Swansea Rural Transport Strategy
Final Report

July 2018

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Swansea Rural Transport Strategy
Final Report

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1. Executive Summary

1.1   This Rural Transport Strategy was commissioned by Swansea Council (SC) to explore how rural transport provision in the Gower and Mawr can be improved to better facilitate sustainable travel by residents and tourists. As a result of consultation activities and engagement with SC Officers, a number of initiative proposals have been recommended within this Rural Transport Strategy to achieve the aims of this Rural Transport Strategy.

2. Introduction

2.1 Overview

Capita Real Estate and Infrastructure was appointed in July 2017 to produce a Rural Transport Strategy Swansea Council (SC), focussing specifically on Rural Swansea.

Recognising that rural public transport has a key role to play in connecting people to socially necessary services such as employment, education and healthcare, it is our intention to assist SC develop a rural transport system that residents find accessible and attractive to use. The Rural Transport Strategy also aims to be beneficial to visitors by enabling more sustainable access to attractions across the area.

Within the context of this report it was agreed that 'Walking' would not be considered as a form of transport. It is acknowledged that, as a leisure activity walking plays a key role in attracting visitors to the area. However, as a form of transport capable of moving people across Rural Swansea it is agreed that walking was not an appropriate mode of transport within the scope of this Strategy.

2.2 Study Areas

Figure 2.1 outlines the two locations; the Gower and Mawr. The Gower is located to the west of Swansea and is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Gower attracts tourists all year round to its numerous beaches and tourist attractions. Meanwhile, the Mawr is located to the north of Swansea. The area has attractions such as the Cwm Clydach Bird Reserve and the Lliw Reservoirs which has a visitor centre and is known for its wildlife, walking and fishing.

Rural Swansea is identified as 8 rural wards with a total land area of 248.98 km² (2011 census);

- Bishopston;
- Fairwood;
- Gower;
- Llangyfelach;
- Mawr;
- Penclawdd;
- Pennard; and
- Pontarddulais.

Figure 2.1 The Gower and Mawr Locations
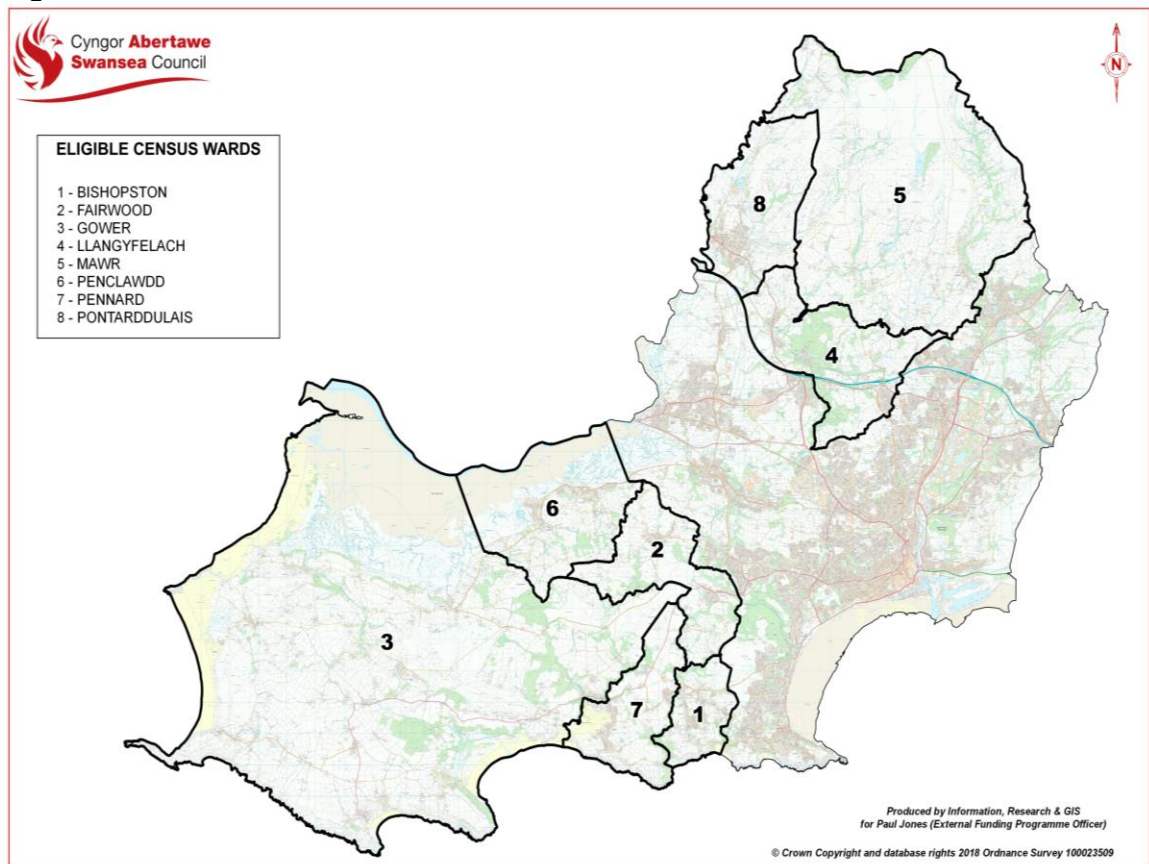
Rural Swansea is a very well-studied area. Over the years there has been a plethora of publicly and privately funded studies investigating a very wide range of topics and issues. Within many of these studies, transport, travelling to and from and within Rural Swansea has featured strongly. A key aim of this Strategy was not to simply repeat the methodology and findings of these studies.

Consequently, it was decided that the consultation event would form the foundation of this Study. It was agreed that discussions and feedback gained from the Workshop would form the starting point and that these ideas would be developed in this Strategy.

2.3   Aims

This Rural Transport Strategy aims to build upon the following objectives for rural transport in the study area:

Integrated Transport Programme (ITP) Schemes:

- With the support of partners, work with stakeholders to develop and deliver schemes; and
- Support a stronger role for local communities in identifying local needs in rural areas and explore how these needs can be met.

Increase Sustainable Transport Opportunities:

- Facilitate increased walking, cycling and public transport by developing and improving the existing network.

Improve the quality of Rural Passenger Transport:

- Seek to make passenger transport responsive to people's real needs, being flexible, extensively advertised, integrated, stable and reliable;
- Co-ordinate services to make best use of what is available. Working with bus and train operators, and where necessary, investing in community and voluntary transport to provide services in areas not adequately served by scheduled bus services; and
- Work with partners to investigate the provision of more responsive passenger transport, improved information and passenger transport facilities and co-ordinate service provision.

3. Consultation Activities

3.1 Introduction

On Thursday 9th November 2017, stakeholders and Council Officers were invited to a consultation workshop. A total of 29 individuals attended with attendees from stakeholder groups including cycling and walking campaign groups, SC Officers and Councillors, as well as other representatives from other stakeholder organisations.

The attendees were split into six groups to undertake six activities as outlined below:

- **Activity 1** – Groups were requested to identify constraints, issues, opportunities and barriers to rural transport provision across the Gower across all modes;
- **Activity 2** - Groups were invited to identify where improvements can be made on the existing network. The location of improvements, barriers and constraints were marked on a plan along with an explanation of the barriers & constraints;
- **Activity 3** - Groups were requested to propose new routes and route extensions including recommendations to complete missing links on the plans;
- **Activity 4** – Groups were asked to prioritise a nominal figure of £100 across a list of items that included investing in public transport, cycling routes, improved signage and improved parking to name a few. Attendees could divide the allocation equally or give the full allocation to one item;
- **Activity 5** – Attendees were given a list of areas and were asked to prioritise each area from 1 (most important) to 10 (least important). Areas included healthcare, employment, public transport interchanges, primary schools, secondary schools, tourist attractions and leisure activities. Attendees could add their own area; and
- **Activity 6** – Groups were invited to provide a prioritised list of schemes which were categorised into short, medium and long term.

The remainder of this chapter outlines the outcome of the consultation activities.

3.2 Results Summary

The following section summarises each of the consultation activities. Proposals from the mapping exercises (Activities 2 and 3) have been included in the proposed maps, where appropriate.

Activity 1 – Constraints, Barriers, Issues and Opportunities

The most common barrier identified by all groups was a lack of finance for investment in rural transport. All groups also cited the geography (narrow lanes and topography in certain Gower locations) as a barrier to rural transport. Barriers to cycling were also stated, along with a lack of transport integration. Similarly, the most common issue identified was accessing services and facilities due to long and infrequent journey times.

Suggestions for areas of opportunity were wide ranging, although many responses focused on the following:

- Improved active travel routes;
- Increased information of public transport services; and
- Improved community transport services to fill in the gaps in public transport.

Activities 2 & 3

Proposals from the mapping exercises (Activities 2 and 3) have been included in the proposed maps, where appropriate.

Activity 4 – Prioritisation for Investment

Each Group was given £100 to invest in improving and enhancing the sustainable transport network in the area. The cumulative investment totals are displayed in Graph 3.1.

Graph 3.1 – Prioritised Investment (across all stakeholder groups)

GRAPH 3.1 - PRIORITISED INVESTMENT

Category	Value
Other: Pedestrian only areas	0
Developing new Bridleways	2
Other: Accessible transport	5
Other: Info & advertising car share	5
Other: Digital Information	10
Other: Community Transport	10
Other: Smart ticketing	10
Upgrading the existing Bridleway network	12
Other: Improve toilets	15
Improved Parking Provision	15
Other: Fairwood transport hub/interchange	20
Other: Improving public transport real information-…	30
Other: Traffic calming limits	30
Improved Signage	33
Improved public Transport interchange	35
Improved weekend public transport	39
Upgrading the existing cycle network	44
Gower Shuttle Bus	80
Improved weekday public transport	85
Developing new cycle routes	120

Activity 5 – Areas for Investment

Table 3.1 shows how the attendees at the consultation event prioritised each area from 1 (most important) to 13 (least important).

Table 3.1 Areas for Investment

Areas for Investment	Priority	Areas for Investment	Priority
Employment	1	Other: Links with Swansea	8
Public Transport Interchanges	2	Other: GP Practices	9
Healthcare	3	Other: Part/Education	10
Secondary Schools	4	Other: Environment/Green Space	11
Primary Schools	5	Other: Further Education	12
Tourist Attractions	6	Other: Smart ticketing (shared tickets)	13
Leisure Activities	7		

Activity 6 – Scheme Priorities

Schemes were prioritised into short, medium and long term. The majority of groups prioritised community transport, public transport and cycling schemes as short term, whereas transport interchange hubs were suggested as long term improvements. This exercise also included specific routes and scheme recommendations to connect specified settlements and facilities, as outlined in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Prioritised List of Schemes

	Prioritised List Of Schemes		
	Scheme	Short Medium Long	Reason
Group 1	Community transport. Dial a ride flexible routes scheme	S-M	Provides flexible service for everyone – efficient and serves bus dense population areas
	Develop smart ticketing within area and preferably outside	M	To make integrated transport efficient and economic
	Moped hire – wheels to work – possible electric	S	Flexible pre use. Young people & lower income
	Develop rural transport hub – possible with park & ride with car share	M-L	To make public transport work better and be less linear
	Promote and increase the use of car sharing in Swansea. Share Cymru is car sharing provider	S-M	Could unlock potential as car use is high
	Develop a round Gower cycle route	M-L	Because active travel is currently difficult
	Work on current cycle route black spots	S-M	Quick wins to make cycling safer and better
	Look for gaps in footpath network	S-M	To make walking routes function better
	Look for bridleway sections to integrate into cycle network	M	To plug links to network
Group 2	Gower access path shared walking and cycle path. Bishopston to Mayals	M	Dangerous to cycle across common, fast moving traffic. Boost economy and environment
	A bus service connecting Mawr communities together and to the city	S	No service exists between the villages in Mawr-improve local

			economy wellbeing and future generation
	Shuttle bus from Southgate/Pennard to Scurlage and beyond (GP practice)	M	To allow access to GP services and the rest of Gower
	Upgrade Lethid footpath to restricted byway to enable cyclist to use S-N Gower link	S	Allows cycle route South-North Gower link
	Complete Penclawdd to Gowerton cycle link (1/2 mile gap)	M	In progress
	Connect rural communities to shopping outlets i.e. Fforestfach	M	Accessibility- Could be once a week to establish need. Flat ease of use, choice in small area
	Improve footpaths and provide cycle paths around Lliw reservoirs	S	Impaired tourism, health and wellbeing – boost to area
	Emergency phones along rural roads and cycle routes.	L	Where network coverage is patchy
Group 3	Completion of cycling routes	S-M	Encourage modal shift
	Creation of Swansea – Rhossili cycle route improvement	S	Encourage modal shift
	Progress cycle network to modern standards	M-L	Encourage modal shift
	Gowerton interchange	M	Improve interlinks with trains
	Speed limits-general 40mph, 20mph local	M	Safer /Clearer
Group 4	Traffic interchange hubs at Gowerton, Killay-shuttle buses back and fore or round trip	S-L	To provide regular frequent service to access priority list (see before)
	Complete and join up cycle routes	M	Gaps not filled in-must join main roads (dangerous)
	Traffic calming measures in Gower	S	Roads shared by walkers, cyclists and cars - dangerous
Group 5	Digital real time access to timetables	S	Apps can be developed relatively cheaply
	Pontardulais/Gorseinon cycle finished	M	Useful connector for leisure and commute
	Extra bus axis Pennard to Gowerton	S	
	Bus interchange at Cilibion	M	Dangerous right now
	Wherever cycle network drops onto highway-remove and separate	L	
	Upgrade access to toilets	S-M	
	Upgrade signage. Make each use clear to its users, car, cycle, walker	S	View as a stranger and see how confusing/lacking it is
Group 6	Water taxi	S-M	Across around the coast
	New and improved cycle routes	S-M-L	
	Transport hub/Interchanges e.g. Fairwood, Gowerton, Roynoldston	M-L	Park and rides, intermodal and better more frequent connections
	More Electric vehicle charging points	S-M	Swansea should be leading on this
	Fleet of small electric buses	M-L	
	Real time bus time tables on bus stops	S	Encourage people to use Buses

Cheaper car parking and /or car park tickets also act as a day bus pass	S	

3.3   Public Transport Suggestions

It was acknowledged during the consultation that seasonality and journey times are issues for public transport. During the winter, some routes do not have enough demand from the residential population to make the service economically viable, while in the summer, passenger numbers are boosted by tourists visiting the area.

In respect of journey times, public transport services will not compete with the private vehicles. However, public transport offers several advantages in comparison to private vehicle travel, and as such, the advantages require further promotion.

The following outlines key recommendations received during the consultation activities:

- Upgrade / improve public transport provision and frequency during the week and weekend. Services should provide frequent journeys across strategic routes to cater for regular residential users during the off-peak season, as well as tourists during the peak season;
- Provide smart ticketing or an integrated ticketing system that enables passengers to disembark and embark at multiple locations and modes i.e. bus stops and train stations;
- Renovate / upgrade existing public transport infrastructure at bus stops and train stations. Public transport infrastructure requires directional signage, real-time information, time and distance to nearby attractions, lighting, seating and access for all;
- Invest in additional routes including the *'Gower Explorer'* along the following routes for example:
  - Swansea – Rhossili (Hourly);
  - Swansea – Rhossili including Pennard / Oxwich and Reynoldston / Port Eynon (2 hourly). During the peak, extend to and from Swansea train station;
  - Swansea – Three Crosses (Hourly). During peak, extend to and from Llanrhidian, Llangennith, Scurlage and Port Eynon;
  - An all-year Sunday / Bank Holiday service including Swansea – Rhossili. For example, Seven buses proposed each day with the same timetable; and
  - A service all-year between Swansea, Penclawdd and Llangennith.

3.4   Cycling Suggestions

Cycling was identified as a key area for development during the consultation activities. A number of cycling specific comments were raised. At the workshop, 60% of consultees highlighted that new cycling infrastructure should be prioritised to receive either the highest or second highest amount of investment of all the transport opportunities in the rural areas of Swansea. Integrating bridleways into the cycling network was also identified as a key area for improvement. Also mentioned were improvements to the standard of cycle routes and to link missing sections of the cycle network.

Integration of the cycle network with public transport was also raised as a key issue as bicycles are not permitted on all buses. A number of other specific new routes were recommended

during the consultation which have been considered in line with the other proposals and included on the proposed routes maps, where appropriate.

3.5   Vehicle Suggestions

Improvements to car parking, as well as the promotion and implementation of traffic calming were identified as two opportunities that would improve road safety and reduce congestion in Rural Swansea.

3.6   Other Proposals

During the consultation activities, additional recommendations were suggested such as:

- Pedestrian zones;
- Improved walking routes;
- Integration with the existing cycle network / bridleways;
- Water taxis; and
- Electric Vehicle Charging / Electric Bicycles.

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4. Public Transport – Evaluation & Recommendations

4.1 Introduction

Public transport is an important part of every community. As such, considerable work has been undertaken in recent years to provide, as well as promote, access to Rural Swansea by public transport. Despite this, consultation identified that a lack of public transport services in certain locations, and at particular times i.e. evenings, weekends and during the off-season is still of concern.

The provision of public transport in rural areas presents a number of unique challenges to both the operator and passenger. This is especially true in an areas such as Rural Swansea due to the distinct seasonal shifts in demand. Low population density and the dispersal of key services and facilities also present significant challenges to the provision of public transport across the area.

For public transport operators, it is difficult to operate a profitable commercial service, due to the dispersed, low population and strong competition from private vehicles. As such, this can lead to the withdrawal of public transport commercial services. In addition, rising operating costs combined with reduced public sector funding has limited the ability of many Local Authorities to subsidise replacement services to the same level of frequency and coverage.

From the passenger's perspective, rural dwellers require fixed robust timetables that offer reliable access to employment, education and healthcare. Individuals across all demographics have different requirements for example, the elderly can adapt to more flexible timetables, while commuters require fixed timetables. However, in rural areas where the demand can only support a low service frequency, it may be difficult for a conventional public transport services to meet these different accessibility needs.

Rural Swansea is an attractive place to live, work and visit. However, poor access to services result in many people suffering transport-related problems such as missing health appointments and late arrivals to work. In addition, within the Rural Swansea area there is a unique topography, variable seasons and infrastructural limitations. As such, this creates a unique environment for public transport.

4.2 Existing Public Transport Network

For the majority of residents in Rural Swansea, private vehicles are the dominant mode of transport. This contributes significantly to congestion in rural areas, particularly during the peak season, which leads to economic, social and environmental problems.

Public buses, at present, reach most parts of the study area from central Swansea. The main routes in south and north Gower have frequent services, though the smaller villages in north-west and south Gower have limited service provision. In addition, public transport traveling times from Swansea to the smaller villages by public transport are significantly higher than undertaking the same journey by car.

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Table 4.1 and Appendix 1 outline bus services provided in the Gower to Swansea. There are currently no rural train stations available in the study area. However, Gowerton rail station is accessible from both the Gower and Mawr.

It has been identified that western rural areas such as Llangennith, Reynoldston and Rhossili, there is only one bus service that provides access to Swansea before 09:00. This suggests that the existing bus provision, as highlighted in Table 4.1, is not flexible and robust.

Table 4.1 The Gower Bus Service

Origin	Destination	Dept	Arrival	Duration	Changes	Single Fare
Llangennith	Swansea Bus Station	07:05	08:30	1hr 25mins	0	Adult £4.80 Child £3.20
Reynoldston	Swansea Bus Station	07.49	08:41	52 mins	0	Adult £4.80 Child £3.20
Rhossili	Swansea Bus Station	07:23	08:41	1hr 18mins	0	Adult £4.80 Child £3.20

It is clear from Table 4.1 that peak time rural bus transport services are not robust enough to improve the usage of public transport. At present if one service does not operate, or runs late, passengers risk not getting to work on time, or missing medical appointments. There is no safety net for passengers if that service is not running or is delayed.

In addition to the infrequent services, at present, existing public transport infrastructure does not inspire confidence. Bus stops are substandard, many lack information, seating, lighting or shelter. As such, it is reasonable to suggest that this acts as a deterrent to increased public transport usage.

However, there are some examples of very good bus stop provision, and the facilities at Rhossili set the standard that future provision in the area should aim for. There is shelter, seating, lighting, timetable information and details on the attractions and facilities in the local area. That said, it is acknowledged, that due to topographical constraints, that not all bus stops in Rural Swansea have the space needed to provide facilities similar to those provided at Rhossili.

4.3 Proposed Public Transport Network

At present, the public transport services and infrastructure to and from rural areas of the Gower to Swansea is not meeting the requirements of residents and tourists as timetabling is infrequent and unreliable. Compare this situation to the range of services available from Gowerton Train station, as highlighted in Table 4.2 and the availability and frequency of public transport improves.

It is acknowledged that Gowerton does not lie within the study area, however, it is strategically placed, both in geographical and transport terms. The combination of bus and rail services from the Gowerton interchange provides 6 different connections capable of arriving into

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Swansea before 09:00. In addition, there are a range of services available after 17:00 onwards from Swansea towards Gowerton.

Table 4.2 Public Transport Services from and to Gowerton

Origin	Destination	Dept	Arrival	Duration	Changes	Single Fare
Before 09:00						
Gowerton – Bus	Swansea Bus Station	07:48	08:31	43 mins	0	Adult £3.80 Child £2.60
Gowerton – Bus	Swansea Bus Station	07:54	08:41	47 mins	0	Wide range
Gowerton – Bus	Swansea Bus Station	08:08	08:51	43 min	0	Wide range
Gowerton – Rail	Swansea Rail Station	07:25	07:40	15 mins	0	Approx. £3.60
Gowerton – Rail	Swansea Rail Station	07:54	08:10	16 mins	0	Approx. £3.60
Gowerton – Rail	Swansea Rail Station	08:36	08:51	15 mins	0	Approx. £3.60
After 17:00						
Swansea - Rail	Gowerton Rail Station	17:03	17:16	13 mins	0	Approx. £3.60
Swansea - Bus	Gowerton Rail Station	17:23	17:52	29 mins	0	£3.30
Swansea - Rail	Gowerton Rail Station	17:33	17:45	12 mins	0	Approx. £3.60
Swansea - Bus	Gowerton Rail Station	17:53	18:22	29 mins	0	£3.30
Swansea - Rail	Gowerton Rail Station	18:12	18:25	13 mins	0	Approx. £3.60
Swansea - Bus	Gowerton Rail Station	18:22	18:45	23 mins	0	£3.30

Gowerton Gateway

This frequency, combined with the proposed interchange improvements mean that Gowerton has as an important role to play as a gateway feature to Rural Swansea. It has the potential to enhance sustainable transport opportunities for motorists and cyclists and for commuters and visitors. Increased vehicle parking, improved cycle parking and enhanced connections to the public transport network all combine to mean Gowerton has the potential to provide enhanced interchange opportunities.

As Table 4.2 suggests, Gowerton Rail Station provides almost on a 'turn up and go' frequency to Swansea. In addition, the strategic location of Gowerton Rail Station provides the opportunity to intercept private vehicles arriving into the area.

By intercepting private vehicles travelling in to the Gower at the Gowerton Rail Station, it is possible to reduce congestion across Rural Swansea. A Park and Ride scheme during the peak season, located conveniently at Gowerton Rail Station would provide tourists, as well as everyday users the opportunity to take the bus or train to their final destination.

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It is acknowledged that Gowerton can be difficult to reach from some areas of the Gower. Consequently, Killay was investigated as a potential location of the Southern Gower Gateway feature. However, Killay does not benefit from the same level of service provision and frequency as Gowerton. In addition, there is not the space to provide enhanced interchange facilities such as vehicle parking, cycling parking and fully integrated bus stops.

North & South Gower Mini Bus Services

Appendix 2 suggests possible routes for a North and South Gower mini bus service. The two new recommended mini-bus vehicles include; one for the North and the other for the South Gower. During the AM & PM commuter peaks these services should focus on connecting commuters to the main line services at Gowerton and Kittle / Killay.

Proposed North: Llangennith – Bury Green – Llanrhidian – Wernffrwd - Llanmorlais – Penclawdd – Three Cross – Dunvant – Gowerton

Proposed South: Rhossili – Pilton Green – Scurlage – Nicholaston – Penmaen – Park Mill – Killay

The limitations of providing enhanced interchange at Killay have already been explained. However, a mini bus that traverses South Gower before connecting to main line services at Killay would require less infrastructure and provide residents and visitors with improved public transport access.

The North Gower route provides residents in that area, were existing public transport provision is low, with an opportunity to gain improved access to the strategic main line services that operate from Gowerton. These additional services would act to improve the frequency and robustness of the existing network.

Demand Responsive Transport

At present, there are no solely demand responsive transport schemes in Rural Swansea. Some of the Community and Voluntary Services and the Good Neighbour Health Care scheme offer elements of demand responsive transport. In areas of low demand, demand responsive transport represents a cost-effective way of providing services to rural communities.

Bwcabus, operating in Carmarthenshire, is an example of best practise. This is a demand responsive flexible local public transport service, helping people living in parts of rural Carmarthenshire get to work and to access education, training and health services. The service is tailored to the needs of the passengers by operating in response to pre-booked journey requests.

In February 2018 Bwcabus launched a new service in Pembrokeshire. The service that operates between Fishguard and Haverfordwest received grant funding of almost £1.8 million under the LINC (Local Integrated Network Collaboration) project.

The demand response transport schemes are membership based with a membership fee. In the majority of schemes, membership is restricted to people in the scheme who are elderly, are disabled or have a mental or physical condition. Newer schemes extend eligibility to anyone who has a transport need. As the service will be entirely new for the Gower and Mawr, there are opportunities to create a unique demand response service.

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The objective of Bwcabus is to improve public transport infrastructure for the community through providing frequent and reliable services to healthcare and education as well as other services such as employment, leisure facilities and visitor attractions. The investment and use of Bwcabus as a sustainable method of transport also reverses the long-term decline of rural bus services.

The benefit of this initiative is that not only does it connect to a wide range of services but it also provides carriage to wide range of people. Demand responsive transport can be accessible for disabled and elderly individuals, as minibuses with ramps, people carriers or busses are frequently the vehicle of choice.

Through providing a service which can be pre-booked in advance of the journey, it can combine the latest technologies (ITS, GPS, scheduling software etc.) to improve local services. This allows individuals to maintain their independence for longer as they choose what service they require and when. As members can book journeys in advance, fares are charged at a rate which varies according to distance travelled.

It should be noted that the provision of Demand Responsive Transport is both expensive and resource intensive. Whilst DRT is known to provide a vital lifeline for rural communities by facilitating connections to socially necessary services, Bwcbaus is a prime example, these services are predominantly used by the elderly.

Health Transport Schemes

In Rural Swansea, it is recognised that some individuals are not eligible for non-emergency Patient Transport Services. Individuals who are eligible for free transport to and from hospital must:

- Have a condition which means they need additional medical support during their journey;
- Find it difficult to walk; and
- Be a parents or guardians of children who are being transported

Patient Transport Services may not be available in all areas. As a result, some individuals find it difficult, or simply cannot access healthcare through the use of public transport.

A Patient Transport Services, providing local door-to-door alternative transport is recommended. An example of a successful scheme is provided by Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE). The ACRE Network and local transport providers have worked in partnership to provide solutions for individual communities, including demand responsive buses, community mini-buses, car-based taxis, 'good neighbour' schemes and even community rail partnerships. These schemes are demand responsive and provide essential transport for health and social reasons. In most cases the volunteer driver's own car will be used, there are two five seater accessible vehicles available as and when required.

In Swansea, there is currently one Good Neighbours scheme which is provided by the Royal Voluntary Service for Swansea, Neath, Port Talbot and Bridgend. This service offers practical help to older people - whether it's assisted shopping, accompanying to appointments or posting letters. Good Neighbours help counter social isolation and the service can act as a pre-emptive step to keep those who are vulnerable out of hospital.

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Wheels 2 Work

Swansea Council currently operate a Wheels 2 Work scooter loan scheme. It is a not-for-profit scooter loan scheme for those who have no other means of getting to, or keeping, a job/training due to a lack of public transport at times they require and no have transport of their own.

For £36 per week, an individual can access a scooter, training, equipment, tax, insurance, maintenance and breakdown cover.

While the scheme has the potential to provide connections to employment opportunities for those without access to their own car or the public transport network, scooters can be used outside of work. Scooters can also be used to connect to other socially necessary services and entertainment.

Voluntary and Community Transport Initiative

Voluntary and Community Transport provides journey opportunities for people who are unable to use conventional public transport, or who live in an area not frequently served by public transport. It can be used by people who are socially isolated from accessing basic public services and facilities, such as health care, employment and training services.

In rural areas, such initiatives can be of significant benefit. They are an essential part of an integrated transport system which feeds into and out from the main public transport corridors and interchanges. Although there appears to be little evidence to suggest how successful this is.

Voluntary and Community Transport initiatives recruit volunteer drivers who use their own vehicle, or sometimes company vehicle, to provide door-to-door transport. In Rural Swansea, the priority for transport is for health appointments, but also includes journeys that meet every day needs.

There are five voluntary and community transport initiatives that are located within Swansea including;

- Swansea Community Transport / Wheels to Work,
- Pontardulais and District Community Car Scheme,
- Gorseinon Car Scheme,
- Gower Voluntary Transport and
- DANSA (Dulais, Afan, Neath, Swansea and Amman valleys), Community Transport Organisation.

However, only two operate in the study area (Gower Voluntary Transport and DANSA Community Transport Organisation). Some services provide minibus hire, dial a ride services, voluntary car schemes and wheels to work. They meet the needs of disadvantaged groups, especially older and disabled people and have a strong community focus that are tailored to meet the needs of residents.

The Gower Voluntary Transport initiative provides accessible transport for people in the Gower peninsula who cannot access public transport, including the elderly, disabled and housebound. Typically trips cater for health appointments, shopping, hair appointments, hospital visits, trips to the station etc. The charge for each trips is based on distance covered.

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DANSA is a membership based not for profit community transport organisation that aims to provide a community transport service to people who may not have easy access to conventional transport arrangements. DANSA also provide a demand responsive service to Swansea for who live in the Urban Areas of Swansea.

DANSA operates a variety of vehicles from cars, multi-purpose vehicles and small mini buses to larger 16+ seat mini buses. The majority of the vehicles are fully accessible and are able to transport passengers who use wheelchairs. An important route by DANSA for this strategy is the return journey service from Gowerton – Llanrhidian (Table 4.3 and Table 4.4).[1]

Table 4.3 Gowerton – Llanrhidian

Gowerton – Llanrhidian					
Gowerton – Sterry Road	19:36	20:41	21:36	22:41	23:41
Gowerton – Hill Street	19:37	20:42	21:37	22:42	23:42
Three Crosses – Poundffald	R[2]	R	R	R	R
Blue Anchor	R	R	–	R	R
Penclawdd – Health Centre	19:43	20:48	21:43	22:48	23:48
Pencaerfenni Park	R	R	–	R	R
Crofty	19:46	20:51	–	22:51	23:51
Llanmorlais	19:48	20:53	–	22:53	23:53
Llanrhidian – Cross	19:53	20:58	–	22:58	23:58

R – Operates to these stops only by pre-booking

Table 4.4 Llanrhidian – Gowerton

Llanrhidian – Gowerton					
Llanrhidian – Cross	20:00	21:05	–	23:05	00:05
Llanmorlais	20:05	21:10	–	23:10	00:10
Crofty	20:07	21:12	–	23:12	00:12
Pencaerfenni Park	R	R	–	R	R
Penclawdd – Opp. Health Centre	20:10	21:15	22:15	23:15	00:15
Blue Anchor	R	R	R	R	R
Three Crosses – Poundffald	R	R	R	R	R
Gowerton – Sterry Road – Arrive	20:18	21:23	22:23	23:23	00:23
Llanrhidian – Cross	20:00	21:05	–	23:05	00:05

R – Operates to these stops only by pre-booking

The DANSA service operates Monday – Saturday evenings (No Service Sundays or Bank Holidays except Good Friday). The daytime service is operated by N.A.T Group (New Adventure Travel) under Route 116.

A proposed public transport network is contained within Appendix 3.

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[1] http://www.dansa.org.uk/route-timetables/116-route-timetable/

[2] R – Operates to these stops only by pre-booking

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4.4   Key Recommendations

A variety of measures have been proposed in Chapter 4. As a result, the following outline the key recommendations:

- Ensure Gowerton Train Station is a strategic interchange that captures private vehicle users and actively promotes / provides the opportunity to use public transport;
- Promote Park & Ride facilities at Gowerton;
- Provide a Demand Responsive Transport system which caters for all demographics and can be used for all;
- Provide North and South Gower Mini Bus Services;
- Provide strategic North South and East West connectivity;
- Engage the community and the voluntary sector to ensure the transport system adds value to the community and maximise the return on investment through partnership with National and Local Government, academia and the private sector;
- Aim to reverse the long term decline of rural bus use through investment in high quality, frequent and reliable services;
- Promote the use of Voluntary and Community Transport Initiatives, Wheels 2 Work, Demand Responsive Transport and Health transport schemes to accommodate the existing gaps in public transport provision throughout Rural Swansea.

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5.   Cycling – Evaluation & Recommendations

5.1   Introduction

Cycling is likely to continue to develop as a growth area for both tourists and residents. Participation in cycling as a leisure activity has significantly increased over recent years and current focusses on healthy lifestyles and Active Travel will see that trend continue.

Cycle provision in the area is limited, narrow roads with steep embankments characterise much of the road network. This creates an environment that in many places is not conducive to cycling and will act to deter even for the most enthusiastic riders.

Lowering the speed limits will help to improve road safety for vulnerable road users and thereby encourage increased cycling in the area. There is a direct link between cyclist safety and traffic speed – the higher the speed of vehicles the more likely a cyclist is to suffer serious or fatal injuries in a collision.[3]

Statistics published by The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) state that a 1 mph reduction in average speed would reduce accident frequency by about 3% on the higher speed urban roads and rural single carriageway main roads[4].

5.2   Existing Cycle Network

The existing cycle network in Swansea is focused around the main urban areas. The main routes connecting to the rural areas consist of the North Gower Trail which links from the NCN Route 4 in Gowerton to the Gower, and a route northwards from NCN Route 4 towards Pontarddulais. The existing cycle route map is included in Appendix 4.

Improving cycling in the rural areas is an important way to improve access to rural tourist attractions such as the beaches along the Gower, therefore, improving the rural economy. Cycling is also important for rural communities to access the larger settlements for facilities such as schools, leisure facilities and retail.

5.3   Proposed Cycle Network

The on road cycling opportunities in Rural Swansea areas are limited due to the nature of the narrow lanes which are not conducive to cycling, however, there are opportunities for off road cycle routes. It is recognised that while the Gower and Mawr are not considered 'Built Up Areas' as per the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013, this Rural Transport Strategy should apply the Active Travel legislation for cycling in the study area as it applies best practice principles for cycling infrastructure.

The map showing proposed cycle routes is included as Appendix 5.

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[3] https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/cyclists/cycling-accidents-factsheet.pdf
[4] https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/drivers/inappropriate-speed.pdf

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Active Travel

As part of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013, all existing routes were mapped and proposed new routes were developed using the Design Guidance as part of the Integrated Network Mapping Stage in 2016.

Although these routes mainly focus on the key Built-Up Areas (BUAs) in Swansea as designated by Welsh Government in 2013, there are a number of improvements to rural routes included in Swansea's proposals. These include improvements to a missing off road link along the North Gower Trail, and connections to Pontarddulais which is identified as a BUA, as well as a proposed route to Pennard.

It is acknowledged that Local Authorities are afforded discretion to include other areas within their Active Travel plans if they so wish.

Cycling on Bridleways

Cyclists have a right to ride on bridleways. There is a comprehensive network of existing bridleways across Rural Swansea. Appendix 6 shows the locations of the bridleways.

However, many of these are currently only suitable for off-road cycling so it is recommended that the feasibility of upgrading some of these routes to be suitable for both off-road (mountain bikes) and horse riders is investigated.

Wheelrights Proposals

Wheelrights are a cycle campaign group who campaign for improved cycle facilities and infrastructure in the Swansea Bay area. The group have developed a number of proposed cycle routes in Swansea that they believe would improve the cycle network. These were submitted as part of their formal response to the Active Travel (Wales) Act consultation in 2016.

Their key proposals in rural areas connect to Pontarddulais, and there are an additional four routes identified in the Gower (Appendix 7):

- Llanrhidian to Llanmadoc via Leason and Landimore;
- Rhossili to Hill End;
- B4271 at Llethryd to A4118 to the west of Parkmill; and
- Llanmadoc to Broughton Farm.

Sustrans: Pontarddulais – Grovesend Scheme

Sustrans are currently working to deliver the "Development of the Walking and Cycling Network in Rural Wales" rural development programme which intends to support local authorities and communities in improving links between rural communities.

The purpose of the Pontarddulais – Grovesend Scheme is for Sustrans to conduct a feasibility study on the provision of a new walking and cycling route between Grovesend and Pontarddulais, as well as for improving routes within Pontarddulais.

The outcome of the feasibility study will be a delivery plan which support the community and local authority in achieving funding opportunities for the further development and construction of the scheme. The route will connect to the end of the existing shared use path and follow

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the railway trackbed up to Allt Y Graban Road. From this point, there are currently two options for route alignments, both of which have advantages and disadvantages as discussed below.

Option 1 (Appendix 8a)

The route will continue west from Allt Y Graban Road along the B4296 to the south of the railway bridge. The route will either be an on road cycling route with on road cycling infrastructure or a segregated route in the highway verge.

Advantages: May reduce land required dependent on land owner agreement (Pentre Farm) and the amount of highway verge available.

Disadvantages: Less direct route than Option 2 and on road infrastructure is less attractive to a range of users. Requires adaptation of bridge over M4 and traffic management measures.

Option 2 (Appendix 8b)

This option uses the eastern section of Allt Y Graban Road. The alignment then turns north emerging onto the dismantled colliery site.

Advantages: Route is already being used for walking and cycling.

Disadvantages: Potential land owner issues.

Gowerton Rail Interchange

Gowerton Station is the nearest railway station to the Gower. There is a study currently in progress to investigate the viability of providing cycling infrastructure development at Gowerton Railway Station.

Tourists accessing the Gower from the station should have easily identifiable cycle routes from the station and be able to park their cars to ride from there. A variety of options are currently being explored for Gowerton Rail Interchange, some of which are improvements to the number of cycle and car parking spaces to facilitate this.

Increased cycle routes leading to Gowerton Station and increased cycle parking at the station will also improve the sustainable transport for commuting purposes. This will enable commuters to cycle to the station and leave their bicycles there before getting on a train into central Swansea, which in turn will help to reduce congestion on the roads during peak hours.

Cycle Hire

Cycle hire opportunities at the station and across the Rural Swansea should also be considered, such as Pedal Power in Cardiff. Pedal Power is a charity based in Cardiff that encourages and enables children and adults of all ages and abilities to experience the benefits of cycling. They offer a range of service including accessible bike hire, cycle tours, cycle training, repairs, amongst others service, for a variety of prices based on each service[5].

Locally BikeAbility Wales, based in Dunvant, provides cycle hire opportunities for those seeking access to Gowerton, Swansea Bay and Mumbles[6].

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[5] https://www.cardiffpedalpower.org/
[6] http://www.bikeabilitywales.org.uk/

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In Swansea, Swansea University are also implementing a Santander Cycle Scheme[7] which will be implemented in spring 2018 following their success at winning the Santander Cycles University Challenge. The scheme will initially have 5 cycle hire stations around the city and around 50 bicycles.

It is suggested that the feasibility of a cycle hire scheme located at the Gowerton station is investigated.

Cycle Tourism

Cycle tourism in the UK is growing, with many areas of the UK targeting the cycle market with niche products to attract visitors. As such, there are huge opportunities to invest in and promote cycling. Through hosting and promoting cycling events, Rural Swansea could benefit from a growth of tourism from a national to international scale.

There are a variety of opportunities that range from cycle events to bespoke cycle holidays to mountain biking to day trips or countryside trails. Not only does cycle tourism attract visitors, but there are also direct and indirect employment benefits in industries supplying the cycle tourism sector.

There are a number of cycling specific events and businesses already taking place in Rural Swansea and many of the tourist accommodation providers advertise specifically for cyclists. Improving investment and development of the necessary infrastructure will only encourage more businesses to come to the area with a specific cycle tourism product. In turn, this will encourage more visitors and tourists into the area.

Gower Cycle Festival

Wheelrights, a local cycle campaign group in the Swansea Bay area have been organising the Gower Cycle Festival for the past 8 years. The festival is held for a week during August each year and consists of a number of organised cycle rides and incorporated events throughout the Swansea area including the Gower. Each ride is graded as easy, moderate or challenging along with a brief description of the route. The routes are all centred on the local attractions and some include visits to museums and attractions along the way.

The event is advertised mainly by fliers and online. It attracts cyclists to Rural Swansea, as well as the surrounding areas. The event also advertises local campsites and places to stay for non-local cyclists to the area. The festival in 2017 attracted 154 registrations.

Swansea Gower Sportive

For the first time in April 2018, the Swansea Gower Sportive took place[8]. Comprising of a 70 mile cycle route around the Gower, the event attracted approximately 300 cyclists. Increased advertising of events such as this will attract more cyclists to the area which in turn will encourage event organisers to plan further events.

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[7] http://www.swansea.ac.uk/bikescheme/
[8] https://www.swanseagowersportive.co.uk/route/

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5.4 Key Recommendations

A variety of measures have been proposed in Chapter 5. The following outlines the key recommendations:

- Develop a prioritised plan to identify and address missing links, taking into account the Active Travel recommendations for prioritisation and the Wheelrights routes in the Gower and Pontarddulais;
- Sustrans' Pontarddulais – Grovesend Scheme will improve connections to Pontarddulais and should be considered for relevant funding to progress the scheme once the project has been completed by Sustrans;
- Complete the existing North Gower cycle route (esp Gowerton – Penclawdd section)
- Create a new Mayals to Bishopston route across Clyne Common
- Cycle parking facilities and clear routes to and from Gowerton Station should be considered as part of the Gowerton Rail Interchange study as this is a key entrance to the Gower;
- Investigate the feasibility of implementing a cycle hire scheme at the station;
- The provision of secure cycling parking should be in line with the Active Travel Guidance;
- Improve cycle signage in line with Active Travel Act guidance;
- Ensure that cycle and public transport is fully integrated, not only at Gowerton Station but also that buses are able to accommodate bicycles; and
- Develop cycle tourism in the rural areas through improving cycle infrastructure and encouraging businesses to locate to these areas.

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6. Vehicles – Evaluations & Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

The private motor vehicle will continue to be the dominant mode of travel for residents and visitors to Rural Swansea. The geographic isolation of many of the attractions mean that for many visitors, the majority of whom arrive in the area by car, the private motor vehicle provides flexibility, directness and convenience that the public transport network cannot match. In addition, for residents, public transport journey times do not compare to journeys made by car, so if residents have access to a car, this will continue to be mode of choice for the majority of their trips.

The key to this then becomes managing the impact of motor vehicles. The objective is to mitigate their impact and ensure that motor vehicles are accommodated in a manner that does not detract from the natural surroundings of the area as a whole.

6.2 Existing Conditions

The Gower is a year round tourist destination, although congestion significantly increases during the summer months due to the increase in visitors to the numerous beaches and visitor attractions that can be found there.

For visitors arriving from an easterly direction existing motorway signage directs motorists to leave the M4 at Junction 42, as highlighted in Appendix 9. Motorists must then travel along the A483, which is the primary means of access into the city centre from an easterly direction. They must then travel along Swansea Bay sea front on the A4067. Both these routes a prone to significant levels of congestion, especially during peak periods.

Upon leaving the city centre motorists are directed along the A4216 towards the residential areas Killay and Dunvant. Again, this route is prone to significant levels of congestion, especially at peak periods.

In addition, the main routes to the Mawr from the south are Craig Cefn Park, Rhydypandy Road, and the B4889. While the main route from the north is via Ammanford (Appendix 10).

6.3 Proposed Improvements

Motorway Signage to the Gower

Improved motorway signage from the M4 to the Gower will help to reduce congestion in the city centre. It is suggested that motorists arriving from the east are directed to leave the M4 at junction 47. From here they travel along the A483 and the A484 before arriving at Gowerton. This route is considerably shorter and has improved journey times as a result of avoiding city centre congestion, as highlighted in Appendix 9.

However, upon departing the motorway at Junction 47, motorists encounter a confusing sign on the A483 just north of the roundabout that intersects with the A484. As illustrated by figure 6.1. This sign suggests that the Gower can be reached by travelling both right and left at the oncoming roundabout.

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Visitors to the area are likely to be very confused. Those that opt to travel left will be directed back into the city centre along the A483 and along the A4067 before having to travel through the residential areas of Killay and Duvant prior to arriving at the Gower.

However, those that turn right at the roundabout face a short journey along the A484 before arriving into Gowerton. From here access to both the north and south Gower is easily achieved.

An additional benefit of this is that motorists will pass Gowerton. The interchange here can act to intercept vehicles before they arrive into the Gower by providing Park & Ride, Cycle Hire and other public transport alternatives.

Figure 6.1 Unclear signage to Gower at Fforestfach roundabout

It is recommended that this sign is changed so that visitors are encouraged to travel along the A484. This is much shorter route with a significantly quicker journey times. It also takes motorists close to Gowerton interchange, where there may be the potential to transfer to more sustainable modes of transport before arriving into the Gower.

Rural Swansea Gateway Signage

Improved gateway signage would provide more information to visitors. It would direct towards the attractions they wanted to visit. This would help reduce congestion as motorists would be better able to travel directly to their destination instead of circulating trying to find it.

On arrival into the area Gateway features would provide information about the best routes to take to visit certain locations. Signage at specified points on the main routes into the area will create a gateway, such as at Gowerton for those entering the Gower and at the main routes into the Mawr - Craig Cefn Parc and Ammanford. Gateway signage locations are indicated on the map in Appendix 11.

Signs should also direct visitors to the destinations within the areas as shown in Figure 6.2, for example separately to North and South Gower (Table 6.1) and the destinations at each.

Table 6.1 Example of North and South Gower Tourist Attractions

North Gower	South Gower
Llangennith	Oxwich Bay
Whiteford and North Gower	Three Cliffs Bay
Cilifor Top	Port Eynon
	Rhossilli

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Visitors arriving in Tenby are directed towards North Beach and South Beach as they arrive into the town. This helps to disperse traffic arriving into the town by directing it towards specific areas. A similar system on the Gower might help reduce circulatory traffic by directing towards specific attractions and destinations.

Figure 6.2 Destination signage in Tenby

The intention is not to flood the area with signs, instead a rationalisation exercise should be undertaken to review the functionality of existing signs. It is suggested that much of the existing signage stock is not fit for purpose. If this is the case, a new branded signage strategy should be developed.

Car Parking

There are car parks at each of the main destinations within the Gower, the majority of which are owned and run by the Council, along with a number of privately owned and run car parks. The Council owned car parks are at the following locations:

- Caswell Hill Car Park;
- Caswell Bay Car Park;

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- Port Eynon Car Park;
- Horton Car Park;
- Langland Car Park; and
- Bracelet Bay Car Park.

The council owned car parks in the Gower currently offer all day parking for £5.00. This ticket is transferable and can be used in any beach or foreshore car park on the day of purchase which will further encourage visitors to visit more than one destination in a day so signage needs to support this.

There needs to be improved information directing vehicles to the available car parks as during peak times there is unnecessary queuing. Motorists need to know where they can safely and securely park their vehicles, and directing traffic will reduce the circulatory traffic.

Existing car park information on www.swansea.gov.uk provides a good level of information. Capacity, opening times, number of disabled spaces along with address and postcode information is available. In addition to this there is information available on the attractions that are accessible from specific car parks.

It is recommended that all privately controlled car parks are added to this website.

In order to improve the visitor experience it is important that the parking machines are as accessible as possible. They should facilitate payments by both cards and cash, at locations where the signal is strong enough, a mobile phone payment option should be introduced.

To encourage increased use of sustainable transport for journeys on the Gower, council controlled car parks should provide secure cycle parking facilities. Such a facility would allow cyclists to go off and enjoy the area safe in the knowledge that their cycles are securely stowed.

Where possible the installation of Electric Vehicle Charging Points should be considered to further encourage sustainable transport options in the area and promote Gower as a sustainable area. Growth in electric vehicle ownership is set to increase dramatically in the next few years, with 90% of new cars forecast to be electric by 2050[9].

It is suggested that an audit review is undertaken within existing car park provision to identify improvements in signage and to ensure that, where possible, car parks are of the same standard and provide the same secure facilities.

Congestion Charging

Congestion charging or vehicle entry fees are a good method of funding improvements to sustainable and public transport infrastructure in the area. Charging vehicles to enter the Gower area would also encourage more sustainable transport choices and reduce vehicle congestion during peak times and also limit the environmental impacts of vehicle use in the area.

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[9] https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/jul/13/electric-car-boom-power-demand-national-grid-hinkley-point-c

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There were proposals in place to introduce congestion charging to the roads in the Peak District in 2005. The proposals were either to charge visitors a flat rate of £3 for using specified roads with the option of a free bus, or to charge visitors per mile travelled on specified roads. The revenue from the charges was proposed to increase sustainable transport infrastructure in the area. However, funding was not awarded by Department for Transport for a feasibility study into congestion charging, so the proposals were not taken further.

It is suggested that an investigation into the feasibility of congestion charging in Rural Swansea is carried out, whether that is through congestion charging similar to London's Congestion Charging Zone or through charging vehicles per mile travelled within the area. Congestion charging is likely to be more appropriate in the Gower rather than Mawr due to the number of visitors.

It is recommended that revenue generated from the Congestion Charge is reinvested into improving the sustainable transport network in the area.

Speed limits

Consideration should be given to lowering speed limits across Rural Swansea. The narrow road network is not appropriate for the national speed limit. Road safety and the overall safety of vulnerable road users would be improved if the speed limit was reduced. A study of country single-carriageway roads estimated that a 10% increase in average speed results in a 30% increase in fatal and serious crashes[10].

It is suggested that a blanket 40mph is imposed on specific areas / zones within the study area to improve road safety for vulnerable road users. It is acknowledge that increased infrastructure would be required to reduce speed and that greater levels of enforcement would be needed across the study area.

It is also suggested that the possibility of introducing 20mph zones in the villages is investigated.

6.4   Key Recommendations

A variety of measures have been proposed in Chapter 6. As a result, the following outline the key recommendations:

- Improved directional signage to Gower from Junction 47 of the M4;
- Rationalisation of signage within Rural Swansea to improve clarity of directional signage to destinations within the areas;
- Creation of Gateway features at strategic locations;
- Investigation into the creation of branded signage through a signage strategy;
- Audit review of car parks in the areas to identify improvements in signage to car parks and facilities at car parks;
- Investigation into the feasibility of congestion charging within the Gower; and
- Reduction in speed limits to 40mph on all national speed limit roads within both areas.

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[10] http://apivir.org/acrobatpdf/taylorvoiesetrisques.pdf

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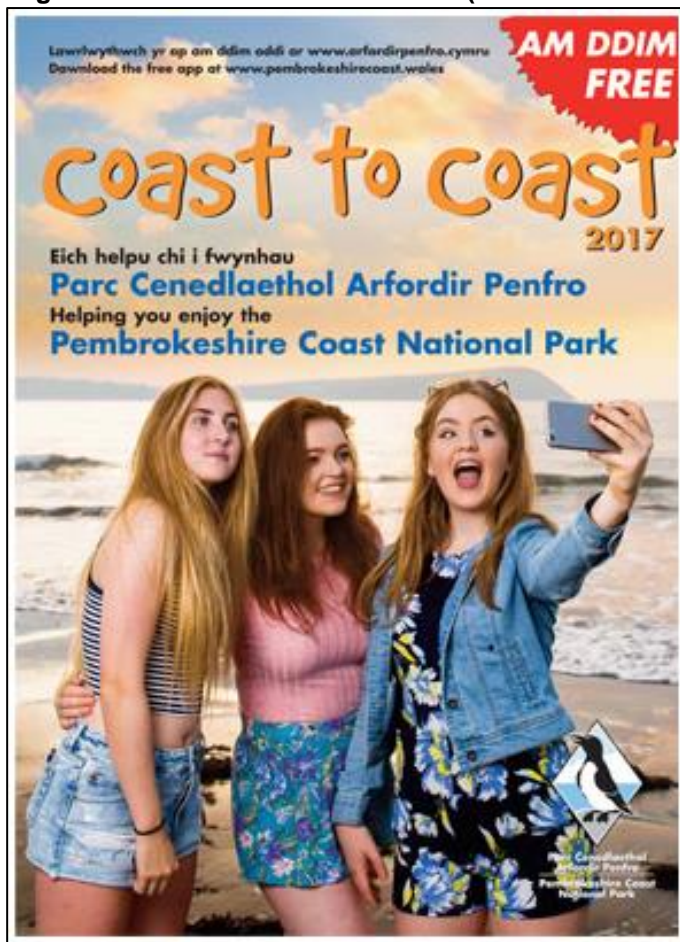# 7. Other Proposals – Evaluation & Recommendations

7.1 Proposed Improvements

Tourism Brochure

It is suggested that a Gower orientated tourism brochure similar to the Coast to Coast brochure published by Pembrokeshire Coast National Park (Figure 7.1). Coast to Coast is published each year to promote attractions, accommodation, catering establishments and public transport services. The brochure is available online and most recently in the form of an App, as well as in hard copy at attractions around the National Park.

Costs are covered primarily by advertising from the contributors to the publication.

Figure 7.1 Coast to Coast Brochure (Pembrokeshire County Council)[11]

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[11] *Source: http://edition.pagesuite-professional.co.uk//launch.aspx?pbid=50893086-6ada-4f20-a3fc-c5fa5305ca75*

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Branding

Throughout Rural Swansea, there are no consistent branding / information boards for tourists and residents. The introduction of a consistent branding is an important factor that can promote people to use public transport. It is reasonable to suggest that at present, the lack of, and complexity of sourcing information about public transport routes and timetables is discouraging the use of public transport.

Providing individuals with an accessible source which presents relevant information can encourage public transport use, and may gradually increase the level of public transport usage. There are opportunities within Rural Swansea to promote public transport information through a variety of online and offline media sources, as well as real time passenger information.

In Wales, there are examples of how branding and information is conveyed. The two examples include Wales Coastal Path (Figure 7.2) and Pembrokeshire Coastal Buses (Figure 7.3).

Figure 7.2 Wales Coastal Path

Figure 7.3 Pembrokeshire Coastal Buses

In addition, passengers would benefit from information boards outlining key information at the area of arrival. A Welsh Government study in 2012 highlighted that information boards, as well as tourist information centres have a high conversion of tourists acting on the information provided to them such as places to eat and drink and attractions to visit. An example of a tourist board which could be implemented at a bus stop is provided in Table 7.1.

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Table 7.1 Tourist Board at Oxwich Bay.

Greenways Leisure Park Bus Stop	
Destination	Distance / Time (Walking)
Oxwich Castle	200m / 4 Minutes
Gower Coast Adventures	600m / 12 Minutes
St Illtyd's	600m / 12 Minutes
Oxwich Leisure Park	700m / 16 Minutes

Once the consistent branding across the public transport network has been implemented, there are possibilities to implement technological advancements, for example integrated ticketing. This allows person to make a journey that involves transfers within or between different transport modes with a single ticket that is valid for the complete journey.

The purpose of recommending integrated ticketing is to encourage people to use public transport within Rural Swansea by simplifying switching between transport modes and by increasing the efficiency of the services.

8.   Action Plan

The challenges facing the delivery of improved sustainable transport in Rural Swansea are considerable. Seasonality, low population, topography, years of under investment and budget cut backs all combine create an environment that makes the delivery of improvements difficult.

Nevertheless, significant progress and been made and continues to be made in the area. The development of Gowerton Interchange, the Sustrans cycle routes and delivery of the Active Travel Act will significantly enhance sustainable transport opportunities. The recommendations contained within this report, will also help to make the area more accessible for both residents and visitors.

The following Action Plan (Table 8.1) contains a prioritised list of measures that through consultation, have had the most support. Measures not included on the Action Plan should not be ignored, and funding permitting they still have a role to play.

However, in an environment of budget cut backs and reduced funding the measures on the following Action Plan have been identified as priority. The schemes contained in the Action Plan are more likely to attract funding from the sources identified in Chapter 9.

Table 8.1 Action Plan [12]

	Measure	Short Term Medium Term Long Term	Ownership	Potential Funding
Public Transport	Gowerton transport interchange Improvements	Medium	SC	Local Transport Fund Swansea Bay City Deal Swansea Bay Metro
	Promote Park & Ride at Gowerton	Medium	SC	Local Transport Fund Swansea Bay City Deal Swansea Bay Metro
	Provide improved cycle parking at Gowerton	Medium	SC	Active Travel Funding
Cycling	Develop missing links related to Active Travel and Gower to Pontarddulais	Medium	SC	Active Travel Funding
	Complete the Sustrans Pontarddulais to Grovesend Scheme	Short	SC Sustrans	Active Travel Funding
	Complete the existing North Gower cycle route (esp Gowerton – Penclawdd section)	Short	SC Wheelrights	Active Travel Funding
	Create a new Mayals to Bishopston route across Clyne Common	Short	SC Wheelrights	Active Travel Funding
	Provide secure cycle parking throughout Rural Swansea	Medium	SC Wheelrights	Active Travel Funding
	Continue to develop cycle tourism & the Sportive Calendar	On going	Wheelrights	Private Sector
Vehicles	Improved strategic destination signage	Medium	SC	Swansea City Highways
	Sign rationalisation strategy to improve clarity	Short	SC	Swansea City Highways
	Investigation into the provision of branded signage	Short	SC	Swansea City Highways
	Car park review to consider signage, electric vehicle points, cycle parking and information	Short	SC	Swansea City Highways
	Investigate the feasibility of a congestion charge	Long	SC	Swansea City Highways
	Investigate the feasibility of a 40mph speed limit	Long	SC	Swansea City Highways
Other	Tourism Brochure	Short	Tourism Providers	Private Funding
	Publicity Information / Technology	Short	SC	Swansea Bay Tourism
	Tourist Information Boards	Short	SC	Swansea Bay Tourism

[12] Short term = 1 to 3 years Medium term = 4 to 7 years Long term = 7 years plus

9. Funding

9.1 Funding Objectives

Schemes that can demonstrate the potential for improving and increasing investment opportunities are more likely to secure funding. There is an understanding that in the current climate collaboration is needed to secure an efficient and effective transport network. It is vital that emerging projects create good connections to local regional and national markets to allow businesses to prosper and where everyone can access the opportunities they need to live and work in a sustainable way.

The following Welsh Government objectives provide a good template upon which emerging schemes and projects should consider:

- Support economic growth and safeguard jobs across Wales, but with a particular focus on the City Regions, Enterprise Zones and local growth zones;

- Reduce economic inactivity by delivering safe and affordable access to employment sites across Wales;

- Maximise the contribution that effective and affordable transport services can make to tackling poverty and target investment to support improvements in accessibility for the most disadvantaged communities; and

- Encourage safer, healthier and sustainable travel.

It is acknowledged that traditional sources of funding might soon no longer be valid. However these are likely to be replaced by other sources related to City Deals and Metro delivery.
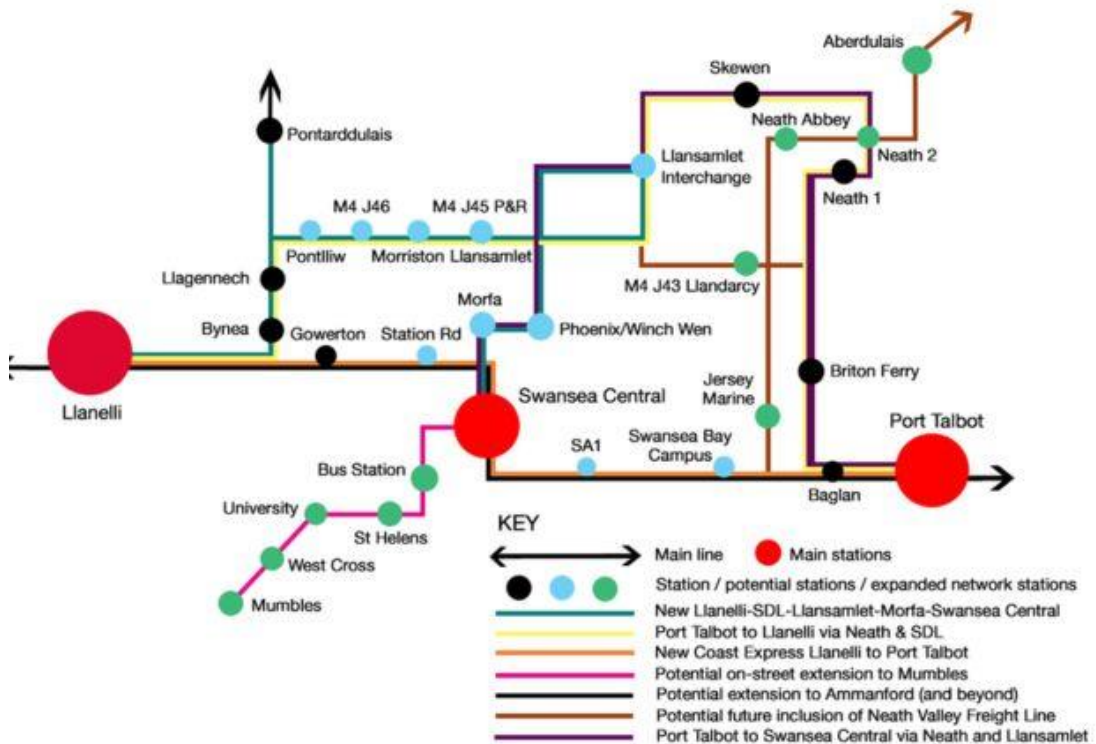
Swansea City Deal

In 2017 the £1.3 billion City Deal for Swansea and the surrounding region was signed. Containing a mixture of public and privately funded schemes to be delivered across the region over the next 15 years via 11 different projects that are forecast to create 10,000 new jobs, the City Deal will have a major economic and social impact on the area. The proposed projects are illustrated on Figure 9.1

Although none of the schemes are located within Rural Swansea action will be needed to sure that the new employment opportunities are accessible to the local population. Consequently the delivery of schemes recommended in this report, notably enhancements at Gowerton Interchange and improvements to cycle routes, will have a very big role to play.

Figure 9.1 Proposed Swansea City Deal Projects

Swansea Bay Metro

Swansea Bay Metro is a £1 billion scheme that promises improved public transport infrastructure and services across the region. The scheme aims to improve connectivity across the area by developing infrastructure that will enhance journey times and improve access. The proposed Metro Map is illustrated in Figure 9.2.

Although scheme development is still in its early stages Gowerton is identified as a station that could accommodate expanded services. If the plans go ahead this will have significant benefits for Rural Swansea as the area will become more accessible across the region and South Wales. This brings benefits in respect of increased investment, employment opportunities and potentially an increase in visitor numbers. Consequently, delivery of recommendations listed in this report, notably those that improve access to Gowerton, will take on increased importance.

Figure 9.2   Proposed Metro Map

Swansea Bay Metro

Active Travel

Active Travel is now firmly established at the heart of Welsh Government policy and recent funding announcements have confirmed their commitment to encouraging increased walking and cycling through the provision of enhanced infrastructure.

The recent LTF funding announcement combined with the additional £60 million over 3 years is the largest ever boost to Active Travel schemes in Wales.

Consequently, Local Authorities need to ensure that developments and infrastructure projects promote Active Travel opportunities and that walking and cycling journeys are catered for in future schemes.

In 2018 / 19 SC received Local Transport Grant Funding (LTF) from Welsh Government. The allocation was £356,000 to develop Active Travel Schemes. At the time of writing SC has not decided on what schemes will be developed. However, there is potential that the Active Travel Schemes in North Gower might benefit from development.

Welsh Government has made an additional £60 million for Active Travel Schemes. Local Authorities are invited to bid for funding and at the time of writing SC has not decided on what schemes will be progressed for funding.

10. Conclusion

Through comprehensive consultation with stakeholders and Council representatives, this Rural Transport Strategy explores a number of initiatives across a variety of transport modes in Rural Swansea.

These initiatives have been design to improve year round connectivity and accessibility for residents of the area and for visitors.

The provision of public transport, as well as Active Travel in Rural Swansea presents a number of unique challenges to operator and users. This Rural Transport Strategy sets out a number of innovative recommendations and proposals which aim to address the issues identified during consultation.
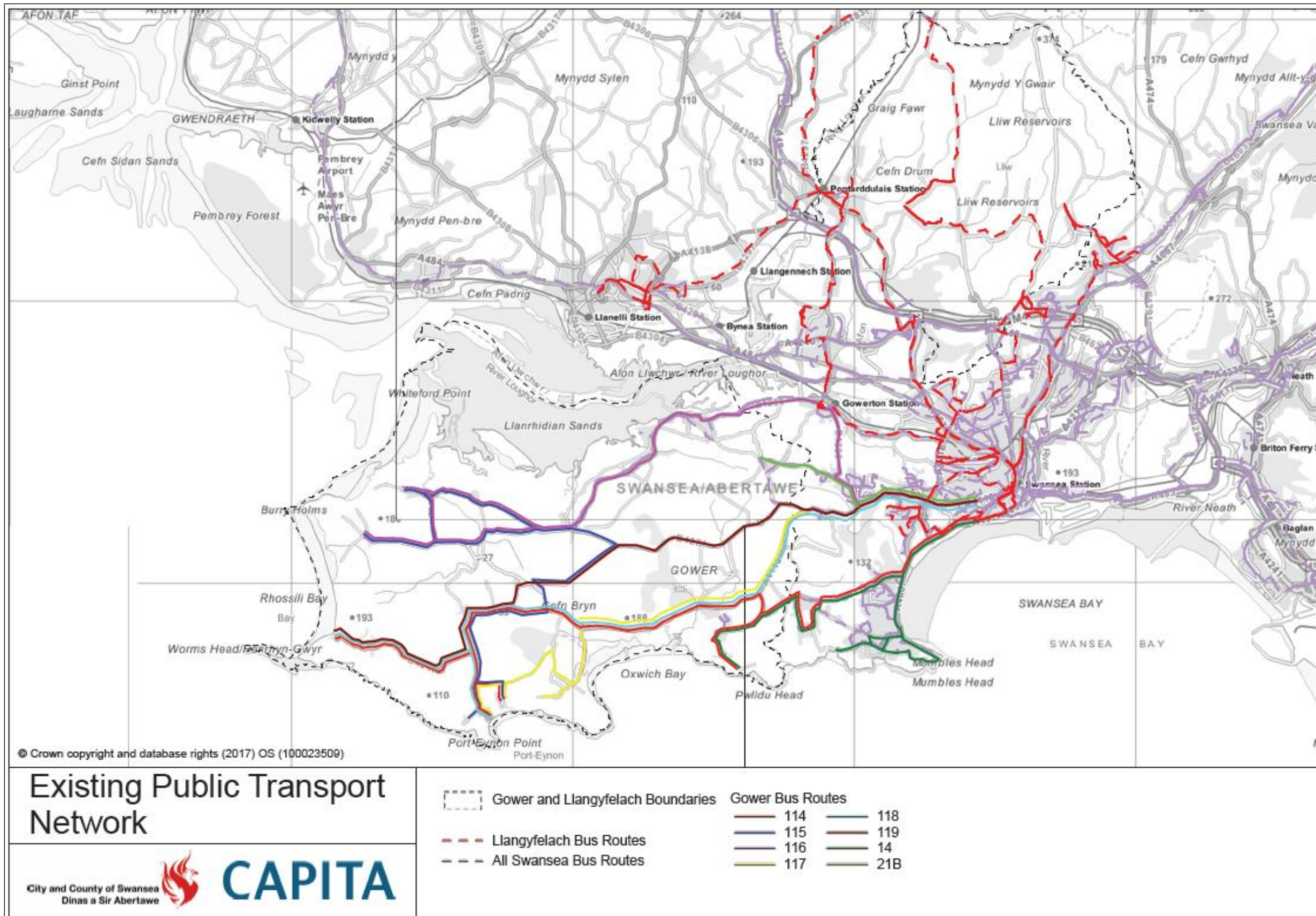
This Strategy aims to improve the existing provision of public transport services, while addressing existing gaps in the network through the use of Travel Plans and encouraging the use of Gowerton Rail interchange, Voluntary and Community Transport Initiatives, Wheels 2 Work, Demand Responsive Transport and Health transport schemes. Furthermore, this Strategy endeavours to continue to develop cycling as a growth area for both tourists and residents in Rural Swansea through a variety of initiatives including, implementation of new cycling infrastructure, cycle hire schemes and upgrades to existing cycling facilities and infrastructure.

In addition, this Strategy purposes to manage the impact of private motor vehicles. The aim is to mitigate their impact and ensure that motor vehicles are accommodated in a manner that does not detract from the natural surroundings of the area as a whole. As such, measures including improving clarity of directional signage to Rural Swansea through a Signage Strategy, a feasibility study of congestion charges within the study area, as well as a reduction of speed limits to 40mph and an audit of all car parks are proposed.
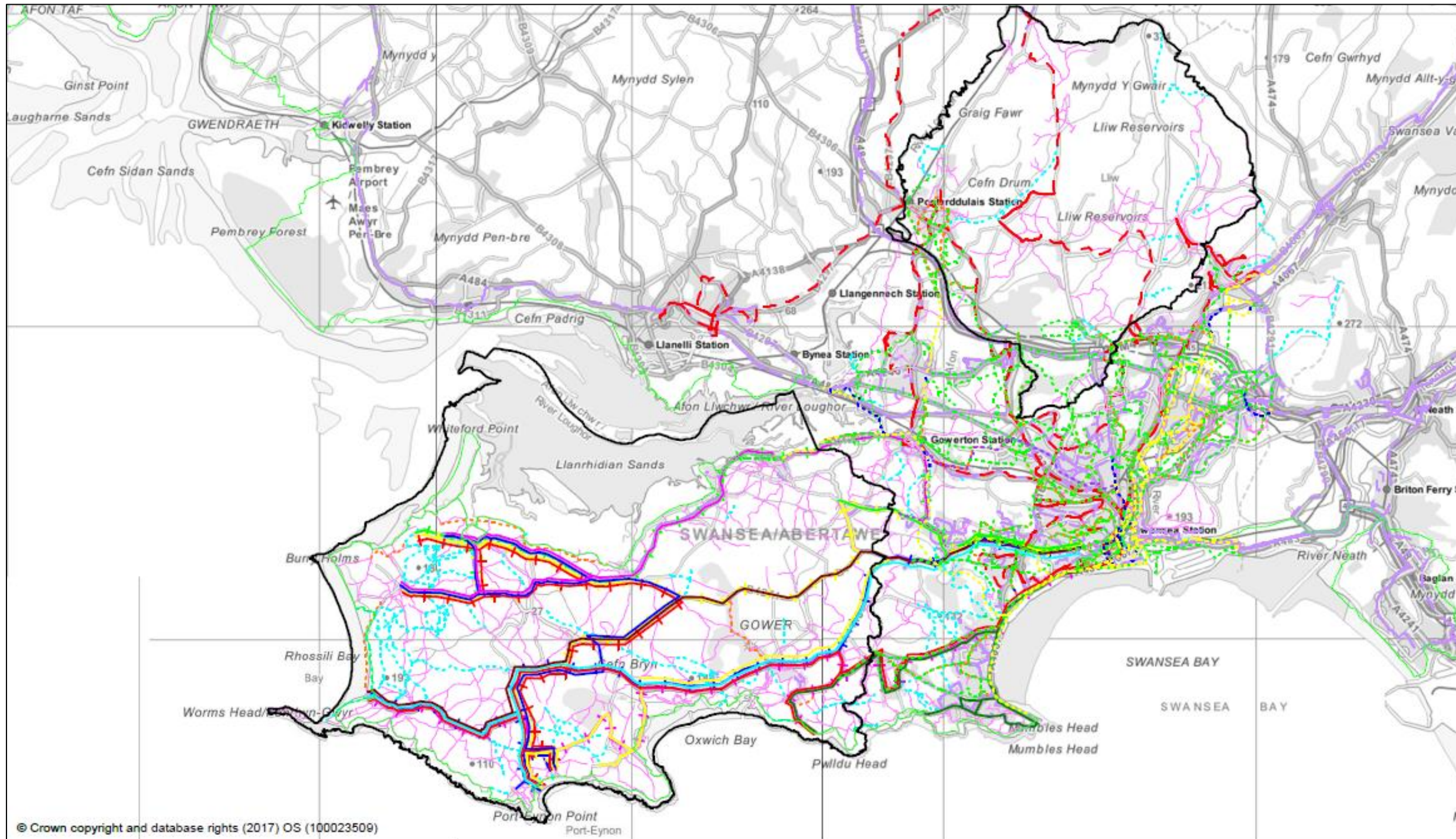
It is recognised that the implementation of the recommended interventions in this Rural Transport Strategy will assist with promoting and encouraging the use of sustainable transport modes by residents and tourists on a regular basis.

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Appendix A

Appendix A.1 – Existing Public Transport

Appendix A.2 – Proposed Rural Transport Network

Proposed Rural Transport Network
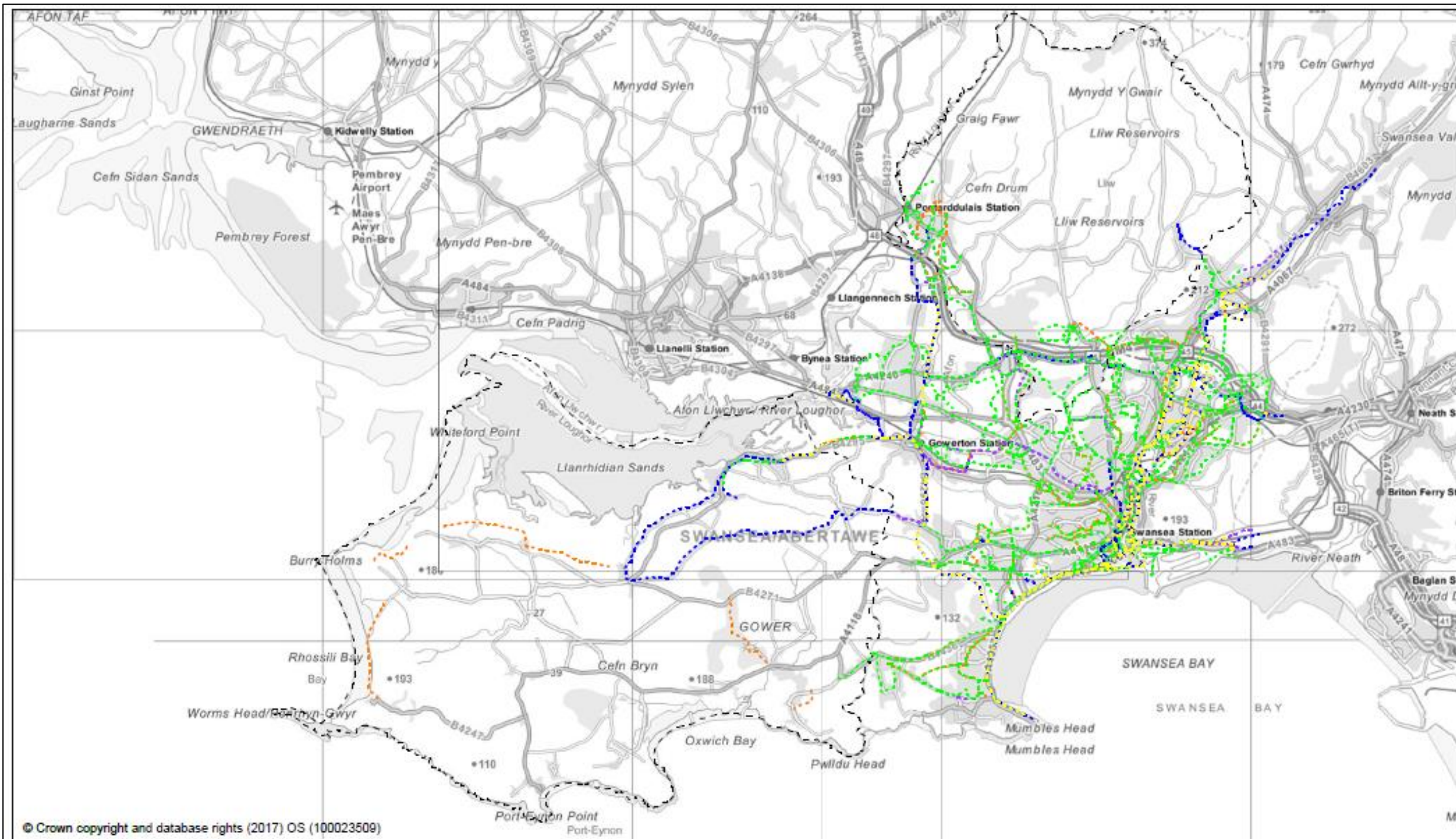
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Legend:
- Gower and Llangyfelach Boundaries
- Existing Footpaths
- Existing Shared Use Paths
- Wales Coastal Path
- Bridleways
- Wheelrights Proposed Cycle Network
- Proposed Active Travel Cycle Routes
- Proposed Active Travel Shared Use Paths

Gower Bus Routes
- 114
- 115
- 116
- 117
- 118
- 119
- 14
- 21B

Gower Explorer Proposals
- 115
- 116
- 118
- X14
- X15

- Llangyfelach Bus Routes
- All Swansea Bus Routes

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Appendix A.3 – Existing Cycling Network

Existing Cycling Network

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Gower and Llangyfelach Boundaries

Existing Shared Use Paths

Existing Cycle Routes

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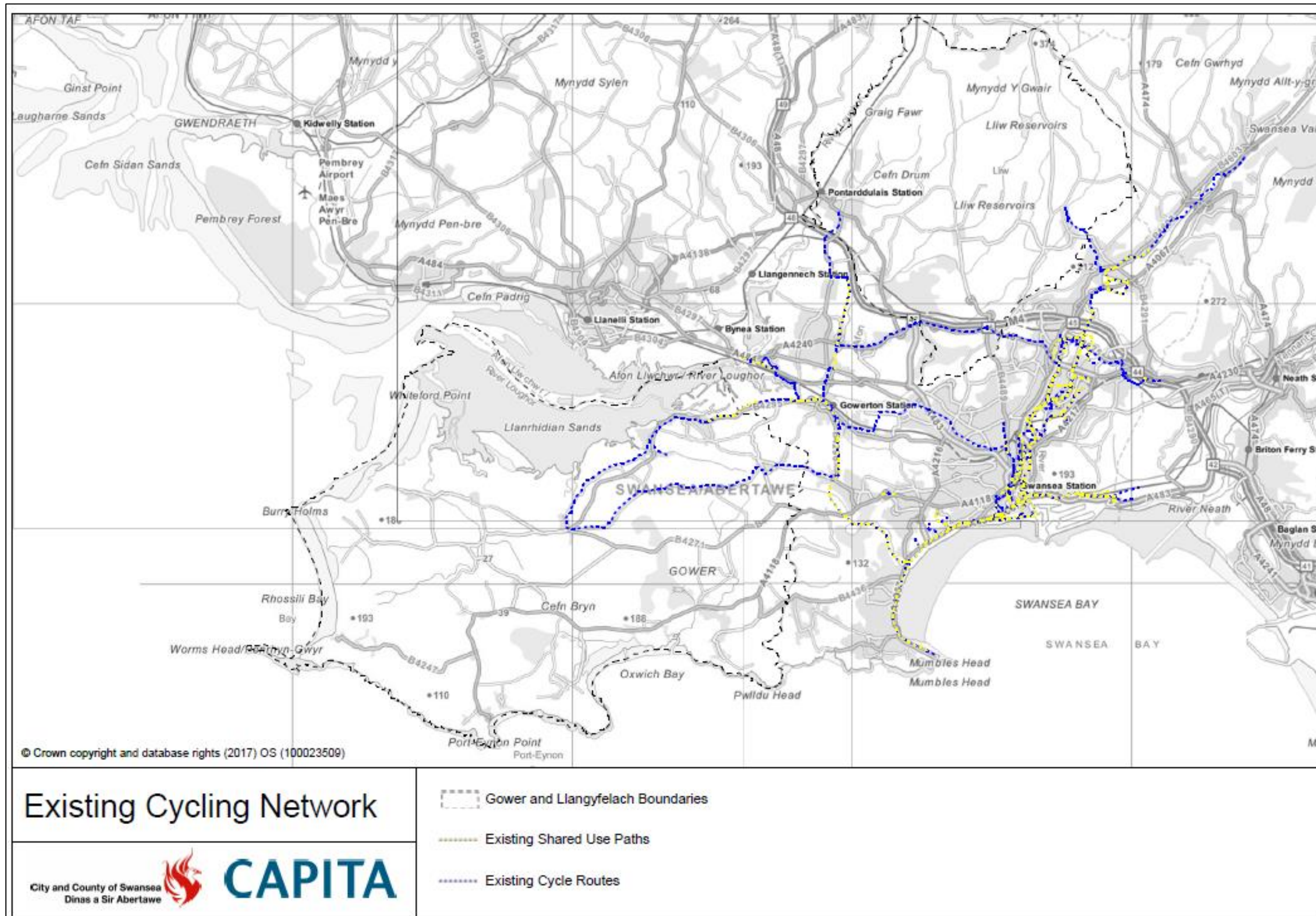
Appendix A.4 – Proposed Cycling Network

Proposed Cycling Network

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- Gower and Llangyfelach Boundaries
- Existing Cycle Routes
- Existing Shared Use Paths
- Proposed Active Travel Cycle Routes
- Proposed Active Travel Shared Use Paths
- Wheelrights Proposed Cycle Network

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Appendix A.5 – Existing Bridleways in Rural Swansea

Existing Bridleway
Network

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······ Gower and Llangyfelach Boundaries

········ Bridleways

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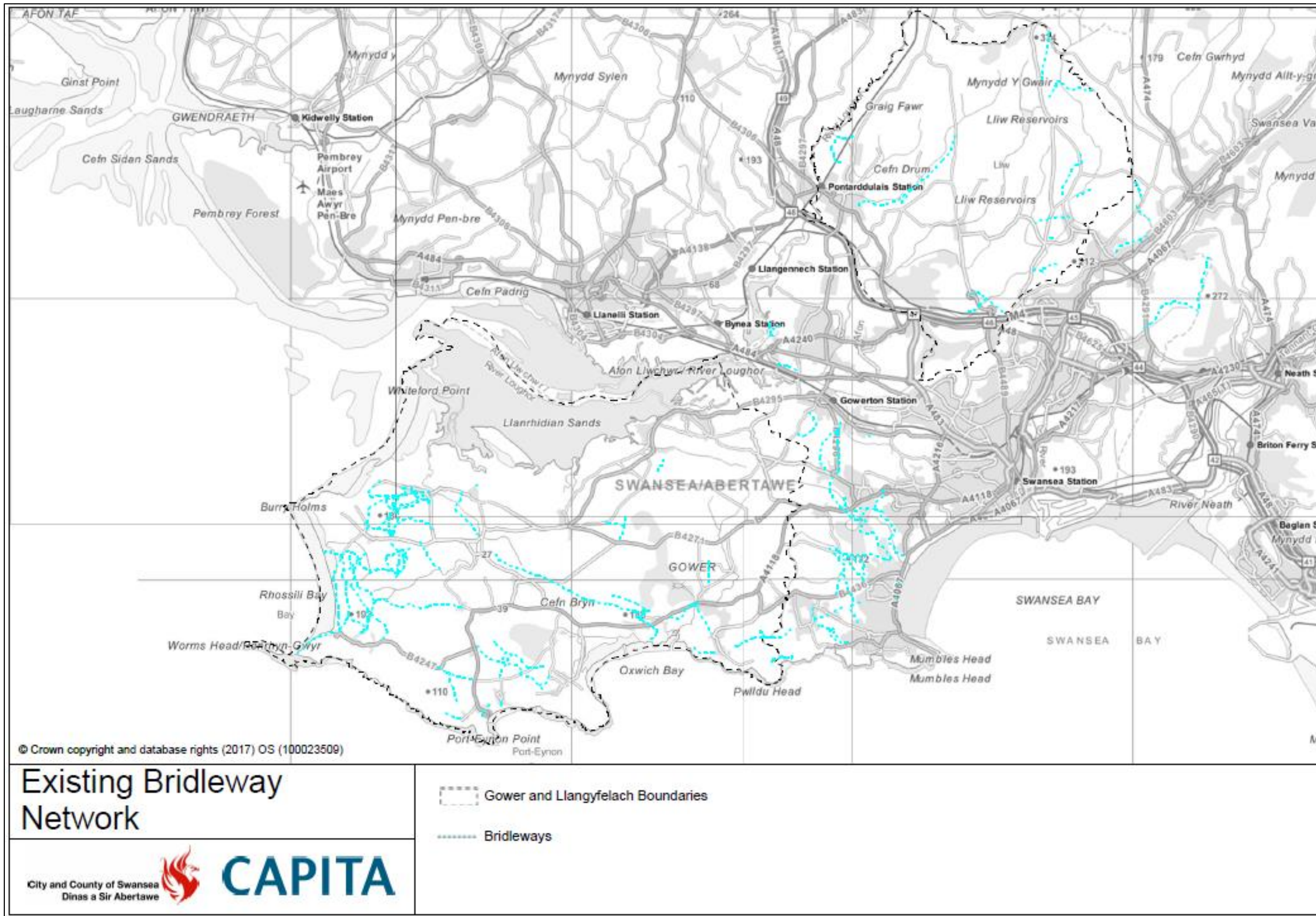
Appendix A.6 – Wheelrights Proposals

Wheelrights Proposals

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Gower and Llangyfelach Boundaries
Wheelrights Proposed Cycle Network

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Appendix A.7 – Sustrans Option 1

SWW-039 Pontarddulais
Potential routes for discussion

Existing route

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Appendix A.8 – Sustrans Option 2

SWW-039 Pontarddulais
Potential routes for discussion

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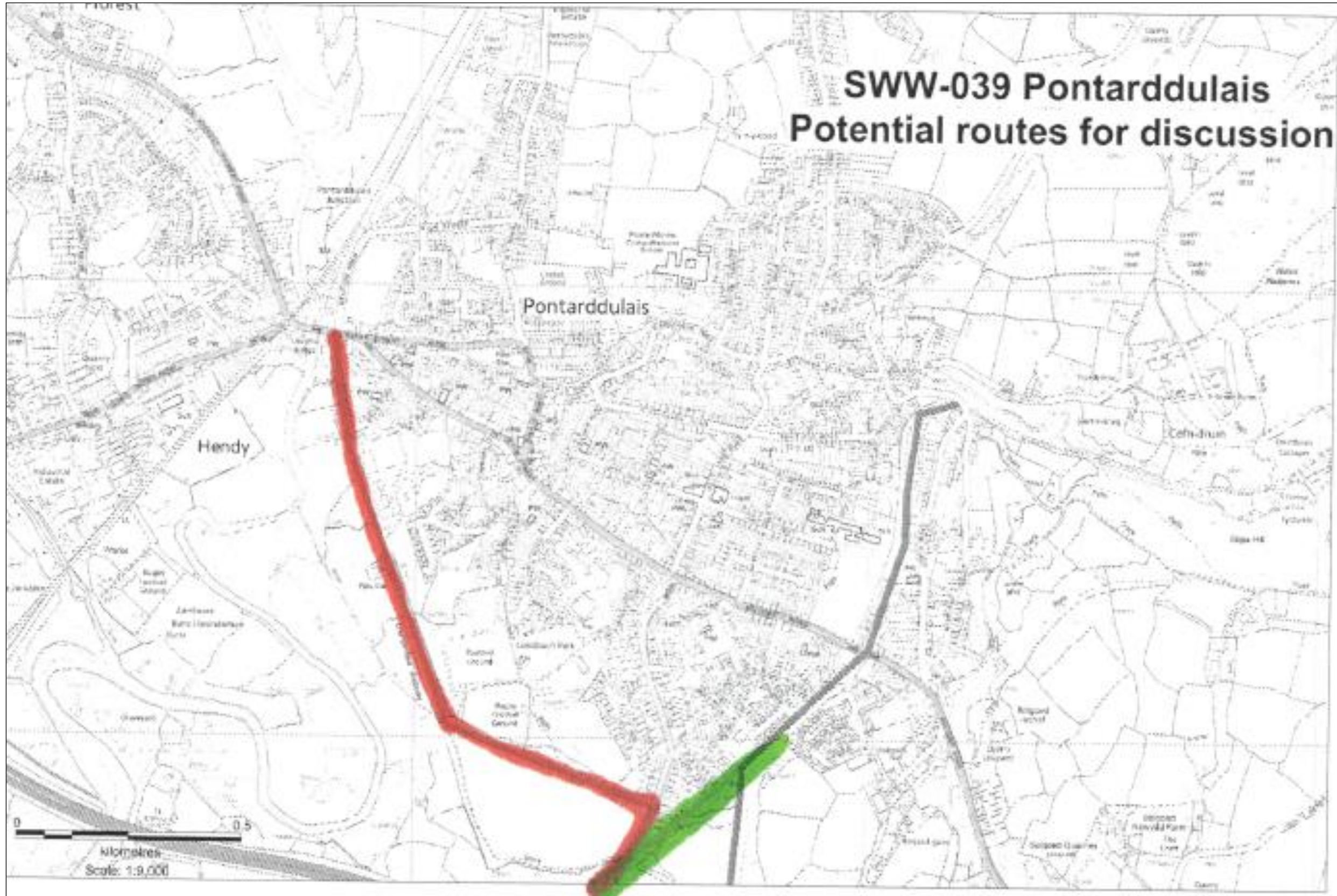
Appendix A.9 – Existing and Proposed Vehicle Routes to the Gower
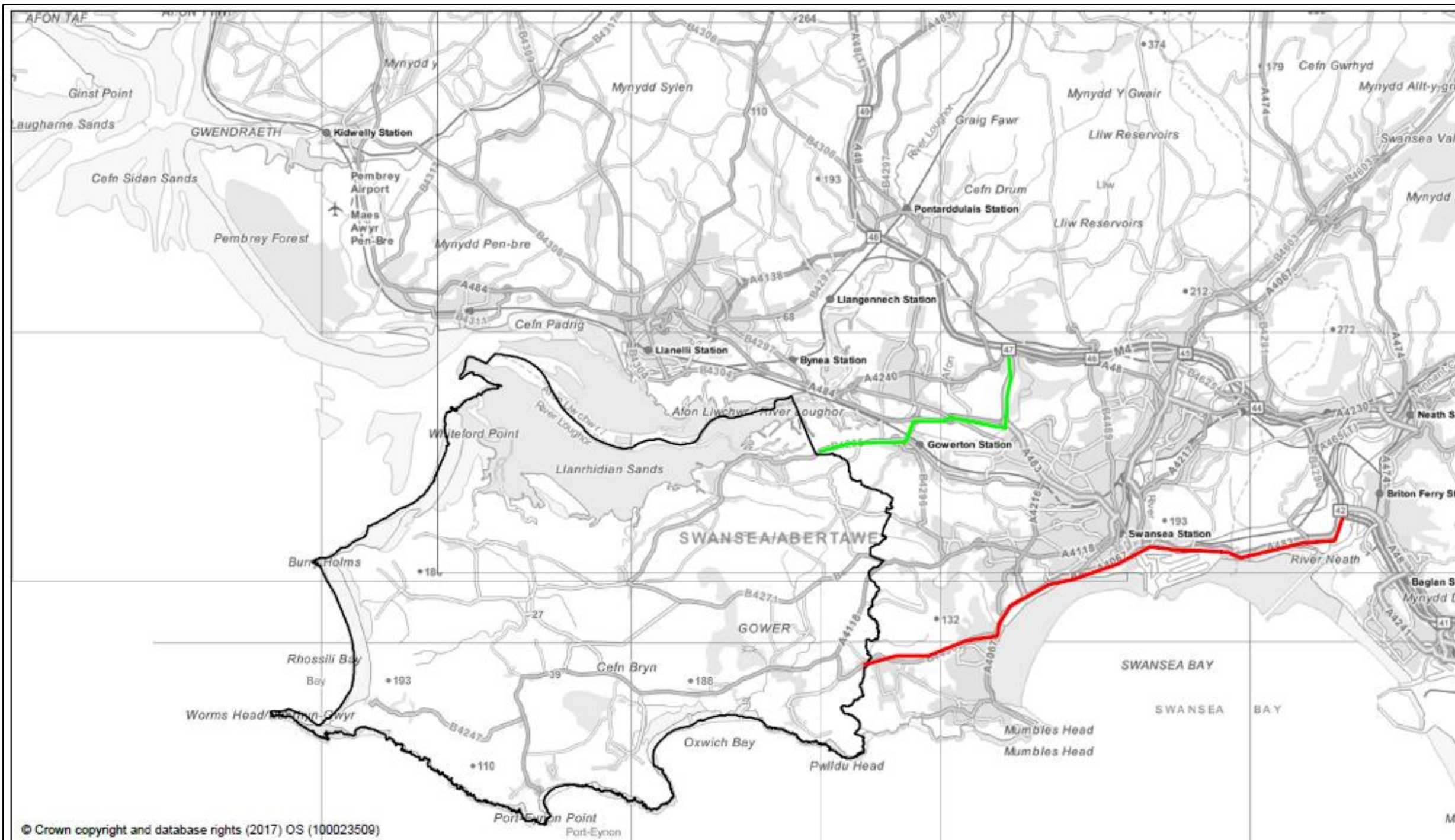
Vehicle Access to Gower

Gower and Llangyfelach Boundaries

Existing Route
Proposed Route

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Appendix A.10 – Existing Routes in to the Mawr

Vehicle Access to Mawr

☐ Gower and Llangyfelach Boundaries
── Routes to Mawr

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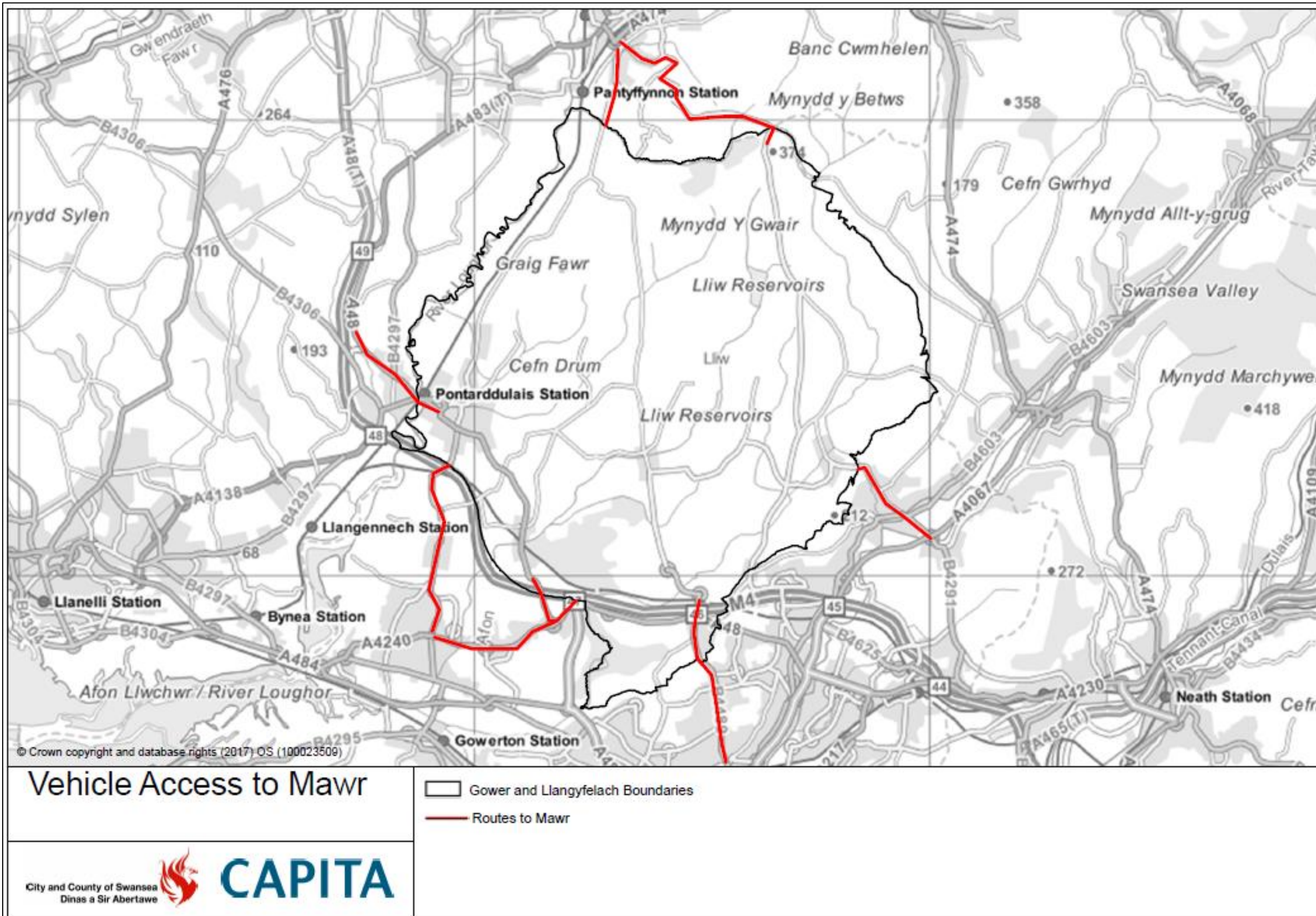
Appendix A.11 – Proposed Gateway Signage Locations

Gateway Signage
Locations

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☐ Gower and Llangyfelach Boundaries

🟣 Gateway Signage Locations

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