

## Infrastructure Division Case Study Gaerfort Active Travel

### Provision of 1.4km Active Travel route in an area of ecological, environmental and archaeological importance

Griffiths were appointed by Newport City Council to provide a 1.4km Active Travel route, in the Gaer district of Newport, comprising 3m wide cycle lane, the installation of Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS), traffic signs, road markings and street lighting.

Designed in accordance with the Active Travel Wales design guidance, the route comprises a shared cycle path connecting Bassaleg Road at the North-West and Wells Close at South-East of the site. The majority of the work is in a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCE) known locally as Gaer Fort, with many Ecological, Environmental and Archaeological factors.

Special measures were put in place in this ancient woodland to protect the trees on this and adjacent sites. Recommendations were followed to prevent any risk of damaging trees and tree roots in areas affected by development activity.

Adjacent land consists of residential properties and a secluded green open space, extensively used for walkers and leisure activities, requiring defined safe walking routes and measures to mitigate noise and any exposure to works prior to commencement.



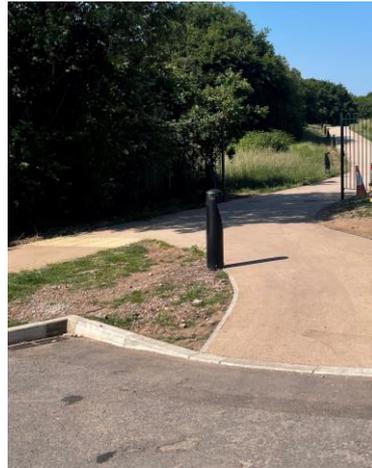
Gaer Fort is an Iron Age hill fort with a prime position overlooking the Severn Estuary and defended on the one side by the River Ebbw.

The hill fort was once part of the lands owned by the Morgan family of Tredegar and in the 17<sup>th</sup> century was incorporated into the landscape of 'The Park' surrounding the Morgan family estate at Tredegar House.

The grounds are laid out as open hill side fort area with bracken and tree groups. The bracken slopes provide a warm microclimate which many reptiles and invertebrates enjoy including common lizards and slow worms.

There are small pockets of heathland with heather and bilberry where acid loving plants such as heath bedstraw and heath speedwell may be seen. Acid grassland and heathland are rare in Newport making these habitats particularly important. The Gaer is also used as a foraging habitat by many bats and over 300 moth species have been recorded. Mammals such as shrews, voles, moles and foxes are common, while birds like the skylark can be heard.

The mounds in the open grassland areas are yellow meadow-ant anthills. These show that the site has not undergone any management which has disturbed the structure of the soil, making it an ancient grassland of particular interest.



## Project details at a glance

Client: **Newport City Council**  
Location: **Gaer, Newport**  
Completed: **November 2021**  
Value: **£471,000**  
Contract: **NEC4 Option A**