

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

**SUPPLEMENTARY
PLANNING GUIDANCE:**

Nature Conservation

March 2011

Contents

| | Page |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Introduction | 3 |
| 2. Policy Context | 3 |
| 3. Issues | 5 |
| 4. Planning Objectives and Requirements | 7 |
| 4.1 General considerations | 7 |
| 4.2 Specific Types of Development Sites | 11 |
| 5. Appendices | 15 |
| 5.1 Appendix 1 – Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) | 15 |
| 5.2 Appendix 2 – Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) | 17 |
| 5.3 Appendix 3 – Sources of Guidance and Advice | 22 |
| 5.4 Appendix 4 – Description of Rhondda Cynon Taf | 25 |
| 6. Bibliography | 26 |

1. Introduction

1.1 This Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) for Nature Conservation has been produced in conjunction with the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan and provides additional guidance to support the policies, allocations and constraints identified in the Plan. For the purposes of this SPG, nature conservation includes biodiversity, soil and earth science features.

1.2 Rhondda Cynon Taf is situated in the South Wales Coalfield. The earth science heritage reflects the rocks, geological processes, geomorphology and industrial history of the County. The geology, climate, soil, landscape, wildlife, land-use, history and culture of the area are closely interconnected. In common with other areas of the Valleys, the extent of semi-natural habitat is unusually high, as is the diversity of habitats. This is one of the key reasons why so much of the County Borough is of nature conservation value. There is a huge variety of original habitats in a small area, from upland crags and scree to floodplain meadows. There are important concentrations of nationally significant habitats and locally distinctive post-industrial biodiversity features. As a consequence, the County Borough supports a wide range of species.

2. Policy Context

2.1 The documents listed in the bibliography have informed the Local Development Plan and this Nature Conservation Supplementary Planning Guidance. For each reference, a brief description of its relevance to Rhondda Cynon Taf or the planning process is outlined.

2.2 The Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan (LDP) sets out the policies that will be applied in Rhondda Cynon Taf. It also identifies the constraints on development and allocates sites for specific uses.

2.3 Relevant Policies in the Local Development Plan:

Policy AW 8 – Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment

Rhondda Cynon Taf's distinctive natural heritage will be preserved and enhanced by protecting it from inappropriate development. Development proposals will only be permitted where:-

1. They would not cause harm to the features of a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) or Regionally Important Geological Site (RIG) or other locally designated sites, unless it can be demonstrated that:-

- a) The proposal is directly necessary for the positive management of the site; or
 - b) The proposal would not unacceptably impact on the features of the site for which it has been designated; or
 - c) The development could not reasonably be located elsewhere and the benefits of the proposed development clearly outweigh the nature conservation value of the site.
2. There would be no unacceptable impact upon features of importance to landscape or nature conservation, including ecological networks, the quality of natural resources such as air, water and soil, and the natural drainage of surface water.

All development proposals, including those in built up areas, that may affect protected and priority species will be required to demonstrate what measures are proposed for the protection and management of the species and the mitigation and compensation of potential impacts. Development proposals must be accompanied by appropriate ecological surveys and appraisals, as requested by the Council.

Development proposals that contribute to the management or development of Ecological Networks will be supported.

Policy NSA 26 – Cynon Valley River Park

Development that will contribute to the achievement of the Cynon Valley River Park Strategy will be supported. This includes:

1. **Proposals for the protection, enhancement, enlargement, connectivity and management of important wildlife sites, species and features of nature conservation value and water quality.**
2. **Proposals to promote public access on foot and by cycle, mitigate and adapt to climate change, encourage health and well-being and support heritage and tourism.**

2.4 The Constraints Map shows the location of the Special Areas of Conservation and Sites of Special Scientific Interest, with the Proposals Map showing the locations of the Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Regionally Important Geological Sites and Local Nature Reserves within the County Borough.

3. Issues

3.1 Biodiversity is defined as ‘the variety of life’ and includes plants and animals (species), the places where they live (habitats) and the relationships between them (ecosystems). Planning policy aims to halt biodiversity loss, protect ecosystem services and where possible contribute to its enhancement.

3.2 Earth Science includes the underlying geology (solid rock and surface deposits) together with the natural geomorphologic processes at work in the landscape. Earth science features have developed over very long timescales and cannot be replaced. Earth science resources may also be of economic value. The objective of the planning policy is to retain the significant feature(s) of the identified sites.

3.3 The soil is the interface between earth science and biodiversity. Soils have a major biodiversity value, with at least half of all species living below ground. Soils are also significant carbon stores. The main threats to Welsh soils are from climate change and the decline in organic matter, from soil sealing (for example by buildings and roads), from contamination (including acidification and eutrophication), soil erosion, and degradation of soil structure and soil loss to extraction.

3.4 Ecosystem services are those services provided by the natural environment that benefit people (Defra 2007). Some,

such as food, fibre and fuel provision, recreation and appreciation of nature, are well known. Other services such as climate regulation, purification of air and water, flood protection, soil formation and nutrient cycling receive less recognition but directly and indirectly affect human well-being.

3.5 Section 40(1) of Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) places a duty on every public authority, in exercising its functions, to “have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.” This guidance sets out the manner in which the Local Planning Authority will comply with this duty.

3.6 Protected sites include Special Areas of Conservation, designated by the Welsh Assembly Government, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, designated by the Countryside Council for Wales, and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) designated as part of the Local Development Plan.

3.6.1 RIGS have been designated on the basis of an Earth Science Audit. For each site the primary and secondary features of importance have been identified. The Earth Science Audit and the RIGS descriptions are published separately. Further information is provided in Appendix 1.

3.6.2 SINC have been designated on the basis of specific criteria for the Mid Valleys area of South Wales. For each site

the primary and secondary features of importance are identified. The Mid Valleys Criteria and the SINC descriptions are published separately. Further information is provided in Appendix 2.

3.6.3 The Local Nature Reserves (LNR) are owned or managed for nature conservation by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council. Wildlife Trust Reserves (WTR) in Rhondda Cynon Taf are owned or leased by the Trust. All the LNR and WTR fall within Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation.

3.7 Ecological Connectivity and habitat fragmentation are important wildlife conservation issues. Small, isolated populations of species are far more vulnerable to extinction than populations that can disperse and interbreed with other populations. The effects of climate change are likely to increase local extinctions among small isolated populations. It is therefore important to maintain and enhance ecological networks of semi-natural habitats that have a high degree of connectivity. The Habitat Regulations (37) require planning policies which conserve features of the landscape that are of major importance for wild flora and fauna, including those linear features that are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.

3.8 The management of land has important nature conservation implications, and in a planning context, this is also recognised by the Habitats Regulations.

3.9 The presence (or likely presence) of a protected species is a material planning consideration and developers must consider this prior to submitting a planning application.

3.9.1 European protected species are protected under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations 1994 (Referred to in the UK as the Habitat Regulations) Schedules 2 and 4 list the protected species.

3.9.2 Bats are unusual compared to other protected species as it is extremely difficult to predict where they may be roosting and foraging. Guidance on bats and the planning process is currently being produced for use by Local Planning Authorities in Wales.

3.9.3 UK protected species are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW). Protected species are listed under Schedules 1 (Birds), 5 (Animals) and 8 (Plants).

3.9.4 Badgers and their setts are protected under the 1992 Protection of Badgers Act.

3.9.5 All wild birds (with certain exceptions) are given basic protection from intentional killing or injuring, and damage or destruction of a nest whilst it is in use or being built. Certain birds are given additional protection.

3.10 Habitats and Species; The Welsh Assembly Government has published a list of habitats and species of

principal importance in Wales, as required under s.42 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The presence of these habitats and species is a material consideration and has informed the SINC criteria.

3.10.1 Action for Nature: the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taf sets out a programme of action for a range of partners to conserve and enhance the biodiversity of Rhondda Cynon Taf. The LBAP lists the habitats and species of particular importance in Rhondda Cynon Taf and these have informed the SINC criteria.

3.10.2 Trees, woodlands and hedges are among the habitats of importance for wildlife but, additionally, may be protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), the Hedgerow Regulations and felling license requirements. TPOs and the Hedgerow Regulations provide protection for specific trees, woodlands and specific types of hedgerow and are a material consideration in planning decisions. Felling licences are required (from the Forestry Commission Wales) for the removal of trees totalling above 2m³ in volume (for sale) or 5m³ in other circumstances (per calendar quarter).

3.11 River corridors are an important component of the natural environment in the County Borough. All major rivers qualify as SINC habitat and many support protected species. River corridors provide connectivity through urban and rural areas. The Water Framework Directive requires that all rivers achieve and maintain good ecological status. Development

proposals likely to affect river corridor habitat, protected species or water quality should have regard for these issues.

4. Planning Objectives and Requirements

4.1 General Considerations

4.1.1 As a general principle, the Council will expect the developer to provide sufficient information to inform a decision about the nature conservation value of the site. Because of the extent of semi-natural habitat in the County Borough, there are few development sites where nature conservation is not a relevant issue. Even within the built up area, bats and nesting birds will need to be considered.

4.1.2 It is therefore recommended that nature conservation issues are considered as early as possible within the scoping and design of development proposals and that early consultation is undertaken with the Council to ensure that relevant information is supplied at the outset and delays avoided.

4.1.3 Information supplied to the Local Planning Authority, as part of a planning application, will normally be available for the public to view on the application file. Developers will be expected to provide the ecological information, submitted in support of their application, to the South East Wales Biodiversity Record Centre.

4.1.4 The following are material considerations to be addressed as part of a planning application;

4.1.4.1 Development should not lead to the net loss of biodiversity, should protect ecosystem services and, where possible, contribute to biodiversity enhancement, in accordance with the policy principles in LDP policy AW 8.

4.1.4.2 The significant features of European and nationally designated sites, SINCS and RIGS should be protected. Applicants will be expected to show how the features for which the site is designated are to be protected, and where possible, enhanced.

4.1.4.3 Where European sites may be affected by development, assessments of likely significant effects and, where necessary, appropriate assessment should be made.

4.1.4.4 Development should be carried out in a way that conserves features of the landscape that are of major importance for wild flora and fauna, including those linear features that are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.

4.1.4.5 Ecological connectivity between habitat patches is generally good in Rhondda Cynon Taf and the impact of development on this connectivity will be a material consideration. Development that reduces connectivity between habitats will not normally be favoured, however there

may be opportunities for development to contribute to ecological connectivity. Planning decisions will be informed by research work being undertaken at the local, regional and Wales level with regard to ecological connectivity.

4.1.4.6 The presence of a protected or priority habitat or species is a material consideration and must be addressed by the application.

4.1.5 The following paragraphs are relevant to the consideration of applications with nature conservation implications.

4.1.5.1 Pre-application enquiries are welcomed, to identify whether the application is likely to affect a designated site or important species and to identify any opportunities for enhancement. This initial scoping will identify that either:

- i) there is no requirement for detailed ecological assessment or mitigation, or
- ii) a SEWBREC search for statutory protected species is required and/ or
- iii) a detailed ecological survey and assessment will be required or
- iv) there is sufficient ecological information to recommend refusal on nature conservation grounds.

4.1.5.2 The level and detail of the necessary ecological survey and assessment must be specific to each planning application

and should be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecological consultant at the appropriate time of year. To determine the requirements, the Local Planning Authority may consult with statutory consultees. An iterative approach to survey assessment is generally advocated, with baseline assessments advising the requirement for, and extent of, more detailed follow-up survey work where necessary.

4.1.5.3 In many cases ecological concerns will be restricted to one species or feature. For example building demolitions may often only require bat and bird surveys. In other cases a baseline ecological assessment (using standard Phase I Habitat Survey methodology) may be sufficient in order to assess habitat features and to identify the potential for statutory protected species. In other cases a detailed suite of surveys may be required, which could include habitat assessment to Phase II standards, and/or detailed audits of lower and higher plants, invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, fish, birds and mammals.

4.1.5.4. Ecological survey reports must also include an appraisal of the significance of features and species within the application site, the impacts and implications of the proposed development on those features and the extent of mitigation, and enhancement measures, which the application will provide.

4.1.5.5 Where a planning application affects trees, woodlands or hedges on or adjacent to the development site, applicants will be expected to provide information about these and the

impact of their proposals on them, both in respect of their nature conservation and amenity value. Where important features are affected, the Council will require a tree report as specified in the British Standards Institutes, BS 5837: Trees in relation to construction.

4.1.5.6 This report should be based on a survey by an appropriately qualified arboriculturalist, categorise the trees and set out the arboricultural implications of the proposed development. For trees etc. that are to be retained, or areas to be planted, an Arboricultural Method Statement and a Tree Protection Plan should be provided and Construction Exclusion Zones identified on the site layout plan. Any specified works to trees etc. should conform to BS 3998: Recommendations for Tree work.

4.1.6 Where a European Protected Species is likely to be affected by a planning application, the following three tests will be applied:

- i) there is 'no satisfactory alternative',
- ii) it is 'not detrimental to the maintenance of the populations of the species concerned at favourable conservation status in their natural range' and
- iii) it is 'in the interests of public health and public safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial

consequences of primary importance for the environment’.

4.1.6.1 To apply these tests, suitable survey and assessment information is required before the application is determined, where an application site is considered to have potential to support a European Protected Species.

4.1.6.2 Where a European Protected Species is likely to be affected, a licence is normally required from the Welsh Assembly Government under the Habitats Regulations, and a condition will be added to any grant of planning permission to produce details of this licence prior to starting works.

4.1.6.3 Following receipt of the survey and assessment this will be subject to internal and statutory consultation to assess whether:

- i) sufficient nature conservation assessment has been undertaken and whether a sufficient resolution of issues has been made. If this is the case, the consultation will identify whether the planning application is either:
 - a. acceptable under adopted planning policy, and can proceed or ;
 - b. unacceptable, leading to a policy objection.
- ii) insufficient nature conservation assessment has been undertaken and further survey and clarification

is required. The planning application may be recommended for refusal due to a lack of information.

4.1.7 Mitigation measures are those measures required to reduce to an acceptable level the impacts and implications of development on features, habitats or species of importance. Compensation measures are designed to offset any impacts that cannot be avoided or mitigated. In certain circumstances, proposed mitigation and / or compensation may result in the development being considered acceptable. The extent of mitigation and compensation required will be specific to the proposal, but could include the retention and long-term management of habitats and the provision of species-specific measures. The planning proposal may also be able to provide enhancement measures to actively benefit nature conservation. This could include positive management of, or providing connections to, adjacent habitats.

4.1.8 Planning conditions and / or planning obligations will be used to ensure that the proposed measures are undertaken. Planning obligations will be used where measures require long-term application (over five years), where monitoring will extend over a prolonged period, or the Council or a third party, takes on the management of an area with commuted management sums.

4.1.8.1 Similarly, where development proposals include areas of informal open space, water and landscape features, retained or planted trees, nature conservation areas or

features, planning conditions and or planning obligations will be sought where appropriate to ensure that the land or feature is appropriately managed.

4.2 Specific Types of Developments / Sites

4.2.1. In addition to the general considerations outlined above, the following paragraphs provide guidance on specific types of developments/ sites. These are not exhaustive.

4.2.2 The design of household extensions can have implications for nature conservation, typically in relation to bats or nesting birds. Where an extension will affect a large tree, an existing roof, or involves demolition of a building or structure, the applicant should seek advice from the Council prior to submitting an application. Opportunities to achieve a net benefit for biodiversity, for example through the provision of nesting or roosting boxes, will be encouraged.

4.2.3 Buildings can be of particular importance as nesting or roosting places for birds or bats. This is true of rural buildings such as barns and urban buildings such as schools, chapels and housing. The conversion of older buildings should provide opportunities to build replacement or new features into developments.

4.2.4 In respect of larger development sites, the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Design and Place Making identifies the need to integrate nature conservation concerns into the design of new developments from the

outset. This will enable areas of high nature conservation value to be avoided and positive contributions to nature conservation to be identified.

4.2.5 The holistic consideration of landscaping, sustainable urban drainage, active travel, informal and formal open space and nature conservation should be a key element of place making.

4.2.6 All larger developments should consider opportunities to achieve net benefit for biodiversity within their design. These should include, where appropriate, the use of up to date best practice, such as:

- the use of technologies, such as green / brown roofs;
- the inclusion of planting and landscaping schemes that benefit wildlife;
- siting of development to exclude areas of biodiversity interest;
- enhancement, creation or restoration of locally distinctive natural habitats;
- enhancement measures for species including the provision of artificial nesting sites / roosting sites / hibernacula;

- Sustainable management.
- Sustainable urban drainage systems
- Ecological connectivity.

4.2.7 The development of each strategic site should aim to achieve no net loss of biodiversity. However, it is recognised that because of the strategic importance of these sites this objective cannot always be achieved. Where a loss of biodiversity cannot be avoided, the Council require a comprehensive management, mitigation and compensation package. This will require the integration of nature conservation considerations from the outset. Sufficient survey and assessment work will need to be undertaken at each stage to establish the extent of the existing nature conservation interest, the areas that should be protected and areas where enhancement can be achieved.

4.2.8 Where schemes are required to reach a minimum of Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes/ or BREEAM “Very Good” standard for commercial development, schools, etc, the ecology requirements of these standards should be considered in light of this SPG. Developers should discuss this element of the proposals with the Council’s Ecologist at an early stage.

4.2.9 Roads should be designed to minimise negative impact on the natural environment and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement should be pursued where possible. Again, the holistic consideration of landscaping, active travel, informal and formal open space and nature conservation is encouraged. The route and design should seek to minimise habitat damage (including the effects of lighting, noise, pollution, drainage and habitat fragmentation) and mitigate impacts and compensate for residual habitat loss. Where protected species are likely to be present, special measures will be required (for example newt gully pots, dormouse crossings, dark corridors).

4.2.9.1 Where geological exposures are created by highway works, consideration should be given to protecting these exposures for geological study and conservation. Geo-netting should not be undertaken without prior consultation with the Countryside Council for Wales.

4.2.9.2 The landscaping of highways provides opportunities for mitigation and enhancement measures. Linear corridors can contribute to ecological connectivity between habitat patches in both urban and rural areas. In general, native grassland should be encouraged and tree or hedge planting with indigenous species of local provenance will be expected. Exotic planting, soil enrichment, imported seed mixes and high maintenance specifications should be restricted to high profile urban locations.

4.2.9.3 Where any development requires the creation or upgrading of a highway or access, the nature conservation implications of this should be addressed.

4.2.10 Renewable energy proposals that will cause significant damage to existing carbon/methane stores, such as ancient woodland or deep peat deposits, should be assessed for their net greenhouse gas emissions. This should be undertaken using national and international guidance and best practice relating to carbon budgets

4.2.11 The design of wind farms on the upland afforested plateau must address the impact on the deep peat soils and hydrology, of the individual turbines, the access and the power line infrastructure. Developers will be expected to survey, to map the extent of the habitat and features present on the site and in the surrounding area. The assessment should include the alternative designs or locations considered; how adverse effects will be avoided wherever possible; how unavoidable impacts will be reduced and mitigated; and how impacts, that cannot be avoided or mitigated, will be compensated. Proposals for the long-term management of habitat and monitoring of impacts will be required. Major wind farms may also have significant impacts on bird and bat populations and the developer should indicate how these impacts have been avoided, minimised or compensated for. However, it should be considered that large windfarm projects will be subject to the requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations. The issues set out in this SPG should therefore not result in a duplication of the scoping

requirements for the environmental statement of the EIA process.

4.2.11.1 Small scale and domestic wind turbines may also have impacts on birds and bats, which should be considered in the design and location of the turbine.

4.2.12 Biomass energy proposals should also be assessed for their net carbon savings contribution. Energy crops that are dependent on high levels of manufactured fertiliser input or high transport energy demands are unlikely to lead to reduced carbon emissions. Displacement of local food production on better quality agricultural land will not be encouraged, although agricultural waste (e.g. straw) may provide feedstock for small scale biomass developments.

4.2.13 The Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (semi-natural areas and uncultivated land) will apply if semi-natural or uncultivated land is brought into production. Biomass proposals should avoid areas of high nature conservation value.

4.2.14 Hydroelectric power schemes should be designed to minimise their impact on the river environment and in particular on otters and migratory fish. The EAW may be consulted by the Council with regard to nature conservation impacts.

4.2.15 Small scale solar, photovoltaic and geothermal energy proposals are unlikely to have major nature conservation

implications. However, where bats are likely to be present, further advice should be sought.

5. Appendices

5.1 Appendix 1: Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS)

The Council commissioned an Earth Science Audit of Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2003/4 from the National Museums and Galleries of Wales and Cardiff University. The work was overseen by an expert panel, from the Council, the Countryside Council for Wales, the Geological Association, the University and the National Museum and Galleries of Wales. An initial desk study of the literature and geological maps was followed by a field survey. An access database was developed linked to a Geographic Information System (GIS) map layer. A transparent methodology for assessing the geo-conservation value of the sites was developed, using the earlier MINESCAN methodology. As recommended in the report, sites scoring above 100 have been included in the list of Regionally Important Geological Sites. The sites with the highest geo-conservation scores are already statutorily protected as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Most of the remaining sites lie within Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, and frequently their features are a contributory factor affecting or determining the ecological value of the site. A small number of sites, including the two active quarries, remain outside the SINC boundaries. The LDP Proposals Map indicates the location (but not the extent) of each RIG site. Each site name, location by grid reference and identification number is shown below. Further information such as full site

descriptions, size, primary and secondary features of importance and photographs are available on request.

List of Regionally Important Geological Sites in Rhondda Cynon Taf

(from Earth Science Audit 2003-4, L Cherns, MG Bassett and A Haycock)

| Loc. No. | Locality Name | Grid Ref | **Total score |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 59 | Graig Fawr | SS 9225 9600 | 335 |
| 27 | Craig-y-Llyn | SN 9150 0320 | 310 |
| 60 | Graig Fach | SS 9290 9540 | 310 |
| 54 | Tarren Saerbren cirque | SS 9270 9760 | 310 |
| 118 | Brofiscin Quarry | ST 0700 8130 | 310 |
| 138 | Mwyndy Mine tips | ST 0550 8190 | 310 |
| 38 | Blaenrhondda road cutting (A4061) | SN 9300 0060 | 285 |
| 4 | Bwa Maen | SN 9150 0795 | 270 |
| 127 | Mynydy Cross, Llantrisant road | ST 0520 8200 | 270 |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|-----------------|-----|-----|---|-----------------|-----|
| 377 | cutting Cefn Park Mine | ST 0480 8220 | 270 | 32 | Lower Craig Blaenrhondda | SN 9231 0135 | 200 |
| 378 | Rhiwsaeson tips | ST 0640 8240 | 270 | 50 | Nant y Gwair stream gully and Cwar y Offeiriad | SS 9115 9872 | 200 |
| 48 | Cwm Lluest | SS 9180 9970 | 240 | 93 | Tarren y Bwllfa | SN 9650 0175 | 180 |
| 161 | Navigation Quarry | ST 0870 9400 | 225 | 34 | River Rhondda Waterfall | SN 9228 0150 | 170 |
| 304 | Tarren Felen Uchaf track cutting | SS 9505 9495 | 220 | 546 | Coed-y-wiw tips | ST 0005 8065 | 170 |
| 30 | Craig y Bwlch | SN 9435 0350 | 220 | 49 | Nant yr Ychen stream gully and crags | SS 9160 9925 | 160 |
| 20 | Llech Syrhyd waterfall | SN 9915 0730 | 220 | 536 | South Ty Rhos crags | SN 9740 0395 | 160 |
| 287 | Pen Pych and west Blaenrhondda crags | SS 9240 9950 | 215 | 174 | Glyncoch Quarry | ST 0790 9190 | 155 |
| 40 | Craig Blaenrhondda | SN 9205 0130 | 205 | 124 | Hendy/Miskin Quarry | ST 0555 8120 | 155 |
| 52 | Craig Selsig and Craig y Ddelw | SS 9170 9775 | 205 | 210 | Craig yr Eos South Dinas Quarry | ST 0028 9136 | 150 |
| 51 | Blaencwm landslide | SS 9180 9840 | 205 | 163 | West Navigation quarry | ST 0857 9410 | 150 |
| 133 | Forest Wood Quarry | ST 0150 7970 | 205 | 375 | Daren y Celyn Quarry | ST 0785 9635 | 140 |
| 159 | The Gap quarry | ST 0785 9643 | 200 | 531 | Bwllfa Road tips | SN 9700 | 140 |

| | | | | |
|-----|---|----|-------------------------|-----|
| 407 | Mynydd Eglwys landslide | yr | 0300 SS 9760 9550 | 140 |
| 348 | Gelynog colliery spoil tips, Beddau | | ST 0568 8534 | 120 |
| 92 | Craig-yr-ysgol | | SN 9590 0265 | 115 |
| 383 | Taffs Well hematite workings | | ST 1360 8370 | 110 |
| 1 | Old Dinas quarry, Pen-cae drain | | SN 9170 0795 | 105 |
| 120 | Small crags west of Gadir Wen House | | ST 0660 8062 | 105 |
| 3 | Lower section of River Sychryd | | SN 9108 0789 | 100 |
| 430 | Tarren Maen-du quarry and landslide | | SS 9375 9760 | 100 |
| 158 | River Taff terrace deposits | | ST 0825 9350 | 100 |

** Total score refer to the geo-conservation assessment

5.2 Appendix 2: Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)

SINCs are an important resource in Rhondda Cynon Taf, protecting locally and nationally important habitats and species.

The Mid Valleys Criteria used for the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan provide objective, scientific, sub-regional criteria for the Mid-Valleys area (Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent).

The geography of the County Borough is reflected in the nature of the SINC. In the uplands, where there is less built development and extensive areas of semi natural habitat, SINCs tend to be larger than in the lowlands.

The locations of the SINC are shown on the Proposals Map. Individual SINC plans and the site descriptions are available on request. The site description includes the primary and secondary features of importance together with information about survey and other evidence relating to the site.

The sites, shown on the Local Development Plan Proposals Map, are based on criteria applied within the context of the evidence considered at the time when the LDP was prepared.

If an unconstrained development site meets the criteria for designation as a protected site, it will be treated as if the site was so designated.

If the development proposed does not adversely affect the special features of the protected site then the designation would not prevent the development.

If the developer claims that the site does not meet the criteria for protection, it will be necessary to show that the site did not meet the criteria at the time of designation.

List of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

1. Coed Wernhir
2. Werfa Farm
3. Nant Fforch
4. Brickyard Mire
5. Rhigos Tramway
6. Cwm Gwrelych
7. Hirwaun Industrial Estate
8. Clydach Vale
9. Hirwaun Ponds
10. Hirwaun Common
11. Gelli-ben-uchel
12. Hirwaun Ponds (North)
13. Hirwaun Iron Works
14. Glynconel
15. Upper Cynon Floodplain
16. Nant Hir Valley and Reservoir
17. Nant Hir Gwyddel
18. Llwydcoed Slopes
19. Bryn-defaid Heath
20. East Llwydcoed
21. Mynydd Bwllffa /Mynydd-y-gyngon
22. Cwm Dare North
23. Cwm Dare South
24. Dare Valley
25. Aberdare South
26. Mynydd Ystradffernol
27. Garn Wen and Panwen Garreg-wen
28. Rhos Gwawr
29. Aberdare Mountain
30. Nant y Wenallt
31. Cwm y Felin Newydd
32. Aberdare Canal
33. Mid Cynon Floodplain
34. Cwmbach Slopes
35. Gelli Slopes
36. Coed Tir Estyll
37. Cefnpennar
38. St Gwynno Forestry
39. Mynydd Merthyr
40. Mynydd Brith-weunydd / Llwynypia hillside
41. Twyn Tyllaudefaid Valley Mire
42. Pont-y-gwaith Hillside
43. Mynydd Troed-y-rhiw Slopes
44. Penrhiw Flushes
45. Birch Grove Slopes
46. Y Ffrwd
47. Mynydd Dinas / Mynydd y Cymmer
48. Bronwydd Park
49. Trebanog Slopes

- | | | | |
|-----|---|------|--------------------------------------|
| 50. | Cilely Farm Rhos Pasture | 80. | Pont Sion Norton Woodland and Ffridd |
| 51. | Cwm Hafod Woodland | 81. | Pontypridd Golf Course |
| 52. | Coed-yr-Hafod Woodland Complex | 82. | Coed-Pen-Maen Common |
| 53. | Llys Nant and Graig Twyn-y-glog Woodlands | 83. | Mynydd Meiros / Upper Ewenny Fach |
| 54. | Mynydd Blaenrhondda and Mynydd Ty-Isaf | 84. | Meiros |
| 55. | Craig Pwllfa | 85. | Llantrisant Forestry and Craig Melyn |
| 56. | Abercwmbol Lake | 86. | Cynllan Wood |
| 57. | Lower Cynon | 87. | Hendre Owen / Trecastell Tip |
| 58. | Treherbert Slopes | 88. | Coed Trecastell |
| 59. | Mynydd y Ffaldau | 89. | Gwaun Llanhari Wood |
| 60. | Mountain Ash Slopes | 90. | Ty'n Y Waun |
| 61. | Blaenllechau Woodland | 91. | Coedcae Marsh |
| 62. | Penrhiw Cradoc Fields | 92. | River Ely |
| 63. | Cwm Clydach | 93. | Ty-Du |
| 64. | Mynydd Ty'n-tyle Slopes | 94. | Ty-Draw (Pontyclun floodmeadows) |
| 65. | Old Smokey Slopes | 95. | Llanharry Quarry |
| 66. | Coed Fforest Isaf-Uchaf | 96. | Cowbridge Road Playing Field |
| 67. | Perthcelyn Slopes | 97. | Ceulan Farm |
| 68. | Pen-twyn-isaf | 98. | Heol Miskin Woodland |
| 69. | Tyntetown Slopes | 99. | Talygarn Woodland and Lake |
| 70. | Darren y Celyn | 100. | East Miskin |
| 71. | Coed Pen-y-parc | 101. | Cefn Hendy Community Woodlands |
| 72. | Heol-y-Mynach Pastures | 102. | Coed-yr-Hendy |
| 73. | Buarth-y-Capel wetland | 103. | Pant Marsh |
| 74. | Dan y Cribyn | 104. | Y Graig |
| 75. | Lower Clydach Woodlands | 105. | Llantrisant Common |
| 76. | Maerdy Colliery | 106. | Cefn Craig Amos |
| 77. | Craig-yr-Hesg / Lan Wood | 107. | Tonyrefail Mountains |
| 78. | Craig-Evan Leyshon Common | 108. | Llanilid Valley |
| 79. | Mynydd Eglwysilian | 109. | Garth-Grabban Slopes |

- | | | | |
|------|---------------------------------------|------|--|
| 110. | Rhiwfelin Fawr | 140. | Brynhill Chapel Grassland |
| 111. | Nant Muchudd | 141. | Coed y Fardre |
| 112. | Coedcae-mawr | 142. | Taff and Rhondda Rivers |
| 113. | Pant-y-ddraenen | 143. | Llantwit Fardre West |
| 114. | Crofft -yr-haidd Marshy Grassland | 144. | Caeau'r-llan Slopes |
| 115. | Nant Gelliwion / Waun Castellau | 145. | Diswylfa Woodland |
| 116. | Darran Park | 146. | Efail Isaf South |
| 117. | Tonyrefail East | 147. | Afon Clun Valley and Rhiwsaeson Hill |
| 118. | Cae'r-ysgol Woodland | 148. | Nant Myddlyn / Afon Clun / Tor-y-Coed Woodland |
| 119. | The Glyn | 149. | Ty Newydd Woods and Grassland |
| 120. | Mynydd y Glyn | 150. | Mwyndy Lake |
| 121. | Penrhiw-fer Road Woodland | 151. | Cefn Parc Cemetery |
| 122. | Penrhiw-fer Road West | 152. | A4119 Road Verge |
| 123. | Ystrad Slopes | 153. | Hendy Quarry and Miskin Manor Slopes |
| 124. | Mynydd Gelli-wion and Gellwion Slopes | 154. | Fforest Wood Quarry |
| 125. | Coed Craig-Fach | 155. | Rhydhalog |
| 126. | Treforest Slopes | 156. | Coed y Gedrys and Garth-fawr |
| 127. | Coed Castellau | 157. | Fforest Fawr |
| 128. | Pen-y-coedcae Grassland | 158. | Ty-Rhiw Woodlands and Penrhos Cutting |
| 129. | Coedcae-du | 159. | Craig Yr Allt Slopes |
| 130. | Rhyd-y-Ilech | 160. | Coed Caedryys / Tir Thomas Jones Tip |
| 131. | Cwm Colliery Grasslands | 161. | The Willowford |
| 132. | Cwm Colliery Spoil and Lake | 162. | Taff Trail Cycletrack |
| 133. | Maendy Quarry | 163. | Fforestnewydd |
| 134. | Croesged Grassland | 164. | Graig Cottages |
| 135. | Beddau East | 165. | Mynydd yr Eglwys |
| 136. | Duffryn Dowlais | 166. | Parc Eirin |
| 137. | Llantwit Fardre Marsh | 167. | Gilfach Road Wetlands |
| 138. | Tonteg Marsh | 168. | Mynydd y Gilfach |
| 139. | Heol-y-Cawl | | |

- 169. Gilfach Goch Slopes
- 170. Nant Ciwc
- 171. Llanbad-fawr Marsh
- 172. Cwm Llanbad
- 173. Fernbank East
- 174. Llanharan Marsh / Brynna Woods / Jubilee Marsh
- 175. Ewenny Fach and associated woodlands
- 176. Llanilid
- 177. Dolau Slopes
- 178. Cwmparc
- 179. Mynydd Tyle-coch
- 180. Nant Pentre Forestry
- 181. Treorchy Slopes
- 182. Treorchy Cemetery
- 183. Ton Pentre Slopes

5.3 Appendix 3- Sources of Guidance & Advice

Countryside Council for Wales

The Countryside Council for Wales is the Government's statutory advisor on sustaining natural beauty, wildlife and the opportunity for outdoor enjoyment in Wales and its inshore waters.

Headquarters
Maes y Ffynnon
Penrhosgarnedd
Bangor
Gwynedd
LL57 2DW

Telephone: 0845 1306229
Fax: 01248 355782
Email: enquiries@ccw.gov.uk

South and East Wales Office
Unit 7
Castelton Court
Fortran Road
St Mellon's
CARDIFF
CF3 0LT

Telephone: 0845 1306229
Fax: 01248 355782
Email: southernsteam@ccw.gov.uk

Environment Agency Wales

Environment Agency Wales reports to the Welsh Assembly Government and is the environmental regulator with wide responsibilities for managing the environment, acting as a champion for the environment, reducing pollution and enforcing pollution legislation, overseeing the management of waste, water resources and freshwater fisheries, reducing the harm caused by flooding and influencing others to achieve positive environmental outcomes by changing attitudes and behaviour.

Head Office
Cambria House
29 Newport Road
Cardiff
CF24 0TP

Telephone: 08708 506506
Email: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk
www.environment-agency.wales.gov.uk

South East Area Office
Rivers House
St Mellons Business Park
St Mellons
Cardiff

CF3 0EY

Telephone: 08708 506506

Email: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

www.environment-agency.wales.gov.uk

Forestry Commission Wales

Forestry Commission Wales are responsible for managing the 38% of Welsh woodlands owned by the Welsh Assembly Government. They advise on the development of forestry policy and its implementation. They also encourage sustainable woodland management within the private sector and are responsible for administering grants and regulatory work, including licensing for felling and replanting.

Victoria House
Victoria Terrace
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion
SY23 2DQ

Telephone: 0845 604 0845

www.forestry.gov.uk/wales

Wales Assembly Government Department of Rural Affairs

Wales Assembly Government Department of Rural Affairs is responsible for the implementation of The Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) (Wales) Regulations 2007.

www.wales.gov.uk/about/departments/depc

Wildlife Trust for South and West Wales

The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales is a charitable organisation working exclusively on all aspects of wildlife conservation in South and West Wales. They provide habitat and species management advice directly to those managing land and work with key partners and local people to promote habitat enhancement and restoration.

The Nature Centre,
Bridgend

Telephone: 01656 724100

The Welsh Wildlife Centre,
Cilgerran

Telephone: 01239 621212

E-mail: info@welshwildlife.org

www.welshwildlife.org

South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre

South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBREC) is the centre for the collation, management and dissemination of biodiversity data for South East Wales.

13 St Andrews Crescent
Cardiff

CF10 3DB

Telephone: 029 2064 1110

Fax: 029 2038 7354

Email: info@sewbrec.org
www.sewbrec.org.uk

Planning for Biodiversity by David Tyldesley and RTPI (1999)

This is a good practice guide that aims to help raise awareness of biodiversity conservation in the planning system and to improve understanding, help resolve conflict and create opportunities and provide practical guidance on planning instruments that may contribute to biodiversity conservation.

www.rtpi.org.uk

British Standard Institute

The British Standard Institute has published **PAS 2010:2006 Planning to halt the loss of biodiversity**. This has been developed to help the planning system play its part in halting the decline of biodiversity.

www.bsigroup.com/Shop

Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (IEEM)

THE IEEM is a non-profit professional body that represents and supports ecologists and environmental managers in the UK and abroad. It provides a variety of services to develop competency and standards in ecology and environmental management.

IEEM
43 Southgate Street
Winchester
Hampshire
SO23 9EH

Telephone: 01962 868626
Fax: 01962 868625
Email: enquiries@ieem.net

www.ieem.net

Think Wildlife Think Protected Species

Provides guidance on the protected species likely to be associated with particular development types or sites in the Glamorgan or Gwent areas.

Developing Naturally by Mike Oxford et al (2000)

This is a good practice guide developed for the Association of Local Government Ecologists relating to development and the planning system in the UK.

5.4 Appendix 4-Description of Rhondda Cynon Taf

Rhondda Cynon Taf is situated in the South Wales Coalfield. The geology, landscape, wildlife, land-use, history and culture of the area are closely interconnected.

Rhondda Cynon Taf extends from the uplands of the Brecon Beacons to the edge of the Vale of Glamorgan. The central feature is the coalfield plateau, which is cut by the Rhondda, Cynon and parts of the Taff and Ely river valleys. The coalfield plateau is higher (600m), more remote and exposed in the north, with dramatic cwms and extensive areas of forestry. Further south, hill farming predominates. The Cynon and Rhondda valleys are generally steep-sided with narrow and mostly built up valley floors, and bracken covered, farmed or wooded slopes. South of Pontypridd, the Taff Valley is wider but heavily developed. The southern part of the County Borough has a softer, more lowland landscape of farms, woods, commons, towns and villages.

The geology is dominated by the Upper Carboniferous rocks, in particular the South Wales Pennant Formation with its Coal Measures. Older Palaeozoic rocks are exposed around the rim of the Coalfield. Minor outcrops of younger, Triassic rocks occur in the south of the borough near the M4. The coalfield plateau was shaped by the Tertiary uplift and the deep valleys were cut by the glaciers of the late Devensian glaciation. Boulder clay and other glacial debris overlie the rocks, periglacial and more recent landslips are also evident.

The iron and coal in the rocks led to the development of the Valleys towns during the industrial revolution, with most of the houses being built of local stone. The narrow, steep-sided valleys have contained built development, roads and railways in narrow ribbons by the river. The thin, acid soil and mild climate have supported traditional agriculture, native woodlands and more recently forestry plantations.

The biodiversity of the County is bound to this heritage. While much of the central band of the County lies on acid soils and rocks, limestone outcrops in both the north and south. The combination of a complex topography, geology, and geomorphology, and generally poor and unproductive soils creates great natural variety of landform, landscape and biodiversity. The diverse mixed land uses, post-industrial legacy and wet, mild climate further increase this environmental diversity. A huge variety of habitats occur in a small area: from upland crags and scree to floodplain meadows. In common with other areas of the Valleys, the extent of semi-natural habitat is unusually high, as is the diversity of habitats. As a consequence, the County also supports a wide range of species, some of these being of importance in a Welsh context.

The biodiversity, landscape and historic value of the South Wales Valleys is something which has only recently been recognised, and provides new considerations, and opportunities for the land use planning of the LDP.

The soils of Rhondda Cynon Taf reflect the geology, past and present climate, the geography and ecosystems, and the land-use history of the County Borough. In general, the upland plateau comprises 'loamy acid permeable soils with a wet peaty surface', on the highest ground there is a significant area of 'deep acid peat soils'. In the border Vale, the more productive agricultural land is mostly on 'well drained loamy soils', with some 'slowly permeable, seasonally wet, loamy and clayey soils'. These also occur on the valley floors within the coalfield as well as the more typical 'slowly permeable, seasonally wet acid soils with a wet peaty surface'. (From the simplified National Soil Map of Wales). There are also areas of exposed rock and scree and mineral spoil tips with minimal or very thin soil development.

6. Bibliography

Association of Local Government Ecologists (2008) **Biodiversity tool kit Initial draft of the 'Validation of Planning Applications' local requirements template.**

In preparation, with Defra and Natural England, to assist applicants submitting on-line planning applications. <http://www.alge.org.uk/publications/index.php>

Bodé, G. (2004) **Guidelines for the Selection of Wildlife Sites in South Wales**, The South Wales Wildlife Sites Partnership, Dingestow.

This document informed the Wales-wide criteria and the Mid Valleys Criteria.

BRIG, (2007) **Revised priority habitats and species lists for the UK**

http://www.ukbap.org.uk/library/brig/TargetsReview06/Final/CountryTarget_Tables_2006update.pdf

British Standard Institute (2006) **PAS 2010:2006 Planning to halt the loss of biodiversity**

British Standards Institute (2005) **BS5837:2005- Guide for Trees in Relation to Construction**

British Standards Institution (1989) **BS3998:1989- British Standard Recommendations for Tree work**

Caerphilly County Borough Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council (2008) **Criteria for the Selection of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in the County Boroughs of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taff (the 'Mid-Valleys Area')**

The Mid Valleys Criteria used for the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan follow the structure and format of the South Wales Guidelines (Bode, 2004) and develop the earlier 'Landscapes Working For Wales' proposed SINC sites (WDA et al., various).

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology Bangor, National Soil Resources Institute, Institute of Grassland and Environment Research, Geoenvironmental Research Centre (Cardiff University), Cynefin Consultants (2002) **Critical Appraisal of State and Pressures and Controls on the Sustainable Use of Soils in Wales**

Identifies the important role of soils for biodiversity and ecosystem services. Considers the importance of soil carbon and its role in the global carbon cycle. Also addresses the role of soil in food and fibre production, as a source of materials and minerals and as a repository of historic artifacts and a palaeo-ecological record. The main threats to Welsh soils are identified. The description of soils in RCT in Appendix 4 is taken from the simplified National Soil Map of Wales in Chapter 2.

http://www.ceh.ac.uk/sections/bef/Wales_Soil_Scoping_Study.html

Lesley Cherns, Michael G Bassett and Andrew Haycock (2004). **Rhondda Cynon Taff Earth Science Audit**
This report describes the Earth Science Audit database and the scoring system for RIGS

Countryside Council for Wales, National Museums and Galleries of Wales (1996–2000). **MINESCAN Partnership Project**

DEFRA (2007) **Conserving biodiversity in a changing climate: guidance on building capacity to adapt**

UK wide guidance establishing six principles: protecting existing biodiversity, reducing sources of harm, developing ecologically resilient landscapes, establishing ecological networks, making decisions based on analysis and integrating measures into management, planning and practice.

Environment Agency (2009) **Water for life and livelihoods - A consultation on the Draft River Basin Management Plan for the Severn River Basin District**

Prepared under the EU Water Framework Directive to achieve good ecological status of rivers, lakes, reservoirs, aquifers, estuaries and coastal waters by 2026. Includes information on the current ecological status of rivers in RCT and proposed actions.

English Nature et al (2007) **The Monarch Report a synthesis for biodiversity conservation**

Modelling Natural Resource Responses to Climate Change in Britain and Ireland.

European Union (2000) **Water Framework Directive 2000/86/EEC**

<http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/s15005.htm>

European Union (2006) **Soil Framework Directive 2006/0086**

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/three_en.htm

European Union (2006) **Sustainable Development Strategy and the Sixth Environment Action Programme**

http://ec.europa.eu/sustainable/docs/renewed_eu_sds_en.pdf

European Commission (2006) **Halting the Loss of Biodiversity by 2010 and Beyond- Sustaining Ecosystem Services for Human Well-being**

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2006:0216:FIN:EN:DOC>

This Communication from the Commission highlights two particular threats to EU biodiversity. “First, that of ill-considered land use and development. Member States have particular responsibility, through improved planning, to reconcile land use and development needs with the conservation of biodiversity and maintenance of ecosystem services. Second, the increasing impact of climate change on biodiversity. This reinforces the imperative for effective action on greenhouse gas emissions beyond the Kyoto Protocol targets. We must also support biodiversity adaptation to climate change, while ensuring that climate change adaptation and mitigation measures are not themselves harmful to biodiversity.”

Glamorgan Biodiversity Advisory Group/Greater Gwent Biodiversity Action Group (2007) **Think Wildlife Think Protected Species**

<http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/content/uploads/document/s/Guidance%20Legislation/Think%20Wildlife%20final%20v2%20Feb%2007.doc>

HMSO (1992). **The Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.**

HMSO (1994). **The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations**

European protected species listed in Schedules 2 and 4 can be viewed at

www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si1994/uksi_19942716_en_8.htm#sdiv2, and
www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si1994/uksi_19942716_en_10.htm#sdiv4.

HMSO (1981). **Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981** (as amended)

Schedules 1 (birds), 5 (animals) and 8 (plants) list the species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The up to date list can be viewed at www.naturenet.net/law/wcagen.html#intro. There is no ‘official’ site, although the Statutory Instruments can be viewed on the HMSO website (www.opsi.gov.uk).

HMSO (2000) **Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW)** (as amended)

HMSO (2006) **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006**

S.42 of the NERC Act (2005?) (formerly s 74 of CROW) requires the Welsh Assembly Government to published a list

of habitats and species of principal importance in Wales. S. 40 establishes the biodiversity duty for public bodies.

HMSO (1949) **National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949**

HMSO (1990) **Town and Country Planning Act 1990**

Provides for the statutory protection of trees of amenity value.

HMSO (1992), **Protection of Badgers Act 1992**, HMSO, London

Provides protection for badgers and their setts.

HMSO (1997), **Hedgerow Regulations. Statutory Instrument 1997 no.1160**

HMSO (1967) **Forestry Act 1967** (as amended)

Requires a felling licence for certain works to trees:

Liz Howe (May 2007) **Advisory Targets for Habitat Creation in Rhondda Cynon Taf Consultation Draft**

The Countryside Council Wales has set minimum targets for habitat creation across Wales, for the Wales Biodiversity Partnership.

Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management **Guidelines for survey methodology**

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2003) **Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey**

DL Jones and G Jones (2008) **A strategic conservation assessment of heathland and associated habitats on the coal spoils of South Wales. Phase II Assessment of environmental parameters.** Countryside Council for Wales CCW Science Report no 824.

P.S. Jones, D.P Stevens, T.H. Blackstock, C.R. Burrows & E. A. Howe (eds) (2003). **Priority Habitats of Wales – a technical guide** Countryside Council for Wales.

J Latham, TH Blackstock and EA Howe (2007) **Ecological Connectivity in Wales: planning action to help terrestrial biodiversity respond to habitat fragmentation and climate change** Countryside Council for Wales (staff science report no 08/7/1)

The Wales maps in this report highlight the importance of the Coalfield Valleys for the extent of semi-natural habitat and the diversity of semi-natural habitat/ Shannon Index.

Monmouthshire CC **UDP Inspectors report**

Sites which meet the criteria for designation as a protected site, it will be treated as if the site was so designated.

Mike Oxford et al (2000) **Developing Naturally** Association of Local Government Ecologists

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (2008) **Action for Nature: the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taf Part One**

Adopted by the Council July 2009

Action for Nature; the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) for Rhondda Cynon Taf sets out a programme of action for a range of partners to conserve and enhance the biodiversity of Rhondda Cynon Taf. The LBAP lists the habitats and species of particular importance in Rhondda Cynon Taf. It was adopted as supplementary planning guidance to the Structure and Local Plans for the Rhondda Cynon Taf area, in October 2000. This was renewed in 2009, pending the adoption of the Local Development Plan. Part Two provides the detailed habitat and species action plans and is available via www.ukbap-reporting.org.uk

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, (2008) **Deposit Draft Local Development Plan 2006 – 2021**

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (2007) **Draft Cynon Valley River Park Strategy**

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (2008) **Natural Environment Topic Paper**

Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC, Welsh Development Agency, Chris Blanford Associates (1997) **Landscapes Working for Wales: Draft Landscape Strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf**

This document combines earlier studies undertaken by consultants for the WDA and the local authorities for

Rhondda, Cynon and Taff Ely, prior to local government re-organisation in 1996. Volume 4, appendix D4 Ecological Appraisal and Annex 2 (confidential) lists proposed SINCs sites used to inform the Local Plans prepared in the 1990s and subsequently adopted by RCT.

RTPI Environmental Planning & Protection Network **E-Bulletin,18.04.08**

The development of an on-line biodiversity planning tool in association with the Planning Portal.

David Tyldesley (1999) **Planning for Biodiversity** Royal Town Planning Institute.

United Nations (1993) **Convention on Biological Diversity** International Treaty to halt biodiversity loss by 2010.

UK Climate Impacts Programme (2009) **A changing climate for business- business planning for the impacts of climate change**

Wales Biodiversity Partnership (February 2008) **Wildlife Sites Guidance Wales: A guide to developing local wildlife sites in Wales,**

These guidelines were endorsed by the Minister for Planning, Sustainability and Housing in February 2008.

National Assembly for Wales Circular 23/2001- **New Guidance for Local Planning Authorities on European Protected Species and Changes in Licensing Procedures**

Welsh Assembly Government (2008) **The Welsh Soils Action Plan (consultation document)**

The draft Plan describes how the planning system should consider the soil resource in Wales and contains a number of actions with regard to planning and ecosystem services. These include scrutiny of LDPs, the retention of Agricultural Land Classification, capturing data on soil loss to development, quantifying area and impact upon loss of function, a revision to the British Standard for Topsoil (BS3882) and revisions to relevant Technical Advice Notes (TANs). Research and targeted management to protect carbon rich soils, enhance flood risk management and track pollution are also proposed.

Welsh Assembly Government letter dated 18th February 2008 to Chief Planning Officers **re Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994 ref CL-01-08**

Welsh Assembly Government (2002), **Planning Policy Wales**

Welsh Assembly Government (2008) **People, Places, Futures - The Wales Spatial Plan 2008 Update**

Welsh Assembly Government Special Planning Unit (Jan 2008) **South East Wales: Developing the Networked Environmental Region, draft consultants brief**

Welsh Assembly Government (2008) **Design (consultation draft)**

Welsh Assembly Government (2008) **Climate Change (consultation draft)**

Welsh Office (1996), **Nature Conservation and Planning: Technical Advice Note (Wales) 5**

Welsh Assembly Government **The Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) (Wales) Regulations 2007**

The Wales Assembly Government Department of Rural Affairs is responsible for the implementation of these regulations which cover the conversion of uncultivated land or semi-natural areas to intensive use and the large-scale restructuring of rural land holdings.

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/wales/wsi2007/wsi_20072933_en_1

Welsh Assembly Government (2009). **Nature Conservation and Planning; Technical Advice Note (Wales) 5.**

Welsh Assembly Government (2009) **Climate change strategy - High level policy statement consultation**

Welsh Assembly Government (2009) **Climate change action plan consultation**

Welsh Assembly Government (2009) **TAN12 Design**

Welsh Assembly Government (2007) **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act S.42 List of Species and Habitats of Principal Importance for Conservation of Biological Diversity in Wales**

S42 species list:

S42 habitats list:

Welsh Assembly Government, (2005) **Local Development Plans Wales: Policy on preparation of LDPs**

Welsh Assembly Government, (2006) **Local Development Plans Manual**

Wales Biodiversity Partnership, September (2008) **Wales Biodiversity Framework: Making the connections for biodiversity action in Wales**

Annex H advises that “The aim of a Biodiversity SPG is to raise the profile of biodiversity issues in planning, provide more detailed guidance to planners and developers to ensure that biodiversity is taken into account in all development proposals and to strengthen links between the LBAP and the Local Development Plan.”

Welsh Assembly Government, (2009) Bioenergy Action Plan for Wales (and Progress Report (2010)).