



**MERTHYR TYDFIL COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2006 - 2021**

ADOPTED PLAN

**SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL (SA)
STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA)**

**Final Sustainability Appraisal Report
May 2011**

Appendix 13

**SA of Proposed Changes arising from the
Programme of further Work
(Volume 2: May 2010)**

Prepared by:

enfusion



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LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2006-2021
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Final Sustainability Appraisal Report

Appendix 13
SA of Proposed Changes arising from the
Programme of Further Work
(Volume 2: May 2010)

For and on behalf of Enfusion Ltd

<i>date:</i>	<i>May 2011</i>	
<i>prepared by:</i>	<i>Barbara Carroll</i> <i>Toney Hallahan</i> <i>Liz Payne</i> <i>Alastair Peattie</i>	
<i>checked by:</i>	<i>Barbara Carroll</i>	

enfusion
environmental planning and management for sustainability



Treenwood House
Rowden Lane
Bradford on Avon
BA15 2AU
t: 01225 867112
www.enfusion.co.uk

Examination of Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan 2006-2021

Programme of Further Work - Sustainability Appraisal of Proposed Changes

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council has prepared policy changes in response to the programme of further work identified in relation to the Examination of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan. This programme was agreed with the Inspector after the Examination Hearing Sessions which took place between November 2009 and February 2010. The changes were forwarded to Enfusion Ltd to determine if there were likely to be any significant sustainability effects arising from those changes to the plan. A screening assessment of each proposed policy change was undertaken; this considered the significance of the policy change and whether there was likely to be a significant sustainability effect as a result of the change.
- 1.2 The Screening Assessment and a Sustainability Appraisal of new Policy AS23 is provided at Appendix 1 and summarised below. It was considered that most of the changes were minor in nature and/or provided clarification of policies and the supporting text or made changes which improved the overall sustainability of the relevant policies. The only policy which was deemed to have changed enough to require further SA was Policy AS23 due to the inclusion of land for employment, waste and minerals uses in conjunction with the proposal to increase use of the Cwmbargoed railhead.

2.0 Summary of Screening Assessment

Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding: Policies H13,E5,H26,H29,H10,H33, H39, H48

- 2.1 Following a request for further information regarding areas susceptible to surface water flooding, the housing allocations and employment allocations were reviewed by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council drainage engineers. This review has identified allocations which are, or maybe, at risk and the Plan has been revised accordingly.
- 2.2 Introduction of this new criterion for flood mitigation measures to be provided will improve the SA/SEA performance of the relevant housing allocations and employment allocation in respect of the health, housing employment and climate change SA Framework objectives and decrease the potential for adverse effects on those objectives. Therefore it is not considered that further SA is required.

Land at Cwmbargoed – Policy TB12: Freight Traffic

- 2.4 Questions were raised at the Examination hearings on the 2nd and 11th February about how the use of the Cwmbargoed railhead could be increased without an employment allocation on adjacent land. Most of the land in this location falls into Caerphilly County Borough Council but in response to the query Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council have revised Policy TB12 to include land for a mixed use development.
- 2.5 The original Policy TB12 performed well against all SA Framework objectives, particularly transport and climate change. No predicted adverse effects were identified. The new policy AS23 has included a mixed use employment allocation and as such a new appraisal has been carried out which found that beneficial effects are predicted for most SA objectives through the encouragement and facilitation of rail, rather than road, freight movement. The only indirect adverse effects identified are the effects of the use of coal as an energy source although it is acknowledged that coal does present a secure local energy supply.

Policies BW4, TB1 and TB2: Development outside settlement boundaries

- 2.6 The issue of rural restraint policies was discussed at the first LDP hearing session on 24th November 2009 and was raised as an issue for attention in the Inspector's note to the Council following that session. Particularly, attention was drawn to the relationship between LDP Policies BW4 and TB1 and the need for further clarification on what constitutes countryside development and how the Plan intends to deal with such proposals.
- 2.7 The revised policy combines the former three policies in a more concise way and provides more clarity on the acceptable location and nature of development in relation to settlement boundaries. It also addresses some of the concerns raised in the SA. The revised policy on water issues (BW8) also addresses the concerns raised over the lack of reference to the water environment and flood related issues. Issues such as replacement dwellings and agricultural workers dwellings in the countryside which were previously in the text are not embodied within the policy.
- 2.8 Further SA work it is not considered to be necessary as the new policy does not raise any new potential for adverse effects and overall will have improved potential for sustainability than the former group of policies.

Policy AS5: Green Wedges

- 2.9 At the first examination hearing, concern was expressed in relation to the proposed use of the green wedge designation within settlement limits and therefore, the LDP's compatibility with national planning policy. There were

two green wedges that are affected by a lack of compliance with national policy, namely, Heolgerrig / Twyncarmel; and Quakers Yard.

- 2.10 The revised policy removes the reference to coalescence within settlements and the green wedge at Quakers Yard. The removal of the word “normally” from the supporting text strengthens and improves the sustainability performance of the policy. The removal of the Quakers Yard green wedge does not represent a significant effect on the overall implementation of the policy and therefore the SA. Furthermore the area in question, which includes part of a SINC, will now be protected by the more appropriate open space for recreation designation. The Council has clearly explained why it has not deleted the Heolgerrig/Twyncarmel designation and it remains in the policy. No further SA of the policy is required.
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Appendix 1: Screening of Proposed Changes

(SA/SEA Screening commentary provided in right-hand column)

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding: Policies H13,E5,H26,H29,H10,H33, H39, H48				
Proforma 4	Appendices 4 and 5 of the LDP Written Statement. Policies H13,E5,H26,H29, H10,H33, H39, H48	<p>An evaluation of sites susceptible to surface water flooding was undertaken by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (MTCBC) drainage engineers. The table is not presented in full in this document but implications for the plan are that Policies H13,E5,H26,H29,H10 will have an additional criterion which reads:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flood mitigation measures may be required on this site; ▪ <p>and Policies H33, H39, H48 will have an additional criterion which reads:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flood mitigation measures will be required on this site 	The Inspector requested additional information regarding the implications of recently published maps on Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding. This information has now been incorporated in the site specific allocations.	<p>Introduction of this new criterion will improve the SA/SEA performance of the relevant housing allocations and employment allocation in respect of the health, housing employment and climate change SA Framework objectives and decrease the potential for adverse effects.</p> <p>Therefore it is not considered that further SA is required.</p>

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
Land at Cwmbargoed – Policy TB12				
Proforma 22	Policy TB12	<p>Policy TB12 to be deleted and replaced with Policy AS23.</p> <p>Freight traffic</p> <p>5.12 — Policy TB12 Subject to detailed planning matters, favourable consideration will be given to proposals that involve the movement of goods and raw materials by rail rather than road.</p>	<p>At the hearing sessions of 2nd and 11th February 2010 the Statement of LDP Cross Boundary Policy Co-ordination between MTCBC and Caerphilly County Borough Council was considered. A tripartite agreement between the landowners, and the two councils was suggested but has not been achieved to date. However a statement of common ground between MTCBC and Covanta</p>	<p>Policy TB12 performed well against all SA Framework objectives, particularly transport and climate change. No predicted adverse effects were identified. The new policy AS23 has included a mixed use employment allocation and as such a new appraisal has been carried out.</p>

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p><i>Opportunities to increase the potential of the Cwmbargoed railhead as a freight transfer/distribution facility will be supported.</i></p> <p>Rail dependent development</p> <p>4.23 Policy AS23 In order to increase the potential of the Cwmbargoed railhead as a freight facility, land at Cwmbargoed Washery is allocated for mixed-use development specifically limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ minerals handling and despatch, ▪ waste management facilities, and /or ▪ other acceptable employment activities which are dependent on rail freight as the main source of transportation for movement of goods or materials associated with the development. 	<p>Energy was agreed on 22nd January and submitted to the LDP Examination.</p> <p>The changes to the LDP have been proposed in light of the need to establish how the use of the Cwmbargoed railhead can be increased and illustrate cross boundary working.</p>	

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
	Paragraphs 5.12.1 To 5.12.3	<p>5.12.1 4.23.1 Though freight can be moved by a variety of means, the only realistic alternative to transportation by road in the County Borough, is transportation by rail. The movement of freight by rail is usually most suited to bulk movements over longer distances. Rail can, however, still provide an economically viable option, especially when interchange with road freight is involved, thus playing a crucial part in reducing the number of long range trips by lorry.</p> <p>Developments that would involve the movement of freight by rail rather than road will normally be given favourable consideration by the Council providing that detailed planning considerations can be met.</p>		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p>5.12.2 4.23.2 The mineral railway that runs from Cwmbargoed to Trelewis sees regular coal traffic as a result of the ongoing Ffos-y-Fran land reclamation scheme, which feeds Aberthaw power station in the Vale of Glamorgan. Whilst the line is therefore likely to have a future beyond the LDP plan period, the Council considers that the potential of the railhead at Cwmbargoed could be better realised through its increased use as a freight distribution/transfer facility. In the first instance, there may be scope to resume the movement of sandstone from Golligaer Quarry via Cwmbargoed as part of a drive for more sustainable movement of freight. In order to help achieve this, two parcels of land at Cwmbargoed Washery have been allocated for specific mixed-use development as</p>		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p>set out in the above policy.</p> <p>4.23.3 Whilst the majority of the washery lies within Caerphilly County Borough, a small proportion of the site is situated within the Merthyr Tydfil administrative boundary. The allocation of land within Merthyr as part of Policy AS23 complements current land uses within Caerphilly and also reflects the Caerphilly LDP's aspirations for future development at that location.</p> <p>5.12.3 4.23.4 Any increase in usage would of the rail line allied to operations at the washery site depends, not least, on sufficient railway infrastructure capacity being available, not only within the County Borough but in the other local authority areas through which the line passes. This is not currently considered to be a significant detractor although it should be noted that the</p>		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p>reintroduction of a passenger rail service to the communities situated along the southern reaches of the Cwmbargoed branch line remains a possibility over the long-term. However, proposals are not yet sufficiently advanced to be included as deliverable proposition in the LDP.</p>		
Policies BW4, TB1 and TB2: Development outside settlement boundaries				
Proforma 24	Policy BW4	<p>Revision of Policy BW4 and deletion of Policies TB1 and TB2.</p> <p>3.4. —</p> <p>Policy BW4: Settlement Boundaries</p> <p>Proposals for new development (including changes of use) outside defined settlement limits, will not normally be permitted. Where a proposal is considered acceptable in principle, the criteria of Policy TB1 must also be fulfilled.</p>	<p>The issue of rural restraint policies was discussed at the first LDP hearing session on 24th November 2009 and was raised as an issue for attention in the Inspector's note to the Council following that session. Particularly, attention was drawn to the relationship between LDP Policies BW4 and TB1 and the need for further clarification on what constitutes countryside</p>	

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
	Paras 3.4.2 – 3.4.4	<p>3.4.2—Proposals for development in the countryside will normally be resisted unless specifically excepted by policy for locational reasons. This is in order to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain the character and integrity of the countryside, including its value for conservation and as a visual, recreational or amenity resource; • preserve the setting and the individual identities of nearby communities; • prevent coalescence of the built form and resist sporadic development. <p>Potentially acceptable uses in the countryside may include those directly connected with Agriculture and Forestry; Leisure and Tourism; Minerals; Land Reclamation; Renewable Energy; Transport and Infrastructure; or Utilities. It should be</p>	<p>development and how the Plan intends to deal with such proposals.</p> <p>Changes to Policies BW4, TB1 and TB2 are necessary so that 'countryside' is more clearly defined, and that matters allied to proposals in the countryside may more appropriately be dealt with through relying on a suitably worded cross reference to national policy whilst retaining a policy reference to settlement limits.</p>	

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p>noted that the above list is not intended to be exhaustive and that the acceptability of a proposal will depend on a variety of particular circumstances when a planning application is submitted.</p> <p>3.4.3—A number of physical factors have been taken into account in determining the precise location for settlement limits. These are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship to existing settlement patterns and the built form. • Existence of features that can be used for demarcation such as roads, rivers, curtilages or field boundaries. • Topography. • Ground conditions. • Existence of features of landscape or nature conservation importance. • Availability of infrastructure and services including those factors influencing 		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p style="text-align: center;">accessibility.</p> <p>3.4.4—The importance of having well defined settlement boundaries cannot be over stated. They help convey the priorities of the Council's development strategy on the ground; they are often the first mechanism used to establish the policy stance of the Council on a particular development proposal; they contribute significantly to the Council reaching a balanced and informed decision through reasoned justification; and, they provide clear and unequivocal advice to all other parties concerned. However, their overall success is often linked to their combination with a variety of other relevant policies and proposals. In this respect, LDP Policy TB1 is the most significant.</p>		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
	Policy BW4	<p>3.4 Policy BW4: Settlement boundaries / locational constraints</p> <p><i>Settlement boundaries are defined on the LDP Proposals Map in order to define the area within which development will be allowed providing it is compatible with national planning policy; the spatial priorities and development strategy of the LDP; and material planning considerations.</i></p> <p><i>Outside defined settlement boundaries, proposals will be regarded as 'countryside development' and will not be permitted unless:-</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• The development is associated with either agriculture, forestry or the winning and working of minerals;</i> <i>• The development is for the</i> 		<p>The revised policy combines the former three policies in a more concise way and provides more clarity on the acceptable location and nature of development in relation to settlement boundaries. It also addresses some of the concerns raised in the SA. The revised policy on water issues also addresses the concerns raised over the lack of reference to the water environment and flood related issues.</p> <p>Further SA work it is not considered to be necessary as the new policy does not raise any new potential for adverse effects and overall will have improved potential for sustainability than the former</p>

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p><i>conversion, rehabilitation or replacement of rural buildings and dwellings;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The development is for tourism, recreation or leisure facilities;</i> • <i>The development is for the provision of public utilities, infrastructure or waste management facilities that cannot reasonably be located elsewhere;</i> • <i>The development is associated with the reclamation or treatment of unstable or contaminated land.</i> <p><i>Where, 'countryside development' is considered acceptable in principle, the proposal must also satisfy material planning considerations as necessary and appropriate .</i></p> <p><u>Policy Justification</u></p> <p>3.4.1 The importance of having well defined settlement boundaries cannot be over-stated. They help</p>		policies.

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p>convey the spatial priorities of the Council's development strategy; they are often the first mechanism used to establish the policy stance of the Council on a particular development proposal; they contribute significantly to the Council reaching a balanced and informed decision through reasoned justification; and they provide clear and unequivocal advice to all other parties concerned.</p> <p>3.4.2 A number of physical factors have been taken into account in determining the precise location for settlement limits. These are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship to existing settlement patterns and the built form. • Existence of features that can be used for demarcation such as roads, rivers, curtilages or field boundaries. • Topography. 		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
	Paras 3.4.1 – 3.4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground conditions. • Existence of features of landscape or nature conservation importance. • Availability of infrastructure and services including those factors influencing accessibility. <p>3.4.3 The above policy draws a clear distinction between the way in which the LDP treats development proposals within settlement limits compared with those that fall outside, i.e. in the countryside. This approach accords with the key objectives and priorities set out in Planning Policy Wales (Sections 2.3; 2.4; and 2.5) and aims to achieve sustainable settlements based on the roles and functions of each of the communities of the County Borough and the LDP growth areas within which they are located.</p> <p>3.4.4 The general presumption in favour of development within settlement limits</p>		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p>is balanced with a corresponding presumption against inappropriate development in the countryside and, in case of the latter, the LDP reinforces this stance through specific protectionist policies in the countryside, for example, Policy AS5 on Green Wedges.</p> <p>3.4.5 It should be noted that the types of countryside development considered acceptable in principle by the above policy do not represent a completely exhaustive list as the LDP does not attempt to address every potential development scenario. However, the stipulated uses are representative of the types of development that are most likely to arise in the local area, making the policy both compliant with national policy and locally distinctive.</p>		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
	Policy TB1	<p>Development outside settlement boundaries</p> <p>5.1 Policy TB1</p> <p>Proposals for new development outside defined settlement boundaries considered to be acceptable in principle under Policy BW4 should also fulfil the following criteria:-</p> <p>1) The merits of the development must outweigh the value of protecting the countryside from new developments.</p> <p>2) The proposal must be</p>		As noted above, the revised policy incorporates these considerations and no further SA work is required.

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p>acceptable in terms of its siting, scale, design and materials.</p> <p>3) The proposal must not have an unacceptable impact on the character, amenity and landscape quality of the area including any historical features present.</p> <p>4) The development must not pose an unacceptable risk to nature conservation interests including habitats and species within the site and within the vicinity of the site.</p> <p>5) The development must not pose an unacceptable risk to the water environment including watercourses, groundwater catchment areas and river quality.</p> <p>6) The proposal must not conflict with transportation considerations including access, parking, traffic generation, accessibility to public transport and the enjoyment of public rights of</p>		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p>7) — If necessary, the proposal must be capable of being provided with the relevant utility services and infrastructure.</p> <p>way.</p> <p><u>Policy Justification</u></p> <p>5.1.1 — The LDP aims to strike a balance between the protection of the environment and addressing the land use pressures that exist in relation to the County Borough's social and economic needs. Development proposals will normally be expected to conform to the spatial priorities of the plan and take place in one of the identified areas of growth (within defined settlement limits), reflecting the availability of appropriate infrastructure and the principles of sustainability.</p> <p>5.1.2 — However, circumstances will arise</p>		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
	Paras 5.1.1 – 5.1.6	<p>when the above is not feasible or desirable due to the particular locational issues involved. In these instances, proposals will be assessed initially against Policy BW4 and where they are considered acceptable in principle, they will fall to be further assessed against the various criteria of Policy TB1 above. For the purposes of the Plan, the term countryside is taken to mean all areas outside defined settlement boundaries as shown on the LDP proposals map.</p> <p>5.1.3 In order that the countryside retains its vitality, it will continue to be necessary to accommodate certain uses which benefit the local economy but which also contribute to a sustainable future. However, development will continue to be strictly controlled in order to maintain</p>		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p>an attractive and ecologically rich countryside in which the environment is conserved and enhanced, and which is accessible to all.</p> <p>Conversion of buildings to residential use in the countryside</p> <p>5.1.4 Whilst dwellings will only be permitted in the countryside if they can be demonstrated absolutely essential in accord with Planning Policy Wales (2002), the conversion of existing rural buildings to residential use will be permitted subject to meeting the relevant policy criteria. In this way, the Council intends to discourage sporadic development but still allow for genuine residential needs such as those that might be associated with agriculture or forestry.</p>		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p>5.1.5 — Where a legitimate need for a dwelling in the countryside is proven, it should be of a size proportionate to the agricultural holding and not of an excessive scale. The curtilage and infrastructure attached to a dwelling (access roads, power lines etc.) can potentially be as intrusive in the countryside as the dwelling itself. Siting, scale and design and access will therefore be of the utmost importance.</p> <p>Replacement dwellings in the countryside</p> <p>5.1.6 — If an existing habitable dwelling in the countryside is sub standard or of poor condition, it may on occasion, be necessary to consider demolition and replacement with a new dwelling. In such cases, proposals for the replacement should represent an improvement on the structure that currently exists. Substantial increases in the size of the dwelling will not be</p>		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p>acceptable and the footprint of both structures should as far as possible coincide so as to preclude retention of both dwellings</p>		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
				Conversion of existing dwellings in the countryside is included in the revised policy.

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
				The issues of dwellings and buildings associated with agriculture, forestry or mineral working is included in the revised policy.

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
				The issue of replacement dwellings in the countryside is included in the revised policy.
	Policy TB2	<p>Unallocated sites within settlement boundaries</p> <p>5.2 POLICY TB2</p> <p>Proposals for new development within settlement boundaries on land not specifically allocated for development by the LDP will be permitted subject to consideration against the following criteria:-</p> <p>1) The proposal must be acceptable in terms of its</p>		As noted above, the revised policy incorporates these considerations and no further SA work is required.

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p>siting, scale, design and materials.</p> <p>2) The proposal must not have an unacceptable impact on the character and amenity of immediate neighbourhood.</p> <p>3) The proposal must not have an unacceptable impact on the character, amenity and landscape quality of the area including any historical features present.</p> <p>4) The proposal must not pose an unacceptable risk to nature conservation interests including habitats and species within the site and within the vicinity of the site.</p> <p>5) The proposal must not pose an unacceptable risk to the water environment including watercourses, groundwater catchment areas and river quality.</p> <p>6) The proposal must not conflict with transportation considerations including access, parking, traffic</p>		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p>generation, accessibility to public transport and enjoyment of public rights of way.</p> <p>7) If necessary, the proposal must be capable of being provided with the relevant utility services and infrastructure.</p> <p><u>Policy Justification</u></p> <p>5.2.1 The settlement limits defined on the LDP proposals map are designed to optimise the use of land and buildings in or adjacent to the existing urban fabric and, combined with the relevant LDP policies, assist in the regeneration of these areas whilst reducing pressures on undeveloped land outside. Policy TB2 above aims to ensure that all proposals for development within settlement boundaries on land not specifically allocated in the LDP, respect the form and character of</p>		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		the surroundings. Also that potential impact on people and the environment is minimised to an acceptable level.		
<i>Policy AS5: Green Wedges</i>				
Proforma 26		<p><i>Policy AS5: Green Wedges</i></p> <p><i>In order to prevent coalescence between and within settlements, Green Wedges have been identified at the following locations:-</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Heolgerrig /Twyncarmel</i> • <i>Abercanaid /Pentrebach /Troedyrhiw</i> • <i>Troedyrhiw Aberfan</i> • <i>Quakers Yard</i> • <i>Trelewis /Nelson</i> <p>The extent of these areas is shown on the</p>	<p>The matter of green wedges was discussed at the first LDP hearing session on 24th November 2009 and is raised as an issue for consideration in the Inspector's note to the Council following that session. Particularly, concern related to the proposed use of the designation within settlement limits and therefore, the LDP's compatibility with national planning policy. There are</p>	<p>The policy removes the reference to coalescence within settlements and the green wedge at Quakers Yard.</p> <p>The removal of the word "normally" from the supporting text strengthens and improves SA performance of the policy.</p> <p>The removal of the Quakers</p>

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p>ldp proposals map and development that prejudices the open nature of the land will not normally be permitted except in very exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>Policy Justification</p> <p>4.5.1 The primary purpose of green wedges is to prevent coalescence between settlements and within urban areas. The designation is not made necessarily on the basis of the physical quality of the landscape nor its recreation value, although these are often major factors, but simply to maintain valuable open space.</p> <p>4.5.2 The areas designated have particular importance in maintaining the distinct identities of separate communities and, therefore, complement the function provided by settlement boundaries. Development of an urban nature will not normally be allowed in green wedges except in very exceptional circumstances as set out at Paras</p>	<p>two green wedges that are affected by a lack of compliance with national policy, namely, Heolgerrig / Twyncarmel; and Quakers Yard.</p>	<p>Yard green wedge does not represent a significant effect on the overall implementation of the policy and therefore the SA. Furthermore the area in question, which includes part of a SINC, will now be protected by the more appropriate open space for recreation designation.</p> <p>Therefore no further SA is required.</p>

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING				
		<p>2.6.16 and 2.6.17 of Planning Policy Wales (2002). and Their value as local landscape designations is reflected through their delineation on the LDP proposals map and their inclusion in the schedule of landscape and biodiversity designations included at Appendix 1.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>In addition, the site should be added to the list of Informal Recreation Areas included at Appendix 6 of the LDP Written Statement as follows:-</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Name</td> <td>Ward</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Berthlwyd, Quakers Yard</td> <td>Treharris</td> </tr> </table> <p>Corresponding changes are proposed to the LDP Proposals Map as shown on the plan that accompanies this proforma as Appendix 2, and all reference to the Quakers Yard Green Wedge should be removed from the Green Wedge Background Paper as follows:-</p>	Name	Ward	Berthlwyd, Quakers Yard	Treharris		
Name	Ward							
Berthlwyd, Quakers Yard	Treharris							

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p>3.4 — Quakers Yard</p> <p>3.4.1 — This green wedge prevents the coalescence of the settlements of Treharris in the north and Quakers Yard in the south.</p> <p>3.4.2 — The Quakers Yard area has experienced a relatively high level of housing development over the past two decades resulting in only the green wedge area being free from existing residential development approvals. The green wedge is a narrow strip of land on a prominent valley side and has a high scenic quality combining dramatic steep wooded valley sides and a tortuous river corridor. The coalescence of the settlements would not only be</p>		

REF. NUMBER	POLICY/ PARAGRAPH/ OTHER	PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION	SA/SEA SCREENING
		<p>detrimental to their landscape setting, but also to the integrity of the communities.</p> <p>3.4.3 — Further benefits in allocating the green wedge include: maintaining the integrity of this distinctive and rare landscape; and maintaining biodiversity interests such as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation.</p>		

Sustainability Appraisal of new Policy AS23

Key:

DG	Development actively encouraged as it would resolve an existing sustainability problem
LG	No sustainability constraints and development acceptable
B	Neutral or unknown effect
Y	Potential sustainability issues; mitigation and /or negotiation possible
O	Problematical and improbable because of known sustainability issues; mitigation or negotiation difficult and /or expensive
R	Absolute sustainability constraints to development

Policy AS23

In order to increase the potential of the Cwmbargoed railhead as a freight facility, land at Cwmbargoed Washery is allocated for mixed-use development specifically limited to:

- minerals handling and despatch,
- waste management facilities, and /or
- other acceptable employment activities which are dependent on rail freight as the main source of transportation for movement of goods or materials associated with the development.

SA Objective	Assessment of Effects		Evidence and Reference (where available)	Proposed and Potential Mitigation
	Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)			
1 HOUSING <i>TOPIC AREA IN SEA DIRECTIVE: POPULATION AND HUMAN HEALTH</i>	No direct impact.	B		
2 CULTURE AND	Heavy freight traffic travelling on substandard roads through town centres and villages often results in	LG		

Assessment of Effects			
SA Objective	Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)	Evidence and Reference (where available)	Proposed and Potential Mitigation
HERITAGE <i>TOPIC AREA IN SEA DIRECTIVE: CULTURAL HERITAGE</i>	damage to historic buildings. Positive impact.		
3 COMMUNITIES <i>TOPIC AREA IN SEA DIRECTIVE: POPULATION</i>	Heavy freight traffic travelling on substandard roads through town centres and villages often discourages residents from walking and cycling through safety issues. Positive impact.	LG	
4 HEALTH <i>TOPIC AREA IN SEA DIRECTIVE: HUMAN HEALTH</i>	Removal of road traffic to another less polluting means improves air quality. Positive impact.	LG	
5 ECONOMY AND	Road congestion is recognised as bad for any economy. Movement of goods by rail should alleviate	LG	

SA Objective	Assessment of Effects		Evidence and Reference (where available)	Proposed and Potential Mitigation
	Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)			
EMPLOYMENT <i>TOPIC AREA IN SEA DIRECTIVE: POPULATION, MATERIAL ASSETS AND HEALTH</i>	some congestion and delays. Cumulative positive impact. Allocating land for employment/economic use increases the range of employment opportunities available.			
6 TRANSPORT <i>TOPIC AREA IN SEA DIRECTIVE: POPULATION AND CLIMATIC FACTORS</i>	The policy directly addresses the aims of this objective.	DG		
7 BUILT ENVIRONMENT	Removal of traffic from town centres and villages will	LG		

SA Objective	Assessment of Effects		Evidence and Reference (where available)	Proposed and Potential Mitigation
	Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)			
<i>TOPIC AREA IN SEA DIRECTIVE: MATERIAL ASSETS</i>	improve the quality of the public realm.			
8 LANDSCAPE <i>TOPIC AREA IN SEA DIRECTIVE: LANDSCAPE</i>	Freight lorries which use substandard highway networks often cause considerable damage to the landscape such as verge erosion. The land is already part of a developed area. Minor but positive impact.	LG		
9 BIODIVERSITY <i>TOPIC AREA IN SEA DIRECTIVE: BIODIVERSITY, FAUNA AND FLORA</i>	Freight lorries which use substandard highway networks often cause considerable damage to the landscape such as verge erosion which also impacts on biodiversity. Minor but positive impact.	LG		

Assessment of Effects			
SA Objective	Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)	Evidence and Reference (where available)	Proposed and Potential Mitigation
10 WATER <i>TOPIC AREA IN SEA DIRECTIVE: WATER</i>	No significant effect although water supply may be an issue in summer months.	B	
11 CLIMATE CHANGE <i>TOPIC AREA IN SEA DIRECTIVE: CLIMATIC FACTORS</i>	Directly addresses one aim of his objective to reduce carbon emissions by encouraging rail use. However the use of fossil fuels, which is enabled by this policy, does have adverse effects on climate change.	DG Y	
12 ENERGY <i>TOPIC AREA IN SEA DIRECTIVE: CLIMATIC FACTORS AND AIR</i>	The use of fossil fuels, which is enabled by this policy, has adverse effects on climate change and does not meet objectives for renewable energy.	O	
13 LAND AND SOILS	No direct impact.	B	

Assessment of Effects			
SA Objective	Nature of the predicted sustainability effect (positive/negative, short/medium/long term, cumulative, scale, reversibility, likelihood)	Evidence and Reference (where available)	Proposed and Potential Mitigation
<i>TOPIC AREA IN SEA DIRECTIVE: SOIL</i>			
14 Waste <i>TOPIC AREA IN SEA DIRECTIVE: WATER, SOIL, HUMAN HEALTH AND POPULATION</i>	The policy will allow waste management facilities to be developed in this location which will enable local recycling management to take place.	LG	
15 MINERALS <i>TOPIC AREA IN SEA DIRECTIVE: MATERIAL ASSETS</i>	The policy supports the minerals extraction process through provision of minerals handling and dispatch.	LG	
Summary Beneficial effects are predicted for most SA objectives through the encouragement and facilitation of rail, rather than road, freight movement. The only indirect adverse effects identified are the effects of the use of coal as an energy source although it is acknowledged that coal does present a secure local energy supply.			

