementation options. The Act is the basis of the socio-economic rationale that underpins a people-focused and people-driven plan.

### 1 - PROSPEROUS WALES

Cyfarthfa will be a national and international exemplar for the way it marshals creativity to develop a sustainable and harmonious balance between city and nature. It will be the same kind of audacious pioneer at the dawn of the post-COVID world that it was at the dawn of the industrial world – leading by example and demonstrating the audacity, enterprise and innovation for which the place was once renowned.

### 2 - A RESILIENT WALES

The importance of nature and biodiversity – especially in an urban environment – is a central tenet of the Plan, influencing every aspect of it. A thoughtful, sensitive landscape is both a ‘core project’ of the Plan, and the context that frames every other key project.

### 3 - A HEALTHIER WALES

Every aspect of the Plan is geared to improving the quality of life for people who live and work in Merthyr – giving them better access to the natural, cultural and heritage assets and opportunities that make for a healthier, happier lifestyle.

### 4 - A MORE EQUAL WALES

For all the strengths of the community of Merthyr Tydfil, it continues to exhibit the hallmarks of post-industrial and structural decline and deprivation. A Plan that delivers demonstrable and transformative change in this context will be a model for towns across Wales, the UK, and the industrialised world that are facing similar challenges.

### 5 - A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES

A people-centred plan that not only affords opportunities to engage communities, but actually requires it. The Plan is designed to empower communities and give them the tools, the incentive, the courage and the freedom to make the place they need and want for their children and grandchildren.

### 6 - A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING WELSH LANGUAGE

The Plan will make Merthyr a vibrant, contemporary ‘cultural complement’ and counterpoint to the natural experience of the Brecon Beacons. Central to that strategy is to value, protect and enhance the authenticity of Welsh culture and language in the town.

### 7 - A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES

We are arguably on the cusp of a new ‘environmental revolution’. It is a time when cities and towns everywhere are questioning their values and re-thinking their priorities – about habits and lifestyles, their connection to nature and the environment, their promotion of physical and mental health. In this new global climate, Merthyr Tydfil will be an innovator and a leader. By transmitting these ideas across the Valleys, the region, and the country, it will play the same pioneering role that it played at the start of the Industrial Revolution.

# The First Decade 2020-2031

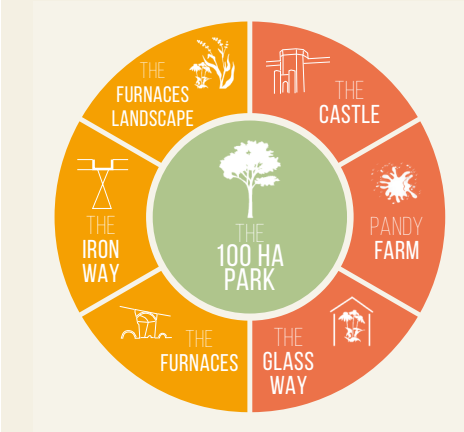
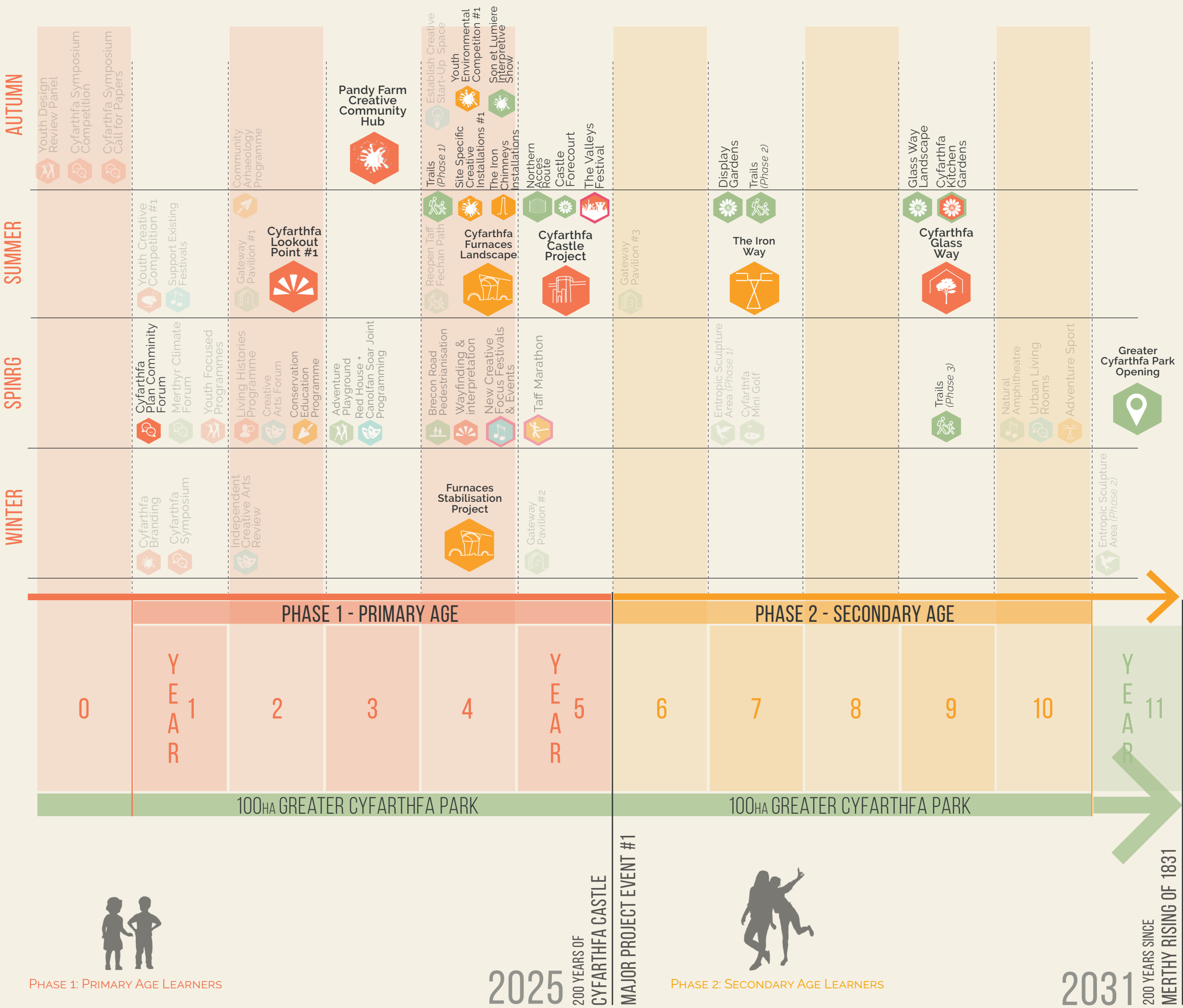
In the first ten years there are 49 proposed projects, programmes, and events, some are very small scale and quick to implement, some advocate for community leadership, and others require longer term planning.

Of these projects, 18 are considered 'must do' projects related to the Castle, Iron Way and the 100ha Park. These projects are put against a suggested timeline.

However, it must be noted that not all of these projects need be completed within this timeframe if external circumstances do not permit.

The flexibility of the Plan means that projects can be implemented individually or in smaller related groups without completing all aspects of the plan.

The Plan is ambitious, but also flexible and can adapt to changing circumstances.



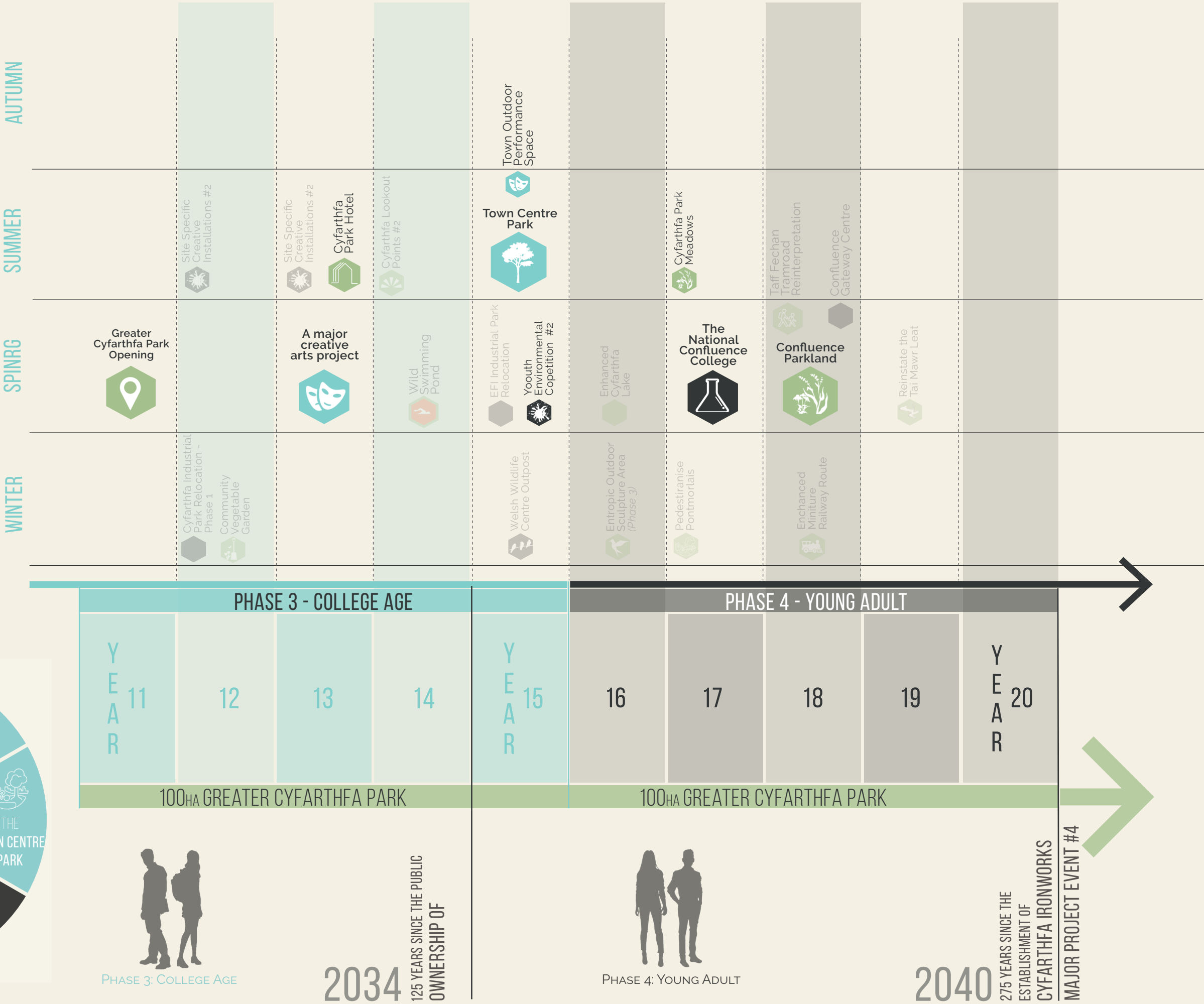
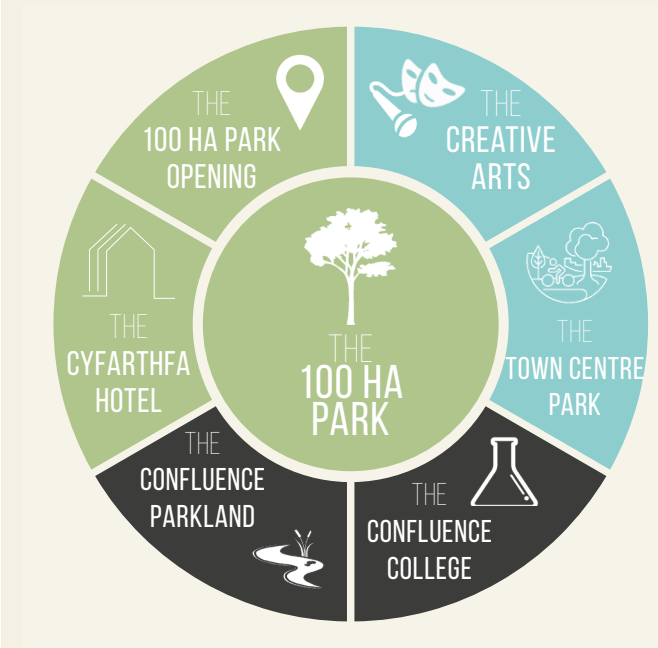


The Second Decade  
2031-2040

In the second ten years there are 23 proposed projects, programmes, and events. Some are very small scale and quick to implement, others require longer term planning.

Of these projects, 5 are considered 'must do' projects. These projects are placed on a suggested timeline.

However, it must be noted that not all of these projects need be completed within this timeframe if external circumstances do not permit.

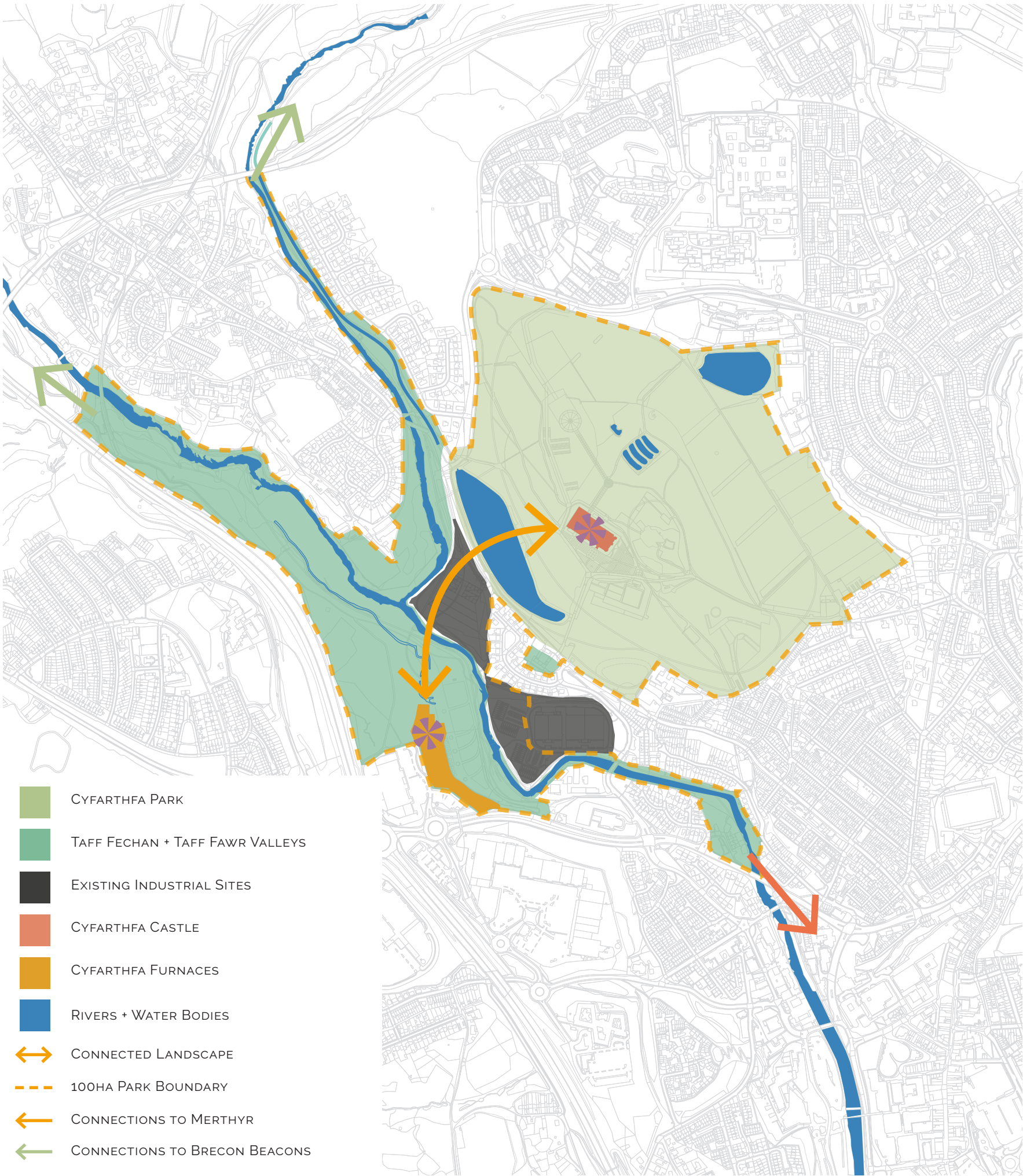




## THE KEY PROJECTS







THE 100HA PARK

The 100ha park is the canvass on which the strands of the plan come together. Importantly, it will blend Merthyr Tydfil into its hinterland, making it a genuine 'gateway' between the Valleys and the Brecon Beacons National Park. It is also the 'connected landscape' of the Crucible Report – connecting both sides of the valley across the Taf Fawr and Taf Fechan rivers (where industrial development now intrudes) enhancing and healing the environment in the process.

The landscape masterplan illustrates the extent of the proposed 'Greater Cyfarthfa Park', which will become one of the largest in Wales. It will encompass not only Cyfarthfa Castle and Park but also the open area west of the river Taff, from the Furnaces to the Cefn Coed viaduct and, connecting the two, the area between the Brecon Road and the confluence of two rivers north of the Pont-y-Cafnau Bridge.

It will conserve and, where possible, enhance these natural assets, including the woodland to the north of the castle, the rivers and leats, the meadows and other sites of special interest and high ecological value. It will preserve mature trees and increase tree-planting where possible.

The projects of the Cyfarthfa Plan, which are phased across the next 20 years, complement the growth of the 100ha park. Prioritised landscape projects are directly related to the 4 key phases of the overall plan. .

Cyfarthfa's many historical assets, set in this 100ha park, are a vital resource for Merthyr Tydfil and the surrounding communities, providing not only cultural and recreational activities but also employment for many.





## THE 100HA PARK

The pathways of the 100ha park are woven through the landscape, each with its own narrative.

History, culture and the natural environment, thread through a contemporary landscape that speaks the story of Cyfarthfa, Merthyr Tydfil, and the wider valleys.

Although the park is currently accessible, that accessibility will be enhanced over the years through active management, new connections and improved trails.

Improving pedestrian access will allow people to enjoy the natural asset while projects are phased for the wider park.

In the first phase, the 'must do' projects include a loop of trails which will weave together the stories of Cyfarthfa Castle and the Furnaces.



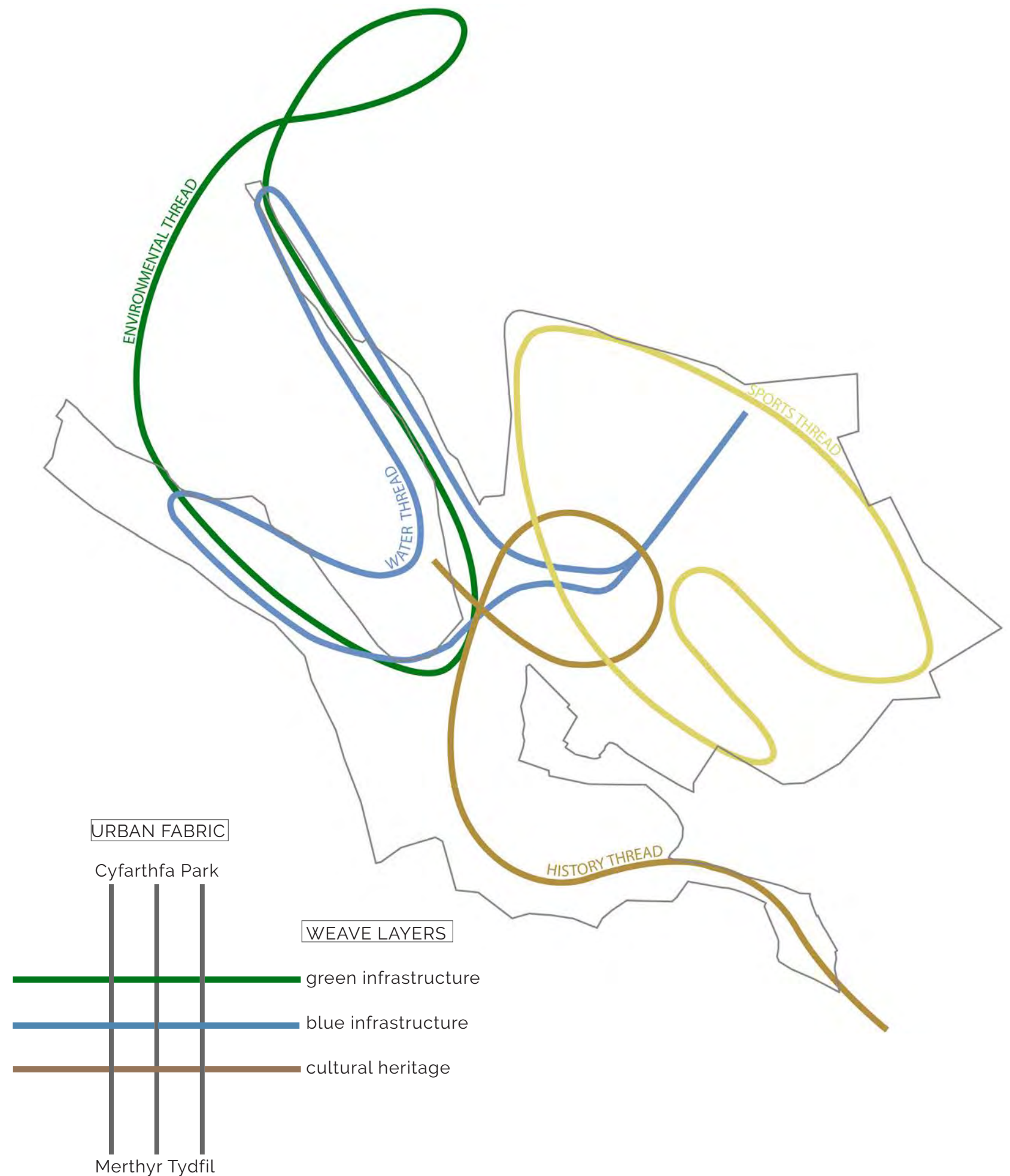
Morbras Reservoir Landform by Kathryn Gustafson



Welsh weaving



Blue bell woods







**THE CASTLE**  
MUST DO PROJECTS



**01** Pandy Farm Creative and Community Hub



**02** The Castle Project



**03** Northern Access Route



**04** Castle Forecourt Gardens



**05** Display Gardens



**06** Cyfarthfa Glass Way



**07** Glass Way Landscape



**08** Cyfarthfa Kitchen Gardens

SHOULD DO PROJECTS



**09** Cyfarthfa Symposium



**10** Youth Focused Programme



**11** Living Histories Programme



**12** Wayfinding & Interpretation



**13** The Valleys Festival

COULD DO PROJECTS



**14** Cyfarthfa Branding



**15** Youth Design Review Panel



**16** Youth Creative Competition #1



**THE IRON WAY**  
MUST DO PROJECTS



**01** Furnaces Stabilisation Project



**02** Cyfarthfa Furnaces Landscape



**03** The Iron Way Project

SHOULD DO PROJECTS



**04** The Iron Chimneys



**05** Site Specific Creative Installations #1

COULD DO PROJECTS



**06** Youth Environmental Competition #1



**07** Community Archaeology Programme



**08** Conservation Education Programme



**09** Large Scale Sporting Event.



**10** Adventure Sport



**THE 100HA PARK**  
MUST DO PROJECTS



**01** Cyfarthfa Lookout Tower - #1



**02** Landscape Trails - Phase 1A



**03** Cyfarthfa Son et Lumiere Showcase



**04** Landscape Trails - Phase 1B



**05** Landscape Trails - Phase 2



**06** Landscape Trails - Phase 3



**07** 100 Ha Park Opening

SHOULD DO PROJECTS



**08** Merthyr Climate Forum



**09** Cyfarthfa Plan Community Forum



**10** Adventure Playground



**11** Brecon Road Pedestrianisation



**12** Entropic Sculpture Area 1 - Cyfarthfa



**13** Cyfarthfa Park Mini Golf



**14** Cyfarthfa Natural Amphitheatre

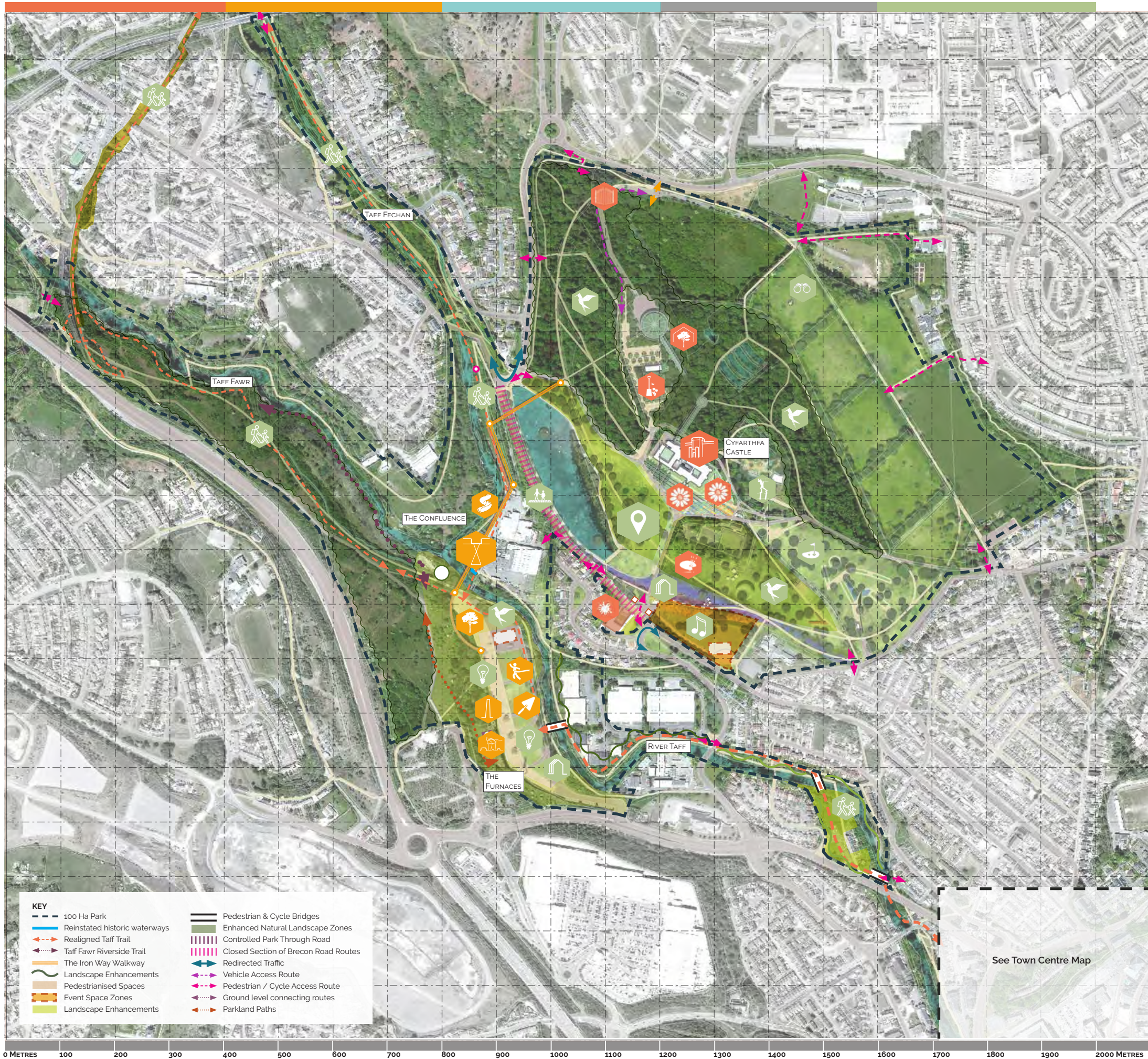


**15** Entropic Sculpture Area 2- Furnaces

COULD DO PROJECTS



**16** Gateway Pavilions 1/2/3



KEY			
	100 Ha Park		Pedestrian & Cycle Bridges
	Reinstated historic waterways		Enhanced Natural Landscape Zones
	Realigned Taff Trail		Controlled Park Through Road
	Taff Fawr Riverside Trail		Closed Section of Brecon Road Routes
	The Iron Way Walkway		Redirected Traffic
	Landscape Enhancements		Vehicle Access Route
	Pedestrianised Spaces		Pedestrian / Cycle Access Route
	Event Space Zones		Ground level connecting routes
	Landscape Enhancements		Parkland Paths

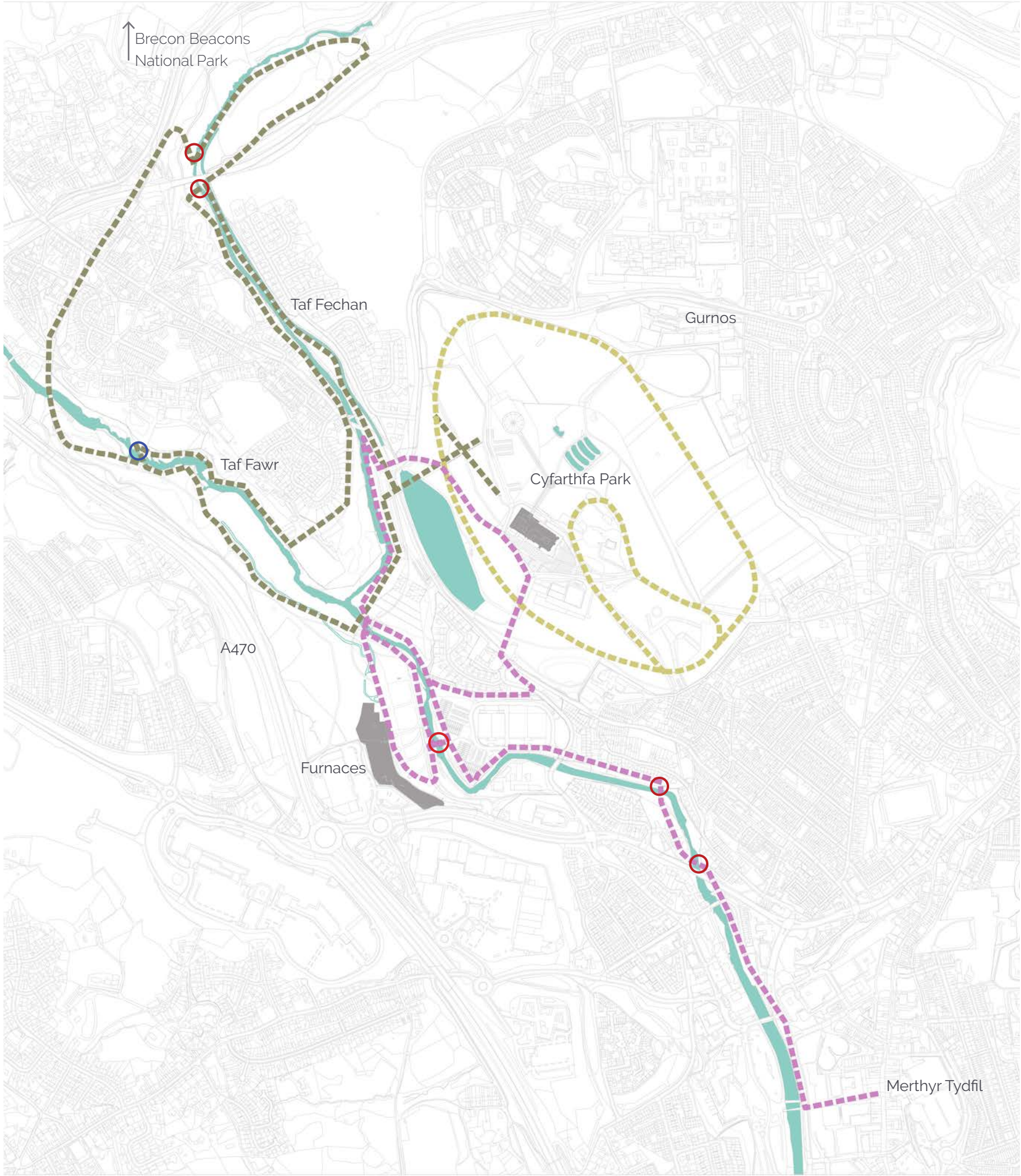




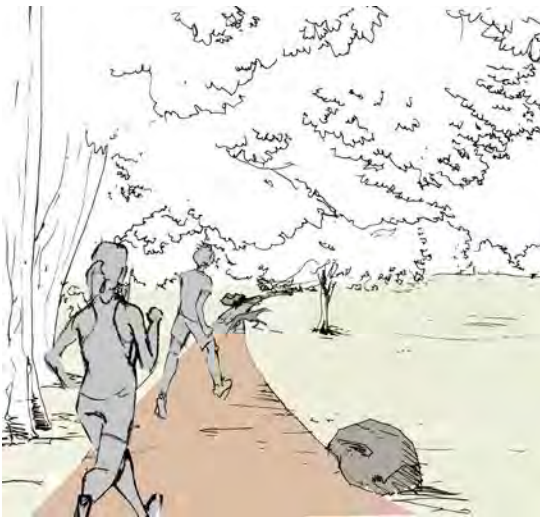
- TERTIARY  
EDUCATION**
- MUST DO PROJECTS**
- 01 EFI Industrial Park Relocation
- 02 National Confluence College Project
- SHOULD DO PROJECTS**
- 03 Youth Environmental Competition #2
- 04 Confluence Gateway Centre
- COULD DO PROJECTS**
- 05 Site Specific Creative Installations #2
- 06 Welsh Wildlife Centre Outpost
- THE 100HA PARK**
- MUST DO PROJECTS**
- 17 Confluence Parkland
- SHOULD DO PROJECTS**
- 18 Cyfarthfa Industrial Park - West Section - Relocation
- 19 The Cyfarthfa Park Hotel
- COULD DO PROJECTS**
- 20 Community Vegetable Gardens
- 21 Wild Swimming Pond
- 22 Cyfarthfa Lake Enhancements
- 23 Cyfarthfa Lookout Viewpoint - #2
- 24 Entropic Sculpture Area 3 - Taff Fawr
- 25 Pontmorlais Pedestrianisation
- 26 Taff Fechan Tramroad Reinterpretation
- 27 Cyfarthfa Park Biodiversity Meadows
- 28 Cyfarthfa Model Railway
- 29 Tai Mawr Leat Restoration







# THE 100HA PARK - TRAILS - 2020-2031



## LANDSCAPE TRAILS

Expanding and upgrading the existing trails that connect neighbourhoods, historic features, amenities, and green spaces is key to bringing the 100ha park together.

The implementation of the trails will be phased as follows:

1. Landscape trails I – includes a connection to the town along the river and a landscape loop that connects the castle with the furnaces
2. Landscape trails II – includes nature trails along the Taf Fawr and Taf Fechan valleys and a connection between proposed new projects such as the Iron Way and the Glass Way
3. Landscape trails III- includes a sports loops within Cyfarthfa park.





## THE 100HA PARK - CASTLE GROUNDS & PLAY - 2020-2031



### CASTLE FORECOURT GARDENS

The castle forecourt becomes a plaza the full length of the building.

The old school entrances will be approached through a grove of trees set in planting with bands of hard paving that weave across the plaza.

The castle entrance is framed by a lively water feature during the summer months providing an attraction for children and their families.



### ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

To the east of the castle, new recreational activities are proposed which include a natural play area, an adventure playground, and a mini-golf area.

These new recreational activities cater to families and young children and will enhance the existing ball courts and playground in the area.

In the woodland an environmental and industrial themed adventure playground, including treetop trek, and a major upgrade to the existing playground is envisaged.



### DISPLAY GARDENS

Colourful display beds surround the plaza inspired by Welsh paintings, hosting potential flower shows and open to community participation.

The seasonally changing floral displays become a lively attraction for visitors to the castle. The design should reflect the history and culture of the area in a contemporary way.

Community involvement is envisaged in developing this project, including co-design.

#### BY YEAR 5

#### 01 CYFARTHFA CASTLE FORECOURT



Hageveld Estate, Netherlands



Treetop trek challenge in Brockholes, Cumbria

#### BY YEAR 3

- 03 THEMED PLAYGROUND
- 04 ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND
- a EXISTING TENNIS COURTS
- b EXISTING BOWLING GREEN
- c EXISTING PLAYGROUND

#### BY YEAR 7

#### 02 CYFARTHFA CASTLE DISPLAY GARDENS



THE 100HA PARK - SCULPTURE, SPORTS & EVENTS - 2020-2031



ENTROPIC SCULPTURE  
AREA 1 - CYFARTHFA

The relationship between art and nature will be on display around the 100ha Park.

One of the first proposed areas of sculpture is east of the Castle grounds.

This outdoor sculpture area can be used to display experiments in environmental art by local artists, school groups and young emerging environmental artists and designers. The existing landscape provides the backdrop for installations that can be permanent or temporary.



CYFARTHFA PARK  
MINI GOLF

A family friendly mini-golf course is proposed across the rolling terrain of the southern corner of Cyfarthfa Park.

It is suggested that each hole is co-designed by groups of designers, artists and local children.

Running and cycling pathways are also located in this area looping through the forest and fields that surround the castle.



CYFARTHFA NATURAL  
AMPHITHEATRE

A large sculptural landscape form is proposed to create an outdoor amphitheatre for between 3000-5000 people.

A stage, backstage and parking area is proposed by Brecon Road.

Large swathes of grasses and perennials could sweep across the landscape with a changing palette of colour and movement.

BY YEAR 7

- 01 NATURAL AMPHITHEATRE
  - a STAGE
  - b BACK OF HOUSE & SERVICE CAR PARKING
- 02 ENTROPIC SCULPTURE AREA 1



Levitas installation by Ian Ritchie at Arte Sella.



Morbras Reservoir Landform by Kathryn Gustafson

BY YEAR 7

- 03 MINI-GOLF

BY YEAR 10

- EVENTS CAPACITY:  
3,000-5,000 PEOPLE



## THE 100HA PARK - COMMUNITY, BIODIVERSITY & WILD SWIMMING - 2031-2040

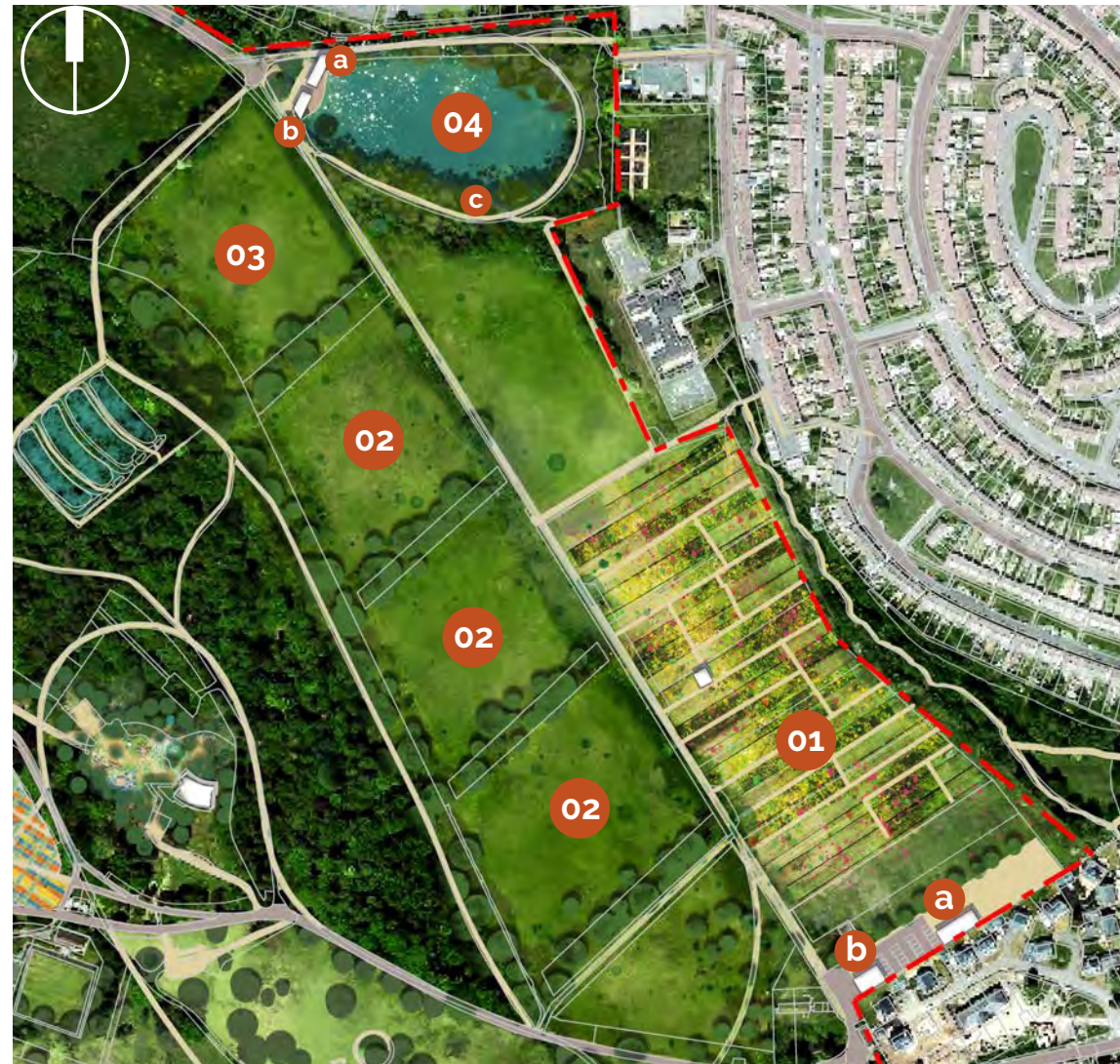


### COMMUNITY VEGETABLE GARDENS

The fields to the northeast of Cyfarthfa Park are proposed as an urban community farm.

Produce from the farm could be sold at Pandy Farm as Cyfarthfa produce. Organic farming methods and sustainable practices will be championed at the farm.

School groups and visitors could enjoy the community cafe and informal restaurant adjacent to the farm maintenance and storage area.



### CYFARTHFA PARK BIODIVERSITY MEADOWS

The existing Cyfarthfa meadows are to be preserved and enhanced with additional species of wildflowers becoming a point of attraction during the flowering season.

The meadows are proposed as a home for community run biodiversity projects which could occur earlier on in the Cyfarthfa Plan depending on community demands.



### WILD SWIMMING POND

It is proposed to develop a wild swimming pond on the site of the Bryn Cae Owen Pond.

This will reinstate the high level historic pond in Cyfarthfa Park whilst providing a new leisure site and water irrigation source for the park.

A small changing room and attendant's office could be located near a proposed access road.

The pond area will be fenced with dense vegetation for protection and security.

#### BY YEAR 12

**01** COMMUNITY VEGETABLE GARDENS AND FARM

**a** FOOD STORAGE & FARM OFFICE

**b** CAR PARKING (APPOX. 20 SPACES)



Waterside changing rooms



A typical wildflower meadow in Yorkshire

#### BY YEAR 12

**02** CYFARTHFA BIODIVERSITY MEADOWS

**03** CYFARTHFA LOOKOUT TOWER

#### BY YEAR 14

**04** SWIMMING POND

**a** CHANGING ROOM \*STAFF OFFICES

**b** TIMBER DECKING

**c** MARGINAL PLANTING



Prioritising Merthyr Tydfil’s Heritage Assets



HISTORIC ASSETS

The number and significance of Merthyr Tydfil's historic assets have been mapped and identified and consideration given to the status and condition of each of the key listed buildings/structures and Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

The Cyfarthfa Plan prioritises the conservation and development of these heritage assets ahead of the development of new interventions. Given their significance and critical condition, it is essential that the Plan seeks to address these within the first two phases.

Addressing these major heritage assets first would remove the risk of further serious degradation, provide an early demonstration of the value of the project, and demonstrate to the people of Merthyr Tydfil that their own concern for the town's heritage has been rightly prioritised.



CYFARTHFA IRONWORKS  
FURNACES

SCHEDULED ANCIENT  
MONUMENT

STATUS: CRITICAL RISK

OPPORTUNITY: HIGH



PANDY FARM

GRADE II LISTED BUILDING

STATUS: MEDIUM RISK

OPPORTUNITY: VERY HIGH



CYFARTHFA CASTLE

GRADE I LISTED BUILDING

STATUS: HIGH RISK

OPPORTUNITY: HIGH



## PRIORITISING MERTHYR TYDFIL'S HERITAGE ASSETS



Light projections by Philippe Echaroux



Zeche Zollverein, Germany

- 1 - TITLED LANDSCAPE
- 2 - INTERPRETATION & SCULPTURAL SITES.
- 3 - EVENT STAGE LOCATION
- 4 - CYFARTHFA FURNACES
- 5 - IRON CHIMNEYS
- 6 - CAR PARKING - 25 SPACES
- 7 - BUS DROP-OFF
- 8 - IRON WAY LANDING
- 9 - TRAILS BRIDGE



Plan of Furnaces Landscape



**CYFARTHFA  
FURNACES**

Stabilisation of The Cyfarthfa Furnaces is considered to be the highest priority task in the whole of the plan.

The furnaces are a scheduled ancient monument. Their scale and grandeur are impressive, and their importance in the history of the industrial revolution of the first order. They must be preserved and their interpretation presented in an inventive way.

It is proposed that a major new landscape is developed in front of the furnaces which reinterprets the former ironworks that once occupied it. This landscape will host contemporary interpretations of the lost heritage assets, with sculpture and interventions explaining the scale and impact of the ironworks both internationally and climatically.

The furnaces landscape will host a regular son et lumière festival with an interpretation of the industrial power of the furnaces projected upon them.

**BY YEAR 4**

**FURNACES STABILISATION  
SCHEDULED ANCIENT  
MONUMENT**

**STATUS: CRITICAL RISK**

**OPPORTUNITY: HIGH**



Ephereal sculptures - Edoardo Tresoldi





View of the furnaces landscape - daytime



View of the furnaces space showing an event

Prioritising Merthyr Tydfil's Heritage Assets



The Iron Chimneys

Two no. 40m tall sculptural chimneys interpreting the locations of the tall chimneys that once lined the skyline of the Merthyr Tydfil. These chimneys could also be used rigging masts for events in the landscape

The markers begin to form a new skyline along the route of the Iron Way.

The markers will become focal points within the 100ha Park and act as backdrops for heritage and environmental interpretation.



By Year 4



## PRIORITISING MERTHYR TYDFIL'S HERITAGE ASSETS



### CYFARTHFA CASTLE

The prominence, scale, and importance of Cyfarthfa Castle is the centrepiece of the heritage and history strand of the Cyfarthfa Plan. It will speak for the locality and the region while also being central to the marketing of a strategic visitor attraction.

The Plan envisages Cyfarthfa Castle as an international standard people's museum which is true to Merthyr Tydfil, its people and its Heritage, enhanced with the capacity to receive large scale exhibitions and events.

Many different options for alternative uses for Cyfarthfa Castle

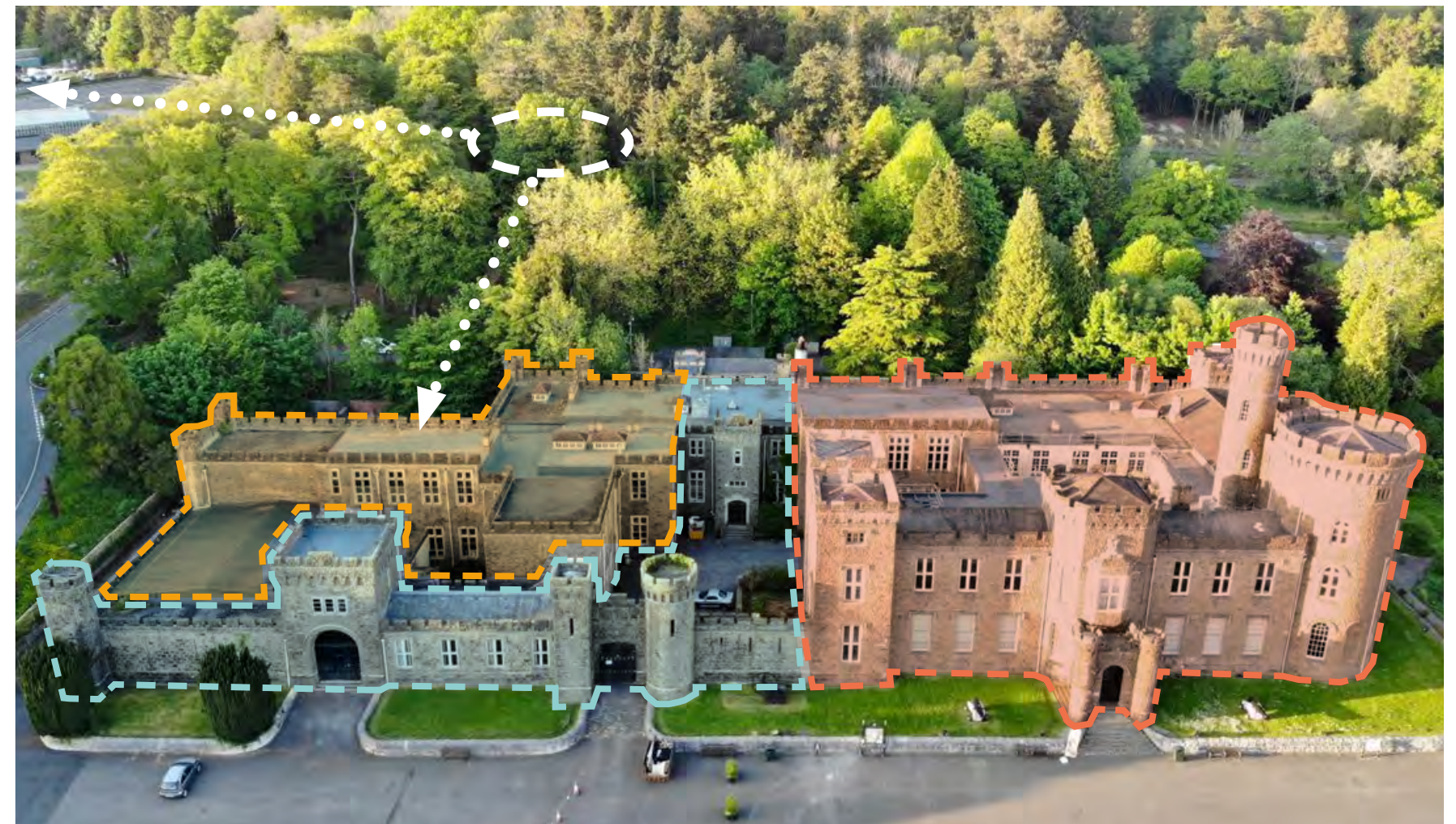
were considered, from an arts centre to an educational establishment. The high-level options analysis for these proposals can be found in the economic report.

What is clear is that the museum aspect of the castle should not be replicated elsewhere, such as at the Furnaces. To do so would lead to direct competition for focus and use of the industrial story.

The Cyfarthfa Plan presents three options of varying scale for a People's Museum at Cyfarthfa Castle.

Each proposal will need to be reviewed in detail, weighing its merits in terms of space, function, flexibility, and its wider substantial public benefits against any impact on the heritage significance of parts of the Castle.

The impact on climate and the ethical position of architects and others dictates making the best use of the existing embodied carbon of the Castle structure.



**Key**

	Castle Side (Restoration)		School Side (Reuse)		School Side (area considered for reconfiguration, rebuild, or new build)
--	---------------------------	--	---------------------	--	--

**CYFARTHFA CASTLE**  
**GRADE I LISTED BUILDING**  
**STATUS: HIGH RISK**  
**OPPORTUNITY: HIGH**

**BY YEAR 5**

**2025 TO OPEN FOR THE**  
**200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE**  
**COMPLETION OF CYFARTHFA**  
**CASTLE**

### OPTION 01

A major restoration and reuse of the Castle side and the internal reconfiguration of the School side of Cyfarthfa Castle as a 21st century museum with the Cyfarthfa Collection, Co-creation Centre and Exhibition Galleries

### OPTION 02

A major restoration and reuse, of the castle side with the internal reconfiguration and part new build of the School side of Cyfarthfa Castle as a 21st century museum with the Cyfarthfa Collection, Co-creation Centre and Exhibition Galleries

### OPTION 03

A major restoration and reuse, of the Castle side with a major rebuild and new build of the School side of Cyfarthfa Castle as a 21st century museum with the Cyfarthfa Collection, Co-creation Centre and Exhibition Galleries

### A PHASED APPROACH

**IF REQUIRED THE CASTLE TRANSFORMATION COULD BE PHASED:**

**CASTLE SIDE - BY YEAR 5**

**SCHOOL SIDE - BY YEAR 9**



# Prioritising Merthyr Tydfil's Heritage Assets



## CYFARTHFA CASTLE THE PEOPLE'S STORY

It is proposed that Cyfarthfa Castle should become a museum focussed on the social and industrial history of Merthyr Tydfil and the wider Valleys, not confined to the 18th and 19th centuries but also addressing the story of the 20th and 21st centuries.

This will represent a major enhancement and extension of the existing museum, evolving it into a museum of international quality. Cyfarthfa Castle (and the town's libraries) are the all-important custodians of stories about the people of Merthyr, thus cementing the principle from the start that the Cyfarthfa Plan is a people's plan (past, present and future).

National and global themes can also be addressed through the people's experience.

Cyfarthfa Castle could be re-imagined as a story centre for

Merthyr and the Valleys and the stories told in a programmable rather than linear manner.

Cyfarthfa Castle will need to be designed to support a changing programme of content. This will require different types of spaces that can accommodate displays of different duration; spaces for lectures, screenings and recitals; temporary exhibitions; learning and collections study spaces.

The physical displays, some of which we would expect to incorporate the latest display technologies, will be complemented by a comprehensive online expression of the museum's stories and resources.

Spaces that can be monetised through retail, catering and private hire will be important contributors to financial sustainability and, as such, should be designed with flexibility in mind.



## CYFARTHFA CASTLE STORY POSSIBILITIES

### Industry / Technology

- 1. The Crucible - the iron technology story
- 2. Merthyr, Wales and the world - The international dimension
- 3. The ironmasters - Crawshay / Guest / Bacon / Homfray.

### Political / Social

- 1. The Merthyr Rising / Rebellion
- 2. Radicalism / Chartism / Rise of Labour and unions/ Keir Hardie.
- 3. Social conditions – poverty, disease, housing, education etc.
- 4. Women - key figures / women at work / Home etc.
- 5. 20th Century Merthyr
- 6. Welsh Identity

### Art / Culture

- 1. The culture of Merthyr/ Valleys - bands, choirs, writers, sportspersons, poets, artists, actors etc.
- 2. Historical art collection
- 3. Natural history collection
- 4. Contemporary art / photography

### Environment

- 1. The changing valley - Black to Green
- 2. Aberfan
- 3. The Cyfarthfa landscape and water, and climate impact



## CYFARTHFA CASTLE MORE THAN A MUSEUM

Cyfarthfa Castle's transformation presents a significant opportunity to tell the story of Merthyr Tydfil and the industrial revolution, but it also offers the chance to incubate strategies and projects for the later years of the Cyfarthfa Plan.

While being the focus of the heritage and history strand of the Cyfarthfa Plan, the Castle could also nurture the early development of the creative arts and the natural environment through its proposed Co-Creation Centre.

The Castle could be host to some of the proposed creative start-up businesses, creative youth programmes and the home of immersive performances in the proposed galleries and auditoriums.

The co-creation facilities and the grounds of the castle could be the home of a Merthyr Climate Forum, youth environmental programmes and biodiversity programmes in the Meadows.

Furthermore, some of the lecture spaces and workrooms could pilot environmental education studies with links to local and national further education institutions. If successful, this could grow into a future educational 'Confluence Centre' within the 100ha Park.

The proposed programmes should be developed with partners and community forums to ensure combined local and regional focus.



## CYFARTHFA CASTLE OBJECTIVES

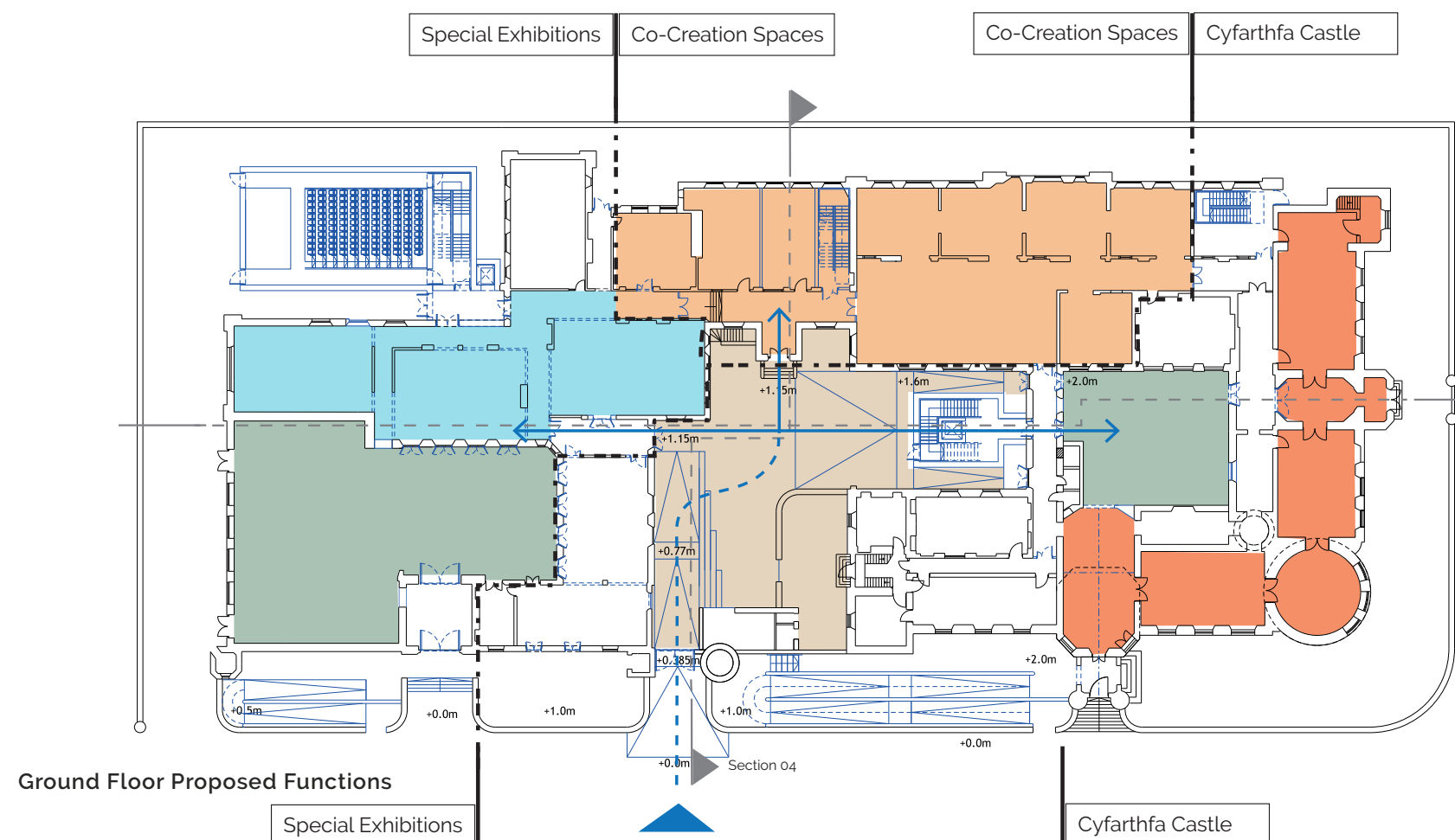
- Transform Cyfarthfa Castle as a centrepiece to the Cyfarthfa Plan set within a proposed 100ha Greater Cyfarthfa Park.
- Create a museum of international quality in terms of its story-telling – combining the story of Merthyr's industrial past with the witness of its people - and an eye on the future.
- Ensure that wider wellbeing and socioeconomic objectives are embedded in the plan.
- Develop a Co-Creation Centre that will extend the education and outreach programme of Cyfarthfa Castle.
- Provide a home in which to incubate some of the later year strategies of the Cyfarthfa Plan for the creative arts and the natural environment programmes.
- Remove mid/late 20th and early 21st century additions considered to be harmful to the significance of the building
- Provide multiple income streams for Cyfarthfa Castle.
- Secure Cyfarthfa Castle as a publicly accessible building for at least the next 50 years.



# CYFARTHFA CASTLE

## OPTION 01

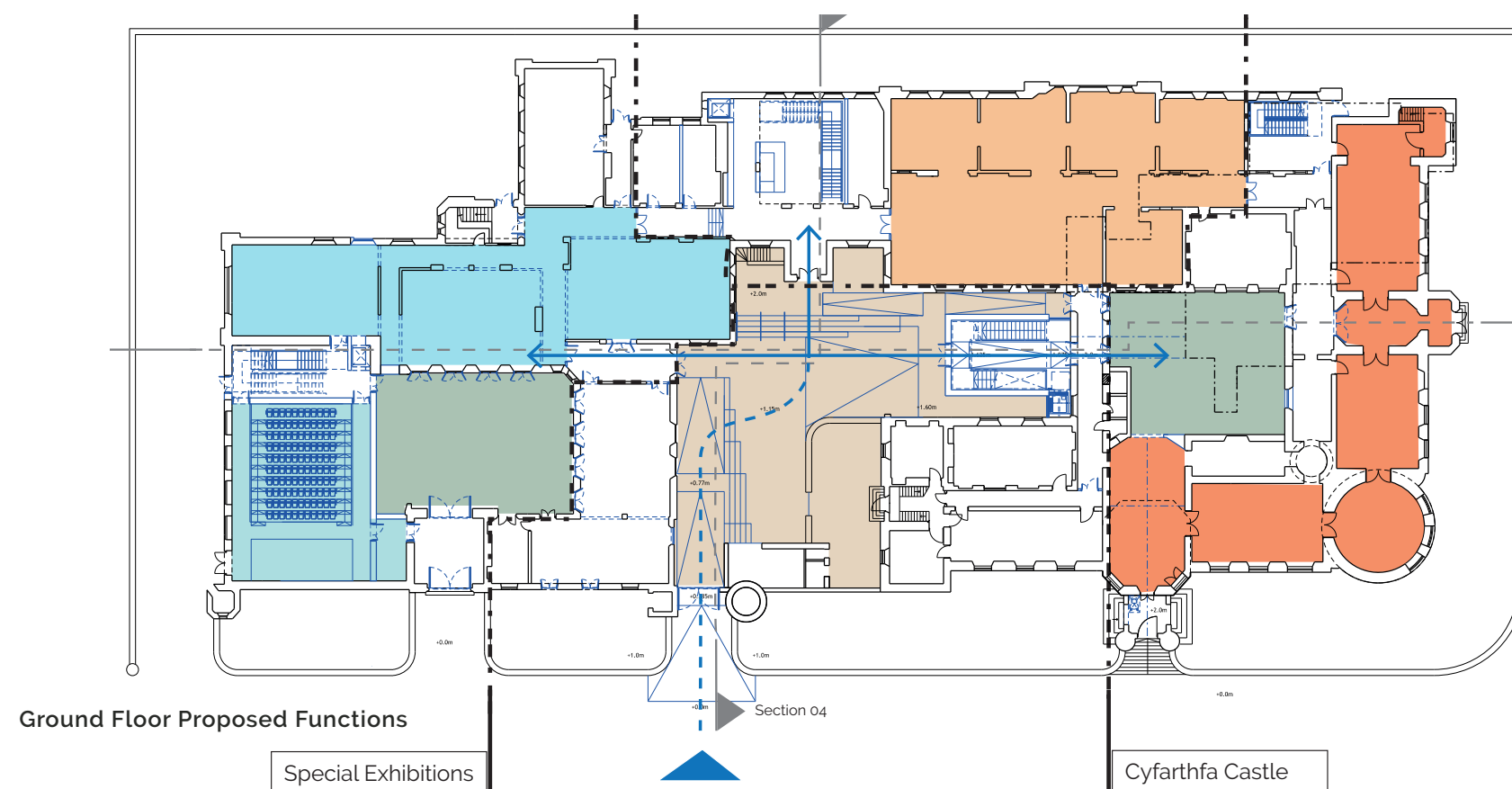
- New Build Elements
- Existing Fabric
- Enclosed Courtyards
- Function Rooms
- Special Exhibition
- Education/Outreach/Archives/Research
- Permanent Collection
- Access Points
- Main Entrance
- Central Orientation Courtyard



A major restoration and reuse of the Castle side and the internal reconfiguration of the School side of Cyfarthfa Castle as a museum housing an enhanced Cyfarthfa Collection, Co-creation Centre and Exhibition Galleries.

Option 1 has the least impact on the Grade 1 listed building by removing new additions which are considered to be harmful (as stated in the Statement of the Significance), and adding interventions to spaces of low significance.

However, it also has the least flexibility due to the existing smaller room layouts of the original school building.



Option 2 seeks to balance the impact of the transformation of the Grade 1 listed building, against the desire to create a museum with a variety of galleries of multiple scales.

Option 2 removes new additions which are considered to be harmful (as stated in the Statement of the Significance), and creates links between spaces with interventions to spaces of low and some of medium significance.

The result is a 3-courtyard approach which offers dedicated exhibition space and galleries. Co-creation outreach and education facilities, enlarged collections spaces, and hireable function spaces within the most historic part of the Castle.

PRIORITISING MERTHYR TYDFIL’S HERITAGE ASSETS



A major restoration and reuse, of the Castle side with a major rebuild and new build of the School side of Cyfarthfa Castle to provide a museum housing an enhanced Cyfarthfa Collection, Co-creation Centre and Exhibition Galleries.

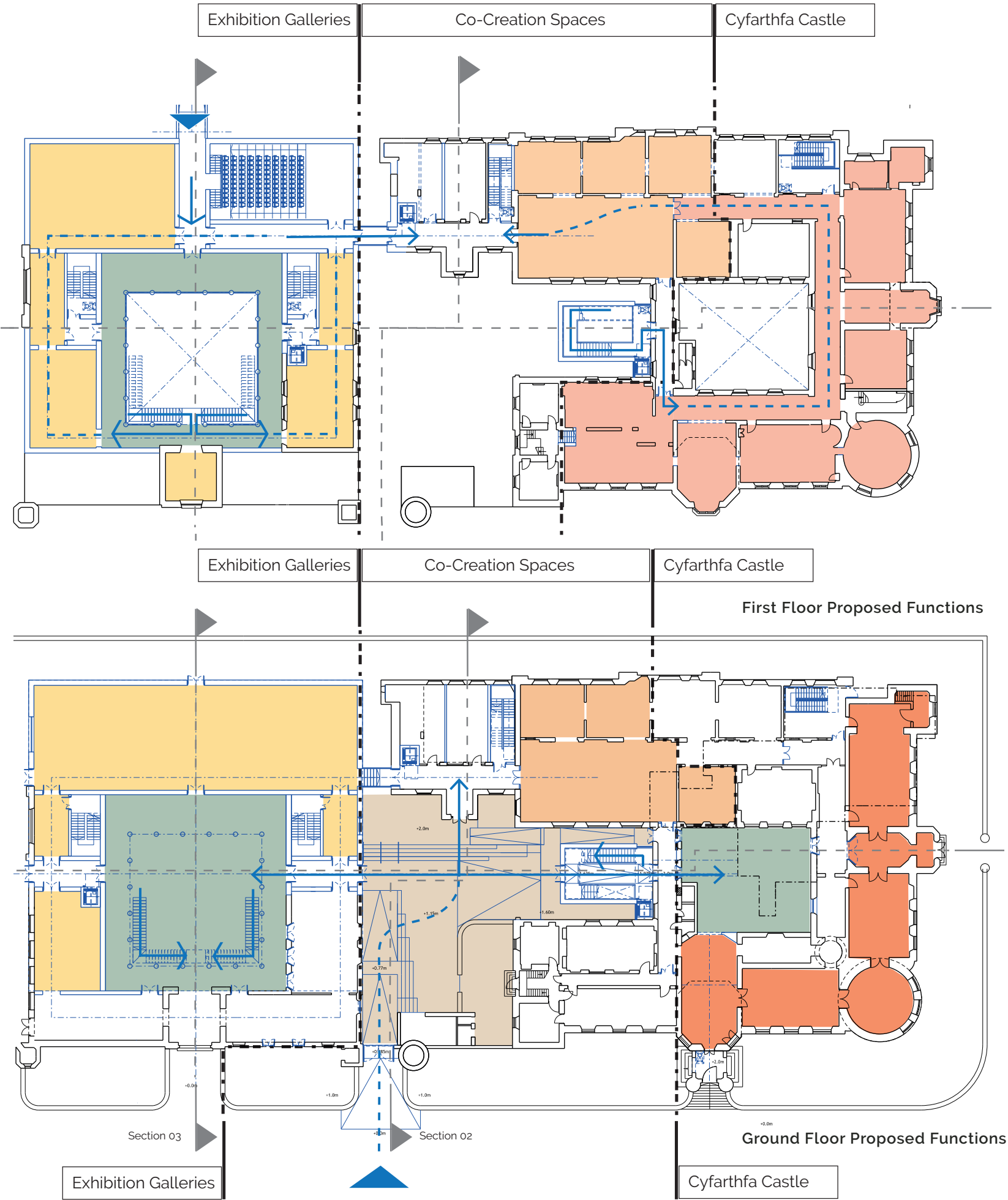
Option 3 posits a major intervention to the school side of Cyfarthfa Castle which will have the most impact on the rear portion of the Grade 1 listed building.

The result is a purpose built exhibition/gallery space around a courtyard which maps the original 1825 stables of the manor house, creating a museum with modern facilities and a variety of galleries of varying scales.

Option 3 removes new additions which are considered to be harmful (as stated in the Statement of the Significance), and creates links between spaces with interventions to spaces of low and some of medium significance.

It also proposes the rebuild of the north west of the school site, retaining the historic entrance ways and facades to the south.

The result is a major 3-courtyard approach which offers more display space, dedicated exhibition spaces and galleries, co-creation, outreach and education facilities, enlarged collections spaces, as well as hireable function spaces within the most historic part of the Castle





## PRIORITISING MERTHYR TYDFIL'S HERITAGE ASSETS

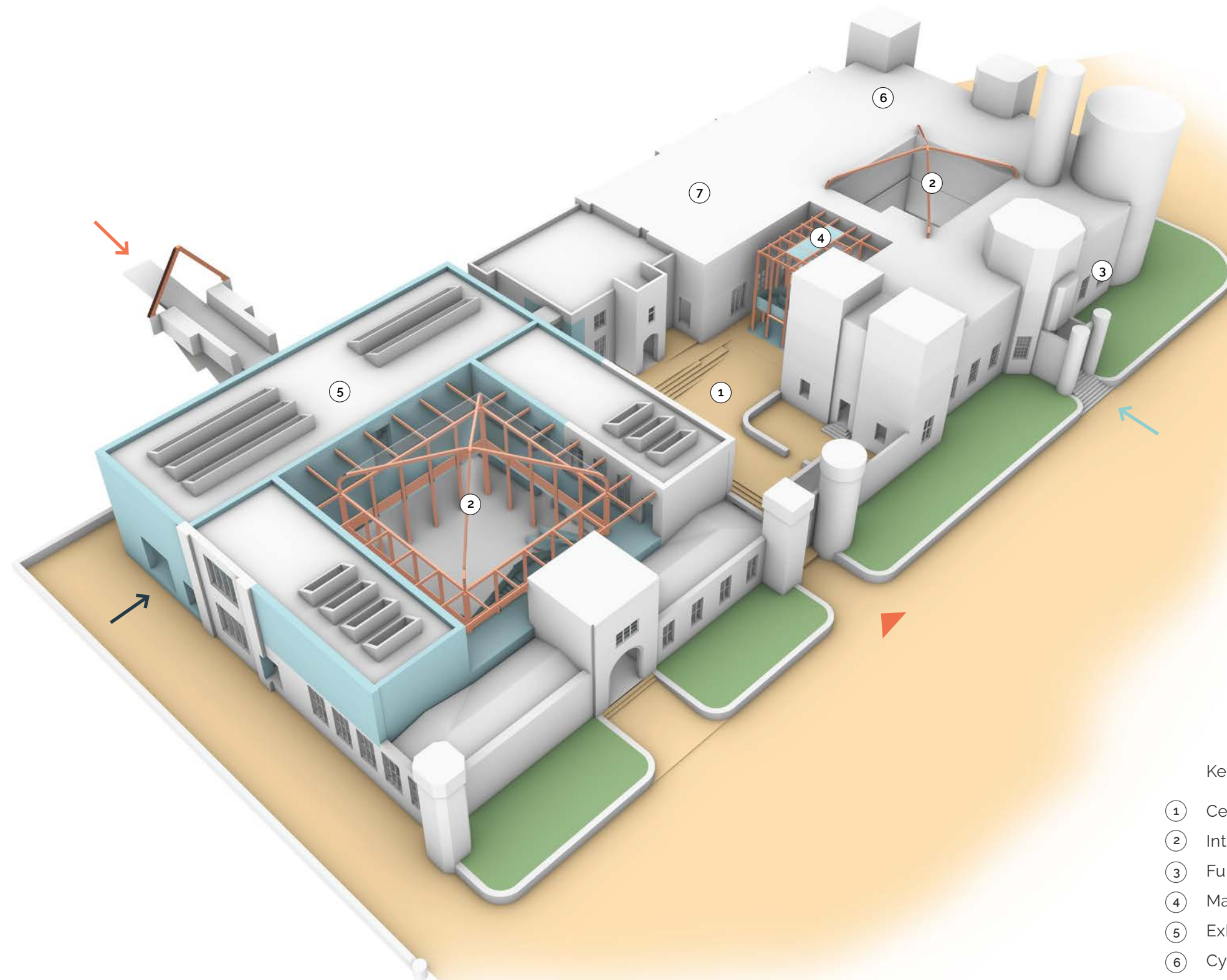


### CYFARTHFA CASTLE OPTION 03

-  Access from future Glass House
-  Main Entrance
-  Access for Functions/Events
-  Service Access

#### OPTION 3 ADVANTAGES SUMMARY

- 3000SQM OF EXHIBITION SPACE
- GREATER SPATIAL FLEXIBILITY
- GREATER INTEGRATION OF CONTEMPORARY TECHNOLOGIES
- LOGICAL FLOW THROUGH THE BUILDING
- DRAMATIC SPACES COMBINED WITH HISTORIC ROOMS.
- INCREASED TRANSFORMATIONAL EFFECT AND VISITOR APPEAL



#### Key Spaces:

- ① Centre Courtyard
- ② Internal Courtyards
- ③ Function Rooms
- ④ Main Circulation
- ⑤ Exhibition Galleries
- ⑥ Cyfarthfa Museum
- ⑦ Co-Creation Centre





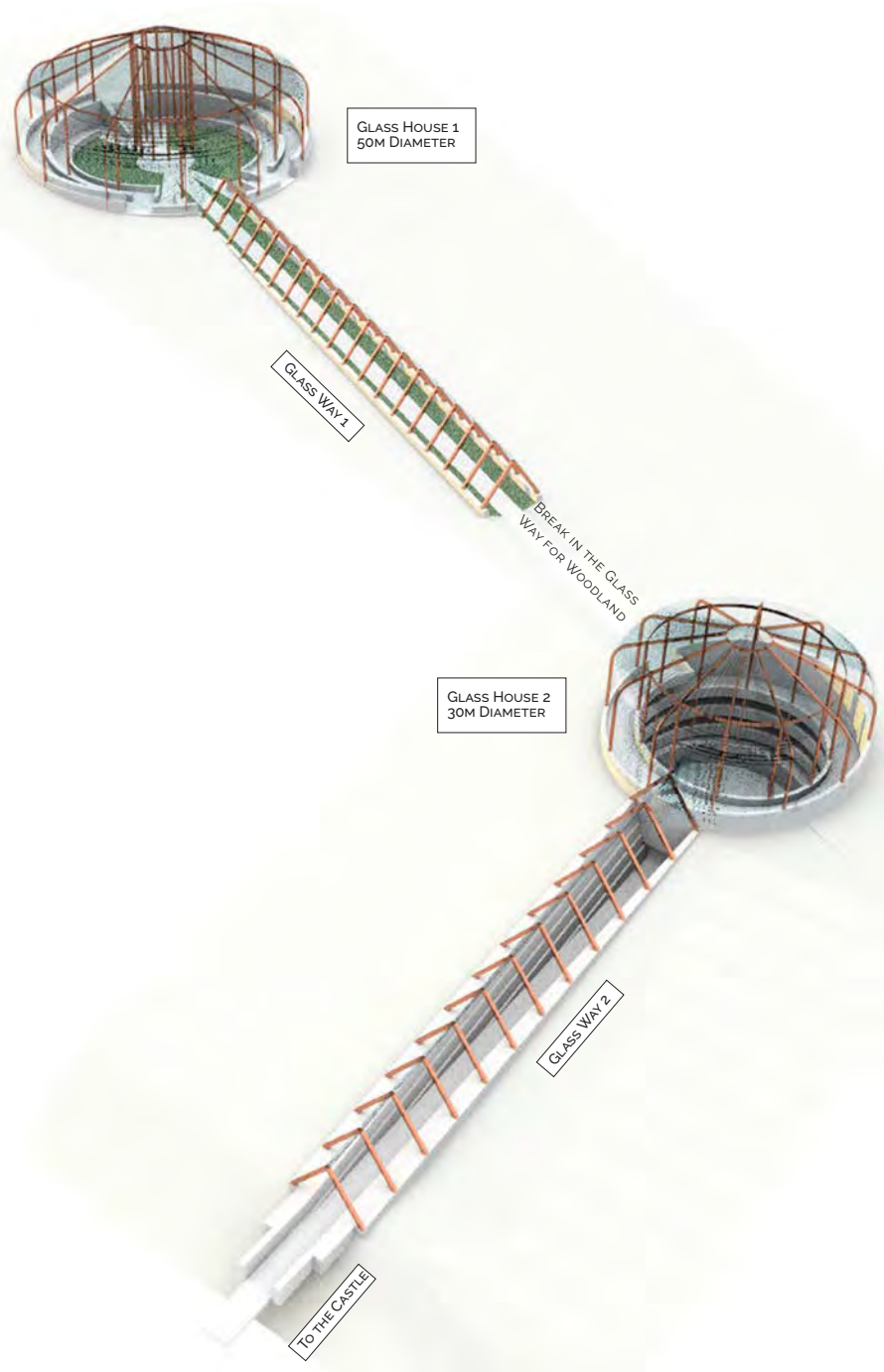
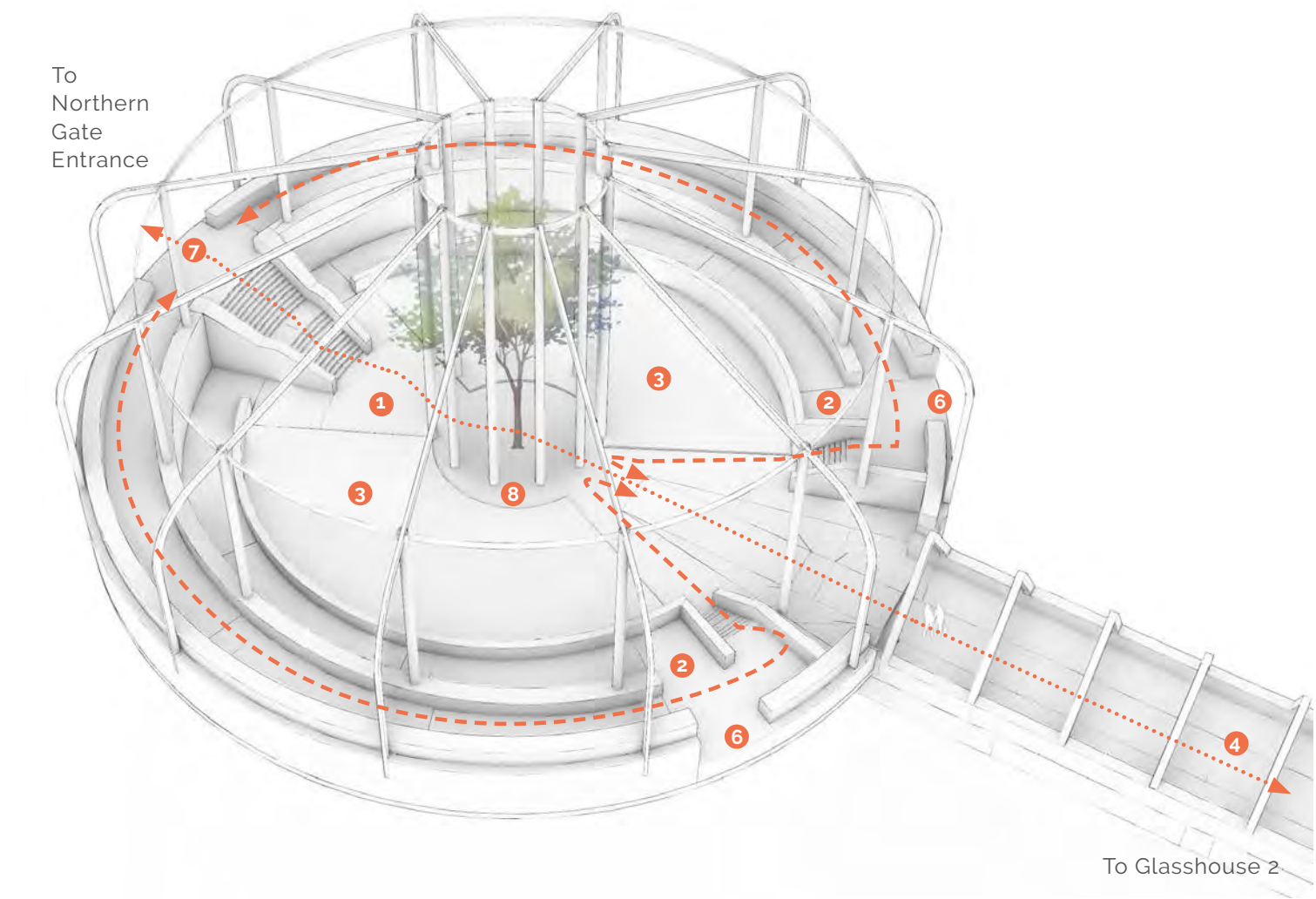
# The Glass Way

Beyond the heritage assets of Cyfarthfa, the Plan advocates the creation of new build projects to complement the significant scale, history and heritage of the Park. These new attractions respond to the topography and physicality of the site, and both are authentic to Merthyr Tydfil.

The Glass Way will be a new attraction within Cyfarthfa Park celebrating the vanished 19th century production and display glasshouses from the past in a modern and accessible way.

Two Glasshouses, one 50m diameter and one 30m diameter connected by a glass walkway - offer a covered planted journey to Cyfarthfa Castle. The Glass Way could be themed on a story of environmental change to demonstrate climate impact. The Glass Way will enable easy access down the steep slope in this area of the park to the castle.

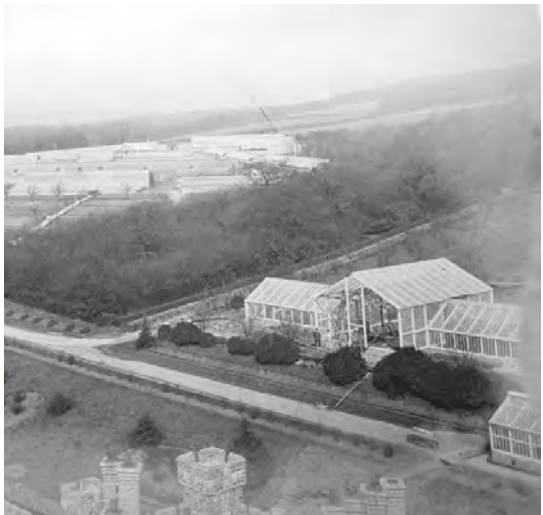
## CREATING SOMETHING NEW - THE GLASS WAY



### BY YEAR 7

#### KEY

- 1 - GLASSHOUSE 1
- 2 - 1:21 ACCESSIBLE SLOPE
- 3 - PLANTING BAYS
- 4 - GLASS WAY 1
- 5 - WASHROOMS
- 6 - EXITS
- 7 - MAIN ENTRANCE
- 8 - EVENT AREA (500PERSONS)



The original 19th Century Glasshouses



## CREATING SOMETHING NEW - THE GLASS WAY



A view of the 100ha Park from above and north of the castle. The Iron Way connecting across the valley to the furnaces can be seen to the right and the black line of the furnaces in the distance.





NORTHERN ACCESS ROUTE

A new vehicular access point is proposed to the north of the existing car park. This route partly re-establishes an historic rear route to the kitchen gardens clearing, currently used by the Parks department of MTCBC. The route will remove day-to-day vehicle access from the main gates of Cyfarthfa Castle to give way to active travel users (pedestrians and cyclists), and public transport (drop off). The route will also allow easy access from the future A465 Heads of the Valleys Road junction.



Keeble Glasshouse Glasgow



Kitchen Garden at West Dean Gardens, Sussex

- BY YEAR 5
- 01- NORTHERN ACCESS ROUTE
- A- VISITOR PARKING OPTION
- B- VISITOR PARKING OPTION
- C- VISITOR PARKING OPTION
- D- ACCESSIBLE PARKING
- E- PUBLIC TRANSPORT DROPOFF
- F - REINSTATED LANDSCAPE

THE 100HA PARK - ACCESS, GLASSHOUSES & PARKING



CYFARTHFA KITCHEN GARDENS

It is proposed to reconstruct part of the kitchen gardens that historically were located in the area of the existing car park. The garden produce can be used by the Cyfarthfa Castle concessions and also be a public attraction for families and school children who could learn about the history of the productive garden which nourishment to the Castle residents.

- BY YEAR 7
- 02 KITCHEN GARDENS F - REINSTATED WOODLAND
- 03 GLASSHOUSE 1
- 04 GLASSHOUSE 2





## PANDY FARM CREATIVE & COMMUNITY SPACES

It is proposed that Pandy Farm is transformed into a creative workspace which offers various sizes of studios, workshops, and makerspaces for start-up creative, craft, community, and food related businesses. It is also proposed that Pandy Farm will act as a community hub with a café, community kitchen, community hall, and allotment gardens.

Pandy Farm will be geographically at the centre of the proposed 100ha Park. It has the potential to act as a real community asset and offer genuine employment and workspace.

As a key listed asset with historic significance to the Cyfarthfa Heritage Area, gaining access to Pandy Farm for visitors and the community is viewed as important to contribute to the high social objectives of the Cyfarthfa Plan.

The ultimate goal is to give opportunities to the younger generation to become the creatives and craftspeople of the future.

## PRIORITISING MERTHYR TYDFIL'S HERITAGE ASSETS



Example of Community Makerspace

1



Example of studio uses

2

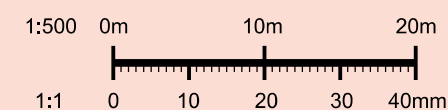
### BY YEAR 3

**PANDY FARM**  
**GRADE II LISTED BUILDING**  
**STATUS: MEDIUM RISK**  
**OPPORTUNITY: VERY HIGH**

### AREA KEY

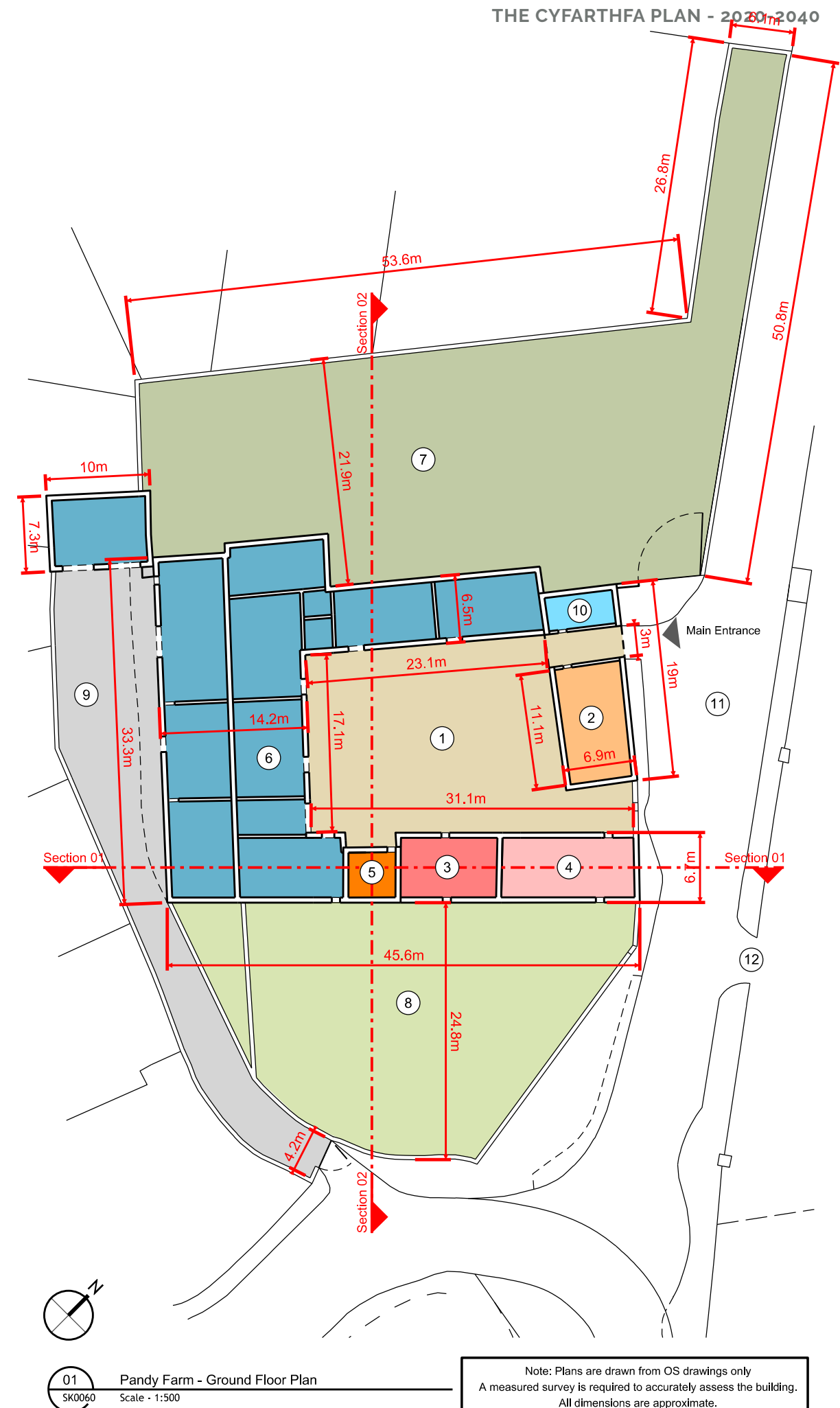
- Workshops /Studios/ Makerspaces/ Start-Up Spaces (679sqm)
- Allotment Gardens (1302sqm)
- Landscaped Gardens / City Farm Animal Learning Zone (759sqm)
- Hard Landscaped Access (404sqm)
- Public WC's (21sqm)
- Central Courtyard (494sqm)
- Community Hall (69sqm)
- Community Kitchen (106sqm)
- Gateway Pavilion / Cafe (146sqm)
- Heritage Clock Tower (20sqm)

**Total Area = 4000sqm**

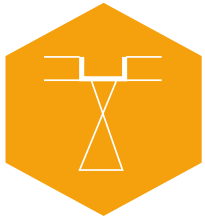


### KEY

- 1 - Landscapes Courtyard
- 2 - Community Hall
- 3 - Community Kitchen
- 4 - Gateway Pavilion / Cafe
- 5 - Heritage Clock Tower Interpretation
- 6 - Workshops /Studios/ Makerspaces/ Start-Up Spaces
- 7 - Allotment Gardens
- 8 - Landscapes Gardens / City Farm Area
- 9 - Workshops Access
- 10 - Public WCs
- 11 - Shared Surface Pedestrianised Road
- 12 - Cyfarthfa Park Main Entrance







# The Iron Way

The Iron Way, is proposed as a dramatic high-level valley wide landmark walkway that will reconnect the historic landscape of Cyfarthfa Park with the Cyfarthfa Ironworks site.

It will provide an exciting cross valley route day and night. At night the Iron Way will appear as a linear starry 'sky' against the dark skies backdrop.

It is a contemporary interpretation of the monumental aqueduct that used to cross the valley, and will complement the significant scale, history and heritage of the proposed 100ha Park.

BY YEAR 7

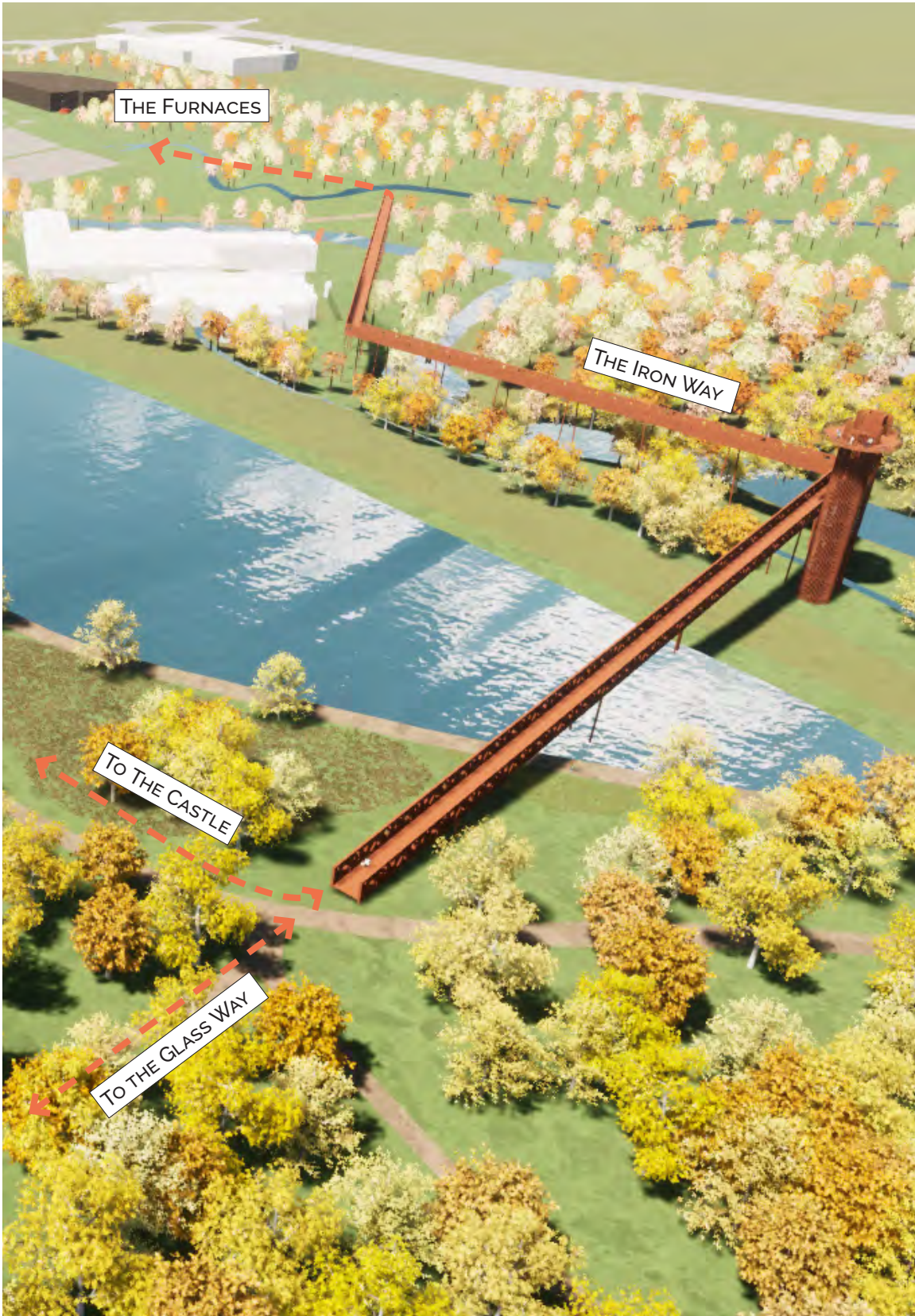
FIGURES:

- 495M LONG
- 5 - 15M ABOVE GROUND
- 25M TALL VIEWPOINT
- 1100M WALK FROM CASTLE TO FURNACES ARCH
- 1000M WALK FROM GLASSHOUSE 1 TO FURNACES ARCH



The original 'Iron Way' timber and iron aqueduct as shown in this Penry Williams painting.

## CREATING SOMETHING NEW - THE IRON WAY



Aerial View of the Iron Way 1



Plan of the Iron Way and Glass Way. 2



## CREATING SOMETHING NEW - THE IRON WAY



A view of the Iron Way bridge passing over Cyfarthfa Lake and Brecon Road heading to the Cyfarthfa Furnaces in the distance. A starry sky is formed within the wall of the bridge.





**THE CONFLUENCE CENTRE  
HIGHER EDUCATION**

As the plan matures we suggest developing new links with tertiary education institutions with a focus on the environment. It is a project that will need time, strong partnerships and major investment. It will, however, cement the impression of Merthyr as a place of higher education that values expertise and learning and nurtures aspirations.

We propose that a National Confluence College be established. This would be an environmentally-focussed college, and an outpost of universities and national institutions.

It could also have a public-facing environmental science research centre including creative interpretations and collaborative projects.

The college could also include residential accommodation for lab workers and/or visiting school groups.



**HIGHER EDUCATION**



Zollverein Landscape, Germany



RSPCB Reserve



Sandgrundspark, Sweden



**THE CONFLUENCE  
PARKLAND**

The 'confluence parkland' is proposed as a means to connect the existing park and the area west of the Taff into one 'Greater Cyfarthfa Park'. This would involve a major remedial project.

Within the proposed confluence parkland fragments of the old leat could be reinterpreted leading people down a sloped embankment to the Pont-y-Cafnau bridge via a series of terraces.

The parkland could be a ground to encourage experiments in phytoremediation, improving water quality and flood mitigation.

- BY YEAR 17
- 1 - REINTERPRETATION OF THE TAFF FECHAN LEAT
  - 2 - CONFLUENCE PARKLAND
  - 3 - CAR PARK
  - 4 - CONFLUENCE CENTRE
- A - REINTERPRETATION OF THE OLD LEAT
- B - SPILL OUT AREA + TEST FIELDS



## The Creative Arts

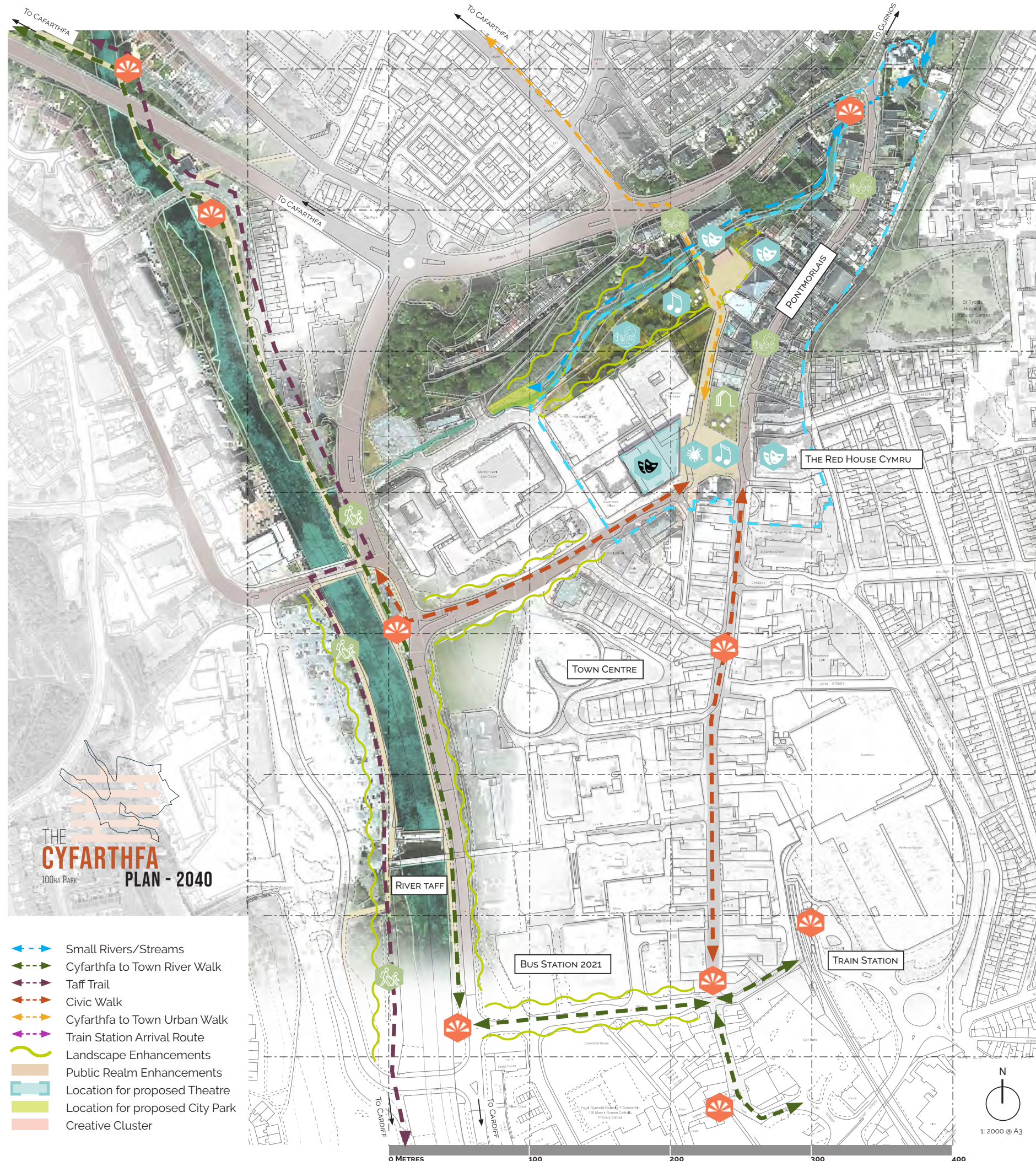
Whilst centred on the Cyfarthfa Heritage Area, the Plan looks beyond these boundaries with projects that support the wider socio-economic rejuvenation of Merthyr Tydfil.

While, formally, these may lie outside the purview of the organisation managing the development of Cyfarthfa, the creativity the plan seeks to foster cannot be contained within a park boundary.

Our consultation indicated that more could be done to foster creativity and, especially, young talent. There is also a perceived need for a producing centre for creative organisations.

We suggest that Merthyr Tydfil requires a substantial creative arts project alongside a new town centre park connecting via the river to Cyfarthfa Park. This would complement existing creative institutions, offer touring companies a viable venue and channel the optimism and enthusiasm of young people.

The Plan proposes many events and programmes linked to creativity. A revival of performing arts of all kinds, and the encouragement of young talent, would be a substantial dividend from the investment proposed.



## THE CYFARTHFA PLAN - 2020-2040

### THE CREATIVE ARTS SHOULD DO PROJECTS

- 01 Independent Creative Arts Review
- 02 Merthyr Creative Arts Forum
- 03 Creative Start Up Business Space
- 04 Urban Living Rooms

### COULD DO PROJECTS

- 05 Summer Festivals Support
- 06 Red House & Canolfan Soar Joint Creative Programming
- 07 New Creative Focus Festivals & Events in the Town Centre

### MUST DO PROJECTS

- 08 A Major Creative Arts Project
- 09 Town Centre Park
- COULD DO PROJECTS
- 10 Outdoor Performance Space

### THE CASTLE MUST DO PROJECTS

- 12 Wayfinding & Interpretation

### THE 100HA PARK MUST DO PROJECTS

- 04 Landscape Trails - Phase 1
- COULD DO PROJECTS
- 16 Gateway Pavilion 3 - (Town Centre)
- MUST DO PROJECTS
- 25 Pontmorlais Pedestrianisation



THE CREATIVE ARTS - A SELECTION OF PROJECTS



CREATIVE ARTS  
FORUM

A Creative Arts Forum should be established to act as a dedicated voice for the Creative Arts and to mobilise the creative community in the area. .

A key task for the forum should be to consider how the arts in Merthyr Tydfil could be championed and organised to increase arts activity, to coordinate grassroots events and to foster the ambition and development of the creative community.



CREATIVE START-UP  
BUSINESS SPACE

Renovation of existing buildings along Pontmorlais to establish Creative Start-Up spaces should be encouraged and prioritised to reinforce a creative community focus.

Exemplar renovations of vacant buildings could be considered to kick-start further investment along Pontmorlais.



URBAN LIVING ROOMS

Open 'urban living room' youth spaces could be created in Pontmorlais as spaces for young people to socialise and/or work.

Urban Living Rooms are a hybrid between a cafe/co-working space and a youth club providing a safe 'hang out' space for young people.

Programmes in such spaces could encourage art, music, writing, study, and sports in an engaging environment.



NEW CREATIVE FOCUSED  
FESTIVALS & EVENTS

New events and festivals in the town centre should be promoted to build momentum and excitement with a strong marketing campaign. Such festivals should seek to partner with national organisations to expand their appeal.

Possible events suggested below:

- A Valleys Festival
- A Family Music Festival.
- An 'Art in the Park' Festival
- A Welsh language Festival
- A renewed Merthyr Rising Festival
- A creative festival interpreting history.



Town Centre Festivals



Town Centre Festivals



Creative a vivid events programme and campaign e.g. Hull 2017.

BY YEAR 2

BY YEAR 3

BY YEAR 10

BY YEAR 3



## ECONOMIC BENEFIT

This Vision is anchored in a clear set of objectives that will help to deliver the outcomes imagined by the Wellbeing for Future Generations Act. The Cyfarthfa Plan is notable for its focus on people. Meaningful socioeconomic change that improves lives and livelihoods can only come from within – it is not something that can be done for the people Merthyr, much less to them, and certainly not without them.

The Plan is also set within a regional context that takes full account of the priorities held by organisations like Welsh Government, Cardiff Capital Region, Valleys Regional Park, and Brecon Beacons National Park. A thriving, confident Merthyr Tydfil – reinvented through a unique approach to heritage, creativity and nature – will energise and inspire people and places across a much wider area than the Borough itself. This is a local project, of regional importance and national significance.

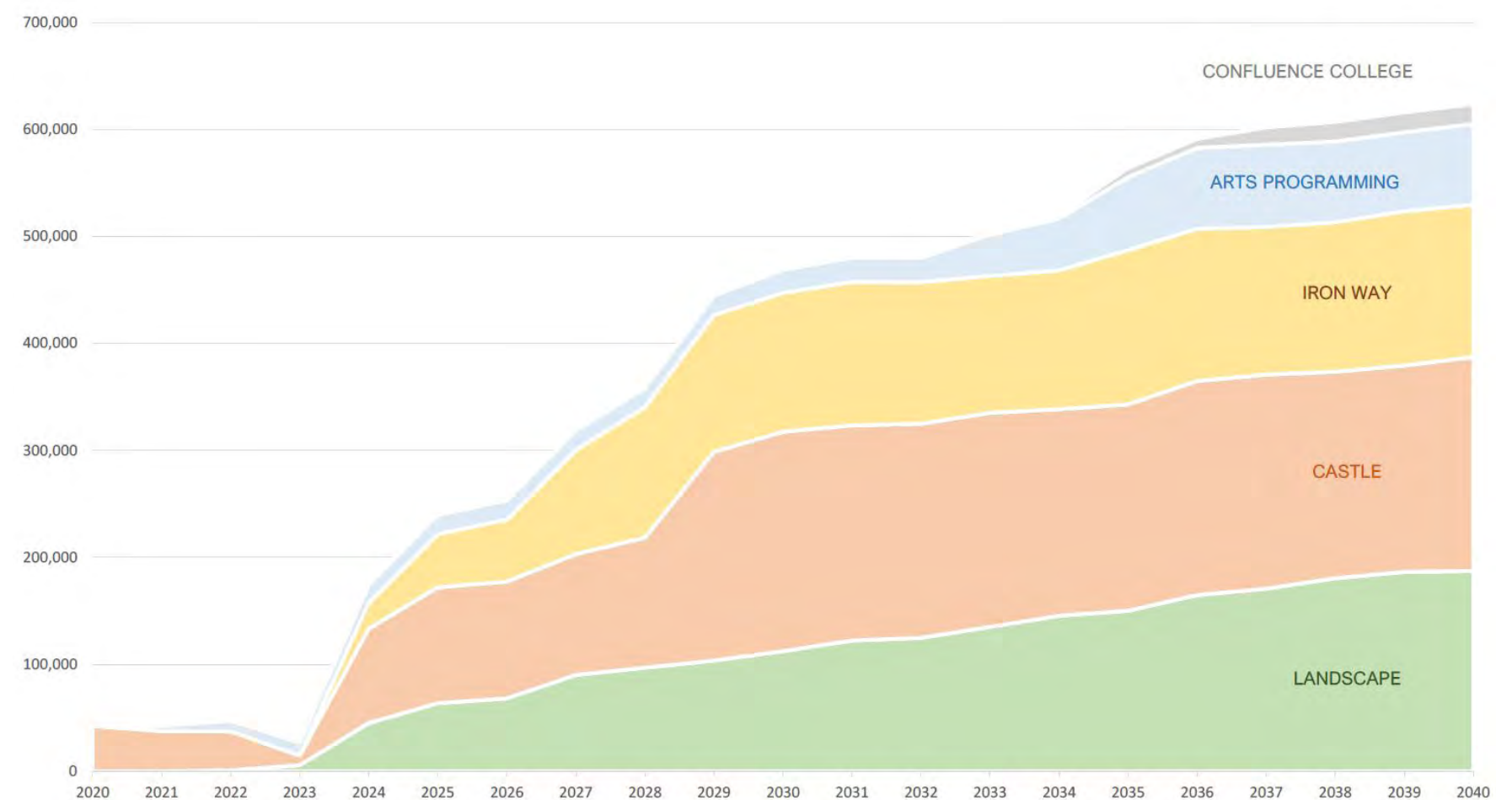
Based on this and previous research, as well as the extensive consultations undertaken in the first Stage of work, we propose an organising principle – especially for a renovated Castle Museum and Art Gallery – that is focused on people and personal stories rather than subject matter or time period. This is a more contemporary approach that is better suited to the Cyfarthfa Museum's strengths and collections and is more conducive to the type of co-curation that will involve people and encourage their participation in the Plan's delivery.

Adding this idea to the themes and principles already established, the strategy considers the implementation of the plan. A great strength of the plan is the versatility and adaptability that comes from having many small projects that can be co-created with local stakeholders and businesses and thus delivered from the bottom-up. The consequence of that, however, is a large number of individual projects that have to be sensibly organised, sequenced, phased and communicated with clarity and conviction.

To that end, we posit that the Plan is defined by five 'key' project groups:

1. The 100 ha Park
2. The Castle
3. The Iron Way
4. The Creative Arts
5. The Confluence College

### PROJECTED VISITORS





Economic Benefit

All other products and programmes can be considered as enablers, complements or consequences of one of these core projects. The strategy thus ables us to collapse a long list of nearly 70 individual projects into five 'ideas' that are neatly sequenced to tell a powerful story about the possibilities that can be created over the next 20 years.

That sequencing, furthermore, has an internal market, funding and operational logic with a sustainable business model for delivering the Plan. This establishes some key principles about:

- Risk management and mitigation
- Focusing on cultural production, as much as consumption
- The need for some measure of charging and potential pricing mechanisms
- The value of capitalising up-front operational costs or securing a future endowment

Preliminary visit projections show the potential for the Plan to generate upwards of 300,000 visits by Year 7, growing to more than 600,000 visits by completion.

Sequencing

The prioritisation, sequencing and phasing of different projects has brought some projects forward (to reach critical mass sooner), while pushing other projects later into the Plan (to avoid over-burdening any one organisation with too many complex projects to deliver at any one time).

Projects that are geographically contained within an area that will likely come within the ambit of a newly constituted Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) have also been prioritised over those that require partnerships.

The Cyfarthfa Plan team – in consultation with MTCBC – has re-categorised all projects as those which are central to the ethos and integrity of the Plan ('must do'), those that are strongly recommended for the Plan to reach its full potential ('should do'), and suggested projects to enhance and optimise the Plan ('could do').

SCENARIOS

NO GRANT-IN-AID / ENDOWMENT

Without any revenue support in the form of reliable grant-in-aid or some form of endowment, the Plan faces significant deficits before reaching a critical mass that pushes it into surplus.

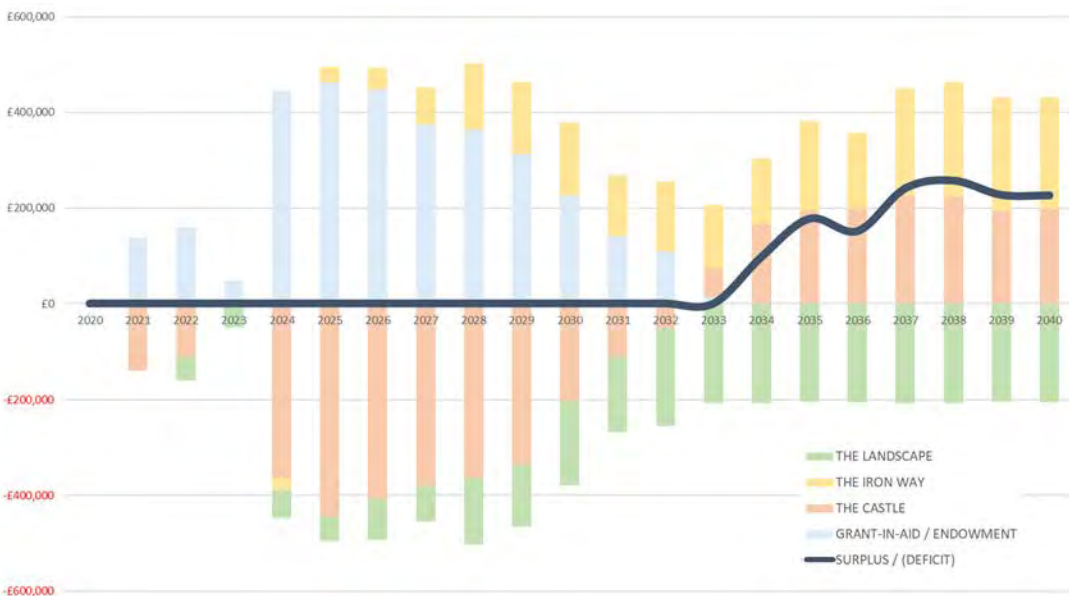
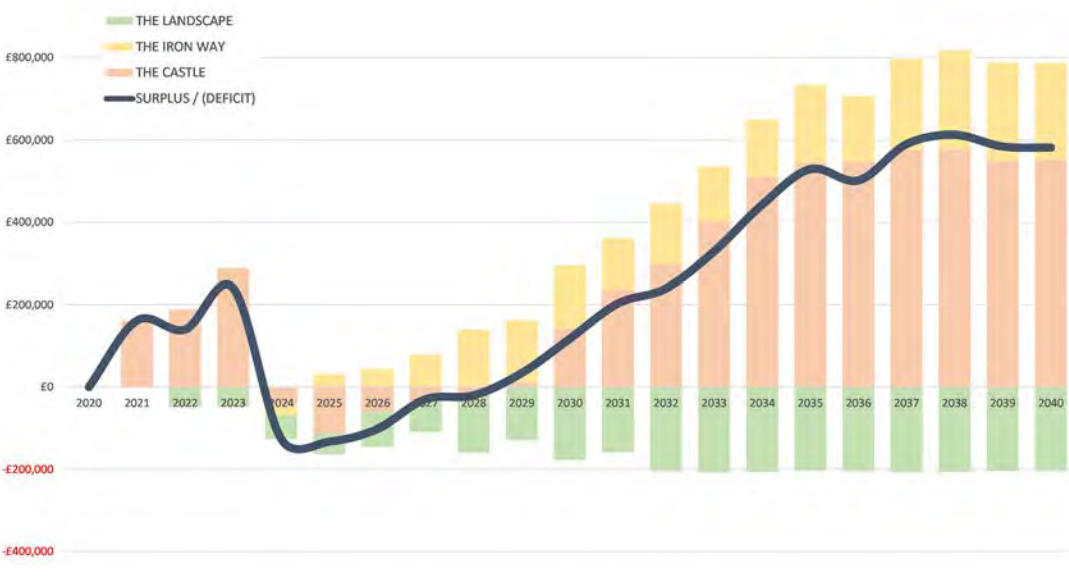
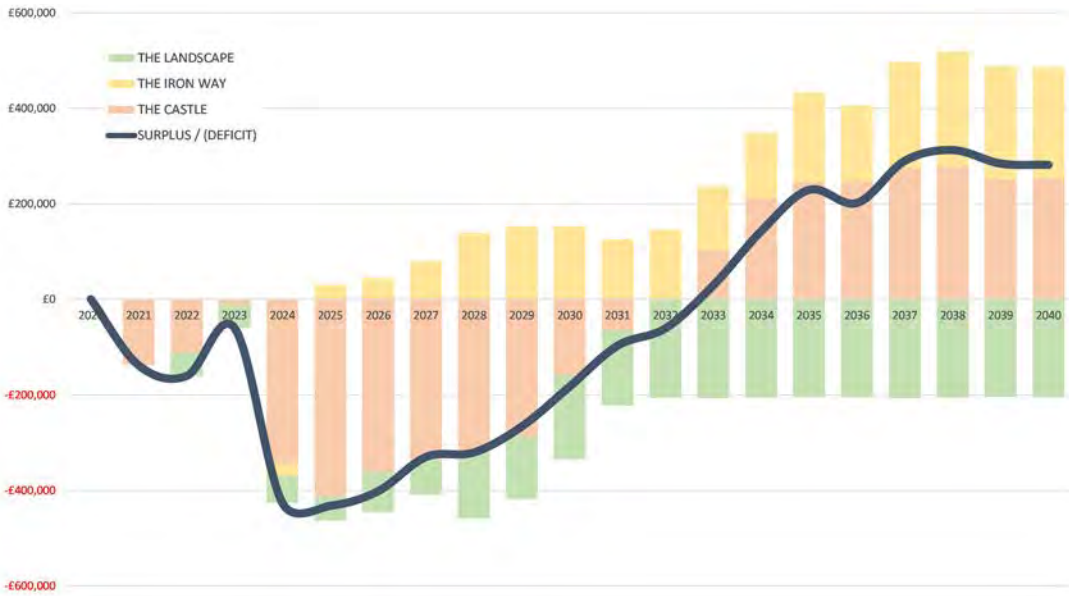
£300,000 GRANT-IN-AID

MTBC already provides some £350,000 of support through the Leisure Trust. Assuming a reduced level of grant-in-aid of some £300,000 per annum, then the break-even position is achieved much sooner and the early-years deficits are much smaller and more manageable. This is true whether income from Pandy Farm is included or excluded.

GAP FUNDING MODEL

We also considered a model where grant-in-aid is flexibly calculated to bridge any revenue gaps from year-to-year, eventually falling to zero as the Plan moves into surplus. Importantly, we estimate that in this scenario, the capitalised value of the required grant-in-aid is some £3.2 million which – while not insignificant – appears good value for enabling a £50 million Plan that could be transformation for the area.

INTEGRATED PROFIT & LOSS PROJECTION





## ECONOMIC BENEFIT

### Funding

Funding – in aggregate – may come from a variety of sources, including trusts and foundations, individual philanthropists, corporate sponsors or private lending / investment. It is realistic to assume that the two main funders from which others will take their cues are: Welsh Government and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

### Economic Impact

This is a holistic, nuanced plan, designed to deliver transformative change over a 20-year timescale. Its benefits are real and tangible and ultimately demonstrable, but not easily demonstrated by the conventional measures of tourism impact assessments. The Iron Way will attract visits, the Creative Arts will generate spend, and the Castle will create jobs. Too much emphasis on these narrow, imperfect metrics, however, will diminish the more substantive socioeconomic benefits that will come from careful execution of the Plan. We must measure what is important to the people of Merthyr; not simply perceive as important that which is easy to measure.

The likely economic impact of the Cyfarthfa Plan is addressed from two perspectives. A more traditional, tourism-led and visitor-driven economic impact assessment estimates the creation of between 150 and 200 new and lasting full-time jobs, plus a further 95 jobs through the construction of various capital projects. This is commensurate with the economic impact from other major projects like Zip World in North Wales and Surf Snowdonia.

Moreover, this estimate excludes induced economic impact through the increased spending power of local residents who benefited from more direct impacts, and new employment created by the inward investment of established companies, start-ups and entrepreneurs, skilled workers and their families, who choose to live, work and invest in Merthyr Tydfil because

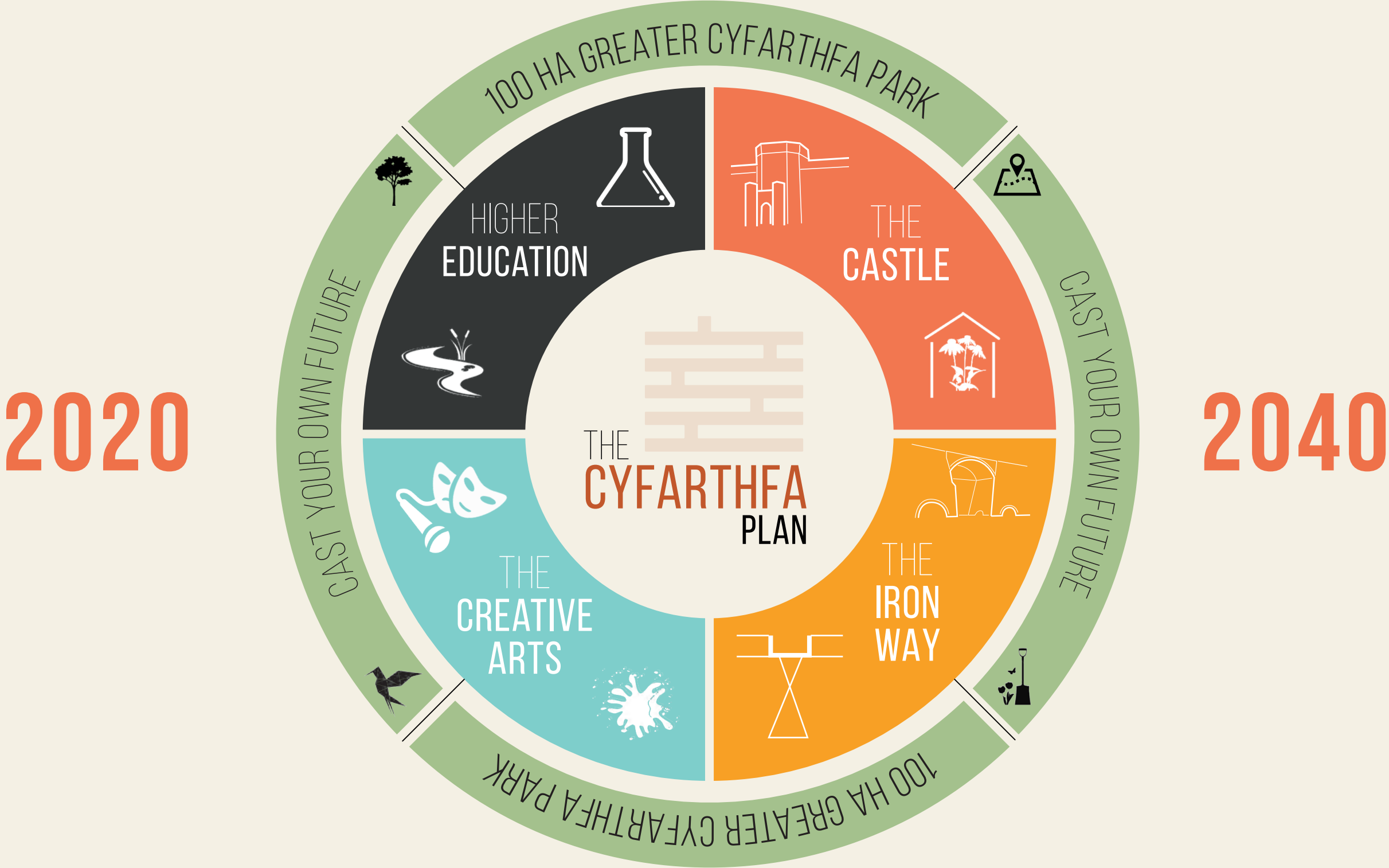
their perceptions of the place have improved. The former effect tends to be marginal, while the latter effect – though difficult to measure – can be transformational.

### Socioeconomic Impact

It is important to evaluate the Plan in socioeconomic terms, as well as (if not instead of) visitor impact. It is vital for any future SPV, working in concert with the local authority, Welsh Government, and partners in higher education and the community, to make the mapping of socioeconomic change a centrepiece of the Cyfarthfa Plan.

This is the current zeitgeist of socioeconomic monitoring and evaluation. It is no longer a fringe argument, too easily dismissed as 'intangible' or 'unquantifiable'. Much work has been done to produce the theoretical foundations and the practical methodologies for defining and measuring the metrics that matter to the people most affected by any intervention. This is an approach that connects the Plan directly to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and can position Merthyr Tydfil at the leading edge of new approaches to local economic modelling, evaluation and decision-making.





THE CYFARTHFA PLAN'S SUCCESS IS BASED ON THE INTERSECTION OF MAPPING HERITAGE, MONUMENTALISM, CREATIVITY, NATURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING IN ONE COHESIVE PLAN, SET WITHIIN A 100HA PARK AND THE TOWN.