



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

Mid Glamorgan
(Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough)
Replacement Structure Plan

Morgannwg Ganol
(Bwrdeistref Sirol Rhondda Cynon Taf)
Cynllun Strwythur Amnewid

1991 –2006
Adopted Plan January 1999
Cynllun Wedi'i Mabwysiadau Ionawr 1999



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

MID GLAMORGAN
(RHONDDA CYNON TAFF COUNTY BOROUGH)
REPLACEMENT STRUCTURE PLAN 1991-2006

ADOPTED PLAN

MORGANNWG GANOL
(*BWRDEISTREF SIROL RHONDDA CYNON TAF*)
CYNLLUN STRWYTHUR AMNEWID 1991-2006

CYNLLUN WEDI'I MABWYSIADU

JANUARY 1999

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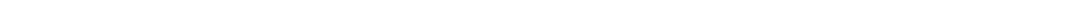
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Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Mid Glamorgan (RCTCB) Replacement Structure Plan 1991-2006





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**MID GLAMORGAN
(RHONDDA CYNON TAFF COUNTY BOROUGH)
REPLACEMENT STRUCTURE PLAN 1991-2006**

WRITTEN STATEMENT

*MORGANNWG GANOL
(BWRDEISTREF SIROL RHONDDA CYNON TAF)
CYNLLUN STRWYTHUR AMNEWID 1991-2006*

DATGANIAD YSGRIFENEDIG





EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRY

- E1 THE REDEVELOPMENT OF UNDER-USED, VACANT OR POTENTIALLY REDUNDANT SITES FOR B1, B2 AND B8 USES WILL BE PERMITTED, SUBJECT TO TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING PARKING, TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ACCESS) AND THE MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL AMENITY.
- E2 THE CONVERSION OF SUITABLE BUILDINGS IN URBAN AREAS FOR BUSINESS USES (B1) WILL BE PERMITTED SUBJECT TO TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING PARKING, TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ACCESS), COMPATIBILITY WITH THE STRUCTURE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BUILDING, AND THE MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL AMENITY.
- E3 WHERE POSSIBLE LAND ADJACENT TO EXISTING INDUSTRIAL PREMISES WILL BE RELEASED TO ACCOMMODATE EXPANSION SUBJECT TO TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING PARKING, TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ACCESS), THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT, AND THE MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL AMENITY.
- E4 LAND WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO PROVIDE A SUITABLE RANGE OF SITES FOR B1, B2 AND B8 USES, TO ACCOMMODATE THE ANTICIPATED INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL NEEDS OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH OVER THE PLAN PERIOD, AS FOLLOWS:-

HECTARES

CYNON VALLEY	95
RHONDDA	15
TAFF ELY	170
 RHONDDA CYNON TAFF	 280.

A LAND BANK COMPRISING A RANGE OF SITES, NORMALLY DERIVED FROM THIS ALLOCATION, AND WHICH CAN BE DEVELOPED WITHIN ONE YEAR, WILL BE MAINTAINED.

- E5 IN ADDITION TO LAND IDENTIFIED IN POLICY E4, SITES WITH GOOD ACCESS TO THE M4, A465 AND A470 WILL BE RESERVED FOR SPECIAL EMPLOYMENT PURPOSES AND WILL BE REQUIRED TO BE DEVELOPED TO A HIGH STANDARD. SITES CURRENTLY CONSIDERED SUITABLE FOR THIS PURPOSE ARE:-

SITE	ACCEPTABLE DEVELOPMENT
M4 JUNCTION 34 MISKIN MANOR	B1, HOTEL OR OTHER LEISURE USES SUBJECT TO THE CONSERVATION OF THE HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND PARKLAND
ABERCYNON	B1 USES, MOTOR SERVICES, HOTEL, RESTAURANT
ABERCYNON COLLIERY SONY SITE(PHASE 3), PENCOED	INNOVATION CENTRE, B1 USES SONY RELATED B1 USES



E6 WHERE POSSIBLE LAND WILL BE PROVIDED, IN SUITABLE LOCATIONS, TO ACCOMMODATE ANY LOCALLY DISPLACED NON-CONFORMING USE SUBJECT TO COMPATIBILITY WITH RELEVANT LOCAL PLAN POLICIES.

E7 INDUSTRIES WHICH EMIT POLLUTANTS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE EMISSIONS CAN BE MONITORED AND CONTROLLED ADEQUATELY. WHERE NECESSARY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY MAY ESTABLISH A MINIMUM SEPARATION ZONE AROUND PERMITTED OR EXISTING PREMISES, WITHIN WHICH NEW DEVELOPMENT OTHER THAN THAT ANCILLARY TO THE INSTALLATION WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

E8 THE DEVELOPMENT OF LAND FOR INDUSTRIES WHICH IMPORT, STORE, MANUFACTURE, INCINERATE, DISPOSE OF OR DISTRIBUTE HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES WHICH ARE A POTENTIAL THREAT TO PEOPLE, PROPERTY OR THE ENVIRONMENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED. WHERE SUCH DEVELOPMENT IS ALREADY IN EXISTENCE THE LOCAL PLAN WILL IDENTIFY A MINIMUM SEPARATION ZONE AROUND THE SITE, WITHIN WHICH NEW DEVELOPMENT OTHER THAN THAT ANCILLARY TO THE INSTALLATION WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

E9 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF GLAMORGAN WHICH:-

- (1) ENHANCE THE EDUCATIONAL OR ANCILLARY FACILITIES AND/OR THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE EXISTING CAMPUS AREA
- (2) SEEK ADDITIONAL SITES FOR EDUCATIONAL OR ANCILLARY PURPOSES
- (3) SEEK TO RE-LOCATE THE EXISTING CAMPUS

WILL BE FAVOURED SUBJECT TO THE MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL RESIDENTIAL AMENITY, THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS. ANY PROPOSAL INVOLVING THE RELOCATION OF THE CAMPUS SHOULD DEMONSTRATE THAT A BENEFICIAL AFTER USE WILL BE ESTABLISHED FOR THE EXISTING SITE.



HOUSING

H1 SUFFICIENT LAND SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE BETWEEN 1991 AND 2006 TO ACCOMMODATE THE DWELLING NEEDS OF THE POPULATION. THESE ARE ESTIMATED TO BE:-

CYNON VALLEY	2,500 dwellings
RHONDDA	1,800
TAFF ELY	7,400
RHONDDA CYNON TAFF	11,700.

THE DWELLING NEEDS OF THE POPULATION AND THE RATE OF HOUSING COMPLETIONS WILL BE MONITORED TO ENSURE THAT AT LEAST A 5 YEAR SUPPLY OF HOUSING LAND IS GENUINELY AVAILABLE AND MAINTAINED.

H2 NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT BEYOND THE REQUIREMENTS OF POLICY H1 WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

- (1) ON GREENFIELD SITES OUTSIDE, BUT ADJACENT TO, THE SETTLEMENT AREAS AS DEFINED IN LOCAL PLANS, TO PROVIDE HOUSING FOR SPECIAL NEEDS FOR WHICH LAND WITHIN THE SETTLEMENT AREA CANNOT REASONABLY BE MADE AVAILABLE
- OR
- (2) WHERE IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR AGRICULTURAL OR FORESTRY WORKERS TO LIVE AT OR NEAR THEIR PLACE OF WORK

PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSALS WOULD NOT LEAD TO THE COALESCENCE OF SETTLEMENTS OR REPRESENT SPORADIC OR RIBBON DEVELOPMENT AND IS CONSIDERED ACCEPTABLE IN TERMS OF TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING PARKING, TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ACCESS), THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE PROVISION OF UTILITY SERVICES.

H3 PROPOSALS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON SITES WITHIN SETTLEMENT AREAS AS DEFINED IN LOCAL PLANS, WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THIS INVOLVES

- (1) NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON DERELICT, UNDEVELOPED, POTENTIALLY REDUNDANT OR UNDER-USED LAND WHERE THIS DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH USES IDENTIFIED IN LOCAL PLANS
- OR
- THE RESTORATION AND CONVERSION TO RESIDENTIAL USE OF SUITABLE BUILDINGS, INCLUDING VACANT FLOORSPACE ABOVE RETAIL UNITS, PROVIDING THE PROPOSALS ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE SCALE AND NATURE OF THE EXISTING BUILDINGS
- AND
- (2) THE PROPOSAL IS COMPATIBLE WITH TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING PARKING, TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ACCESS), THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL AMENITY.



- H4 HOUSING PROPOSALS (OTHER THAN FOR PARTICULAR NEEDS) WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHICH INVOLVE
- (1) HOUSING DENSITIES WHICH ARE OUT OF CHARACTER WITH THOSE OF ADJOINING RESIDENTIAL AREAS,
- OR
- (2) INSENSITIVE OR INAPPROPRIATE INFILLING WITHIN OR ADJOINING EXISTING RESIDENTIAL AREAS.
- H5 PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT ON SITES DEVELOPED FOR INSTITUTIONAL USES IN COUNTRYSIDE LOCATIONS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE
- (1) THE FORM, BULK AND GENERAL DESIGN OF BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPES ON THE SITE ARE RETAINED WHERE BUILDINGS OR GARDENS OF ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC MERIT ARE INVOLVED
- OR
- WHERE EXISTING BUILDINGS, OR PART OF THEM, ARE UNSUITABLE FOR CONVERSION, ANY PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT SHOULD NOT RESULT IN A MAJOR INCREASE OF THE GROUND FLOOR AREA OF THE EXISTING DEVELOPED AREA OF THE SITE
- AND
- (2) THE PROPOSAL IS COMPATIBLE WITH TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING PARKING, TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ACCESS) AND THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT.
- H6 GYPSY SITES WILL BE PROVIDED IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS, WHERE NECESSARY, TO ACCOMMODATE GYPSIES RESIDING OR RESORTING TO THE COUNTY BOROUGH. SITES SHOULD SATISFY THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:-
- (1) THE SITE SHOULD AS FAR AS POSSIBLE BE IN AN AREA ALREADY FREQUENTED BY GYPSIES
 - (2) THE SITE SHOULD HAVE REASONABLE ACCESS TO SHOPS AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES
 - (3) CLOSE PROXIMITY TO RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE AVOIDED WHERE POSSIBLE
 - (4) NEIGHBOURING LAND USES SHOULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH A RESIDENTIAL USE
 - (5) THE SITE IS ACCEPTABLE IN TERMS OF TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS, THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE PROVISION OF UTILITY SERVICES
 - (6) THE SITE SHOULD BE CAPABLE OF BEING SCREENED, PARTICULARLY WHERE A COUNTRYSIDE SETTING IS ACCEPTABLE.



ENVIRONMENT

- EV1 DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED EXCEPT FOR THAT IN THE INTERESTS OF, AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY, COUNTRYSIDE LEISURE, THE PROVISION OF HOUSING FOR SPECIAL NEEDS, THE CONVERSION OF RURAL BUILDINGS, CONVERSIONS / REDEVELOPMENT OF SITES USED FOR INSTITUTIONAL PURPOSES, MINERALS, LAND RECLAMATION, TRANSPORTATION OR UTILITY SERVICES.
- EV2 DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS LIKELY TO LEAD TO THE LOSS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND OF GRADE 3A AND ABOVE WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED. WHERE THE LOSS OF SUCH LAND IS INVOLVED DEVELOPMENT SHOULD TAKE PLACE ON THE LOWEST POSSIBLE GRADES OF SUITABLE LAND SUBJECT TO ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION INTERESTS, WHILE THE PROPOSAL SHOULD NOT BE LIKELY TO LEAD TO THE LOSS OF THE FARM UNIT.
- EV3 THE CONVERSION OF EXISTING RURAL BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE SATISFIED.
- (1) THE BUILDINGS ARE STRUCTURALLY SOUND OR CAPABLE OF BEING MADE SO WITHOUT SUBSTANTIAL EXTERNAL ALTERATION, OR RECONSTRUCTION
 - (2) THE FORM, BULK CHARACTER AND GENERAL DESIGN OF THE BUILDINGS IS RESPECTED, AND IMPROVED WHERE NECESSARY, AND THE PROPOSAL IS IN SCALE AND SYMPATHY WITH THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE
 - (3) THE PROPOSED USE IS COMPATIBLE WITH SURROUNDING RURAL LAND USES
 - (4) THE PROPOSAL IS COMPATIBLE WITH TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING ACCESS, TRAFFIC GENERATION AND PARKING)
 - (5) ADVERSE EFFECTS ON NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS HAVE BEEN MINIMISED.
- EV4 DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD LEAD TO VISUAL INTRUSION ON THE LANDSCAPE OF SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE SUITABLE MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN TO REDUCE SUCH EFFECTS TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS. SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS WILL INCLUDE AREAS OF STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE (NAMELY THE COALFIELD PLATEAU AND VALLEY SIDES, AND THE CAERPHILLY MOUNTAIN AREA), AND OTHER AREAS OF LOCAL LANDSCAPE IMPORTANCE AND WILL BE DEFINED IN LOCAL PLANS.
- EV5 DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING SITES RECOGNISED AS IMPORTANT FOR NATURE CONSERVATION WILL BE CONSIDERED AS FOLLOWS:-
- (1) DEVELOPMENT ON OR IN THE VICINITY OF NATIONALLY OR INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED SITES FOR NATURE CONSERVATION (INCLUDING MAJOR SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AND NATIONAL NATURE RESERVES), WHICH IS LIKELY TO LEAD TO THEIR DESTRUCTION DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED
 - (2) DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD DESTROY DAMAGE OR DISTURB SITES OF STRATEGIC OR LOCAL IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION AS DEFINED IN LOCAL PLANS (INCLUDING



REGIONALLY IMPORTANT GEOMORPHOLOGIC AND GEOLOGICAL SITES (RIGS), ANCIENT AND SEMI-ANCIENT NATURAL WOODLANDS AND LOCAL NATURE RESERVES) WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE SUITABLE MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN TO ENSURE THE SURVIVAL OF HABITATS, SPECIES OR FEATURES.

- EV6 BEFORE A DEVELOPMENT IS APPROVED WHICH DISTURBS OR DESTROYS A SITE IMPORTANT FOR NATURE CONSERVATION, PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE BY THE APPLICANT FOR
- (1) A DETAILED EVALUATION OF THE NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE OF THE SITE
- AND
- (2) THE PROTECTION OF HABITATS, SPECIES OR FEATURES WITHIN THE SITE
- OR
- (3) WHERE THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SUITABLE REPLACEMENT SITE.
- EV7 PROPOSALS FOR THE ENHANCEMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF EXISTING SITES AND FEATURES OF IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION WILL BE FAVOURED.
- EV8 THE CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT OF THE APPEARANCE OF RIVER BANKS AND WHERE POSSIBLE THE IMPROVEMENT OF RECREATIONAL ACCESS TO RIVERS WILL BE FAVOURED, WHILST ENSURING THAT IMPORTANT HABITATS ARE AVOIDED OR NOT AFFECTED ADVERSELY, AND OPPORTUNITIES ARE TAKEN TO IMPROVE THEIR VALUE FOR WILDLIFE.
- EV9 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES TO MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF THE BUILT AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT WILL BE FAVOURED.
- EV10 DEVELOPMENT ON OR WITHIN MAJOR SITES OR FEATURES OF THE BUILT AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT WILL BE CONSIDERED AS FOLLOWS:-
- (1) DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS LIKELY TO DESTROY OR DAMAGE THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES OR ANCIENT MONUMENTS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE AND SINGLE OR GROUPS OF BUILDINGS DESIGNATED AS BEING OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST (INCLUDING LISTED BUILDINGS) WILL NOT BE PERMITTED
 - (2) DEVELOPMENT WHICH FAILS TO PRESERVE MAINTAIN OR ENHANCE WHERE POSSIBLE, THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF OTHER SINGLE OR GROUPS OF BUILDINGS, CONSERVATION AREAS OR OTHER FEATURES RECOGNISED AS BEING OF LOCAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST IN LOCAL PLANS (SUCH AS OTHER IDENTIFIED BUILDINGS, HISTORIC ROUTES AND HISTORIC PARKS, GARDENS AND LANDSCAPES) WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED
 - (3) DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS LIKELY TO DESTROY OR DAMAGE THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF OTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES OR ANCIENT MONUMENTS WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED.
- EV11 BEFORE A DEVELOPMENT IS APPROVED WHICH IS LIKELY TO DESTROY OR DAMAGE THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND ANCIENT MONUMENTS, PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR



-
- (1) AN EARLY ARCHAEOLOGICAL / ARCHITECTURAL EVALUATION OF THE SITE
AND
(2) ITS PRESERVATION IN SITU
OR
(3) WHERE THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE THE EXCAVATION, AND/OR RECORDING OF THE SITE AND THE RESCUE OF IMPORTANT ARTEFACTS.
- EV12 DEVELOPMENT (INCLUDING THE RAISING OF LAND), WHICH WOULD BE AT DIRECT RISK FROM FLOODING, OR BE LIKELY TO INCREASE THE RISK OF FLOODING ELSEWHERE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.
- EV13 PROPOSALS FOR THE PROTECTION AND MAINTENANCE OF NATIVE BROADLEAVED TREES, WOODLANDS (INCLUDING ANCIENT WOODLANDS AND ANCIENT SEMI-NATURAL WOODLANDS) AND HEDGEROWS, AND PROPOSALS FOR THE PLANTING OF NATIVE SPECIES WILL BE FAVOURED, EXCEPT WHERE THESE WOULD RESULT IN UNACCEPTABLE CONFLICT WITH NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS.
- EV14 NEW AFFORESTATION PROPOSALS WILL BE FAVOURED WHERE THEY COMPLY WITH THE FOLLOWING:-
- (1) THE QUALITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT IS MAINTAINED OR ENHANCED, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO THE PROTECTION OF HIGH QUALITY AGRICULTURAL LAND, IMPORTANT LANDSCAPES, SITES IMPORTANT TO NATURE CONSERVATION AND FEATURES OF THE BUILT AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT
- (2) LOCAL RECREATIONAL USE, AMENITY AND RIGHTS OF WAY ARE MAINTAINED OR ENHANCED
- (3) WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLIES ARE MAINTAINED, AND IN PARTICULAR ACIDIFICATION IS AVOIDED.





TRANSPORTATION

T1 EARLY IMPLEMENTATION WILL BE SOUGHT FOR THE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE TRUNK ROAD SYSTEM AS SET OUT IN ROADS IN WALES 1994 REVIEW, NAMELY:-

- (1) A465(T) DUALLING; ABERGAVENNY - HIRWAUN
- (2) A470(T); CORYTON - PONTYPRIDD

T2 THE FOLLOWING MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE COUNTY BOROUGH HIGHWAY NETWORK WILL BE IMPLEMENTED:-

PHASE I (PROGRAMMED)

- (1) A4058 PORTH/LOWER RHONDDA FACH RELIEF ROAD
- (2) A473 CHURCH VILLAGE BYPASS

PHASE II

- (1) A4058 GELLI /TREORCHY RELIEF ROAD
- (2) A473 LLANHARAN BYPASS
- (3) A4059 MOUNTAIN ASH BYPASS
- (4) A4233 UPPER RHONDDA FACH RELIEF ROAD
- (5) A4119 YNYSMAERDY-TALBOT GREEN RELIEF ROAD

PHASE III

- A473 TALBOT GREEN BYPASS - DUALLING

T3 MINOR ROAD IMPROVEMENTS AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEMES WILL BE IMPLEMENTED WHERE THEY IMPROVE OR PROMOTE

- (1) ROAD SAFETY
- (2) PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATIONS
- (3) URBAN RENEWAL
- (4) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- (5) THE ENVIRONMENT
- (6) THE FLOW OF TRAFFIC

T4 THE NETWORK OF BUS SERVICES WILL BE IMPROVED BY:-

- (1) THE PROVISION AND IMPROVEMENT OF BUS TERMINAL AND SUPPORTING FACILITIES SUCH AS BUS STATIONS, TURNING CIRCLES, LAYBYS, BUS STOPS AND BUS LANES AND OTHER BUS PRIORITY MEASURES
- (2) THE DESIGN OF NEW DEVELOPMENT SO AS TO PERMIT THE FREE AND EFFICIENT MOVEMENT OF BUSES
- (3) ENSURING THAT WHERE PRACTICABLE THE LOCATION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES ESPECIALLY THOSE FOR THE ELDERLY, ARE ADJACENT TO BUS ROUTES
- (4) THE PROVISION OF PARK AND RIDE FACILITIES FOR BUS SERVICES WHERE APPROPRIATE, INCLUDING THE PROTECTION OF LAND FOR POTENTIAL FUTURE SITES.



- T5 THE NETWORK OF PASSENGER RAIL SERVICES WILL BE DEVELOPED BY:-
- (1) ASSISTING WITH THE PROVISION OF NEW TRACK, STATIONS AND SIGNALLING
 - (2) THE PROVISION OF PARK AND RIDE FACILITIES (INCLUDING CYCLE PARKING)
 - (3) THE PROVISION OF BUS/RAIL INTERCHANGE FACILITIES
 - (4) THE PROVISION OF RAIL FEEDER BUS SERVICES
 - (5) THE PROVISION OF IMPROVED PEDESTRIAN ROUTES TO STATIONS
 - (6) FAVOURING DEVELOPMENT IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO RAILWAY STATIONS.
- T6 DEVELOPMENT WHICH INHIBITS THE POTENTIAL REOPENING OF REDUNDANT RAILWAY LINES OR THEIR ALTERNATIVE USE AS ROADS OR CYCLEWAYS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.
- T7 THE PROVISION OF NEW RAIL FREIGHT SERVICES AND FACILITIES TOGETHER WITH THE SITING OF SUITABLE INDUSTRIES CLOSE TO RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE, WILL BE FAVOURED.
- T8 THE ENVIRONMENT WILL BE PROTECTED AND IMPROVED BY THE FOLLOWING TRANSPORTATION MEASURES:
- (1) REDUCING TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF ROAD TRAFFIC POLLUTION ON PEOPLE AND PROPERTY IN TOWN CENTRES AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS
 - (2) DESIGNING NEW SCHEMES TO MINIMISE LAND SEVERANCE AND THE DEMOLITION OF PROPERTY
 - (3) REDUCING TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS VISUAL INTRUSION AND NOISE BY LANDSCAPING TO PROVIDE AN ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT PARTICULARLY ALONG MAJOR ROUTES
 - (4) CONTROLLING ROAD TRAFFIC INCLUDING THE SEGREGATION OF PEDESTRIANS AND VEHICLES THEREBY ENABLING THE PEDESTRIANISATION OF STREETS TO BE INTRODUCED IN SHOPPING AREAS
 - (5) FAVOURING THE INTRODUCTION OF STREET FURNITURE, TREE PLANTING, THE WIDENING OF FOOTWAYS, ETC., IN TOWN CENTRES
 - (6) INTRODUCING TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES
 - (7) REDUCING TRAFFIC ON MINOR ROADS IN TOWN CENTRES, IN CONSERVATION AREAS, AND IN OTHER AREAS OF LANDSCAPE AND CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE
 - (8) DEVELOPING PUBLIC TRANSPORT FACILITIES
 - (9) DEVELOPING FACILITIES TO ASSIST WALKING AND CYCLING.
- T9 DEVELOPMENT WILL BE FAVOURED WHICH CAN BE DEMONSTRATED TO REDUCE THE LENGTH OF CAR-BORNE JOURNEYS TO WORK IN THE AREA, OR INCREASE THE RANGE OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT, WHERE THIS IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT.
- T10 DEVELOPMENT ADJACENT TO HIGHWAYS WILL BE CONTROLLED IN ACCORDANCE WITH CRITERIA RELATING TO ACCESS, ROAD SAFETY, PEDESTRIANS, TRAFFIC GENERATION, PARKING, ROAD LAYOUT, BUS TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT. THESE CRITERIA WILL PLACE PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THE PROTECTION OF THE MAJOR ROUTE NETWORK.



- T11 WHERE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS WOULD CREATE OR EXACERBATE PROBLEMS ON THE ROAD SYSTEM THE DEVELOPER WILL BE REQUIRED TO MAKE PROVISION FOR THE RESOLUTION OF SUCH PROBLEMS.
- T12 NEW ROADS WITHIN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENTS SHALL BE BUILT TO A STANDARD ACCEPTABLE TO THE HIGHWAY AUTHORITY AND BE OFFERED FOR ADOPTION.
- T13 OFF STREET CAR PARKS WILL BE PROVIDED TO ASSIST THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF TOWN CENTRES.
- T14 ALL NEW DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT OR CHANGES OF USE SHOULD INCLUDE APPROPRIATE OPERATIONAL AND NON-OPERATIONAL PARKING PROVISIONS ACCORDING TO THE LAND USE, DENSITY AND LOCATION PROPOSED. WHERE APPROPRIATE, DEVELOPERS IN TOWN CENTRES WILL BE REQUIRED TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE PROVISION OF NON-OPERATIONAL PARKING OUTSIDE THE CURTILAGE OF THE DEVELOPMENT.
- T15 MEASURES WILL BE ADOPTED TO REDUCE CONFLICT BETWEEN PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR TRAFFIC, PARTICULARLY WHERE PEDESTRIAN DENSITIES ARE HIGH.
- T16 SUITABLE PROVISION WILL BE MADE FOR THE NEEDS OF CYCLISTS:-
- (1) BY THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF CYCLE ROUTES (INCLUDING ON STREET AND OFF STREET CYCLE PARKING) FACILITIES
 - (2) IN THE DESIGN AND IMPROVEMENT OF ROADS AND JUNCTIONS
 - (3) ON THE EXISTING HIGHWAY NETWORK, PARTICULARLY TO LINK RECREATIONAL ROUTES, TOWN CENTRES, RESIDENTIAL AREAS AND PLACES OF WORK.





DERELICT AND CONTAMINATED LAND

- D1 ALL IDENTIFIED DERELICT LAND WILL BE SUBJECT TO TREATMENT APPROPRIATE TO THE CONDITION AND NATURE OF THE SITE AND PROPOSED AFTER USES, DURING THE PLAN PERIOD.
- D2 EACH RECLAMATION SCHEME WILL NORMALLY REQUIRE A DEVELOPMENT BRIEF TO BE PREPARED AND, WHERE ADDITIONAL DETAILED LAND USE POLICIES ARE NECESSARY, APPROVED AS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE TO THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN.
- D3 LAND USE WILL BE MONITORED ON COMPLETED SITES WHICH ARE TO BE RETAINED IN PUBLIC OWNERSHIP AFTER THE EXPIRY OF DERELICT LAND GRANT AID, AND ANY NECESSARY ACTION TO ENSURE THEIR CONTINUED BENEFIT TO THE COMMUNITY WILL BE TAKEN.
- D4 BEFORE REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS ARE APPROVED ON SITES WHICH ARE CONSIDERED TO BE POTENTIALLY CONTAMINATED, INVESTIGATIONS MUST BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE APPLICANT TO ESTABLISH WHETHER CONTAMINATION EXISTS AND IF SO, TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE TREATMENT.
- D5 WHERE A DERELICT SITE CONTAINS FEATURES OF NATURE CONSERVATION, GEOLOGICAL, ARCHITECTURAL, HISTORIC OR INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL, OR OTHER SPECIAL INTEREST, THE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THOSE FEATURES, WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECLAMATION SCHEME, AND THE CONSIDERATION OF SUBSEQUENT REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS.
- D6 IN EACH RECLAMATION SCHEME, RESTORATION SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN SO AS TO CONSERVE OR REPLACE AREAS OF NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST, OR TO CREATE NEW HABITATS, WHEREVER THIS IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE PROPOSED AFTER-USES OF THE SITE.
- D7 DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD PREJUDICE THE COMPREHENSIVE RECLAMATION OF DERELICT LAND WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.





MINERALS

MIN1 PROPOSALS FOR MINERAL EXTRACTION AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- (1) MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN TO REDUCE DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO THE ENVIRONMENT TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS
- (2) POLLUTION OR DISTURBANCE OF WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE ARE UNLIKELY TO RESULT FROM THE PROPOSAL
- (3) MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN TO REDUCE DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO NEIGHBOURING LAND USES TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS, INCLUDING THE EFFECTS OF EXCESSIVE NOISE, DUST, VIBRATION AND OTHER DISRUPTIVE INFLUENCES, ARISING FROM THE METHODS OF WORKING OR THE DURATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT
- (4) THE PROPOSAL IS COMPATIBLE WITH TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS, PARTICULARLY TRAFFIC GENERATION TO AND FROM THE SITE, AND ACCESS
- (5) THERE ARE POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO THE ECONOMY, PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF CONTINUED OR ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT
- (6) PROPOSALS FOR RESTORATION, AFTERCARE AND BENEFICIAL AFTER-USE ARE SUITABLE
- (7) THE PROPOSAL IS UNLIKELY TO REDUCE THE STABILITY OF ADJOINING LAND
- (8) THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF UNSTABLE LAND ON OR IN THE VICINITY OF THE SITE OF THE PROPOSAL IS ACCEPTABLE.

MIN2 PROPOSALS FOR OPEN PIT MINERAL WORKING WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED SUBJECT TO POLICY MIN1 AND WHERE:-

- (1) DISTURBANCES CAUSED BY METHODS OF EXTRACTION, PARTICULARLY THE EXTENT OF ANY BLASTING, ARE UNLIKELY TO BE EXCESSIVE
- (2) DEPTH OF WORKING AND PHASING OF OPERATIONS DO NOT PREJUDICE SITE RESTORATION AND BENEFICIAL AFTER USE
- (3) THE LEVEL OF ANNUAL OUTPUT AND SCALE OF WORKING OF OPERATIONS ARE UNLIKELY TO LEAD TO UNACCEPTABLE DISRUPTIVE EFFECTS ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY
- (4) SUITABLE MEASURES ARE PROPOSED TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF RELEVANT GEOLOGICAL FACTORS RELATING TO THE SITE, AND THEIR EFFECTS UPON THE EXTENT OF COMMERCIALLY USEFUL RESERVES.

MIN3 NEW LIMESTONE QUARRIES WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED.

MIN4 FAVOURABLE CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO ENLARGEMENTS OF EXISTING QUARRIES SUBJECT TO MIN1, MIN2 AND MIN11. WHERE ENLARGEMENTS ARE CONSIDERED ACCEPTABLE THE DEEPENING OF EXISTING QUARRIES IN PREFERENCE TO LATERAL EXTENSIONS WILL BE FAVOURED SUBJECT TO ACCEPTABILITY IN TERMS OF GEOTECHNICAL, HYDROLOGICAL AND HYDROGEOLOGICAL FACTORS.

MIN5 EXPLORATION FOR OIL AND GAS WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT ANY PROPOSALS CONTAIN APPROPRIATE MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND RESTORATION OF THE LAND.



- MIN6 PROPOSALS FOR THE TIPPING OF MINERAL WASTE WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THEY ARE ACCEPTABLE UNDER POLICY MIN1 AND WHERE:-
- (1) THE SCALE OF THE PROPOSED TIP IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE PRESENT LANDSCAPE
 - (2) THE PROPOSED LAND FORM IN RELATION TO AFTER-USE IS CONSIDERED SUITABLE
 - (3) THE PROPOSAL IS UNLIKELY TO GENERATE UNACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION, PARTICULARLY THAT LEADING TO ADVERSE EFFECTS ON WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY.
- MIN7 APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING CONSENT FOR THE EXTRACTION OF MATERIAL FROM MINERAL WORKING DEPOSITS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THEY ARE ACCEPTABLE UNDER POLICY MIN1 AND WHERE:-
- (1) THE PROPOSAL MAINTAINS OR IMPROVES TIP SAFETY WHERE RELEVANT
 - (2) THE PROPOSAL IS UNLIKELY TO GENERATE UNACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION, PARTICULARLY THAT LEADING TO ADVERSE EFFECTS ON WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY.
- MIN8 IN ORDER TO SECURE AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF CRUSHED ROCK TO MEET THE NEEDS OF INDUSTRY, A LAND BANK OF PERMITTED RESERVES AMOUNTING TO 20 YEARS WHERE APPROPRIATE, WILL BE MAINTAINED AT INDIVIDUAL SITES.
- MIN9 IN MEETING THE LAND BANK COMMITMENTS IN POLICY MIN8 ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD STERILISE RESERVES WITH PLANNING CONSENT FOR MINERAL WORKING TOGETHER WITH OTHER RESOURCES IDENTIFIED FOR PROTECTION IN MINERALS LOCAL PLANS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.
- MIN10 A MINERAL PROTECTION ZONE WITH A WIDTH TO BE DEFINED FOR EACH SITE IN THE MINERAL PLAN SHALL BE DRAWN OUTWARDS FROM THE BOUNDARY OF EXISTING QUARRIES AND RESERVES, IDENTIFIED IN THE MINERALS LOCAL PLANS, AND WITHIN THAT ZONE
- (1) RESIDENTIAL OR OTHER SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT AND/OR
 - (2) MINERAL DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.
- IN DEFINING EACH BUFFER ZONE ACCOUNT WILL BE TAKEN OF THE EFFECTS OF MINERAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE EXISTING AND PROPOSED PATTERN OF LAND USES IN THE VICINITY.
- MIN11 NEW QUARRIES OR SUBSTANTIAL EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING QUARRIES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHERE THIS WOULD RESULT IN UNACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO SITES AND THEIR SETTINGS RECOGNISED AS HAVING NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL NATURE CONSERVATION, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, ARCHITECTURAL, OR HISTORIC IMPORTANCE.
- MIN12 THE PRODUCTION OF SECONDARY AGGREGATES FROM THE WINNING OF NATURAL MATERIALS OR THE RECYCLING OF INDUSTRIAL WASTES WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THIS WOULD NOT RESULT IN UNACCEPTABLE DAMAGE TO THE ENVIRONMENT.



RETAILING

- R1 THE TOWN CENTRES IN THE COUNTY BOROUGH (INCLUDING WHERE APPLICABLE, AREAS ADJACENT TO THEM), AS DEFINED IN LOCAL PLANS, WILL BE MAINTAINED AND ENHANCED LARGELY ON THE BASIS OF THE ROLE INDICATED BY THE FOLLOWING HIERARCHY:-

MAJOR TOWN CENTRES

SUB REGIONAL CENTRES

- (1) ABERDARE
- (2) PONTYPRIDD

DISTRICT CENTRES

- (1) PORTH
- (2) TREORCHY
- (3) TONYPANDY
- (4) MOUNTAIN ASH
- (5) TALBOT GREEN

MINOR TOWN CENTRES

ALL OTHER EXISTING SHOPPING CENTRES IDENTIFIED IN LOCAL PLANS (NORMALLY EXCLUDING RETAIL WAREHOUSE PARKS AND FREE STANDING LARGE RETAIL STORES), WILL GENERALLY BE CONSIDERED, AS LOCAL OR NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES WHICH ARE INTENDED TO SERVE THE RETAIL NEEDS OF THE SETTLEMENT OR IMMEDIATE LOCALITY.

- R2 PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALL NEW RETAIL FLOORSPACE IN THE CENTRES INDICATED IN R1 WILL BE PERMITTED SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:-

- (1) THE PROPOSAL, BY VIRTUE OF ITS SCALE, IS UNLIKELY TO UNDERMINE THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF NEARBY SHOPPING CENTRES AS A WHOLE (INCLUDING PROPOSALS FOR NEW FLOORSPACE WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO THEM WHICH ARE ESSENTIAL TO THIS)
- (2) THE PROPOSAL IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE EXISTING PHYSICAL CHARACTER OF THE CENTRE
- (3) THE PROPOSAL IS COMPATIBLE WITH TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING PARKING, TRAFFIC GENERATION, AND ACCESS).

- R3 PROPOSALS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW LARGE RETAIL UNITS SELLING DURABLE GOODS OUTSIDE OF THE CENTRES INDICATED IN R1, WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THEY ARE LOCATED WITHIN EXISTING OR APPROVED RETAIL UNITS OR SITES, AND PROVIDED THEY ARE COMPATIBLE WITH R5.

- R4 PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW RETAIL FLOORSPACE OTHER THAN THOSE COVERED BY R2 AND R3, AND CONSISTING OF EITHER:

- (1) MAJOR NEW SHOPPING CENTRES
- (2) NEW RETAIL PARKS OR GROUPS OF LARGE UNITS SELLING MAINLY DURABLE GOODS
- (3) NEW LARGE SINGLE RETAIL UNITS SELLING MAINLY DURABLE GOODS
- (4) NEW LARGE UNITS OR SUPERSTORES SELLING MAINLY CONVENIENCE GOODS



WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHERE:

- (1) THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF NEARBY TOWN CENTRES IS LIKELY TO BE UNDERMINED, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF OTHER APPROVED RETAIL DEVELOPMENT
 - (2) THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN ALLOCATES AN APPROPRIATE SITE WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO THE TOWN CENTRE CAPABLE OF ACCOMMODATING THE PROPOSAL
 - (3) ACCESS TO THE PRIMARY ROAD NETWORK IS CONSIDERED INADEQUATE AND THERE ARE UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE EFFECTS ON TRAFFIC FLOWS
 - (4) ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT IS CONSIDERED INADEQUATE
 - (5) THE PROPOSAL LEADS TO UNACCEPTABLE CONFLICT WITH THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT OR THE MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL AMENITY
 - (6) THE PROPOSAL IS LIKELY TO LEAD TO UNACCEPTABLE IMPACTS ON OVERALL SHOPPING TRAVEL PATTERNS, PARTICULARLY WHERE THIS INVOLVES MAJOR INCREASES IN PRIVATE CAR TRAVEL
 - (7) THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF R6 WHERE THE USE OF INDUSTRIAL LAND IS INVOLVED .
- R5 ALL EXISTING, APPROVED, OR NEW DURABLE RETAIL FLOORSPACE OUTSIDE OF THE CENTRES REFERRED TO IN R1 WILL NORMALLY BE RESTRICTED TO OUTLETS SELLING BULKY DURABLE GOODS WITHIN CLASS A1 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (USE CLASSES) ORDER 1987. THE SALE OF OTHER DURABLE GOODS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHERE:
- (1) THIS IS LIKELY TO UNDERMINE THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF NEARBY TOWN CENTRES
- OR
- (2) SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE TOWN CENTRE SITES ARE ALLOCATED IN THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN CAPABLE OF ACCOMMODATING SUCH FLOORSPACE
- OR
- (3) THE PROPOSAL IS UNACCEPTABLE IN TERMS OF TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS.
- R6 THE USE OF INDUSTRIAL SITES FOR ANY NEW RETAIL FLOORSPACE (INCLUDING RETAIL PARKS AND INDIVIDUAL DURABLE UNITS AND SUPERSTORES) WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THERE IS A SUFFICIENT QUANTITY AND VARIETY OF LAND AVAILABLE FOR MANUFACTURING AND SERVICE INDUSTRY WITHIN THAT RELEVANT TRAVEL TO WORK AREA, AND RETAIL LAND IS SCARCE. RETAIL USES OTHER THAN THOSE ANCILLARY TO THE SITE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED ON SPECIAL EMPLOYMENT SITES UNDER E5.



LEISURE

- L1 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR THE PROVISION OF LEISURE BASED FACILITIES OR ACCOMMODATION (INCLUDING RELEVANT FARM DIVERSIFICATION SCHEMES), WILL BE PERMITTED SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:-
- (1) WHERE A COUNTRYSIDE LOCATION IS INVOLVED, IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT SUCH A LOCATION IS APPROPRIATE TO THE PROPOSAL
 - (2) DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO THE ENVIRONMENT CAN BE REDUCED TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS
 - (3) THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH THE MAINTENANCE OF FARM VIABILITY AND THE PROTECTION OF THE BEST QUALITY AGRICULTURAL LAND, PARTICULARLY WHERE FARM DIVERSIFICATION IS INVOLVED
 - (4) THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING PARKING, TRAFFIC GENERATION, AND ACCESS)
 - (5) ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT IS CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE FOR THE NATURE OF THE PROPOSAL
 - (6) THE AVAILABILITY OF IDENTIFIED MINERAL RESOURCES OR RESERVES IS NOT STERILISED
 - (7) THE PROPOSAL IS WELL RELATED TO SURROUNDING URBAN SETTLEMENT WHERE RELEVANT
 - (8) THE PROPOSAL IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL AMENITY.
- L2 LEISURE BASED DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN SETTLEMENT AREAS, OR ADJACENT TO THEM WHERE NO SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE SITES ARE AVAILABLE WITHIN THE BUILT UP AREA WILL BE FAVOURED.
- L3 DEVELOPMENT WHICH SATISFIES THE NEEDS FOR LOCAL LEISURE FACILITIES FROM ALL SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY WILL BE FAVOURED. PRIORITY FOR THE PROVISION OF MAJOR LOCAL LEISURE FACILITIES WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE LEVEL OF UNSATISFIED DEMAND FOR THOSE FACILITIES.
- L4 NEW DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT OR A CHANGE OF USE WHICH RESULTS IN THE DISCONTINUANCE OF AN EXISTING LEISURE FACILITY, INCLUDING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY, WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:-
- (1) AN ALTERNATIVE FACILITY CAN BE PROVIDED WITH AT LEAST AN EQUIVALENT LEVEL OF PROVISION
- OR
- (2) IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT ITS CONTINUED USE AS A LEISURE FACILITY IS NOT REQUIRED.
- L5 THE USE OF EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER PUBLICLY OWNED ESTABLISHMENTS FOR WIDER COMMUNITY LEISURE PURPOSES WILL BE FAVOURED.
- L6 NETWORKS OF ROUTES FOR THE PUBLIC ENJOYMENT OF THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL CONTINUE TO BE DEVELOPED, HAVING REGARD TO THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT, AND CONFLICT BETWEEN POTENTIAL USERS.



- L7 LEISURE BASED DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WHICH SUPPORT THE FURTHER ENHANCEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTHERN VALLEYS AREAS AS MAJOR TOURIST AREAS WILL BE FAVOURED.

- L8 THE CONTINUED PUBLIC ACCESS TO AND INFORMAL RECREATIONAL USE OF LAND TO BE DISPOSED OF BY THE FOREST ENTERPRISE WILL BE FAVOURED, AND CONTINUED ACCESS AGREEMENTS WILL BE USED TO ACHIEVE THIS.



UTILITY SERVICES

- U1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITIES, INCLUDING THOSE FOR WIND POWER, WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHERE SUCH DEVELOPMENT WOULD RESULT IN UNACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO SITES AND THEIR SETTINGS RECOGNISED AS HAVING NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL NATURE CONSERVATION, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC IMPORTANCE.
- U2 PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITIES AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING THOSE FOR WIND POWER, IN AREAS OTHER THAN THOSE REFERRED TO IN U1, WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE:-
- (1) THE PROPOSAL CAN BE LOCATED TO REDUCE DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO THE ENVIRONMENT TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS, PARTICULARLY THE LEVEL OF VISUAL INTRUSION LIKELY TO RESULT FROM THE PROPOSAL TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE CUMULATIVE EFFECTS ARISING FROM OTHER EXISTING AND APPROVED SCHEMES IN THE AREA
 - (2) CONFLICTS WITH SURROUNDING LAND USES CAN BE REDUCED TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS, PARTICULARLY WHERE THE AMENITY OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS IN THE LOCALITY IS LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED ADVERSELY
 - (3) PROVISIONS FOR THE REINSTATEMENT OF THE SITE WHEN IT CEASES TO OPERATE ARE CONSIDERED ADEQUATE
 - (4) THE AVAILABILITY OF IDENTIFIED MINERAL RESOURCES OR RESERVES IS NOT STERILISED.
- U3 PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES IN COUNTRYSIDE LOCATIONS WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE:-
- (1) SITING AND APPEARANCE HAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO REDUCE TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS, DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO THE ENVIRONMENT, PARTICULARLY THE LEVEL OF VISUAL INTRUSION LIKELY TO OCCUR
 - (2) THE PROPOSAL IS PART OF A PLANNED DEVELOPMENT OF AN ASSOCIATED NETWORK
 - (3) THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT STERILISE THE AVAILABILITY OF IDENTIFIED MINERAL RESOURCES OR RESERVES.
- U4 THE PROVISION OF UTILITY SERVICES SHOULD HAVE AS LITTLE ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH AS POSSIBLE. IN PARTICULAR
- (1) ALL ABOVE GROUND SERVICE LINES SHOULD BE ROUTED TO REDUCE TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS, DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO THE ENVIRONMENT OR THE STERILISATION OF IDENTIFIED MINERAL RESERVES OR RESOURCES. CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO PLACING SUCH SERVICES UNDERGROUND WHERE ECONOMICALLY AND TECHNICALLY FEASIBLE AND DESIRABLE ON ENVIRONMENTAL GROUNDS
 - (2) WHERE SERVICES ARE PLACED UNDERGROUND ADEQUATE RESTORATION MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN TO MINIMISE DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO THE ENVIRONMENT
 - (3) MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN WHEREVER FEASIBLE TO RATIONALISE SERVICE PROVISION TO REDUCE ITS VISUAL IMPACT.



- U5 DEVELOPMENTS WHICH (FOLLOWING CONSULTATION WITH THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY), ARE CONSIDERED LIKELY TO LEAD TO A DETERIORATION IN THE QUALITY OF UNDERGROUND, SURFACE, OR COASTAL WATER WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.
- U6 DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE FAVOURED IN AREAS WHERE ADEQUATE UTILITY SERVICES DO NOT EXIST, ARE NOT REASONABLY ACCESSIBLE OR CANNOT BE READILY AND ECONOMICALLY PROVIDED.



**MID GLAMORGAN
(RHONDDA CYNON TAFF COUNTY BOROUGH)
REPLACEMENT STRUCTURE PLAN 1991-2006**

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

*MORGANNWG GANOL
(BWRDEISTREF SIROL RHONDDA CYNON TAF)
CYNLLUN STRWYTHUR AMNEWID 1991-2006*

MEMORANDWM EGLURHAOL





EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

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Appendix 1 - Regeneration Aims of the County Borough Council

Appendix 2 - Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987 extract)

Key Diagram





1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Development Plans

1.1.1 Part 2 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act (as amended) requires local planning authorities to prepare and keep under review development plans for their areas. For the former shire county areas, a development plan consists of three elements: Local Plans prepared by Borough and District Councils and National Park Authorities, and Minerals Plans and Structure Plans prepared by County Councils.

1.1.2 Following Local Government Reorganisation in Wales on 1st April 1996 the responsibility for proceeding to adopt the Structure Plan falls upon the successor authorities to the former Mid Glamorgan County Council. Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council is responsible for the Replacement Structure Plan insofar as it affects the area of its Local Planning Authority, which consists of the area within its administrative boundaries with the exception of the area within the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.

1.2 The Structure Plan

1.2.1 A Structure Plan is intended to provide County Borough wide strategic guidance for land use development over a period of 15 years ahead, taking into account national and regional policies. It thereby aims to produce general policies for the development and use of land which provide a framework for local plans and the control of development. The plan must therefore:-

- set out policies on a series of key topic areas as defined in national planning guidance, for example on strategic transport facilities or major environmental features.
- indicate where appropriate for the key topic areas, scales of land provision to be made in the County Borough as a whole, for example for housing and industrial land.
- indicate the general location of major developments likely to have a significant effect on the area, such as sites for special kinds of industry.
- indicate broad areas where development would be restrained, for example in areas of environmental importance.

1.2.2 Structure Plans are not in the main intended to be site specific, and do not contain proposals maps with an ordnance survey base as does a Local Plan. Although a key diagram is included to show the broad locational effect of policies, this is for illustrative purposes only. Local Plans provide a detailed local interpretation of strategic policies.

1.2.3 The present document forms the second review of the Structure Plan. The first plan for the whole of the County of the former Mid Glamorgan was submitted to the Secretary of State for Wales in 1978, and was approved subsequently in 1982, to cover the period up to 1991. However, it was already apparent at that time, that revisions to County-wide policy were necessary, and alterations were prepared and submitted to the Secretary of State during 1985. These alterations were approved in September 1989, extending the period of plan coverage up to 1996.

1.2.4 The Approved Mid Glamorgan Structure Plan expired in 1996 and the County Borough Council considers that it is an appropriate time to roll the plan forward, to establish its land use strategy and policies for the rest of the 1990s and beyond.

1.2.5 Overall the present review is considered to be more wide ranging than that approved in 1989. In taking into account new government guidance and the development pressures which may occur into the early part of the next century, comprehensive replacements to existing policy are proposed, rather



than a series of limited alterations. The review must therefore be considered to form a Replacement Structure Plan.

1.3 The Replacement Plan

1.3.1 A number of recent changes to planning legislation including new regulations govern the nature of the present Replacement Structure Plan.

1.3.2 A number of revised national Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs) were issued following the 1990 Act. PPG12, Development Plans and Strategic Planning Guidance In Wales, now replaced by Planning Guidance (Wales) Unitary Development Plans (April 1996), indicates that structure plans should not be as detailed as they have been in the past, to complement the introduction of new mandatory district wide development plans. Full coverage of local plans will in the long term remove the need for many structure plan policies. Therefore, policies in the Replacement Plan will, in most circumstances, be limited to former district local level allocations and issues of County Borough-wide significance, and will be fewer in number.

1.3.3 The Town and Country Planning (Development Plan) Regulations 1991 introduced new requirements for structure plans, particularly with regard to the need to take into account environmental matters in formulating policy. Although the former Mid Glamorgan County Council always paid due regard to such matters in establishing policy, the new requirement made this explicit as an end in itself, rather than as a support to economic development or improving the quality of life of the population.

1.3.4 The enactment of the 1991 Planning and Compensation Act means that the Replacement Plan will no longer be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval. Adoption will now be the responsibility of the County Borough Council. The procedure to be followed prior to adoption, however, is essentially the same as before. Responses to a consultation draft of the Replacement Plan have been taken into account in preparing revised plan proposals. These were placed on public deposit and subjected to a further round of consultation. An Examination in Public (EIP) was held before a panel chaired by an independent person appointed by the Secretary of State. The County Borough Council then made its final decisions in the light of the EIP panel's recommendations.

1.4 The Approved Replacement Structure Plan

1.4.1 The present document represents proposed modifications to the deposit version of the Replacement Structure Plan insofar as it affects the area of the Rhondda Cynon Taff Local Planning Authority. The former Mid Glamorgan County Council issued the deposit document for public consultation in December 1993. The statutory deposit consultation period took place from January to March of 1994. Prior to this a consultation draft was published in November 1992, and placed on public display throughout the former County during December 1992 and January 1993.

1.4.2 A large number of organisations were consulted directly or informed of the publication of the deposit version of the plan. The results of this exercise are summarised in the supporting document 'Report of Deposit Stage Public Consultations' (Mid Glamorgan CC). Further consultation took place where it was considered necessary to clarify, or resolve where possible, major objections to the deposited plan. The former Mid Glamorgan County Council proposed a number of modifications to the deposit version of the plan, taking into account follow up consultation, together with more recent relevant information. The first proposed modifications document, published in accordance with PPG12 (Wales) Annex A paragraph 20, was subjected to a period of public consultation. Following this exercise the former County Council determined to proceed to an Examination in Public, held in September 1995. Adoption of the County-wide plan was not possible before Local Government Reorganisation.



1.4.3 Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council proposed three sets of further modifications to the Replacement Plan. These were subject to a period of deposit and public consultation, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Plan) Regulations 1991, in January and February 1997, and September and October 1997. The EIP was reopened in February 1998 and as the result of the panel's report, the County Borough Council proposed further modifications which were deposited in May and June 1998. Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council resolved to proceed to adopt the Replacement Structure Plan insofar as it affects the area of its Local Planning Authority.

1.4.4 The Replacement Structure Plan consists of a number of statutory and non statutory parts:-

THE WRITTEN STATEMENT comprises a full list of policies proposed to replace those of the existing approved plan. Each proposed policy is presented in capital letters and is allocated a reference number. The written statement is the statutory plan statement.

THE EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM comprises a description of the plan strategy together with a short explanation of the purpose of each replacement policy, including, where relevant, explanations of terms used in the policies. For ease of reference each proposed replacement policy is repeated below each explanation. The explanatory memorandum is not part of the plan itself.

THE KEY DIAGRAM is located at the back of the document. This locates relevant policies within the County Borough in diagrammatic terms. In the case of a conflict between the diagram and the written statement, the latter will prevail.





2. STRUCTURE PLAN STRATEGY

2.1 The National Planning Context

2.1.1. Paragraph 9(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Plan) Regulations 1991 requires Structure Plans to have regard to social, economic and environmental considerations in establishing policies. Planning Guidance in Wales explains this further. Policies for land use should weigh and reconcile priorities in the public interest.

2.1.2 Some of these priorities relate to development which accommodates social or economic needs while others have conservation and environment as their common flavour. Environmental concerns are now viewed as weighing increasingly as a planning consideration which may conflict with other priorities which require development. Development plans and their policies are seen as having a role to play in achieving an appropriate balance between these priorities.

2.1.3 Accordingly the former Mid Glamorgan County Council adopted the following as the basic aims of the Replacement Structure Plan and they continue to be supported by Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council.

- **the achievement of a dynamic economy, capable of meeting the changing employment needs of its population with a reduced dependency on government assistance**
- **the achievement of the highest possible standards of provision and degree of choice of living and working conditions**
- **the conservation key environmental features and resources.**

The County Borough Council sees its task in interpreting the development plan regulations as producing development guidance which balances the need of economic regeneration, the improvement of social conditions and the conservation and enhancement of the environment.

2.1.4 Planning Guidance (Wales), (PG(W)), also indicates that the Government intends to work towards ensuring that development and growth are sustainable. The planning system is viewed as having a major role in establishing this objective. Sustainable development has been defined as -

'Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (report of the UN World Commission on Environment and Development 1987 - Brundtland Report)

The County Borough Council accepts this definition as compatible with the requirement to work towards sustainable development policies whilst recognising that the Replacement Structure Plan must produce balanced guidance. Consequently the Plan has been reviewed with these requirements in mind and involves;-

- **the conservation and enhancement of the best of the environment for the enjoyment of the current population and future generations,**
- **an emphasis on urban renewal and the reuse of developed sites and property within the built up area,**
- **the protection of major natural resources where alternatives are available,**
- **the encouragement of public transport to help limit carbon dioxide emissions and traffic congestion,**



- **the long term protection of specific development sites as a resource associated with an identified need, from uses which could be accommodated elsewhere,**
- **the promotion of development policies which reduce the need to travel.**

2.1.5 Central to the County Borough Council's interpretation of government guidance is the requirement to establish an overriding need for a particular development at a specific location if that proposal conflicts materially with features protected by the plan. For that development to proceed it should be demonstrated clearly that it is in the public interest and must take place in that location. Planning Guidance recognises a number of circumstances involving features of national importance where these tests can be included specifically in development plan policies. However, normally these will be taken to represent material considerations outside of the plan. Hence in situations which conflict irreconcilably with the plan, development would not be permitted unless such material considerations determined otherwise. If the necessity for a particular development at a particular protected site can be established, this must then be considered to outweigh the need to protect the areas or features involved, before the development can be approved, as a departure from the plan. Environmental Impact Analysis may be necessary in such circumstances. The weight given to features, resources or areas protected under the plan will depend upon their relative national, regional or local importance.

2.1.6 Having outlined the main aims of the review, it is necessary to consider the main elements of the strategy for progressing these aims. The basic elements of the strategy are considered below dealing first with the regional context, followed by a brief description of the strategy adopted in the original approved plan of 1989 and taken forward into this approved Plan.

2.2 The Regional Context

2.2.1 One of the main tasks of the Structure Plan is to interpret National and Regional Government policy. Rhondda Cynon Taff is located at the heart of the South Wales region (Fig. 1). The main statement of Government Policy as it applies to this region remains Wales the Way Ahead dating from 1967. Accordingly the first Structure Plan (1982) and its first Review (1989) used this as the basis for establishing the Plan. Hence these plans sought to:-

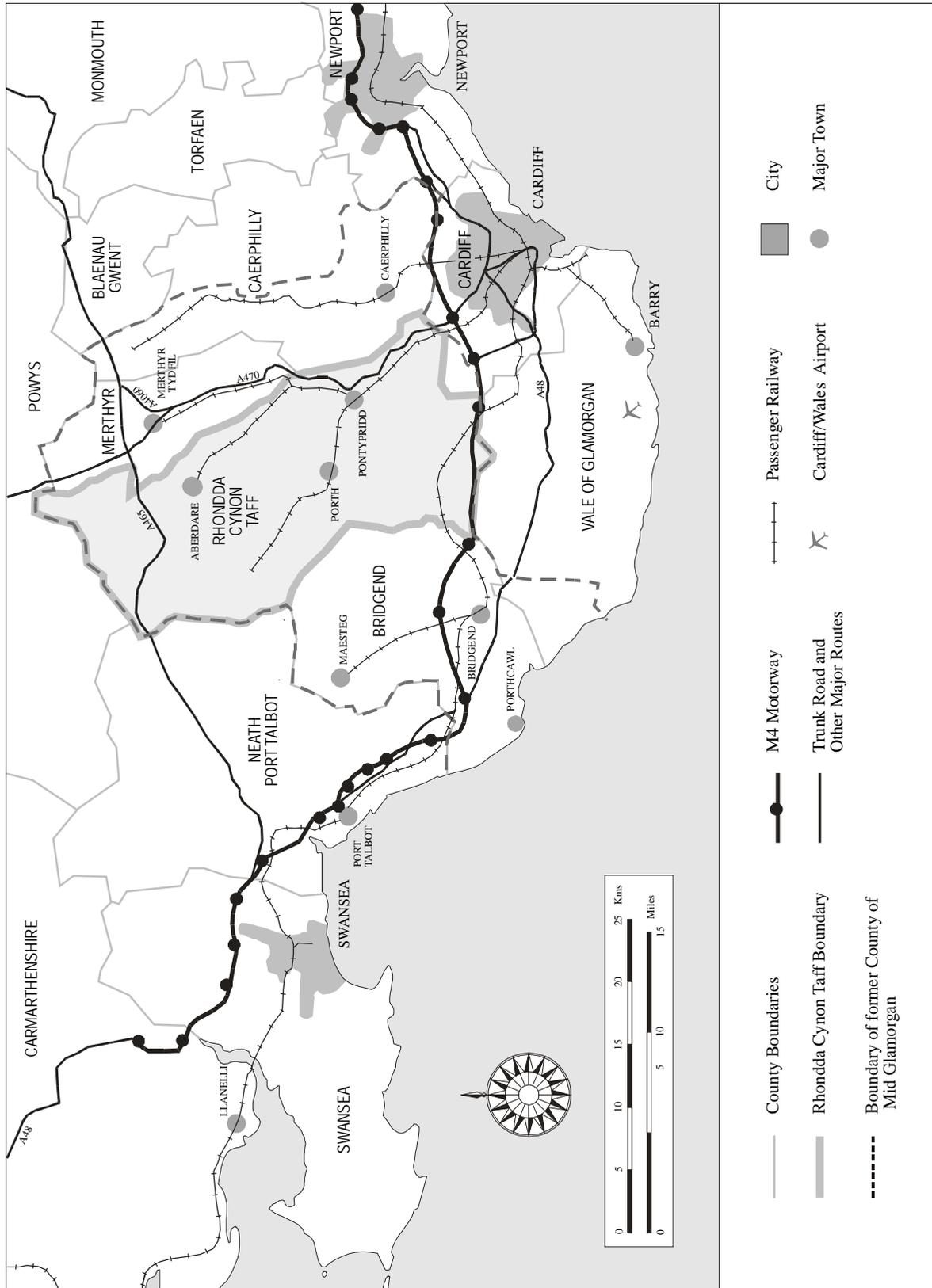
- **Maintain substantial Valleys communities,**
- **Exploit the development potential for industry of the Valley Mouths and Heads of the Valleys area,**
- **Accept the continuing development of Cardiff as an administrative, manufacturing and service centre.**

2.2.2 Although Government Planning Policy is now contained in Planning Guidance (Wales), no statement of Strategic Planning Policy has yet emerged, to update "Wales the Way Ahead". The County Borough Council therefore continues to interpret strategic planning policy for Wales in the same way as the former Mid Glamorgan County Council, endorsed in the Approved Structure Plan by the Secretary of State in 1989, and more recently further supported by Government policy under the Strategic Development Scheme (SDS) and the Valleys Programme.

2.2.3 Since the mid 1970s a series of regional working parties, comprising Central and Local Government and the Minerals Industry, have been established to consider the supply and demand for certain minerals on a regional basis. Minerals Planning Guidance notes (MPGs) now advise local authorities to take account of the recommendations of these working parties in formulating their development plans.



**Figure 1. Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough
General Location Plan**





2.2.4 Structure Plan Policy has thus been based on the findings of the working party established for the South Wales region, which clarifies the position of the County Borough as a supplier of minerals in the regional context. Minerals Policy therefore acknowledges the continuing importance of the County Borough as a major supplier of minerals within the region.

2.3 The Structure Plan Strategy

2.3.1 The above regional policy context is interpreted by the County Borough Council as, to attempt to provide conditions feasible to the long term elimination of at least the net loss of population by migration by the end of the century. This will mean attempting to sustain the virtual natural change conditions shown in Rhondda Cynon Taff during the late 1980s. This aim will be tackled by a programme of local development and urban renewal, and improvement and protection of the built and natural environment. Such an approach would be supplemented where necessary and acceptable on environmental grounds, by new development near major transportation corridors, such as the M4 and A470, and the Cardiff area (e.g. Cardiff Bay), and the improvement of transportation links to these places. Important environmental features and areas will be identified and included in local plans. Developments conflicting with these protected features will only be permitted where there are overriding material considerations outside of the plan. A balance is therefore attempted between the development needs of the population to achieve aims shown above and the need to protect the environment for its own sake, and for its contribution to the quality of life. The main elements of the Strategy are summarised below, and will be repeated for each relevant topic chapter.

2.3.2 Within the long term framework provided by the Structure Plan Strategy, the County Borough Council also pursues a number of shorter term programmes which implement its land use and other strategies. Of particular importance to the implementation of land use policy is urban regeneration which can provide a basis for seeking funding adopting the aims indicated in Appendix 1.

2.4 Elements of the Plan Strategy

2.4.1 Employment and Industry

- To promote the use and conversion of existing sites and property for industrial and commercial uses.
- To make provision for the future job needs of the population and the needs of industry and commerce by identifying an adequate amount of land and range of sites in each district or within reasonable commuting distance.
- To ensure that an adequate supply of readily developable industrial and commercial land is always available by the maintenance of a land bank.
- To reserve special sites for B1 development near the strategic highway network, provided they are compatible with the conservation of the environment.
- To limit increases in long distance commuting by promoting more development opportunities within the County Borough.
- To reduce possible threats to the environment from potentially hazardous industry by establishing appropriate restrictions on such development.

2.4.2 Housing

- To make provision for the future housing needs of the population by identifying a sufficient amount of additional dwellings for each area.



- To cater for an adequate range of housing in each area by allowing extra provision capable of accommodating identified particular needs.
- To promote urban renewal by encouraging the use of suitable urban sites and existing premises for new housing uses.
- To restrict the physical growth of settlements to reduce pressure for development on the countryside and the coalescence of built up areas.

2.4.3 Environment

- To protect the countryside for its own sake by restricting development to that which is appropriate for such locations.
- To protect important features of the natural and built environment of the County Borough by introducing special designations and controls.
- To seek the maintenance and enhancement of the rural economy in the County Borough taking into account the need to maintain a viable agricultural sector and conserve the quality of the rural landscape.

2.4.4 Transportation

- To improve accessibility within the County Borough by carrying out a series of improvements to major routes and other highways.
- To promote the use of public transport by making improvements to the network of both bus and rail services.
- To enhance the environment of town centres and other areas by introducing pedestrianisation and traffic calming measures.
- To limit the transportation effects of new proposals for development on the urban and rural environment by adopting specific controls.

2.4.5 Derelict Land and Contamination

- To seek the clearance of all major dereliction in the County Borough within the plan period, and to aim to prevent further dereliction.
- To ensure the effectiveness of the land reclamation process by identifying and implementing suitable after-uses and protecting or replacing environmental features.
- To seek to deal with all known contaminated land which becomes available for treatment in the County Borough.

2.4.6 Minerals

- To ensure that, whilst protecting the environment as far as possible, there should be a continuing basis for the minerals industry in the County Borough to meet the needs of society.

2.4.7 Retailing

- To limit the loss of locally generated expenditure from the County Borough by improving the nature of shopping facilities in the County Borough.



- To establish the renewal of existing town centres in the County Borough as the priority area for future retail investment.
- To ensure that the vitality and viability of major town centres in the County Borough is not undermined by new retail development in other locations.
- To allow limited additional floorspace in out of town locations where this is complementary to town centre development.
- To ensure that the existing support for the improvement to the physical environment of town centres continues.

2.4.8 Leisure

- To encourage the development of new leisure facilities where these are compatible with the conservation of the environment.
- To encourage the wider public use of existing leisure facilities.
- To encourage the further development of tourism in the County Borough by supporting new attractions and destinations.
- To improve and extend the opportunities for the informal public enjoyment of the countryside where these are compatible with the conservation of the environment.

2.4.9 Utility Services

- To ensure that the need to develop utility services in the County Borough takes due account of the need to conserve the environment.

2.5 The Availability of Resources

2.5.1 The 1990 Act requires Structure Plans to have regard to the availability of resources for their implementation. All development plans must be realistic in this respect. Two main kinds of resource are considered for the present Replacement Plan, the land and finance.

Land Resources

2.5.2 The strategy of the Replacement Plan aims to highlight the importance of enhancing the environment and protecting the best features and areas from development which does not have to take place at such locations. The Structure Plan, together with Local Plans, therefore not only defines environmental features and areas of importance which already have some statutory protection, but also defines additional features and areas which are also considered worthy of protection. These include areas of high landscape value such as the Coalfield Plateau and Valley Sides, nature conservation areas such as nature reserves, and buildings and monuments of major importance, such as listed buildings and conservation areas. Such additional features will be identified in more detail in local plans. In addition to protecting the environment the Structure Plan also seeks to reduce the pressures for the use of greenfield land resources by emphasising the development or redevelopment of land and property within the existing built and developed environment. The emphasis on urban regeneration is particularly important with regard to the reuse and refurbishment of buildings and the redevelopment of existing sites within urban areas. Similarly the rolling programme of derelict land reclamation and provision of beneficial afteruses, approved and funded by the WDA, is of key importance in recycling used land.



Financial Resources

2.5.3 The implementation of the strategy will depend heavily on the finance available to the local authority and the main implementing agencies over the plan period. Although one of the basic aims of the County Borough Council is to reduce dependency on external assistance, it is considered unrealistic to expect this process to be complete within the plan period, even though substantial progress can be made.

2.5.4 The Replacement Structure Plan covers a period of 15 years while financial planning usually takes place on a much shorter timescale. Financial allocations are usually available on an annual basis, and sometimes up to 5 years ahead. Although increased finance was generally available at the beginning of the 1990s, this trend is unlikely to continue over the plan period, at least in the short term. Indeed financial resources available to local government and the County Borough Council in particular were reduced significantly during 1996/7. Policies have thus been based on the level of resources currently available on the assumption that this level will be sustainable in average terms over the plan period. Transportation improvements and land reclamation are funded directly by the Welsh Office and the Welsh Development Agency (WDA), in terms of rolling programmes. The financial basis for the policies proposed for these areas is considered under the appropriate section.

2.5.5 Urban Renewal in the County Borough receives additional funding from the Welsh Office formerly under the Urban Programme, and now under the Strategic Development Scheme (SDS). The Urban Programme allowed grant funding to industrial, commercial, environmental and leisure projects in the valley areas such as the refurbishment of commercial and industrial property. This clearly illustrates the importance of Urban Renewal in encouraging investment in the County Borough. The SDS supports projects which contribute to the economic, environmental and social development of areas in need.

2.5.6 In recent years the WDA has also allocated substantial funds for specific town development and renewal schemes, which have often been carried out in co-operation with the relevant local authorities. Such schemes can prove of great benefit to the implementation of the strategy and the County Borough Council will continue to co-operate with WDA initiatives where consistent with its own regeneration aims.

2.5.7 Funding from other Government agencies is also important to implementing the strategy. This includes grants from the Wales Tourist Board for the provision of visitor facilities, the Countryside Council for Wales, for a range of countryside/ environmental schemes, and the Forestry Commission for woodland maintenance and planting. It is considered vital to the implementation of the strategy that this support from all agencies of Government continues throughout the plan period.

2.5.8 The County Borough Council, operating in partnership with other agencies, has played a major role in implementing specific elements of the Plan. Indeed the Local Authority has acted as the main implementation agency for a number of major leisure or environmental projects. However, it is considered unlikely that finance will be available in future to continue the introduction of new facilities from public resources alone, while existing developments may themselves become part of the private sector. The strategy therefore envisages that although existing facilities may continue to be enhanced by local authority finance, future development will need to come more from the private sector than in the past.

European Union (EU) Funding

2.5.9 The distribution of EU Structural Funds helps to revitalise regions affected by serious economic decline. At present Rhondda Cynon Taff qualifies for such funding on the basis of criteria defined by the EU for land use schemes related, for example, to economic regeneration, infrastructure improvements, and site provision. The former County of Mid Glamorgan was able to secure a substantial proportion of EU funding allocated to South Wales. Funding is anticipated to continue. Where bids for funding relate to land use issues, they will help directly to implement the Plan strategy.



2.6 Monitoring

2.6.1 During the course of the preparation of the Replacement Plan, the data and assumptions contained in it have been updated using the latest available information and planning guidance. This has in particular involved the extensive use of the 1991 census to refine population and housing information. Plan policies have been revised comprehensively on an up to date basis. This process of updating has continued as the Plan has progressed towards adoption, to ensure that the final version of the Plan remains credible and consistent. It will be necessary to continue to monitor progress towards achieving plan objectives and policy implementation, in particular by recording population change and land use/development trends.

2.7 Environmental Appraisal

2.7.1 An ongoing Environmental Appraisal of the policies contained within the replacement plan has been carried out. This exercise was largely based upon the guidelines established in 'Environmental Appraisal of Development Plans' (DOE 1993), and has already been used to produce some of the proposed changes to the Plan. The appraisal was used in support of the Plan at the EIP in September 1995 and demonstrates the overall environmental effects of the Replacement Structure Plan.



3. POPULATION CHANGE

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The first Structure Plan (1982) and its subsequent Alteration No.1 (1989) were based upon the aim to achieve at least net nil migration in each of the Districts in the former Mid Glamorgan during the respective plan periods. Whilst the need to maintain substantial Valley Communities and exploit the County Borough's development potential remains central to the County Borough Council's interpretation of existing regional guidance, other factors relating to economic and social circumstances, together with the need to ensure that development and growth are sustainable, also need to be considered. In addition the supply of land available for housing and industrial development must be taken into account. The population assumptions used as the basis for many of the policies in the Replacement Plan have been developed in the light of these issues.

3.2 Population Trends Since 1981

3.2.1 The Registrar General's Final Mid Year Population Estimate indicates that the 1991 population of Rhondda Cynon Taff, (243,800), was similar to that of 1981, (244,500). On the basis of the published information the County Borough appears to have experienced two distinct periods of population change:-

1. A period of decline between 1981 and 1986 during which population fell by 5,200 caused primarily by a net out-migration of 6,700 people - amongst the highest levels recorded in the UK; and
2. A period of growth from 1986-91 resulting from improved economic circumstances and a small amount of apparent net in-migration. This was caused principally by increases in the numbers migrating from other parts of the UK particularly the South East, South West and West Midland regions of England.

3.2.2 As table 1 indicates on an area basis, the earlier period was associated with high levels of net out-migration in Cynon Valley and Rhondda. However, between 1986-91 a slight population increase appears to have occurred overall through natural growth, together with some in-migration. In the former District of Taff-Ely consistently high rates of natural increase appear to have combined with net in-migration after 1986. This is only partly explained by the growth of student numbers at the University of Glamorgan. It is estimated that approximately 40% of net in-migration to the former District since 1986 was due to non-students.

3.2.3 The apparent growth in population since 1986, shown in Table 1, strongly reflects the changed out-migrational circumstances of the County Borough where net out-migration no longer out-weighs natural increases. This trend suggests that the area was largely able to achieve migration balance by the end of the period compared to previous periods, which is in general accord with the objectives of the Approved Structure Plan. The County Borough Council concludes that net nil migration continues to be feasible in the long term and that this remains central to the strategy.

3.2.4 However, the issue remains of when and under what conditions this aim may be achieved. The likelihood of future net migration balance needs to be assessed against several factors. These include economic and social circumstances, land availability, development rates, together with any relevant National and Regional guidance concerning the amount and type of growth that should be planned for.



**Table 1. Rhondda Cynon Taff
Population And Components of Change 1981-1991
by former District areas**

<i>Former District Area</i>	<i>1981 Pop-ulation</i>	<i>Natural Change 1981-1986</i>	<i>Net Mig-ration 1981-1986</i>	<i>1986 Pop-ulation</i>	<i>Natural Change 1986-1991</i>	<i>Net Mig-ration 1986-1991</i>	<i>1991 Pop-ulation</i>
Cynon Valley #	67.8	- 0.1	- 2.3	65.4	0.4	0	65.8
Rhondda	82.3	- 0.5	- 2.7	79.1	0	0.3	79.4
Taff Ely *	94.4	2.1	- 1.7	94.8	2.1	1.7	98.6
RHONDDA CYNON TAFF # *	244.5	1.5	- 6.7	239.3	2.5	2.0	243.8
FORMER MID GLAMORGAN # *	540.8	4.6	- 11.4	534.5	6.7	0.6	541.8
All figures in 000s and may not add due to rounding							
# Includes area now transferred to Brecon Beacons National Park							
* Includes Pentyrch Community Council area now transferred to Cardiff County							
<i>Source: Registrar General's Mid-Year Estimates</i>							

3.3 National and Regional Population Forecasts

3.3.1 Although population changes form the basis of many strategic land-use planning policies there is currently no specific national or regional guidance on the levels of growth that should be used for the Structure Plan. The Welsh Office produces a regular series of population and household projections. However, these do not contain any policy assumptions and simply reflect what would happen if certain past migration trends continued over the next 20 years. The 1989 based trend estimates showed a decline of 2,000 people and an increase of 10,000 households between 1991 and 2006 arising from an assumed net out-migration of 1,400 persons per annum in the former County of Mid Glamorgan.

3.3.2 The Welsh Office did not produce projections below the level of the former counties. Table 2 indicates the levels of population and the numbers of households that might be expected if the 1981-91 net migration trend of the former districts now comprising Rhondda Cynon Taff continued over the Plan period. The projection also incorporates more recent mortality and fertility rates. This would result in an increase of 400 people but 7,000 additional households in the former districts of Cynon Valley, Rhondda and Taff Ely between 1991 and 2006.



Table 2. Rhondda Cynon Taff Population Trend Projections 1991-2006 by former District areas			
<i>Former District Area</i>	<i>Net Migration Trend (per annum)</i>	<i>Population Change 1991-2006</i>	<i>Household Change 1991-2006</i>
Cynon Valley #	-230	-1000	1000
Rhondda	-270	-2400	200
Taff Ely *	-180	3800	5800
RHONDDA CYNON TAFF # *	-680	400	7000
FORMER MID GLAMORGAN # *	-1240	4600	17500
All figures in 000s and may not add due to rounding # Includes area now transferred to Brecon Beacons National Park * Includes Pentyrch Community Council area now transferred to Cardiff County			
<i>Source: Former Mid Glamorgan County Council</i>			

3.4 The Structure Plan Estimate of Future Population

3.4.1 The former Mid Glamorgan based the Plan Estimate of the Approved Structure Plan (1989) upon an assumption of net migration balance (natural change) from 1986. The intention of this assumption was to allow sufficient housing and employment land to be allocated in order to encourage investment and redevelopment and thus help to reduce out-migration. It was therefore "development led" with the aim of maximising the former County's economic and social potential. Although migration balance was not realised until the end of the decade, largely due to the severity of the 1980s recession, this objective remained realistic for the production of revised estimates of future population.

3.4.2 The early 1990s recession reduced both inward and outward migration. It could be argued that after the recession the traditional net movement outwards, for example, the long term trend shown in the Welsh Office projections, will be resumed. However, the substantial progress made in restructuring the South Wales economy and other social and environmental advantages of the region lead the former County Council to consider that an assumption of nil net migration from 1991, except for the former Taff Ely District, is reasonable in order to provide a practical basis for land use policies. In Taff Ely an assumption of 200 non-student net in-migrants every year is considered reasonable in view of the strategic importance of the area and net-migration trends since 1986.

3.4.3 The above assumptions have been used as the basis for the Plan Estimate of future population shown in Table 3 and Figure 2. The former County projected that between 1991 and 2006 the population of the former districts would grow by about 14,800. The Plan Estimate will be monitored and revised if new information suggests this is warranted.



**Table 3. Rhondda Cynon Taff
Plan Estimate Population Projection
by former District areas**

<i>Former District Area</i>	<i>1991</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>Growth 91-06</i>
Cynon Valley #	65.8	66.7	67.8	68.6	+2.8
Rhondda	79.4	79.9	80.7	81.5	+2.1
Taff Ely *	98.6	103.7	106.3	108.5	+9.9
RHONDDA CYNON TAFF # *	243.8	250.3	254.8	258.6	+14.8
MID GLAMORGAN # *	541.8	552.6	562.1	569.9	+28.1

All figures in 000s and may not add due to rounding

Includes area now transferred to Brecon Beacons National Park

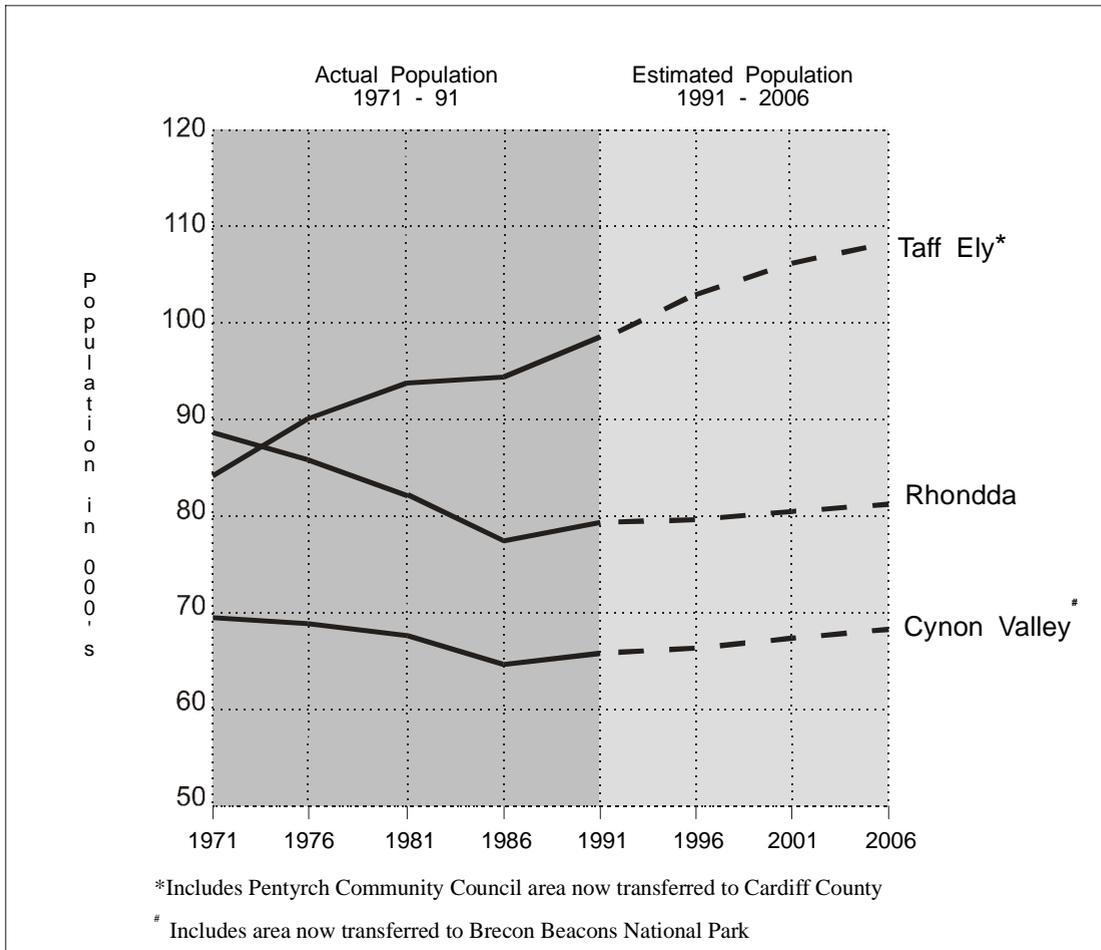
* Includes Pentrych Community Council area now transferred to Cardiff County.

Also includes estimated (1991) and projected numbers of students whose term time address is in the former District area of Taff Ely but with a home address outside the area.

Sources: Registrar General / Former Mid Glamorgan County Council



Figure 2. Actual Population 1971-1991 and Plan Estimate 1991-2006 by former District areas



Sources : Registrar General / Former Mid Glamorgan County Council





4. EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRY

Strategy Elements

- **To promote the use and conversion of existing sites and property for industrial and commercial uses.**
- **To make provision for the future job needs of the population and the needs of industry and commerce by identifying an adequate amount of land and range of sites in the County Borough within reasonable commuting distance.**
- **To ensure that an adequate supply of readily developable industrial and commercial land is always available by the maintenance of a land bank.**
- **To reserve special sites for B1 development near the strategic highway network, provided they are compatible with the conservation of the environment.**
- **To limit increases in long distance commuting by promoting more development opportunities within the County Borough.**
- **To reduce possible threats to the environment from potentially hazardous industry by establishing appropriate restrictions on such development.**

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The persistently high level of unemployment over the past two decades has been one of the most obvious manifestations of Britain's economic problems. The former area of Mid Glamorgan, dependent on a declining industrial base of coal and heavy industry, was one of the worst affected areas.

4.1.2 In 1947 there were 51,000 miners employed in 71 collieries in the former County of Mid Glamorgan. In 1997 only Tower Colliery, in Rhondda Cynon Taff, remains in operation. During the intervening years, the local economy has had to re-structure itself to generate new sources of employment.

4.1.3 Up until the early 1970s, the net effect of redundancies from the collieries on the level of unemployment was considerably reduced in the former County of Mid Glamorgan due to the expansion in manufacturing industries. By the mid 1970s, over 70,000 people were employed in the manufacturing sector. Half of these were in mechanical and electrical engineering, metal goods and clothing and footwear. Between 1977-87, employment in manufacturing declined by 24,000; of these 70% were in the four dominant industries. As a result, no single industry now employs more than 8% of the former County's workforce.

4.1.4 Throughout the 1980s the coal industry continued to close collieries. These redundancies were not being replaced by growth in the manufacturing industries. By June 1986 there were 36,000 people unemployed in the former area of Mid Glamorgan. The stability in the construction, distribution, hotels, catering, banking and service industries failed to fill the employment vacuum until the "Lawson Boom". By 1987 these sectors of the local economy provided an additional 10,200 jobs.

4.1.5 This growth was however short lived. The 1991 Census of Employment showed that between 1989 and 1991 the construction and service industries contracted shedding 3,700 jobs. During the same period, employment in the primary and manufacturing industries had also contracted by 9,000 jobs. This is reflected in the unemployment statistics. In June 1990, unemployment reached its lowest point in over a decade, 17,485. The 1991 census shows that unemployment had again risen to 28,835 with a further 3,989 on a government sponsored training scheme.



4.2 Changing Land Use Needs

4.2.1 The shift from employment underground to the industrial estates and into offices and high tech premises has affected the way in which land is used and developed. The larger employers, whether they are manufacturing or service based companies, demand good quality sites where location is important. The sites in greatest demand have good access to the strategic highway network and major commercial centres, and are usually highly visible. The development of such sites has already produced changes to travel to work patterns in the County Borough. The number of work trips to the former County of South Glamorgan increased significantly, with major investment initiatives concentrating along the M4 corridor and the development of Cardiff Bay.

4.3 Planning Guidance

4.3.1 Government policy as expressed in PG(W) requires local planning authorities to ensure that there is sufficient land available, in terms of quantity and quality, for the expansion of industry and commerce. Particular emphasis is placed on the need to re-use existing urban sites and property. The guidance suggests that development should only be prevented or restricted where this would serve a clear planning purpose or where it is incompatible with environmental objectives.

4.3.2 The White Paper 'This Common Inheritance' highlights the link between global warming and the demand for travel. At a strategic level this is interpreted as a need to limit the growth of long journeys to work and to promote the use of public rather than private transport. Development plans are seen as the means of resolving problems of pursuing competing objectives.

4.4 Industrial Strategy

4.4.1 The need to ameliorate the effects of national economic trends on the local area has resulted in the expansion of economic development activities by many agencies including local government. Joint action is considered necessary by the County Borough Council to obtain maximum value from scarce resources. The nature and intensity of these activities has varied, but the objective and the means of achieving them remain the same - the pursuit of economic growth through the provision of industrial land, premises, infrastructure, financial incentives, and training.

4.4.2 The successful regeneration of Rhondda Cynon Taff's economy will depend on its continued diversification. The provision of a balanced portfolio of industrial land and property is an essential component in the process of encouraging and enabling economic development.

4.4.3 Many of the sites presently identified for industrial use are within the urban environment, close to other employment intensive uses and well served by local roads and public transport. Others are on the fringe of the urban environment, while some are the subject of land reclamation schemes. It is vitally important that these derelict, vacant or under-used sites and premises are brought back into productive use. The successful regeneration of these areas will remove urban blight and provide suitable accommodation for local businesses to start up or expand. The ability to achieve economic development on local sites within the County Borough is an important means of limiting the need for future growth in long distance commuting. This will support the key economic and social objectives by improving local workforce participation rates and raising household incomes, and can contribute to environmental objectives by limiting carbon dioxide emissions.

4.4.4 Some greenfield sites have also been allocated for industrial use. These will generally be required to attract businesses whose requirements cannot be met through the reclamation or refurbishment of derelict land and vacant premises. These greenfield sites have been selected because of their topography and their locational relationship with existing industrial uses (or lack of them) and the highway network. The larger more attractive sites tend to be within easy reach of the M4 and A470. A number of these sites have been selected for special employment purposes. It is intended that these sites are afforded special protection from competing uses including inappropriate industrial and commercial development.



4.4.5 Industrial land is a finite resource which diminishes with each successful development. It must therefore be carefully managed to ensure that each site is developed to its full potential without damaging the environment. Each industrial development proposal should be assessed against factors such as the availability of alternative existing sites, residential areas, access to the road network, traffic generation and car parking provision and the emissions of noise, smell and noxious pollutants. Where the proposal requires the development of a greenfield site which has not been allocated for development, an Environmental Impact Assessment would normally be required. Priority will be given to the need to protect good quality agricultural land, local and strategic landscapes and the conservation of the countryside.

4.5 Retention and Expansion of Existing Industrial Uses

4.5.1 The changing land use requirements of modern industry have tended to discourage the use of older industrial premises. These have fallen into disrepair and are often left under-used or vacant. As an example, in August 1993 the former County Council's industrial property register showed over 2.9 million sq.ft. of floorspace available for lease or for sale. Were this space to be used to its full potential, assuming an employment density of 3 employees per 1,000 sq.ft., it could accommodate a further 8,700 employees. Further floorspace could also become available from potentially redundant sites, i.e. those where the present occupant has demonstrated to the local planning authority that the existing use will not continue. (See also policy H3).

4.5.2 To stimulate private investment in existing premises a continuing programme of Industrial Improvement Area (IIAs) declarations has been established. Financial assistance is given through various schemes targeted at private businesses to encourage the improvement, extension, conversion and re-use of urban land and property. The County Borough Council will continue to seek funding from the Welsh Office, the WDA, the EU and other sources to continue its own programme of urban renewal and support the activities of other authorities and agencies contributing to the same objectives.

4.5.3 The regeneration and re-use of industrial and commercial premises will strengthen local employment opportunities, achieve a more self-reliant community, help stabilise the level of out-commuting and reduce the pressure for development on green field sites. New uses or intensification of existing uses should not however, lead to detrimental effects on the amenity of the surrounding areas. The industrial uses proposed on these sites are classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987, (see appendix 2).

E1 THE REDEVELOPMENT OF UNDER-USED, VACANT OR POTENTIALLY REDUNDANT SITES FOR B1, B2 AND B8 USES WILL BE PERMITTED, SUBJECT TO TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING PARKING, TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ACCESS), AND THE MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL AMENITY.

4.5.4 There are many vacant buildings in urban areas that are capable of conversion to employment generating uses. Some of these buildings may be of architectural or historical importance or make a significant contribution to the townscape. It is important that their refurbishment and re-use is not only sympathetic to the existing structure in terms of the design and materials used, but that the use does not detract from residential amenity by means of noise, pollution, unsociable hours of operation or the generation of excessive levels of vehicular traffic.

E2 THE CONVERSION OF SUITABLE BUILDINGS IN URBAN AREAS FOR BUSINESS USES (B1) WILL BE PERMITTED SUBJECT TO TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING PARKING, TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ACCESS), COMPATIBILITY WITH THE STRUCTURE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BUILDING AND THE MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL AMENITY.



4.6 Expansion of existing Industrial Sites

4.6.1 It is important that established industries are encouraged to remain within the County Borough. Where an established business proposes to expand its operations onto an adjacent site, the development should be encouraged subject to detailed local planning policies, particularly with regard to the definition of settlement boundaries.

E3 WHERE POSSIBLE LAND ADJACENT TO EXISTING INDUSTRIAL PREMISES WILL BE RELEASED TO ACCOMMODATE EXPANSION SUBJECT TO TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING PARKING, TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ACCESS), THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT, AND THE MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL AMENITY.

4.7 Industrial Land Need and Allocation

4.7.1 The industrial land use strategy must ensure that there is sufficient land to be able to meet the development needs of industry and commerce and the employment needs of the population for the duration of the development plan. However local planning authorities can only encourage and enable economic growth and must respond to the demands of industry. It is therefore important that the portfolio of industrial sites is not only capable of meeting employers' evolving requirements in terms of its size and quality but can respond quickly to increases in the demand for land from businesses wishing to start up or relocate.

4.7.2 The first alteration to the Approved Structure Plan established the principle of a "land bank". The land bank contains a range of sites, drawn from the overall land supply/allocation, which are capable of either immediate development or of being brought forward for development in no more than one year. As these sites are developed, the land bank will need to be replenished. The maintenance of an industrial land bank will improve a planning authority's ability to respond to demands for industrial land.

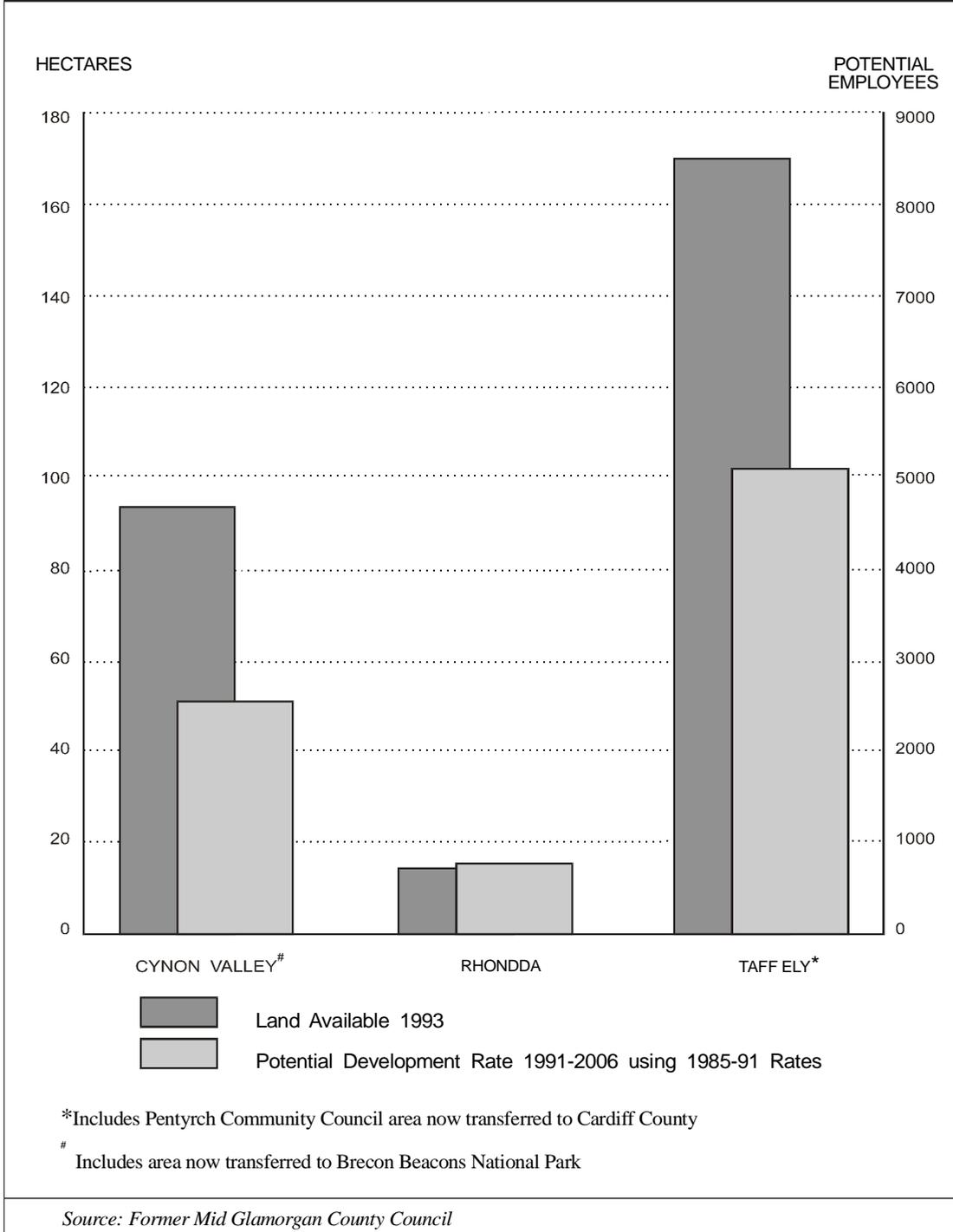
4.7.3 Between June 1985-91 approximately 150 hectares of land in the former Mid Glamorgan were developed for industrial and commercial purposes - an average annual development rate of 25 hectares. Extrapolating this development rate over the duration of the development plan, about 375 hectares would be needed in the former County for the duration of the plan period. Industrial land availability and requirements in constituent parts of Rhondda Cynon Taff are shown in Figure 3.

4.7.4 The method of assessing the population's future employment needs relies on projections for population growth, economic activity rates, the composition of the supply of labour and employment densities. The application of economic activity rates forecasts produced by the former County Council to estimates of the future population of working age, suggests that the future economically active population of the former constituent districts of Rhondda Cynon Taff could increase by 7,900 from its 1991 level of 100,370 to 108,300 by 2006.

4.7.5 If the number in employment, including the self-employed and those on government training schemes, remains at the 1991 Census level, the above increase would lead directly to unemployment levels (the 'job gap') of about 20,000, (table 4). Assuming an average employment development density of 50 jobs per hectare, and that all new jobs are provided on new sites, about 160 hectares would be needed to accommodate the projected increase to restore 1991 levels of unemployment. To reduce unemployment to zero, 420 hectares would be needed, (see Figure 4).



Figure 3. Industrial Land Availability in Rhondda Cynon Taff in 1993: by former district areas





**Table 4. Rhondda Cynon Taff
Projected Employment Need 1991 -2006
by former District areas**

	Cynon Valley #	Rhondda	Taff Ely *	RHONDDA CYNON TAFF # *	FORMER MID GLAMORGAN # *
Economically Active Population 1991	26,128	30,519	43,723	100,370	226,736
Unemployed	3,906	4,948	4,221	13,075	28,835
Government Training Scheme	692	682	579	1,953	3,989
Working in Area	16,150	17,330	40,960	74,440	166,990
Net Out Commuting	5,380	7,559	-2,037	10,902	26,922
Economic Active Population 2006	27,251	30,911	50,146	108,308	241,342
Less Those Employed	22,222	25,571	40,585	88,378	198,984
Potential Job Gap	5,029	5,340	9,561	19,930	42,358
Potential Growth in Job Gap	1,123	392	6,423	7,938	14,606
Land Required to Maintain 1991 Level of Unemployment (hectares)	22.5	7.8	128.5	158.8	292.2
Land Required to Reduce Unemployment to Zero (hectares)	100.6	106.8	212.9	420.3	868.9

Includes area now transferred to Brecon Beacons National Park

* Includes Pentyrch Community Council area now transferred to Cardiff County

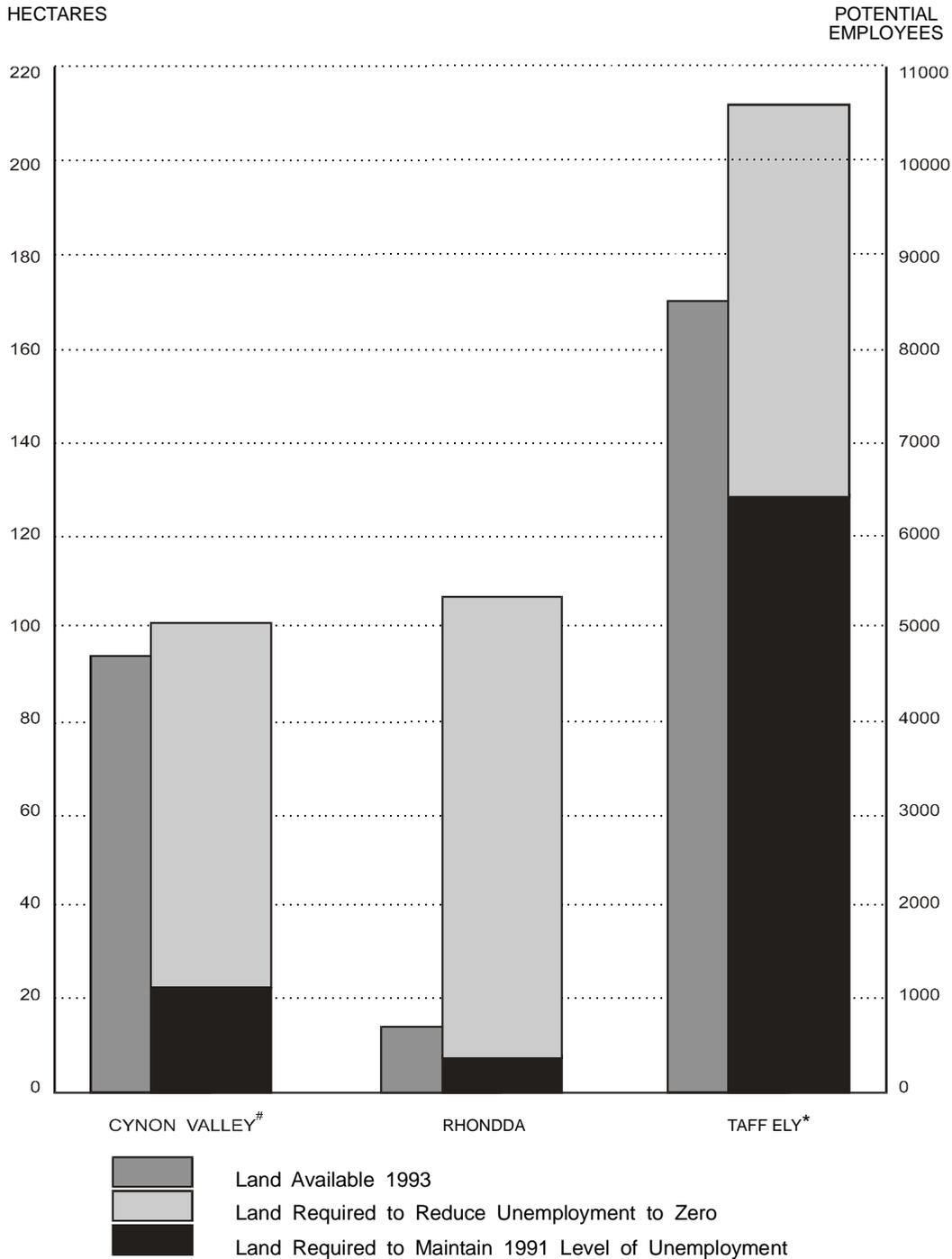
Source: Former Mid Glamorgan County Council

4.7.6 On the basis of the above the County Borough Council is of the opinion that the present range, quality and distribution of industrial sites in the County Borough is capable of accommodating the anticipated needs of industry and commerce, as indicated by past development rates, and is adequate to provide for the employment needs of the population during the plan period. Policy E4 is thus proposed on this basis.

4.7.7 Each of the sites that comprise the allocation in E4, has been subjected to a considerable amount of evaluation via the planning process. The sites have either been granted planning permission and /or identified in local plans.



Figure 4. Industrial Land Need Levels in Rhondda Cynon Taf to 2006: by former district areas



*Includes Pentyrch Community Council area now transferred to Cardiff County

[#] Includes area now transferred to Brecon Beacons National Park

Source: Former Mid Glamorgan County Council



E4 LAND WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO PROVIDE A SUITABLE RANGE OF SITES FOR B1, B2 AND B8 USES, TO ACCOMMODATE THE ANTICIPATED INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL NEEDS OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH OVER THE PLAN PERIOD, AS FOLLOWS:-

	HECTARES
CYNON VALLEY	95
RHONDDA	15
TAFF ELY	170
RHONDDA CYNON TAFF	280

A LAND BANK COMPRISING A RANGE OF SITES NORMALLY DERIVED FROM THIS ALLOCATION, AND WHICH CAN BE DEVELOPED WITHIN ONE YEAR, WILL BE MAINTAINED.

4.7.8 The portfolio of industrial land is considered to be capable of accommodating most of the anticipated needs of industry and commerce over the plan period. The distribution, quality and availability of that land however varies between the former district areas.

4.7.9 In 1993 the former District of Cynon Valley had about 95 hectares of land identified for general industrial use. Many of the sites were of a good quality, 55 hectares of which could be ready for development within one year. The main problem facing the area appeared to be the ability to realise its development potential and the loss of Development Area status for the southern half of the former Borough made the objectives of the joint venture between Cynon Valley Borough Council, the former Mid Glamorgan County Council and the Welsh Development Agency more difficult to realise.

4.7.10 The Rhondda Valley, because of its topography, continues to face a shortage of available industrial land. The former Borough relies heavily on surrounding districts, notably the former Taff Ely, for new sources of employment opportunities. Despite the problems of the topography, the creation of suitable new industrial land arising from reclamation or redevelopment must remain a high priority. Existing sites must be protected from competing uses. This need was noted in the Panel's report of the first structure plan EIP in 1978 and remains relevant.

4.7.11 The former Borough of Taff Ely has a crucial role to play in the County Borough's industrial development strategy. The former Borough has a substantial motorway frontage, provides the main road arteries into the valley districts and is an important source of employment for other areas, particularly Rhondda. In 1993 over two thirds of its 70 hectares then immediately available consisted of the reclaimed Nantgarw Colliery, 40% of which had already been built on or was under construction. Once this has been fully developed the land bank will be reduced to about 40 hectares. It is therefore important that the constraints on reserve sites are removed to replenish the land bank. The recent successes in attracting inward investment may be adversely affected by the removal of Development Area Status.

4.7.12 Good quality industrial land is a finite resource and must be carefully managed to ensure that each site is developed to its full potential. The distribution and availability of industrial land throughout the County Borough will be closely monitored throughout the plan period.

4.8 Special Employment Sites

4.8.1 Major industrial projects demand sites which are well served by the transportation network. They have tended to favour locations within easy reach of the M4, A465 and A470. Rhondda Cynon Taff has succeeded in attracting a number of Japanese and European firms.

4.8.2 In addition to the general industrial land allocation made in Policy E4, a number of sites have been reserved for special employment purposes to continue to attract major inward investment projects



with specific requirements for sites near the regional highway network. The Secretary of State for Wales has also approved the principle of reserving these sites in his 1989 plan approval. He confirmed that "... the small number of highly attractive, readily accessible sites that are available should be used for special employment purposes and not to accommodate uses which could be more appropriately located elsewhere". The County Borough Council is therefore of the view that uses on these sites should be restricted to those which specifically need them. Policy E5 therefore interprets suitable uses to consist largely of B1 industry, together with other defined uses or site size needs which require these locations, and the special protection afforded by the policy. Non compliant proposals would require specific justification as to why a particular site must be used.

4.8.3 The County Borough Council also considers that since many of such sites are in the countryside beyond built up areas, only the special needs which they provide for has justified overriding established countryside policy. This adds weight to the need to retain these sites for special employment purposes and not accommodate alternative uses which do not require such specific locations. The location of many of the sites in the countryside, the need to provide an attractive on site environment for such industry, and the occasional proximity of residential development, demands that these sites are developed to the highest standards. The County Borough Council therefore considers that design briefs should be prepared for each site to guide its further development.

4.8.4 Policy E5 makes four additions to the list of special employment sites contained in the Approved Structure Plan. Following approval on appeal, a site to the south west of the M4, junction 35 at Pencoed is included. It is considered that the most suitable uses for the site's Phase 3 of the Sony development should be B1 uses related to Sony. This would provide the opportunity for the long term expansion of the company and related businesses at this location, and thereby relates strongly to the reasons for granting the original permission. To the north along the A470 the former Abercynon Colliery is being promoted as a Valleys Business / Innovation Centre. Miskin Manor is retained in the policy but is already substantially developed for uses acceptable within the parkland setting. The County Borough Council considers that any further development should be limited in scale to ensure the conservation of the historic buildings and parkland.

E5 IN ADDITION TO LAND IDENTIFIED IN POLICY E4, SITES WITH GOOD ACCESS TO THE M4, A465 AND A470 WILL BE RESERVED FOR SPECIAL EMPLOYMENT PURPOSES AND WILL BE REQUIRED TO BE DEVELOPED TO A HIGH STANDARD. SITES CURRENTLY CONSIDERED SUITABLE FOR THIS PURPOSE ARE:

SITE	ACCEPTABLE DEVELOPMENT
M4 JUNCTION 34 MISKIN MANOR	B1 HOTEL OR OTHER LEISURE USES SUBJECT TO THE CONSERVATION OF THE HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND PARKLAND
ABERCYNON	B1 USES, MOTOR SERVICES, HOTEL, RESTAURANT
ABERCYNON COLLIERY	INNOVATION CENTRE, B1 USES
SONY SITE(PHASE 3), PENCOED	SONY RELATED B1 USES.

4.8.5 It is accepted that further special employment sites may be required during the plan period. In particular the WDA has identified a current need for sites of over 15 hectares in the valley areas of the former County with good access to the strategic highway network, which could assist inward investment in these areas, and require long term protection from alternative uses and site sub-division. Local Plans will investigate the potential for such sites, while favourable consideration would normally be given to them provided they are acceptable in terms of other development plan policies.

4.8.6 Proposals for industrial development on countryside greenfield sites not allocated under Policies E4 and E5 (or any other development plan allocation) would normally be subject to the



general restrictions on development in the countryside indicated in Policy EV1. Such development proposals should be accompanied by an environmental impact assessment, and would have to justify the loss of countryside and environmental amenity against the economic benefits of the proposed development and why it cannot be accommodated on alternative, available sites. The study should also assess the affect the development would have on the existing highway network and travel to work patterns. Industrial development proposals on sites or premises in developed areas, not allocated under E4 and E5 would normally be subject to policies E1, E2 and E3.

4.9 Non Conforming Uses and Hazardous Substances

4.9.1 The regeneration of urban areas may involve the displacement of existing non-conforming uses including industries which manufacture, store or distribute hazardous substances. These industries may be environmentally undesirable, however, they can play an important part in the local economy. PG(W) makes it clear that development plans should provide specifically for such types of industry. Detailed site allocation is a matter for local plans but policies E6, E7 and E8 should be taken into consideration. Land identified for the relocation of non-conforming industries should be carefully selected. Potential sites should be away from residential or environmentally sensitive areas. Their use should be controlled to minimise any detrimental affects for example caused by the emission of noise or smells.

E6 WHERE POSSIBLE LAND WILL BE PROVIDED, IN SUITABLE LOCATIONS, TO ACCOMMODATE ANY LOCALLY DISPLACED NON-CONFORMING USE SUBJECT TO COMPATIBILITY WITH RELEVANT LOCAL PLAN POLICIES.

4.9.2 Many industries have the potential to pollute the environment. There is growing public awareness about the long term effects these pollutants have, particularly those on the ozone layer. It is therefore desirable to control the development of industries that discharge pollutants and to discourage the development of those that are considered to be a threat to the health and safety of people, property and the environment.

4.9.3 Certain industrial processes and pipelines are, by virtue of the quantities of hazardous substances used or stored, designated as notifiable installations. Applications to establish an industry which is required to comply with the Notification of Industries Hazardous to Health Regulations (NIHHS) and/or require consent under the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990 should be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment. The Health and Safety Executive will be consulted to assess the risk that the notified installation might pose to the surrounding population.

4.9.4 Such a proposal will be considered on its merits subject to the site being segregated from nearby communities. Particular attention will be put on the ability of the local planning authority and other regulatory bodies to monitor and control any discharge of polluting materials and the ability of the regulatory bodies to prosecute should the agreed levels of discharge be exceeded.

E7 INDUSTRIES WHICH EMIT POLLUTANTS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE EMISSIONS CAN BE MONITORED AND CONTROLLED ADEQUATELY. WHERE NECESSARY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY MAY ESTABLISH A MINIMUM SEPARATION ZONE AROUND PERMITTED OR EXISTING PREMISES, WITHIN WHICH NEW DEVELOPMENT OTHER THAN THAT ANCILLARY TO THE INSTALLATION WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

4.9.5 Due to the urbanised nature of the County Borough, the establishment of industries which import, store, manufacture, incinerate dispose of or distribute defined dangerous substances and would be subject to The Control of Industrial Major Accident Hazards Regulations, will be strongly resisted.

E8 THE DEVELOPMENT OF LAND FOR INDUSTRIES WHICH IMPORT, STORE, MANUFACTURE, INCINERATE, DISPOSE OF OR DISTRIBUTE HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES WHICH ARE A POTENTIAL THREAT TO PEOPLE, PROPERTY OR THE ENVIRONMENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED. WHERE SUCH DEVELOPMENT IS ALREADY IN EXISTENCE



LOCAL PLANS WILL IDENTIFY A MINIMUM SEPARATION ZONE AROUND THE SITE WITHIN WHICH NEW DEVELOPMENT OTHER THAN THAT ANCILLARY TO THE INSTALLATION WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

4.10 University of Glamorgan

4.10.1 The University of Glamorgan makes a valuable contribution to the provision of educational, research and development facilities in the County Borough. It is also an employment centre in its own right. The Approved Structure Plan Policy S54 presumes in favour of the expansion of the University. In recent years the University has experienced a significant growth in many areas of academic provision and student numbers, which have been successfully accommodated within the campus. With limited scope to accommodate further change on site the University may propose additional sites to meet its projected accommodation needs. Policy E9 provides a framework for the consideration of proposals involving the existing campus and other areas.

E9 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF GLAMORGAN WHICH:-

- (1) ENHANCE THE EDUCATIONAL OR ANCILLARY FACILITIES AND / OR THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE EXISTING CAMPUS AREA
- (2) SEEK ADDITIONAL SITES FOR EDUCATIONAL OR ANCILLARY PURPOSES
- (3) SEEK TO RE-LOCATE THE EXISTING CAMPUS

WILL BE FAVOURED SUBJECT TO THE MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL RESIDENTIAL AMENITY, THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS. ANY PROPOSAL INVOLVING THE RELOCATION OF THE CAMPUS SHOULD DEMONSTRATE THAT A BENEFICIAL AFTER USE WILL BE ESTABLISHED FOR THE EXISTING SITE.





5. HOUSING

Strategy Elements

- **To make provision for the future housing needs of the population by identifying a sufficient amount of additional dwellings for the County Borough.**
- **To cater for an adequate range of housing in each area by allowing extra provision capable of accommodating identified particular needs.**
- **To promote urban renewal by encouraging the use of urban sites and existing premises for new housing uses.**
- **To restrict the physical growth of settlements to reduce pressure for development on the countryside and the coalescence of built up areas.**

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Provision of an adequate supply of housing land continues to remain a vital element of the Structure Plan strategy. One of its primary purposes is to provide a policy framework for more detailed Local Plans by indicating the overall levels of growth, its general distribution throughout the County Borough and the nature and form of development. In addition relevant National and Regional policy has also been considered together with existing land supply, development rates, and environmental constraints on housing development.

5.2 Housing Trends

5.2.1 Between 1986 and 1993 some 4,700 new houses were built in Rhondda Cynon Taff. The late 1980s also showed a sharp decline in the number of demolitions.

5.2.2 Within the County Borough the highest building rates have been found consistently in Taff-Ely. The 1986-93 period saw a significant upturn in house building, particularly in Cynon Valley and Rhondda where Housing Associations have made a significant contribution. However, this still remains below the levels of Local Authority development achieved during the 1970s.

5.2.3 The level of house building together with a stabilising population implies that average household sizes are falling in the County Borough. This appears to be a national trend, resulting from increasing numbers of elderly people, growth in the number of single person and lone-parent households and the tendency towards smaller families.

5.3 National and Regional Policy Guidance

5.3.1 PG(W) provides the statement of Government policy on the provision of housing. As far as development plans are concerned the guidance places an emphasis on:

- the re-use of urban land, particularly as a means of relieving pressure in the countryside
- the importance of local choice, for instance through the provision of low cost housing, in meeting the needs for new housing development
- an adequate 5 year supply of available land, the details of which should be incorporated in the most recently published Land Availability study
- a removal of the special presumption in favour of releasing land for housing where such land is in short supply.



5.3.2 These elements of Government guidance are seen as of particular importance to the Housing policies of the Plan. Whilst the Structure Plan does not make specific site allocations, the re-use of urban land and the provision of housing for identified specific needs, are considered to be essential in meeting the housing elements of the strategy. An adequate and wide choice of dwelling provision in certain areas is essential if people are to be given reasonable opportunities to remain in their local communities. In addition the re-use of urban land can help to relieve pressure on the countryside.

5.4 Dwelling Requirements

5.4.1 Policy H1 estimates the need for additional dwellings in the County Borough from 1991 to 2006 derived from the Plan Estimate of future population. This Estimate while reflecting the objectives of the strategy is also based on the 1991 Census and Registrar General's Mid Year Population Estimates, and the latest available information on household formation rates. The latter suggest continued reduction in average household sizes over the plan period. The policy indicates that an additional 11,700 houses will be needed in Rhondda Cynon Taff during the plan period. This level of development is considered necessary in order to accommodate the growth in the population and meet anticipated changes in household formation as well as allowing for a certain proportion of vacancies and demolitions. It also covers the requirements for specific types of housing, although in some cases additional allocations for particular circumstances may need to be made.

5.4.2 The levels of additional housing need shown in H1 will form the basis for the total volume of housing land provision to be made in local plans. It is important to note here that no assumptions have been made concerning the detail of the level suggested, particularly any contribution to be made from minor sites under 0.5 hectares in size, or from conversions and changes of use. This is considered to be a matter for detailed local plan interpretation.

H1 SUFFICIENT LAND SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE BETWEEN 1991 AND 2006 TO ACCOMMODATE THE DWELLING NEEDS OF THE POPULATION. THESE ARE ESTIMATED TO BE:

CYNON VALLEY	2,500 dwellings
RHONDDA	1,800
TAFF ELY	7,400
RHONDDA CYNON TAFF	11,700.

THE DWELLING NEEDS OF THE POPULATION AND THE RATE OF HOUSING COMPLETIONS WILL BE MONITORED TO ENSURE THAT AT LEAST A 5 YEAR SUPPLY OF HOUSING LAND IS GENUINELY AVAILABLE AND MAINTAINED.

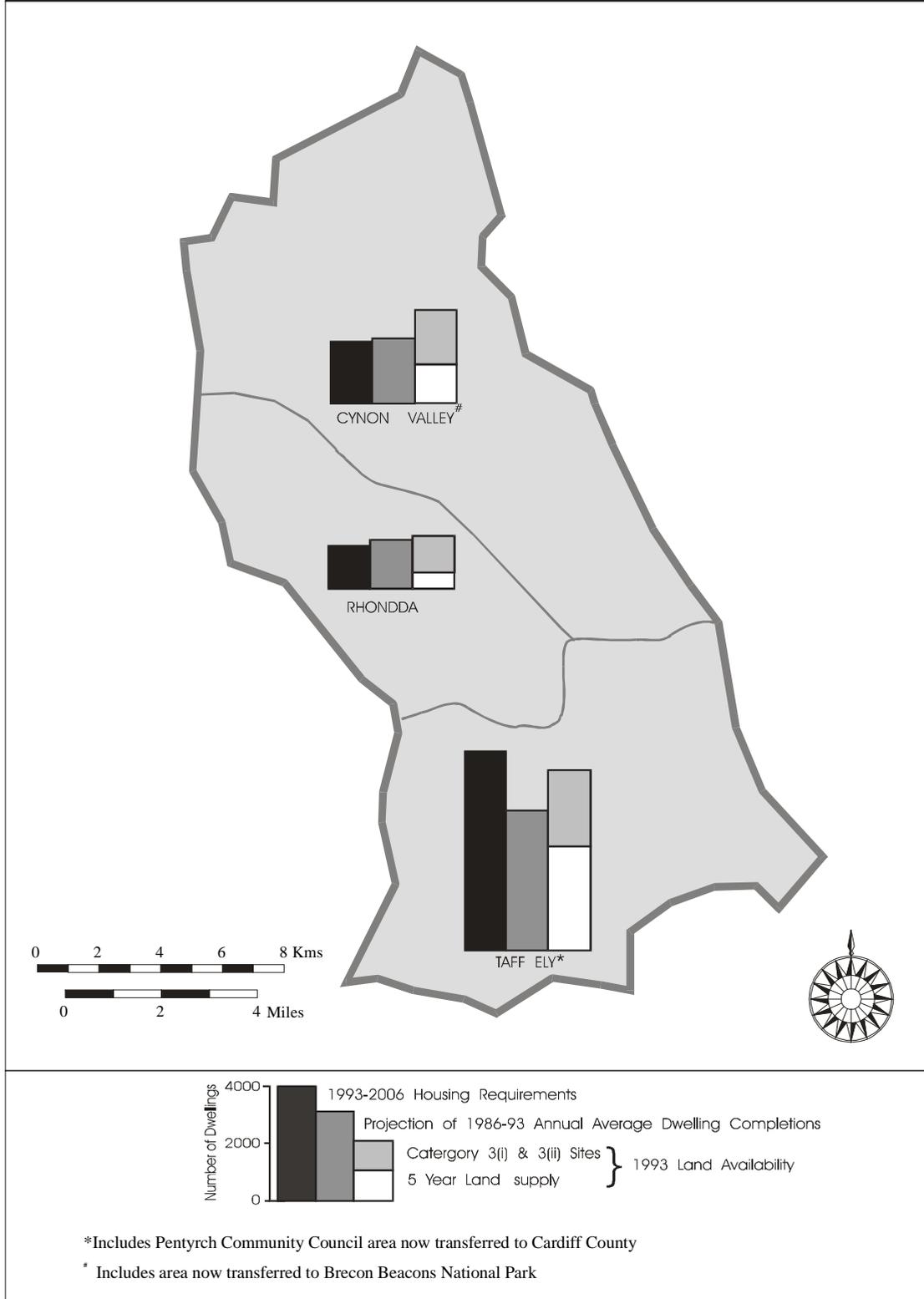
5.4.3 While it is necessary to provide for a certain amount of flexibility and choice in allocating the H1 requirement this should not result in unjustifiable development of additional greenfield sites in the Countryside, beyond settlement boundaries. As PG(W) notes it is important to make full use of land within urban areas. Allocations should have full regard to government policy for the protection of the countryside.

5.4.4 Most of the H1 requirement less completions 1991-93 has already been established as the available housing supply in the 1993 Joint Land Availability Study of the former County of Mid Glamorgan published annually by the Land Authority for Wales (LAW). On a district basis, additional housing will be required to meet H1 in Taff Ely while existing supply levels exceed H1 requirements already in Cynon Valley and Rhondda (Table 5 and Figure 5). However, 80% of the total supply in Rhondda falls into Category 3 sites on which there are likely to be development constraints. Local Plans should give close attention, where possible, to how much of the supply can be considered to be realistically available, and thus included in the plan allocations, prior to deciding whether further allocations should be made to satisfy the H1 requirement.





**Figure 5. Housing Requirement & Land Availability 1993 - 2006
by former district areas**





5.4.5 Additional housing land may be necessary in future because certain sites within the existing housing land supply may ultimately prove not to be genuinely available for development despite their allocation in the Local Plan. In other situations there may be a local shortage of suitable sites which may require the release of further land in that locality. These circumstances are particularly important in view of the requirement to maintain at least a 5 year supply of readily available housing in each district.

5.4.6 The provision of housing land in excess of H1 in Local Plans or the release of further countryside greenfield land where the existing supply (as identified in the LAW land availability reports) meets or already exceeds this level, must be justified. Such a requirement will normally relate only to sites over 0.5 hectares since new minor sites below this size taken individually, are unlikely to lead to demonstrable over provision. It is therefore clear that to minimise these circumstances, local plans should pay great attention to whether proposed allocations for housing in H1 are feasible and are appropriate to the needs of each locality.

5.5 New residential development in the Countryside

5.5.1 In addition to the general allocations made in H1, and the need to limit pressure on general residential development in the countryside, there are specific circumstances where a countryside location may be considered acceptable for residential development. The need for social housing is a material planning consideration which may properly be taken into account in formulating development plan policies. Where there is a demonstrable lack of affordable housing to meet local needs, authorities may include specific policies for the provision of affordable housing throughout the plan area.

5.5.2 The need for affordable housing depends on many factors, particularly those relating to house prices, wage levels, the degree of access to the rented sector and the number of additional households likely to be formed in key age-groups. The Plan estimate forecast suggests that the number of households will increase up to 2006. Although it is expected that the number of younger households will decline, this will be compensated for by increases in the number of older households, mainly in Rhondda and Taff Ely. In addition there may also be increasing pressures for new housing arising from particular groups within the population. For instance the provision of "sheltered accommodation" and retirement homes may require particular site considerations which cannot be met elsewhere.

5.5.3 Although it is not appropriate for the Structure Plan to lay down firm targets the County Borough Council considers that the need for the inclusion of policies for the provision of an element of affordable housing should be considered in local plans. This may be achieved by negotiation with developers. Where such provision within the allocated land supply is impossible and an unmet need for low cost housing can be identified, additional releases outside of settlements may be permitted, provided there are no conflicts with other development plan policies.

5.5.4 Former PPG3 (Wales) drew attention to the need to make available a number of sites capable of meeting the selective housing needs of senior management. This, it is suggested, may assist the establishment of new enterprises and stimulate local economic growth. Although this can be interpreted as an established need already justified by government policy, this should not compromise existing environmental policy. Where additional proposals are made to sites of this kind specifically allocated in local plans, it will also be necessary to demonstrate why allocations already made fail to satisfy this specific particular need. Criterion 1 of policy H2 considers the issues referred to above together with other specific housing needs normally associated with countryside locations, i.e. the provision of new accommodation for agricultural and forestry workers. All particular needs not specifically identified in the development plan are considered to be located most appropriately within settlements, and thus would require justification that a countryside location is necessary and that allocations or sites within settlements are not available.



H2 NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT BEYOND THE REQUIREMENTS OF POLICY H1 WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

(1) ON GREENFIELD SITES OUTSIDE, BUT ADJACENT TO, THE SETTLEMENT AREAS, AS DEFINED IN LOCAL PLANS, TO PROVIDE HOUSING FOR SPECIAL NEEDS FOR WHICH LAND WITHIN THE SETTLEMENT AREA CANNOT REASONABLY BE MADE AVAILABLE

OR

(2) WHERE IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR AGRICULTURAL OR FORESTRY WORKERS TO LIVE AT OR NEAR THEIR PLACE OF WORK

PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSALS WOULD NOT LEAD TO THE COALESCENCE OF SETTLEMENTS OR REPRESENT SPORADIC OR RIBBON DEVELOPMENT AND IS CONSIDERED ACCEPTABLE IN TERMS OF TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING PARKING, TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ACCESS), THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE PROVISION OF UTILITY SERVICES.

5.6 Residential Development Within Settlements

5.6.1 Much of the land already committed to residential development forms extensions to the existing built up area. However, the optimum use of land and buildings within existing settlements for uses including residential use is an important means of reducing development pressures on greenfield sites. Here the land reclamation programme can contribute to the provision of residential sites. This emphasis on the use or re-use of urban land is reflected in government policy as expressed in PG(W).

5.6.2 There are also a number of vacant, underused and potentially redundant, (see paragraph 4.5.1), buildings in many settlements which could be converted into residential use, including vacant floorspace above shops. The re-use and occupation of these buildings, for example using 'over the shop schemes', would be a major step towards the regeneration of urban areas and complement local authorities' efforts to renew commercial centres. The suitability of the development in terms of the land use of the premises and the locations involved would be a matter for local interpretation, taking into account the need to consider the nature of the building involved. The conversion of rural buildings outside urban areas should be considered against policy EV3.

H3 PROPOSALS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON SITES WITHIN SETTLEMENT AREAS, AS DEFINED IN LOCAL PLANS, WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THIS INVOLVES

(1) NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON DERELICT, UNDEVELOPED, POTENTIALLY REDUNDANT OR UNDER - USED LAND WHERE THIS DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH USES IDENTIFIED IN LOCAL PLANS

OR

THE RESTORATION AND CONVERSION TO RESIDENTIAL USE OF SUITABLE BUILDINGS, INCLUDING VACANT FLOORSPACE ABOVE RETAIL UNITS, PROVIDING THE PROPOSALS ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE SCALE AND NATURE OF THE EXISTING BUILDINGS

AND

(2) THE PROPOSAL IS COMPATIBLE WITH TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING PARKING, TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ACCESS), THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL AMENITY.

5.6.3 Good design is a principle which the County Borough Council actively pursues where it acts as an implementing agency and encourages in all types of development. Specific issues relating to the design and layout of residential developments are detailed non strategic development control matters which are best dealt with by local plans. The County Borough Council would however, wish to



support the need for adequate design standards to be incorporated in local plans, including consideration of design for crime prevention.

5.6.4 The County Borough Council considers that strategic guidance will be useful in controlling the density of residential development across the County Borough in gross and net terms. The over development of residential land and the inadequate provision of open space, car parking and other facilities, in an urban or rural location, could be detrimental to amenity, place a strain on the infrastructure and prejudice environmental policies. Similarly under development involving very low densities could lead to pressure to develop additional land and thus also prejudice environmental policies. Suitable residential densities should therefore be determined on the basis of local circumstances but should reflect the general principle that development should not damage the character and amenity of established residential areas. Former PPG3(Wales) indicated, however, that the provision of higher density housing for special needs, including affordable housing, may lead to circumstances where some flexibility is needed. The basis of proposed policy H4 was established by the Secretary of State in the Approved Structure Plan to apply to high quality residential environments. In the desire to seek the continued improvement of existing urban areas, there is good reason to apply this concept on a wider basis.

H4 HOUSING PROPOSALS (OTHER THAN FOR PARTICULAR NEEDS) WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHICH INVOLVE

- (1) HOUSING DENSITIES WHICH ARE OUT OF CHARACTER WITH THOSE OF ADJOINING RESIDENTIAL AREAS
- OR
- (2) INSENSITIVE OR INAPPROPRIATE INFILLING WITHIN OR ADJOINING EXISTING RESIDENTIAL AREAS.

5.7 Re-use of sites developed for institutional purposes in the countryside

5.7.1 Over the plan period it is likely that a number of sites currently developed for institutional purposes, such as hospitals, will become redundant. Many of these sites are located in the countryside. In planning for their future the County Borough Council believes that the main aim would be to ensure they can be used for purposes compatible with their countryside location. Normally this should involve an assessment of whether any form of institutional use can continue. Where there is little prospect of this occurring other uses are considered preferable to allowing the buildings to remain unoccupied. In many instances, for example in the case of proposals for residential use, it should often be possible for the existing buildings to be converted requiring only minor alterations to the site. This is considered to be essential where buildings of architectural or historic merit are involved or where there are important gardens or landscapes on the site.

5.7.2 Where existing buildings either wholly or in part are unsuitable for conversion, the County Borough Council believes that the aim should be to ensure that the impact of the development on the countryside is no greater than that of the existing development. Any redevelopment should not lead to a substantial increase in the gross developed area of the site, while transportation matters and the need to conserve the environment should also be considered. Policy H5 is therefore proposed to deal with conversions or redevelopment of institutional sites in countryside locations beyond settlement areas. It is anticipated that sites adjacent to settlements will be defined as within that particular area, and will therefore be dealt with under H3 or E1 for example. Retailing and leisure proposals will also be subject to other appropriate plan policies. The conversion or alteration of rural buildings, usually involving small sites, is considered under EV3.

H5 PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT ON SITES DEVELOPED FOR INSTITUTIONAL USES IN COUNTRYSIDE LOCATIONS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE

- (1) THE FORM, BULK AND GENERAL DESIGN OF BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPES ON THE SITE ARE RETAINED WHERE BUILDINGS OR GARDENS OF



- ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC MERIT ARE INVOLVED
- OR
- WHERE EXISTING BUILDINGS, OR PART OF THEM, ARE UNSUITABLE FOR CONVERSION, ANY PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT SHOULD NOT RESULT IN A MAJOR INCREASE OF THE GROUND FLOOR AREA OF THE EXISTING DEVELOPED AREA OF THE SITE
- AND
- (2) THE PROPOSAL IS COMPATIBLE WITH TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING PARKING, TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ACCESS), AND THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT.

5.8 Gypsy Sites

5.8.1 Applications for private gypsy sites will be considered in terms of relevant Structure and local plan policies.

5.8.2 Policy H6, is intended to provide broad strategic guidance for circumstances where the existing capacity and distribution of provision is insufficient to deal with identified needs of gypsies residing in or resorting to the area of Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough. The policy is based on similar policies to those found acceptable in other replacement structure plans in Wales, and includes a number of general criteria to guide site evaluation. A site should thus have a reasonable chance of being used and generally be in the area used by gypsies. This will inevitably mean it should not be remote from the strategic highway network. In addition it should not be an unacceptable distance from retail and community services, whilst close proximity to residential development (excluding scattered or individual houses) should be avoided where possible. The site should not be located in an environment which would give rise to conditions unsuitable for residential development, particularly with regard to the effects of neighbouring land uses. The site should also satisfy transportation requirements particularly with regard to access, while it should be possible to supply utility services at reasonable cost. In some circumstances a countryside location may be acceptable where urban sites are not suitable. In such cases the site must be acceptable in terms of environmental conservation, and where possible have the ability to be screened from view.

H6 GYPSY SITES WILL BE PROVIDED IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS, WHERE NECESSARY, TO ACCOMMODATE GYPSIES RESIDING OR RESORTING TO THE COUNTY BOROUGH. SITES SHOULD SATISFY THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:-

- (1) THE SITE SHOULD AS FAR AS POSSIBLE BE IN AN AREA ALREADY FREQUENTED BY GYPSIES
- (2) THE SITE SHOULD HAVE REASONABLE ACCESS TO SHOPS AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES
- (3) CLOSE PROXIMITY TO RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE AVOIDED WHERE POSSIBLE
- (4) NEIGHBOURING LAND USES SHOULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH A RESIDENTIAL USE
- (5) THE SITE IS ACCEPTABLE IN TERMS OF TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS, THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE PROVISION OF UTILITY SERVICES
- (6) THE SITE SHOULD BE CAPABLE OF BEING SCREENED, PARTICULARLY WHERE A COUNTRYSIDE SETTING IS ACCEPTABLE.



6. ENVIRONMENT

Strategy Elements

- **To protect the countryside for its own sake by restricting development to that which is appropriate for such locations.**
- **To protect important features of the natural and built environment of the County Borough by introducing special designations and controls.**
- **To seek the enhancement of the rural economy in the County Borough taking into account the need to maintain a viable agricultural sector.**

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 The Structure Plan has always contained policies which dealt with landscape and conservation issues. The Replacement Plan continues this theme but deals with natural features, such as important landscape and habitats, and man made features, such as significant buildings landscapes and archaeological remains, under the general heading of Environment. The chapter will deal largely with development in the countryside, which is considered to be the area outside settlement areas as defined in adopted local plans.

6.1.2 Rhondda Cynon Taff's environment contains many natural and man made features of importance, which are often vulnerable to loss or damage. Although many of these features have received 'official' designations affording special protection many others are worthy of inclusion in development plans. This is supported by the recognition of the importance of environmental issues, in the White Paper 'This Common Inheritance', and more recently in the UK Sustainable Development Strategy (January 1994). The latter identifies the planning system as a 'key instrument in delivering land use and development objectives that are compatible with the aims of sustainable development'. Recognising the increased status of development plans it further suggests that 'the principles of sustainable development can be reflected in every planning decision relating to land use, as local planning authorities make progress in their plan preparation'. The Replacement Structure Plan seeks to introduce a County Borough-wide system to protect features acknowledged to be important to the environment. In addition to the review of the Plan, the County Borough Council intends to produce a series of non statutory documents relating to the management of the environment. The first of these dealing with a Strategy for the Countryside was prepared by the former Mid Glamorgan County Council 1994.

6.1.3 Planning Guidance requires Structure Plans to produce broad land use environmental policies, particularly those related to the conservation of natural and built features. Also important is the enhancement of the best areas, and the maintenance of the character and diversity of the countryside together with its wildlife habitats. To contribute to the achievement of sustainable development aims, policies in development plans should ensure that the sum total of decisions in the planning field do not deny future generations the best of today's environment.

6.1.4 PG(W) recognises the importance of protecting both the countryside for its own sake and the rural economy. Important to this aim is the protection of agriculture as a custodian of the countryside, whilst recognising that suitable agricultural diversification and some non agricultural development may provide an important means of achieving this.

6.1.5 The extant part of PPG16 and PG(W) aim to protect and enhance the best of the archaeological environment. Strong emphasis is placed upon preservation of sites in situ where affected by development, or 'by record' where this is not possible. Development plans should indicate which important sites will be preserved where known.



6.1.6 The government recognises the importance of the planning system for maintaining Biodiversity (i.e. the diversity of habitats and species, and the genetic variation within species) and has set out its policies in the UK Strategy for Biodiversity (January 1994). This document recognises that 'increasingly, wildlife and beautiful landscapes are regarded as explicit products of land management to be sought directly rather than expecting them to emerge as a by-product of other goals, such as food production'. The objective of conserving the abundance and diversity of British wildlife and its habitats, or minimising the adverse effects on wildlife where conflict is unavoidable is reaffirmed. The need for land use planning to reflect these objectives and have proper regard to nature conservation outside designated sites is confirmed in PG(W). The government has also published Regulations to implement the EC Habitats Directive. These provide for the designation of areas for the protection of species and habitats, and the control of damaging activities. A new category of 'European protected species' of plants and animals, which includes species present in Rhondda Cynon Taff is thus provided with additional protection.

6.1.7 Characteristic of the thrust of present national planning policy is the need to identify a balance between the protection of environmental interests and the needs for development related to social welfare or economic considerations. Such a balance would involve the assessment of the importance of the environment, in terms of its quality or its distribution, compared with the level of importance of the development. In this way it is intended that development which conflicts with areas and features of major importance, will only take place in exceptional and unavoidable circumstances. In other cases measures should be taken to reduce the conflict to acceptable minimum levels before development occurs. Replacement Structure Plan policies are presented below with this in mind.

6.2 Development in the Countryside

6.2.1 As indicated above, environmental policies will deal essentially with the countryside which PG(W) indicates should be protected for its own sake. Policy EV1 is therefore introduced, which maintains a general restriction on most development in the countryside as the starting point for the consideration of relevant proposals.

6.2.2 The County Borough Council does accept that some forms of development are appropriate for the countryside however, and these need to be assessed within a specific framework. In particular PG(W) recognises the need to encourage rural enterprise and to accommodate local industry and commerce where possible. However, Rhondda Cynon Taff does not have a prominent rural economy, and the majority of the aims associated with PG(W) can be accommodated within existing settlements. The County Borough Council does accept the need to maintain a viable agricultural sector, both in terms of its role in the rural economy and the protection of the countryside. In this context appropriate schemes for diversifying farm economies could make a major contribution to these aims. The 'Farm Diversification Scheme, - Welsh Office Agricultural Department (WOAD) 1988, provided a list of potentially eligible projects, including a limited number of leisure related schemes. Although this scheme has now closed, the County Borough Council considers the list of schemes involved to be a useful guide to what could be acceptable. Where a farm diversification scheme involves a leisure use it would be considered under L1 and where appropriate L2.

6.2.3 The County Borough Council also accepts that some development proposals which do not benefit directly the rural economy can take place appropriately in the countryside. Such proposals involve the following, and are dealt with as indicated -

- Controllable development related to agriculture and forestry - see also policies EV2 and H2.
- Leisure developments which require countryside locations - dealt with in Chapter 11.
- PG(W) states new housebuilding away from established settlements should be strictly controlled. However it also indicates that new housing development on greenfield sites in the countryside, outside existing urban areas, may be justifiable in specific circumstances. These are referred to in policy H2.



- Conversions of existing rural buildings or the conversion/redevelopment of existing sites used for institutional purposes - covered by policies EV3 and H5.
- Mineral developments - dealt with in Chapter 9.
- Land Reclamation sites in the countryside - dealt with in Chapter 8.
- Specific development or improvement of transportation facilities - covered by Chapter 7.
- Developments involving utility services - dealt with in Chapter 12.

6.2.4 The remainder of the Environment section introduces a series of policies by which other developments proposed for a countryside location can be assessed in addition to the general restriction of EV1. These policies may strengthen the basic restriction on development in the countryside, where it leads to unacceptable detrimental effects on other important features. In order to overturn this and any specific restriction referred to in any of the relevant policies, it will be necessary to establish that there is an overriding need for a development at that location compared to the needs for site protection. In cases where a major development is proposed, an Environmental Impact Assessment would normally be required.

EV1 DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED EXCEPT FOR THAT IN THE INTERESTS OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY, COUNTRYSIDE LEISURE, THE PROVISION OF HOUSING FOR SPECIAL NEEDS, THE CONVERSION OF RURAL BUILDINGS, CONVERSIONS / REDEVELOPMENT OF SITES USED FOR INSTITUTIONAL PURPOSES, MINERALS, LAND RECLAMATION, TRANSPORTATION OR UTILITY SERVICES.

6.3 Development Affecting Agricultural Land

6.3.1 The first Mid Glamorgan Structure Plan was produced at a time when the protection of agricultural production and agricultural land was considered to be vital to the national interest. However, this situation has now changed considerably, in the light of large agricultural surpluses, changes in Government and EEC policy and the economy in general. PG(W) indicates that the loss of agricultural land of grade 3b or lower would not normally be opposed on agricultural land quality grounds. Higher quality land of grade 3a and above due to its versatility is regarded as a national resource for the future, so that considerable weight should be given to its protection. The guidance indicates that where development involves such land it should always be directed towards the lowest possible grade of land available, whenever there is a choice of sites. The value of low grade agricultural land as a wildlife resource contributing to overall biodiversity (particularly that which has been less intensively used for modern farming) has also been recognised, and the policy therefore also seeks to protect areas of environmental conservation interest. PG(W) indicates agricultural factors for consideration when making decisions. Policy EV2 is proposed to deal with these matters.

EV2 DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS LIKELY TO LEAD TO THE LOSS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND OF GRADE 3A AND ABOVE WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED. WHERE THE LOSS OF SUCH LAND IS INVOLVED DEVELOPMENT SHOULD TAKE PLACE ON THE LOWEST POSSIBLE GRADES OF SUITABLE LAND SUBJECT TO ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION INTERESTS, WHILE THE PROPOSAL SHOULD NOT BE LIKELY TO LEAD TO THE LOSS OF THE FARM UNIT.

6.4 The Conversion of Rural Buildings in the Countryside

6.4.1 The need to promote the rural economy in view of its role in conserving the countryside has been discussed above. PG(W) makes it clear that the conversion of existing rural buildings within the countryside, where acceptable, can contribute to this aim. Such acceptability will depend heavily upon the nature of the uses proposed, the existing setting of the buildings, and the nature of the proposed



building and ancillary works. PG(W) also indicates clearly that particular care needs to be taken in respect of these matters where residential conversions are involved because such proposals often involve major alterations or extensions and the creation of residential curtilages which could be out of character with the buildings and their surroundings. Hence because of the specific requirements involved in residential conversions, buildings will not always be suitable for such uses. The guidance also suggests that it may be appropriate to apply principles similar to those used for new housing in the countryside.

6.4.2 Approved Structure Plan Policy S3 seeks to control this form of development of redundant buildings in the countryside. However, PG(W) states that development where acceptable in planning terms should no longer apply just to redundant buildings. However, appropriate action is suggested where abuse of the system is suspected. Policy EV3 is thus proposed as a modification to existing policy which maintains a substantial control on this form of development. Modifications are proposed to the detailed criteria of S3 to make them applicable over a wide area and thus capable of more detailed interpretation in local plans. An additional criterion has been added to take account of nature conservation interests which involve the building or its immediate surroundings. This could be particularly important where the building has been disused for a considerable period.

EV3 THE CONVERSION OF EXISTING RURAL BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE SATISFIED:-

- (1) THE BUILDINGS ARE STRUCTURALLY SOUND OR CAPABLE OF BEING MADE SO WITHOUT SUBSTANTIAL EXTERNAL ALTERATION, OR RECONSTRUCTION
- (2) THE FORM, BULK, CHARACTER AND GENERAL DESIGN OF THE BUILDINGS IS RESPECTED, AND IMPROVED WHERE NECESSARY, AND THE PROPOSAL IS IN SCALE AND SYMPATHY WITH THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE
- (3) THE PROPOSED USE IS COMPATIBLE WITH SURROUNDING RURAL LAND USES
- (4) THE PROPOSAL IS COMPATIBLE WITH TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING ACCESS, TRAFFIC GENERATION AND PARKING)
- (5) ADVERSE EFFECTS ON NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS HAVE BEEN MINIMISED.

6.5 Protection of the Countryside Landscape

6.5.1 Planning guidance has always placed great emphasis on the protection of the countryside from the point of view of conserving the rural landscape. The Structure Plan has supported this view by means of a series of policies giving general protection to the countryside.

6.5.2 PG(W) confirms that additional locally defined non statutory areas of high landscape value can be designated within structure and local plans, while the introduction of a district wide local plan can provide a means for the introduction of a detailed coverage of the landscape, incorporating landscapes of varying scales of importance. Landscapes considered to be of major significance to the County Borough will be defined in detail in local plans. The Structure Plan has always considered that the coalfield plateau and the sides of the main valleys are important in strategic terms, but has not attempted to define these areas. The introduction of local plans make this a realistic possibility together with the inclusion of other sites also considered to be of more local significance.

6.5.3 Policy EV4 applies to areas which are important to the landscape and which do not have special protection outside of the development plan. These areas are important to the regional and local character of South Wales. Within them it is suggested that development should not be allowed to proceed unless adequate measures can be taken to reduce any likely adverse visual effects to minimum acceptable levels. The Structure Plan key diagram identifies the general area of the coalfield plateau



and the valley sides as a special landscape area due to their being visible over a wide area or from the major transport routes within the County Borough. The section of the Caerphilly Mountain Countryside Service in the County Borough is also considered to form a special landscape area. It is intended that local plans should define these areas together with any additional landscapes considered worthy of protection, such as green wedges and local viewpoints etc.

6.5.4 Other areas of the countryside, may contain specific items important to the local landscape which warrant protection and which could be adversely affected by a development proposal. Such features would not be specifically defined in local plans yet remain material considerations in the control of development. In such circumstances it would normally be for the local planning authority to establish the importance of the feature or area to be protected in the context of the proposed development.

EV4 DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD LEAD TO VISUAL INTRUSION ON THE LANDSCAPE OF SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN TO REDUCE SUCH EFFECTS TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS. SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS WILL INCLUDE AREAS OF STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE (NAMELY THE COALFIELD PLATEAU AND VALLEY SIDES, AND THE CAERPHILLY MOUNTAIN AREA), AND OTHER AREAS OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE AND WILL BE DEFINED IN LOCAL PLANS.

6.6 Conservation of the Natural Environment

6.6.1 PG(W) establishes the need to consider nature conservation factors (including earth sciences e.g. geology and geomorphology) in arriving at balanced development decisions. There are already specific controls on development which may produce adverse affects on major sites designated as important to nature conservation. Such designations have always been recognised in Structure and Local Plan policies. However, as the policy guidance on nature conservation makes clear, the need to conserve the natural environment is not confined to statutorily designated sites, while local plans should also maintain the conservation value of other sites of more local importance.

6.6.2 Sites within the First Category of EV5 will comprise of major designated or widely acknowledged sites together with their immediate surroundings, the protection of which from adverse development, is considered by PG(W) to be in the national interest. Sites of national and international importance are also protected by the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) which indicate that disturbance or damage should not be allowed. The Second Category will include those sites and their surroundings recognised as of strategic or local significance,(e.g. sites of nature conservation interest, SNCIs, RIGs, Local Nature Reserves etc.) and should be identified in detail in local plans. Development which is likely to have an adverse effect on such sites should not be allowed to proceed unless appropriate measures can be taken to reduce such effects to minimal acceptable levels. Additional sites not included in development plans which nevertheless can be demonstrated by the local planning authority to be worthy of protection, should be considered as material considerations for development control purposes.

EV5 DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING SITES RECOGNISED AS IMPORTANT FOR NATURE CONSERVATION WILL BE CONSIDERED AS FOLLOWS:-

- (1) DEVELOPMENT ON OR IN THE VICINITY OF NATIONALLY OR INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED SITES FOR NATURE CONSERVATION (INCLUDING SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AND NATIONAL NATURE RESERVES), WHICH IS LIKELY TO LEAD TO THEIR DESTRUCTION, DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.
- (2) DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD DESTROY, DAMAGE OR DISTURB SITES OF STRATEGIC OR LOCAL IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION AS DEFINED IN LOCAL PLANS (INCLUDING REGIONALLY IMPORTANT GEOMORPHOLOGICAL AND GEOLOGICAL SITES (RIGS), ANCIENT AND SEMI-



ANCIENT NATURAL WOODLANDS AND LOCAL NATURE RESERVES) WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE SUITABLE MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN TO ENSURE THE SURVIVAL OF HABITATS, SPECIES OR FEATURES.

6.7 Measures to Protect Sites Important for Nature Conservation

6.7.1 In some circumstances under EV5 it may be possible for the need for a particular development within a specific site to be considered to outweigh adverse effects on nature conservation interests, and that measures need to be taken to ensure that habitats species or features will survive. In other cases a previously unknown potentially valuable site may be discovered as a result of considering the application. Clearly the value of a site should be ascertained in detail before a balanced decision can be taken. It may then be possible to seek the retention of part of the site or the replacement of sites where favourable circumstances apply. Policy EV6 is therefore proposed to encourage this approach where possible.

EV6 BEFORE A DEVELOPMENT IS APPROVED WHICH DISTURBS OR DESTROYS A SITE IMPORTANT FOR NATURE CONSERVATION, PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE BY THE APPLICANT FOR

- (1) A DETAILED EVALUATION OF THE NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE OF THE SITE
- AND
- (2) THE PROTECTION OF HABITATS, SPECIES OR FEATURES WITHIN THE SITE
- OR
- (3) WHERE THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SUITABLE REPLACEMENT SITE.

6.8 Enhancement of Existing Sites Important for Nature Conservation

6.8.1 In addition to the sites identified under previous policies there are likely to be many undesignated and possibly undiscovered sites and features which may prove worthy of higher status. Furthermore, it may also be possible to identify opportunities for the enhancement of existing sites. Many agencies can play a part in such identification, and the County Borough Council will support the identification and designation of additional sites. With regard to existing sites the County Borough Council in conjunction with other agencies where relevant will continue to favour and itself identify and carry out proposals for their enhancement and management, and encourage developers to do likewise. This is endorsed by paragraph 37 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994 which indicates that conservation policies shall be taken to include managing features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild flora and fauna

EV7 PROPOSALS FOR THE ENHANCEMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF EXISTING SITES AND FEATURES OF IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION WILL BE FAVOURED.

6.9 Rivers

6.9.1 Rivers and their valleys feature strongly in the history of the County Borough. They not only form significant features of the landscape, but are also important from a recreational viewpoint. As water quality has improved, due to the activities of the Environment Agency and its predecessor the National Rivers Authority and other agencies, the river banks have become increasingly important for wildlife. This is clearly identified in the Regulations to implement the Habitats Directive. The Structure Plan has sought consistently to improve both the appearance of the banks of rivers and to improve their recreational potential, with the main priority being the Taff Valley. In the view of the County Borough Council this activity remains relevant but requires updating and extension to other areas for the present plan period. Policy EV8 thus represents a modified version of existing policy to be applied on a more general basis whilst reflecting the major conservation role of rivers and their



banks. Any proposed improvements will therefore ensure that habitats recognised by the County Borough Council as important, are avoided or not affected adversely.

EV8 THE CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT OF THE APPEARANCE OF RIVER BANKS AND WHERE POSSIBLE THE IMPROVEMENT OF RECREATIONAL ACCESS TO RIVERS WILL BE FAVOURED, WHILST ENSURING THAT IMPORTANT HABITATS ARE AVOIDED OR NOT AFFECTED ADVERSELY, AND OPPORTUNITIES ARE TAKEN TO IMPROVE THEIR VALUE FOR WILDLIFE.

6.10 Protection of the Built Heritage

6.10.1 The former County and District Councils carried out a series of environmental improvements to the built and the historic environment of the County Borough, many of which are in designated areas such as CIAs and conservation areas. Funding for such schemes has been derived from local authority capital programmes supported often on a 50% basis by the WDA. Due to overall restrictions on County Borough Council financial resources, the capital programme for such schemes will be small, at least in the short term. The ability to carry out such schemes directly will therefore be seriously curtailed. The County Borough Council believes however that it remains important to encourage and support the work of other organisations involved in implementing environmental improvement schemes in the County Borough.

EV9 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES TO MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF THE BUILT AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT WILL BE FAVOURED

6.10.2 The protection of the most important features of the County Borough's built heritage has also formed a major element of development plan policy at all levels, and is an accepted material consideration in the determination of development applications. Major features which include scheduled ancient monuments, and listed buildings, are recognised as worthy of special protection. However, planning guidance confirms that protection of other important features may be afforded by the development plan. For example, PG(W) and the still extant parts of PPG16 Archaeology and Planning, establishes that the development plan may also be used to protect remains and features of more local importance. Rhondda Cynon Taff contains many features worthy of such additional protection, recorded for example in the County Sites and Monuments Record maintained by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust. In addition the Cadw / ICOMOS registers of Landscapes and Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest will be available, together with the Gazetteer of Garden Landscape Sites of Local Importance, compiled by the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust. Local authorities including the County Borough Council, also hold a considerable amount of information concerning, historic buildings, conservation areas, and archaeology. PG(W) indicates that where nationally important archaeological features are affected there should be a presumption in favour of their preservation. For archaeological features of lesser importance local authorities will need to weigh their relative importance against the need for the proposed development. Policy EV10 is therefore proposed to identify and provide protection to sites and their immediate settings recognised as having architectural, historical and archaeological importance which can be defined in detail in local plans.

EV10 DEVELOPMENT ON OR WITHIN MAJOR SITES OR FEATURES OF THE BUILT AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT WILL BE CONSIDERED AS FOLLOWS:-

- (1) DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS LIKELY TO DESTROY OR DAMAGE THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES OR ANCIENT MONUMENTS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE AND SINGLE OR GROUPS OF BUILDINGS DESIGNATED AS BEING OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST (INCLUDING LISTED BUILDINGS) WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.
- (2) DEVELOPMENT WHICH FAILS TO PRESERVE, MAINTAIN OR ENHANCE WHERE POSSIBLE, THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF OTHER SINGLE OR GROUPS OF BUILDINGS, CONSERVATION AREAS OR OTHER FEATURES RECOGNISED AS BEING OF LOCAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST IN LOCAL PLANS



- (SUCH AS OTHER IDENTIFIED BUILDINGS, HISTORIC ROUTES AND HISTORIC PARKS, GARDENS AND LANDSCAPES), WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED.
- (3) DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS LIKELY TO DESTROY OR DAMAGE THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF OTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES OR ANCIENT MONUMENTS WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED.

6.10.3 It is possible that in some cases the need for a development to proceed will outweigh any adverse effects on archaeological sites or ancient monuments. PG(W) acknowledges this possibility and recommends that a number of measures should be taken where possible, including for example the physical preservation of the site in situ. The guidance also stresses the need for early liaison between developers and archaeologists with a view to resolving conflict. Policy EV11 proposes a series of measures which can assist in resolving development issues.

EV11 BEFORE A DEVELOPMENT IS APPROVED WHICH IS LIKELY TO DESTROY OR DAMAGE THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND ANCIENT MONUMENTS, PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR

- (1) AN EARLY ARCHAEOLOGICAL / ARCHITECTURAL EVALUATION OF THE SITE
AND
(2) ITS PRESERVATION IN SITU
OR
(3) WHERE THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE THE EXCAVATION, AND/OR RECORDING OF THE SITE AND THE RESCUE OF IMPORTANT ARTEFACTS.

6.11 Areas Subject to Flood Risks

6.11.1 PG(W) and Circular 68/92 indicate that development plans should include policies relating to development in flood risk areas. There are a number of areas which can be subject to river flooding. Proposals in all areas liable to flooding are required to take into account adequate safeguards not only to protect them, but to consider the effects the development itself may have on flooding at the site or in other areas. This will include the nature of land drainage and the possible need to compensate for the loss of flood plain. In this context the comments of the Environment Agency must be given substantial weight.

EV12 DEVELOPMENT, (INCLUDING THE RAISING OF LAND), WHICH WOULD BE AT DIRECT RISK FROM FLOODING, OR BE LIKELY TO INCREASE THE RISK OF FLOODING ELSEWHERE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

6.12 Trees and Woodlands

6.12.1 Native broadleaved woodlands and hedgerows are significant elements of the natural landscape of many parts of the County Borough. In addition such features are often vital to nature conservation as natural habitats or routeways. Particularly important here are ancient semi-natural woodlands as defined by the Glamorgan Inventory of Ancient Woodland, produced by the Nature Conservancy Council in 1986. It is also important that trees which make an important contribution to the landscape continue to be protected by local authorities making tree preservation orders, and that important trees on development sites and amenity areas are protected. Policy has therefore attempted to preserve maintain and encourage new planting of native species, whilst safeguarding nature conservation interests. Local authorities have worked closely with Coed Cymru to help to achieve these aims. The Regulations aimed at implementing the Habitats Directive support this approach, recognising in particular the value of small woods and traditional field boundaries, such as hedges, for the migration dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species. It is therefore relevant to continue to operate a strategic policy which favours an increase in natural broadleaved woodlands and hedgerows as in Policy EV13.



EV13 PROPOSALS FOR THE PROTECTION AND MAINTENANCE OF NATIVE BROADLEAVED TREES, WOODLANDS (INCLUDING ANCIENT WOODLANDS AND ANCIENT SEMI-NATURAL WOODLANDS) AND HEDGEROWS, AND PROPOSALS FOR THE PLANTING OF NATIVE SPECIES WILL BE FAVOURED, EXCEPT WHERE THESE WOULD RESULT IN UNACCEPTABLE CONFLICT WITH NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS.

6.13 Afforestation

6.13.1 Afforestation can offer a number of benefits such as recreational opportunities, reduction of timber imports, a source of job creation, and landscape improvement. In addition it is increasingly recognised that forestry can help reduce the effects of global warming by means of carbon dioxide absorption. However, although planting practices have improved during the 1980s, unrestricted commercial forestry can change the character of the landscape, and can affect adversely agriculture and nature conservation interests, such as important natural habitats.

6.13.2 The County Borough Council is a statutory consultee of the Forestry Authority on all new Forest Enterprise planting proposals and all new grant aided planting proposals by private owners. A strategic land use policy is therefore required which examines afforestation proposals in terms of whether they maintain or enhance other important countryside features. The design guidelines issued by the Forestry Commission will provide an important means of examining the extent to which afforestation proposals will be integrated with their surroundings. An Indicative Forestry Strategy will also be prepared if resources allow, to indicate areas where afforestation would be preferred and those locations which could be sensitive to such proposals.

EV14 NEW AFFORESTATION PROPOSALS WILL BE FAVOURED WHERE THEY COMPLY WITH THE FOLLOWING:-

- (1) THE QUALITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT IS MAINTAINED OR ENHANCED, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO THE PROTECTION OF HIGH QUALITY AGRICULTURAL LAND, IMPORTANT LANDSCAPES, SITES IMPORTANT TO NATURE CONSERVATION, AND FEATURES OF THE BUILT AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT
- (2) LOCAL RECREATIONAL USE, AMENITY AND RIGHTS OF WAY ARE MAINTAINED OR ENHANCED
- (3) WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLIES ARE MAINTAINED, AND IN PARTICULAR ACIDIFICATION IS AVOIDED.





7. TRANSPORTATION

Strategy Elements

- **To improve the accessibility of all sectors of the community to places of work, shopping, and recreation by the implementation of a comprehensive transportation strategy.**
- **To improve the road network by a programme of major and minor highway schemes.**
- **To improve the public transport network by a range of initiatives which enhances travel by bus and rail.**
- **To protect and improve the environment by the introduction of various transportation measures.**

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 Structure Plan Issues Report No. 3 (Transportation), published by the former Mid Glamorgan County Council in 1991, sets out the past and future trends relating to the principal transportation issues which faced the former County Council in devising its future transportation strategy for the period of the Replacement Plan. In particular, it highlighted that the demand for travel has increased substantially over the past decade with the consequence that traffic congestion has increased significantly, particularly at peak periods. Further growth in car ownership is expected. However, the resources required to tackle the problem fully by providing more road capacity are most unlikely to be available and in any event, to do so would cause unacceptable degradation of the environment, particularly in urban areas. Thus a sustainable transport strategy is required, which recognises future global environmental problems and resource considerations and also the aspirations and needs of the present generation.

7.1.2 The transportation strategy to be adopted involves a 'mix' of the key elements of road construction, public transport improvements, enhancement of cycling and pedestrian facilities, and traffic management. This strategy, supported by ancillary policies such as control of parking, town centre enhancement and development control, will encourage a reduction in the need to travel and is therefore in conformity with government sustainable development policy. Consequently, the balance between the major policy components will be different from that in the Approved Structure Plan in that the role to be played by public transport will be far more dynamic in trying to cater for an increasing amount of peak period traffic. Road construction, on the other hand, whilst still having a role to play, particularly in assisting the County Borough's economic development, will not be able to tackle all congestion problems. Indeed, as a way of optimising the use of scarce resources and limiting the adverse effect of such construction on the environment, it will be inappropriate for new roads always to be designed to cater for future peak period situations. This is especially so where this implies significant increases in cost and land take. This will also support the objective of transferring peak period travel from the private car to public transport.

7.1.3 The transportation strategy is a critical element in the whole Structure Plan Strategy in which the transportation system must provide the necessary links to attract inward investment, and to provide adequate commuting links to major employment centres. Transportation also plays a major part in the urban renewal process, firstly by relieving towns of through-traffic and, secondly by providing attractive retail and commercial centres through traffic management and environmental enhancement schemes such as pedestrianisation. Additionally, many of the major road schemes complement the land reclamation programme which is being implemented.



7.2 New Roads

7.2.1 Although the proposed transportation strategy is a 'balanced' one containing several elements including measures to encourage greater use of public transport, cycling and pedestrian facilities, there will continue to be a need to invest in new roads. In many parts of the County Borough major routes continue to run through residential areas, resulting in environmental and safety problems as well as leading to traffic congestion, which is a deterrent to economic growth and inward investment. As long as there exist economic, environmental, and safety problems which can be attributed to the existing major road network, it is considered that a road construction programme will continue to be an essential element of the overall transportation strategy.

7.2.2 The improvement of the road network will be concentrated on those routes which are of most importance within the road hierarchy. At the top of this hierarchy of routes is the Strategic Highway Network (SHN), comprising the M4 motorway, the A465 and A470 trunk roads together with particular County Borough roads. However, certain other 'A' roads not included in the SHN are of almost as much importance to the regeneration of the economy of the County Borough and are therefore included in the Major Route Network. Routes within the Major Route Network and particularly the SHN will be given special emphasis in formulating both highway investment priorities and development control policy. Figure 6 shows the composition of the Major Route Network.

7.2.3 The most significant routes serving the County Borough, namely the motorway (M4) and trunk roads (A465 and A470), are under the jurisdiction of the Welsh Office. These represent vital strategic communication links into and within the County Borough and the creation and retention of a high quality motorway and trunk road network, together with improvements to capacity as the need arises, is seen as critical to the County Borough's economic regeneration. In view of motorway service areas (MSAs) on the M4 at locations outside the County Borough, as well as criteria set out in Welsh Office Circular 34/94 regarding intervals between MSAs, it is considered that there is no overriding need to make provision for additional facilities. Proposed transportation policies dealing with development control are considered to be adequate to deal with such proposals.

T1 THE EARLY IMPLEMENTATION WILL BE SOUGHT FOR THE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE TRUNK ROAD SYSTEM, NAMELY:

- (1) A465(T) DUALLING; ABERGAVENNY - HIRWAUN
- (2) A470(T); CORYTON - PONTYPRIDD

(1) This proposal is identified for the long term. In view of the importance of this strategic route to the regeneration of the heads of the valleys it is hoped that this scheme can commence at as early a date as possible, within the overall long term programme.

(2) The need to tackle the present capacity problems along the A470(T) between Coryton and Pontypridd is an issue of paramount importance in view of the dependence of the County Borough on this strategic route. Congestion along this route can only be to the County Borough's disadvantage in its attempts to attract new inward investment, and to provide good commuting links to Cardiff. It is considered essential that as soon as possible a strategy for dealing with this problem is adopted, and implemented. Further, it is considered that the best strategy is likely to consist of a number of elements encompassing both public transport and highway improvements. An additional element is the investigation into the feasibility of constructing a route from the M4 at Capel Llanilltern to the A470 at Pontypridd, which may incorporate elements of the proposed Church Village Bypass. This study incorporates the findings of the South Wales Area Traffic Study and the A470 Corridor Public Transport Study.



7.2.4 The first Approved Structure Plan (1981) contained 26 major road schemes under Policy T2. These were categorised into Phase I schemes which were expected to be completed by 1986 and Phase II schemes which would follow on from 1986. The schemes identified in Phase I in Rhondda Cynon Taff were completed. Despite the programme being several years behind the original schedule, some schemes from Phase II have already been completed. The list of completed schemes is set out below (see Figure 7).

Phase I of 1981 Approved Structure Plan

A468	Nantgarw to Penrhos Improvement, 1979
A4058	Trehafof Bypass, 1983
A4059	Aberdare Bypass Central & Northern Section, 1984
A472	Cross Valley Link Fiddlers Elbow to A4059 north of Abercynon connecting with A470(T), 1985
A4119	Tonyrefail Bypass including Trebanog Link, 1986

Phase II of 1981 Approved Structure Plan

A4059	Aberdare Bypass Southern Extension, 1995
CIII	Power Station Hill Improvement, Tonteg, 1988. (Replaced A473 Taff Vale crossing to A470(T))
A4119/A4058	Access to Mid Rhondda, 1988
A473	Talbot Green Bypass, 1991
A4119	Talbot Green to Ynysmaerdy Dualling, 1993
A4058	Pontypridd Inner Relief Road, 1993.

7.2.5 A list of schemes to be carried forward as a major roads programme is set out below in T2. For the purpose of introducing new schemes into this major roads programme, schemes have had to meet the criteria of having a total cost of at least £5 million (i.e. qualifying for transport grant) and also that of improving the major route network. However, schemes identified in the Approved Structure Plan are retained even if they do not meet these particular criteria for new schemes. The completion of the new Phase I programme indicated in the policy, and indeed the continued progression through Phase II of the programme, is dependent on the rate at which the County Borough Council receives transport grant approval from the Secretary of State for its major highway programme. It is consistent with the need to implement a major roads programme to complement the Secretary of State's Programme for the Valleys. Land needs to be protected for all these schemes and will be safeguarded in local plans where appropriate.

T2 THE FOLLOWING MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE COUNTY BOROUGH HIGHWAY NETWORK WILL BE IMPLEMENTED:

PHASE I

- | | | |
|-----|-------|--|
| (1) | A4058 | PORTH / LOWER RHONDDA FACH RELIEF ROAD |
| (2) | A473 | CHURCH VILLAGE BYPASS |

PHASE II

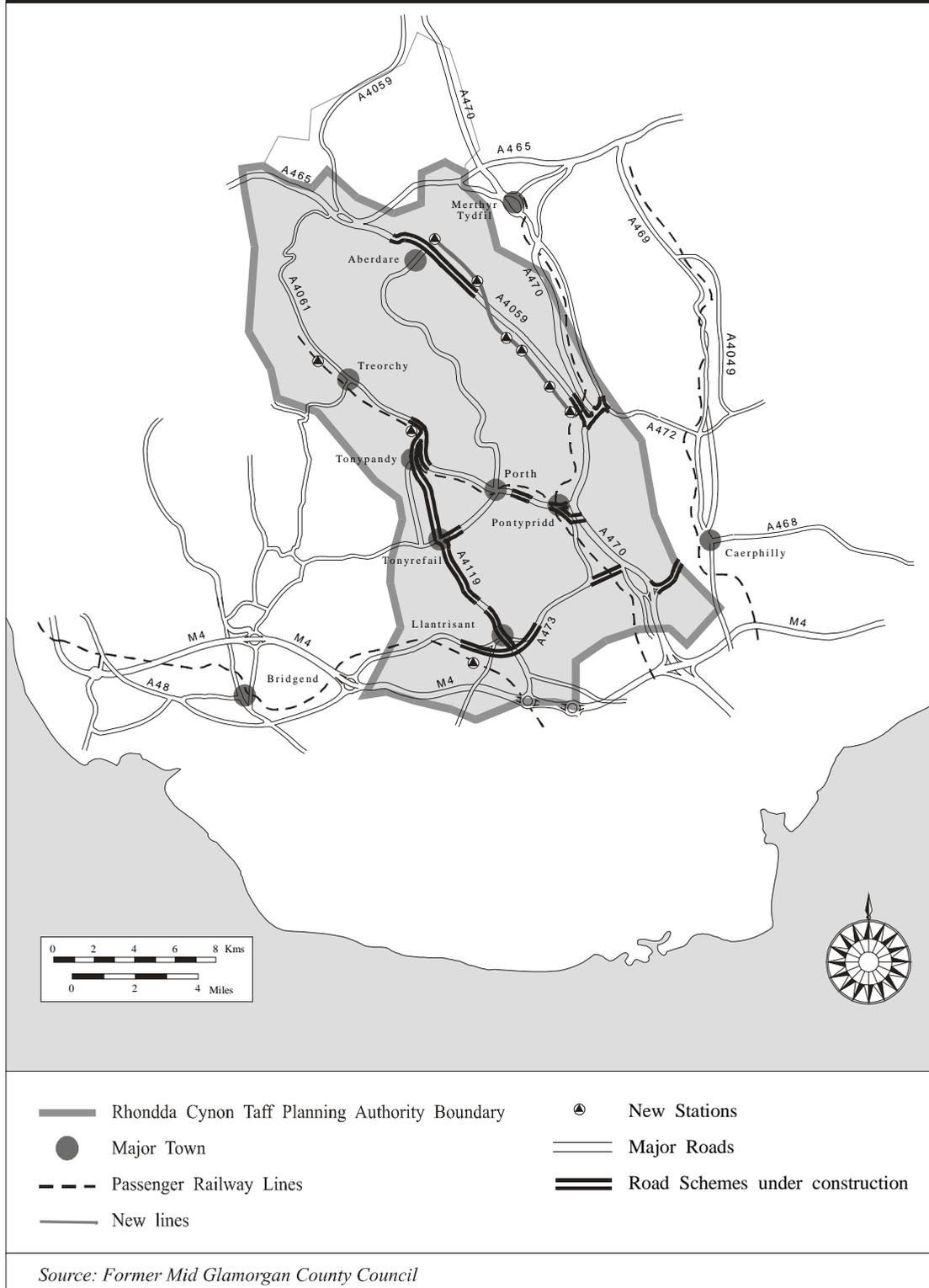
- | | | |
|-----|-------|---------------------------------------|
| (1) | A4058 | GELLI / TREORCHY RELIEF ROAD |
| (2) | A473 | LLANHARAN BYPASS |
| (3) | A4059 | MOUNTAIN ASH BYPASS |
| (4) | A4233 | UPPER RHONDDA FACH RELIEF ROAD |
| (5) | A4119 | YNYSMAERDY - TALBOT GREEN RELIEF ROAD |

PHASE III

- | | |
|------|--------------------------------|
| A473 | TALBOT GREEN BYPASS - DUALLING |
|------|--------------------------------|



**Figure 7. Rhondda Cynon Taff:
Transportation Improvements 1978 - 1994**





7.2.6 The details of the schemes contained in the policy are as follows:

Phase I

The schemes set out in phase 1 were already programmed but had not commenced when they appeared in the 1994 T.P.P., the last to be produced by the former County Council.

A4058 Porth / Lower Rhondda Fach Relief Road

This scheme improves the major routes serving the Rhondda Fach and Rhondda Fawr valleys which meet at Porth. These are important travel to work and industrial traffic routes. The majority of through traffic will be removed from the existing main roads and environmental relief will be achieved along these heavily built-up routes and in Porth town centre.

A473 Church Village Bypass

This scheme will improve a section of the major east-west route along the mouths of the valleys. It will complement the new Talbot Green Bypass and reduce journey to work times between main population centres and major industrial sites located to the west and east of the proposed bypass. The bypass will reduce traffic along the existing main road significantly and provide environmental relief to properties along its length.

Phase II

The schemes identified for Phase II are those which are not yet programmed and not in order of priority but are essential to achieve the overall strategy. The majority of the schemes are carried over from the previous structure plan.

A4058 Gelli / Treorchy Relief Road

This scheme will reduce journey times between the upper Rhondda Fawr and the Mid Rhondda Access Road in the south. The existing main routes within the valley will be relieved of most through traffic thereby providing environmental relief to the existing continuous frontage development along the highway. The scheme combines the originally separate Gelli Bypass and Treorchy Relief Road schemes and will bypass the Gelli/Ton Pentre communities and also extend northwards beyond Treorchy if a satisfactory alignment can be found. A feasibility study is therefore to be conducted into possible alignments for such a route, the opportunity for upgrading the B4223 Nantygwyddon Road as part of a comprehensive scheme will also be investigated. The full scheme will provide much needed traffic relief as well as assist the regeneration of the upper valley.

A473 Llanharan Bypass

This scheme improves a section of the A473 strategic route between the M4 at Pencoed and Llantrisant. The scheme will provide an improved route for through-traffic as well as relief for the communities of Llanharan and Brynna.

A4059 Mountain Ash Bypass

The bypass will improve communications through the valley and provide improved access to new major development sites. The scheme provides a new alignment for the main valley road and includes new cross valley links to relieve the town centre of through traffic. The scheme is a fundamental part of the regeneration package for this part of the valley. It will complement the river and railway diversions adjacent to the town centre in facilitating a much improved town centre environment.



A4233 Upper Rhondda Fach Relief Road

This scheme will extend the Lower Rhondda Fach Relief Road northwards from Pontygwaith to serve the rest of the valley and relieve the upper congested sections of the existing road. This scheme will ease journey to work movements and improve the chances of attracting much needed industrial development to sites in the northern part of the valley. It will also improve greatly the environment of the communities and enhance road safety significantly.

Ynysmaerdy - Talbot Green Relief Road (A4119-A473)

This scheme will provide an alternative route for a significant proportion of traffic which currently uses the A4119. It will provide relief for the A4119 should traffic congestion begin to build up as expected along this route towards the end of the plan period.

Phase III

The schemes identified for Phase III consist of existing single carriageway bypasses on strategic routes which may, during the course of the plan, cease to have sufficient capacity to accommodate forecast traffic growth, and will have to be improved to dual carriageway standard. Thus whilst the schemes identified for Phases I and II are justified at the present time, the need for those in Phase III will be dependent on the rate of traffic growth. This will be monitored and the need to bring schemes in Phase III forward, ahead of some of those in Phase II, will be kept under review. The need for other strategic routes to be improved to dual carriageway standard will also be monitored and assessed. However, the ability to improve junction capacities may be the deciding factor.

A473 Talbot Green Bypass

The bypass has improved east-west movement along the A473 and has eased congestion problems on the A4119 strategic route. Present traffic forecasts indicate that the bypass will need to be improved to dual carriageway standard before the end of the plan period. The construction of the Church Village bypass to dual standard is likely to increase corridor movement above general growth rates and it may be appropriate to dual the Talbot Green Bypass shortly thereafter. It will be necessary to take into account the conclusions of the A470 Pontypridd to M4 Capel Llanilltern Relief Road feasibility study.

7.2.7 In addition to these major highway schemes a programme of minor road improvements and traffic management schemes will also be implemented subject to the availability of resources. In identifying the priority of these schemes, particular attention will be paid to the contribution made to road safety, public transport operations, urban renewal, economic development and the environment in addition to the easing of traffic congestion. It is recognised that traffic management is likely to have an increasing role to play in making the most efficient use of resources and in meeting many of these objectives. With respect to road improvements to assist traffic flow, these will be carried out primarily on the major route network.

T3 MINOR ROAD IMPROVEMENTS AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEMES WILL BE IMPLEMENTED, WHERE THEY IMPROVE OR PROMOTE

- (1) ROAD SAFETY
- (2) PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATIONS
- (3) URBAN RENEWAL
- (4) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- (5) THE ENVIRONMENT
- (6) THE FLOW OF TRAFFIC.



7.3 Public Transport

7.3.1 The promotion of public transport is a key element in the transportation strategy. There are four policies dealing with this issue: T4 for bus services, T5 for rail services, T6 for redundant railway lines, and T7 for rail freight.

7.3.2 Policy T4 which promotes the provision of efficient and integrated bus services updates policy T5 in the Mid Glamorgan Approved Structure Plan to reflect changed circumstances. The 1985 Transport Act, whilst significantly reducing the influence of the County Borough Council has over the network of bus services, also grants the County Borough Council a specific power and responsibility to procure socially desirable services not otherwise provided. It is intended to give public transport greater prominence and the provision of new infrastructure to improve bus operations, including reserved sections of route, perhaps even with a guidance system, will be investigated. Improved bus stop facilities and information systems would assist the commercial prospects of these services and allow operators to invest in improved vehicles and to increase frequencies. Also, during the plan period there is likely to be a need to identify park and ride facilities for bus services, as distinct from those at railway stations, and on the outer fringes of major towns (see T13).

T4 THE NETWORK OF BUS SERVICES WILL BE IMPROVED BY:

- (1) THE PROVISION AND IMPROVEMENT OF BUS TERMINAL AND SUPPORTING FACILITIES SUCH AS BUS STATIONS, TURNING CIRCLES, LAYBYS, BUS STOPS AND BUS LANES AND OTHER BUS PRIORITY MEASURES
- (2) THE DESIGN OF NEW DEVELOPMENT SO AS TO PERMIT THE FREE AND EFFICIENT MOVEMENT OF BUSES
- (3) ENSURING THAT WHERE PRACTICABLE THE LOCATION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES, ESPECIALLY THOSE FOR THE ELDERLY, ARE ADJACENT TO BUS ROUTES
- (4) THE PROVISION OF PARK AND RIDE FACILITIES FOR BUS SERVICES WHERE APPROPRIATE, INCLUDING THE PROTECTION OF LAND FOR POTENTIAL FUTURE SITES.

7.3.3 The former Mid Glamorgan County Council demonstrated that a partnership with British Rail to improve the network of local passenger services can produce a major enhancement of the public transport system. The re-opening of the line to Aberdare, including the provision of new stations, the opening of new stations in the Rhondda, the provision of track and signalling improvements to enable services to be enhanced, were all components of the former County Council's Rail Development Strategy. Policy T5 is therefore augmented to reflect the role of a continuing partnership, originally established between British Rail and the former Mid Glamorgan County Council, in the overall transportation strategy. Improvements in services will depend on the ability to create additional system capacity with extra rolling stock, track, and enhanced signalling; this will need to be complemented by improvements in the access to stations, park and ride sites, and interchange facilities in Cardiff. In pursuit of this the Welsh Office, in partnership with the former Mid Glamorgan County Council, Cardiff Bay Development Corporation, the former South Glamorgan County Council and Regional Railways, sponsored Cardiff Region Public Transport Study to examine the public transport options to link the former Mid Glamorgan with Cardiff City Centre and Cardiff Bay.

T5 THE NETWORK OF PASSENGER RAIL SERVICES WILL BE DEVELOPED BY:

- (1) ASSISTING WITH THE PROVISION OF NEW TRACK, STATIONS AND SIGNALLING
- (2) THE PROVISION OF PARK AND RIDE FACILITIES (INCLUDING CYCLE PARKING)
- (3) THE PROVISION OF BUS/RAIL INTERCHANGE FACILITIES
- (4) THE PROVISION OF RAIL FEEDER BUS SERVICES
- (5) THE PROVISION OF IMPROVED PEDESTRIAN ROUTES TO STATIONS
- (6) FAVOURING DEVELOPMENT IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO RAILWAY STATIONS.



7.3.4 In devising its Rail Development Strategy the former County Council became aware of a number of lines which could have been re-opened had development not already been allowed to take place. In view of the need to retain maximum flexibility for the future extension of the railway network, it would therefore seem appropriate for any railway routes which become superfluous to existing requirements to be investigated to assess their future potential for rail transport. Such routes should be protected from development. However, some routes can form ideal alignments for new roads or cycleways. This, however, should only be accepted after an analysis has been carried out into the relative merits to the transportation strategy of losing the ability to re-open the line against the advantages that the particular alignment offers to a new road or cycleway, should it be demonstrated that there is no potential for any of these transportation uses, then the route could be released for development. A new policy T6 is therefore included.

T6 DEVELOPMENT WHICH INHIBITS THE POTENTIAL REOPENING OF REDUNDANT RAILWAY LINES OR THEIR ALTERNATIVE USE AS ROADS OR CYCLEWAYS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

7.3.5 Movement of freight by rail can offer significant environmental benefits through the transfer of heavy freight carried by road. In this respect the new criteria for Section 8 grants are to be welcomed, although more initiatives will be required if a significant transfer from road to the railways is to take place. Further, consideration will need to be given to keeping former railway lines open such that future major industrial sites may be served by rail.

T7 THE PROVISION OF NEW RAIL FREIGHT SERVICES AND FACILITIES TOGETHER WITH THE SITING OF SUITABLE INDUSTRIES CLOSE TO RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE, WILL BE FAVOURED.

7.4 The Environment

7.4.1 The proposed transportation strategy reflects a concern for environmental issues. Its objective of encouraging a modal shift away from the private car towards public transport, particularly for peak period movements, demonstrates this. However, the major role with respect to limiting the damaging effect of transport on the environment, must lie with central government through legislation, regulatory or fiscal measures. Nevertheless the transportation strategy has a positive role to play with regard to the local environment and Policy T8 sets out the framework for this.

T8 THE ENVIRONMENT WILL BE PROTECTED AND IMPROVED BY THE FOLLOWING TRANSPORTATION MEASURES:

- (1) REDUCING TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF ROAD TRAFFIC POLLUTION ON PEOPLE AND PROPERTY IN TOWN CENTRES AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS
- (2) DESIGNING NEW SCHEMES TO MINIMISE LAND SEVERANCE AND THE DEMOLITION OF PROPERTY
- (3) REDUCING TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS VISUAL INTRUSION AND NOISE BY LANDSCAPING TO PROVIDE AN ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT PARTICULARLY ALONG MAJOR ROUTES
- (4) CONTROLLING ROAD TRAFFIC, INCLUDING THE SEGREGATION OF PEDESTRIANS AND VEHICLES, THEREBY ENABLING THE PEDESTRIANISATION OF STREETS TO BE INTRODUCED IN SHOPPING AREAS
- (5) FAVOURING THE INTRODUCTION OF STREET FURNITURE, TREE PLANTING, THE WIDENING OF FOOTWAYS, ETC., IN TOWN CENTRES
- (6) INTRODUCING TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES
- (7) REDUCING TRAFFIC ON MINOR ROADS IN TOWN CENTRES, IN CONSERVATION AREAS, IN THE NATIONAL PARK, AND IN OTHER AREAS OF LANDSCAPE AND CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE



- (8) DEVELOPING PUBLIC TRANSPORT FACILITIES
- (9) DEVELOPING FACILITIES TO ASSIST WALKING AND CYCLING.

7.5 Development Control

7.5.1 Many Rhondda Cynon Taff residents experience long journeys to work by car, often to areas outside the County Borough. The ability to attract new development into the County Borough may reduce the need for such journeys. The reduction in the length of the journeys to work, particularly those made by car, especially where opportunities for development of public transport facilities exist, may also contribute to environmental objectives. This is particularly important with regard to the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions. The extent to which a particular new development can reduce the total traffic associated with journeys to work is therefore relevant to the consideration of the need for it, especially where such a development would conflict with the need to conserve the environment. Policy T9 is therefore included to provide specific consideration for this issue.

T9 DEVELOPMENT WILL BE FAVOURED WHICH CAN BE DEMONSTRATED TO REDUCE THE LENGTH OF CAR-BORNE JOURNEYS TO WORK IN THE AREA OR INCREASE THE RANGE OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT, WHERE THIS IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT.

7.5.2 The construction of a high quality major road network (see Figure 6) providing good access to all parts of the County Borough to assist employment generation and commuting involves considerable expenditure. Any new access which would reduce the effectiveness of this network would therefore be unacceptable. Developers will therefore be required to demonstrate that proposed major developments will not have adverse implications for the highway network by carrying out a traffic impact study to the satisfaction of the highway authority. In commenting on planning applications the County Borough Council will take into account the framework set out in PG(W) paragraphs 51-73. Additionally the principles on which the responses will be made relating to the Major Route Network will be based on the classification system given in 'Roads and Traffic in Urban Areas'- HMSO 1987 (or on the revised or replacement document), and on criteria which shall be approved by the County Borough Council from time to time .

T10 DEVELOPMENT ADJACENT TO HIGHWAYS WILL BE CONTROLLED IN ACCORDANCE WITH CRITERIA RELATING TO ACCESS, ROAD SAFETY, PEDESTRIANS, TRAFFIC GENERATION, PARKING, ROAD LAYOUT, BUS TRANSPORT, AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT. THESE CRITERIA WILL PLACE PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THE PROTECTION OF THE MAJOR ROUTE NETWORK.

7.5.3 Where it is apparent, by means of a traffic impact study or otherwise, that a proposed development would exacerbate problems on the highway network, or lead to other problems for the overall transportation strategy, developers will be required to provide or fund appropriate off-site infrastructure improvements by a legally binding agreement. In certain circumstances this may take the form of works other than the construction of increased highway capacity, such as the funding of public transport or traffic management improvements, cycling facilities or car parking.

T11 WHERE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS WOULD CREATE OR EXACERBATE PROBLEMS ON THE ROAD SYSTEM THE DEVELOPER WILL BE REQUIRED TO MAKE PROVISION FOR THE RESOLUTION OF SUCH PROBLEMS

7.5.4 It is highly desirable that new roads are properly maintained and the best way of ensuring this is for them to be adopted by the highway authority. However, in order that they may be acceptable for adoption it will be necessary for any new roads in private developments to be built to appropriate standards as set out in the highway authority's adopted design guide for residential and industrial estate roads.



T12 NEW ROADS WITHIN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENTS SHALL BE BUILT TO A STANDARD ACCEPTABLE TO THE HIGHWAY AUTHORITY AND BE OFFERED FOR ADOPTION.

7.6 Car Parking

7.6.1 As part of the local plans process, appropriate off-street car parks will be identified. These will need to be of sufficient capacity to enable the commercial viability of town centres to be maintained and allow reduction in on-street provision. Whilst the need for car parks to be sited close to town centres is accepted, their location should not encourage traffic to travel through the town centre to make use of them. In certain instances park and ride schemes may also be appropriate on the periphery of major centres.

T13 OFF-STREET CAR PARKS WILL BE PROVIDED TO ASSIST THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF TOWN CENTRES.

7.6.2 In addition to public car parks provided by the local authority, it will be necessary for any new development to make appropriate provision for operational and non-operational parking requirements. Generally the appropriate level of car parking will be in accordance with the Standing Conference on Regional Policy in South Wales, "Parking Guidelines". However, in many town centres it will be appropriate for the parking required to be part of a co-ordinated strategy of provision, rather than adjacent to each development, and therefore a financial contribution towards this strategy will often be more appropriate.

T14 ALL NEW DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT OR CHANGES OF USE SHOULD INCLUDE APPROPRIATE OPERATIONAL AND NON-OPERATIONAL PARKING PROVISIONS ACCORDING TO THE LAND USE, DENSITY AND LOCATION PROPOSED. WHERE APPROPRIATE, DEVELOPERS IN TOWN CENTRES WILL BE REQUIRED TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE PROVISION OF NON-OPERATIONAL PARKING OUTSIDE THE CURTILAGE OF THE DEVELOPMENT.

7.7 Pedestrians

7.7.1 Most journeys require an element of walking, particularly so for non car-owning households. In urban areas, and especially in town centres where multi-purpose trips are made as pedestrian-only journeys rather than by vehicular modes, pedestrian priority schemes will be initiated. These schemes will include reducing kerb heights, upgrading pavements, footpaths and footways to assist disabled people and people carrying young children. Consideration will also be given to the improvement of signing to amenities in town centres, and to and from car parks, and the enhancement of street lighting. Such initiatives will enhance the safety of pedestrians. Measures that facilitate pedestrian activity in urban areas will also complement town centre enhancement and economic regeneration schemes, as well as traffic restraint measures.

T15 MEASURES WILL BE ADOPTED TO REDUCE CONFLICT BETWEEN PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR TRAFFIC, PARTICULARLY WHERE PEDESTRIAN DENSITIES ARE HIGH.

7.8 Cycling

7.8.1 Cycling, whether for leisure, shopping or work purposes is becoming increasingly important as a mode of travel. It is considered that the potential contribution of cycling both to the relief of congestion and wider environmental problems should not be ignored and therefore policy T16 is included in addition to L7 (Leisure). The provision of cycle routes for leisure purposes will aid the development of a network of routes across the County Borough; additionally, opportunities to develop cycle routes to assist with journeys to work where there is relatively flat terrain, particularly around town centres, will be investigated. To take sufficient account of the needs of cyclists, the layout of major new residential developments also needs to be planned in accordance with standards set out in the



highway authority's adopted design guide for residential and industrial estate roads. Where appropriate, cycle parking needs to be provided in town centres and major new roads designed in such a manner that cycling is made convenient and safer and not deterred.

T16 SUITABLE PROVISION WILL BE MADE FOR THE NEEDS OF CYCLISTS:

- (1) BY THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF CYCLE ROUTES (INCLUDING ON STREET AND OFF STREET CYCLE PARKING) FACILITIES
- (2) IN THE DESIGN AND IMPROVEMENT OF ROADS AND JUNCTIONS
- (3) ON THE EXISTING HIGHWAY NETWORK, PARTICULARLY TO LINK RECREATIONAL ROUTES, TOWN CENTRES, RESIDENTIAL AREAS, AND PLACES OF WORK.



8. DERELICT AND CONTAMINATED LAND

Strategy Elements

- To seek the clearance of all major dereliction in the County Borough within the plan period, and to aim to prevent further dereliction.
- To ensure the effectiveness of the land reclamation process by identifying and implementing suitable after-uses and protecting or replacing environmental features.
- To seek to deal with all known contaminated land which becomes available for treatment in the County Borough.

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 Land reclamation is recognised as a key step in the regeneration process of any area, and the WDA land reclamation programme is one of the largest and most sustained of its kind in Europe, directed at providing new land for development and creating improved environments throughout Wales.

8.2 Land Reclamation in Rhondda Cynon Taff

8.2.1 In Rhondda Cynon Taff, the reclamation programme concentrated initially on safety schemes, designed to remove dangerous dereliction wherever it threatened communities. Later, as such schemes were progressed and funding increased, the programme was expanded to include those areas where redevelopment was possible and could offer new homes, replacement employment opportunities and recreation facilities in an improved urban landscape. Following further progress the programme has been extended to include a larger proportion of schemes where the main objective of treatment is to enhance further the overall quality of the landscape in the valleys by removing the most obvious dereliction. Although the balance of the programme has changed over time as schemes have been completed, public safety, the provision of development land, and environmental improvement, remain the priorities for the identification of schemes.

8.2.2 Under the Welsh Development Agency Act 1975 as amended by the Derelict Land Act 1985, the WDA's land reclamation powers may only be exercised in relation to the following:

- Derelict land - defined as land so damaged by past industrial or other development that it is incapable of beneficial use without treatment
- Neglected or unsightly land - defined as land which though capable of some beneficial use is at present uncared for, untidy and in a condition detrimental to the environment
- Other land - land which is not itself derelict, neglected or unsightly, but which the Agency believes is reasonably required for the purpose of a reclamation scheme.

8.2.3 The Agency may also carry out works on land which is not derelict, neglected or unsightly but is likely to become so by reason of actual or apprehended collapse of the surface as the result of relevant operations which have ceased to be carried out.

8.2.4 The WDA funds private and public sector land reclamation schemes. Private schemes are assessed on their merits individually. For public schemes local authorities are invited by the WDA to submit a list of schemes for approval for land reclamation funding about every 2 years. The Agency then prepares rolling programmes of local authority sponsored land reclamation schemes and from time to time the Agency submits programmes of such work for the Secretary of State's approval.



These programmes take account of the resources expected to be available and of the funds already committed over the programme periods.

8.2.5 Initial bids to the WDA include a description of the land involved, the reasons for reclamation, proposals for land acquisition, preliminary cost estimates and proposed after-use, as well as the authority's view as to the priority of the scheme.

8.2.6 Since 1966 more than 7,600 hectares have been treated in Wales. Another 800 hectares were involved in schemes which were in progress in 1995 and a further 3,500 hectares had then been approved and entered the programme. The rate of progress has accelerated over more recent years.

8.2.7 Progress in the former County of Mid Glamorgan mirrored the all Wales picture. Spending by the former County Council, both in its own right and as an agent for the former District Councils increased considerably. Up to 1991 the former County Council was responsible for the reclamation of approximately 2020 hectares.

8.3 National Legislation and Guidance

8.3.1 Derelict land matters in Wales come mainly under the province of the Welsh Development Agency Act 1975 as amended by the Derelict Land Act 1985. However, other Acts have an indirect bearing on derelict land, for example The Town and Country Planning (Minerals) Act 1981, which together with the 1990 Planning Act covers minerals operations through the development control process.

8.3.2 European Community legislation also has a fundamental effect on derelict land matters in particular through its requirement for environmental assessments and in relation to the handling and monitoring of hazardous waste materials.

8.3.3 PG(W) states that derelict and waste land should be restored and where possible put back into beneficial use. Preference should be given to development on sites which would enable the reclamation of derelict and waste land, (brownfield sites), as opposed to the development of greenfield sites.

8.4 Derelict Land Clearance

8.4.1 It is the policy of the Secretary of State for Wales to proceed with land reclamation at the maximum possible speed consistent with the production of high quality landscapes and facilities acceptable to the local communities and attractive to inward investment.

8.4.2 There are a significant number of schemes funded by the WDA which were or are being undertaken by the local authorities. The programme is organised on a shorter time-scale than the plan period, and it is thus intended to carry out approved schemes before the end of the century. Within this time frame implementation will take place on a broad geographical basis with progress on individual schemes contained in the programme depending upon opportunities and constraints whose effects vary from scheme to scheme. This will mean that the bulk of the derelict land problem will be dealt with soon, although the future programme may contain a small number of additional sites, which will be acknowledged by the WDA as worthy of treatment. In this context, it must be noted that the existing programme is still only an indication of the present overall amount of derelict land which can be treated in one form or another. Indeed, not all of the new schemes submitted by local authorities to the WDA, were approved. In addition new schemes may be required from time to time to deal with future industrial changes.

8.4.3 Therefore, within the plan period the County Borough Council will continue to seek funding to treat all derelict land it identifies as worthy of such action. Often, the appropriate treatment will involve extensive land-forming procedures, but there will be cases where modest proposals will suffice. Where, in the opinion of the local authority, such treatment can only be carried out by the public sector, it will



seek the public acquisition of the land involved. However, it should be noted that identification does not impose a requirement for the land owner to carry out any necessary treatment.

D1 ALL IDENTIFIED DERELICT LAND WILL BE SUBJECT TO TREATMENT APPROPRIATE TO THE CONDITION AND NATURE OF THE SITE AND PROPOSED AFTER USES, DURING THE PLAN PERIOD.

8.5 Development Briefs and Supplementary Planning Guidance

8.5.1 Following the initial feasibility study, land use policy for an approved reclamation scheme should normally involve the preparation of a development brief to identify the proposed future land uses and the means of implementation. Where such schemes are complex because of their scale, nature or relationship with surrounding land uses it may be appropriate to establish such briefs as supplementary planning guidance.

8.5.2 The development brief, particularly if it is approved as supplementary planning guidance, should contain sufficient detail in order to provide a clear framework for development control decisions. This should include the physical impact of the scheme on residential and other property and its inhabitants; the implications of the scheme on archaeology, local history, agriculture, local ecology and nature conservation; recreational opportunities and visual amenity; the transportation implications; and the social and economic benefits of the scheme in terms of intended after-use and the pursuit of wider objectives in the surrounding area.

D2 EACH RECLAMATION SCHEME WILL NORMALLY REQUIRE A DEVELOPMENT BRIEF TO BE PREPARED AND, WHERE ADDITIONAL DETAILED LAND USE POLICIES ARE NECESSARY, APPROVED AS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE TO THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

8.6 Aftercare Management and Resources

8.6.1 The aftercare requirements of schemes can often pose major problems. This is partly because there are increasing numbers of schemes where a high proportion of the reclaimed land is proposed for amenity or agricultural and forestry after-use. Once treatment is complete, it is normal practice for the local authorities to dispose of the land as soon as possible. However, certain land must be retained in public ownership as a result of its designated after-use; for example, public open space. In addition, where agricultural or forestry uses are proposed, before disposal can occur, the local authority must be satisfied that the prospective land owner has the capability and resources to maintain the site to an adequate standard.

8.6.2 Therefore, with regard to land having to remain in public ownership, there is a need for the County Borough Council to monitor conditions and take appropriate action to ensure that reversion does not occur. The most effective means to achieve this is considered to be an after management plan, preferably created at the outset of scheme design. Amongst the land use issues to be addressed are the effective design of land-form, landscape and location of facilities.

D3 LAND USE WILL BE MONITORED ON COMPLETED SITES WHICH ARE TO BE RETAINED IN PUBLIC OWNERSHIP AFTER THE EXPIRY OF DERELICT LAND GRANT AID, AND ANY NECESSARY ACTION TO ENSURE THEIR CONTINUED BENEFIT TO THE COMMUNITY WILL BE TAKEN.

8.7 Contaminated Land

8.7.1 The question of actual or potentially contaminated land is a separate but important issue where further planning and related environmental guidance will be necessary for its treatment and regulation.



8.7.2 The Government has withdrawn the requirement for statutory registers of contaminating uses of land, proposed by the Environmental Protection Act 1990, as amended by the Environment Act 1995. Instead there is to be a review of the powers and duties of local authorities relating to the identification, assessment and appropriate treatment or control of land that could cause pollution of the environment or harm human health. In the meantime, the government considers that local authorities will be able to use their existing powers, to find and deal with actual pollution which is a source of danger, and to decide planning issues about contamination.

8.7.3 Local authorities may come across contaminated or potentially contaminated land, either on derelict land needing reclamation or on land to be developed or redeveloped needing planning permission. Where contaminated land co-exists with identified derelict land, grants for its treatment are available. In such a case, it could be expected to receive priority on grounds of safety.

8.7.4 However, where land is not derelict, the present situation relies on the local authority knowing or suspecting that the land is contaminated, or the potential developer admitting that it is or is suspected of being contaminated. On land which is currently, or relatively recently has been subject to a potentially contaminated use, the assessment of risk may be relatively easy. However, on land which has not had a potentially contaminating use in recent history, the presence or suspicion of the presence of contamination, will be more difficult to establish. Many contaminating uses existed well before planning records were kept, and information can be extremely sketchy if not completely missing.

8.7.5 Problems may arise where land is still operational or has been redeveloped without treatment. Where it is still operational it may be possible to tackle any contamination when further development is required, by means of a private scheme. However, it is clearly sensible to minimise the chances of this situation arising in the future. Where a potentially contaminated site (i.e. where contamination is known or strongly suspected) is proposed for redevelopment, the extent of the contamination and nature of treatment should be established prior to approval. The County Borough Council considers that the applicant should supply this information. The advice of the Environment Agency should always be sought on the type of treatment, because of its special interest in the issue by reason of its responsibilities for groundwater protection.

D4 BEFORE REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS ARE APPROVED ON SITES WHICH ARE CONSIDERED TO BE POTENTIALLY CONTAMINATED, INVESTIGATIONS MUST BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE APPLICANT TO ESTABLISH WHETHER CONTAMINATION EXISTS AND IF SO, TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE TREATMENT.

8.8 Conservation

8.8.1 Most of the worst dereliction has now been tackled. There is a good prospect that the present schemes with hard-end uses will either be in progress or completed before the end of the decade. Soon there will be left only those schemes characterised as consisting chiefly of valley sides, high ground, hill tops and moorland.

8.8.2 The change in character of the majority of schemes makes it all the more important that, within the design and implementation of the treatment and after-uses of a scheme, due consideration is given to the protection and enhancement of particular valuable features found within the scheme boundary or in its environs. By this is meant those features relating to nature conservation, geological structures, architectural quality, historical importance, industrial archaeological importance, or other special interest. It is intended not only that the site operations and the form of future land uses should avoid disturbing such features but that there should be every attempt made to protect and enhance them for posterity.

8.8.3 This change in character will also lead to a reassessment of the methods of appropriate treatment in other less sensitive situations. It may be that treatment would be limited to replanting schemes and other cases where the engineering content is minimal. Other potential schemes may



require little or no treatment because of the quality of natural colonisation which may already have occurred.

D5 WHERE A DERELICT SITE CONTAINS FEATURES OF NATURE CONSERVATION, GEOLOGICAL, ARCHITECTURAL, HISTORIC OR INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL, OR OTHER SPECIAL INTEREST, THE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THOSE FEATURES WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECLAMATION SCHEME, AND THE CONSIDERATION OF SUBSEQUENT REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS.

8.9 New Habitats for Flora and Fauna

8.9.1 It is proposed that the protection, maintenance and enhancement of existing habitats identified under Policy EV5, or possible replacement under Policy EV6, should be taken into account in the design of a scheme. In addition, where appropriate new and varied habitats might also be created. Such action is intended to support the continued existence of native fauna and flora in the completed landscape.

D6 IN EACH RECLAMATION SCHEME, RESTORATION SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN SO AS TO CONSERVE OR REPLACE AREAS OF NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST, OR TO CREATE NEW HABITATS, WHEREVER THIS IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE PROPOSED AFTER-USES OF THE SITE.

8.10 Prevention of Prejudicial Development

8.10.1 It would be clearly inappropriate to allow development to occur which would prejudice a reclamation scheme, even though that scheme may not be programmed for implementation immediately. Policy D7 is proposed to deal with this and will apply to land which forms part of or is vital to the implementation of an approved reclamation scheme.

D7 DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD PREJUDICE THE COMPREHENSIVE RECLAMATION OF DERELICT LAND WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

8.11 Prevention of Dereliction

8.11.1 Where derelict land unavoidably continues to be created, it is obviously essential to treat it and return it to beneficial use. However, naturally it would be preferable to prevent dereliction in the first place.

8.11.2 Most of the dereliction created in Wales pre-dated the planning control procedures. It is a legacy from former heavy industries and their industrial restructuring or old mineral workings which were not subject to planning controls. Now that the Mineral Planning Authorities and Local Planning Authorities have a wide range of powers, it should be easier to ensure that the creation of new dereliction is kept to a minimum.

8.11.3 For the future it seems likely that there may be less mineral related dereliction because of greater control powers. The current tightening of pollution controls, and in particular the introduction of integrated pollution control under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, should also be of great assistance, but dereliction cannot be prevented completely and some will continue to be created by industrial closures and from misuse of land and buildings to the extent that they become contaminated.

8.11.4 The County Borough Council will take action, wherever possible to prevent the creation of new dereliction.





9. MINERALS

Strategy Element

- To ensure that whilst protecting the environment there should be a continuing basis for the minerals industry in the County Borough to meet the needs of society.

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 It is indisputable that society needs minerals. There are the obvious needs which include construction (e.g. roads, houses, factories, schools, hospitals etc). Also energy supply for power generation and raw materials for industry (i.e. production of iron/steel, chemicals, cement etc). There are also the less obvious needs which include those uses of minerals in agriculture, in purification processes for sugar, water, paint etc., in foodstuffs, toothpaste, paper and in manufacturing industries such as glass and ceramics.

9.1.2 Geological processes have provided the minerals which society needs, but not always in the most favourable location. Minerals can only be worked where they exist and such a fact often leads to conflict with other land-uses and with conservation, particularly as those same geological processes which give rise to economic deposits often led to the special landscape features which are so important to environmental quality. Furthermore, the growth of communities close to the mineral workings which provided employment, particularly in the coalfield valleys of Rhondda Cynon Taff is also an important factor in this conflict. The County Borough Council takes the view therefore that mineral exploitation should only take place in an environmentally acceptable manner.

9.2 Mineral Planning Guidance (MPG)

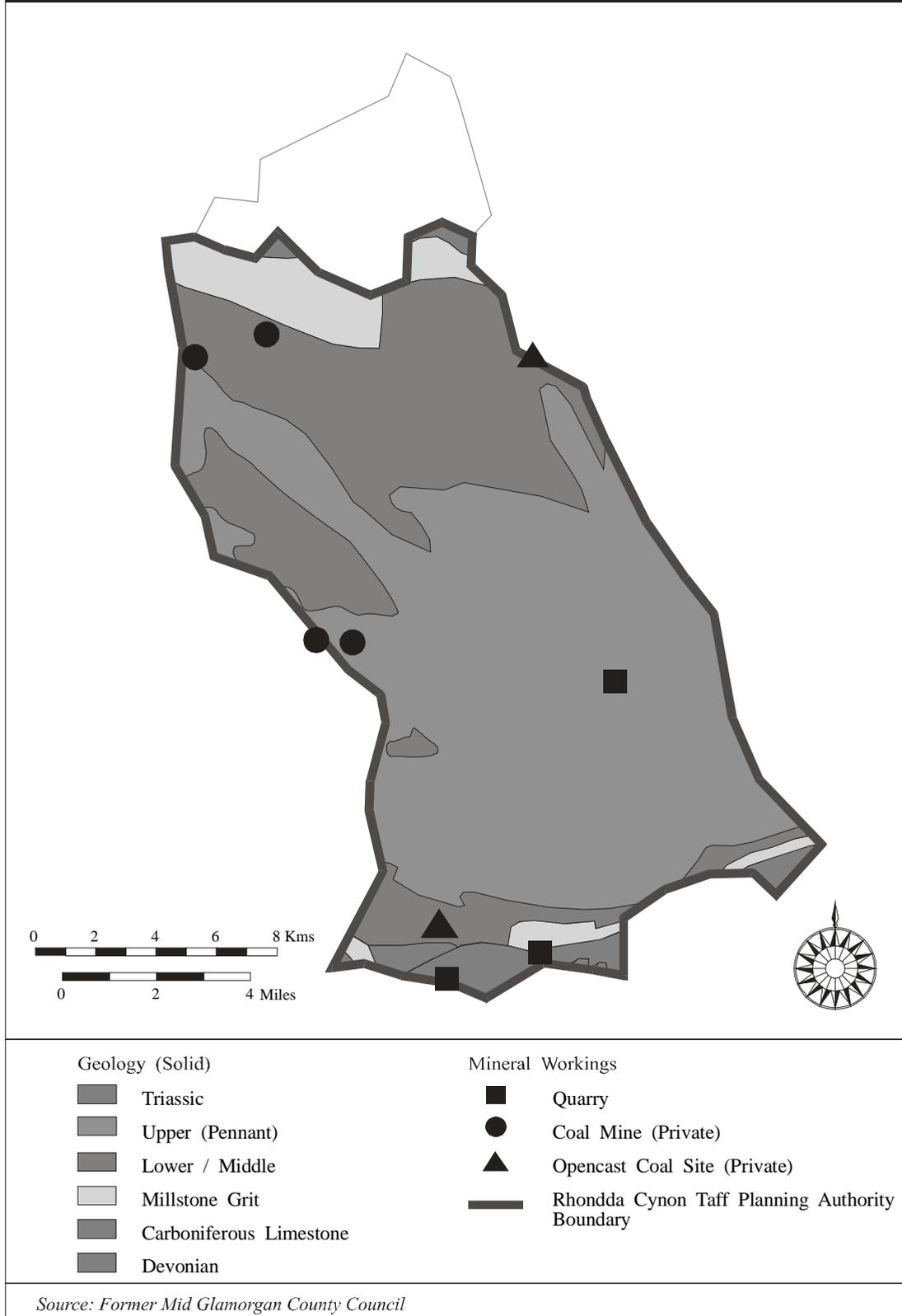
9.2.1 In recent years, there have been increasing concerns over the impact of mineral development on the environment. Central Government has recognised the importance of environmental issues in producing a series of Mineral Planning Guidance notes since 1988.

9.2.2 MPG1 sets out the general policy considerations for Mineral development while other MPG notes cover the control of development, the review of mineral development and reclamation of mineral workings. However, three of the notes relevant to Wales cover specific types of mineral workings namely coal mining and colliery spoil disposal (MPG3), the provision of Aggregates (MPG6), and Cement (MPG10). Those MPGs provide valuable advice on national and regional issues and draw upon work carried out by various bodies including the Regional Aggregates Working Parties. Consequently, in conjunction with other Planning Guidance, these Mineral Guidance Notes provide the type of advice needed for the preparation of Structure Plans.

9.2.3 The former County of Mid Glamorgan was a major mineral producing area, (Figure 8), and Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council recognises the need to maintain the County Borough's contribution to regional production and supply, to meet the demands of society. Within the framework of the Structure Plan, the former Mid Glamorgan County Council prepared a series of Quarry Appraisals and individual parts of a Minerals Subject Plan. A statutory Minerals Local Plan for Limestone Quarrying in Rhondda Cynon Taff has been adopted. That Plan contains general and site specific policies relating to the winning and working of limestone within the County Borough.



Figure 8. Rhondda Cynon Taff: Geology and Mineral Workings





9.3 Minerals Policies

9.3.1 Several issues have arisen since the Structure Plan was approved initially in 1982 and subsequently with modifications in 1989. These include for example new legislation, the introduction of Minerals Planning Guidance, and the greater awareness of environmental matters. In addition, experience gained from implementing existing policies through development control, appeals, and in the preparation of Minerals Local Plans has shown that some modification of the existing policies is necessary. It is therefore proposed to introduce a new set of mineral policies to cater for these changes and this experience. In doing so, the opportunity has also been taken to modify the format of the policies in order to deal with specific issues.

9.3.2 The minerals policies are also established in the context of sustainable development within which the concept of safeguarding of non renewable resources, use of alternatives and identifying the need for development are fundamental principles. Those concepts are consistent with advice in Minerals Planning Guidance notes and PG(W).

9.4 General Mineral Working Policy

9.4.1 Minerals extraction almost invariably has an adverse impact upon the environment and upon other land-uses. Although the individual characteristics of mineral workings may vary, there are many common factors which need to be considered in assessing proposals for mineral workings. In recognition of this situation and those factors which are common to all forms of mineral extraction, a policy is proposed against which (a) new proposals for development may be judged and (b) existing operations will be assessed in accordance with the terms of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Environment Act 1995. Further, criteria specific to the type of development are contained in subsequent policies.

MIN1 PROPOSALS FOR MINERAL EXTRACTION AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- (1) MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN TO REDUCE DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO THE ENVIRONMENT TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS
- (2) POLLUTION OR DISTURBANCE OF WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE ARE UNLIKELY TO RESULT FROM THE PROPOSAL
- (3) MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN TO REDUCE DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO NEIGHBOURING LAND USES TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS, INCLUDING THE EFFECTS OF EXCESSIVE NOISE, DUST, VIBRATION AND OTHER DISRUPTIVE INFLUENCES ARISING FROM THE METHODS OF WORKING OR THE DURATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT
- (4) THE PROPOSAL IS COMPATIBLE WITH TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS, PARTICULARLY TRAFFIC GENERATION TO AND FROM THE SITE, AND ACCESS
- (5) THERE ARE POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO THE ECONOMY, PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF CONTINUED OR ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT
- (6) PROPOSALS FOR RESTORATION, AFTERCARE AND BENEFICIAL AFTER-USE ARE SUITABLE
- (7) THE PROPOSAL IS UNLIKELY TO REDUCE THE STABILITY OF ADJOINING LAND
- (8) THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF UNSTABLE LAND ON OR IN THE VICINITY OF THE SITE OF THE PROPOSAL IS ACCEPTABLE.

9.5 Open Pit Excavations

9.5.1 In addition to the criteria listed in Policy MIN1, open pit excavations, which may include quarrying, opencast coal working, clay extraction, sand and gravel working and metalliferous mineral extraction have particular characteristics which need to be considered carefully.



MIN2 PROPOSALS FOR OPEN PIT MINERAL WORKING WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED SUBJECT TO POLICY MIN1 AND WHERE:-

- (1) DISTURBANCES CAUSED BY METHODS OF EXTRACTION, PARTICULARLY THE EXTENT OF ANY BLASTING, ARE UNLIKELY TO BE EXCESSIVE
- (2) DEPTH OF WORKING AND PHASING OF OPERATIONS DO NOT PREJUDICE SITE RESTORATION AND BENEFICIAL AFTER-USE
- (3) THE LEVEL OF ANNUAL OUTPUT AND SCALE OF WORKING OPERATIONS ARE UNLIKELY TO LEAD TO UNACCEPTABLE DISRUPTIVE EFFECTS ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY
- (4) SUITABLE MEASURES ARE PROPOSED TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF RELEVANT GEOLOGICAL FACTORS RELATING TO THE SITE, AND THEIR EFFECTS UPON THE EXTENT OF COMMERCIALY USEFUL RESERVES.

9.6 Future Mineral Working

9.6.1 For many years the former County Council adopted a policy which presumed against any new limestone quarries. This policy derived from detailed consideration of the known resources of limestone, the extent of permitted reserves, the location of existing quarries and the markets within which they operate. The County Borough Council at present believes there is no foreseeable need to open new limestone quarries within the Plan period and that markets can be satisfied by exploiting existing reserves and where necessary and appropriate, by extending existing quarries. Policy MIN3 proposes that new limestone quarries will not normally be permitted. Some flexibility is maintained therefore, to deal with changes to other material considerations including markets and overall supply within the region. In the case of sandstone the County Borough Council acknowledges that demand normally relates to the specialist skid resistance qualities of the stone and its use for road surfacing throughout the UK. Existing permitted reserves appear to be sufficient to meet present demands. However, should it be necessary to release further reserves either at existing sites or at new locations if overall UK demand should increase, such proposals would be considered under Policies MIN1 and MIN2.

MIN3 NEW LIMESTONE QUARRIES WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED.

9.6.2 As indicated above enlargements of existing quarries may be acceptable where they are compatible with other mineral policies. In some instances, lateral extensions to quarries may be premature particularly if resources are known to be present at depths which may be worked economically. However, as sites are worked to greater depth, geotechnical considerations may become more significant, and the influence of water table becomes more important. The former County Council supported research into these matters and the County Borough Council recognises the necessity to take them into account.

MIN4 FAVOURABLE CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO ENLARGEMENTS OF EXISTING QUARRIES SUBJECT TO MIN1, MIN2 AND MIN11. WHERE ENLARGEMENTS ARE CONSIDERED ACCEPTABLE THE DEEPENING OF EXISTING QUARRIES IN PREFERENCE TO LATERAL EXTENSIONS WILL BE FAVOURED SUBJECT TO ACCEPTABILITY IN TERMS OF GEOTECHNICAL, HYDROLOGICAL AND HYDROGEOLOGICAL FACTORS.

9.7 Mining

9.7.1 Mining has been the most dominant form of mineral extraction in Rhondda Cynon Taff. Mining for silica sandstone and iron-ore has now ceased and the drastic run-down in deep coal mining since 1984 has reduced the number of deep mines to one, at Tower Colliery. In addition, small scale coal mining continues at the other licensed coal mine in the County Borough. Whilst these mines have an impact locally, they do not have any particular characteristics which warrant policy consideration outside Policy MIN1.



9.8 Oil and Gas

9.8.1 Oil/gas exploration took place in the former County of Mid Glamorgan on several occasions. For the most part, this exploration has been restricted to vibroseis surveys with occasional use of explosive charges. Whilst the former County Council took the view that this form of development is transient with very limited environmental effects, it is prudent to present a policy on such activities as a guide to developers particularly if more detailed exploration by drilling is to be carried out.

MIN5 EXPLORATION FOR OIL AND GAS WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT ANY PROPOSALS CONTAIN APPROPRIATE MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND RESTORATION OF THE LAND.

9.8.2 The exploration work which has been carried out for oil and gas has not yet led to any proposals for extraction. However, it must be recognised that such development could take place if exploration proves that economically workable reserves exist. Proposals for oil/gas extraction will be examined under Policy MIN1.

9.9 Mineral Waste

9.9.1 With the decline in the deep mine coal industry, the requirement for land for tipping of colliery waste has reduced dramatically. Within Rhondda Cynon Taff the continued operation of Tower Colliery, the last operational deep mine in Wales, to the end of the plan period and beyond is dependent on additional waste tip capacity becoming available. Other mineral activities, including quarrying, also generate waste. It is necessary to make clear to developers how such proposals will be considered.

MIN6 PROPOSALS FOR THE TIPPING OF MINERAL WASTE WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THEY ARE ACCEPTABLE UNDER POLICY MIN1 AND WHERE:-

- (1) THE SCALE OF THE PROPOSED TIP IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE PRESENT LANDSCAPE
- (2) THE PROPOSED LAND FORM IN RELATION TO AFTER-USE IS CONSIDERED SUITABLE
- (3) THE PROPOSAL IS UNLIKELY TO GENERATE UNACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION, PARTICULARLY THAT LEADING TO ADVERSE EFFECTS ON WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY.

9.9.2 Spoil tips from former mineral workings sometimes contain economically workable deposits of material. In some instances there are quantities of small coal which can be recovered by washing the tip material, whereas others tips can provide large quantities of secondary aggregates for use as fill or as a feedstock for brick or block making. There has been much activity of this type in recent years and it is necessary to define a policy accordingly.

MIN7 APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING CONSENT FOR THE EXTRACTION OF MATERIAL FROM MINERAL WORKING DEPOSITS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THEY ARE ACCEPTABLE UNDER POLICY MIN1 AND WHERE:-

- (1) THE PROPOSAL MAINTAINS OR IMPROVES TIP SAFETY WHERE RELEVANT.
- (2) THE PROPOSAL IS UNLIKELY TO GENERATE UNACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION, PARTICULARLY THAT LEADING TO ADVERSE EFFECTS ON WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY.

9.10 Landbanks

9.10.1 Rhondda Cynon Taff is a major minerals producing area providing a significant proportion of regional production and available supply. The County Borough Council recognises that, it is necessary



to maintain the County Borough's contribution to regional mineral supply by ensuring that a sufficient stock of permitted reserves (i.e. a landbank) is available to meet the needs of industry. The construction industry requires aggregates (crushed rock, sand/gravel, secondary materials) for roads, buildings and civil engineering projects; the iron and steel industry requires limestone/dolomite for fluxing; the chemical industry requires minerals of special quality; and the cement industry requires limestone and shale. In determining the appropriate period for the landbank, it is necessary to have regard to the investment required in major quarries, the demand for the mineral, the level of production, and the impact of working.

MIN8 IN ORDER TO SECURE AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF CRUSHED ROCK TO MEET THE NEEDS OF INDUSTRY, A LANDBANK OF PERMITTED RESERVES AMOUNTING TO 20 YEARS WHERE APPROPRIATE, WILL BE MAINTAINED AT INDIVIDUAL SITES.

9.11 Mineral Protection Zones

9.11.1 The County Borough Council recognises that minerals can only be worked where they occur, and at times there is conflict between mineral working and other land-uses. The County Borough Council will seek to minimise that conflict by protecting reserves (with planning permission for working sites), or resources which have been identified for protection in the Minerals Local Plan for Limestone Quarrying, against other forms of development. That protection recognises that mineral reserves and resources could be sterilised when development is located directly upon, or adjacent to them. Furthermore, it recognises the potential impact of working those reserves and resources and it is necessary to introduce policies which restrict development which would sterilise such deposits.

MIN9 IN MEETING THE LANDBANK COMMITMENTS IN POLICY MIN8 ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD STERILISE RESERVES WITH PLANNING CONSENT FOR MINERAL WORKING TOGETHER WITH OTHER RESOURCES IDENTIFIED FOR PROTECTION IN MINERAL LOCAL PLANS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

MIN10 A MINERAL PROTECTION ZONE WITH A WIDTH TO BE DEFINED FOR EACH SITE IN THE MINERAL PLAN SHALL BE DRAWN OUTWARDS FROM THE BOUNDARY OF EXISTING QUARRIES AND RESERVES, IDENTIFIED IN MINERALS LOCAL PLANS, AND WITHIN THAT ZONE

(1) RESIDENTIAL OR OTHER SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT

AND/OR

(2) MINERAL DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

IN DEFINING EACH MINERAL PROTECTION ZONE ACCOUNT WILL BE TAKEN OF THE EFFECTS OF MINERAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE EXISTING AND PROPOSED PATTERN OF LAND USES IN THE VICINITY.

9.12 Sites of Environmental Importance

9.12.1 In view of the availability of mineral deposits elsewhere in Rhondda Cynon Taff, the County Borough Council considers that any new quarries or major extensions to existing sites which would produce unacceptable adverse affects on these areas of environmental importance would only be warranted in exceptional circumstances.

MIN11 NEW QUARRIES OR SUBSTANTIAL EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING QUARRIES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHERE THIS WOULD RESULT IN UNACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO SITES AND THEIR SETTINGS RECOGNISED AS HAVING NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL NATURE CONSERVATION, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, ARCHITECTURAL, OR HISTORIC IMPORTANCE.



9.13 Recycling/Use of Substitute Materials

9.13.1 The term 'Secondary Aggregates' refers to those materials which are produced as waste from naturally occurring deposits or from industrial byproducts, and which can be used in bulk in construction. Such materials may include clay/shale, colliery spoil, quarry waste, power station ash, iron and steel slag and other industrial products. These commodities have been used to provide bulk fill for road embankments, for road surfacing materials and as a feedstock for lightweight block making plants, and as such have reduced the potential demand for quarried products, particularly limestone. Across the South Wales region, only a small amount of aggregates consumption comprised secondary materials and the County Borough Council believes that greater utilisation could be achieved. Furthermore, where appropriate the County Borough Council will encourage recycling of construction materials such as concrete and road planings to reduce the need for new materials. Clearly some of these operations could have a detrimental effect on the environment, and there would need to be a proper balance between any operation and its effects.

MIN12 THE PRODUCTION OF SECONDARY AGGREGATES FROM THE WINNING OF NATURAL MATERIALS OR THE RECYCLING OF INDUSTRIAL WASTES WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THIS WOULD NOT RESULT IN UNACCEPTABLE DAMAGE TO THE ENVIRONMENT.





10. RETAILING

Strategy Elements

- To limit the loss of locally generated expenditure from the County Borough by improving the nature of shopping facilities in the County Borough.
- To establish the renewal of existing town centres in the County Borough as the priority area for future retail investment.
- To ensure that the vitality and viability of shopping centres in the County Borough is not undermined by new retail development in other locations.
- To allow limited additional floorspace in out of town locations where this is complementary to town centre development.
- To ensure that the existing support for the improvement to the physical environment of town centres continues.

10.1 Introduction

10.1.1 Retailing is commonly accepted to be an activity important to the whole community and not just shoppers. It is often an attractor of other investment in jobs and services. This attribute works best where floorspace can be concentrated in town centres which are likely to remain the most accessible locations for the bulk of the catchment population. Problems in coping with future general traffic growth and also the expected greater future role for public transport will have an effect on the suitability of certain locations for retailing and tend to favour town centres. These trends are reflected in the structure plan policies now proposed.

10.1.2 Retailing influences associated with major town centres or large new developments can extend over a wide area often beyond local authority boundaries. Hence these issues have always been given major coverage in previous Structure Plans for the former County. However, government planning guidance and recent changes to the retailing industry itself require a new set of retail policies for the period covered by the Replacement Plan.

10.2 Planning Guidance

10.2.1 PG(W) indicates that the Government's objectives are to sustain and enhance the vitality, attractiveness and viability of town and district centres; to ensure a wide range of shops, employment, services and facilities to which people have easy access by a choice of means of transport; to maintain an efficient, competitive and innovative retail sector; and to maximise the opportunities for shoppers and other town centre users to use means of transport other than the car.

10.3 Structure Plan Policy

10.3.1 The first structure plan recognised a deficiency in shopping facilities in many parts of the former County. Policies on retailing were therefore aimed at supporting existing town centres with new investment, whilst protecting them from out of centre developments, first as convenience good superstores and subsequently as durable goods retail warehouses.

10.3.2 Some areas of the County Borough have seen very little increase in the overall amount of floorspace and the current retailing position remains one of deficiency of provision for these areas. Evidence suggests that whereas most convenience and bulk durable goods expenditure is spent within



the County Borough, a very large proportion of other durable expenditure leaves the area, principally for Cardiff.

10.3.3 Town centres in Rhondda Cynon Taff continue to be small in durable goods floorspace terms compared to their catchments, while improvements to centres themselves, including the development of new floorspace, refurbishment of buildings and general environmental improvements, have sometimes proved difficult to implement. To achieve these improvements the former County and District Councils designated a series of CIAs under the urban programme, and its successor the Strategic Development Scheme, providing funding for the refurbishment of town centres in the valley areas. The County Borough Council is of the opinion that such funding needs to be maintained over the plan period not only to make further progress, but to sustain the improvements achieved to date.

10.3.4 Recent forecasts of long term retail expenditure, produced by the Unit for Retail Planning Information, indicate that both convenience and comparison (durable) expenditure will show growth over the plan period, albeit at a much lower rate than experienced in recent years (see Figure 9). Despite current approvals for increases in durable floorspace in Rhondda Cynon Taff's town centres, such proposals if implemented, are still unlikely to be able to absorb even the lower projected growth of expenditure. Hence some areas stand to lose an even larger proportion of local durables expenditure. The County Borough Council considers there are good reasons for attempting to limit this possibility and to retain expenditure in the local catchment. These include increasing the number of jobs in an area, reducing the length of shopping journeys, increasing the scale of retailing functions with the possibility of attracting further development, and priming other developments where land supply conditions are suitable. It is therefore considered vital that existing proposals for new floorspace are implemented, that investment that has taken place so far in CIAs is safeguarded, new investment is renewed and refurbishment encouraged while there is some scope for a limited amount of additional new floorspace.

10.3.5 The shopping strategy for the County Borough therefore gives the improvement of existing main town centres high priority, while seeking the appropriate development of new floorspace on permitted out of centre sites, with a view to limiting the loss of locally generated consumer expenditure from the County Borough.

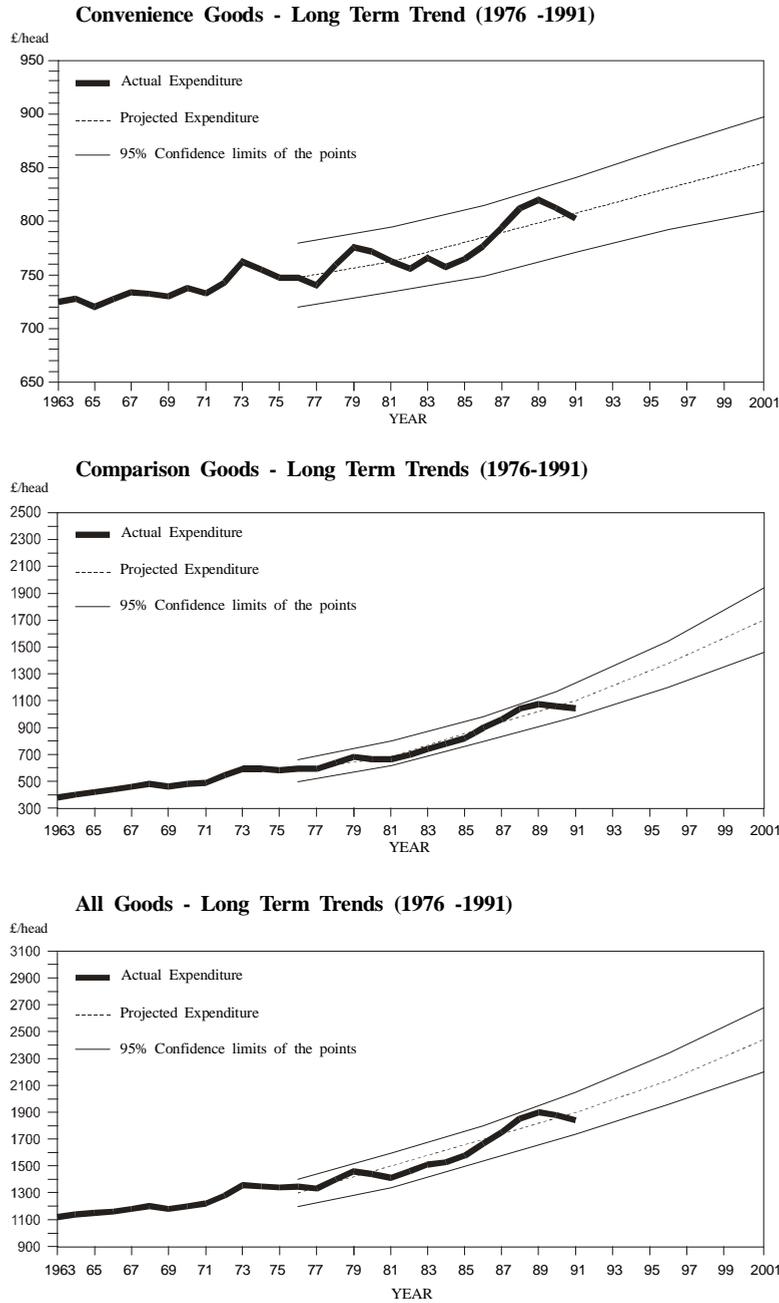
10.4 Town Centres

10.4.1 Major town centres of the County Borough are shown in Table 6 and Figure 10. Proposals for new floorspace in these centres will in some cases increase their size substantially, whilst modernising and improving their overall competitive position. The expansion of such new floorspace aims to retain a greater proportion of local expenditure, and is thus considered essential to the maintenance and improvement of town centre vitality and viability while reducing the need for long distance shopping journeys to centres often outside the County Borough.

10.4.2 New policies are proposed below, to indicate clearly the main priorities for town centre investment; firstly, to identify the shopping centres in which major development is preferred; and secondly, to ensure that developments within the centres are of an appropriate nature. The latter is particularly important in improving the competitive ability of town centres, especially in view of their already congested nature in many cases. However, policy also seeks to ensure such approvals must have regard to possible effects on other centres within the former Mid Glamorgan and neighbouring areas. In this and in cases related to out of town centre shopping, nearby centres will be considered to include those in neighbouring authorities.



Figure 9. UK Annual Average Consumer Retail Expenditure per Head Actual and Projected (1985 prices)



Source: URPI Newsletter 3/93

**Table 6. Major Shopping Centres in Rhondda Cynon Taff**

CENTRE	Existing Floorspace (Net Sq.m.)	Approved Floorspace (Net Sq.m.)	Total (Net Sq.m.)
SUB-REGIONAL CENTRES			
Pontypridd	13,111	8,300	21,411
Aberdare	13,463	3,700	17,163
DISTRICT CENTRES			
Talbot Green	12,913	----	12,913
Tonypanydy	8,904	----	8,904
Porth	7,918	----	7,918
Treorchy	5,993	----	5,993
Mountain Ash	5,011	----	5,011
<i>Source: Former Mid Glamorgan County Council</i>			

R1 THE TOWN CENTRES IN THE COUNTY BOROUGH (INCLUDING WHERE APPLICABLE, AREAS ADJACENT TO THEM), AS DEFINED IN LOCAL PLANS, WILL BE MAINTAINED AND ENHANCED LARGELY ON THE BASIS OF THE ROLE INDICATED BY THE FOLLOWING HIERARCHY:

MAJOR TOWN CENTRES

SUB REGIONAL CENTRES

- (1) ABERDARE
- (2) PONTYPRIDD

DISTRICT CENTRES

- (1) PORTH
- (2) TREORCHY
- (3) TONYPANDY
- (4) MOUNTAIN ASH
- (5) TALBOT GREEN

MINOR TOWN CENTRES

ALL OTHER EXISTING SHOPPING CENTRES IDENTIFIED IN LOCAL PLANS (NORMALLY EXCLUDING RETAIL WAREHOUSE PARKS AND FREESTANDING LARGE RETAIL STORES) WILL GENERALLY BE CONSIDERED AS LOCAL OR NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES WHICH ARE INTENDED TO SERVE THE RETAIL NEEDS OF THE SETTLEMENT OR IMMEDIATE LOCALITY.

R2 PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALL NEW RETAIL FLOORSPACE IN THE CENTRES INDICATED IN R1 WILL BE PERMITTED SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

- (1) THE PROPOSAL BY VIRTUE OF ITS SCALE IS UNLIKELY TO UNDERMINE THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF NEARBY SHOPPING CENTRES AS A WHOLE (INCLUDING PROPOSALS FOR NEW FLOORSPACE WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO THEM WHICH ARE ESSENTIAL TO THIS)



- (2) THE PROPOSAL IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE EXISTING PHYSICAL CHARACTER OF THE CENTRE
- (3) THE PROPOSAL IS COMPATIBLE WITH TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING PARKING, TRAFFIC GENERATION, AND ACCESS).

10.5 Existing and Approved Retail Warehouse Parks

10.5.1 Until the early 1990s pressure to provide out of town centre locations for durable goods was largely restricted to the sale of bulk durable goods such as DIY, furniture and electrical goods. Such pressures arose initially for individual stores to be followed by proposals for retail warehouse parks. In 1993, nearly 1,000,000 sq.ft. (gross) of this form of floorspace was trading in the former County, while a further 1,300,000 sq.ft. remained in unimplemented planning permissions, mainly in the form of retail parks.

10.5.2 The County Borough Council accepts that there are some advantages in concentrating bulky goods shopping in suitable town centre sites and in out of centre retail warehouse parks where suitable sites are unavailable in town centres. These advantages include the prospect of local retention of expenditure, new jobs and the reduction of long shopping journeys, together with car parking and public transport provision. Indeed where there is floorspace potentially available in such approved locations the County Borough Council would wish to discourage further sporadic retail warehouses to give priority to the full development of these sites. This might include the prospect of securing the relocation of existing units to the approved developments. Policy R3 thus seeks to concentrate new large units (i.e. at least 10,000 sq.ft. gross) selling mainly durable goods, to existing or approved sites where they are available.

R3 PROPOSALS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW LARGE RETAIL UNITS SELLING DURABLE GOODS OUTSIDE OF THE CENTRES INDICATED IN R1, WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THEY ARE LOCATED WITHIN EXISTING OR APPROVED RETAIL UNITS OR SITES, AND PROVIDED THEY ARE COMPATIBLE WITH R5.

10.6 Superstores

10.6.1 Superstore policy in the County Borough has always tended towards restriction of out of centre development on grounds of potential damage to the convenience trade of town centres. However, the Secretary of State has, as indicated above, tended to view superstore impact in terms of the town as a whole, and has often allowed such development at appeal.

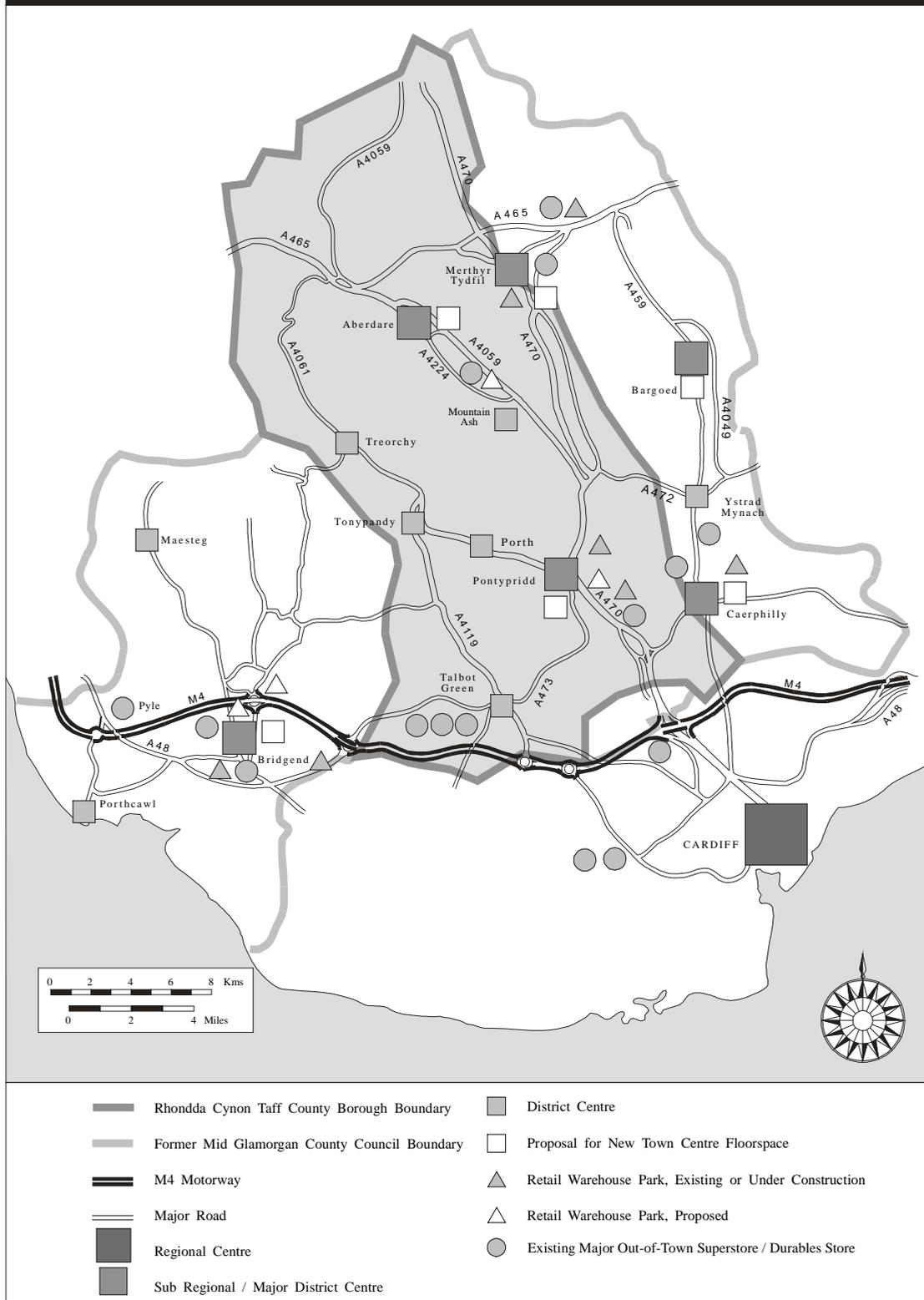
10.6.2 Most convenience goods expenditure is retained in the County Borough with very little 'leakage' elsewhere. Projected growth rates over the plan period are likely to be low in relation to those experienced in the 1980s (Figure 9). This would therefore suggest that any further major increases in floorspace (including some of those already approved), where they are not directly related to new expenditure, must involve some convenience trade redistribution from town centres and existing stores. PG(W) also indicates that out of centre food supermarkets should not be allowed if they are likely to lead to the loss of general food retailing in the centre of small towns. These matters will be considered under the criteria dealing with town centre vitality and viability contained in policy R4.

10.7 New Out of Town Centre Sites and Floorspace

10.7.1 Policy R4 introduces a series of criteria to deal with new durable and convenience sites and floorspace in out of town centre locations. Large units are considered to be those of at least 10,000sqft (gross). Major shopping centres would be at least 40,000sqft (gross), and could contain groups of retail outlets including factory shops.



Figure 10. Former County of Mid Glamorgan with Cardiff area: Major Service Centres and Retail Outlets





10.7.2 The first criterion requires that the effect of a new proposal outside of approved and existing retail locations should be examined in terms of whether they are likely to undermine the need to maintain the vitality and viability of neighbouring town centres. This will include the examination of such effects on proposals for new floorspace within town centres which are essential to this aim, especially where such proposals are central to development plan strategy for the town centre. Recent decisions by the courts have indicated that important factors in this consideration would include the likelihood that the town centre development would not otherwise proceed and that there are clear disbenefits to the town centre in such development not proceeding. In order to assist with the proper consideration of this criterion it is therefore recommended that a retail impact assessment should be supplied by the applicant for each proposal covered by this policy.

10.7.3 In addition to the question of vitality and viability, PG(W) introduces a sequential approach towards site development where town centres are the preferred location. If these are available then edge of town sites will usually be the preferred location for new retail development, and out of centre sites in locations which are accessible by a choice of means of transport will be considered finally.

10.7.4 Shorter distances to shop may result from the provision of new facilities, particularly where this involves the clawback of trade currently leaving an area. However, longer and in some cases more difficult journeys, together with increased private car usage, could also result from loss of facilities in nearby town centres, or the development of new sites relying upon the attraction of regional trade. Significant increases in travel where this involves private car usage may also conflict with government policy for the reduction of overall levels of pollution. Proposals dealt with under R4 should therefore be accompanied by a statement indicating how the development is likely to effect existing shopping travel patterns, the level of private car usage and potential effects on carbon dioxide levels and other polluting emissions.

R4 PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW RETAIL FLOORSPACE OTHER THAN THOSE COVERED BY R2 AND R3, AND CONSISTING OF EITHER:

- (1) MAJOR NEW SHOPPING CENTRES
- (2) NEW RETAIL PARKS OR GROUPS OF LARGE UNITS SELLING MAINLY DURABLE GOODS
- (3) NEW LARGE SINGLE RETAIL UNITS SELLING MAINLY DURABLE GOODS
- (4) NEW LARGE UNITS OR SUPERSTORES SELLING MAINLY CONVENIENCE GOODS

WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHERE:

- (1) THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF NEARBY TOWN CENTRES IS LIKELY TO BE UNDERMINED, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF OTHER APPROVED RETAIL DEVELOPMENT.
- (2) THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN ALLOCATES AN APPROPRIATE SITE WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO THE TOWN CENTRE CAPABLE OF ACCOMMODATING THE PROPOSAL.
- (3) ACCESS TO THE PRIMARY ROAD NETWORK IS CONSIDERED INADEQUATE AND THERE ARE UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE EFFECTS ON TRAFFIC FLOWS
- (4) ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT IS CONSIDERED INADEQUATE
- (5) THE PROPOSAL LEADS TO UNACCEPTABLE CONFLICT WITH THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT OR THE MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL AMENITY
- (6) THE PROPOSAL IS LIKELY TO LEAD TO UNACCEPTABLE IMPACTS ON OVERALL SHOPPING TRAVEL PATTERNS, PARTICULARLY WHERE THIS INVOLVES MAJOR INCREASES IN PRIVATE CAR TRAVEL
- (7) THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF R6 WHERE THE USE OF INDUSTRIAL LAND IS INVOLVED.



10.7.5 Retail warehouses, both on retail warehouses parks and as freestanding units, have tended to be devoted to bulky goods, for which large display space and extensive car parking are essential requirements. Such units, it has been argued, were not only difficult to accommodate in often congested town centres, but were not vital to the viability to the town centre itself since they often formed only a small proportion of the floorspace. Indeed the Secretary of State has often found in their favour at appeal concluding in some cases that nearly all of the bulky goods sector could be accommodated in such sites with little effect. Coincident with this, conditions have been imposed on such schemes and accepted by the Secretary of State, that the goods sold on such sites should be restricted, to bulky items. This would prevent goods more suitable to town centres from being sold.

10.7.6 In view of the large area of permitted floorspace of this kind in relation to estimates of the growth of future expenditure, there are likely to be pressures to change its nature towards higher value goods, and fill vacant or undeveloped floorspace. Meanwhile as indicated above, existing town centres, even with existing proposals for expansion, are unlikely to be able to absorb all projected increases in expenditure in durable goods, while new forms of retailing evolve over time. The County Borough Council therefore believes that there is some scope for limited flexibility towards the nature of floorspace on retail parks and other out of centre developments. This is suggested as a balanced approach to the creation of floorspace which for example may help to secure the development of existing parks and thus provide new local floorspace, while limiting the scale of impact on existing town centres. Floorspace in existing or approved single or groups of out of centre durable units and new units or sites acceptable under R3 or R4, should remain largely confined to the sale of bulky durable goods commonly found in retail warehouses. The sale of other durable goods would not be appropriate where this would, undermine the vitality and viability of town centres (see 10.7.2 above), including where there are new town centre proposals which are considered essential to this. In addition for the sale of these goods to be acceptable it should also be clearly shown that no suitable town centre development plan allocation, is capable of accommodating the proposal. New kinds of floorspace must also be considered in terms of any new traffic generation characteristics. Policy R5 is proposed as a basis for controlling the character of existing, approved and future out of town centre retailing sites, and can be further detailed in local plan policies based on local circumstances.

R5 ALL EXISTING, APPROVED, OR NEW DURABLE RETAIL FLOORSPACE OUTSIDE OF THE CENTRES REFERRED TO IN R1 WILL NORMALLY BE RESTRICTED TO OUTLETS SELLING BULKY DURABLE GOODS WITHIN CLASS A1 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (USE CLASSES) ORDER 1987. THE SALE OF OTHER DURABLE GOODS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHERE:

- (1) THIS IS LIKELY TO UNDERMINE THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF NEARBY TOWN CENTRES

OR

- (2) SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE TOWN CENTRE SITES ARE ALLOCATED IN THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN CAPABLE OF ACCOMMODATING SUCH FLOORSPACE

OR

- (3) THE PROPOSAL IS UNACCEPTABLE IN TERMS OF TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS.

10.8 Industrial Land

10.8.1 The introduction of large out of town retail units and parks has required the use of extensive flat sites. Often such sites were originally designated as industrial sites, and a number have now been given over to retailing uses, following planning appeals. PG(W) indicates that applications for retail use should not normally be allowed on land designated for other uses, especially industry and employment, in the development plan.

10.8.2 In Rhondda Cynon Taff, land suitable for industry is a finite and scarce resource. In the interests of the principle of sustainability alone it needs to be carefully husbanded even though development for industry may be many years away. It is the long term needs of the community rather



than the need for a developer to make a return on investment in land that must be paramount. In any case, in view of the scale of existing permissions and the projected low growth of retail expenditure, it is clear that permitting retailing uses on industrial sites does not guarantee their short term development.

10.8.3 The development of industrial sites, usually takes place over many years - sometimes extending beyond the Structure Plan period. There is also a demonstrable need in the County Borough to improve the quality of jobs available. While those in retailing make a valuable contribution to the overall stock of jobs, jobs in industry or other commercial sectors usually offer the prospect of higher quality and variety. The County Borough Council considers it is inappropriate to release such sites where they are in short supply. It is therefore proposed to continue the restrictions on retailing on industrial sites, similar to those adopted in Approved Structure Plan policy R7, as follows.

R6 THE USE OF INDUSTRIAL SITES FOR ANY NEW RETAIL FLOORSPEACE (INCLUDING RETAIL PARKS AND INDIVIDUAL DURABLE UNITS AND SUPERSTORES), WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED, WHERE IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THERE IS A SUFFICIENT QUANTITY AND VARIETY OF LAND AVAILABLE FOR MANUFACTURING AND SERVICE INDUSTRY WITHIN THAT DISTRICT OR RELEVANT TRAVEL TO WORK AREA, AND RETAIL LAND IS SCARCE . RETAIL USES OTHER THAN THOSE ANCILLARY TO THE SITE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED ON SPECIAL EMPLOYMENT SITES UNDER E5.





11. LEISURE

Strategy Elements

- To encourage the development of new leisure facilities where these are compatible with the conservation of the environment.
- To encourage the wider public use of existing leisure facilities.
- To encourage the further development of tourism in the County Borough by supporting new attractions and destinations.
- To improve and extend the opportunities for the informal public enjoyment of the countryside where these are compatible with the conservation of the environment.

11.1 Introduction

11.1.1 Development Plan policy relating to leisure has traditionally been dealt with under the headings of recreation and tourism. This has usually been on the basis that the former related largely to needs of residents, whereas the latter provides for visitors. Such a distinction is often arbitrary especially when many tourist facilities also seek more localised support. With this in view this section will introduce policies for sport, recreation and tourism under the general heading of leisure in keeping with other Structure Plan reviews in South Wales.

11.1.2 Local authorities, including the County Borough Council, are major developers and funders of leisure facilities of many kinds and scales. For larger developments or projects the former Mid Glamorgan County Council often acted in partnership with other councils to increase the financial support available. This form of arrangement has led to major schemes such as the Rhondda Heritage Park, the Glyncofel Environmental Studies Centre and the Caerphilly Mountain Countryside Service. Smaller projects and management schemes also form a major element of the work, and are often supported directly by the County Borough Council independently. The Structure and Local Plans seek to provide the policy framework for devising and implementing such projects.

11.1.3 Strategic Development Plan Policies relating to leisure are important for a number of reasons.

- Many potential development sites are in countryside locations and may be in areas receiving special protection for landscape, historical or environmental conservation reasons. Such areas are sometimes suffering from over use, and it is important to ensure that further damage is avoided.
- The leisure industries are growing in employment and becoming proportionally even more important with the decline of traditional industries. Many new major and minor leisure facilities have been introduced. It is important to provide a sound basis for the further development of the leisure industry.
- Demographic and social changes within the population have led to major increases in participation in most types of leisure activity. It is important to ensure such improvements to the quality of life continue.

11.2 Planning Guidance

11.2.1 Planning advice on leisure developments is contained in PG(W) and aims to support the development of sport and recreation for everyone. It states that the planning system should ensure that adequate land and water resources are allocated, both for organised sport and recreation.



11.2.2 Open spaces which have amenity or recreational value should be protected from development, particularly in urban areas. PG(W) indicates that all playing fields should be protected where facilities can best be retained and enhanced through the redevelopment of a small part of the site; alternative provision of equal community benefit is made available; or there is an excess of such provision in the area.

11.2.3 PG(W) indicates that plans should seek to enable facilities and accommodation for tourism to be provided and improved. As well as supporting existing tourist areas, plans should encourage appropriate tourist-related commercial development in new destinations including existing urban areas, in other locations well served by public transport and small-scale tourism related developments in rural areas.

11.3 New Leisure projects and developments

11.3.1 The main advantages of Rhondda Cynon Taff from a leisure point of view include particular elements of its countryside, and its historical and industrial heritage. Furthermore its location at the centre of the South Wales region is also supported by improving transport links to other parts of the UK. The County Borough is therefore, reasonably placed to attract developments requiring a substantial catchment population, catering for both the day trip and short stay market.

11.3.2 A number of substantial developments have been carried out in Rhondda Cynon Taff by local authorities since 1974. They so far include country parks, leisure centres, interpretation centres and the Rhondda Heritage Park. In addition existing major attractions have been enhanced while a small number of new private sector projects have also been developed. In future, more and more reliance is likely be placed on the need to protect, enhance and manage existing facilities and resources, while encouraging the development of new private sector schemes, perhaps in partnership with local authorities. However, all major schemes should still be subject to an assessment of their suitability against environmental and other strategic policies.

11.3.3 There are obvious economic advantages in encouraging people to stay within the County Borough as well as visiting its attractions. The County Borough Council places great emphasis on improving the range and quality of self catering and serviced accommodation available, including new hotels, chalet developments and touring caravan and camping sites. The provision of all leisure related accommodation should be well related to the transportation network whilst ensuring that impact on the environment and existing development is minimised. This will include the examination of any adverse effects on the landscape, nature conservation, building conversions and alterations to historic buildings and gardens, as covered by the environmental policies. However, leisure developments in the countryside should normally be limited to those for which such locations are essential. Specific justification would be necessary to allow other leisure uses in the countryside. Policy L1 is therefore proposed to guide the introduction of all new leisure developments and the extension or enhancement of existing facilities.

L1 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR THE PROVISION OF LEISURE BASED FACILITIES OR ACCOMMODATION (INCLUDING RELEVANT FARM DIVERSIFICATION SCHEMES), WILL BE PERMITTED SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:-

- (1) WHERE A COUNTRYSIDE LOCATION IS INVOLVED, IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT SUCH A LOCATION IS APPROPRIATE TO THE PROPOSAL
- (2) DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO THE ENVIRONMENT CAN BE REDUCED TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS
- (3) THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH THE MAINTENANCE OF FARM VIABILITY AND THE PROTECTION OF THE BEST QUALITY AGRICULTURAL LAND, PARTICULARLY WHERE FARM DIVERSIFICATION IS INVOLVED



- (4) THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING PARKING, TRAFFIC GENERATION, AND ACCESS)
- (5) ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT IS CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE FOR THE NATURE OF THE PROPOSAL
- (6) THE AVAILABILITY OF IDENTIFIED MINERAL RESOURCES OR RESERVES IS NOT STERILISED
- (7) THE PROPOSAL IS WELL RELATED TO THE SURROUNDING URBAN SETTLEMENT WHERE RELEVANT
- (8) THE PROPOSAL IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL AMENITY.

11.4 Urban and Urban Fringe Leisure Development

11.4.1 Areas within and on the fringes of settlements in the County Borough have formed a main priority area for the encouragement of formal and informal leisure activity. Leisure developments on the fringes of settlements, in addition to being highly accessible, can often provide a useful buffer between agricultural and urban uses, perhaps serving to preserve existing breaks between settlements. Urban fringe locations can offer local provision to socially and economically disadvantaged sections of the population with limited mobility, while at the same time forming a useful means of achieving local environmental improvements, and providing local employment opportunities. Some schemes have now been developed in the County Borough, ranging from the Cardiff periphery to the edge of the National Park, often involving several agencies.

11.4.2 Developing the potential for leisure provision within settlements and in the urban fringe should remain a priority, to be defined further by specific schemes and areas in local plans. This does not imply that facilities for leisure will automatically be considered suitable for urban fringe sites. It is intended that facilities normally found within built-up areas should remain in these areas unless suitable sites are unavailable to accommodate them.

L2 LEISURE BASED DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN SETTLEMENT AREAS, OR ADJACENT TO THEM WHERE NO SUITABLE ALTERNATIVES ARE AVAILABLE WITHIN THE BUILT UP AREA WILL BE FAVOURED.

11.5 Priorities for Leisure Provision

11.5.1 The previous Structure Plans identified serious deficiencies of leisure provision on a local scale in the valley areas of the County Borough. This was related to the difficulties of providing facilities such as playing fields in urban areas. Accordingly the need to cater for leisure demands occurring in these areas was given a high priority in this plan.

11.5.2 Many new projects have been developed in the valley areas, including new facilities such as sports centres, playing fields on land created by land reclamation schemes and local countryside management and interpretation schemes - all of which have helped to improve access and participation. However, the below average participation rates in organised sports in the County Borough, identified by the Sports Council study, still points towards lack of opportunity and under provision in the County Borough. Further studies carried out by the Sports Council however, have also shown that the level of 'unsatisfied demand' for sports facilities, representing the percentage shortfall in demand not satisfied by existing provision, varies across the County Borough according to the nature of the facility. Hence the Rhondda sector of the County Borough shows the highest unsatisfied demand for sports halls, while the Cynon sector shows the highest level of demand for additional swimming pools (see table 7). While the County Borough Council would wish to encourage a general improvement in local leisure provision for the population as a whole, priority should be awarded to satisfying identifiable local deficiencies of demand for specific major facilities. The information provided by the Sports Council concerning unsatisfied demands will be of particular importance to the recognition of such deficiencies and should be taken into consideration in local plans.

**Table 7. Rhondda Cynon Taff - Unsatisfied Demand for Selected Leisure Facilities by former District areas**

Former District Area	(1) Sports Halls	(2) Welsh Ranking	(1) Swimming Pools	(2) Welsh Ranking
Cynon Valley #	37%	26	30%	4
Rhondda	82%	1	12%	18
Taff Ely *	47%	16	25%	8

(1) Percentage unsatisfied by existing facilities
(2) Ranking within Wales of levels of unsatisfied demand
Date: September 1992

Includes area now transferred to Brecon Beacons National Park
* Includes Pentyrch Community Council area now transferred to Cardiff County

Source: Sports Council for Wales

L3 DEVELOPMENT WHICH SATISFIES THE NEEDS FOR LOCAL LEISURE FACILITIES FROM ALL SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY WILL BE FAVOURED. PRIORITY FOR THE PROVISION OF MAJOR LOCAL LEISURE FACILITIES WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE LEVEL OF UNSATISFIED DEMAND FOR THOSE FACILITIES.

11.6 Protection of Existing facilities

11.6.1 Existing or potential facilities, already in short supply in some areas, especially where they are on the fringe of settlements, are sometimes threatened by competing land uses. In view of shortages of provision which exist across the area, the County Borough Council considers that other new development should not normally lead to an overall reduction or loss of such facilities. It is accepted however, there may be cases where a leisure use can be demonstrated to be redundant due to population or social change. The Borough Council also considers that where practical, public rights of way, which are an important means of enjoying the countryside, should also be retained or replaced.

L4 NEW DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT OR A CHANGE OF USE WHICH RESULTS IN THE DISCONTINUANCE OF AN EXISTING LEISURE FACILITY, INCLUDING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY, WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- (1) AN ALTERNATIVE FACILITY CAN BE PROVIDED WITH AT LEAST AN EQUIVALENT LEVEL OF PROVISION
- OR
- (2) IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT ITS CONTINUED USE AS A LEISURE FACILITY IS NOT REQUIRED.

11.7 Multiple Use of Facilities

11.7.1 PG(W) indicates that in urban areas where land supply is limited, sports facilities which are capable of intensive use will reduce pressure on urban open space. Consideration should be given in appropriate locations, particularly in rural areas, to the dual use of school facilities, the provision of village halls and appropriate conversions of farm buildings for playing fields and other facilities. The County Borough Council believes that multi-use of facilities can do much to satisfy leisure needs in the



County Borough, especially where land is scarce or finance limited. For example the Sports Council has suggested that general public use of educational leisure facilities, could provide for approximately 50% of presently unaccommodated leisure centre type needs. The County Borough Council would therefore wish to continue Structure Plan policy for the multiple use of leisure facilities.

L5 THE USE OF EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER PUBLICLY OWNED ESTABLISHMENTS FOR WIDER COMMUNITY LEISURE PURPOSES WILL BE FAVOURED.

11.8 Access To The Countryside

11.8.1 Walking is probably the major leisure activity in the countryside, popular with all sections of the community. Local authorities in the former County gave considerable attention to the provision and maintenance of such public access, including the provision in partnership of cross district schemes such as the Ridgeway Walk and the Taff Trail.

11.8.2 Cycling is also becoming more popular as a leisure activity, and has recently found more Government support because of its environmentally friendly nature. Over the last few years recreational cycle routes have been developed in the County Borough, also associated in some cases with footpaths. Particularly helpful here has been the ability to use disused railway lines.

11.8.3 Bridleways are another form of public access to the countryside. However, horse riding has often lead to major conflicts with other public users or contributed significantly to erosion. It is therefore likely that many parts of the existing bridleway network need to be improved, altered or extended to resolve these conflicts.

11.8.4 The County Borough Council considers it is essential that the work of all relevant agencies be co-ordinated with regard to the provision, protection and maintenance of the various kinds of public rights of way. Some of these are at present in unsatisfactory condition, and the County Borough Council is concerned that improvement should continue as a matter of urgency. Also the Authority is currently re-classifying Roads Used as Public Paths as either footpaths, bridleways or as byways open to all traffic. In addition opportunities have already been taken to link in leisure facilities and attractions along existing and new routes. Policy L6 is thus proposed to encourage the continuation of the work carried out so far to develop networks in the County Borough. This activity should be defined further in local plans, and other management documents.

L6 NETWORKS OF ROUTES FOR THE PUBLIC ENJOYMENT OF THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL CONTINUE TO BE DEVELOPED HAVING REGARD TO THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT, AND CONFLICT BETWEEN POTENTIAL USERS.

11.9 Priorities for Tourism

11.9.1 Major improvements are taking place in parts of the County Borough, based upon different kinds of attractions. The County Borough Council believes that further designations, as priority areas, would enhance their status and encourage a co-ordinated management strategy. A major part of the renewal strategy involves the development of tourist facilities, especially in the Northern Valleys, the enhancement of the area's rich industrial and historical heritage and local leisure provision. Policy L7 is therefore proposed to recognise areas as specific priorities for the development of tourism. This should not be interpreted however, as indicating that specific facilities outside these areas will not be supported.

L7 LEISURE BASED DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WHICH SUPPORT THE FURTHER ENHANCEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTHERN VALLEYS AREAS AS MAJOR TOURIST AREAS WILL BE FAVOURED.



11.10 Forest Land Sales and Recreational Access and Use

11.10.1 The Forest Enterprise is required to sell off 10% of its land holding in the period up to the end of the century. The County Borough Council supports the principle that where the public currently enjoys access to such land, this should be maintained and arrangements drawn up, where possible, between the relevant Minister, the Local Authority and any third party to achieve this. Such Continued Access Agreements will allow public access, normally on foot, maintaining the informal quiet recreational use of these areas.

L8 THE CONTINUED PUBLIC ACCESS TO AND INFORMAL RECREATIONAL USE OF LAND TO BE DISPOSED OF BY THE FOREST ENTERPRISE WILL BE FAVOURED, AND CONTINUED ACCESS AGREEMENTS WILL BE USED TO ACHIEVE THIS.



12. UTILITY SERVICES

Strategy Element

- To ensure that the need to develop utility services in the County Borough takes due account of the need to conserve the environment.

12.1 Introduction

12.1.1 Although detailed policies relating to the provision of utility services are appropriate to local plans, there are certain utilities which by their nature may be important from a strategic point of view, especially with regard to the nature of their impact on the environment. The County Borough Council has therefore proposed a number of policies to consider the development of utility services, with particular reference to renewable energy, and the provision of telecommunications facilities.

12.2 Renewable Energy - Existing National Policy

12.2.1 The Government's overall energy policy is to ensure secure, diverse and sustainable supplies of energy through the mechanism of the market. It also intends to pursue this aim in the context of meeting its international environmental obligations to reduce the emission of pollutants. To meet this objective the Government will seek to 'stimulate the exploitation and development of renewable energy sources wherever they have prospects of being economically attractive and environmentally acceptable' (Energy Paper No 35). Subsequently, Energy Paper No.62, 'New and Renewable Energy' (DTI 1994), states that the government will work towards 1500Mw of new generating capacity from UK renewable sources, by the end of the century. The mechanism for achieving this is the Non Fossil Fuel Order (NFFO) of the 1989 Electricity Act, which enables renewable energy producers to compete equitably with conventional sources.

12.2.2 Government planning advice on renewable energy is contained in PG(W). It explains the need to ensure that society's needs for energy are satisfied, consistent with protecting the local and global environment. The government wishes to stimulate the exploitation and development of renewable energy sources wherever they have the prospects of being economically attractive and environmentally acceptable. Development plans should address issues of renewable energy generation through wind, waste, water, sun and wood and the contribution it might make to making demand on a local, regional and national basis.

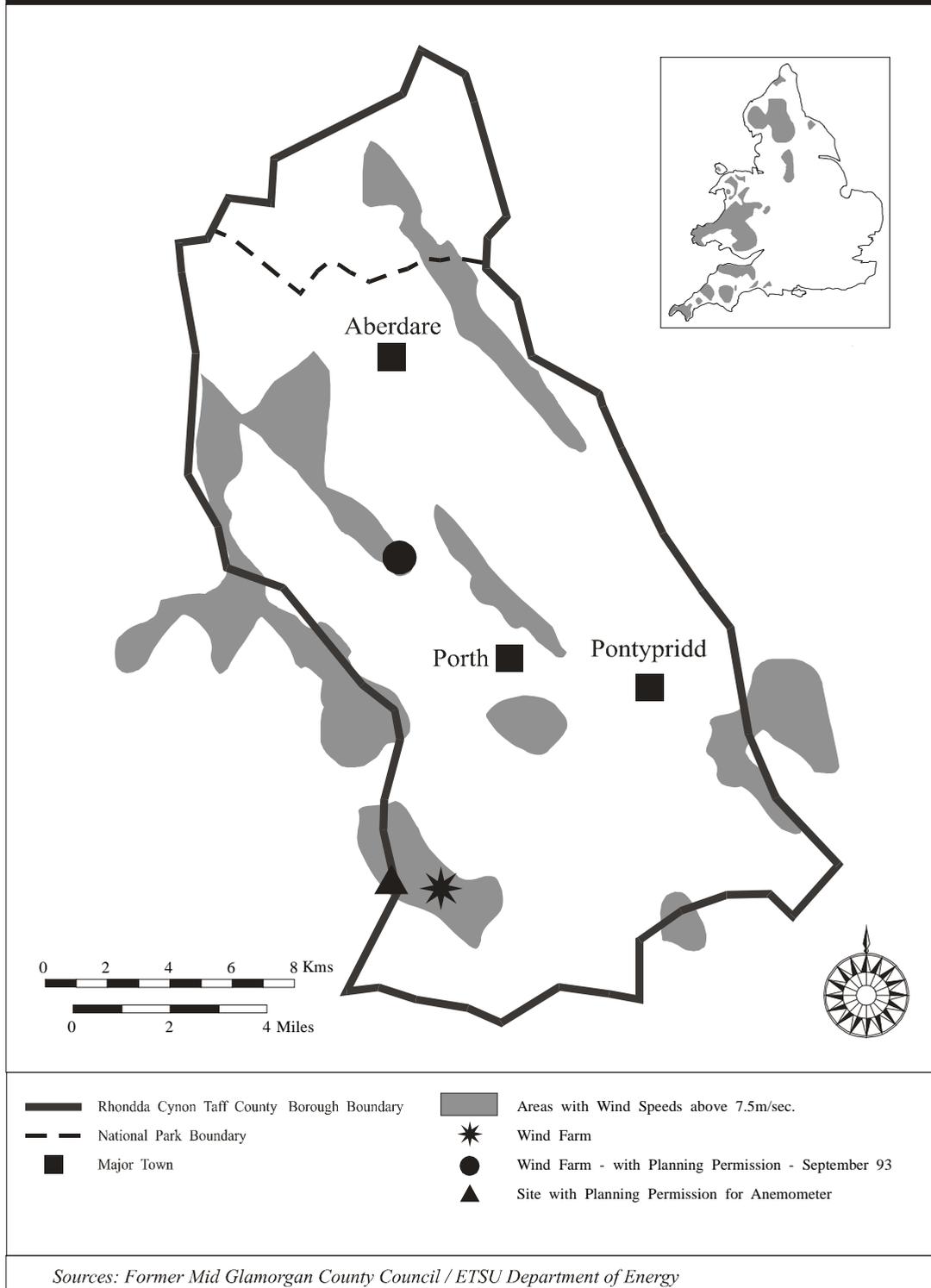
12.2.3 Whilst the former Mid Glamorgan County Council made an initial assessment of the wind resource in the former County, at the present time there is no information available to assess the County Borough's ability to meet local, regional or national requirements. However, the Standing Conference in South Wales in conjunction with the Energy Technological Support Unit (ETSU) undertook such a study during 1993/4. The results of the study in the form of a landscape assessment and policy guidelines have been considered where appropriate in the formulation of strategic renewable energy policies and will be used in subsequent reviews.

12.3 Renewable Energy Policy - Wind Power

12.3.1 Whilst wind power is likely to be a major contributor to the policy to develop 1500Mw of renewable energy by 2000, over the long term its future is less certain. The Department of Energy has estimated that the UK's potential for wind energy amounts to about 10% of current energy consumption. The House of Commons Welsh Affairs Committee, Report on Wind Energy 1994, notes that this could require between 10 and 15 thousand turbines throughout the UK. The NFFO scheme encourages wind farms to seek locations where wind speeds are in excess of 7.5m/sec. Much of the western part of the UK, including some of Rhondda Cynon Taff is consistently above this level, (Figure 11).



**Figure 11. Rhondda Cynon Taff:
 Average Wind Speeds Above 7.5m/sec.**



12.3.2 Parts of the County Borough appear technically suitable for wind power, based on average wind speed information. The majority of this involves land over 1000 ft above sea level, largely coinciding with areas of high landscape value, or proposed for inclusion in the development plan. There are two schemes in operation.



12.3.3 The annex to PPG22 still extant in Wales advises local authorities to weigh carefully the desirability of exploiting this clean renewable energy resource against the visual impact of wind turbines on the landscape. It is inevitable therefore, that there are likely to be cases of conflict in achieving this balance. Whilst local, regional and national requirements are a material consideration to be taken into account when assessing proposals the County Borough Council considers that these do not automatically outweigh the need to protect the environment as reflected in the development plan. Policies EV4, EV5 and EV10 introduce a hierarchy of protection for the landscape, sites of importance to environmental conservation and archaeological/historic sites. Other areas of the County Borough may well be able to provide alternative sites for wind power. An environmental assessment would therefore be required in these areas to demonstrate that other less damaging sites are unsuitable. Policy U1 is therefore proposed to express this viewpoint, which is also supported by the Standing Conference guidelines.

12.4 Renewable Energy Policy - Other Renewable Energy Facilities

12.4.1 Other forms of renewable energy relevant to the County Borough include energy crops, landfill gas, sewage gas, waste incineration and solar power, all of which are covered by the NFFO. Currently the County Borough Council considers scope for the exploitation of these power sources is likely to be limited in Rhondda Cynon Taff in the short term, compared to wind power. The locations required to produce these forms of energy are often in less exposed areas than those sought for wind power, while site facilities may be less extensive. Visual intrusion into protected landscapes is thus less likely. However, it is still vital to ensure such development remains compatible with environmental objectives. Policies U1 and U2 although dealing essentially with wind power, will also apply to all forms of renewable energy facilities. The adequacy of these policies will be kept under particularly close scrutiny as greater knowledge is gained of the practical possibilities of using these fuels and the likely commercial demand for their exploitation.

U1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITIES, INCLUDING THOSE FOR WIND POWER, WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHERE SUCH DEVELOPMENT WOULD RESULT IN UNACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO SITES AND THEIR SETTINGS RECOGNISED AS HAVING NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL NATURE CONSERVATION, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC IMPORTANCE.

12.4.2 Policies EV4 EV5 and EV10 refer to development plan designations for other landscape areas, sites important to nature conservation, and archaeological/historic sites. The special landscape areas in particular, provide the main source of wind power potential outside the areas referred to in U1. Since government policy establishes the need to produce wind energy it is therefore considered reasonable to expect that these areas should normally be able to contribute to providing sources of wind energy and indeed other forms of renewable energy, unless damage to landscape or environmental interests cannot be reduced to acceptable levels by siting amendments. The need to limit visually intrusive development in areas visible from the National Park will be given particular weight. The scale of the development in relation to the character of the landscape, and the cumulative visual effects due to other developments or approvals in the vicinity, are important factors in determining the level of visual intrusion involved. In addition renewable proposals will need to be compatible with neighbouring land uses in the vicinity, the detailed requirements of which would be contained in local plans. Policy U2 is proposed to deal with these issues.

U2 PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITIES AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING THOSE FOR WIND POWER, IN AREAS OTHER THAN THOSE REFERRED TO IN U1, WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- (1) THE PROPOSAL CAN BE LOCATED TO REDUCE DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO THE ENVIRONMENT TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS, PARTICULARLY THE LEVEL OF VISUAL INTRUSION LIKELY TO RESULT FROM THE PROPOSAL TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE CUMULATIVE EFFECTS ARISING FROM OTHER EXISTING AND APPROVED SCHEMES IN THE AREA.



- (2) CONFLICTS WITH SURROUNDING LAND USES CAN BE REDUCED TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS, PARTICULARLY WHERE THE AMENITY OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS IN THE LOCALITY IS LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED ADVERSELY.
- (3) PROVISIONS FOR THE REINSTATEMENT OF THE SITE WHEN IT CEASES TO OPERATE ARE CONSIDERED ADEQUATE
- (4) THE AVAILABILITY OF IDENTIFIED MINERAL RESOURCES OR RESERVES IS NOT STERILISED.

12.5 Telecommunications facilities

12.5.1 Effective telecommunications are recognised by the Government as vital to the development of commercial prosperity and to society in general. Government policy aims to facilitate the growth of telecommunications, and indicates that the planning system should encourage and avoid hindering development in this field. In particular PG(W) notes that planning authorities should not question the need for the service which a proposed development seeks to provide, nor to prevent competition between operators. While the majority of telecommunications issues relate to local detailed siting issues, there are also strategic issues which require consideration. The development of a nationwide telecommunications system requires that no 'holes' should occur in the coverage while reception standards should not vary.

12.5.2 To achieve such aims, there could be pressures to establish a network of facilities over wide areas, which may well bring conflicts with sites, features or areas protected in the development plan. This may be of particular importance for example, in the valleys areas where preferred sites for installations might be in prominent locations which are in themselves protected on landscape or other grounds. Although the County Borough Council accepts the necessity for improvements to telecommunications as an important means of advancing its economic and social objectives in line with Government policies, this must not occur where its environmental objectives cannot be outweighed by other material considerations. It aims to promote better understanding and hopefully early agreement on for example, route strategies, choice of site, and the use of shared facilities, and the avoidance of piecemeal proposals. Policy U3 is proposed to enable a balance to be sought between the need to provide the service and the need to apply conditions or impose restrictions which limit or where necessary prevent, impacts on the environment. This will normally be interpreted through siting and designing installations to reduce damage or disturbance to the environment to acceptable levels. This is particularly important where adverse visual effects can be moderated by relocation.

U3 PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES IN COUNTRYSIDE LOCATIONS WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- (1) SITING AND APPEARANCE HAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO REDUCE TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS, DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO THE ENVIRONMENT, PARTICULARLY THE LEVEL OF VISUAL INTRUSION LIKELY TO OCCUR
- (2) THE PROPOSAL IS PART OF A PLANNED DEVELOPMENT OF AN ASSOCIATED NETWORK
- (3) THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT STERILISE THE AVAILABILITY OF IDENTIFIED MINERAL RESOURCES OR RESERVES.

12.6 Major Utilities Networks

12.6.1 The provision of major strategic overground and underground utility service networks, is not directly controllable by local authorities. The County Borough Council is a consultee on proposals for all major power lines over 132kv. Under the 1989 Electricity Act, the National Grid Company (NGC), and SWALEC have a statutory duty to have regard to features of the environment and to mitigate any effects of its proposals to take this into account. The President of the Board of Trade is required to examine how far the utility companies have complied with this duty in considering such proposals. Normally such compliance must be achieved by careful routing of the proposed line to minimise impact. Underground provision of major power lines due to cost, technical, and maintenance



difficulties together with possible environmental disturbance now appears only likely in exceptional circumstances. The County Borough Council would wish that consideration be given to this form of provision where it is feasible and important environmental conflicts are otherwise unresolvable. The County Borough Council also acts as a consultee on high pressure gas lines. There is a clear need to ensure adequate restoration takes place to remove the effects of the provision of such underground services which can be visible over a wide area. In addition the provision of duplicate or back up facilities in the strategic network can be an important consideration in ensuring continuity of supply. However, because this may result in visual intrusion, unnecessary additional provision should be avoided and networks should be rationalised where feasible. The former Approved Structure Plan policy U2 was normally used to guide the responses of the former County Council on such consultations. Policy U4 of the Replacement Plan seeks to represent the objectives behind this policy.

U4 THE PROVISION OF UTILITY SERVICES SHOULD HAVE AS LITTLE ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH AS POSSIBLE. IN PARTICULAR

- (1) ALL ABOVE GROUND SERVICE LINES SHOULD BE ROUTED TO REDUCE TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS, DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO THE ENVIRONMENT OR THE STERILISATION OF IDENTIFIED MINERAL RESERVES OR RESOURCES. CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO PLACING SUCH SERVICES UNDERGROUND WHERE ECONOMICALLY AND TECHNICALLY FEASIBLE AND DESIRABLE ON ENVIRONMENTAL GROUNDS.
- (2) WHERE SERVICES ARE PLACED UNDERGROUND ADEQUATE RESTORATION MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN TO MINIMISE DAMAGE OR DISTURBANCE TO THE ENVIRONMENT
- (3) MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN WHEREVER FEASIBLE TO RATIONALISE SERVICE PROVISION TO REDUCE ITS VISUAL IMPACT.

12.7 Water Quality and Water Resources

12.7.1 New Development is capable of having a significant effect on the quality of surface, underground and coastal water. The need to protect water quality in development plan policies is recognised in PG(W). Where such proposals are likely in the opinion of the Environment Agency to place the quality of watercourses or ground water at risk, they should not be allowed to proceed. Policy U5 is proposed to control this.

U5 DEVELOPMENTS WHICH (FOLLOWING CONSULTATION WITH THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY) ARE CONSIDERED LIKELY TO LEAD TO A DETERIORATION IN THE QUALITY OF UNDERGROUND, SURFACE OR COASTAL WATER, WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

12.8 Maximising the Use of Existing Services

12.8.1 The County Borough Council accepts that the objective to protect the environment can be furthered by encouraging new development to seek locations which maximise existing infrastructure provision, rather than sites or areas where services cannot be reasonably or economically provided. A general location policy is therefore proposed in Policy U6. Such action is particularly important for the provision of sewerage services in rural areas, especially with regard to affordable housing.

U6 DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE FAVOURED IN AREAS WHERE ADEQUATE UTILITY SERVICES DO NOT EXIST, ARE NOT REASONABLY ACCESSIBLE OR CANNOT BE READILY AND ECONOMICALLY PROVIDED.





**MID GLAMORGAN
(RHONDDA CYNON TAFF COUNTY BOROUGH)
REPLACEMENT STRUCTURE PLAN 1991-2006**

APPENDICES

*MORGANNWG GANOL
(BWRDEISTREF SIROL RHONDDA CYNON TAF)
CYNLLUN STRWYTHUR AMNEWID 1991-2006*

ATODIADAU





APPENDIX 1

Regeneration Aims of the County Borough Council

Encourage Inward Investment

Develop Local Businesses

Improve Transport Facilities

Promote the Development of Tourism

Improve the Physical Appearance of Town Centres

Reclaim All Derelict Land

Protect and Enhance Important Features of the Natural and Built Environment

Improve the Quality and Choice of Housing and Residential Areas

Enhance Skill Levels of the Workforce

Help Rhondda Cynon Taff Residents to Secure Jobs

Ensure and Enhance the Wellbeing of Vulnerable Groups in Society

Encourage the Personal, Social and Cultural Development of Individuals

Improve the Quality of Community Life

Source: Regenerating Mid Glamorgan : A New Approach,
Former Mid Glamorgan County Council, August 1993.





APPENDIX 2

Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987 (extract)

PART A

Class A1: Shops

Use for all or any of the following purposes:-

- (a) for the retail sale of goods other than hot food
- (b) as a post office
- (c) for the sale of tickets or as a travel agency
- (d) for the sale of sandwiches or other cold food for consumption off the premises
- (e) for hairdressing
- (f) for the direction of funerals
- (g) for the display of goods for sale
- (h) for the hiring out of domestic or personal goods or articles
- (i) for the reception of goods to be washed, cleaned or repaired

- where the sale, display or service is to visiting members of the public.

PART B

Class B1: Business

Use for all or any of the following purposes:-

- (a) as an office other than as a use within class A2 (financial and professional services)
- (b) for research and development of products or processes, or
- (c) for any industrial process

- being a use which can be carried out in any residential area without detriment to the amenity of that area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit.

Class B2: General Industrial

Use for the carrying on of an industrial process other than one falling within B1 or classes B3 to B7.

Class B8: Storage or Distribution

Use for storage or as a distribution centre.





MID GLAMORGAN
(RHONDDA CYNON TAFF COUNTY BOROUGH)
REPLACEMENT STRUCTURE PLAN 1991-2006

KEY DIAGRAM

MORGANNWG GANOL
(BWRDEISTREF SIROL RHONDDA CYNON TAF)
CYNLLUN STRWYTHUR AMNEWID 1991-2006

DARLUN ALLWEDDOL



MID GLAMORGAN (RHONDDA CYNON TAFF COUNTY BOROUGH) REPLACEMENT STRUCTURE PLAN 1991-2006

Key Diagram

Policy Area

-  Boundary of Rhondda Cynon Taff Planning Authority
-  Boundary of Rhondda Cynon Taff administrative area
-  Boundary of former District Council areas
-  Main Built Up Areas
-  Area outside of County Borough
-  National Park

Roads

-  Line of Motorway
-  Trunk Road
-  Principal Road
-  Secondary Road

Principal Road Improvements

-  T1
-  T2 (First Phase)
-  T2 (Second Phase)
-  T2 (Third Phase)

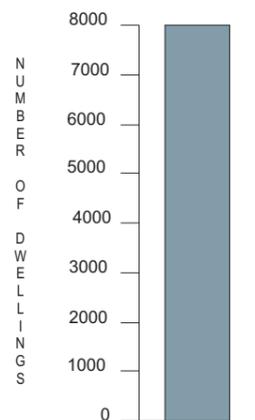
Railways

-  Passenger line

Policies

Housing

1992-2006 Housing requirements (H1)



Landscape Areas

-  Special Landscape Area (EV4)

Mineral Workings

-  Quarry (MIN 1,2,4,8)
-  Opencast Coal (MIN 1,2)
-  Coal Mine (MIN 1)
-  Other Mineral Workings(MIN 1,2,7)

-  Mineral Protection Zone (MIN 10)

Shopping Centres

-  Sub Regional (R1)
-  District (R1)

Employment

-  Special Employment Sites (E5)



CYNON VALLEY

RHONDDA

TAFF ELY