

# Rhondda Tunnel



Presentation to NPT Council 3<sup>rd</sup>. December 2021

Steve Mackey – Chair

Tony Moon – Project Secretary

Project Costs

Creating a “Must Visit” attraction

Blaengwynfi

# Project Costs



Detailed Plans Created by our Technical Subcommittee  
after consulting with leading UK tunnel engineers

Physical work will take 18 months

Project Cost includes:

- Visitors' Centres

- Micro-hydro schemes at both sides

Recently validated by Corderoy (Quantity Surveyors)

Total Project Cost: **£13.111M**

# South Wales has Two Abandoned Long Tunnels

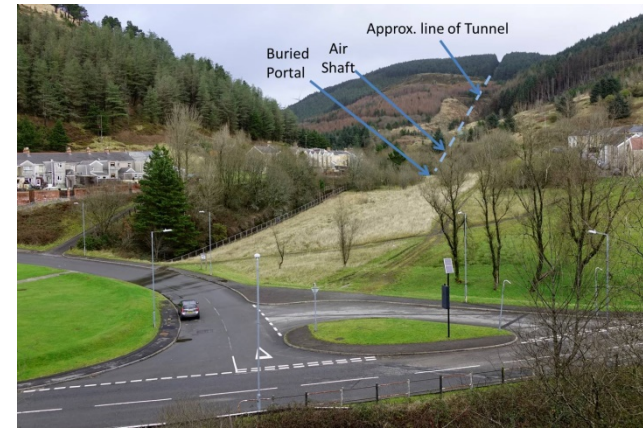


## Abernant-Merthyr



RCT has  
a Portal of  
Both Tunnels

## Rhondda



Active Travel Route – Merthyr-Aberdare

Continued Public Funding

but

Little public support

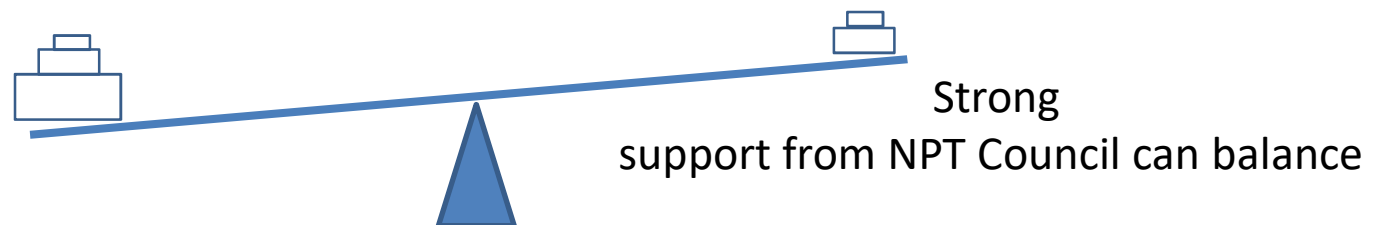
Merthyr Council lobbies hard for support

Longest in Europe

Seen more as a Visitor Attraction

Huge Public Support  
but no public funding

...this is how it sometimes feels



# Current Situation



Both Tunnels are owned by Westminster DfT – Grant Shapps MP

DfT will transfer them to the Welsh Govt. with a small sum  
(£60k for Rhondda)

but

Welsh Govt. wants Several Million Pounds

Chris Bryant MP is approaching DfT on behalf of  
Welsh Govt. for Funds

RCT Council are working on a Heritage Lottery Fund application



The Rhondda Tunnel has 526 alcoves

The middle is dry and mild all year

It offers a huge exhibition space

Why not use the alcoves for interactive displays

Much Interest from the National Library of Wales

Some displays could be sponsored

Graphic Arts, Museum, Famous Welsh people, etc., etc.

Plenty of room for all of them!



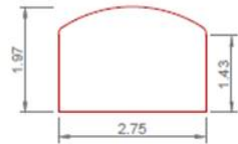




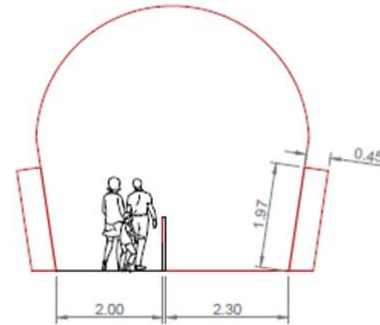
Sound and Light Displays in Bare Wall Sections

Again, plenty of tunnel!

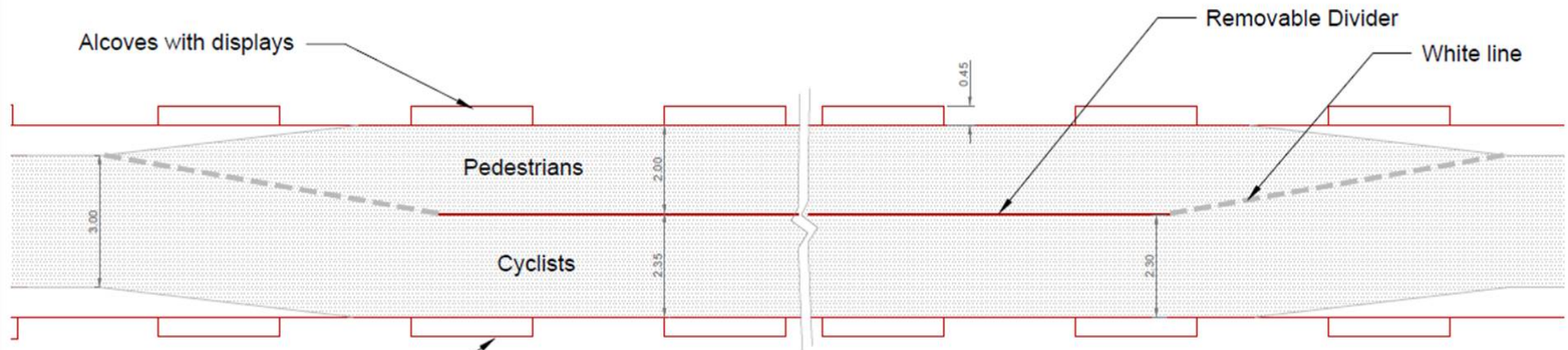




Alcove Elevation



Tunnel Cross Section



Plan

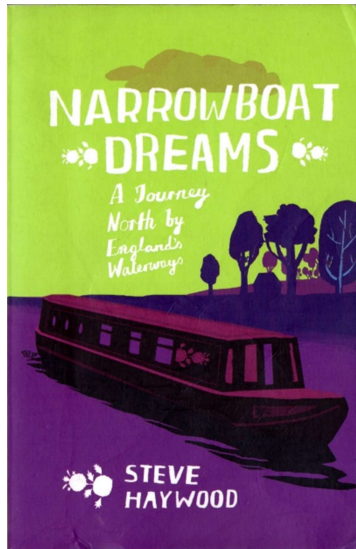
Normal Cycle Path width of 3m  
widened to full width of tunnel for  
Display Section



TWNNEL Y RHONDDA TUNNEL

Proposed Display Section

Scale: 1:125



## Standedge Canal Tunnel

between Manchester & Huddersfield

“Let me tell you a secret about the Standedge tunnel.  
One they know but won't even whisper.”

5500yds (3 miles) long; 645ft. above sea level

It takes 3 hours to go through by boat

“...What they won't tell you, the secret they keep to themselves,  
is that it's also very boring.”

We can't let visitors feel the same about the Rhondda Tunnel

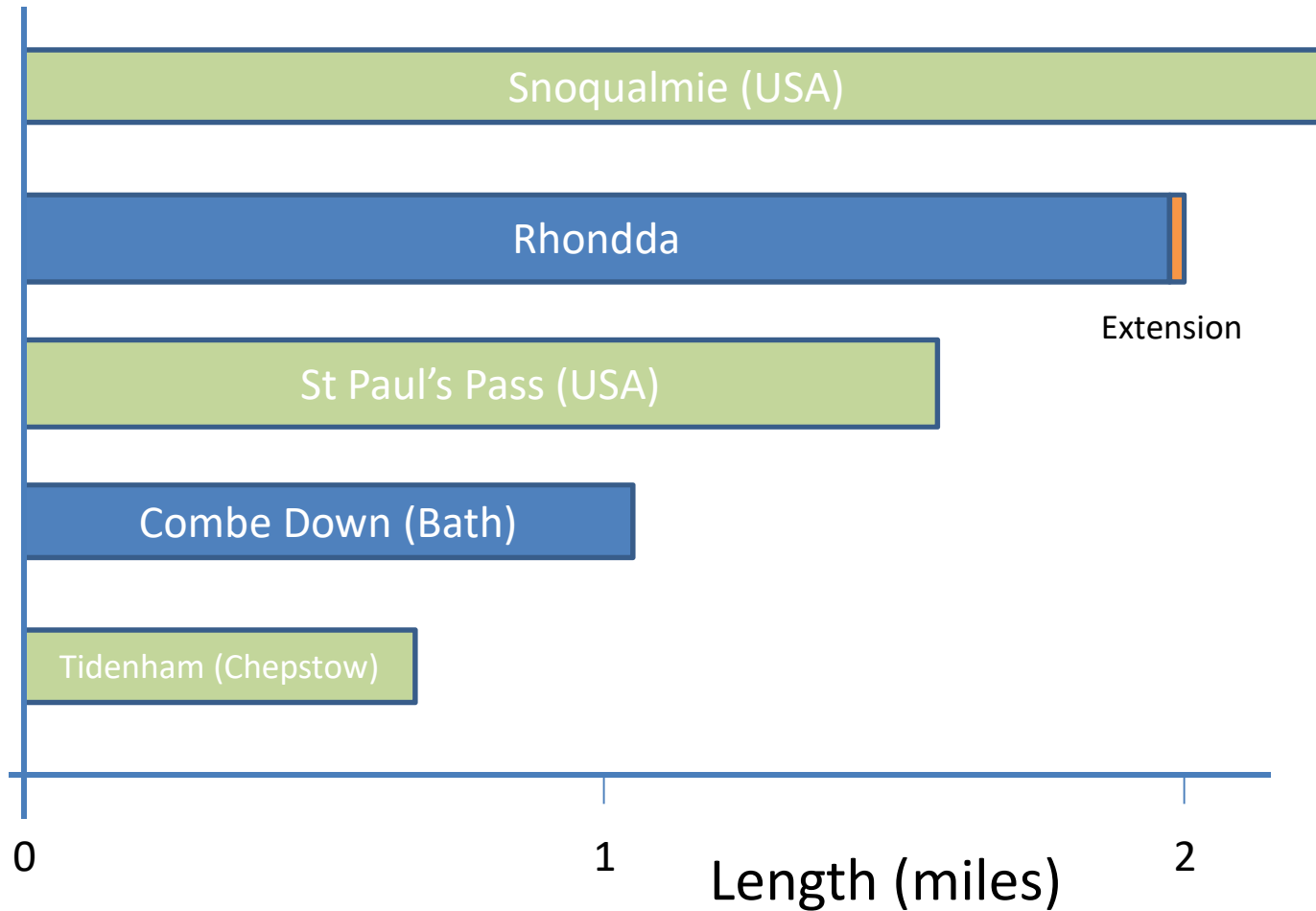




# Some Long Cycling & Walking Tunnels



 Tunnels Open All Year with Tarmac Surface and Lighting



Rhondda - An hour to walk from end to end



Blaengwynfi 1970s

Tunnel is deep





## Blaengwynfi today

Deep hole needed to access tunnel and lots of spoil to be moved



# At Blaengwynfi



Current Plan is to excavate the Approach Cutting

but

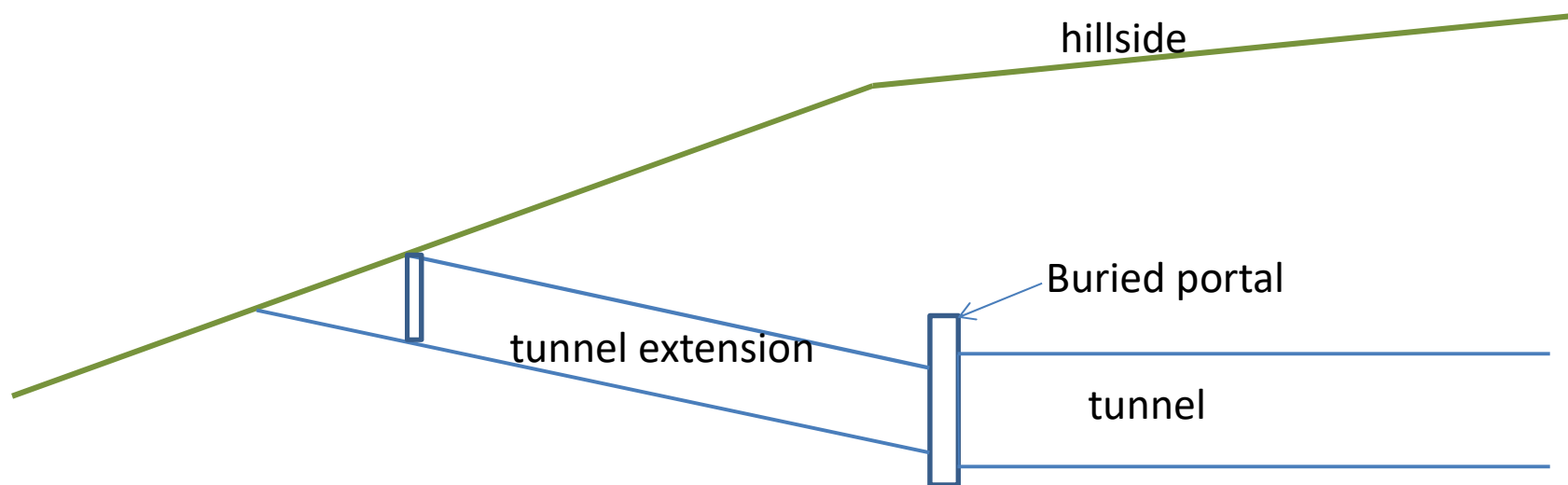
hyperTunnel have approached us with a new tunnelling technology to create an extension to the tunnel



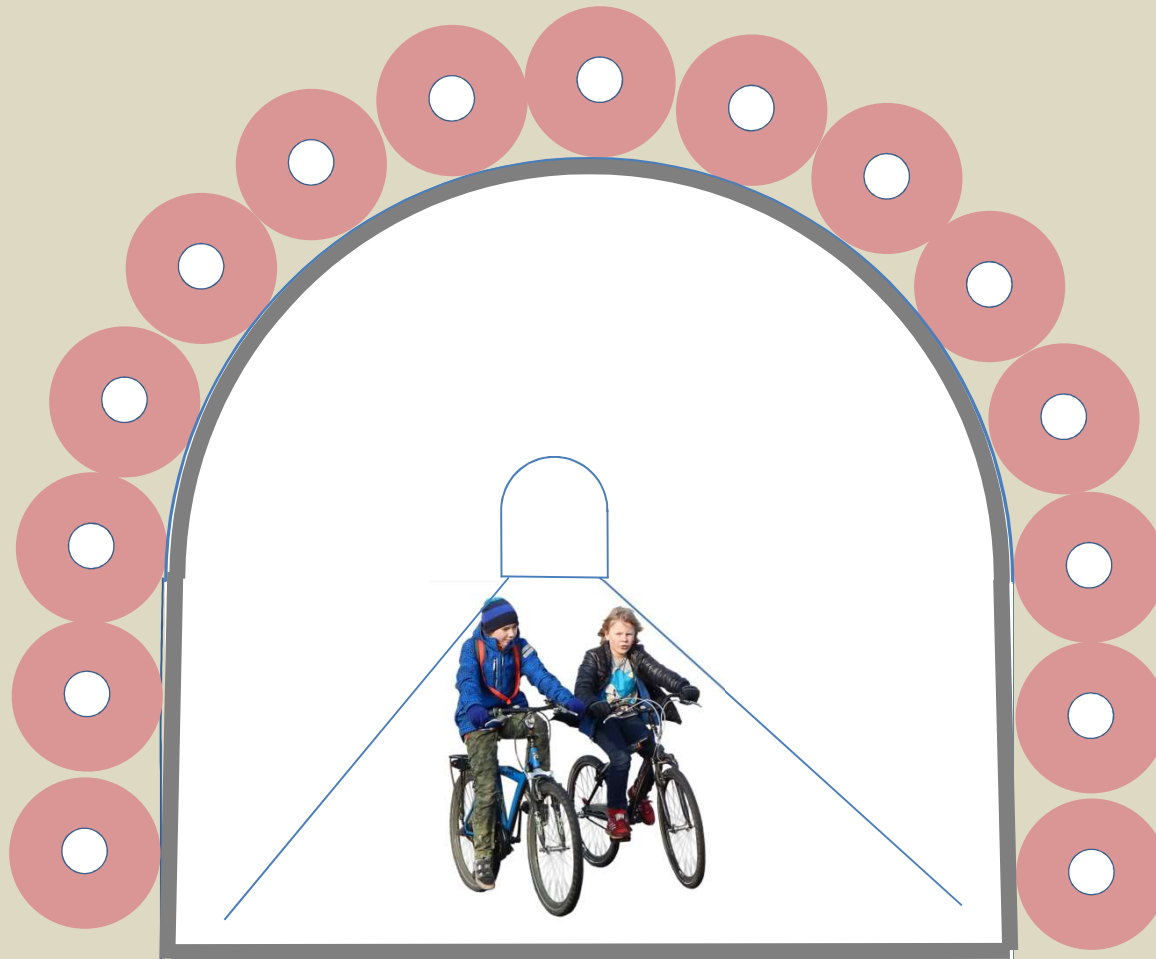
Less disruption & much less spoil

We are also looking at a “Cut & Cover” alternative

# Blaengwynfi



hyperTunnel



1. Pilot hole(s)
2. Holes outside the planned tunnel wall
3. Inject grout (liquid cement)
4. Dig out centre
5. Spray concrete wall



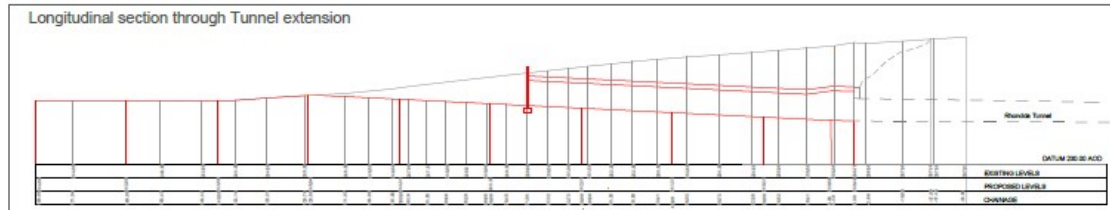


Green – Spoil removed and deposited

# Excavate

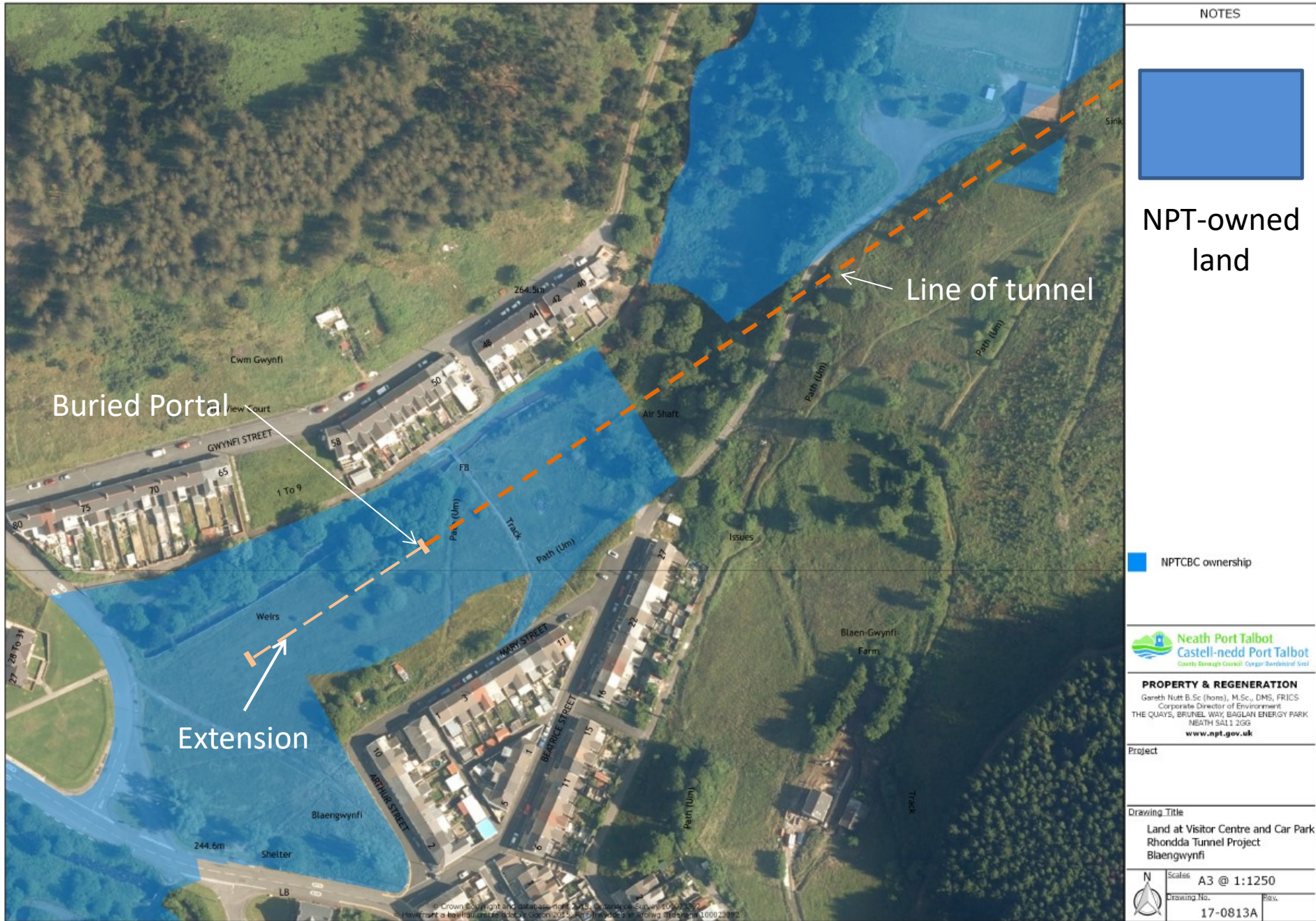


# Extend



<b>Rhodda Tunnel</b>	
Blaengwynfi Portal	
Tunnel Extension Alternative	
Date	26 July 2021
Scale	1:1000, 1:500, 1:250 @ A1
Drawn by	RLW
RTS 4001	





Extension will be entirely in NPT Land – Independent of Westminster or Welsh Govt.



Rhondda Tunnel Society has been campaigning  
since 2015

Huge political support, but endless reports and delays

We want to see if we can raise the funds for a Blaengwynfi Extension  
independently of public funding

The air shaft could be opened for abseiling to bring visitors

Create a huge momentum to finish the job!

Tentative offer of some funding already;

Could provide the “Match Funding” essential for most bids