

# Going underground in Eryri

Helping communities to thrive:  
our local workforce strategy

**nationalgrid**



## Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>Executive summary .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1.	Purpose .....	3
1.2.	Scope .....	3
<b>2.</b>	<b>References .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1.	External references.....	4
2.2.	HOCHTIEF UK references.....	4
<b>3.</b>	<b>Core principles.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Our approach in Eryri .....</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1.	Strategic policies.....	7
4.2.	Supply chain opportunities .....	10
4.3.	Workforce accommodation .....	11
4.3.1.	Progress to date from contract award in January 2022 to May 2023.....	12
<b>5.</b>	<b>Governance.....</b>	<b>13</b>
5.1.	Document reviews and updates.....	13
<b>6.</b>	<b>Terms and definitions.....</b>	<b>14</b>
	<b>Appendix A – Off-site workers living accommodation facility.....</b>	<b>15</b>

## Figures

Figure 1 – HOCHTIEF social value / community benefits policy objective	6
Figure 2 – SCSS self-assessment measures	8
Figure 3 – Proposed workforce compound	Error!
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## Tables

Table 1: Local workforce opportunities	10
Table 2: Definitions	14

## 1. Executive summary

### 1.1. Purpose

The Visual Impact Provision project in and adjacent to the Eryri National Park aims to reduce the visual impact of National Grid's overhead line across the Dwyrdd Estuary from Penrhyndeudraeth to Llandecwyn.

Stakeholders have agreed that the best way to achieve this is to remove a section of this overhead line and replace it with electricity cables buried in a tunnel underground. It represents a major opportunity to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and environmental heritage of this precious landscape of Eryri.

With this project also comes the opportunity to leave a lasting legacy on local communities. This document, our local workforce strategy, sets out our core principles, the benefits we will deliver to local people and businesses, and how we plan to do this.

### 1.2. Scope

HOCHTIEF (UK) Construction Ltd (HOCHTIEF) has been appointed by National Grid as the contractor to design and construct the tunnel under the Dwyrdd Estuary to house the new underground electricity cables. Removal of the overhead line will be delivered by other contractors under a separate contract with National Grid.

This document has been jointly prepared by National Grid and HOCHTIEF as a commitment to delivering social value through the design and construction of the new tunnel.

Throughout the lifetime of the project, HOCHTIEF will require a site workforce of up to 175 people including management and supervisory staff, plus jobs created off site through the supply chain and supporting functions.

Our approach to creating social value includes a commitment to employing local people on the project, within the supply chain and local support services.

This strategy applies to the local and regional areas around the project. For the purposes of this document, **local** is defined as within Gwynedd County, while **regional** is defined as within North Wales.

Our approach and commitments within the strategy are not intended to apply to workers employed on behalf of the project outside the region, but in these situations our overarching principles will be followed where appropriate.

We expect the greatest social benefit to be realised in the early stages of the project during design, planning, and preparing for the construction works, when recruitment and placing supply contracts are at their peak.

## 2. References

### 2.1. External references

The following documents have guided our principles and approach. They are not required to understand this document and are included for information only.

- [Well-being of Future Generations Act \(Wales\) 2015](#)
- [WPPN 01/20 Social value clauses/community benefits through public procurement](#)
- [Community Benefits: Delivering Maximum Value for the Welsh Pound](#)

### 2.2. HOCHTIEF UK references

HOCHTIEF's strategy and approach are underpinned by a range of wider company policies, outlined below for reference.

- [Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy](#)
- [Purchase Order Conditions](#)
- [Anti Bribery Policy](#)
- [Integrated Management System Policy](#)
- [Sustainable Society Policy](#)
- [Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy Statement](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Business Partners](#)
- [Privacy Policy Notice for Suppliers and Customers](#)
- [Drugs and Alcohol Policy](#)
- [Procurement Policy](#)

### 3. Core principles

The core principles of our social value approach are underpinned by National Grid's vision to be at the heart of a **clean, fair and affordable** energy future:

- **Clean**, because we have a critical role to play in tackling climate change, leading the way to net zero
- **Fair**, because we want to enable the energy transition for all, making sure that no one gets left behind
- **Affordable**, because everyone should be able to pay for all their essential energy needs

#### National Grid's values

If National Grid's vision sets out 'what' we want to achieve, our values are the 'how'. They shape our spirit, attitude and what guides us:

#### Do the right thing

- Stand up for safety every day
- Put our customers first
- Be inclusive, supporting and caring for each other
- Speak up, challenge and act where something doesn't feel right

#### Find a better way

- Embrace the power and opportunity of diversity
- Increase efficiency to help with customer affordability
- Work with others to find solutions for customers
- Commit to learning and new ideas

#### Make it happen

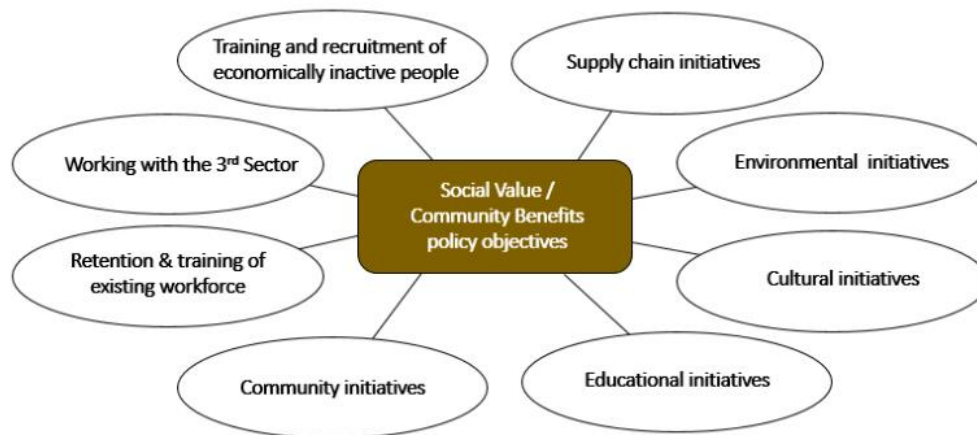
- Take personal ownership for delivering results
- Be bold and act with passion and purpose
- Focus on progress over perfection
- Follow the problem through to the end

We apply these values in tandem with HOCHTIEF's four core Values: Safety, People, Sustainability and Engineering. Our local workforce strategy applies across all four, principally focusing on People.

HOCHTIEF's business practices are aligned with the fundamental principles of National Grid's Supplier Code of Conduct. HOCHTIEF's Code of Conduct is also aligned with the principles of the UN



Global Compact on sustainable business, UN Guiding Principles of Business and Human Rights, and the International Labour Organisation's Rights at Work.



*Figure 1 – HOCHTIEF social value / community benefits policy objectives*

Our social value and community benefits policy objectives are designed to deliver social value through investment in jobs and training, supply chain initiatives, education, environment and local communities including culture. This allows us to leave a lasting legacy across a range of measures in the communities where we work.



## 4. Our approach in Eryri

### 4.1. Strategic policies

HOCHTIEF's strategic policies set the tone for how we do the right thing on human rights, supply chain, skills, inclusion and diversity. The following section details how we apply these policies and how we will put them into action on the Eryri VIP project.

#### Respecting human rights:

Our **Dignity at Work Procedure** encapsulates the principles of respect, protection and promotion of human rights. Bullying, harassment, victimisation or unfair treatment in any form is not tolerated. Any issues raised through our Grievance Procedure are taken very seriously. HOCHTIEF operates confidential internal and external whistle blowing hotlines for employees and third parties such as subcontractor staff. Our Corporate Compliance team deals with internal calls with discretion; external calls are handled by an independent legal expert.

We ensure that working environments are safe, with suitable welfare provisions; our Health & Safety Site Welfare Procedure details how we consistently provide suitable facilities, in line with the CDM Regulations, HSE Welfare at Work guidance and other relevant standards.

#### Creating value-adding work in the supply chain:

We aim to enhance the communities in which we work, including Llandecwyn, Penrhyndeudraeth, Minffordd, and Porthmadog and the postcode areas LL47, LL48 and LL49. We will boost the local economy through creation of opportunities for SMEs and local businesses. Our **local employment strategy** for the project will ensure decent work in the supply chain by engaging local subcontractors, and locally advertising works suitable for SMEs.

**Throughout the project we will be supporting National Grid's commitment to the Living Wage Foundation in the UK.**

To select new suppliers, we will complete a full competency assessment, which includes: safety records and procedures; training; insurance; accreditations; financial information; and equality, diversity and inclusion. This enables us to identify potential supply chain partners with the best experience to successfully meet the contract requirements, and whose commitments to sustainable business practices align with those of National Grid and HOCHTIEF.

Interested suppliers can register their interest in our opportunities by emailing [svip.opportunities@hochtief.co.uk](mailto:svip.opportunities@hochtief.co.uk)

We will monitor and audit the performance of suppliers to ensure that agreements and standards are maintained throughout project delivery.

#### Contributing to skills development:

HOCHTIEF has a structured training programme for our own workforce and have a dedicated site-based HR Adviser to support ongoing requirements. We will provide support as needed to enable local suppliers to join the project supply chain. For example, at the Reading Station Upgrade project we identified a need for two small subcontractors to obtain BS 11000 certification. We mentored key people from their organisations through the process, arranged workshops with experts from our own organisation, and supported both in attaining certification within six months.

HOCHTIEF is also a partner member of the [Supply Chain Sustainability School](#) (SCSS), which is a collaboration between clients, contractors and Tier 1 suppliers with a mutual interest in building the skills of the supply chain. The SCSS provides free training modules in leadership and management; procurement; people; fairness, inclusion & respect and sustainability, which will be used to train our own people and those of our subcontractors.



Figure 2 – SCSS self-assessment measures

HOCHTIEF contributes to the school as a funding partner and assists in developing the school's resources. The SCSS is set up by principal contractors and is funded by CITB and contractors. The supply chain can register and access information for free. At the point of onboarding, HOCHTIEF will ask suppliers to join SCSS where they can, then undertake a self-assessment which identifies modules relevant for them.

We will also engage with local communities and job centres throughout the project to promote opportunities for local businesses and new recruits. We are currently working closely with two recruitment agencies based in North Wales to attract local applicants. We have posted our opportunities on local Facebook job sites, and intend to use the local JobCentre Plus sites at Porthmadog, Pwllheli, Caernarfon and Dolgellau.

HOCHTIEF has a successful **apprenticeship** scheme which has been used to employ local people on our past projects. We will endeavour to provide suitable apprenticeship opportunities as part of the Eryri VIP scheme and encourage wider apprenticeship opportunities. We will start engaging with local schools and colleges such as Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor with a view to secure an intake of apprentices in autumn 2023. Our offering will include degree apprenticeships for engineering/commercial roles, and we will work to establish suitable providers for all of our apprenticeship options.

To maximise the opportunities we offer to young people, we will also contact local schools and colleges to offer site visits and short-term work experience placements. These will include Ysgol Eifionydd, Porthmadog and Ysgol Ardudwy, Harlech, as well as primary schools within their catchment areas.



## SUCCESS STORY: Schools STEM event at Pont Briwet Bridge Replacement

We invited Year 11 pupils from Ysgol Ardudwy to join us on site to learn about engineering and construction, which included an educational workshop in collaboration with the Construction Industry Training Board. *"This event provided a welcome opportunity for children from the area to realise that there are a range of job opportunities that are open to them here in Gwynedd."* – Councillor Gareth Roberts, Gwynedd Council Cabinet Member for Environment. We also supported the design of two children's playgrounds in the villages of Talsarnau and Penrhyndeudreath, to benefit the local community



### Supporting inclusion and diversity:

In line with and in addition to our obligations under the Equality Act 2010, our **Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy** recognises the value of fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce. We will not discriminate on the grounds of age, gender, race, religious beliefs or disability and this is enshrined in our Equal Opportunities and Diversity Procedure.

We check prospective subcontractors for their equality policies and practices and include terms in subcontracts that require suppliers to comply with their statutory obligations and HOCHTIEF's Equal Opportunities Policy and Procedure. Everyone working on site on the Eryri tunnelling contract, including subcontractor personnel, will complete the SCSS Diversity and Inclusion module. Our HR Advisor will champion inclusion and diversity awareness on site.

**National Grid and HOCHTIEF are committed to providing opportunities to diverse suppliers including small and local businesses, minority suppliers and social enterprises.**

As a demonstration of our commitment to the local community and culture, we are promoting Welsh speaking throughout our employment and supply chain, particularly in roles where being fluent in the Welsh language is important. HOCHTIEF staff commenced Welsh language lessons in August 2022. We will respect Welsh cultural heritage across all aspects of the project and ensure and encourage the use of the Welsh language.

#### ***Q. How will you identify potential diverse suppliers?***

We will identify social enterprises and SMEs with whom we could collaborate to generate new opportunities throughout the project. For example, we could provide employment and training opportunities for people with learning disabilities in their own community, and would be delighted to engage with them to provide opportunities during the delivery of the project.

#### ***Q. How will you ensure opportunities are communicated and made available to the extended supply chain?***

In conjunction with the Welsh Government's **Supplier Development Service** we will hold a **Meet the Buyer day** in the early stages of the project and at key milestones to enable as many local suppliers as possible to meet us and explore opportunities to work together.

Our first Meet the Buyer day will take place in early 2023, and meetings will then take place regularly at key milestones. The venue will be local to the site, in Penrhyndeudraeth. We will advertise subcontracting opportunities locally and on **Sell2Wales**, which we regularly use with great success, and will ask larger subcontractors to do the same.

### SUCCESS STORY: Local procurement on Pont Briwet Bridge Replacement

We held local Meet the Buyer events to discuss the project with suppliers from the area (pictured). Local subcontractors included Mulcair (£4m), Jennings (£1m) and North Wales Fencing (£60k). Involvement in the Pont Briwet project helped local firms to win additional work, for example, we recommended our materials supplier Porthmadog Concrete to a piling contractor who went on to use them on future projects. We benefited the region's economy by hiring equipment locally (Penrhyn Tool Hire) and using a local rescue boat based out of Pwllheli. 70% of our workforce were locally employed; for those staff who did travel to site we used B&Bs, pubs, restaurants and shops in the surrounding areas of Penrhyndeudraeth, Porthmadog, Llandecwyn, Harlech and Criccieth. We also held long-term rental agreements for properties over the winter period; providing a reliable revenue stream for landlords who typically rely on summer tourism.



#### 4.2. Supply chain opportunities

The complex and extensive nature of our work opens the door to a number of employment opportunities across a range of disciplines. The table below shows opportunities available for the local workforce in direct employment or through the supply chain.

Opportunity	Description
Management & supervisory staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engineering, commercial management, administration, stores</li> </ul>
<b>General subcontract packages (foreseen to be opportunities for local companies)</b>	
Catering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Canteen at Garth compound, kitchen at the off-site living accommodation</li> </ul>
Security, cleaning, maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site security services, office cleaning, site maintenance</li> <li>Cleaners, laundry, catering and rodent control for purpose built accommodation</li> </ul>
Earthworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site clearance, topsoil strip, construction of earthworks and working platforms at Garth and Llandecwyn</li> </ul>
Civil engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permanent and temporary roads</li> <li>Temporary structures within compounds, minor structures within shafts</li> </ul>
Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction and fit-out of two tunnel head house buildings</li> </ul>
Construction plant and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plant hire, equipment, builders merchant materials, bulk materials</li> </ul>
Waste disposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General construction waste for recycling</li> <li>Shaft and tunnel arisings</li> </ul>
Landscaping, land reinstatement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landscaping including tree planting</li> <li>Reinstatement of worksites to previous use including land drainage and earthworks</li> </ul>
<b>Specialist subcontract packages (not foreseen to be opportunities for local companies)</b>	
Specialist Tier 2 contracts will advertise suitable site-based roles locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shafts contractor</li> <li>Tunnelling contractor</li> <li>High voltage systems contractor</li> <li>Mechanical &amp; electrical contractor</li> </ul>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	
Ancillary roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drivers, trades, general labour, logistics, office staff</li> <li>Civil works for accommodation compound</li> </ul>

Table 1: Local workforce opportunities

#### **4.3. Workforce accommodation**

Short term and longer term accommodation will be required for on-site National Grid and HOCHTIEF staff at various intervals throughout the project.

The main project offices and canteen will be provided at Garth along with a medical facility with nurse attendance linked to the hospital and doctors surgery. Other facilities will include welfare, changing rooms, training rooms and stores. A smaller project office and welfare site will be established at Llandecwyn. No living accommodation will be provided on the Garth or Llandecwyn sites.

Limited parking will be provided on the sites, with additional workforce parking at the off-site living accommodation facility, with a shuttle minibus running to worksites. The shuttle will also stop at train stations and bus stops to encourage the local workforce to travel sustainably.

Notices, signs and other communications will be bilingual in Welsh and English, and also made available in other languages and formats as required. Active travel will be encouraged where appropriate.

Below is an outline of our plans for workforce accommodation at various stages throughout the project.

##### **2022-2026:**

As the project gets underway, the project staff and workforce will use locally available living accommodation including hotels, B&Bs, rented accommodation and caravans. Due to booking levels in the tourist season some accommodation will be block booked for use by project staff. Potential accommodation providers can register their interest by emailing [svip.opportunities@hochtief.co.uk](mailto:svip.opportunities@hochtief.co.uk)

##### **2023 to 2026:**

HOCHTIEF is developing plans for a bespoke workforce living accommodation facility in the local area to ensure suitable and sufficient accommodation for workers in the tourist seasons as well as through the winters. This will also ensure that specialist subcontractors can mobilise their best people and accommodate them even at short notice. We have selected a site after an extensive search and consideration of a number of options in the local area. Planning permission is being sought for the site in Penrhyndeudraeth.

A rental agreement and code of conduct will be prepared to reinforce respect for neighbours, appropriate behaviour and to encourage volunteering and work in the community. This facility will have approximately 100 ensuite bedrooms with broadband Wi Fi, a television lounge, recreation and kitchen areas, plus security on the gate and surveillance.

Workers will use the living accommodation to suit their shift patterns which will normally be single shifts, with three shifts per day during the tunnel drive period.

Our associated spend in the local economy will include restaurants, cafes, leisure centres, gyms and shops. To promote and encourage use of local facilities by the workforce, HOCHTIEF will display information about local leisure facilities in the site accommodation.

We recognise that some staff and workforce may choose to rent other off-site accommodation, particularly site visitors and families.

##### **2027 to 2029:**

Workforce living accommodation will be sought in the local area following demobilisation of the workforce accommodation facility.

#### 4.3.1. Progress to date from contract award in January 2022 to May 2023

As of the end of May 2023 we have made the following progress on delivering value to the local community.

##### Employment

11 of HOCHTIEF's employees live within the LL postcode area (out of 30 staff employed on the project at our temporary office in Trawsfynydd).

Seven employees within the team are fluent Welsh speakers, with an additional eight currently taking classes.

##### Supply chain

We have made several key local appointments that are crucial to our plans:

- Gwynedd Archaeological Trust has been contracted to undertake archaeological investigations.
- Atmos Consulting Ltd has been contracted to undertake environmental consultancy and mitigation works.
- Williams Cleaning Services has been contracted to undertake cleaning of the Trawsfynydd temporary offices.

A full list of the local companies we have appointed is included below, with reference to their location.

- Aggregates: Breedon Quarry (Penrhyndeudraeth – LL48 6HP)
- Archaeology: Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (Bangor – LL57 2RT)
- Compounds set up and prep: Jennings (Colwyn Bay – LL29 8TH)
- Crane hire: Bob Francis Crane Hire (Rhuddlan – LL18 5UE)
- Ecologists: Atmos Consulting (Mold – CH7 1XP)
- Environmental waste: GEWS (Penrhyndeudraeth – LL48 6LT)
- Estate agents: Tom Parry (Porthmadog – LL49 9LW)
- Fire extinguishers and servicing: Assured Fire Services (Llandudno – LL30 9FS)
- Kitchen condiments and foods: Castell Howell (Porthmadog – LL49 9NY)
- Land at Penamser Road: D&J Holdings Ltd (Porthmadog – LL49 9HU)
- Medium to large plant hire: GAP Plant Hire (Bangor – LL57 4YH)
- Occupational health: CAER Health Services (Wrexham – LL13 7YT)
- Office and welfare cleaning: Williams/Wilkinson Cleaning (Trawsfynydd – LL43 2AG)
- Palisade fencing: North Wales Fencing (Bangor – LL57 4BG)
- PAT testing: Harrison (P.A.T.) Services (Rhyl – LL18 4QG)
- Planning consultancy: Cadnant Planning (Conwy – LL32 8UB)
- Plant hire: Roberts Plant Hire (Llanrwst – LL26 0EE)
- Site guards and CCTV: Corvus Security (Bethesda – LL57 3AF)
- Small tools hire and purchase: Penrhyn Hire Ltd (Penrhyndeudraeth – LL48 6LE)
- Staff accommodation: Plas Weunydd Hotel (Blaenau Ffestiniog – LL41 3NB)
- Steel fabrication: Eifion Engineering (Chwilog – LL53 6LQ)
- Stock fencing: Ffensio Morgan Dafydd Fencing (Llanrwst – LL26 0HR)
- Traffic management: AMBERON (Conwy – LL32 8HB)
- Waste skips/wheelie bins: Veolia (Penrhyndeudraeth – LL48 6LT)
- Water management and flood risk: Waterco (Rhuthun – LL15 1NJ)
- Welsh language translation: Cymen (Caernarfon – LL55 2AY)

## **5. Governance**

### **5.1. Document reviews and updates**

This document will be reviewed on a six month basis by the HOCHTIEF HR Advisor.

Significant changes will be discussed with and issued to the local authorities for acceptance prior to implementation.

## 6. Terms and definitions

The table below defines frequently used acronyms and abbreviations within this document.

Table 2: Definitions

Abbreviation / Acronym	Definition
CG	Cyngor Gwynedd
HOCHTIEF	HOCHTIEF (UK) Construction Ltd
SCSS	Supply Chain Sustainability School



## Appendix A – Off-site workers living accommodation facility

Proposed site plan accommodation area

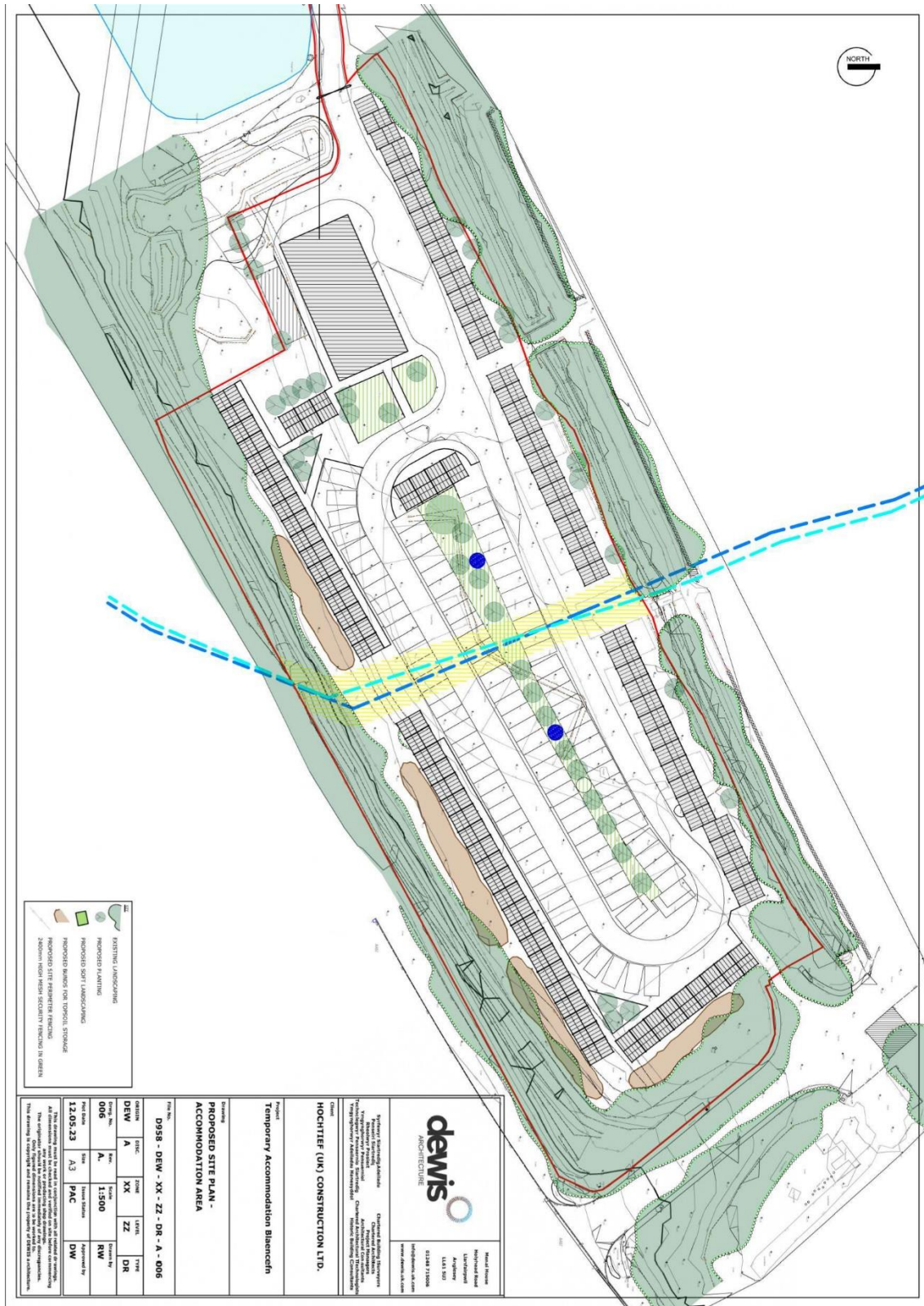


Figure 3 – Layout of the proposed workers accommodation facility

### **Different formats**

Please let us know if you or anyone you know require consultation documents in different formats, such as alternative languages, Braille or large print.

### **Contact us**

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