

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2006-2021)**

# **Transportation Topic Paper**

April 2008

## **Context**

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## BACKGROUND

In January 2007 the Council issued for public consultation the Local Development Plan: Preferred Strategy. The Strategy was the first stage of the new statutory local development plan (LDP).

The next stage in the plan making process is the production of a deposit draft LDP. In order to ensure the soundness of the emerging LDP and transparency in the plan making process, the Council has produced a series of topic papers.

The topic papers address the main area of policy to be considered in the LDP. **It should be stressed that these papers are a starting point for policy development, through the sustainability appraisal process and as the Council's evidence base develops, emerging LDP policy will evolve and be refined**

### 1. INTRODUCTION

An efficient and sustainable transport system is a requirement for a modern, prosperous and inclusive society.

The LDP will establish a robust and meaningful policy context for the development of an modern, efficient and truly integrated transportation system in Rhondda Cynon Taf. In order to do so the LDP will provide a framework for the development of major new highway schemes, the provision of new public transport services, the creation of safer

environments through improvements to traffic management and parking provision and the promotion of walking and cycling.

In order to do this the topic paper will outline:

- **The policy context** for housing, including a explanation of national, regional and local policy;
- **Key Issues in Rhondda Cynon Taf**, which relate specifically to transportation;
- **Preferred Strategy**, policy in respect of transportation, representations to the Strategy and proposed policy response, and
- **Draft LDP Policy**, which provides a planning policy context for transportation in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

### 2. NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

*People, Places, Futures – The Wales Spatial Plan (adopted 2004)*

The Wales Spatial Plan, provides a framework for the future spatial development of Wales. Rhondda Cynon Taf along with the neighbouring authorities of Cardiff, Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil, Caerphilly and the Vale of Glamorgan has been identified as part of the South East – Capital Network Zone. The vision for the Capital Network is:

*“An innovative skilled area offering a high quality of life – international yet distinctively Welsh. It will compete internationally by increasing its global viability through*

*stronger links between the Valleys and the coast and the UK and Europe, helping spread prosperity within the area and benefiting other parts of Wales”.*

Whilst the Spatial Plan may not provide a detailed framework for the delivery of transportation in South East Wales it does nevertheless provide a number of clear propositions. These include the following:

- The Valleys need to be strengthened as a desirable place to live, work and visit – combining a wider mix of types of housing and good access to jobs and services – in distinctive communities set in an attractive environment.
- The area will function as a single networked city region on a scale to realise its international potential, its national role and to reduce inequalities. A fully integrated transport system is necessary to enable this to happen. The area will operate in a way that maintains and enhances the facility of international gateways and corridors.

*Turning Heads – A Strategy for the Heads of the Valleys 2020 (June 2006)*

Turning Heads – A Strategy for the Heads of the Valleys 2020 as the name suggests, outlines a strategy for regenerating the northern Valley areas of South East Wales. In Rhondda Cynon Taf the strategy area includes Treorchy, Treherbert, Ferndale, Mountain Ash and Aberdare. The objectives of the

programme reflect those of the Wales Spatial Plan in seeking to ensure:

- An attractive and well used natural, historic and built environment;
- A vibrant economic landscape offering new opportunities;
- A well educated, skilled and healthier population;
- An appealing and coherent tourism and leisure experience, and
- Public confidence in a shared bright future

*Planning Policy Wales (2002)*

Assembly Government Transportation policy is embodied in chapter 8 of Planning Policy Wales (2002). Supplementary guidance in relation to Transportation is contained in Technical Advice Notes 18. The Planning Policy Wales Companion Guide (2006) relates Planning Policy Wales to the LDP system, identifying clear statements of national policy that should only be repeated in where local circumstance require.

The Assembly Government’s objectives for transportation is to extend choice in transport and secure accessibility in a way which supports sustainable development by encouraging the establishment of a integrated transport system which is safe, efficient, clean and fair. This will be achieved through integration:

- within and between different types of transport;

- between transport measures and land use planning;
- between transport measures and policies to protect and improve the environment; and
- between transport measures and policies for education, health, social inclusion and wealth creation.

Land use planning can help to achieve the Assembly Government's objectives for transport through:

- reducing the need to travel, especially by private car, by locating development where there is good access by public transport, walking and cycling;
- locating development near other related uses to encourage multi-purpose trips and to reduce the length of journeys;
- improving accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport;
- ensuring that transport is accessible to all, taking into account the needs of disabled and other less mobile people;
- promoting walking and cycling;
- supporting the provision of high quality public transport;
- supporting traffic management measures;
- promoting sustainable transport options for freight and commerce;
- supporting sustainable transport options in rural areas;
- supporting necessary infrastructure improvements; and

- ensuring that, as far as possible, transport infrastructure does not contribute to land take, urban sprawl or neighbourhood severance.

*Technical Advice Note 18: Transportation (2007)*

Technical Advice Note 18: Transport (TAN 18) supplements Planning Policy Wales (2002) and provides additional guidance on achieving a sustainable and integrated transport system.

TAN 18 emphasises that local authorities should consider the need for introducing or reviewing parking standards and requirements, and the parking needs of disabled people. Car parking policies should address the provision and management of both on-street and off-street parking, and the standards to be applied to new developments, reflecting the differing needs of various land uses. Additionally, neighbouring authorities should co-operate to achieve a more consistent regional approach. Guidance also states that policies should encourage the implementation of specific measures to develop safer cycling, including secure cycle parking at interchanges, and at all major developments.

TAN 18 also indicates that the extra traffic generated by a proposed development may produce the need for transport improvements in the vicinity, and beyond. It states that where improvements are necessary, local planning authorities may grant planning permission subject to a condition requiring that improvements are completed prior to the commencement / occupation of the development. Furthermore, it says that

developers will be required to pay the cost of any highway improvements where the need is directly created by their development. Such improvements may be secured under section 278 of the Highways Act 1980, whilst the use of planning obligations may be appropriate in some circumstances.

***Wales Transport Strategy – Draft for Consultation (2006)***

The Wales Transport Strategy (WTS) sets out how the Welsh Assembly Government proposes to deliver its transport duty. The WTS focuses on the role that transport can play in delivering the wider policy agenda of integrating transport with spatial planning, economic development, education, health, social services, environment and tourism, whilst meeting the strategic agenda set out in ‘Wales: A Better Country’ and the implementation framework of the Wales Spatial Plan. The vision for WTS is “to provide a framework that connects national, regional and local policy to maximise the contribution that transport can make to achieving a sustainable future for Wales, where actions for social, economic and environmental improvement work together to create positive change.”

The WTS has a number of desired outcomes and three key themes which underpin the strategy. These outcomes form the basis for the WTS and the Consortia are required to use them to frame and guide Regional Transport Plans (RTPs) and the ensuing schemes and interventions.

Social Outcomes
1. Improving access to healthcare
2. Improving access to education, training and life-long learning
3. Improving access to shopping and leisure facilities
4. Encouraging healthy lifestyles
5. Improving the actual and perceived safety of travel

Economic Outcomes
6. Improving connectivity within Wales and internationally
7. Improving the efficient, reliable and sustainable movement of people
8. Improving the efficient, reliable and sustainable movement of freight
9. Improving access to employment opportunities
10. Improving access to key visitor attractions
11. Increasing the use of more sustainable materials in the maintenance of Wales’ transport assets and in the provision of new transport infrastructure.

## Environmental Outcomes

12. Reducing the contribution of transport to greenhouse gas emissions
12a. Adapting to the impacts of climate change
12b. Reducing the contribution of transport on to air pollution and other harmful pollutant emissions.
13. Reducing the negative impact of transport on the local environment - water pollution, soil loss and land contamination, noise and vibration, light pollution and links between communities
14. Reducing the negative impact of transport on our heritage – landscape, townscape, historical environment and Wales' distinctiveness
15. Reducing negative impacts of transport on biodiversity and increasing positive impacts.

In addition, the three themes of the WTS are as follows:

Theme 1: To achieve a more effective and efficient transport system

Greater efficiency in terms of vehicle technology, as well as seeking more efficient use of available infrastructure (for example achieving higher capacity on some existing routes) is promoted. In some cases, provision of new infrastructure will also be required if the effectiveness of the system is to be ensured. The Assembly Government is also seeking more

efficient use of resources and promoting more co-ordinated decision making across different policy areas

Theme 2: To achieve greater use of the more sustainable and healthy forms of travel

Specifically, a reduction in single-occupancy car use is sought, by promoting greater use of car sharing, buses, trains, walking and cycling. This will reduce the environmental impacts of travel and help to improve opportunities for those without access to a car.

Theme 3: To minimise the need to travel

It is recognised that travel can broaden people's horizons. However, if greenhouse gas emissions and congestion are to be reduced there is a need to consider ways in which people could still access services whilst minimising the need for car travel, particularly single-occupancy. This could be by seeking to minimise the number of journeys made (for example by encouraging greater use of teleconferencing and home working), and seeking to reduce the average length of journeys (for example through better land-use planning). The focus will be on car travel, as, for example, higher levels of walking and cycling are beneficial to health.

The Welsh County Surveyor's Society (WCSS) provides detailed parking requirements according to land use and type of development. It has been prepared by CCS Wales on behalf of all 22 Welsh Unitary Authorities and the four regional transport consortia, SEWTA, SWWITCH, TAITH and TRACC. Its aim is:

- to assist developers, designers and builders in the preparation and submission of planning applications; and
- to achieve a common approach to the provision of vehicle parking facilities associated with new development and change of use.

The Wales Parking Standards have been based on the Parking Guidelines Revised Edition of 1993 that was prepared by the Standing Conference on Regional Policy in South Wales. The underlying rationale for the 1993 Parking Guidelines was to provide “sufficient parking for private cars and service vehicles to avoid the need for vehicles to park on-street and thereby cause congestion, danger and visual intrusion.

In assessing parking requirements, the Wales Parking Standards identify that a number of factors need to be taken into account in relation to the development and its location. These include:

- the level of service provided by the public transport system;
- the provision of works buses or the extent of car pooling required by a Travel Plan;
- relative proportions of local labour available within walking or cycling distance and more distant labour;
- the existing and possible future congestion levels in streets likely to be affected by the development; and
- the provision of public parking space in the vicinity or grouped car parks on industrial estates or retail parks

A fundamental departure from previous guidance is the requirement for Local Authorities to introduce a system of zones for parking purposes into their development plans. It is the responsibility of individual Local Authorities to decide which of the six zones are applicable to their area and where the zones boundaries should be drawn within their area.

### **3. REGIONAL POLICY CONTEXT**

Sewta is an alliance of 10 south-east Wales local authorities working with others to deliver better transport in south east Wales region. It is constituted as a joint local government committee.

The Transport Act (Wales) 2006 requires the consortia to produce a regional plan for transport for all modes of travel. Sewta produced an outline of the Regional Transport Plan (RTP) in January 2007. The draft RTP is due by summer 2008 and the final RTP by March 2009.

Sewta's vision for the RTP is to provide a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system for south east Wales that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity and protects the environment, where public transport, walking, cycling and sustainable freight provides real travel alternatives.

The priorities of the RTP will be to:

- improve access to services, facilities and employment, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling;
- provide a transport system that increases the use of sustainable modes of travel;

- reduce the demand for travel;
- develop an efficient and reliable transport system with reduced levels of congestion and improved transport links within the SEWTA region and to the rest of Wales, the UK and Europe;
- provide a transport system that encourages healthy and active lifestyles, is safer and supports local communities;
- reduces significantly the emission of greenhouse gases and air pollution from transportation;
- ensure that land use development in south east Wales is supported by sustainable transport measures;
- make better use of the transport system;
- play a full role in regenerating south east Wales

### **Walking and Cycling Strategy**

The RTP seeks at regional level to rebalance the relationship between people as car drivers, and as pedestrians and other users of the transport system.

The RTP Walking and Cycling Strategy will ensure the region works towards providing a high quality cycle infrastructure and encourage people to cycle more. Sewta and its partner authorities also needs to ensure the provision of safe and convenient cycle routes and supporting facilities are central to the design process for new or regenerated development and any additional or modification to the highway network.

### **Roads Strategy**

Sewta intends to invest heavily in alternative modes of travel but car traffic will continue to dominate the transport scene. However the majority of motorised travel will remain on the road system and in cars and lorries. Therefore Sewta accepts that some new highway investment will be necessary during the life of the RTP but the thrust of the Roads Strategy is to protect and improve capacity of the existing highway network.

### **Rail Strategy**

The Sewta Rail Strategy in conjunction with partner organisations provides the context for securing enhancements and further improvement of the rail network.

The Strategy will be based on:

- enhancing the quality of trains and increasing their length;
- increasing service frequencies;
- track enhancements to improve running speeds and reliability;
- improving existing stations including better interchange with other modes;
- improving information for travellers;
- a limited programme of opening new lines and stations on existing lines.

## **Bus Strategy**

With Sewta being committed to providing alternatives to the private car, the Bus Strategy and its policies will be key to this commitment.

The Bus Strategy will concentrate on:

- enhancing the quality of the bus fleet;
- increasing service frequencies;
- developing larger distance express services;
- relocation of road space to favour buses;
- ticketing initiatives;
- improving bus stops and bus interchange with other modes;
- stronger enforcement of parking regulations.

## **Road Safety Strategy**

The Sewta Road Safety Strategy contains 20 policies with an overall objective to improve both safety and the perception of safety for all road users.

Local authorities will be responsible for the delivery of most of the objectives, with Sewta setting a consistent regional approach. The strategy concentrates on policies aimed at specific groups of road users, improving the quality and consistency of accident analysis and practical ways to reduce the speed of traffic.

## **4. LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT**

*A Better Life – Our Community Plan 2001 – 20014*

A Better Life - Our Community Plan sets out a framework for creating a brighter future for everyone who lives and works in Rhondda Cynon Taff. The plan was developed through the Better Life Consortium, during 2003/2004. The Community Plan identifies 5 key themes under which are a series of local level aims. The key themes are:

- Safer Communities
- Our Living Space
- Our Health and Well Being
- Boosting Our Local Economy
- Learning for Growth

The key themes identified in the Community Plan has been developed into strategies for improving the quality of life in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Transport is identified as part of the Our Living Space Strategy. The Strategy (200?) sets the following themes:

- Healthy Environments;
- Community Collaboration and Prevention;
- Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing;
- Children and Young People;
- Work and Health;
- Maintaining Independence;
- Transport and Access

*Access, Circulation and Parking Requirements Study (2007)*

The study was commissioned by the Council in 2006 to provide an Rhondda Cynon Taf specific evidence base relating to access, circulation and parking standards. In doing so the study looked at design guidance in relation to access and parking layout, parking standards, key junctions, transport assessments, travel plans, planning conditions and obligations.

*Strategic Transport Assessment (2007)*

Commissioned by the Council in 2007 the study examines the possible impact the development of the 8 strategic sites identified in the LDP will have upon the highway network and makes recommendations to ameliorate the impacts. Further detailed assessment work is currently being undertaken and will be reported shortly.

*Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council*

In March 2007 the Council's Executive Cabinet approved a report of the Group Director – Environmental Services which outlined a strategy for future major road schemes in the County Borough. The report details the major road schemes to be carried forward in the LDP and RTP and identifies congestion and pressure points on the highway network.

**5. KEY ISSUES IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF**

The key issues to be addressed by the Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP have been identified by making an assessment of the following:

- The results of pre deposit consultation with key stakeholder;
- The results of the Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Exercise; and
- A review of baseline social, economic and environmental information.

The issues identified through this process will inform directly the development of the spatial strategy for the LDP.

*Pre Deposit Consultation*

Transportation issues identified are as follows:

- Poor infrastructure – difficulty of movement and congestion
- Need for better infrastructure – transport and community facilities
- Poor public transport
- Need to make better use of bus and rail

### *Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment*

The Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment identified the following transportation issues:

- Away from the two north / south main routes (the A4119 and A470) accessibility is poor;
- 62% of people travel to work by car, ranking 19<sup>th</sup> out of 376 for England and Wales, however, 31.6% of households do not have a car;
- Poor access to services

### *Baseline information.*

Transportation issues identified are as follows:

- Only 60% of the workforce of Rhondda Cynon Taf work in the County Borough (Review of Economic Analysis of Rhondda Cynon Taf 2006);
- 22,000 residents commute out of Rhondda Cynon Taf every day to work, of these 19,000 commute to Cardiff (Review of Economic Analysis of Rhondda Cynon Taf 2006)
- Car ownership in Rhondda Cynon Taf has grown since 1991 from 60% to 68% in 2001 (Office for National Statistics);

- The dominant mode of transport for in Rhondda Cynon Taf for travelling is the private car with 74% preferring to use their cars. 10% of residents walking to work and 8% use public transport (Office for National Statistics);
- The volume of motor vehicle traffic on the roads of Rhondda Cynon Taf increased by 13% between 1996 –2004. This is in line with the growth in road traffic in Wales for the same period. (Welsh Transport Statistics 2005)

## **6. PREFERRED STRATEGY**

The preferred strategy provides the following policy framework for transportation in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

### *Objectives of the Local Development Plan*

Paragraph 4.2 of the Preferred Strategy (January 2007) lists 16 objectives for the LDP. The following objectives are the most relevant to the topic area;

- Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport;
- Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all;
- Provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe life style and promote well being, and
- Manage the effects of climate change.

### ***Development Strategy***

Paragraphs 6.1 – 6.11 of the Preferred Strategy sets out a development strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf. The strategy area is divided into two distinct parts:-

- Northern Strategy Area, and
- Southern Strategy Area

The Northern Strategy area comprises the key settlements of Tonypany, Porth, Treorchy, Treherbert, Ferndale, Tylorstown, Mountain Ash and Hirwaun and the principal town of Aberdare. In this area the emphasis is on building sustainable communities and halting the process of depopulation and decline.

The Southern Strategy area includes the principal towns of Pontypridd and Llantrisant and key settlements of Tonyrefail and Llanharan. In the south of the County Borough the emphasis is on sustainable growth that benefits Rhondda Cynon Taf as a whole.

The strategy recognises the important role that principal towns and key settlements play in providing services of both local and county importance. Where possible, development will be focused on the principal towns and key settlements of the County Borough in order to support and reinforce the important role of these centres play as places for social and economic activity.

### ***Transportation***

Paragraphs 6.24 – 6.28 of the Preferred Strategy provides a strategy for the development of transportation in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The paragraphs are as follows;

*“The distinctive geography of Rhondda Cynon Taff means that the County Borough has a linear communications network. Transportation links tend to follow the valleys, with access across the plateau being more difficult. The major roads, particularly the M4, A470 and A4119 provide access to Cardiff and South East Wales. Access to Swansea and West Wales is provided by the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road. Internal linkages in Rhondda Cynon Taf however, can be more problematic with congested residential streets and town centres, which are unsuitable for heavy traffic.*

*During the plan period the following committed transportation schemes will be completed :-*

- *A465 Abergavenny / Hirwaun Dualling*
- *Church Village By pass, and*

*The strategy will build on these achievements and continue to promote the need for further improvements in the strategic transportation network to ensure improved links with Cardiff and the M4 and Merthyr Tydfil and the A465. Improvements will also be sought to the internal transportation network in Rhondda Cynon Taf to facilitate movement east / west.*

*As a general principle development will be directed to locations that offer a choice of transportation. Particular*

*importance will be placed on ensuring that development both supports and where necessary contributes towards the development of a modern integrated transport system in Rhondda Cynon Taf.*

*It should be noted the integrated transport strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf will be informed by a combination of the policy framework contained in the LDP and the emerging Regional Transport Plan.”*

#### *Strategic Policy*

The strategic transport policy is as follows;

### **SP 9 – TRANSPORTATION**

**The Council will seek to implement transportation schemes and initiatives which will achieve sustainable regeneration, enhance the public realm, improve the economy, reduce congestion, and improve road safety by:-**

- 1. Reduce the need to travel by private car;**
- 2. Maintaining and improving accessibility for all sections of the community;**
- 3. Supporting transportation schemes which benefit the economy of the County Borough whilst seeking to minimise impact on the environment;**
- 4. Supporting and enhancing public transport; walking and cycling provision; and achieving integration of all modes of transportation;**

### **5. Minimising adverse effects of traffic and parking on local amenities and the environment as a whole.**

#### ***Representations to the Preferred Strategy***

Representations made in respect of the Transportation element of the Preferred Strategy fall broadly into 2 areas – representations in respect of paragraph 6.24 –6.28 and Strategic Policy 9.

Outlined below is a summary of the main representation submitted in respect of these 2 areas. Responses to each of the main representations are included.

1. Representations to Paragraph 6.24 –6.28 – Transportation

**General:** Significant growth is focused in the South. The precise scale of development proposed is not specified, but it is clear that it is likely to put additional pressure on M4 and key routes into Cardiff which are heavily congested at peak commuter periods (notably the A470 and A4232) and particularly if the trend for commuting from RCT to Cardiff continues.

**Proposed Response:** The Draft LDP will provide a clear policy framework for the development of a modern integrated transport in Rhondda Cynon Taf which maximises that opportunities provided by public transport and seeks to reduce the need to travel by private car.

**General:** It is essential that new development includes

appropriate public transport provision (in addition to walking and cycling) to minimise the demand for travel within the Sewta region and, particularly, to minimise commuting by car into Cardiff

**Proposed Response:** The Draft LDP will provide a clear policy framework for the development of a modern integrated transport in Rhondda Cynon Taf which maximises that opportunities provided by public transport and seeks to reduce the need to travel by private car

**General:** Given the very high percentage of people who travel outside the boundaries of RCT to go to work- it is disappointing to see no reference to develop car parks which can be used for car sharing schemes, which would help to reduce the volumes of private vehicles using the main roads like the M4 /A470 etc.

**Proposed Response:** The emerging LDP will provide a policy framework for the development of park and ride and park and share schemes at appropriate locations.

**General:** Clarity needs to be provided in relation to the flexibility of the emerging LDP in relation to developments outside as well as within the plan area (e.g. St Athan, M4 Junction 33 Culverhouse Cross);

**Proposed Response:** Noted. The Council will work with the Welsh Assembly Government, the Vale of Glamorgan Council and the City and County of Cardiff to assess the implications of development outside as well as within the plan area.

**General:** The preferred strategy needs to demonstrate an integrated approach to housing, employment and transport, having regard to cross-border relationships.

**Proposed Response:** The Draft LDP will provide a clear policy framework for the development of a modern integrated transport in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

**General:** Transport strategy is poor. Consideration needs to be given to the problems of congestion and improvements to public transport.

**Proposed Response:** The Draft LDP will provide a clear policy framework for the development of a modern integrated transport in Rhondda Cynon Taf which maximises that opportunities provided by public transport and seeks to reduce the need to travel by private car

**General:** Rhondda Cynon Taf needs to take steps to ensure the development of a modern integrated transportation system in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

**Proposed Response. :** Noted. The Draft LDP will provide a clear policy framework for the development of a modern integrated transport in Rhondda Cynon Taf

**General:** Concerns are expressed that high levels of unemployment are likely to prevail in the upper Valley communities unless transport access is improved.

**Proposed Response:** The LDP will provide a policy framework for the development of improved transportation infrastructure to serve the upper Valley communities.

**General:** A new road is needed between Porth and Treherbert

**Proposed Response:** The LDP will provide a policy framework for the development of improved transportation infrastructure to serve the upper Valley communities.

**General:** The A4059 between Abercynon and Hirwaun needs to be duelled.

**Proposed Response:** The LDP will provide a policy context for the development of improved transportation infrastructure in the Cynon Valley.

**General:** Support is expressed for the Church Village Bypass.

**Proposed Response:** Support Welcomed.

**General:** Consideration needs to be given to the capacity of the M4 to assimilate additional traffic.

**Proposed Response:** : Noted. The Council will work with the Welsh Assembly Government, the Vale of Glamorgan Council and the City and County of Cardiff to assess the implications of development outside as well as within the plan area.

**General:** Road and Rail improvements are required in the northern strategy area in particular passenger rail services should be extended to Hirwaun.

**Proposed Response:** The LDP will provide a policy framework for the development of improved transportation infrastructure to serve the Northern Strategy Area.

2. Representation to Strategic Policy SP9 - Transportation

**Policy SP9:** The policy should be amended to include 'walking for health' as a transport objective

**Proposed Response:** Agreed. Policy SP9 will be amended to include 'walking for health'.

## **7. DRAFT LDP POLICY**

### Revised Strategic Policies 9

#### **SP 9 – TRANSPORTATION**

**The Council will seek to implement transportation schemes and initiatives which will achieve sustainable regeneration, enhance the public realm, improve the economy, reduce congestion, and improve road safety by:-**

- 1. Reduce the need to travel by private car;**
- 2. Maintaining and improving accessibility for all sections of the community;**

3. **Supporting transportation schemes which benefit the economy of the County Borough whilst seeking to minimise impact on the environment;**
4. **Supporting and enhancing public transport; walking for health and cycling provision; and achieving integration of all modes of transportation;**
5. **Minimising adverse effects of traffic and parking on local amenities and the environment as a whole.**

#### Justification

The distinctive geography of Rhondda Cynon Taff means that the County Borough has a linear communications network. Transportation links tend to follow the valleys, with access across the plateau being more difficult. The major roads, particularly the M4, A470 and A4119 provide access to Cardiff and South East Wales. Access to Swansea and West Wales is provided by the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road. Internal linkages in Rhondda Cynon Taf however, can be more problematic with congested residential streets and town centres, which are unsuitable for heavy traffic.

During the plan period the following committed transportation schemes will be completed :-

- A465 Abergavenny / Hirwaun Dualling
- Church Village By pass, and
- 

*Th* The strategy will build on these achievements and continue to promote the need for further improvements in the strategic transportation network to ensure improved links with Cardiff

and the M4 and Merthyr Tydfil and the A465. Improvements will also be sought to the internal transportation network in Rhondda Cynon Taf to facilitate movement east / west.

As a general principle development will be directed to locations that offer a choice of transportation. Particular importance will be placed on ensuring that development both supports and where necessary contributes towards the development of a modern integrated transport system in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

It should be noted the integrated transport strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taff will be informed by a combination of the policy framework contained in the LDP and the emerging Regional Transport Plan.

#### Area Wide Policies

The planning systems objectives for transportation are to provide to extend choice and secure accessibility in a way which supports sustainable development. This will be achieved through integration:

- within and between different types of transport;
- between transport measures and land use planning;
- between transport measures and policies to protect and improve the environment; and
- between transport measures and policies for education, health, social inclusion and wealth creation.

In order to achieve this it will be necessary to ensure that:

- reduce the need to travel, especially by private car, by locating development where there is good access by public transport, walking and cycling;
- locate development near other related uses to encourage multi-purpose trips and to reduce the length of journeys;
- improve accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport;
- ensure that transport is accessible to all, taking into account the needs of disabled and other less mobile people;
- promote walking and cycling;
- support the provision of high quality public transport;
- support traffic management measures;
- promote sustainable transport options for freight and commerce;
- support sustainable transport options in rural areas;
- support necessary infrastructure improvements; and
- ensure that, as far as possible, transport infrastructure does not contribute to land take, urban sprawl or neighbourhood severance.

The distinctive geography of Rhondda Cynon Taff means that the County Borough has a linear communications network. Transportation links tend to follow the valleys, with access across the plateau being more difficult. The major roads, particularly the M4, A470 and A4119 provide excellent access to Cardiff and South East Wales. Access to Swansea and West Wales is provided by the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road.

Whilst external communications are excellent, internal linkages can be more problematic. In some parts of the County Borough the main through routes follow narrow congested residential streets and town centres, which are unsuitable for heavy traffic. The Key Issues Chapter of LDP Preferred Strategy outlined problems in terms of access to services, availability of public transport, car dependence, significant daily out commuting and congestion that need to be addressed if a modern transportation system is to be developed in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The policy framework contained in the LDP will ensure the development of a modern, integrated transportation system meets the needs of existing and future residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

#### *Strategic Highway Network*

The process of developing the Sewta Regional Highways Strategy included the development of the Strategic Road Network (SRN). This network will comprise routes that are essential to the function of the regional transport system. It defines a minimum of highway routes that need to be maintained to appropriate standard to ensure key population centres are connected.

The SRN serving Rhondda Cynon Taf comprises the M4 motorway, A470 and A465 trunk roads and some 'A' roads in the County Borough e.g. A473, A4059, A4058 and A4119. Of these roads the M4, A470 and A465 fall within the jurisdiction of the Welsh Assembly Government. These roads

represent strategic communications links into and within the County Borough.

The SRN in Rhondda Cynon Taf is experiencing problems of congestion and in some instances is close to capacity. The Council will through the implementation of a strategic corridor management system seek to manage and mitigate against the growth of traffic on A roads within its control. The Welsh Assembly Government Trunk Road programme has identified a scheme for dualling the A465 between Abergavenny / Hirwaun. The scheme, originally programmed for 2008, is likely to take place during 2012. A study examining the options for improving capacity on the M4 is being conducted and is expected to report shortly. The Council recognises that the creation and retention of an efficient, high quality motorway and trunk road network is critical for the effective operations of the capital network and the regeneration of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

### **Policy TRAN 1 - Major Road Schemes**

**Land will be safeguarded and provision made for the development of the strategic highway network, including:**

- i) Church Village Bypass**
- ii) Mountain Ash Southern Cross Valley Link**
- iii) Upper Rhondda Fach Relief Road**
- iv) Gelli / Treorchy Relief Road**
- v) A4059 Aberdare Bypass Extension**
- vi) Tonyrefail Bypass and Ynysmaerdy to Coed Ely Dualling**

- vii) Upper Rhondda Fach Relief Road Extension (Beyond Maerdy)**
- viii) Mountain Ash Northern Cross Valley Link**
- ix) A473 Llanharan Bypass**
- x) A473 Talbot Green Bypass Dualling**
- xi) Ynysmaerdy to Talbot Green Relief Road**
- xii) A465 Dualling - WAG**

#### **Justification**

Although the LDP will seek to implement a balanced transportation strategy that contains several elements including elements to encourage public transport, walking, and cycling, there will continue to be a need for new roads. In many parts of Rhondda Cynon Taf major routes continue to run through residential areas resulting in environmental and safety problems as well as leading to traffic congestion, which deter to economic growth and inward investment. As long as there are economic, environmental and safety problems resulting from the existing road network, it is considered that a road construction programme will continue to be an essential element of the overall transportation strategy.

The South East Wales Transport Alliance Regional Transport Plan identifies 4 major road schemes in Rhondda Cynon Taf as priority schemes for implementation during the period 2008 – 23. These schemes are as follows:

- **Church Village Bypass**
- **Gelli/Treorchy Relief Road**
- **A4119 Ynysmaerdy to Talbot Green Relief Road**

- **A4059 Aberdare Bypass Extension**

The Council will seek to maximise the opportunities presented by a transport grant system, convergence funding and developer contributions to implement currently uncommitted schemes during the plan period.

### **Policy TRAN 2 - Key Strategic Transport Corridors**

**In order to ensure the effective management of traffic growth within the County Borough development proposals on sites of 1 hectare or more in the following strategic corridor areas;**

- i) A4119 / A473 Corridor;**
- ii) A470 / A4059 Corridor, or**
- iii) A4059 / A465 Corridor**

**Will be required to contribute towards;**

- i) The development of a strategic corridor management system;**
- ii) Infrastructure improvements;**
- iii) Public Transport Enhancement; and**
- iv) Park and share provision**

Justification

The Strategic Transportation Study (2007) indicates clearly that the transport system within areas of the County Borough

is under pressure as a result of current and predicted levels of development. Existing problems of congestion will be exacerbated and new problems created on the highway network unless sufficient investment is undertaken to mitigate the impact of new development.

Development throughout the County Borough will be directed to locations that offer a choice of modes of transportation. Particular importance will be placed on ensuring that development both supports and, where necessary, contributes towards the developments of a modern integrated transport system. As a result, development proposals on sites of 1 hectare or more within the A4119 / A473, A470 / A4059 and A4059 / A465 Corridors will be required to fund the development of a strategic corridor management system, improvements to the highway network and key junctions, public transport enhancements and park and share provision. This approach will allow the Council to manage and minimise traffic growth within the County Borough and respond to change in the wider region.

As a general principle development will be directed to locations that offer a choice of transportation. Particular importance will be placed on ensuring that development both supports and where necessary contributes towards the development of a modern integrated transport system in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Further guidance in respect of the identified strategic transportation corridors is contained in Supplementary Planning Guidance on Access, Parking and Design.

### *Public Transport*

Public transport provision in Rhondda Cynon Taff is provided by a combination of bus and rail services. The bus is the dominant mode of public transport in the County Borough. The area is served by more than 80 operational routes, these include regular cross boundary services to adjacent towns and cities. There is also an extensive rail network in Rhondda Cynon Taff with the County Borough being served by 22 stations. Train services operate to Cardiff from Pontypridd, Treherbert and Aberdare and to Cardiff from Bridgend with trains calling at Pontyclun/Llanharan.

### **Policy TRAN 3 – Public Transport Services**

**Proposals for public transport improvements will be supported where they result in the provision of new, or improved;**

- i) Rail or Bus network Services;**
- ii) Passenger Rail and / or Bus Stations, and**
- iii) Park and ride provision**
- v) Park and stride provision**
- iv) Kiss and ride provision**

#### Justification

The development of a modern integrated transport system in Rhondda Cynon Taf is essential if issues such as access to services, car dependency and congestion are to be addressed. This policy recognises the importance of public

transport in Rhondda Cynon Taf and provides a framework for the development of new and Rail and Bus services.

### **Policy TRAN 4 - Car Parking**

**Development proposals will be required to make provision for operational and non-operational car parking, motorcycles, cycles and the needs of the mobility impaired in accordance with the approved parking standards.**

#### Justification

Provision for car parking is a major influence on the choice of means of transport and the pattern of development. The Council will seek to restrict developments that generate a high level of trips (e.g. offices, shops and leisure uses) to locations well served by public transport. Moreover, provision for parking will be reduced in line with improvements in public transport accessibility.

*The parking guidelines contained within the Welsh County Surveyor's Society Wales Parking Standards (2008) seek to ensure that new developments provide sufficient parking for private cars and service vehicles to avoid the need for vehicles to park on-street and cause congestion, danger and visual intrusion.*

Space for operational parking purposes and areas for vehicle manoeuvring will normally be required within the development site. The degree of non-operational parking will be assessed

in line with adopted parking standards and where this cannot be provided on site, or judged not to be appropriate, the Borough Council will seek to enter into negotiations with developers for contributions towards a range of alternative transport measures.

Further guidance in respect of Car parking is contained in Supplementary Planning Guidance on Access, Parking and Design.

### **Policy TRAN 5 - Cycle Provision**

**Suitable provision will be required for the need of cyclists including:**

- i) The development and improvement of the existing network of cycle paths and recreational routes;**
- ii) The provision of on street and off street cycle parking facilities;**
- iii) In the design and improvement of roads and junctions; and**
- iv) On the existing highway network, particularly to link recreational routes, town centres, residential areas, and places of work**
- v) Links to, and within new developments**
- vi) Protection of disused railway lines**

### **Justification**

Cycling has potential to act as a substitute for shorter car journeys in urban or rural areas, or form part of a longer journey when combined with public transport. Accordingly, developers will be required to ensure that new development encourages cycling by giving careful consideration to location, design, access arrangements, travel 'desire lines' through a development, and integration with existing and potential off-site links.

The Council will require developers to adopt minimum cycle parking standards within their parking strategies – for commercial premises these standards should include cycle parking for both employees and visitors. The local authority will also require new residential developments to provide storage for bicycles so they are easily available for everyday use while secure enough to be left unattended for long periods of time.

Within the County Borough there are two of the network's National routes. Lon Las Cymru runs north – south through the principality and links Holyhead with Cardiff utilising the Taff Trail within Rhondda Cynon Taf. The Celtic Trail – Lon Geltaidd, the National Route that links Chepstow and Fishguard, also uses the Taff Trail from Nantgarw and Abercynon to meet Pontypridd. From here the route heads west to Tonyrefail and the County Borough boundary. Other associated projects are the spur from Pontypridd to Porth and the high level route from Pontypridd over the Bwlch and Rhigos to Neath.

## Policy TRAN 6 - Design of New Development

**Good design will be sought in all development. Proposals for new residential and commercial development must include layouts and densities that maximise the opportunities for walking and cycling to local facilities and public transport stops**

### Justification

The layout and detailed design of development can be critically important in providing genuine alternatives to car travel and achieving quality in the environment as a whole. All development will be required to demonstrate good design by satisfactorily responding to local character and context; achieving a legible development which relates well to adjoining spaces and the public realm; providing a safe and accessible environment for everyone who might use or visit it; providing for the efficient use of resources and adaptability to changing requirements; and satisfactorily addressing issues of layout, density, scale, massing, height, detailing and landscaping.

There are a number of factors to be taken into account: the needs of pedestrians and vehicles in the context of several elements – the carriageway, the footway – the cycleway, as part of the highway, other footpaths separate from the carriageway, car parking and garaging.

The Council **will** reviewed its standards and guidance to embrace the principles of Manual for Streets. The local standards and guidance now focus on creating and improving

local distinctiveness through the appropriate choice of layouts and materials while adhering to the overall guidance given in Manual for Streets.

Further guidance in respect of design is contained in Supplementary Planning Guidance on Access, Parking and Design.

## Policy TRAN 7- Home Zones

**Proposed residential developments will be required to evaluate the suitability of the site for Home Zones, where the needs of pedestrians and children are put above the needs of the car and vehicle speeds are controlled by design.**

### Justification

Home zones are residential streets in which the road space is shared between drivers of motor vehicles and other road users, with the wider needs of residents (including people who walk and cycle, the elderly and children) being accommodated. They are about promoting quality of life and neighbourliness.

Although the introduction of a home zone can contribute to highway safety, the main benefit for people is a change in the perceptions of how the street environment can be used. Introducing a home zone allows greater scope for a wider range of activities in street space that was formerly considered to be for exclusive use by vehicles.

## **Policy TRAN 8 - Transport Assessment**

**Transport Assessments will be required for development proposals on land of 1 hectare or more or where the proposals are likely to have significant transport implications**

### Justification

Transport Assessments should be prepared and submitted alongside the relevant planning applications for any development that will have significant transport implications. As a rule this requirement will apply to sites of 1 hectare or more, however it will depend upon the individual circumstance and location of the application. A Transport Assessment is a comprehensive and consistent review of all the potential transport impacts of a proposed development or redevelopment, with an agreed plan to reduce any adverse consequences. Their purpose is to provide information to enable decision-makers to understand how the proposed development is likely to function in transport terms.

Detailed guidance in respect of scope and contents of Transport Assessments is contained in Supplementary Planning Guidance on Access, Parking and Design.

## **Policy TRAN 9 - Travel Plans**

**Travel plans will be required for development proposals on land of 1 hectare or more or where the proposals are likely to have significant transport implications**

### Justification

The Assembly Government promotes the widespread adoption of Travel Plans by businesses, schools, hospitals, tourist attractions and other significant travel-generating uses. The need for a travel plan will be identified early on as part of the pre-application discussions with the Local Planning / Highway Authority.

A Travel Plan should identify how individuals do (will) access a site by different modes; targets for increasing non-car modes and mechanisms by how this will be achieved. The implementation of Travel Plans will be secured through a condition or planning obligation on the planning permission. Employers have an important role to play in setting the framework within which employers and visitors make travel decisions. By developing and implementing travel plans, employers can play a significant role in reducing car use, and can also reduce the impact of business and visitor travel. Joint travel plans may be prepared, individually or jointly, by the owners and operators of existing or proposed developments.

Monitoring of a Travel Plan should track the core targets, providing regular information on the progress the plan is making in achieving its aims. This information can provide important 'early warning' if a plan is failing to have a sufficient impact on travel behaviour and the plan and its measures can then be modified accordingly.

Detailed guidance in respect of scope and contents of Travel Plans is contained in Supplementary Planning Guidance on Access, Parking and Design.

### **Policy TRAN 10 - Planning Obligations**

**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. Planning obligations will therefore be sought to secure:**

- i) The development of a strategic corridor management system;**
- ii) Infrastructure improvements;**
- iii) Public Transport Enhancement; and**
- iv) Park and share provision**

#### Justification

New development often puts pressure on already over-stretched infrastructure and it is generally expected that developers will mitigate or compensate for the impact of their proposals by way of 'Planning Obligations'. These are usually concluded under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and are agreements between local planning authorities and developers (and the landowner where the developer does not own the land) that secure contributions (in cash or kind) to address community and infrastructure needs associated with the development.

To ensure the cumulative impact of developments can be properly mitigated the Borough Council will consider the 'pooling' of contributions to maximise the potential to fund capital investment programmes for new infrastructure, facilities and services, and strategic corridor management.

Detailed guidance in respect of Planning Obligations is contained in Supplementary Planning Guidance on Access, Parking and Design and the Supplementary Planning Guidance Planning Obligations.

#### Northern Strategy Area Policy

The transportation network in the Northern Strategy Area is provided by a combination of road, rail and bus provision.

The main strategic road links within the Strategy Area are provided by the A4119, A470, A4058, A4233, A4059 and A465. The construction of the A4058 / A4233 Porth / Lower Rhondda Fach Relief Road which was completed in 2007 has assisted in promoting accessibility to the lower Rhondda Valleys. Additional new roads will however, be required in order to promote accessibility in the upper Rhondda and Cynon Valleys.

Public transport provision is provided by well established network of bus and rail. Bus provision is provided by a network which serves the Key settlements of Hirwaun, Mountain Ash, Treorchy, Tonypany, Ferndale, Porth and the Principal Town of Aberdare. Main bus stations are located at Porth and Aberdare.

The main line passenger service connects the Rhondda Fawr and the Cynon Valley with Cardiff. Stations are located at Porth, Ton Pentre, Dinas Rhondda, Llwynypia, Treorchy, Treherbert, Abercynon, Mountain Ash and Aberdare.

Whilst the public transport service is well established, further expansion is required if a modern integrated transport system is to be developed in the Northern Strategy Area.

### **Policy TRAN N1 - Major Road Schemes**

**In accordance with the requirements of policy TRAN 1 land in the northern strategy area will be safeguarded and provision made for the development of the strategic highway network, including:**

- i) Mountain Ash Southern Cross Valley Link;**
- ii) Upper Rhondda Fach Relief Road;**
- iii) Gelli / Treorchy Relief Road;**
- iv) A4059 Aberdare Bypass Extension;**
- v) Upper Rhondda Fach Relief Road Extension (Beyond Maerdy) and**
- vi) Mountain Ash Northern Cross Valley Link)**

Justification

*Mountain Ash Southern Cross Valley Link;*

A cross valley link approximately 1km south of Mountain Ash town centre to divert traffic away from the built up B4275 to

the A4059 bringing environmental relief to Mountain Ash town centre, the Miskin and Penrhiwceiber area. The link will also improve access to existing and new businesses at Cwm Cynon Business Park. The scheme will facilitate regeneration of the area, and will provide improved safety and environmental conditions in the town centre

*Upper Rhondda Fach Relief Road;*

The proposed scheme will extend the Porth Relief Road northwards from Pontygwaith to Maerdy. The scheme will provide improved access to the proposed Former Maerdy Colliery Strategic Site development. The proposals include large-scale employment, tourism and leisure uses, which will assist with the regeneration of the Rhondda Fach valley.

The proposed road will provide good communications between the population of the Upper Rhondda Fach and the A470 and M4. It will open up access to employment opportunities and attract industrial development, particularly in Maerdy and Tylorstown, which are Communities First Areas. It will bring environmental relief to residential and commercial areas and improve road safety.

The scheme will facilitate large-scale regeneration of the area, and will provide improved safety and environmental conditions for a significant number of residents.

*Gelli / Treorchy Relief Road;*

The single carriageway relief road will provide a high quality link between the middle and upper Rhondda Fawr. The proposed road scheme will provide improved access to the Fernhill Colliery Strategic Site at the head of the Rhondda Fawr Valley

The road will open up access to employment opportunities and attract industrial development to help regenerate the social and economical aspects of Gelli and Treorchy. It will bring environmental relief to residential and commercial areas and improve road safety through Gelli, Ton Pentre, Pentre and Treorchy.

The scheme will facilitate large-scale regeneration of the area, and will provide improved safety and environmental conditions for a significant number of residents.

#### *A4059 Aberdare Bypass Extension;*

Extension to the existing A4059 Aberdare Bypass. The scheme will assist with the development of the Robertstown/Aberdare Strategic Site. There is a proposal for mixed-use development at Robertstown and the Aberdare General Hospital Site. There is potential for residential, employment and commercial development which will provide opportunities for regeneration in the area

The proposed road will provide good communications between the substantial population of the upper Cynon Valley and the A465. It will open up access to employment opportunities and attract industrial development. It will bring

substantial environmental relief to residential and commercial areas and improve road safety. This scheme will provide improved access and assist with the development of the Hirwaun/Penywaun Strategic Site proposed for the Tower Colliery site after coal related operations have ceased, where there is potential for large-scale employment, and some residential use.

The scheme will facilitate large-scale regeneration of the area, and will provide improved safety and environmental conditions for a significant number of residents.

The scheme is largely dependent on the dualling of the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road by the Assembly. The scheme would need to be constructed at the same time as the A465 dualling, as the Aberdare Bypass Extension would need to be designed to tie in with the revised alignment of the A465

#### *Upper Rhondda Fach Relief Road Extension (Beyond Maerdy)*

The proposed scheme will extend of the Upper Rhondda Fach Relief Road to link the Upper Rhondda Fach to the AA465.

The scheme will assist with the development of the Hirwaun / Penywaun Strategic Site proposed for the Tower Colliery site after coal related operations have ceased, where there is potential for large-scale employment, and some residential use. This road scheme will provide a link for the potential workforce in the upper part of the Rhondda Valley to this

Strategic Site, and the Fernhill Colliery Site at the head of the Rhondda Fawr Valley.

The proposal will provide a direct link from Maerdy to the A465 via A4061 Rhigos, which would improve communication links between the two areas and increase development opportunities in the northern part of the Rhondda Valley. The proposed route sits within environmentally sensitive areas and is likely to conflict with government guidance.

This scheme will help facilitate regeneration by providing a link to proposed major employment sites. It has been categorised as a low priority scheme as there is a lack of congestion on the current route.

#### *Mountain Ash Northern Cross Valley Link*

A cross-valley link, which will link the east to the west bank, north of the town bridge.

The proposed cross-river link will bring environmental relief to residential and commercial properties within the town centre and the Miskin and Penrhiwceiber area.

The scheme will facilitate regeneration of the area, and will provide improved safety and environmental conditions in the town centre. The scheme will provide a link to the new Mountain Ash Hospital.

### **Policy TRAN N2 - Rail Network and Station Improvements**

**Land will be safeguarded for rail network and station improvements at the following locations:**

- i) The former rail freight line between Aberdare and the former Tower Colliery, Hirwaun;**
- ii) Land at Tower Colliery, Hirwaun;**

Justification

With the closure of Tower Colliery in 2008 the freight line between Aberdare and Hirwaun is effectively redundant. The redevelopment of the of the former Tower Colliery site towards the end of the plan period for major residential, commercial and employment purposes presents an opportunity for the freight line to be reused and passenger rails services to be extended to Hirwaun.

### **Policy TRAN N2 - Park and Ride Provision**

**Land will be safeguarded for park and ride facilities at the following locations:**

- i) Land adjacent to Aberdare Railway Station**

Justification

Provision for additional park and ride facilities will be made within the strategic site at Robertstown, Aberdare. The provision of extra park and ride facilities at this location will

assist the Council in managing the growth of traffic in the A470 / A4059 Strategic Transportation Corridor.

### **Policy TRAN N3 – Park and Share Provision**

**Provision for park and share parking in the northern strategy area will be made within the Strategic Site at Hirwaun / Penywaun.**

#### **Justification**

Park and share facilities provide an opportunity for work colleagues and business associates to meet and continue in one car for the remainder of their journey. Thus reducing pollution and congestion.

An element of park and share provision will be made within the car park of the proposed retail development at the strategic site in Hirwaun / Penywaun.

The position of the strategic site will assist in promoting shared journeys along the A465 / A4059 and A470 / A4059 Strategic Transport Corridors.

### **Policy TRAN N4 – Cycle Provision**

**The existing network of cycle paths and recreational routes in the northern strategy areas will be extended to include:**

- i) The Rhondda Community Route Network;**
- ii) The Cynon Valley Cycle Route;**

- iii) The Heads of the Valley Cycleway;**
- iv) Pontygwaith to Maerdy**
- v) Cwmaman to Aberaman**

#### **Justification**

##### *The Rhondda Community Route Network*

Proposed development of a community route network throughout the Rhondda. The route will connect the communities of Gelli/Ton Pentre/Pentre, shopping and leisure and health facilities in Treorchy and Tonypany town centre, Rhondda Heritage Park, the National Cycle Network.

##### *The Cynon Valley Cycle Route*

The completion of the Cynon Valley Cycle Route will provide a continuous route from Abercynon to Penderyn, closely passing the communities of Mountain Ash and Cwmbach, passing through Aberdare and providing links to the National Cycle Network. The Cynon Valley Cycle Route will provide an excellent north/south connection for cyclists through the Cynon Valley.

##### *The Heads of the Valley Cycleway*

The proposal to complete the HOTV Cycle Route (NCN 46), to provide a route between Abergavenny and Neath, represents one of the most important strategic links needed to develop the NCN in Wales. The route in RCT is currently still a proposal although a route has been identified. The route in

RCT will be partly off-road and partly on-road broadly following the A465 trunk road corridor. It will skirt the northern edge of Hirwaun and its industrial area before heading into Neath Port Talbot.

#### *Pontygwaith to Maerdy*

This route is a continuation of the Community Route that has been implemented as part of the Porth Relief Road. The route continues north from Pontygwaith to Maerdy.

#### *Cwmaman to Aberaman*

This proposal will provide a primarily off-road link from Cwmaman to the Cynon Valley Cycle Route.

#### Southern Strategy Area Policy

The transportation network in the Southern Strategy Area is provided by a combination of road, rail and bus provision.

The main strategic road links within the Strategy Area are provided by the A4119, A473 and A470. The programmed construction of the A473 Church Village Bypass will relieve congestion and bring about environmental improvements in Tonteg, Church Village, Beddau and Llantwit Fadre. Additional new roads will however, be required in order to promote accessibility and reduce congestion in the Southern Strategy Area.

Public transport provision is provided by well established network of bus and rail. Bus provision is provided by a network which serves the settlements of Llanharan, Tonyrefail, Church Village, Llantwit Fardre, Beddau, Talbot Green and the Principal Towns of Pontypridd and Llantrisant. Main bus station is located in Pontypridd.

The main line passenger service connects the Taff Valley with Cardiff. Station are located at Pontypridd., Treforest, Taffs Well, Pontyclun and Llanharan.

Whilst the public transport service is well established, further expansion is required if a modern integrated transport system is to be developed in the Southern Strategy Area.

#### **Policy TRAN S1 – Major Road Schemes**

**In accordance with the requirements of policy TRAN 1 land in the southern strategy area will be safeguarded and provision made for the development of the strategic highway network, including:**

- i) Church Village Bypass;**
- ii) Tonyrefail Bypass and Ynysmaerdy to Coed Ely Dualling;**
- iii) A473 Llanharan Bypass;**
- iv) A473 Talbot Green Bypass Dualling, and**
- v) Ynysmaerdy to Talbot Green Relief Road**

Justification

## Church Village Bypass

**(To Be Updated)**

### *Tonyrefail Bypass and Ynysmaerdy to Coed Ely Dualling;*

The proposed dualling will take place in two phases – Tonyrefail section and Ynysmaerdy to Coedely section) upgrade to dual carriageway standard and junction improvements.

The scheme is largely dependent on the scale of new development in the area, and as such will require developers to assist with cost

There is limited opportunity to promote development sites with the current access arrangements. The need for this scheme is very much dependent on the rate of traffic growth as a result of development activity in the vicinity. The bypass will improve communications through the valley and provide improved access to existing and new major industrial sites.

### *A473 Llanharan Bypass;*

The proposed new road will bypass the communities of Llanharan and Brynna. The scheme is required for the development of the Llanilid Strategic Site. A film studio complex and residential development are proposed for this site and need major transportation improvements, which include a motorway junction, a bypass and new passenger rail stop.

The proposed road will bring environmental relief to Llanharan, Brynna and Dolau. The improved route will facilitate major development in the area. Improved reliability for both Local traffic and commuters.

The scheme is largely dependent on the scale of new development in the area, and as such will require developers to assist with cost.

### *A473 Talbot Green Bypass Dualling, and*

The proposed dualling of the existing A473 in the Talbot Green area. The proposed road scheme will be necessary to enable the development of the Mwyndy/Talbot Green Area Strategic Site.

The scheme will help link new and existing industrial and commercial development in the Talbot Green areas with the A473 corridor. The scheme is highly dependent on the level of development activity in the area.

The scheme is largely dependent on the scale of new development in the area, and as such will require developers to assist with cost.

*Ynysmaerdy to Talbot Green Relief Road* Do we need to bring flexibility into this area in view of possible results of A4119 study?

The proposed relief road to provide an alternative route from the Upper Ely Valley to the west of Talbot Green. The scheme is largely dependent on the scale of new development in the area, and as such will require developers to assist with cost

The proposed road will bring significant environmental relief to Talbot Green town centre. Potential routes pass through environmentally sensitive areas and are likely to conflict with government guidance. The road would improve access to industrial and commercial areas for potential workforce in the Rhondda and Upper Ely Valley.

#### **Policy TRAN S 2 - Pontyclun to Beddau Railway Line**

**Land will be safeguarded for the provision of passenger rail services between Pontyclun and Beddau and or the provision of new rail station at the following locations:**

- i) Cowbridge Road, Talbot Green;**
- ii) Cardiff Road, Llantrisant;**
- iii) Llantrisant Road, Gwaun Miskin, and**
- iv) Parish Road, Tynant.**

#### **Justification**

The provision of new passenger rail service between Pontyclun and Beddau is a key part of the South East Wales Transport Alliance's Rail Strategy. The scheme involves the introduction of passenger services on a former freight line

between Pontyclun and Beddau and the development of new railway stations at Talbot Green, Llantrisant, Gwaun Miskin and Beddau (Tynant).

The implementation of the service would provide an important new rail link between the southern strategy area and Cardiff and assist in removing road traffic from the heavily congested A4119 corridor.

Do we need to refer to possible alternatives in view of uncertainty

#### **Policy TRAN S3 - Park and Ride**

**Land will be safeguarded for park and ride facilities at the following locations :**

- i) Land adjacent to Pontyclun Railway Station;**
- ii) Land adjacent to Taffs Well Railway Station;**
- iii) Land adjacent to Trefforest Railway Station**

#### **Justification**

Provision will be made for additional park and ride parking at Pontyclun, Taffs Well and Trefforest Railway Stations in the southern strategy area. The development of additional park and ride facilities at these locations will assist the Council in managing the effects of traffic growth in the A473 / A4119 and A470 / A4059 Strategic Transport Corridors.

#### **Policy TRAN S4 – Park and Share Provision**

**Provision for park and share parking will be made within the following developments;**

- i) Brown Lennox, Pontypridd**
- ii) New Town Centre Development, Talbot Green / Pontyclun**

Justification

An element of park and share provision will be made within the car park of the proposed retail development at the strategic site in Mwyndy / Talbot Green and at the retail allocation at Brown Lennox, Pontypridd.

The position of the strategic site will assist in promoting shared journeys along the A473 / A119 and A470 / A4059 Strategic Transport Corridors

### **Policy TRAN S5 – Cycle Provision**

**The existing network of cycle paths and recreational routes in the southern strategy areas will be extended to include:**

- i) Talbot Green to Thomastown route;**
- ii) Gyfeillion to Llanwonno route;**
- iii) South of the University of Glamorgan;**
- iv) Lady Windsor to Llanwonno**
- v) Llantrisant to Beddau**
- vi) Talbot Green via Brynna to Pencoed**
- vii) Route along disused railway line via M4 J33/Creigiau north to Church Village**

#### *Talbot Green to Thomastown Route*

The proposed route follows the line of the old railway line, and will provide a safe alternative to the A4119 travelling between the settlements of Tonyrefail and the Talbot Green area. The route will provide a link to the Royal Glamorgan Hospital, Ynysmaerdy Industrial Estate and shopping and leisure facilities in Talbot Green.

#### *Gyfeillion to Llanwonno*

This proposed route is part of a strategic route connecting the Taff Trail to routes in West Glamorgan.

#### *South of Glamorgan University*

This proposed route follows the disused railway line from the southern end of the car park of the University of Glamorgan's Treforest Campus to Llantrisant. The route will provide links to the University of Glamorgan Campus at Treforest, the communities of Pontypridd, Treforest, Tonteg and Llantrisant, shopping/leisure facilities and employment opportunities in Pontypridd, Church Village and Llantrisant, Treforest Railway Station, the National Cycle Network and Treforest Industrial Estate.

#### *Lady Windsor to Llanwonno*

This is a proposed extension to the existing Lady Windsor Cycle Route, which would link Ynysybwl to Llanwonno Woods and the reservoir and the National Cycle Network

#### *Llantrisant to Beddau*

Provision of a route alongside the carriageway will provide a safe walking and cycling link between the communities of Beddau and Llantrisant.

#### *Talbot Green via Brynna to Pencoed*

This proposed route could follow the existing network of bridleways between Talbot Green, Brynna and Pencoed and could link into the cycle routes that have been implemented at the Llanilid Film Studios access roundabout near the boundary with Bridgend CBC. This route would provide links to the communities of Brynna, Llanharan, and shopping and leisure facilities in Talbot Green.

#### *Route along disused railway line via M4 J33/Creigiau north to Church Village*

This route would provide a link between Creigiau north and Church Village. The route will link to cycling and pedestrian improvements to be implemented in connection with the Church Village bypass

### **Policy TRAN S6 - Pontypridd Town Centre Enhancement**

**In order to improve the streetscape and retail environment in Pontypridd Town Centre, parts of Taff Street, Mill Street and High Street will be pedestrianised.**

This scheme will involve the pedestrianisation of Taff Street southwards from its junction with Crossbrook Street, High Street up to its junction with Broadway, Mill Street and Penuel Lane by means of a prohibition of driving. This will exclude

traffic for much of the shopping day which will be of benefit to the environment and safety for shoppers and visitors to the town centre. The streetscape of the area will be improved by a programme of works in which the street will be resurfaced and new street furniture and landscaping features provided. It is anticipated that these proposals will form an important and integral element of the regeneration strategy for the town centre.

## **8. FURTHER ADVICE**

If you require any further advice or assistance in respect this or other LDP documents or wish to be placed on the Council's consultation database please contact a member of the Local Development Plan Team at:

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Floor 5,  
Ty Pennant,  
Catherine Street,  
Pontypridd  
CF37 2TB

Email: [LDP@rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk](mailto:LDP@rhondda-cynon- Taf.gov.uk)

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