

# **Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Local Development Plan (2016 – 2031)**

## **PRE-DEPOSIT PROPOSALS DOCUMENT 2 Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report**

June 2017



**Policy & Implementation**  
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council  
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## **1. INTRODUCTION AND KEY OUTCOMES**

### **Introduction**

- 1.1 This Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report forms part of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's (MTCBC) pre-deposit documents for the emerging Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) 2016 -2031. It updates and builds on a Scoping Report<sup>1</sup> which the Council produced in January 2017 and will be further developed to inform the Deposit Plan. On adoption of the LDP, the Council will publish a statement explaining how the SA has influenced the LDP.
- 1.2 The main purpose of this Initial Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to identify the likely significant economic, environmental, social and cultural effects of the Preferred Strategy (PS) for the LDP and to identify the potential sustainability implications of sites included on the Candidates Sites Register. Key Policies included within the PS provide some measures to mitigate potential negative effects and maximise positive effects. These draft policies have also been assessed. This report:
- ◆ Summarises and updates the key aspects of the SA Scoping Report;
  - ◆ Describes the PS;
  - ◆ Assesses the vision, objectives, strategic options, key policies included within the PS and Candidates Sites against the Sustainability Objectives;
  - ◆ Identifies the potential sustainability impacts and Likely Significant Effects (LSEs) to address the requirements of the SEA directive of the PS;
  - ◆ States how the SA has influenced the PS;
  - ◆ Considers ways to mitigate any likely significant negative impacts;
  - ◆ Proposes monitoring indicators for sustainability trends; and,
  - ◆ Includes detailed appendices including the assessment of strategic growth and distribution options and on key policies included within the PS. The detailed assessments of the Candidate Sites are included in the Candidate Sites Register.
- 1.3 By including suitable Sustainability Objectives, this integrated assessment also enables a Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) and a Welsh Language Impact Assessment. The Council has also undertaken a separate Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Assessment (HRA)<sup>2</sup> and the key findings are highlighted in Paragraph 3.11.

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<sup>1</sup> See Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Local Development Plan (2016 – 2031) Sustainability Appraisal: Scoping Report – January 2017

<sup>2</sup> Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Local Development Plan (2016 – 2031) Preferred Strategy Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report 2017.

**How the initial SA has informed the LDP process**

- 1.4 The systematic appraisal of the various components that make up the PS against the sustainability framework set out in the SA Scoping Report, including the appraisal of strategic options, has informed the Council in the identification of the PS so that the LDP will be best placed to address the likely key economic, social, environmental and cultural issues affecting Merthyr Tydfil County Borough. At this stage, the SA has assisted in the development of the PS, LDP objectives and key policies for the delivery of the PS. The early assessment of Candidate Sites provides an indication of the potential impacts which may arise from their allocation although no firm assessment is possible site allocations are not made at the PS stage of plan making.

**Overall summary of the sustainability of the Preferred Strategy**

- 1.5 As preparation of the LDP progresses a better judgement can be made on any precise sustainability impacts of the LDP and ways to mitigate or enhance them. A summary of potential adverse sustainability impacts identified by this initial SA process is set out below.
- 1.6 Overall, the PS vision, objectives, preferred growth and spatial options and key policies provide a sustainable basis for the preparation of the deposit LDP. Selecting sites and preparing policies to minimise any adverse environmental impacts (in particular the design policy SW10) provide the opportunity to deliver the strategy in a sustainable manner.
- 1.7 In terms of the SEA topics, positive likely significant effects from the PS are identified for the topics of Population, Material Assets and Landscape. No adverse likely significant effects have been identified, however this reflects the stage of plan making and further detail will enable a more detailed consideration of small impacts, which due to their individual character may be significant in themselves.
- 1.8 There is a direct link between the positive likely significant effects for the population and material assets. An approach supporting sustainable population growth, rather than decline or significant expansion in a short period of time, helps community cohesion and for new development to be assimilated with existing services and facilities. Conversely, improvements to material assets are likely to attract population growth and the retention of working aged people. There is a positive synergistic effect apparent here, the positive effects contributing to an improved 'environment' which will continue to improve the perception of the County Borough as an attractive place to live, work and visit.

- 1.9 In terms of health and equality, the compatibility analysis for the LDP vision shows a neutral effect, however LDP Objective 4 relates to the provision of infrastructure and open space for the regeneration of communities and performs positively in this respect. The PS is considered to be directly beneficial as the strategy is likely to enhance provision and access to healthcare services, and would, in the medium to long term, increase demand for sport and recreation facilities as well as public open spaces and footpaths/active travel routes.
- 1.10 In terms of the Welsh language, the compatibility analysis for the LDP vision shows a neutral effect on the Welsh language; however LDP Objective 2 specifically relates to the Welsh language and performs positively in this respect. The Preferred Strategy is considered likely to attract and retain population in the County Borough. Although the LDP cannot directly influence how many will be Welsh speakers, the level of growth proposed is likely to result in investment being attracted to facilitate improvements to assets of cultural significance and this will help to retain Welsh speaking residents. Sites perform universally positively in regards to the Welsh language. This is due to the fact that sites would provide housing in areas within the catchments of the 2 Welsh schools in the County Borough, thereby providing additional potential pupils for these schools. Sites for non-residential development (retail, employment, tourism) will help make the area a more attractive place to live work and visit and will support the County Borough as a place of distinctive Welsh culture. This will ensure that the LDP has the scope to facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.

#### **How to comment on the Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report**

- 1.11 The consultation period runs from 14<sup>th</sup> July to 25<sup>th</sup> August 2017.
- 1.12 Comments made on this initial Sustainability Appraisal Report must be made in writing and received by the County Borough Council by 12 midday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2017.
- 1.13 All comments made by the deadline will be acknowledged and considered, however the Council cannot guarantee that comments received after this date will be considered.
- 1.14 The consultation documents and comments forms are available at the following locations:

- ◆ Council Offices, Civic Centre, Castle Street, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN

- ◆ Council Offices, Unit 5, Triangle Business Park, Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 4TQ
- ◆ Merthyr Tydfil Central Library, High Street, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AF
- ◆ Rhydycar Library Hub, Merthyr Tydfil Leisure Centre, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 1UT
- ◆ Treharris Library, Perrott Street, Treharris, Merthyr Tydfil, CF46 5ET
- ◆ Dowlais Library, Church Street, Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 3HS
- ◆ Aberfan Community Library, Pantglas Road, Aberfan, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 4QE

1.15 Or one can be downloaded from the Council's website at: [www.merthyr.gov.uk](http://www.merthyr.gov.uk) or from the Cwm Taf Hub [www.cwmtafhub.co.uk](http://www.cwmtafhub.co.uk)

1.16 You can either email completed forms to: [devplanning@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:devplanning@merthyr.gov.uk) or post them to:

The Head of Planning & Countryside  
Planning & Countryside Department  
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council  
Unit 5, Triangle Business Park  
Pentrebach  
Merthyr Tydfil  
CF48 4TQ

1.17 If you have any queries about how to submit your comments please:  
Email the LDP team @ [devplanning@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:devplanning@merthyr.gov.uk) or  
Telephone 01685 726279

### **Next steps**

1.18 The Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report will be used to inform preparation of a full SA report and Deposit version of the Replacement LDP 2016 – 2031. On adoption, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council will publish a statement explaining how the SA has influenced the Replacement LDP.



## 2. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS AND COMPONENTS MAKING UP THE SA REPORT

### Statutory Requirements

- 2.1 Section 69(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (UK Government, 2004), as amended, requires the Council to appraise the sustainability [SA] of the LDP and to report its findings as an integral part of the plan preparation process. Under the 2004 Act, SA must cover the social and economic effects of the LDP as well as the environmental effects.
- 2.2 In addition, the Council must comply with EU SEA Directive 2001/42/EC (European Community, 2001), which requires formal Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), during preparation of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have a significant effect on the environment.
- 2.3 The Environmental Assessment of the Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004 (National Assembly for Wales, 2004) transposes this requirement into law. Regulation 12 requires the preparation of an 'Environmental Report' where an environmental assessment is required under this provision. Since this includes LDPs, this means that in preparing its first replacement LDP the Council must comply with the SEA regulations and subject it to an environmental assessment.

### Integrated Appraisal: Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 2.4 Welsh Government has further determined that the requirements of the SEA Regulations should be incorporated into the mandatory SA process. In addition, it suggests that SA can be fully integrated with LDP preparation. This means that as long as those aspects of work specifically required, to meet SEA Regulations<sup>3</sup>, are clearly recorded and signposted in a common reporting structure then a separate Regulation 12 'Environmental Report' is not required. Accordingly the strategic SA framework (Table 6.1) identifies the sustainability objectives which address the requirements of the SEA Regulations and the Likely Significant Effects are identified in Table 10.1.
- 2.5 This combined SEA and SA process, is termed the SA.

<sup>3</sup> Table 3.1: SEA Regulations 2004 No.1656 (w.170) requirements, shows what the SEA must include.

### 3. APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

#### Approach adopted for Integrated Appraisal

- 3.1 The SA was undertaken following completion of the SA Baseline Scoping Report in January 2017, alongside preparation of the PS, as part of the integrated SA process to describe and appraise the likely significant effects (LSE) of implementing the PS. It reports on the findings of the SA of the PS and sites nominated for inclusion in the Deposit LDP, so called, 'Candidate Sites'.
- 3.2 Every effort has been made to ensure that this SA is consistent with the PS; however, some assumptions regarding the form of development that could take place had to be made during the SA of the candidate sites. Inevitably uncertainty will remain until site allocations are selected and detailed proposals presented by developers.

#### Welsh language, Health and Equality Impact Assessments

- 3.3 MTCBC has also chosen to integrate the Welsh language, Health and Equality Impact Assessment processes together with the overarching SA process by incorporating sustainability objectives relating to these matters.
- 3.4 The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure (Welsh Government , 2011) made Welsh an official language in Wales, which means it must be treated no less favourably than English. In addition, TAN 20 (Welsh Government, 2013) states that the SA should assess evidence of the impacts of the spatial strategy, policies and allocations on the Welsh language, and the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 (Welsh Government, 2015) contains provisions relating to the consideration of the Welsh language in the appraisal of development plans.
- 3.5 Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is not a statutory requirement for Councils; however, health considerations are a requirement of the SEA process and thereby the overall SA process.
- 3.6 Public bodies have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 (UK Government , 2010) to assess the impact of their policies on different population groups to ensure that discrimination does not take place and where possible, to promote equality of opportunity, this is carried out through an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA).
- 3.7 For the appraisal of the PS the integration of Welsh language, health and equality concerns has focused on ensuring that these issues are well represented in the SA Framework against which the emergent PS has been

assessed. [Sustainability Objective 17: To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language and Sustainability Objective 4: To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities]. Consideration of Welsh language, health and equality issues will also be addressed iteratively as the appraisal process progresses alongside preparation of the Deposit Plan.

### **Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)**

- 3.8 The Habitats Directive (92/43/ECC) (European Economic Community, 1992) as set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (UK Government, 2010) [The Habitats Regulations], require that Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is applied to all statutory land use plans in Wales. The aim of the HRA process is to assess the potential effects arising from a plan against the nature conservation objectives of any site designated for its nature conservation importance.
- 3.9 HRA screening considers how effects arising from the plan may indirectly affect these sites either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The methods and findings of the HRA process are set out in a separate HRA Report, sent to the statutory consultee [Natural Resources Wales] and placed on consultation for the wider public. The HRA screening concludes that all matters, apart from the following, should be screened out from further consideration at deposit stage:-
- All development allocations in the deposit plan must avoid the loss and or degradation of marsh fritillary habitat (of relevance to the Aberbargoed Grasslands Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Blaen Cynon SAC).
  - Emissions from new industrial development on protected and allocated industrial sites in the deposit plan must not directly contribute to the degradation of the environmental conditions of the Brecon Beacons SAC, Coedydd Nedd a Mellt SAC, Cwm Cadlan SAC, and Llangorse Lake SAC.

### **Consultation: Statutory, Public & Stakeholder Engagement**

- 3.10 The SEA Directive requires that the authorities responsible for preparing plans should consult with Consultation Bodies. For MTCBC, these are Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Cadw. The Directive does not require full consultation with the public or other bodies until the Environmental Report (in this case, the SA) on the Deposit Plan is finalised. However, the Directive does require early and effective consultation with the public and therefore MTCBC is seeking wider consultation on this Initial SA report in order to better inform plan

and decision making. Comments are therefore invited and details of how to do so are contained at the end of section 1 of this report.

### The Stages of the SA

- 3.11 The five main stages of SA, as outlined in the LDP Manual (Welsh Government, 2015), are being followed as shown in Figure 3.1. This report represents Stages 2 – 4, with regard to the SA of the PS.

Figure 3.1: SA stages		
The five main stages in conducting an SA that need to be integrated into LDP preparation		
Stage 1	Scoping	Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope
Stage 2	Appraisal	Developing and refining options and assess effects
Stage 3	Reporting	Preparing the SA Report
Stage 4	Consulting	Consultation on the PS and SA Report
Stage 5	Monitoring	Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the LDP

### Components making up the SA report

- 3.12 Figure 3.2 shows the components making up this SA report, which have been prepared in accordance with the LDP Manual and the Practical Guide to Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive<sup>4</sup>. It shows how this report, together with the Scoping Report, meets the legal requirements of the SEA Regulations. The Final SA Report which will be presented alongside the Adoption Statement<sup>5</sup> will include more detailed information on how development and conservation issues will be addressed in the Adopted LDP.

<sup>4</sup> A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive – ODPM 2005

<sup>5</sup> When a Local Planning Authority adopts its Local Development Plan (LDP), it is required to produce and publish an adoption statement in accordance with Regulation 25(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005.

**Figure 3.2:** Requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations

Key Questions	Environmental Report SEA requirements	Where covered
What is the plan trying to achieve?	An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes (Sch2(1))	Section 4 of the ISA & Section 2.0 of SA: Scoping Report.
What's the policy context?	An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship (if any) with other relevant plans and programmes (Sch2(1))	Section 4 of the ISA & Section 2.0 of SA: Scoping Report.
What are the key sustainability objectives that need to be considered?	The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation (Sch2(5))	Section 5 and Appendix 3 of the ISA. Section 4 of the SA: Scoping Report.
What's the situation now?	The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme (Sch2(2)) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected (Sch2(3))	Section 5 of the ISA and Section 3.0 of SA Scoping Report (pages 23 – 70).
What will the situation be <u>without</u> the plan?	The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme" (Sch2(2))	Section 5 of the ISA Section 3.0 of SA Scoping Report (pages 23 – 70).
What are the key issues including any sustainability problems?	Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, not covered in the HRA (Sch2(4))	Appendix 3 of the ISA and Table 4.1: Key Sustainability Issues of SA Scoping Report (page s 72 -75)
What will be the situation <u>with</u> the plan?	The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors (Sch2(6))	Table 10.1 and Sections 7 & 8 of the ISA. SA of LDP Vision, Objectives, Growth and Spatial Options, Policies and Candidate and JHLAS sites. ISA Appendices 4, 5 & 6 and Candidate Sites Register.
How can we mitigate adverse (and enhance positive) effects?	The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme" (Sch2(7))	Section 1 of the ISA
How can we best monitor the plan's impacts?	A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring (Sch2(9))	Table 5.3 SA Indicators and targets SA Scoping Report Section 9 of the ISA

## 4 THE LDP PREFERRED STRATEGY

### The LDP and the SA process

- 4.1 MTCBC formally began work on its first replacement LDP in August 2016, following a full review<sup>6</sup> of the adopted LDP in April 2016 and approval of the Delivery Agreement<sup>7</sup> in August 2016. The publication of the PS for consultation is the first formal publication in the replacement LDP process. When adopted the replacement 2016-2031 LDP will constitute the development plan for Merthyr Tydfil and supersede the Council's adopted 2006-2021 LDP.
- 4.2 The PS sets out the broad approach that the LDP intends to take in order to ensure that the County Borough is developed in a sustainable manner over the Plan period. It also provides the strategic framework for detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations which will subsequently be included in the Deposit LDP 2016-2031.
- 4.3 It has been informed by the key trends and issues identified through preparation of the SA/SEA Scoping Report which comprises a general review of social, economic and environmental information, the national, regional and local policy context, including national well-being goals and strategic assessments of key issues.
- 4.4 The overall purpose of the PS is to:
  - ◆ Identify a set overarching objectives for delivering sustainable development which address the vision and key issues for the LDP;
  - ◆ Explain the preferred strategy and reasons for its selection having regard to the anticipated scale and distribution of future growth in population, housing and employment requirements;
  - ◆ Set out key policies to deliver the vision and objectives and preferred strategy.

### The Vision:

- 4.5 In line with the LDP Manual 2015 (Welsh Government, 2015), the vision is based on the Single Integrated Plan 2013 – 2017 's vision, published by the Merthyr Tydfil Local Service Board in March 2013 (revised in October 2015) and has been amended to incorporate a demographic element and reference to the

<sup>6</sup> The Review Report sets out the extent of changes required to the LDP and recommends that the Council commences the preparation of a replacement LDP following the full revision procedure.

<sup>7</sup> This Delivery Agreement (DA) is a public statement of how and when stakeholders and the community can contribute to the preparation of the replacement LDP.

Cardiff Capital Region. It should be noted that, when agreed in early 2018, the Cwm Taf Local Well-being Plan<sup>8</sup> will inform the vision in the Deposit Plan.

*To strengthen Merthyr Tydfil's position as the regional centre for the Heads of the Valleys within the Cardiff Capital Region, encourage a sustainable level of population growth and be a place to be proud of where:*

- *People learn and develop skills to fulfil their ambitions;*
- *People live, work, have a safe, healthy and fulfilled life; and*
- *People visit, enjoy and return.*

#### **LDP objectives:**

- 4.6 As required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (s62) the PS sets out the authorities objectives in relation to the development and use of land in the area. 17 objectives are proposed, which are derived from those incorporated in the adopted LDP (2006 – 2021), issues identified in the SA/SEA Baseline Scoping Report and a review of the most up to date edition of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (Welsh Government, 2016).
- 4.7 Involvement was undertaken through the first round of LDP Steering and Working groups, which together with a joint LDP and well-being workshop were held throughout October and November 2016. Following this work, broad consensus was gained following at LDP Steering and Working groups held between January and March 2017 when the draft Vision and objectives were presented.
- 4.8 The LDP objectives are grouped in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (Welsh Government, 2015), which defines sustainable development as the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> A plan required under the Well-Being of Future generations (Wales) Act 2015

<sup>9</sup> To act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**Figure 4.1: LDP objectives**

Improving social well-being:	
LDP Objective 1	To encourage a sustainable level and distribution of population growth.
LDP Objective 2	To promote use of the Welsh language.
LDP Objective 3	To promote suitable previously developed land for the delivery of a diverse supply of housing.
LDP Objective 4:	To ensure the provision of infrastructure and open space is the basis for the regeneration of communities.
LDP Objective 5:	To promote high quality, sustainable and inclusive design and support measures which mitigate the predicted effects of climate change.
LDP Objective 6:	To support an integrated transport system, promote active travel and ensure new developments are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.
LDP Objective 7:	To support existing community facilities and suitable community led development
Improving cultural well-being:	
LDP Objective 8:	To protect, enhance and promote heritage and cultural assets.
Improving environmental well-being:	
LDP Objective 9:	To improve habitats which contribute to ecosystem resilience and connectivity and which support protected species.
LDP Objective 10:	To protect and enhance the character and appearance of the landscape and the countryside.
Improving economic well-being:	
LDP Objective 11:	To provide and safeguard appropriate land for economic and skills development.
LDP Objective 12:	To strengthen and diversify the rural economy.
LDP Objective 13:	To develop the town and local centres as accessible, attractive, viable and vibrant places.
LDP Objective 14:	To support suitable tourism, leisure and recreation developments and encourage a year round tourism industry
LDP Objective 15:	To promote renewable and low carbon energy.
LDP Objective 16:	To ensure a sustainable supply of minerals.
LDP Objective 17:	To promote the efficient use of materials and resources and ensure an integrated network of waste management facilities.



**Strategic Options:**

- 4.9 According to the LDP Manual 2015 (Welsh Government, 2015), an important feature of the LDP system is the emphasis on identifying options. Options should reflect the evidence and the plan objectives meet the needs of the area and deliverable within the plan period. They should also conform to national policy and regional and local plans and strategies.
- 4.10 Several evidence based growth and spatial options have been considered including the continuation of the existing strategy and these are explained below.

**The Growth Options:**

- 4.11 There were significant differences between the statistics used to derive the existing *Enhanced Growth Strategy* of the adopted LDP based on migration rates and the most recent population estimates produced by the Welsh Government. It was therefore evident that the level of population growth for the LDP needed to be reconsidered.
- 4.12 Eight different scenarios were assessed through Popgroup<sup>10</sup> in order to highlight a range of possible dwelling requirements that the Council might need to cater for differing population projections. The results indicated a range of requirements from approximately 300 dwellings to nearly 4000 dwellings being required between 2016 and 2031 depending on the scenario followed<sup>11</sup>.
- 4.13 Having tested all eight scenarios and analysed the results, an amount of land required to deliver the scenarios has been calculated. The Growth Options which consider the overall levels of growth and change to be accommodated in the area were progressed for further assessment in advance of the Preferred Strategy consultation. These three scenarios are shown in Figure 4.2.
- 4.14 The preferred growth option selected having achieved broad consensus at the LDP Steering and Working groups held between January and March 2017 where the analyses of the three scenarios were presented.

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<sup>10</sup> Popgroup, is a software package that has been developed to forecast population, households and dwellings for areas. It replicates WG projections and allows users to develop different policy led scenarios and convert household change into dwelling requirements.

<sup>11</sup> The full analysis can be found in the Population and Housing and populations options Background Paper – July 2017.

Figure 4.2: The Growth Options		
1	High growth option - continuation of Existing Enhanced Growth Strategy	Continuation of current LDP strategy to build over 200 dwellings per annum and subsequently attempt to manage a population increase of over 15% by 2031.
2	Mid growth option - sustainable population growth	Seeks to facilitate and manage a level of sustainable population growth by 2031 (approx. 8% increase). The level of house building will continue broadly along the lines of recent (10 year average) build rates (150 dwellings per annum).
3	Low growth option - planning for population decline	Trend based population projections that anticipate population decline towards the end of the Plan period, and seeks to manage this as effectively as possible. The Option will require approximately 20-30 dwellings per annum.

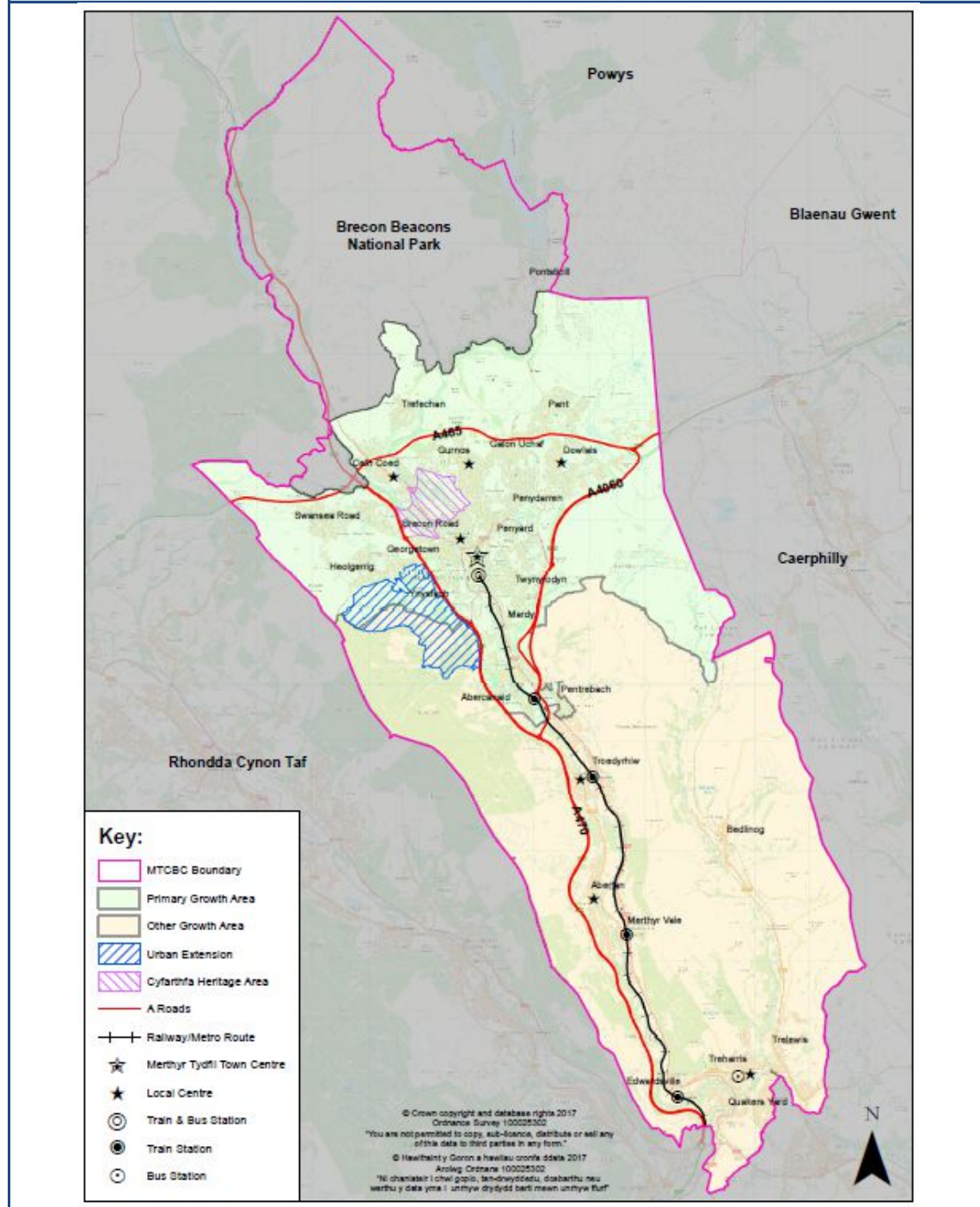
### The Spatial Options:

- 4.15 In terms of the spatial distribution of housing the Enhanced Growth Option of the adopted LDP focussed on three distinct areas i.e. The Primary Growth Area comprising the northern settlements, the Secondary Growth Area comprising the southernmost settlements of the County Borough and the Other Growth Areas comprising the mid-settlements of the area, with the housing allocations varying across the three areas. Since the start of the plan period the overall delivery rate of house-building is not at a level sufficient to meet the requirements of the adopted LDP's strategy within the plan period. It was therefore considered that spatial distribution of growth needed to be reconsidered in order to establish whether the current strategy is the most appropriate for the delivery growth up to 2031.
- 4.16 Reasonable alternatives for the distribution of growth were presented by the candidate sites submissions<sup>12</sup> received in December 2017. Since no further suggestions were forthcoming at the steering and working groups held during January and March 2017, three options were selected for detailed consideration as part of the PS preparation as shown in Figure 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5.

<sup>12</sup> Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Candidate Sites Register 2017.

**Figure 4.3: Urban extension in Merthyr Tydfil (Cwm Glo Glyndyrys SSSI) and other small sites.**

The majority of housing (up to 1500 dwellings) would be located on an urban extension at Cwm Glo and Glyndyrys Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI) along with associated leisure, retail and tourism development.



A significant proportion of housing (up to 1000 dwellings) will be located on the 'Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area' (Abercanaid/Pentrebach) which will also support employment uses and form a key part of the 'South Wales Metro' proposals.





Housing will be located on a number of sites across the County Borough (approx. 50-150 dwellings per site). The majority of these would be situated in the main settlement of Merthyr Tydfil.



**Key policies to deliver the preferred strategy:**

- 4.17 Key policies supporting the LDP objectives are grouped by their contribution to improving the social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being of Wales. They set out the spatial strategy for the development and use of land in greater detail and encourage the protection and management of features of the built and natural environment. The policies are based on the emerging background evidence and technical documents, which where complete, can be viewed at the locations listed at the end of section 1 of this report. The PS policies are attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.18 Site allocations in the deposit LDP will be selected from site nominations in the Candidate Sites Register and sites contributing to the 5-year housing land supply. Each has been assessed against the sustainability objectives in accordance with the methodology as set out in table 6.2, enabling an informed decision to be taken when selecting site allocations in the Deposit LDP.

**Candidate Sites Register**

- 4.19 A Candidates Sites Register has been prepared following the call for candidate sites in 2016. The register contains a list of the 98 sites submitted for consideration, either for development or protection, in the emerging LDP.
- 4.20 The register forms part of the suite of pre-deposit documents prepared in order to obtain stakeholder feedback and focus on the strategic level issues that can be used to inform the Deposit Plan but does not form part of the PS. However, as part of the consultation process for the PS there is an opportunity to comment on the sites submitted and a further opportunity to submit additional sites. In accepting submissions it is important to understand there is no guarantee that any site on the register or submitted as part of the PS consultation process will be included or “allocated” in the Deposit LDP. The Candidates Sites Register can be viewed at the locations listed at the end of section 1 of this report.

**Joint Housing Land Availability Study (JHLAS)**

- 4.21 The 2016 Merthyr Tydfil JHLAS (Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council , 2016) presents the housing land supply for the area at the base date of 1st April 2016. It was prepared in accordance with the requirements of PPW (Welsh Government, 2016) and Technical Advice Note 1 (Welsh Government, 2015) (TAN 1). It shows that based on the residual method set out in TAN 1, Merthyr Tydfil has 1.6 years housing land supply. 45 sites are included in the JHLAS which

assesses the likelihood of completions occurring on these sites in the subsequent 5 year period.

## 5. THE BASELINE SCOPING REPORT

- 5.1 This SA report updates and builds on a Scoping Report<sup>13</sup> prepared by the Council in January 2017. The Report reviewed the International, European, National, Regional and local level key policies, plans and strategies relevant to the area. A summary of the documents reviewed is attached at Appendix 2, and the process is summarised in Figure 5.1.

**Figure 5.1:** Review of Plans, Policies and Programmes. Summary of process.

Level	Summary
International Plans and Programmes	A review was undertaken of key International Conventions and European Directives that could potentially influence the development of the LDP and the SA. European Directives are transposed into national legislation in each individual Member State and, therefore, there should be a 'trickle-down effect' of the key principles and an application to the relevant national, regional and local circumstances in other planning documents.
National and Regional Plans and Programmes	A pragmatic and proportionate approach was taken with regard to identification of key National and regional Plans and Programmes. Planning Policy Wales (PPW) and Technical Advice Notes translate the Welsh Governments commitment to sustainable development into the planning system. Other plans reviewed included the Wales Spatial Plan, the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and the South Wales Metro.
Local Plans and Strategies	Plans produced at the local level specifically address issues relating to the natural and built heritage environment, economy; health; safety; tourism; sustainable communities; housing; employment; and physical activity and in theory have included the main influences of international, national, regional and county level plans through the 'trickle-down effect'. The LDP and the SA has drawn from these documents and transposed their aims in their objectives and policies. These local plans and strategies were instrumental in the development of the SA Framework as they provided a more local focus (refer to Table 6.2). It is, through identifying these themes and incorporating them into the PS/LDP that synergies can be achieved with other relevant documents.

<sup>13</sup> See Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Local Development Plan (2016 – 2031) Sustainability Appraisal: Scoping Report – January 2017



### Implications for the PS/LDP and SA

- 5.2 All the baseline evidence gathered for the report was assessed and analysed on the basis of the following criteria:

#### Figure 5.2: Criteria for assessing other Plans, Policies and Programme (PPP)

- ◆ The PPP identified a sustainability or environmental concern that the LDP can address;
- ◆ The issues identified were specific to the County Borough rather than abstract and generalised (even though the issue may also occur elsewhere);
- ◆ The PPP identified the cause of the problem (where this is known);
- ◆ The PPP included information in relation to what, how and where is being affected;
- ◆ The issues identified in the PPP were intermittent in nature or relates to a specific timeframe or event, and the circumstances that give rise to the issue, or its duration and frequency (i.e. 'when') is explained;
- ◆ The PPP did not pre-empt the solution;
- ◆ The issues in the PPP were identified before a solution was found, not after
- ◆ The PPP did not focus on an internal council issue;
- ◆ The PPP identified the scope of the opportunity;
- ◆ The PPP was not confined to a topic only e.g. water contamination;
- ◆ The PPP did not define the desired outcome (that is the role of objectives) and
- ◆ Were succinct

- 5.3 The key environmental, economic, social issues, and so called 'sustainability issues', affecting the County Borough that had implications for the PS and emerging replacement LDP identified were grouped under topic headings and attached at Appendix 3. A synopsis of the findings is provided below:
- 5.4 Communities: Existing plans and strategies that seek to improve the overall well-being of communities have the potential to be affected by the LDP. For communities, the potential effects focus on the areas or districts within the town and the settlements situated further south along the Taff and Taff Bargoed river valleys. These communities contain more limited job opportunities and a range of lower order local services and facilities. Conversely it fosters strong community ties within settlements. Ensuring the town centre and district centre services and facilities are maintained and enhanced will support local communities. The LDP will need to consider the appropriate siting of new development, particularly sites that are likely to include new services and

facilities. Any development gains could also stimulate potential opportunities for improvements to service and facility provisions including recreational areas, leisure facilities and tourist attractions, with the potential for increased indirect positive effects and benefits for local communities.

- 5.5 Health and Inequalities: The LDP can have a significant influence in addressing inequalities, it can seek to locate development in areas to facilitate improved accessibility for existing residents as well as new, and ensure that future development does not exacerbate inequalities. The SA process can support the identification and refinement of options that can contribute to reducing inequalities, and support the development of policy approaches that cumulatively improve the well-being of local communities. Improvements to existing development through regeneration could further help to improve health reduce and inequalities.
- 5.6 Housing: The delivery of new housing is considered to support local communities by meeting housing needs and addressing shortages. Due to existing growth restraints within the region, there is the potential that Merthyr Tydfil may need to accommodate a small level of growth from outside the plan area in the future given the close connections with the National Park in the County Borough. On the other hand promoting additional growth will inevitably increase pressures on the existing highway network traffic, which has implications for air quality, waste facilities, energy consumption, services, facilities and natural resources including the consumption of water, water resources and greenfield land. The SA process should support the identification and maximisation of potential benefits through the consideration of alternatives and assessment of both negative and positive significant effects.
- 5.7 Economy and Employment: Although Merthyr Tydfil is the smallest local authority in the Valleys the main town of Merthyr Tydfil functions as the regional commercial, retail and service centre of the County Borough and Heads of the Valleys region, with its primary shopping areas, the majority of the employment opportunities, a hospital and many other higher order services and facilities. Existing economy and employment plans seek to maximise the economic potential of this area, particularly in regards to the wider economic potential of the South East Wales 'Cardiff Capital' Region. Accessibility by transport other than the car varies considerably, and current public transport systems within the County Borough area and to and from surrounding authority areas remain quite poor. It suffers from long journey times and infrequent services and a lack of options for orbital travel between valleys. This limits the accessibility of the jobs market for the labour force without access to a car (one of the highest rates in Wales). The LDP should seek to maximise the potential benefits of

nearby strategic growth, and take advantage of opportunities for an 'orbital' approach to growth, ensuring the vitality and viability of the local economy.

- 5.8 Connections (Transport and Movement): The transport strategies identify strategic and localised priorities and action plans, and any increased growth in housing and employment development proposed in the LDP will have the potential to affect the current state of the transport network. This is set to be enhanced by the road widening along the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road, currently underway. The SA can reduce this by appropriately siting new development, identifying where mitigation may be needed and requiring the necessary transport provisions and contributions from new development that will promote a modal shift toward public transport and Active Travel. This includes potential opportunities that may arise as a result of the delivery of new infrastructure, including the 'Metro' and 'Bus Station'.
- 5.9 Energy: The LDP can support energy efficiency measures for new development and the promotion of renewable energy. The LDP can set targets for developers to provide for a given percentage of energy used by a new development to come from on-site renewable or low carbon technologies (UK Government, 2008). The LDP can also promote the Home Quality Mark<sup>14</sup> (Building Research Establishment Ltd, 2015) and Building for Life (Design Commission for Wales, 2015) standard to support residents in understanding the quality and performance of new build homes.
- 5.10 Climate Change: The LDP should seek to identify opportunities to maximise the potential for alternative modes of transport to the car, reduce the need to travel, and thereby reduce emissions. LDP policies can further support the development of renewable energy technologies, where appropriate, in line with climate change mitigation strategies and targets.
- 5.11 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna: The delivery of growth can support investment and improvement to local nature conservation designations and biodiversity networks (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and Green Infrastructure). However, increased growth also has the potential for negative effects on and increased potential for fragmentation of habitats and ecological corridors. The LDP should seek to maximise any opportunities arising for local economies, communities, health and biodiversity. This includes potential enhancements to those designated and non-designated natural environment sites and other ecological networks that cross LA boundaries. The LDP area does not include any 'European Sites' (Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs), however other planning areas in the

<sup>14</sup> Using a simple 5-star rating, the Home Quality Mark gives home buyers and renters a clear indication of the quality and performance of a new home regarding energy bills.

region do. Blaen Cynon (Rhondda Cynon Taff) and Aberbargoed Grasslands (Caerphilly) are European Sites in neighbouring planning areas which support populations of the Marsh Fritillary Butterfly, which have now also been recorded within the plan area. The LDP and SA should seek to ensure that all significant cross boundary issues are identified and addressed. It should also seek to maximise any potential opportunities that could arise through the requirement for development plan compatibility and consistency.

- 5.12 Water and Flooding: The LDP can plan for water efficiency, as well as ensure that water quality is maintained and enhanced in the plan area and that there is sufficient 'headroom' in the waste water treatment works in Cilfynydd. This not only addresses an existing sustainability issue but will allow for more long-term flexibility in the LDP, should the overall level of growth change in the future because of new or updated evidence. The SA process should seek to identify and address potential negative effects on the water environment. The LDP can ensure that development is sited away from areas of high flood probability and that appropriate provision is made for water drainage in line with local flood risk strategies.
- 5.13 Air Quality: Any increased growth in housing and employment development proposed in the LDP will inevitably increase pressures on road traffic and air quality. The SA process can help the LDP to minimise the effects of this through the consideration of alternatives and assessment of significant effects.
- 5.14 Waste: The LDP can support waste minimisation measures for new development.
- 5.15 Minerals, Land and Soil: Land and soil quality, are all likely to be affected to some degree by the delivery of new development within the Plan area. The LDP should ensure that new development does not conflict with current mineral operations as well as long-term mineral safeguarding zones. Further to this the LDP can ensure the appropriate protection of soil quality, including best and most versatile agricultural land and soils which have not been disturbed by previous industrial activity. The SA process should inform the development of the Plan by helping to identify sensitive receptors and seek to ensure that adverse sustainability effects are minimised and opportunities for sustainable development are maximised.
- 5.16 Cultural Heritage (Inc. Welsh Language) & Historic Environment: Increased growth also has the potential for negative effects on the settings of designated heritage assets. This highlights the need for strong design policies. The LDP can also offer enhanced protection for designated and non-designated heritage

assets and their settings, including any potential archaeological finds in line with heritage protection and enhancement strategies and plans.

- 5.17 Landscape and Townscape: are all likely to be affected to some degree by the delivery of new development within the Plan area. Increased growth also has the potential for negative effects on landscape and townscape characters. The LDP can seek to protect and enhance key landscapes and their settings and townscapes through regeneration.

**Figure 5.3: The Key Headline Issues**

◆ The role and function of the town of Merthyr Tydfil as the regional centre for the Heads of the Valleys.
◆ The distribution of growth within the SE Wales region and projected demographic change within the County Borough over the plan period.
◆ New transport infrastructure is being proposed, including the South Wales Metro and active travel routes.
◆ Ecological connectivity.

### Evolution without the LDP

- 5.18 Communities: There is likely to be a less coordinated approach to the delivery of new housing and other development required by the changing population. The LDP can help to guide development to the right place, at the right time, to address relevant issues within the MTCB area.
- 5.19 Health and Inequalities: Development is less likely to deliver health benefits and there is an increased likelihood of negative effects on green infrastructure networks and existing facilities. The LDP can provide protection for green infrastructure; ensure that new development contributes to enhancing assets, achieve overall connectivity and equality of provision at the strategic scale; is accessible and targets planning gains to the most deprived areas, thus seeking to reduce inequalities.
- 5.20 Education: There is likely to be a less coordinated approach to the delivery of new education facilities. The LDP can help to guide high quality educational facilities in suitable locations across the MTCB area.
- 5.21 Housing: There is likely to be a less coordinated approach to the delivery of new housing, particularly affordable housing. The LDP can help to guide appropriate residential development towards sustainable locations across the MTCB area.

- 5.22 Economy and Employment: There is likely to be a less coordinated approach to the delivery of new employment where it is needed most, which could affect the current trends of increasing economic activity and decreasing economic inactivity. The LDP can address issues, such as the over-reliance on public sector jobs, the relatively low numbers of people employed in higher paid/more skilled occupations, and the higher than average commercial vacancy rate by guiding development to suitable sustainable locations across the MTCB area.
- 5.23 Connections (Transport and Movement): It would be less likely that highway capacity improvements would be identified to accommodate the cumulative impact of new development. The LDP can guide development to areas where the existing transport networks can accommodate growth, improvements can be easily provided which improve accessibility for local communities and reduce the need to travel by promoting a modal shift towards active travel and quality public transport systems. The LDP can also direct new strategic employment development to combat out-commuting and contribute towards minimising transport emissions and provide rural development that supports key services and facilities that contribute to improving accessibility and equality within the countryside.
- 5.24 Energy: Although existing national planning guidance provides a framework for the delivery of renewable energy technology, planning gains are less likely to be delivered in a timely and coordinated manner. The LDP can allocate land for the siting of renewable energy developments and include policies which provide guidance and criteria for such development.
- 5.25 Climate Change: Development may be less ambitious in its energy performance, and planning gains are less likely to be delivered in a timely and coordinated manner. The LDP can provide support to climate change through mitigation measures such as new green infrastructure, sustainable drainage systems in new development and contributions to improved flood defence and by setting aspirational energy efficiency targets.
- 5.26 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna: Development would still come forward and be subject to international and national policies and guidance in relation to the protection of biodiversity. However, the LDP gives the LPA the opportunity to more effectively coordinate development and direct it towards those areas that are potentially less sensitive, has less cumulative effects on biodiversity, where it avoids fragmentation and helps to maintain or improve ecological connectivity, within MTBC and neighbouring authority areas.

- 5.27 Water: Resources, Quality and Flooding: Development would still come forward and be subject to national policies and guidance in relation to the protection of water resources and quality; incorporation of efficiency measures; management of surface water run-off and avoidance of flood risk areas. However, the LDP provides the opportunity to more effectively co-ordinate development; direct it towards those areas that are potentially less sensitive and have lower risk of flooding, and set more aspirational requirements for future development in terms of water efficiency standards and the management of surface water run-off.
- 5.28 Air Quality: There is likely to be a less coordinated approach to the delivery of new development and infrastructure in the County Borough, which could exacerbate congestion and potentially affect air quality. The LDP provides an opportunity to determine what additional infrastructure and wider mitigation measures such as green infrastructure is necessary to minimise impacts. New development and infrastructure can be delivered alongside improvements to public transport and active travel routes in areas that will help to reduce the need to travel and potentially help to address an existing area of congestion, such as within the proposed AQMA.
- 5.29 Noise: There is likely to be a less coordinated approach to the delivery of new housing, employment and infrastructure in MTCBC. This could create or exacerbate noise pollution issues and result in negative impacts on human health and well-being, the economy, wildlife and tranquillity. The LDP provides an opportunity to consider the cumulative effect of new development on the acoustic environment and determine what measures are necessary to mitigate the impacts of noise pollution. New housing, employment and infrastructure can be delivered in the appropriate locations, alongside improvements to existing infrastructure and the introduction of mitigating measures.
- 5.30 Minerals, land and soil: On-going management and future development of minerals are provided through collaborative working arrangements at a regional level, but there is no guiding framework at a local level. The LDP is therefore essential to maintain a minimum 10 year land bank of permitted aggregate reserves which contributes to regional demand. The LDP can also identify the most appropriate locations for new mineral developments that have the least adverse impact on locally sensitive receptors and steer new sensitive development, such as schools and housing, away from existing mineral sites to avoid conflicts.
- 5.31 Waste: On-going management and future development of waste facilities are provided through collaborative working arrangements at a regional level, but there is no guiding framework at a local level. The LDP is therefore essential to



provide sufficient land to deliver an adequate and integrated network of waste facilities. The LDP can identify the most appropriate locations for new waste developments that have the least adverse impact on locally sensitive receptors and steer new sensitive development, such as schools and housing, away from existing waste sites to avoid conflicts. The LDP can also ensure that new developments maximise opportunities to recycle demolition and construction waste on site; incorporate facilities and space for the collection, composting and recycling of waste materials.

5.32 Cultural Heritage (incl. Welsh Language) & Historic Environment: Although National policy protects designated heritage assets the LDP can protect non-designated assets which are highly valuable and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, as well as to identify which of those are more vulnerable to the impacts of development. Importantly given that the SA can consider the cumulative effects of proposed development on designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings, the LDP can implement the mechanisms to enhance protection for such assets. Together with Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) the LDP can also secure enhancements through grant aid and future regeneration projects and steer new development to appropriate locations, sympathetic to existing heritage assets. The growth in Welsh speakers is positive, but this needs to be maintained and work towards the national target of one million Welsh speakers by 2050 across Wales. For Merthyr this equates to around a third of the current population. The LDP can support the Council's emerging Welsh Language Promotional Strategy by supporting opportunities to weave the language into everyday life to increase people's confidence and opportunity to speak it; e.g. through play, leisure opportunities, interaction with businesses and within the workplace.

5.33 Landscape and Townscape (incl. Built Environment): Although key designated landscapes will retain a level of protection in accommodating new development, a number of non-designated features, assets and characteristics which significantly contribute to the overall landscape character and sense of place will remain vulnerable. The LDP can offer local policy protection of these key assets, reducing the risk of loss, or detriment to, factors affecting landscape character. It can also coordinate opportunity and investment across the whole of the plan area to ensure that development delivers the best possible, high quality, and multifunctional benefits. It can also consider designation of new landscape protection areas such as Special Landscape Areas. With changing agricultural practices, the LDP can also provide a flexible policy approach to agricultural land management and appropriately monitor the effects of the changes in the industry and its implications for the landscape.



## 6. THE SA FRAMEWORK

- 6.1 The proposed method for appraising the emerging replacement LDP, or 'SA Framework', which is used in this report requires appraisal of each element of the Preferred Strategy against the sustainability objectives.
- 6.2 SA objectives were drafted following the identification of key issues (see Appendix 3) during the scoping stage and link with the 'National Well-being Goals'. The PS Vision, Objectives, Growth and Spatial Options, Policies, Candidate Sites and JHLAS sites have each been appraised against the SA Objectives using professional judgment, supported by the baseline information. The categories of significance for the appraisal of Growth and Spatial Options, Policies, Candidate Sites and JHLAS sites is set out in Figure 6.1 below.
- 6.3 The LDP vision and objectives have been appraised through an analysis of compatibility with each of the Sustainability Objectives.
- 6.3 The Strategic SA Framework presented at in Table 6.1 provides the basis for appraising strategic growth and distribution options.
- 6.4 The Candidate Site SA Framework presented in Table 6.2 provides the basis for appraising 'Candidate Sites' nominated for inclusion in the replacement LDP and JHLAS sites.
- 6.5 The results of the appraisal are detailed in sections 7 and 8.

Figure 6.1: SA Significance Key Categories of Significance		
Symbol	Meaning	Sustainability Effect
++	Major Positive	Proposed development encouraged as would resolve existing sustainability problem
+	Minor Positive	No sustainability constraints and proposed development acceptable
0	Neutral	Neutral effect
?	Uncertain	Uncertain or Unknown Effects
-	Minor Negative	Potential sustainability issues: mitigation and/or negotiation possible
--	Major Negative	Problematical and improbable because of known sustainability issues; mitigation likely to be difficult and/or expensive

**Table 6.1:** Strategic SA Framework

Topic	Key Sustainability Issues	SA Objectives	Decision-Aiding Questions
<p><b>Communities (incl. Population)</b></p> <p>SEA Directive Topic(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population</li> <li>Material Assets</li> </ul> <p>Well-being Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A more equal Wales</li> <li>A Wales of cohesive communities</li> <li>A Wales of vibrant culture &amp; thriving Welsh language</li> <li>A healthier Wales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The latest (2014) population projections show a declining population from 2024 onwards.</li> <li>It is projected that the demographic profile will move towards there being a greater proportion of the population aged 60 and over.</li> <li>All population scenarios will have an impact on a wide range of infrastructure such as education facilities, health facilities and leisure facilities.</li> <li>The distribution of any population and housing growth must be considered carefully to ensure that existing community services and infrastructure can cope, or that planned new infrastructure and services can be delivered to ensure communities remain sustainable.</li> <li>There is still a trend of losing working age people to elsewhere in the UK.</li> <li>Sustaining the existing level of population would lead to an increase in the number of school age children in the County Borough over the plan period potentially requiring extensions to existing schools or the construction of new schools.</li> <li>The spatial distribution of educational facilities needs to be considered</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.</li> <li>To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.</li> <li>To support a sustainable level of population growth.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the option present opportunities to retain and or enhance the identity of a community or settlement and effectively integrate within the existing settlement pattern or is it likely to result in change?</li> <li>Is the option likely to necessitate investment in education and training facilities and or recreational and open space provision?</li> <li>Does the option ensure that a sufficient level of sustainable community services/facilities will be delivered to meet the identified needs or projected deficiencies of all communities and or provide opportunities to enhance or expand the existing provision in the plan area?</li> <li>To what extent will the option assist in sustaining the level of the working aged population living and allow for the projected transition in the demographic profile in the County Borough?</li> </ul>

Table 6.1: Strategic SA Framework			
Topic	Key Sustainability Issues	SA Objectives	Decision-Aiding Questions
	<p>carefully to ensure that facilities remain viable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Educational attainment at Key Stage 4 is below the Welsh Average.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Health and Equalities</b></p> <p>SEA Directive Topic(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Human Health</li> <li>◆ Material Assets</li> </ul> <p>Well-being Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ A healthier Wales</li> <li>◆ A more equal Wales</li> <li>◆ A Wales of cohesive communities</li> <li>◆ A Wales of vibrant culture &amp; thriving Welsh language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Life expectancy is significantly below the Wales average.</li> <li>◆ Obesity in the adult population is significantly worse than the Wales average.</li> <li>◆ A mental health component summary score which is significantly lower than the Wales average.</li> <li>◆ Higher multiple deprivation is experienced in the north of the County Borough.</li> <li>◆ The accessibility to and sufficiency of open space varies by ward with some experiencing deficiencies.</li> <li>◆ The Noise maps indicate that the existing primary source of noise pollution within MTCBC is from the classified roads within the County Borough.</li> </ul>	<p>4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Is the option susceptible to the risk of a serious HSE, vehicular or natural hazard?</li> <li>◆ Does the option offer the potential for investment, regeneration or renewal in areas experiencing high level of multiple deprivation?</li> <li>◆ Does the option present opportunities to retain and expand the identified need of all communities' and residents health provision?</li> <li>◆ Is the option likely to have an effect on communities and settlements in terms of increased noise generating activities?</li> <li>◆ Is the option likely to have an effect on communities and settlements in terms of community safety and cleanliness?</li> </ul>

Table 6.1: Strategic SA Framework			
Topic	Key Sustainability Issues	SA Objectives	Decision-Aiding Questions
<b>Housing</b>  SEA Directive Topic(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population</li> <li>Material Assets</li> <li>Human Health</li> </ul> Well-being Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Wales of cohesive communities</li> <li>A more equal Wales</li> <li>A globally responsible Wales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustaining the existing level of population would require an increase in the number residences in the County Borough.</li> <li>There is a significant need for the provision of Social Housing despite the relative affordability of living in Merthyr Tydfil.</li> <li>Intermediate affordable housing products need to be carefully considered.</li> <li>There is a need to facilitate a sustainable transition towards the housing needs of an aging population.</li> </ul>	5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the option provide a sufficient range of high quality and accessible housing land to facilitate the sustainable development of the new housing requirement in the plan area?</li> <li>Does the option provide the opportunity to promote an appropriate mix of housing size, type and tenure for the identified needs of communities including those with special needs within the Plan area?</li> <li>Does the option provide opportunities to meet affordable housing needs to enable people to remain within the plan area?</li> </ul>

Table 6.1: Strategic SA Framework			
Topic	Key Sustainability Issues	SA Objectives	Decision-Aiding Questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A significant range in the quality and energy efficiency of the 'stock'.</li> <li>A significant number of 'empty properties'.</li> <li>Additional, better quality, housing is required to attract and retain people.</li> <li>The spatial distribution and phasing of new housing development must be considered carefully to ensure that it is viable and to ensure that existing infrastructure can cope, or that planned new infrastructure can be delivered to ensure communities remain sustainable.</li> <li>Competition from other areas in South East Wales.</li> </ul>	6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the option present opportunities to protect and enhance the existing traditional housing stock where appropriate?</li> <li>Does the option present opportunities to improve the energy efficiency of the existing and new housing stock?</li> <li>Does the option present opportunities to influence good sustainable design in new housing developments?</li> </ul>
<b>Economy and Employment</b>  SEA Directive Topic(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Material Assets</li> </ul> Well-being Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A prosperous Wales</li> <li>A more equal Wales</li> <li>A Wales of cohesive communities</li> <li>A globally responsible Wales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The employment rate in MTCBC is increasing but is still below the Wales average.</li> <li>Gross weekly pay is lower than the Wales average.</li> <li>Relatively low numbers of people are employed in higher paid/more skilled jobs.</li> <li>Key economic sectors include the public sector and service sectors.</li> <li>There are relatively low outflows of retail and convenience spending.</li> <li>Commercial vacancy rates are higher than the Wales average.</li> <li>Very little new development on</li> </ul>	7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the option enable the safeguarding of existing employment land in the plan area?</li> <li>Does the option present opportunities to attract and provide a sufficient range of high quality and accessible employment land to facilitate the sustainable expansion of new jobs in the plan area?</li> <li>Does the option present opportunities to support and enhance the vitality and viability of the Town and local Centres?</li> <li>Does the option safeguard the low level of retail convenience spend</li> </ul>

Table 6.1: Strategic SA Framework			
Topic	Key Sustainability Issues	SA Objectives	Decision-Aiding Questions
	<p>employment land over the past 5 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Competition from other areas in UK.</li> </ul>		<p>loss?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Does the option present opportunities to retain and facilitate the sustainable expansion of resident businesses in the plan area?</li> <li>◆ Does the option present opportunities to retain, develop and enhance the MTCB area as a tourist destination?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Connections (incl. transport and movement)</b></p> <p>SEA Directive Topic(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Material assets</li> <li>◆ Air</li> </ul> <p>Well-being Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ A prosperous Wales</li> <li>◆ A globally responsible Wales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Green infrastructure and Active Travel routes are not well connected through the urban grain / pattern.</li> <li>◆ The A470, train line and the River Taf, all run North-South and constrain East-West movement and accessibility to bridges, underpasses and roundabouts in some parts of the County Borough.</li> <li>◆ Orbital travel (between valleys) is difficult. There is an opportunity to link Merthyr and Aberdare via the Abernant Tunnel.</li> <li>◆ Very low levels of active travel commuting for journeys less than 5km.</li> <li>◆ Rights of Way connectivity requires improvement (links and loops).</li> <li>◆ Net out-commuting to Cardiff.</li> <li>◆ New central bus station proposed.</li> <li>◆ Rail head at the Ffos-y-fran land reclamation site is still in operation.</li> <li>◆ Congestion at 'hot spots' on the road network at peak times. An AQMA is</li> </ul>	8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Does the option present opportunities to improve access to and the quality of sustainable transport modes for all communities, including public transport, freight and active travel routes?</li> <li>◆ Does the option present opportunities to promote the use of green infrastructure within communities and to connect settlements?</li> </ul>
		9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Does the option ensure that sufficient land and infrastructure capacity e.g. electricity, gas, water, telecommunications and waste facilities and is available to facilitate required or identified improvements?</li> <li>◆ Is the option likely to have an effect on communities and settlements in terms of increased emissions and or air quality and proximity to landfill</li> </ul>

Table 6.1: Strategic SA Framework			
Topic	Key Sustainability Issues	SA Objectives	Decision-Aiding Questions
	proposed at Twynirodyn Hill, with road traffic being the primary cause of for exceedances of the AQOs.		<p>sites?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the option likely to increase or exacerbate levels of traffic congestion and air quality 'hot spots'?</li> <li>Does the option offer opportunities to enhance or improve the existing road or rail (including freight) network?</li> <li>Does the option enable the safeguarding of locally or regionally planned transport routes or proposals?</li> </ul>
<b>Energy</b>  SEA Directive Topic(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Material Assets</li> <li>Climatic Factors</li> <li>Air</li> </ul> Well-being Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A prosperous Wales</li> <li>A resilient Wales</li> <li>A globally responsible Wales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Domestic consumption is the biggest contributor to local greenhouse gas emissions.</li> <li>Transport fuel consumption is also a significant contributor to local greenhouse gas emissions.</li> <li>There is opportunity for renewable energy within the plan area.</li> </ul>	<p>10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.</p> <p><i>See SA objectives 6 and 9 above and SA objective 11 below.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the option present opportunities to promote the use and production of renewable energy in the plan area?</li> <li>Does the option present opportunities to promote energy efficiency in new development?</li> <li>Does the option present opportunities to reduce fuel poverty?</li> </ul>
<b>Climate Change</b>  SEA Directive Topic(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climatic Factors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increases in hot-weather related death and illness and conversely reductions in cold-weather related illness and death.</li> <li>Changes in soil conditions, biodiversity</li> </ul>	<p>11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the option likely to result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions?</li> <li>Would the option ensure that new</li> </ul>

**Table 6.1:** Strategic SA Framework

Topic	Key Sustainability Issues	SA Objectives	Decision-Aiding Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water</li> <li>Material Assets</li> </ul> <p>Well-being Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A resilient Wales</li> <li>A globally responsible Wales</li> <li>A healthier Wales</li> </ul>	<p>and landscape due to warmer, drier summers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changes in species including a decline in native species, changes in migration patterns and increases in alien and invasive species.</li> <li>Reductions in river flows and water availability during the summer, affecting water supplies and the natural environment.</li> <li>Increases in flooding, affecting people, property and infrastructure.</li> <li>Increases in the risk of pests and diseases affecting agriculture and forestry. The risk to livestock is a particular concern.</li> <li>Increases in grass yields, allowing a potential increase in livestock production;</li> <li>Increases in tourist numbers and a longer tourist season.</li> </ul>	<p>resilience to it.</p>	<p>development is resilient to the effects of climate change?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the option present opportunities to promote the use of green infrastructure to help to reduce the County Boroughs carbon footprint?</li> <li>Is the option likely to have an effect on microclimates and what is that effect likely to be?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna.</b></p> <p>SEA Directive Topic(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biodiversity</li> <li>Flora</li> <li>Fauna</li> <li>Soil</li> </ul> <p>Well-being Goals:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the County Borough.</li> <li>National and local designated sites for nature conservation and geodiversity and the presence of a range of s42 habitats and species.</li> <li>Ecological corridors within Merthyr Tydfil and between Merthyr Tydfil and adjoining LAs.</li> <li>Fragmented green infrastructure within</li> </ul>	<p>12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.</p> <p>See SA objective 7 above.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the option likely to have an effect on nationally or locally designated locally designated sites?</li> <li>Is the option likely to result in the loss or fragmentation of important ecosystems green spaces or reduce connectivity of green corridors?</li> <li>Does the option present opportunities to enhance or manage important habitats or</li> </ul>



Table 6.1: Strategic SA Framework			
Topic	Key Sustainability Issues	SA Objectives	Decision-Aiding Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A resilient Wales</li> <li>A globally responsible Wales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the urban area.</li> <li>Land management practices have varying impacts on the biodiversity present.</li> <li>Climate change will place increased pressure on biodiversity and ecosystems.</li> <li>Post-industrial land.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>species and or provide a net gain?</li> <li>Does the option present opportunities for communities to manage their own environments?</li> </ul>
<b>Water (inc. Flooding)</b>  SEA Directive Topic(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water</li> <li>Climatic Factors</li> <li>Material Assets</li> </ul> Well-being Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A resilient Wales</li> <li>A globally responsible Wales</li> <li>A prosperous Wales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate change will place increased pressure on water resources, in particular in the summer months.</li> <li>The chemical status of Water is deteriorating in the Nant Morlais.</li> <li>Improving and/or preventing the decline of the quality of groundwater and surface-water and water bodies. Parts of the Town Centre are identified as being at risk from flooding.</li> </ul>	13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.  See SA objective 9 above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the option likely to have an effect on the sustainable use of water resources?</li> <li>Is the option likely to have an effect on the quality of ground water bodies?</li> <li>Does the option present opportunities to promote water-based recreation?</li> </ul>
		14. To minimise the risk of flooding.  See SA objective 11 above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the option direct development away from flood risk areas?</li> <li>Does the option enable the safeguarding of land to manage or reduce future flood risks in the plan area?</li> <li>Does the option present opportunities to protect the natural and built environment?</li> <li>Does the option present opportunities to promote the use of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) in the plan area?</li> </ul>

Table 6.1: Strategic SA Framework			
Topic	Key Sustainability Issues	SA Objectives	Decision-Aiding Questions
<b>Air Quality</b>  SEA Directive Topic(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Air</li> <li>Human Health</li> <li>Material Assets</li> </ul> Well-being Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A resilient Wales</li> <li>A healthier Wales</li> <li>A globally responsible Wales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 AQMA designated for exceedances of Nitrogen Dioxide in Twynrodyn Hill caused by Traffic.</li> <li>A new bus station has received planning permission.</li> <li>East Merthyr Land reclamation phase 3 (Ffos-y-fran) is ongoing.</li> </ul>	See SA objectives 8 and 11 above.	See SA objectives 8 and 11 above.
<b>Waste</b>  SEA Directive Topic(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biodiversity</li> <li>Landscape</li> <li>Material Assets</li> <li>Soil</li> </ul> Well-being Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A prosperous Wales</li> <li>A resilient Wales</li> <li>A globally responsible Wales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to facilitate the provision of an adequate and integrated network of waste facilities.</li> <li>Capacity of waste site at Trecatti.</li> </ul>	See SA objectives 8, 9 and 11 above.	See SA objectives 8, 9 and 11 above.
<b>Minerals, Land &amp; Soil</b>  SEA Directive Topic(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biodiversity</li> <li>Landscape</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no 'best and most versatile' agricultural land, present within the County Borough.</li> <li>There is very little soil which may be used for growing.</li> </ul>	15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the option enable the safeguarding of mineral resources sustainable levels of extraction in the plan area?</li> <li>Is the option reliant on the pre-</li> </ul>

Table 6.1: Strategic SA Framework			
Topic	Key Sustainability Issues	SA Objectives	Decision-Aiding Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Material Assets</li> <li>Soil</li> </ul> <p>Well-being Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A prosperous Wales</li> <li>A resilient Wales</li> <li>A globally responsible Wales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing permitted reserves.</li> <li>Mineral resources worthy of safeguarding have been identified by the BGS.</li> <li>A large amount of previously developed and contaminated land.</li> <li>A significant land reclamation scheme is underway in the County Borough and one is proposed in a neighbouring areas.</li> <li>Encouraging the transportation of raw materials by rail.</li> </ul>	See SA objectives 9 and 11 above.	<p>extraction of mineral resources and follow-up restoration?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the option present potential opportunities to enable safe and appropriate restoration, regeneration or re-use of previously developed brownfield or contaminated land in the plan area?</li> <li>Is the option likely to have an effect on previously undeveloped greenfield or agricultural land in the plan area?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cultural Heritage (inc. Welsh Language) &amp; Historic Environment</b></p> <p>SEA Directive Topic(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural Heritage</li> <li>Material Assets</li> </ul> <p>Well-being Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Wales of vibrant culture &amp; thriving Welsh language</li> <li>A Wales of cohesive communities</li> <li>A more equal Wales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Merthyr Tydfil contains a rich defining era of heritage assets, which require sensitive management and protection.</li> <li>Merthyr Tydfil has the second highest proportion of population who are unable to communicate in Welsh (after Blaenau Gwent) at 91.36% (2011 Census).</li> </ul>	16. To protect and enhance heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the option likely to have an effect on nationally or locally designated heritage assets and/or their settings?</li> <li>Is the option likely to have an effect on any important non-designated heritage assets and/or their settings?</li> <li>Does the option present potential opportunities to enhance any heritage assets or their settings in the plan area?</li> </ul>
		17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the option present opportunities to facilitate the promotion of the Welsh language or local arts, sports and culture in the plan area?</li> </ul>

Table 6.1: Strategic SA Framework			
Topic	Key Sustainability Issues	SA Objectives	Decision-Aiding Questions
<b>Landscape &amp; Townscape (inc. Built Environment)</b>  SEA Directive Topic(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landscape</li> <li>Material Assets</li> </ul> Well-being Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Wales of cohesive communities</li> <li>A Wales of vibrant culture &amp; thriving Welsh language</li> <li>A resilient Wales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning Area Adjoins the Brecon Beacons National Park.</li> <li>Areas of landscape quality, identified as draft Special Landscape Area Designations.</li> <li>Merthyr Tydfil contains a rich defining era of heritage assets based on its origins of Iron Works. The Valleys settlements grew around Coal production.</li> <li>Maintaining the integrity of the Merthyr Tydfil Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest.</li> <li>Maintaining the integrity and setting of Cyfarthfa Castle and associated Registered Park and Garden and Aberfan Cemetery - Garden of Remembrance and Former Tip and Slide area.</li> <li>Protecting the setting and character of 'character areas' and conservation areas.</li> <li>Maintaining traditional field boundaries and habitats.</li> <li>Preserving views from promoted routes such as the Taff Trail.</li> </ul>	18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.  See SA objective 7 above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the option likely to have an effect on nationally or locally designated sites or features and or their settings and key views to and from features including open natural skylines, open hill slopes and site lines of key views?</li> <li>Would the option result in loss of trees, woodland, hedgerows, field patterns or valued landscapes?</li> <li>Which settlements in the County Borough would most likely be effected by change and what is that change likely to be as a result of the option?</li> <li>Is the option likely to have an effect on the identity of any communities or result in coalescence?</li> </ul>

Table 6.2: Candidate Sites SA Framework				
Topic	SA Objective	Significance criteria, including any assumptions, uncertainties standards and thresholds for SA of Site Options		
<b>Communities (incl. Population)</b>	1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	SA Objective 1 relates to the capacity of social and community infrastructure to accommodate communities' sustainable access to the services and facilities they require to meet their needs.	++	The site option is located within reasonable walking distance (within 800m) of all key services and facilities.
		The SA assumes that any proposal for development can make appropriate and timely provision or contributions for necessary supporting infrastructure, including community facilities and services.	+	The site option is located within reasonable walking distance (within 800m) of most of the key services and facilities.
		The nature and significance of the effects against this SA Objective will relate to the <b>distance of the site from existing services/ facilities</b> , including schools (primary and secondary), libraries, GP surgery/medical centres, post offices, community centres and retail provision.  <b>Evidence Base:</b> The Council's site assessment process will be used to inform the assessment of effects against this SA Objective. Reasonable walking distance is informed by the <i>Department for Transport (2007) Manual for Streets</i> (Department for Transport, 2007).	0	A neutral effect is not considered possible.
			?	There is an element of uncertainty, most likely until lower level assessments have been carried out through planning applications.
			-	The site option is located beyond reasonable walking distance (over 800m) of most of the key services and facilities.
			--	The site option is located beyond reasonable walking distance (over 800m) of all key services and facilities.
	2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement	SA Objective 2 relates to the impact of a development proposal on the character and identity of a community.  The nature and significance of the effects against this SA Objective will relate to the magnitude of change. For	++	Development would support the character and identity of a community area experiencing Multiple Deprivation by enabling it to grow sustainably.

	identities.	instance would the proposal, alone or in combination, lead to the coalescence of settlements or significantly change the characteristics of a community? It assumes high quality of design. <b>Evidence base:</b> ArcGIS will enable the identification of the scale of change a community could expect if the site option (s) were selected.	+	Development would support the character and identity of a community by enabling it to grow sustainably.
			0	A neutral effect is not considered possible
			?	N/A
			-	Development would lead to a significant change in the character of the community
			--	Development would lead to the coalescence of settlements or an existing community to be subsumed by new development.
Health and Equalities	3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	Assuming sufficient sites have been nominated for inclusion in the LDP, SA objective3 is not a differential at the site options stage.		
	4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	SA Objective 4 relates to the built environment's contribution to healthy and active lifestyles, and any disparities in provisions across the Plan area.  The nature and significance of the effects against this SA Objective will relate to the provision of development in deprived areas and access to existing good quality open/recreational space and sports/leisure facilities.  The SA assumes that any proposal for development can make appropriate and timely provision or contributions for necessary supporting infrastructure, including health, and	++	The site option is located within reasonable walking distance (within 400m) to sufficient amounts of open/recreational space or sports/leisure facilities and will deliver new development in an area of higher deprivation.
			+	The site option is located within reasonable walking distance (within 400m) of most of the open/recreational space or sports/leisure facilities or will deliver

		<p>green infrastructure.</p> <p>The appraisal narrative will note if there are any potential issues at site options with regard to the compatibility of surrounding land uses. It will also identify where mitigation may overcome any identified potential negative effects.</p> <p><b>Evidence base:</b></p> <p>The open space strategy identified sufficiency standards for access to open space. The Welsh index of Multiple Deprivation identifies communities experiencing Multiple Deprivation.</p> <p>The Council's site assessment process will be used to inform the assessment of effects against this SA Objective. Reasonable walking distance is informed by TAN 16: <i>Sport, Recreation and Open Space</i>.</p>		new development in an area of higher deprivation.
			0	A neutral effect is not considered possible.
			?	There is an element of uncertainty, most likely until lower level assessments have been carried out through planning applications.
			-	The site option is located beyond reasonable walking distance (over 400m) to existing open/recreational space or sports/leisure facilities and would be located in an area deficient in open space.
			--	Development at the site option would result in a net loss of open/recreational space, and / or sports/leisure facilities, in an area already deficient in open space.
Housing	5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	<p>SA Objective 5 primarily relates to the provision of an appropriate quantity of housing to meet the needs of all residents and communities in Plan area.</p> <p>This SA objective assumes that development at any of the site options could provide an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures.</p>	++	The site option has the potential to provide a significant amount of new housing (50 dwellings or more)
			+	The site option has the potential to provide new housing (less than 50 dwellings)
			0	If no housing is being proposed as part of development, as it is an

		<p>The nature and significance of the effects against this SA Objective will relate to the potential <b>capacity of the site to accommodate residential development</b>.</p> <p><b>Evidence base:</b> The Council's site assessment process, in particular the proposed use and estimated housing capacity of the site, will inform the assessment of effects against this SA Objective.</p>		employment site option, then it is considered to have a neutral effect against this SA Objective
			?	There is an element of uncertainty as the capacity of the site option for housing development is unknown
			-	Not applicable.
			--	Not applicable.
	6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	<p>SA objective 6 relates to the quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock, which, in new development, is largely regulated by building control.</p> <p>This SA objective assumes that development at any of the site options could be delivered to a high quality.</p> <p>The nature and significance of the effects against this SA Objective will primarily relate to specific sites and will not be a differential at the site options stage.</p>		
	7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	SA objective 7 assumes that any proposal for development will be designed responsibly and relates to significant interventions to attract new job creating investment in <b>any</b> sector. This objective is not a differential at the site options stage.		
<b>Economy &amp; Employment</b>	7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	SA objective 7 assumes that any proposal for development will be designed responsibly and relates to significant interventions to attract new job creating investment in <b>any</b> sector. This objective is not a differential at the site options stage.		
<b>Connections (incl. Transport and Movement)</b>	8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of	<p>The nature and significance of the effects against SA Objective 8 will primarily relate to <b>existing access to active travel train or bus routes and proposed enhancements</b>. In particular to better connect residential areas with the Town Centre and to connect Merthyr Tydfil and Aberdare via the Aberrant Tunnel and the wider region.</p>	++	The site option is within reasonable walking distance to a train station (800m), bus stop (400m) with a frequent service (every half hour) and or a reasonable distance (100m) to an active travel route or a



	transport.	<p>For the purposes of the SA, identified active travel routes are those identified in the <i>Active Travel existing Routes Map (2016)</i>.</p> <p>A key aspect of encouraging walking and cycling is that routes need to be direct and accessible. Taking this into account, for the purposes of the SA a reasonable distance to these key walking and cycling routes is considered to be within 100m.</p> <p>Distances will be measured using a buffer zone of the set reasonable walking distance calculated from the site boundary within ArcGIS. It is recognised however that the distance by buffer zone is not the only aspect to consider in accessibility, and as such the narrative will note if potential barriers to movement or poor quality infrastructure is likely to restrict the potential use of the mode. The SA assumes that development at any of the site options could potentially provide or contribute to improved access to active travel routes.</p> <p>The SA assumes that larger strategic development options have greater potential for enhancements to existing infrastructure and services/provisions.</p> <p><b>Evidence base:</b> ArcGIS shapefiles and evidence gathered to support the identification of existing Active Travel routes (2016).</p>		key pedestrian or cycling route and offers the potential to enhance the sustainable travel network.
			+	The site option is within reasonable walking distance (100m) without impediment to an active travel or a key pedestrian or cycling route.
			0	A neutral effect is not considered possible.
			?	There is an element of uncertainty, for example the connectivity of the route is questionable or unknown, until more detailed assessments have been completed e.g. topography.
			-	The site option is not within reasonable walking distance to a train station (800m), bus stop (400m) with a frequent service (every half hour) and or a reasonable distance (100m) to an active travel route or a key pedestrian or cycling route or is within reasonable walking distance but is impeded by topography or barriers.

			--	The site option is not within reasonable walking distance to a train station (800m), bus stop (400m) with a frequent service (every half hour) and or a reasonable distance (100m) to an active travel route or a key pedestrian or cycling route and would hinder improvements to the connectivity of the active travel route network.
	9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	<p>SA Objective 9 relates to the capacity of infrastructure to accommodate the distribution of population and housing growth.</p> <p>The SA assumes that any proposal for development can make appropriate and timely provision or contributions for necessary supporting infrastructure, including utilities services.</p> <p>The nature and significance of the effects against this SA Objective will relate to whether headroom exists within the electricity network, water provision, waste and water disposal networks, gas network and broadband network.</p> <p><b>Evidence base:</b> Consultation responses and advice from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dwr Cymru Welsh Water</li> <li>• Western Power Distribution</li> <li>• Wales and West Utilities</li> <li>• BT Openreach</li> </ul>	++	Sufficient infrastructure headroom exists in all utilities and connections are straight forward
			+	There will be sufficient infrastructure headroom in all utilities during the plan period although connections to at least one utility will require phasing and or a significant developer contribution.
			0	A neutral effect is not considered possible.
			?	There is an element of uncertainty, most likely until more detailed assessments have been carried out through planning applications
			-	The provision of headroom is reliant on efficiencies in the network outside the direct control of the utilities provider.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Merthyr Tydfil Council Waste Management</li> </ul>	--	It is unlikely that sufficient headroom will be available in the plan period or the development contribution required to upgrade a network is likely to make the site unviable.
Energy	10. To minimise efficiency use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	<p>SA Objective 10 relates to the potential for the site option to contribute to the delivery of renewable energy and assumes that all new development can meet policy targets for energy efficiency, using sustainable construction methods and could promote building form and layout that aids adaptation.</p> <p>It is assumed that all site options have the potential for neutral effect against SA Objective 10, and this SA Objective will not be a key differentiator between site options.</p> <p>The nature and significance of the effect will relate to the proposed use of the site and, for sites not proposed for renewable energy generation, whether there is the potential for the site to contribute to renewable / low carbon energy production.</p> <p>The SA does not consider the impact of incorporating renewable energy within development on a sites financial viability. Where practical constraints to the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy are identified these will be noted.</p> <p><b>Evidence base:</b></p> <p>The Council has commissioned a Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Assessment which will identify opportunities.</p>	++	The site is promoted for the generation of renewable and low carbon energy.
			+	The site is not promoted for renewable or low carbon energy but has clear potential to integrate with renewable technologies.
			0	A neutral effect is not considered possible.
			?	The site is not promoted for renewable or low carbon energy and it is unclear whether it has the potential to support renewable technologies.
			-	The site is not promoted for renewable or low carbon energy and practical constraints has clear potential to integrate with renewable technologies.
			--	The site is not promoted for renewable or low carbon energy and would hamper an opportunity for the development of renewable and low carbon energy generation.

		Other considerations include topography and whether any other constraints exist.		
Climate change	11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	<p>SA objective 11 relates to the capacity of the site to support adaptation to the predicted effects of climate change. In particular will the option allow sufficient access to open spaces and shade away from microclimates? Others predicted impacts most closely related to the selection of development sites are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Changes in soil conditions, biodiversity and landscape due to warmer, drier summers (see SA objectives 12 &amp; 18 below).</li> <li>2. Changes in species including a decline in native species, changes in migration patterns and increases in alien and invasive species (see SA objective 12 below).</li> <li>3. Reductions in river flows and water availability during the summer, affecting water supplies and the natural environment.</li> <li>4. Increases in flooding, affecting people, property and infrastructure.</li> </ol> <p>The nature and significance of effects against this SA Objective will relate to the potential for the development site to allow sufficient access to open spaces and shade away from microclimates through the provision of green infrastructure and planting of trees.</p> <p>If the evidence suggests that such access may be a significant issue this will be noted within the summary appraisal narrative.</p> <p><b>Evidence base:</b> Evidence from the Council's Candidate sites register and observations of the Council officers.</p>	++	The site is entirely brownfield and will not result in the loss of any greenfield or agricultural land.
			+	The majority of the site is brownfield land and will not result in the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.
			0	A neutral effect is not considered possible.
			?	An element of uncertainty exists for all sites until more detailed lower level surveys and assessment have been carried out through planning applications.
			-	The majority of the site is greenfield and does not contain any best and most versatile agricultural land.
			--	Development at the site option could result in the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.

<b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</b>	12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	SA Objective 12 relates to existing identified biodiversity assets, and ecological corridors that provide strategic connectivity for biodiversity.	++	Development at the site option will deliver biodiversity gains, or improve ecological corridors / connections to a designated site (SSSI, LNR), or development will address a significant existing sustainability issue relating to biodiversity.
		The nature and significance of effects against this SA Objective will primarily relate to potential <b>effects on biodiversity</b> . Is the site within, adjacent to, or in close proximity (200m) to any nationally designated biodiversity (SSSIs, NNRs)?		
		Is the site within, adjacent to, or in close proximity (200m) to any biodiversity sites designated as being of local importance (Local Wildlife Site, Local Nature Reserve)? Would development at the site result in the loss or fragmentation of important habitats or Green Infrastructure for biodiversity as identified in the SINCs and Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2014)?  It is recognised that when considering the potential for effects on designated biodiversity, distance in itself is not a definitive guide to the likelihood or severity of an impact. The appraisal commentary will try to note any key environmental pathways that could result in development potentially having a negative effect on designated biodiversity that may be some distance away.  The capacity of the site to accommodate housing and employment development will also influence the judgements made in terms of the nature and significance of effects against this SA Objective.  Are there opportunities to enhance biodiversity? Possibly improve connectivity, green/blue infrastructure or enhance		
			+	Development will not lead to the loss of an important habitat, species, trees and hedgerows or hamper ecological connectivity (SINCs identified / LBAP and there are potential opportunities to enhance biodiversity).
			0	Developments at the site is not likely to have negative effects on any nationally or locally designated biodiversity or contributes towards a severance of green and blue infrastructure or impede the migration of biodiversity. Potential for a neutral effect or Development at the site has the potential for negative effects on sites designated as being of local importance. Mitigation possible, potential for a residual neutral

		<p>an important habitat?</p> <p><b>Evidence base:</b> Analysis of ArcGIS map layers, Countryside and Biodiversity officers input and the Nature Conservation Strategy will inform the assessment of effects against this SA Objective.</p>		effect.
			?	Element of uncertainty exists until more detailed lower level surveys and assessments have been carried out.
			-	<p>Development at the site option has the potential for negative effects on sites designated as being of local importance, or will lead to the loss of important habitats or fragmentation/severance of the connectivity of ecological corridors as identified as SINC / Green Infrastructure or</p> <p>Development at the site has the potential for negative effects on nationally designated sites</p> <p>Mitigation possible, potential for a minor residual negative effect.</p>

			--	Development at the site has the potential for negative effects on a nationally designated site. Mitigation difficult and / or expensive, potential for a major residual negative effect.
<b>Water: Resources, Quality and Flooding</b>	Water resource availability – See SA objective 9 above.			
	13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	<p>SA Objective 13 relates to the water efficiency of new development, and its potential effects on water quality.</p> <p>The SA assumes that development at any of the sites can incorporate aspirational water efficiency measures and that any proposal. The appraisal summary narrative will note if water intensive development is being proposed at the site option.</p> <p>The appraisal will focus on the potential offered by the site to improve the quality of water leaving the site (outside the Waste Water system).</p> <p>This will focus on the opportunity for the incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SDS). It is recognised that ground conditions and contamination have a large effect on the quality of water (see SA objective 15 below).</p> <p><b>Evidence base:</b> ArcGIS will be used to consider the relationship of site options with watercourses and bodies of water such as ponds and whether they are in areas identifies as not</p>	++	Development has clear opportunities for SDS and that development at the site option will lead to significant positive effects on water quality leading to 'good' status.
			+	Development has clear opportunities for SDS and that development at the site option will lead to positive effects on water quality in an area already meeting 'good' status.
			0	The site option is unlikely to lead to any significant effects on water quality, or that appropriate mitigation is in place to reduce negative effects with the potential for a residual neutral effect.
			?	There is an element of uncertainty; most likely until further detailed assessment work has been carried out.

		having 'good' status under the Water Framework Directive. It will also consider the topography of the site to determine the likelihood that SDS are appropriate.	-	Development has no clear opportunity for SDS and, the site option may lead to minor negative effects on water quality, although satisfactory mitigation is identified.
			--	Development has no clear opportunity for SDS, will lead to major negative effects on water quality and no satisfactory mitigation is identified.
	14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	SA Objective 14 relates to existing areas of flood risk within the plan area. The nature and significance of effects against this SA Objective will therefore relate to whether a site option is located within an area of <b>flood risk</b> (from all sources) or has the potential to reduce flood risk. <b>Evidence base:</b> Analysis in ArcGIS using NRW Flood Map for Planning and Risk of Flooding from Surface Water and the Council's Flood Risk Management Plan will be used to inform the assessment of effects against this SA Objective.	++	The site option is not located within any area of flood risk and there is evidence that development at the site option could offer an opportunity to reduce flood risk elsewhere.
			+	The site option is not located within an area of flood risk and is not at risk of surface water flooding.
			0	The site option is located partially within an area of flood risk, or at risk of surface water flooding in parts of the site. However, development could avoid this area, or suitable mitigation is available, with the potential for a residual neutral effect.
			?	There is an element of uncertainty until more detailed lower level surveys and assessments have been carried out.



			-	The site option is located partially within an area of flood risk, or at risk of surface water flooding in parts of the site. The areas of flood risk would be difficult to avoid, and mitigation is likely to be expensive/difficult.
			--	The site option is located predominantly within an area of flood risk and is at risk of surface water flooding. No clear opportunities for mitigation.
<b>Air Quality</b>	<p>See SA objective 8 above.</p> <p>Air quality within Merthyr Tydfil is closely linked to road traffic. This is demonstrated by the proposed designation of the AQMA on Twynrodyn Hill where there is traffic congestion. Given the close relationship between traffic and air quality, the findings of the assessment under SA objective 8 are relevant to this topic. For example, positive effects against SA Objective 8 are likely to result in a positive indirect effect on air quality; equally, negative effects are likely to result in negative indirect effects on air quality.</p> <p>Mitigation provided through LDP policies and at the project level to reduce traffic impacts, such as improving access to sustainable transport modes will also help to mitigate impacts on air quality.</p>			
<b>Minerals, Land and Soil</b>	15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The nature and significance of the effect will relate to the land type and potential loss of previously undeveloped soil and the impact on safeguarded mineral resources.	++	The site is entirely brownfield and will not hinder the future extraction of safeguarded minerals resources.
			+	The site is brownfield but would be reliant on the pre-extraction of mineral resources (for which there is no impediment).
			0	A neutral effect is not considered possible.

		<p><b>Evidence base:</b> Officers will use BMV and BGS safeguarding maps and site visits to determine whether the site proposal is on land where there is good soil or mineral resources worthy of safeguarding on the site and whether the potential resulting impact.</p> <p>There is little best and most versatile agricultural land in the County Borough.</p>	<p>?</p> <p>-</p> <p>--</p>	<p>An element of uncertainty exists until more detailed lower level surveys and assessment are undertaken.</p> <p>The site is brownfield but would be reliant on the pre-extraction of mineral resources (for which there are clear impediments) or the majority of the site is greenfield although acceptable mitigation for the loss of soil is identified.</p> <p>The majority of the site is greenfield and there is no clear mitigation for the impact on soil.</p>
<b>Waste</b>		<p>See SA objective 9 above.</p> <p>SA Objective 3 relates to the capacity of infrastructure to accommodate the distribution of population and housing growth.</p> <p>The nature and significance of the effects against this SA Objective, in relation to Waste, will relate to whether headroom exists within the network of waste facilities to accommodate the site option.</p> <p><b>Evidence base:</b> Consultation responses and advice from Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's Waste Management Department.</p>		
<b>Cultural Heritage (inc. Welsh Language) &amp; Historic</b>	16. To protect and enhance heritage assets which defines the	The nature and significance of the effects in this instance will relate to <b>designated heritage assets</b> (Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens, and Areas of Archaeological Importance) and their setting. Any important non-	++	Development at the site option has the potential for a major positive effect on the significance / risk categorisation of a designated heritage assets and / or its setting.

<b>Environment</b>	County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	<p>designated heritage assets will be noted within the appraisal commentary.</p> <p>Are there any designated heritage assets or their setting, which could be affected within or adjacent to the site?</p> <p>Are there any opportunities to enhance heritage assets, such as: securing appropriate new uses for unused Listed Buildings; the removal of an eyesore could have a positive effect on the setting of designated assets; improved access and signage?</p> <p>It is considered that there is an element of uncertainty for all sites until more detailed lower level surveys and assessments have been carried out. Key conclusions will be noted in the appraisal.</p> <p><b>Evidence base:</b></p> <p>ArcGIS will provide a basis for consideration of the relationship between site proposals and assets. The Buildings at Risk survey provides a condition report for the stock of Listed Buildings.</p> <p>The advice of the Design and Built Heritage Officer and Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust will inform the assessment of effects against this SA Objective.</p>	+	Development at the site option has the potential for minor positive effects as it may secure appropriate new uses for unused Listed Buildings and / or enhance the setting of, or access / signage to designated assets.
			0	Development at the site option will have no significant effect. This may be because there are no heritage assets within the influence of proposed development, or that mitigation measures are considered to reduce negative effects with the potential for a residual neutral effect.
			?	Not applicable – There is an element of uncertainty for all sites until more detailed lower level surveys and assessments have been carried out.
			-	Development has the potential for a residual minor negative effect on a Conservation Area; a Scheduled Monument; Listed Building; Registered Historic Park and Garden and/ or their setting.
			--	Development has the potential for a residual major negative effect on a Conservation Area, Scheduled Monument; Listed Building; Registered Historic Parks and Gardens and/ or their setting.

				Mitigation is likely to be difficult/expensive.
	17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	<p>The nature and significance of the effects in this instance will relate to <b>the potential for the site option to facilitate the uptake of the Welsh Language and encourage those who can converse in Welsh to do so.</b></p> <p>There are two Welsh primary schools in the County Borough (Santes Tudful (Penyard) &amp; Rhyd y grug (Aberfan) site options located within their catchments will be considered to have facilitated the uptake of the Welsh Language to a greater extent than those located outside the catchments. It is, however, recognised this is not a major differential. The Welsh Speaking Secondary School is in Aberdare.</p> <p><b>Evidence base:</b></p> <p>ArcGIS will enable the identification of site options in relation to the catchment areas of Welsh Language primary schools.</p>	<div>++</div> <div>+</div> <div>0</div> <div>?</div> <div>-</div> <div>--</div>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Development at the site option has the potential for minor positive effects because it is within the catchment of an existing Welsh language primary school.</p> <p>Development at the site option will have no significant effect because it is located outside the catchment of an existing Welsh language primary school.</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p>
<b>Landscape and Townscape (inc. Built Environment)</b>	18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality	<p>SA Objective 18 relates to valued landscapes and townscapes, as well as features and assets that contribute to landscape and townscape character.</p> <p>The nature and significance of the effects against this SA Objective will relate to the <b>sensitivity of the landscape or townscape.</b></p>	++	Development significantly enhances the landscape or removes a significant eyesore and/or would regenerate previously developed land and buildings (PDL) that is currently having a major negative effect on the landscape/ townscape.

	townscapes.	<p>The capacity of the site to accommodate housing and employment development will also influence the judgements made in terms of the nature and significance of effects against this SA Objective.</p> <p>It is considered that there is an element of uncertainty for all sites until more detailed lower level surveys and assessments have been carried out through planning applications.</p> <p>The SA assumes that any trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders within a site option will be retained, unless there is evidence to suggest that this is not the case.</p> <p><b>Evidence base:</b> ArcGIS and Landmap will inform the expert consideration of this objective by the Landscape Architect.</p> <p>Consideration against the emerging SLAs, the Brecon Beacons National Park, Registered Landscape of Outstanding Historic Importance, emerging Iron Settlement work and the CADW Urban Characterisation Study.</p>	+	Development would remove an eyesore, or enhance the landscape and/or would regenerate PDL that is currently having a minor negative effect on the landscape/ townscape.
			0	A neutral effect is not considered possible.
			?	N/A – An element of uncertainty exists until more detailed lower level assessments have been carried out.
			-	The site option has medium sensitivity in landscape terms or is within the setting of the National Park or SLA or is located where the landscape or townscape character is well defined and mitigation through good design is likely.
			--	The site option has medium to high or high sensitivity in landscape terms and would conflict with the management objectives of a draft Special Landscape Area. Mitigation is likely to be difficult/ expensive. Potential for major residual negative effect.

## 7. THE SA OF THE PREFERRED STRATEGY

### Compatibility appraisal of LDP vision and SA objectives

Figure 7.1: SA of Vision		
<p>To strengthen Merthyr Tydfil's position as the regional centre for the Heads of the Valleys within the Cardiff Capital Region, encourage a sustainable level of population growth and be a place to be proud of where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People learn and develop skills to fulfil their ambitions;</li> <li>• People live, work, have a safe, healthy and fulfilled life; and</li> <li>• People visit, enjoy and return.</li> </ul>		
SA Objective		Compatibility Analysis
1	To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	++ Positive
2	To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	+ Compatible
3	To support a sustainable level of population growth.	++ Positive
4	To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities	++ Positive
5	To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	+ Compatible
6	To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock	0 Neutral
7	To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	++ Positive
8	To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	0 Neutral
9	To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	+ Compatible
10	To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	? Uncertain
11	To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	? Uncertain
12	To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	0 Neutral
13	To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	? Uncertain
14	To minimise the risk of flooding.	0 Neutral
15	To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources	0 Neutral
16	To protect and enhance heritage assets which defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	0 Neutral
17	To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	0 Neutral
18	To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes	0 Neutral

- 7.1 Broadly speaking, the vision performs well against the majority of the SA Objectives, particularly against those relating to Communities, Housing and Economy and Employment. This is to be expected for a plan proposing a sustainable level of population growth and the anticipated development associated with such a strategy. There are uncertainties in relation to issues such as climate change, and energy and water use, which is to be expected with any plan proposing growth, particularly at this relatively early stage. As the plan process moves forward, greater levels of detail will be known about which sites will be put forward, the precise wording of policies etc., and this greater detail will enable a better judgement to be made on the precise impact of the Deposit LDP on these objectives.

### Compatibility appraisal of LDP objectives and SA objectives

Matrix 7.1: SA of PS Objectives																	
Compatibility of PS Objectives with SA Objectives																	
Symbol		++ Positive			+ Compatible			0 Neutral		? Uncertain		- Potential conflict			-- Incompatible		
SA Objectives	PS Social Objectives							PS Cultural Objectives	PS Environmental Objectives		PS Economic						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1																	
2																	
3																	
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- 7.2 All of the PS objectives have successfully integrated principles of sustainability, and therefore, none of them are incompatible when tested against the SA framework (objectives). The PS objectives address a variety of issues and are grouped in line with their contribution to improving the social, cultural, environmental and economic wellbeing of Wales. This helps to ensure that the LDP will link in closely with the Cwm Taf Wellbeing Plan and the broader aims the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- 7.3 Most of the positive compatible scores (++) occur in relation to the social and economic objectives of the PS. This is primarily because of the direct correlation between aiming to increase the population in a sustainable manner and seek to house and employ the population on appropriate sites. The population increase is also likely to help sustain community facilities across the County Borough. There are also positive compatible scores where PS and SA objectives deal the same specific issues such as landscape and biodiversity.
- 7.4 Most of the neutral scores are a result of no direct significant link between the objectives in question. There are instances, however, where the neutral score is a reflection of the positive effects of one objective cancelling out any potential negative effects of another objective. These scores generally occur where one objective promotes development and the other promotes environmental protection.

### **SA of Strategic Options**

- 7.5 The Council gathered evidence to inform the development and identification of reasonable options for the level and distribution of growth as well as potential sites to accommodate that growth. The Strategic Options which have been considered are shown in Figures 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5.
- 7.6 The nature of the Likely Significant Effects (including positive/negative, duration (short, medium or long term), and permanent / temporary, secondary, cumulative and synergistic) is described in the detailed appraisal commentary, together with any assumptions or uncertainties. These are provided in Appendix 4 and 5. Where necessary, the SA has made suggestions and recommendations to mitigate negative effects or promote opportunities for enhancement. Summaries of the findings from the assessment of each of the strategic options and reasons for the selection of the preferred growth and distribution options are provided below.



### **What level of growth represents an appropriate demographic aspiration for the County Borough to 2031?**

#### High Growth Option (Continuation of Existing strategy)

- 7.7 The Council believe that following a strategy of a level of growth where over 200 dwellings are built per annum would bring considerable concerns over the deliverability of such a strategy. Historic completion data shows that since 2001, there have only been two years where a completion rate of over 200 dwellings has been achieved (2008 and 2010), and the average number of completions during the last 15 years is 149 dwellings.
- 7.8 This level of building would essentially be a continuation of the current LDP strategy. Five Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs) have been produced since adoption of the LDP and the findings of these reports and the LDP Review Report (published April 2016) clearly highlight that this strategy is not being met, particularly in relation to the number of dwellings being built.
- 7.9 A strategy where this level of growth is achieved would also result in a significant increase in the total population of the County Borough from around 60,000 in 2016 to nearly 69,000 by 2031. An increase of population of this proportion (nearly 15%), would be likely to place significant pressure on both physical and social infrastructure.
- 7.10 Issues arising from this option include:
- ◆ A requirement for an increase in house building of at least 40%.
  - ◆ There would be a significant increase in the number of school age children. Given that the majority of development would likely be concentrated in the North of the County Borough, where most of the new housing has been built over the last 15 years, and some schools are already nearing capacity, it is likely that a significant school building/extension programme would be required to address this issue.
  - ◆ As this option would result in the largest overall population growth, it would also result in the highest number of elderly people living in the County Borough. The ageing population will be a key issue in whichever option is followed in the LDP, and the larger this demographic, the greater impact it will have on the deliverability of the housing element of the Plan.
  - ◆ If this level of growth was achieved, it would result in the County Borough retaining a far larger share of working age adults and the loss of this demographic has been a key issue in the County Borough for decades. However, the location of jobs and other associated development would need to be very carefully considered so that pressure on the highways

network and public transport infrastructure are not unacceptably exacerbated.

- ◆ Development at this level is likely to have the effect of exacerbating existing deficiencies in terms of access to good quality open space.
- ◆ There are fundamental concerns as to whether building over 3000 dwellings in the County Borough over a 15-year period is practically achievable. There is some doubt as to whether the construction industry has the capacity to build the proposed level of housing in South East Wales over the next 10-20 years. Inevitably, the industry will focus on more profitable locations in the South of the region, and given potential shortages of various tradesmen, higher levels of house building in the North of the region may prove difficult to achieve.

#### Low Growth Option (Planning for population decline)

7.11 Following a scenario where Welsh Government population projections are followed would result in a dwelling requirement of approximately 20 dwellings per annum. Historic completion data shows that since 2001, there has only been two years where completions have been less than 100 (54 dwellings in 2002, and 94 dwellings in 2012).

7.12 A strategy where these trends are followed would result in some small population growth until the mid-2020s. However, the population of the County Borough would then be likely to decline in the longer term, falling back into a cycle of decline that occurred for decades up until the mid-2000s.

7.13 Accordingly, the Council believe that following such a strategy would not result in a sound LDP as the plan would show little ambition, restrict economic growth in the area and not fit with other plans, programmes and strategies such as the City Deal.

7.14 Issues arising from this option include:

- ◆ A requirement for a level of house building approximately 80% lower than historic build rates.
- ◆ Whilst any population growth would be minimal, it is likely that there will still be an increase in the number of school aged children. Whilst this may reduce pressure on existing schools, any potential improvements/extensions that would be required, may be more difficult to fund as there would be a reduced amount of CIL/planning obligations being received by the Council due to the lower level of development.
- ◆ Similarly, there would still be a significant increase in the proportion of elderly people living in the County Borough, and whilst the impact of this might not be as large as if other strategies were followed, catering for this

demographic will still be a key issue for service providers across the public and private sectors.

- ◆ Such a strategy would result in the County Borough continuing to lose a significant proportion of its working age population to elsewhere in the UK. Whilst this may assist in easing pressure on the highway network, public transport and other infrastructure, it also decreases the likelihood that such facilities will be improved as levels of funding that Local Authorities and other organisations can attract are often linked to population and the resultant need for such infrastructure.
- ◆ Similarly, development at this level is likely to have less of an impact on open space provision across the County Borough, simply related to the fact that there would be less development overall. However, in line with the previous issue, the scope for improvement to the open space network could be reduced due to funding becoming more difficult to access, particularly in respect of CIL and Section 106 agreements.

#### Mid growth option (Sustainable population growth)

- 7.15 Following a strategy where a level of house building is proposed broadly in line with historic build rates can be considered to be both ambitious and realistic. The average build rate over the last 5 years is 137 dwellings per annum (dpa), the 10 year average is 160 dpa, and the 15 year average is 149 dpa.
- 7.16 Even building towards the lower end of these averages would still result in completions significantly higher than the number of dwellings required if trend based population projections were followed. Building at 140 dwellings per annum would result in a total dwelling requirement of 2100; building at 180 dwellings per annum would result in a requirement of 2700 dwellings. Both these scenarios are significantly lower than the current LDP requirement of 3800 dwellings, but considerably higher than a population projections scenario where the total requirement would be approximately 300 dwellings.
- 7.17 A strategy where these trends are followed would result in population growth until the end of the plan period (2031) to approximately 64,400. This increase in population of 8% over the plan period appears to be a level of growth that can be sustainably managed through some new infrastructure proposals, in addition to capitalising on the existing physical and social infrastructure in the County Borough.
- 7.18 Accordingly, the Council believe that following such a strategy would result in a sound LDP as the plan would show ambition for the County Borough; be realistic and deliverable; enable sustainable economic growth in the area in line with other plans, programmes and strategies such as the City Deal and

would also counteract the long-term issue of population decline within the County Borough.

7.19 Issues arising from this option include:

- ◆ A requirement for a level of house building only slightly higher than long term, historic build rates.
- ◆ As there would be population growth, there would be an increase in the number of school age children. Whilst this is likely to increase pressure on existing schools, this pressure would not be as acute as a scenario of building at over 200 dwellings per annum. Also, any potential improvements /extensions that would be required may be easier to fund as there would be a larger amount of CIL/planning obligations being received by the Council than if a lower level of house building was aimed for.
- ◆ As with any strategy followed, there will be a significant increase in the proportion of elderly people living in the County Borough, and whilst the impact of this might not be as large as if other strategies were followed, catering for this demographic will still be a key issue for service providers across the public and private sectors.
- ◆ Such a strategy would result in the County Borough losing a smaller proportion of its working age population to elsewhere in the UK than is currently occurring. Whilst this is a positive element of following such a strategy, it increases the importance of correctly locating physical infrastructure, jobs opportunities, and ensuring that the public transport network effectively links Merthyr Tydfil County Borough with the rest of South East Wales.
- ◆ Development at this level is likely to have some impact on open space provision across the County Borough. However, given that the level of development proposed is lower than what has been proposed in the past, and the fact the Council now has an adopted Open Space Strategy, built development should be able to be planned in conjunction with improvements to the quality and access to important areas of open space. Also, the scope for improvement to the open space network will be higher than if lower levels of development were proposed, due to funding becoming easier to access, particularly in respect of CIL and Section 106 agreements.

### **Summary of findings of the SA Growth Options**

7.20 The 'planning for population decline' option would result in a declining population that could threaten economic growth and social well-being. Although this strategy scores higher against some environmental SA objectives (e.g. biodiversity), due to the lower level of development proposed, the

impacts concerning issues such as energy efficiency would only be neutral. A key sustainability issue that has been identified as part of the baseline evidence review is that there has been long-term population decline in the County Borough (which has only recently started to reverse), with the loss of working-age people, in particular, proving a key concern. There is a fundamental conflict between addressing this issue and the 'planning for population decline' option.

- 7.21 Both growth strategies (but more so the enhanced option) have the potential to conflict with certain environmental SA objectives but given the potential for mitigation/compensation, and the potential for economic and social improvements, a strategy that plans for some level of growth is more likely to be acceptable in terms of overall sustainability.
- 7.22 The 'sustainable growth' option has positive impacts on objectives relating to housing, economic development, infrastructure, community identity and community facilities. Where there are potential impacts identified in relation to issues such as energy use and the water environment, it has been judged that mitigation/compensation will be feasible under this strategy, although the precise detail of these measures will need to be fleshed out later in the Plan process.
- 7.23 The 'enhanced growth' option also has positive impacts on objectives such as housing and economic development, although there are more negative impacts identified in relation to issues such as infrastructure and communities. This is primarily due to the uncertainty that surrounds how the level of growth proposed could actually be delivered, given that the level of housebuilding proposed has not been achieved under the strategy of the extant LDP.
- 7.24 Given the higher proportion of positive impacts and the increased scope for mitigation, coupled with the uncertainty of delivering the 'enhanced growth' option, the sustainable growth strategy is judged to be the preferred option for Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council.

### **How to spatially deliver this level of sustainable population growth across the County Borough?**

- 7.25 One of the benefits of following this level of sustainable population growth is that it would give the Council the flexibility to focus on delivering this growth in the most appropriate manner. If planning to deliver over 3000 dwellings over the plan period was considered appropriate, the spatial options would be limited as the vast majority of available/vacant land would need to be allocated for residential development (and some of this land's deliverability

could be questioned.). This could result in significant conflict between the plan and some of its own Sustainability Appraisal Objectives. Conversely, the lower level of growth would also limit options as the entire dwelling requirement could potentially be met on one or two sites.

#### Areas of Growth

- 7.26 Further consideration is required as to how the different areas of the County Borough are defined in the LDP and how this affects the strategy of the Plan. In the current adopted LDP, the County Borough is divided into Primary, Secondary and Other Growth Areas. This approach could be carried on in the replacement plan; however, this will depend upon the exact distribution of development in the County Borough. The examination conducted for the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy concluded CIL was not viable in either the Secondary or Other Growth Areas.
- 7.27 Particular attention will need to be paid to the number of dwellings allocated in the Treharris/Trelewis in comparison to the Mid Valleys area comprising Troedyrhiw, Merthyr Vale, Aberfan and Bedlinog. Given the physical constraints of the lower valley area of the County Borough, and the fact the majority of existing allocations in this area have been delivered, it is questionable as to whether the level of development proposed in a new Plan would justify differentiating between Treharris/Trelewis and the Mid Valley communities, and as such it would be more appropriate to combine these as 'Other' growth areas.
- 7.28 Notwithstanding this, the key consideration is how best to accommodate the majority of the total dwelling requirement in the Primary Growth Area / Merthyr Tydfil.
- 7.29 Having considered, the options presented by Candidate Site submissions, three options are apparent:
1. An urban extension in Merthyr Tydfil (Cwmglo and Glyndyrys SSSI) and other small sites.
  2. A strategic regeneration area in Merthyr Tydfil (Hoover site) and other small sites.
  3. The dispersal of small sites across the County Borough (continuation of existing LDP).
- 7.30 For each of the above options, other sites will also be assessed within the 'Other Growth Areas'.

### Summary of findings of the SA of Spatial Options

- 7.31 As shown in Appendix 5, the 'urban extension' option scores positively on objectives related to population growth and housing, however there are fundamental constraints on objectives relating to biodiversity, soils, landscape and heritage. Developing the Cwmglo and Glyndyrys SSSI as the key component of the LDP strategy is completely inappropriate given the suitability of the alternative spatial options.
- 7.32 The 'Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area' option has significant positive impacts on objectives relating to population growth, economic development, transport and infrastructure and also scores positively in terms of housing, communities and human health. A potential negative impact has been identified in regard to the water environment, however the level and distribution of new development increases the likelihood of any mitigation/compensation being achieved.
- 7.33 The 'dispersed sites' option also scores well in relation to the same objectives as the 'Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area' option, although not to the same extent. Again, a potential negative impact on the water environment has been raised and the same principles apply in relation to the required mitigation/compensation.
- 7.34 Whilst it is clear that the 'urban extension' option is not a suitable option to take forward as a strategy, the differences between the remaining two options are more subtle, as both options would potentially be a suitable spatial option of delivering sustainable population growth in Merthyr Tydfil County Borough. The key difference between these two options is the introduction of the 'Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area' at Abercanaid/Pentrebach that would form an integral part of the housing, employment, transport infrastructure and leisure proposals of a new LDP strategy.
- 7.35 Whilst the 'dispersed sites' option is essentially a continuation of the spatial strategy of the current LDP, which would be likely to deliver the sustainable level of growth proposed in largely sustainable locations, the option does not present the same opportunities that the 'Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area' option does.
- 7.36 The location of the Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area will capitalise on the South Wales Metro proposals more than any other option due to its location adjacent to existing strategic public transport infrastructure routes. The location of the strategic site will also assist in integrating the northern and southern halves of the County Borough. Developing the site will also regenerate a former

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## SA of Policies

Matrix 7.2: SA of PS Policies		Compatibility of PS Policies with SA Objectives	
<b>Positive</b>	<b>++</b>	Policy will considerably progress the sustainability objective	
		Policy progresses the sustainability objective to an extent	
		No/neutral effect – policy will not affect the sustainability objective	
		Policy will have uncertain effect on sustainability objective	
		Policy will conflict with sustainability objective to an extent	
<b>Incompatible</b>	<b>--</b>	Policy will conflict considerably with the sustainability	



### Summary of findings of SA of Policies

- 7.37 As would be anticipated, the proposed policies to be included in the Preferred Strategy are likely to have an overall positive effect when assessed against the SA framework. There are some obvious positive effects, such as policies aiming to deliver housing scoring well against the housing objectives, however there are some less obvious positive effects that warrant analysis.
- 7.38 The housing policies scored well against the objective relating to soil conservation and mineral safeguarding, and there are two reasons behind these conclusions. Firstly, the lack of any significant extension of settlement boundaries results in mineral resources being able to be appropriately safeguarded. Secondly, the distribution and location of housing sites (including the strategic regeneration area) is likely to result in a lesser effect on greenfield land, and may actually result in some contaminated, previously developed land being remediated.
- 7.39 Some potentially surprising results are also how well the environmental policies scored against objectives related to population growth and economic development. These findings are down to the link between improving the natural environment of an area, and the resulting improvement of the perception of the area as being more attractive to invest in. Also, a key component of growing the population sustainably is ensuring that the population has access to good quality open space, which also supports biodiversity.
- 7.40 A key finding with several proposed policies such as 'Planning Obligations' and 'Sustainable Design and Placemaking' is that the assessed effects are largely positive, however, the actual success of the policies will be related to how robustly and effectively they are implemented once the LDP has been adopted. This will be an issue that will need to be closely monitored throughout the life of the Plan.
- 7.41 Some of the more uncertain findings of this assessment were on policies that proposed some form of built development, and their effect on issues such as water, climate change, ecology and landscape.
- 7.42 For example, it was assessed that there is likely to be potential conflict between a policy promoting renewable energy technology and objectives relating to ecology and landscape. This is due to the likelihood that any proposals for larger scale renewables are likely to occur in areas that have value in terms of landscape and/or ecological issues.
- 7.43 There are likely to be similar conflicts in the proposed mineral policy as mineral extraction can only take place where there are mineral resources, and these

locations are largely located in the countryside and will have landscape/ecological value. The precise wording of the policies covering these issues in the Deposit Plan will be important to ensure that any conflict with environmental considerations is minimised and can be mitigated/compensated.

7.44 The full assessments of the proposed policies can be found in Appendix 6.

## 8 SA OF CANDIDATE AND JHLAS SITES

- 8.1 Table 6.2 provides the methodology (SA Objectives) for appraising 'Candidate Sites' nominated for inclusion in the replacement LDP and sites readily available for home building included in the Joint Housing Land Availability Study. It is not possible, at the plan-making stage, to know precisely what kind of development will go on each site, for instance what combination of housing, employment and infrastructure a developer will propose when they make a planning application or what site layout and development design they will propose. Matrix 8.1 shows the summary results of the candidate site appraisal process for individual sites. The detailed assessment of each of the Candidate Sites is included in the Candidates Sites Register so that it may be viewed alongside a plan of the site to which it relates. The Candidate Sites Register can be viewed at the locations listed in section 1.

### Overview of the potential impacts of each Candidate and JHLAS Site by Ward

- 8.2 Cyfarthfa Ward: A relatively high number of Candidate and JHLAS sites are located in this Ward (which is located within the Primary Growth Area), resulting in potentially high development pressure. The majority of the sites in the ward are proposed for housing and so generally perform positively on Objective 5. There is general uncertainty regarding objectives 9, 10 & 13. This is mainly due to the large size of the sites and their lack of recognition in the draft Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Assessment. The majority of the proposed sites are mainly greenfield and, as such, perform poorly on Objectives 11 & 15. The sites also generally perform poorly on Objective 12 due to their proximity to environmental designations such as SSSIs and SINCs.
- 8.3 Dowlais Ward: Due to their location within settlement limits, being adjacent to existing areas of development, and within an area experiencing Multiple Deprivation, the sites in Dowlais Ward perform positively on Objective 2. The sites are proposed for a mix of uses, however, where they are proposed for housing they perform positively on Objective 5. The sites are generally brownfield and as such perform positively on Objectives 11 & 15. The sites are generally not within areas of flood risk and therefore perform favourably on Objective 14.
- 8.4 Gurnos Ward: Due to their location close to primary and secondary schools and the Prince Charles Hospital (PCH), the sites in Gurnos perform positively on Objective 1. They are located within settlement limits, adjacent to existing development and within an area experiencing multiple deprivation, and so perform favourably on Objectives 2 & 4. The sites are proposed for housing and therefore perform positively on Objective 5. The sites perform favourably on Objective 8 due their proximity to good bus services. The sites are generally

greenfield & as such perform negatively on Objectives 11 & 15. Due to the sites distance from water-bodies, areas of flooding and areas of biodiversity and heritage assets they have performed neutrally on Objectives 12, 13, 14 & 16.

- 8.5 Merthyr Vale Ward: The sites in Merthyr Vale are generally located within settlement limits, adjacent to existing development and within an area experiencing multiple/higher deprivation, and so perform favourably on Objectives 2, 3 & 4. The sites are proposed for housing and therefore perform positively on Objective 5. The sites generally have a neutral effect in terms of Objective 16. There is an element of uncertainty in relation to Objective 18 due to the large size of some of the sites, their prominent locations, and (for some) their location outside settlement limits.
- 8.6 Park Ward: Due to the relatively central location of Park Ward, the sites generally perform favourably on Objective 1. Due to the sites location within settlement limits & adjacent to areas of existing development, they perform favourably in terms of Objective 2. The sites close proximity to Cyfarthfa Park and the Taff Trail results in a favourable performance against Objective 4. Due to Parks Ward's close proximity to Merthyr Tydfil town centre & the Taff Trail the sites perform favourably for Objective 8.
- 8.7 Penydarren Ward: Due to their location close to primary and secondary schools and local services and facilities, the sites in Penydarren perform positively on Objective 1. They are located within settlement limits and are adjacent to existing development and so also perform favourably on Objective 2. The sites are proposed for housing and therefore perform positively on Objective 5. The sites perform favourably on Objective 8 due their proximity to good bus services. The sites are generally greenfield and as such perform negatively on Objectives 11 & 15. Due to their distance from water-bodies, areas of flooding, areas of biodiversity and heritage assets, the sites have performed neutrally on Objectives 12, 13, 14 & 16.
- 8.8 Plymouth Ward: A relatively high number of Candidate and JHLAS sites are located in this Ward (which is located within the Primary Growth Area), resulting in potentially high development pressure. Many of the sites in Plymouth Ward perform unfavourably on Objective 1 due to their distance from key facilities & services. The sites are mainly proposed for housing and therefore perform positively on Objective 5. Due to their proximity to good bus services, train stations and active travel routes, the sites perform positively on Objective 8.
- 8.9 Town Ward: A relatively high number of Candidate and JHLAS sites are located in this Ward (which is located within the Primary Growth Area), resulting in potentially high development pressure. Due to Town Ward's central location, proximity to facilities, services, public transport and active travel routes, and the

sites proximity to existing built development & brownfield nature, they perform favourably on objectives, 1, 2 4,5, 8, 11, 15 & 18. Some areas of Town Ward also experience higher levels of deprivation. The sites generally perform neutrally on Objectives 12 & 13, due to their distance from water-bodies and areas of biodiversity.

- 8.10 Vaynor Ward: Due to the sites proximity to facilities, services, public transport and active travel routes, and the proximity to existing built development , the sites perform favourably on objectives, 1, 2 4,5 & 8. The sites are also located primarily in areas experiencing multiple deprivation. The sites are generally not within areas of flood risk & therefore perform favourably on Objective 14.

# MERTHYR TYDFIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2016 - 2031

## INITIAL SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT

Matrix 8.1: Summary appraisal findings for the Candidate Sites & JHLAS Sites by Ward																
	SA Objectives															
CS & JS Sites by Ward	1	2	4	5	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
<b>Bedlinog: 1-7 &amp; 1-5</b>																
Gilfach Maen Isaf Farm & Tir William Morgan Farm																
Land to rear of Bedw Road Bedlinog																
Land adjoining 30 Pleasant View Bedlinog																
Land adjacent to Craig-y-Hendre																
Land off Gelligaer Road, Llancaiach																
Land to the East of Trelewis																
Land at Taff Merthyr Garden Village (Storm Town)																
Gelligaer Road, Trelewis																
Land at Taff Merthyr Garden Village																
Land adjoining Pleasant View Bedlinog																
Land to rear of Grove Terrace Bedlinog																
Land to rear of Oakland Street Bedlinog																
<b>Cyfarthfa: 8-30 &amp; 6-15</b>																
Land between Swansea Road and A465																
Land North of A465																
Land to the West of Winchfawr Road																
Land South of Moodies Field, Heolgerrig Site 1																
Land South of Moodies Field, Heolgerrig Site 2																
Trago Mills (Site 1)																
Trago Mills (Site 2)																
Land at Erw Las, Gellideg																
Rhydycar/Orbit																

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## INITIAL SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT

Brondeg															
Upper Georgetown Plateau															
Land at Rhydycar West - Site 1															
Land at Rhydycar West - Site 2															
Land at Rhydycar West - Site 3															
Land at Rhydycar West - Site 4															
Land at Rhydycar West - Site 5															
Land at Rhydycar West - Site 6															
Land at Rhydycar West - Site 7															
Land at Rhydycar West - Site 8															
Land South of College Car Park															
West Merthyr															
Rhydycar															
South Merthyr Tydfil Regeneration Area															
Beacon Heights															
Crud Yr Awel															
Adjacent to Trago Mills															
Rhydycar															
Brondeg															
Swansea Road															
Castle Park															
Winchfawr Road															
Gellideg															
Upper Georgetown Plateau															
<b>Dowlais: 31-41 &amp; 16-19</b>															
Land adjacent to Trevor Close, Pant															
East Street, Dowlais															

# MERTHYR TYDFIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2016 - 2031

## INITIAL SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT

Goatmill Road (Industrial)	Orange	Green	Green	Yellow	Orange	Orange	Orange	Green	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Orange
Former Dowlais MUE Sub Depot	Orange	Green	Orange	Yellow	Orange	Orange	Orange	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Orange
Trevor Close, Pant	Orange	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Orange
Land east of A4060 at Ffos Y Fran	Orange	Green	Green	Yellow	Orange	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green
Pengarnddu	Orange	Green	Orange	Yellow	Orange	Orange	Orange	Green	Orange	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green
Land at Pant Industrial Estate	Orange	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Orange	Orange	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Orange	Green	Yellow	Green	Green
Land at East Street, Dowlais	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Orange
Heartlands	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Green	Yellow	Orange	Yellow	Green	Orange	Green	Orange
Blaen y Garth Farm	Red	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Green	Orange	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Red	Orange	Green	Red
Trevor Close, Pant	Orange	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Orange
Heartlands	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Green	Yellow	Orange	Yellow	Green	Orange	Green	Orange
St Johns Church	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Victoria House	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green
<b>Gurnos: 42-43 &amp; 20-22</b>	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Orange
Gurnos Farm	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Orange
Pen-y-dre	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Orange
Gwaelodygarth House	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Orange
Pen-y-dre	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Orange
Marigold Close	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green
<b>Merthyr Vale: 44-48 &amp; 23-25</b>	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Orange
Colliery Site, Merthyr Vale, Aberfan	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Orange
Land at Hafod, Tanglwys	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Orange
Riverside	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Orange
Taff and Crescent Streets and Railway Sidings	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Orange
Land opposite Kingsley Terrace, Aberfan	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Orange
Riverside	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Land rear of Oakfield Street	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Green



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## INITIAL SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT

Land rear of Cardiff Road															
<b>Park: 49-57 &amp; 26-27</b>															
Cyfarthfa Heritage Area Site 1															
Cyfarthfa Heritage Area Site 2															
Cyfarthfa Heritage Area Site 3															
Former Merthyr Care Home, Penydarren Road															
YMCA, Penydarren Road, Pontmorlais															
Pontycafnau															
Land at Chapel Banks/Adj Joseph Parry's Cottage															
Ty Keir Hardie/ Martin Evans House															
Cyfarthfa Park and Heritage Area															
Old School Close															
Labour Exchange															
<b>Penydarren: 58-59 &amp; 28-30</b>															
The Greenie															
Hillcrest Park/Haydn Terrace															
Parc Brychan															
The Greenie															
Hillcrest Park/Haydn Terrace															
<b>Plymouth: 60-78 &amp; 31-35</b>															
Land at Rhydycar West - Site 9															
Land at Rhydycar West - Site 10															
Land at Rhydycar West - Site 11															
Land off Aberfan Road, Site 1 - Option 1															
Land off Aberfan Road, Site 1 - Option 2															
Land off Aberfan Road, Site 2 - Option 1															

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## INITIAL SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT

Land off Aberfan Road, Site 2 - Option 2															
Ardagh Site, Dragon Parc, Abercanaid															
Land West of Gethin Road, Abercanaid															
Land known as The Lowes, Abercanaid															
Hoover Site 1															
Hoover Site 2															
Hoover Site 3															
Hoover Factory Sports Grounds															
Hoover factory facade, gatehouse & sports ground															
Hoover Factory Site, Pentrebach															
Land south of Merthyr Tydfil Industrial Park/Sekis															
West Bank - Land across river from Afon Taf															
Ski Slope															
St Peter & St Paul Church 1															
Land at Mount Pleasant, Troedyrhiw															
Land West of Gethin Road, Abercanaid															
P&R Motors															
St Peter & St Paul Church 2															
<b>Town: 79-93 &amp; 36-41</b>															
Goatmill Road (Residential)															
Land at Queens Road (Former School)															
Theatre Royal and Thespian House, Park Place															
Former School Site, Queens Road															
Former Night Club, Church Street															
Queens Road, Former Ysgol Santes Tydfil Site															
Central Bus Station and Land Adjacent															

# MERTHYR TYDFIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2016 - 2031

## INITIAL SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT

Bradley Gardens Two															
Glasier Road															
Penheolferthyr, Twynyrodyn															
Former Miners Hall															
Former St Tydfils Hospital															
Former Hollies/Police Station site															
Tax Office															
Oldway House															
Glasier Road															
Goatmill Road															
Former St Tydfils Hospital															
Bradley Gardens Two															
Former Sandbrook Centre															
Penheolferthyr, Twynyrodyn															
<b>Treharris: 94-97 &amp; 42-44</b>															
Land at Treharris															
Commercial Field, Treharris															
Twynygarreg															
Cilhaul															
Springfield Rise															
Cilhaul															
Twynygarreg															
<b>Vaynor: 98 &amp; 45</b>															
Taf Fechan River Bank															
Sweetwater Park															

**Overview of the potential impacts of each Candidate and JHLAS Site by Sustainability Objective**

- 8.11 Communities (inc. Population): Some wards perform generally poorly in regards to Objective 1. Bedlinog performs poorly due to its relatively isolated location. Other wards, i.e. Cyfarthfa, Dowlais & Plymouth, have a higher incidence of negative performance due to their location, as well as the relatively isolated nature of some of the sites being considered. However, the majority of sites being considered perform positively in regards to this objective, resulting in the LDP having the scope to offer sites that ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of residents and communities are met. Town and Park wards perform particularly positively in this regard due to their proximity to Merthyr Tydfil town centre.
- 8.12 Cyfarthfa and Plymouth wards perform generally poorly in regards to Objective 2. This is due to the size and/or position of some of the sites being considered. However, the majority of sites being considered perform positively in regards to this objective, resulting in the LDP having the scope to offer sites that maintain and enhance community and settlement identities, and, in some cases, achieve this in areas experiencing Multiple Deprivation.
- 8.13 As sufficient site options have been nominated for inclusion in the LDP, SA objective 3 is not a differential at the site options stage.
- 8.14 Health & Equalities: The majority of sites being considered perform positively in this regard. Only one site being considered performs particularly poorly in this regard, due to the loss of open space that would result from its development, and its location in an area which is not experiencing higher deprivation. The LDP therefore has the scope to offer sites which improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities, and, in some cases, achieve this in areas experiencing higher deprivation.
- 8.15 Housing: Sites which are proposed for residential development (which comprises the majority of sites being considered), perform positively in this regard. The LDP therefore has the scope to meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.
- 8.16 SA objective 6 relates to the quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock, which, in new development, is largely regulated by building control. This SA objective assumes that development at any of the site options could be delivered to a high quality. The nature and significance of the effects against this SA Objective will primarily relate to specific sites and is not a differential at the site options stage.

- 8.17 Economy & Employment: SA objective 7 assumes that any proposal for development will be designed responsibly and relates to significant interventions to attract new job creating investment in any sector. This objective is not a differential at the site options stage.
- 8.18 Connections (inc. Transport & Movement): Sites located in Bedlinog ward score poorly in this regard due to the relatively isolated location of Bedlinog. Some sites in Cyfarthfa ward also perform particularly poorly due to their distance from public transport links and active travel routes. However, the majority of sites perform positively in this regard. The LDP therefore has the scope to reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.
- 8.19 Utility providers have not highlighted any particular issues with new development within Merthyr Tydfil County Borough. As such, some sites perform positively in this regard. However, the potential impact of many of the sites is ambiguously, and requires clarification, due to their location if off-gas areas, the high number of dwellings that could potentially be constructed on them, or that the proposed use may have a particularly high demand (employment, commercial etc.). More information regarding the supply of utilities to the sites is therefore required to ensure that the LDP has the scope to ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.
- 8.20 Energy: Some sites being considered perform positively in this regard as they are located in areas that have been identified as having the potential for solar or wind renewable energy. However, many of the sites perform ambiguously. More information regarding the potential of sites to integrate renewable energy technologies is therefore required to ensure that the LDP has the scope to minimise efficiency use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.
- 8.21 Climate Change: Some sites being considered perform positively in this regard as they are mainly or entirely brownfield. However, many of the sites perform somewhat negatively, due to the fact that they are mainly or entirely greenfield. No valuable agricultural land will be lost however, and the positively scoring sites do ensure that the LDP has the scope to minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.
- 8.22 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna: The majority of sites perform positively, neutrally, or require further information regarding their impact on biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity. Some sites in Cyfarthfa and Plymouth wards perform particularly poorly due to their proximity to a SSSI. The sites which perform positively and neutrally, along with policies, will ensure that the LDP has the scope to maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.

- 8.23 Water: Resources, Quality and Flooding: The vast majority of sites have a neutral impact on the water environment, or require more information to ascertain their impact. A very small number perform negatively. The neutral scoring sites, combined with policies will ensure that the LDP has the scope to minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.
- 8.24 The vast majority of sites have a positive or neutral impact in terms of flood risk, and others require more information to ascertain their impact. A very small number perform negatively. Some of these relate to sites which are proposed for less vulnerable, i.e. non-residential, uses. As such, this ensures that the LDP has the scope to minimise the risk of flooding, which can also be aided through policies.
- 8.25 Air quality: See paragraph 8.18 above.
- 8.26 Minerals, Land and Soil: The vast majority of sites either perform positively or particularly poorly in this regard. Bedlinog, Cyfarthfa, Gurnos, Penydarren, Plymouth and Treharris wards perform notably unfavourably. This is due to the fact that sites are either greenfield (and may hinder the extraction of minerals) or brownfield and, if they are greenfield, no information regarding the mitigation of loss of soil has been submitted at this stage. Policies can assist in guiding development to sites which have less negative impact in this regard. This, along with the significant number of positively scoring sites, will ensure that the LDP has the scope to protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.
- 8.27 Waste: See paragraph 8.19 above.
- 8.28 Cultural Heritage (inc. Welsh language) & Historic Environment: A number of sites perform unfavourably in this regard, due to their proximity to designated and non-designated heritage assets. This is particularly noticeable in Cyfarthfa ward. The largest proportions of sites perform neutrally against this objective. A number of sites perform positively as they would, for example, bring vacant or unused Listed Buildings into use or would improve the setting of a Conservation Area. The neutral and positively performing sites, along with Development Management policies, would ensure that the LDP has the scope to protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.
- 8.29 Sites perform universally positively in regards to the Welsh language objective. This is due to the fact that sites would either provide housing in areas within the catchments of either of the 2 Welsh schools in the County Borough, thereby providing additional potential pupils for these schools, or would provide non-residential development in these areas (retail, employment, tourism etc.), thereby making the areas more attractive places to live work and visit and

therefore supporting the County Borough which is a place of distinctive welsh culture. This will ensure that the LDP has the scope to facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.

- 8.30 Landscape & Townscape (inc. Built Environment): Some sites, notably in Cyfarthfa ward, perform poorly, due to their location (particularly within a draft SLA), their size and prominent position within the landscape of the County Borough. A significant number of sites perform positively as their development would remove existing eyesores or regenerate previously developed land and buildings that are currently having a negative effect on the landscape. These sites, along with policies, would ensure that the LDP has the scope to protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.

## 9 MONITORING

9.1 Table 9.1 provides details of data that could be used to monitor trends for each of the 18 Sustainability Objectives. Taken together, these indicators provide an overview of the Sustainability of the County Borough which may then be considered alongside broader development monitoring information included in the Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report to help determine whether the LDP's interventions are contributing to the achievement of sustainable development.

**Table 9.1: SA INDICATORS AND TARGETS**

Sustainability Appraisal Objective	Indicator	Target Trend	Baseline	Data Source
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	Percentage of people satisfied with their ability to get to/ access the facilities and services they need.	Increased percentage	52% all Wales @ 2014 -15	National Indicator for Wales Number 24. <a href="http://gov.wales/statisticsand-research/nationalsurvey/?lang=en">http://gov.wales/statisticsand-research/nationalsurvey/?lang=en</a>
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	Percentage of people agreeing that they belong to the area; that people from different background get on well together; and that people treat each other with respect.	Increased percentage	66% of 16+ adults in Merthyr Tydfil @ 2014-15	National Indicator for Wales Number 27. <a href="https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/National-Survey-for-Wales/percentageofpeoplewhoagreehatthereisgoodcommunitycohesionintheirlocalarea-by-localauthority-year">https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/National-Survey-for-Wales/percentageofpeoplewhoagreehatthereisgoodcommunitycohesionintheirlocalarea-by-localauthority-year</a>
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	Population estimates (annual).	Maintain and sustainably increase.	59,324 @ 2015	Source: <a href="https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Population-and-Migration/Population/Estimates/Local-Authority/populationestimates-by-localauthority-year">https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Population-and-Migration/Population/Estimates/Local-Authority/populationestimates-by-localauthority-year</a>
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	Number of priority open spaces that meet the standard for 'Green flag' status.	Increase	3 out of 22 @ 2017	Annual open space strategy monitoring. Merthyr Tydfil CBC Planning & Countryside Dept. To be reported from 2017 in the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring



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				Report. <a href="http://www.merthyr.gov.uk/resident/planning-building-control/local-development-plan/">http://www.merthyr.gov.uk/resident/planning-building-control/local-development-plan/</a>
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	Housing Land Availability in Years.	A minimum 5-year supply.	1.6 years @ 2016	To be reported from the Annual JLHAs Report <a href="http://www.merthyr.gov.uk/media/2408/joint_housing_and_availability-study-2016.pdf">http://www.merthyr.gov.uk/media/2408/joint_housing_and_availability-study-2016.pdf</a>
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	Energy Company Obligation measures installed.  Percentage of dwellings with a Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating of 65 or above (Only at an all Wales level).	Increase  Increased percentage	6215,598 approved by Ofgem @ April 2017.  77.6% all Wales @ 2008	Source: <a href="https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-programmes/eco/contacts-guidance-and-resources/eco-public-reports-and-data">https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-programmes/eco/contacts-guidance-and-resources/eco-public-reports-and-data</a> National Indicator for Wales Number 33. <a href="https://data.gov.uk/dataset/average_energy_efficiency_sap_rating_of_new_homes_england_and_wales_resource/5b495b25-84d6-4239-97e6-f954f3dc03d2">https://data.gov.uk/dataset/average_energy_efficiency_sap_rating_of_new_homes_england_and_wales_resource/5b495b25-84d6-4239-97e6-f954f3dc03d2</a>
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	Regional Gross Value (GVA) added per Head and per Head Indices (Central Valleys Region).	Increase	15,745 West Wales and the valleys @ 2014.	Source: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/household-energy-efficiency-national-statistics">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/household-energy-efficiency-national-statistics</a>
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	In the last three months, how frequently have you walked for more than 5 minutes as a means of transport?	Increased percentage	65% @ 2014-2015 all Wales. 68% @ 2014-2015 urban areas all Wales.	National Survey for Wales: Active Travel (Collected biennially) <a href="https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/National-Survey-for-Wales/2014-15">https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/National-Survey-for-Wales/2014-15</a>
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	Index of Electricity, Gas and Water supply by quarter and area (Only at an all Wales level).	Maintain	105.7 @ Q4 all Wales 2016.	Stats Wales <a href="https://statscymru.cymru.gov.uk/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/Economic-Indices/Indices-of-Production-and-Construction/indexofelectricitygasandwatersupply-by-quarter-area">https://statscymru.cymru.gov.uk/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/Economic-Indices/Indices-of-Production-and-Construction/indexofelectricitygasandwatersupply-by-quarter-area</a>

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10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	Average kilowatt hours of domestic electricity consumed. Cumulative planning permissions for Renewable Energy Generation	Reduce  Monitor	3250 Kw @ 2015  0.06 MW @ January – March 2017	Source: <a href="http://www.infobasecymru.net/IAS/profiles/profile?profileid=470&amp;geoTypeid=">http://www.infobasecymru.net/IAS/profiles/profile?profileid=470&amp;geoTypeid=</a> Taken from Development Management Quarterly Survey: <a href="http://gov.wales/topics/planning/planningstats/development-management-quarterly-survey/?lang=en">http://gov.wales/topics/planning/planningstats/development-management-quarterly-survey/?lang=en</a>
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	Local Authority CO2 emissions.  Levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO2) pollution in the air.	Decrease  Decrease	4.8 tonnes per resident @ 2014  40 µg/m³ @2015	Source: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics</a> National indicator for Wales Number 4. <a href="http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/161115-national-indicators-for-wales-technical-document-en.pdf">http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/161115-national-indicators-for-wales-technical-document-en.pdf</a>
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	Area of healthy ecosystems in Wales.	Maintain	4040 ha areas of SINC @ 2017.	National Indicator for Wales Number 43. Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report. <a href="http://www.merthyr.gov.uk/resident/planning-building-control/planning-policy/">http://www.merthyr.gov.uk/resident/planning-building-control/planning-policy/</a>
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	Percentage of surface water bodies and groundwater bodies achieving good or high overall status under the Water Framework Directive.	1. Improve Groundwater Status 2. Maintain quantitative status 3. Improve chemical status	1. Moderate @ 2014.  2. Good @ 2014.  3. Poor @ 2014.	National Indicator for Wales Number 45. <a href="http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/161115-national-indicators-for-wales-technical-document-en.pdf">http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/161115-national-indicators-for-wales-technical-document-en.pdf</a> <a href="http://waterwatchwales.naturalresourceswales.gov.uk/en/">http://waterwatchwales.naturalresourceswales.gov.uk/en/</a> Natural Resource Wales Habitat survey: <a href="http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-4258">http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-4258</a>
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	Total number of properties (residential and non-residential) at risk of fluvial flooding up to the 0.1%* annual probability flood event.  *Low means that each year, this area has a	Reduce	197 properties @ 2017	National Indicator for Wales Number 32. Arc GIS analysis from the Local Land Use Gazetteer and <a href="https://www.naturalresources.wales/our-evidence-and-reports/maps/flood-risk-map/?lang=en">https://www.naturalresources.wales/our-evidence-and-reports/maps/flood-risk-map/?lang=en</a> Reported in: Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report. <a href="http://www.merthyr.gov.uk/resident/planning-building-control/planning-policy/">http://www.merthyr.gov.uk/resident/planning-building-control/planning-policy/</a>

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	chance of flooding of between 1 in 1000 (0.1%) and 1 in 100 (1%).			
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The area of land (ha) granted planning permission for new development on previously developed land during the year.	Monitor	2.62 ha @ January – March 2017	Taken from Development Management Quarterly Survey: <a href="http://gov.wales/topics/planning/planningstats/development-management-quarterly-survey/january-march-2017/?lang=en">http://gov.wales/topics/planning/planningstats/development-management-quarterly-survey/january-march-2017/?lang=en</a>
16. To protect and enhance heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	Percentage of scheduled monuments in Wales that are in a stable or improving condition or listed buildings that are neither 'vulnerable' nor 'at risk'.	Increase	79.26% in Wales @ 2015	National Indicator for Wales Number 40. <a href="http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/161115-national-indicators-for-wales-technical-document-en.pdf">http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/161115-national-indicators-for-wales-technical-document-en.pdf</a>
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	Percentage of people who speak Welsh daily and can speak more than just a few words of Welsh.	Maintain	11% of 16+ adults in all Wales 2014-15  8.9% in Merthyr Tydfil @ 2011	National Indicator for Wales Number 36. <a href="http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/161115-national-indicators-for-wales-technical-document-en.pdf">http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/161115-national-indicators-for-wales-technical-document-en.pdf</a> <a href="https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/National-Survey-for-Wales/percentageofadultswhospeakwelshdailyandcanspeakmorethanjustafewwords-by-age-year">https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/National-Survey-for-Wales/percentageofadultswhospeakwelshdailyandcanspeakmorethanjustafewwords-by-age-year</a> Merthyr Tydfil Council Welsh language promotional Strategy
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.	Developments granted planning permission which harm landscape or townscape character.	Monitor	1.75 ha on greenfield land @ January – March 2017	Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report. <a href="http://www.merthyr.gov.uk/resident/planning-building-control/planning-policy/">http://www.merthyr.gov.uk/resident/planning-building-control/planning-policy/</a>

## 10 CONCLUSION

10.1 SA is an assessment tool that helps to inform decision-making, but it is not the sole basis for a decision. The Council has considered the findings of the SA alongside the wider evidence base to inform decision-making in relation to the development of the LDP Vision, Objectives, the selection or rejection of strategic options and the development of key policy for the PS of the LDP. SA is an iterative and on-going process that will continue to be undertaken at each stage of plan-making. SA reports will accompany consultation on the LDP at each stage, detailing the methodology and findings of the SA as well as reasons for the selection or rejection of alternatives in the plan-making process.

### **Sustainability Appraisal**

10.2 As preparation of the LDP progresses a better judgement can be made on any precise negative impacts of the LDP on the SA objectives and ways to mitigate or enhance them. There are uncertainties in relation to issues such as climate change, and energy and water usage, which are not specifically mentioned in the Vision, however each of the LDP objectives have been successfully integrated the principles of sustainability and therefore none are incompatible with the SA objectives.

10.3 The preferred 'sustainable population growth' or 'mid growth' option would result in an increase in the population which is likely to lead to higher energy consumption and increase in trip generation. There is likely to be some conflict with certain environmental considerations and a possible loss of some natural resources, impacting on the sufficiency of open space. Synergistically, increased demand for water is likely to have a negative effect. There will be some conflict with environmental considerations with the preferred spatial 'Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area' and other small sites' option. The level of development proposed will require mitigation in terms of its effect on the water environment. However the proposed policies would be likely to have significant positive effects as they would assist in growing the population of the County Borough in a sustainable manner through providing appropriate land for housing and employment development, and ensuring that any potential negative environmental impacts are minimised and mitigated/compensated.

10.4 The preferred 'sustainable growth' or mid growth option would offer the potential to safeguard areas of land for renewable energy proposals and opportunities to use green infrastructure to mitigate the impact of development on climate change. Protective water management methods could be put in place, but Welsh Water have assured that any increase in

demand for water can be met through existing infrastructure<sup>15</sup>. Improvements to active travel routes and implementation of the 'South Wales Metro' and opening of the Abernant tunnel could provide opportunities for increasing sustainable transport modes, whilst dualling of the A465 could also relieve pressure on existing on transport networks. This option would also offer retention in the working aged population and increase the number of school age children, community identities and facilities and is likely to provide a range of dwelling types and jobs. It would also offer investment, town centre regeneration and improvements to the quality and access to areas of open space.

- 10.5 As the plan process moves forward, greater levels of detail will be known about which sites will be allocated and this greater detail will enable a better judgement to be made on the precise impact of the LDP on the SA objectives. The key policies to deliver the PS are important, not only for identifying the strategy, but also for mitigating or enhancing the effects from the strategy. Criteria based policies on issues such as design and community facilities will be crucial in ensuring that any potential environmental or social conflicts are mitigated or compensated for. Also, robust implementation of the Planning Obligations policy will be important in ensuring that the appropriate infrastructure is put in place to grow the population in a sustainable manner.

#### **Ward Summary of findings of the SA of the Candidates & JHLAS Sites**

- 10.6 The detailed assessment of the Candidate sites can be found in the Candidate Sites Register. A summary by ward is provided below:
- ◆ Cyfarthfa Ward: There is a relatively high number of Candidate & JHLAS sites located in this ward, the majority of which are proposed for housing on greenfield land and as such, score poorly due to their proximity to SSSIs, SINCs etc.
  - ◆ Dowlais Ward: The sites are generally proposed for a mix of uses on brownfield sites, within an area experiencing Multiple Deprivation, within settlement limits or nearby existing urban areas and outside of flood risk areas and therefore generally score favourably.
  - ◆ Gurnos Ward: The sites are generally proposed for housing on sites within an area experiencing Multiple Deprivation, or nearby existing urban areas and in close to primary & secondary schools, Prince Charles Hospital and good bus services so generally score favourably on social objectives. However, the sites are mainly greenfield and as such score negatively on environmental objectives.

<sup>15</sup> Established through meeting with Welsh Water held on 02/11/16

- ◆ Merthyr Vale Ward: The sites mainly proposed for housing are generally located within settlement limits, nearby existing urban areas and within an area experiencing multiple/higher deprivation, and so score favourably on social objectives. However, there is an element of uncertainty in relation to potential negative effects on landscape mainly due to the large size of some of the sites, their prominent locations and (for some) their location outside settlement limits.
- ◆ Park Ward: Due to the relatively central location within settlement limits and nearby areas of existing urban areas their close proximity to Cyfarthfa Park, the Taff Trail and Merthyr Tydfil town centre the sites generally score favourably.
- ◆ Penydarren Ward: Due to their proximity to schools, to good bus services, local services and facilities nearby existing urban areas the mainly housing sites generally scores favourably on social objectives. However, the sites are mainly greenfield and as such score negatively on environmental objectives.
- ◆ Plymouth Ward: A relatively high number of Candidate and JHLAS sites are located in this Ward resulting in potentially high development pressure. Since the sites are mainly proposed for housing due their proximity to good bus services, train stations and active travel routes, they score positively for sustainable transport. However, due to their distance from key facilities and services they score unfavourably on other objectives.
- ◆ Town Ward: A relatively high number of Candidate & JHLAS sites are located in this Ward resulting in potentially high development pressure. However, due to central location, proximity to facilities, services, public transport, active travel routes, existing built development and the brownfield nature the sites generally score favourably.
- ◆ Vaynor Ward: Due to central location, proximity to facilities, services, public transport, active travel routes, existing built development and the brownfield nature the sites generally score favourably.

### **Health, Equalities and Welsh Language Impact Assessment**

- 10.7 Consideration of the effects on equality, health and the Welsh language has been made throughout the SA process. The SA topics, objectives and frameworks (Tables 6.1 and 6.2) contain several direct and indirect links to health, equality and the Welsh language.
- 10.8 For the appraisal of the PS the integration of Welsh language, health and equality concerns has focused on ensuring that these issues are well represented in the SA Framework [through objectives and decision-aiding questions relating to SA Objective 17, for the Welsh language and SA Objective

4. for Health and equalities.] against which the emergent policies have also been assessed. Consideration of Welsh language, health and equality issues has also been addressed iteratively as the appraisal process has progressed, for example demonstrating how the PS has taken on board the provisions relating to Health and Well-being set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. To demonstrate compliance with the Equality Act 2010, an Equalities Impact Assessment will accompany the Council Report seeking approval to consult the public on the Preferred Strategy.

10.9 The compatibility analysis for the LDP vision shows a neutral effect on Health and quality; however LDP Objective 4 relates to the provision of infrastructure and open space for the regeneration of communities and performs positively in this respect. The Preferred Strategy is considered to be directly beneficial as the strategy is likely to enhance provision and access to healthcare services, and would, in the medium to long term, increase demand for sport and recreation facilities as well as public open spaces and footpaths/active travel routes. The Level of development proposed will also place less pressure to build on existing open spaces, but also enable access to S106/CIL funding to improve the quality and access to existing public open space. Furthermore, the majority of sites being considered perform positively in this regard. Only one site being considered performs particularly poorly in this regard, due to the loss of open space that would result from its development, and its location in an area which is not experiencing higher deprivation. The LDP therefore has the scope to offer sites which improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities, and, in some cases, achieve this in areas experiencing higher deprivation.

10.10 The compatibility analysis for the LDP vision shows a neutral effect on the Welsh language; however LDP Objective 2 specifically relates to the Welsh language and performs positively in this respect. The Preferred Strategy is considered likely to attract people into the County Borough. Although the LDP cannot directly influence how many will be Welsh speakers, the level of growth proposed is likely to result in investment being attracted to facilitate improvements to assets of cultural significance and this will help to retain Welsh speaking residents. Sites perform universally positively in regards to the Welsh language. This is due to the fact that sites would provide housing in areas within the catchments of the 2 Welsh schools in the County Borough, thereby providing additional potential pupils for these schools, or would provide non-residential development in these areas (retail, employment, tourism), thereby making the areas more attractive places to live work and visit and supporting the County Borough which is a place of distinctive Welsh culture. This will ensure that the LDP has the scope to facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.

### Strategic Environmental Assessment

10.11 Table 10.1 below provides assessment conclusions for each of the issues prescribed in the SEA regulations. It identifies three likely significant positive effects from the strategy for the topics of Population, Material Assets and Landscape. No adverse likely significant effects are identified, reflecting the stage of plan making. Once further detail on site allocations, in particular for housing, is available, a more detailed consideration of small impacts will be enabled and some of these, due to nature of the receptor (for instance a protected species or listed building), may be significant.

**Table 10.1: SEA Conclusions**

SEA TOPIC	Will the Preferred Strategy be likely to have likely significant effects? <i><b>Likely significant effects highlighted in bold.</b></i>
<b>Biodiversity Fauna Flora</b>	<p>Environmental protection policies included within the Preferred Strategy coupled with the preferred growth and spatial options and the range of candidate site options provide the opportunity to avoid significant direct adverse effects on biodiversity.</p> <p>Some 4,040 Hectares of land (amounting to approximately 45%) of the plan area are protected as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, having a positive long term effect.</p> <p>Concentrating a development at the Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area (a previously developed site that has little known ecological value) eases pressure on other locations in the County Borough where sites with some ecological value, may be required for housing.</p> <p>Despite this, new development to accommodate the expected population growth has the potential to lead to some habitat fragmentation. However, the scale and dispersal of new development will result in mitigation/compensation being possible in the majority of cases.</p> <p>Relevant SA objective: 12</p>
<b>Population</b>	<p>The Preferred Strategy promotes a sustainable increase in population which would lead to population retention and a more balanced demographic profile than an approach accepting the population projections, which show decline. <i><b>This is a direct, positive, long-term likely significant effect arising from the Preferred Strategy.</b></i></p> <p>Relevant SA objectives: 3 &amp; 5</p>



<b>Human health</b>	<p>Although not significant, a positive indirect effect of the Preferred Strategy is that it is likely to enhance provision and access to healthcare services, and would, in the medium to long term, increase demand for sport and recreation facilities as well as public open spaces and footpaths/active travel routes, and may contribute improvements to public open space through planning obligations and CIL.</p> <p>The location of the proposed concentration of development at the Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area, away from the Council's only designated Air Quality Monitoring Area at Twynyrodyn Hill, helps avoid adverse effects from the LDP on human health.</p> <p>From the candidate site submissions, the LDP has the scope to promote development which improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities, and, in some cases, achieve this in areas experiencing higher deprivation.</p> <p>Providing a range of dwelling types could also help integrated communities in particular through the delivery of affordable housing.</p> <p>Synergistically the Preferred Strategy is likely to have a positive, permanent effect on human health.</p> <p>Relevant SA objectives: 4, 5 &amp; 8</p>
<b>Soil</b>	<p>Environmental protection policies included within the Preferred Strategy coupled with the preferred growth and spatial options and the range of candidate site options provide the opportunity to avoid significant direct adverse effects on soil.</p> <p>Concentrating a development at the Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area (a previously developed site that has little known ecological value) eases pressure on other locations in the County Borough where greenfield sites may be required for housing.</p> <p>Despite this, new development to accommodate the expected population growth has the potential to lead to some permanent adverse effects on soil although the impact remains uncertain because no information regarding mitigation for the loss of soil has been received at this stage.</p> <p>Accordingly, the Preferred Strategy is likely to have a negative effect on soil.</p> <p>Relevant SA objectives: 9, 11, 12 &amp; 15</p>
<b>Water</b>	<p>A sufficient water supply and sewage infrastructure is available to accommodate the Preferred Strategy.</p> <p>Although new development will be likely to increase demand, the LDP and Building Regulation in particular, ensure measures to minimise the demand for water are incorporated in new development.</p> <p>The level of development proposed will require some mitigation in terms of the effect on the water environment through surface water runoff, however the dispersed nature of sites (with the exception of the strategic site) increases the likelihood that this mitigation can be achieved and so no likely significant effect is identified.</p> <p>Have considered the Candidate Sites, the vast majority of sites appear to be outside areas at flood risk, some will, however require more information to ascertain their acceptability and impact. Some of these relate to sites which are proposed for less vulnerable, i.e. non-residential, uses.</p> <p>As such, the LDP has the scope to minimise the risk of flooding, which can also be aided through design policies promoting SUDS and restricting new development in flood risk areas.</p>

	<p>Accordingly, no significant effect is identified, although it must be recognised that climatic factors have an important impact on this finding and should they, or their modelling, change significantly, the assessment will need to be reviewed.</p> <p>Relevant SA objectives: 13 &amp; 14</p>
<b>Air</b>	<p>The location of the proposed concentration of development at the Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area, away from the Council's only designated Air Quality Monitoring Area at Twynrobyn Hill, helps avoid adverse effects from the LDP on air quality.</p> <p>Although the Preferred Strategy seeks to capitalise on the development of the South Wales Metro, it will be difficult to directly influence a significant reduction in the need to travel although, overall a positive in-combination effect is predicted for air quality from promoting the use of public transport and active travel routes.</p> <p>Energy consumption is dependent on a wide range of factors and its generation from a wide range of sources. The proposed increase in population and economic development is not likely to lead to a significant effect on air quality, indirectly, through increased energy consumption. In any case, the strategy presents opportunities to actively promote energy efficiency and renewable energy.</p> <p>No likely significant effect is identified and a neutral overall effect is an appropriate evaluation in this regard.</p> <p>Relevant SA objectives: 8 &amp; 10</p>
<b>Climatic factors</b>	<p>The strategy aims to reduce the need to travel and promotes sustainable transport which has a lesser contribution to the production of greenhouse gasses, pollution, and global warming.</p> <p>The Preferred Strategy also provides the opportunity to use green infrastructure (active travel routes etc.) to mitigate impact of development on climate change.</p> <p>The proposed increase in population and economic development is not likely to lead to a significant effect on air quality, indirectly, through increased energy consumption. In any case, the strategy presents opportunities to actively promote energy efficiency and renewable energy.</p> <p>These positive interventions are offset by accepting that there is likely to be some conflict between development and the environment with the resultant loss of some natural resources.</p> <p>Overall, no likely significant effect on climate change is attributable to the LDP although some minor positive and negative effects are likely.</p> <p>Relevant SA objectives: 10 &amp; 11</p>

<b>Material assets</b>	<p>As a development plan strategy, the Preferred Strategy directly affects a wide range of material assets, which together comprise the built environment, notably housing, public services buildings (hospitals and schools, industrial estates, retail premises, utilities, transport and communications infrastructure and other 'softer' infrastructure such as parks and active travel routes.</p> <p>By supporting a sustainable increase in population, the subsequent increase in demand for facilities is likely to result in the provision of local facilities in accessible locations, whilst not overburdening existing community and social infrastructure. In particular the impact of the preferred strategy on schools provision will be uncertain until site allocations are selected and this matter in particular requires close consideration when preparing the Deposit LDP. The preferred strategy supports the Council's Open Space Strategy, by seeking to protect designated open spaces.</p> <p>The Preferred Strategy supports new housebuilding across the County Borough and a significant regeneration project within the Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area. It also supports the South Wales Metro, the dualling of the A465 and a new central bus station in Merthyr Tydfil.</p> <p>Utility providers have not highlighted any particular issues with new development within Merthyr Tydfil County Borough, although further work will be undertaken to establish any particular issues.</p> <p><b>Overall, the Preferred Strategy is likely to have significant direct, and in-combination, positive effects on Material Assets</b> by supporting a sustainable increase in population which will retain demand for services and facilities within the County Borough.</p> <p>However, detailed site selection in the Deposit Plan has the potential to have some adverse effects on particular material assets and so the involvement of stakeholders is important to ensure avoidance and mitigation as appropriate.</p> <p>Relevant SA objectives: 1, 5, 7, 9 &amp; 10</p>
<b>Cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage</b>	<p>Candidate sites have been considered in relation to the historic environment and whilst a number have the potential to cause a likely significant impact, due to their proximity to designated and non-designated heritage assets, this is not certain as development sites, other than the Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area remain to be allocated at the next stage of plan making.</p> <p>Policies are included to conserve the setting of historic environment assets and to have regard to Urban Character Areas and Archaeologically Sensitive Areas, due to be identified before site allocations are chosen.</p> <p>The Preferred Strategy is not considered likely to have a significant effect on the Welsh language. Pursuing the strategy is likely to attract people into the County Borough, although the LDP cannot directly influence how much of the increased population will be Welsh speakers. Nevertheless the level of growth proposed is likely to result in investment being attracted to facilitate improvements to assets of cultural significance. New housing development within the catchments of the 2 Welsh schools in the County Borough, providing additional potential pupils, also supports the Welsh language.</p> <p>Overall, whilst no likely significant effect is identified, the impact of the LDP remains uncertain in this regard because any single development could result in a significant effect.</p> <p>Relevant SA objectives: 16 &amp; 17</p>
<b>Landscape</b>	<p>The Preferred Strategy proposes the designation of Special Landscape Areas to ensure the character of locally significant landscapes are maintained for future</p>

	<p>generations. <b><i>This intervention has the potential for a direct, positive, long-term effect also benefitting biodiversity, flora and fauna, cultural heritage and human health.</i></b></p> <p>Some sites, due to their location, size and position within the landscape, have the potential to negatively affect landscape quality although the development of others would remove existing eyesores or regenerate previously developed land and buildings that are currently having an adverse impact. This will require careful site selection when determining allocations in the Deposit Plan.</p> <p>Relevant SA objective: 18</p>
<b>The inter-relationship between the issues.</b>	<p>Positive likely significant effects from the Preferred Strategy are identified for the topics of Population, Material Assets and Landscape. No adverse likely significant effects have been identified, however this reflects the stage of plan making and further detail will enable a more detailed consideration of small impacts, which due to their individual character are significant in themselves.</p> <p>There is a direct link between the positive likely significant effects for the population and material assets. An approach supporting sustainable population growth, rather than decline or significant expansion in a short period of time helps community cohesion and assimilation with existing services and facilities. Conversely, improvements to material assets are likely to attract population growth and the retention of working aged people. <b><i>There is a positive synergistic effect apparent here, the positive effects contributing to an improved environment and 'perception' of the County Borough as an attractive place to live, work and visit.</i></b></p> <p>There is a less obvious inter-relationship between the likely positive significant effect of the Preferred Strategy on the Landscape and those identified for Population and Material Assets. For the first time Special Landscape Areas are proposed in the County Borough, ensuring that any development pays attention to locally important landscapes present in the County Borough. Not only has this a direct positive effect on the landscape, but it also has positive impacts for biodiversity, flora and fauna, cultural heritage and human health and further contributes to the synergistic effect of helping to improve the 'perception' of the County Borough as an attractive place to live, work and visit.</p> <p>There are interrelationships between likely insignificant effects also. Of note, by supporting the Open Spaces Strategy the Preferred Strategy has an in-combination positive effect on each of the SEA topics. The importance of the Open Spaces Strategy, therefore, to the successful development of the County Borough until 2031, cannot be overstated. Focussing resources derived from development at the environmental improvements highlighted in the Open Space Strategy's action plans has the potential to maximise the value of any investment made in the widest public interest.</p>

**Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)**

10.12 The aim of the HRA process is to assess the potential effects of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Local Development Plan (2016 – 2031) against the nature conservation objectives of any site designated for its nature conservation importance. The HRA of the Merthyr Tydfil LDP has been undertaken alongside the SA with the findings of the HRA informing the SA. The methods and findings of the HRA process are reported separately and have been sent to NRW as the statutory consultee and placed on consultation for the wider public alongside the SA and the Preferred Strategy.

10.13 The HRA screening concludes that all matters apart from the following, should be screened out from further consideration at deposit stage:-

- All development allocations in the deposit plan must avoid the loss and or degradation of marsh fringing habitat (of relevance to the Aberbargoed Grasslands Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Blaen Cynon SAC).
- Emissions from new industrial development on protected and allocated industrial sites in the deposit plan must not directly contribute to the degradation of the environmental conditions of the Brecon Beacons SAC, Coedydd Nedd a Mellt SAC, Cwm Cadlan SAC, and Llangorse Lake SAC.

## APPENDIX 1: PREFERRED STRATEGY POLICIES

<b>PREFERRED STRATEGY POLICIES</b>	
<b>Improving social well-being</b>	
Policy SW1:	Provision of new homes.
Policy SW2:	Provision of affordable housing
Policy SW3:	Sustainably distributing new homes
Policy SW4:	Settlement boundaries
Policy SW5:	Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area
Policy SW6:	The former Ivor Steel Works Regeneration Site
Policy SW7:	Gypsy, Traveller and Showpeople sites
Policy SW8:	Planning Obligations
Policy SW9:	Protecting and improving our open spaces
Policy SW10:	Sustainable design and placemaking
Policy SW11:	Improving our local transport network
Policy SW12:	Improving our strategic transport network
Policy SW13:	Central Bus Station
Policy SW14:	Protecting and improving our local community facilities
<b>Improving cultural well-being</b>	
Policy CW15:	Historic Environment
Policy CW16:	Cyfarthfa Heritage Area
<b>Improving environmental well-being</b>	
Policy EnW17:	Environment
Policy EnW18:	Local Nature Reserves
Policy EnW19:	Protected sites and species
Policy EnW20:	Special Landscape Areas
<b>Improving economic well-being</b>	
Policy EcW21:	Provision of employment land.
Policy EcW22:	Protecting employment sites.
Policy EcW23:	Retail Hierarchy - supporting our retailing provision.
Policy EcW24:	Retail Allocation
Policy EcW25:	Town and Local Centre Development
Policy EcW26:	Renewable Energy
Policy EcW27:	Sustainably supplying minerals
Policy EcW28:	Waste Facilities

## APPENDIX 2: KEY PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

### International:

Relevant international plans and policy have been transposed into national plans, policy and legislation and are considered below.

### National:

**Welsh Government - People, Places, Futures – The Wales Spatial Plan (WSP) 2008** update the WSP is the overarching framework and integration tool for Wales and is important to the Welsh Assembly Government as it helps to deliver priorities set out in One Wales.

**Welsh Government - One Wales: One Planet, The Sustainable Development Scheme of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) 2009** sets out WAG's vision of a sustainable Wales and confirms that sustainable development will be the central organising principle of the Assembly.

**Welsh Government - Planning Policy Wales, Edition 9, November 2016**, is the land use planning policy for Wales this guidance is supplemented by 21 Technical Advice Notes (TANs) together with procedural guidance in circulars.

**Welsh Government - Travelling to a Better Future - A Gypsy and Traveller Framework for Action and Delivery Plan** and up-dates seeks to ensure the needs of gypsies and travellers are assessed, planned and implemented in a more strategic way.

**Environment Agency, Managing Water Abstraction, 2013** - is the overarching document for managing water resources in England and Wales and links together the abstraction licensing strategies.

**Environment Agency, Water for people and the environment Water Resources Strategy for Wales, 2014** sets out how water resources should be managed over the coming decades so that water can be abstracted and used sustainably.

**Dwr Cymru, Water Resources Management Plan 2014 - The Plan covers a 25 year period, from 2015 to 2040** (also termed the 'planning period') and considers what needs to be done to ensure a sustainable and affordable balance between the amount of water taken from the environment and the amount of water needed for daily lives.

**Cadw Arts and Heritage Framework 2012** is the Welsh Government's historic environment service, working for an accessible and well-protected historic environment for Wales.

**Cadw - Historic Environment Strategy for Wales 2013** produced to promote activity, access and creativity —bringing together enjoyment and protection of much of the country's natural as well as its historic environment.

**Welsh Government - The Woodlands for Wales Action Plan 2015 -2020** is the short-term focus on actions and activities to make progress towards delivery of the long-term ambitions of Woodlands for Wales, Welsh Government's fifty-year strategy for woodlands and trees in Wales.

**Welsh Government - The Nature Recovery Plan for Wales** sets out how Wales will deliver the commitments of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the EU Biodiversity Strategy to halt the decline in our biodiversity by 2020 and then reverse that decline.

**Welsh Government - Climate Change Strategy for Wales 2010** and the two delivery plans that accompany it confirm commitments to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and enable effective adaptation in Wales.

**Welsh Government – A low carbon revolution 2010** sets the Welsh Government's ambitions for low carbon energy in Wales.

**Welsh Government - Towards Zero Waste – One Planet Wales: The Overarching Waste Strategy for Wales 2010** sets out a long term framework for resource efficiency and waste management between now and 2050.

**Public Health Wales (PHW) - Creating a Healthier, Happier and Fairer Wales – Introducing the Public Health Wales Strategic Plan for 2015 -18** explains how PHW is working to make Wales a healthier, happier and fairer place for everyone.

**Welsh Government - Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan for Jobs and Growth 2012 (WIIP)** set out the Welsh Government's strategic investment priorities providing a detailed account of sectoral investment plans through to 2014-15 - Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan Project Pipeline provides a single point of cross sectoral knowledge to inform key strategic investment decisions across the public and private sector the latest update being Project Pipeline Update February 2016.

**Welsh Government - Skills Implementation Plan** – Delivering the policy statement on skills developed to inform future action in relation to post-19 skills and employment policy, 2014.

**Welsh Government – Scoping study for converting disused railway tunnels into walking and cycling routes as part of the National Cycle Network Wales 2015** – Considers the scope for Abernant and Morlais tunnels.

**Welsh Government - Noise Action Plan for Wales 2013 – 2018** – explains how noise is managed and by whom providing evidence to support noise policies.

**Welsh Government – The Action Plan for Pollinators in Wales 2013** - sets the strategic vision, outcomes and areas for action to improve conditions for pollinators and work to halt and reverse their decline in Wales.

## Regional:

**Welsh Government - Turning Heads – A Strategy for the Heads of the Valleys 2020, 2006** helping to drive the success of South East Wales as an internationally recognised capital region.

**Defra and Environment Agency – Water for Life and Livelihoods – River Basin Management Plan Severn River Basin District 2009** is the approach the Environment Agency is using to ensure combined efforts achieve the improvement needed in the Severn River Basin District, focussing on the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment.

**South East Wales Transport Alliance (Sewta) - Regional Transport Plan (RTP) 2010** is a statutory plan which sets out an integrated and sustainable transport strategy for South East Wales.

**South East Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party – Regional Technical Statement 2014** apportiones the requirement for aggregates provision amongst Minerals Planning Authorities.



**South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan, January 2015** covering the period 2015 -2020 building upon the success of the previous Sewta Regional Transport Plan jointly developed by Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen local authorities sets out the thinking on the area's future transport needs, ways of increasing the transport choice for local residents and ways of improving access to jobs, education, healthcare and other services in the South East Wales Valleys area.

**Welsh Government - City Regions Final Report July 2012** considers the evidence for city regions as economic drivers, and identifies potential City Regions in Wales.

**Gillespie's LLP - Heads of the Valleys - Smaller Scale Wind Turbine Development - Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study: Final Report –April 2015** the purpose of the study is to provide guidance for the landscape and visual assessment of the impacts of smaller scale wind turbine developments.

**Western Power Distribution – Innovation Strategy 2016 – updated February 2017** – sets out WPD's approach to innovation and describes how they will improve efficiency and set the foundations for smart grids.

**South East Wales Employment and Skills Plan 2016** – defines the regional skills agenda.

**Waste Planning Monitoring Report – South East Wales 2016** – Monitors waste sites and development in the South East Wales area.

**Integrated Transport South Wales Metro Project** – The South Wales Metro is a proposed integration of heavy rail and development of light rail and bus-based public transport services and systems in South East Wales around the hub of Cardiff Central. The second phase comprises the electrification of the Valley Line which includes a 'turn-up & go' service, every 15 minutes from Merthyr Tydfil.

**The Cardiff Capital Region Growth and Competitiveness Commission** was established as part of the tri-partite City Deal agreement between the UK Government, the Welsh Government and the ten local authorities of the Cardiff Capital Region and is currently reviewing evidence to provide recommendations later in 2017.

## Surrounding LDPs in the South-East Wales Region

**Bridgend County Borough Council Local Development Plan 2006 - 2021**, was adopted September 2013.

**Caerphilly County Borough Council Local Development Plan 2006 - 2021**, was adopted November 2010.

**Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan 2006-2021**, was adopted March 2011.

**Brecon Beacons National Park Local Development Plan 2011-2026**, was adopted December 2013.

**Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan up to 2021** was adopted November 2012.

**Torfaen Local Development Plan** was adopted December 2013.

**Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan 2011-2021**, was adopted February 2014.

**Newport Local Development Plan 201-2016**, was adopted January 2015

**Cardiff Local Development Plan 2006-2026**, was adopted January 2016

**The Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan Deposit Draft 2011 -2026** adopted 2017.

## Local

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Local Development Plan 2006-2021** sets out the Council's priorities for the development and use of land in the area.

**Merthyr Tydfil Active Travel, 2015** existing route maps implements the duty under the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 which includes the potential of Public Rights of Way (PROWs) in encouraging active travel.

**Merthyr Tydfil Open Spaces Strategy, 2016** identifies areas of surplus and deficiency in access to open space and Identifies priority open spaces and ideas for their enhancement.

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – The Highway Network Management Plan** sets out a policy in relation to all highways maintenance activities undertaken within the County Borough area.

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – 2015 Updating and Screening Assessment for Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council 2016** fulfils the requirements of the Local Air Quality Management process which places an obligation on all local authorities to regularly review and assess air quality in their areas, and to determine whether or not the air quality objectives are likely to be achieved.

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council - Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2013** sets out to satisfy the requirements of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Action for Wildlife - The Merthyr Tydfil Biodiversity Action Plan 2014 -2019** sets out objectives, targets and actions for conservation of biodiversity within the County Borough area.

**White Consultants - The Merthyr Tydfil LANDMAP Study (2002)** the aim of the study was to ascertain a clear understanding of the landscape resource and set out a strategy and design and management guidelines to assist in the socio-economic regeneration of the MTBC area.

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council - Destination Management Plan 2015-2018** prioritising the tourism sector within the Local Authority and concentrating on developing its products further and upgrading the existing tourism product.

**The Conservation Studio - Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Built Heritage Strategy and Action Plan 2008** a detailed Action Plan to protect and enhance its heritage assets, including listed and locally listed buildings, ancient monuments, and conservation areas.

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council - Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans (CAAMPs)** provide detailed information on the special character of conservation areas, and provide guidance for development and maintenance of properties.

**Celfwaith - Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre Public Art Strategy 2014** purporting an arts led regeneration and artists can play a major part in that process by helping to change public perceptions of the town.

**Merthyr Tydfil Leisure Trust – Library Delivery Plan 2015- 2016** a working document which sets out the direction for the delivery of the service within the Leisure Trust for 2015 -2016.

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Local Housing Market Assessment 2014-2019 (LHMA) March 2015** a periodical review of housing need which will assist the Authority with strategic planning for housing and a range of other Local Authority services.

**Welsh Government - Merthyr Tydfil Housing Association Limited Regulatory Assessment Report 2014** provides evidence to demonstrate performance against delivery outcomes.

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Corporate Asset Management Plan** sets out our vision for property in the context of corporate influences and objectives and details what progress has been made to date, together with our priorities for the future.

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Corporate Plan** sets out the main priorities for the council from 2013 to 2017.

**Merthyr Tydfil Public Service Board - Single Integrated Plan for Merthyr Tydfil 2013 - 2017** replaced the four previous partnership plans that sought to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area its people and will be superseded by the Local Well-Being Plan following completion of the Cwm Taf Well-being Assessment.

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Local well-being statement** (in preparation)

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Welsh language promotional strategy** (in preparation)

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment** (2016)

**A needs analysis and recommendations to support a future poverty strategy for**

**Merthyr Tydfil 2016** - brings together a range of quantitative and qualitative data to develop an informed understanding of current and future need in relation to poverty in Merthyr Tydfil.

**Merthyr Tydfil Public Service Board** – Information Strategy seeks to have the right information available to the right people at the right time ensuring safety of information to support the right decisions.

**Emerging Council Plans** include an economic development strategy, twenty first century Schools Improvement Programme (both due in 2017) and development of the Local Well-being Plan due in 2018.

**Significant future developments** include a new central bus station, Trago Mills retail outlet and the dualling of the A465.

### APPENDIX 3: KEY SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES FROM OTHER PLANS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

Communities (incl. population)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The latest (2014) population projections show a declining population from 2024 onwards.</li> <li>◆ It is projected that the demographic profile will move towards there being a greater proportion of the population aged 60 and over.</li> <li>◆ All population scenarios will have an impact on a wide range of infrastructure such as education facilities, health facilities and leisure facilities.</li> <li>◆ The distribution of any population and housing growth must be considered carefully to ensure that existing community services and infrastructure can cope, or that planned new infrastructure and services can be delivered to ensure communities remain sustainable.</li> <li>◆ There is still a trend of losing working age people to elsewhere in the UK.</li> </ul>
Health and Equalities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Life expectancy is significantly below the Wales average.</li> <li>◆ Obesity in the adult population is significantly worse than the Wales average.</li> <li>◆ A mental health component summary score which is significantly lower than the Wales average.</li> <li>◆ Higher Multiple Deprivation is experienced in the north of the County Borough.</li> <li>◆ The accessibility to and sufficiency of open space varies by ward with some experiencing deficiencies.</li> </ul>
Education:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Sustaining the existing level of population would lead to an increase in the number of school age children in the County Borough over the plan period potentially requiring extensions to existing schools or the construction of new schools.</li> <li>◆ The spatial distribution of educational facilities needs to be considered carefully to ensure that facilities remain viable.</li> <li>◆ Educational attainment at Key Stage 4 is below the Welsh Average.</li> </ul>
Housing:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Sustaining the existing level of population would require an increase in the number residences in the County Borough.</li> <li>◆ There is a significant need for the provision of Social Housing despite the relative affordability of living in Merthyr Tydfil.</li> <li>◆ Intermediate affordable housing products need to be carefully considered.</li> <li>◆ There is a need to facilitate a sustainable transition towards the housing needs of an aging population.</li> <li>◆ A significant range in the quality and energy efficiency of the 'stock'.</li> <li>◆ A significant number of 'empty properties'.</li> <li>◆ Additional, better quality, housing is required to attract and retain people.</li> <li>◆ The spatial distribution and phasing of new housing development must be considered carefully to ensure that it is viable and to ensure that existing infrastructure can cope, or that planned new infrastructure can be delivered to ensure communities remain sustainable.</li> <li>◆ Competition from other areas in South East Wales.</li> </ul>
Economy and Employment:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The employment rate in MTCBC is increasing but is still below the Wales average.</li> <li>◆ Gross weekly pay is lower than the Wales average.</li> <li>◆ Relatively low numbers of people are employed in higher paid/more skilled jobs.</li> <li>◆ Key economic sectors include the public sector and service sectors.</li> </ul>

- ◆ There are relatively low outflows of retail and convenience spending.
- ◆ Commercial vacancy rates are higher than the Wales average.
- ◆ Very little new development on employment land over the past 5 years.
- ◆ Competition from other areas in UK.

#### Connections (Transport and Movement):

- ◆ Green infrastructure and Active Travel routes are not well connected through the urban grain / pattern.
- ◆ The A470, train line and the River Taf, all run North-South and constrain East-West movement and accessibility to bridges, underpasses and roundabouts in some parts of the County Borough.
- ◆ Orbital travel (between valleys) is difficult. There is an opportunity to link Merthyr and Aberdare via the Abernant Tunnel.
- ◆ Very low levels of active travel commuting for journeys less than 5km.
- ◆ Rights of Way connectivity requires improvement (links and loops).
- ◆ Net out-commuting to Cardiff.
- ◆ New central bus station proposed.
- ◆ Rail head at the Ffos-y-fran land reclamation site is still in operation.
- ◆ Congestion at 'hot spots' on the road network at peak times. An AQMA is proposed at Twynrydyn Hill, with road traffic being the primary cause of for exceedances of the AQOs.

#### Energy:

- ◆ Domestic consumption is the biggest contributor to local greenhouse gas emissions.
- ◆ Transport fuel consumption is also a significant contributor to local greenhouse gas emissions.
- ◆ There is opportunity for renewable energy within the plan area.

#### Climate Change:

- ◆ Increases in hot-weather related death and illness and conversely reductions in cold-weather related illness and death.
- ◆ Changes in soil conditions, biodiversity and landscape due to warmer, drier summers.
- ◆ Changes in species including a decline in native species, changes in migration patterns and increases in alien and invasive species.
- ◆ Reductions in river flows and water availability during the summer, affecting water supplies and the natural environment.
- ◆ Increases in flooding, affecting people, property and infrastructure.
- ◆ Increases in the risk of pests and diseases affecting agriculture and forestry. The risk to livestock is a particular concern.
- ◆ Increases in grass yields, allowing a potential increase in livestock production;
- ◆ Increases in tourist numbers and a longer tourist season.

#### Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna:

- ◆ 10 Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the County Borough.
- ◆ National and local designated sites for nature conservation and geodiversity and the presence of a range of 42 habitats and species.
- ◆ Ecological corridors within Merthyr Tydfil and between Merthyr Tydfil and adjoining LAs.
- ◆ Fragmented green infrastructure within the urban area.
- ◆ Land management practices have varying impacts on the biodiversity present.
- ◆ Climate change will place increased pressure on biodiversity and ecosystems.
- ◆ Post-industrial land.

#### Water and Flooding:

- ◆ Climate change will place increased pressure on water resources, in particular in the summer months.
- ◆ The chemical status of Water is deteriorating in the Nant Morlais.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving and/or preventing the decline of the quality of groundwater and surface-water and water bodies.</li> <li>Parts of the Town Centre are identified as being at risk from flooding.</li> </ul>
<b>Air Quality:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IAQMA designated for exceedances of Nitrogen Dioxide in Twynyrodyn Hill caused by Traffic.</li> <li>A new bus station has received planning permission.</li> <li>East Merthyr Land reclamation phase 3 (Ffos-y-fran) is on-going.</li> </ul>
<b>Noise</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Noise maps indicate that the existing primary source of noise pollution within MTCBC is from the classified roads within the County Borough.</li> </ul>
<b>Minerals, Land and Soil:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no 'best and most versatile' agricultural land, present within the County Borough. There is very little soil which may be used for growing.</li> <li>Existing permitted reserves.</li> <li>Mineral resources worthy of safeguarding have been identified by the BGS.</li> <li>A large amount of previously developed and contaminated land.</li> <li>A significant land reclamation scheme is underway in the County Borough and one is proposed in a neighbouring areas.</li> <li>Encouraging the transportation of raw materials by rail.</li> </ul>
<b>Waste:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to facilitate the provision of an adequate and integrated network of waste facilities.</li> <li>Capacity of waste site at Trecatti.</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural Heritage (inc. Welsh Language) &amp; Historic Environment:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Merthyr Tydfil contains a rich defining era of heritage assets, which require sensitive management and protection.</li> <li>Merthyr Tydfil has the second highest proportion of population who are unable to communicate in Welsh (after Blaenau Gwent) at 91.36% (2011 Census). Across Wales the ambition is for approximately a third of the population to use Welsh by 2050.</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape and Townscape:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning Area Adjoins the Brecon Beacons National Park.</li> <li>Areas of landscape quality, identified as draft Special Landscape Area Designations.</li> <li>Merthyr Tydfil contains a rich defining era of heritage assets based on its origins of Iron Works. The Valleys settlements grew around Coal production.</li> <li>Maintaining the integrity of the Merthyr Tydfil Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest.</li> <li>Maintaining the integrity and setting of Cyfarthfa Castle and associated Registered Park and Garden and Aberfan Cemetery - Garden of Remembrance and Former Tip and Slide area.</li> <li>Protecting the setting and character of 'character areas' and conservation areas.</li> <li>Maintaining traditional field boundaries and habitats.</li> <li>Preserving views from promoted routes such as the Taff Trail.</li> </ul>

#### APPENDIX 4: SA OF GROWTH OPTIONS

	Planning for population decline	Sustainable population growth	Continuation of Existing Enhanced Growth Strategy
SA Objective	<i>The LDP accepts trend based population projections that anticipate population decline towards the end of the Plan period, and seeks to manage this as effectively as possible. Will require approximately 50-70 dwellings per annum.</i>	<i>The LDP seeks to facilitate and manage a level of sustainable population growth by 2031 (approx. 8% increase). The level of house building will continue broadly along the lines of recent (10 year average) build rates (150 dwellings per annum)</i>	<i>Continuation of current LDP strategy to build over 200 dwellings per annum and subsequently attempt to manage a population increase of over 15% by 2031.</i>
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met  (SEA Directive topic: Population, Material Assets)	-  In the longer term, there will be less development overall which will result in less chance of securing local facilities in accessible locations. Fewer residents may also mean less demand for such facilities, increasing the likelihood that existing facilities could be lost.	+	?
		The sustainable increase in population would lead to population retention (not losing as many working age people as trends have shown previously). The subsequent increase in demand for facilities is likely to result in the provision of local facilities in accessible locations, whilst not overburdening existing community and social infrastructure.	The larger increase in population will lead to increase in demand for facilities. Retention of a larger share of working age people is likely. This, coupled with the associated increase in dependents, raises issues as to whether there are the resources to deliver the additional educational facilities, social care and health care required by this level of population growth.
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities	?	+	?
	The population decline forecast towards the end of the Plan period could lead to permanently disintegrated communities. The lower level of development	The overall level of development required by this option will still result in the individual communities of the County Borough retaining their identities. Housing allocations will be	The overall level of development required by this option could result in the coalescence of some communities within the County Borough as the increased



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(SEA Directive topic: Population, Material Assets)	proposed, if not appropriately located, could result in erosion of some settlements where there are already issues in regard to physical and social conditions.	spread across the County Borough and assist in regenerating all communities in Merthyr Tydfil.	demand for housing will require more land to be allocated with a concentration in the main Merthyr Tydfil settlement.
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth  (SEA Directive topic: Population)	--  Direct conflict with this objective as the population would experience decline by the end of the Plan period.	++  The level of population growth in this option is judged to be sustainable as it would require a level of house building that is achievable, and the associated physical and social infrastructure required would be able to be delivered even with the predicted pressure on public finances.	?  It is unknown if the level of population growth proposed in this option is sustainable as there is uncertainty as to whether the additional educational and social/health care facilities would be deliverable. The transport infrastructure would also face increased pressure with this level of population growth.
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities  (SEA Directive topic: Material Assets, Human Health)	?  Potentially harmful secondary effect in the medium term as healthcare and recreational facilities may no longer be viable due to less demand.  Increasingly dispersed facilities would necessitate car use in favour of walking cycling or public transport.	+  Directly beneficial as the strategy is likely to enhance provision and access to healthcare services, and would, in the medium to long term, increase demand for sport and recreation facilities as well as public open spaces and footpaths/active travel routes.  Level of development proposed will also place less pressure to build on existing open spaces, but also enable access to S106/CIL funding to improve the quality and access to existing public open space.	?  On one hand, this option would be beneficial as the strategy could enhance provision and access to healthcare services, and would, in the medium to long term, increase demand for sport and recreation facilities as well as public open spaces and footpaths/active travel routes.  However, given the extra pressure for land, for housing in particular, there is a likelihood some existing open spaces would be permanently lost, proving difficult to replace.
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling types and tenures  (SEA Directive topic: Population,	?  Adverse negative effect in the medium to long term as it would lead to reduced dwelling choice and decrease the likelihood of a mix of housing types and tenures.  Failure to provide affordable housing	+  Positive permanent effect: Likely to assist in providing for a range of dwelling types and could in the long term indirectly contribute to integrated communities by allowing local people to remain in the communities through the delivery of affordable housing.	+  Positive permanent effect: Likely to assist in providing for a range of dwelling types and could in the long term indirectly contribute to integrated communities by allowing local people to remain in the communities through the delivery of affordable housing.



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<i>Material Assets, Human Health)</i>	would indirectly prevent local people from remaining in their communities. Could be mitigated through very carefully allocated affordable housing, and strong, evidence-led private development	Positive secondary effects, although temporary, on the construction and related supply industries and therefore jobs. Cumulatively, in relation to social and economic policies, could assist in promoting integrated communities	Positive secondary effects, although temporary, on the construction and related supply industries and therefore jobs.
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock	0	+	++
<i>(SEA Directive topic: Population, Material Assets, Human Health)</i>	Any new dwellings built will have to meet appropriate standards and will therefore be of a higher quality and energy efficiency than existing older stock.  Lower level of new development means that it will be more difficult to significantly increase the overall proportion of stock that is of a higher standard.	Any new dwellings built will have to meet appropriate standards and will therefore be of a higher quality and energy efficiency than existing older stock.  The number of dwellings required to accommodate the new residents may, in the longer term, necessitate the refurbishment, to a higher energy efficient standard, of the existing housing stock.  Positive secondary effects, although temporary, on the construction and related supply industries and therefore jobs (although not at the same scale as Enhanced Growth Option)	Any new dwellings built will have to meet appropriate standards and will therefore be of a higher quality and energy efficiency than existing older stock.  The high number of dwellings required to accommodate the new residents would in the long term necessitate the refurbishment, to a higher energy efficient standard, of the existing housing stock.  Positive secondary effects, although temporary, on the construction and related supply industries and therefore jobs.
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support Economic Development	-	+	+
	Would not provide for a sustainable economy as it neither encourages local growth, nor takes into account identified strategic economic aspirations. Would accelerate decline, deprivation and unemployment due to economic inactivity.  The rural economy and sustainable tourism would not be supported and a decline in population would jeopardise the vitality of town centre. It is unlikely that this strategy would deliver a diverse	Would result in a positive effect as it provides for a sustainable economy by encouraging inward and indigenous investment, promoting a healthy town centre, and maintaining a portfolio of employment land. It could also indirectly assist in providing a diverse range of job opportunities, thereby, cumulatively, reducing the need for out-commuting from the Borough for work and attracting new residents.  In the long term, the expected growth may not be sufficient to permanently cater for strategic economic aspirations to diversify into new	Would result in a positive effect as it provides for a sustainable economy by encouraging inward and indigenous investment, promoting a healthy town centre, and maintaining a portfolio of employment land. It could also indirectly assist in providing a diverse range of job opportunities, thereby, cumulatively, reducing the need for out-commuting from the Borough for work and attracting new residents.  In the long term, there may be doubts in

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	<p>range of job and training opportunities in accessible locations due to lack of investment and proximity to markets.</p> <p>Proposed Metro transport infrastructure would make the area more attractive, but economy unlikely to grow if the labour is not available locally.</p> <p>All options would be able to adequately safeguard appropriate areas and amounts of land for employment uses.</p>	<p>sectors in sub-regionally significant growth locations.</p> <p>Proposed Metro transport infrastructure will make the area more attractive and enable a smoother flow of labour into County Borough.</p> <p>All options would be able to adequately safeguard appropriate areas and amounts of land for employment uses.</p>	<p>regard to the demand for a larger amount of employment land in the North of the City Region.</p> <p>Proposed Metro transport infrastructure will make the area more attractive and enable a smoother flow of labour into County Borough. This may justify the larger allocation of employment land.</p> <p>All options would be able to adequately safeguard appropriate areas and amounts of land for employment uses.</p>
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport	<p>-</p> <p>The strategy does not address transportation issues. This will result in long-term negative effects, difficult to remedy. A decreasing number of people would have to travel further to fewer and more isolated facilities and jobs.</p> <p>As a secondary adverse effect, reduced support for the town centre and less demand for such services due to a declining population would render an improved public transport system (e.g. Metro proposals) unviable and existing service more difficult to sustain.</p> <p>Limited opportunities to promote and improve Active Travel routes and Green Infrastructure as the declining population is likely to result in a smaller demand for such facilities.</p>	<p>0</p> <p>Land is likely to be safeguarded for both strategic highway network improvements (A465) and for development associated with the proposed Metro system.</p> <p>The scale of the Metro proposals should offset any potential extra car use associated with the increase in population and the dualling of the A465 trunk road due for completion in the plan period.</p> <p>Increased amount of new development will increase the demand on existing Active Travel routes, and enable new routes to be considered in order to effectively integrate new development with existing communities and facilities.</p> <p>The level of growth proposed will also enable the protection and enhancement of Green Infrastructure</p>	<p>0</p> <p>Land is likely to be safeguarded for both strategic highway network improvements (A465) and for development associated with the proposed Metro system.</p> <p>The scale of the Metro proposals should offset any potential extra car use associated with the increase in population and the dualling of the A465 trunk road due for completion in the plan period.</p> <p>Increased amount of new development will increase the demand on existing Active Travel routes, and enable new routes to be considered in order to effectively integrate new development with existing communities and facilities.</p> <p>The level of growth proposed will also enable the protection and enhancement of Green Infrastructure, although the extra pressure for land to build on could make</p>

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			this more difficult.
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	?	++	+
	<p>Option would ensure that sufficient land is available to facilitate required improvements to infrastructure; however, the population decline could result in less demand for some facilities and thus reducing the likelihood of investment in this infrastructure.</p> <p>Potential for exacerbating traffic congestion and air quality hotspots due to the more isolated nature of any new development.</p> <p>Would enable the safeguarding of locally or regionally planned transport routes or proposals.</p>	<p>Option would ensure that sufficient land is available to facilitate required improvements to infrastructure.</p> <p>The level of growth proposed would also likely attract the appropriate level of demand and investment required to deliver the infrastructure.</p> <p>Opportunities to improve strategic public transport infrastructure (through Metro proposals) and the realistic level of growth proposed are likely to mitigate any potential issues with regard to increased traffic congestion and reduced air quality.</p> <p>Would enable the safeguarding of locally or regionally planned transport routes or proposals.</p>	<p>Option would ensure that sufficient land is available to facilitate required improvements to infrastructure.</p> <p>The larger increase in population will lead to an increase in demand for facilities, however, it is uncertain whether the level of investment can keep up with this extra demand.</p> <p>Opportunities to improve strategic public transport infrastructure (through Metro proposals) and the realistic level of growth proposed are likely to mitigate any potential issues with regard to increased traffic congestion and reduced air quality.</p> <p>Would enable the safeguarding of locally or regionally planned transport routes or proposals.</p>
10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation	?	?	-
	<p>The initial positive impact on reduced use of energy due to a declining population is offset by the expected inefficient use of land, resources and energy together with the increased need to travel by car with adverse results on energy consumption.</p> <p>As a secondary negative effect, the lack of a critical mass in terms of buildings and infrastructure would discourage investment in alternative energy schemes from renewable resources.</p>	<p>This option does present opportunities to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy given the greater level of overall development.</p> <p>The level and distribution of new development will enable opportunities such as district heating systems and community solar schemes to be considered.</p> <p>Although the impact on energy consumption is dependent on other factors and further details, an increase in population is likely to lead to higher energy consumption.</p>	<p>There is potential for the increase in energy use in this option to be mitigated through energy efficient design and promotion of renewable energy schemes.</p> <p>The level and distribution of new development will enable opportunities such as district heating systems and community solar schemes to be considered.</p> <p>Although the impact on energy consumption is dependent on other factors and further details, the increase in</p>

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	Potential to safeguard areas of land for renewable energy proposals.	Potential to safeguard areas of land for renewable energy proposals.	population proposed will lead to higher energy consumption.  Potential to safeguard areas of land for renewable energy proposals.
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	0  The initial positive impact on climate change due to a declining population is offset by the expected inefficient use of land, resources and energy together with the increased need to travel by car, contributing to global warming.	?  The strategy aims to reduce the need to travel, and refers to locational policy that will also aim to reduce fuel consumption and, therefore, make a lesser contribution to the production of greenhouse gasses, pollution, and global warming. The positive intention is offset by accepting that there is likely to be some conflict with certain environmental considerations and a possible loss of some natural resources.  Opportunity to use green infrastructure (active travel routes etc.) to mitigate the impact of development on climate change.	-  The strategy aims to reduce the need to travel, and refers to locational policy that will also aim to reduce fuel consumption and, therefore, make a lesser contribution to the production of greenhouse gasses, pollution, and global warming. The positive intention is offset by accepting that there is likely to be conflict with certain environmental considerations and a loss of some natural resources due to the extra pressure for development.  Opportunity to use green infrastructure (active travel routes etc.) to mitigate the impact of development on climate change, although this may be more difficult than other options due to extra pressure for land for development.
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity	+  Reducing the level of development and pressure on resources would by default enhance wildlife habitats and prevent their fragmentation with unintended but immediate positive results on fauna and flora.  Would present opportunities for communities to manage their own environments.	0  Neutral impact on the SA objective as the strategy refers to policy mechanisms that are designed to protect and enhance the County Borough's natural environment.  Despite this, new development to accommodate the expected growth could negatively impact on existing habitats resulting in irreversible fragmentation.  The scale and dispersal of new development	?  The strategy refers to policy mechanisms that are designed to protect and enhance the County Borough's natural environment.  Mitigation measures are mentioned, though they are not specified and may be more difficult/costly as the new development to accommodate the expected growth would likely lead to habitat fragmentation

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		<p>will result in mitigation/compensation being feasible in the majority of cases where there is any conflict with environmental policy.</p> <p>Would present opportunities for communities to manage their own environments. This could prove particularly valuable as the improvement of some habitats could mitigate the potential loss of others due to the growth proposed.</p>	<p>Due to the higher level of growth, there is an increased likelihood of significant adverse irreversible effects to fauna and flora, with long term negative secondary effects on climate change and air quality.</p> <p>Would present opportunities for communities to manage their own environments although this may be on a smaller scale as more land is required for development.</p>
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	+	?	?
	<p>Would result in less demand for water, ease pressure on the drainage system and reduce the need for wastewater treatment. This would indirectly protect ground water sources and avoid water pollution. Unintended beneficial impact on progressing the SA objective.</p>	<p>The strategy refers to the impact on the water environment and protection of flood plains, yet the increase in population would place strain on this resource resulting in potential long-term adverse effects.</p> <p>The strategy states that there will be some conflict with environmental considerations, however building standards and design has evolved to minimise the impact on the water environment.</p> <p>Synergistically, increased demand for this resource without protective water management methods in place is likely to have a negative effect, difficult to remedy.</p>	<p>The strategy refers to the impact on the water environment and protection of flood plains, yet the dramatic increase in population on mainly greenfield/ previously undeveloped sites would put a considerable strain on this resource.</p> <p>The strategy states that there will remain a greater conflict with environmental considerations than in the other option, and although mitigation measures are mentioned they are not specified. This would render the protection of the water environment and promotion of sustainable water management difficult and expensive.</p> <p>Medium term negative impact on water preservation in periods of draughts. Long-term adverse effect on groundwater levels (with resulting indirect consequences for agriculture) and secondarily higher energy consumption for water processing.</p>
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	+	0	?
	<p>Would result in less demand for water,</p>	<p>Would result in an increased demand for water,</p>	<p>Would result in an increased demand for</p>

	<p>ease pressure on the drainage system and reduce the need for wastewater treatment. This would indirectly protect ground water sources and avoid water pollution. Unintended beneficial impact on progressing the SA objective. Would look to promote SUDS and direct development away from flood risk areas.</p>	<p>placing some pressure on the drainage system and increasing the need for wastewater treatment. Initial discussions with relevant stakeholders indicate that this level of growth could be accommodated without strategic improvements to existing infrastructure. Would look to promote SUDS and direct development away from flood risk areas.</p>	<p>water, placing pressure on the drainage system and increasing the need for wastewater treatment. Initial discussions with relevant stakeholders indicate that this level of growth could potentially be accommodated without strategic improvements to existing infrastructure; however, the extra dwellings proposed would be likely to require a higher level of investment in the water infrastructure than other options.</p> <p>Would look to promote SUDS and direct development away from flood risk areas, however the extra pressure for land to development could conflict with these issues.</p>
<p>15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.</p>	<p><b>0</b></p> <p>Less development would have a negligible short-term positive impact on preserving land and soil, but would not necessarily encourage the reuse of land and would also not encourage the reclamation of contaminated land.</p> <p>Would enable the appropriate safeguarding of mineral resources.</p>	<p><b>0</b></p> <p>Would encourage the use of brownfield sites in favour of greenfield sites and reclamation contaminated land.</p> <p>The strategy states that there will be some conflict with environmental considerations, and that certain environmental policies may need to be strictly applied to enable mitigation.</p> <p>Would enable the appropriate safeguarding of mineral resources.</p>	<p><b>0</b></p> <p>Although the option would encourage the use of brownfield sites in favour of greenfield sites, the increased housing requirement would inevitably lead to increasing pressure to release greenfield land for development.</p> <p>The strategy states that there will be conflict with environmental considerations, and that certain environmental policies may need to be strictly applied to enable mitigation. This however may prove increasingly difficult to achieve given the extra pressure to develop of this option.</p> <p>Would enable the appropriate safeguarding of mineral resources.</p>

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16. To protect and enhance heritage assets which defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	-	0	?
	Likely overall negative effect on the SA objective. Although the strategy would eventually ease the development pressure in the County Borough, less revenue income due to fewer visitors may in the long term jeopardise maintenance and management schemes of existing buildings/structures.	The strategy would require land to be released for development, however, given the overall level of growth proposed; the Council will still be able to prioritise some existing historic buildings/assets for redevelopment as there would not be the overwhelming need to develop every vacant site in the County Borough.  The economic viability of redeveloping these existing buildings would have to be balanced with other priorities within the Plan and other Council strategies.	The strategy expects to facilitate growth through significant amounts of new developments. Given known issues surrounding economic viability in the Valleys area, it will be even more difficult to protect and enhance assets if more attractive land for development is released.  Significant grant funding would need to be very carefully directed by the Council in order to retain links to the towns' industrial heritage, and protect and enhance existing buildings/structures.
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	?	0	0
	Population decline is likely to result in a decrease in the number of Welsh speakers in the County Borough.  Also, the low level of investment (given the low level of development proposed) could result in the condition of assets that reflect the cultural significance of Merthyr Tydfil deteriorating or potentially being lost.	The option is likely to attract people into the County Borough, although the LDP cannot directly influence how much of the increased population will be Welsh speakers. Measures to promote the Welsh language will need to be robustly implemented.  The level of growth proposed is likely to result in investment being attracted to facilitate improvements to assets of cultural significance.	The level of population increase could see any distinctiveness of local culture be diluted unless measures to promote local culture and Welsh language are robustly implemented.  The level of growth proposed is likely to result in investment being attracted to facilitate improvements to assets of cultural significance, however there extra pressure for land for housing may result in some of these assets being lost.
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.	0	0	?
	Uncertain effect on the SA objective. Although the strategy would eventually ease the development pressure in the County Borough, less revenue income due to fewer visitors may in the long term jeopardise maintenance and management schemes.	The strategy would potentially require the release of greenfield sites, with potential harmful impacts on future landscape character.  However, the level of development proposed does not require significant expansions to	The strategy expects to facilitate growth through significant amounts of new developments. Despite stating a preference for use of brownfield sites, this would result in a considerable amount of development on greenfield sites with potential harmful impacts on landscape.

		settlement limits and any impact on landscape features would be able to be mitigated/compensated for.	Potential irreversible long term harm because once land is built upon it is very unlikely that it will be reverted back to an open green space. The geographical extent of the damage is restricted by defining settlement boundaries, therefore triggering some protection mechanism.
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## APPENDIX 5: SA OF SPATIAL OPTIONS

SA Objective	Urban extension and other small sites	Strategic brownfield site and other small sites	Dispersal of small sites across County Borough
	<i>Majority of housing (upto 1500 dwellings) would be located on an urban extension at Cwm Glo and Glyndyrys SSSI along with associated leisure, retail and tourism development.</i>	<i>Significant proportion of housing (upto 800 dwellings) will be located on a strategic regeneration site (Abercanaid/Pentrebach). The site will also facilitate employment use and leisure facilities and will form a key part of the South Wales Metro proposals.</i>	<i>Housing will be located on a number of sites across the County Borough (approx. 50-150 dwellings per site), the majority of these sites will be situated in the main Merthyr Tydfil settlement.</i>
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met  (SEA Directive topic: Population, Material Assets)	-  The sustainable increase in population is likely to lead to population retention (not losing as many working age people as trends have shown previously).  There is the potential for this spatial option to deliver the necessary associated community and social facilities, however, given the relatively isolated location of the urban extension, this has the potential to be more difficult and costly than other spatial options which are likely to be easier to integrate with existing infrastructure.	+  The sustainable increase in population is likely to lead to population retention (not losing as many working age people as trends have shown previously).  The subsequent increase in demand for facilities is likely to result in the provision of local facilities in accessible locations (given the distribution of new development within existing communities), whilst not overburdening existing community and social infrastructure	+  The sustainable increase in population is likely to lead to population retention (not losing as many working age people as trends have shown previously).  The subsequent increase in demand for facilities is likely to result in the provision of local facilities in accessible locations (given the distribution of new development within existing communities), whilst not overburdening existing community and social infrastructure.

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2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities  (SEA Directive topic: Population, Material Assets)	?	+	+
	<p>The spatial distribution of development under this option (the urban extension) will result in the creation of a new community.</p> <p>Integrating this community with existing areas of Merthyr Tydfil to the point of enhancing community/settlement identity is likely to prove costly/difficult given the location and physical separation of the urban extension.</p>	<p>The overall level and distribution of development required by this option should result in the individual communities of the County Borough retaining their identities.</p> <p>Housing allocations will be spread across the County Borough and assist in regenerating all communities in Merthyr Tydfil.</p>	<p>The spatial distribution of development in this option could result in the coalescence of some communities within the County Borough as the increased demand for housing will require more land to be allocated with a concentration in the main Merthyr Tydfil settlement.</p> <p>However, the level of growth proposed should enable new development to be planned and managed effectively in order to enhance community/settlement identities.</p>
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth  (SEA Directive topic: Population)	++	++	++
	<p>The level of population growth is judged to be sustainable as it would require an overall level of house building that is achievable, and the associated physical and social infrastructure required would be likely to be delivered even with the predicted pressure on public finances.</p>	<p>The level of population growth is judged to be sustainable as it would require an overall level of house building that is achievable, and the associated physical and social infrastructure required would be likely to be delivered even with the predicted pressure on public finances.</p>	<p>The level of population growth is judged to be sustainable as it would require an overall level of house building that is achievable, and the associated physical and social infrastructure required would be likely to be delivered even with the predicted pressure on public finances.</p>
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities	?	+	+
	<p>Given the concentration of development on the proposed urban extension, this option has the potential to deliver healthcare/leisure facilities to</p>	<p>Directly beneficial as the strategy is likely to enhance provision and access to healthcare services, and would, in the medium to long term, increase demand for sport and recreation</p>	<p>Directly beneficial as the strategy is likely to enhance provision and access to healthcare services, and would, in the medium to long term, increase demand for</p>

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<p>(SEA Directive topic: Material Assets, Human Health)</p>	<p>serve this expansion, however the relatively isolated location of the urban extension decreases the likelihood of being able to integrate these facilities with existing communities.</p> <p>Also, the location of the development is likely to result in an increased need to travel by car, and not encourage walking/cycling to the extent of other spatial options.</p>	<p>facilities as well as public open spaces and footpaths/active travel routes.</p> <p>Level of development proposed will also result in less pressure to lose existing open spaces for built development, but also enable access to S106/CIL funding to improve the quality and access to existing public open space.</p>	<p>sport and recreation facilities as well as public open spaces and footpaths/active travel routes.</p> <p>Level of development proposed will also result in less pressure to lose existing open spaces for built development, but also enable access to S106/CIL funding to improve the quality and access to existing public open space.</p>
<p>5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling types and tenures</p> <p>(SEA Directive topic: Population, Material Assets, Human Health)</p>	<p>+</p> <p>Positive permanent effect: Likely to assist in providing for a range of dwelling types. Will be more difficult to integrate communities given the scale of urban extension, and its relatively isolated location.</p> <p>Positive secondary effects, although temporary, on the construction and related supply industries and therefore jobs. Cumulative, in relation to social and economic policies, could assist in promoting integrated communities.</p>	<p>+</p> <p>Positive permanent effect: Likely to assist in providing for a range of dwelling types and could in the long term indirectly contribute to integrated communities by allowing local people to remain in the communities.</p> <p>Positive secondary effects, although temporary, on the construction and related supply industries and therefore jobs. Cumulative, in relation to social and economic policies, could assist in promoting integrated communities.</p> <p>Affordable housing needs are likely to be met and enable people to remain in the Plan area</p>	<p>+</p> <p>Positive permanent effect: Likely to assist in providing for a range of dwelling types and could in the long term indirectly contribute to integrated communities by allowing local people to remain in the communities.</p> <p>Positive secondary effects, although temporary, on the construction and related supply industries and therefore jobs. Cumulative, in relation to social and economic policies, could assist in promoting integrated communities.</p> <p>Affordable housing needs are likely to be met and enable people to remain in the Plan area with an increased chance of</p>

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	Affordable housing needs are likely to be met and enable people to remain in the Plan area, but remaining in their preferred community may prove more difficult than other spatial options due to concentration of development on urban extension.	with an increased chance of remaining in preferred communities given the more dispersed nature of new housing development.	remaining in preferred communities given the more dispersed nature of new housing development.
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock  (SEA Directive topic: Population, Material Assets, Human Health)	<p>+</p> <p>Whilst the amount of new dwellings constructed over the plan period will increase the proportion of the overall housing stock that is of a higher quality, it is difficult to measure the potential to affect the existing stock.</p> <p>The concentration of a large proportion of new housing on an urban extension does have the potential to really focus on sustainably designing what is effectively a new community.</p> <p>Positive secondary effects, although temporary, on the construction and related supply industries and therefore jobs.</p>	<p>+</p> <p>Whilst the amount of new dwellings constructed over the plan period will increase the proportion of the overall housing stock that is of a higher quality, it is difficult to measure the potential to affect the existing stock.</p> <p>The concentration of a large proportion of new housing on a strategic site does have the potential to really focus on sustainably designing what is effectively a new community.</p> <p>Positive secondary effects, although temporary, on the construction and related supply industries and therefore jobs.</p>	<p>+</p> <p>Whilst the amount of new dwellings constructed over the plan period will increase the proportion of the overall housing stock that is of a higher quality, it is difficult to measure the potential to affect the existing stock.</p> <p>The design of new housing sites will need to be carefully considered given the more dispersed nature of sites in comparison to other spatial options.</p> <p>Positive secondary effects, although temporary, on the construction and related supply industries and therefore jobs.</p>
7. To enhance the	0	++	+

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attractiveness of the County Borough to support Economic Development	<p>Focus on Town Centre would be lost due to detached nature of urban extension.</p> <p>It could indirectly assist in providing a diverse range of job opportunities, thereby, cumulatively, reducing the need for out-commuting from the Borough for work and attracting new residents.</p> <p>However, the location of the proposed urban extension could have a negative impact on any potential extension of Bike Park Wales, which has had a significant positive impact on the local economy since opening in 2013.</p> <p>Detached location of urban extension would not capitalise on Metro to the extent of other options.</p>	<p>Would result in a significant positive effect as it provides for a sustainable economy by encouraging inward and indigenous investment, promoting a healthy town centre (partly through direct links between strategic site and Town Centre), and maintaining a portfolio of employment land.</p> <p>It could indirectly assist in providing a diverse range of job opportunities, thereby, cumulative, reducing the need for out-commuting from the Borough for work and attracting new residents.</p> <p>Proposed Metro transport infrastructure will make area more attractive and enable smoother flow of labour into County Borough and will be capitalised on given location of strategic site on main rail line</p>	<p>Would result in a positive effect as it provides for a sustainable economy by encouraging inward and indigenous investment, promoting a healthy town centre, and maintaining a portfolio of employment land.</p> <p>It could indirectly assist in providing a diverse range of job opportunities, thereby, cumulative, reducing the need for out-commuting from the Borough for work and attracting new residents.</p> <p>Proposed Metro transport infrastructure will make area more attractive and enable smoother flow of labour into County Borough, however, this option would not capitalise on Metro to the same extent, as there would not be the concentration of development around new transport infrastructure.</p>
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport	<p>?</p> <p>Although the strategy identifies the need for an extensive public transport system it will be difficult to directly influence a reduction in the need to travel.</p>	<p>++</p> <p>Although the strategy identifies the need for an extensive public transport system it will be difficult to directly influence a reduction in the need to travel.</p>	<p>+</p> <p>Although the strategy identifies the need for an extensive public transport system it will be difficult to directly influence a reduction in the need to travel.</p>

	<p>Land is likely to be safeguarded for both strategic highway network improvements (A465) and for development associated with the proposed Metro system.</p> <p>The detached nature of the urban extension is likely to increase the need to travel, especially as the location of the site would not capitalise directly on any Metro proposals.</p> <p>Location of urban extension does not present straightforward opportunities to connect to Green Infrastructure/Active Travel routes. Connecting with routes such as Taff Trail could prove costly due to barriers such as A470.</p>	<p>Land is likely to be safeguarded for both strategic highway network improvements (A465) and for development associated with the proposed Metro system.</p> <p>Whilst the A465 improvements will increase highway network capacity, the scale of the Metro could potentially offset the extra car use associated with the increase in population given the location of the proposed strategic site.</p> <p>The location of the proposed strategic site presents relatively straightforward opportunities to connect a significant amount of new development with Green Infrastructure/Active Travel routes. Taff and Trevithick Trails are close to proposed strategic site and could easily be linked in to new housing and employment development.</p>	<p>Land is likely to be safeguarded for both strategic highway network improvements (A465) and for development associated with the proposed Metro system.</p> <p>Whilst the A465 improvements will increase highway network capacity, Metro proposals could offset the extra car use, although not to the extent of an option which focuses development around potential Metro sites.</p> <p>The dispersed nature of development has the potential to result in a comprehensive network of Green Infrastructure/Active Travel routes; however, this is likely to be more costly to carry out than linking a strategic site that is located close to existing routes.</p>
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	<p>?</p> <p>Option would ensure that sufficient land is available to facilitate required improvements to infrastructure; however, providing this infrastructure is likely to prove more costly given the location</p>	<p>++</p> <p>Option would ensure that sufficient land is available to facilitate required improvements to infrastructure. The proposed strategic site is located within the existing urban area and will be able to access existing infrastructure at a</p>	<p>+</p> <p>Option would ensure that sufficient land is available to facilitate required improvements to infrastructure. The dispersed nature of sites would be located within the existing urban area and will be</p>

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	<p>and nature of the urban extension.</p> <p>Would enable the safeguarding of locally or regionally planned transport routes or proposals.</p>	<p>comparatively lower cost to any urban extension.</p> <p>Would enable the safeguarding of locally or regionally planned transport routes or proposals.</p>	<p>able to access existing infrastructure at a comparatively lower cost to any urban extension.</p> <p>Would enable the safeguarding of locally or regionally planned transport routes or proposals.</p>
10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	<p>0</p> <p>Although the impact on energy consumption is dependent on other factors and further details, the proposed increase in population is likely to lead to higher energy consumption. Even though the strategy promotes sustainable development, there is still likely to be some conflict with some environmental considerations.</p> <p>This option presents opportunities to actively promote energy efficiency and renewable energy through robust design policy and the potential for areas of search for renewable energy proposals.</p>	<p>0</p> <p>Although the impact on energy consumption is dependent on other factors and further details, the proposed increase in population is likely to lead to higher energy consumption. Even though the strategy promotes sustainable development, there is still likely to be some conflict with some environmental considerations.</p> <p>This option presents opportunities to actively promote energy efficiency and renewable energy through robust design policy and the potential for areas of search for renewable energy proposals.</p>	<p>0</p> <p>Although the impact on energy consumption is dependent on other factors and further details, the proposed increase in population is likely to lead to higher energy consumption. Even though the strategy would promote sustainable development, there is likely to be conflict with some environmental considerations.</p> <p>This option presents opportunities to actively promote energy efficiency and renewable energy through robust design policy and the potential for areas of search for renewable energy proposals.</p>
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising	<p>-</p> <p>The strategy aims to reduce the need to travel, and refers to locational policy that</p>	<p>0</p> <p>The strategy aims to reduce the need to travel, and refers to locational policy that will also aim</p>	<p>0</p> <p>The strategy aims to reduce the need to travel, and refers to locational policy that</p>

resilience to it.	<p>will also aim to reduce fuel consumption and, therefore, make a lesser contribution to the production of greenhouse gasses, pollution, and global warming.</p> <p>The positive intention is offset by accepting that there is likely to be some conflict with certain environmental considerations and a possible loss of some natural resources.</p> <p>The urban extension is situated on a safeguarded coal reserve, and accordingly, extraction of the coal would need to be considered before any development takes place that could sterilise the resource.</p> <p>Opportunity to use green infrastructure (active travel routes etc.) to mitigate impact of development on climate change. Locating a significant proportion of new development close to new public transport infrastructure will also assist in encouraging mitigation. However, in this spatial option, the mitigation is likely to prove more costly</p>	<p>to reduce fuel consumption and, therefore, make a lesser contribution to the production of greenhouse gasses, pollution, and global warming.</p> <p>The positive intention is offset by accepting that there is likely to be some conflict with certain environmental considerations and a possible loss of some natural resources.</p> <p>Opportunity to use green infrastructure (active travel routes etc.) to mitigate impact of development on climate change. Locating a significant proportion of new development close to new public transport infrastructure will also assist in encouraging mitigation.</p>	<p>will also aim to reduce fuel consumption and, therefore, make a lesser contribution to the production of greenhouse gasses, pollution, and global warming.</p> <p>The positive intention is offset by accepting that there is likely to be some conflict with certain environmental considerations and a possible loss of some natural resources.</p> <p>Opportunity to use green infrastructure (active travel routes etc.) to mitigate impact of development on climate change. The dispersed nature of development also allows improvements to existing public transport facilities to be maximised.</p>
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	and difficult than other options.		
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity	<p>--</p> <p>The strategy refers to policy mechanisms that are designed to protect and enhance the County Borough's natural environment.</p> <p>Despite this, new development to accommodate the expected population growth has the potential to lead to habitat fragmentation.</p> <p>The site of the proposed urban extension is predominantly a Site of Special Scientific Interest (Cwm Glo and Glyndyrys SSSI) and as such, there is an absolute constraint with regard to developing any significant amount of built development on this site. There would be significant, irreversible adverse effects to flora, fauna and habitats.</p>	<p>++</p> <p>The strategy refers to policy mechanisms that are designed to protect and enhance the County Borough's natural environment.</p> <p>Despite this, new development to accommodate the expected population growth has the potential to lead to habitat fragmentation. However, the scale and dispersal of new development will result in mitigation/compensation being possible on the majority of cases.</p> <p>This particular option would concentrate a significant proportion of development on a previously developed site that has little known ecological value. This also eases pressure on other locations in the County Borough where sites may be required and appropriate for housing that have some ecological value.</p>	<p>+</p> <p>The strategy refers to policy mechanisms that are designed to protect and enhance the County Borough's natural environment.</p> <p>Despite this, new development to accommodate the expected population growth has the potential to lead to habitat fragmentation. However, the scale and dispersal of new development will result in mitigation/compensation being possible on the majority of cases.</p>
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	<p>-</p> <p>The strategy states that there will be some conflict with environmental considerations, however building standards and design have evolved to</p>	<p>?</p> <p>The strategy states that there will be some conflict with environmental considerations, however building standards and design have evolved to minimise the impact on the water</p>	<p>?</p> <p>The strategy states that there will be some conflict with environmental considerations, however building standards and design have evolved to minimise the impact on</p>

	<p>minimise the impact on the water environment.</p> <p>The proposed urban extension is situated on a valley side with numerous watercourses running through the site, mitigation could prove costly /difficult.</p> <p>The level of development proposed will require mitigation in terms of the effect on the water environment; however, the location of the urban extension increases the complexity of any mitigation.</p>	<p>environment.</p> <p>The level of development proposed will require mitigation in terms of the effect on the water environment, and the dispersed nature of sites (with the exception of the strategic site) increases the likelihood that this mitigation can be achieved.</p>	<p>the water environment.</p> <p>The level of development proposed will require mitigation in terms of the effect on the water environment, and the dispersed nature of sites increases the likelihood that this mitigation can be achieved.</p>
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	<p>-</p> <p>Would result in an increased demand for water, placing some pressure on the drainage system and increasing the need for wastewater treatment. Initial discussions with relevant stakeholders indicate that this level of growth could be accommodated without strategic improvements to existing infrastructure, but the location of the urban extension is likely to significantly increase the costs of the improvements required in</p>	<p>0</p> <p>Would result in an increased demand for water, placing some pressure on the drainage system and increasing the need for wastewater treatment. Initial discussions with relevant stakeholders indicate that this level of growth could be accommodated without strategic improvements to existing infrastructure.</p> <p>Would look to promote SUDS and direct</p>	<p>0</p> <p>Would result in an increased demand for water, placing pressure on the drainage system and increasing the need for wastewater treatment. Initial discussions with relevant stakeholders indicate that this level of growth could potentially be accommodated without strategic improvements to existing infrastructure.</p> <p>Would look to promote SUDS and direct</p>

	<p>comparison to other options.</p> <p>Would look to promote SUDS and direct development away from flood risk areas.</p>	development away from flood risk areas.	development away from flood risk areas.
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	<p>--</p> <p>The area proposed for the urban extension is currently a safeguarded coal resource and accordingly pre-extraction would need to be considered.</p> <p>Uncertain to what extent any extraction would be appropriate given proximity to nearby communities.</p> <p>Whether or not the site is classified as greenfield or brownfield, developing the urban extension will have an effect on a large area of land that has essentially remained untouched for a significant period of time.</p> <p>The soil conditions of the SSSI (the location of the urban extension) are a key component of the ecological value of the site. The soil supports the fungus that forms some of the most valuable habitats on the SSSI.</p> <p>Any built development on this site is likely to have a significant negative effect on the soil condition, and therefore one of</p>	<p>++</p> <p>The option would enable the appropriate safeguarding of mineral resources.</p> <p>The strategic site, where a significant proportion of development will take place, is a brownfield site. This in turn eases the pressure on greenfield sites in the County Borough that may be suitable for housing and would be required in an option where there is not a strategic brownfield site.</p>	<p>+</p> <p>The option would enable the appropriate safeguarding of mineral resources.</p> <p>Although the option would encourage the use of brownfield sites in favour of greenfield sites, the more dispersed requirement for housing sites could lead to increased pressure to release greenfield land for development.</p>

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	the key components of the SSSI		
16. To protect and enhance heritage assets which defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	<p>--</p> <p>The strategy proposes an urban extension into an area of high landscape value, with a large part of this value related to the heritage assets that are situated on the site. Any mitigation/compensation is likely to be very difficult if not impossible.</p>	<p>0</p> <p>The strategy would require land to be released for development, however, given the overall level of growth proposed; the Council will still be able to prioritise some historic buildings/assets for redevelopment as there would not be the overwhelming need to develop every vacant site in the County Borough, particularly with a concentration of development at the proposed strategic site.</p> <p>The economic viability of redeveloping these assets would have to be balanced with other priorities within the Plan and other Council strategies.</p>	<p>0</p> <p>The strategy would require land to be released for development, however, given the overall level of growth proposed; the Council will still be able to prioritise some historic buildings/assets for redevelopment as there would not be the overwhelming need to develop every vacant site in the County Borough.</p> <p>The economic viability of redeveloping these assets would have to be balanced with other priorities within the Plan and other Council strategies.</p>
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	<p>0</p> <p>The option is likely to attract people into the County Borough, although the LDP cannot directly influence how much of the increased population will be Welsh speakers. Measures to promote the Welsh language will need to be robustly implemented.</p> <p>The level of growth proposed is likely to result in investment being attracted to facilitate improvements to assets of</p>	<p>0</p> <p>The option is likely to attract people into the County Borough, although the LDP cannot directly influence how much of the increased population will be Welsh speakers. Measures to promote the Welsh language will need to be robustly implemented.</p> <p>The level of growth proposed is likely to result in investment being attracted to facilitate</p>	<p>0</p> <p>The option is likely to attract people into the County Borough, although the LDP cannot directly influence how much of the increased population will be Welsh speakers. Measures to promote the Welsh language will need to be robustly implemented.</p> <p>The level of growth proposed is likely to result in investment being attracted to facilitate improvements to assets of cultural</p>

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	cultural significance.	improvements to assets of cultural significance.	significance.
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.	<p>--</p> <p>Development of the proposed urban extension would have a significant impact on a nationally designated landscape (Merthyr Tydfil Historic Landscape) and result in the loss of features that are intrinsically linked to the landscape value of the Western side of the Merthyr Valley.</p> <p>As the strategy proposes an urban extension into an area of high landscape value, any mitigation/compensation is likely to be very difficult if not impossible.</p> <p>Development of the urban extension would have a significant impact on the Merthyr West Flank Special Landscape Area (SLA) that would be difficult to mitigate/compensate.</p>	<p>0</p> <p>The strategy would potentially require the release of some greenfield sites, with potential harmful impacts on future landscape character.</p> <p>However, the level of development proposed does not require expansions to settlement limits and any impact on landscape features would be able to be mitigated/ compensated for.</p> <p>The option is unlikely to have any significant impacts on designated Special Landscape Areas.</p>	<p>0</p> <p>The strategy would potentially require the release of some greenfield sites, with potential harmful impacts on future landscape character.</p> <p>However, the level of development proposed does not require expansions to settlement limits and any impact on landscape features would be able to be mitigated/ compensated for.</p> <p>The option is unlikely to have any significant impacts on designated Special Landscape Areas.</p>

## APPENDIX 6: SA OF PREFERRED STRATEGY POLICIES

<b>Key:++</b>	Policy will considerably progress the sustainability objective
<b>+</b>	Policy progresses the sustainability objective to an extent
<b>0</b>	No/neutral effect – policy will not affect the sustainability objective
<b>?</b>	Policy will have uncertain effect on sustainability objective
<b>-</b>	Policy will conflict with sustainability objective to an extent
<b>--</b>	Policy will conflict considerably with the sustainability

Policy SW1: Provision of new homes Policy SW2: Provision of affordable housing		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	Ensuring that sufficient land is available to encourage and accommodate housing development will assist in facilitating the retention of existing community infrastructure. New development can also directly contribute to improving existing facilities as well as providing new infrastructure.	+
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	As the location of new dwellings is not dealt with in this policy there is no direct effect on community and settlement identities.	0
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	Delivering the amount of housing identified in the policy will facilitate the growth of the County Boroughs population by approximately 5,000 people over the LDP period.	++
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	Populations must be retained to ensure that health and education services are viable. Adopting this approach to development should support the retention and improvement of facilities. Potential for long-term positive impact.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy allocates sufficient land to meet the dwelling requirements of the projected population of the County Borough.	++
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	Whilst the amount of new dwellings constructed over the plan period will increase the proportion of the overall housing stock that is of a higher quality, it is difficult to measure the potential to affect the existing stock.	+

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7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	Encouraging retention of population through providing additional housing should have a long-term positive impact on the economy. Directing economic development (including housebuilding) towards the area with a good strategic location in terms of road and rail should have a positive outcome.	++
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	The allocation of an amount of housing that does not require significant settlement extensions results in new housing development being able to integrate into existing networks more easily also encourages a greater concentration of people, which in turn facilitates more sustainable modes of transport.	+
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	Discussions with infrastructure providers such as DCWW indicate that the overall level of housing provision can be accommodated by existing infrastructure or with improvements that are already planned	+
10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The level of housing proposed and resultant population increase is likely to cause some conflict with environmental considerations. However, as the level of growth proposed is sustainable, there will still be scope to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy through robust design policy and the potential for areas of search for renewable energy proposals.	0
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	<p>The positive intention of allocating a sustainable level of housing is offset by accepting that there is likely to be some conflict with certain environmental considerations and a possible loss of some natural resources.</p> <p>Opportunity to use green infrastructure (active travel routes etc.) to mitigate impact of new housing on climate change. Locating a significant proportion of the housing requirement close to new public transport infrastructure will also assist in encouraging mitigation.</p>	0
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	<p>New housing development to accommodate the expected population growth has the potential to lead to habitat fragmentation. However, the scale and dispersal of new housing will result in mitigation/ compensation being possible on the majority of cases.</p> <p>The level of housebuilding also eases pressure on locations in the County Borough where sites may have been required under other strategy options and been appropriate for housing even though they have some ecological value.</p>	+
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	<p>Building standards and design have evolved to minimise the impact on the water environment.</p> <p>However, the level of development proposed will require mitigation in terms of the effect on the water environment. The dispersed nature of housing (with the exception of the strategic site) increases the likelihood that this mitigation can be achieved.</p>	?
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	The policy would result in an increased demand for water, placing some pressure on the drainage system and increasing the need for wastewater treatment. Initial discussions with relevant stakeholders indicate that this	0

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	level of growth could be accommodated without strategic improvements to existing infrastructure.  Other policies would look to promote SUDS and direct development away from flood risk areas.	
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policy would enable the appropriate safeguarding of mineral resources as the level of housing proposed does not result in the need to encroach settlements into areas that are presently safeguarded.	++
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	Given the overall level of growth proposed, the Council will still be able to prioritise some historic buildings/assets for redevelopment as there would not be the overwhelming need to develop every vacant site in the County Borough.  The economic viability of redeveloping these assets would have to be balanced with other priorities within the Plan and other Council strategies.	0
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The level of growth proposed is likely to result in investment being attracted to facilitate improvements to assets of cultural significance.  The housing proposed is likely to attract people into the County Borough, although the LDP cannot directly influence how much of the increased population will be Welsh speakers. Measures to promote the Welsh language will need to be robustly implemented.	0
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.	The level of housing proposed would potentially require the release of some greenfield sites, with potential harmful impacts on future landscape character.  However, this level of housing does not require expansions to settlement limits and any impact on landscape features would be able to be mitigated/ compensated for, and the policy is unlikely to have any significant impacts on designated Special Landscape Areas.	0
<b>Summary</b> The overall impact of this policy is positive as it seeks to capitalise on the growth that has happened in Merthyr Tydfil over the last 10 years, and address the potential population decline forecast in national projections. There is evidence to show that the level of housebuilding will directly influence the population, and providing land for this many dwellings will directly assist in one of the key points of the LDPs vision, sustainably growing the population.		



Policy SW3: Sustainably distributing new homes:		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	Ensuring that land is appropriately distributed for housing development will assist in facilitating the retention of existing community infrastructure. New development can also directly contribute to improving existing facilities as well as providing new infrastructure.	+
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	As the policy directs different levels of housing development to different areas of the County Borough, it presents the opportunity to retain and enhance community identity. The distribution of housing development proposed will integrate effectively with the existing settlement pattern.	++
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	The distribution of dwellings proposed will support sustainable population growth in that dwellings will be located close to community services and facilities with the majority of dwellings being proposed near to the main service centre of the County Borough (Merthyr Tydfil Town).	++
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	Populations must be kept at critical levels to ensure that health and education services are viable. Adopting this distribution of development should support the retention and improvement of facilities. Potential for long-term positive impact.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy allocates sufficient land in the appropriate areas of the County Borough to meet the dwelling requirements of the projected population of the County Borough. The policy also supports exception sites for affordable housing in the countryside.	++
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	Whilst the amount of new dwellings constructed over the plan period will increase the proportion of the overall housing stock that is of a higher quality, it is difficult to measure the potential to affect the existing stock.	+
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	Encouraging retention of population through providing additional housing should have a long-term positive impact on the economy. Directing economic development (including housebuilding) towards the most appropriate areas of the County Borough, with a good strategic location in terms of road and rail should have a positive outcome.	+
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	The proposed distribution of housing sites results in new housing development being able to integrate into existing networks more easily and also encourages a greater concentration of people within existing communities, which in turn facilitates more sustainable modes of transport.	++
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	Discussions with infrastructure providers such as DCWW indicate that the overall level and location of housing provision can be accommodated by existing infrastructure or with improvements that are already planned.	+

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10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	Location of housing proposed and resultant population increases are likely to cause some conflict with environmental considerations. However, as the level of growth proposed is sustainable, there will still be scope to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy through robust design policy and the potential for areas of search for renewable energy proposals.	0
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The positive intention of allocating a sustainable level of housing is offset by accepting that there is likely to be some conflict with certain environmental considerations and a possible loss of some natural resources.  Opportunity to use green infrastructure (active travel routes etc.) to mitigate impact of new housing on climate change. Locating a significant proportion of the housing requirement close to new public transport infrastructure will also assist in encouraging mitigation.	0
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	The level of new housing development required to accommodate the expected population growth has the potential to lead to habitat fragmentation. However, the scale and dispersal of new housing will result in mitigation/ compensation being possible on the majority of cases.  The level and distribution of housebuilding proposed also eases pressure on locations in the County Borough where sites may have been required under other strategy options and been appropriate for housing even though they have some ecological value.	+
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	Building standards and design have evolved to minimise the impact on the water environment.  However, the level of development proposed will require mitigation in terms of the effect on the water environment. The dispersed nature of housing (with the exception of the strategic site) increases the likelihood that this mitigation can be achieved.	?
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	The level of growth proposed would result in an increased demand for water, placing some pressure on the drainage system and increasing the need for wastewater treatment. Initial discussions with relevant stakeholders indicate that this level of growth could be accommodated without strategic improvements to existing infrastructure, particularly with the distribution of new housing being proposed.  The distribution proposed enables the LDP to seek to promote SUDS and direct development away from flood risk areas.	0
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The distribution proposed would enable the appropriate safeguarding of mineral resources as the level of housing proposed does not result in the need to encroach settlements into areas that are presently safeguarded.  The distribution proposed would have a lesser effect on previously developed greenfield land than other options.	++
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the	Given the overall level and distribution of growth proposed, the Council will still be able to prioritise some historic buildings/assets for redevelopment as there would not be the overwhelming need to develop every vacant site in the County Borough.	0

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County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	The economic viability of redeveloping these assets would have to be balanced with other priorities within the Plan and other Council strategies.	
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	<p>The level of growth proposed is likely to result in investment being attracted to facilitate improvements to assets of cultural significance with the distribution of housing proposed likely to result in facilities being improved across the County Borough.</p> <p>The housing proposed is likely to attract people into the County Borough, although the LDP cannot directly influence how much of the increased population will be Welsh speakers. Measures to promote the Welsh language will need to be robustly implemented.</p>	0
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.	<p>The distribution of housing proposed would potentially require the release of some greenfield sites, with potential harmful impacts on future landscape character.</p> <p>However, this level of housing does not require expansions to settlement limits and any impact on landscape features would be able to be mitigated/ compensated for, and the policy is unlikely to have any significant impacts on designated Special Landscape Areas.</p>	0
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>The overall impact of this policy is positive as it seeks to capitalise on the growth that has happened in Merthyr Tydfil over the last 10 years by concentrating new housebuilding in the main Merthyr Tydfil settlement. Directing smaller levels of growth to the other communities of the County Borough will ensure that these areas also grow in a sustainable manner, rather than pressure being placed on infrastructure in these locations if too much new housing was proposed.</p> <p>As there is no significant urban extension proposed, the policy is likely to have a range of positive effects in terms of directing new housing development within existing urban areas and communities. This will result in new housing being able to integrate into existing communities more efficiently with access to facilities and infrastructure proving easier. The dispersed nature of sites is also likely to mean that any mitigation/compensation in regard to environmental conflicts is likely to be more achievable.</p>		

Policy SW4: Settlement Boundaries		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policy generally directs developments to existing urban areas, but does facilitate appropriate development in the countryside which may include infrastructure and community facilities.	+
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	One of the primary functions of the policy is to direct most development to existing urban areas, and robust settlement boundaries will directly assist in maintaining settlement identities	++
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	The policy will ensure that the population growth proposed will take place in sustainable locations (predominantly in existing urban areas and close to existing facilities/services)	++
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	The policy has no significant direct impact on human health	0
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy directs the vast majority of housing development to existing settlements, but does allow some housing (particularly affordable housing) in the countryside subject to certain conditions.	+
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policy has no significant direct impact on quality and energy efficiency of housing stock.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	The policy has no significant direct impact on the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	0
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	Directing the majority of development within existing urban areas reduces the need to travel by minimising journey distances and also concentrates the population around the public transport network.	++
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the	Directing the majority of new development within existing urban areas ensures that new development can access utilities and infrastructure as easily as possible	+

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needs of all.		
10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	<p>Directing the majority of new development within existing urban areas will assist in minimising energy use by reducing need for car travel etc.</p> <p>Opportunities for in-building community led renewable energy schemes are greater where there are larger concentrations of housing, industrial uses etc. A well-defined countryside also protects land that may be suitable for larger scale, strategic renewable energy projects.</p>	+
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	Directing the majority of new development within existing urban areas can assist in minimising the contribution to climate change by reducing need for car travel etc.	0
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	The policy assists in protecting biodiversity features and ecosystems outside settlement boundaries. However, connectivity between biodiversity features and ecosystems within settlement boundaries needs to be considered through separate policy.	+
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	The level of growth proposed is likely to result in an increase in demand for water, however, concentrating development within existing settlements presents opportunities to improve the efficiency of the water environment/infrastructure.	0
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	The distribution of development proposed enables the LDP to seek to promote SUDS and direct development away from flood risk areas. The policy also assists in protecting large areas of countryside that play an important role in reducing flood risk.	+
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policy directs development to existing urban areas and therefore assists in protecting soils that have not previously been disturbed. This also enables appropriate safeguarding of mineral resources across the County Borough.	++
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	<p>The policy directs majority of new development to urban areas, and as such, helps to protect the significant amount of heritage assets in the countryside of the County Borough.</p> <p>There are however numerous, significant heritage assets within the settlement boundaries that will need to be carefully considered in order to protect/enhance them.</p>	+
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The policy is unlikely to have a significant effect on this objective	0

18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.	The policy will assist in protecting and enhancing designated areas of landscape value by directing development to existing urban areas. This will also assist in creating good quality townscapes by directing investment to areas where improvements to the built environment will play an important part improving the overall landscape of the County Borough.	++
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>The policy will have a positive effect as it will direct development to appropriate locations, helping to both protect the countryside and facilitate appropriate development in countryside locations.</p>		

Policy SW5: Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policy is likely to result in investment in a wide range of infrastructure and community facilities and result in a significant amount of new development in a location that is accessible to most of the population of the County Borough.	++
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	Due to the nature of the strategic regeneration area, the proposals are likely to create a new community identity, and it will be important to deliver the development in an integrated manner, so that the identity of adjacent communities is not negatively affected.	+
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	The area is likely to provide approximately one –third of the total population increase during the LDP period, in a sustainable location in terms of access to public transport facilities and other key services/facilities.	++
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	The location of the area will enable existing areas of open space and green infrastructure to be better incorporated into the usable areas of open space/green infrastructure in the County Borough.  The anticipated public transport improvements also have the potential to reduce car use and improve air quality in the County Borough.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The scale of nature of the proposed site will enable a wide range of dwelling tenures and types to be delivered on site.	++
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	Opportunities to provide some higher density housing on the site also increase the opportunities for creating more energy efficient housing schemes.	+
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	The proposed Metro transport infrastructure will make area more attractive and enable smoother flow of labour into County Borough and will be capitalised on given location of strategic site on main rail line.  The area will also provide land for high quality employment uses, and also be seen as a prestigious development in the wider city region, not just Merthyr Tydfil.	++
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	The location of the proposed strategic site presents relatively straightforward opportunities to connect a significant amount of new development with Green Infrastructure/Active Travel routes. Taff and Trevithick Trails are close to proposed strategic site and could easily be linked in to new housing and employment development	++
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are	The strategic regeneration area is located within the existing urban area and will be able to access existing infrastructure relatively easily.	+

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available to meet the needs of all.	The area would also enable the safeguarding of locally and regionally planned transport routes or proposals.	
10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The site presents opportunities to minimise energy use due to its highly accessible nature, however, the extra population is likely to lead to higher energy consumption.  Scale and location of the site also presents opportunities to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy through robust design policy.	0
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	Opportunity to use green infrastructure (active travel routes etc.) to mitigate impact of development on climate change. Locating a significant proportion of new development close to new public transport infrastructure will also assist in encouraging mitigation.  The extra population is however likely to conflict with some environmental considerations.	0
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	The policy proposed a significant amount of new development on an area of previously developed land with little known ecological value. There is also potential to improve the quality and access to River Taff SINC and other areas of biodiversity features as part of the development.	+
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	Due to the scale of the site, there is likely to be some conflict with environmental considerations, however building standards and design have evolved to minimise the impact on the water environment.  The level of development proposed will require mitigation in terms of the effect on the water environment, and the scale of the strategic regeneration area should enable this, although greater detail of the proposals will be needed to confirm this.	?
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	Development of the strategic regeneration area will present opportunities to promote SUDs and will address potential historical flood risk issues on the Western side of the River Taff.	+
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The strategic site is a brownfield site. This in turn eases the pressure on greenfield sites in the County Borough that may be suitable for housing and would be required in an option where there is not a strategic brownfield site.	++
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	Opportunities to reflect the historic and cultural significance of the Hoover factory site in the redevelopment of the area.  The redevelopment should also improve access to other heritage assets in the proximity of the area e.g. Trevithick Tunnel	+
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local	Due to the significance of the Hoover site, redevelopment proposals should support its distinctive place in the town's history.	0



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culture and the Welsh language.	Policy is unlikely to directly affect the number of Welsh speakers in the County Borough.	
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.	<p>Development of the strategic area is unlikely to have any impact on designated Special Landscape Areas, although it is situated within the Merthyr Tydfil Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest.</p> <p>Redevelopment of the areas is likely to improve the overall landscape that is currently made up of predominantly redundant industrial land</p>	+
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>The policy will have a positive overall effect and will form a key part of the overall strategy of the LDP. A significant proportion of the overall housing provision is anticipated to be delivered in the strategic regeneration area, along with employment facilities and open space. When more detailed plans are considered it will important to closely examine opportunities for renewable energy projects and ecological enhancements to maximise the positive aspects of the area.</p>		

Policy SW6: The Former Ivor Steel Works Regeneration Site		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policy is unlikely to have a significant effect on this objective.	0
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	The policy could result in an area of derelict/unsightly land being developed, therefore potentially improving settlement identity	+
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	The policy is unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	The policy could result in an area of contaminated and/or unstable land being remediated, having a direct impact on the safety of that land.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	Remediation/reclamation of this site may result in the land becoming suitable and viable for housing development over the Plan period.	+
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policy is unlikely to have a significant effect on this objective.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	Remediation/reclamation of this site should result in the land becoming developable with the potential to support economic development in the County Borough.	+
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	The policy is unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	The policy is unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0

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10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The policy is unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The policy is unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	Reclamation/remediation of this site could result in improvements to biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity in the long term. However, the reclamation/remediation work will need to be carefully considered as the site has been untouched for a long period of time and will have some ecological value.	?
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	Reclamation/Remediation of such sites has the potential to improve the water environment by dealing with contaminated land.	+
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	Reclamation/Remediation of this site has the potential to address flooding issues in the area; however, care needs to be taken to ensure that any works do not create new problems in terms of flooding issues.	0
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policy is likely to result in an area of brownfield land being improved and then potentially becoming suitable for re-use.	+
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	Redevelopment of the site should result in the enhancement of a listed building on the site, positively contributing to this objective.	+
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The policy is unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of	Depending on precise location of sites, policy has the potential to enhance the quality of significant areas of land that is currently of a poor quality within the County Borough.	+

landscape value and good quality townscapes.		
<b>Summary</b> Policy SW6 is likely to have an overall positive effect as it should at least result in improvements to the physical appearance of an area of land in the County Borough that requires reclamation/remediation. Additionally, the policy could result in additional land becoming available for development giving the LDP some additional flexibility in terms of delivering housing, employment or leisure proposals.		

Policy SW7: Gypsy, Traveller and Showpeople sites		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policy contained in the deposit plan will aim to ensure that any GT accommodation is appropriately located and has sufficient access to facilities and infrastructure.	+
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	The policy contained in the deposit plan will aim to ensure that any new GT accommodation is located sensitively so that settlement and community identity are at least maintained.	+
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant effect on this objective.	0
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	The policy will be likely to assist in reducing inequalities as it seeks to facilitate accommodation for a specific demographic group.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy will seek to facilitate a particular type of housing need that may not be delivered through general housing policies.	++
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant effect on this objective.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant effect on this objective.	0
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	The policy will seek to ensure that any new GT accommodation is appropriately located, including in terms of proximity to transport networks.	+
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	The policy will seek to ensure that any new GT accommodation is appropriately located particularly in terms of having satisfactory access to local services and facilities.	+

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10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant effect on this objective.	0
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant effect on this objective.	0
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant effect on this objective.	0
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant effect on this objective.	0
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant effect on this objective.	0
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant effect on this objective.	0
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant effect on this objective.	0
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant effect on this objective.	0
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of	New GT accommodation could be located within or outside settlement boundaries. As such, care will need to be taken in terms of the impact of any new site on designated areas of landscape value.	0

landscape value and good quality townscapes.		
<b>Summary</b> The detailed version of Policy SW7 that will be included in the Deposit Plan will aim to facilitate the delivery of a specific type of housing provision and allows greater flexibility than policies for regular housing provision. Due to this flexibility, and the fact that the potential development arising from this policy is of a relatively small scale, there are a higher number of neutral or 'no effect' scores. However, the policy will still, overall, be likely to have a positive outcome.		

Policy SW8: Planning Obligations		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policy seeks to provide a range of community and social infrastructure and facilities that will be required to address the impact of new development in the County Borough.	++
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	The policy seeks to secure obligations, such as open space improvements, that will maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	+
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	The policy seeks to ensure that the population growth proposed by the LDP occurs in a sustainable manner by providing for the needs of new and existing residents by providing improvements to educational facilities, securing affordable housing provision, and any other facilities/services that are required by the residents of the County Borough.	++
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	The policy is likely to present opportunities to improve open space and community safety/cleanliness. There is also scope for the policy to require new development to contribute directly toward health provision if required and viable.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy seeks the provision of affordable housing which will directly address particular housing needs across the County Borough.	++
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policy will deliver new affordable housing which is required to be built to high standards of energy efficiency. The policy is unlikely to have a direct effect on quality of existing stock.	+
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	The policy is likely to result in environmental improvements and provision of new infrastructure that will enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	+
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	The policy presents opportunities to improve access to sustainable modes of transport and also directly improve the associated facilities.  The policy could have a significant impact on improving the Green Infrastructure network in the County Borough, particularly if used in conjunction with the Council's Open Space Strategy.	+
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are	The policy seeks to provide a range of community and social infrastructure and facilities that will be required to address the impact of new development in the County Borough.	++



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available to meet the needs of all.		
10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The policy seeks to minimise the impact of new development, including minimising energy use and providing renewable energy opportunities where appropriate and viable.	+
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The policy seeks to minimise the impact of new development, including minimising the contribution the climate change.	+
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	The policy seeks to minimise the impact of new development, including maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	+
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	The policy seeks to minimise the impact of new development, including minimising the demand for water and seeking any appropriate improvements to the water environment.	+
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	The policy seeks to minimise the impact of new development, including minimising the risk of flooding (securing flood mitigation measures)	+
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policy seeks to minimise the impact of new development, including potentially compensating for the loss of any areas of valuable soils.	+
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	The policy seeks to minimise the impact of new development, including securing any appropriate and viable mitigation/compensation in regard of the County Borough's heritage assets.	+
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The policy will provide the mechanism to secure services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language, where appropriate and viable.	+
18. To protect and	The policy provides the mechanism to secure improvements to areas of open space across the County	+

enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.	Borough, and mitigate/compensate any potential negative impacts from new development on areas of landscape importance.	
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>The policy has the potential to have significant positive effects on a wide range of areas. Policy SW8 is likely to result in the provision of affordable housing, open space and play provision, and assist in providing highway improvement and educational facilities. It is however worth noting that there is an element of uncertainty in relation to the delivery of these obligations as they will all be subject to economic viability.</p>		

Policy SW9: Protecting and improving our open spaces		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policy will assist in ensuring the communities have access to good quality open space.	+
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	Protecting areas of open space is likely to have a positive effect on community and settlement identities.	+
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	Ensuring that the increased population has access to open space is key in ensuring that the population increase is carried out in a sustainable manner.	+
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	Enabling all elements of the population to have access to good quality open space will play an important role in improving human health.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy is unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policy is unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	Protecting and improving open space is likely to increase the overall physical attractiveness of the County Borough and therefore enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	+
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	Protection of open space should directly result in the enhancement of green infrastructure corridors across the County Borough, encouraging people to use active travel routes and other methods of sustainable transport.	+
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	The policy is unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0

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10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The policy is unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	Through protecting open space, the policy presents opportunities to promote the use of green infrastructure to help reduce the carbon footprint of the County Borough	+
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	Protection of open space is likely to provide opportunities to improve biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	+
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	Protecting open space is unlikely to have a negative effect on use of water resources or on the quality of ground water bodies.  Protecting and improving open spaces may also present opportunities to promote water-based recreation.	+
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	Protecting and improving open space presents opportunities to promote SUDs and incorporate areas of open space into flood protection mechanisms.	+
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policy is likely to result in areas of soil being protected, and also ensuring that areas of minerals are safeguarded through not being permanently developed.	+
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	The policy is likely to further protect heritage assets that are included in areas of open space.	+
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The policy is unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
18. To protect and enhance the quality of	The policy provides the mechanism to secure improvements to areas of open space across the County Borough, and mitigate/compensate any potential negative impacts from new development on areas of	+

designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.	landscape importance.	
<b>Summary</b> Policy will have an overall positive effect particularly in the areas of human health, climate change, landscape.		

Policy SW10: Sustainable Design and Placemaking		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	The policy will seek to maintain and enhance community and settlement identities through promoting high quality, sustainable and inclusive design.	++
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	The policy will seek to improve human health and reduce inequalities through promoting high quality, sustainable and inclusive design.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policy will seek to improve the overall quality of the housing stock through promoting high quality, sustainable and inclusive design.	+
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	The policy will improve the overall physical attractiveness of the County Borough and therefore enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	++
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	The policy will seek to reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport through requiring new development to contribute to the creation of attractive and sustainable places. A fully integrated transport system is a key feature of such places.	+
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0

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10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	Whilst the policy will not actively promote opportunities for renewable energy, the criteria based policy to be included in the Deposit plan is likely to contain criteria aimed at improving energy efficiency.	+
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The policy is likely to ensure that new development is of a high quality design standard, including measures to ensure that new development is resilient to the effects of climate change.	+
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	The policy states that development must contribute to creation of attractive and sustainable places. Integrating the natural environment and ensuring the ecosystem connectivity is maintained will be important in creating such places.	+
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	The criteria based policy to be included in Deposit Plan will likely require development to contain measures to minimise water demand and where appropriate, improve the water environment.	+
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	The criteria based policy to be included in Deposit Plan will likely require development to contain measures to address flooding issues. Issue is also covered by national policy.	+
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	The policy will ensure that development that affects the County Boroughs heritage assets must protect and enhance these buildings, structures and landscapes.	+
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective..	0
18. To protect and enhance the quality of	The policy will seek to ensure that new development across the County Borough is successfully integrated into the existing landscapes and townscapes of the area.	+

designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.		
<b>Summary</b> The policy will have an overall positive effect as it will ensure that new development coming forward is of a high quality design standard and contributes to creating attractive and sustainable places. Caution must be taken however, as the positive outcomes will only be achieved if the policy is robustly implemented. The precise wording of the policy contained in the Deposit Plan will be important to ensure the success of the policy.		



Policy SW11: Improving our local transport network		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	An integrated local transport system should assist in ensuring that residents have access to appropriate community and social infrastructure.	+
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	An integrated local transport system enables individual communities to become more self-sufficient and maintain their identity	+
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	Ensuring that the population are able to efficiently access appropriate infrastructure and facilities is a key element of growing the population in a sustainable manner.	++
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	Improving non-motorised methods of transport will have a direct impact on human health of making people more active and also improve health through reducing emissions and improving air quality.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	Improving the accessibility of jobs and services to residents of the County Borough is likely to have the effect of enhancing the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	+
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	The fundamental aim of the policy is to reduce the need to travel at a local level and encourage more sustainable methods of transport for any journeys needed.	++
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0

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10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The policy seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the need for motorised travel and encouraging the use of green infrastructure routes for local journeys.	+
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	The policy promotes the use of green infrastructure routes and an impact of this should be to at least maintain connectivity, with there being scope to enhance this depending on which routes are selected for improvement.	+
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of	The intention of the policy to promote green infrastructure routes will have positive impacts on the County Boroughs landscapes and townscapes. Firstly, the green routes themselves are likely to be within or nearby to urban areas, and will physically improve the appearance of these areas. Secondly the promotion of these	+

landscape value and good quality townscapes.	routes will also ease the pressure to build new roads/transport facilities on areas that may have higher landscape value.	
<b>Summary</b> The policy has the potential to have significant positive impacts on human health, transport and sustainable growth objectives. It will be important to ensure that the policy is robustly implemented to ensure the positive aspects highlighted are actually achieved.		

Policy SW12: Improving our strategic transport network Policy SW13: Central Bus Station		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	An integrated transport system should assist in ensuring that residents have access to appropriate community and social infrastructure	+
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	An integrated transport system enables individual communities to become more self-sufficient and maintain their identity.	+
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	Ensuring that the population are able to efficiently access appropriate infrastructure and facilities is a key element of growing the population in a sustainable manner.  Land to be safeguarded for South Wales Metro proposals (particularly at the strategic regeneration area) will be key in ensuring that the increased population can access homes, services and facilities in a sustainable manner.	++
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	Improving the strategic public transport network has the potential to reduce emissions through promotion of means of transport other than car.  Also the dualling the A465 will improve the safety of a trunk road that is currently 3 lanes and has a history of fatal accidents.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	Improving the accessibility of jobs and services to residents of the County Borough is likely to have the effect of enhancing the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.  The Metro proposal in particular could have a significant impact on the attractiveness of the County Borough for economic development when coupled with the position of the strategic regeneration area within the transport network.	++
8. To reduce the need to	The fundamental aim of the policy is to reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of	++

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travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	transport at a local and regional level.	
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The policy seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the need for motorised travel	+
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	As more defined areas of land to be safeguarded are yet to finalised, care will need to be to minimise any impact on local or national sites of importance.  As the Metro proposals could result in less dependence on cars, there is the potential for the quality of existing biodiversity and ecosystems to improve due to improved air quality.	?
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	Policy unlikely to have significant direct effect on this objective.	0
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0

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Revolution.		
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.	<p>The Metro proposals are likely to have a positive impact on the landscape of the County Borough; due to the fact they will largely take advantage of existing structures and infrastructure.</p> <p>The dualling of the A465 is likely to have more of an impact on the landscape due to the scale of works required to widen the road, construct new junctions etc.</p>	?
<b>Summary</b> Overall the policy is likely to have a positive effect through integrating what is at the moment an inefficient public transport network, and through increasing the safety of a stretch of trunk road. However, there are likely to be some conflict with considerations such as landscape and biodiversity, and the implementation of other LDP policies will be important in ensuring the proposals come forward in an appropriate manner.		

Policy SW14: Protecting and improving our local community facilities		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policy will seek to both protect existing community facilities and encourage provision of new facilities.	++
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	Protecting facilities within existing communities helps to retain the identity of the communities of the County Borough	+
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	Ensuring that the increased population can access a range of community facilities enables to growth to occur in a sustainable manner.	+
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	Having access to a range of community facilities can improve both physical and mental health (ability to walk to nearby facilities, and the reassurance of having access to such facilities)	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	Encouraging new community facilities can support the vitality of the Town and local centres.  Protecting community facilities within designated centres also presents opportunities to retain and facilitate expansion of resident businesses.	+
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	Ensuring a range of community facilities are available within existing communities can play an important part in reducing the need to travel.	+
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0

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needs of all.		
10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The policy will seek to encourage retention and creation of new community facilities which would have the potential to support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language	+
18. To protect and enhance the quality	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0



of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.		
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>The policy is likely to have positive effect overall as it encourages new community facilities, and seeks to protect existing facilities. The policy will assist in ensuring that residents across the County Borough have access to a range of appropriate services within their communities. The criteria based policy to be included in Deposit plan does however need to give flexibility to premises in local centres to ensure vitality is sustained.</p>		

Policy CW15: Historic Environment Policy CW16: Cyfarthfa Heritage Area		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	Conserving and enhancing designated historic assets can play a vital role in maintain the identity of communities and settlements within the County Borough.	++
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	Conserving and enhancing designated historic assets can play an important role in improving the health of the population, as a significant proportion of the County Boroughs assets are parks and gardens, or landscapes, which are used for recreational activity.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	A number of historic buildings around the County Borough have the potential to be brought back into use for housing. Restoring and redeveloping these buildings will help in providing a wider range of dwelling types across the County Borough.	+
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	Conserving and enhancing historic assets will assist in improving the overall attractiveness of the County Borough and, in turn, enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development	+
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0

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available to meet the needs of all.		
10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective..	0
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	As a significant number of historic assets in the County Borough are landscapes or Registered parks and gardens, conserving and enhancing these assets has the potential to play an important role in enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	+
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	By protecting the heritage assets of the County Borough, which include historic landscapes, the policy has an indirect effect of protecting areas of greenfield land and safeguarding minerals.	+
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	The policies directly sets out to meet the objective by seeking to preserve and enhance the setting and integrity of the designated historic environment assets of the County Borough.	++
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	By seeking to conserve and enhance the County Boroughs historic assets, the policy is likely assist in supporting facilities that support the distinctive local culture of Merthyr Tydfil.	+
18. To protect and	As a significant number of historic assets in the County Borough are landscapes or Registered parks and	+

enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.	gardens, conserving and enhancing these assets has the potential to play an important role in protecting and enhancing designated areas of landscape value. Additionally, the policy should assist in enhancing townscapes in the County Borough given the quantity of historic buildings across the Plan area.	
<b>Summary</b> Policies CW15 and CW16 will play an important role given the County Boroughs' range and quantity of historic assets. A positive effect can be expected as the policy is likely to assist in protecting heritage assets in the natural environment, and facilitating the appropriate conservation of the County Boroughs built heritage.		

<b>Policy EnW17: Environment</b> <b>Policy EnW18: Local Nature Reserves</b> <b>Policy EnW19: Protected sites and species</b>		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policies present opportunities to enhance elements of infrastructure such as open space and green infrastructure, as well as proposing new Local Nature Reserves.	+
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	The policies promote the importance of green infrastructure and ecosystem connectivity, which will in turn assist in maintaining community and settlement identity where the natural environment plays an important part in that identity.	+
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	The policies aim to protect and enhance green infrastructure, as well as proposing new Local Nature Reserves and protecting certain sites and species. By doing this, the policy will help in ensuring that the population growth proposed occurs in a sustainable manner.	+
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	The policies will have the effect of improving the natural environment across all areas of the County Borough which can have positive effects both the physical and mental well-being of the population.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	Protecting and enhancing the natural environment will assist in improving the overall attractiveness of the County Borough and, in turn, enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development	+
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	The policies promote the use of green infrastructure, and as this can include active travel routes, the policies will assist the plan in meeting this objective.	+
9. To ensure essential	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0

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utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.		
10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The policies actively promotes green infrastructure and could assist in reducing the County Boroughs carbon footprint.	+
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	The policies seek to protect national and local designated sites; proposed new Local Nature Reserves and mitigate for any ecological impact of development. As such, the policy directly aims to achieve this objective.	++
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	The policies are likely to assist in having a positive effect on the water environment through protecting the ecological value of watercourses and resources across the County Borough. The major rivers within the County Borough are SINCs	+
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	By protecting areas of land from inappropriate development, the policies are likely to assist in minimising flood risk. Through promoting green infrastructure, there is also a link between the policies and the option to provide SUDs as part of development.	+
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policies are likely to protect areas of soil that have ecological/importance.	+
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	As a significant number of historic assets in the County Borough are landscapes or Registered parks and gardens, conserving and enhancing these assets has the potential to play an important role in enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	+
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0

culture and the Welsh language.		
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.	SINCs and other environmental designations form an integral part of the landscape of the County Borough. Protecting and enhancing these elements of the environment will have a positive effect on the landscape value of areas of the natural and built environment.	+
<b>Summary</b> The 3 policies are likely to have a significant positive impact on the environment of the County Borough. Given the lower level of growth proposed than the previous LDP, a key element of the replacement plan is to increase the focus on improving the environment in addition to providing the new homes and associated development required to meet the LDP strategy. As with other policies, robust implementation will be key to the success of the policy.		

Policy EnW20: Special Landscape Areas		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	By protecting large areas of the County Boroughs landscape, the policies will assist in maintaining and potentially enhancing the identity of various communities and settlements.	+
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	By protecting large areas of the County Boroughs landscape, the policies will assist in ensuring that areas of high quality open space remain accessible to the residents, which can positive effects on both physical and mental well-being.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	Protecting and enhancing the landscape will assist in improving the overall attractiveness of the County Borough and, in turn, enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development	
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0



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10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	Whilst the policy does not actively promote green infrastructure, protecting large areas of landscape is likely to at least present opportunities to enhance green infrastructure and the SLAs themselves/	+
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	In the process of designating SLAs, one of the LANDMAP topics that the landscapes are assessed against is 'landscape habitats'. Significant proportions of the SLAs designated in the County Borough scored well against this topic and as such, the policies contribute effectively towards meeting this objective.	+
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	By protecting large areas of land that contain watercourses and resources, the policy is likely to have a positive impact on the water environment.	+
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	By protecting areas of land from inappropriate development, the policies are likely to assist in minimising flood risk	+
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	Policies are likely to protect large areas of soil through protecting large areas of important landscape.	+
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	A significant proportion of the County Boroughs' historic assets form part of landscapes that have historic interest. The policies will protect, and seek to enhance, the historic assets that form part of the landscapes that are covered under these policies.	+
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of	The policies directly seek to protect and enhance areas of landscape value across the County Borough.	++

landscape value and good quality townscapes.		
<b>Summary</b> Policy EnW19 is likely to have an overall positive effect. In addition to protecting large areas of the County Boroughs' landscape, the mechanism of SLAs can also have the positive impact of influencing the design of development so that it integrates into the landscape more efficiently.		

Policy EcW21: Provision of employment land		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	Providing a range of land for employment use will directly assist in helping to retain a larger element of the working age population. Retaining a larger share of working age adults is a key issue in growing the population sustainably.	++
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	Due to the nature of the proposed uses, there is uncertainty in regard to elements such as noise generating activities and health and safety risks. There are likely to positive impacts in respect of increasing the proportion of the population in work, which has both physical and mental benefits.	?
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	The policy aims to facilitate the provision of a range of employment uses and, as such, will enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development by giving the market a choice of sites for development.	++
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	The policy includes employment use at the strategic regeneration area. This has the potential to attract a significant proportion of the workforce to travel to work via the new Metro system. Also, by increasing employment opportunities within the County Borough, there is the potential to reduce the number of people commuting out the County Borough.	+
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	Locating employment uses on the strategic site will help to increase the viability of the Metro proposals in that locality, and all the employment sites benefit from being well placed in relation to the strategic road network.  Until details of the precise uses are known there is uncertainty around impacts such as air quality and traffic congestion.	0

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10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	Given the scale and type of development proposed, there is scope to promote the use of renewables and promote energy efficiency in new development.	+
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The policy has the potential to increase greenhouse gas emissions, however the location of the strategic site in particular should enable new employment uses to capitalise on green infrastructure and public transport and minimise the contribution to climate change.	?
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	Given the location of the sites included in the policy, it is unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	Given the location of the sites included in the policy, it is unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policy encourages the use of 3 previously developed sites and does not sterilise any minerals that are currently safeguarded	+
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	Given the location of the sites included in the policy, it is unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective, although conservation of some element of the Hoover factory at the strategic regeneration sites could result in a positive effect in relation to this objective.	0
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of	All of the sites included in the policy are situated within the Merthyr Tydfil Historic Landscape, and due to their scale, it could be expected for there to be some impact, however this is uncertain at present.	?

landscape value and good quality townscapes.		
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Overall, the policy is likely to have a positive effect. It should result in increasing the jobs opportunities in the County Borough, help to grow the population sustainably and potentially claw back some of the out commuting from Merthyr Tydfil.</p> <p>Impacts on human health, climate change and landscape will however need to be closely considered when more detailed proposals come forward.</p>		

Policy EcW22: Protecting employment sites.		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	Protecting the status of existing employment sites is likely to assist in ensuring that residents have access to a wide range of services and facilities.	+
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	Protecting existing employment sites will assist in ensuring that there is a clear sense of place between areas for employment and associated uses, and areas of other development such as residential areas.	+
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	The policy will help in ensuring that the population grows sustainably by ensuring that there is a wide range of employment opportunities across the County Borough.	+
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	Policy will give employers certainty in regard to where it appropriate to locate certain types of business. Additionally the flexibility in allowing other appropriate commercial services can make the sites more attractive more new investment (e.g. access to gyms, cafes etc. for employees)	++
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	Concentrating employment uses on existing sites, which are accessible by public transport should assist in reducing the need to travel and encouraging more sustainable modes of transport.	+
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0

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10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	Given the location of existing employment sites, the policy is unlikely to result in any negative effect towards this objective, and if certain environmental improvements were to be taken forward, the policy could have a positive impact.	+
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of	Given the location of the existing employment sites, there is unlikely to be any negative effect of the policy on this objective.	0

landscape value and good quality townscapes.		
<b>Summary</b> The policy is expected have a positive effect overall. Concentrating and protecting employment uses on existing site has the positive effects of maintaining a sense of place, ensuring residents have access to a wide range of services and facilities, and enhancing the attractiveness of the County Borough in relation to supporting economic development.		



Policy EcW23: Retail Hierarchy – supporting our retailing provision		
Policy EcW24: Retail Allocation		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policies aim to ensure that retail and other complementary commercial development are located in town or local centres and, if it is to be located on edge or out-of-centre sites, the development must not cause harm to the vitality, viability and attractiveness of town and local centres. Thereby ensuring that some essential/basic services, such as convenience goods, are located in appropriate locations.	+
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	The policies aim to direct retail and other complementary commercial development to Town and Local Centres, thereby conserving and enhancing their existing characters to maintain settlement and area identities.	+
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	The policies are unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective. However, maintaining viable Town and Local Centres could increase their attractiveness to business and services, creating employment opportunities in these areas, thereby potentially encouraging more people to move to the County Borough to take advantage of these opportunities.	+
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	The policies aims to direct retail and other complementary commercial development to Town and Local Centres. This offers the potential for investment, regeneration and renewal in areas experiencing multiple deprivation. It would also offer the opportunity to retain and expand the identified need of communities in terms of health provision (as these facilities are often located in town and local centres), convenience goods and other essential and basic services.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	The policies aim to direct retail and other complementary commercial development to Town and Local Centres, which support the enhancement of the vitality and viability of the Town and Local Centres. This would also safeguard the low level of convenience spend loss and would present opportunities to retain and facilitate the sustainable expansion of retail convenience spend loss.	++
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	The policies aim to direct retail and other complementary commercial development to Town and Local Centres. Therefore it encourages development in areas with established transport links, rather than to areas which do not have this.	+

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9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	The policies will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policies aim to guide development to town and local centres to present potential opportunities to enable restoration, regeneration or re-use of previously developed brownfield land.	+
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	The policies aim to direct retail and other complementary commercial development to Town and Local Centres. There tends to be a concentration of heritage assets in town and local centres therefore by facilitating the enhancement of these areas the heritage assets may in turn be enhanced.	+
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local	The policies aim to direct retail and other complementary commercial development to Town and Local Centres. These centres tend to be established areas which have been in existence for a considerable time, and therefore directly linked to local and Welsh culture.	+

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culture and the Welsh language.		
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.	The policies aim to direct retail and other complementary commercial development to Town and Local Centres, thereby enhancing the vitality and viability of the Town and Local Centres. There tends to be a concentration of heritage assets in town and local centres therefore by facilitating the enhancement of these, as well as other non-heritage built assets, good quality townscapes are encouraged.	+
<b>Summary</b> The overall impact of this policy is positive as it seeks to direct retail and other complementary commercial development is directed to Town and Local Centres, thereby supporting their enhancement of the vitality and viability of the Town and Local Centres. This would have positive impacts on built heritage and economic development and service provision.		

Policy EcW25: Town and Local Centre development		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policy aims to support the enhancement of the vitality and viability of the Town and Local Centres, thereby enhancing services, such as retail and professional services, which are used by the whole (in the case of the town centre), or part of (in the case of local centres), the County Borough.	+
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	The policy aims to support the enhancement of the vitality and viability of the Town and Local Centres, thereby conserving and enhancing their existing characters to maintain settlement identities.	+
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	The policy is unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective. However, the enhancing of Town and Local Centres could increase employment opportunities in these areas, thereby potentially encouraging more people to move to the County Borough to take advantage of these opportunities.	+
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	The policy aims to support the enhancement of the vitality and viability of the Town and Local Centres. This offers the potential for investment, regeneration and renewal in areas experiencing multiple deprivation. It would also offer the opportunity to retain and expand the identified need of communities in terms of health provision (as these facilities are often located in town and local centres), convenience goods and other essential and basic services.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	The policy directly aims to support the enhancement of the vitality and viability of the Town and Local Centres. This would also safeguard the low level of convenience spend loss and would present opportunities to retain and facilitate the sustainable expansion of retail convenience spend loss.	++
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	The policy directly aims to support the enhancement of the vitality and viability of the Town and Local Centres. Therefore it encourages development in areas with established transport links, rather than to areas which do not have this.	+
9. To ensure essential utilities and	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0

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infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.		
10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policy aims to guide development to town and local centres to present potential opportunities to enable restoration, regeneration or re-use of previously developed brownfield land.	+
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	The policy directly aims to support the enhancement of the vitality and viability of the Town and Local Centres. There tends to be a concentration of heritage assets in town and local centres therefore by facilitating the enhancement of these areas the heritage assets may in turn be enhanced.	+
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The policy directly aims to support the enhancement of the vitality and viability of the Town and Local Centres. These centres tend to be established areas which have been in existence for a considerable time, and therefore directly linked to local and Welsh culture.	+

18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.	The policy directly aims to support the enhancement of the vitality and viability of the Town and Local Centres. There tends to be a concentration of heritage assets in town and local centres therefore by facilitating the enhancement of these, as well as other non-heritage built assets, good quality townscapes are encouraged.	+
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>The overall impact of this policy is positive as it seeks to support the enhancement of the vitality and viability of the Town and Local Centres. This would have positive impacts on built heritage and economic development and service provision.</p>		

Policy EcW26: Renewable Energy		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	The policy will aim to direct renewable energy development to appropriate locations, thereby minimising their impact on community and settlement identities.	+
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	The policy will aim to facilitate new renewable energy development, thereby ensuring the adequate supply of energy to cope with any increased energy demand resulting from an increased population.	+
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	Renewable energy development needs to be located in areas where, for example appropriate amounts of sun and wind can be utilised. Therefore it is not clear whether these would be areas with good transport links, or if these links would need to be created.	?
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	The policy will aim to facilitate new renewable energy development, thereby ensuring an adequate/increased supply of energy to communities or the national grid.	+

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10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The policy will aim to facilitate the appropriate development of renewable energy.	++
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The policy will aim to facilitate new renewable energy development, thereby lessening the need for energy generated from finite sources which have a greater impact on climate change.	+
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	The policy will aim to locate renewable energy development in appropriate locations thereby protecting those areas of most importance in terms of biodiversity. However, given that these activities would likely be located in undeveloped countryside locations, they would have some negative impact on biodiversity and/or ecosystem connectivity.	-
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policy will aim to facilitate the development of renewable energy development. This development is likely to be located in countryside locations. As such they may have a negative impact on soil. They may also hinder the appropriate future potential extraction of minerals; however, as these developments have an approximately 25 year lifespan, this would only be temporary.	-
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	The policy will aim to locate renewable energy development in appropriate locations thereby protecting those areas of most importance in terms of heritage.	0
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of	The policy will aim to locate renewable energy development in appropriate locations .However, given the nature and scale of these developments, it is likely that they would have some impact on the landscape.	-



landscape value and good quality townscapes.		
<b>Summary</b> The overall impact of this policy is likely to be positive as it will seek to facilitate renewable energy development in appropriate locations. However, given the nature, scale and likely countryside location of the activities, they would have some negative impact on the landscape, soil and on biodiversity. The precise wording of the policy contained in the Deposit Plan will be key in ensuring the success of the policy.		

Policy EcW27: Sustainably supplying minerals		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	The policy will aim to direct the location of mineral extraction or secondary use of aggregates to appropriate areas (active mineral or construction sites, not within 500m of the settlement boundary, not within Mineral Buffer Zones etc.), thereby preventing them from affecting community and settlement identities.	+
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	The policy will aim to facilitate the extraction and use of minerals, and not hindering their appropriate extraction through the location of new development, thereby ensuring the adequate supply of minerals to cope with any increased mineral requirements resulting from an increased population.	+
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	The policy will aim to locate mineral extraction in appropriate locations (not within 500m of the settlement boundary, not within Mineral Buffer Zones etc.), thereby avoiding any potential health or wellbeing consequences associated with these activities.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	Mineral extraction activities need to be located where the minerals are, and where their extraction is viable. Therefore it is not clear whether these would be areas with good transport links, or if these links would need to be created.	?
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0

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10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	The policy will aim to locate mineral extraction in appropriate locations (i.e. not within areas of nation or international environmental designations), thereby protecting those areas of most importance in terms of biodiversity. However, given that these activities would be located over 500m away from the settlement boundary it is reasonable to assume that they would occur in an undeveloped countryside location and would, therefore have some negative impact on biodiversity and/or ecosystem connectivity.	-
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policy will aim to facilitate the safeguarding of mineral resources, and not hindering their appropriate future potential extraction through the location of new development.	++
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	The policy will aim to locate mineral extraction in appropriate locations (i.e. not within areas of nation or international cultural designations), thereby protecting those areas of most importance in terms of heritage.	0
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
18. To protect and enhance the quality of	The policy will aim to locate mineral extraction in appropriate locations (i.e. not within areas of nation or international cultural or environmental designations), thereby protecting those areas of most importance in	-

designated areas of landscape value and good quality townscapes.	terms of heritage. This can include Special Landscape Areas. However, given the nature and scale of mineral extraction operations, it is likely that they would have some impact on the landscape.	
<b>Summary</b> The overall impact of this policy is likely to be positive as it will seek to safeguard mineral resources, and locate mineral extraction activities in appropriate locations, minimising their impact on areas of value. However, given the nature, scale and likely countryside location of the activities, they would have some negative impact on the landscape and on biodiversity. The precise wording of the policy contained in the Deposit Plan will be key in ensuring the success of the policy.		

Policy EcW28: Waste Facilities		
SA Objective	Assessment of Effects	
1. To ensure that the community and social infrastructure needs of all residents and communities are met.	The policy will aim to facilitate the development of required and appropriately located new waste facilities, thereby ensuring that the waste management and treatment needs of the County Borough are met.	+
2. To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	The policy will aim to direct the location of new waste facilities to appropriate areas (allocated and safeguarded B2 employment sites, and away from sensitive locations), thereby preventing them from affecting community and settlement identities.	+
3. To support a sustainable level of population growth.	The policy will aim to facilitate the development of required and appropriate waste facilities, thereby ensuring the ability of the County Borough to cope with any increased waste management requirements resulting from an increased population.	+
4. To improve human health and well-being and reduce inequalities.	The policy will aim to facilitate the development of required new waste facilities in appropriate locations, thereby ensuring the efficient and appropriate disposal and treatment of waste, and avoiding any potential health consequences of inefficient and inappropriate waste management.	+
5. To meet the housing needs of all through a mix of dwelling tenures and types.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
6. To improve the overall quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
7. To enhance the attractiveness of the County Borough to support economic development.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
8. To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable modes of transport.	The policy will aim to direct the location of new waste facilities to appropriate areas (allocated and existing B2 employment sites), thereby locating them in areas with existing good transport links.	+
9. To ensure essential utilities and infrastructure are available to meet the needs of all.	The policy will aim to facilitate the development of required and appropriately located new waste facilities, thereby ensuring that the waste management and treatment needs of the County Borough are met.	+

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10. To minimise energy use and optimise opportunities for renewable energy generation.	The policy will aim to facilitate the development of required and appropriate waste facilities, thereby encouraging the potential development of energy-from-waste facilities.	+
11. To minimise the contribution to climate change whilst maximising resilience to it.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
12. To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity.	The policy will aim to direct the location of new waste facilities to appropriate areas (allocated and safeguarded B2 employment sites, and away from sensitive locations), thereby preventing them from affecting undeveloped areas of areas of particular biodiversity value.	+
13. To minimise the demand for water and improve the water environment.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
14. To minimise the risk of flooding.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
15. To protect and conserve soil and safeguard mineral resources.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
16. To protect and enhance of heritage assets that defines the County Borough as the most significant Welsh town of the Industrial Revolution.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
17. To facilitate services and facilities that support distinctive local culture and the Welsh language.	The policy will be unlikely to have a significant direct effect on this objective.	0
18. To protect and enhance the quality of designated areas of	The policy will aim to facilitate the development of required new waste facilities in areas that are appropriate and away from sensitive locations, thereby avoiding any potential unsightly build-up or storage of waste in areas of landscape value.	+

landscape value and good quality townscapes.		
<b>Summary</b> The overall impact of this policy is likely to be positive as it seeks to facilitate the development of required and appropriately located new waste facilities, thereby ensuring that the waste management and treatment needs of the County Borough are met & minimising their impact on areas of value. The precise wording of the policy contained in the Deposit Plan will be key in ensuring the success of the policy.		

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