



**BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY  
BOROUGH COUNCIL  
UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN  
1996 – 2011**

**WRITTEN STATEMENT**

**ADOPTED JULY 2006**

**Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council  
Blaenau Gwent Business Resource Centre  
Tafarnaubach Industrial Estate  
Tredegar  
Gwent  
NP22 3AA**

## **Foreword by Executive Member – Sustainable Communities**

**It is my great pleasure to present the Adopted Blaenau Gwent Unitary Development Plan.**

**The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) sets out the Council's policies and proposals for the development and use of land up until 2011, in line with legislative requirements and provides a framework for the regeneration of the area. The Plan will replace the existing**



# **UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PART 1**

**1. INTRO**

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

- 1.6 National planning policy guidance (This Common Inheritance 1990) states that the government intends to work towards sustainability and that it will continue to develop policies consistent with the concept of sustainable development. The planning system and the preparation of development plans in particular can contribute to this. Government land use planning policies in Wales are contained in Planning Policy Wales this is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes and Circulars. Advice on the preparation of unitary development plans is contained in Unitary Development Plans Wales. The Welsh language is part of the social and cultural fabric of Wales but within communities in Blaenau Gwent it is less a part of the social fabric and land use policies do not therefore affect the linguistic balance. Approximately 9 out of 10 people in Blaenau Gwent are unable to speak Welsh and there are no Welsh speaking communities. However, the Welsh language is becoming a part of the County's character being seen and heard in placenames and signage.

#### Regional Context

- 1.7 Blaenau Gwent is situated in the north east of Industrial South Wales and adjoins the Brecon Beacons National Park. The plan area has a population of 73,200 (Registrar General Mid Year Estimate 1996). The main settlements are Tredegar, Ebbw Vale, Brynmawr, Nantyglo and Blaina and Abertillery.
- 1.8 Planning Policy Guidance (Wales) identifies Blaenau Gwent as part of an area for economic growth and regeneration and suggests that it is likely to be one of the main locations in

**a substantial valley community is retained in Blaenau Gwent to support an adequate range of community services and facilities.**

### **Economic Development**

- 1.13 The decline of the traditional employment base of coal and steel has left a legacy of high unemployment, low activity rates, low earnings and a lower skilled workforce.**
- 1.14 The key to achieving a thriving economy is through regeneration. The Council's Economic Development Strategy aims to:**
- reduce unemployment**
  - provide a range of quality jobs and improved access to jobs**
  - create a b**





- **Reducing inequality by reducing poverty and disadvantage by facilitating access to housing, employment and leisure.**
- **Sustaining viable communities by ensuring that residents have access to local facilities such as schools and public transport. Securing sustainable communities also requires that sufficient employment opportunities are provided for the residents of Blaenau Gwent.**

### **Sustainability Appraisal**

- 1.25 Sustainability appraisal is an integral part of the plan preparation process. It clarifies and provides justification for the planning authority's choice of options.**
- 1.26 Since 1991 there has been a statutory requirement that local planning authorities must have regard to environmental considerations when preparing their development plans (Regulation 9(1) (b) of the Town and Country Planning Regulations). A systematic appraisal is an effective way to demonstrate how this authority has met this requirement in its development plan.**
- 1.27 A separate appraisal document has been produced r**



- **Development proposals will be required to demonstrate design quality and detailing**
- **The redevelopment of the former Corus site Ebbw Vale**

**1.30 The regeneration of the Qde th**

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(F)

- (B) IMPROVING EXISTING HOUSING PARTICULARLY THROUGH THE DESIGNATION OF RENEWAL AREAS AND AREAS FOR HOUSING IMPROVEMENT;**
- (C) PROVIDING LAND TO MEET THE REQUIREMENT FOR A RANGE OF DWELLINGS BY ALLOCATING SITES OF VARIOUS SIZES AND IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF LOCATIONS;**
- (D) ENCOURAGING THE PROVISION OF DWELLINGS AFFORDABLE TO THOSE LEAST ABLE TO COMPETE IN THE HOUSING MARKET.**

## **E1 EMPLOYMENT**

**THE STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT NEEDS OF BLAENAU GWENT WILL BE MET BY:**

- (A) PROVIDING 180 HECTARES OF LAND FOR EMPLOYMENT TO ACCOMMODATE THE REQUIREMENTS OF EXISTING BUSINESSES AND A RANGE OF SITES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW BUSINESSES; AND**
- (B) MAINTAINING THE STOCK OF BUSINESS PREMISES AND SITES, SUBJECT TO SATISFACTORY REGARD BEING PAID TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND, WITHIN ESTABLISHED BUSINESS AREAS, SECURING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS BENEFICIAL TO ESTABLISHED BUSINESSES; AND**
- (C) PERMITTING THE EXTENSION OF BUSINESS PREMISES EXCEPT WHERE THERE WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT; AND**
- (D) PERMITTING B1 OFFICE USES IN TOWN CENTRES AND WITHIN DESIGNATED INDUSTRIAL AREAS; AND**
- (E) FAVOURING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT; AND**
- (F) PERMITTING AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND DIVERSIFICATION OF THE RURAL ECONOMY.**

## **T1 TRANSPORT**

**TO DEVELOP AN INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO:**

- (A) SATISFYING THE TRAVEL NEEDS OF ALL SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY THROUGH AN EFFECTIVELY INTEGRATED TRANSPORT SYSTEM, GIVING PRIORITY TO IMPROVING PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND PROVISION FOR CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS; AND**

- (B) PROMOTING A TRANSPORT NETWORK WHICH HAS REGARD TO THE SAFETY OF ALL ROAD USERS, REDUCES CONGESTION AND WHICH CAUSES MINIMAL DISTURBANCE TO AMENITY THROUGH DANGER, NOISE AND AIR POLLUTION; AND
- (C) CO-ORDINATING LAND USE CHANGE WITH TRANSPORT PROVISION SO AS TO MINIMISE THE NEED TO TRAVEL AND TO LOCATE NEW DEVELOPMENT WHERE IT CAN BE ACCOMMODATED BY THE HIGHWAY NETWORK AND BE SERVED BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE ROUTES; AND
- (D) PROTECTING THE LANDSCAPE AND NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS FROM UNACCEPTABLE DETRIMENTAL IMPACT.

## **T2 TRANSPORT PROPOSALS**

LAND WILL BE SAFEGUARDED TO ACCOMMODATE THE FOLLOWING TRANSPORT PROPOSALS:

- (A) DUALLING OF THE A465 HEADS OF THE VALLEYS ROAD
- (B) PARK AND RIDE FACILITIES IN RELATION TO THE RE-OPENING OF THE EBBW VALE – NEWPORT/CARDIFF PASSENGER RAILWAY LINE

## **S1 TOWN CENTRES**

TOWN CENTRES AND LOCAL CENTRES WILL BE THE FOCUS OF SHOPPING, COMMERCIAL, CULTURE, SOCIAL AND LEISURE ACTIVITY AND BE THE PRIORITY LOCATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT.

## **EN1 THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SHOULD SAFEGUARD THE NATURAL BEAUTY AND AMENITY OF LAND. FEATURES OF THE LANDSCAPE WHICH ARE OF IMPORTANCE FOR WILD FLORA AND FAUNA OR HABITATS AND SPECIES WILL BE PROTECTED AND MANAGED.

## **EN2 THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

THE DESIGN OF ALL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING CONVERSIONS OF EXISTING BUILDINGS, SHOULD BE OF GOOD QUALITY IN TERMS OF SCALE, DENSITY, LAYOUT, HEIGHT, MASSING, ACCESS, MATERIALS, APPEARANCE AND LANDSCAPING. DESIGNS SHOULD RESPECT THE TOPOGRAPHY, NATURAL SETTING AND IMPORTANT EXISTING BUILT FORM IN THE VICINITY OF THE PROPOSAL.

**DL1 DERELICT AND NEGLECTED LAND**

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WHICH BRING DERELICT AND  
NEGLECTED LAND INTO BENEFICIAL USE**





**UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PART 2**

**2. HOUSING POLICIES**

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 One of the main aims of the Unitary Development Plan is to maintain a substantial valley community in Blaenau Gwent. It is therefore essential that a sufficient quality and variety of land is allocated to provide a range and choice of sites for new residential development. Within this section, an assessment is made of future demographic changes and its implications on the amount of land required for new housing up until 2011, together with appropriate allocations of land for housing to meet this requirement.
- 2.2 The success of the iron and coal industries in the 19th and early 20th centuries resulted in a huge influx of population into Blaenau Gwent, leading to a peak population level of 127,611 in 1921. An example of the rapid growth in population that took place is illustrated by the growth of Abertillery, in 1880 the population of the town was only 6,000, by 1920 it had increased to 38,000. However, the decline of the iron and coal industries resulted in a population decline in Blaenau Gwent; between 1951 and 1991, the reduction was over 20%, and between 1981 and 1991 the population decline was around 6%, due to movement of people out of the area to find employment elsewhere.
- 2.3 However, since the early 1990's this population decline has stabilised, a more diverse economy is being pursued and jobs are being provided at a number of industrial parks. The landscape has also changed; almost all the spoil tips have been removed and landscaped. Furthermore a high proportion of substandard 19th century housing has been renovated to meet present day standards.
- 2.4 In order to maintain a viable valley community in Blaenau Gwent, it is essential that a net migration balance is achieved. This is because those most likely to migrate are the younger and more economically active members of the community. It is therefore important to attract public and private finance for housebuilding schemes, environmental improvement, land reclamation and infrastructure development. The continued implementation of a range of urban regeneration projects will ensure that Blaenau Gwent's image is radically improved and will have positive effects on migration levels.
- 2.5 The accuracy of calculating future housing requirements depends on how precise the demographic changes can be forecast. Population levels are governed by three variables namely: - births (or fertility rates), deaths (or mortality rates) and migration rates. Population projections in Blaenau Gwent are based on the assumption that net outward migration will be halted, and by 2006 reversed, and that the area experiences a small amount of inward migration which results in a population estimate of 73,725 in 2011 compared to a population figure of 73,250 in 1991.
- 2.6 The accuracy of population projections has implications on the anticipated future need for housing, jobs and other services. For the population estimate in Blaenau Gwent to be related to housing needs, it is necessary to make projections on household formation. Changes in marriage and divorce patterns, an ageing



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**Ebbw Vale**

Proposal No.	Site	Area	Units
H2(12)	Nant-y-Croft, Rassau	1.7h	30
H2(13)	Adjacent Gwaun Helyg	1.4h	25
H2(14)	Pant-y-Fforest	1.7h	35
H2(15)	Glanyrafon School	1.5h	20
H2(16)	Froes-y-Barcl, Llangynidr Road	0.5h	10
H2(17)	Garden City	0.6h	16
H2(18)	Highlands Road	2.0h	50
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>186</b>

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WELL RELATED TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND OTHER MODES OF TRANSPORT; AND

(G) THAT THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT HAS ADOPTED MEASURES THROUGH ITS LAYOUT AND DESIGN TO REDUCE CRIME; AND

(H) THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK.

2.19 Within the defined urban area, there is considerable potential for residential development especially where linked to urban regeneration activity. The Council wishes to encourage the rehabilitation, conversion and re-use of derelict and underused buildings and Brownfield land. However, to ensure that development adds to, and increases the quality of life within Blaenau Gwent, careful consideration needs to be given to proposals as outlined in the criteria contained in this policy, particularly the relationship between proposed and existing development and where brownfield land has become of nature conservation value. The Council will through its development control procedure, ensure that attractive residential areas are not spoiled by insensitive infilling. Where the proposed development would be in conflict with considerations of amenity, design or highwa

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**LONGER NEEDED TO HOUSE AN AGRICULTURAL WORKER FROM THE ORIGINAL HOLDING OR FROM WITHIN THE LOCALITY**

**H7 REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING DWELLINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE**

**THE REPLACEMENT OF AN EXISTING DWELLING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE MET:**

- (A) THE PROPOSED DWELLING WILL BE WITHIN THE CURTILAGE OF THE EXISTING DWELLING; AND**
- (B) THE PROPERTY HAS NO ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC MERIT AND IS NOT WORTHY OF CONSERVATION; AND**
- (C) THE PROPERTY HAS NO VISUAL MERIT IN THE CONTEXT OF ITS SURROUNDINGS; AND**
- (D) RESIDENTIAL USE HAS NOT BEEN ABANDONED; AND**
- (E) THE PROPOSED DWELLING WOULD NOT BE MORE INTRUSIVE IN SITING OR SCALE THAN THE ORIGINAL; AND**
- (F) THE PROPOSED DWELLING HAS NO UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE CONSERVATION VALUE OF SEMI IMPROVED VEGETATION.**

- 2.22 Subject to the policy criteria the replacement of an existing dwelling in the countryside is acceptable. The Policy is, however designed to prevent the reinstatement to domestic use of dwellings that have been abandoned for so long that the property has fallen into a serious state of disrepair and would need to be virtually rebuilt. Permission for such development will not be granted. Applicants should not commence demolition work pending the determination of the planning application, as this could result in the Council having to consider the proposal as a new dwelling under the provisions of Policy H5.**

**H8 CONVERSION TO RESIDENTIAL USE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE**

**THE CONVERSION OR REHABILITATION OF BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE TO PERMANENT RESIDENTIAL USE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS:**

- (A) THE APPLICANT CAN DEMONSTRATE HIS ATTEMPTS TO SECURE SUITABLE BUSINESS RE-USE AND THE APPLICATION IS SUPPORTED BY A STATEMENT OF THE EFFORTS MADE; OR**
- (B) RESIDENTIAL CONVERSION IS A NECESSARY AND SUBORDINATE TO (B) Tj 7.92467 0 Td (E) Tj 7.6845**

**SO WITHOUT EXTERNAL ALTERATION, RECONSTRUCTION OR EXTENSION, AND**

- (D) THE ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE BUILDING AND ITS SURROUNDINGS ARE ENHANCED, AND**
- (E) THE CREATION OF A RESIDENTIAL CURTILAGE WOULD NOT HAVE ANY HARMFUL EFFECT ON THE CHARACTER OF THE COUNTRYSIDE.**

**2.23 The Countryside is defined as all areas within Blaenau Gwent not included within the defined urban area boundary on the Proposals Map. The creation of local employment is a priority and the re-use of existing rural buildings has an important role in meeting the needs of the area for business, tourism, sport and recreation. However, there are existing buildings in the countryside which may be suitable for conversion to dwellings, indeed this may be the only practicable way to conserve them. This is subject to the proposal not having an unacceptable effect on the countryside. The policy does not permit the rebuilding of a ruin or the conversion of a recently completed structure.**

#### **H9 GYPSY SITES**

**WITHIN THE DEFINED URBAN AREA PROPOSALS FOR SETTLED OCCUPATION, TEMPORARY STOPPING AND TRANSIT GYPSY SITES WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:**

- (A) THE LOCATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE CHARACTER OR VISUAL QUALITY OF THE SURROUNDINGS; AND**
- (B) THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT HAVE AN UNACCEPTABLE DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE AMENITIES OF OCCUPIERS OF ADJACENT RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES; AND**
- (C) THE PROPOSED LAYOUT, SITE ACCESS, INTERNAL VEHICULAR CIRCULATION, LANDSCAPING AND THE PROVISION OF SERVICES IS SATISFACTORY.**

**2.24 The Caravans Sites Act, 1968 as amended no longer places a statutory duty on Local Authorities to provide accommodation on caravan sites for Gypsies residing or resorting in their area. This Policy provides a criteria based approach for considering the suitability of any sites proposed.**

**2.25 Settled occupation sites are for long-term use. Temporary stopping is for seasonal or periodical occupation and transit sites are designed for limited stays. Conditions will be attached to approvals in respect of temporary stopping and transit sites.**

**H10 NURSING HOMES AND SHELTERED HOUSING**

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF NURSING HOMES AND SHELTERED HOUSING FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE MET:**

- (A) THE DEVELOPMENT HAS A HIGH LEVEL OF PEDESTRIAN ACCESS BOTH WITHIN THE SITE AND FROM THE STREET.**
- (B) GARDEN SPACE WITH A SITTING OUT AREA IS PROVIDED, WHICH ENJOYS SUNLIGHT.**
- (C) THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT IS WITHIN CLOSE WALKING DISTANCE OF LOCAL FACILITIES SUCH AS SHOPS, CHURCHES AND PARKS.**
- (D) SAFE ACCESS AND ADEQUATE PROVISION FOR PARKING AND THE MANOEUVRING OF CARS, AMBULANCES AND VANS OFF THE MAIN HIGHWAY CAN BE PROVIDED, WHILE MAINTAINING AN ESSENTIALLY RESIDENTIAL APPEARANCE.**
- (E) NO NUISANCE IS CAUSED TO THE RESIDENTS OF NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES FROM AN INCREASE IN THE MOVEMENT OF TRADE AND VISITOR TRAFFIC, AND THERE IS NO LOSS OF PRIVACY.**
- (F) THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT IS OF AN APPROPRIATE SIZE AND LAYOUT TO BE COMPATIBLE WITH ADJACENT PROPERTIES, THUS MAINTAINING THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF AN AREA.**

**2.26** There is a continuing need in Blaenau Gwent for residential care homes and nursing homes, where care is provided on the premises for people who because of their age, require assistance for their daily living needs. There is also a need for sheltered accommodation, where people can be allowed some independence but with varying degrees of care provision.

**2.27** Such premises are an appropriate use within residential areas, provided that the building and its surroundings are suitable for the provision of long term residential care. Locations close to and convenient for facilities

**account.**

**2.29 Development proposo**

**UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PART 2**

**3. EMPLOYMENT**









## **E2 EMPLOYMENT LAND ALLOCATIONS**

**THE FOLLOWING SITES, AS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, ARE ALLOCATED FOR d (A) USES -**



**3.12 All development proposals on employment land**

**3.16 The scale and distribution of employment land allocations are also based on the following general requirements:-**

- (a) to provide opportunities for development in locations with ready access to the Heads of the Valleys Road (A465) which has good links to the national motorway network**

**3.19 It is the intention to prepa**

- 3.22 Other exceptions to the general objectives of retaining business premises for business and industrial uses may arise, for example, where the businesses or industrial use of the premises gives rise to severe environmental problems, then a change of use may enable these problems to be removed.**

#### **E6 EXPANSION OF EXISTING INDUSTRIAL PREMISES**

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR THE EXPANSION OF INDUSTRIAL PREMISES ON ADJACENT LAND WILL BE PERMITTED, PROVIDING THE PROPOSAL COMPLIES WITH THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:-**

- (A) THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE AMENITY OF NEARBY RESIDENTS; AND**
  - (B) SATISFACTORY VEHICULAR ACCESS AND PARKING, AND LANDSCAPING IS PROVIDED; AND**
  - (C) THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE OF A SCALE AND DESIGN APPROPRIATE TO ITS SURROUNDINGS; AND**
  - (D) THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON LANDSCAPE OR WILDLIFE INTERESTS OF ACKNOWLEDGED IMPORTANCE**
- 3.23 Most expanding firms tend to prefer to stay in the area (avoidance of upheaval, training staff, client and customer awareness). If they move out of Blaenau Gwent they may be replaced by new companies but the benefit of their potential employment growth is likely to be lost to local residents. Although the UDP has not allocated land specifically to accommodate the expansion of existing firms, the Council will look favourably on proposals for existing and indigenous business to be**



- (C) THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE OF A SCALE AND DESIGN APPROPRIATE WITH ITS SURROUNDINGS, INCORPORATE SATISFACTORY LANDSCAPING, AND WOULD NOT RESULT IN VISUAL INTRUSION; AND
- (D) THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON LANDSCAPE OR WILDLIFE INTERESTS OF ACKNOWLEDGED IMPORTANCE.

3.24 Development of existing under utilised or obsolete industrial land has the advantage of contributing to general environmental improvement by the removal of unsightly buildings. It is necessary for the best use to be made of such land, as development on such sites can make use of existing on-site infrastructure investment, assist in overcoming shortage of industrial land and assist in the economic regeneration of the area.

#### **E8 CONVERSION OF PROPERTY TO INDUSTRIAL USE**

PROPOSALS FOR THE CONVERSION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS FOR SMALL SCALE BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSAL COMPLIES WITH THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:-

- (A) THE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE OF AN APPROPRIATE SCALE AND DESIGN SO AS NOT TO DETRACT FROM THE OVERALL CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA AND INCORPORATES APPROPRIATE LANDSCAPING; AND
- (B) THE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE UNACCEPTABLY DETRIMENTAL TO LOCAL RESIDENTIAL OR OTHER AMENITIES IN TERMS OF NOISE, SMELL, SAFETY, AIR EMISSIONS OR EXCESSIVE TRAFFIC GENERATION; AND
- (C) SATISFACTORY VEHICULAR ACCESS AND PARKING IS PROVIDED.

3.25 Where small scale industrial activity is proposed, particularly in existing buildings, permission will be granted unless there are specific and convincing objections. In rural areas such schemes will be encouraged if it can be established that they help towards creating a balance between housing and employment needs and thereby minimise the need to travel.

#### **E9 SMALL BUSINESS IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

PROPOSALS FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OF PROPERTY IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS TO B1 (BUSINESS/LIGHT INDUSTRIAL) OFFICE USE WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE: -

- (A) SATISFACTORY VEHICULAR ACCESS AND PARKING PROVISION IS PROVIDED; AND

- (B) THE EFFECT OF THE PROPOSED USE WILL HAVE NO UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE IMPACT IN TERMS OF THE AMENITY OF LOCAL RESIDENTS; AND
- (C) THE IMPACT ON THE VISUAL AMENITY RESULTING FROM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND ALTERATIONS TO BUILDINGS WOULD NOT BE INCONGRUOUS WITH THE RESIDENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AREA.

3.26 The establishment of small businesses close to or within residential areas encourages local employment. Large homes especially those with large gardens and other redundant buildings may be suitable

**(C) THE RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE PROPERTY IS RETAINED.**

- 3.28** Many small scale businesses and some types of jobs are based in the home which is used as the "office", business address and base for any vehicle used for the business or job. Home based businesses provide valuable employment opportunities. However, it is important that any proposals to establish home based businesses will not introduce activity which will exceed that which can be tolerated in a residential area. Planning permission is required where the proposal to work from home amounts to a material change of use. Many home based offices with limited business use will not require planning permission.
- 3.29** Unless there is some certainty about how a home based business will operate it will be appropriate initially to grant planning permission for a temporary period, so that the nature of the use can be assessed for a period of time (namely one year) unless the Council can be satisfied that a longer period, or a full time permission can be justified. Where a proposal is to enable an individual to pursue a business based on a particular profession or skill, it may be inappropriate to allow a subsequent occupier to continue the business and a personal planning permission may then be justified.

**UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2011-2016**

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1** The transport network determines the ease with which people can move about and gain access to the range of facilities they wish to use, it therefore has a vital role to play in the quality of life of the community. Good access and personal mobility are also essential for the economic and social well being of Blaenau Gwent. The dominant feature of the highway network in Blaenau Gwent. is the Heads of the Valleys Trunk Road (A465) located at the northern end of the County Borough. There are proposals to upgrade the A465 between Hirwaun and Abergavenny to dual carriageway standards, thus completing the entire A465/A40 route across Wales between Neath and Monmouth to a standard commensurate with its strategic nature.
- 4.2** The main north/south links in Blaenau Gwent are the A4048, A4046 and the A467 which connect the Heads of the Valley Trunk Road (A465) with the M4 Corridor to the south.
- 4.3** Currently there is no passenger rail service in Blaenau Gwent. A feasibility study has been carried out into the possibility of restoring a passenger service on the Newport to Ebbw Vale railway line previously used only for freight. The feasibility study indicates that from an engineering and railway operations point of view the restoration of a passenger service is perfectly realistic. The service that is envisaged is a mixture of fast and slow trains serving Abertillery to Cardiff and Ebbw Vale to Newport respectively. Interchange would be possible at major stations Newbridge and/or Risca. The railway operation will stimulate retail and commercial development at and around stations and should lead to substantial regeneration of Ebbw Vale, C

- 4.7 Many residential areas in valley towns have little or no provision for residents parking and serious problems are already experienced as a result. Further growth in car ownership will obviously exacerbate this problem. The resolution of traffic problems is essential not only to support the continued economic regeneration of the area, but to also improve the environment by removing traffic from residential areas and hence the quality of life of the residents.**
- 4.8 The basic transport priorities of the plan involve:-**
- a) the development of an integrated approach to transport which takes account of the needs of all sections of the community including disabled people and other vulnerable groups using the network such as pedestrians and cyclists.**
  - b) improving road safety and personal security, and reducing the effects of traffic on the environment from noise and air pollution.**
  - c) co-ordinating land use change with transport provision, to ensure that development proposals are located so that workplaces, homes and community facilities are conveniently located to one another, to minimise the need for long journeys and where they can be served by existing transport infrastructure, particularly public transport.**
- 4.9 The policies within the plan embrace strategic and non strategic road investment, whilst the promoo**



- 4.14 The A467 has been improved throughout its length, though problems have arisen at Warm Turn. There is a need for improvements to traffic flow, reduction in congestion, and the provision of safe and adequate access to any new development on the A467.

#### **T4 HIGHWAY CONSIDERATIONS IN NEW DEVELOPMENT**

**NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT IT CAN BE ADEQUATELY SERVED FROM THE EXISTING HIGHWAY NETWORK. IF IT CANNOT, THE SCHEME SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO ENSURE THAT:**

- (A) HIGHWAY SAFETY WILL NOT BE PREJUDICED; AND**
- (B) ENVIRONMENTAL HARM IS AVOIDED.**

- 4.15 New development will not be acceptable if it will create or add significantly to safety or environmental problems on the existing highway network, or, if it does not make provision for appropriately designed new highways and transportation facilities within the development. Development proposals in the plan have been examined to ensure that they do not have unacceptable effects on the highway network, but in some instances off site works may be needed to increase highway capacity or to overcome road safety or environmental problems. Where developments require off-site highway works, the Council will seek safeguards through planning and highway agreements to ensure that such improvements are funded by the developer, and implemented before the development is brought into use. Innovation will be possible in design, provided that the basic principles required by the Council are met, and that the needs of service vehicles, public transport and emergency vehicles are also catered for. Highways designed and constructed appropriately will be adopted for future maintenance by the Council under the provision of the Highways Act.

#### **T5 PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

**PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO THE PROMOTION OF GREATER USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND THE BETTER INTEGRATION OF RAIL, BUS AND CAR TRAVEL BY: -**

- (A) FAVOURING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS THAT INCLUDE THE PROVISION OF PARK AND RIDE FACILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH RAIL TRAVEL.**
- (B) SEEKING TO ENSURE THAT APPROPRIATE PROVISION FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACCESS AND OPERATION IS MADE AT THE PLANNING STAGE OF NEW DEVELOPMENT.**
- (C) SEEKING TO ENSURE THE INTRODUCTION OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES INTO NEW DEVELOPMENT AT AN EARLY STAGE BEFORE TRAVEL PATTERNS BECOME ESTABLISHED.**
- (D) PERMITTING APPROPRIATE FACILITIES RELATED TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT.**



Blaenau G

Abertillery, Ebbw Vale and Tredegar town centres through the implementation of partial pedestrianisation schemes.

## **T8 NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND PEDESTRIAN ROUTES**

**WITHIN NEW DEVELOPMENTS PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR SAFE, CONVENIENT AND PLEASANT PEDESTRIAN ROUTES CONSISTENT WITH CRIME PREVENTION MEASURES. THE LINE OF EXISTING FOOTPATHS WILL NORMALLY BE SAFEGUARDED EITHER BY INTEGRATION INTO THE OVERALL SCHEME, OR BY DIVERSION WHERE AN ALTERNATIVE ROUTE IS AVAILABLE.**

- 4.20** Where new developments are proposed, arrangements for pedestrians will need to be considered at the initial planning stages. Pedestrian routes segregated from vehicles, giving direct access to community facilities will be preferred. The design of routes will need to be consistent with the requirements of crime prevention. It will usually be necessary to retain the line of existing footpaths within new developments as these represent the "desire lines" for pedestrians walking to existing facilities. However, diversions may be acceptable where an alternative route of an equivalent character can be devised.

## **T9 CYCLE ROUTE DEVELOPMENT**

**NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS SHOULD HAVE REGARD TO THE NEEDS OF CYCLISTS THROUGH THE PROVISION OF CYCLE TRACKS, CYCLE CROSSINGS AT MAIN ROADS AND CYCLE PARKING FACILITIES.**

**A CYCLE ROUTE NETWORK IS BEING DEVELOPED AND THERE ARE PROPOSALS TO CONSTRUCT CYCLE ROUTES THROUGHOUT BLAENAU GWENT AS INDICATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP.**

- 4.21** Increased use of cycles can assist in reducing congestion and pollution. The Council intends to provide a number of strategic cycleroutes, either by upgrading existing routes or by creation of new rights-of-way. The routes will integrate with the National Cycle Network and will provide important long distance links connecting major centres and provide a core network to which other new routes can be joined. These routes can also compliment the Authority's and other organisations Green Transport Plans.
- 4.22** New developments and highway improvements should take account of the needs of cyclists. In assessing what provision is required for cyclists, consideration will be given to:-
- (a)** the scale and character of development;
  - (b)** the degree to which the facility will add to the quality of the scheme, in particular highway safety;
  - (c)** the relationship between the project and the planned network of cycleroutes.

**T10 CAR PARKING**

**THE PROVISION OF OFF STREET CAR PARKING WILL BE REQUIRED IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S APPROVED STANDARDS.**

- 4.23 Car parking is an essential element in the overall strategy for transport and the provision made for car parking can have an important bearing on the use of the highway network. Suitable off street parking arrangements will be required in new developments to reduce the possibility of indiscriminate parking causing safety and environmental problems, or restricting the capacity of the highway network. The Council has approved car parking standards which are used to assess the adequacy of car parking provision in development proposals.**

**T11 AVIATION**

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR FLYING SITES FOR ALL TYPES OF AVIATION ACTIVITY OR CHANGES TO OPERATIONS AT EXISTING SITES, WILL BE ASSESSED AGAINST THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA.**

- (A) THE ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT ADVANTAGES ARISING.**
- (B) THE BROADENING OF THE RANGE OF RECREATION PROVISION AVAILABLE WITHIN THE REGION.**
- (C) THE LIKELY IMPACT UPON RESIDENTIAL AND OTHER NOISE SENSITIVE PROPERTIES IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY (I.E. UNDER FLIGHT PATHS AND CIRCUITS), BY VIRTUE OF NOISE AND DISTURBANCE.**
- (D) THE BENEFITS TO SERVICES SUCH AS THE PUBLIC UTILITIES.**
- (E) THE SITE'S ROLE IN THE OVERALL TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE OF THE REGION, HAVING REGARD TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ISSUES.**
- (F) VISUAL IMPACT.**
- (G) THE EXISTENCE OF SUITABLY LOCATED ALTERNATIVE FLYING FACILITIES.**
- (H) ACCESS FROM THE MAIN POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT CENTRES IN THE REGION AND NEIGHBOURING AREAS.**
- (I) PROTECTION OF NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS.**

**RESTRICTIONS UPON THE NUMBER, TYPE AND TIMES OF MOVEMENTS WOULD BE THE SUBJECT OF THE PROPOSALS AT THE TIME OF THE PROPOSAL.**

WE Y EN EO O

**THE CASE AND IN NEGOTIATION WITH THE OPERATOR, HAVING REGARD TO THE ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF THE SITE.**

- 4.24 General Aviation (GA), which covers all civil aircraft activity other than that carried out by the commercial air transport sector, is the largest part of the UK aviation community. The number of GA aircraft represents a growing proportion of the total aircraft on the UK register. GA is important as it can play a vital role in a region. It can form an essential element in the overall transport infrastructure. It can encourage the economic competitiveness of the area and foster its links with Europe. It can broaden the range of recreational facilities available in the region. It**

**UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PART 2**

**5. TOWN CENTRES AND RETAIL  
DEVELOPMENT**



**5.6 In addition there have been planning permissions for retail/commercial uses on:**

**Remainder of Focus site, Ebbw**

## **S2 TOWN CENTRE ENHANCEMENT**

**THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE VIABILITY, VITALITY, QUALITY AND ENVIRONMENT OF THE FIVE CENTRAL SHOPPING AREAS OF ABERTILLERY, BLAINA, BRYNMAWR, EBBW VALE AND TREDEGAR WILL BE ENCOURAGED, ESPECIALLY BY THE FOLLOWING MEASURES:**

- (A) THE UPGRADING AND MODERNISATION OF EXISTING SHOPS, OFFICES AND OTHER COMMERCIAL PREMISES BY MEANS OF REFURBISHMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT;**
- (B) THE PROVISION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES;**
- (C) THE PROVISION OF BETTER VEHICULAR ACCESS AND CIRCULATION ARRANGEMENTS, IMPROVED PUBLIC TRANSPORT FACILITIES AND PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL CAR PARKING SPACES WHERE NECESSARY;**
- (D) THE PROVISION OF SCHEMES FOR PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY, LANDSCAPING, BETTER QUALITY STREET FURNITURE AND OTHER VISUAL IMPROVEMENTS;**
- (E) THE IMPROVEMENT OF ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY.**

**5.11 The most effective method of achieving the aims of this policy will be through the continued implementation of the Action Plans for the town centres. These can be implemented through a variety of funding mechanisms such as the Welsh Capital Challenge, ERDF and the WDA. In addition the private sector will be encouraged to contribute to the enhancement of retail areas through direct investment in properties, and in the range and nature of services provided in town centres.**

**5.12 As the town centres are enhanced, the County Borough Council will, in partnership with occupiers and users of town centres develop and implement Town Centre Management Plans (subject to funding). These will seek to protect existing investment and continue to improve the town centres.**

## **S3 TOWN CENTRE USES**

**WITHIN THE CENTRAL SHOPPING AREAS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP FOR ABERTILLERY, BLAINA, BRYNMAWR, EBBW VALE AND TREDEGAR THE FOLLOWING USES WILL BE PERMITTED:**

- (A) RETAIL;**
- (B) PROFESSIONAL AND FINANCIAL SERVICES;**
- (C) ENTERTAINMENT AND LEISURE.**



- 5.13 In order to maintain and strengthen the vitality and viability of the town centres a range of uses must be encouraged to extend the operating hours of the centre and to provide services that are all-inclusive, including provision for the less able-bodied and non car owning households.

#### **S4 OUT OF CENTRE RETAIL AND LEISURE DEVELOPMENTS**

##### **OUTSIDE THE DEFINED CENTRAL SHOPPING AREAS RETAIL AND LEISURE DEVELOPMENTS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF:**

- (A) THERE IS A NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT;**
  - (B) THEY MEET THE LOCATIONAL SEQUENTIAL TEST FOR SITE SELECTION;**
  - (C) THE PROPOSAL, EITHER BY ITSELF OR CUMULATIVELY WITH OTHER PROPOSALS OR DEVELOPMENTS, WILL NOT HARM THE VITALITY OR VIABILITY OF A NEARBY TOWN CENTRE;**
  - (D) AN ADEQUATE LEVEL OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT IS, OR WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE;**
  - (E) THEY HAVE CLEAR AND ATTRACTIVE PEDESTRIAN LINKS WITH A TOWN CENTRE; AND**
  - (F) THEY ARE NOT LOCATED ON LAND USED OR ALLOCATED FOR INDUSTRY OR BUSINESS.**
- 5.14 This Policy is directed at all new retail and leisure proposals, except for minor schemes such as corner shops. In order to meet the aims of enhancing the town centres, and to provide accessibility for non car owning households, it is vital that any new premises are located within or adjacent to established town centres. Careful attention will be given to the linkages with existing town centres, this is especially important given the topographical constraints which exist in valley areas. Further out of centre developments in Blaenau Gwent could have a detrimental impact upon the existing shopping facilities and, therefore a retail impact assessment will be required for any scheme exceeding 2000 sq metres (Gross) of internal floor space. Applications for extensions to existing out of centre retail premises will be critically examined against the aims underlying town centre enhancement.
- 5.15 The Council believes that there may be leakage of trade from Blaenau Gwent to the main concentrations of non-food based retail warehousing at Cwmbran, Merthyr and Newport. There may therefore be scope for such development within the County Borough, although this will be a matter for a developer to establish. The size of the units in such schemes may be controlled by condition.
- 5.16 The sequential approach to be adopted in meeting Criterion (B) will also be applied to other uses that need to be accessible to a large number of people (see 5.10 above), and should match that set out in Planning Policy Wales (March 2002). Where work to the public highway is needed to facilitate the development, the Council will expect the developer to meet the cost. To protect existing resources, the use of land in industrial or business use, or proposed as such, must be avoided.





**S9 RETAIL/OFFICE SITES**

**THE FOLLOWING SITES AS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP ARE ALLOCATED FOR RETAIL/OFFICE DEVELOPMENT:**

**PROPOSALS**

<b>Policy No.</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Area</b>
<b>S9 ( 1 )</b>	<b>James Street (South) Ebbw Vale Office (A2)</b>	<b>0.2ha</b>
<b>S9 ( 2 )</b>	<b>Gas Holder Site Ebbw Vale Retail (A1 non-food)</b>	<b>0.6ha</b>
<b>S9 ( 3 )</b>	<b>Crown Business Park Tredegar Hotel (C1) Retail (A1) Warehousing only</b>	<b>2.0ha</b>
<b>S9 ( 4 )</b>	<b>Kenmore NMC site Nantyglo Retail (A1 Commercial A2 &amp; A3)</b>	<b>1.1ha</b>
<b>S9 ( 5 )</b>	<b>N.E of Leos Ebbw Vale Hotel (C1),Retail (A1) Warehouse only,Commercial (A2) (A3) (C2)</b>	<b>2.4ha</b>
<b>S9 ( 6 )</b>	<b>Rassau Estate Road Ebbw Vale Petrol Filling Station</b>	<b>0.6ha</b>



**UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PART 2**

**6. ENVIRONMENT**

## **6. BACKGROUND**

### **6.1**

## STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

**EN1 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SHOULD CONSERVE THE NATURAL BEAUTY AND AMENITY OF LAND. FEATURES OF THE LANDSCAPE WHICH ARE OF IMPORTANCE FOR WILD FLORA AND FAUNA OR HABITATS AND SPECIES WILL BE PROTECTED AND MANAGED.**

**EN2 THE DESIGN OF ALL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING CONVERSIONS OF EXISTING BUILDINGS, SHOULD BE SUSTAINABLE IN TERMS OF SCALE, DENSITY, LAYOUT, HEIGHT, MASSING, ACCESS, MATERIALS, APPEARANCE AND LANDSCAPING. DESIGNS SHOULD RESPECT THE TOPOGRAPHY, NATURAL SETTING AND IMPORTANT EXISTING BUILT FORM IN THE VICINITY OF THE PROPOSAL.**

**6.7 The main aim of the environment-led policy is to ensure that environmental resources are fully taken into account, to improve the physical environment, to protect high quality environments, to control pollution and to improve poor environments. Biodiversity, habitats, species and the wider environment will be protected through the planning process. Planning agreements and obligations will be used to bring about the conservation and sustainable management of the above features and interests.**

**6.8 In this section policies are intended to promote the conservation, protection and improvement of both the built and natural environment. Policies and proposals are particularly concerned with conserving aspects of value, initiating further improvements, controlling new development and encouraging better quality and design. In this context the Blaenau Gwent Landscape Improvement Initiative and the Countryside and Landscape Strategy have been developed to provide guidance and advice on how the countryside and landscape can be developed and managed. In addition the Blaenau Gwent LA21 strategy and the Blaenau Gwent Biodiversity Action Plan contain objectives for the conservation protection and improvement of the local natural and built environment. An emphasis on "quality" is intended to help maintain or enhance the attractiveness of Blaenau Gwent and help to attract investment and promote the Council's developing role associated with leisure and tourism activities. The intended effect of the environmental policies are to protect and conserve the area's natural attributes and**



- 2: To protect or enhance the natural environment.**
  - (a) The prot**

**interest. (refer to Environmental Policy EN6, EN7, EN8). Increasing regard will also be paid to the quality**





**ACCOMMODATE THE PROPOSED USE WILL RESULT IN NO OR MINIMAL LOSS OF ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC FEATURES.**

**DEMOLITION OF LISTED BUILDINGS WILL ONLY BE GRANTED CONSENT IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, WHERE IT IS DEMONSTRATED TO BE NECESSARY, FOR EXAMPLE AS PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE REDEVELOPMENT OF A SITE.**

- 6.20 The Assembly is responsible for compiling a list of buildings of special architectural and historic interest, under section 1 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This responsibility is undertaken by Cadw, which grades buildings on merit (I, II\* or II). The listing of a building encompasses the exterior, interior and the structures within the curtilage. Listed building consent from the local authority and planning permission are required for any works intended. Details of listed buildings within Blaenau Gwent are held by the Environment and Development Department of the council.
- 6.21 The fact that a building is 'listed' does not mean that it will be 'preserved' intact in all circumstances, but it does mean that demolition will not be allowed unless the case for it has been fully proven. Alterations must preserve the character of the building. It is an offence to demolish or alter a listed building in any way that affects its character without listed building consent which must first be obtained from the Local Planning Authority. There may be circumstances where listed buildings have fallen into such a state of disrepair as to severely detract from the environment and prejudice worthwhile development of the site or adjoining land. In such circumstances the Council may well support the case for demolition. The Authority and the Assembly also have powers to Compulsory Purchase Listed Buildings that are not being properly preserved.
- 6.22 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is striving for investment, in the built environment, a flexible approach will be adopted in land allocation when dealing with planning applications for a change of use, where it is deemed vital for the preservation of the building. Demolition of a listed building, however, will only be granted approval when all material issues and options have been evaluated, in relation to the intrinsic architectural and historic interest of the building.
- 6.23 The setting of Listed Buildings can be enhanced and their appearance improved by ensuring that new developments in their vicinity are complementary, and do not detract or prejudice the character of the buildings.

**EN9 ARCHAEOLOGY AND ANCIENT MONUMENTS**

**IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS, BOTH SCHEDULED AND OTHERWISE WILL BE PROTECTED FROM DEVELOPMENT LIKELY TO HAVE A DESTRUCTIVE OR ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THEM. DEVELOPERS WILL BE EXPECTED TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO ENABLE PROPER ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSAL ON ANY ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS.**

- 6.24 Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Blaenau Gwent consist of those scheduled under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Development on such sites requires Scheduled Monument Consent, in addition to planning permission. Unscheduled

ancient monuments which are shown to be of national importance, will also be encompassed by this policy. Details of Scheduled Ancient Monuments within Blaenau Gwent are held by the Environment Department of the council.

- 6.25 Archaeological remains are irreplaceable, representing a finite and non-renewable resource of past human activity. Interest in archaeology is gaining in significance and the Welsh Office, Circular 60/96, recognises the importance of archaeological remains "for their own sake" as well as their obvious role in education, leisure and tourism.
- 6.26 Development affecting the structures of unscheduled ancient monuments will be required to comply with the following criteria:-
- (a) an archaeological assessment that follows the advice of an archaeological consultant will be submitted by the developer with the planning application;
  - (b) In order to secure appropriate protection and development, conditions are imposed upon planning consents and/or agreements under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 are entered into.
- 6.27 The Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust is responsible for maintaining the Sites and Monuments Record of Archaeological Sites in the County Borough. This record has been adopted by the County Borough for planning purposes. The County Borough will follow the guidance outlined in Planning Guidance (Wales): Planning Policy and Circular 61/96 Planning and the Historic Environment a r h s e y T d ( P ) T j 6 . 6 0 3 9 0 7 T d ( e ) T j 5 i n 6 3 0 5 0 T d 3 u

- 6.29** Bedwellty Park is the only site in the Blaenau Gwent area included in Cadw's Register of 'Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales'. This park is also designated as a Conservation Area and will be protected under Policy EN6. Cadw's Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales lists Blaenavon, part of which is within Blaenau Gwent. The Register of Landscapes of Special Historic Interest lists Clydach Gorge, part of which is also in Blaenau Gwent. The conservation of these, and the other historic parks, gardens and landscapes identified, will be implemented by development control decisions.
- 6.30** There are a number of other historic natural and industrial landscapes which this policy also covers. The Council will use the Blaenau Gwent Countryside and Landscape Strategy as a source of Supplementary Planning Guidance on this Policy.

#### **EN11 THROUGH-ROUTES AND GATEWAYS**

**NEW PROPOSALS FRONTING MAJOR THROUGH-ROUTES AND AT THE IDENTIFIED GATEWAYS INTO BLAENAU GWENT WILL BE REQUIRED TO INCORPORATE A HIGH STANDARD OF DESIGN AND LANDSCAPING.**

- 6.31** The main impression of Blaenau Gwent can be formed on travelling along the main through routes, at certain points of arrival and at "gateways





scientific interest of the adjoining site is not compromised. Development on Sites of Special Scientific Interest or adjacent to them can have a detrimental effect on the features or qualities of an SSSI, either physically or through noise, water pollution or other forms of disturbance.

6.38 There are currently ty



and distinctive groups of trees. All these areas are considered worthy of 'Special Landscape Area' status and the Council will endeavour to:

- (a) control and regulate the impact of development;
- (b) resolve the conflict between agricultural, recreational, forestry and woodland interests;
- (c) protect and improve the landscape and wildlife resources.

6.48 The Blaenau Gwent Landscape initiative is a source of information which will be material in determining applications within Special Landscape Areas. This policy is not intended to prevent works of land improvement which would not have a detrimental effect upon the landscape.

6.49 The distinctive character of landscapes is dependent upon a combination of many different elements including topography, the type and location of trees, woodlands and other vegetation, the character of settlements, the nature of river valleys and local farming techniques. Landscape elements such as fencing, walling and hedgerows also contribute towards a 'sense of place'. These various landscapes serve a valuable open land function. Encouraging and developing the quality of landscapes can give rise to areas of ecological interest.

6.50 The Government is encouraging Councils to include land-use policies designed to secure the conservation of natural beauty and amenity of land. Policy EN17 sets out the Council's commitment to conserving this resource, which is fundamental in not only raising the quality of life for residents, but also in improving the image for potential investors and visitors. Landscape enhancement schemes, can restore and even produce new landscape features by creating distinct

- (B) VALLEY ROAD, EBBW VALE
- (C) BEAUFORT GREEN NETWORK, BEAUFORT, EBBW VALE
- (D) FESTIVAL PARK, EBBW VALE
- (E) REAR OF TY BRYN ROAD, CWMTILLERY, ABERTILLERY.

**WITHIN SUCH AREAS DEVELOPMENT THAT WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO LOCAL CHARACTER OR FUNCTION WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.**

- 6.52 Local Landscape Areas provide urban communities with access to areas of natural landscape. These areas have been identified as an important part of the environment by the local communities in which they exist. Agenda 21 recognises that one of the fundamental prerequisites for the achievement of sustainable development is public involvement and participation. Generally, the areas are open spaces where natural or urban landscape is essential to the quality of the environment. The extent of development on allocated sites within the areas will be limited and must retain and enhance the existing landscapes and planting. These areas will be safeguarded for the purposes of informal leisure and local amenity whilst providing valuable natural environment within existing built urban settlements.

#### **EN20 PROVISION FOR OPEN SPACE**

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WILL BE REQUIRED TO MAKE ADEQUATE PROVISION FOR OPEN SPACE AND LANDSCAPING.**

- 6.53 Developers should demonstrate, wherever appropriate, that they have considered the wider settings of j 3160153 0 Td ( )Tj -432.015 -13.8 Td (P)Tj 7.08418 0 Td (R)Tj 8.52503 0 Td69 0 Td ( )Tj

**APPEARANCE OF UNTIDY LAND WILL BE IMPROVED WHERE THIS WOULD NOT DAMAGE NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS.**

- 6.55 The use of mixed woodland planting will help to improve the landscape setting of the built environment as well as putting large areas of reclaimed land to a positive use. Tree planting will help to provide shelter belts and screen eyesores. Afforestation schemes will be undertaken in partnership with the Forestry Commission and the Welsh Development Agency, where appropriate. The establishment of native broadleaved woodlands will be encouraged while large scale conifers afforestation will be discouraged.**
- 6.56 Community forests provide wooded landscapes for recreation, education, conserv16205(r)Tj 3.84227 0**





**protection and positive management through Tree Preservation Orders designations as SINC's and woodland management agreements.**

**6.67 The Council**





**UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PART 2**

**7. COMMUNITY SERVICES**

## **7. BACKGROUND**

- 7.1 The quality of everyday life is greatly influenced by the nature and extent of local community facilities. Local schools, community buildings, and medical services play an important role in the life of an area. The Unitary Development Plan provides detailed guidance regarding the nature, scale and location of future development in Blaenau Gwent. The guidance is provided in part to enable organisations responsible for community services to co-ordinate their own capital programmes and relate them to the planned pattern of housing and industrial development. In this way, the limited resources available should be used to maximum community benefit.**

### **POLICIES**

#### **C1 COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES WILL BE PROVIDED IN ACCESSIBLE LOCATIONS. THIS WILL NORMALLY BE TOWN AND LOCAL CENTRES.**

- 7.2 The Council will encourage the organisations concerned with the provision of community**

from existing centres should therefore be considered in relation to the needs of the community it is intended to serve. Such proposals will, however, need to be capable of accommodation without giving rise to problems of disturbance for occupiers of adjacent premises or prejudicing highway safety. As community facilities encompass a diverse range of functions and activities it will be particularly important to ensure

**C5 CHILD CARE FACILITIES - DAY NURSERIES**

**THE PROVISION OF DAY NURSERIES EITHER BY NEW BUILD OR CHANGE OF USE OF PREMISES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:-**

- (A) THERE IS NO DISTURBANCE TO THE OCCUPIERS OF NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES; AND**
- (B) THERE IS ADEQUATE PARKING FOR STAFF AND VISITORS; AND**
- (C) THERE IS NO DETRIMENT TO HIGHWAY SAFETY.**

**7.8 Day nurseries**

**UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PART 2**

**8. LEISURE, RECREATION AND  
TOURISM**

## 8. BACKGROUND

- 8.1 The activities involved in recreation and tourism are interrelated and involve a wide variety of activities pursued during varying times of the day with differing land use requirements. Within Blaenau Gwent the opportunities and facilities for recreation, leisure and tourism are diverse. There are four leisure centres, a factory outlet shopping centre, a country park of regional significance at Bryn Bach, four rugby grounds with grandstands, a Cinema, an indoor cricket school, an 18 hole golf course and numerous countryside walks and playing fields.
- 8.2 An increase in the leisure time available to individuals coupled with an increase in the diversity of activities and pursuits could contribute to improving the quality of life of the local community. Indeed an increase in physical recreation and activity can also have direct health benefits both physically and emotionally. In this context, the management of existing and the provision of new facilities need to reflect the needs of the public and be accessible to all sectors of the community. The Unitary Development Plan takes into account the Council's Leisure Strategy and it will also be important to ensure that the recreational and tourism benefits are not outweighed by environmental costs arising from the impact of the development or the intensity of the activity accommodated by the local community.
- 8.3 Leisure, whether informal or formal, casual in terms of play or active in terms of sport, represents an important element in the quality of life of an area. Such provision is important in the development of children and fulfilment in adulthood.
- 8.4 The policies listed below aim to provide a rational framework within which the development of tourism and leisure facilities can grow; an effective tool for reintegrating people into the community and an opportunity for all sectors of the community to improve their quality of life. The policies also aim to assist in sustaining a viable valley community and to regenerate the local economy. Additionally they:-
- (a) take account of the variety and diversity of recreation, leisure and tourism and its constantly changing requirements.
  - (b) protect and enhance existing facilities and provision.
  - (c) protect existing open spaces used for recreation, leisure and tourism and also aim to provide new open spaces to serve new development.

## POLICIES

### R1 RECREATION, LEISURE AND TOURISM





- (C) THE CHARACTER OF THE BUILDING IS RESPECTED (PARTICULARLY IF IT HAS ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC MERIT) AND T OOOO O

## R5 PLAYING FIELDS AND OTHER OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

LOSS OF OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, SUCH AS PLAYING FIELDS AND SPORTS GROUNDS, WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THE FACILITIES CAN BE SHOWN NOT TO BE NEEDED OR EQUIVALENT REPLACEMENT FACILITIES PROVIDED.

243 HECTARES OF LAND ARE ALLOCATED FOR THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL PLAYING FIELDS AND OTHER OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP. THE SITES INCLUDE:-

	<u>HECTARES</u>
WEST OF ANEURIN CRESCENT, BRYNMAWR	3
CWMTILLERY COLLIERY, ABERTILLERY	6
PARC BRYN BACH, TREDEGAR	165
FESTIVAL PARK, EBBW VALE	47
PARC NANTYWAUN, NANTYGLO	20
CHARTIST WAY, TREDEGAR	1
DUKE STREET, TREDEGAR	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>243</b>

- 8.10 Blaenau Gwent experiences great demand for its recreation grounds including playing fields, indeed Blaenau Gwent is deficient in playing field provision, consequently existing facilities will be protected from development and sites have also been identified for future proposals.

## R6 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS ON AREAS OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

## 8.12 The cultivation of a

**[REDACTED]**

**[REDACTED]**

**PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSAL COMPLIES WITH THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA: -**

- (A) THE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE ON A SCALE APPROPRIATE TO THE LOCALITY AND WOULD BE SYMPATHETIC TO, AND NOT DETRACT FROM THE OVERALL CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA; AND**
- (B) THE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE DETRIMENTAL TO LOCAL RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES; AND**
- (C) APPROACH ROADS TO THE SITES ARE OF ADEQUATE STANDARD TO ACCOMMODATE ANY INCREASE IN TRAFFIC LIKELY TO BE GENERATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT; AND**
- (D) SATISFACTORY VEHICULAR ACCESS AND CAR PARKING PROVISION CAN BE ACCOMMODATED ON SITE.**

**8.15** The supply of serviced accommodation in Blaenau Gwent is very limited. However, there is an opportunity to develop new markets and the potential to provide serviced accommodation by encouraging the renovation and full utilisation of the upper floors of the public houses throughout the area. Encouragement will be given to local people to provide bed and breakfast accommodation in those properties suitable to accommodate such facilities.

#### **R11 STATIC HOLIDAY CARAVANS AND CHALET SITES**

**PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF STATIC HOLIDAY CARAVAN AND CHALET SITES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSAL COMPLIES WITH THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:-**

- (A) THE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT OCCUPY A HIGHLY VISIBLE SITE;**
- (B) THE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE OF APPROPRIATE SCALE AND DESIGN, INCORPORATING RELEVANT LANDSCAPING TO PREVENT IT DETRACTING FROM THE OVERALL CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA;**
- (C) THE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE DETRIMENTAL TO LOCAL RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES;**
- (D) SATISFACTORY CAR PARK PROVISION AND VEHICULAR ACCESS CAN BE PROVIDED TO THE SITE, WITH SUCH ROAD PROVISION TO ACCOMMODATE ANY INCREASE IN TRAFFIC LIKELY TO BE GENERATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT;**
- (E) THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT WILL BE SAFEGUARDED.**

- 8.16** At present there are no static holiday caravan and chalet sites in Blaenau Gwent. However with the scope to develop tourism in the locality there is potential to develop such facilities. To be given favourable consideration, any proposed static caravan, chalet or cabin development will need to be of a high standard. Detailed design should ensure a low density development with an informal layout which can be assimilated sympathetically into the local landscape. The impact of any proposed development will need to be kept to a minimum with its site location having to satisfy strict environmental, amenity and highway safety criteria.

## **R12 TOURING CARAVAN SITES**

**PROPOSALS TO DEVELOP TOURING CARAVAN SITES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSAL COMPLIES WITH THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA: -**

- (A) THE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT OCCUPY A HIGHLY VISIBLE SITE;**
  - (B) THE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE OF APPROPRIATE SCALE AND DESIGN, INCORPORATING HIGH QUALITY LANDSCAPING TO PREVENT IT DETRACTING FROM THE OVERALL CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA;**
  - (C) THE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE DETRIMENTAL TO LOCAL RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES;**
  - (D) PRIVATE SITE ACCESS ROADS WILL BE WITHIN APPROXIMATELY ONE KILOMETRE OF AN ADOPTED HIGHWAY HAVING SUFFICIENT WIDTH, ADEQUATE ALIGNMENTS AND GRADIENTS TO ACCOMMODATE THE SAFE USE OF TOWED VEHICLES;**
  - (E) SATISFACTORY VEHICULAR ACCESS CAN BE PROVIDED TO THE SITE, WITH SUCH ROAD PROVISION BEING OF ADEQUATE STANDARD TO ACCOMMODATE ANY INCREASE IN TRAFFIC LIKELY TO BE GENERATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT;**
  - (F) THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT WILL BE SAFEGUARDED.**
- 8.17** Touring caravan holidays are becoming increasingly popular, at present the only touring caravan park site is at Parc Bryn Bach. The Council recognise the potential to increase touring caravan provision and will give favourable consideration to touring caravan site development, provided that the proposals satisfy the same criteria as those applied to static holiday caravan, chalet and cabin developments. There is also potential to combine caravan and camping sites to allow an inter-changeability between touring caravans and tent pitches to meet market needs.

**R13 CARAVAN STORAGE SITES  
WITHIN THE DEFINED URBAN**

- 8.19** The Council has limited influence over the distribution and provision of camping facilities for short term use, as planning permission is not usually required. However, if camp sites are to be developed on a more permanent long term basis with on-site facilities then they will be subject to formal planning control. Campers rarely use large towed vehicles, thus camp sites need not require access roads of similar standard to those required by touring caravans.

#### **R15 OUTDOOR ACTIVITY CENTRES**

**PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUTDOOR ACTIVITY CENTRES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THE PROPOSAL COMPLIES WITH THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:-**

- (A) THE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT OCCUPY A HIGHLY VISIBLE SITE;**
- (B) THE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE OF APPROPRIATE SCALE AND DESIGN AND INCORPORATE RELEVANT LANDSCAPING TO PREVENT IT DETRACTING FROM THE OVERALL CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA;**
- (C) THE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE DETRIMENTAL TO LOCAL RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES;**
- (D) APPROACH ROADS TO THE SITES ARE OF ADEQUATE STANDARD TO ACCOMMODATE AN INCREASE IN TRAFFIC LIKELY TO BE GENERATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT;**
- (E) SATISFACTORY VEHICULAR ACCESS AND CAR PARKING PROVISION CAN BE ACCOMMODATED ON SITE;**
- (F) THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT WILL BE SAFEGUARDED.**

**PROPOSALS FOR RIDING STABLES OR PONY TREKING CENTRES WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THERE ARE ADEQUATE, CONVENIENT AND SUITABLE BRIDLEWAYS OR UNCLASSIFIED ROADS FOR HORSE RIDING IN THE VICINITY.**

- 8.20** Outdoor activity centres are defined as residential or non-residential establishments specifically used as a base for outdoor recreational or educational purposes. Such establishments will include outdoor recreational pursuit centres, educational field study centres, pony trekking centres and riding stables. The provision of such facilities which attract visitors who are interested in the natural, historical and cultural assets of the area will prove an important contributor to the development of tourism in Blaenau Gwent.

#### **R16 FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS**

**THE EXISTING NETWORK OF FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS, OTHER PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND DISUSED RAILWAY FORMATIONS WILL BE SAFEGUARDED. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WILL:-**





**(E) EXISTING USES OF SURFACE OR GROUND WATER RESOURCES.**

**ANY NEW BUILDINGS SHOULD NOT EXCEED WHAT IS REASONABLY REQUIRED FOR PLAYING OF GOLF AND MAINTAINING THE COURSE.**

- 8.23** There is potential for golf course development in Blaenau Gwent and interest has previously been expressed in Parc Bryn Bach. However, it is important that any new courses or course extensions are designed to incorporate planting and land forms which are in harmony with the established landscape character and bring improvement to the landscape. They should also safeguard and enhance existing wildlife value. It will be advantageous should a proposal bring about the restoration of derelict or degraded land, not only because it will provide a beneficial use of the land, but also, through planting and course design, bring visual improvement and benefit to wildlife. Applications for proposals must provide details of course layout and landscape management plan as well as development details.
- 8.24** Golf is a sport which involves potential hazard to others in the vicinity and therefore new courses and extensions will need in their design to avoid prejudicing the safety of people using established rights of way and access areas in the locality.
- 8.25** The establishment or extension of a golf course may be seen as an opportunity to develop additional facilities beyond those required by golfers and for the maintenance of the course, taking advantage of an attractive setting and potential custom from golfers. However, new buildings to provide facilities such as hotels and conference and indoor leisure Pinewrath 10213, 10276



- 8.29 A further concern will be whether any other uses proposed in association with the stadium are acceptable in terms of other policies in the plan. Many proposed schemes for new stadia incorporate substantial retail**

**UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PART 2**

**9. MINERALS**



## **Blaenau Gwent - its Geology an**



- (I) LAYOUT AND DESIGN OF BUILDINGS AND OPERATIONAL AREAS (INCLUDING HAUL ROADS);
- (J) SOIL SURVEY AND SOIL CONSERVATION MEASURES;
- (K) TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS (INCLUDING ACCESS, TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ROUTING);
- (L) HOURS OF OPERATION;
- (M) EMPLOYMENT;
- (N) MEASURES TO MINIMISE POLLUTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL DISTURBANCE;
- (O) IMPACT ON EXISTING LAND USE;
- (P) AN ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE;
- (Q) AN ASSESSMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS AND HISTORIC FEATURES AND MEASURES FOR THEIR PRESERVATION AND RECORDING;
- (R) IMPACT ON PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY;
- (S) LANDSCAPING MEASURES AND BOUNDARY TREATMENT OF THE SITE;
- (T) AFTERCARE;
- (U) AFTERUSE;
- (V) MANAGEMENT PROVISIONS;
- (W) BUFFER ZONE PROTECTION.

9.11 Where proposals are likely to have a significant environmental impact an Environmental Statement will be required in accordance with Government Regulations and Guidance. Pre-application discussions with the Planning Department are advised to establish if an Environmental Statement is needed, and what issues are most important.

9.12 When planning permission is granted, a comprehensive set of conditions is attached to ensure the satisfactory working and reclamation of the site. Planning conditions are used to regulate the development or use of land, and normally most matters can be adequately covered. Broadly, conditions can only relate to the control of the use of land and are imposed in order to allow development where it would otherwise be refused.

### **M3 MINERALS RESOURCE USE.**

**THE PRODUCTION OF SECONDARY AGGREGATES FROM THE WINNING OF NATURAL MATERIALS OR THE RECYCLING OF INDUSTRIAL WASTES WILL BE PERMITTED SUBJECT TO ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE CRITERIA LISTED IN POLICY M1.**

9.13 Recycling of aggregates and the conservation and efficient use of natural mineral resources will be promoted.

### **M4 PLANNING OBLIGATIONS**

**THE COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO NEGOTIATE PLANNING OBLIGATIONS (UNDER SECTION 106 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990) AS MEASURES FOR CONTROLLING MINERAL OPERATIONS WHICH CANNOT BE ACHIEVED BY THE USE OF PLANNING CONDITIONS. WHERE APPROPRIATE THESE AGREEMENTS MAY INCLUDE**



**THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEVELOPER TO PROVIDE A BOND TO ENSURE ADEQUATE RESTORATION OF THE SITE.**

**9.14 In order to control certain matters beyond the legal scope of planning conditions, the County Borough Council will utilise its powers to use planning obligations. These comprise either legal agreements between the Council, the applicant and any relevant third party, or unilateral undertakings made by the applicant. Circumstances where planning obligations may be sought include:**

- (a) the provision of off-site works such as highway improvements;**
- (b) where funding is required, such as to allow for archaeological works;**
- (c) where third parties are involved, such as long term management provisions;**
- (d) where financial guarantees are required for the long term management of mineral sites, or to ensure implementation of matters where there is a real concern that planning conditions will not suffice.**

**M5 VISUAL IMPACT**

**ALL PLANT, BUILDINGS AND STOCKPILE AREAS WILL:**

- (A) WHERE PRACTICABLE, BE GROUPED TOGETHER TO PREVENT THE CREATION OF AN UNSIGHTLY SPRAWL OF DEVELOPMENT AND TO FACILITATE THEIR SCREENING;**
- (B) BE KEPT AS LOW**

- (A) MEASURES TO RETAIN, PROTECT AND MANAGE EXISTING FEATURES OF INTEREST AND VALUE FOR SCREENING AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE RECLAMATION OF THE SITE;
- (B) MEASURES TO SCREEN THE SITE BY THE USE OF EARTH MOUNDING AND/OR TREE PLANTING;
- (C) DETAILS OF METHOD OF WORKING AND PHASING TO CAUSE LEAST VISUAL INTRUSION;
- (D) DETAILS OF THE LOCATION, SIZE, SHAPE AND TREATMENT OF ANY TEMPORARY SOIL, OVERBURDEN OR WASTE MOUNDS;
- (E) THE LOCATION, FORM, NUMBER, SPECIES, SIZE, METHOD OF PLANTING, SITE PREPARATION AND ANY NECESSARY MEASURES FOR REPLACING PLANT MATERIAL WHICH FAILS FOLLOWING INITIAL PLANTING.

9.16 A suitable landscaping scheme including tree planting and earth moulding, can help screen and reduce visual impact. The effectiveness of these measures can generally be increased by advance planting. Where existing peripheral hedgerows and trees can screen the site, priority should be given to their retention, maintenance and protection. Off site landscaping may also have a role. Where possible, such features should also be capable of forming part of the final reclamation.

#### M7 NOISE

MEASURES TO REDUCE THE NOISE IMPACT OF MINERALS DEVELOPMENT WILL BE IMPOSED WHERE APPROPRIATE BY:-

- (A) RESTRICTING HOURS OF OPERATION;
- (B) SOUND PROOFING OF FIXED MOBILE PLANT;
- (C) SETTING MAXIMUM NOISE LEVELS AT SENSITIVE LOCATIONS;
- (D) THE USE OF ACOUSTIC SCREENING SUCH AS BAFFLE MOUNDS OR FENCING.

9.17 Mineral workings can cause a wide range of environmental pollution, principally noise, blast vibration, dust, mud and water contamination. Legislation controlling these matters is contained within various Acts, notably the Control of Pollution Act 1974, the Water Resources Act 1991, the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Environment Act 1995. Whilst these provide an important degree of protection (especially where planning controls are absent), they are not sufficient to prevent mineral development giving rise to unacceptable levels of pollution. Planning Controls can therefore be used to reinforce and supplement these powers.

9.18 The primary sources of noise arise from the processing plant and heavy mobile equipment such as dump trucks and scrapers. Noise impact can be minimised by locating processing

plant and other noisy operations away from sensitive areas, and by restricting hours of working. Sound proofing measures include cladding fixed plant, using conveyors instead of dump trucks, and electric instead of diesel pumps.

- 9.19 Noise sensitivity is also dependent on existing background levels. For example, a plant located next to a busy road is unlikely to create as much noise impact as one situated in a quiet rural setting. Where practicable, it may be appropriate to impose maximum noise levels at sensitive locations.

#### **M8 BLASTING**

**MEASURES TO REDUCE THE IMPACT OF BLASTING WILL BE IMPOSED WHERE APPROPRIATE BY: -**

- (A) SETTING A MAXIMUM VIBRATION LIMIT;**
- (B) RESTRICTING THE HOURS WHEN BLASTING CAN OCCUR;**
- (C) LIMITING AIR OVER-PRESSURE LEVELS.**

- 9.20 Disturbance arises mainly from ground vibration and air over-pressure. Although property damage is very rare, the nuisance and concern caused by shaking buildings and rattling windows is nevertheless very real. Standard maximum vibration levels have been established to avoid property damage and general disturbance. Techniques such as delayed detonation of multiple charges, and burying detonation cables can do much to reduce maximum vibration and air overpressure levels. Accordingly, with site testing and monitoring, it should be possible to keep blasting down to predetermined acceptable limits. Restricting the hours when blasting can take place may also be appropriate in sensitive areas.

#### **M9 DUST**

**MEASURES TO SUPPRESS DUST GENERATION FROM MINERALS DEVELOPMENT WILL BE REQUIRED. SUCH MEASURES WILL INCLUDE WHERE APPROPRIATE:-**

- (A) THE USE OF WATER BOWSERS ON HAUL ROADS;**
- (B) SCREEN BANKS;**
- (C) ENCLOSING DUST GENERATING FIXED PLANT AND MACHINERY;**
- (D) SHEETING OF LORRIES.**

- 9.21 Many mineral operations are prone to generating dust especially when conditions are dry and windy. Processing areas, stockpiles, haul roads and the stripping and replacement of soil and overburden are likely to be amongst the worst offenders. Infilling operations can also present dust hazards.

- 9.22 Ameliorative measures include the use of water bowsers to dampen down land roads, proper plant maintenance, screening banks, the sheeting of lorries and enclosing dusty processing operations. Tree screens may also help to trap dust and reduce wind blow. Total dust suppression is however difficult to achieve and even the most diligent mineral operator may experience occasional lapses in control.

#### **M10 MUD**

**MEASURES TO PREVENT MUD FROM MINERAL WORKINGS CONTAMINATING PUBLIC HIGHWAYS WILL BE IMPOSED, SUCH MEASURES WILL INCLUDE WHERE APPROPRIATE:**

- (A) WHEEL CLEANING FACILITIES;**
  - (B) METALLING HAUL ROADS NEAR THEIR POINT OF ACCESS TO THE PUBLIC HIGHWAY;**
  - (C) SHEETING OF LORRIES.**
- 9.23 Unmetalled internal haul roads and plant areas usually become very muddy and unless precautions are taken, quarry traffic can soon spread mud onto adjoining public highways. Whilst this is an offence and subject to control under highway law, planning conditions can impose measures to minimise the risk. These include wheel cleaning facilities and metalling quarry access roads for a reasonable length from their access onto the public highway. Sheeting of lorries also helps prevent spillage.

#### **M11 WATER CONTAMINATION**

**MEASURES TO PROTECT SURFACE AND GROUNDWATER FROM POLLUTION BY MINERALS DEVELOPMENT AND/OR ASSOCIATED WASTE DISPOSAL WILL BE REQUIRED. SUCH MEASURES WILL TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY, WALES.**

- 9.24 Surface and groundwater can be polluted by minerals development in a number of ways. Within active sites, surface run off is likely to be laden with mud and silt which can clog up ditches and cloud larger watercourses. Diverting drainage to collecting ponds, which trap fine particles, and/or to cleaning out ditches may be the most effective remedies. Wet processing usually results in large quantities of slurry, which must be allowed to settle out in lagoons before being discharged into the drainage system. Chemical pollution may occur, for example, surface run off from unrestored colliery tipping areas may be rich in chlorides. The most serious threat to groundwater comes from the disposal of non-inert waste into landfill sites.

#### **M12 ROAD TRAFFIC**

**PRIOR TO PERMITTING MINERALS OPERATIONS THE COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL NEED TO BE SATISFIED THAT:-**

- (A) THE VEHICLE MOVEMENTS LIKELY TO BE GENERATED BY THE DEVELOPMENT CAN BE SATISFACTORILY ACCOMMODATED BY**

**THE HIGHWAY NETWORK AND WITHOUT CAUSING UNDUE DISTURBANCE TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES;**

- (B) WHERE IT IS CONSIDERED NECESSARY TO ENSURE CONTROL OF VEHICLE ROUTING OR HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS ON LOCAL ROADS THAT SUITABLE ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE PRIOR TO THE GRANTING OF PLANNING PERMISSION;**
- (C) TRANSPORTATION OF MINERALS BY NON ROAD MEANS SUCH AS RAIL HAS BEEN EXPLOITED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE.**

**9.25** The movement of extracted minerals and/or the importing of waste to infill mineral workings/to landfill, can generate large volumes of traffic. Different types of transport will be appropriate in different circumstances. Options include rail, water, pipeline or conveyor, as well as road.

**9.26** Most mineral operations involve transport of at least some mineral by road. In some cases site development can also involve substantial road movement of construction materials. Such road traffic can have a significant environmental impact on the countryside and residential amenity, and can cause structural damage to the highway network. The main problems caused by heavy lorry traffic are: noise, vibration, mud, dust, fumes, damage to buildings and roads, visual intrusion and a reduction in road safety. These problems are potentially most severe close to the point of access to the site from the public highway, where lorries use minor roads unsuited to their weight and size, and where they pass through residential areas. For minerals development, measures to limit adverse effects include: sheeting of lorries, installation of wheel cleaning facilities, highway improvements, agreement over lorry routing and hours of working. These can best be achieved by the use of conditions, or, where appropriate, planning obligations.

### **M13 PHASING**

**MINERAL EXTRACTION SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO ALLOW A PHASED SEQUENCE OF EXTRACTION, RECLAMATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLANNED AFTER-USE.**

**9.27** It is essential that mineral extraction and reclamation are properly designed at the planning application stage to ensure that both are technically and economically feasible, and that their impact can be fully assessed. Whenever practical, reclamation should be phased to minimise the area of land taken out of beneficial use at any one time, and to ensure reclamation is achieved as quickly as possible.

### **M14 SOIL CONSERVATION**

**RECLAMATION SCHEMES WILL INCLUDE MEASURES TO ENSURE THE PROPER STRIPPING, STORAGE AND REPLACEMENT OF THE ORIGINAL OR SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE SOILS PROFILE. WHERE SOILS ARE ABSENT OR DEFICIENT, SCHEMES SHOULD INCLUDE MEASURES TO ENSURE THAT A VIABLE VEGETATION COVER CAN BE ESTABLISHED.**

**9.28** Such measures may include:



prejudice approved reclamation schemes. Conditions will be imposed to define cessation of extraction, and to require the implementations of an alternative reclamation scheme. For most mineral development proposals, the potential problems created by premature cessation of activity need to be considered.

#### **M17 AFTERCARE**

**AFTERCARE CONDITIONS WILL BE IMPOSED ON PLANNING PERMISSIONS FOR MINERAL OPERATIONS WHERE RESTORATION IS TO BE TO AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY OR AMENITY USE.**

- 9.31 The purpose of the aftercare requirement is to ensure that newly restored land is properly cultivated, planted and managed during the early years of development. The aftercare condition can either specify the steps to be taken following restoration, or the steps to be taken in accordance with a scheme approved by the Council.
- 9.32 In most cases the aftercare condition will cover a maximum period of 5 years from completion of basic restoration. Whilst this period can be varied, aftercare conditions cannot be used to secure the long term management of land - such requirements have to be controlled by appropriate planning obligations.

#### **M18 AFTERUSE**

**APPLICATIONS FOR MINERALS OPERATIONS WILL INCLUDE FULL DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED AFTERUSE, AND THIS AFTERUSE SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO MAXIMISE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE THE ENVIRONMENT.**

**WHERE IT IS CONSIDERED THAT LONG TERM MANAGEMENT PROVISIONS ARE NECESSARY FOR THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF AN AFTERUSE, PLANNING OBLIGATIONS WILL BE SECURED PRIOR TO GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION.**

- 9.33 Afteruse options include agriculture, woodland, nature conservation, recreation and, less commonly, built development. At some sites more than one after use may be possible. It is therefore essential that the after use is detailed at the planning application stage.

#### **M19 AGRICULTURAL AFTERUSE**

**PROPOSALS FOR RESTORATION TO AGRICULTURAL USE WILL TAKE FULL ACCOUNT OF THE POTENTIAL FOR CONSERVING AND WHERE APPROPRIATE ENHANCING LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE INTEREST BY THE INCLUSION OF SOME OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- (A) MIXED WOODLAND PLANTING COMPATIBLE WITH MODERN AGRICULTURAL PRACTICE;**
- (B) MIXED SPECIES HEDGEROWS AND HEDGEROW TREES;**

- (C) WATERCOURSES, PONDS AND ASSOCIATED MARSH OR 'WET' AREAS;
- (D) LOW MAINTENANCE, WILDFLOWER GRASSLAND, OR HEATHLAND.

9.34 In the past, inadequate restoration and aftercare measures, including poor soil conservation, meant that land reclaimed to agriculture often suffered from long term, if not permanent, losses in productivity. With proper soil handling and cultivation it should be possible to reclaim even the best and most versatile land back to its original standard.

9.35 The opportunity should be taken with agricultural afteruse schemes to include a range of environmental features such as hedgerows, dry stone walls, broadleaf woodl12184 0 Td (s)Tj 4.56269 0





**A 200M BUFFER ZONE IS IDENTIFIED FOR TREFIL QUARRY. PROPOSALS FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL AND OTHER SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE BUFFER ZONE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED. PROPOSALS FOR MINERAL EXTRACTION WITHIN THE BUFFER ZONE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHERE THIS ENCROACHES TOWARDS ANY SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT.**

- 9.43 Policy M22 aims to restrict non-mineral development in areas of permitted and potential future working. The objective of the buffer zone is to protect land uses that are most sensitive to the impact of mineral operations by establishing a separation distance between potentially conflicting land uses. A 200m buffer zone around Trefil quarry is defined to protect existing and proposed sensitive development in particular residential dwellings to the south.**

**M23 MINERAL EXTRACTION (COAL AND HARDROCK)**

**PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT THAT WOULD DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY S**

**UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PART 2**

**10. WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICIES**

## 10. BACKGROUND

### National Waste Strategy

10.1 National guidance on the management of controlled waste is contained in *Wise About Waste* the National Waste Strategy for Wales published in June 2002. The guidance is based on the principle of sustainability, with the three key areas of sustainable waste management being:-

- (a) reducing the amount of waste produced
- (b) making the best use of waste
- (c) selecting waste management options which minimise the risk of environmental pollution and harm to human health

10.2 The guidance is based on the hierarchy of waste management options encompassing: -

- (a) Waste reduction
- (b) Reuse
- (c) Recovery - Incineration with energy recovery
  - Composting
  - Materials recovery (recycling)
- (d) Disposal - Landfill being the least desirable option, although for some wastes this may still be the Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO)

10.3 At present, waste management in the UK is currently "heavily weighted towards the bottom of the hierarchy", with 85% of Controlled Waste going to landfill. The intention is to increase the proportion of waste managed using the options towards the top of the hierarchy, through a 5 pronged approach to the promotion of sustainable waste management including:-

- Regulatory e wæ wæ w

- 10.5 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is part of a consortia of local authorities seeking a regional solution to the problems associated with siting and financing of waste management activities.**
- 10.6 Technical Advice Note 21 on Waste sets out guidance on sustainable waste management. One of the requirements is that a Regional Waste Plan (RWP) be prepared and adopted by the Regional group of authorities by November 2003. The RWP is intended to identify areas of need and search for potential sites and indicate predicted tonnages of each type of waste likely and the facilities required. Each LPA is then requiredly**





**10.21 Using waste to supply useful energy is a well established method of obtaining added value**



**resource which can replace virgin raw materials and which can contribute to energy gain and lessen our dependence on fossil fuels.**

**10.28 The optimisation of recycling and waste recovery is dependent upon integrated waste management strategies at the local level. There is no one strategy which is relevant to every authority. Decisions on appropriate strategies requires consideration of:**

- (a) the characteristics and volume of waste in an area and likely changes to these over time**
- (b) the appropriate colle**



- 10.36 The four sites currently generate 7,800 tonnes per annum and it is estimated that this waste is likely to increase by 8%.
- 10.37 Scrapyard operations in the main constitute a marginal landuse but provide a considerable recycling facility if managed properly, they are characterised by low running costs and low capital investment. Typically they have been established over many years, often in inappropriate locations and in the majority of cases, without planning controls to protect local amenity. Scrap is stored in the open and often stacked because of lack of space, so that adverse effects on visual amenity are increased.
- 10.38 Such operations have been encompassed into the Waste Management Licensing regime which requires controls over potential pollution to land or ground water, there is little scope for securing significant improvements through the use of planning powers.

### **WM3 WASTE TRANSFER, RECYCLING AND HANDLING**

**PROPOSALS FOR THE USE OF LAND FOR THE RECEIPT, STORAGE, TREATMENT INCLUDING "WASTE TO ENERGY" AND RECOVERY OF USEFUL MATERIALS AND TRANSFER OF WASTE INCLUDING THE USE OF LAND AS A SCRAPYARD WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE ALL THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE MET:-**

- (A) THAT THE VISUAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSALS, DOES NOT CAUSE DETRIMENT TO RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES AND THE QUALITY OF THE LANDSCAPE OR TOWNSCAPE SETTING;**
  - (B) THAT PROVISION CAN BE MADE FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF NOISE, DUST, ODOUR, SMOKE AND FLUE GAS EMISSIONS FROM THE SITE SO THAT THE AMENITY OF OCCUPIERS OF ADJACENT PROPERTIES, IN PARTICULAR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES IS PROTECTED;**
  - (C) THAT CONTAMINATION OF LAND AND POLLUTION OF GROUND WATER AND SURFACE WATER, ON AND OFF THE SITE CAN BE PREVENTED;**
  - (D) THAT ACCESS, VEHICLE MANOEUVRING AND CUSTOMER AND EMPLOYEE CAR PARKING ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE ACCOMMODATED WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO HIGHWAY SAFETY AND MAINTENANCE;**
  - (E) THE PROPOSAL WILL NOT CONFLICT WITH ACKNOWLEDGED NATURE CONSERVATION GEOLOGICAL AND GEOMORPHOLOGICAL INTERESTS.**
- 10.39 Sites for waste facilities will not be permitted in sensitive locations, i.e. sites or areas designated for protection for nature conservation reasons; SLAs and Green Wedges; areas of archaeological or historic interest; in close proximity to housing, recreational and tourist attractions or where there would be an undue impact on the environment. Areas that are not

precluded from the development of waste facilities will be considered in relation to the above criteria.

10.40 One of the primary objectives of the government is to achieve 25% recycling or composting of household waste by 2005, 30% by 2010 and recover value from 40% of household waste by 2005, 45% by 2010.

10.41 It is the County Borough's intention to achieve these national targets through the: -

- (a) waste banks located at various civic amenity sites
- (b) initiatives in conjunction with private recycling companies
- (c) introduction of a kerbside recycling scheme

10.42 The importance of re-use of waste is regarded as being second in importance only to waste reduction in the waste hierarchy. Waste recovery is to be preferred to landfill. Developments for re-use or recovery of materials from waste will therefore be encouraged. However, such proposals should not outweigh the need to protect the environment and local communities from any harm associated with the development.

**WM4 CONTROL OVER THE DISPOSAL OF SPECIAL WASTE**

**DEVELOPMENT FOR THE DISPOSAL, STORAGE OR DISTRIBUTION OF SPECIAL WASTE WILL BE PERMITTED ONLY WHERE THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS ARE CONSIDERED TO BE ACCEPTABLE IN RELATION TO NEIGHBOURING LAND USES, IN PARTICULAR RESIDENTIAL AMENITY AND SITES DESIGNATED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.**

10.43 Within the South West and South East Wales regions there is a need for hazardous waste facilities but it is extremely difficult to find suitable sites for such facilities. The need for such facilities is highlighted in the following table:



6. **Less Waste More Value - Consultation Paper on the Waste Strategy for England and Wales (1998).**

**UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PART 2**

**11. ENERGY**

## 11. BACKGROUND





**EG3 RENEWABLE ENERGY**

**IN C**



amenity issues.

- 11.15 The Council will also use the Blaenau Gwent Landscape Initiative as a source of Supplementary Planning Guidance on this Policy.

#### **EG5 RECOVERABLE AND OTHER ENERGY**

**PROPOSALS FOR THE GENERATION OF POWER FROM RECOVERABLE ENERGY SOURCES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDING THAT THERE ARE NO ADVERSE IMPACTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS.**

- 11.16 Recoverable energy would include the positive use of landfill gas captured from the waste disposal site at Silent Valley.
- 11.17 Examples of such development could include: proposals to use recovered (waste) energy through combined Heat and Power (CHP) schemes, biomass (quick rotation wood planting) and recycled waste fuelled projects. Jointly developed schemes elsewhere are "in principle" models of good practice and the Council will participate in and support such schemes where appropriate.
- 11.18 Nevertheless, the Council will wish to ensure that any proposals for renewable and/or recoverable energy do not adversely effect existing environmental quality and accordingly will be weighed carefully against policies in the plan for environmental protection.

**UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PART 2**

**12. PUBLIC UTILITIES**

## **12. BACKGROUND**

### **12.1 Th**

**PU3 PRO**

swales, ponds, infiltration basins and porous surfaces and should be considered as alternatives to conventional drainage where appropriate. The Environment Agency Wales can provide guidance on the design of SUDS and has produced a document entitled "Protecting the Quality of our Environment, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems - An Introduction".

#### **PU5 WETLANDS, WATERCOURSES AND WATERBODIES**

**PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE VICINITY OF WETLANDS OR WATERCOURSES WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THE PROPOSED USE OF LAND IS SATISFACTORY IN TERMS OF WATER CONSERVATION, WATER QUALITY, NATURE CONSERVATION AND PUBLIC ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS.**

- 12.9 It is the intention of the Council to promote wetlands and river corridors as important areas of open land, which have particular value for the ecology of the Plan area and for public access. River corridors in particular are territories for a variety of wildlife, including fish. River corridors and wetland areas also offer opportunities for informal recreation and should remain zones within which the possibility of contam**



potentially affected by flooding. A number of these have planning permission already and others represent allocations such as historic parks and gardens or play areas which do not fall in the built development categories. A small number of allocated built development sites (without a current planning permission) are identified as being affected (2 stations , 1 employment site and part of the Six Bells School site) these sites are all brownfield sites and with the exception of the affected employment allocation at Crown Business Park (E2(22)B) are required for the regeneration of the area and no alternative sites exist. Allocated sites that are located within or close to identified flood plain areas have been assessed in accordance with TAN 15. The Full assessment of all these sites is included in supporting Document FR1. Whilst a number of sites are affected some already have planning permission. Others are considered necessary to fulfill the regeneration objectives of the plan and are retained following the assessment procedure. Resulting allocations affected will include annotation of flooding as a constraint for the individual site and individual briefs will specify the requirements which pertain to the development of that site.

- 12.13 Where there is a risk of flooding, developers will be required to provide at their own cost details of hydraulic investigations to determine the impact of the proposed development, having regard to the recommendations of the Environment Agency. Prior to the occupation of the buildings and/or commencement of a new use all mitigation works shall be carried out and an agreement entered into to secure their future maintenance.

#### **PU7 DEVELOPMENT BY STATUTORY UNDERTAKERS**

**WHERE FORMAL CONSENT IS REQUIRED DEVELOPMENT BY STATUTORY UNDERTAKERS WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THE DESIGN/MEASURES PROPOSED DO NOT RESULT IN:**

- (A) A LOSS OF LANDSCAPE FEATURES,**
- (B) A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE LANDSCAPE, OR**
- (C) A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON NATURE CONSERVATION, GEOLOGICAL OR GEOMORPHOLOGICAL INTERESTS.**

- 12.14 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 provides that specified works by statutory undertakers do not require planning approval. This policy only relates to developments which require planning approval. The Council recognises that the provision of statutory services is economically and socially essential. This policy seeks to ameliorate any detrimental effect on sensitive locations by stipulating that the most sympathetic measures and routes are implemented. It is desirable that new connections to the electricity grid are located underground, but it is recognised that this can only be done within reasonable financial and technical limits.

- 12.15 SWALEC has identified the following proposals for the alteration/improvement of the electricity network that may come forward during the life of the Plan:

- (a) An extension to the Rassau West 132/11kv sub station may be required to meet additional demand from industrial development in the Rhyd-y-Blew, Rassau and Tafarnaubach areas;



**UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PART 2**

**13. DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT  
CONTROL**

## 13 BACKGROUND

13.1 Development plans should give developers and communities' certainty about the type of development that will be permitted at a given location. Development plans should also provide clear indications of local planning authorities' design expectations. In order to be equitable and effective, standards must be set for the assessment of proposals. These standards must then be applied consistently and uniformly.

13.2 These policies are to be read in conjunction with Supplementary Planning Guidance which have or will be prepared by the Local Planning Authority. The following Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes have already been adopted:

- Note 1 - Shop-fronts
- Note 2 - Security Fixtures for Shop-fronts
- Note 3 - Residential Extensions
- Note 4 - Advertisements
- Note 5 - Telecommunications

13.3 The intention is to prepare Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes for the following subjects:

- (a) Pigeon Cotes, Stables and similar structures
- (b) Blaenau Gwent Landscape Initiative
- (c) Domestic Garages

## POLICIES

### D1 LAYOUT AND DESIGN

#### DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- (A) THE PROPOSAL IS IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA IN TERMS OF QUALITY, DESIGN, SCALE, MATERIALS, DENSITY AND LAYOUT (OR SEEKS TO IMPROVE THEREON).
- (B) RESIDENTIAL AMENITY IS NOT PREJUDICED.
- (C) A SITE APPRAISAL IS USED AS THE BASIS FOR DESIGNING THE LAYOUT. THIS WILL ENABLE THE TOPOGRAPHY AND EXISTING LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND WILDLIFE INTERESTS OF THE SITE TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.
- (D) SATISFACTORY VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO THE SITE CAN BE ACHIEVED. ALL NEW ROADS WILL CONFORM TO THE STANDARDS SET OUT IN THE AUTHORITY'S ROADS DESIGN GUIDE. PARKING PROVISION SHOULD CONFORM WITH THE COUNCIL'S ADOPTED GUIDELINES.
- (E) A LANDSCAPING SCHEME IS SUBMITTED AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE PROPOSAL. THIS TAKE ACCOUNT OF EXISTING

**SITE FEATURES AND LINKS TO ADJOINING OPEN SPACES/LANDSCAPE FEATURES.**

- 13.4 The key aims on Residential Layouts is to ensure that the context of development sites are taken into account in formulating proposals and that developments are of a good standard in terms of layout and design.**
- 13.5 In addition reference to the following documents should be made:-**
- a) Design Guide for Residential and Industrial Estate Roads in Gwent 1elo**



**flexible approach**





- 13.16 The Council will prepare Supplementary Planning Guidance on this topic. This will give detailed advice on the formulation and submission of development proposals. Copies will be available from the Environment Department.**

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**D8**

**THERE WILL BE A STRONG PRESUMPTION AGAINST ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE, SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS AND AREAS OF SPECIAL CONTROL.**

- 13.18 The Council has produced Supplementary Planning Guidance on advertisements. This gives detailed advice on the topic. Copies of the guidance note are available from the Environment Department.
- 13.19 This policy applies to advertisements requiring advertisement consent under the Advertisement Regulation 2007

**SUBMIT A GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATION TO ACCOMPANY THE APPLICATION. THIS GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATION AND STABILITY REPORT MUST BE UNDERTAKEN BY A SUITABLE, COMPETENT PERSON AND MUST PROVIDE AN EXPERT SPECIALIST ASSESSMENT TO DETERMINE THE STABILITY OF THE GROUND AND TO IDENTIFY ANY REMEDIAL MEASURES REQUIRED TO DEAL WITH ANY INSTABILITY. THE INVESTIGATION AND REPORT SHOULD INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE RISK OF THE DEVELOPMENT CAUSING INSTABILITY ON NEIGHBOURING LAND. THIS STABILITY REPORT WILL BE REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED BEFORE A PLANNING APPLICATION IS DETERMINED.**

- 13.24 Planning Policy Wales (March 2002) sets out the Government's guidance on instability and contamination as they affect development proposals.
- 13.25 This policy sets out the requirements of the Local Planning Authority in respect of development proposals which may affect landslip areas. Planning decisions on such proposals must take into account any potential hazard instability may cause.
- 13.26 It is also in the interests of the developer that any such problems are identified and investigated at an early stage. In this way unnecessary expense may be avoided, such as abortive land acquisition costs and detailed design should a site prove unsuitable for development. Also, precautionary measures may be incorporated into the design to take account of the recommendations of the stability report.
- 13.27 The Local Planning Authority will require the submission for approval of an investigation report containing recommendations for safe development of the site. This investigation may show that the development proposed on the site is not possible for safety or economic reasons.

## **D12 CONTAMINATED LAND**

**AN APPLICANT PROPOSING DEVELOPMENT ON OR NEAR A SITE WHERE THERE IS CONTAMINATION OR GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THAT CONTAMINATION MAY EXIST, SHOULD CARRY OUT A SITE ASSESSMENT AND SUBMIT A REPORT OF THE FINDINGS TO ESTABLISH THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE CONTAMINATION. DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS PRACTICABLE AND EFFECTIVE MEASURES ARE TO BE TAKEN TO TREAT, CONTAIN OR CONTROL ANY CONTAMINATION SO AS NOT TO:**

- (A) EXPOSE THE OCCUPIERS OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND NEIGHBOURING LAND USERS TO UNACCEPTABLE RISK; OR**
- (B) THREATEN THE STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY OF ANY BUILDING BUILT, OR TO BE BUILT, ON OR ADJOINING THE SITE; OR**
- (C) LEAD TO THE CONTAMINATION OF ANY WATERCOURSE, WATER BODY OR AQUIFER; OR**

- (D) CAUSE THE CONTAMINATION OF ADJOINING LAND OR ALLOW SUCH CONTAMINATION TO CONTINUE; OR**
- (E) CAUSE DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF ACKNOWLEDGED IMPORTANCE.**

**13.28** Blaenau Gwent was formerly an area characterised by coal mining and heavy industry. The Council therefore considers it appropriate for issues of potential contamination to be addressed in the submission of proposals. The objective of this policy is to ensure that any contamination that may pose a threat to health, safety or the environment is dealt with before the development begins in accordance with a scheme approved by the Council beforehand.

**13.29** The disturbance of contaminated land can have risks to public health and the environment through, for example, the mobilisation of pollutants into the aquatic environment or problems associated with landfill gas. Where development is proposed on sites known or suspected to be contaminated or where the site is in the vicinity of a former or active landfill site, the developer will be required to carry out a risk assessment to establish any possible pollutant pathways and identify all necessary mitigation measures, if any, to reduce the risks and allow development to proceed. To enable the Planning Authority to assess the sites suitability for the intended end use, this information will be required before planning permission is granted.

#### **D13 RETAINING WALLS**

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR RETAINING WALLS WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE: -**

- (A) SATISFACTORY DETAILS, INCLUDING STRUCTURAL DRAWINGS AND CALCULATIONS ARE SUBMITTED TO ACCOMPANY A PLANNING APPLICATION; AND**
- (B) THE RETAINING WALL IS OF AN APPROPRIATE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTED FROM SATISFACTORY MATERIALS;**

**13.30** As a general guideline the excavation and construction of retaining walls in excess of 1.5m in height are considered to constitute an engineering operation and essss

**LOCATION AND THERE IS NO UNACCEPTABLE DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE LANDSCAPE; AND**

- (B) EXISTING LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND TOPOGRAPHY ARE USED TO MINIMISE THE VISUAL IMPACT OF THE DEVELOPMENT. LANDSCAPING USED WHERE APPROPRIATE TO BLEND THE DEVELOPMENT INTO THE EXISTING SURROUNDINGS; AND**
- (C) THE MATERIALS, COLOUR, DESIGN AND SCALE OF THE DEVELOPMENT HARMONISE WITH ANY EXISTING DEVELOPMENT IN THE VICINITY; AND**
- (D) THE DEVELOPMENT IS NOT UNACCEPTABLY DETRIMENTAL TO NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS.**

**13.31 Planning permission will be required for most agricultural buildings or extensions to such buildings on holdings of less than 5 hectares, as set out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. Some agricultural proposals, whilst not requiring planning permission, must be submitted to the Council so that a decision can be made within 28 days as to whether the L**





**UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PART 2**

**14. IMPLEMENTATION,  
MONITORING AND REVIEW**



## **14. BACKGROUND**

- 14.1** The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) provides the planning framework to guide development until 2011. If the County Borough is to meet the challenges ahead, and the needs of residents and visitors alike are to be satisfied, it is essential that the policies and proposals in the Plan are implemented. The implementation of the various policies and proposals are seen as a community-wide initiative. This will involve the public, private and voluntary sectors, acting either separately or in partnership, against the background of furthering the Plan's overall objectives of improving the Blaenau Gwent's physical environment and fostering economic regeneration, whilst working within the framework determined by national policy and economic forces. To this end, the Plan will not only guide development, but will also be used to support the Council's bid to the National Assembly, Europe or other sources, for funding to implement the Plan.

### **THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES**

- 14.2** Many agencies will be involved in the implementation of the Plan, but the principle ones can be identified as:

#### **The Council**

- 14.3** The Council will play a significant role in the implementation of the UDP, through its own development proposals and work programmes. Environmental Improvement Programmes are intended to be implemented in Tredegar, Ebbw Fach and Ebbw Fawr. Implementation is also achieved through the Councils' development control powers, or by identifying development opportunities through the UDP for others to implement.
- 14.4** Where appropriate the Council will attach relevant and reasonable conditions to planning consents, to regulate development, in accordance with the UDP policies and proposals. It may also refuse planning consent where it conflicts with the Plan's policies and proposals. The Council may use its enforcement powers to ensure that development is carried out in accordance with planning consents and that unauthorised development is dealt with as appropriate.
- 14.5** In order to ensure that development proposals are sympathetic to the UDP's policies and proposals, the Council will, in some instances, prepare supplementary planning guidance or development briefs, or enter into planning agreements with developers. This will provide positive guidance to developers on both general planning considerations and site specific issues, and will ensure conformity with the Plan.

#### **Other Bodies or Agencies**

- 14.6** In addition to the Council, there are many other bodies and agencies which can be expected to have an involvement in the implementation of the policies and proposals of the Plan.
- 14.7** The National Assembly, Welsh Assembly Government, Regional Health Authority, statutory undertakers and Housing Associations will seek to undertake their own development programmes during the Plan period, be this new development or alterations to existing development. Such proposals will, where required, be controlled by the Council

**through its development control powers, but can make a significant contribution to the implementation of the Plan where in conformity with its policies and proposals.**

**(a) Private Sector**

- 14.8 Development proposals by the private sector will undoubtedly constitute the greatest impact in terms of the Plan's implementation. This could range from major development projects of large businesses to relatively minor proposals from individual householders. Through its development control powers the Council will ensure that such proposals conform with the Plan.**

**(b) Voluntary Sector**

- 14.9 The work of the voluntary sector is largely related to social, environmental or recreational areas of work. Local groups will play an important role in this respect and often the Council will work in partnership with such group<sup>e</sup> ation**

## **Financial Re**

- 14.20 More detailed planning guidance and programmes for action will ensure the effective implementation of the Plan. This will take various forms, dependent upon the particular issues in question.
- 14.21 The Council will, where necessary, prepare supplementary planning guidance which will take the form of Development Briefs in the case of site specific issues; Strategies in respect of topic based issues, such as countryside and landscape; Management Plans for areas such as the Parc Bryn Bach and Local Nature Reserves and Area-based Action Plans for areas such as town centres, where there is a need for a comprehensive approach to deal with wide ranging, but inter-related, planning issues.

### Regeneration Strategy

- 14.22 In response to the problems facing Blaenau Gwent, a range of area based regeneration initiatives have been pursued including:

(a) Victoria, Ebbw Vale

- 14.23 Since 1992 an urban village project has been developed on part of the site of the former Garden Festival Wales. This project has attracted substantial commercial and residential development including a factory outlet shopping complex. Further private sector investment in the leisure sector is ongoing.

(b) Tredegar

- 14.24 Tredegar Action was established as a partnership between Blaenau Gwent Borough Council, Gwent County Council and the WDA in 1992. During 1994 a three year strategic Action Plan was approved by the Welsh Office, which has succeeded in attracting in the region of £30 million for the regeneration of the town.

- 14.25 The programme of initiatives within the Tredegar 2000 programme will continue to be implemented. The town received a major boost when the Welsh Capital Challenge Bid to create Tredegar Business Park was approved in December 1997 and work is well advanced on this project. The land reclamation work has been completed and work has commenced on the access road and construction of the industrial units.

(c) Abertillery

- 14.26 The Abertillery Action partnership between Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, Gwent County Council, the WDA and Welsh Office was established in 1988 and has resulted in the implementation of a range of projects including new retail development and environmental improvement. The projects undertaken by Abertillery Action have successfully assisted in sustaining the towns role as a retail centre and have had a positive impact on the local economy including the redevelopment of the former Roseheyworth Colliery site to provide industrial units. These units have already been let and there is a strong demand for further units in the area.

**(d) Ebbw Fach Valley**

- 14.27 In 1996 the Abertillery Action partnership was extended to cover the whole of the Ebbw Fach Valley, the Ebbw Fach Action Forum was formed and the Ebbw Fach Regeneration Strategy was approved.
- 14.28 At a strategic level the Blaenau Gwent Strategic Forum was established in April 1996, this provides the operational framework within which the County Borough Council, WDA and Gwent TEC contribute towards the regeneration of Blaenau Gwent.
- 14.29 This activity demonstrates that there is a strategic approach to regeneration, however the severity of the problems facing the most deprived unitary authority in Wales, requires long term investment.
- 14.30 It will be necessary to maintain existing/establish new working relationships with all other agencies involved in the Plan's implementation.
- 14.31 The Council must actively seek funding for the implementation of the Plan from all possible sources, both public and private. It must also ensure that its own capital programme reflects the Council's own responsibilities and aims in terms of the UDP's implementation.

**MONITORING**

- 14.32 Having prepared the UDP and indicated how it will be implemented, the Council will also need to ensure that the policies and proposals of the Plan continue to be relevant and to this end, the Plan will be kept under review. In this way, it will be possible for the Council to ensure that the Plan remains effective as a land-use planning document for the County Borough for the duration of the Plan period.
- 14.33 The Strategy for the Plan has set out in broad terms what the Plan is aiming to achieve and, at a more detailed level, objectives and targets have been identified for each policy area. In monitoring the effectiveness of the Plan, it will be important to assess the performance of policies and proposals against the objectives and targets which have been set.
- 14.34 This will involve the collection, collation and interpretation of data on those matters which are relevant to the planning and development of the County Borough and which will influence the Council's ability to implement successfully the Plan's policies and proposals. The Council will continue to monitor information such as housing and industrial land availability, the incidence and reclamation of derelict or vacant land, traffic and transportation, population and unemployment trends.

**Environmental Appraisal**

- 14.35 The Environmental Appraisal of the UDP generally takes the form of the methodology provided in the Government guide - Environmental Appraisal of Development Plans: A Good Practice Guide, 1993. But the apprao

**14.36 The key tasks of the appraisal are:**

- (a) characterising the environment**
- (b) scoping the pl**



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