

Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan (Deposit Draft, with Focussed Changes)

Strategic Sites Background Paper

May 2010

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Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to bring together the evidence behind the allocation of the 8 strategic sites for various combinations of land uses.

This paper deals with the strategic sites in the same order as they appear in the Draft LDP.

Definition of Strategic Sites

Strategic sites are:

- 20 hectares or more in size
- Located in close proximity to regional transport network
- Able to deliver significant benefits to the County Borough

(Draft LDP 4.35).

Purpose of Strategic Sites

The purpose of strategic sites, as the term implies, is to contribute to the delivery of the LDP strategy. The strategy is to provide “development in locations that meet local needs whilst promoting sustainable growth” and “seeks to marry the delivery of new homes and services at a local level with an ambitious strategy for growth intended to promote sustainable regeneration”. (Draft LDP, 4.1)

The strategy reflects the different trends in the north and south of the plan area. In the Northern Strategy Area, which has experienced depopulation and decline, development proposals “will provide appropriate growth to address the problems of deprivation and high levels of social and economic need” (4.4). In the Southern Strategy Area, which has experienced growth, development proposals “will promote sustainable development by providing a managed form of growth ...” (4.7).

The strategy also recognises the important role that settlements play in providing homes and services. In order to focus growth in areas where maximum social and economic benefits can be achieved, a distinction is made between principal towns, key settlements and smaller settlements. New development opportunities will be focused in principal towns and key settlements (4.10).

The Draft LDP Key Diagram (page 28) shows the location of the 8 strategic sites in relation to the 2 Strategy Areas, the 3 principal towns, the 8 key settlements, the main road system and existing railways.

Of the 8 sites, 5 are in the more deprived Northern Strategy Area. Maerdy supports Ferndale key settlement. Fernhill supports Treorchy key settlement. Phurnacite supports Mountain Ash key settlement. Robertstown / Abernant supports Aberdare principal town. Hirwaun supports Hirwaun key settlement. In the Southern Strategy Area, Cwm and Mwyndy / Talbot Green support Llantrisant / Talbot Green principal town. Llanilid supports Llanharan key settlement. Furthermore, the accessibility of the strategic sites from the trunk roads and A class roads means that the economic and social benefits of their development should be felt beyond the nearest principal town or key settlement.

The strategic sites are based on candidate sites, either singly or in combination, and have been assessed in accordance with the Council's Candidate Sites Methodology.

Former Maerdy Colliery Site, Rhondda Fach:	Candidate site 462
Former Fernhill Colliery Site, Blaenrhondda:	Candidate site 187
Former Phurnacite Plant, Abercwmboi:	Candidate site 443
Land at Robertstown / Abernant, Aberdare:	Candidate sites 216, 249, 256 (Robertstown) and 275 (Abernant)
Land south of Hirwaun:	Candidate sites 336, 486, 487 & 488
Former Cwm Colliery & Coking Works Tyn-y-nant, Pontypridd:	Candidate sites 132 & 206
Mwyndy / Talbot Green Area:	Multiple candidate sites
Former OCC Site Llanilid, Llanharan:	Candidate sites 113 & 476

Placemaking

Each of the strategic sites underwent a placemaking exercise involving the Council's Urban Designer and a multi-disciplinary team of Council officers, held in August and September 2007. The output of the process is the set of 8 Indicative Concept Plans for each of the strategic sites in the Draft LDP, together with the description of development in the supporting text to the 8 policies.

The placemaking process is described in the Placemaking Event Record [Evidence Base document EB27].

Each of the strategic sites has undergone sustainability appraisal in accordance with the Council's methodology. The results of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) are in the SA of the Deposit Draft LDP (EB8).

Sensitivity Testing

A section is included under each strategic site on sensitivity testing. The sensitivity testing is intended to identify possible scenarios that could arise at each strategic site and their possible implications. This is intended to help inform the consideration of issues at each site.

The Council does not consider that these scenarios are likely to arise. Clearly the effect of any change at the strategic sites would require detailed assessment by the Council, to consider the implications on the Plan and its strategy.

Proposals seeking to deliver development significantly different from that established by the LDP may require a formal review of the Plan to fully understand the consequences for the Plan and its strategy.

Where proposals are explored (e.g. 'proposed school is deleted') the Council is not advocating this position and the background paper should not be taken as a formal consideration of the merits or otherwise of such a proposal.

Flood Risk

The Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment (Scott Wilson 2008: Evidence Base document EB59), section 7 summarises flood risk for the strategic sites on a traffic light system (green for low risk, amber for medium risk, red for high risk). The findings are referred to in this paper under the headings of the strategic sites.

In November 2009, maps showing the Environment Agency's Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding were made available to the Authority. The maps are at 1:50,000 scale and are not sufficient on their own to make specific planning decisions. Nevertheless a comment on the broad implication for each strategic site is included under the strategic site headings.

Transportation

Hyder Consulting were commissioned by the Council to assess the strategic sites in terms of their associated traffic impact upon the strategic highway network in the Strategic Transport Assessment Report, 2007 (EB80) and Strategic Transport Corridors Infrastructure Needs Study (EB81). Relevant findings of the reports are included in this paper under the strategic site headings.

Infrastructure

The Draft Infrastructure Topic Paper, April 2008 (EB95) contains information about allocated sites including the 8 strategic sites, from the following organisations:

- National Grid
- Education Service
- Library Service

National Grid makes the following general comment:

“Based on the construction and distribution of new residential and employment land in Rhondda Cynon Taf, development should, in principle, not represent a major issue for National Grid’s electricity or gas transmission network.”

Site-specific information is set out under the headings of the strategic sites.

The Event Record of Pre-Deposit Consultation with Key Infrastructure Providers (August/September 2008: Evidence Base document EB28) contains information about allocated sites including the 8 strategic sites, from the following organisations:

- Western Power Distribution (WPD)
- Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd (GGAT)
- Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)
- Coal Authority
- Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW)

Western Power Distribution makes the following general comment:

“Due to unknown electrical requirements WPD are unable to provide a response on each allocation. However, based on housing figures provided by the Council, it is probable that WPD would be able to provide the infrastructure given that a number of sites

have previously installed infrastructure for use in the collieries and associated past industries. The reinforcement of WPD assets will also be required in some areas, along with diversions of its plant to facilitate proposed development.”

Dwr Cymru Welsh Water makes the following general comment:

“Sewage Treatment: If all sites coming forward, or clusters in particular areas – then this would exceed the theoretical design capacity of the Waste Water Treatment Works. Approval for capital investment for the next 5 years to improve these sites would not be known until December 2009. Should developers wish to proceed in advance of DCWW improvements, then this may result in an objection to the proposal or it may be possible for developers themselves to fund the necessary upgrades.”

Site-specific information is set out under the headings of the strategic sites.

Strategic Site 1: Former Maerdy Colliery Site, Rhondda Fach

Core Strategy Policy: CS 3.1
Strategy Area Policy: NSA 4

Current Use:

Disused former colliery surface and tips



Objective:

Restoration of derelict landscape for amenity and employment uses, to enhance the key settlement of Ferndale.

Summary of Proposals:

- a. Plateau for small business & industrial units.
- b. Visitor Centre & car park near Castell Nos & Lower Reservoir.

c. Access spine road; riverside path; cycle way.

d. Retain and enhance wildlife sites; community woodland; valley side restoration.

Proximity to regional transport network:

200m from site along existing industrial access road to A4233 Aberdare/Ferndale/Porth/Tonyrefail road

Evidence:

Housing	Not applicable
Employment	Employment Land Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB84]
Retail	Not applicable
Leisure, recreation and open space	The Maerdy Site Development Study (Atkins 2004) informed the open space allocation. The LDP Constraints Map shows that parts of the open space are within a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation 76. The background to this is in the Natural Environment Topic Paper.
Education	Not applicable
Land Reclamation	The LDP Proposals Map shows that a large proportion of the site is subject to land reclamation proposal NSA 27.7.
Access	The Strategic Sites Transport Assessment (Hyder, 2007) advises that: Primary access will be from the existing industrial estate road that connects to the A4233 via a priority T-junction. Secondary access through Wrgant Place and Springfield Road would allow for a continuation of the existing community. Future developments should, as a minimum, provide a good cycle and pedestrian friendly environment along these access routes.
Flood Risk 1	The Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment (Scott Wilson 2008) identifies a medium (amber) risk of overland flow from the existing unmaintained drainage ditches. This is a maintenance issue that should not prevent the development envisaged.
Flood Risk 2	The Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding map shows that the only area affected is the narrow channel of the river on the north-eastern boundary of these site. The industrial development plateau is not affected. No further investigation is considered necessary.
Planning History	None relating to future use of the site.

Origin and Alternatives Considered:

Reclamation of the site has been sought since the colliery closed in 1990. In 1996, a phase 1 reclamation scheme produced an industrial plateau (adjoining the strategic site) occupied by a polymer engineering business that produces rubber mouldings and rubber to metal bonded products principally for the automotive industry. In 2004, Atkins produced the “Maerdy Site Development Study” for the rest of the colliery site (the strategic site) proposing landscaping and recreational uses. However, with the closure of the Chubb fire extinguisher factory in Ferndale in 2005, a requirement for new land to attract industry to the Rhondda Fach was identified. Two options for were considered, one including a substantially larger industrial development plateau, the other as the Draft LDP proposals. The reason for rejecting the larger industrial option was that the cost and visual impact of the considerable engineering operations that would have been required to cut and fill the ground to form the plateau was not justified in view of the lack of evidence of demand for large-scale sites for new industry.

Infrastructure Issues:

Transportation	<p>The Strategic Sites Transport Assessment (Hyder, 2007) recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any future development should ensure that the site is an extension of the existing urban settlement and not segregated by any physical boundaries. • The capacity assessment of the key links has demonstrated that forecast traffic generation will not have a detrimental impact on the strategic highway network and will not require any highway link upgrade to manage the additional traffic. Further studies will be required to ascertain whether the additional traffic will impact upon the operational performance of the key junctions on the strategic highway network. • A comprehensive Masterplan must be devised at an early stage of the design process to maximise accessibility by all modes of transport. • A Travel Plan should be agreed prior to first occupation. • Consideration should be given to ‘pump priming’ prior to first occupation.
GGAT	<p>Archaeological Restraint: Significant Restraint Maerdy Colliery and inside Registered Landscape of Special Historic Importance. Impact on setting of Castell Nos.</p> <p>Archaeological Recommendation: Archaeological desk-based assessment plus Assessment of the Significance of the Impact of Development on Historic Landscape and assessment of impact on setting of scheduled ancient monument required prior to determination of planning application.</p>

CCW	<p>Site contains pockets of biodiversity interest. Site is prominent when viewed from above and the A4233 from Aberdare. Careful consideration to the design of the roofscape should be given for any development. Opportunity should be taken to seek footpath and cycleway improvements from the site to link into the surrounding network. Inclusion in the Rhondda Landscape of Historic Interest.</p>						
DCWW	<p>Parts of the sewerage network suffer from hydraulic overloading so developers may be required to fund essential improvements ahead of regulatory improvements. If the development gives rise to a new discharge of trade effluent then a Discharge Consent is required from DCWW. The area suffers from low water pressure with new development exacerbating service levels so development of this site would require off-site main laying. Water mains cross the site so this may restrict the density of development.</p>						
Coal Authority	Possible/known shallow mine workings	Other underground workings	Recorded mine entries	Coal mining geology issues	Past surface mining	Known mine gas issues	Previous coal mining related hazards
	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No

Sensitivity Testing:

Variation	Effect	Comment
Employment allocation is deleted	LDP would fail to help deliver a means to retain some working population in the upper Rhondda Fach	This allocation is already minimal in size and should be retained.
Visitor centre is deleted	LDP would fail to help deliver a means to (a) attract some visitors and their spending to the upper Rhondda Fach and (b) to improve the quality of life for residents	The visitor centre proposal should be retained.

Strategic Site 2: Former Fernhill Colliery Site, Blaenrhondda

Core Strategy Policy: CS 3.2

Strategy Area Policy: NSA 5

Current Use:

Disused former colliery surface and tips



Objective:

Restoration of derelict landscape for residential use, to enhance the key settlement of Treorchy

Summary of Proposals:

- a. 400 dwellings
- b. Local facilities including shops at end of Brook Street.
- c. Extension of Penpych Primary School (off-site).
- d. Access road from A4061; other access from Brook Street.
- e. Restoration of river; retain & enhance wildlife sites; restore land for amenity use (off-site).

Proximity to regional transport network:

630m from site along proposed new access road to A4061 Bridgend/Treorchy/Hirwaun road

Evidence:

Housing	Housing Land Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB83]
Employment	Not applicable
Retail	The retail content of the proposed Fernhill local centre is not significant enough to be evidenced in the Retail Topic Paper.
Leisure, recreation and open space	The LDP Constraints Map shows that almost all the open space is within a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation 58. The background to this is in the Natural Environment Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB98].
Education	See below.
Access	The Strategic Sites Transport Assessment (Hyder, 2007) advises that: Access is likely to be limited to Brook Street unless the redevelopment includes a new access road leading to the A4061. This is likely to be difficult to attain from an engineering perspective, although it could be funded by the residential development. It is recommended that further studies are conducted, as it would be beneficial for the development and for local residents if an alternative access solution can be found. Brook Street has significant restrictions on traffic flow along this narrow carriageway and is adjoined by dwellings along its entire length.
Flood Risk 1	The Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment (Scott Wilson 2008) identifies an unknown (amber) risk of overland flow to be addressed in a site-specific Flood Consequences Assessment or surface water management plan. This need not prevent development as envisaged.
Flood Risk 2	The Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding map shows that the site is affected along the course of the Afon Rhondda Fawr and side tributaries within the site. Further investigation is required.
Planning History	None relating to future use of the site.

Origin and Alternatives Considered:

Fernhill Colliery was closed in 1978. By 1987 a short-lived tourist attraction on a cowboy theme called “Western World” had set up on the site. The adopted Rhondda Local Plan allocated a site in the same location as the Strategic Site (of similar size but with different boundaries) for provision of tourist accommodation. In the early 2000s, prospective developers exhibited proposals locally for a large-scale commercial leisure scheme. No planning application was made and the site was sold to Cofton Ltd in 2005. Since then only residential development has been considered.

Infrastructure Issues:

Transportation	<p>The Strategic Sites Transport Assessment (Hyder, 2007) recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any redevelopment should ensure that the site is an extension of the existing urban settlement and not segregated by any physical boundaries. • The capacity assessment of the key links has demonstrated that forecast traffic generation from this site should not have a detrimental impact on the RCT strategic highway network and should not require any highway link upgrade to manage the additional traffic. Further studies will be required to ascertain whether the additional traffic will impact upon the operational performance of the key junctions on the strategic highway network. • Further studies into the viability of a new form of vehicular access would be beneficial prior to commencing any redevelopment plans for this site as the existing access via Brook Street is restrictive. • A comprehensive Masterplan must be devised at an early stage of the design process to maximise accessibility by all modes of transport. • A Travel Plan should be agreed prior to first occupation. • Consideration should be given to ‘pump priming’ prior to first occupation.
Education Service	<p>Depending on the proposed number of housing units a new Primary School may be required or alternatively the extension of both Treorchy Comprehensive and the relatively new Penpych Primary School. There is little surplus capacity in both Primary Schools and Secondary and Welsh Medium Schools in the area.</p>
Library Service	<p>No implications from development plans.</p>

GGAT	Archaeological Restraint: Fairly Significant Restraint Fernhill Colliery and inside Registered Landscape of Special Historic Importance. Archaeological Recommendation: Archaeological desk-based assessment plus Assessment of the Significance of the Impact of Development on Historic Landscape required prior to determination of planning application.						
CCW	Area of significant landscape value. Inclusion in the Rhondda Landscape of Historic Interest. Prominent role in distant views when approaching Treherbert along the A4061 from Treherbert, so design and roofscapes will be particularly important. Need to build on existing footpaths and improve footpaths and cycle links to the railway station at Treherbert.						
DCWW	Parts of the sewerage network suffer from hydraulic overloading so developers may be required to fund essential improvements ahead of regulatory improvements. A public sewer and water mains crosses the site so this may restrict the density of development. The area suffers from low water pressure with new development exacerbating service levels so development of this site would require off-site main laying.						
Coal Authority	Possible/known shallow mine workings	Other underground workings	Recorded mine entries	Coal mining geology issues	Past surface mining	Known mine gas issues	Previous coal mining related hazards
	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No

Sensitivity Testing:

Variation	Effect	Comment
Residential density is increased	The regeneration effect of the development could be increased, subject to a variety of dwelling types being provided. Viability of the development could be enhanced	The apparently low proposed densities take account of the site's topography and the desire to provide a different style of house from the predominantly terraced housing, in order to encourage residents to stay in or

		return to the area
Residential density is decreased	Access road may become unviable, imposing traffic movements on the Blaenrhondda residential and conservation area	Even if Brook Street has the capacity for extra traffic, the amenity impact of traffic movements would not be acceptable
Local centre is deleted	The LDP would fail to help deliver a regeneration benefit for the existing village. The development would lack a strong sense of place without a local centre within it.	The local centre proposal should be retained

Strategic Site 3: Former Phurnacite Plant, Abercwmboi

Core Strategy Policy: CS 3.3

Strategy Area Policy: NSA 6

Current uses:

Disused cleared site of former Phurnacite briquettes plant and tips

Lake

River

Railway line

Unused industrial development plateau



Objective:

Restoration of derelict landscape for employment, residential and amenity uses, to enhance the key settlement of Mountain Ash and the principal town of Aberdare.

Summary of Proposals:

a. B1 B2 B8 development

- b. Access to a. from Aberaman Industrial Park; recreation access from John Street
- c. Riverside ecology park
- d. 500 dwellings and primary school
- e. Access to d. from Bronallt Terrace.
- f. Football ground.

Proximity to regional transport network:

Industrial part is 980 m along an existing industrial access road from A4059 Hirwaun/Aberdare/Mountain Ash/A470 road
 Residential part is 2,200 m along the B4275 road from the A4059.

Industrial part is 1,580m from Cwmbach railway station.
 Residential part is 2,800 m from the same station.

Evidence:

Housing	Housing Land Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB83]
Employment	Employment Land Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB84]
Retail	Not applicable
Leisure, recreation and open space	The LDP Constraints Map shows that the lake and parts of the open space outside the settlement boundary are Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation 56 & 57 (i.e. <i>not</i> the area where the residential development proposal is being reinstated). The background to this is in the Natural Environment Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB98].
Education	See below
Access	The Strategic Sites Transport Assessment (Hyder, 2007) advises that: If the industrial units are located in the northern section of the development site, then primary access should be taken via the existing industrial estate spine roads. The residential redevelopment should aim to take the form of an extension of Abercwmboui, whereby streets link up to promote a sense of community.
Flood Risk 1	The Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment (Scott Wilson 2008) identifies a high (red) risk of flooding for highly vulnerable development. The site flooded in 1979. There is a medium (amber) risk for development of lower vulnerability and unknown (amber) risk of flooding from sewers. The Hydraulic

	Modelling Report (Waterman, 2009) supersedes these conclusions.
Flood Risk 2	The Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding map shows that the site is substantially affected, particularly where the existing lake lies and land northeast of the railway intended for riverside open space. Further investigation is required.
Planning History	None for future uses of the site

Origin and Alternatives Considered:

The Phurnacite Plant closed progressively between 1990 and 1999. In the adopted Rhondda Cynon Taf (Cynon Valley) Local Plan, the site is allocated for industrial development with areas for recreation. Proposals made in 1995 for recovery of coal and encapsulation of tarry waste in an engineered landfill cell were refused planning permission in 2004, on grounds of insufficient information, traffic impact, piecemeal development, short-term solution and flood risk. Between 2000 and 2005, the Environment Council conducted a “stakeholder dialogue” to reach consensus on the future of the site. In January 2005, planning permission was granted for removal by rail of tarry waste to an off-site landfill and backfilling of the voids with inert material sourced from within the site. These operations have been completed. No planning applications have been made for industrial or other future use of the site. The Draft LDP proposed employment development as completion of Aberaman Industrial Park and open space on the majority of the site in view of flood risk. The focussed changes propose residential development on the evidence of a site-specific Hydraulic Modelling Report (Waterman, 2009) in support of representations from the Welsh Assembly Government (3477.D14) and DTZ (2048.A1).

Infrastructure Issues:

Transportation	<p>The Strategic Sites Transport Assessment (Hyder, 2007) recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any development should ensure that the site is an extension of the existing settlement and industrial estate and not segregated by any physical boundaries. • Integration of the employment element with the existing industrial estate will reduce the need for a new vehicular access point on the A4059. • The capacity assessment of the key links has demonstrated that forecast traffic generation from the proposed redevelopment at this site will have a negative impact on the A4059. This link is forecast to approach its theoretical capacity level and will require attention. • Further studies will be required to ascertain whether the additional traffic will impact upon the operational performance of the key junctions on the strategic highway network.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive Masterplan must be devised at an early stage of the design process to maximise accessibility by all modes of transport. • A Travel Plan should be agreed prior to first occupation. • Consideration should be given to 'pump priming' prior to first occupation.
Education Service	Depending on the proposed number of housing units a new Primary School may be required in the area or alternatively an extension to an existing school. There is limited surplus capacity in the region, with existing developments at Rose Row and Tirfounder Fields further exacerbating the limited surplus capacity in schools in the area. Secondary provision at Mountain Ash has sufficient capacity, although the Welsh Medium Sector in the Cynon Valley is already oversubscribed resulting in a need for the Council to address this under provision.
Library Service	No implications from development plans.
GGAT	Archaeological Restraint: None. Archaeological Recommendation: OK.
CCW	Check with SEWBRcC (SE Wales Biological Records Centre) for any records that might inform our justification of the site.
DCWW	<p>Parts of the sewerage network suffer from hydraulic overloading so developers may be required to fund essential improvements ahead of regulatory improvements.</p> <p>A public sewer crosses the site so this may restrict the density of development.</p> <p>If the development gives rise to a new discharge of trade effluent then a Discharge Consent is required from DCWW.</p> <p>If all proposed developments come to fruition then the Cynon WwTW will exceed design capacity. Should developers proceed in advance of DCWW planned improvements it may result in objection to the proposals with the possibility of developers funding the necessary upgrades via S106.</p> <p>DCWW require us to include a statement on waste water infrastructure for the site.</p> <p>The area suffers from low water pressure with new development exacerbating service levels so development of this site would require off-site main laying which could be quite substantial and expensive.</p>

Coal Authority	Possible/known shallow mine workings	Other underground workings	Recorded mine entries	Coal mining geology issues	Past surface mining	Known mine gas issues	Previous coal mining related hazards
	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

Sensitivity Testing:

Variation	Effect	Comment
Employment proposal is deleted	An opportunity for the LDP to promote employment development near a principal town would be lost	There is no obvious alternative use for this allocation, as its development would complete Aberaman Industrial Park
Residential density is increased	The regeneration effect of the development could be increased subject to a variety of dwelling types being provided. Viability of the development could be enhanced	A variety of dwelling types is required to encourage residents to stay in or return to the area. Flood risk could constrain any increase in residential numbers
Residential density is decreased	Increased opportunity for a high quality scheme (e.g. improved setting for the lake) with attendant regeneration benefits	Viability could constrain any decrease in residential numbers
Proposed school is deleted	Overcrowding would result. If the on-site proposal were to be deleted, off-site provision would be needed: no suitable site has been suggested	The school proposal is needed.

Strategic Site 4: Land at Robertstown / Abernant, Aberdare

Core Strategy Policy: CS 3.4
Strategy Area Policy: NSA 7

Current uses:

Agricultural fields
Hospital
River
Factory
Disused former factory site
Small workshops and day nursery
Disused former railway sidings and station building



Objective:

Redevelopment of derelict industrial land for employment / commercial leisure / medical centre; redevelopment of hospital site and land for residential use; retention of parkland for amenity use; to enhance the principal town of Aberdare

Summary of Proposals:

Robertstown:

- a. Access-improvements to A4059 and Robertstown highways
- b. B1
- c. Hotel, cinema or similar commercial leisure
- d. Medical centre

Abernant:

- e. Access-improvements to A4059 and Abernant highways
- f. 600 dwellings.
- g. Primary school.
- h. Retention of trees and parkland.

Proximity to regional transport network:

The employment / commercial leisure part is:

70m from A4059 Hirwaun/Aberdare/Mountain Ash/A470 road
Adjacent to Aberdare station
240m from Aberdare bus station

The residential part is:

360m from A4059 Hirwaun/Aberdare/Mountain Ash/A470 road
340m from Aberdare station
510m from Aberdare bus station

Evidence:

Housing	Housing Land Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB83]
Employment	Employment Land Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB84]
Retail	Not applicable
Leisure, recreation and open space	The LDP Constraints Map shows that all except 1.5 hectares of the open space is in a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation 15. The background to this is in the Natural Environment Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB98].
Education	See below
Access	The Strategic Sites Transport Assessment (Hyder, 2007) advises that: Primary access to the commercial and industrial elements could be taken from Wellington Street. Primary access for a residential element could be located on Abernant Road. It should be a requirement of any residential development to link into the existing streets on the eastern side of Abernant Road. However this is likely to be reliant on Abernant Road being able to accommodate the additional traffic, which further studies will need to establish prior to redevelopment. An alternative primary / secondary access could also be taken from Wellington Street as it has a higher capacity than Abernant Road.
Flood Risk 1	Roberstown The Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment (Scott Wilson 2008) identifies a high (red) risk of flooding for both higher and lower vulnerability development. The area flooded in 1979. There is a medium (amber) risk of overland flows and flooding from sewers. A site-specific Flood Consequences Assessment has been undertaken in relation to the proposals for employment and commercial leisure use (defined in TAN 15 as less vulnerable uses). Scott Wilson has prepared the required Broad Level Flood Consequences Assessment (April 2010). This concludes that: “Given the work undertaken to date, in particular the 2006 FCA, and the exclusion of more vulnerable uses, it is believed that a solution is achievable for mitigation at the site to ensure it meets the requirements of TAN15. Therefore, it is likely that the site would be deliverable as part of the LDP, subject to economic viability and Environment Agency consent”.

	<p>Abernant The Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment (Scott Wilson 2008) identifies no flood risk (green) in this area.</p>
Flood Risk 2	<p>Roberstown The Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding map shows that the site is entirely affected. Further investigation is required.</p> <p>Abernant The Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding map shows that the site is affected along the narrow routes of watercourses through the site. Further investigation is required.</p>
Planning History	<p>04/1809 An outline planning application for mixed-use redevelopment of the Roberstown part of the Strategic Site to provide residential, commercial and leisure facilities was refused by Welsh Assembly Government on 15/11/06 on flood risk grounds.</p>

Origin and consideration of alternatives:

The Roberstown area is an area of former railway sidings and industry. The Universal Furniture factory burned down in 2002 and has not been redeveloped. The land was partly allocated in the adopted Rhondda Cynon Taf (Cynon Valley) Local Plan for A3 uses, D2 uses, housing and industry. None of the allocations have been implemented. Flood risk is a constraint on residential development in particular.

The Aberdare Hospital site, Abernant is due to be vacated by April 2011 with relocation of services to the new Cynon Valley Hospital site in Mountain Ash. Initially residential development of the buildings and grounds was considered, but the more environmentally valuable parkland has been excluded for amenity and wildlife reasons. The consideration of representations has allowed the opportunity to assess potential extensions to the site – Alternative Sites AS (N) 12, 15 and 129. These have not been recommended for allocation in view of their environmental value (trees).

The consideration of alternatives has mainly involved access. Initially a spine road was envisaged connecting the Gadlys roundabout on the A4059 to the Roberstown land via a level crossing and to the Abernant land via a river bridge. This has been

discounted, partly on the grounds of traffic impact on the A4059 of a level crossing, and partly on the grounds of environmental impact of a river crossing on the river, habitats and trees. Low-impact alternatives to the spine road are being sought.

Infrastructure Issues:

Transportation	The Strategic Sites Transport Assessment (Hyder, 2007) recommends:
Education Service	The provision of additional Primary Education places on this site will be a necessity given that all schools in the locality are either full or over capacity in both the Welsh and English Medium sectors. Statistical evidence reaffirms an over subscription in schools that is likely to rise within the next 5 years. This site should be considered in conjunction with other sites in the area, given that Abernant Primary School requires urgent replacement with a new build, the size of which is likely to be determined by the number of housing units proposed.
Library Service	Additional housing will lead to greater use of Aberdare Library. Given that this is one of the 3 main libraries in Rhondda Cynon Taf, it should easily absorb the increase in demand.
GGAT	Archaeological Restraint: Abernant House and park Archaeological Recommendation: Archaeological desk-based assessment plus building recording prior to determination of planning application
CCW	Expansion of commercial and leisure facilities at the Park & Ride Site will lead to an increase in car-borne traffic, contrary to WAG's aim to reduce carbon emissions and detract from the existing town centre. Check with SEWBRcC (SE Wales Biological Records Centre) for any records that might inform our justification of the site.
DCWW	Parts of the sewerage network suffer from hydraulic overloading so developers may be required to fund essential improvements ahead of regulatory improvements. A public sewer and water mains crosses the site so this may restrict the density of development. If the development gives rise to a new discharge of trade effluent then a Discharge Consent is required from DCWW. If all proposed developments come to fruition then the Cynon WwTW will exceed design capacity. Should

	<p>developers proceed in advance of DCWW planned improvements it may result in objection to the proposals with the possibility of developers funding the necessary upgrades via S106. DCWW require us to include a statement on waste water infrastructure for the site. The area suffers from low water pressure with new development exacerbating service levels so development of this site would require off-site main laying.</p>						
Coal Authority	Possible/known shallow mine workings	Other underground workings	Recorded mine entries	Coal mining geology issues	Past surface mining	Known mine gas issues	Previous coal mining related hazards
	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No

Sensitivity Testing:

Variation	Effect	Comment
Employment proposal is deleted	An opportunity for the LDP to promote employment development in a principal town would be lost	The site has a history of use for industry and for railway sidings. Vacant flat land, centrally located in settlements and accessible from main roads is especially useful for employment
Commercial leisure proposal is deleted	An opportunity for the LDP to promote development that would enhance the attraction of the centre of a principal town would be lost	There is no other vacant land of significant size close to the existing centre of Aberdare
Residential density is increased	The development would have to be high-rise, or would have to encroach on the parkland	Proposed density is already high. High-rise residential development would be out of character in Aberdare. The parkland should be retained for visual and wildlife value.
Residential density is decreased	Increased opportunity for a high quality scheme (e.g. improved setting for the park and better treatment of protected trees)	Proposed density is already high. A lower density scheme would still make good use of the site

	with attendant regeneration benefits. Loss of need for and ability to fund highways improvements	
Medical centre is delayed	Patients would continue to be treated in poor conditions. The site would remain vacant and unsightly	The need for the medical centre is established and awaits WAG funding
Proposed school is deleted	Overcrowding would result. If the on-site proposal were to be deleted, off-site provision would be needed: a site in Abernant has been suggested.	The school proposal is needed but off-site provision is likely to be an acceptable option.

Strategic Site 5: Land South of Hirwaun

Core Strategy Policy: CS 3.5
Strategy Area Policy: NSA 8

Current uses:

Coal workings
Agricultural fields
Recreation ground



Objective:

New Hirwaun centre; residential development; restoration of colliery land for employment use; to support key settlement of Hirwaun

Summary of proposals:

- a. Retail, commercial and community facilities
- b. 400 dwellings with links over new trunk road
- c. B1 B2 B8 development with ecological mitigation
- d. Primary school
- e. Extensions to secondary & Welsh-medium schools (off site, in Aberdare)
- f. Landscape and habitat restoration / protection and mitigation

Proximity to regional transport network:

The site lies at the junction of the A465 Heads Of The Valleys trunk road, the A4059 Hirwaun/Aberdare/Mountain Ash/A470 road and the A4061 Bridgend/Treorchy/Hirwaun road.

The residential area is 1,010 m from the proposed Hirwaun station (draft LDP NSA 22.2)

The industrial part is 960m from the proposed Hirwaun station (draft LDP NSA 22.3)

Evidence:

Housing	Housing Land Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB83]
Employment	Employment Land Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB84]
Retail	The Retail Topic Paper gives evidence for the retail content of the proposed New Hirwaun Centre.
Leisure, recreation and open space	The LDP Constraints Map shows that minor parts of the open space are in a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation 9. The background to this is in the Natural Environment Topic Paper.
Education	See below
Access	The Strategic Sites Transport Assessment (Hyder, 2007) advises that: Primary access will vary depending upon the location of the various elements of the development. If the residential element is placed in the eastern section of the development site, then access should be located along the A4059, so as to provide a continuation of the existing streets. If the business park is to be located on the western section of the development site, then amendments to the proposed A465 dualling plans should be sought at the earliest possible opportunity. It will be necessary to conduct further studies to determine the size and nature of junction required at the Tower Colliery

	junction, or whether the proposed grade separated junction (part of the A465 dualling scheme), will be sufficient to manage the additional traffic associated with the business park. Redevelopment plans should investigate alternative means of access also, as the proposed A465 dualling scheme may not be completed within the timeframe of this assessment. Secondary access points could be taken from the existing A465 alignment upon completion of the A465 dualling upgrade and the A4061.
Flood Risk 1	The Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment (Scott Wilson 2008) identifies a medium (amber) risk of overland flow that should be addressed in a site-specific Flood Consequences Assessment. The map of Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding corroborates this risk.
Flood Risk 2	The Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding map shows that the site is affected along the narrow routes of numerous watercourses through the site. The SFCA has already assessed this risk as medium.
Planning History	The planning history relates to mining activities. There are no significant planning applications for non-minerals development.

Further evidence supporting the need for improved retail, leisure and recreation facilities is found in the Hirwaun Village Study (Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners, 2008) which finds that recent residential development in Hirwaun has not kept pace with the provision of community facilities.

Origin and Consideration of Alternatives:

Land south of Hirwaun and Penywaun and east of Tower Colliery operational land was first considered for a major strategic employment allocation in 1998, in recognition of the strategically important location on the Heads Of The Valleys road with links to the Cynon Valley, Rhondda and Bridgend. However, no allocation was made and in 2006 it was known that Tower Colliery would close as a deep mine in 2008. Therefore the industrial land allocation was moved to the area affected by coal workings and the land most closely related to the urban area of Hirwaun allocated for housing. Land to the east of the strategic site, south of Penywaun was considered for residential development but excluded to preserve the separate identities of Hirwaun and Penywaun, and in view of the availability of enough housing land elsewhere.

Infrastructure Issues:

Transportation	<p>The Strategic Sites Transport Assessment (Hyder, 2007) recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any future redevelopment should ensure that the site is an extension of the existing urban settlement and industrial estate and not segregated by any physical boundaries. • The capacity assessment of the key links has demonstrated that forecast traffic generation from the proposed development will have a significant impact on the A4233, A4059, A4061, A465 and A470 links. The impact upon the A4059 and A470 will need to be addressed through further transport corridor studies to determine the best method of managing the forecast traffic demand. The A465 section that is shown to be over capacity could be resolved through the A465 dualling scheme, for which funding is being sought by the Welsh Assembly Government. The other highways are considered to operating within capacity in 2025. Further studies will be required to ascertain whether the additional traffic will impact upon the operational performance of the key junctions on the strategic highway network. • A comprehensive Masterplan must be devised at an early stage of the design process to maximise accessibility by all modes of transport. • A Travel Plan should be agreed prior to first occupation. • Consideration should be given to 'pump priming' prior to first occupation.
National Grid	<p>The site has a Gas Transmission pipeline running through. National Grid's underground pipelines are protected by permanent agreements with landowners or have been laid in the public highway under its licence. These grant legal rights that enable National Grid to achieve efficient and reliable operation through maintenance, repair and refurbishment of the gas transmission network. As such, National Grid require that no permanent structures are built over or under pipelines or within the zone specified in the agreement, materials or soil are not stacked or stored on top of the pipeline route and that unrestricted and safe access to any of its pipelines must be maintained at all times.</p>
Education Service	<p>At present, primary education provision in Hirwaun, Penywaun, Rhigos and Penderyn is adequate to meet the needs of local communities, with some surplus capacity available. However, the scale of the proposed site will require new, exclusive provision to be built, both English and Welsh Medium. Existing secondary schools in the upper Cynon Valley may also require extension, or possibly new provision depending on the number of homes built.</p>

Library Service	Additional housing would justify a new library with improved facilities.						
GGAT	Archaeological Restraint: Historic agricultural landscape overlain by industrial activity Archaeological Recommendation: Archaeological desk-based assessment plus possible evaluation on specific sites prior to determination of planning application.						
CCW	Habitat exists on this allocation that is suitable for marsh fritillary butterflies so the site could impact upon their breeding habitat if developed. Close proximity to SAC.						
DCWW	Parts of the sewerage network suffer from hydraulic overloading so developers may be required to fund essential improvements ahead of regulatory improvements. A public sewer and water mains crosses the site so this may restrict the density of development. If the development gives rise to a new discharge of trade effluent then a Discharge Consent is required from DCWW. If all proposed developments come to fruition then the Cynon WwTW will exceed design capacity. Should developers proceed in advance of DCWW planned improvements it may result in objection to the proposals with the possibility of developers funding the necessary upgrades via S106. DCWW require us to include a statement on waste water infrastructure for the site. The area suffers from low water pressure with new development exacerbating service levels so development of this site would require off-site main laying.						
Coal Authority	Possible/known shallow mine workings	Other underground workings	Recorded mine entries	Coal mining geology issues	Past surface mining	Known mine gas issues	Previous coal mining related hazards
	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No

Sensitivity Testing:

Variation	Effect	Comment
Proposed new Hirwaun centre is deleted	An opportunity for the LDP to help secure a centre for Hirwaun of more appropriate size than the existing centre would be lost. Residents continue to travel to Aberdare for basic shopping needs. The development would lack a strong sense of place without a centre within it.	Aberdare can still thrive as a higher-order retail centre whilst there would be sustainability benefits if Hirwaun residents can make short trips for basic shopping needs.
Residential density is increased	The regeneration effect of the development could be increased subject to a variety of dwelling types being provided.	A variety of dwelling types is required to encourage residents to stay in or return to the area.
Residential density is decreased	Increased opportunity for a high quality scheme with attendant regeneration benefits. Risk of the proposed centre not being justified.	Dwelling numbers should not be reduced.
Residential development is postponed	The LDP fails to deliver regeneration of the key settlement of Hirwaun within the plan period	Already only 400 of the 1,000 dwellings envisaged are allocated in the current plan period. If the A465 realignment does not take place in the plan period, development including the new Hirwaun centre could be allowed to proceed adjoining the existing bypass
Employment proposal is deleted	An opportunity for the LDP to promote employment development in a key settlement would be lost	The site will lie at an existing and a proposed junction on the A465 trunk road, so is likely to be especially attractive for employment uses
Proposed school is deleted	Overcrowding would result. If the on-site proposal were to be deleted, off-site provision would be needed: no other site has been suggested.	The school proposal is needed.

Strategic Site 6: Former Cwm Colliery & Coking Works, Tyn-y-nant, Pontypridd

Core Strategy Policy: CS 3.6
Strategy Area Policy: SSA 7

Current uses:

Former colliery surface now used for open storage of railway sleepers
Former colliery tips
Disused coking works (including 2 listed cooling towers)
Agricultural fields



Objective:

Restoration of derelict landscape for residential and amenity uses, to support the principal towns of Llantrisant / Talbot Green and Pontypridd

Summary of proposals:

- a. Minimum of 800 dwellings
- b. B1 B2 B8 and preservation of the listed cooling towers

- c. Primary school
- d. Reclaim land and enhance habitat for open space
- e. Protect habitat in Croescade Road
- f. Green space along streams
- g. Spine road and east-west link
- h. Local centre [N.B. indicated on ICP but not in para. 6.135]

Proximity to regional transport network:

The site is 740m along the B4595 from the existing A473 Bridgend/Llanharan/Talbot Green/Pontypridd road.
 The site is 1,820m along the B4595 and Crown Hill from the A473 Church Village bypass.
 The site is 100m from the proposed Parish Road, Ty'n-y-nant station (draft LDP SSA 19.5)

Evidence:

Housing	Housing Land Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB83]
Employment	Employment Land Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB84]
Retail	The retail content of the proposed Cwm local centre is not significant enough to be evidenced in the Retail Topic Paper.
Leisure, recreation and open space	The LDP Constraints Map shows that the tip lagoons and part of the open space inside the settlement boundary are Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation 132 & 134. The background to this is in the Natural Environment Topic Paper.
Education	See below
Land Reclamation	The LDP Proposals Map shows that an area approximating to the proposed open space is subject to land reclamation proposal SSA 24.5.
Access	The Strategic Sites Transport Assessment (Hyder, 2007) advises that: The primary point of access should be on Woodlands Road. Further studies will be required, but if capacity becomes an issue at the existing junction with the A473, then what we understand to be a disused railway line linking the site to the A473 could be converted, as an option, to provide a new link road to feed Beddau and the development site from the south, thereby relieving the existing junction to manage traffic from the north only. Secondary access points could be located along Croescade Road and the 'unnamed' road that runs along

	the western boundary of the development site. If the future redevelopment of this site has residential dwellings in the southern section then vehicular links should be made from east to west to allow continuity through the community. This should include a link from Heol Dyhewydd to Commercial Street and Heol Brynhyfryd to Heol-Y-Beddau. This method of traffic distribution will however, be reliant on local junctions and link roads being subject to forecast traffic capacity analysis and demonstrated to be capable of withstanding this additional traffic.
Flood Risk 1	The Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment (Scott Wilson 2008) identifies no flood risk (green) in this area, but warns that the de-culverting of the Nant Myddlyn will change the flooding regime so that a site-specific Flood Consequences Assessment will be required. Although this has not been submitted with the LDP representations, it is anticipated that the de-culverting scheme can be designed for a planning application so as not to prevent the development envisaged.
Flood Risk 2	The Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding map shows that the former coking works area is substantially affected, as well as the lagoons on the coal tips. Further investigation of the coking works area is required.
Planning History	04/1360 An appeal against non-determination of an outline planning application for the demolition of existing structures, site remediation and redevelopment of the Cwm Coking Works site, to provide a mix of uses including approximately 630 residential units (use class C3), 1788 sq. m Commercial Development (use class B1) community use, was dismissed on 19/07/07 to allow consideration of the proposals in the LDP process.

Origin and consideration of alternatives:

Cwm Colliery closed in 1986 and Cwm Coking Works closed in 2002. Options for reclamation were considered from 1986. The original development brief provided for a phase 1 industrial development plateau on the colliery site, with a requirement for no noxious uses. The colliery tips were to be retained to shield the coking works from residential areas to the east. The phase 1 plateau has only ever been used for open storage of railway sleepers: the presence of the adjoining coking works is thought to have been a deterrent to investment in the site. Phase 2, to follow closure of the coking works, proposed a new access to improve amenity for Windsor Gardens, an extended industrial plateau and re-profiling of the tips over the coking works site. The subsequent

listing of the 2 cooling towers presented a constraint to phase 2 and it has not been implemented. The option of redevelopment of the colliery and coking works sites independently of the tips was explored in the unsuccessful appeal.

Infrastructure Issues:

Transportation	<p>The Strategic Sites Transport Assessment (Hyder, 2007) recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any future redevelopment should ensure that the site is an extension of the existing urban settlement and not segregated by any physical boundaries. • The capacity assessment of the key links has demonstrated that forecast traffic generation from the proposed redevelopment will have a significant impact on the A473. It is therefore suggested that further transport corridor studies are required to manage this additional increase in traffic. It is envisaged that the Church Village bypass scheme will aid in this. Further studies will be required to ascertain whether the additional traffic will impact upon the operational performance of the key junctions on the strategic highway network and other localised minor roads. • A comprehensive Masterplan must be devised at an early stage of the design process to maximise accessibility by all modes of transport. • A Travel Plan should be agreed prior to first occupation of the redevelopment. This is to ensure that RCT can utilise developer contributions to fund a pump priming process that will influence travel choice and promote sustainable modes.
Education Service	<p>At a National Assembly Planning Inquiry it was accepted that additional primary education provision would be required to provide for the number of housing being proposed. Given limited surplus capacity in schools in the area and the considerable size of the proposed development, the requirement may be for a new English Medium Primary School, together with an extension of the local secondary school. Welsh medium provision is adequate in the area at present, but depending on the scale of development, small scale, additional provision in the Welsh Medium Primary sector may require consideration.</p>
Library Service	<p>The existing library will need to be improved.</p>
GGAT	<p>Archaeological Restraint: Coke Works Archaeological Recommendation: Need to preserve listed structures</p>

CCW	<p>Check with SEWBRcC (SE Wales Biological Records Centre) for any records that might inform our justification of the site.</p> <p>CCW welcomes the proposal to integrate and manage large parts of the site as public open space and recommends close liaison with our ecologist and landscape architect.</p> <p>The site offers significant opportunities for biodiversity enhancement and CCW recommends that good quality walking, cycling and transport links are integrated into the proposals.</p>						
DCWW	<p>Parts of the sewerage network suffer from hydraulic overloading so developers may be required to fund essential improvements ahead of regulatory improvements.</p> <p>A public sewer and water mains crosses the site so this may restrict the density of development.</p> <p>If the development gives rise to a new discharge of trade effluent then a Discharge Consent is required from DCWW.</p> <p>If all proposed developments come to fruition then the Rhiwsaeson WWTW will exceed design capacity. Should developers proceed in advance of DCWW planned improvements it may result in objection to the proposals with the possibility of developers funding the necessary upgrades via S106.</p> <p>DCWW require us to include a statement on waste water infrastructure for the site.</p> <p>The area suffers from low water pressure with new development exacerbating service levels so development of this site would require off-site main laying which could be quite substantial and expensive.</p>						
Coal Authority	Possible/known shallow mine workings	Other underground workings	Recorded mine entries	Coal mining geology issues	Past surface mining	Known mine gas issues	Previous coal mining related hazards
	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No

Sensitivity Testing:

Variation	Effect	Comment
Residential density is increased	The regeneration effect of the development could be increased. Viability of the proposed passenger rail service from Pontyclun to Beddau (policy SSA 19) could be enhanced. Viability of decontamination	Increased density is an acceptable option.

	and retention of cooling towers could be enhanced.	
Residential density is decreased	Increased opportunity for a high quality scheme, however viability would be affected	Density should not be reduced.
Employment proposal is deleted	An opportunity for the LDP to promote employment development between two principal towns would be lost. Without a proper setting, the listed cooling towers could detract from residential amenity by virtue of their austere appearance	Employment development is considered to be the only appropriate setting for the retained listed cooling towers
Proposed school is deleted	Overcrowding would result. If the on-site proposal were to be deleted, off-site provision would be needed: no other site has been suggested.	The school proposal is needed.
Local centre is deleted	Residents would be likely to travel outside the immediate area for basic shopping needs, as the existing centre in Commercial Street, Ty'n-y-nant is small (Policy SSA 16). The development would lack a strong sense of place without a local centre within it.	The local centre is needed.

Strategic Site 7: Mwyndy / Talbot Green Area

Core Strategy Policy: CS 3.7

Strategy Area Policy: SSA 8

Current uses:

Retail department store (Leekes)

Depot (Royal Mail)

Cleared former industrial site (Purolite)

Factory (Staedtler)

Agricultural fields

Residential (Cefn-parc Farmhouse)

Road (A4119)

Cemetery (Cefn-y-Parc)

Retail furniture store (Arthur Llewellyn Jenkins)

Coal briquettes plant (Maxibrite)

Dwellings (Lynwood)

Mwyndy Cross Industries (Leekes, etc.)



Objective:

Redevelopment of industrial land for business and retail use; development of land for residential and open space uses; to support the principal town of Llantrisant / Talbot Green.

Summary of proposals:

Cowbridge Road:

- a. New Llantrisant Town Centre
- b. 100 dwellings adjoining a.
- c. B1 adjoining a./b.
- d. Expansion of Y Pant school (off-site)

Clun corridor:

- e. Green corridor with paths and cycle paths

Mwyndy Cross:

- f. Business park with grade-separated junction

Cefn-yr-Hendy:

- h. 400 dwellings with primary school and local centre

Proximity to regional transport network:

The site is at the junction of the A473 Bridgend/Llanharan/Talbot Green/Pontypridd road and the A4119

Tonypany/Tonyrefail/Talbot Green/M4/Cardiff road, 2,050 m from the M4 junction 34

The proposed Llantrisant New Town Centre is close to the proposed Cowbridge Road, Talbot Green station (draft LDP SSA 19.2), and includes a proposed public transport hub

Evidence:

Housing	Housing Land Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB83]
Employment	Employment Land Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB84]
Retail	The NLP Retail Capacity Assessment Quantitative Update, 2008 and the Supplementary Report on Proposed Town Centre Llantrisant, 2008 together with the Retail Topic Report, provide the evidence for the

	retail element of the proposed Llantrisant New Town Centre. [Evidence Base documents EB70 to 71.]
Leisure, recreation and open space	<p>The LDP Proposals Map shows that all of the open space is within a Special Landscape Area SSA 23.4. The methodology for this is in the document, "Development Of Criteria For Special Landscape Area Designation For South East Wales Local Authorities" (TACP 2007).</p> <p>The background to this is in the Natural Environment Topic Paper and the Proposals for the Designation of Special Landscape Areas in Rhondda Cynon Taf (Bronwen Thomas, 2008).</p> <p>The LDP Constraints Map shows that almost all of the open space is within Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation 102, 103, 147 & 151. The background to this is also in the Natural Environment Topic Paper.</p>
Education	See below
Access	<p>The Strategic Sites Transport Assessment (Hyder, 2007) advises that:</p> <p>The proposed means of access will depend on the location of each of the development types within the site and a comprehensive Masterplan. However it is apparent that the scale of development proposed will be associated with a substantial amount of additional traffic. This will significantly impact on the local strategic highway network and extensive further studies into the performance of local junctions will be required before any development can commence.</p> <p>Primary access to a development of this size will require a large primary access point that is capable of accommodating development traffic and peak hour traffic volumes. Further investigations into the nature and form of junction required, but it is likely to require the modification of the A473 / A4119 roundabout to include signals and possibly even grade separation.</p> <p>Further assessment of the local area would suggest that secondary access could be achieved from the two existing roundabouts located on the northeastern and northwestern sections of the site on the A473. The northwestern roundabout does not currently have a southern arm but could very easily be converted to accommodate one. The northeastern roundabout does have an existing southern arm, Rhiwsaeson Road that carries very little traffic. This roundabout could easily be modified to add a more substantial arm that could accommodate a proportion of the proposed development traffic.</p> <p>Pedestrian and cycle access points should also be considered and if possible kept segregated from the high levels of vehicular traffic. Care should also be taken to ensure that the routes are safe, convenient and link to existing settlements.</p>
Flood Risk 1	The Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment (Scott Wilson 2008) identifies unknown (amber) risk of flooding from sewers and from lakes (Mwyndy Lake), requiring further assessment. This is not anticipated to prevent the envisaged development.
Flood Risk 2	The Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding map shows that effects are concentrated in the open

	space along the Afon Clun. Minor parts of the development areas are affected that will require investigation.
Planning History	03/1674 An appeal against refusal of outline planning application for mixed-use development comprising B1 business development & residential units on land to the east and west of A4119, Mwyndy was allowed 23/10/08.

Origin and Consideration of Alternatives:

Development in this area has been sought since the former Land Authority for Wales (which became the Welsh Development Agency before becoming part of the Welsh Assembly Government) bought the BP Pensions Trust landholding in about 1990. Objections to the deposit draft Taff Ely Local Plan made in 1996 and considered in a local plan inquiry in 1999 resulted in a 5.7-hectare special employment land allocation for B1 development on WDA-owned land on the west side of the A4119 at Mwyndy (e2.26). Other objections seeking allocation of privately owned land east of Mwyndy (the “Mwyndy Park proposal”) were not successful as there was insufficient traffic information available. In 2001, a substantial proposal for a business park and residential development east of Mwyndy was discussed (which emerged as LDP candidate sites 118 and 538). Also in 2001, the WDA produced evidence that employment allocation e.2.26 was not financially viable. As a result, proposals were discussed for residential development on the employment allocation to financially enable a business park development on unallocated land east of the A4119. This became a planning application in 2003, which was allowed on appeal in 2008. The strategic site proposals include and expand the appeal proposals, but the idea of residential development east of the A4119 was rejected as the area is severed by busy main roads (A4119; A473) and the Afon Clun from Llantrisant / Talbot Green and Pontyclun. A need for a town centre for the greater Llantrisant area was discussed from around 1998. The existing district centre in Talbot Green was considered to lack the attraction of the mixture of uses normally found in town centres, and incapable of further expansion on account of main roads and established residential areas. Initially the site considered comprised the greenfield part of the currently proposed New Town Centre site together with the fields adjoining to the east fronting the A473 and known as Pant Marsh. As the wildlife value of Pant Marsh emerged and the Purolite and Staedtler factory sites became available, the New Town Centre proposal was repositioned to the west. Consideration was given to including the site of Y Pant Comprehensive School in the development area. A replacement site would have been needed; the sloping land between Cefn-yr-Hendy and the Afon Clun was considered but rejected as unsuitable educationally in view of the slope and inconvenient location. The site is also in a special landscape area. No other replacement site was suggested; hence Y Pant School is now excluded from the Strategic Site. Leekes was considered for inclusion in the strategic site but initially rejected, as the availability of this property for redevelopment was unknown. Through the

representations on the LDP, the availability of this site is now established and the logic of incorporating the Leekes site in the New Town Centre proposal accepted by the Council (see the Council's response to representations under Alternative Site AS (N) 112).

Infrastructure Issues:

Transportation	<p>The Strategic Sites Transport Assessment (Hyder, 2007) recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any future redevelopment of the site should ensure that the site is an extension of the existing urban settlement and not segregated by any physical boundaries. • The capacity assessment of the key links has demonstrated that forecast traffic generation from the proposed redevelopment at this site will have a significant impact on the A473, A4119, A468 and M4 motorway. Apart from the A468, which will operate within capacity in 2025, all other highways will require further transport corridor studies to determine the best way to manage the additional increase in traffic. Although some of the highways will be operating over capacity under base traffic loading in 2025, it is considered that the traffic generation from this site is significant enough to cause severe congestion and warrant further studies. Further studies will also be required to ascertain whether the additional traffic will impact upon the operational performance of the key junctions on the strategic highway network. [This comment relates to the period when the site included residential development east of the A4119 (see above) and not to the more limited proposals in the Draft LDP.] • A comprehensive Masterplan must be devised at an early stage of the design process to maximise accessibility by all modes of transport. • A Travel Plan should be agreed prior to first occupation. • Consideration should be given to 'pump priming' prior to first occupation.
WPD	<p>It is expected that a new grid substation and infrastructure could be required costing in excess of £5,000,000 (2003 price).</p>
National Grid	<p>Overhead lines run through the site. With regard to development in the vicinity of overhead lines it should be noted that National Grid does not own the land on which its overhead lines are sited, but obtains the rights from individual landowners to place equipment on their land. There are no planning restrictions preventing development on land beneath or adjacent to overhead lines, but it is National Grid policy to seek to retain existing overhead lines in-situ because of the strategic nature of the national network and that statutory safety clearances must be maintained at all times.</p>

Education Service	The provision of additional school places, in all education sectors, with the exception of Welsh Medium Secondary, for this site will be a necessity given that all schools in the locality are either full, or are over capacity and cannot be extended any further. Firm evidence of precise education requirements can only be provided when the number of housing units is known, but it appears likely that a minimum of two primary schools will be required. There will also be a requirement to relocate Y Pant Comprehensive School and extend its provision, given that the existing site is included as part of the development land. Taking this site in conjunction with other proposals in the area, a new secondary school, in addition to Y Pant may be required.
Library Service	Additional housing would justify a new library with improved facilities.
GGAT	Archaeological Restraint: Fairly Significant Restraint: Bronze Age and Roman sites identified in area. Archaeological Recommendation: Archaeological desk-based assessment plus possible evaluation on specific sites required prior to determination of planning application. Archaeological remains may remove some areas of site from development.
CCW	Check with SEWBRcC (SE Wales Biological Records Centre) for any records that might inform our justification of the site. CCW have serious concerns relating to this proposal, due to its major extension into the open countryside and the coalescence of a small number of settlements that would result in a loss of traditional field patterns and important boundary features. The area has potential for breeding otter and major biodiversity interests.
DCWW	A public sewer and water mains crosses the site so this may restrict the density of development. Parts of the sewerage network suffer from hydraulic overloading so developers may be required to fund essential improvements ahead of regulatory improvements. If the development gives rise to a new discharge of trade effluent then a Discharge Consent is required from DCWW. If all proposed developments come to fruition then the Coslech WWTW will exceed design capacity. Should developers proceed in advance of DCWW planned improvements it may result in objection to the proposals with the possibility of developers funding the necessary upgrades via S106. DCWW require us to include a statement on waste water infrastructure for the site. The area suffers from low water pressure with new development exacerbating service levels so development

	of this site would require off-site main laying which could be quite substantial and expensive.						
Coal Authority	Possible/known shallow mine workings	Other underground workings	Recorded mine entries	Coal mining geology issues	Past surface mining	Known mine gas issues	Previous coal mining related hazards
	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No

Sensitivity Testing:

Variation	Effect	Comment
New Town Centre is expanded	Eastwards expansion of land take would encroach on a special landscape area and impact further on Pant Marsh site of importance for nature conservation, reducing the area available for mitigation of the loss already proposed. Southward expansion would displace Y Pant Comprehensive School. No satisfactory alternative site for the school has been identified. The A4222 and A473 constrain westwards or northwards expansion. Expansion of the retail floorspace would have adverse impacts on Pontypridd retail centre. The NLP Retail Study identified the maximum floorspace possible without detriment to Pontypridd. Flexibility to increase floorspace would exist at the planning application stage if retail operators were to be identified that trade at lower sales densities.	The retail content of the New Town Centre should not be expanded.

	Expansion of other town centre uses would not have the strategic impact that retail expansion would.	
New Town Centre is scaled down	Significant scaling down of the centre could result in reduced loss of land from the Pant Marsh site of importance for nature conservation. The LDP could fail to deliver the strategic benefit to the wider Llantrisant area of an attractive town centre.	There is a strategic need for a town centre to serve the wider Llantrisant area.
Residential density is increased	Expansion of the land take would encroach on the special landscape area. A higher density of development would also lead to the edge of development appearing harsh and intrusive into the special landscape area when viewed from Talbot Green.	Higher density would not be appropriate.
Residential density is decreased	A more visually pleasing relationship with the special landscape area would be achievable through increased landscaping. Reduced contribution to principal town.	Lower density would not be acceptable.
Employment proposal is deleted	An opportunity for the LDP to promote employment development related to both a principal town and the M4 would be lost. As the A4119 is a commuting route for Rhondda and Llantrisant residents who work in Cardiff, there is good potential for the development to shorten journeys to work.	The employment proposal should be retained.
Proposed school is deleted	Overcrowding would result. If the on-site proposal were to be deleted, off-site provision would be needed: no other site has been suggested.	The school proposal is needed.

Local centre is deleted	Residents would be likely to travel outside the immediate area for basic shopping needs. The development would lack a strong sense of place without a local centre within it.	The proposed local centre is needed.
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Strategic Site 8: Former OCC Site Llanilid, Llanharan

Core Strategy Policy: CS 3.7
Strategy Area Policy: SSA 9

Current uses:

Former OCC site i.e. opencast coal mine (backfilled).
Agricultural fields.



Objective:

Redevelopment of the former opencast coalmine for new Llanharan centre, residential use and the permitted employment uses (chiefly film studios, commercial leisure and business parks); to support the key settlement of Llanharan and the principal town of Llantrisant / Talbot Green; to secure economic benefits for the wider area.

Summary of proposals:

- a. Minimum of 1,700 dwellings.
- b. New Llanharan Centre.

- b. Landmark feature.
- c. Sports pitches.
- d. Open spaces.
- e. Llanharan bypass or appropriate alternative access.

Proximity to regional transport network:

The site is on the A473 Bridgend/Llanharan/Talbot Green/Pontypridd road (existing and proposed)

The site is 2,970m along the A473 from the M4 junction 35, and there is planning permission for a new junction adjoining the site.

The site is 1,830 m along the A473 from Llanharan station.

Evidence

Housing	Housing Land Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB83]
Employment	Employment Land Topic Paper [Evidence Base document EB84]
Retail	The Retail Topic Paper gives evidence for the retail content of the proposed New Llanharan Centre.
Leisure, recreation and open space	The LDP Constraints Map shows that the western parcel of open space is within Site of Importance for Nature Conservation 175. The background to this is in the Natural Environment Topic Paper.
Education	See below
Access	<p>The Strategic Sites Transport Assessment (Hyder, 2007) advises that:</p> <p>Primary access for the film studios should be gained from a new link road to a new junction (34a) of the M4 motorway. This will assist in relieving the A473 of a significant proportion of the development and some background traffic.</p> <p>Secondary access could be taken from the A473, specifically at the two existing roundabouts at the northeastern and northwestern corners of the development site respectively.</p> <p>A primary redevelopment objective of this site should be to link its internal street network to Bryncae, an existing housing development, to allow for ease of movement by pedestrians and cyclists. This proposal will allow the residential section of this redevelopment to take the form of an urban extension and not a segregated development.</p>
Flood Risk 1	The Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment (Scott Wilson 2008) identifies no flood risk (green) for this site.
Flood Risk 2	The Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding map shows that significant parts of the residential area

	are affected. Significant but minor parts of the employment area (that has planning permission) are affected. The effects on the residential area will require investigation.
Planning History	<p>01/2815 An outline planning application for development of land in the Strategic Site south of the proposed Llanharan bypass was approved on 16/01/04. The description of development reads, "A film studios complex including production and post production facilities, administration, core services, celebrity residences, parking, a film backlot, a golf course and club house, a film academy. A leisure complex including leisure attractions, themed retail outlets, restaurants/fast food counters, a multiplex cinema and parking. Associated developments comprising hotel and conference centre with health spa, offices, business parks, warehousing and light industrial, hospital, budget hotel and petrol station. A motorway junction, new roundabout on the A 473 and pedestrian and cycle routes throughout site."</p> <p>02/1085 An outline planning application for residential development with ancillary uses and facilities and associated open space, landscaping and highway and other infrastructure on land north of the proposed Llanharan bypass line through the Strategic Site was submitted in 2002 and withdrawn on 19/03/08 following approval of 06/1485.</p> <p>04/1246 A section 73 application to amend conditions on 01/2815 was approved, resulting in a fresh outline planning permission, on 23/11/05.</p> <p>06/1485 An outline application for construction of residential dwellings with associated infrastructure on part of the site of 02/1085 was approved on 18/08/07, together with completion of a section 106 agreement, as enabling development to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The completion of 4 silent film stages; The completion of the First Phase Primary Highway Infrastructure for the approved film studio development; The provision of on site and off site services; A contribution towards off site highway improvements;

	<p>The provision of 7 affordable housing units; The dedication of an area of Brynna Woods to the Council for wildlife conservation; A contribution to education provision in the area.</p> <p>07/2152 An application for approval of reserved matters under 06/1485 for construction of 248 dwellings was approved on 04/06/08.</p> <p>08/1491 A section 73 application to amend conditions on 04/1246 was approved, resulting in another fresh outline planning permission, on 14/01/09. One of the 57 conditions reads, "Application for the approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the 16/01/10 and the development hereby permitted shall be begun either before the 16/01/12, or before the expiration of two years from the date of the approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved whichever is the later."</p> <p>09/1346 Application to vary condition 1(b) of planning permission ref: 08/1491/15 in order to provide additional time for the submission of reserved matters and commencement of development.</p>
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Further evidence supporting the need for improved retail, leisure and recreation facilities is found in the Llanharan Village Study (Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners, 2008) which finds that recent residential development in Llanharan has not kept pace with the provision of community facilities.

Origin and Consideration of Alternatives:

In 1989 a final permission for opencast coal extraction was granted on appeal ("Llanilid West Revised"). This was carried out in the early 1990s and the void backfilled with spoil stored on site. The permission was subject to a scheme for restoration of the site to agricultural use with ecology features. Several applications to extend the time limit for its implementation have been granted, and it has not been carried out while the possibility of development is being considered. Objections to the draft Taff Ely Local Plan submitted in 1996 resulted in a 45-hectare business park allocation being made on the spoil mound site (it was assumed then that the filled void would be unstable land) subject to provision of the whole Llanharan bypass for access. In 1999, Newport Council refused permission for a theme park with film studios known as Legend Court. The developers then expressed interest in Llanilid,

but with film studios as the main use and a theme park linked to it but subsidiary. Outline planning permission was sought in 2001 and issued in 2004 once the Assembly Government had assented to the new junction on the M4. Outline planning permission was sought for residential development (about 2,000 houses) in 2002, but was not determined in the absence of a UDP or LDP. In 2004, a freestanding development of 5 silent film studios in the northwest end of the site was granted full planning permission. Infrastructure including a section of the Llanharan bypass was also approved fully in 2004. In 2006, outline planning permission was sought for residential development at the east end of the 2001 application site. The permission granted in 2007 enabled construction of 4 of the 5 permitted silent film studios and the roads permitted in 2004. The large outline residential application has been withdrawn, and nothing further has been built in either part of the site. In December 2009 an application to renew the outline consent was submitted to the Council.

Infrastructure Issues:

Transportation	<p>The Strategic Sites Transport Assessment (Hyder, 2007) recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any future redevelopment of the site should ensure that the site is an extension of the existing urban settlement and not segregated by any physical boundaries. • The capacity assessment of the key links has demonstrated that forecast traffic generation from the proposed development will have a significant impact on the A473, A4119 and M4 motorway. It is envisaged that the forecast traffic impact on the A473 will be alleviated by the construction of a new link road and a new motorway junction (34a) with the M4. This link has been proposed as part of the film studios development at this site and should be introduced before the development has been completed. It is considered that this new link road will reduce the forecast traffic impact on the A4119, between Llantrisant and the M4 motorway. However, there will still be a significant increase on the M4 motorway, and this must be addressed even if no development is to take place at this site. • Further studies will be required to ascertain whether the additional traffic will impact upon the operational performance of the key junctions on the strategic highway network. • A comprehensive Masterplan must be devised at an early stage of the design process to maximise accessibility by all modes of transport. • A Travel Plan should be agreed prior to first occupation. • Consideration should be given to 'pump priming' prior to first occupation.
WPD	Discussions are ongoing between WPD and Scottish Power regarding this site.

Education Service	Statistical evidence already exists of oversubscription in schools in the locality. The scale of the proposed development will mean that new provision exclusively serving the site will be required, the amount of which will depend on the proposed number of housing units. It appears likely that a minimum of one large or two smaller primary schools will be required, one English medium and possibly one Welsh medium. There may also be a need to examine secondary school provision in conjunction with other developments in the area, such as Mwyndy / Talbot Green.						
Library Service	Additional housing would justify a new library that could replace the currently failing library in Llanharry.						
GGAT	Archaeological Restraint: Environmental Statement has identified small areas of archaeological interest. Archaeological Recommendation: Sufficient information in Environmental Statement if required works on archaeological sites can be secured by condition.						
CCW	Check with SEWBRc (SE Wales Biological Records Centre) for any records that might inform our justification of the site. Concerns over the development of this area and likely coalescence of Llanharry, Llanilid and Llanharan. Likely to be considerable highway and traffic implications, which would produce questions over the sustainability implications of such proposals. Engage in discussions with Bridgend CBC due to their consideration of proposals in the Pencoed area.						
DCWW	A public sewer and water mains crosses the site so this may restrict the density of development. The area suffers from low water pressure with new development exacerbating service levels so development of this site would require off-site main laying which could be quite substantial and expensive.						
Coal Authority	Possible/known shallow mine workings	Other underground workings	Recorded mine entries	Coal mining geology issues	Past surface mining	Known mine gas issues	Previous coal mining related hazards
	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No

Sensitivity Testing:

Variation	Effect	Comment
Planning permission for the employment uses (film studios etc) expires and renewal is not sought.	Approved scheme would not be implemented. Alternative proposals to deliver strategic regeneration would be sought.	Unlikely given current application seeking to renew planning permission, which is due to be determined in May 2010. Alternative options would be revisited in a future review of the Plan.
Residential density is increased	A higher density of development would enhance the feasibility of the scheme	Higher density would be acceptable
Residential density is decreased	A lower density of development would reduce the feasibility of the scheme	Lower density would not be acceptable
Proposed school is deleted	Overcrowding would result. If the on-site proposal were to be deleted, off-site provision would be needed: no other site has been suggested.	The school proposal is needed
Local centre is deleted	Residents would be likely to travel outside the immediate area for basic shopping needs. The development would lack a strong sense of place without a local centre within it	The proposed local centre is needed
Eastern section of bypass is deleted	Residential amenity along the existing A473 through Llanharan would deteriorate, and access to the strategic site would be poor from the Llantrisant / Talbot Green principal town and beyond in Rhondda Cynon Taf and highway capacity would be compromised.	The whole bypass is required