

Public Document Pack  
**Bridgend County Borough Council**  
**Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr**



Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB / Swyddfeydd Dinesig, Stryd yr Angel, Pen-y-bont, CF31 4WB

Legal and Regulatory Services /  
**Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Rheoleiddiol**  
Direct line / Deialu uniongyrchol: 01656 643148  
Ask for / Gofynnwch am: Mr Mark Anthony Galvin

Our ref / Ein cyf:  
Your ref / Eich cyf:

**Date / Dyddiad: 19 November 2015**

Dear Councillor,

**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Development Control Committee will be held in Council Chamber, Civic Offices Angel Street Bridgend CF31 4WB on **Thursday, 26 November 2015 at 2.00 pm.**

**AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence  
To receive apologies for absence from Members / Officers for the reasons so stated.
2. Declarations of Interest  
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers including those who are also Town and Community Councillors, in accordance with the provisions of the Members' Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008. Members having such dual roles should declare a personal interest in respect of their membership of such Town/Community Council and a prejudicial interest if they have taken part in the consideration of an item at that Town/Community Council contained in the Officer's Reports below.
3. Site Visits  
To confirm a date of Wednesday 6 January 2016 for proposed site inspections arising at the meeting, or identified in advance of the next Committee meeting by the Chairperson.
4. Approval of Minutes 5 - 14  
To receive and confirm the Minutes of a meeting of the Development Control Committee dated 15 October 2015
5. Public Speakers  
To advise Members of the names of the public speakers listed to speak at today's meeting (if any).
6. Amendment Sheet  
That the Chairperson accepts the Development Control Committee Amendment Sheet as

an urgent item in accordance with Part 4 (paragraph 4) of the Council Procedure Rules, in order to allow for Committee to consider necessary modifications to the Committee Report, so as to take account of late representations and revisions that require to be accommodated.

7.	<u>Development Control Committee Guidance</u>	15 - 18
8.	<u>Officer's Reports</u>	
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15.	<u>Urgent Items</u> To consider any other item(s) of business in respect of which notice has been given in accordance with Part 4 (paragraph 4) of the Council Procedure Rules and which the person presiding at the meeting is of the opinion should by reason of special circumstances be transacted at the meeting as a matter of urgency	

Yours faithfully

**P A Jolley**

Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services

**Distribution:**

Councillors:

N Clarke  
GW Davies MBE  
PA Davies  
CA Green  
RC Jones  
DRW Lewis

Councillors

JE Lewis  
HE Morgan  
LC Morgan  
DG Owen  
D Sage  
JC Spanswick

Councillors

G Thomas  
M Thomas  
JH Tildesley MBE  
C Westwood  
R Williams  
M Winter

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2015 AT 2.00 PM

Present

Councillor M Thomas – Chairperson

N Clarke	GW Davies MBE	PA Davies	CA Green
RC Jones	DRW Lewis	JE Lewis	HE Morgan
JC Spanswick	G Thomas	C Westwood	R Williams
M Winter			

Officers:

Jonathan Parsons	Group Manager Development
Rhodri Davies	Development and Building Control Manager
Craig Flower	Team Leader Technical Support
Mark Galvin	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Nicola Gandy	Principal Planning Officer
Rod Jones	Senior Lawyer
Tony Godsall	Traffic and Transportation Manager
Robert Morgan	Transportation Development Control Officer
Sue Tomlinson	Project Officer
Andrew Rees	Senior Democratic Services Officer – Committees
Sarah Daniel	Democratic Services Officer - Committees

628. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the following Officers/ Members for the reasons so stated:

Councillor L Morgan – Hospital Appointment  
Councillor D Sage – Unwell  
Cllr J Tildesley – Personal Commitment

629. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of Interest were received from the following Officers/ Members:

Councillor G W Davies – P/15/304/FUL – Prejudicial interest as the objectors were known to him and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor G W Davies – P/15/214/FUL – Prejudicial interest as he is known to the applicant and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor HE Morgan – P/15/361/FUL – Prejudicial interest – as he took part in discussion of the application at the Bridgend Town Council Planning Committee and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor N Clarke – P/15/172/FUL – Personal interest – is a member of Porthcawl Town Council but takes no part in planning matters

**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE - THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2015**

Mr R Morgan – P/15/543/FUL – Prejudicial Interest – as the applicant is well known to him and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

630. SITE VISITS

RESOLVED: That the date for site inspections (if any) arising from the meeting, or identified in advance of the next meeting of the Committee by the Chairperson, was confirmed as 25 November 2015

631. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Development Control Committee of 3 September 2015 were approved as a true and accurate record

632. PUBLIC SPEAKERS

The Chairperson read out for the benefit of those present the name of the public speakers addressing the following applications which were considered at the meeting:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Planning Application Number</u>	<u>Reason for Speaking</u>
A Thomas	P/15/304/FUL	Objector
R Burns	P/15/361/FUL	Objector
G Griffiths	P/15/361/FUL	Applicant
P Domachowski	P/15/543/FUL	Objector
B Board	P/15/543/FUL	Applicant

633. AMENDMENT SHEET

The Group Manager Development advised that in accordance with new procedures , and following the Chairperson's consent, Members had received the Amendment Sheet following the the Site Visit as an urgent item in accordance with Part 4 (paragraph 4) of the Council's Procedure Rules, in order to allow for the Committee to consider modifications to the Committee report, so as to take account of any late representations and revisions that require to be accommodated

The Chairperson also thanked Councillor N Clarke for submitting a question prior to the Development Control Committee as this allowed for the Officers to conduct the appropriate research and give Councillor Clarke a thorough answer.

634. P/15/304/FUL - LAND AT BRYN MYNACH FARM, LLAN ROAD, MAESTEG

RESOLVED: That the following application be granted subject to the Conditions contained in the report of the Corporate Director Communities to the Development Control Committee dated 15 October 2015, subject to the inclusion of the following note:

e) In respect of condition No.4 the vision splays referred to are as shown on drawing number 002 related to planning permission P/08/1061/FUL

<u>Code No</u>	<u>Proposal</u>
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P/15/304/FUL                      Land at Brynmynach Farm, Llan Road, Maesteg – Detached dwelling at Wild Boar Farm to accommodate the owners of the farm business.

635.    P/15/322/FUL - LAND SOUTH WEST OF MAESTEG ROAD, TONDU

RESOLVED:                      That the following application be granted subject to the Conditions contained in the report of the Corporate Director Communities to the Development Control Committee dated 15 October 2015, subject to the inclusion of the following condition:

15) No structure, erection or planting exceeding 0.9 metres in height above adjacent carriageway level shall be placed within the required vision splays areas at any time

Reason: In the interest of highway safety

Code No                              Proposal

P/15/322/FUL                      Land South West of Maesteg Road, Tondy - Erect 2 X A1 Units & 2 X A3 Units with access, parking

636.    P/15/444/FUL - LAND AT BEDW STREET/HUMPHRIES TERRACE, CAERAU, MAESTEG

RESOLVED:                      That the following application be granted subject to the Conditions contained in the report of the Corporate Director Communities to the Development Control Committee dated 15 October 2015.

Code No.                              Proposal

P/15/444/FUL                      Land at Bedw Street/ Humphries Terrace, Caerau, Maesteg - Change of use of land for storage in association with Caerau Football Club

637.    P/15/361/FUL - REAR OF 79 MERTHYR MAWR ROAD, BRIDGEND

RESOLVED:                      That the following application be granted subject to the Conditions contained in the report of the Corporate Director Communities to the Development Control Committee dated 15 October 2015, subject to the amendment of condition 2 of the report as follows:

2. The parking areas shall be completed in permanent materials and the garage also completed before the development is brought into beneficial use and thereafter the parking areas and garage must be retained for parking purposes in perpetuity.

Code No.                              Proposal

P/15/361/FUL                      Rear of 79 Merthyr Mawr Road, Bridgend - 2 No. Flats within new 2 storey building facing on to Heol Gam

638. P/15/543 FUL - 133 COWBRIDGE ROAD, BRIDGEND

RESOLVED: That the following application be granted subject to the Conditions contained in the report of the Corporate Director Communities to the Development Control Committee dated 15 October 2015.

Code No. Proposal

P/15/526/FUL 133 Cowbridge Road, Bridgend - Retention of building as built (Amendment to P/13/147/FUL) for use as studio dwelling by family member

639. P/15/214 FUL - HARDEN HOUSE, 115 OXFORD STREET, PONTYCYMMER

RESOLVED: That at the applicants request, consideration of the following application be deferred until the next meeting of the Development Control Committee in order that the viability of the site may be further examined so as to enable full assessment of this issue and the ability to meet the Section 106 obligation

Code no. Proposal

P/15/214/FUL Harden House, 115 Oxford Street, Pontycymmer - Convert offices to 6No. 3-storey dwellings

640. P/15/526/FUL - LAND REAR 26-27 CLOS PEN LLWYN, BROADLANDS, BRIDGEND

RESOLVED: That the following application be granted subject to the Conditions contained in the report of the Corporate Director Communities to the Development Control Committee dated 15 October 2015 subject to the inclusion of the following note:

e) The developer is advised to consider the incorporation of bat bricks, bat tiles and bat boxes within the development as these would provide summer roosting opportunities for bats.

Code No. Proposal

P/15/526/FUL Land rear 26-27 Clos Pen Llwyn, Broadlands, Bridgend - Construction of new detached dwelling

641. P/15/172/FUL - 52 JOHN STREET, PORTHCAWL

RESOLVED: That the following application be granted subject to the Conditions contained in the report of the Corporate Director Communities to the Development Control Committee dated 15 October 2015

Code no. Proposal

P/15/172/FUL 52 John Street, Porthcawl - Conversion of existing commercial property to 1No. One bed residential dwelling

642. APPEALS

RESOLVED: (1) That the following Appeal received as outlined in the report of the Corporate Director Communities be noted.

<u>Code No.</u>	<u>Subject of Appeal</u>
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A/15/3133197 (1761)	1 Green Meadow, Cefn Cribwr
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(2) That the Appeal received as outlined in the report was withdrawn at the appellant's request

<u>Code No.</u>	<u>Subject of Appeal</u>
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A/12/2179972 (1730)	Provision of Wind Turbine on site of former water tower: Former Stormy Down Aerodrome
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643. MARGAM MINE

The Group Manager Development provided an update on the current position of the Margam Opencast Coal Site to Committee. He explained that since the last update report, meetings had been held with Celtic Energy and the land owner both in conjunction with NPT Council and individually with Bridgend Officers. The main issues discussed related to safety, security and future restoration proposals for the Margam site. He added that following meetings with the land owner and Celtic Energy the following facts were established.

The Group Manager Development stated that Margam opencast coal site was owned by "Beech", which was a subsidiary of "Oak Regeneration", Celtic Energy's involvement on the site was limited to water monitoring and security. Celtic Energy confirmed that the liability for the site rests with the landowner, i.e. Oak and whilst it continued maintaining water levels in the void it cannot do so indefinitely. The pumping process was very expensive and a long term solution is needed to control water levels. This would need to be funded from the current restoration fund. Celtic Energy only have access to the site until June 2017.

The Group Manager Development advised that a "light" restoration scheme had been discussed, utilising the existing restoration funds, which involved creating a channel from the water filled void into an adjacent water course, some re-profiling of the overburden mound, landscaping and reinstatement of rights of way across the site. The water in the void would remain but be made safe by way of a channel. The original restoration scheme involved the full reinstatement of Crown Road and Bedford Road, which were severed to accommodate the mine. If this were to be proposed it would have a significant financial impact on the final restoration scheme and consideration should be given as to whether the reinstatement of rights of way may be achievable in the form of a bridleway or cycle path in any future restoration proposal. The Group Manager Development added that Celtic Energy had indicated that it would be prepared to submit a planning application for the "light" restoration scheme early next year. Whilst the void area is located within the NPT administrative district, a considerable part of the unrestored site is within Bridgend and this will necessitate the submission of applications to both authorities. A consensus between Bridgend Council and the neighbouring Neath Port Talbot would be critical to the success of any future restoration proposals

A summit on the restoration of open cast coal mines was held in July, with representatives from Welsh Government, Local Planning Authorities, community groups

and mine operators. The Welsh Government Minister had set out his intentions or moving forward by way of a written statement, which identified the following areas for further work:-

- Improving the resilience of the minerals planning service in Wales by pooling skills and expertise;
- Engaging local authorities, industry and communities in the joint Welsh Government/ Coal Authority work to prepare best practice guidance on the calculation, accumulation and management of bonds which would seek to establish a consistent basis for negotiations across Wales;
- a focused review of MTAN2, the scope of which would include consideration of the exceptions to the buffer zone policy;
- starting a dialogue with UK Government, particularly their stake on legacy sites (especially the portfolio sites on which there was immunity from bonding) and to feed back to a follow up event at a later date.

The Group Manager Development stated that a representative from the Department of Environment and Climate Change was due to visit the site and speak to local representatives including the LPAs towards the end of October 2015. However, notwithstanding the visit, the availability of future central government funding to secure full restoration could not be relied upon. Also, any subsequent changes to planning guidance or discussion on 'good practice' unfortunately would not help improve the legacy issues at Margam.

The Group Manager Development stated that as previously highlighted, the success of any further enforcement action on the site was extremely unlikely. In addition to the issues with the validity of the Bridgend conditions, any enforcement notice would be challengeable by way of an appeal and even if a notice was ultimately upheld, it would not result in the full restoration of the site as originally envisaged as any enforcement action is to a certain extent dependent on the cooperation of the landowner. If the landowner company was to fold then it would be left to the local authorities to oversee the restoration with the limited funds available.

The Group Manager Development stated that presently, the site operator Celtic Energy had indicated a willingness to engage with both LPAs in order to carry out the light restoration proposals described above and that it will continue with the pumping operations in order to maintain water levels in the void. However, the continued cooperation of the company would not be possible if in the future it ceased to operate on this site. In any event Celtic Energy had made it clear that it would not continue pumping indefinitely. Once pumping stops, the water levels in the void would increase.

The Group Manager Development concluded by informing Committee that at a recent meeting, NPT Planning Committee resolved to pursue a light restoration scheme with the land owner and Celtic Energy utilising the current restoration fund. Negotiations were currently underway and a planning application was expected early next year. Under timescales discussed with Celtic Energy the restoration works may commence sometime during the middle of 2016 with an expectation that the works are completed the following year. Members were advised that this scheme is a realistic way forward to secure the long term safety of the site and that they should seriously consider any future proposal for the light restoration of the open cast site.

A member asked if Bridgend Council and Neath Port Talbot Council could appeal to the Welsh Government to help with the ongoing situation. The Group Manager

Development stated that the Welsh Government Minister has indicated that the matter is a national issue and it is unable to intervene or provide any funding.

RESOLVED: That the report of the Corporate Director was noted

644. FEE INCREASE

The Group Manager Development updated the Committee on the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications and Site Visits) (Wales) Regulations 2015 that came into effect on the 1 October 2015. He explained that the Planning application fees were set nationally by Welsh Government and the increase provided an average of 15% across the board which was the first since 2009. He added that planning fees in England were similarly increased in 2012, and based on the average fee income over the last 5 years, the increase equates to around £79,000 per annum to Bridgend. The Minister had written to all local authorities indicating that the fee increase should be used to improve their planning services.

The Group Manager Development welcomed the increase in fee income, however, he stated that notwithstanding the Minister's expectations the planning fee increase will help to stem a further reduction in service levels as part of the medium term financial strategy and unfortunately would not be used to improve existing services. He added that whilst the importance placed on the planning function was encouraging, the new fees regulations also included a provision (Regulation 9) that required local planning authorities to refund planning fees if applications are not determined within a certain timescale and where agreement could not be reached on extending the time period. He added that the regulation would also apply to applications that were awaiting the completion of a legal agreement which, through no fault of the local planning authority, may be delayed. Planning fees for major schemes could run into many thousands of pounds.

The Group Manager Development stated that there was concern that introducing the principle in the planning process would place increased emphasis on speed of determination rather than focusing on the quality of a decision and outcomes. He added that this would result in greater pressures on the planning service in Bridgend in terms of performance, particularly as the planning service had already reduced by almost a half over the last 6 years due to budget cuts. He advised Committee that if the provision had already been in place this current year, the planning department would have had to refund £26,640 back in application fees, which is the salary of a senior planning officer.

The Group Manager Development stated that Regulation 9 would apply to all planning applications submitted after the 1 October 2015. He added that whilst the vast majority of applications submitted to Bridgend are determined well within timescales, delays do occur for a number of reasons. He further added that Officers would continue to monitor determination dates to ensure that where necessary an extension of time to determine would be sought and agreed with the applicant. In a case where no agreement is able to be reached then the risk of refunding application fees would inevitably increase. In the case of applications that are deferred at Committee it may be necessary to consider reconvening the meeting or holding a separate meeting out of the normal Committee cycle to ensure timescales are met.

The Group Manager Development concluded that the Leader had responded to the Minister's letter expressing concern over the introduction of Regulation 9 and requesting information or evidence as to why this approach had been adopted and how it would improve the planning process. He added he would inform the Committee if or when a response was received.

RESOLVED: The Committee noted the report

645. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Group Manager Development gave an update to the Committee on the Annual Performance Report (APR). He stated that the Annual Performance Report was a factual public document which outlined how a local planning authority had performed against a set of indicators identifying what it did well so that it could be shared with others and what steps might be taken to address areas of performance in need of improvement.

The Group Manager Development stated that following adoption of the performance framework indicators in November 2014, local planning authorities must submit an APR every November with the first report due on 20 November 2015. He advised that a draft APR was currently being produced and Members would be updated once the document was finalised.

RESOLVED: The Committee noted the report.

646. PUBLIC OPEN SPACE SPG

The Group Manager Development advised that in accordance with revised procedures that were agreed following the training session in July, Members would be involved with the formulation, preparation and publication of future supplementary planning guidance (SPG)

The Group Manager Development asked for nominations for up to three Committee members to sit on the Open Spaces SPG group, which would comprise of planning officers together with colleagues from other Council sections. The next stage would then be to convene a scoping meeting, to establish the purpose extent and evidence base required for the document and to agree a timescale. A draft SPG would then be produced and discussed at a future training or workshop session. The nominated members would assist in the facilitation of the session. The final document would then require DC Committee and Council approval.

RESOLVED: That the Committee agreed the following members be nominated to assist with the preparation of the Open Spaces SPG

Councillor JC Spanswick  
Councillor HE Morgan  
Councillor DRW Lewis

647. TRAINING LOG

RESOLVED: That the report of the Corporate Director Communities outlining forthcoming training activities for Members, be noted.

648. PORTHCAWL CONSERVATION AREA

The Group Manager – Development submitted a report to Committee to advise Members that a conservation area appraisal and draft management plan for Porthcawl Conservation Area had been prepared as part of a programme of conservation area appraisals. Members' agreement was sought to consult on one of the recommendations namely the proposed extension of the Porthcawl Conservation Area.

RESOLVED: That Members' authorised Officers to:

1. Consult the public on the proposed extension to the Porthcawl Conservation Area; and
2. Report back on the results of the consultation

649. URGENT ITEMS

None

The meeting closed at 4.22 pm

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## **Development Control Committee Guidance**

I submit for your consideration the following report on Planning Applications and other Development Control matters based upon the information presently submitted to the Department. Should any additional information be submitted between the date of this report and 4.00pm on the day prior to the date of the meeting, relevant to the consideration of an item on the report, that additional information will be made available at the meeting.

For Members' assistance I have provided details on standard conditions on time limits, standard notes (attached to all consents for planning permission) and the reasons to justify site inspections.

### **STANDARD CONDITIONS**

On some applications for planning permission reference is made in the recommendation to the permission granted being subject to standard conditions. These standard conditions set time limits in which the proposed development should be commenced, and are imposed by the Planning Act 1990. Members may find the following explanation helpful:-

#### Time-limits on full permission

Grants of planning permission (apart from outline permissions) must, under section 91 of the Act, be made subject to a condition imposing a time-limit within which the development authorised must be started. The section specifies a period of five years from the date of the permission. Where planning permission is granted without a condition limiting the duration of the planning permission, it is deemed to be granted subject to the condition that the development to which it relates must be begun not later than the expiration of 5 years beginning with the grant of permission.

#### Time-limits on outline permissions

Grants of outline planning permission must, under section 92 of the Act, be made subject to conditions imposing two types time-limit, one within which applications must be made for the approval of reserved matters and a second within which the development itself must be started. The periods specified in the section are three years from the grant of outline permission for the submission of applications for approval of reserved matters, and either five years from the grant of permission, or two years from the final approval of the last of the reserved matters, whichever is the longer, for starting the development.

#### Variation from standard time-limits

If the authority consider it appropriate on planning grounds they may use longer or shorter periods than those specified in the Act, but must give their reasons for so doing.

### **STANDARD NOTES**

- a. Please note that this consent is specific to the plans and particulars approved as part of the application. Any departure from the approved plans will constitute unauthorised development and may be liable to enforcement action. You (or any subsequent developer) should advise the Council of any actual or proposed variations from the approved plans immediately so that you can be advised how to best resolve the matter.

In addition, any conditions that the Council has imposed on this consent will be listed above and should be read carefully. It is your (or any subsequent developer's) responsibility to ensure that the terms of all conditions are met in full at the appropriate time (as outlined in the specific condition).

The commencement of development without firstly meeting in full the terms of any conditions that require the submission of details prior to the commencement of development will constitute unauthorised development. This will necessitate the submission of a further application to retain the unauthorised development and may render you liable to enforcement action.

Failure on the part of the developer to observe the requirements of any other conditions could result in the Council pursuing formal enforcement action in the form of a Breach of Condition Notice.

- b. The enclosed notes which set out the rights of applicants who are aggrieved by the Council's decision.
- c. This planning permission does not convey any approval or consent required by Building Regulations or any other legislation or covenant nor permits you to build on, over or under your neighbour's land (trespass is a civil matter).

To determine whether your building work requires Building Regulation approval, or for other services provided by the Council's Building Control Section, you should contact that Section on 01656 643408 or at:- <http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/buildingcontrol>

- d. Developers are advised to contact the statutory undertakers as to whether any of their apparatus would be affected by the development
- e. Attention is drawn to the provisions of the party wall etc. act 1996
- f. Attention is drawn to the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and in particular to the need to not disturb nesting bird and protected species and their habitats.
- g. If your proposal relates to residential development requiring street naming you need to contact 01656 643136
- h. If you are participating in the DIY House Builders and Converters scheme the resultant VAT reclaim will be dealt with at the Chester VAT office (tel: 01244 684221)
- i. Developers are advised to contact the Environment and Energy helpline (tel: 0800 585794) and/or the energy efficiency advice centre (tel: 0800 512012) for advice on the efficient use of resources. Developers are also referred to Welsh Government Practice Guidance: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in Buildings (July 2012):-  
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/planning/policy/guidanceandleaflets/energyinbuildings/?lang=en>
- j. Where appropriate, in order to make the development accessible for all those who might use the facility, the scheme must conform to the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. Your attention is also drawn to the Code of Practice relating to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 Part iii (Rights of Access to Goods, Facilities and Services)
- k. If your development lies within a coal mining area, you should take account of any coal mining related hazards to stability in your proposals. Developers must also seek permission from the Coal Authority before undertaking any operations that involves entry into any coal or mines of coal, including coal mine shafts and adits and the implementation of site investigations or other works. Property specific summary information on any past, current and proposed surface and underground coal mining activity to affect the development can be obtained from the Coal Authority. The Coal Authority Mining Reports Service can be contacted on 0845 7626848 or [www.coal.gov.uk](http://www.coal.gov.uk)
- l. If your development lies within a limestone area you should take account of any limestone hazards to stability in your proposals. You are advised to engage a Consultant Engineer prior to commencing development in order to certify that proper site investigations have been carried out at the site sufficient to establish the ground precautions in relation to the proposed development and what precautions should be adopted in the design and construction of the proposed building(s) in order to minimise any damage which might arise as a result of the ground conditions.
- m. The Local Planning Authority will only consider minor amendments to approved development by the submission of an application under section 96A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The following amendments will require a fresh application:-
  - re-siting of building(s) nearer any existing building or more than 250mm in any other direction;
  - increase in the volume of a building;
  - increase in the height of a building;
  - changes to the site area;
  - changes which conflict with a condition;
  - additional or repositioned windows / doors / openings within 21m of an existing building;
  - changes which alter the nature or description of the development;
  - new works or elements not part of the original scheme;
  - new works or elements not considered by an environmental statement submitted with the application.

- n. The developer shall notify the Planning Department on 01656 643155 / 643157 of the date of commencement of development or complete and return the Commencement Card (enclosed with this Notice).
- o. The presence of any significant unsuspected contamination, which becomes evident during the development of the site, should be brought to the attention of the Public Protection section of the Legal and Regulatory Services directorate. Developers may wish to refer to 'Land Contamination: A Guide for Developers' on the Public Protection Web Page.
- p. Any builder's debris/rubble must be disposed of in an authorised manner in accordance with the Duty of Care under the Waste Regulations.

## **THE SITE INSPECTION PROTOCOL**

The Site Inspection Protocol is as follows:-

### **Purpose**

#### **Fact Finding**

Development Control Committee site visits are not meetings where decisions are made and neither are they public meetings. They are essentially fact finding exercises, held for the benefit of Members, where a proposed development may be difficult to visualise from the plans and supporting material. They may be necessary for careful consideration of relationships to adjoining property or the general vicinity of the proposal due to its scale or effect on a listed building or conservation area.

### **Request for a Site Visit**

#### **Ward Member request for Site Visit**

Site visits can be costly and cause delays so it is important that they are only held where necessary normally on the day prior to Committee and where there is a material planning objection.

Site visits, whether Site Panel or Committee, are held pursuant to:-

1. a decision of the Chair of the Development Control Committee (or in his/her absence the Vice Chair) or
2. a request received within the prescribed consultation period from a local Ward Member or another Member consulted because the application significantly affects the other ward, and where a material planning objection has been received by the Development Department from a statutory consultee or local resident.

A request for a site visit made by the local Ward Member, or another Member in response to being consulted on the proposed development, must be submitted in writing, or electronically, within 21 days of the date they were notified of the application and shall clearly indicate the planning reasons for the visit.

Site visits can not be undertaken for inappropriate reasons (see below).

The Development Control Committee can also decide to convene a Site Panel or Committee Site Visit.

### **Inappropriate Site Visit**

Examples where a site visit would not normally be appropriate include where:-

- purely policy matters or issues of principle are an issue
- to consider boundary or neighbour disputes
- issues of competition
- loss of property values
- any other issues which are not material planning considerations
- where Councillors have already visited the site within the last 12 months, except in exceptional circumstances

### **Format and Conduct at the Site Visit**

#### **Attendance**

Members of the Development Control Committee, the local Ward Member and the relevant Town or Community Council will be notified in advance of any visit. The applicant and/or the applicant's agent will also be informed as will the first person registering an intent to speak at Committee but it will be made clear that representations cannot be made during the course of the visit.

### **Officer Advice**

The Chair will invite the Planning Officer to briefly outline the proposals and point out the key issues raised by the application and of any vantage points from which the site should be viewed. Members may ask questions and seek clarification and Officers will respond. The applicant or agent will be invited by the Chairman to clarify aspects of the development.

The local Ward Member(s), one objector who has registered a request to speak at Committee (whether a local resident or Town/Community Council representative) and a Town/Community Council representative will be allowed to clarify any points of objection, both only in respect of any features of the site, or its locality, which are relevant to the determination of the planning application.

Any statement or discussion concerning the principles and policies applicable to the development or to the merits of the proposal will not be allowed.

### **Code of Conduct**

Although site visits are not part of the formal Committee consideration of the application, the Code of Conduct still applies to site visits and Councillors should have regard to the guidance on declarations of personal interests.

### **Record Keeping**

A file record will be kept of those attending the site visit.

### **Site Visit Summary**

In summary site visits are: -

- a fact finding exercise.
- not part of the formal Committee meeting and therefore public rights of attendance do not apply.
- to enable Officers to point out relevant features.
- to enable questions to be asked on site for clarification. However, discussions on the application will only take place at the subsequent Committee.

### **Frequently Used Planning Acronyms**

AONB	Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty	PINS	Planning Inspectorate
APN	Agricultural Prior Notification	PPW	Planning Policy Wales
BREEM	Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method	S.106	Section 106 Agreement
CA	Conservation Area	SA	Sustainability Appraisal
CAC	Conservation Area Consent	SAC	Special Area of Conservation
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy	SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
DAS	Design and Access Statement	SINC	Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation
DPN	Demolition Prior Notification	SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment	SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
ES	Environmental Statement	TAN	Technical Advice Note
FCA	Flood Consequences Assessment	TIA	Transport Impact Assessment
GPDO	General Permitted Development Order	TPN	Telecommunications Prior Notification
LB	Listed Building	TPO	Tree Preservation Order
LBC	Listed Building Consent	UCO	Use Classes Order
LDP	Local Development Plan	UDP	Unitary Development Plan
LPA	Local Planning Authority		

## RECOMMENDATION : SECTION 106

**REFERENCE:** P/15/368/OUT

**APPLICANT:** JRT,MARDAN (STEVENAGE) LTD, LODGEGROUND  
C/O C2J ARCHITECTS UNIT 1A COMPASS BUSINESS PARK PACIFIC  
ROAD OCEAN PARK, CARDIFF

**LOCATION:** LAND AT PARC EWENNI EWENNY INDUSTRIAL ESTATE BRIDGEND

**PROPOSAL:** CONSTRUCTION OF UP TO 240 RES. UNITS, 1123M.SQ OF  
A1/A2/A3/D1 /D2 DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC OPEN SPACE & HIGHWAY  
WORKS

**RECEIVED:** 3rd June 2015

**SITE INSPECTED:** 10th July 2015

## APPLICATION/SITE DESCRIPTION

The application proposes the construction of up to 240 residential units together with the provision of 1,123sq.m.of A1/A2/A3/D1 and D2 development, provision of public open space and associated highway infrastructure on land on the southern side of the A473 at Waterton, Bridgend. The site encompasses the car sales enterprise on the western side of the existing western access, the Penybont Gym and commercial unit, all of the units on the Ewenny Industrial Estate which are accessed from a secondary access point to the west of Travis Perkins and the John Raymond Transport Depot but excludes the Travis Perkins Builders Merchants. The application is in outline with all matters reserved for future consideration apart from access. The application has been accompanied by a number of reports in respect of the following matters:-

- \* Transport Assessment
- \* Flood Consequences Assessment
- \* Drainage Strategy Report
- \* Utilities Report
- \* Air Quality Assessment
- \* Environmental Noise Assessment
- \* Phase 1 Geo Environmental Report
- \* Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Bat Emergence Check.

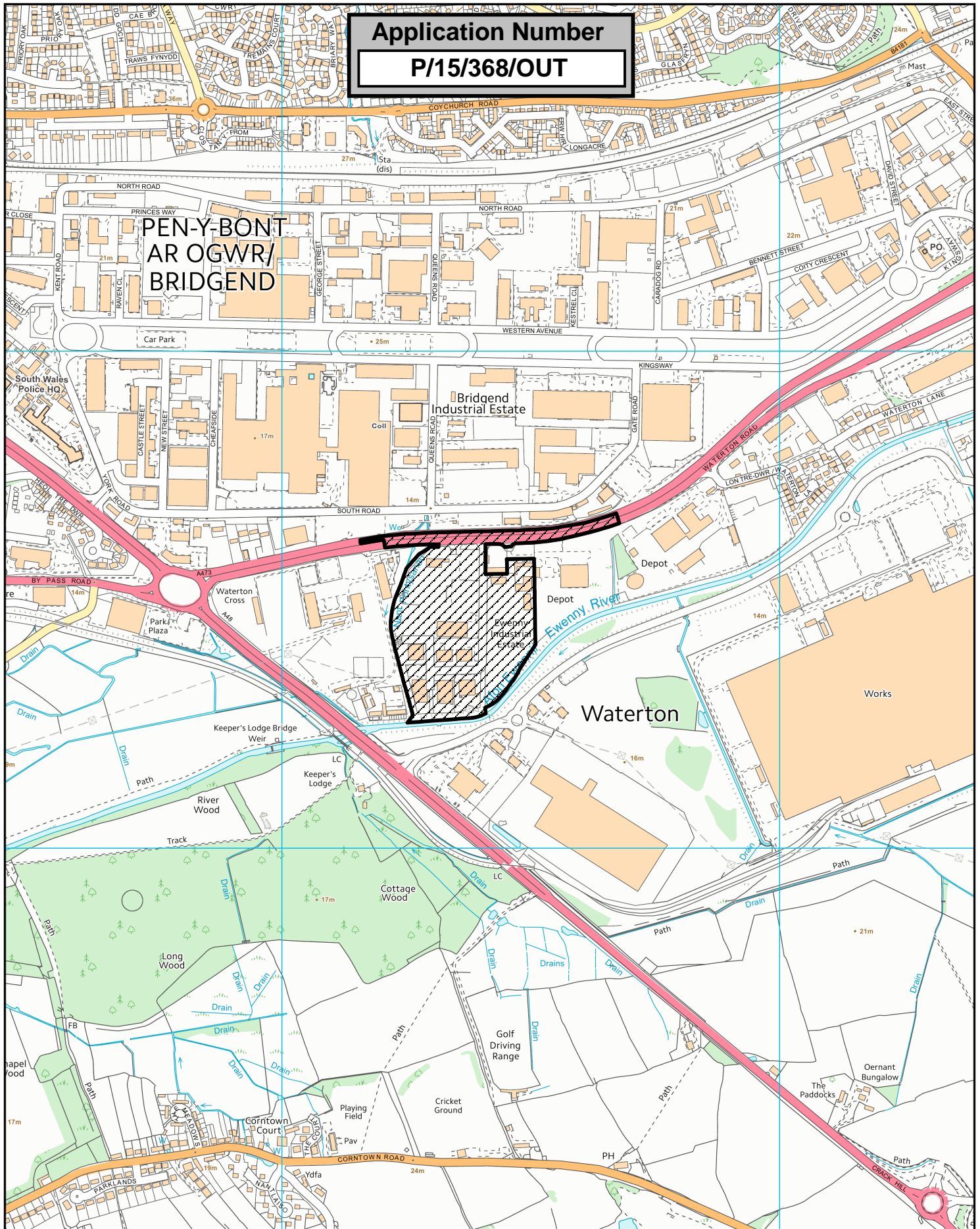
The Indicative Site Layout, which forms part of the submission, indicates that access into the site will be obtained via a new traffic light controlled junction located adjacent to the watercourse that runs along the western site boundary and approximately where the car sales building currently exists. A principal spine road leads in a southerly direction from the access point until it meets an internal spine road running east-west, which provides linkages into future developments to the west on the South Wales Police Ground and to the east on Council owned land. A commercial hub containing A1/A2/A3 uses and retaining the existing Penybont Gym facility is shown on the western side of the north/south spine road. Residential development is proposed to surround this commercial hub with an area of approximately 1.8 acres of public open space located in the south western corner of the site. The separate existing access into Travis Perkins will be retained.

## RELEVANT HISTORY

Application Number

P/15/368/OUT

PEN-Y-BONT  
AR OGWR/  
BRIDGEND



Page 18

Scale 1:10,000

Date Issued:  
18/11/2015

Development-Mapping  
Tel: 01656 643176

Mark Shephard

Corporate Director-Communities

Communities Directorate,  
Bridgend County Borough  
Council, Civic Offices,  
Angel Street,  
Bridgend CF31 4WB.

O/Drive/Plandraw/new MI layouts/  
Committee DC Plan

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Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol



**P/10/351/FUL**

**APPROVED 15-07-2010**

**+conditions**

**CHANGE USE FROM TRANSPORT DEPOT TO CHILDRENS PLAY & CHILDCARE FACILITY, COMMERCIAL GYMNASIUM & CATERING FACILITY**

**P/96/374/OUT**

**WITHDRAWN 21-08-1996**

**RETAIL SALES MOTOR CARS GARAGE AND SHOWROOM FACILITIES**

#### **PUBLICITY**

The application has been advertised on site.

Neighbours have been notified of the receipt of the application.

The period allowed for response to consultations/publicity expired on 16th July, 2015.

#### **NEGOTIATIONS**

Considerable discussion has taken place between the Public Protection Department and the applicant's acoustic consultants regarding the submitted Environmental Noise Assessment. In addition the Transport Assessment, which accompanies the submission, has been forwarded to transport consultants acting for the Council for consideration and audit. A report prepared by the Council's consultants has been forwarded to the applicant's agent to seek clarification on a number of aspects of the highway proposals and a rebuttal statement has been received from the applicant's transport consultants. Assessment of this statement is currently ongoing and an update and the formal observations of the Highways Department, if available will be reported to Committee on the Addendum Sheet.

#### **CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

##### **Town/Community Council Observations**

Notified on 18th June 2015

##### **Councillor E Venables**

Objects to this application on the following grounds:-

1. Installation of traffic lights:-

- (a) Consider that these will extend the journeys of residents living at Waterton Close;
- (b) Same problem will occur for future residents where Council Depot is currently;
- (c) Residents and other travellers may drive into the development site and turn around rather than using Waterton Cross roundabout;
- (d) In the original Masterplan there was to be a roundabout which would alleviate extra journey times and keep A473 free flowing.

2. Displacement of traffic - Traffic may either use the B4181 to travel to Bridgend town or use the road near the Ford Plant to access the A48. This already occurs but consider that more locals will do this if traffic lights are installed.

3. Transport Assessment - this estimates the number of residential units on the entire allocation within the Local Development Plan and predicts a flow. This prediction does not take into account the redevelopment of the eastern section of the LDP allocation. In addition predictions are based on peak hours whereas there are also high volumes at other times and therefore consider that overall usage should be used.

4. Issues for new residents at Parc Afon Ewenni - some of roads appear not to include turning facilities; footpath connections between the different roads should be included; parking spaces for retail area/gym appear too limited; lack of children's play area; any previous contamination by Ordnance Factory should be dealt with prior to occupation of the site; noise barrier/mitigation would need to be incorporated into redevelopment; visual screening around Travis Perkins and central gym/retail area should be included in the scheme and that residential properties are provided with adequate rear private amenity space rather than at the front of the property.

#### **Head Of Street Scene (Drainage)**

No objection subject to condition.

#### **Natural Resources Wales**

No objection subject to conditions.

#### **Welsh Water Developer Services**

No objections.

#### **Crime Prevention Design S.Wales Police**

Detailed observations providing advice on designing out crime and security issues are submitted for the information and consideration of the developer.

#### **Group Manager Public Protection**

Concern raised regarding the assessment of potential noise from adjacent Police facility with regard to dogs and firearms training.

### **REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED**

#### **The Concerns And Objections Received From Local Residents, Can Be Summarised As Follows:-**

Objections received from 6 Duffryn Close, 25 Waterton Close and 15 Waterton Close:-

1. Access from the development site onto the A473 via new traffic light controlled junction will be a disaster and cause significant delays for traffic approaching the Waterton roundabout from the east particularly the residents of Waterton Close.
2. It is suggested that access to the development site should be re-directed to the A48.
3. A roundabout controlled junction at the access to the development site would be more appropriate.
4. The additional traffic and the access proposals will represent a safety hazard to school children crossing the A473 and walking to school in Coychurch.

### **COMMENTS ON REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED**

The following observations are provided in response to the concerns and objections raised by the Ward Member and local residents:-

Proposed Traffic Lights - The Transport Assessment demonstrates that, even at peak times, journey times will not be so significant as to warrant refusal of the scheme. Whilst the

Masterplan Framework and Delivery Strategy for the wider Parc Afon Ewenni Regeneration Area prepared in November, 2011 contained a suggestion for a roundabout controlled access to the east of the application site, this framework has not been formally adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. The Transport Assessment is considered to demonstrate that the proposed traffic lights will adequately control traffic flows. With regard to the future impact in the event that the Council owned land to the east of the application site is redeveloped, this would be a matter to be assessed at that time.

Displacement of traffic - It is considered that both existing users of the A473 and future traffic generated by the proposed development will access both of these alternative routes via the traffic light controlled junction as there will be no direct access across the River Ewenny to the south.

Transport Assessment - Any future redevelopment of the land to the west owned by the South Wales Police Authority or similarly land to the east owned by this Council will have to provide their own transport assessments based on the traffic conditions prevailing at the time of submission.

Internal Issues within Development Site - The application is in outline with all matters other than access reserved for future approval and, therefore, the submitted layout is purely indicative. Appropriate road widths, car parking levels, turning facilities would be matters to be resolved at reserved matters or detailed application stages should this application be approved. Issues relating to contamination, noise mitigation and the provision of adequate screening/landscaping can be satisfactorily addressed by appropriately worded conditions in the event that this submission is favourably recommended.

## **APPRAISAL**

The application is referred to Committee to consider the concerns and objections raised by the Ward Member and local residents.

During the site inspection, it was noted that the land is reasonably flat in nature. Other than the car sales enterprise, much of the northern section of the site is vacant and is already hard surfaced. Much of the southern section of the site is occupied by the existing unit occupied by Penybont Gym and Econotherm Ltd and the remaining six units on the Ewenny Industrial Estate. The eastern sector of the site is currently occupied by John Raymond Transport Depot which comprises lorry parking and staff car parking with three buildings abutting the eastern site boundary. A landscape buffer of mature trees separates the application site from the River Ewenny, which runs to the south of the site and similarly a buffer runs along the western site boundary adjacent to the watercourse that runs in a north/south direction and joins the River Ewenny in the south western corner of the site. An area of grassland/open space lies immediately to the east of application site and surrounds the County Supplies Building.

The indicative site layout shows access obtained by a single traffic light controlled junction with the A473 located slightly to the west of the existing westernmost access. A commercial hub centred on the retained Penybont Gym/Econotherm building is to be surrounded by residential development but an area of public open space will occupy the southernmost section of the site adjacent to River Ewenny.

The application site forms one part of a larger regeneration and mixed use development scheme as allocated by Policy PLA3(4) of the Bridgend Local Development Plan (LDP). The aim of this allocation is the regeneration of a brownfield and under-utilised site within defined settlements that provides an appropriate mix of land uses. The Policy requires implementation of the identified schemes to be in accordance with a master plan/development brief and/or appropriate planning/highway agreements. In this case, a Masterplan Framework and Delivery Strategy document was prepared in November, 2011 but this has not been formally adopted as

Supplementary Planning Guidance. Notwithstanding that the application site forms only part of the overall allocation, it is considered that the indicative layout is generally compatible with the uses proposed within the Development Framework Plan contained in that document.

The allocation proposes to deliver a mix of uses comprising residential development (COM1(3)), improvements to the transport network (PLA8(4)), B1/B2/B8 employment development (REG1(6)), a small scale local service centre (REG5(5)), a community building (COM9(6)) and accessible natural greenspace (COM13(7)).

The application includes for the provision of up to 240 dwellings, the provision of 1123sq.m. of A1/A2/A3/D1/D2 development, public open space and associated highway infrastructure. Taking each of the elements in turn, the residential development is considered to be of an acceptable density and is considered to be in accordance with the LDP.

The application triggers Policy COM5 of the LDP, which in this location requires 20% of dwellings to be provided as affordable housing to be transferred to a registered social landlord (RSL) with an appropriate tenure to be agreed between the applicant and the Housing Strategy Department. As the application is in outline and the total number of units is not yet known, the affordable housing requirement should be expressed as a percentage in a Section 106 Agreement.

The application is also subject to the requirements of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 16 Educational Facilities and Residential Development. The Children's Directorate have been consulted to ascertain the impact the proposed development will have on local education facilities. According to the formula contained in the SPG, the proposal will generate up to 12 Nursery, 53 Primary, 43 Secondary and 9 Post 16 age children. Local Primary Schools are all at capacity and are forecast to remain so for the foreseeable future. A contribution based on the formula and cost guidance in SPG16 is therefore likely to be requested for Nursery and Primary age children from this site. There is, however, sufficient capacity to accommodate Secondary and Post 16 age children generated by the development. It is important to note that the Section 106 Agreement will need to specify how a contribution would be used to provide additional capacity.

With regards to the A1/A2/A3/D1/D2 development, Policy REG5 recognises the important role local shopping and commercial facilities play in serving their communities, especially in areas of housing growth. Policy REG5(3) therefore facilitates the provision of a new locally scaled service centre of up to 2,000sq.m. to serve the wider regeneration site. As such, whilst agreeing the acceptability of this element of the application in principle, it is important to ensure that any consent is conditioned or appropriately tied to a legal agreement to ensure that the commercial elements of the scheme are implemented and not left vacant after the residential development is constructed. As a minimum, this should secure the provision of serviced land ready for construction, ensure appropriate highway access is provided and ensure that the developer carries out any profiling or levelling of the land as deemed necessary.

With regards to the public open space to be provided as part of the proposals, Policy COM 11 of the LDP requires the provision of a satisfactory standard of outdoor recreation space, which is defined as 2.4 hectares per 1000 people. For a proposal of up to 240 dwellings, this amounts to approximately 1.3 - 1.4 hectares to consist of a combination of outdoor sport, children's play space, allotment provision and accessible natural green space. BCBC's open space audits reveal a general deficit of facilities per head of population in this location.

Finally, with regard to the delivery of Policy PLA8(4) (requiring improvement to the local highway network) as part of the PLA3(4) mixed use development the Highway Department's assessment of the impact of the proposals on the surrounding highway network will be required together with any indication of whether there would be any Section 106 requirements. As previously indicated the formal observations of the Highways Department are awaited and it is anticipated that these

will be reported to Committee via the Amendment Sheet.

Policy SP14 acknowledges that the provision of planning obligations can affect the viability of residential development and, therefore, the aforementioned requirement can be subject to negotiation.

The application has been accompanied by a Flood Consequences Assessment(FCA) given that the River Ewenny abuts the southern boundary and the Nant Pont Y Sanau runs along the western site boundary. The assessment confirms that the site is predominantly outside the area which is susceptible to flooding with the layout designed so that any highly vulnerable development will not be located within the identified C2 Flood Zones of the above mentioned watercourses. Natural Resources Wales has confirmed that it agrees with the conclusions of the FCA that the site is not at risk of flooding from fluvial sources.

In respect of ecological and environmental issues, a detailed Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Bat Emergency Check were submitted with the application. The Survey confirms that no evidence of protected species was recorded on the site. Given the site is already largely hard surfaced, there will be no significant loss of natural habitats and the indicative layout shows the retention of the trees and hedgerows currently existing along the application site boundaries. In this regard the development proposals are considered to be compatible with Policy ENV6 of the LDP which requires the retention, conservation or enhancement of existing natural features.

Policy ENV7 of the LDP states that development proposals will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that they would not cause or exacerbate an existing unacceptable risk of harm to health, biodiversity and/or local amenity due to air pollution, noise pollution, contamination and water pollution. In this regard the submission has also been accompanied by a Geo-environmental Site Assessment to identify possible land contamination hazards and geotechnical hazards. The report considered the previous history of the site and noted that the former Royal Ordnance Factory occupied the land immediately to the north of the site and includes an area south of the A473 potentially used as a "Burning Ground" for the destruction of any rejected munitions. The report concludes that there is a low/medium risk from unexploded ordnance on the site and Natural Resources Wales considers that the biggest risk from a pollution viewpoint would occur during the construction phase. A number of conditions requiring a pollution prevention method statement and further contamination investigation studies have been recommended to ensure that these issues are adequately addressed. Similarly, a condition requiring a comprehensive and integrated drainage system for the development can be imposed to ensure that effective facilities are provided to serve the development, that flood risk is not increased and in the interests of pollution prevention.

With regard to noise pollution, as indicated in the observations received from the Public Protection Department, notwithstanding that an environmental noise assessment has been provided, there remains concern about the impact of noise emanating from the adjoining South Wales Police Ground, which have not been adequately assessed. It has been acknowledged that, as the application is in outline, conditions requiring further noise surveys to assess the noise generated by the Police Dog Kennels and any external tactical training exercises and the impact on any residential development to be located in the vicinity of these noise sources can be imposed.

During the processing of the application Policies PLA3(4), COM1(3), COM4, COM5, COM9, REG1, REG5, SP2, ENV6, ENV7, PLA7, PLA8 and PLA11 of the Bridgend Local Development Plan were considered.

## **CONCLUSION**

The application is recommended for approval as the development is considered to comply with National and Council policies and guidelines and will not adversely impact on privacy, visual

amenities nor on highway safety along the A473. The development proposal represents an opportunity to rationalise access points from the southern west bound carriageway of the A473 and contribute new dwellings including an element of affordable housing in accord with the allocation Policy PLA3(4) of the Bridgend Local Development Plan.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

(A) The applicant enter into a Section 106 Agreement to

\* Provide 20% of the units as affordable housing units in accordance with SPG13. The Section 106 Agreement will provide for these units to be transferred to a Registered Social Landlord, with the type of units, location within the site, affordable tenure, transfer price and timescale for delivery to be agreed by the Council.

\* Provide a financial contribution in accordance with the formula and cost guidance in SPG16 towards the provision of additional nursery and primary school places in the schools serving the Parc Afon Ewenni regeneration site.

\* Provide outdoor recreation space in accordance with Policy COM11 of the LDP with arrangements for future management and maintenance to be agreed in writing by the Council

\* Timing of the payment of the financial contributions is subject to negotiation and will be included in the Section 106 Agreement with phased payments likely to be agreeable.

(B) The Corporate Director Communities be given plenary powers to issue an outline decision notice granting consent in respect of this proposal once the applicant has entered into the aforementioned Section 106 Agreement, as follows:-

- 1 The consent, hereby granted, relates to the development of the land outlined in red on the 1:2500 scale Location Plan (Drawing No SK(00)01) for up to a maximum of 240 residential units, 1,123 sq.m. of A1/A2/A3/D1/D2 development, public open space and highway infrastructure.

Reason : For the avoidance of doubt and confusion as to the nature and extent of the approved development.

- 2 Before any detailed or reserved matters applications are submitted a comprehensive Development Brief and Phasing Plan covering the entire development site shall be submitted to an agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Brief and Phasing Plan shall provide a robust framework and establish over-arching principles and parameters, design principles and materials palette, landscaping and programming or phasing of works including the provision of the commercial hub and access thereto. The development within the site shall thereafter conform to the agreed Development Brief and Phasing Plan.

Reason : To ensure that the development is undertaken in an orderly and co-ordinated manner in the interests of visual and residential amenity and highway safety.

- 3 Prior to the submission of any reserved matters or full applications, a further noise survey, the scope and methodology of which shall be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority prior to the survey being undertaken. Thereafter a report which shall include an assessment of the noise generated from the South Wales Police Dog Kennels and external tactical training exercises involving the use of firearms, and the impact that these

could have on the proposed residential developments. The report shall also include a mitigation scheme to demonstrate that noise will achieve an appropriate level, to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority. The mitigation scheme shall thereafter be implemented in full prior to the occupation of any dwellings, which have been indicated in the report as being adversely affected by these noise sources.

Reason : To safeguard the residential amenities of future occupiers on the site.

- 4 Not more than 1 unit or any equivalent floor area up to 300 sq.m shall be used for purposes under Class A3 (Food and Drink) as defined in the schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order. In addition not more than 1 unit or any equivalent floor area up to 300 sq.m shall be used for purposes under Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services) as defined in the schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order.

Reason : For the avoidance of doubt as to the extent of the approved uses within the commercial hub and to ensure that a balance of uses are provided in the interests of the future vitality and viability of the hub.

- 5 No development shall commence on site until a scheme for the comprehensive and integrated drainage of the site showing how foul drainage, highway, surface water, including the means to prevent run off from driveways and parking bays discharging onto the highway, roof and yard water will be dealt with, has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter proceed in accordance with the agreed scheme prior to the development being brought into beneficial occupation.

Reason : To ensure safe drainage of the site

- 6 A buffer strip a minimum of 7 metres wide, measured from the top of the bank, should be left free from development (including residential gardens) along the bank of the watercourses (River Ewenny and the Nant Pontysanau) and be so retained in perpetuity.

Reason : For the protection of the riparian corridor and the wildlife that uses it for foraging, shelter and movement.

- 7 No development shall commence on site until a Method Statement detailing all necessary pollution prevention measures for the demolition and construction phases of the development has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Method Statement should identify the following as a minimum:-

- \* Storage facilities for all fuels, oils and chemicals;
- \* Details on any water features on the site and how they will be protected;
- \* Full details of how any watercourse will be crossed or confirmation that this is not applicable;
- \* Any sources of pollution (including silt), potential pathways for that pollution to enter any watercourses within the vicinity of the site and appropriate pollution control measures to be implemented on the site;
- \* Details of the nature, type and quantity of materials to be imported onto the site;
- \* Measures for dealing with any contaminated material (demolition waste or excavated waste);
- \* Details on waste types that will be produced and how they will be managed;

- \* Details of any invasive species that may be present on the site and how they will be managed;
- \* Identification of any buried services, such as foul sewers, so that they are protected;
- \* Details of emergency contacts and procedures.

The development shall thereafter be undertaken in accordance with the agreed Method Statement which shall if necessary be efficiently communicated to all contractors and sub-contractors with any deficiencies rectified immediately.

Reason : In the interests of preventing pollution.

- 8** No development shall commence on site until details of a scheme to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site has been submitted and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall, as a minimum, comprise the following:-
- \* A preliminary risk assessment which has identified all previous use, potential contaminants associated with those uses, a conceptual model of the site indicating sources, pathways and receptors, potentially unacceptable risks from contamination at the site;
  - \* A site investigation scheme based on the above risk assessment to provide information for a detailed assessment of the risk to all receptors that may be affected including those off site;
  - \* The site investigation results and the detailed risk assessment and based on these, an options appraisal and remediation strategy giving full details of the remediation measures required and how they are to be undertaken;
  - \* A verification plan providing details of the data that will be collected in order to demonstrate that the works set out in the remediation strategy are complete and identifying any longer term monitoring of pollutant linkages, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action.

Any changes to these components will require the express consent of the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be undertaken in accordance with the agreed scheme.

Reason : For the protection of the controlled waters at the site, which are of high environmental sensitivity being on Secondary A Aquifer and to prevent contamination.

- 9** Prior to occupation of any part of the permitted development, a verification report demonstrating completion of the works set out in the agreed remediation strategy and the effectiveness of the remediation shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The report shall include results of sampling and monitoring carried out in accordance with the approved verification plan to demonstrate that the site remediation criteria have been met. It shall also include any plan (a long term monitoring and maintenance plan) for longer term monitoring of pollutant linkages, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action, as identified in the verification plan and for the reporting of this to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason : To demonstrate that the remediation criteria relating to controlled waters have been met and to secure long term monitoring of groundwater quality thereby ensuring that there are no remaining unacceptable risk to controlled waters following remediation of the site.

- 10** If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site, then no further development shall be carried out until the developer has submitted to and obtained the written consent of the Local Planning Authority for an amendment to the

agreed remediation strategy detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with. Thereafter such previously unidentified contamination shall be remediated in accordance with the agreed amendment prior to the development being brought into beneficial use.

Reason : Given the extent and complexity of the site, there is the potential for previously unidentified areas of contamination that could pose a risk to controlled waters unless appropriately remediated.

- 11** No infiltration system for the disposal of surface water drainage into the ground is permitted until details have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such permission will only be given for those parts of the site where it has been demonstrated that there is no resultant risk to controlled waters. The scheme shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the agreed scheme.

Reason : To prevent pollution from inappropriately located infiltration systems.

- 12** Piling or any other foundation designs using penetrative methods shall not be permitted other than with the written consent of the Local Planning Authority, which may be given for those parts of the site where it has been demonstrated that there is no resultant unacceptable risk to groundwater.

Reason : To safeguard against the pollution of controlled waters from in appropriate methods of piling.

- 13** There shall be a minimum distance of 12m between front habitable room windows of different dwellings directly facing each other with the development site and a minimum distance of 21m between any other habitable room windows of different dwellings directly facing each other.

Reason : In the interests of privacy.

- 14** The plans and particulars submitted in accordance with the reserved matter in respect of landscaping above shall include:-

(a) a plan showing the location of, and allocating a reference number to, each existing tree on the site which has a stem with a diameter, measured over the bark at a point 1.5 metres above ground level, exceeding 75mm, showing which trees are to be retained and crown spread of each retained tree;

(b) details of the species, diameter (measured in accordance with paragraph (a) above), and the approximate height, and an assessment of the general state of health and stability, of each retained tree and of each tree which is on land adjacent to the site and to which paragraphs(c) and (d) below apply;

(c) details of any proposed topping or lopping of any retained tree, or of any tree on land adjacent to the site;

(d) details of any proposed alterations in existing ground levels, and of the position of any proposed excavation, within the crown spread of any retained tree or of any tree on land adjacent to the site.

(e) details of the specification and position of fencing and of any other measures to be

taken for the protection of any retained tree from damage before or during the course of development.

In this condition "retained tree" means an existing tree which is to be retained in accordance with the plan referred to in paragraph (a) above.

Reason : To maintain and improve the appearance of the area in the interests of visual amenity, and to promote nature conservation.

- 15** No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected and a timetable for its implementation. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed plan and timetable.

Reason : To ensure that the general amenities of the area are protected.

**\* THE FOLLOWING ARE ADVISORY NOTES NOT CONDITIONS**

(a) The application is recommended for approval as the development is considered to comply with National and Council policies and guidelines and will not adversely impact on privacy, visual amenities nor on highway safety along the A473. The development proposal represents an opportunity to rationalise access points from the southern west bound carriageway of the A473 and contribute new dwellings including an element of affordable housing in accord with the allocation Policy PLA3(4) of the Bridgend Local Development Plan.

(b) The developer is reminded that this consent relates to the redevelopment of the site in the proposed manner only and any demolition works, required to facilitate future development, shall be the subject of separate demolition prior notification submissions, which should include a full demolition method statement.

(c) Foul and surface water shall be drained separately.

(d) No surface water will be allowed to discharge to the public highway or the public sewerage system.

(e) No land drainage run off will be permitted to discharge either directly or indirectly into the public sewerage system.

(f) The proposed development site is crossed by a 1575mm combined public sewer with the approximate position being marked on the attached observations received from Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water. Under the Water Industry Act, Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water has rights of access to its apparatus at all times. No part of any building will be permitted within 8 metres either side of the centre line of the public sewer

(g) In order to satisfy the drainage conditions, the following information will be required :-

- \* Agreement of surface water discharge rate to existing watercourses including main river;
- \* Submission and agreement of hydraulic design, including an in principle agreement from Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water with regard to adoption;
- \* Submission and agreement of details with regard to the management of any existing land drainage;
- \* Submission and agreement of management and maintenance regime for any private elements of the attenuation system;
- \* Obtaining appropriate consents in relation to any works affecting adjacent watercourses including the main river.

(h) The observations received from Crime Prevention Design Advisor are attached for the developer's information and consideration.

**MARK SHEPHARD**  
**CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES**

**Background Papers**

None

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**APPLICATION NO:** P/15/429/FUL

**APPLICANT NAME & ADDRESS:**

POWELL DOBSON ARCHITECTS, CHARTERHOUSE, LINKS BUS. PARK, ST MELLONS, CARDIFF, CF3 0TL

**LOCATION:** COMMUNAL AREA ADJACENT TO 35 PWLL-Y-WAUN, PORTHCAWL

**DEVELOPMENT:** REMOVE EXISTING GRASS COMMUNAL AREA PROVIDE 4NO VISITORS OFF STREET PARKING SPACES & ASSOCIATED WORKS

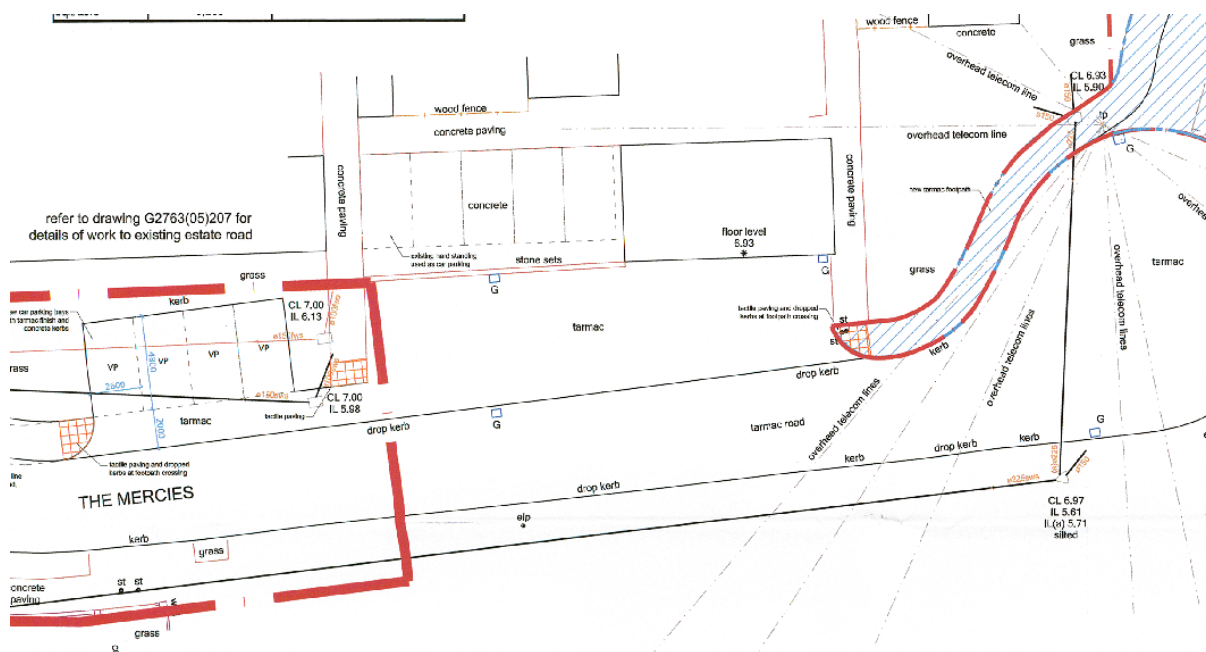
**APPLICATION/SITE DESCRIPTION**

The application seeks planning permission to change the use of this grassed area to off street parking for 4 parking spaces. The site is shown below.



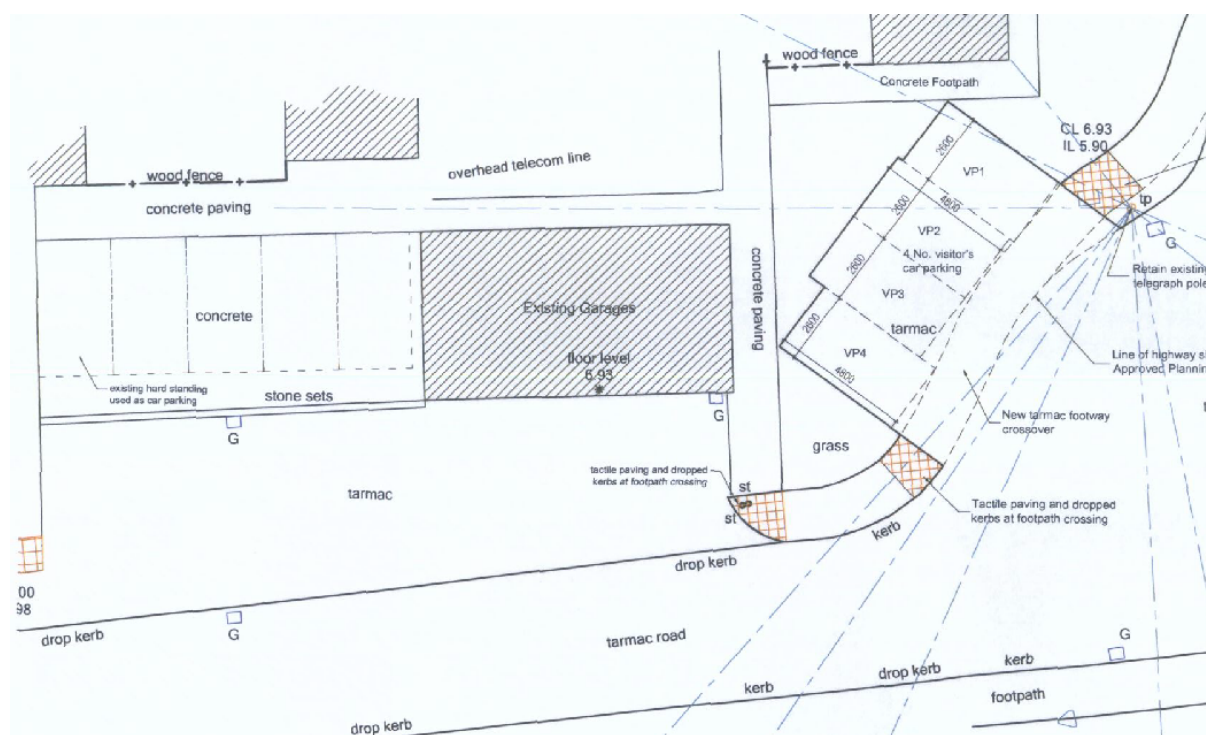
The application is an amendment to planning permission approved in 2013 for 10 dwellings at The Mercies, Porthcawl. The original application included 4 additional parking spaces on a grassed area to the front of 29 Pwll Y Waun as seen on the plan below.

### Existing Plan



Following concerns from local residents in relation to the location of the parking spaces the applicant has applied to relocate those parking spaces to an area to the west of the existing garages and communal parking area, shown on the proposed plan below.

## Proposed Plan



The proposed parking spaces will be accessed via the existing turning head at The Mercies. Each parking space will measure 4.8m x 2.6m.

## **RELEVANT HISTORY**

P/07/797/OUT - Residential development of 10 dwellings - Approved with conditions on 15 November 2007.

P/11/938/FUL - 10 Dwellings with off street parking - Approved with conditions 20 September 2013.

## **SITE INSPECTED**

The site was inspected on the 27<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

## **NEGOTIATIONS**

The applicant was requested to amend the plans in order to ensure that the development was acceptable in terms of highway safety. Amended plans were received on 23 October 2015.

## **PUBLICITY**

The period allowed for response to consultations and publicity expired on 6 August 2015.

## **CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

Councillor Brian Jones objects to the proposal for the following reasons:-

- Loss of residential amenities due to noise and air pollution to children and homes during day and night
- Pedestrian and highway safety
- Position closer to new builds at end of Mercies on the turning circle is a better position.

Porthcawl Town Council object to the proposal for the following reasons:-

- Highway and safety issues from parking so close to houses day and night
- Loss of residential amenities due to noise and air pollution.

The Transportation Development Control Officer has no objection to the proposal subject to a condition.

## **REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED**

Objections were received from the following:-

S Emberlin - 22 The Mercies, Porthcawl

J Roberston - 33 Pwll y Waun (requested to speak at the Development Control Committee meeting)

The objections are summarised as follows:-

- No requirement for additional parking
- Further parking will increase risk of accidents

- Additional parking will spoil the appearance of the area
- Loss of grassed area which is used by local children

## **COMMENTS ON REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED**

The proposed development has been assessed by the Transportation Development Control Officer and the development is considered to be acceptable in terms of highway and pedestrian safety.

The parking spaces were a requirement of the original planning permission for the 10 dwellings at the end of the Mercies ([P/11/938/FUL](#) refers).

The application is for the relocation of the parking spaces approved under [P/11/938/FUL](#) and, as such, there will not be a net increase in the number of parking spaces. Consequently, there will not be an increase in noise or air pollution.

The proposed amended spaces are located closer to the development site, towards the turning circle at The Mercies.

The loss of a grassed area is addressed in the 'Appraisal' section of this report.

## **APPRAISAL**

The application is referred to the Development Control Committee for determination at the request of the local member and in view of the objection received from Porthcawl Town Council.

The application seeks planning permission to change the use of this grassed area to an off street parking area for 4 vehicles.

Planning permission was originally approved for 10 dwellings to the east of The Mercies and included an area of off street parking ([P/11/938/FUL](#) refers), for 4 vehicles, on a grassed area to the south of 29 Pwll y Waun. Following the approval of planning permission the applicant received complaints in respect of the potential for disturbance caused by the parking spaces to the occupiers of No.29 Pwll Y Waun. Vehicles using the spaces would directly face the ground floor habitable room windows at No. 29 a distance of approximately 2.3m causing light and noise disturbance. It is noted that the only habitable room windows at ground floor level serving No. 29 Pwll y Waun are on the southern elevation, which front the original parking area.

The application proposes to relocate those 4 parking spaces to the east of an existing garage block and to the south of the side elevation of 35 Pwll y Waun, which is closer to the development of 10 dwellings approved under [P/11/938/FUL](#). The car parking spaces will not cause any adverse disturbance to neighbouring properties as the spaces will front the garages and communal parking area. There is an existing footpath which separates the parking spaces from the side elevation of 35 Pwll y Waun.

Furthermore, 34 & 35 Pwll y Waun, are 12m from the site and have boundary fences which will screen the parking spaces from these properties.

With regard to the loss of a grassed area, the application is to relocate previously approved parking spaces from an existing grassed area to an alternative grassed area. The parking area identified under planning permission [P/11/938/FUL](#) will now remain as a grassed area and, as such, the development will not result in any additional loss of grassed space in the area. Furthermore, the site area is adjacent to a highway and is not the most versatile or useable open space. Furthermore, there is a large area of useable open space to the east of the site.

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of highway, pedestrian safety and parking provision.

Whilst determining this application [Policy SP2](#) of the Bridgend Local Development Plan was considered.

## **CONCLUSION**

Notwithstanding the objections received the application is recommended for approval because the development complies with Council policy and Council's guidelines and does not adversely affect privacy or visual amenities nor so significantly harms neighbours' amenities or highway safety as to warrant refusal.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**R02:** That permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

1. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:  
G2898 (05) 102 Rev B (received on 23 October 2015)

Reason: To avoid doubt and confusion as to the nature and extent of the approved development.

2. The parking area shall be laid out as shown on plan G2898(05)102 B (received 23 October 2013) and be completed in permanent materials with the individual spaces clearly demarcated in permanent materials prior to the development being brought into beneficial use and retained as such thereafter in perpetuity.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

\* THE FOLLOWING ARE ADVISORY NOTES NOT CONDITIONS

a) Notwithstanding the objections received this application is recommended for approval because the development complies with Council policy and Council's

guidelines and does not adversely affect privacy or visual amenities nor so significantly harms neighbours' amenities as to warrant refusal.

b) Before creating, altering or reinstating any vehicular crossover, constructional details must be agreed with the Highway Maintenance Manager. You should contact the highway maintenance inspector for the area, Bridgend County Borough Council, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend. Telephone No. (01656) 642541.

**MARK SHEPHARD**  
**CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES**

**Background papers**

None

## RECOMMENDATION : GRANT WITH CONDITIONS

**REFERENCE:** P/15/214/FUL  
**APPLICANT:** RIGHT TO BUY HOMES LTD  
3RD FLOOR LAWFORD HOUSE ALBERT PLACE LONDON  
**LOCATION:** HARDEN HOUSE 115 OXFORD STREET PONTYCYMER  
**PROPOSAL:** CONVERT OFFICES TO 6NO. 3-STOREY DWELLINGS  
**RECEIVED:** 31st March 2015  
**SITE INSPECTED:** 15th April 2015

## APPLICATION/SITE DESCRIPTION

This application was initially reported to Committee on 15th October, 2015. Following receipt of a request from the applicant, consideration of the application was deferred to allow for further consideration of the viability of the site and the ability to meet the recommended Section 106 Obligation.

Reproduced below is the original report to Committee together with an amended Appraisal Section to include an assessment of the additional information submitted by the applicant.

The application proposes the conversion of an existing vacant office building into six three bedroom dwellings. The most southerly of the units will comprise a living room, utility and shower room, at lower ground floor level; a hallway, kitchen and dining area at ground floor level and three bedrooms and a bathroom at first floor level. The remaining four units will have a bedroom, utility and shower room on the lower ground floor; a hallway, dining room, sitting room and kitchen on the ground floor with two bedrooms and a bathroom provided on the first floor.

External changes involve the removal of the existing central entrance way and its replacement with two domestic doors and windows. An existing gable feature towards the northern end of the building is to be removed and replaced with domestic scale windows to match the existing. The windows and decorative balustrading on two other existing gables are also to be removed and replaced with domestic scale windows. New doors are proposed to replace existing entrances but the existing large display type windows along the frontage (east elevation) are to be retained. At the rear, the existing three gables along with their large windows are to be removed along with three entrance porches. New patio door type openings are to be installed in each of the lower ground floor levels of the proposed dwellings with new windows of a design to match the remainder of the building will replace the glazed areas in the former gables. Where gables are to be removed, the roof will be made good in materials to match the existing building. One window serving the ground floor dining area of the most southerly of the proposed dwellings is to be installed in the southern elevation of the building facing the adjoining open space and seating area.

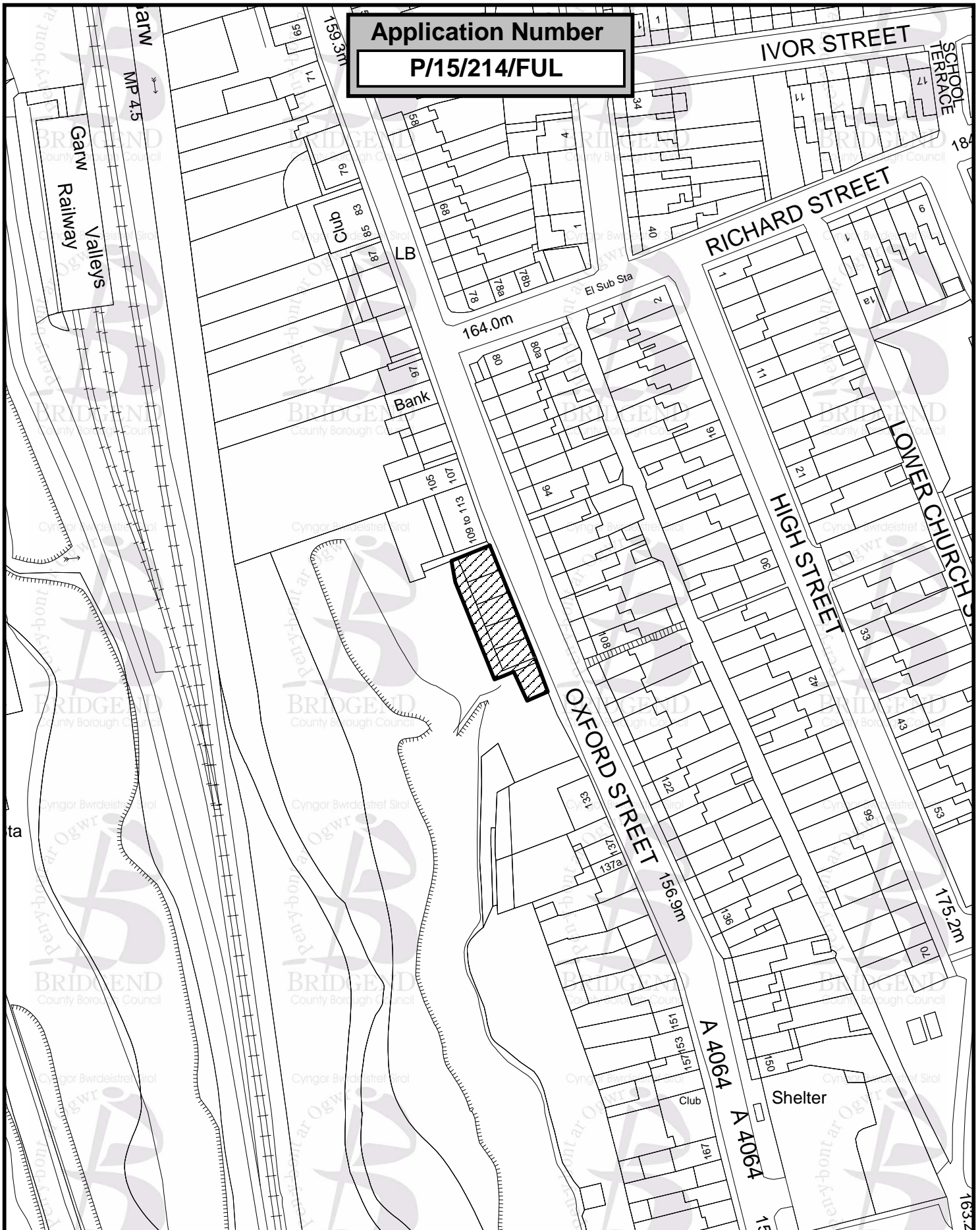
A platform or decked area will be created projecting 7m from the rear wall of the properties to provide a rear private amenity area for each of the proposed new dwellings. A 1.1m boundary wall will enclose the western end of the patio/terraced areas with suspended fire escapes provided leading to the land at the rear.

A Design and Access Statement has been submitted in support of the application.

## RELEVANT HISTORY

Application Number

P/15/214/FUL



Page 38

Scale 1:1,250

Date Issued:  
18/11/2015

Development-Mapping  
Tel: 01656 643176

Mark Shephard

Corporate Director-Communities

Communities Directorate,  
Bridgend County Borough  
Council, Civic Offices,  
Angel Street,  
Bridgend CF31 4WB.

O/Drive/Plandraw/new MI layouts/  
Committee DC Plan

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**PUBLICITY**

The application has been advertised on site.

Neighbours have been notified of the receipt of the application.

The period allowed for response to consultations/publicity expired on 6th May, 2015.

**NEGOTIATIONS**

The applicant's agent was advised of the affordable housing obligation but also concerns were expressed regarding the level of private amenity space provision given the scale of the development. It was highlighted that the development proposes the provision of 6 three bedroom properties that would be provided with extremely limited private amenity space at the rear. Given that three bedroom properties are likely to be occupied by families with children, it was considered that the amenity space provision was inadequate, particularly given there are no public recreational facilities in the vicinity to the application site.

It was suggested that consideration be given to reconfiguring the floor plans so that the basement area is used as a kitchen/utility area, the ground floor for living accommodation with two bedrooms and bathroom at first floor level above. Alternatively, the developer would need to investigate a means of providing additional private amenity space given that the land at the rear slopes steeply and is currently covered by trees.

Following discussion with the applicant's agent, revised plans were received on 18th September, 2015 which include the provision of a decked area/patio projecting 7m from the rear wall of the building to provide a flat, usable private amenity space for each of the proposed dwellings. At the time of report preparation, the applicant indicated that the S106 financial obligation would make the proposed development unviable and it was suggested discussions would be conducted with the S106 Officer. A viability report has now been submitted and assessed by the Section 106 Officer and the conclusions are included within the appraisal section of this report.

**CONSULTATION RESPONSES****Town/Community Council Observations**

The Community Council objects to this application on highway issues. There are only 2 car parking spaces available for six houses. It is highly likely that residents of six dwellings will have on average two cars per dwelling with no places to park. There is no on-street parking available at this site which is already a bottleneck for traffic.

The Members are concerned that there will be an increase in illegally/dangerously parked cars in the area which they are keen to avoid. This would have a knock-on effect for the highway safety of all vehicle users in the Garw Valley that pass through Oxford Street in Pontycymmer. The street is already congested, especially if lorries or buses are trying to pass.

In conclusion, unless a parking scheme can be provided for the conversion of these offices to dwellings, the Community Council is urging BCBC to turn down this application on highway safety issues.

### **Head Of Street Scene (Highways)**

No objection

### **Head Of Street Scene (Drainage)**

No objection subject to condition.

### **Welsh Water Developer Services**

In the event that the Authority is minded to approved the proposed development, it is requested that advisory notes are included within any decision notice in order to ensure no detriment to existing residents, the environment nor Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water assets.

## **REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED**

### **Seven Letters Of Objection Have Been Received From, Local Residents. The Reasons Are Summarised Below:-**

1. Car parking - all of the objectors highlight existing problems with residents living opposite the application site experiencing difficulties due to the highway partially fronting the application site but mainly in front of the adjoining supermarket being designated as a loading bay with no parking between 10am and 5pm.
2. Existing on street parking causes congestion with traffic flows frequently reduce to a single carriageway.
3. Whilst there is car parking to the south of the application site, this is usually full and due to the distance not convenient for future occupiers.
4. Noise and disturbance - the area is already loud due to irresponsible landlords and their tenants are believed to contribute to rising crime rates in the area. More rental properties are not what the area needs.
5. Loss of privacy - residents of the properties on the opposite side of Oxford Street are concerned about overlooking between the proposed new dwellings and their homes.

## **COMMENTS ON REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED**

The following observations are provided in response to the objections received from local residents:-

**Car Parking** - It is noted that the majority of the properties in the area do not benefit from in curtilage / off street parking and consequently park on the street. In addition whilst the building is currently vacant, it could be returned to its former office use without the need for planning permission with office staff and calling customers visiting the site and parking on the street fronting the premises. The subdivision of this building into six individual units, each with a display window at ground floor does not require planning permission and once divided, each unit could technically be converted to a shop with a flat above, resulting in 6 shops and 6 flats, without requiring formal consent by exercising permitted development rights under the provisions of Class F, Part 3, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order, 1995. It is considered that the proposed scheme will not exacerbate existing parking problems to such a degree as to warrant refusal given the potential fall back uses and their associated parking requirements. It is also highlighted that the site lies in a relatively sustainable location in close proximity to local shops and bus services pass the frontage of the building.

**Traffic Congestion** - As with the concerns expressed in relation to parking, it is considered that this is an existing problem which the proposed development will not so significantly exacerbate as to warrant refusal of the application.

**Noise and disturbance** - The proposed development relates to the conversion of the building into 6 three bedroom properties likely to be occupied by families. It is considered that the level

provided will not exacerbate any pre-existing conditions. Tenure in this case is not material to the determination of this application.

Loss of Privacy - Whilst relating to domestic extensions, Supplementary Planning Guidance 2 Householder Development provides guidelines for the assessment of overlooking. It explains that the Council has adopted the standard of 21m between directly facing habitable room windows but clarifies that reductions may in certain circumstances be acceptable. One of the identified exceptions relates to where overlooking is between windows fronting onto a highway where the established building lines are less than 21m apart. In this case the objectors' properties are located on the opposite side of Oxford Street and are elevated above the street level. There is an approximate distance of 16m between the established building lines and the proposed development does not propose to alter this existing arrangement. It is therefore considered that there will not be a significant impact on the privacy of these neighbours created by the proposed development.

## **APPRAISAL**

The application is referred to Committee to consider the objection raised by the Community Council and also those expressed by local residents.

The application site lies on the western side of Oxford Street, Pontcymmer and abuts an open area on which two public bench seats are currently positioned. It was noted that the land in this area slopes steeply from east to west and this results in the properties on the opposite side of the street being significantly elevated above the highway. The properties on the western side of Oxford Street tend to be split level with two storeys at the front and three storeys at the rear. A parking area capable of accommodating two spaces lies immediately to the south of the building and is included within the application site boundary. The land to the rear of the building drops away steeply from the building such that, currently, only a modest strip of level ground is available to provide pedestrian access to the rear of the premises.

The proposal is located within the settlement boundary of Pontcymmer as defined by Policy PLA1 of the Bridgend Local Development Plan. The building is also located within the established commercial centre of Pontcymmer but is outside the primary shopping frontage. Policy REG7 of the LDP states that changes of use to non A1, A2 and A3 premises on the ground floor in a commercial centre will only be permitted for residential purposes if it has been vacant for at least two years, has been actively marketed over that time and it does not form part of a purpose built retail environment or continuous frontage of three or more existing commercial units. It is acknowledged that the applicant has made a concerted effort to market the premises and that the site is located on the periphery of the commercial centre. Although the unit was purpose built and lies adjacent to an active retail unit, should the building remain vacant for a longer period, the potential for break ins and anti-social behaviour may increase to the detriment of the appearance of the building and the area generally. On the basis that the conversion of existing buildings to residential is permitted within settlement boundaries, there is no objection in principle to the proposed change of use in accord with Policy REG7.

As a proposal for 6 dwellings, the application triggers Policy COM5, which requires 15% affordable housing in the Ogmore, Garw and Upper Llynfi Valley Housing Market Area. As such 1 of the units should be provided as affordable housing with an appropriate tenure agreed between the applicant and the Housing Strategy Department. Alternatively, a contribution towards the provision of affordable housing in lieu of on-site provision may be acceptable. Policy COM5 acknowledges that the provision of affordable housing can affect the viability of residential development and, therefore, the aforementioned requirements may be subject to negotiation with the applicant.

Additional information has been submitted by the applicant's agent relating to the financial viability of the proposed development. This has been assessed with justification sought from the agent

for the various costs provided. The submitted build costs have been sourced from a bill of quantities prepared by a reputable structural consultant and comparable house prices provided by a locally based estate agent. Whilst the build costs are low in comparison with those used in the Three Dragons Development Appraisal Toolkit, it reflects the unique nature of the proposal which is a conversion of an existing building rather than a new build. It is therefore considered reasonable to accept the figures provided. Likewise the house prices also appear low in comparison to existing data but there are few similar local schemes to draw direct comparison with.

The submitted information demonstrates that, even if the profit from the scheme is reduced to a bare minimum, a significant increase in the house prices will need to be achieved in order for the developer to cover the cost of acquiring the site and contribute a sum to affordable housing. A level of profit equal to 17-20% has been established as an industry wide acceptable standard in numerous planning appeal decisions. Given this, there is not sufficient local evidence to demonstrate that the required increase in house prices to make the scheme sufficiently viable would be forthcoming.

In light of the foregoing, together with the pre-application advice previously provided, it is considered that the information submitted by the agent sufficiently demonstrates that a contribution to affordable housing is not viable. Given the lack of new build residential development in this location and the Garw Valley in general, it is considered that the benefits of the proposal are such that the application can be recommended for approval without a requirement for the affordable housing obligation.

The application also triggers the threshold of 5 dwellings as identified in the LDP and adopted SPG - Educational Facilities. However sufficient capacity exists within local schools to accommodate the proposal and, therefore, no contribution is sought from the developer in this case. The site is located close to existing outdoor amenity areas and as the proposal relates to a conversion of an existing building, therefore, there is no requirement for any open space provision.

In terms of design and detail, the proposed development is assessed for compatibility with Policy SP2. This Policy requires all development to contribute to creating high quality, sustainable places which enhance the community in which they are located and establishes fifteen criteria, which development proposals should meet. In this case it is considered that criteria 1,2,3,4,6,7,12 & 13 are relevant to this application. Notwithstanding the objections raised by the Community Council and local residents, it is considered that the proposed conversion of the existing vacant building to residential purposes is compatible with these criteria or can be made compliant through the imposition of appropriately worded conditions.

During the processing of the submission Policies REG7, COM3, COM5 and SP2 of the Bridgend Local Development Plan were considered.

## **CONCLUSION**

Notwithstanding the objections received the application is recommended for approval because the proposed development complies with national and council policies and guidelines as it will not have a significant adverse impact on the visual amenities of the area or the residential amenities of neighbouring properties nor so significantly exacerbate existing highway conditions as to warrant refusal. It is also considered that the application will result in the re-use of a substantial vacant building to an acceptable use, which has the benefit of partially satisfying the demand for new homes within the Valley.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

(R02) That permission be GRANTED subject to the following condition(s):-

- 1 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the amended floor plans, elevational plans and sectional plans received on 18th September, 2015.

Reason: To avoid doubt and confusion as to the nature and extent of the approved development.

- 2 The materials to be used in the construction of the refurbishments and amendments to the building shall match those used in the existing building.

Reason : To secure the maximum degree of unity between existing and proposed development so as to enhance and protect the visual amenity of the area.

- 3 No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme indicating the design, materials and type of boundary treatment to divide the rear platform/decked area between each of the six properties. The agreed means of boundary enclosure shall be erected prior to any part of the development being brought into beneficial use and be retained thereafter in perpetuity.

Reason : To safeguard the residential amenities of future occupiers.

- 4 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2013 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no development which would be permitted under Article 3 and Classes A,B,C,D,E & G of Part 1 to Schedule 2 of the Order shall be carried out within the curtilage of the (any) dwelling without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason : In the interests of visual and residential amenities.

- 5 No development shall commence on site until a scheme for the comprehensive and integrated drainage of the site showing how roof, surface water and land drainage will be dealt with has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage system shall thereafter be provided in accordance with the agreed scheme prior to the development being brought into beneficial use.

Reason : To ensure that effective drainage scheme is provided to serve the development and that flood risk is not increased elsewhere.

**\* THE FOLLOWING ARE ADVISORY NOTES NOT CONDITIONS**

(a) Notwithstanding the objections received the application is recommended for approval because the proposed development complies with national and council policies and guidelines as it will not adversely impact on the visual amenities of the area or the residential amenities of neighbouring properties nor so significantly exacerbate existing highway conditions as to warrant refusal. It is also considered that the application proposes the return of this substantial vacant building into an acceptable use, which has the benefit of providing needed new homes within the Valley including a potential contribution to affordable housing.

(b) Attached are the observations received from Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water for the developer's information and consideration.

**MARK SHEPHARD**  
**CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES**

**Background Papers**  
None

**APPLICATION NO:** P/15/351/FUL

**APPLICANT NAME & ADDRESS:**

MR JOHN WILLIAMS  
1 PRESWYLFA COURT MERTHYR MAWR ROAD BRIGEND

**LOCATION:** GREYFRIARS BARN, CLEVIS HILL, PORTHCAWL

**DEVELOPMENT:** CONVERSION AND EXTENSION OF EXISTING BARN AND OUTBUILDINGS TO CREATE A DWELLING

**APPLICATION/SITE DESCRIPTION**

Planning permission was granted in 2013 to convert this barn to a 2-bedroom dwellinghouse (P/13/527/FUL refers). The converted barn would be limited to the ground floor, which included an extension on the western elevation.

This application seeks consent to further extend the barn, thereby creating floorspace at first floor level. This would involve utilising existing space in the northern most part of the barn but raising the roof the southern wing and extending its footprint, thereby creating a 3-bedroom dwellinghouse. The southern wing would have a footprint of 6.9m x 8m, retaining the eaves height of 2.6m but with a new ridge height of 5.9m.

The site is located within the built up settlement of Newton and the Newton Conservation Area. The surrounding area is primarily residential in nature. A Bat Survey has been submitted in support of the application.

Existing Plan



### Proposed Plans



## RELEVANT HISTORY

P/13/527/FUL - CONVERT BARN AND AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS INTO DWELLING &  
REAR SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION TO EXISTING DWELLING

[CONDITIONAL CONSENT - 18 NOVEMBER 2013]

## SITE INSPECTED

The site was inspected on 10 July 2015

## NEGOTIATIONS

Amended plans were requested to improve the design and appearance of the development and to have an accurate representation of the extent of the curtilage of the barn, particularly the western end of the site and the parking/amenity spaces.

## PUBLICITY

The period allowed for response to consultations/publicity expired on 21 July 2015.

## CONSULTATION RESPONSES

### Town/Community Council Observations

Notified on 26th June 2015

Objects to the proposal:

Highway/Pedestrian safety  
Lack of information submitted concerning bats

**Cllr Ken Watts**

Can be dealt with by delegated officer but I do have concerns as to what looks like a door or doors opening directly onto the highway. I believe this was a cause of concern for the previous application.

**Head of Street Scene (Highways)**

No objections to the proposal subject to a condition and an advisory note.

**Destination & Countryside Management**

No objections to the proposal subject to a condition.

**Welsh Water Developer Services**

No objections to the proposal subject to a condition.

**Head of Street Scene (Engineers)**

No objections to the proposal subject to a condition.

**Natural Resources Wales**

No objections to the proposal subject to a condition.

**Head of Street Scene (Drainage)**

No objections to the proposal subject to a condition.

**REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED**

Objections have been received from the following:

Porthcawl Town Council  
8, 21 and 23 Clevis Hill  
Cleviston Cottage (3 Heol-y-Graig)

Their objections have been summarised as follows:

1. Parking and highway/pedestrian safety
2. The southern elevation would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
3. Loss of privacy to 8 and 21 Clevis Hill and Cleviston Cottage
4. Inadequate information concerning bats
5. Disruption during construction work

**COMMENTS ON REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED**

In response to the objections received:

1. The barn already benefits from planning permission to be converted into a 2-bedroom residential dwelling ([P/13/527/FUL](#) refers). In considering the previous application, the Group Manager Transportation and Engineering (Highways) had no objections to the proposal subject to conditions and advisory notes. This included provision of replacement parking for 1 Heol-y-Graig and two off-street parking spaces for the converted barn. The spaces for 1 Heol-y-Graig have already been implemented.

Whilst this proposal would increase the amount of bedrooms within the barn from 2 to 3 and it is acknowledged that the area can become congested at school peak times, the scheme can secure two off-street parking spaces. This is considered proportionate to a dwelling of this scale, especially since the barn is also within a relatively sustainable location for public transport, being within 100m of a bus stop to the north (Bridgend Road) and 150m from a bus stop to the south (Church Street).

School peak times are only considered to be short periods of time within a weekday and do not reflect the circumstances of the site throughout the entire day, night nor at weekends. When the Case Officer visited the site it was possible to park safely in an on-street manner. As such, any shortfall in parking for calling visitors or delivery vehicles can generally be accommodated on-street.

The Group Manager Transportation and Engineering (Highways) has no objections to this latest scheme subject to a conditions and an advisory note. This includes ensuring that any gates or doors encroach onto the highway. A significant proportion of the parking area, especially nearest to the public highway, is already finished in permanent materials.

2. The barn has retained most of its original character, albeit the gable end of the southern wing has been domesticated by the inclusion of a garage door. This elevation, therefore, does not have the traditional character of a barn and does not significantly contribute to the character and appearance of Newton Conservation Area. There is scope for a more innovative approach to be taken to this elevation. The proposed development would achieve greater design interest, whilst making subtle references to the traditional character of the barn, such as mirroring the roof design of the eastern gable end of the northern wing and vertical-emphasis glazing. Conditions requiring the agreement of materials, door and windows would ensure that the development preserves the character and appearance of Newton Conservation Area.

3a. 8 Clevis Hill is located to the south-east of the application site and across the road of Clevis Hill. The eastern elevation of the proposed converted barn would include one large window positioned on the gable end of the northern wing of the barn serving a habitable room (bedroom). Five velux-type windows would be positioned on the eastern roof slope of the southern wing, two serving a bedroom and three serving a landing.

Given the angled orientation of No.8 with the barn, the first floor windows on the eastern elevation and the windows and Juliet-balcony on the southern elevation would not directly face this neighbouring property. As such, the proposal would not result in such unreasonable overlooking, so as to be detrimental to their residential amenity.

The first floor windows on the eastern elevation of the barn would face the garden of 8 Clevis Hill which is enclosed by stone walls. It is acknowledged that the garden of No.8 appears to be frequently used and this has been emphasised in letters of objection from the occupier of this neighbouring property.

The barn is sited at a distance of approximately 8-9m with this boundary. The velux-type windows, however, would be positioned further back in the roof slope and would only marginally be within the recommended distance of 10.5m, as specified by [Supplementary Planning Guidance 2: Householder Development \(SPG2\)](#). Such a marginal infringement to the guidelines is not deemed to be detrimental to the privacy of the occupiers of 8 Clevis Hill. This is further justified by established building lines on this road being less than 21m apart, mainly due to the absence of footways at either side of Clevis Hill. This has led to closer and more direct relationships being apparent between properties along this street, for example

between 17, 19 and 23 Clevis Hill and 6 Clevis Hill. This is considered compatible with the guidelines specified by Note 6 of SPG2.

The bedroom window would utilise an original opening within the barn and would directly face the bottom-end of the garden of 8 Clevis Hill. This particular area, inclusive of the gardens of 2 and 4 Clevis Lane, is overlooked at a similar distance by first floor windows on 1 and 3 Clevis Lane. Justified by existing casual or mutual overlooking between properties and established building lines on this road being less than 21m apart, the scheme is considered to reasonably comply with the requirements of Note 6 of SPG2.

Having regard to the above, it is considered that this scheme would not have such an adverse effect on the amenities of 8 Clevis Hill so as to warrant refusal, with particular regards to privacy, light, outlook and dominance.

3b. 21 Clevis Hill is located to the south-west of the application site. Whilst the southern elevation of the barn would include glazing and a Juliet balcony, this would be at a distance of approximately 21m from the nearest habitable room window of 21 Clevis Hill and over 10.5m to the boundary. This neighbouring property is also located diagonally and on the opposite side of the road of Greyfriars Court. The development, therefore, meets the privacy guidelines within SPG2.

3c. Cleviston Cottage (3 Heol-y-Graig) is located to the west of the application site. This is a large, two-storey property, separated from the application site by the bungalow at 1 Heol-y-Graig. The first floor windows on the western elevation of the proposed dwelling would be fitted with obscure glazing, thereby ensuring that the privacy of this neighbouring property is respected.

4. The application has been accompanied by a bat survey and the Council's Ecologist has no objections to the proposal subject to a condition for the recommendations within the submitted bat survey to be implemented as part of the development of the site.

5. Whilst it is acknowledged that there would be a degree of disruption during the construction and conversion process, this is likely to be short-term only and does not warrant the refusal of this scheme.

## **APPRAISAL**

The barn is situated within the settlement of Porthcawl and was primarily assessed against the Policies contained within the [Bridgend Local Development Plan \(BLDP\)](#) and [Supplementary Planning Guidance 2: Householder Development \(SPG2\)](#) and [Design Guide 4: Farm Building Conversions \(DG4\)](#).

The conversion of this building, in principle, has already been established by the granting of [P/13/527/FUL](#). This application does not seek to revisit that aspect of the scheme but focuses on the elements which differ, such as the proposed extensions and alterations to the barn.

The barn lies within the Newton Conservation Area and, as such, any adaptations should not detract from the character and appearance of the area.

The stone barn has some individual character and is sited on a prominent corner in the Conservation Area. The existing timber access doors within the gable reflect the original purpose for which the building was used. The barn has retained most of its original character,

albeit the gable end of the southern wing has been domesticated by the inclusion of a garage door.



The application has been accompanied by a structural survey and the Council's Structural Engineer has examined its contents. The building is considered structurally sound and capable of conversion.

[Design Guide 4 \(DG4\)](#) provides guidelines on the sensitive conversion of traditional farm buildings and is primarily focused on ensuring that such developments remain sympathetic to countryside settings. Despite the rural character of this building, it is within a highly urbanised context, being surrounded by dwellings of varying shapes, sizes and architectural design. This particular scheme, therefore, requires a more pragmatic interpretation of DG4.

In this respect, the amended scheme broadly meets the guidelines within DG4. Despite the increase in the height of the southern wing of the barn, it would remain marginally below the ridge height of the northern wing, thereby ensuring a degree of subordination between the two sections. The increase in the footprint of the southern wing of the barn and the inclusion of a dormer extension would affect secondary elevations and are largely hidden from main public views. The gable end of the southern wing has already been domesticated and this proposal would provide greater design interest. On those elevations which are publicly prominent, existing openings would be utilised, where possible, and any new openings would be sensitively incorporated, such as velux-type roof lights and vertical-emphasis sash-type windows.

In addition to DG4, the barn is situated in a prominent part of Newton Conservation Area. As such, the scheme is assessed against Policies SP5 (Conservation of the Built and Historic

Environment), ENV8 (Heritage and Regeneration) and SP2 (Design and Sustainable Place Making). In this respect, the Conservation and Design Team has no objections to the amended scheme subject to conditions relating to materials and the design of windows and doors. Having regard to the above, it is considered that the scheme would positively utilise a heritage asset and would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

All habitable rooms within the proposed converted barn would achieve a reasonable amount of amenity, in regard to light, outlook and privacy. Several windows and doors would be positioned up to the road frontage. There are no footways along Clevis Hill, however, any views from the road into the converted barn would be similar to views into terraced properties built up to footways, such as those in nearby Church Street.

The barn is adjacent to one immediate neighbour property, 1 Heol y Graig. Despite the close proximity of this property to the barn, the scheme would not involve any changes to the height of the northern wing of the barn, whilst the increase in height and massing of the southern wing would be adjacent to the blank side elevation of No.1. It is, however, considered necessary to impose a condition for the first floor bedroom window of the converted barn facing No.1 to be fitted with fixed pane obscure glazing and for the dormer window serving the bathroom on the same elevation to be fitted with obscure glazing. Subject to the above, it is considered that the proposed development would not have such an adverse effect on the amenities of this property as to warrant refusal, with particular regards to light, outlook, dominance and privacy.

The three other elevations of the barn front onto highways, namely Heol-y-Graig, Clevis Hill and Greyfriars Court. There are properties located on the other side of the roads, however, in general terms, there is already a degree of mutual or casual overlooking between properties, mainly due to the topography of the land and the ad-hoc nature of development in the vicinity, with older parts of Newton to the south and more recent developments to the north.

49 Clevis Crescent is located to the north of the application site and is positioned on the junction with Heol-y-Graig. This development would achieve the recommended distances indicated in Note 6 of [Supplementary Planning Guidance 2: Householder Development \(SPG2\)](#).

23 Clevis Hill is located to the south of the application site and is positioned on the junction with Greyfriars Court. This development would achieve the recommended distance of 10.5m to boundary but would marginally be within the 21m overall distance (approximately 19m). However, this development would be across an existing highway and the relationship would be similar to that between Nos. 21 and 23 and 1 and 3 Greyfriars Court. The scheme, therefore, accords with the guidelines within Note 6 of SPG2.

8 Clevis Hill is located to the south-east of the application site and across the road of Clevis Hill. It is considered that the scheme would not have such an adverse effect on their amenity so as to warrant refusal. The consideration of the potential impact of this development on the privacy of 8 Clevis Hill, Cleviston Cottage (3 Heol-y-Graig) and 21 Greyfriars Court can be found under the 'Comments on Representations Received' Section of the report.

49 Clevis Crescent is located to the north of the application site and is positioned on the junction with Heol-y-Graig. This development would achieve the recommended distances within Note 6 of [Supplementary Planning Guidance 2: Householder Development \(SPG2\)](#)

The converted barn would have 6m x 3m of amenity space. This is similar to that provided under the previously approved scheme, ([P/13/527/FUL](#) refers). It would also have access to public open space and a children's play area which are approximately 200m away to the

south of the site. Having regard to the above and that this proposal would seek to re-use an existing building, it is considered that there would be an adequate overall provision of amenity space to serve this property.

In terms of the potential impact of the development on parking and highway/pedestrian safety, it is considered that the scheme would not have such an adverse effect on parking provision or highway/pedestrian safety so as to warrant refusal.

The application has been accompanied by a bat survey and the Council's Ecologist has no objections to the proposal subject to a condition to ensure that the recommendations within the submitted bat survey are implemented as part of the development of the site. Natural Resources Wales has no objections to the proposal. Subject to the imposition of the above condition, it is considered that the scheme would not have any significant adverse effect on ecology and biodiversity.

The site is not within a flood risk area and both the Council's Drainage Team and Welsh Water have no objections to the proposal subject to advisory notes. It is, therefore, considered that this scheme would not have any adverse effect on drainage, nor materially increase the risk of flooding. The site is within an urban area and is within reasonable proximity to other utilities.

## **CONCLUSION**

This application is recommended for approval because the development complies with Council policy and guidelines. The scheme preserves the character and appearance of Newton Conservation Area and does not adversely affect privacy, highway/pedestrian safety, ecology/biodiversity, drainage or visual amenities, nor so significantly harms neighbours' amenities as to warrant refusal.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**R02:** That permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

1. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

Drawing No. 2 of 3 (Rev. B) - Proposed Ground Floor Plan (received 12 November 2015)

Drawing No. 3 of 3 (Rev. A) - Proposed First Floor Plan and Elevations (received 25 September 2015)

Block/Parking Plan (Rev. A) (received 16 November 2015)

Section 12 of 'Report on survey for Bat Roost sites' [Conducted by Spectrum - 2013] (received 23 June 2015)

Reason: To avoid doubt and confusion as to the nature and extent of the approved development and in the interests of ecology/biodiversity.

2. Notwithstanding the requirements of condition 1, no development shall take place until a detailed specification for, or samples of, the materials to be used in the construction

of the surfaces of the extension hereby permitted have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed materials of construction are appropriate for use on the development so as to enhance and protect the visual amenity of the area and the character and appearance of Newton Conservation Area.

3. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected and a timetable for its implementation. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed plan and timetable.

Reason: To ensure that the general amenities of the area are protected.

4. Notwithstanding the requirements of Condition 1, the window facing west and serving the bedroom at first floor level, as shown on "Drawing No. 3 of 3 (Rev. A) - Proposed First Floor Plan and Elevations" (received on 25 September 2015) shall be fitted with fixed pane obscure glazing to a minimum of level 4 on the Pilkington index of obscurity. The window shall be fitted prior to the beneficial residential occupation of development hereby approved and shall then be retained in perpetuity.

Reason: In the interests of privacy and residential amenities.

5. Notwithstanding the requirements of Condition 1, the window facing west and serving the bathroom at first floor level, as shown on "Drawing No. 3 of 3 (Rev. A) - Proposed First Floor Plan and Elevations" (received on 25 September 2015) shall be fitted with obscure glazing to a minimum of level 4 on the Pilkington index of obscurity. The window shall be fitted prior to the beneficial residential occupation of the development hereby approved and shall then be retained in perpetuity.

Reason: In the interests of privacy and residential amenities.

6. Notwithstanding the requirements of Condition 1, no development shall commence until there have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority full details of the style, design, materials, external colour and method of opening of all windows (including velux-type windows) and external door openings. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure that the converted barn retains an authentic character, in the interests of preserving the character and appearance of Newton Conservation Area.

7. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2013 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no development which would be permitted under Article 3 and Classes A, B, C, D, E of Part 1 and Classes A, B, E and F of Part 40 to Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 shall be carried out within the curtilage of the dwelling without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenities and to preserve the character and appearance of the barn and Newton Conservation Area.

8. Any vehicular access gate shall be fitted with sideways opening arrangement only and shall be retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

9. Any domestic external doors shall be located and fitted so as not to open out over the highway at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

**\* THE FOLLOWING ARE ADVISORY NOTES NOT CONDITIONS**

a) This application is recommended for approval because the development complies with Council policy and guidelines. The scheme preserves the character and appearance of Newton Conservation Area and does not adversely affect privacy, highway/pedestrian safety, ecology/biodiversity, drainage or visual amenities, nor so significantly harms neighbours' amenities as to warrant refusal.

b) The developer should make every effort to ensure surface water from any permanent surface drains onto adjacent porous surfaces, thereby reducing the demand on the drainage system. Alternatively, the developer may wish to explore the use of permeable materials for the parking areas, although compacted chippings would not be considered acceptable as they are likely to be dragged onto the highway to the detriment of highway and pedestrian safety. As a result of the above, impermeable surfacing such as concrete or tarmac extending across the full width of the parking areas should not be considered as a first option.

c) The applicant should be advised that any building materials delivered to the development site shall not be deposited or stored on the highway, without the express PRIOR consent of Bridgend County Borough Council as the Highway Authority.

d) Rainwater run-off shall not discharge into the highway surface-water drainage system. Failure to ensure this may result in action being taken under the Highways Act 1980.

e) Foul water and surface water discharges shall be drained separately from the site

f) No surface water shall be allowed to connect, either directly or indirectly, to the public sewerage system.

g) Land drainage run-off shall not be permitted to discharge, either directly or indirectly, into the public sewerage system.

h) If a connection is required to the public sewerage system, the developer is advised to contact Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water's Developer Services on (0800) 972 652.

i) The applicant/developer is advised to follow the recommendations of the Structural Report undertaken by Coupland Associated (received 15 July 2015).

j) If any archaeological resource are found during development, the applicant/developer is advised to contact Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust on (01792) 655208.

k) The site and areas surrounding the application site may also be used by nesting birds. It is recommended that the applicant may be made aware that under the Wildlife and

Countryside Act 1981 (Section 1), it is an offence to take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built. If at any time nesting birds are observed, works, which may disturb them, must cease immediately and advice sought from the Council's Ecologist.

l) In respect of Condition 8, it is a requirement under Section 153 of the Highways Act 1980 that any gates must be located and fitted so as not to open out over the highway. Furthermore regular, inward opening gates, would not be feasible given the proximity of the parking spaces. In order to provide a gated arrangement, the applicant/developer will need to install a sideways opening gate which could be a single panel, a concertina or a roller arrangement.

m) The applicant/developer is encouraged to complete the parking spaces in permanent materials.

**MARK SHEPHARD**  
**CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES**

**Background papers**

None

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## **APPEALS**

***The following appeal has been received since my last report to Committee:***

<b>CODE NO.</b>	A/15/3136250 (1762)
<b>APP. NO.</b>	P/15/279/FUL
<b>APPELLANT</b>	UK POWER RESERVE LTD
<b>SUBJECT OF APPEAL</b>	A SMALL SCALE STANDBY ELECTRICITY GENERATION PLANT IN INDIVIDUAL SOUND PROOF CONTAINERS: LAND NORTH WEST SIDE OF COITY ROAD BRIDGEND
<b>PROCEDURE</b>	HEARING
<b>DECISION LEVEL</b>	DELEGATED OFFICER

The application was refused for the following reason:

1. The site is allocated in the adopted Local Development Plan for regeneration and mixed use schemes comprising predominantly residential development (Policy COM1(4))with some employment (Policy REG1(3))and a Park and Ride Facility to serve Wildmill Train Station (Policy PLA7(21)). The development which comprises of an infrastructure project will be prejudicial to the future development of the site and the wider regeneration of Bridgend, contrary to the aims of the adopted Local Development Plan.

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***The following appeals have been decided since my last report to Committee:***

<b>CODE NO.</b>	A/15/3128677 (1757)
<b>APP. NO.</b>	P/15/64/FUL
<b>APPELLANT</b>	MR GARETH EVANS
<b>SUBJECT OF APPEAL</b>	PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF 2 NO. BEDROOM DORMER BUNGALOW - RESUB OF P/14/687/FUL: LAND ADJ 16A DANYCOED, BLACKMILL
<b>PROCEDURE</b>	WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS
<b>DECISION LEVEL</b>	DELEGATED OFFICER
<b>DECISION</b>	<b>THE INSPECTOR APPOINTED BY THE WELSH MINISTERS TO DETERMINE THIS APPEAL DIRECTED THAT THE APPEAL BE DISMISSED</b>

A copy of this appeal decision is attached as APPENDIX A

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<b>CODE NO.</b>	A/15/3121472 (1758)
<b>APP. NO.</b>	P/15/164/FUL
<b>APPELLANT</b>	MR ALAN MALLETT

<b>SUBJECT OF APPEAL</b>	CONVERT 6 NO. STABLES TO 2 NO. SELF-CONTAINED HOLIDAY LET UNITS: AR GRAIG, LALESTON
<b>PROCEDURE</b>	WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS
<b>DECISION LEVEL</b>	DELEGATED OFFICER
<b>DECISION</b>	<b>THE INSPECTOR APPOINTED BY THE WELSH MINISTERS TO DETERMINE THIS APPEAL DIRECTED THAT THE APPEAL BE ALLOWED SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS</b>

A copy of this appeal decision is attached as APPENDIX B

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the report of the Corporate Director Communities be noted.

**MARK SHEPHARD**  
**CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES**

**Background Papers**

See relevant application reference number.

## Appendix A

### Penderfyniad ar yr Apêl

Ymweliad â safle a wnaed ar 05/10/15

gan **P J Davies BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI**  
Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru  
Dyddiad: 22/10/15

### Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 05/10/15

by **P J Davies BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI**  
an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers  
Date: 22/10/15

**Appeal Ref: APP/F6915/A/15/3128677**

**Site address: Land adjacent 16A Dan Y Coed, Blackmill, Bridgend CF35 6EA**

**The Welsh Ministers have transferred the authority to decide this appeal to me as the appointed Inspector.**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr Gareth Evans against the decision of Bridgend County Borough Council.
- The application Ref P/15/64/FUL, dated 28 January 2015, was refused by notice dated 20 March 2015.
- The development proposed is the construction of a detached dormer bungalow in garden areas of 16A and 17 Dan Y Coed.

### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Main Issues

2. These are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, and the living conditions of the occupiers of 16A Dan Y Coed with reference to the provision of amenity space.

### Reasons

#### *Character and Appearance*

3. Dan Y Coed is largely characterised by bungalows and dormer style bungalows of varying form situated mainly in detached plots and set back from the road. Notwithstanding the individual building styles, there is an element of uniformity derived from the low height and wide frontages which give a horizontal and spacious impression to the street scene.
4. The proposed dwelling however, would be situated up tight to the back edge of the road. The site frontage is comparable to some others in the street but because it would in part extend behind the adjacent dwelling, No 17, this would not be easily apparent in public vantage views. As a consequence the proposed development would appear squeezed into a narrow gap close to the road. Further, because the proposed development would be narrower than the majority of dwellings nearby it would have a more balanced upright shape that would be unlike the flatter characteristics of the

housing scene. Taking the above into consideration, I find that the siting and design of the proposal would be demonstrably at odds with the housing character and would fundamentally detract from the qualities of the area's context that I have described. I note that the appellant is prepared to introduce a more imaginative design by softening the garage doors but there are no specific details before me for consideration.

5. In reaching my decision, I have had regard to the current condition of the garage which I concur is in need of some improvement. However, this is a matter of maintenance rather than any permanent visual harm, and despite its condition, the garage remains a modest low height structure in keeping with the street scene.
6. I conclude that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area contrary to one of the objectives of Policy SP2 of the Bridgend Local Development Plan (LDP) to ensure the highest quality design possible whilst respecting and enhancing local character and distinctiveness.

#### *Living Conditions*

7. The proposal invariably reduces the external garden space for the host dwelling, No 16A. Nonetheless, a relatively long, albeit narrow space would remain to the rear, and there is also an area of private space to the southern side. From what I saw this space is sufficient for sitting out and for basic facilities such as clothes drying. In my view, it is not a cramped area and the living conditions of the occupants would not therefore be materially harmed by the development. Accordingly, in this regard, the proposal would comply with LDP Policy SP2. However, whilst I have found the proposal to be acceptable in this respect, this would not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area which I find to be a compelling reason for dismissing the appeal.
8. I have had regard to all other matters raised including the need for the development and that it would represent a sustainable use of previously developed land, but these factors would not be sufficient to override the identified harm and the conflict with the development plan.
9. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*P J Davies*

**INSPECTOR**

## Appendix B

### Penderfyniad ar yr Apêl

Ymweliad â safle a wnaed ar 05/10/15

**gan P J Davies BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI**  
**Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru**  
**Dyddiad: 21/10/2015**

### Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 05/10/15

**by P J Davies BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI**  
**an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers**  
**Date: 21/10/2015**

**Appeal Ref: APP/F6915/A/15/3121472**

**Site address: Ar Graig, Laleston, Bridgend CF32 0LY**

**The Welsh Ministers have transferred the authority to decide this appeal to me as the appointed Inspector.**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr Alan Mallet against the decision of Bridgend County Borough Council.
- The application Ref P/15/164/FUL, dated 19 February 2015, was refused by notice dated 22 May 2015.
- The development proposed is convert 6 No. stables to 2 No. self contained holiday let units.

### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the conversion of 6 No. stables to 2 No. self contained holiday let units at Ar Graig, Laleston, Bridgend CF32 0LY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P/15/164/FUL, dated 19 February 2015, subject to the conditions set out in the schedule below.

### Main Issue

2. This is the effect of the proposal on highway safety.

### Reasons

3. The development would be accessed via an existing splayed entrance from the A48, where the visibility splay to the east is approximately 2.4m x 65m. Speeds surveys carried out by the Council indicate that having regard to Technical Advice Note (TAN) 18 Transport, a visibility splay of 2.4m x 112m would be appropriate. Nonetheless, such standards should be applied to the particular circumstances of each case and the question is whether the shortfall in the recommended stopping sight distance would result in any actual harm to highway safety in this instance.
4. Given that the A48 is a dual carriageway at this point, vehicles are only able to enter and leave the site from the west bound carriageway. Driver observation and intervisibility is therefore limited to one direction of traffic which in turn would benefit driver focus and concentration. Traffic flows are high as evidenced by the Council's surveys, but this is an existing access with no evidence of any accidents or highway safety issue with its use. In particular, the likelihood of vehicle shunts from misinterpretation of indicator lights, and danger from lane change manoeuvres is not borne out in evidence. Any use of the stables would involve traffic using the access

and the former equine use of the site would have been likely to include cars towing trailers and/or large vehicles. Relative to six stables, two small holiday lets would be unlikely to materially increase existing vehicular movements to and from the site. I acknowledge the Council's argument that the stables could be rebuilt without planning permission, but a condition removing permitted development rights for curtilage buildings would overcome the risk to highway safety from any unacceptable intensification of vehicular use of the access. Whilst I accept that the paddock itself could continue in equine use, its limited size and lack of stabling/feed storage would not in my view encourage such a use to any intensive degree. My attention is drawn to Annex E.4 TAN 18 relating to trunk roads, but the Council also confirm that this part of the A48 is not a trunk road.

5. On balance therefore, and notwithstanding that the visibility falls below the recommended standards, it has not been demonstrated that the proposal would materially increase the existing vehicular use of the access to the extent that there would be harm to highway safety interests. The development would therefore comply with the objectives of Policy SP2 of the Bridgend Local Development Plan.

### **Conditions**

6. As set out in my reasoning, a condition restricting permitted development rights for ancillary buildings is necessary to avoid over intensification of the access and any unacceptable risk to highway safety. A condition relating to the implementation of a parking layout is necessary to ensure highway safety. In the light of my conclusions on highway safety, it is not reasonable or necessary to require traffic signs on the dual carriageway. A condition restricting the use of the site to holiday accommodation is necessary in the interests of countryside protection, and drainage conditions are necessary to ensure the satisfactory development of the site. I have made minor amendments to the wording of some of the suggested conditions so that they are more concise, without changing their overall aim.

### **Conclusions**

7. For the above reasons and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

*P J Davies*

**INSPECTOR**

### **Schedule of Conditions**

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than five years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: site plan (external works) 1:500; site location plan 1:2500; existing plans 1:100; proposed plans 1:100.
- 3) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking, re-enacting or modifying that Order), no garages, stables or other external buildings shall be erected on the application site as identified by the site location plan scale 1:2500.

- 4) No development shall commence until a scheme for the provision of 8 off street parking spaces has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The parking scheme shall be completed in accordance with the agreed details prior to the occupation of the development and shall thereafter be retained for parking purposes.
- 5) The premises shall be used for holiday accommodation and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class C3 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification). The holiday lets shall be occupied for holiday accommodation only and shall not be occupied as a person's or persons' sole or main place of residence and shall not be occupied by any person or persons for a period for more than 28 days in any 12 month period.
- 6) No development shall commence until a scheme for the comprehensive drainage of the site, including foul and surface water drainage, has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of the development.
- 7) No building hereby permitted shall be occupied until surface water drainage works have been implemented in accordance with details that have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Before these details are submitted an assessment shall be carried out of the potential for disposing of surface water by means of a sustainable drainage system in accordance with the principles set out TAN 15 (or any subsequent version), and the results of the assessment provided to the local planning authority. Where a sustainable drainage scheme is to be provided, the submitted details shall:
  - i) provide information about the design storm period and intensity, the method employed to delay and control the surface water discharged from the site and the measures taken to prevent pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface waters;
  - ii) include a timetable for its implementation;
  - iii) provide a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development;
  - iv) and provide a ground investigation report sufficient to support the design parameters and suitability of the proposed system.

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## **The Building Regulations & c. (Amendment No.3) and Domestic Fire Safety (Wales) Regulations 2013**

### **Residential Automatic Fire Suppression Systems**

From the 1 January 2016 all new homes, and homes created by a 'Material Change of Use' in Wales will be required by the Welsh Building Regulations to be fitted with an automatic fire suppression system.

In 2013 a report was undertaken into the amount of deaths/injuries caused by fires in the previous 10 years. On average over this period, 17 deaths and over 500 injuries resulted from fires in residential properties in Wales and it is hoped these numbers will be significantly reduced by the introduction of the new measures.

The requirement is specific to new homes, although the requirement has been in place for Care Homes and other residences that are used for sleeping accommodation since April 2014.

The costs of an installation can vary, due to the type of installation/water pressures etc, but for a typical 3 bedroomed house it could be approximately £1400, increasing to £2500 if a pump is needed. Further issues and costs could arise if works have to be carried out in the conversion of properties and to installations fitted retrospectively.

The requirement has created work opportunities - Neath Port Talbot College are currently operating upgrading courses for plumbers as well as re-skilling courses for individuals in the installation of the systems.

The Minister for Housing and Regeneration, Carl Sargeant, announced a Welsh Government funded programme for the design and installation of fire sprinklers in social housing. The scheme has been operating for nearly a year looking at the;

- Design & installation
- Costs & cost savings
- Water supply issues
- Application of statutory guidance
- Experience of all key stakeholders

An interim report is due to be published this Autumn with the final report expected in Spring 2016.

The Bridgend County Borough Council Building Control Section hosted a seminar on 5 November 2015 with the speakers from the Technical Manager of the Welsh Government and RSP Sprinklers Wales to advise of the impending changes to Building Regulations relating to sprinkler systems in houses and flats from 1 January 2016.

### **Background to the legislation**

June 2007 – Ann Jones AM won an assembly ballot to be the first individual AM to introduce a Legislative Competence Order [LCO]

February 2011 – Domestic Fire Safety [Wales] Measure 2011, introduced by Ann Jones AM, is passed by the National Assembly

April 2011 – Measure receives the Royal Assent

January 2012 – Building Regulations devolved to Welsh Ministers

May 2012 – Welsh Government made a commitment to introduce regulations in 2013.

October 2013 - Changes to the Building Regulations were made and published.

**Recommendation:**

That the report of the Corporate Director Communities be noted.

**MARK SHEPHARD**  
**CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES**

**Background Papers**

None

## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

26<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2015

### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

#### 2015 ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT FOR THE BRIDGEND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP) 2006 -2021

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To report to Development Control Planning Committee the findings of the Bridgend County Borough Local Development Plan 2015 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

#### 2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The Bridgend Local Plan (LDP) is one of the high level strategies which must be prepared by the Council. The LDP sets out in land use terms those priorities in the Corporate Plan that relate to the development and use of land provided they are in conformity with national and international policy. The AMR monitors whether the LDP and therefore the Council's land use and regeneration objectives are being successfully implemented.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 Following the adoption of the Bridgend Local Development Plan in September 2013, the Council has a statutory obligation under section 76 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).
- 3.2 The 2015 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) was submitted to the Welsh Government on the 27<sup>th</sup> October 2015 and this document is attached as Appendix1.
- 3.3 The main aim of the AMR is to assess the extent to which the LDP Strategy and Policies are being achieved. Therefore, the AMR has two primary roles; firstly to consider whether the policies identified in the monitoring process are being implemented successfully; and secondly to consider the plan as a whole against all of the information gathered to determine whether a complete or partial review of the plan is necessary.

#### The Requirement for Monitoring

- 3.4 In order to monitor the Local Development Plans performance, it needs to be considered against a set of monitoring aims and indicators. Chapter 7 of the LDP sets

out the Monitoring Framework that forms the basis of the AMR and provides information that is required to be included by LDP Regulation 37.

3.5 In this context the AMR is required to identify policies that are not being implemented and for each such policy:

- Outline the reasons why the policy is not being implemented;
- Indicate steps that can be taken to enable the policy to be implemented;
- Identify whether a revision to the plan is required;
- Specify the housing land supply from the Housing Land Availability Report for that year, and for the full period since the adoption of the plan; and
- Specify the number of net additional affordable and general market dwellings built in the LPA area for that year, and for the full period since the adoption of the plan.

3.6 The LDP Manual supplements this requirement by setting out additional factors that should be assessed in the AMR:

- Whether the basic strategy remains sound (if not, a full plan review may be needed);
- What impact the policies are having globally, nationally, regionally and locally;
- Whether the policies need changing to reflect changes in national policy;
- Whether policies and related targets in the LDP have been met or progress is being made towards meeting them, including publication of relevant supplementary planning guidance (SPG);
- Where progress has not been made, the reasons for this and what knock on effects it may have;
- What aspects, if any, of the LDP need adjusting or replacing because they are not working as intended or are not achieving the objectives of the strategy and/or sustainable development objectives; and
- If policies or proposals need changing, the suggested actions that is required to achieve them.

- 3.7 Monitoring the Plan also accords with the requirements for monitoring the sustainability performance of the plan through the Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal (SEA/ SA).

#### **4. Current Situation**

- 4.1 The Council has a statutory obligation under section 61 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to keep all matters under review that are expected to affect the development of its area. In addition, section 76 of the Act requires the Council to produce information on these matters in the form of an Annual Monitoring Report for submission to the Welsh Government. This is the first AMR to be prepared since the adoption of the Bridgend LDP and is based on the period from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015 and is required to be submitted to Welsh Government by the end of October 2015.
- 4.2 There have been many changes since 2013 that will impact on the successful implementation of the LDP; the most notable are the changes in the Welsh Economy and the changes in the regional context. The AMR therefore considers whether the development strategy that underpins the LDP remains valid; and assesses whether or not the Strategy Policies contained in the LDP are being effective in delivering the Development Strategy and meeting the objectives of the plan.
- 4.3 The LDP Regulations and the LDP Manual specify what the AMR is required to include:
- An Executive Summary;
  - A review of changes to national and regional policy and guidance and their implications for the LDP;
  - SEA/SA Monitoring based on the SEA/SA Monitoring Framework;
  - LDP Monitoring based on the LDP Monitoring Framework;
  - Statutory Indicators; and
  - Recommendations on the course of action in respect of policies and the LDP as a whole.

#### **Key findings of the Annual Monitoring Process**

- 4.4 An overview of the LDP Monitoring Data for the 1st AMR period provides an interesting insight into the implementation of the LDP over the past 12 months. The key findings are set out below:

- The 2015 JHLAS indicates that 582 new homes were completed during the monitoring period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 and that 4,041 dwellings have been completed in total, during the LDP period 2006 to 2015;
- The 2015 JHLAS indicates that the Council has a housing land supply, assessed against the housing requirement of the Bridgend LDP of 5.4 years;
- Since 2009 880 affordable units have been delivered, 588 of which are general needs affordable dwellings;
- During the monitoring period 01 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 only 0.45 hectares of vacant employment land was developed. During the preceding year 2014 1.63 ha of employment land was developed;
- Within Bridgend Town Centre of the 382 commercial properties surveyed 55 were vacant – representing a vacancy rate of 14.4%;
- Within Porthcawl Town Centre of the 209 commercial properties surveyed 16 were vacant – representing a vacancy rate of 7.7%;
- Within Maesteg Town Centre of the 158 commercial properties surveyed 17 were vacant – representing a vacancy rate of 10.8%;
- Two town centre regeneration schemes have or are in the process of being delivered at Maesteg Town Centre, with the successful implementation of Maesteg Outdoor Market (where 13 out of the 14 units are occupied by retail traders) and within Bridgend Town Centre at ‘Riverside’ that is subject of a successful ‘Vibrant & Viable Places’ funding bid which will deliver a commercial and residential scheme;
- Notwithstanding the fact that LDP monitoring does not trigger the need to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, requirements of the new Housing (Wales) Act 2014 requires each local authority in Wales to undertake an assessment by February 2016 and identify a Gypsy and Traveller site if a need is identified; and
- The County Borough is making a significant contribution to national renewable energy targets. The generating capacity within and immediately adjacent the refined SSA (north of Evanstown) is 79.5MW which is considerably higher than the estimated capacity within the SSA of 31 MW.

4.5 Chapter 5 of the AMR provides a detailed analysis of the success of the plan to date against the monitoring indicators and factors in terms of delivering sustainable development.

## Conclusions

4.6 There is no evidence to suggest there is a need for a full or partial review of the LDP at this time. Whilst the level of growth in some areas is slower than anticipated, evidence collected through the monitoring process clearly suggests that good progress is being made in the delivery of the majority of LDP targets, which must be seen as a positive. This may be attributed in part to the proactive approach the Council has taken to bringing forward its own land for development, accompanied by detailed development briefs, which considerably de-risks development for potential investors. Continued investment into the local economy is required to stimulate the delivery of new employment land and mixed-use regeneration sites by taking a proactive approach with landowners and developers especially where development sites are in the Councils ownership and bring forward new schemes, masterplans and development briefs to facilitate development. The development which has taken place in the County Borough of Bridgend since the adoption of the LDP, together with the projected future investment from the public and private sector will ensure that the LDP is successfully delivered.

4.7 The findings of the Annual Monitoring Report for 2015 suggest that:

1. No full or partial review of the LDP is required at this time; and
2. The actions set out in the AMR will seek to address underperformance are implemented.

## **5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules**

5.1 Following the adoption of the Bridgend LDP, the Council has a statutory obligation under section 76 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) to identify whether the policies identified in the monitoring process are being implemented successfully; and to consider the plan as a whole against all of the information gathered to determine whether a complete or partial review of the plan is necessary.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 There are no direct implications associated with this report. However, any future review of the policies and proposals contained within the Bridgend County Borough Local Development Plan will require an equalities impact assessment to be carried out.

## **7. Financial Implications**

7.1 There are no new financial implications as a consequence of this report.

## **8. Recommendations**

That Development Control Committee notes the report.

**Mark Shephard**  
**Corporate Director Communities**

**26 November 2015**

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BRIDGEND CF31 4WB

### **Background documents**

**Appendix 1:** The Bridgend County Borough Local Development Plan 2015 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

## Appendix 1

# Bridgend Local Development Plan

AMR 2015

BRIDGEND  
County Borough Council



## Annual Monitoring Report 2015

October 2015

# 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Bridgend County Borough Local Development Plan (2006 – 2021) was formally adopted by the Council on the 18th September 2013. Following the adoption of the Bridgend LDP, the Council has a statutory obligation under section 76 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). This is the first AMR to be prepared since the adoption of the Bridgend LDP and is based on the period from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015 and is required to be submitted to Welsh Government by the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2015.
- 1.2 The main aim of the AMR is to assess the extent to which the LDP Strategy and Policies are being achieved. Therefore, the AMR has two primary roles; firstly to consider whether the policies identified in the monitoring process are being implemented successfully; and secondly to consider the plan as a whole against all of the information gathered to determine whether a complete or partial review of the plan is necessary.

## The Requirement for Monitoring

- 1.3 In order to monitor the Local Development Plans performance, it needs to be considered against a set of monitoring aims and indicators. Chapter 7 of the LDP sets out the Monitoring Framework that forms the basis of the AMR and provides information that is required to be included by LDP Regulation 37.
- 1.4 In this context the AMR is required to identify policies that are not being implemented and for each such policy:
- Outline the reasons why the policy is not being implemented;
  - Indicate steps that can be taken to enable the policy to be implemented;
  - Identify whether a revision to the plan is required;
  - Specify the housing land supply from the Housing Land Availability Report for that year, and for the full period since the adoption of the plan; and
  - Specify the number of net additional affordable and general market dwellings built in the LPA area for that year, and for the full period since the adoption of the plan.

1.5 The LDP Manual supplements this requirement by setting out additional factors that should be assessed in the AMR:

- Whether the basic strategy remains sound (if not, a full plan review may be needed);
- What impact the policies are having globally, nationally, regionally and locally;
- Whether the policies need changing to reflect changes in national policy;
- Whether policies and related targets in the LDP have been met or progress is being made towards meeting them, including publication of relevant supplementary planning guidance (SPG);
- Where progress has not been made, the reasons for this and what knock on effects it may have;
- What aspects, if any, of the LDP need adjusting or replacing because they are not working as intended or are not achieving the objectives of the strategy and/or sustainable development objectives; and
- If policies or proposals need changing, the suggested actions that is required to achieve them.

1.6 Monitoring the Plan also accords with the requirements for monitoring the sustainability performance of the plan through the Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal (SEA/ SA).

## Format and Content

### 1.7 The structure of the AMR is as follows:

This chapter has outlined the requirement for the purpose and structure of the Annual Monitoring Report 2014-2015.

**Chapter 2: Executive Summary (pages 4-9);**

**Chapter 3: Monitoring Framework (pages 10-13)** – explains the process of monitoring the LDP, how to quantify the resulting data and if necessary, determine whether a review of the LDP and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is required;

**Chapter 4: Contextual Change (pages 14-28)** – analyses the potential impact of factors such as changes to national planning policy, the economic climate and local issues on the implementation of the LDP;

**Chapter 5: Local Development Plan Monitoring (pages 29-72)** – provides an analysis of the effectiveness of the LDP policy framework in delivering the plans targets;

**Chapter 6: Sustainability Appraisal Monitoring (pages 73-78)** – analyses the impact the LDP is having on the social, economic and environmental well-being of Bridgend and;

**Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations (pages 79-84)** – provide an overview of the findings of the AMR and makes recommendations about issues that require further consideration.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Section 76 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to monitor the implementation of their adopted LDPs by preparing an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). This is the first AMR to be prepared since the adoption of the Bridgend LDP and is based on the period from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015 and is required to be submitted to Welsh Government by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2015.

### Background

- 2.2 The Council formally adopted the Bridgend County Borough Local Development Plan (LDP) on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2013. Following the adoption of its LDP, the Council has a statutory obligation under section 61 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to keep all matters under review that are expected to affect the development of its area. In addition, section 76 of the Act requires the Council to produce information on these matters in the form of an Annual Monitoring Report for submission to the Welsh Government. This is the first AMR to be prepared since the adoption of the Bridgend LDP and is based on the period from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015 and is required to be submitted to Welsh Government by the end of October 2015.
- 2.3 There have been many changes since 2013 that will impact on the successful implementation of the LDP; the most notable are the changes in the Welsh Economy and the changes in the regional context. The AMR will therefore consider whether the development strategy that underpins the LDP remains valid; and will assess whether or not the Strategy Policies contained in the LDP are being effective in delivering the Development Strategy and meeting the objectives of the plan.
- 2.4 The LDP Regulations and the LDP Manual specify what the AMR is required to include:
- An Executive Summary;
  - A review of changes to national and regional policy and guidance and their implications for the LDP;
  - SEA/SA Monitoring based on the SEA/SA Monitoring Framework;
  - LDP Monitoring based on the LDP Monitoring Framework;

- Statutory Indicators; and
- Recommendations on the course of action in respect of policies and the LDP as a whole.

## **Key findings of the Annual Monitoring Process**

### **External Influences**

2.5 The AMR considers the external factors that have had, or could have, an influence on the implementation of the plan and thus on development in the County Borough. These include changes in:

- Policy and legislation;
- National statistics;
- External conditions; and
- Local development context.

### **Policy and Legislation**

2.6 The AMR is required to identify documents, at national and regional level, that may have implications for the policies in the LDP and to assess them to identify their implications. The following key policy documents have been issued by the Welsh Government since the LDP's adoption between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and 31st March 2015:

- Planning Policy Wales Edition 7 (2014);
- The Housing (Wales) Act (2014);
- The Active Travel (Wales) Act (2013);
- Practice Guidance: Buildings and Economic Development Evidence Base to Support a Local Development Plan – (2015);
- Technical Advice Note 21: Waste (February 2014);
- TAN 23: Planning for Economic Development (2014);
- TAN 20 – The Welsh Language Act (2013);
- The Planning (Wales) Act 2015;

- The Town and Country (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2014; and
- The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulation Amendments (2014).

2.7 The changes in National Policy and Legislation have resulted in significant changes to policy but are not considered to have any major implications for the implementation of the LDP and do not need to be addressed until the statutory LDP review in 2017.

## **External Conditions**

### **National Context**

2.8 The UK economy has been recovering at a relatively strong rate since early 2013, although there was a slight slowdown in growth in late 2014 due to problems in the Eurozone and other worldwide economic uncertainties. Whilst the picture for the UK economy is relatively positive Wales has been one of the many countries significantly affected by the global economic downturn and this has been visible in many areas, most notably in the business, commercial and property markets. In Wales, the picture for house building continues to be more positive than it was previously. Welsh Government statistics indicate during 2014-15 a total of 6,955 new dwellings were started, a rise of 20 per cent on the previous year, and the highest annual number recorded since 2007-08.

### **The Local Development Context & Economic Conditions**

2.9 Statistics in relation to house building and prices in Bridgend during 2014-15 suggest that whilst the housing market in the County Borough is beginning to show signs of recovery, current data shows average actual house sale prices for 2014–15 for Bridgend as being £115,297, down from £117,848 during the previous year. The Bridgend 2015 JHLAS indicates that 582 new homes were completed during the monitoring period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 and that 4,041 dwellings have been completed in total, during the LDP period 2006 to 2015.

2.10 In the County Borough of Bridgend between April 2014 & March 2015 there were 67,700 economically active people and at 2015 there were 4,400 businesses registered in the County Borough. In terms of the proportion of jobs in each sector of the Bridgend economy:

- Manufacturing remains strong in the area, in comparison with Wales and Great Britain, despite sustained job losses in the sector. Manufacturing has shown considerable falls in employment over the past 15 years;
  - Banking, finance, insurance and other service sectors are under-represented in the county borough when compared to the UK; and
  - The percentage of jobs in public administration, education and health in the county borough is higher than both the Welsh and British averages.
- 2.11 Despite a difficult period for the local economy, the percentage of working age population increased from 68.9% to 72.1% and the percentage of 16-24 year olds in employment rose from 47.1% to 50.1% between 2012-2014. In terms of Gross Value Added (GVA) per head, this has also increased from £14,489 in 2011 to £15,593 in 2014.
- 2.12 On the ground the green shoots of recovery are starting to emerge, with Ford recently announcing an investment of 181 million pounds for their existing facility in Bridgend and South Wales Police and Bridgend County Borough Council creating a new state of the art vehicle maintenance facility on the Brackla Industrial Estate for the service, repair and MOT of their vehicles. It is accepted that the some of the statistics included in this document indicate a fragile economy in particular the current low take-up of employment land. However, this is attributed to the fact that because of the considerable loss of industrial and business capacity that took place during the recession, most new employment activity is actively being taken up within existing vacant buildings and/or extensions on allocated employment sites rather than on new sites. Effectively the lost capacity as a result of recession is being regained before new take-up accelerates as the economy improves. In addition, other sectors of the economy including tourism and services, not dependent on being located on traditional employment sites are growing. The County Borough is experiencing growth in golf tourism, outdoor activity destinations linked to cycle touring, mountain biking and other extreme sports.

#### **Strategic      Environmental      Assessment/Sustainability      Appraisal Monitoring**

- 2.13 The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires local authorities to undertake Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as part of the preparation of the LDP. In addition to this the LDP Regulations requires a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) to be undertaken. In preparing the LDP the council undertook joint SEA and SA and produced and published its SEA/SA Report in conjunction with the LDP.

- 2.14 The SEA Directive also requires that the council monitor the state of the environment through monitoring the sustainability objectives set out in the SEA/SA Report. This forms an integral part of the AMR and is contained in Section 6. The SEA/SA monitoring indicates a positive change to the environment thus far in the plan period.

### **LDP Policy Monitoring**

- 2.15 An overview of the LDP Monitoring Data for the 1st AMR period provides an interesting insight into the implementation of the LDP over the past 12 months. The key findings are set out below:

- The 2015 JHLAS indicates that 582 new homes were completed during the monitoring period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 and that 4,041 dwellings have been completed in total, during the LDP period 2006 to 2015;
- The 2015 JHLAS indicates that the Council has a housing land supply, assessed against the housing requirement of the Bridgend LDP of 5.4 years;
- To date, 588 general needs affordable new build dwellings have been completed with 880 affordable units delivered in total;
- During the monitoring period 01 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 only 0.45 hectares of vacant employment land was developed. During the preceding year 2014 1.63 ha of employment land was developed;
- Within Bridgend Town Centre of the 382 commercial properties surveyed 55 were vacant – representing a vacancy rate of 14.4%;
- Within Porthcawl Town Centre of the 209 commercial properties surveyed 16 were vacant – representing a vacancy rate of 7.7%;
- Within Maesteg Town Centre of the 158 commercial properties surveyed 17 were vacant – representing a vacancy rate of 10.8%;
- Two town centre regeneration schemes have or are in the process of being delivered at Maesteg town centre, with the successful implementation of Maesteg Outdoor Market (where 13 out of the 14 units are occupied by retail traders) and within Bridgend town centre at 'Riverside' that is subject of a successful 'Vibrant & Viable Places' funding bid which will deliver a commercial and residential scheme.

- Notwithstanding the fact that LDP monitoring does not trigger the need to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, requirements of the new Housing (Wales) Act 2014 requires each local authority in Wales to undertake an assessment by February 2016 and identify a Gypsy and Traveller site if a need is identified; and
  - The County Borough is making a significant contribution to national renewable energy targets. The generating capacity within an immediately adjacent the refined SSA (north of Evanstown) is 79.5MW which is considerably higher than the estimated capacity within the SSA of 31 MW.
- 2.16 Chapter 5 of the AMR provides a detailed analysis of the success of the plan to date against the monitoring indicators and factors in terms of delivering sustainable development.

### 3. MONITORING FRAMEWORK

3.1 The Monitoring Framework comprises 2 key elements. These are the monitoring of:

- The LDP strategy, policies and proposals; and
- The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which includes the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

3.2 The on-going success of these documents and the policies within them are to be measured against a set of targets identified as part of the LDP process. Indicators have been formulated to determine whether these targets have been met. Where the results conclude that the targets are not being met, and that the effectiveness of the LDP documents (or parts or policies of it), are falling significantly below the level required, then consideration will be given to the need for a review of the LDP.

#### **LDP Monitoring Aims, Indicators, Targets, Triggers and Outcomes**

3.3 The LDP monitoring framework identifies 13 monitoring aims based on the Policies which deliver the strategy of the Plan; these monitoring aims are assessed against 31 indicators. It should be noted that whilst the targets and indicators relate to each Strategic Policy, the framework has been designed to ensure that linkages are made between the Strategic Policies, relevant objectives and Development Management and Allocation policies. Monitoring the delivery of the Strategic Policies therefore provides a mechanism for monitoring the LDP as a whole.

3.4 Trigger levels have been set which identify where a policy has diverged from the monitoring target to such an extent that the policy is failing to be implemented or needs to be amended. Where this happens the analysis in the monitoring table identifies the issue and, where necessary, the actions required to address it.

#### **The Sustainability Appraisal Objectives and Indicators**

3.5 The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the LDP identifies a set of objectives and significant effect indicators which are intended to measure the social, economic and environmental impact of the LDP. The SA identifies 4 objectives and 15 indicators specifically designed to monitor the environmental credentials of the LDP.

## Monitoring Progress

- 3.6 The analysis of the monitoring process will be in the form of detailed written assessment of the indicator results and a subsequent view on the success of the targets and effectiveness of the policies. This will be provided in the respective monitoring sections of this report for the LDP and SA.
- 3.7 As a visual aid in showing the monitoring outcomes, a simple colour coded system has been formulated and will be included in the individual tables of Strategic Policies and SA results, as shown below:

<b>Continue Monitoring</b>
Where indicators are suggesting that LDP policies are being implemented effectively and there is no cause for a review.
<b>Officer / Member Training Required</b>
Where indicators associated with planning applications suggest that policies are not being implemented as they were intended and further officer or Member training is required.
<b>Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) / Development Briefs Required</b>
Whilst the Council will be preparing SPG and Development Briefs throughout the Plan period, indicators may suggest that further guidance should be provided to developers on how a policy should be properly interpreted. Additionally, should sites not be coming forward as envisaged; the Council will actively engage with developers / landowners to bring forward Development Briefs on key sites to help commence the development process.
<b>Policy Research</b>
Where the indicators suggest that the LDP policies are not being effective as they should; further research and investigation, including the use of contextual indicators and comparisons with other local authorities and national statistics where appropriate may be required.
<b>Policy Review</b>
Where indicators suggest that a LDP policy is failing to implement the strategy of the Plan and a formal review of the policy is required. Further research and investigation, including comparisons with other local authorities and national statistics where appropriate will be required before a decision to formally review the policy is made.
<b>Plan / Strategy Review</b>
Where indicators suggest that the LDP strategy is failing and a formal review of the Plan is required. The decision to review the Plan will not be taken lightly, and this trigger will not apply to the majority of policy areas.

### **Trigger for Review of the Plan**

- 3.8 A review of the LDP in advance of the statutory 4-year review will only take place in exceptional circumstances. The monitoring framework for the LDP identifies specific trigger points where it was considered appropriate to highlight the need to consider the reasons why policies are failing to be delivered. However, these triggers are not in themselves sufficient to trigger a review of the Plan.
- 3.9 The Council will make a judgement on the need for a full or partial review based on the following factors:
- A significant change in external conditions;
  - A significant change in local context e.g. closure of major employment site;
  - A significant change in development pressures or needs and investment strategies of major public and private investors;
  - A significant change in national policy or legislation; and
  - Significant concerns from the findings of the AMR in terms of policy effectiveness, site delivery, progress rates, and any problems with implementation.

### **Local Development Plan Wales (2005)**

- 3.10 Government sets out in LDP Wales paragraph 4.43 the following requirements:
- *Whether the basic strategy remains sound (if not, a full plan review may be needed);*
  - *What impact the policies are having globally, nationally, regionally and locally;*
  - *Whether the policies need changing to reflect changes in national policy;*
  - *Whether policies and related targets in LDPs have been met or progress is being made towards meeting them, including publication of relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG);*

- *Where progress has not been made, the reasons for this and what knock on effects it may have;*
- *What aspects, if any, of the LDP need adjusting or replacing because they are not working as intended or are not achieving the objectives of the strategy and/or sustainable development objectives; and*
- *If policies or proposals need changing, what suggested actions are required to achieve this.*

3.11 *The AMR must also specify the housing land supply (from the current Housing Land Availability Study) and the number of net additional affordable and general market dwellings built in the authority's area, and report on other LDP indicators.'*

## 4. CONTEXTUAL CHANGE

- 4.1 The findings of the AMR Monitoring Framework are fundamental in determining how the implementation and delivery of the LDP is progressing. However, it is equally important to understand how the implementation of the LDP has been influenced by local, regional, national and international social and economic factors. By seeking to understand how different factors have affected the delivery of the LDP, the Council will gain a better understanding of what it can do to support the Plan's implementation. In focussing on those factors it can influence and better support delivery of its objectives and shape future strategies.
- 4.2 The following section looks specifically at the external factors that have had, or could have, an influence on the implementation of the plan and thus on development in Bridgend County Borough. These include changes in:
- Policy and legislation;
  - National statistics;
  - External conditions; and
  - Local development context.

### Policy and legislation

- 4.3 The Council needs to consider through its AMR whether changes to national planning policy have any implications for the LDP. If the implications are significant, the Council will need to determine how it addresses the issues. Between the adoption of the plan and 31st March 2015, the following policy documents were issued by the Welsh Government:

#### **Planning Policy Wales Edition 7 (July 2014)**

- 4.4 Planning Policy Wales is the land use planning policy for Wales and should be taken into account by local planning authorities when preparing development plans. This guidance is also supplemented by 21 Technical Advice Notes (TANs). The main changes to Edition 7 are to section 4.12 in Chapter 4 which has been revised to delete the national development management policy on Sustainable Building standards. These changes have been made in light of amendments to Part L of Building Regulations on energy efficiency.

## **The Housing (Wales) Act (2014)**

4.5 The key elements of the act are:

- introduction of a compulsory registration and licensing scheme for private rented sector landlords and letting and management agents, which will be delivered by Rent Smart Wales;
- reform of homelessness law, including placing a stronger duty on local authorities to prevent homelessness and allowing them to use suitable accommodation in the private sector;
- placing a duty on local authorities to provide sites for Gypsies and Travellers where a need has been identified;
- introduction of standards for local authorities on rents, service charges and quality of accommodation;
- reform of the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy system;
- giving local authorities the power to charge more than the standard rate of council tax on long-term empty properties and certain types of second homes;
- assisting the provision of housing by Co-operative Housing Associations, and amendment of the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993.

## **The Active Travel (Wales) Act (2013)**

4.6 The Active Travel (Wales) Act places a requirement on local authorities to continuously improve facilities and routes for walkers and cyclists and to prepare maps identifying current and potential future routes for their use. The Act will also require new road schemes to consider the needs of pedestrians and cyclists at design stage.

## **Practice Guidance: Buildings an Economic Development Evidence Base to Support a Local Development Plan – August 2015**

4.7 This practice guide provides step by step advice for LPAs on how to build an evidence base to support LDP employment land strategies and policies. The guidance promotes joint working between local planning authorities to understand, and plan for, economic issues affecting areas beyond the

boundaries of a single authority. This guide gives advice to local planning authorities about undertaking employment land studies at both a local and larger than local level, and provides guidance on preparing a site inventory, reviewing the property market, forecasting future need and monitoring.

#### **Technical Advice Note 21: Waste (February 2014)**

- 4.8 This document (accompanied by TAN 21 Practice Guidance note) sets out the relevant planning considerations necessary to ensure that the new European Union waste management drivers are reflected in Wales when new waste management facilities are proposed. The LDP was produced in the knowledge that the original TAN21 (2001) needed updating and therefore much of what is now contained within the new TAN was anticipated during the preparation of the LDP. Therefore, the LDP is strongly aligned to the new TAN21 (and its associated TAN 21 Practice Guidance note) and its requirements on LPAs are being met.

#### **TAN 23: Planning for Economic Development (2014)**

- 4.9 The TAN contains detailed advice with regard to national planning policy as contained within Chapter 7 of PPW on economic development. The guidance is intended to assist local authorities in: developing high-level economic planning objectives; assessing the economic benefits of new development and helping to determine the employment land supply. Another key aspect of TAN 23 is to provide advice on economic development and the rural economy, as well as preparing an evidence-base and creating an economic development vision for the LDP.
- 4.10 Whilst the TAN acknowledges that economic activity can stem from the public, private or voluntary sector and include uses beyond the traditional B-class uses such as retail, tourism and leisure; it is held that the aforementioned retail, tourism and leisure uses are subject to a variety of other policies. Therefore, the TAN primarily deals with B-class uses given that they require a traditional yet sustainable method of planning. The TAN also requires careful consideration when releasing traditional employment sites to alternative uses as they often make a valid contribution to the local economy and are difficult to replace once lost. The Council currently has a sufficient level of employment land to meet the LDP's regeneration objectives distributed throughout the County Borough. Additionally, a robust site release methodology, using existing LDP policy and a recently adopted SPG21 'Safeguarding Employment Sites' is utilised to ensure due consideration when releasing employment sites to alternative uses.

## **TAN 20 – The Welsh Language**

- 4.11 Technical Advice Note 20 provides guidance on the consideration of the Welsh language as part of the Local Development Plan making process. This Technical Advice Note covers:
- the role of Single Integrated Plans;
  - the Welsh language and Sustainability Appraisals;
  - the Welsh Language Commissioner; and
  - signs and advertisements.
- 4.12 TAN 20 states: *“Local Development Plans are intended to be focused on local issues and objectives, informed by relevant community strategies and an evidence base”*. Therefore, depending on the usage of the Welsh language within a plan area, or partial plan area; LDPs will need to address how the planning system can consider or potentially mitigate the effects of development on the Welsh language, or indeed the sustainability of Welsh language communities.

## **The Planning (Wales) Act 2015**

- 4.13 The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 (the “Act”) received Royal Assent on the 6<sup>th</sup> July 2015. It is the first separate Planning Act for Wales since planning was devolved to Wales in 2011 and aims to address 5 objectives:
- a modernised framework for the delivery of planning services (e.g. by enabling some planning applications to be made directly to the Welsh Ministers);
  - strengthening the plan led approach (e.g. by the introduction of a National Development Framework and Strategic Development Plans);
  - improved resilience (e.g. by enabling the Welsh Ministers to direct that local planning authorities work together and be merged);
  - frontloading and improvement of the development management system (e.g. by introducing a statutory pre-application procedure for certain planning applications); and
  - enabling effective enforcement and appeals (e.g. by way of changes to enforcement procedures and increased transparency and efficiency in the appeal system).

- 4.14 National Development Framework - The Act makes provision for the preparation and revision of a National Development Framework for Wales ("NDF"). The NDF is a national land use plan which will set out Welsh Government's policies in relation to the development and use of land in Wales. This replaces the Wales Spatial Plan.
- 4.15 Strategic Planning - The Act gives the Welsh Ministers a power to designate an area of Wales as a strategic planning area and establish a strategic planning panel for that area. These will be to deal with cross boundary issues, for example, waste disposal. A strategic planning panel must prepare a plan for its strategic planning area, known as a strategic development plan that must be in general conformity with the NDF. Three possible areas have been identified – Cardiff, Swansea and the A55 corridor. Not all areas of Wales will have an SDP.
- 4.16 Local Development Plans (LDPs) - The Act provides that an LDP must be in general conformity with the NDF and any SDP which includes all or part of the area of the authority. Following the publication of the NDF, local planning authorities will be under a duty to consider whether to carry out a review of their LDP. The same duty will exist where an SDP is adopted or approved and the area of a local planning authority is included in the strategic planning area.
- 4.17 Pre-application consultation and services -The Act introduces a statutory requirement for pre-application engagement with specified persons which are likely to include the public and statutory consultees where the development is of a specified type. It is thought that this will include DNS and major developments. The Welsh Ministers will be able to make regulations which cover the pre-application services to be provided by them and by local planning authorities.
- 4.18 Applications to the Welsh Ministers - The Act introduce two instances where direct planning applications either must or could be made. These are as follows:
1. Developments of National Significance (DNS)
- 4.19 The Act provides that applications for a new category of planning applications known as developments of national significance (DNS) are to be made directly to Welsh Ministers instead of to the local planning authority. Those applications which are to constitute DNS are to be specified in regulations made by the Welsh Ministers. These are likely to follow a similar procedure to that which applies in the case of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

- 4.20 The DNS provisions in the Act allow decisions in respect of secondary consents (i.e. connected to the DNS application) to be made by the Welsh Ministers instead of the person who would otherwise make that decision.
- 4.21 The determination period for an application for DNS is 36 weeks, beginning with the date on which the application was accepted by the Welsh Ministers.

## 2. Optional direct applications

- 4.22 The Act allows an applicant to choose to make an application to the Welsh Minister if the applicant so chooses where the local planning authority has been designated as under-performing and the application meets certain criteria (yet to be defined). There will be no right of appeal from a decision made following a direct application.
- 4.23 Town and Village Greens - The Act introduces new 'trigger events' to prohibit the registration of a town and village green under certain circumstances.
- 4.24 Enforcement - The Act seeks to prevent developers from repeatedly submitting applications or appeals where they have failed to obtain planning permission so as to delay effective enforcement action. The Act provides a power for local planning authorities to require the submission of a retrospective planning application. If a retrospective planning application is not submitted, an enforcement notice may then be served. Local planning authorities will also be given the power to refuse to determine a retrospective planning application where the development is subject to an enforcement notice.
- 4.25 Validation appeal procedure - A new validation appeals procedure, to the Welsh Ministers, is intended to resolve validation disputes quickly. The appeal procedure will deal solely with whether an application is valid and will be dealt with by written representations only.
- 4.26 Appeals process - This will be much more 'front-loaded' than currently. There may not be a choice as to how an appeal is determined but costs may be recovered for written representation appeals. There will be no ability for developers to make minor changes once an appeal is lodged. There will be an option for the Welsh Ministers to recover some of their costs.

## **The Town and Country (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2014**

- 4.27 The Amendment amends Parts 8 and 32 of the General Permitted Development Order and introduces new parts in the form of Part 41 and Part 42. The main effects of the Amendment and therefore the principle implications for the LDP are:

- More flexible permitted development rights (PDRs) for Part 8 (industry and warehousing) and Part 32 (schools, colleges, universities and hospitals) development;
- New PDRs for offices (new Part 41), shops, financial and professional services (new Part 42);
- An increase in the threshold - from 235qm to 500sqm - for permitted changes of use of industrial premises to and from use class B8 (storage and distribution);
- A requirement for hard standings associated with industrial and warehouse development to be made of porous or permeable materials, or to direct run-off to porous or permeable areas - in order to reduce flood risk; and
- New PDRs for cycle and refuse stores.

4.28 These amendments to the GPDO do not change the way in which the LDP's policies operate, however, certain developments will no longer be required to be determined by LDP policies. The type of development permitted by the amendments to the GPDO should have minimal impact on the delivery of the LDP's vision, aims and objectives or its strategy.

#### **The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulation Amendments (February 2014)**

4.29 The CIL regulation amendments issued on the 23rd February 2014 brought a number of important changes into effect with regard to the way in which CIL operates. The most significant amendments are as follows, the deadline for restricting local authorities from imposing Section 106 agreements in the form of pooled contributions has been postponed a year to the 6th April 2015. Additionally, further exemptions and relief from CIL have been introduced to sit alongside social housing and charitable development; these include exemptions for self-build housing and for development comprising residential annexes and extensions. In addition, minor operational changes to CIL, include permitting local authorities to set differential rates of CIL with reference to the intended floorspace of a development, or indeed the number of dwellings/units within a said development. Also phased development will witness each phase liable for a separate CIL payment, in addition to local authorities being presented with the option to accept the provision of infrastructure as full or partial payment of CIL on a development.

## **The Regional Technical Statement for the North Wales and South Wales Regional Aggregate Working Parties - 1st Review 2014**

- 4.30 National planning guidance requires that the South Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party (SWRAWP), of which Bridgend is a member, prepares a Regional Technical Statement (RTS) for the region. The RTS sets out specific planning guidance, aimed at ensuring the sustainable supply of aggregates in Wales.
- 4.31 The Regional Technical Statement (RTS) First Review (which replaced the original RTS of 2008), was fully endorsed by the Welsh Government on the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2014. This followed the preparation of the document and endorsement by member authorities on the 1st April 2014. The document sets out detailed calculations to determine a projected demand for aggregates in the South Wales region from December 2010 until 2036. It subsequently apportions a tonnage of aggregates that each of Local Authority in the group need to provide in the form of landbanks of permissions.

### **City Regions**

- 4.32 City Regions boards were established in South East Wales and Swansea in 2013 to provide leadership, vision and strategic direction for the City Region; prioritise projects which demonstrate the potential to change the economy across the region and gain wider local input, collaboration and support as part of a well-planned process of participation. The Cardiff City Region Board has published its strategic vision for the Region entitled 'Powering the Welsh Economy', it focuses on the opportunity for improved regional alignment and collaboration around 4 key themes: Connectivity, skills, innovation and growth, identity.

### **SEWDER**

- 4.33 The group of South East Wales Directors of Environment and Regeneration (SEWDER) reports to the South East Wales Chief Executives and Managing Directors Group and the Welsh Local Government Association South East Wales Regional Partnership Board. SEWDER have developed a Regional Strategic Framework endorsed by the Leaders of all ten unitary authorities which identifies the key strategic priorities to ensure growth and prosperity for the region: Physical Connectivity; Business and Growth; and People and Skills.

## **City Deal**

- 4.34 A City Deal for Cardiff could unlock significant new money to support capital investment in major infrastructure priorities for the city-region. Arrangements have been put in place to enable a successful bid for City Deal funding to be delivered. All South East Wales Local Authority leaders, including Bridgend County Borough Council, have signed up to taking part in the bid to Central Government.

## **Statistics**

### **Population and Household Projections (2014)**

- 4.35 On the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014, the Welsh Government released a new set of household projections for Wales, based on the data collated during the 2011 census. A summary of the projections are set out below:
- The number of households is projected to increase by around 190,000 (15%);
  - Most of the increase is expected to come from growth in the numbers of 1-person households, and households formed of 2 persons without children;
  - Households containing 4 or 5 persons without children, and lone parent households with 1 child are projected to show large percentage increases; and
  - Lone parent households of all types are projected to increase by 20% whilst overall numbers of households containing 2 or more adults with children are expected to decrease by 4%.
- 4.36 The Household Projection identifies that for Bridgend there were 58,600 households in 2011 and there will be 63,000 in 2021.
- 4.37 The LDP's population and household / dwelling projections were undertaken by Cambridge Econometrics. The LDP's own population projection for 2016 is 140,620, compared to the latest 2011 based Welsh Government Projections for Bridgend in 2016 of 140,600. The LDP projections are therefore proving to be highly accurate. Up until 2021 the LDP's own projection for the County Borough is 144,643, this compares to the 2011 based Welsh Government projection of 143,700. The variance of only 943 in terms of population is not considered significant.

- 4.38 In terms of household projections, the Cambridge Econometrics 2021 household projections were 66,402 households for Bridgend; this compares to the latest 2011 based Welsh Government household projection of 63,000 for 2021. As such by 2021 there is a substantial variance built into the LDP household and dwelling projection of 3402 additional households that the LDP is theoretically catering for in terms of accommodating its LDP housing requirement.
- 4.39 The household projection variance between the LDP and the 2011 based Welsh Government projections at 2016 is 1,023. Although this variance is significant it is not considered that the difference is so fundamental as to require a review of the LDP on the basis of a fundamental change in the underlying national statistics at this stage of monitoring the plan.

### **External Conditions (National Context)**

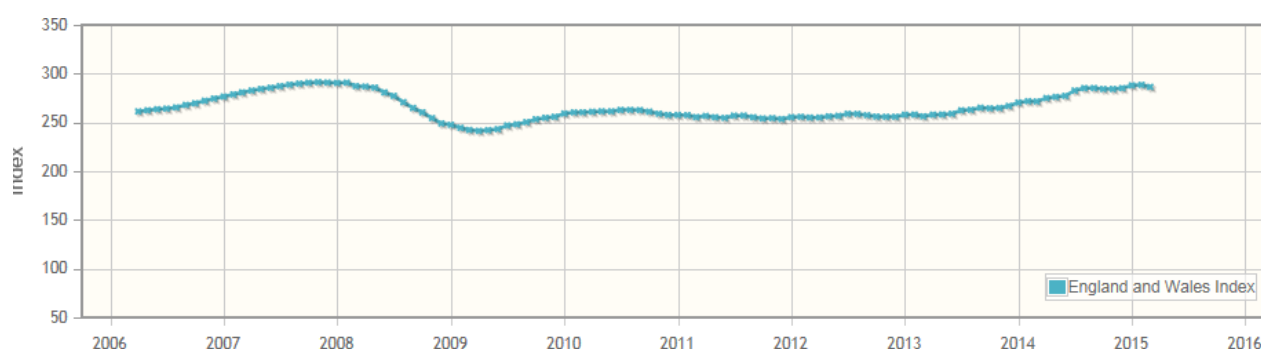
#### **Economy**

- 4.40 The UK economy has been recovering at a relatively strong rate since early 2013, although there was a slight slowdown in growth in late 2014 due to problems in the Eurozone and other geopolitical uncertainties. The services sector remains the main engine of UK growth for both output and employment. Manufacturing and construction growth have slowed recently, but should remain positive contributors to overall UK growth in 2015-16. London and the South East are continuing to lead the recovery, as has been the pattern for many years, but other UK regions should also register positive growth in 2015.
- 4.41 Whilst the picture for the UK economy is relatively positive, Wales has been one of the many countries significantly affected by the global economic downturn and this has been visible in many areas, most notably in the business, commercial and property markets. Welsh Government Statistics indicate that there were 1.364 million people in employment in Wales in 2014/15. Wales is still experiencing a prolonged and gradual realignment of the economy and the levels of growth anticipated at the start of the plan period may take longer to deliver than originally envisaged. The economy in Wales has a high reliance on public sector employment and continuing government cuts and subsequent public sector job losses will significantly dampen predicted growth.
- 4.42 There are two sectors of the Welsh economy that are particularly relevant to the successful implementation of the LDP. These are the housing and commercial markets, which combined with the need for an efficient transport system, are essential to ensure that people have access to homes and jobs.

## Housing Market

- 4.43 In Wales, the picture for house building continues to be more positive than it was previously. Welsh Government statistics indicate that over the last three years there has been a sustained increase in the number of new dwellings started in Wales. During 2014-15 a total of 6,955 new dwellings were started, a rise of 20 per cent on the previous year, and the highest annual number recorded since 2007-08. Following a decrease during 2012-13, the number of new dwellings completed has increased again over the last two years. During 2014-15 there were 6,170 new dwellings completed in Wales, which is 6 per cent more than during 2013-14, but remains below the annual levels seen prior to the economic downturn.
- 4.44 A review of annual house prices for England and Wales for the period 2006 – 2015 indicates clearly the fluctuations that have taken place in house prices over the last five years, as shown in Figure 1 .The average house price in England and Wales rose by approximately 7 % between April 2014 and March 2015.

Figure 1: Average House Sales Price in England and Wales 2006 – 2015



Source: Land Registry

- 4.45 Property market forecasts for England and Wales from Savills (February 2014), anticipate a growth in house prices in Wales of up to 21% in the period up to 2018.

## The Local Development Context & Economic Conditions

- 4.46 In order to properly understand the local context for the LDP, it is necessary to consider a range of factors which affect implementation. These factors include changes to the local policy framework, local economic conditions (in particular the operations of the housing and commercial markets) and the investment strategies of major public and private sector organisations.

- 4.47 The following documents have been added to the LDP evidence base since the adoption of the LDP:

### **Bridgend Joint Housing Land Availability Study 2015**

- 4.48 The recently published 2015 JHLAS shows that the County Borough has a housing land supply, assessed against the housing requirement of the Bridgend LDP of 5.4 years. The 2014 JHLAS also demonstrated a 6.0 year supply of housing land, more than the minimum 5 year requirement which was also assessed against the housing requirement of the adopted LDP.

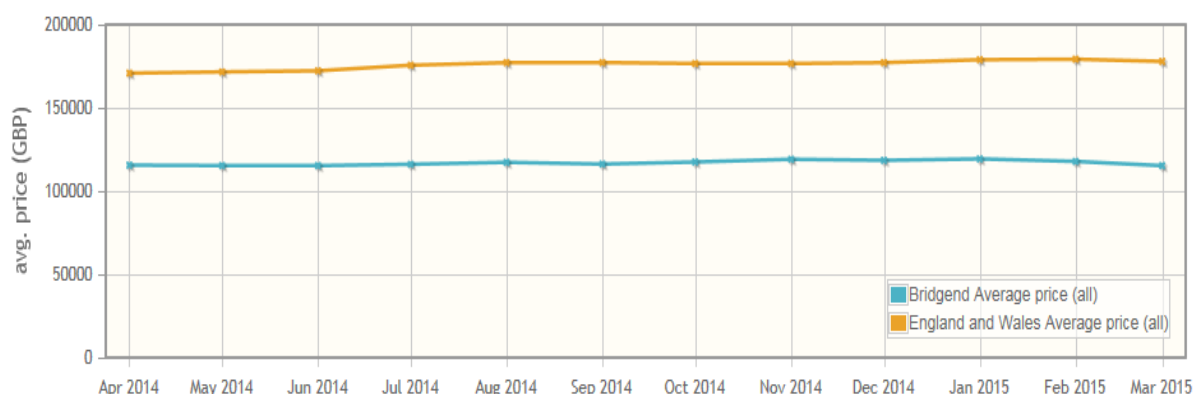
### **Local Economic Conditions**

- 4.49 The housing and commercial property markets are two sectors of the local economy that are particularly relevant to the successful implementation of the LDP.

### **Bridgend Housing Market**

- 4.50 Statistics in relation to house building and prices in Bridgend during 2014-15 suggest that whilst the housing market in the County Borough is beginning to show signs of recovery, current data shows average actual house sale prices for 2014–15 for Bridgend as being £115,297, down from £117,848 during the previous year; this represents a 0.8% decrease. The Land Registry data in Figure 2 below shows the average house sales price from 2014–15 and indicates house sale prices in Bridgend consistently below the national England and Wales sales prices.

Figure 2: Average House Sales Prices in Bridgend 2014/15



(Source: Land Registry)

## Bridgend Economy

- 4.51 Bridgend County Borough falls within the West Wales and Valleys area for European regional aid purposes. This comprises 15 of Wales' 22 local authorities. Over the period 2014 to 2020 approximately £1.4billion of European Union support will be invested in the area to stimulate economic development and growth. Alongside this, the whole area is designated an assisted area which allows the highest levels of state aid to be awarded to businesses seeking to invest.
- 4.52 Although the county borough has strong links both east and west, it falls into the remit of the Cardiff City Region. This is likely to have a significant influence on economic development and infrastructure investment across the region over the forthcoming years. It takes in 10 local authority areas covering the whole of south east Wales.
- 4.53 In the County Borough of Bridgend between April 2014 & March 2015 there were 67,700 economically active people.
- 4.54 The table below shows the proportion of jobs in each sector in the County Borough.

	<b>Employee Jobs by Industry (2014)</b>			
	<b>Bridgend Employee Jobs</b>	<b>Bridgend %</b>	<b>Wales %</b>	<b>Great Britain%</b>
Primary Services	100	0.1	0.4	0.4
Energy & Water	500	1.0	1.5	1.1
Manufacturing	7,900	13.9	12.3	8.5
Construction	2,800	5.0	4.8	4.5
Services	45,300	80.0	81.0	85.6
Wholesale & Retail	9,000	15.8	14.4	15.9
Transport Storage	1,900	3.3	3.5	4.5
Accommodation & Food Services	3,300	5.8	7.3	7.1
Information & Communication	1,900	3.4	2.3	4.1
Financial & Business Services	8,600	15.2	14.7	22.2
Public Admin, Education and Health	19,300	34.0	34.5	27.4
Other Services	1,400	2.5	4.3	4.4

Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey

- Manufacturing remains strong in the area, in comparison with Wales and Great Britain, despite sustained job losses in the sector. Manufacturing has shown considerable falls in employment over the past 15 years;
  - Banking, finance, insurance and other service sectors are under-represented in the county borough when compared to the UK; and
  - The percentage of jobs in public administration, education and health in the county borough is higher than both the Welsh and British averages.
- 4.55 At 2015 there were 4,400 businesses registered in the County Borough. An examination of the size of businesses in the county borough shows that the majority of enterprises are micro (defined as up to nine employees). This is reflective of the national picture which shows similar proportions of very small businesses, with 86.8% employing below 10 employees.
- 4.56 The majority of employment is focused within Bridgend, reflecting that the town is the County Borough's largest settlement and its historical role as a service, employment hub and regional service centre. This is likely to continue into the future as the town is seen as an attractive place for business to locate, given the existing employment base and the availability of skilled labour. Key employment locations are the town centre, Bridgend Industrial Estate, Waterton Industrial Estate, Bridgend Science Park and Brackla and Litchard Industrial Estate.
- 4.57 The LDP recognises that the County Borough has one of the highest rates of employment land development in South East Wales. The Council considers that this wide and balanced portfolio will allow the local economy to attract higher value-added knowledge intensive employment uses, while maintaining the significant manufacturing base that is an important driver of growth for the local economy.
- 4.58 Following a difficult period for the local economy analysis of the monitoring data in chapter 5 indicates a low take up of employment land compared to last year, however, this is not a true reflection of what is happening in the real economy where between 2012-2014 the percentage of working age population increased from 68.9% to 72.1% and the percentage of 16-24 year olds in employment rose from 47.1% to 50.1%. In terms of Gross Value Added (GVA) per head, this has also risen from £14,489 in 2011 to £15,593 in 2014. Also on the ground the green shoots of recovery are starting to emerge, with Ford recently announcing an investment of 181 million pounds into their existing facility in Bridgend. Production of a new highly efficient petrol engine

is expected to start in 2018, safeguarding 750 skilled jobs and demonstrates a growing confidence in the Bridgend economy.

- 4.59 Bridgend County Borough Council and South Wales Police in a bid to reduce costs have come together to create a new state of the art vehicle maintenance facility which is the first of its kind. The 11,000sqm site on the Brackla Industrial Estate, Bridgend will consist of staff from both organisations and will service, repair and MOT all Police and Council vehicles. This project demonstrates the benefits of two large organisations creating a single cost-effective integrated operation which will secure 2 million pounds investment to the Brackla Industrial Estate and keep skilled jobs in the area.
- 4.60 In addition, other sectors of the economy including tourism and services, not dependent on being located on traditional employment sites are growing. The County Borough is experiencing growth in golf tourism, outdoor activity destinations linked to cycle touring, mountain biking and other extreme sports.
- 4.61 The above chapter has identified a number of key contextual changes in national and local planning guidance as well as in the broader economic and social climates. At present, it is not considered that any individual change in circumstance would, at this stage in the plan period, have a substantial effect on the delivery of the objectives of the LDP, nor trigger an early review of the LDP, (in advance of the statutory review in 2017). However, there are various issues identified that will need to be considered further when the LDP review is undertaken.

## 5. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN MONITORING

To Produce High Quality Sustainable Places			
Strategic Development Distribution		Primary Policy: Strategic Policy SP1	LDP Objectives: 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d
<b>Monitoring Aim:</b> Development to be distributed according to the Regeneration-Led Sustainable Development Spatial Strategy			Other Policies:
Policy Target	Indicators	Annual/Interim Monitoring Target	Assessment Trigger
1. 85% or more of housing development on allocated sites takes place within the SRGAs by 2021.	Percentage of the total housing allocation in the Plan developed in the SRGAs.	By 2016 38% or more of the total proposed housing development on allocated sites takes place within the SRGAs.	By 2016 less than 38% of the total proposed housing development on allocated sites takes place within the SRGAs.
2. 80% or more of employment development on Policy REG1 and SP9 sites takes place within the SRGAs by 2021.	Percentage of the total annual employment development on Policy REG1 and SP9 sites located within the SRGAs.	80% of the annual employment development takes place within the SRGAs and Strategic Employment Sites.	Less than 80% of the annual employment development takes place within the SRGAs and Strategic Employment Sites.
3. To ready the Strategic Employment Sites for delivery.	Strategic Employment Sites status in the annual Employment Land Review study.	By 2016 all the Strategic Employment Sites are classified by the Annual Employment Land Review as immediately or short term available.  By 2016 all Strategic	By 2016 all the Strategic Employment Sites are not classified by the Annual Employment Land Review as immediately or short term available.  By 2016 all Strategic Employment Sites do not have a planning consent or an approved development brief.

		Employment sites will have a planning consent or approved development brief.	
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## Analysis of Results

In order to Produce High Quality Sustainable Places, Strategic Policy SP1 aims to ensure that development is distributed according to the LDP's Regeneration-Led Sustainable Development Strategy. To assess how effective the LDP is in implementing it's overall Strategy a number of indicators and targets have been devised by the Council that measure the 'spatial distribution' of housing and employment development. Policy Target 1 measures the spatial distribution of housing growth and requires that 85% or more of housing development, on allocated sites, takes place within the Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas (SRGAs) by 2021.

At a base date of 2009, Housing Policies COM1 and COM2 of the LDP allocated 7,894 housing units across the County Borough. 6,358 of these allocated housing units are located within the 4 SRGAs of Bridgend, Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley, Porthcawl and the Valleys Gateway. At 2015, since the base date of 2009, a total of 2,046 housing units have been completed on all allocated sites, 1,354 of these units have been completed within the 4 SRGAs – which represents 66% of overall completions on allocated sites within the 4 SRGAs. This is below the 85% 2021 target but considerably greater than the 2016 Interim Target of 38%.

In distribution terms 'between' the 4 SRGAs, Bridgend and the Valleys Gateway have over performed in terms of delivery, with 64% of completions taking place in Bridgend (compared with a distribution of allocations of 42%) and 29% of completions, within the Valleys Gateway (compared with a distribution of 16% of allocations), Porthcawl and Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley have underperformed in terms of delivery, which is largely attributed to the delay in bringing forward the Porthcawl Waterfront Regeneration Area (due to withdrawal of large-scale retail development) and within the Llynfi Valley, where there has been issues of housing market viability and the need to overcome various site constraints by land reclamation and land assembly.

Policy Targets 2 and 3 measure the 'distribution' of employment development on allocated employment sites, and the readying of the 4 Strategic Employment Sites respectively. Policy Targets 2 and 3 requires that 80% or more of employment land is developed within employment allocations located within the 4 Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas (SRGAs) and that by 2016 all the Strategic Employment Sites are classified in the Annual Employment Land Review as immediately or short term available.

For the monitoring period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 – 31 March 2015 0.35 ha of vacant employment land was taken up for development on allocated sites within the SRGAs. The total take-up of employment land was 0.45 ha. This therefore represents 78% of overall take-up within the SRGA, very close to the 80% target.

Although monitoring reveals that the LDP is not fully reaching its target the spatial distribution is largely on track.

Considerable progress is also being made with 'readying' the 4 Strategic Employment Sites for development.

#### Strategic Employment Sites

SP9(4) Ty Draw Farm – The site benefits from a planning consent, P/12/796/FUL – granted 22/01/14, for 94 dwellings associated access, open space, with B1 employment use for the remainder of the site. On the basis that the residential part of the site is progressing and the access road is in place, the B1 part of the site is considered to be available for development in the short term.

SP9(2) Land at Island Farm, Bridgend – The site benefits from an outline planning application, P/08/1114/OUT, granted for mixed-use sport, leisure, commercial and offices on 14/03/12. P/14/824/RES – Highway infrastructure, green bridge and drainage infrastructure, was also granted on 12/06/15 at Island Farm. The infrastructure will enable the B1 part of this approved mixed-use, leisure led development to come forward. A further planning application, P/15/318/NMA is pending for amendments to conditions relating to P/08/1114/OUT, to enable ecological mitigation to take place.

SP9(1) Brocastle, Waterton – Regular liaison meetings are held between the Council's planning and economic development officers and Welsh Government Officers, regarding updates and status of Welsh Government owned employment sites. As a Welsh Government owned site, Brocastle has recently been the subject of a pre-application meeting and Welsh Government are currently progressing an updated Masterplan, which is being undertaken by ARUPs. The Brocastle site is also the subject of a bid for European money and is identified by Welsh Government as 1 of only 3 'key' employment sites in Wales. Following completion of the updated Masterplan ARUP are instructed by Welsh Government to progress with a planning application and EIA. This site is therefore considered to be 'on track' to be assessed as available in the short term before 2016, given the ongoing activity.

SP9(3) – Pencoed Technology Park is also owned by Welsh Government. The site straddles the eastern administrative boundary of Bridgend and RCT. The site is identified and the focus of High Quality Life Sciences and manufacturing and is already the home of a number of high profile investments. Welsh Government recently extended their ownership at the site by acquiring the brownfield former Sony land holding and are also in the process of acquiring a small land parcel in the Councils ownership. Substantial infrastructure is in place, including 'road stubs' to undeveloped parcels, including the land within Bridgend's administrative area, and the site is considered to be immediately available for development.

Performance	
Action	

Policy Targets 1, 2 and 3 are on track, continue monitoring.

To Produce High Quality Sustainable Places			
Design and Sustainable Place Making		Primary Policy: Strategic Policy SP2	LDP Objectives: 1f, 1g, 2a, 2b, 2c
<b>Monitoring Aim:</b> All development to meet Sustainable Place Making Criteria			Other Policies: PLA4
Policy Target	Indicators	Annual/Interim Monitoring Target	Assessment Trigger
4. No highly vulnerable development will take place within the C1 and C2 floodplain area.	Amount of development (by TAN15 paragraph 5.1 development category) permitted in C1 and C2 floodplain areas not meeting all TAN15 tests (paragraph 6.2 i-v).	No applications permitted for highly vulnerable development permitted within the C1 and C2 floodplain area.	1 or more planning applications for highly vulnerable development permitted in C1 and C2 floodplain areas not meeting all TAN 15 tests (paragraph 6.2 i-v).
5. No development will adversely impact on water quality or quantity.	Number of planning applications approved in any given year, contrary to the advice of Natural Resources Wales/Dwr Cymru Welsh Water on water quality or quantity grounds.	No planning applications approved in any given year, contrary to the advice of Natural Resources Wales/Dwr Cymru Welsh Water on water quality or quantity grounds.	1 or more planning applications approved in any given year, contrary to the advice of Natural Resources Wales/Dwr Cymru Welsh Water on water quality or quantity grounds.
6. All development proposals will give consideration to Climate Change adaptation techniques within a Design and Access Statement.	Number of planning applications which consider Climate Change adaptation techniques with a Design and Access Statement.	All planning applications give consideration to Climate Change adaptation techniques within a Design and Access Statement:	1 or more major planning application fails to give consideration to Climate Change adaptation techniques within a Design and Access Statement in any given year.  Revision of Climate Neutral Development

		2015 Revision of Climate Neutral Development SPG.	SPG is not complete by 2015.
7. By 2021 60% of the permitted residential development is on previously developed land.	Amount of new residential, development (ha) permitted on previously developed land expressed as a percentage of all residential development permitted.	By 2016 21% or more of new residential development is permitted on previously developed land.	By 2016 less than 21% of new residential development is permitted on previously developed land.

#### Analysis of Results

The aim of Strategic Policy SP2 is to ensure that all development contributes to Sustainable Place Making.

In order to monitor whether development is meeting Sustainable Place Making criteria set out in Policy PLA4, the Council considers 4 Policy Targets (4, 5, 6 and 7) to ensure that no vulnerable development takes place within the C1 and C2 floodplain (Policy Target 4); no development will adversely impact on water quality and quantity (Policy Target 5); all development proposals give consideration to climate change (Policy Target 6) and that by 2021 60% of permitted residential development is on brownfield land (Policy Target 7).

In terms of Policy Target 4, between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 only 2 developments for highly vulnerable (residential) development were permitted within a C2 flood zone. These proposals related to 2 residential properties in Nantyffyllon and a change of use proposal of a former chapel to residential, also in Nantyffyllon in the Llynfi Valley. However, both planning applications were the subject of no objections from NRW and both proposals satisfied the TAN15 justification test. As such the assessment 'trigger' has not been breached, and the Plan is therefore on target in 2014-2015.

With respect to Policy Target 5, during the monitoring period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 – 31 March 2015 no development was permitted contrary to NRW and/or Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water's advice that would adversely impact on water quality or quantity.

Policy Target 6 requires that all development proposals will give consideration to climate change adaptation techniques within a Design and Access Statement. Part of the interim target for this indicator is that by 2015 there should be a revision of SPG12 – Climate Neutral

Development which was originally adopted in 2007. This SPG was updated and replaced by SPG 12 – Sustainable Energy on the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014. Furthermore, all the qualifying developments approved during the monitoring period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 have given consideration to environmental sustainability matters, sustainable building techniques and/or energy usage.

In terms of Policy Target 7, of the 422 new residential units that were permitted between 1 April 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, 418 or 99% were on previously developed land. This far exceeds the target of achieving 60% of permitted residential units on previously developed land by 2021 and greatly exceeds the Interim Target of 21% by 2016.

The Plan is therefore on target in 2014-2015 with respect to all 4 indicators relating to Sustainable Place Making.

Performance	
Action	
Continue monitoring.	

To Produce High Quality Sustainable Places			
Strategic Transport Planning		Primary Policy: Strategic Policy SP3	LDP Objectives: 1f, 1g, 2a, 2b, 2c
<b>Monitoring Aim:</b> All development required to meet Strategic Transport Planning Principles			Other Policies: PLA4
Policy Target	Indicators	Annual/Interim Monitoring Target	Assessment Trigger
8. To increase sustainable forms of transport and reduce overall levels of traffic congestion, the Council will aim to implement the strategic transport improvement schemes detailed in Policy PLA7.	Progression of Regional Transport Plan developments detailed in Policy PLA7, in accordance with the Regional Transport Plan delivery timetable.	PLA7 proposals being implemented in accordance with the Regional Transport Plan delivery timetable.	Regional Transport Plan developments detailed in Policy PLA7, are not being implemented in accordance with the Regional Transport Plan delivery timetable.
<p>Analysis of Results</p> <p>Delivering development that meets the requirements of the 'Strategic Transport Planning Principles' set out in Strategic Policy SP3 of the LDP is central to the aim of Producing High Quality Sustainable Places.</p> <p>The transportation and improvement schemes set out by Policy PLA7 will increase sustainable forms of transport and reduce overall levels of traffic congestion, as well as contributing to the requirements of the new Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.</p> <p>Policy Target 8 monitors the schemes set out by Policy PLA7 against the delivery timetable of the Regional Transport Plan (RTP). However, since the LDP was adopted in September 2013, the Regional Transport Plan (RTP) has been replaced by Bridgend's Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2015-2030, and the various schemes included within Policy PLA7 have been 're-set' accordingly. It is therefore against this new delivery timetable set out in the LTP that Policy Target 8 should be considered with respect to this and future AMRs, in particular those schemes</p>			

programmed in the first phase of the LTP 2015-2020/21, which coincides with the LDP Plan period.

It should be noted that the LTP includes many additional schemes to those originally proposed in the RTP and set out in PLA7, many of which (up to 13 separate schemes) relate to 'bridge' replacements associated with the electrification of the railway line.

In terms of delivery, 3 schemes included in Policy PLA7 were fully implemented by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 these are:-

PLA7(9) – Walking and cycling route between Porthcawl and Rest Bay.

PLA7(14) – Wales Coastal Path.

PLA7(16) – Bus corridor improvements in the Blaengarw - Bridgend, Maesteg - Bridgend, and Bridgend - Cowbridge strategic road corridors.

Other schemes are 'partly' implemented these are:-

PLA7(1) – Llynfi Valley Community Route (Implemented as far south as Maesteg Cemetery).

PLA7(3) – Bridgend – Porthcawl Route. (Not implemented for 'Active Travel' but available as a pedestrian route).

PLA7(12) – Community Route between Wildmill and Bridgend Industrial Estate (small section at Coity Sidings implemented).

A number of 'rail' proposals included within Policy PLA7, relating to improvements to the capacity of the Maesteg – Bridgend Railway line and a new railway station at Brackla, are now investment proposals reserved for the Welsh Government, and not the LTP. Welsh Government are now the coordinating body for investment in all railway related matters, including all new rail services, rail infrastructure and railway stations.

Walking and Cycling Schemes included within the new Phase 1 LTP programme, up to 2021 are:-

PLA7(2) – Improved links to the National Cycle Network in the Vale of Glamorgan.

PLA7(4) – Bridgend and Pencoed (which is financed and programmed for implementation before the end of 2016).

PLA7(7) – Bridgend and Designer Outlet at Junction 36 of the M4 (the middle section of which could be secured by S106 funding).

In terms of highway schemes:-

PLA7(25) – Improvements to A4063 between Sarn and Maesteg is programmed for delivery up to 2021 in the LTP.

All remaining proposals included within Policy PLA7 have been re-scheduled within the LTP, and fall for delivery beyond the LDP Plan period. Notwithstanding this, all of the proposals remain valid and could be implemented earlier should there be further changes to investment decisions or assisted by Section 106 infrastructure funding.

Performance	
Action	

Continue monitoring within the context of schemes set out within the Local Transport Plan.

To Protect and Enhance the Environment			
Natural Environment		Primary Policy: Strategic Policy SP4	LDP Objectives: 2a, 2b, 2c
<b>Monitoring Aim:</b> To protect sites and buildings of acknowledged natural, built and historic interest			Other Policies: ENV1, ENV2, ENV4, ENV5, ENV6, ENV7, ENV8
<b>Policy Target</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Annual/Interim Monitoring Target</b>	<b>Assessment Trigger</b>
9. No inappropriate development takes place in the countryside of the County Borough.	Amount of land in the countryside (ha) lost to development which is permitted by way of a departure application to Policy ENV1.	No land in the countryside lost to development which is permitted by way of departure applications to Policy ENV1.	> 0 ha of land in the countryside lost to development which is permitted as a departure application to Policy ENV1.
10. No inappropriate development in Green Wedges which would contribute to the coalescence of settlements.	Planning permissions given for inappropriate development within Green Wedge designations (Policy ENV2) which contributes towards the coalescence of settlements.	No planning permissions given for inappropriate development within Green Wedge designations (Policy ENV2) which contributes towards the coalescence of settlements.	1 or more planning permissions granted for inappropriate development within Green Wedge designations (Policy ENV2) which contributes towards the coalescence of settlements.
11a. No development will take place which adversely affects a Special Landscape Area.	Number of developments permitted with the potential to adversely affect a Special Landscape Area.	No planning permissions approved contrary to the advice of NRW or the Council's Countryside section / Landscape Officer.	1 or more planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of NRW or the Council's Countryside section / Landscape Officer.
11b. No development will take place which affects the integrity of a designated site for nature conservation.	Number of developments permitted which adversely affect the features of a protected site for nature		

	conservation.		Green Infrastructure SPG is not in place by 2014.
11c. No development will take place which results in detriment to the favourable conservation status of European protected species, or significant harm to species protected by other statute.	Number of developments permitted with the potential to result in detriment to the favourable conservation status of European protected species, or significant harm to species protected by other statute.	2014: Production of a Green Infrastructure SPG.	
<p>Analysis of Results</p> <p>Strategic Policy SP4 of the LDP aims to conserve and enhance the natural environment of the County Borough. The Monitoring Framework sets out 5 Policy Targets (9, 10, 11a, 11b and 11c) to measure how effective the Plan has been in terms of achieving this outcome. These targets relate to monitoring whether inappropriate or detrimental development has taken place within the countryside (Policy Target 9), in Green Wedges (Policy Target 10) within Special Landscape Areas (Policy Target 11a), designated sites of nature conservation (Policy Target 11a) and whether development is detrimental to protected species (Policy Target 11c).</p> <p>In terms of Policy Target 9, 'inappropriate' development in the countryside, between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 there were 3 planning applications classified as departures' from the LDP.</p> <p>However, these proposals were not deemed to be 'inappropriate' development in the countryside after a full assessment. The proposals are:-</p> <p>P/11/781/FUL – The Rest Convalescent Home, Rest Bay, Porthcawl. The redevelopment for residential purposes of part of the building relates to the demolition and reconstruction on a similar footprint and ensures the on-going sustainability of the listed building.</p> <p>P/13/938/FUL – Development to the rear of Cwrt Pant yr Awel, Lewistown. The application site boundary marginally extends beyond the settlement boundary; but upon site examination reflects a 'logical' extent in terms of gradient and demarcation of the countryside beyond.</p> <p>P/14/98/FUL – Castell House, Maesteg – This proposal represents the replacement of an existing dwelling in the countryside, where the</p>			

curtilage of the property was marginally extended to accommodate a small domestic garage.

In terms of Policy Target 10 'inappropriate' development within a 'Green Wedge' (defined by Policy ENV2 of the LDP) which would contribute to the coalescence of settlements, there were 5 planning applications permitted within the Green Wedges between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015. However, none of these proposals were classified as inappropriate or contributed to the coalescence of settlements.

The proposals included a 'spectator stand' associated with existing playing fields, (an acceptable development in a Green Wedge) underground electricity cabling and 'tourism' interpretation panels.

In terms of Policy Target 11a, development adversely affecting Special Landscape Areas (defined by Policy ENV3), 21 planning proposals were approved within Special Landscape Areas during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015. None of these proposals however were the subject of 'objection' from the Council's Countryside and/or Landscape Officer or were approved contrary to the advice of NRW and were considered appropriate.

Similarly with respect to Policy Targets 11b and 11c, no proposals have been granted within the County Borough, contrary to the advice of NRW or the Council's Countryside Section that would be detrimental to the conservation of designated sites of nature conservation or would adversely affect the protection and conservation of European protected species (or species protected by other statutes).

The Council is therefore on target to achieve its aim of protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

The Council has also achieved its 'interim' target of producing a Green Infrastructure SPG by 2014. SPG19 Biodiversity and Development – A Green Infrastructure Approach was adopted by Council on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2014. The SPG has been downloaded more than 4000 times by outside organisations and members of the public. Furthermore, the Council also developed a Green Infrastructure On-line Tool, which provides an interactive means of demonstrating how developments and the Community can contribute to the Green Infrastructure Approach.

Performance	
Action	
Continue monitoring.	

To Protect and Enhance the Environment			
Built and Historic Environment		Primary Policy: Strategic Policy SP5	LDP Objectives: 2a
<b>Monitoring Aim:</b> To protect sites and buildings of acknowledged natural, built and historic interest			Other Policies: ENV8
Policy Target	Indicators	Annual/Interim Monitoring Target	Assessment Trigger
12. Development proposals do not adversely impact upon buildings and areas of built or historical interest and their setting.	Occasions when development permitted would have an adverse impact on a Listed Building; Conservation Area; Site/Area of Archaeological Significance; or Historic Landscape, Park and Garden or their setting.	No Planning consents are issued where there is an outstanding objection from the Council's Conservation and Design team, CADW or Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT).  2015: Production of Built Heritage Strategy.	1 or more planning consents are issued where there is an outstanding objection from the Council's Conservation and Design team, CADW or Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT).  Built Heritage Strategy is not in place by 2015.
<p>Analysis of Results</p> <p>Strategic Policy SP5 of the LDP aims to conserve, preserve or enhance the built and historic environment of the County Borough and its setting. Policy Target 12 measures how effective Policy SP5 has been in achieving this outcome, by monitoring whether developments have been permitted which would have an adverse impact on a Listed Building, Conservation Area, Site/Area of Archaeological Significance or Historic Landscape, Park and Garden or their setting.</p> <p>The assessment is undertaken by analysing whether planning consents have been issued where there are outstanding objections from the</p>			

Council's Conservation and Design Team, CADW or Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT). Analysis for the monitoring period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 of those planning applications where these bodies have been specifically consulted, indicate that no proposals were permitted that had any 'outstanding' objections.

In this respect the Council is therefore on target to achieving its aim of protecting sites and buildings of acknowledged built and historic interest.

Interim Monitoring Target 12 is to produce a Built Heritage Strategy by 2015 and to adopt the Strategy as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). This target has not been achieved to date. The Strategy's production is being delayed to coincide with the outcome of the Historic Environment Bill, which is currently being considered by Welsh Government. The final outcome of the Bill is being awaited to fully inform the Council's Built Heritage Strategy. On this basis, although it is unlikely that the Built Heritage Strategy will be produced before the end of 2015, its future production is anticipated next year, and is programmed for delivery within the Communities Directorate's Business Plan. It is therefore anticipated that progress will be made towards achieving Interim Monitoring Target 12 by next year, and be reported in the 2015/16 AMR accordingly.

Performance	
Action	
Progress Built Heritage Strategy and adopt as SPG.	

To Protect and Enhance the Environment			
Minerals		Primary Policy: Strategic Policy SP6	LDP Objectives: 2d
<b>Monitoring Aim:</b> Safeguard areas of aggregates and coal resources			Other Policies: ENV10, ENV11, ENV12
<b>Policy Target</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Annual/Interim Monitoring Target</b>	<b>Assessment Trigger</b>
13. Maintain a minimum 10 year aggregate landbank throughout the plan period.	Aggregates landbank for Bridgend County Borough in years.	Maintain a minimum 10 year supply of aggregates resource.	Less than a 10 year supply of aggregates resource.
14. No permanent, sterilising development will be permitted within a mineral buffer zone or a minerals safeguarding area.	Number of planning permissions for permanent, sterilising development permitted within a mineral buffer zone or a minerals safeguarding area.	No permanent, sterilising development will be permitted within a mineral buffer zone or a minerals safeguarding area.	1 permanent, sterilising development permitted within a mineral buffer zone or a minerals safeguarding area.
<p>Analysis of Results</p> <p>Strategic Policy SP6 aims to provide a contribution to national, regional and local demand for a continuous supply of minerals. LDP Policy Targets 13 and 14 have a particular focus on monitoring whether the LDP maintains a minimum landbank for aggregates (Policy Target 13) and also safeguarding against permanent sterilising development within mineral buffer zones and mineral safeguarding areas (Policy Target 14).</p> <p>Policy Target 13 specifically requires the maintenance of a minimum 10 year aggregate landbank throughout the plan period within the County Borough. The latest SWRAWP calculates the 10 year aggregate landbank as 68 years and as such the LDP is meeting its target of providing a minimum 10 year supply.</p> <p>With respect to Policy Target 14, analysis of planning applications show that no permanent sterilising developments have been approved in the</p>			

monitoring period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, within mineral safeguarding areas or mineral buffer zones, that did not comply with the criteria of LDP Policies ENV9 or ENV10. The LDP is therefore meeting its monitoring target with respect to Policy Target 14.

Performance

Action

Continue monitoring.

To Protect and Enhance the Environment			
Waste		Primary Policy: Strategic Policy SP7	LDP Objectives: 2d
<b>Monitoring Aim:</b> Seeks to meet the County Borough's contribution to regional and local waste facilities			Other Policies: ENV14, ENV15, ENV16
Policy Target	Indicators	Annual/Interim Monitoring Target	Assessment Trigger
15. Provide 7.7 to 11.9 hectares of available land (or consented for that purpose) on sites identified under Policy SP7 for the provision of new waste treatment facilities to meet the regionally identified need to treat up to 228,000 tonnes of waste per annum.	The availability of 7.7 to 11.9 hectares of land (or consented for that purpose) on sites identified under Policy SP7 to meet the identified need to treat up to 228,000 tonnes of waste per annum.	7.7 to 11.9 hectares of land is provided (or consented for that purpose) on sites identified under Policy SP7 for the provision of new waste treatment facilities.	The availability of land on the sites identified under Policy SP7 falls below 7.7 hectares (or has not been developed for that purpose).
<p>Analysis of Results</p> <p>Strategic Policy SP7 aims to make provision for new waste treatment facilities to meet regional (and local) waste treatment needs.</p> <p>Strategic Policy SP7 identifies 5 sites where waste facilities will be favoured at Heol y Splott, South Cornelly, Brynmenyn Industrial Estate, Village Farm Industrial Estate, Brackla/Litchard Industrial Estate and Waterton Industrial Estate. Waste proposals on other appropriate sites or land allocated for industrial purposes may also be permitted, provided the proposal meets the criteria set out in Policy ENV16 of the LDP.</p> <p>In order to satisfy regional (and local) waste treatment needs Policy Target 15 requires the availability of 7.7 to 11.9 hectares of land (or land consented for that purpose), on the 'favoured' sites set out in SP7.</p>			

At the monitoring date of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, the table below illustrates that 33.70 hectares of land remained available on SP7 sites.

<b>1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 – 31 March 2015</b>		
SP7(1)	Land at Heol-y-Splott, South Cornelly	3.72
SP7(2)	Brynmenyn Industrial Estate, Brynmenyn	7.16
SP7(3)	Village Farm Industrial Estate, Pyle (cumulative total)	2.83
SP7(4)	Brackla/Litchard Industrial Estate, Bridgend	8.33
SP7(5)	Waterton Industrial Estate, Bridgend	11.66
	<b>Total</b>	<b>33.70</b>

For the monitoring period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, there were also 2 change of use proposals for recycling and waste transfer facilities consented on Village Farm Industrial Estate.

The analysis indicates that the Council is therefore achieving its requirement to contribute to identified regional (and local) waste treatment needs and facilities.

Performance

Action

Continue monitoring.

To Protect and Enhance the Environment			
Energy Generation, Efficiency and Conservation		Primary Policy: Strategic Policy SP8	LDP Objectives: 2d
<b>Monitoring Aim:</b> That the County Borough contributes towards the country's renewable energy requirements			Other Policies: ENV17, ENV18
Policy Target	Indicators	Annual/Interim Monitoring Target	Assessment Trigger
16. All major planning applications assess the potential for onsite Renewable / Low Carbon Energy technologies.	Major planning applications which are accompanied by a Renewable / Low Carbon Energy Assessment in accordance with Policy ENV17.	100% of all major planning applications are accompanied by a Renewable / Low Carbon Energy Assessment in accordance with Policy ENV17.  2014: Production of Energy Opportunities Plan SPG.	<100% of all major planning applications are accompanied by a Renewable / Low Carbon Energy Assessment in accordance with Policy ENV17 in any year.  Energy Opportunities Plan SPG is not in place by 2014.
17. To increase the amount (in MW) of energy produced in the County Borough from renewable sources.	Permitted and installed capacity (MW) of renewable electricity and heat projects within the County Borough.	Annual increase in the permitted or installed capacity of renewable electricity and heat projects within the County Borough through the Plan period.  2014: Production of Energy Opportunities Plan SPG.	No annual increase in the permitted or installed capacity of renewable electricity and heat projects within the County Borough. Energy Opportunities Plan SPG is not in place by 2014.
18. 35MW of renewable	The capacity of renewable	If planning applications which	If planning applications which would

energy generated in the refined Strategic Search Areas (Policy ENV18) by the end of the Plan period.	energy developments (MW) installed inside the refined Strategic Search Areas (Policy ENV18).	would cumulatively meet the 35MW target are not submitted by 2018.	cumulatively meet the 35MW target are not submitted by 2018.
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#### Analysis of Results

The monitoring aim of Strategic Policy SP8 is to ensure that development proposals within the County Borough contribute to meeting national renewable energy efficiency targets. The Monitoring Framework sets out 3 targets (16, 17 and 18) to measure how effective the Plan has been in achieving this aim.

Policy Target 16 requires that all major planning applications assess the potential for on-site renewable/low carbon energy technologies and this is measured by analysing whether each major application is accompanied by a renewable/low carbon energy assessment – this is a requirement of Policy ENV17.

Of the ‘qualifying’ developments no major planning applications submitted (and granted) for the monitoring period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 were accompanied by a ‘specific’ energy assessment. Policy Target 16 has therefore not been met.

Wider analysis and contextual information relating to each proposal of ‘why’ the Council has not met this target is therefore required to inform any future necessary action. It should be noted however that all of the relevant proposals gave consideration to environmental sustainability matters and/or climate change adaption techniques within a Design and Access Statement (also acknowledged by Policy Target 6).

Of the qualifying major planning applications permitted during the monitoring period 5 related to industrial buildings on the existing industrial estates of Bridgend and Brackla. A view was taken that given the expectation to expedite employment generating proposals and the relatively low value of existing industrial land and buildings (or their extensions) at these particular locations, it would have been unreasonable to request an Energy Assessment on viability grounds and that notwithstanding an assessment’s outcome, it would be likely that the cost of installing zero carbon or low carbon equipment would have been prohibitive. Neither could these developments have connected to a district heat or energy network.

2 major planning applications at Island Farm and at Parc Derwen (for residential development) were for Reserved Matters where the original consents preceded the introduction of Policy ENV17 and therefore considered not to fall under its remit. A further 2 major applications were for renewable solar energy projects – and therefore not relevant for consideration under Policy Target 17.

3 further major planning applications for residential were approved at Heol Tre Dwr, Bridgend, Carey Baptist Chapel, Aberkenfig and at North-East Brackla, it was recognised that there were considerable abnormal costs at Heol Tre Dwr relating to drainage attenuation and acoustic measures, and the Council was satisfied that Taylor Wimpey the developer were constructing energy efficient homes, incorporating low energy lighting, dual flush toilets, high efficiency heating, double glazing and insulation as standard. The company also fully participates in the CRC (Carbon Reduction Commitment) Energy Efficiency Scheme and have an ethical material sourcing policy, assessed against the Green Building Guide. In this respect an additional Energy Assessment may not have ‘added value’ to this particular development, and energy efficiency matters were addressed within a Design and Access Statement.

Similarly a residential proposal at Carey Baptist Church is being developed by a RSL, where energy efficiency standards exceed the industry norm and national requirements. As such an additional Energy Assessment was not considered necessary.

In terms of North-East Brackla this proposal relates to an outline application submitted by the landowner who have recently transferred the land to a national house builder. At the time of submission of the developer’s new full application an appropriate Energy Assessment can be considered afresh.

An extension to a nursing home also representing a major application within Maudlam was also approved within the Monitoring Period. The Design and Access Statement made a commitment to using materials from sustainable sources and that the extensions would comply with Part L2 of Building Regulations. With respect to this proposal, the most substantive issue considered at pre-application stage was negotiation with the applicant to suitably locate the development within the settlement boundary. The matter of complying with Policy ENV17 and the submission of an Energy Assessment would have been more of a secondary issue, given the complex negotiation that necessarily had to be undertaken to achieve a good design and an extension to a much needed social and community facility within the settlement boundary. In addition, as the development was for an extension to an existing building it was also felt that limited scope existed to achieve zero/low carbon energy technologies for the whole building, given that existing technologies were already in place.

A major application was also submitted and approved for the replacement of Sarn Park Motorway Services, incorporating a new service area building, new petrol station and shop. The assessment undertaken by Welcome Break indicates that the amenity building is likely to achieve BREEAM 'Very Good' standard, incorporating many 'green credentials' including daylight detecting light controls, low energy light fittings, low water content WCs and showers, energy, fuel and water metering monitors, zoned temperature controls, natural ventilation and rainwater collection etc.

Notwithstanding the fact that not all major planning applications have been accompanied by an Energy Assessment the Council has achieved its 'interim target' of producing an Energy Opportunities Plan SPG by 2014. The Council originally produced its Energy Opportunities Plan in November 2011 and this has been updated and subsequently been incorporated into the Sustainable Energy SPG adopted by Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014. Future scope may also exist to connect to a district heat network, as Bridgend has been successful in attracting funding and being progressed for 2 pilot projects relating to a heat network in Bridgend and a 'mine water' network in the Llynfi Valley.

The aim of Policy Target 17 is to increase the amount of energy produced in the County Borough from Renewable Sources in the County Borough. Success is judged by monitoring whether there has been an annual increase in the permitted or installed capacity of renewable electricity and heat projects.

During the Monitoring Period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 54.48mw of renewable electricity capacity was permitted. The schemes approved comprised 2 large scale solar farms at Seaview Farm, Porthcawl and at land near Court Colman, Penyfai, which accounted for approximately 90% of this increase in capacity. Other smaller capacity schemes included solar panel installations at Sony, Pencoed Technology Park and at Asda Store Bridgend; a single wind turbine at the former Stormy Down Aerodrome, and a micro-hydro scheme at Evanstown.

The LDP is therefore annually increasing the amount of energy produced from renewable source and is meeting Policy Target 17.

Policy Target 18 aims to generate 35MW of renewable energy within the refined Strategic Search Areas (SSAs) by 2021.

Parts of Bridgend County Borough lie within the Strategic Search Area (SSA) F for large scale wind energy projects outlined in TAN8. As part of a consortium, Bridgend County Borough carried out a refinement exercise in these areas in 2006.

The refinement carried out by Ove Arup and partners, calculated the generation capacity of parcels of land, included in the SSA. For those 'refined' areas of the SSA in Bridgend County Borough the capacity was calculated as:-

Zone 20 North East of Maesteg 19MW

Zones 31-34 North of Evanstown 31MW

Within zones 31-34 the Council has consented planning applications at Pant Y Wal and Fforch Nest wind farms totalling 35MW – thereby exceeding this capacity. All of this capacity is already installed and operational. It should be noted that Zone 20 was excluded from the capacity assessment on the basis of the operational Ffynon Oer wind farm in Neath Port Talbot. The Plan has therefore met its target with respect of the generation of 35MW of renewable energy by the end of the Plan period.

In addition the Pant Y Wal extension, comprising of an additional 12 wind turbines with a generating capacity of 3MW each was consented on 28/02/15. Although not located within the refined SSA boundary, the turbines are located immediately adjacent to it and within the wider SSA and will contribute an additional 36MW of renewable energy capacity.

As such the generating capacity from large-scale wind turbines (within and immediately adjacent to the refined SSA) is 79.5MW. As such the County Borough is making a significant contribution to national renewable energy targets.

Performance – Policy Target 16	
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Action	
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Policy ENV17 is currently not being implemented as it was intended. In this respect further training of officers to promote the requirement to submit Energy Assessments with planning applications is proposed and to promote this requirement as part of the planning application validation process.	
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Performance – Policy Targets 17 & 18	
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Action	
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Continue monitoring.

To Spread Prosperity and Opportunity through Regeneration			
Employment Land Development		Primary Policy: Strategic Policy SP9	LDP Objectives: 1a, 1b, 1d, 3a, 3b, 3c
<b>Monitoring Aim:</b> Protect 164 hectares of vacant employment land			Other Policies: REG1
Policy Target	Indicators	Annual/Interim Monitoring Target	Assessment Trigger
19. 72.5 ha of employment land allocated by Policies SP9 and REG1 are developed over the Plan period.	Employment land development on Policies SP9 and REG1 sites in hectares.	6.3 ha of employment land allocated by Policies SP9 and REG1 are developed per year for employment uses.	<6.3 ha of employment land allocated by Policies SP9 and REG1 are developed per year for employment uses.
20. A readily available supply of land for development for employment purposes.	Proportion (%) of remaining allocated vacant employment land (SP9 and REG1 sites) which is classed as immediately available or available in the short term in the annual employment land survey.	30% or more of remaining vacant land allocated by Policy SP9 and REG1 is classed as immediately available or available in the short term in the annual employment land survey throughout the plan period.	<30% of remaining vacant land allocated by Policy SP9 and REG1 is classed as immediately available or available in the short term in the annual employment land survey.
<p>Analysis of Results</p> <p>The Local Development Plan's employment land is safeguarded for employment purposes, by Policies SP9 and REG 1. The future prosperity of the local economy is facilitated by ensuring that the County Borough can offer a range and choice of employment sites and premises for employment uses.</p> <p>To achieve the objective of a prosperous local economy Policy Target 19 aims to develop 72.5 ha of employment land during the Plan period up to 2021 and Policy Target 20 aims to ensure that the identified employment allocated by Policy SP9 and REG 1 is readily available.</p>			

Policy Targets 19 and 20 are monitored by an annual employment land survey which monitors the take-up of vacant land on all of the County Borough's allocated employment sites together with the land's status in terms of availability.

The monitoring target associated with Policy Target 19 is that 6.3 hectares of employment land is developed annually on allocated sites.

During the monitoring period 01 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 only 0.45 hectares of vacant employment land was developed. During the preceding year 2014 1.63 ha of employment land was developed. This falls far short of the annual monitoring target of 6.3 ha.

The current low take-up of employment land is attributed to the fact that because of the considerable loss of industrial and business capacity that took place during the recession, most new employment activity is actively being taken up within existing vacant buildings and/or extensions on allocated employment sites rather than on new sites. Effectively the lost capacity as a result of recession is being regained before new take-up accelerates as the economy improves. In addition, other sectors of the economy including tourism and services, not dependent on being located on traditional employment sites are growing.

The failure to meet Policy Target 19 is not a true reflection of what is happening in the real economy, where between 2012 to 2014 the percentage of the working age population rose from 68.9% to 72.1% and the percentage of 16 – 24 year olds in employment rose from 47.1% to 50.1%.

In terms of Gross Value Added (GVA) per head, this has also risen from £14,489 in 2011 to £15,593 in 2014.

Before the economic recession Bridgend County Borough traditionally had one of the highest rates of development of new employment land in South-East Wales. Notwithstanding the recent low take-up of land the underlying locational advantages of Bridgend and its employment sites, the majority of which are located along the M4 corridor, and the prospect of Bridgend's role in a future Cardiff Capital Region means that subject to wider improvements to the overall economy, a much higher level of employment land take-up would take place in the latter part of the Plan Period.

According to the Welsh Government's Statistics for Wales Service, Bridgend County Borough has seen workplace employment growth of 18%

in the period 2001 to 2013. This is substantially above the Welsh average of 8% and the UK average of 7%. Of the 22 local authority areas in Wales Bridgend had the second largest growth behind only Cardiff which showed employment growth of 25% over the period. Six local authority areas actually experienced a fall in workplace employment over the 12-year period. Taking just the latest figures, from 2012 to 2013, workplace employment increased by 2% in both Wales and the UK but Bridgend far outstripped this with the largest local authority percentage increase of 12%. No other part of Wales achieved double digit employment growth over that period. This workplace employment data was published by Welsh Government.

It is therefore important that the Local Development Plan continues to safeguard its most valuable employment assets for future industrial and business purposes and that these land assets are readily available to respond to investment decisions.

In terms of providing a readily available supply of land for development for employment purposes the monitoring target associated with Policy Target 20 is that 30% or more of vacant land allocated by Policies SP9 and REG 1 is classed as immediately available or available in the short term.

The 2015 Employment Survey demonstrates that 42.79 ha of land is immediately available and a further 15.23 ha is available in the short term. This represents 58.02 ha in total or 52.6% of all vacant land on allocated sites.

The Plan is therefore on target with respect to Policy Target 20 by providing a readily available supply of employment land.

#### Performance – Policy Target 19

##### Action

Contextual indicators and comparisons with other local authorities show that notwithstanding the low take up of employment land the ‘real’ economy is relatively buoyant and that the failure to meet this target is the result of the recent very deep recession and the regaining of previous lost capacity. Bridgend retains its locational advantages for business and can expect higher levels of employment land take-up in the latter part of the Plan period. A formal review of policy is not considered necessary at this stage.

#### Performance – Policy Target 20

##### Action

Continue monitoring.

To Spread Prosperity and Opportunity through Regeneration			
Retailing and Commercial Centres		Primary Policy: Strategic Policy SP10	LDP Objectives: 1a, 1b, 1d, 3e, 3f, 3g
<b>Monitoring Aim:</b> Directs new retail and leisure development to the town and district centres of the County Borough			Other Policies: REG6, REG7, REG8, REG9, REG11
Policy Target	Indicators	Annual/Interim Monitoring Target	Assessment Trigger
21. To ensure that vacancy rates within the town centres of the County Borough do not increase to a level that would adversely impact on the vitality of those centres.	Annual vacancy rates of commercial properties within the town centres of the County Borough.	Vacancy rates of commercial properties in the town centres of Bridgend, Maesteg or Porthcawl remain below 15% throughout the plan period.	Vacancy rates of commercial properties in the town centres of Bridgend, Maesteg or Porthcawl increase to more than 15%.
22. The integrity of the Primary Shopping Frontages are maintained.	Proportion of A1 retail uses in the Primary Shopping Frontages designated by REG6.	60% or more of units within the Primary Shopping Frontages are in an A1 use.  2014: Preparation of a Primary Shopping Frontages SPG.	<60% or more of units within the Primary Shopping Frontages are in an A1 use.  Primary Shopping Frontages SPG is not in place by 2014.
23. The town centres of the County Borough are regenerated by the development of key sites.	Amount (sqm) of major retail, office and leisure development permitted in town centres.	2014: Planning consents in place for Porthcawl retail development.  2014: Completion of Maesteg Outdoor Market, Bus Station and Riverside Scheme.	Planning consents for Porthcawl Regeneration Area retail development not in place by 2014.  Maesteg Outdoor Market, Bus Station and Riverside Scheme is not completed by 2014.

		2016: Development Briefs prepared for sites highlighted in Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan.	Development Briefs for the sites highlighted in the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan have not been prepared by 2016.
<p>Analysis of Results</p> <p>The overall aim of Strategic Policy SP10 is to focus and direct new retail, commercial and leisure developments within the County Borough Retail and Commercial Centres in order to maintain and protect their vitality and viability.</p> <p>A key strand of the LDP's Sustainable Regeneration-Led Spatial Strategy is to promote the County Borough's 3 main town centres as part of the LDP Vision, which seeks to create a successful regional employment, commercial and service centre in Bridgend, a vibrant waterfront and tourism destination in Porthcawl and a revitalised Maesteg.</p> <p>In order to measure how successful Policy SP10 is in directing appropriate new retail and leisure development to the County Borough's town and district centres to maintain their vitality and viability the monitoring framework looks at 3 Policy Targets relating to vacancy rates of commercial properties within town centres (Policy Target 21), the integrity of the Primary Shopping Streets within the town centres (Policy Target 22) and progress on the regeneration of key sites within the town centres (Policy Target 23).</p> <p>The annual monitoring target for Policy Target 21 is to ensure that the vacancy rates of commercial properties within the 3 town centres of Bridgend, Porthcawl and Maesteg remain below 15% throughout the plan period.</p> <p>The latest annual retailing and commercial centre survey indicates that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within Bridgend Town Centre of the 382 commercial properties surveyed 55 were vacant – representing a vacancy rate of 14.4%.</li> <li>• Within Porthcawl Town Centre of the 209 commercial properties surveyed 16 were vacant – representing a vacancy rate of 7.7%.</li> </ul>			

- Within Maesteg Town Centre of the 158 commercial properties surveyed 17 were vacant – representing a vacancy rate of 10.8%.

The LDP's strategic aim of maintaining and protecting the vitality and viability of town centres is therefore on track for the monitoring period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 with respect to Policy Target 21.

The annual monitoring target relating to Policy Target 22, to maintain the integrity of the Primary Shopping Frontages of Bridgend, Porthcawl and Maesteg is to ensure that 60% of more units are in A1 (Retail) use.

The latest annual retailing and commercial centre survey indicates that:-

- Within Bridgend Town Centre of the 119 units within the Primary Shopping Frontages 78 were in A1 use – representing 65.6%.
- Within Porthcawl Town Centre of the 96 units within the Primary Shopping Frontages 61 were in A1 use – representing 63.5%.
- Within Maesteg Town Centre of the 87 units within the Primary Shopping Frontages 49 were in A1 use – representing 56.3%.

It should be noted that the proportion of Maesteg Town Centre's Primary Shopping Frontages falls below the 60% annual target, but only marginally so.

The survey however has not taken account of the new 14 individual retail units associated with the recently implemented Maesteg Outdoor Market and the inclusion of these units in any future survey is likely to increase the percentage towards the target 60%. Furthermore significant additional retail floorspace (9465 sq ft) within the town centre has been attracted in the form of a change of use of the previously vacant 'Fluid nightclub' to the original discount shop which was approved on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

The interim target for Policy Target 22 is that a Primary Shopping Frontage SPG should be prepared and in place in 2014, as such the Council has not met it's target with respect to this interim indicator. However, although the SPG has not as yet been through a statutory consultation process and adopted by the Council, its preparation is in hand and an officer draft version of the document exists. It is therefore proposed to

present the draft SPG to Development Control Committee, undertake statutory consultation and adopt the document in 2016. Its delay is largely attributed to staff resource issues and the prioritisation of other work. It is therefore anticipated that the Council will meet this target next year.

With respect to the regeneration of key sites within the County Borough's town centres, the interim monitoring targets associated with Policy Target 23 requires that by 2014 planning consents are in place for Porthcawl regeneration area development and that the regeneration scheme associated with Maesteg Outdoor Market is completed. Both these interim targets have been met, with the successful implementation of the Maesteg Outdoor Market where 13 out of the 14 units are occupied by retail traders. It should be noted however that although an outline planning consent is in place for Phase I of the Porthcawl Regeneration Area, this is unlikely to proceed and be implemented in its current form, given the withdrawal of the preferred retail operator and subsequent attempts to attract an alternative developer have not been successful. This is due to fundamental changes to the retail convenience store sector and lack of interest in developing large-scale superstores, which is a situation beyond the Council's control.

In response to this change in circumstance the Council and other landowner is actively pursuing an alternative strategy to deliver Phase I of the scheme, including the potential for a reduced retail element by commissioning a Development Brief and Masterplan for the Harbourside Area, with a view to adopting the document as SPG and disposing of this part of the site in 2016. In this respect Planning Consultants NLP have recently been appointed.

The interim target with respect to Bridgend Town Centre regeneration sites is to ensure that Development Briefs are prepared for those sites highlighted in Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan.

With respect to these sites, Riverside – Land at Rhiw Car Park has been the subject of a successful Vibrant and Viable Places funding bid, and the Council in partnership with Coastal Housing will deliver a commercial and residential scheme together with a replacement car park within the next 3 years. The scheme has also successfully gained a recent planning consent.

Southside – Land at Brackla Centre Cheapside site is in part ownership of South Wales Police who are currently rationalising their estate and acquiring and developing alternative premises to release their existing building on the site. No development brief currently exists for the site, however when SW Police rationalisation process is complete it is the intention of the Council to engage as partners to consider the future of the

site and bring forward a Development Brief.

The scheme for Elder Yard, Bridgend, which was successful in attracting Heritage Lottery Monies is complete and the building's owner is currently seeking an appropriate commercial operator.

Land north of Market Street and the Embassy Cinema Site are both in private ownership. The Embassy Cinema site is currently being utilised for town centre car parking, and the premises making up the Market Street site are currently largely occupied by existing users. With respect to both of these sites the Council is willing to engage with land owners and bring forward Development Briefs to facilitate alternative commercial development.

It maybe unlikely that Development Briefs will be progressed for these sites in the short term by 2016 although this is feasible should they attract market interest and there is a willingness on behalf of the landowners.

Performance – Policy Target 21 & 23	
Action	
Continue monitoring.	
Performance – Policy Targets 22	
Action	

In order to assist in meeting Policy Target 22, the Council will progress SPG relating to Primary Shopping Frontages within town centres. Notwithstanding the successful regeneration of the 'Outdoor Market' In Maesteg and the 'Riverside' Vibrant & Viable Places Scheme' in Bridgend. With respect to Policy Target 23 planning officers will actively pursue a development team approach with officers across the Council and with landowners to further facilitate town centre regeneration and bring forward Development Briefs.

To Protect and Enhance the Environment			
Tourism		Primary Policy: Strategic Policy SP11	LDP Objectives: 1c, 3c, 3d
<b>Monitoring Aim:</b> Encourage high quality Sustainable Tourism			Other Policies: REG2, REG13
<b>Policy Target</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Annual/Interim Monitoring Target</b>	<b>Assessment Trigger</b>
24. To increase year on year the number of visitors to the County Borough.	Annual number of visitors to the County Borough.	Year on year increase of visitors to the County Borough.	Decrease in visitors to the County Borough compared to previous year.
<p>Analysis of Results</p> <p>Strategic Policy SP11 aims to promote and encourage high quality sustainable tourism, through the implementation of various appropriate projects relating to activity based tourism, business, events and cultural tourism.</p> <p>Policy Target 24 measures how effective the Plan is in promoting and encouraging tourism and the indicator is to increase the annual number of visitors to the County Borough.</p> <p>The latest STEAM figures for Bridgend indicates that between 2013 and 2014 visitor numbers for the County Borough rose from 3,546,000 to 3,658,200. This represents year on year increase of 112,200, or more than 3% in visitor numbers between 2013 and 2014.</p> <p>The County Borough's tourism offer is continually being enhanced and schemes contributing to this success include the implementation of the Wales Coastal Path, a new touring caravan/camping site at Glynogwr , Lakeside (REG12(a)), various mountain bike trails and new visitor</p>			

centres at Bnyngarw County Park and Parc slip. Within Porthcawl specifically the Harbourside Marina scheme has been implemented and the resort continues to host a number of successful festivals including the Elvis, Rockabilly and New Romantic festivals, attracting large number of visitors.

The Plan is therefore on target with respect to Policy Target 24.

Performance	
Action	

Continue monitoring.

To Create Safe, Healthy and Inclusive Communities			
Housing and Affordable Housing		Primary Policy: Strategic Policy SP12	LDP Objectives: 1c, 3c, 3d
<b>Monitoring Aim:</b> Requires 9,690 market (including 1,370 affordable) dwelling units to be accommodated in the County Borough during the Plan period			Other Policies: COM1, COM2, COM3, COM5, COM6
Policy Target	Indicators	Annual/Interim Monitoring Target	Assessment Trigger
25. Maintain a 5 year supply of housing land for development throughout the plan period.	Forecast supply of housing land.	Maintain a 5 year supply of housing land for development throughout the plan period.	Less than a 5 year supply of housing land is recorded.
26. Provide 9,690 new dwellings by 2021 based on the three 5 year tranches set out in Policy SP12.	Annual dwelling completions.	By 2011 provide 2,085 dwellings. By 2016 provide 4,973 dwellings. By 2021 provide 9,690 dwellings.	Less than 4,973 dwellings developed by 2016.
27. Develop COM1 and COM2 Residential Allocations at or above the estimated number of units specified.	Number of units permitted on COM1 and COM2 Residential Allocations.	Residential Allocations developed at or above the estimated number of units specified in Policies COM1 and COM2.	Residential Allocations developed below the estimated number of units specified in Policies COM1 and COM2.
28. Develop Small and Windfall sites, over 0.15 hectares, at a density of 35 dwellings per hectare or more.	Average density of Small and Windfall sites over 0.15 hectares.	Small and Windfall sites over 0.15 hectares developed at a density of 35 dwellings per hectare or more.	Small and Windfall sites over 0.15 hectares developed at a density of less than 35 dwellings per hectare.
29. Provide 1,370 affordable	Annual affordable housing	By 2011 provide 295 dwellings.	Dwelling completions fall below specified

dwelling by 2021 through the planning system as secured by condition or S106.	completions.	By 2016 provide 703 dwellings. By 2021 provide 1,370 dwellings.	requirement.
30. Monitor the need for a permanent or transit Gypsy & Traveller site.	The annual number of authorised and unauthorised Gypsy & Traveller encampments in the County Borough.	Approve the Bridgend County Borough protocol for the management of unauthorised gypsy and traveller encampments by April 2014.  No increase in the average of 3 unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller Sites recorded in 1 year by the biannual Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count and / or the Gypsy and Traveller Protocol.	The Bridgend County Borough protocol for the management of unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller encampments is not approved by 2014.  An increase above 3 unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller Sites recorded in 1 year by the biannual Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count and / or the Gypsy and Traveller Protocol for 2 consecutive years will require the identification of a site.

#### Analysis of Results

In order to create safe, healthy and inclusive communities Policy SP12 of the LDP aims to provide 9,690 dwellings up to 2021, including 1,370 units of affordable housing, to provide for all the accommodation needs of the County Borough.

Five Policy Targets monitor the performance of whether the LDP is meeting its housing needs by measuring the supply of housing land (Policy Target 25), housing completions, for both market and affordable dwellings (Policy Targets 26 and 29), housing numbers permitted on allocated sites (Policy Target 27), housing density (Policy Target 28) and whether there is a need for a permanent or transit Gypsy and Traveller site (Policy Target 30).

Policy Target 25 aims to provide a 5 year supply of housing land for development throughout the plan period. The supply of land for housing is

assessed as part of the annual Joint Housing Land Availability Study (JHLAS) which is a statutory document which local planning authorities are required to produce by Welsh Government in accordance with guidance set out in Planning Policy Wales (PPW) and Technical Advice Note (TAN) 1. Supply is assessed against the housing requirements of an adopted development plan.

The recently published 2015 JHLAS shows that the County Borough has a housing land supply, assessed against the housing requirement of the Bridgend LDP of 5.4 years.

The LDP has therefore achieved its target of maintaining a 5 year supply of housing land during the monitoring period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31 March 2015.

The 2014 JHLAS also demonstrated a 6.0 year supply of housing land, more than the minimum 5 year requirement which was also assessed against the housing requirement of the adopted LDP.

Policy Target 26 aims to provide 9,690 new dwellings by 2021, based on the three, 5 year tranches of delivery set out in Policy SP12 of the LDP.

The 2015 JHLAS indicates that 582 new homes were completed during the monitoring period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 and that 4,041 dwellings have been completed in total, during the LDP period 2006 to 2015.

The relevant interim monitoring target is to provide 4,973 dwellings by 2016. The 2015 JHLAS forecasts 540 new dwelling completions on large sites in 2016 and with the inclusion of an estimated rolling average 'small-site' contribution of 57 new dwellings, estimated housing completions for 2016 is 598. This indicates an estimated cumulative total of 4,650 by 2016, which is marginally below the 2016 target of 4,973. However, housing completions are forecast to increase substantially from 2017 onwards reflecting a progressively improving housing market. Next year's report however would indicate whether or not the assessment trigger will be breached, if less than 932 dwellings were completed.

Policy Target 27 requires that the development of housing allocations in the LDP is at or above the estimated numbers set out under Policies COM1 and COM2 of the LDP. This is monitored against the number of units permitted on allocated sites.

Analysis of permissions indicate that housing allocations are coming forward at or above estimated capacity. Those allocations that have significantly exceeded estimated capacity include Ewenny Road, Maesteg where 165 units have been permitted (subject to S106) compared to an allocation in COM1(17) of 125 and Pwll y Waun, Porthcawl, where 73 dwellings have been permitted, and are currently being implemented, compared to 40 units allocated by allocation COM1(27).

The LDP is therefore on target with respect to the delivery of residential allocations at or above estimated capacity, as required by Policy Target 27.

Policy Target 28 aims to develop small and windfall sites, over 0.15 hectares at density of 35 dwellings per hectare or more. The Policy Target is a monitoring mechanism for the implementation of COM4 of the LDP.

An analysis of permissions granted from the adoption of the LDP to the end of the monitoring period 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 has been undertaken and 12 planning consents are relevant to this monitoring target, ranging from small-scale proposals for only 1 dwelling up to larger unit size windfall developments of 56 dwellings.

5 of the proposed developments have residential densities greater than 35 dwellings per hectare. These proposals include apartment developments of 40 units at New Road, Porthcawl and at Bridgend Road, Aberkenfig, being developed at densities of 83 and 93 dwellings per hectare respectively.

Some of the smaller-scale developments of 1-5 units however have permission for development at lower densities than 35 dwellings per hectare. However these proposals are justified exceptions permitted by Policy COM4 because of limitations imposed by highway and access issues, topography and site configuration or being located within sensitive locations; one proposal being located within a conservation area and within the setting of a listing building.

On balance, taking account of the total area of 4.11 hectares for these proposals, and the total number, 144 units to be delivered, the 'average' density of eligible small and windfall sites is 35.04 dwellings per hectare.

It is considered the LDP is broadly on target with respect to the implementation of Policy COM4 and that Policy Target 28 is being met.

In terms of the delivery of affordable housing, Policy Target 29 requires the delivery of 1,370 units by 2021 with the interim target to provide 703 affordable dwellings by 2016. Analysis of the housing returns data indicates that at 2015, 588 general needs affordable new build dwellings have been completed with 880 affordable units delivered in total (taking account of supported housing schemes and a small element of mortgage rescue). The 2015/16 forecast is for an additional 146 general needs affordable housing units to be delivered next year, which would provide a total of 734 new build general needs affordable units by 2016.

The LDP is therefore on target to deliver its interim target of 703 affordable housing units by 2016 and 1,370 units by 2021.

Policy Target 30 requires that the Local Planning Authority monitors the need for a Gypsy and Traveller Site by recording the annual number of authorised and unauthorised encampments in the County Borough. The interim target is that there is no increase in the average of 3 unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller Sites within 1 year, as recorded in the Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count and/or the Council's Gypsy and Traveller Protocol. An increase above 3 unauthorised encampments for 2 consecutive years would trigger the requirement to identify a site.

Another part of the Council's interim target was to ensure that the Protocol for the Management of Unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller Encampments should be approved by April 2014. This has been achieved with the protocol being approved by Management Team, and a Lead Officer responsible for the protocol's implementation identified.

For the monitoring period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, 2 unauthorised incidences occurred within the County Borough which is below the 1 year average of 3. As such the LDP is on target with respect to this indicator and will not 'breach' the assessment trigger of 2 consecutive years of increase in unauthorised encampments within the next 2 years.

Notwithstanding whether or not the assessment trigger of Policy Target 30 is breached within this or subsequent years, the requirement as to whether the Council will need to identify a Gypsy and Traveller Site is now however determined by the new requirements of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 requires each local authority in Wales to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment to ensure that needs are properly assessed and planned for. An assessment must be submitted to Welsh Government by February 2016 with a

statutory duty placed on local authorities to make provision for site(s) where an assessment identifies an unmet need.

The Council will await the outcome of the forthcoming Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment to determine whether future sites are required to be identified within the County Borough. In this respect officers of the Development Planning Team are working closely with Housing Officers to ensure that the Council's obligations are met with respect to the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

Performance

Action

Continue monitoring.

To Create Safe, Healthy and Inclusive Communities			
Community Uses		Primary Policy: Strategic Policy SP13	LDP Objectives: 1c, 3c, 3d
<b>Monitoring Aim:</b> The retention of existing community uses and facilities and seek to develop new ones, where needed.			Other Policies: COM7, COM8, COM9, COM10, COM11, COM12, COM13, COM14, COM15
Policy Target	Indicators	Annual/Interim Monitoring Target	Assessment Trigger
31. The retention or enhancement of Community Facilities.	Number of applications approved contrary to Strategic Policy SP13 and the protective aim of Policy COM7.	No applications approved contrary to Strategic Policy SP13 and the protective aim of Policy COM7.	1 application approved contrary to Strategic Policy SP13 and the protective aim of Policy COM7.
<p>Analysis of Results</p> <p>Strategic Policy SP13 aims to maintain and improve the quality of life of residents of the County Borough by retaining or enhancing a range of social and community facilities. In the interest of service efficiency the Policy also requires that where new or replacement facilities are proposed, co-location of facilities are considered before stand-alone facilities.</p> <p>Policy COM7 of the LDP specifically protects against facility loss, unless justified by provision of suitable alternative provision, if it is demonstrated that there is an excess of provision or the facility is no longer required.</p> <p>For the monitoring period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 no planning applications were approved contrary to the protective aim of Policies SP13 or COM7.</p> <p>A number of large-scale proposals have been permitted which will enhance the County Borough's access to social and community facilities especially recreation facilities. These include a new Indoor Tennis Centre with 12 external courts at Island Farm, 3 new rugby pitches at Bryncethin Claypits, a number of multi-purpose pitches, car park and improved access at Newbridge Field extension, and a new "community</p>			

focussed school” at Parc Derwen which will replace the existing Coity Primary School by providing a more modern and larger facilities including a community wing to the building, playing fields and a MUGA.

Performance

Action

Continue monitoring.

## 6. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL MONITORING

- 6.1 The Sustainability Appraisal of the LDP identifies 15 objectives under the 4 wider sustainability objectives of:-
- Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
  - Effective protection of the environment;
  - Prudent use of natural resources; and
  - Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.
- 6.2 LDP monitoring is concerned with assessing performance of Policies in delivering the Plan's strategy and achieving its objectives and many relate directly to sustainable development. As such there is considerable overlap between the monitoring framework of the LDP and the SA which uses a subset of the LDP's monitoring objectives.
- 6.3 Each of the 15 Sustainability Appraisal objectives are therefore assessed against those LDPs monitoring indicators that have been identified as relevant to the 15 sustainability objectives.
- 6.4 Against each SA objective the monitoring result is cross-referenced to the action column in the previous monitoring chapter (with the exception of the SA objective relating to Built Environment, where performance is not dependant on whether the Built Heritage Strategy is in place). The symbol delineates the specific performance against the SA objective where:-
- represents 'Likely to contribute to the achievement of greater sustainability'; and
  - x represents 'Likely to detract from the achievement of greater sustainability'.
- 6.5 The 2014/15 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) monitoring results show that out of the 15 objectives and their related targets, 13 have been achieved. In overall terms the LDP is therefore contributing positively to the achievement of greater sustainability.
- 6.6 The SA objectives relating to 'maintaining high and stable levels of economic growth and employment' has not been fully achieved with respect to 'Employment'.
- 6.7 The analysis shows that the LDP did not deliver the annual take-up of employment land of 6.3 hectares. However, as noted in the previous section this is considered not to be a true reflection of what is happening in the real

economy, and the current low take up is expected to increase in the coming years in line with expected improvements to the general economy.

- 6.8 With respect to the SA objective of 'social progress which recognises the needs of everyone' the LDP has performed very well. However it missed an 'Accessibility' target relating to the proportion of A1 retail uses in Primary Shopping Areas. However, this target was only marginally missed for 'Maesteg Town Centre', where the proportion of A1 units in the primary shopping frontage was 56.3% (target being 60%). In this respect the Council is proposing to bring forward a Primary Frontage SPG next year which will assist in ensuring that this target is met. Furthermore, the future inclusion of the new outdoor market retail units as part of the annual retail survey is likely to result in the target being achieved.
- 6.9 Under the Sustainability Objectives of a 'prudent use of natural resources' the LDP has delivered on all of its targets relating to air, climate change, water land/soil, minerals and waste and renewable energy. Although not specifically measured under 'renewable energy' as part of the SA monitoring process there is also scope for further improvement, with the proper implementation of Policy ENV17 of the LDP and the requirement for major planning application to be accompanied by renewable/low carbon energy assessments which is commented on in the previous section.
- 6.10 SA Monitoring also shows that, the LDP is meeting its objective of 'the effective protection of the environment'. However, as noted as part of the LDP monitoring framework this will be further enhanced by the future programmed implementation of the 'Built Heritage Strategy'.

Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone				
				Monitoring Result
1	Accessibility	To ensure an increase in accessibility to opportunities, transport and to all services and information in the County Borough.	IND1: % of total County Borough housing developed in the SRGA	●
			IND2: % of total County Borough employment land developed in the SRGA	●
			IND8: Progress on RTP schemes	●
			IND22: Proportion of A1 retail uses in the Primary Shopping Areas	X
2	Housing	To provide the opportunity for people to meet their housing needs	IND25: Forecast supply of housing completions	●
			IND26: Annual housing completion figures	●
			IND29: Annual affordable housing completion figures	●
3	Health, safety and security	To improve overall levels of health and safety, including the sense of security, for all in the County Borough	IND31: Improvements to community facilities provision secured through planning consents, conditions and/or Section 106 agreements.	●
4	Community	To maintain, promote and where suitable enhance, the distinctive character of the communities of Bridgend	IND31: Improvements to community facilities provision secured through planning consents, conditions and/or	●

			Section 106 agreements.	
Effective protection of the environment				
5	Biodiversity	To maintain and enhance the diversity and abundance of species, and safeguard areas of significant nature conservation value	IND11a/b/c: Loss of natural habitats without mitigation or translocation of species associated with CCW/Countryside section observations on development control applications	•
6	Landscape	To maintain and enhance the quality and character of the landscape, including its contribution to the setting and character of settlements	IND10: Green Wedge designated land lost to inappropriate development which contributes to coalescence of settlements.	•
			IND11a/b/c: CCW/Countryside section observations on development control applications	•
7	Built Environment	To maintain and enhance the quality of the built environment, including the cultural/historic heritage	IND12: Amount of development permitted which could potentially impinge upon one of those areas/buildings listed as advised by Cadw, the Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) and the Conservation and Design section of the Council.	•
Prudent use of natural resources				
8	Air	To reduce all forms of air pollution in the interests of local air quality and the integrity	IND8: Progression on Regional Transport Plan developments	•

		of the atmosphere		
9	Climate change	To ensure that new development takes into account the effects of climate change	IND6: Developments which incorporate Climate Change adaptation techniques	•
10	Water	To maintain and improve the quality and quantity of ground waters, river waters and coastal and bathing waters	IND5: NRW / DCWW observations on development control applications	•
11	Land / Soil	To use land efficiently, retaining undeveloped land and bringing damaged land back into use	IND9: The amount of departure planning application permitted outside of the designated settlement boundaries of the County Borough	•
			IND10: Green Wedge designated land lost to inappropriate development which contributes to coalescence of settlements.	•
12	Minerals and waste	To maintain the stock of minerals and non-renewable primary resources	IND13: Amount of aggregates landbank permitted as a percentage of total landbank identified in the Regional Technical Statement	•
			IND14: Number of planning permissions for permanent, sterilising development permitted within a buffer zone or a minerals safeguarding area.	•
13	Renewable energy	To increase the opportunities for energy generation from renewable energy sources	IND17: Progress on adoption of an Energy Opportunities Plan	•
			IND17/18: Permitted and / or installed	•

			capacity of renewable electricity and heat projects within the County Borough.	
Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment				
14	Employment	To ensure that there is a vibrant local economy which is at the forefront of a wider regional economy and provide diversity of employment within the County Borough and support a culture of entrepreneurship	IND2: % of total County Borough employment land developed in the SRGA	•
			IND3: Implementation of strategic employment sites	•
			IND19: Annual take-up rate of employment land allocations developed / redeveloped for employment purposes.	X
15	Wealth creation	To achieve a clear connection between effort and benefit, by making the most of local strengths, seeking community regeneration, and fostering economic activity	IND3: Implementation of strategic employment sites	•
			IND19: Annual take-up rate of employment land allocations developed / redeveloped for employment purposes.	X
			IND20: Proportion of the allocated employment land immediately available or available in the short term.	•
			IND24: Annual number of overnight visitors to the County Borough.	•

## 7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 This is the first AMR to be prepared since the adoption of the Bridgend LDP and is based on the period from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015 and is required to be submitted to Welsh Government by the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2015. The findings of the AMR provide an important opportunity for the Council to assess the effectiveness of the Plan and to determine whether or not it needs to be reviewed.

7.2 Local Development Plan Wales (2005) sets out seven questions that the AMR must seek to address. Whilst all of the issues are considered and addressed throughout the report as part of the analysis of the monitoring data, they are not set out specifically to directly address the particular questions. In order to ensure that the AMR complies with its statutory requirements, responses to each of the assessment factors identified in LDP Wales are outlined below:

### **1. Does the basic strategy remain sound (if not, a full plan review may be needed)?**

7.3 The evidence collected as part of the annual monitoring process for 2014-15 indicates that the LDP Strategy remains sound, effective and is for the most part being delivered. Whilst the impact of the global economic recession has meant that development in some areas is slower than predicted, it remains the Councils view that the LDP will provide a robust foundation to deliver sustainable economic growth and regeneration over the plan period.

### **2. What impact are the policies having globally, nationally, regionally and locally?**

7.4 Globally, the SEA Monitoring framework identifies that there is a positive impact on economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainability.

7.5 Nationally, the LDP policy framework is providing opportunities for development to meet national need for housing and employment land. The County Borough is making a significant contribution to national renewable energy targets. The generating capacity within and immediately adjacent the refined SSA (north of Evanstown) is 79.5MW which is considerably higher than the estimated capacity within the SSA of 31 MW.

7.6 From a regional perspective the LDP is assisting in meeting transport, waste and mineral requirements.

7.7 At a local level, the LDP policy framework and allocations are assisting with regeneration objectives and meeting the needs of the local community.

### **3. Do the policies need changing to reflect changes in national policy?**

- 7.8 Chapter 4 highlights significant changes in national planning policy guidance as well as proposed changes to the structure of the planning system in Wales during 2014-15. Whilst these policy changes will undoubtedly need to be incorporated into LDP policies, they are not considered to be of a scale that would require immediate amendment. These national policy changes will be considered further at the statutory LDP Review stage from 2017 with any amendments made to the LDP as necessary.

### **4. Are policies and related targets in the LDP being met or progress being made towards meeting them, including publication of relevant supplementary Planning guidance (SPG)?**

- 7.9 The findings of the LDP and SA monitoring exercise are outlined in chapters 5 & 6 of the AMR.
- 7.10 The following paragraphs provide a brief commentary on the LDP monitoring targets that have not been fully met.
- 7.11 The monitoring objectives relating to ‘maintaining high and stable levels of economic growth and employment’ has not been fully achieved with respect to ‘Employment’. The analysis shows that the LDP did not deliver the annual take-up of employment land of 6.3 hectares. However, as noted in the main body of the AMR report this is considered not to be a true reflection of what is happening in the real economy. The current low take up is expected to increase in the coming years in line with expected improvements to the general economy.
- 7.12 In terms of achieving the required proportion of A1 retail uses in Primary Shopping Areas, the County Borough performed adequately, however this target was marginally missed for ‘Maesteg Town Centre’, where the proportion of A1 units in the primary shopping frontage was 56.3% (target being 60%). In order to assist in meeting Policy Target 22 the Council is proposing to deliver a Primary Frontage SPG next year which will assist in ensuring that this target is met. Furthermore, the future inclusion of the new outdoor market retail units as part of the annual retail survey is likely to result in the target being achieved.
- 7.13 Under the Sustainability Objectives of a ‘prudent use of natural resources’ the LDP has delivered on all of its targets relating to air, climate change, water land/soil, minerals and waste and renewable energy. Although not specifically measured under ‘renewable energy’ as part of the SA monitoring process there is also scope for further improvement, with the proper implementation of

Policy ENV17 of the LDP and the requirement for major planning application to be accompanied by renewable/low carbon energy assessments which is commented on in the previous section.

- 7.14 Interim Monitoring Target 12 sets out the requirement to produce a Built Heritage Strategy by 2015 and to adopt the Strategy as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). This target has not been achieved to date. The Strategy's production is being delayed to coincide with the outcome of the Historic Environment Bill, which is currently being considered by Welsh Government. On this basis, although it is unlikely that the Built Heritage Strategy will be produced before the end of 2015, its future production is anticipated next year, and is programmed for delivery within the Communities Directorate's Business Plan. It is therefore anticipated that progress will be made towards achieving Interim Monitoring Target 12 by next year, and be reported in the 2015/16 AMR accordingly.

**5. Where progress has not been made, what are the reasons for this and what knock on effects it may have?**

- 7.15 The main reason for the slow delivery of some parts of the LDP is linked to the impact of the global economic recession on the operations of the housing and commercial markets. Whilst, a continued reduction in investment in housing and commercial development will inevitably have an adverse impact on the delivery of some elements of the LDP, the housing and commercial markets are showing positive signs of recovery and the Council does not consider it necessary to amend or review the LDP at this time.
- 7.16 Section 5 provides a detailed analysis of the success of the plan to date against the monitoring indicators and factors in terms of delivering sustainable development. It also provides a summary of how the plan has performed specifically in 2014/15.
- 7.17 The findings of the SA monitoring exercise are outlined in Section 6 of the AMR. The results indicate that overall, the plan is contributing towards sustainable development in the County Borough of Bridgend.

**6. Do any aspects of the LDP need adjusting or replacing because they are not working as intended or are not achieving the objectives of the Strategy and/or Sustainable Development Objectives?**

- 7.18 The LDP Development Strategy remains fundamentally sound and the Council does not consider that any aspects of the Plan need adjusting or replacing at this time.

**7. If policies or proposals need changing, what suggested actions are required to achieve this?**

- 7.19 Information collected through the AMR process indicates that the plan policies are generally being met and that the plan is moving towards its targets. The Council does not consider that any aspects of the plan need adjusting or replacing at this time. A full review of the Plan will be triggered in 2017.
- 7.20 In September 2015 the Welsh Government published a revised LDP Manual. Paragraph 9.4.8 identified additional issues that maybe relevant for the AMR to consider.

**8. What new issues have occurred in the area or in local/national policy (key recent contextual and national policy changes, future prospects)?**

- 7.21 This is covered in detail in the main body of the AMR report. The Council does not consider that any aspects of the plan need adjusting or replacing at this time. A full review of the Plan will be triggered in 2017.

**9. How relevant, appropriate and up to date is the LDP Strategy and its key policies and targets?**

- 7.22 As outlined in the previous chapters of the AMR report, the LDP Strategy remains sound and no change is required to the policies or targets.

**10. What sites have been developed or delayed in relation to the plan's expectations on location and timing?**

- 7.23 In terms of providing a progress report on LDP sites, the main regeneration and mixed-use sites (Policy PLA3), residential (Policy COM1& COM2), employment (Policy SP9) and those retail and commercial centre sites with a residential element. Progress on Bridgend Town Centre (REG9) sites is also set out in Chapter 5 under policy target 23. Please refer to the site pro-forma sections which provide details of the current LDP status and completion timetable <http://www1.bridgend.gov.uk/services/planning/development-plan-library/population-and-housing/residential-land-availability.aspx>. As part of the 2015-16 AMR process, the Council will endeavour to include an update on the PLA3, COM1, COM2, SP9 and REG9 site implementation from the LDP site database. This will highlight what activity has taken place on the site including the preparation of studies or progression of development, in addition to that set out in the 2016 JHLAS.

**11. What has been the effectiveness of delivering policies and in discouraging inappropriate development?**

- 7.24 A review of the data monitoring indicates that the majority of the LDP policies are being delivered assisting to guide growth and change in a sustainable manner reflecting national policy and guidance. Chapters 5 & 6 of the AMR highlight the policies and monitoring indicators that are not delivering or being met and the actions recommended to improve delivery or effectiveness.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 In the Council's opinion there is no evidence to suggest there is a need for a full or partial review of the LDP at this time. Whilst the level of growth in some areas is slower than anticipated, evidence collected through the monitoring process clearly suggests that good progress is being made in the delivery of the majority of LDP targets, which must be seen as a positive. However, further investment into the local economy is required and specific consideration will be given to the opportunities to stimulate the delivery of new employment land and mixed-use regeneration sites by taking a pro-active approach with landowners and developers especially where development sites are in the Council's ownership and bring forward new schemes, masterplans and development briefs to facilitate development. The Council believes that the development which has taken place in the County Borough of Bridgend since the adoption of the LDP, together with the projected future investment from the public and private sector will ensure that the LDP is successfully delivered.

### **Recommendations**

- 8.2 As a result of the findings of the Annual Monitoring Report for 2015 it is recommended that:
1. No full or partial review of the LDP is required at this time; and
  2. The actions set out in the AMR to address underperformance are implemented.

# Bridgend Local Development Plan

AMR 2015



October 2015

## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

26<sup>th</sup> November 2015

#### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – COMMUNITIES

##### **Renewables in the Landscape Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To report to Committee the outcome of the consultation exercise on the draft Renewables in the Landscape Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) document.
- 1.2 To seek the Committee's endorsement of the draft document and to recommend to Council that it is adopted as SPG to the Bridgend Local Development Plan.

#### **2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priorities**

- 2.1 The adoption of this Supplementary Planning Guidance will assist in the implementation of policies within the adopted Bridgend Local Development Plan the Council's statutory land-use planning document.

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The purpose of the Renewables in the Landscape SPG (Appendix 1) is to provide a strategic-level assessment of the relative sensitivities of the County Borough's landscapes to different scales of wind and solar energy developments. It includes general guidance for developers to follow as well as information tailored to each of Bridgend's 15 Landscape Character Areas. It also acts as a 'first-step' in helping to direct developments, strategically to the least sensitive landscapes.
- 3.2 On the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2014 the Development Control Committee resolved to approve draft SPG20 – Renewables in the Landscape, as the basis for public consultation; authorised officers to make appropriate arrangements for public consultation; and to await a further report on the outcome of the consultation process.
- 3.3 A 6 week period of public consultation was held between 23 October 2014 and 4 December 2014. The consultation was advertised in the following ways:
  - A Statutory notice placed in the Glamorgan Gazette on 23 October 2014;
  - Consultation documents were available for inspection with representation forms at every library in the County Borough and at the Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend;
  - A press release was issued at the start of the consultation;
  - Information on the consultation, including all the documentation, representation forms and the facility to make representations electronically was placed on the Council's website; and
  - An electronic access link to the documentation was sent to approximately 400 targeted consultees, including Community Councils, planning consultants/energy operators with details on how to respond.

#### **4. Current Situation**

- 4.1 By the end of the consultation period 6 individuals and external organisations submitted comments. 2 additional organisations (NRW and Suncredit) submitted responses after the close of the consultation period. All of the representations received have been considered and responses to each have been prepared. These are included in Appendix A in the SPG and the original representations can be viewed by members at the Planning Department.
- 4.2 A number of comments received were 'non-specific' drawing to the Council's attention good practice in properly considering material planning issues, in particular with respect to environmental risk and impact on heritage assets. Such matters are considered to be more appropriately dealt with at any future planning application stage of development.
- 4.3 A large number of comments from one objector related to specific wording and alternative descriptions. These are considered not to be justified, given the evidence, strategic-level nature of the assessment and the fact that the comments are also open to interpretation.
- 4.4 Other representations, question the fundamental 'role' of the SPG and argue that it should be broadened to include other energy sources and other locational determinants for energy proposals. These objections misinterpret what is the primary purpose of the SPG which is to focus on the relative landscape sensitivities of the County Borough.
- 4.5 As such it is considered that the representations received should not result in any amendments to the document.
- 4.6 Committee is requested to consider each of the representations, endorse the suggested reasoned responses and approve the decisions and actions (not to amend the document as a result of consultation) and recommend that Council adopts the document for publication.

#### **5. Next Steps**

- 5.1 This SPG is the second of a suite of 'Green Infrastructure' SPGs to be produced by the Council which seek to promote the strategic management and planning of landscapes and the natural environment to deliver multiple (social, economic and environmental) benefits.
- 5.2 The Biodiversity and Development SPG 19 – A Green Infrastructure Approach was adopted on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2014. Further SPG promoting the Green Infrastructure Approach relating to Landscape and Local Character and Residential Development and Recreation will be brought forward in due course.

#### **6. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules**

- 6.1 This SPG expands upon the existing land-use planning policy framework contained within the adopted Local Development Plan providing officers and developers more guidance with respect to proposals for wind and solar energy development.

6.2 The SPG will represent a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications.

## **7. Equality Impact Assessment.**

7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment Screening has been undertaken and the proposed recommendations are unlikely to have an impact on equality issues.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 None.

## **9. Recommendations**

9.1 That the Development Control Committee:

- (1) considers the representations received, endorses the suggested reasoned responses and approve the decisions and actions (not to amend the document as a result of consultation).
- (2) recommends that Council adopts SPG20 – Renewables in the Landscape as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the adopted Bridgend Local Development Plan.

**Mark Shephard**  
**Corporate Director Communities**  
**26<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

### **Contact Officer**

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### **Background documents**

Renewables in the Landscape SPG

## APPENDIX 1

# SPG 20 Renewables in the Landscape: Supplementary Planning Guidance





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## List of Abbreviations

BCBC: Bridgend County Borough Council

GI: Green Infrastructure

LCA: Landscape Character Area/Landscape Character Assessment

LDP: Local Development Plan

PPW: Planning Policy Wales

SINC: Site of Importance for Nature Conservation

SPG: Supplementary Planning Guidance

TAN: Technical Advice Note

TCPA: Town and Country Planning Association

## Executive Summary

This Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is part of a suite of Green Infrastructure SPGs produced by the Council to echo the emerging principles of Natural Resources Wales: promoting the strategic management and planning of landscapes to deliver multiple (social, economic and environmental) benefits. This *Renewables in the Landscape SPG* recognises that the varied landscapes of Bridgend County Borough have a significant economic, social and community value, contributing to a sense of identity, well-being, enjoyment and inspiration. At the same time, many parts of the landscape have good conditions to produce wind and solar energy which are already being capitalised upon through the installation of related developments.

The Council recognises these opportunities and understands the need to maximise renewable energy generation, which can also have environmental, economic, social and other benefits. However, the development of wind and solar electricity generating installations within the county borough needs to be managed carefully to achieve the greatest contribution towards energy needs, while at the same time ensuring that the valued characteristics of the landscape are not unacceptably harmed.

In order to help understand how best to design and site wind and solar PV developments at the right scale and in the right places, this SPG includes an assessment of the sensitivity of the County Borough's landscapes to different scales of wind and solar photovoltaic energy developments. It also includes general guidance for developers to follow when planning and designing schemes, as well as specific information tailored to each of Bridgend's 15 Landscape Character Areas to reflect local variations in landscape character.

For wind energy developments, further planning guidance on Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) requirements is provided in the regional study produced by Gillespies LLP for the Heads of the Valleys Landscape Officers and Planners<sup>1</sup>. Users of this *Renewables in the Landscape SPG* are encouraged to refer to the regional study for more detailed information on planning application requirements for wind turbines.

This SPG provides evidence to support LDP policies including SP2: *Design and Sustainable Place Making*, SP4: *Conservation and Enhancement of the Natural Environment* and SP8: *Renewable Energy*.

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<sup>1</sup> Gillespies LLP (June 2014) *Planning Guidance for Wind Turbine Development: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Requirements*. Prepared for the Heads of the Valleys Landscape Officers and Planners with support from the South Wales Landscape Liaison Group.

# 1. The Green Infrastructure Approach



# 1 The Green Infrastructure Approach

## What is Green Infrastructure?

- 1.1 Green Infrastructure (GI) is a network of multifunctional green spaces, natural features and environmental management systems which help to provide a natural life support system for people and wildlife.
- 1.2 GI provides the spatial framework for a range of natural functions and uses. By adopting the GI approach, development schemes may be adapted or designed to provide a range of important benefits to people such as improved connectivity through footpaths and cycle routes; space for nature that contributes to the local or sub-regional pattern of connected habitat; imaginative recreational facilities that give educational and physical health benefits to local people; and places that will be more resilient to the impacts of a changing climate.

### The natural character of Bridgend

Bridgend County Borough is a small but remarkably diverse area, demonstrating centuries of human interaction with the natural environment. The northern half of the County Borough comprises the steep-sided valleys and commons which form part of the wider coalfield plateau of South Wales, with pockets of pastoral farmland and rough grazing land. To the south the landscapes of the County Borough meet the sea, including part of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast. This dramatic and wild coastline provides a stark contrast to the nearby settlements with their strong human influence (including the tourist centre of Porthcawl and nearby steelworks at Neath Port Talbot). The coast includes the highest sand dunes in Britain at Merthyr Mawr, part of an internationally important network of coastal habitats which provide a scenic frontage to the County Borough.

The market town of Bridgend itself has evidence of settlement dating back to the Prehistoric period, but the discovery of coal in the valleys north of the town had a dramatic impact on its development. Like other parts of South Wales, the decline of the coal mining and other primary industries had a significant impact on the local economy and the communities which relied on them. In recent years, much investment has been injected into the area, with regeneration projects and new development breathing new life into the area, including both within the town and the nearby mining settlements in the valleys.

Bridgend County Borough Council is preparing an online [Green Infrastructure Tool](#) which will support those submitting planning applications. This tool will incorporate maps of features and topics which should be considered when planning for green infrastructure, and should be utilised when designing Green Infrastructure within planned development.

## Green Infrastructure Assets

- 1.3 Most natural and semi-natural features in the landscape can be considered to be green infrastructure, and many can perform one or more Green Infrastructure functions. Examples of green infrastructure assets (following the terms defined by the Town and Country Planning Association's '*The essential role of Green Infrastructure – eco-towns green infrastructure worksheet*' (2008)) are as follows:

**Parks and gardens** – urban parks, country and regional parks, formal and private gardens (permeable paving, trees, rainwater collection, ponds) and institutional grounds (e.g. at schools and hospitals) for example Bryngarw Country Park, and Cemeteries and churchyards;

**Amenity green space** – informal recreation spaces, play areas, outdoor sport facilities, housing green spaces, domestic gardens, village greens, urban commons, other incidental space, green roofs, hedges, civic squares and spaces, and highway trees and verges, for example Newbridge Fields and Pandy Park sports fields;

**Productive spaces** - Allotments, community gardens, city farms, orchards, roof gardens, and urban edge farmland;

**Natural and semi-natural features** - woodland and scrub, trees, hedgerows, grassland (for example downland and meadow), heath and moor, wetlands, open and running water (rivers Llynfi, Garw, Ogmore) brownfield sites, bare rock habitats (for example cliffs and quarries), coast, beaches.

**Green corridors** - rivers (e.g. Llynfi, Garw, Ogmore) including their banks, road and rail corridors (verges), access networks, cycling routes, and rights of way, for example the All Wales Coastal Path, Bridgend Circular Walk, the Ogwr Ridgeway Walk and the Afon Llynfi;

**Existing national and local nature reserves** and locally designated sites for nature conservation for example Kenfig NNR, Craig-y-Parcau LNR and Parc Slip Nature Reserve, Merthyr Mawr SSSI.

**Archaeological and historic sites**, for example Y Bwlwarcaw Scheduled Ancient Monument; Coity Castle, Parc Tondy Ironworks.

**Functional green space**, such as sustainable urban drainage schemes and flood storage areas.

- 1.4 The GI approach is associated with capitalising on green infrastructure assets for the multi-functional social, economic and environmental opportunities they offer.
- 1.5 Whilst wind and solar development are 'grey' infrastructure in respect of them being man-made structures, they could be considered as 'green' infrastructure in respect that the developments, by their very nature, function to capitalise on the natural environment (wind and sunlight) providing a renewable source of energy, reducing our reliance on fossil fuels and therefore reducing the impact that burning fossil fuels is having on the environment and climate change.
- 1.6 However, there are competing green infrastructure objectives in respect of wind and solar energy development as they are often considered to have an adverse impact on another key green infrastructure asset which is the County Borough's rich and varied landscape.
- 1.7 The purpose of this guidance therefore is to provide the necessary guidance, supported by a robust evidence base, which will allow for a balance to be struck between facilitating wind and solar development whilst also protecting the landscape.

## Green Infrastructure and the Planning Process

- 1.8 When considering planning applications for renewable energy development, the Local Planning Authority will consider all material considerations relevant to the determination of the planning application. There may be instances where the development is considered to have a detrimental impact on existing infrastructure (green and grey) and may require that suitable mitigation is secured to appropriately mitigate these impacts.
- 1.9 For example, for a wind energy development this might include the impact on biodiversity (please refer to the Council's Biodiversity and Development SPG), the impact on the landscape considered in this SPG, the need to widen access roads or correcting losses to amenity (e.g. correcting for TV interference). These are considered in Policy ENV18 of the LDP and might be addressed/secured by way of condition or a Section 106 agreement<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.10 Policy ENV18(8) of the LDP states:  
*Local receptor of heat and energy from the proposal are identified and, where appropriate, are connected to/benefit from the facility*
- 1.11 Paragraph 4.6.10 of the LDP expands on this stating:  
*The local community should also benefit appropriately from any facility with examinations of the potential to connect existing/future development to the facility or, where this is not possible, other forms of community benefit should be examined.*
- 1.12 The purpose of this policy is to encourage developers to consider community benefits beyond those which make the development proposal acceptable from a planning perspective and could be a material consideration in the determination of a planning application – although would not represent a reason for refusal. In the first instance the developer is encouraged to look for local receptors for heat and energy produced by the development as this meets the policy objectives of Strategic Policy SP8 and ENV17 of the LDP (which encourage low and zero carbon buildings). Where this is not possible or appropriate, the developer should then consider alternative community benefits which meet other policy objectives of the LDP. For example, if the developer were to

<sup>2</sup> A legal agreement under section 106 of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act. Section 106 agreements are legal agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken (Planning Portal: <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/general/glossaryandlinks/glossary/s>)

improve green connectivity in the area surrounding the development which was considered to enhance the green infrastructure network, this could be considered as another material planning consideration in favour of the proposal.

- 1.13 However, there are also those community benefits which do would not be a material consideration in the determination of a planning application and would be confided separately from the planning process. These are non-the less encouraged in the LDP however and would contribute toward the green infrastructure approach adopted by the Council in respect of achieving social and economic benefits (which in this case is the renewable energy development).
- 1.14 The following paragraphs provide guidance on how best to capitalise on these opportunities.

#### **Employment and training opportunities**

- 1.15 This involves local contracting and associated local employment during construction and operation. Significant sums of money are often involved in the construction, operation and maintenance of a renewable or low carbon energy development.
- 1.16 It is not allowed by procurement laws in the UK for developers to guarantee that they will let contracts to local companies. However, there are things which can be done, by both the developer and by local authorities or local economic development agencies, which can make it more likely that more of the value in a development and operation is spent locally, through local businesses and through employing local people.
- 1.17 For example, developers can provide early details of a typical specification of works locally, hold briefings for contractors in the locality of the development site, and indicate to all their contractors and suppliers a preference, for sustainable development reasons, to source labour and materials locally.
- 1.18 Local authorities and/or economic development agencies can, for example, identify contractors potentially qualified to deliver contracts, provide active encouragement and support to local contractors to engage with the developers and the tendering process, and engage with the developer early to secure a commitment to encourage local sourcing of labour and materials with their contractors.

#### **Education opportunities**

- 1.19 Developers should provide educational opportunities for local residents, such as through organised community group and school trips.

#### **Community economic benefits from community owned schemes**

- 1.20 These can be achieved in a number of ways:

##### *Community funds*

- 1.21 This involves a lump sum or regular payments put into a fund for the benefit of the local community. Contributions are often linked to the scale of the project, for example an annual payment per megawatt, either for every year or some years of the project.
- 1.22 The fund could be used to develop a 'community asset' such as affordable housing, new recreation facilities or access to land, or a community energy initiative. The designation of local funds that meet carbon reductions or local service needs may also be set up. These will have the benefits of addressing social inequality. The local funds may be used to supplement insulation for local households.

##### *Benefits in kind*

- 1.23 This involves the developer directly providing or paying for local community benefits such as facility improvements, environmental improvements, visitor facilities, school and educational support.
- 1.24 It is important to note that these are different from those actions required to make a development 'acceptable', for example, additional infrastructure such as widening access roads, or restoring wildlife habitats to make up for any impact caused by development. These necessary actions are those which the development has created a direct need for.
- 1.25 Many communities will already have lists of improvements they want to achieve in their area, through their parish or county councils, or other community interest groups. These may include local community facilities (such as village hall improvements, sports facilities and community gardens), tourism, recreational and education provision (such as nature trails, school education materials and visitor information), and improvements to amenity, environmental and wildlife habitats.

- 1.26 If a community fund is set up the scope of the fund should take account of the match-funding for other regeneration programmes delivering community benefits, such as the rural development programme, communities first, micro and social enterprise support schemes, etc.
- 1.27 As well as geographic communities benefiting from developments, consideration should be given to communities and groups with a common interest benefiting from the development as it may be logical for local interest groups where much of the activity and investment comes from to benefit from their involvement. Investment models could be set up through established networks such as Transition groups. Farmer led energy co-operatives should be encouraged to be set up.
- 1.28 Benefits in kind can be secured through Section 106 agreements. Generally such agreements are made between the developer, community and local planning authority, with all three stakeholders as parties to the agreement.

#### *Local ownership*

- 1.29 This involves the ownership of shares by local people, either through their own investment or through a profit-sharing or part-ownership scheme designed to tie community benefits directly to the project performance. It is possible for the ownership to be either bought through investment by individuals or groups in a community, or granted by the developer to a community group.
- 1.30 There are a number of risks associated with the shareholder approach, for example, shareholders may receive little or no dividend on their investment if the project fails to generate enough income to pay its bank loan repayments.
- 1.31 There is also the potential issue of social inequality – the shareholder approach clearly requires people to have money to invest, and not all members of a local community may be in this situation.
- 1.32 There is also the potential for developers to ‘gift’ shares in the energy company, or part of the development project (for example, one of the turbines in the case of a wind energy development) to a local community organisation. To reduce risk, the bank would restrict the activities and rights of the community ‘ownership’ in much the same way as it does the rights of the commercial owner.
- 1.33 As well as part ownership schemes it may be possible for the community to own an entire turbine. The developer would add another turbine to their plans and take on the development and planning related considerations (Most of which would be applicable to their original scheme) and the community would raise the finance for the turbine. This would give a higher level of ownership and gives the opportunity to negotiate their own power purchase agreements should the community wish, as well as providing a clearer definition of what is specifically owned by the community.

## 2 Policy Background & Method for Assessing Landscape Sensitivity



## 2 Policy Background & Method for Assessing Landscape Sensitivity Purpose

This Section of the Supplementary Planning Guidance outlines how landscape character and sensitivity should be considered as part of renewable energy development proposals (wind turbines and field-scale solar photovoltaics (PV)) within the County Borough.

It begins by setting out the national and local policy context to this SPG and summarises the method taken to the landscape sensitivity assessment discussed and presented in Chapters 3 and 4.

### Recognising the Importance of Landscape Character when Considering Renewable Energy Proposals

- 2.1 The [Landscape Character Assessment](#) for Bridgend County Borough (July 2013) provides a sound evidence base for planners and developers to consider the character and sensitivity of the different landscapes of the County Borough when considering new developments. It also promotes an understanding of how the landscapes of the County Borough are changing (as a result of a combination of natural, economic and human factors), and how they can be strengthened in response. This SPG draws on the information provided in the Landscape Character Assessment and uses the same framework of fifteen Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) to assess the varying levels of sensitivity to wind energy developments (turbines of >15 metres height to blade tip) and field-scale solar PV (with footprints of 1 hectare and above)<sup>3</sup>.
- 2.2 The overarching philosophy of the suite of Green Infrastructure SPGs produced by the Council is to echo the emerging principles of Natural Resources Wales: promoting the strategic management and planning of landscapes to deliver multiple (social, economic and environmental) benefits. This SPG responds to the current and ongoing demand for renewable energy developments to be sited within the landscape; capitalising on the wind and solar resources the environment offers as a clean source of energy. This demand in turn responds to international and national targets for renewable energy generation, as well as national and local policy drivers which are summarised below.

### National and Local Policy Context

#### Renewable energy

- 2.3 Climate change and energy security are key priorities of both the UK and Welsh Governments. The use of fossil fuels is seen as a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, a major cause of global climate change and moving towards a low carbon energy based economy to tackle the causes of climate change and improve energy security are a Government priority. The generation and use of renewable and low carbon energy sources has a key role to play in this and the UK Government is committed to meeting the EU target of 15% of energy from renewable sources by 2020<sup>4</sup>. The Climate Change Act 2008 introduces a legally binding target of at least a 34 percent cut in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, and at least an 80 percent cut by 2050, against a 1990 baseline.
- 2.4 The Welsh Government has embarked on an ambitious and long-term programme of cross cutting policy initiatives to address these issues. This is contained in *One Wales: One Planet* (2009) which sets out a vision where within the lifetime of a generation we want to see Wales using only its fair share of the earth's resources.

<sup>3</sup> Please note that the Landscape Character Assessment does not cover the five main urban areas in the County Borough, as indicated in Figure 2.1. Therefore this assessment also excludes the urban areas, which are also unlikely to be considered as sites for the scales of renewable energy developments considered by this SPG.

<sup>4</sup> EU Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 23 April 2009

To support this vision, Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 2012 sets out the objectives of the Welsh Government with regard to renewable energy and low carbon developments. One of these is to:

*“Promote the generation and use of energy from renewable and low carbon energy sources at all scales and promote energy efficiency, especially as a means to secure zero or low carbon developments and to tackle the causes of climate change”.*

2.5 Technical Advice Note (TAN) 8: *Planning for Renewable Energy* (2005)<sup>5</sup> provides guidance for the land use planning system in relation to the development of wind energy specifically. This document identifies ‘Strategic Search Areas’ (SSAs) where *...‘for efficiency and environmental reasons amongst others, large scale (over 25MW) onshore wind developments should be concentrated’*. These areas were further refined at a local level through a landscape and visual assessment exercise in 2006<sup>6</sup>, and the resultant refined SSAs for the County Borough are included in **Figure 2.1**.

2.6 At a local level, the Bridgend Local Development Plan (LDP) contains a number of policies which seek to support the sustainable development and promotion of renewable energy objectives, including:

- The overarching strategic **Policy SP2: Design and Sustainable Place Making**, which states that development should *“make a positive contribution towards tackling the causes of, and adapting to the impacts of Climate Change”*.
- **Policy PLA4: Climate Change and Peak Oil** reiterates this, stating that *“all development proposals will be required to make a positive contribution towards tackling the causes of, and adapting to the impacts of Climate Change and Peak Oil issues,”* including by *“encouraging the development of renewable energy generation”*.
- **Policy SP8: Renewable Energy** defines the role of the County Borough in promoting renewable energy developments, where it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant impact on the environment or local community, to contribute to national targets. Chapter 1 for sets out how this LDP policy seeks to promote the Green Infrastructure benefits arising from developments.
- **Policy ENV18: Renewable Energy Developments** offers more detailed specifications on what is expected from proposals for renewable energy development. This includes the TAN 8 requirement to direct wind energy schemes of 25MW or more to the SSAs, but it does not place any energy generation limits on land outside the SSA.

#### **Landscape character and local distinctiveness**

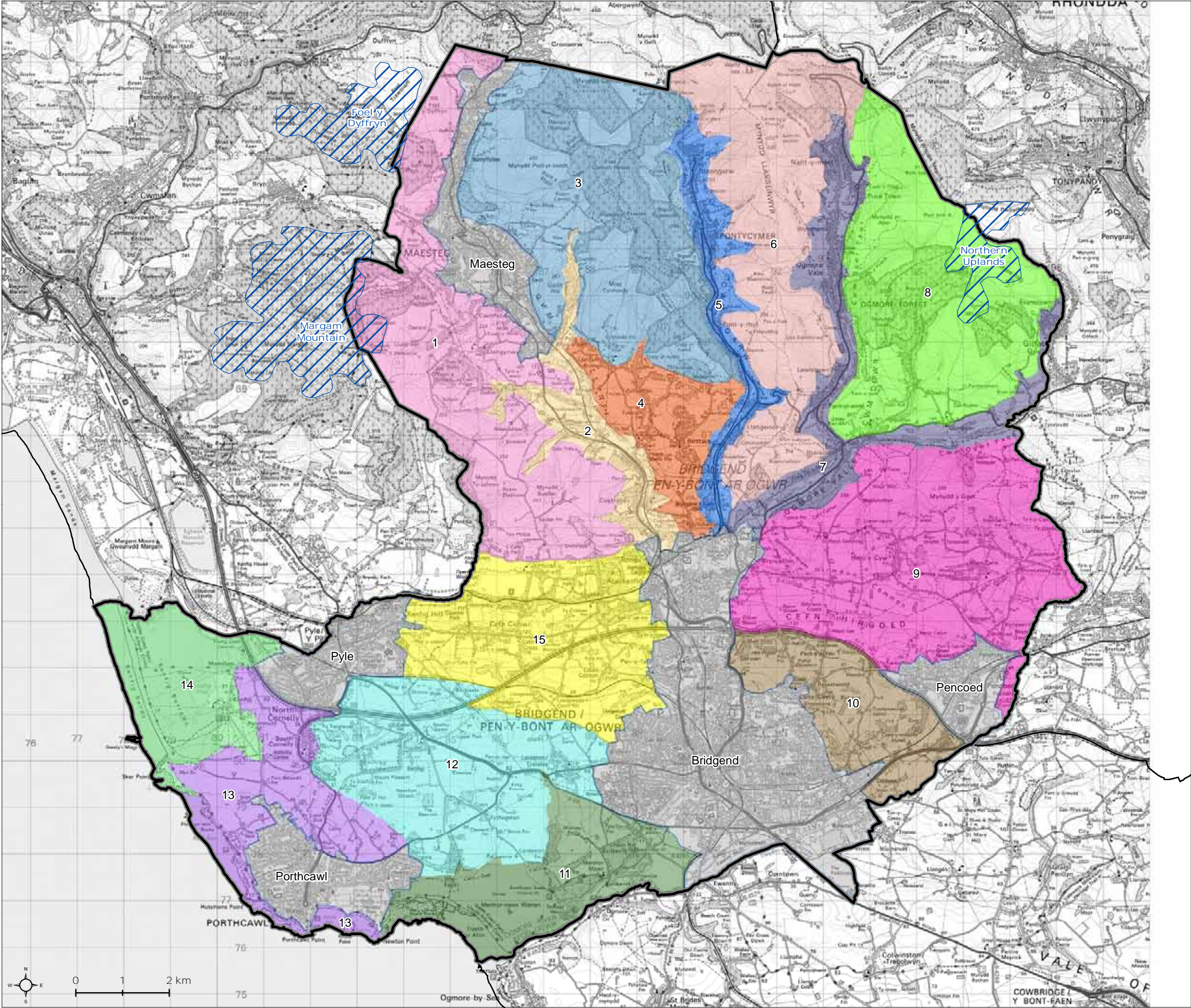
2.7 The above targets and policies for renewable energy need to be carefully balanced with policies that seek to protect and enhance landscape character and distinctiveness. Developers and other applicants will need to demonstrate how their proposals adhere to these policies to ensure the local authority can make an informed and balanced decision on the planning application.

2.8 At a strategic level, LDP **Policy SP2: Design and Sustainable Place Making**, states that ‘All development should contribute to creating high quality, attractive, sustainable places which enhance the community in which they are located, whilst having full regard to the natural, historic and built environment’. The policy also requires that all development proposals should have ‘a design of the highest quality possible, whilst respecting and enhancing local distinctiveness and landscape character’.

2.9 The importance of the County Borough’s landscape is also referenced in a number of other policies in the LDP (**SP4, SP5, ENV3, ENV4, ENV5 and ENV6**). These policies highlight the importance of enhancing the natural and heritage environment through development, and state that developments which result in adverse impact on the landscape and its important features will not be permitted. The strategic policy SP4: Conservation and Enhancement of the Natural Environment, states that *“Development which will conserve and, wherever possible, enhance the natural environment of the County Borough will be favoured,”* and further makes clear that *“Development proposals will not be permitted where they will have an adverse impact upon...the character of the County Borough’s landscape”*. Specific policies are included on Special Landscape Areas (ENV3), Local and Regional Nature Conservation Sites (ENV4), Green Infrastructure (ENV5) and Nature Conservation (ENV6).

<sup>5</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/planning/policy/tans/tan8/?lang=en>

<sup>6</sup> Covering Bridgend County Borough, this document is Arup (December 2006) *TAN 8 Annex D study of Strategic Search Areas E and F: South Wales Valleys*. Final report for the Consortium of



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Figure 2.1  
  
Landscape Character Areas  
and TAN 8 Strategic Search  
Areas

- Bridgend County Borough Boundary
- TAN 8 Strategic Search Areas

- Landscape Character Areas
- 1 Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry
  - 2 Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
  - 3 Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry
  - 4 Bettws Settled Farmland
  - 5 Garw Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
  - 6 Mynydd Llangeinwyr Uplands
  - 7 Ogmore Valley Floor & Lower Slopes
  - 8 Ogmore Forest and Surrounding Uplands
  - 9 Hirwaun Common and Surrounding Ridges
  - 10 Coity Rural Hinterland
  - 11 Merthyr Mawr Farmland, Warren and Coastline
  - 12 Newton Down Limestone Plateau
  - 13 Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland
  - 14 Kenfig Dunes and Coastline
  - 15 Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland
  - Urban Area

Map Scale @ A3: 1:80,000

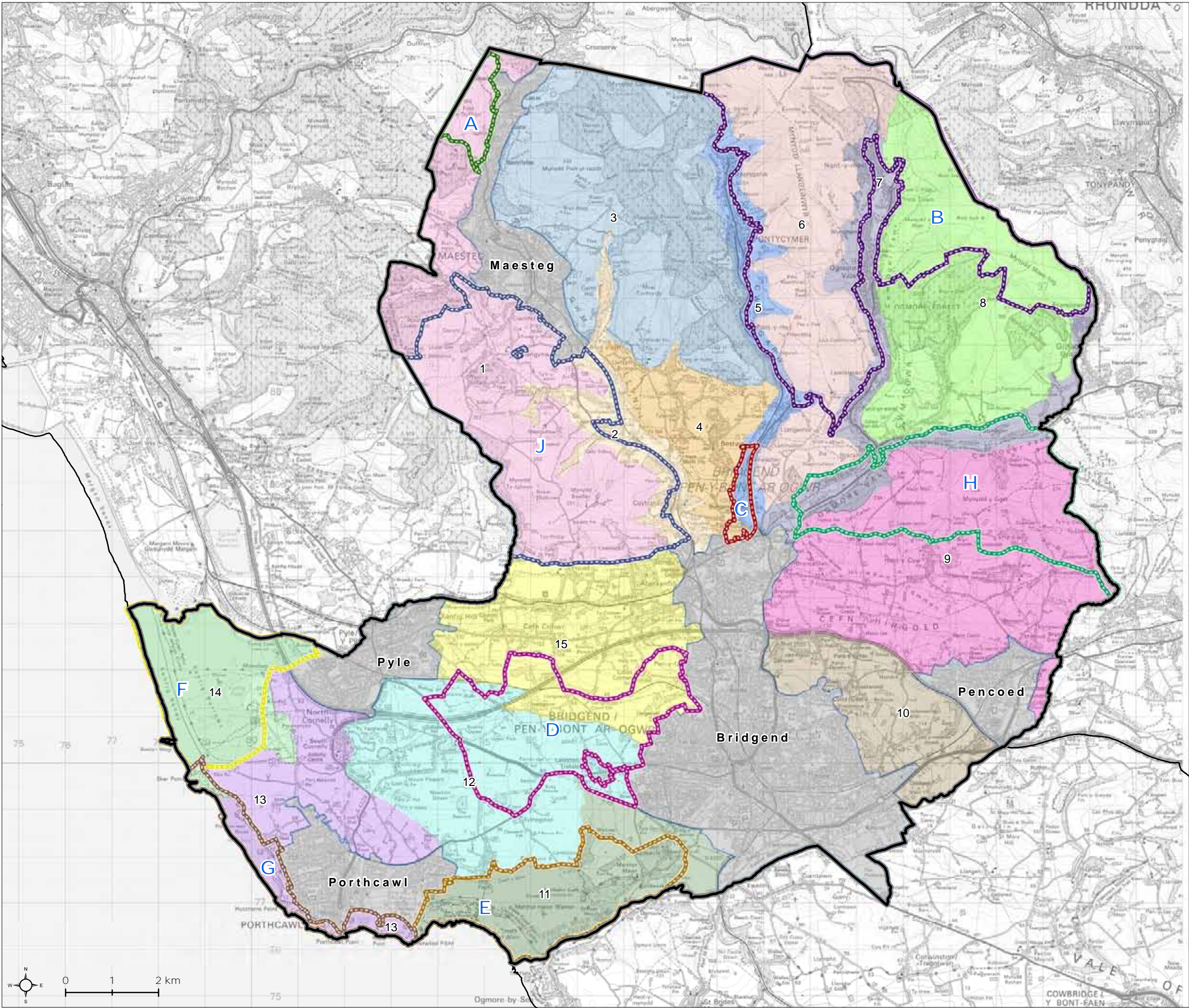
- 2.10 In all areas of the County Borough, proposals will be favoured where the applicant has demonstrated an understanding of how the development would affect the distinctive landscape character of the locality and has sought to protect and enhance key landscape features and qualities and to mitigate any negative impacts on landscape character. This SPG seeks to provide the evidence to support these landscape policies in the context of the development of wind turbine and solar PV developments.

## Landscape Areas Subject to Particular Protection

- 2.11 The Local Development Plan makes clear that a number of different site and area designations will be protected from harm by development through the following policies:
- **Strategic Policy SP4** *Conservation and Enhancement of the Natural Environment* confers protection to international and national nature conservation designations and also the nationally important Glamorgan Heritage Coast and the outstanding historic landscapes of Kenfig and Merthyr Mawr Warren.
  - **Strategic Policy SP5** *Conservation of the Built Environment* confers protection to Listed Buildings and their settings; Conservation Areas and their settings; Scheduled Ancient Monuments; Sites or Areas of Archaeological Significance; Historic Landscapes, Parks and Gardens and Locally Significant Buildings.
  - **Policy ENV3** confers protection to nine *Special Landscape Areas* (see below)
- 2.12 Through ENV3, the LDP recognises nine **Special Landscape Areas** (SLAs) as being unique, exceptional or distinctive to the County Borough. These are at Foel y Dyffryn, the Northern Uplands, the Western Uplands, Bryngarw Country Park, Mynydd y Gaer, Kenfig Burrows, Laleston, Porthcawl Coast and Merthyr Mawr Warren.
- 2.13 In these Special Landscape Areas, Policy ENV3 states that development will only be permitted where:
- 1) It retains or enhances the character and distinctiveness of the SLA;
  - 2) The design of the development reflects the building traditions of the locality in its form, materials and details, and/or assimilates itself into the wider landscape; and
  - 3) The proposed development is accompanied by a landscape assessment which takes into account the impact of the development and sets out proposals to mitigate any adverse effects.
- 2.14 Detailed maps delineating the boundaries of these areas are held on the County Borough Council's [website](#) and can also be viewed using the [Green Infrastructure Tool](#) and referenced at **Figure 2.2**. See **Figure 2.4** for a map of the historic landscape designations within the County Borough.

## Nature Conservation Areas Subject to Particular Protection

- 2.15 There are three tiers of sites that recognise the international, national and regional or local importance of habitats for nature conservation. Developers should be aware of these sites in relation to their proposed development and be able to show how they have included the protection and enhancement of any sites that would be affected directly or indirectly by their proposals. The [Biodiversity SPG](#) provides further information on the consideration of designated nature conservation sites and protected wildlife species in development proposals, and should be referred to in order to ensure biodiversity and ecological issues are considered in any application.



## Renewables in the Landscape: Supplementary Planning Guidance

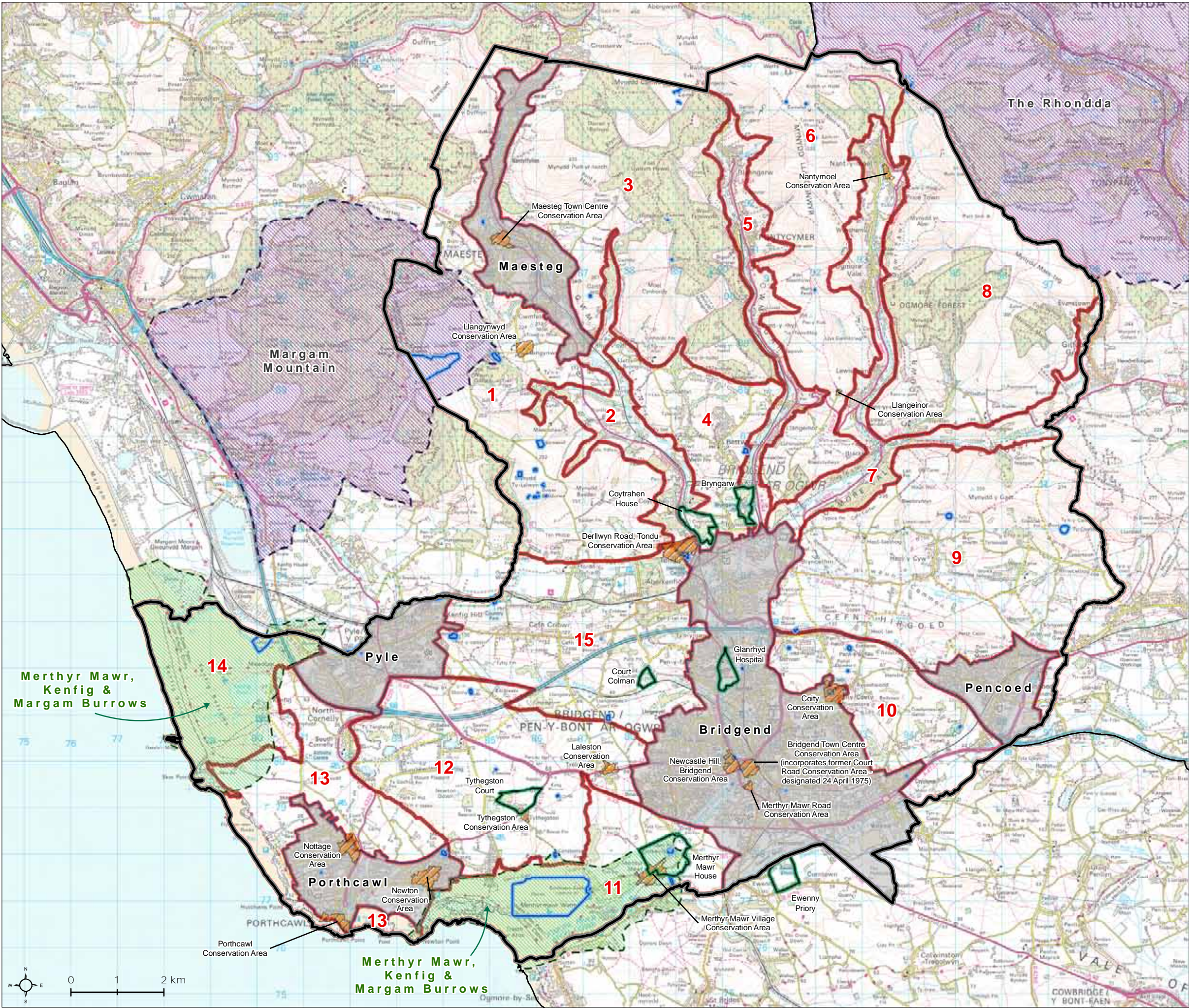
Figure 2.2

### Landscape Character Areas and Special Landscape Areas

- Bridgend County Borough Boundary
- 1 Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry
- 2 Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
- 3 Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry
- 4 Bettws Settled Farmland
- 5 Garw Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
- 6 Mynydd Llangeinwyr Uplands
- 7 Ogmore Valley Floor & Lower Slopes
- 8 Ogmore Forest and Surrounding Uplands
- 9 Hirwaun Common and Surrounding Ridges
- 10 Coity Rural Hinterland
- 11 Merthyr Mawr Farmland, Warren and Coastline
- 12 Newton Down Limestone Plateau
- 13 Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland
- 14 Kenfig Dunes and Coastline
- 15 Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland
- Urban Area
- Special Landscape Areas**
  - Foel y Dyffryn
  - Northern Uplands
  - Bryngarw Country Park
  - Laleston
  - Merthyr Mawr Warren
  - Kenfig Burrows
  - Porthcawl Coast
  - Mynydd y Gaer
  - Western Uplands

Map Scale @ A3: 1:80,000





Renewables in the Landscape:  
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Figure 2.3  
Historic Designations In  
Bridgend County Borough

- Bridgend County Borough Boundary
  - Registered Parks & Gardens
  - Conservation Areas
  - Scheduled Monuments
  - Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest
  - Landscape of Special Historic Interest
- Landscape Character Areas
- 1 Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry
  - 2 Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
  - 3 Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry
  - 4 Bettws Settled Farmland
  - 5 Garw Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
  - 6 Mynydd Llangeinwyr Uplands
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  - 13 Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland
  - 14 Kenfig Dunes and Coastline
  - 15 Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland
  - Urban Area

Map Scale @ A3: 1:80,000



## Method for Assessing Landscape Sensitivity to Renewable Energy Developments

- 2.16 Paragraph 4.2 of Topic Paper 6<sup>7</sup> (which accompanies the current Landscape Character Assessment guidance) states that:

*‘Judging landscape character sensitivity requires professional judgement about the degree to which the landscape in question is robust, in that it is able to accommodate change without adverse impacts on character. This involves making decisions about whether or not significant characteristic elements of the landscape will be liable to loss... and whether important aesthetic aspects of character will be liable to change’*

- 2.17 In this study the following definition of ‘landscape sensitivity’ has been used, which is based on the principles set out in Topic Paper 6. It is also compliant with the third edition of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA 3, 2013) as well as definitions used in other landscape sensitivity studies of this type:

***Landscape sensitivity is the extent to which the character and quality of the landscape is susceptible to change as a result of wind energy or solar PV developments.***

### Assessment Criteria

- 2.18 In line with the recommendations in Topic Paper 6, this landscape sensitivity assessment is based on an assessment of landscape character using carefully defined criteria.
- 2.19 These criteria are based on attributes of the landscape most likely to be affected by each development type. These are as follows:

#### Wind energy assessment criteria

- Landform and scale
- Land cover pattern and presence of human-scale features
- Historic landscape character
- Skylines
- Key views and vistas
- Scenic and special qualities
- Perceptual qualities

#### Solar PV assessment criteria

- Landform
- Sense of openness / enclosure
- Field pattern and scale
- Landcover
- Historic landscape character
- Key views and vistas
- Scenic and special qualities
- Perceptual qualities



- 2.20 **Table 2.1** provides more information on the criteria that have been used for the assessment of landscape sensitivity to the principle of wind energy development (of any size); and **Table 2.2** for the assessment of landscape sensitivity to solar PV development (of any size). It includes guidance and examples for applying the criteria for the two development types, which have then been verified through professional judgement and field survey work in Bridgend County Borough (undertaken in January 2014).



<sup>7</sup> Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity. Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland. Available at [http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/lcatopicpaper6\\_tcm6-8179.pdf](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/lcatopicpaper6_tcm6-8179.pdf)

**Table 2.1: Criteria and Guidance for Assessing Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Developments**

Landform and scale				
<p>A smooth gently sloping or flat landform is likely to be less sensitive to wind energy development than a landscape with a dramatic rugged landform, distinct landform features (including prominent headlands and cliffs) or pronounced undulations. Larger scale landforms are likely to be less sensitive than smaller scale landforms - because turbines may appear out of scale, detract from visually important landforms or appear visually confusing (due to turbines being at varying heights) in the latter types of landscapes.</p> <p>Information sources: Bridgend CB Landscape Character Assessment; Ordnance Survey basemaps; Topography data (Ordnance Survey Panorama); fieldwork.</p>				
Examples of sensitivity ratings				
Lower sensitivity		Higher sensitivity		
e.g. an extensive lowland flat landscape or elevated plateau, often a larger scale landform	e.g. a simple gently rolling landscape, likely to be a medium-large scale landform	e.g. an undulating landscape, perhaps also incised by valleys, likely to be a medium scale landform	e.g. landscape with distinct landform features, and/or irregular in topographic appearance (which may be large in scale), or a smaller scale landform	e.g. a landscape with a rugged landform or dramatic landform features, or a small scale or intimate landform
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features				
<p>Simple, regular landscapes with extensive areas of consistent ground cover are likely to be less sensitive to wind energy development than landscapes with more complex or irregular land cover patterns, smaller and / or irregular field sizes and landscapes with frequent human scale features that are traditional of the landscape, such as stone farmsteads and small farm woodlands<sup>8</sup>. This is because large features such as wind turbines may dominate smaller scale traditional features within the landscape.</p> <p>Information sources: Bridgend CB Landscape Character Assessment; Ordnance Survey basemaps; Google Earth (aerial photography); fieldwork.</p>				
Examples of sensitivity ratings				
Lower sensitivity		Higher sensitivity		
e.g. a very large-scale landscape with uniform groundcover and lacking in human scale features.	e.g. a landscape with large-scale fields, little variety in land cover and occasional human scale features such as trees and domestic buildings.	e.g. a landscape with medium sized fields, some variations in land cover and presence of human scale features such as trees, domestic buildings.	e.g. a landscape with irregular small-scale fields, variety in land cover and presence of human scale features such as trees, domestic buildings.	e.g. a landscape with a strong variety in land cover and small-scale / irregular in appearance containing numerous human scale features.

<sup>8</sup> Human scale features are aspects of land cover such as stone walls, hedges, buildings which give a 'human scale' to the landscape

Historic Landscape Character					
<p>Due to intrinsic historic landscape character significance, or potential for preserved archaeological evidence – historic landscapes, including those listed on the register of <i>Outstanding</i> or <i>Special Historic Landscapes in Wales</i> – would be more sensitive to new development than those dominated by modern human influence.</p> <p>Information sources: Cadw Historic Landscape Areas, national historic designations (e.g. Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks &amp; Gardens, Conservation Areas), LANDMAP Historic Landscape aspect.</p>					
Examples of sensitivity ratings					
Lower sensitivity					Higher sensitivity
e.g. majority of the landscape dominated by modern (20 <sup>th</sup> and 21 <sup>st</sup> ) development or land uses.	e.g. majority of the landscape covered by modern development or land uses, but may include some small areas of historic importance.	e.g. landscape including a mixture of modern and historic landscapes, which may include some designated sites or areas.	e.g. majority of the landscape covered by valued historic landscapes and features, but may include small areas of lower sensitivity.	e.g. the majority of the landscape included on the Register of Historic Landscapes in Wales, has a high number of other national heritage designations and/or is rated as 'high' or 'outstanding' in the LANDMAP Historic Landscapes aspect.	
Skylines					
<p>Prominent and distinctive and/or undeveloped skylines, or skylines with important landmark features, are likely to be more sensitive to wind energy development because turbines may detract from these skylines as features in the landscape, or draw attention away from existing landform or landmark features on skylines. These include the skylines of elevated coastlines and coastal headlands. Important landmark features on the skyline might include historic features or monuments.</p> <p>Information sources: Bridgend Landscape Character Assessment; fieldwork, Ordnance Survey 1:25K basemaps.</p>					
Examples of sensitivity ratings					
Lower sensitivity					Higher sensitivity
e.g. a large-scale flat or plateau landscape where skylines are not prominent and/or there are no important landmark features on the skyline	e.g. a large-scale landscape where skylines are not prominent and/or there are very few landmark features on the skyline – other skylines in adjacent LCAs are more prominent	e.g. a landscape with some prominent skylines, but these are not particularly distinctive. There may be some landmark features on the skyline.	e.g. a landscape with prominent skylines that may form an important backdrop to views from settlements or important viewpoints, and/or with important landmark features	e.g. a landscape comprising prominent or distinctive undeveloped skylines or skylines with particularly important landmark features	

Key views and vistas					
<p>Landscapes with key, highly valued views (within or beyond the LCA) are likely to be more sensitive to wind energy development, as the presence of wind turbines may intrude on these views or negatively impact on landmark features by taking them out of context or obscuring them. Rural landscapes that form a valued backdrop to views from settlements are also likely to be more sensitive to wind energy development.</p> <p>Information sources: Bridgend Landscape Character Assessment; Designation of Special Landscape Areas report (March 2010); fieldwork; Ordnance Survey 1:25K basemaps.</p>					
Examples of sensitivity ratings					
Lower sensitivity					Higher sensitivity
e.g. a landscape with no important or valued views to other landscapes or that does not form a backdrop to views from settlements.	e.g. a landscape with a few valued views to/from the area but the majority is self contained.	e.g. some parts of the landscape form a rural backdrop to views from settlements and a few locations afford valued views to other landscapes.	e.g. large parts of the landscape form a valued rural backdrop to views from settlements or it is valued for its scenic views to other landscapes.	e.g. a landscape with prominent key landmarks, key vistas or important and valued views, appreciated for their unspoilt or scenic character.	
Scenic and special qualities					
<p>Landscapes that have a high scenic quality (which may be recognised as a National Park, AONB, Heritage Coast or, at a local level, Special Landscape Area) will be more sensitive than landscapes of low scenic quality. This is particularly the case where their special qualities (as recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment or designation documents) are likely to be affected by wind energy development. Scenic and special qualities may relate to landscapes that are not designated as well as landscape designated for their natural beauty.</p> <p>Information sources: Landscape Character Assessment information on 'special qualities and features'; Heritage Coast designation information; Designation of Special Landscape Areas report (March 2010).</p>					
Examples of sensitivity ratings					
Lower sensitivity					Higher sensitivity
e.g. landscape has low scenic quality such as an industrial area or despoiled land – special qualities will not be affected by wind energy development.	e.g. landscape has low-medium scenic quality, or special qualities are unlikely to be affected by wind energy development.	e.g. landscape has a medium scenic quality and some of the special qualities may be affected by wind energy development.	e.g. landscape has a medium-high scenic quality (which might be designated as SLA)– most of the special qualities are likely to be affected by wind energy development.	e.g. area has a high scenic quality (likely to be recognised as National Park/AONB/ Heritage Coast) and the scenic qualities will be affected by wind energy development.	

## Perceptual qualities

Landscapes that are relatively remote or tranquil (due to freedom from human activity and disturbance and having a perceived naturalness or a strong feel of traditional rurality with few modern human influences) tend to increase levels of sensitivity to wind energy development compared to landscapes that contain signs of modern development (as the development will introduce new and uncharacteristic features which may detract from a sense of tranquillity and or remoteness/ naturalness).

Information sources: Bridgend Landscape Character Assessment; Ordnance Survey basemaps (presence / absence of development, settlement, structures).

### Examples of sensitivity ratings

<div> <div>Lower sensitivity</div> <div>↔</div> <div>Higher sensitivity</div> </div>				
e.g. a landscape with much human activity and development such as industrial areas.	e.g. a rural landscape with much human activity and dispersed modern development.	e.g. a rural landscape with some modern development and human activity.	e.g. a more naturalistic landscape and / or one with little modern human influence and development.	e.g. a remote or 'wild' landscape with little or no signs of current human activity and development.

**Table 2.2: Criteria and Guidance for Assessing Landscape Sensitivity to Solar PV Developments**


Landform				
<p>A flat or gently undulating lowland landscape or extensive plateau is likely to be less sensitive to solar PV development than a landscape with prominent landforms and visible slopes, including coastal headlands. This is because arrays of solar PV panels will be less easily perceived in a flat landscape than on a slope, especially higher slopes.</p> <p>Information sources: Bridgend Landscape Character Assessment; contours from the Ordnance Survey basemaps; Topography data (Ordnance Survey Panorama); fieldwork.</p>				
Examples of sensitivity ratings				
Lower sensitivity		Higher sensitivity		
e.g. a lowland flat landscape or extensive plateau.	e.g. a gently undulating lowland landscape or plateau.	e.g. an undulating landscape with hidden areas as well as some visible slopes.	e.g. a landscape with many prominent, visible slopes or an upland landscape.	e.g. very steep landform and exposed, visible slopes.
Sense of openness / enclosure				
<p>A landscape with a strong sense of enclosure (e.g. provided by land cover such as woodland or high hedgebanks) is likely to be less sensitive to solar PV development than an open and unenclosed landscape because the development will be less easily perceived, especially at a distance, in an enclosed landscape.</p> <p>Information sources: Bridgend BC Landscape Character Assessment; Google Earth / aerial photographs; fieldwork.</p>				
Examples of sensitivity ratings				
Lower sensitivity		Higher sensitivity		
e.g. a very well enclosed landscaped – perhaps provided by thick, high hedgebanks and hedgerows, tree belts and woodland.	e.g. relatively high levels of enclosure provided by hedgebanks and thick hedgerows with frequent hedgerow trees.	e.g. a landscape with some open and some more enclosed areas – likely to be a rural landscape with some hedgebanks and hedgerows and tree belts.	e.g. an open landscape with little sense of enclosure (low, few or no hedgebanks or hedgerows, few trees).	e.g. an extremely open landscape such as an unenclosed plateau with no field boundaries or trees.

## Field pattern and scale

Landscapes with small-scale, more irregular field patterns are likely to be more sensitive to the introduction of solar PV development than landscapes with large, regular scale field patterns because of the risk of diluting or masking the characteristic landscape patterns. This would be particularly apparent if development takes place across a number of adjacent fields where the field pattern is small and intricate (bearing in mind that the height of panels could exceed that of a hedge/ hedgebank).

Information sources: Bridgend BC Landscape Character Assessment; LANDMAP Historic Landscapes Level 2 Aspect; Ordnance survey 1:25K basemap (showing field patterns); Google Earth (aerial photography); fieldwork.

### Examples of sensitivity ratings


Lower sensitivity					Higher sensitivity
e.g. a landscape with large-scale, regular fields of mainly modern origin.	e.g. a landscape which is mainly defined by large, modern fields.	e.g. a landscape with a mixture of large-scale, modern fields and some smaller, more historic enclosure.	e.g. a landscape dominated by ancient, small-scale field patterns with a few isolated areas of modern enclosure.	e.g. a landscape characterised by small-scale, ancient field patterns.	

## Landcover

Since PV panels introduce a new land cover (of built structures) , landscapes containing existing hard surfacing or built elements (e.g. urban areas, brownfield sites or large-scale horticulture) are likely to be less sensitive to field-scale solar PV development than highly rural or naturalistic landscapes.

Information sources: Bridgend BC Landscape Character Assessment; Google Earth (aerial photography); fieldwork.

### Examples of sensitivity ratings

Lower sensitivity					Higher sensitivity
e.g. an urban or 'brownfield' landscape	e.g. an area of large scale horticulture	e.g. a rural landscape, perhaps with some brownfield sites or urban influences	e.g. a rural landscape , perhaps with some areas of semi-natural land cover	e.g. a landscape dominated by semi-natural land cover	


Historic Landscape Character				
<p>Due to intrinsic historic landscape character significance, or potential for preserved archaeological evidence – historic landscapes, including those listed on the register of <i>Outstanding</i> or <i>Special Historic Landscapes in Wales</i> – would be more sensitive to new development than those dominated by modern human influence.</p> <p>Information sources: Cadw Historic Landscape Areas, national historic designations (e.g. Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks &amp; Gardens, Conservation Areas), LANDMAP Historic Landscape aspect.</p>				
Examples of sensitivity ratings				
<div> <div>Lower sensitivity</div> <div>↔</div> <div>Higher sensitivity</div> </div>				
e.g. majority of the landscape dominated by modern (20 <sup>th</sup> and 21 <sup>st</sup> ) development or land uses.	e.g. majority of the landscape covered by modern development or land uses, but may include some small areas of historic importance.	e.g. landscape including a mixture of modern and historic landscapes, which may include some designated sites or areas.	e.g. majority of the landscape covered by valued historic landscapes and features, but may include small areas of lower sensitivity.	e.g. the majority of the landscape included on the Register of Historic Landscapes in Wales, has a high number of other national heritage designations and/or is rated as 'high' or 'outstanding' in the LANDMAP Historic Landscapes aspect.
Key views and vistas				
<p>Landscapes with key, highly valued views (within or beyond the LCA) are likely to be more sensitive to wind energy development, as the presence of wind turbines may intrude on these views or negatively impact on landmark features by taking them out of context or obscuring them. Rural landscapes that form a valued backdrop to views from settlements are also likely to be more sensitive to the siting of solar PV development.</p> <p>Information sources: Bridgend BC Landscape Character Assessment; Designation of Special Landscape Areas report (March 2010); fieldwork; Ordnance Survey 1:25K basemaps.</p>				
Examples of sensitivity ratings				
<div> <div>Lower sensitivity</div> <div>↔</div> <div>Higher sensitivity</div> </div>				
e.g. a landscape with no important or valued views to other landscapes or that does not form a backdrop to views from settlements.	e.g. a landscape with a few valued views to/from the area but the majority is self contained.	e.g. some parts of the landscape form a rural backdrop to views from settlements and a few locations afford valued views to other landscapes.	e.g. large parts of the landscape form a valued rural backdrop to views from settlements or it is valued for its scenic views to other landscapes.	e.g. a landscape with prominent key landmarks, key vistas or important and valued views, appreciated for their unspoilt or scenic character.

## Scenic and special qualities

Landscapes that have a high scenic quality (which may be recognised as a National Park, AONB, Heritage Coast or, locally, a Special Landscape Area) will be more sensitive than landscapes of low scenic quality. This is particularly the case where their special qualities (as recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment or designation documents) are likely to be affected by solar PV development. Scenic and special qualities may relate to landscapes that are not designated as well as landscapes designated for their natural beauty.

Information sources: Landscape Character Assessment information on 'special qualities and features'; Heritage Coast designation information; Designation of Special Landscape Areas report (March 2010)

### Examples of sensitivity ratings


Lower sensitivity					Higher sensitivity	
e.g. landscape has low scenic quality such as an industrial area or despoiled land—special qualities will not be affected by solar PV development.	e.g. landscape has low-medium scenic quality, or special qualities are unlikely to be affected by solar PV development.	e.g. landscape has a medium scenic quality and some of the special qualities may be affected by solar PV development.	e.g. landscape has a medium-high scenic quality (which might be designated as SLA) – most of the special qualities are likely to be affected by solar PV development.	e.g. area has a high scenic quality (likely to be recognised as National Park/ AONB/ Heritage Coast) and the scenic qualities will be affected by solar PV development.		

## Perceptual qualities

Landscapes that are relatively remote or tranquil (due to freedom from human activity and disturbance and having a perceived naturalness or a strong feel of traditional rurality with few modern human influences) tend to increase levels of sensitivity to solar PV development compared to landscapes that contain signs of modern development (as the development will introduce new and uncharacteristic features which may detract from a sense of tranquillity and or remoteness/ naturalness).

Information sources: Bridgend BC Landscape Character Assessment; Ordnance Survey basemaps (presence / absence of development, settlement, structures).

### Examples of sensitivity ratings

Lower sensitivity					Higher sensitivity	
e.g. a landscape with much human activity and development such as industrial areas.	e.g. a rural landscape with much human activity and dispersed modern development.	e.g. a rural landscape with some modern development and human activity.	e.g. a more naturalistic landscape and / or one with little modern human influence and development.	e.g. a remote or 'wild' landscape with little or no signs of current human activity and development.		

## The Summary of Landscape Sensitivity

- 2.21 Once the criteria have been assessed individually, the results are drawn together into a balanced summary of landscape sensitivity to the principle of the renewable energy development for that LCA. All of the assessments for the Landscape Character Areas found in Bridgend County Borough (fifteen in total) are included in **Chapter 4**.
- 2.22 If one criterion has a particularly strong influence on landscape sensitivity this is drawn out in the summary (an example might be a landscape with prominent/ dominant skylines, or particularly high levels of tranquillity or remoteness). In any given LCA there may be criteria that have conflicting effects on sensitivity. For example, when considering sensitivity to wind energy development, a settled landscape, while containing greater human influence (indicating a lower sensitivity), will also include more human scale features that could be affected by large-scale wind turbines (indicating a higher sensitivity). Conversely, a more remote landscape will lack the human scale features but is likely to present a higher sensitivity from a perceptual point of view. When considering solar PV development, a landscape with a very small-scale field pattern and with a high sense of enclosure might score higher for 'field pattern and scale' but be assessed as of lower sensitivity for 'sense of enclosure/openness'.
- 2.23 It is important to note that the results of the sensitivity assessment are not influenced by the presence of existing or proposed renewable energy developments in the landscape; it focuses on its *inherent* landscape sensitivity.

## Judging Landscape Sensitivity to Different Sizes/Scales of Development

- 2.24 The next stage of the assessment is to come to a judgement on landscape sensitivity to different sizes/scales of development (height and cluster sizes of wind turbines and size of solar PV developments). In the case of wind turbines, notes are also provided in relation to sensitivity to different turbine cluster sizes.
- 2.25 Sensitivity is judged on a five-point scale as shown in **Table 2.3** below, which is consistent with the majority of studies of this kind undertaken in the UK. These sensitivity ratings can apply to any landscape in Wales (or indeed the UK) – they are not specific to this study. Therefore the sensitivity assessments are taken in the national context.

**Table 2.3: Sensitivity Levels and Definitions**

Sensitivity Level	Definition
<b>High (H)</b>	The key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are highly sensitive to change from the type and scale of renewable energy being assessed.
<b>Moderate-High (M-H)</b>	The key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change from the type and scale of renewable energy being assessed.
<b>Moderate (M)</b>	Some of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change from the type and scale of renewable energy being assessed.
<b>Low-Moderate (L-M)</b>	Few of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change from the type and scale of renewable energy being assessed.
<b>Low (L)</b>	Key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are robust and are less likely to be adversely affected by the type and scale of renewable energy development being assessed.

## Presentation of the Landscape Sensitivity Results

- 2.26 The full landscape sensitivity assessments for each of the fifteen Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) are presented in tabular format in **Chapter 4**. The tables – separate for wind and solar PV - provide:
- A summary description of the LCA against each of the assessment criteria, giving an overall landscape sensitivity assessment 'score' for each LCA (on the coloured five-point scale as set out in **Table 2.3** above).
  - An overall discussion on landscape sensitivity for the LCA.
  - Sensitivity ratings for different scales of development (different turbine heights for wind energy development and different areas (in hectares) of solar PV development).
  - For wind energy development, a commentary on landscape sensitivity to different cluster sizes.
  - A list of key sensitive landscape features/characteristics within the LCA.
- 2.27 A summary of the results of the landscape sensitivity assessment for the county borough as a whole is presented and mapped at the beginning of **Chapter 3**.

## Strategies and Guidance by Landscape Character Area (LCA)

- 2.28 The second part of the LCA assessments for both wind and solar PV sets out the following information:
- **An overview of the location of operational and permitted developments** within the LCA (and in the case of LCAs on the edge of the administrative boundary, those within close proximity). Please note that this is based on Council data from November 2013 and will be subject to frequent change. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales>. An equivalent database is not available for solar PV developments.
  - **An overall strategy for development** within the LCA. For LCAs that include land within the refined TAN 8 Strategic Search Areas (Figure 2.2) it is accepted through national policy that change to landscape character could as a result of wind energy development. For land outside the SSAs, a separate strategy is provided for the LCA, as is the case for the solar assessments.
  - **LCA-specific guidance for development**. This section sets out bullet-pointed guidance tailored to the landscape concerned, taking account of its sensitive characteristics and features highlighted in the preceding sensitivity assessment.
  - **Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA**. This section takes account of any local variations in landscape sensitivity within the character area as a whole.
- 2.29 General guidance that should be followed when considering any wind energy or solar PV developments in the County Borough is included after the overall sensitivity results in **Chapter 3**.

## Limitations of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

- 2.30 While the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment presented in Chapters 3 and 4 provides an initial indication of the relative landscape sensitivities of different areas to wind energy and solar PV development and guidance for accommodating such developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of a certain location for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their individual merits. It is also unrelated to any Government targets for renewable energy development or studies of technical potential.
- 2.31 It should also be noted that the results of the study are based on an assessment of landscape character using carefully defined criteria. As with all analyses based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is particularly to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can be absolutely associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that landscape sensitivity is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). We have sought to address this issue in our summary of overall landscape sensitivity given for each LCA – which considers how the criteria-based assessments combine to give an overall sensitivity result for different scales of development within an LCA. Because of the complexity of the criteria, and their subtle interrelationships with each other, we have purposefully not used a numeric scoring system in expressing sensitivity. The

assessments are based on professional judgement, taking account of the interplay between criteria, as well as those which might be more important [to landscape character] in a particular LCA.

- 2.32 It is also worth noting that the assessment does not cover specific ecological issues associated with nature conservation designations or, in the case of wind turbines, bird flight paths; specific cultural heritage/archaeological issues associated with individual designated heritage assets and their settings; visual amenity issues (including residential visual amenity) or impacts on tourism or recreation (or other economic activities); or technical issues, such as the fact that trees and woodland can create turbulence making siting of turbines more difficult. These are all issues that will need to be taken into account in site selection by developers, and when reporting on impacts at the time when individual proposals are being put forward – e.g. through the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process (required for proposals more than of local significance).

### 3 Overall Landcape Sensitivity Results and General Guidance for Development



### 3 Overall Landscape Sensitivity Results and General Guidance for Development

#### Purpose

This Section of the Supplementary Planning Guidance is designed to provide a robust evidence base for informing future planning and management decisions on wind and field-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) developments across the County Borough. The primary aims are to ensure the area's distinctive, varied and dynamic landscapes are considered in the planning of any new development or land uses, and that opportunities to enhance and strengthen the distinctive design of the development within the landscape setting are pursued wherever possible.

#### Recognising the Full Value of Landscape Character and Design

- 3.1 Producing well designed developments, that sit well in their local landscape, is an essential part of the planning process. Developments that reflect the County Borough's varied landscape character reinforce the spirit of place that makes the area special, enhancing people's sense of belonging and commitment to their locality. The quality of people's natural surroundings has been shown to improve their health and well-being and encourage inward investment by businesses.
- 3.2 The general guidance included in this Chapter, as well as the LCA-specific guidance provided for each assessment in Chapter 4, provides information on how wind and solar PV developments can be designed and sited to best reflect and account for landscape character. In particular, the scale and form of developments in the context of the 'host' landscape is a particularly important consideration which this SPG is designed to provide guidance on. Please note that there are a number of other important reference documents produced by other organisations that should also be referred to. These are cited (as footnotes) throughout the general guidance section of this chapter.

#### Overall Levels of Landscape Sensitivity to Wind and Solar PV developments in Bridgend County Borough

##### Interpretation of the landscape sensitivity assessment results

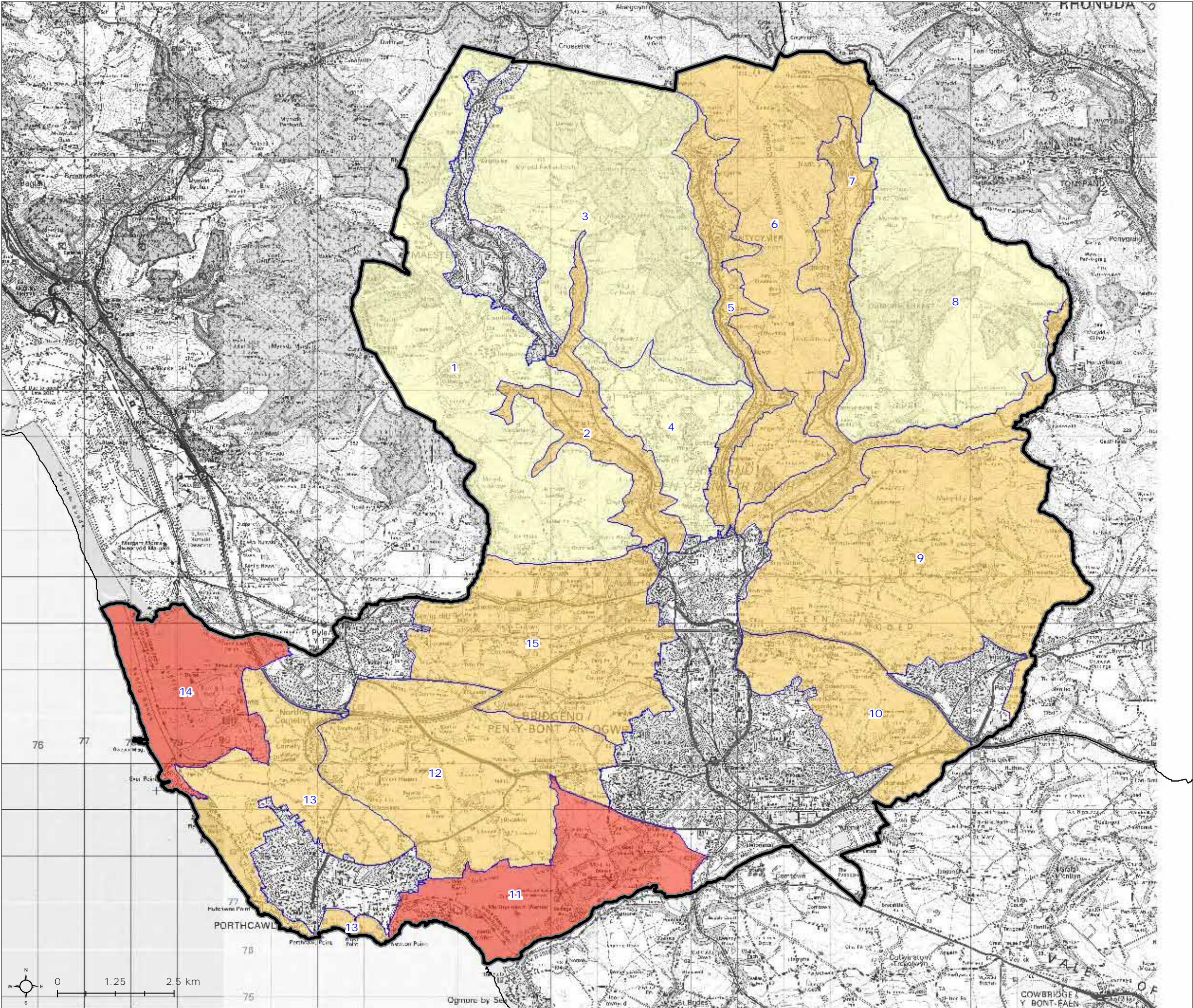
- 3.3 The County Borough's Landscape Character Areas often contain areas of higher and lower sensitivity within them, which should be borne in mind when using the overall sensitivity results maps and tables that follow. It is therefore very important to take note of the content of the individual LCA sensitivity assessments and guidance presented in Chapter 4 when interpreting the results.
- 3.4 **Figures 3.1 to 3.10** present the mapped landscape sensitivity results using the spatial framework of LCAs, starting from 'very small' wind, through the wind size categories; and then followed by the maps for the solar PV sensitivity assessment results.

##### Overall findings

- 3.5 The mapped results depicted in the following figures show that all of the county borough's landscapes are assessed as being particularly sensitive to large-scale developments of both wind and solar PV. For wind energy development, the majority of the area is assessed as of 'moderate-high' or 'high' sensitivity to turbines of over 75 metres in height. Only two Landscape Character Areas (1: Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands & Forestry and 8: Ogmore Forest and Surrounding Uplands) are assessed as of 'moderate' sensitivity to large wind turbine

developments (76-110m to blade tip), due to their large landform scale and presence of existing development on skylines. Moving up to the next size bracket used for the assessment (turbines of over 110 metres), both of these LCAs are assessed as of 'moderate-high' sensitivity, whilst the remainder of the County Borough is classed as of 'high' sensitivity. This reflects the often small scale of many parts of the landscape, with frequent human-scale features (e.g. trees, woodlands, field boundaries, farm buildings) and rural skylines forming a valued backdrop to views from settlements and urban areas.

- 3.6 For solar PV development, the presence of small-scale fields, prominent slopes and ridgelines and valued tracts of naturalistic habitat across the County Borough have resulted in the overall majority of the area being of high sensitivity to larger (over 10 hectare) schemes. The exception is LCA 12: Newton Down Limestone Plateau, which contains some large-scale fields of intensive farm production on flatter (less visible) plateau areas as well as locations of existing industrial activity. Nevertheless, other sensitive attributes within this LCA have still resulted in a 'moderate-high' landscape sensitivity assessment for developments within the 10-15 hectares size bracket. All of Bridgend is assessed as of 'high' sensitivity to solar PV developments of over 15 hectares in size.
- 3.7 As stated previously, the individual LCA assessments presented in Chapter 4 provide detailed information on variations in landscape sensitivity within them, and should always be referred to when interpreting the overall mapped results.







## Bridgend Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 3.1




Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Developments - Very Small (15-25m)

 Bridgend County Borough Boundary

### Landscape Character Areas

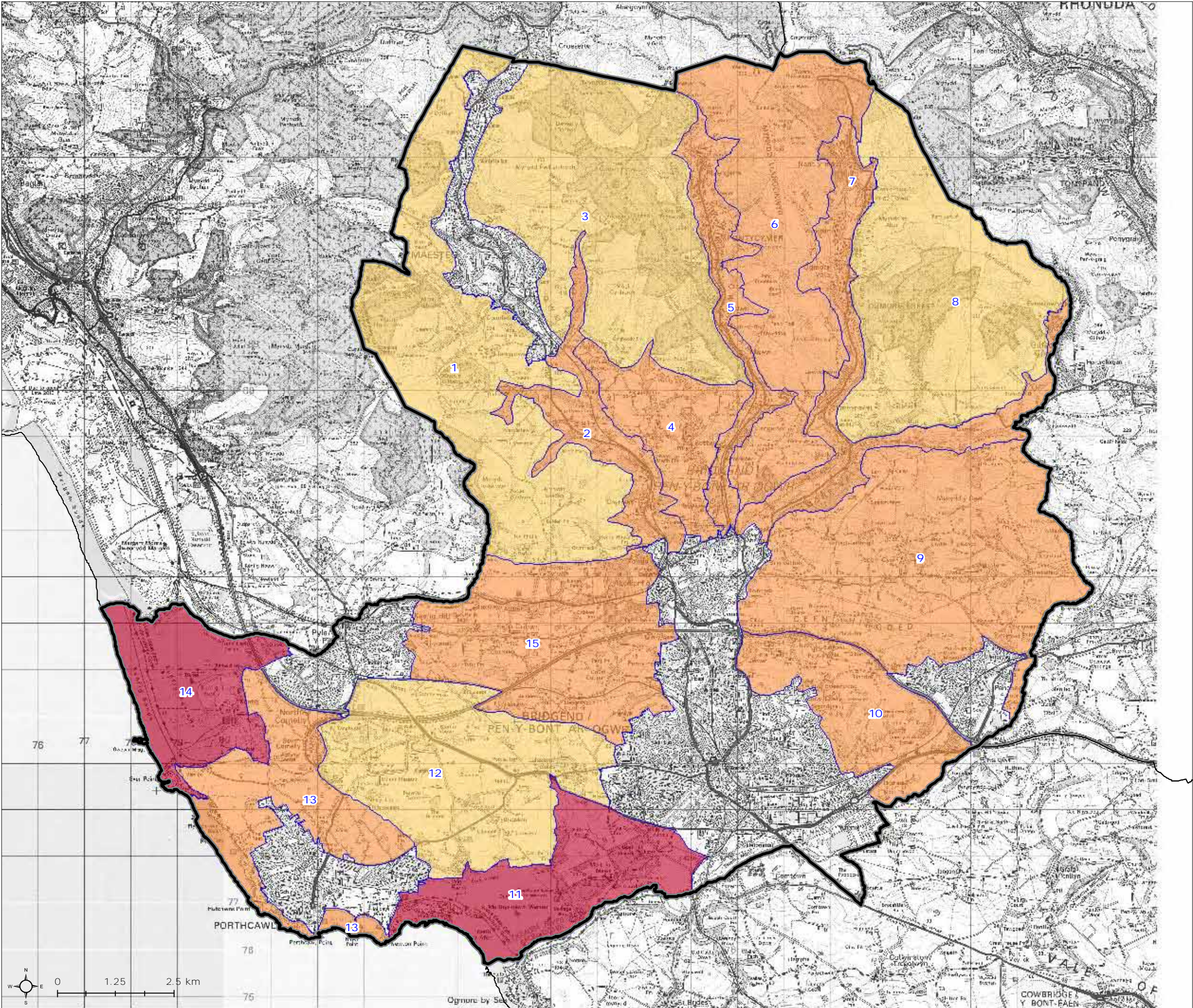
-  1 : Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry
-  2 : Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
-  3 : Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry
-  4 : Bettws Settled Farmland
-  5 : Garw Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
-  6 : Mynydd Llangeinwyr Uplands
-  7 : Ogmore Valley Floor & Lower Slopes
-  8 : Ogmore Forest and Surrounding Uplands
-  9 : Hirwaun Common and Surrounding Ridges
-  10 : Coity Rural Hinterland
-  11 : Merthyr Mawr Farmland, Warren and Coastline
-  12 : Newton Down Limestone Plateau
-  13 : Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland
-  14 : Kenfig Dunes and Coastline
-  15 : Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland

### Landscape Sensitivity to Very Small Wind Energy Developments

-  Low
-  Low - Moderate
-  Moderate - High

Map Scale @ A3: 1:80,000









## Bridgend Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 3.2




Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Developments - Small (26-50m)

 Bridgend County Borough Boundary

### Landscape Character Areas

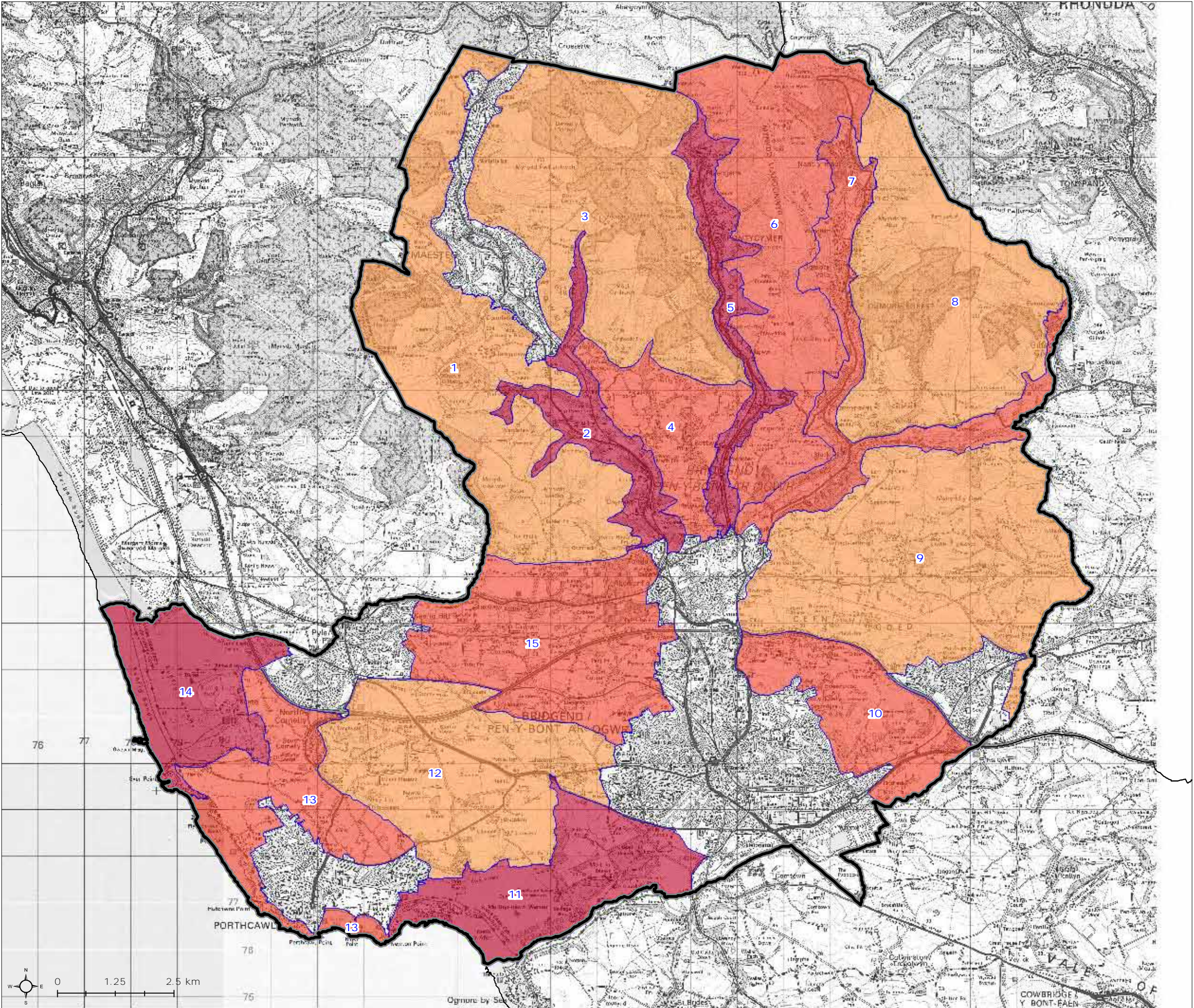
-  1 : Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry
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-  11 : Merthyr Mawr Farmland, Warren and Coastline
-  12 : Newton Down Limestone Plateau
-  13 : Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland
-  14 : Kenfig Dunes and Coastline
-  15 : Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland

### Landscape Sensitivity to Small Wind Energy Developments

-  Low - Moderate
-  Moderate
-  High

Map Scale @ A3: 1:80,000





## Bridgend Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 3.3




Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Developments - Medium (51-75m)

 Bridgend County Borough Boundary

### Landscape Character Areas

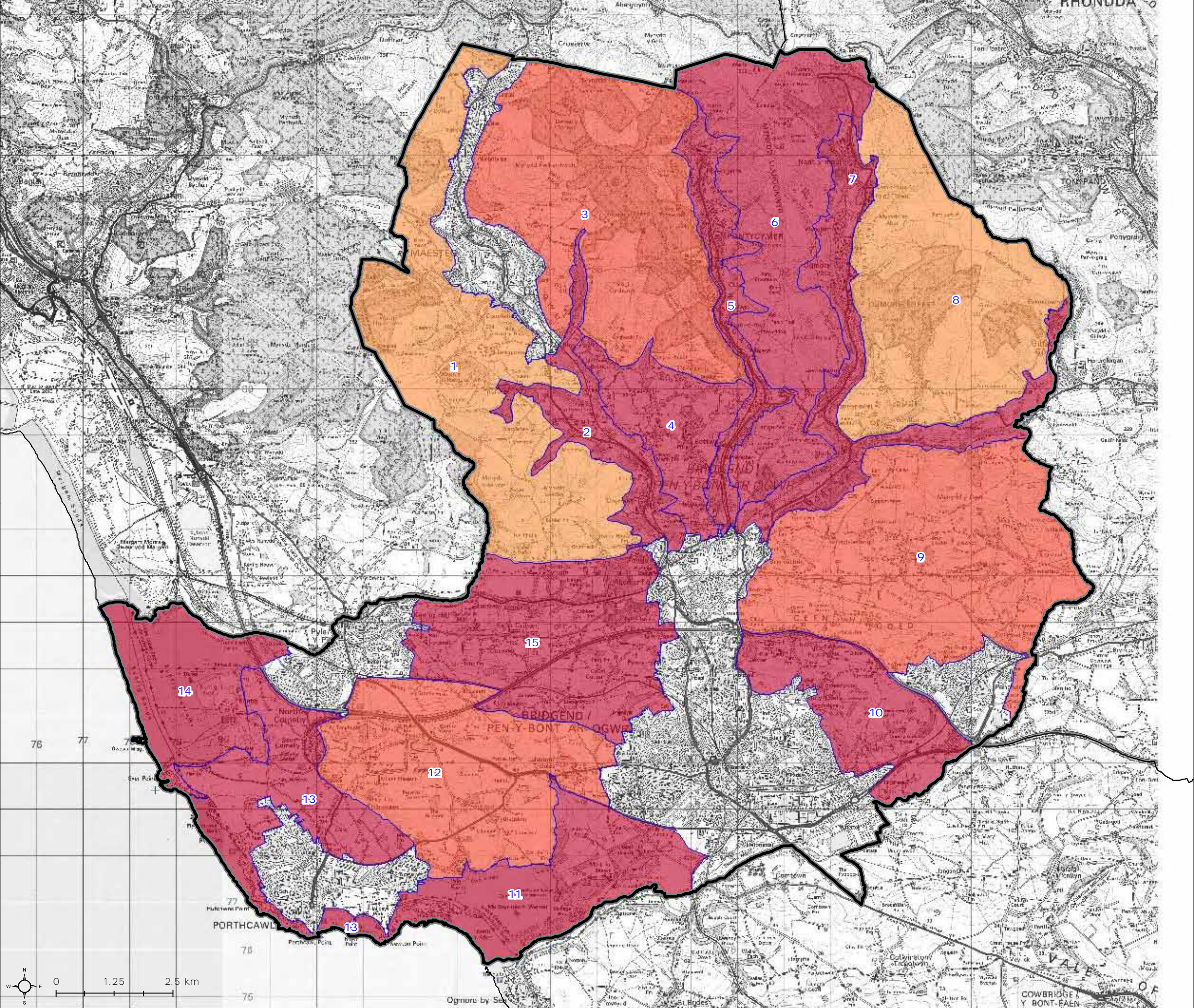
-  1 : Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry
-  2 : Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
-  3 : Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry
-  4 : Bettws Settled Farmland
-  5 : Garw Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
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-  7 : Ogmore Valley Floor & Lower Slopes
-  8 : Ogmore Forest and Surrounding Uplands
-  9 : Hirwaun Common and Surrounding Ridges
-  10 : Coity Rural Hinterland
-  11 : Merthyr Mawr Farmland, Warren and Coastline
-  12 : Newton Down Limestone Plateau
-  13 : Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland
-  14 : Kenfig Dunes and Coastline
-  15 : Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland

### Landscape Sensitivity to Medium Wind Energy Developments

-  Moderate
-  Moderate - High
-  High

Map Scale @ A3: 1:80,000





## Bridgend Landscape Sensitivity Assessment




Figure 3.4  
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Developments - Large (76-110m)

 Bridgend County Borough Boundary

### Landscape Character Areas

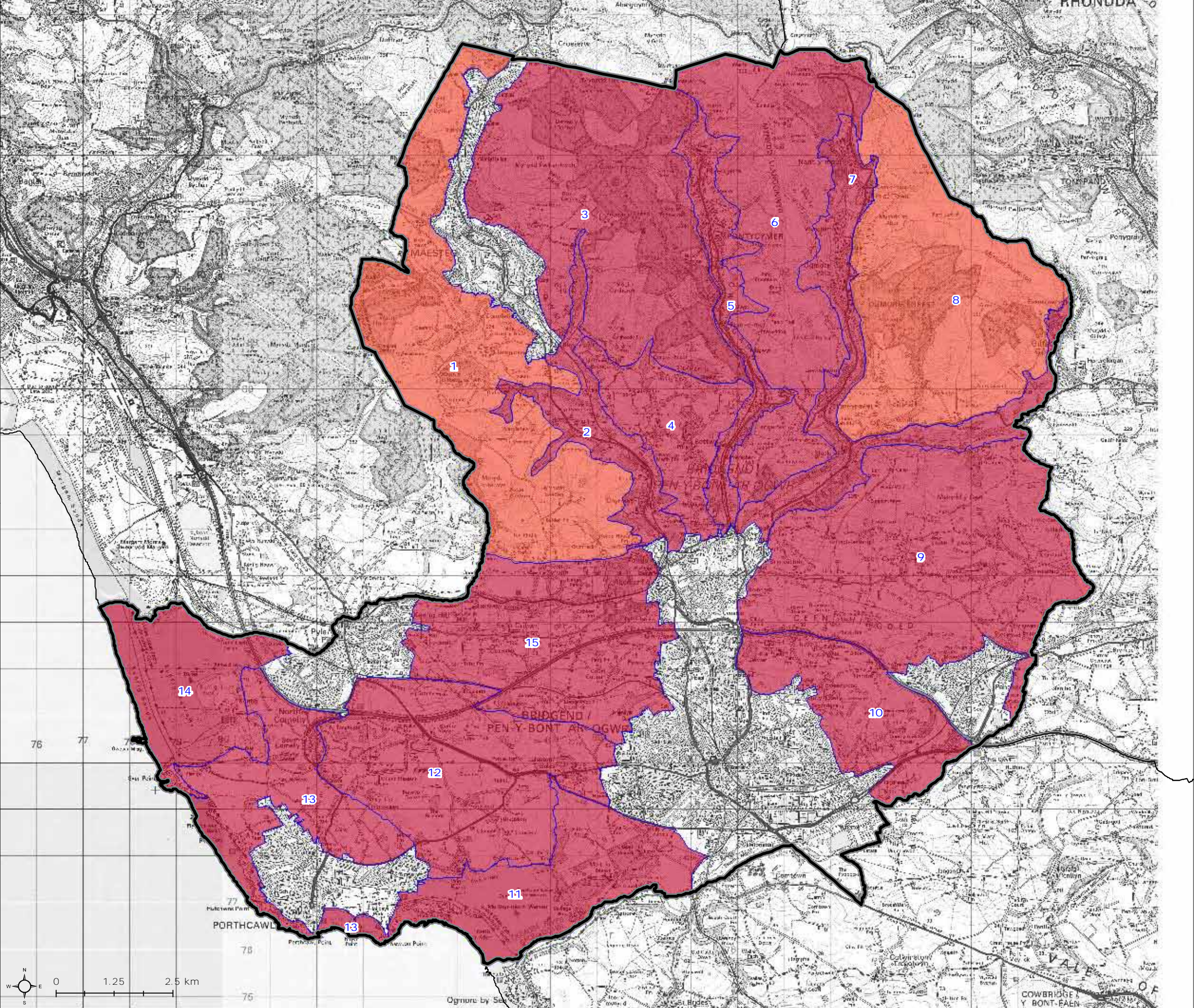
-  1 : Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry
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-  12 : Newton Down Limestone Plateau
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-  14 : Kenfig Dunes and Coastline
-  15 : Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland

### Landscape Sensitivity to Large Wind Energy Developments

-  Moderate
-  Moderate - High
-  High

Map Scale @ A3: 1:80,000





Bridgend Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 3.5  
Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Developments - Very Large (111-150m)

Bridgend County Borough Boundary

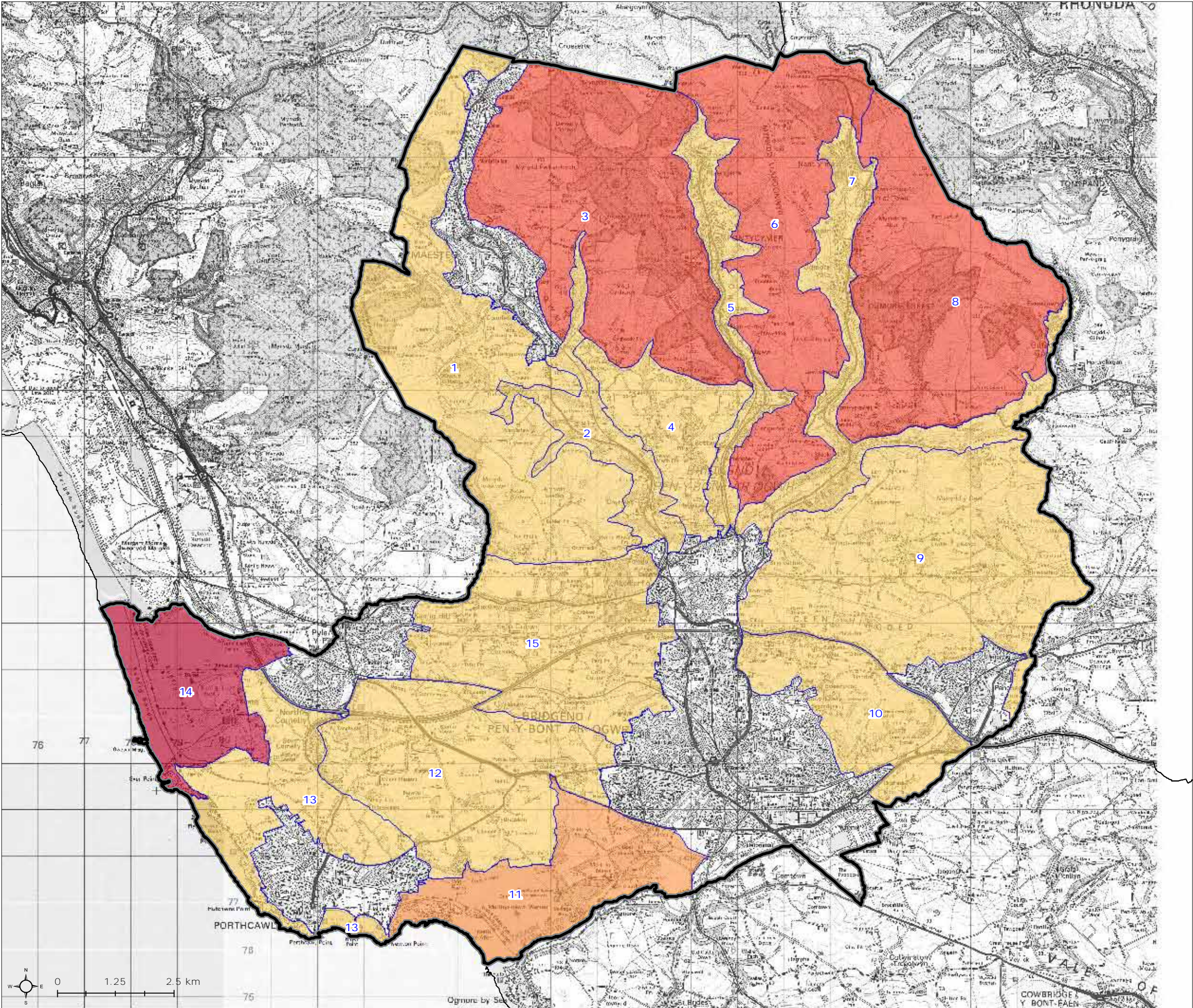
- Landscape Character Areas
- 1 : Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry
  - 2 : Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
  - 3 : Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry
  - 4 : Bettws Settled Farmland
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  - 12 : Newton Down Limestone Plateau
  - 13 : Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland
  - 14 : Kenfig Dunes and Coastline
  - 15 : Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland

Landscape Sensitivity to Very Large Wind Energy Developments

- Moderate - High
- High

Map Scale @ A3: 1:80,000





# Bridgend Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 3.6





Landscape Sensitivity to Solar PV Developments - Very Small (less than 1ha)

 Bridgend County Borough Boundary

## Landscape Character Areas

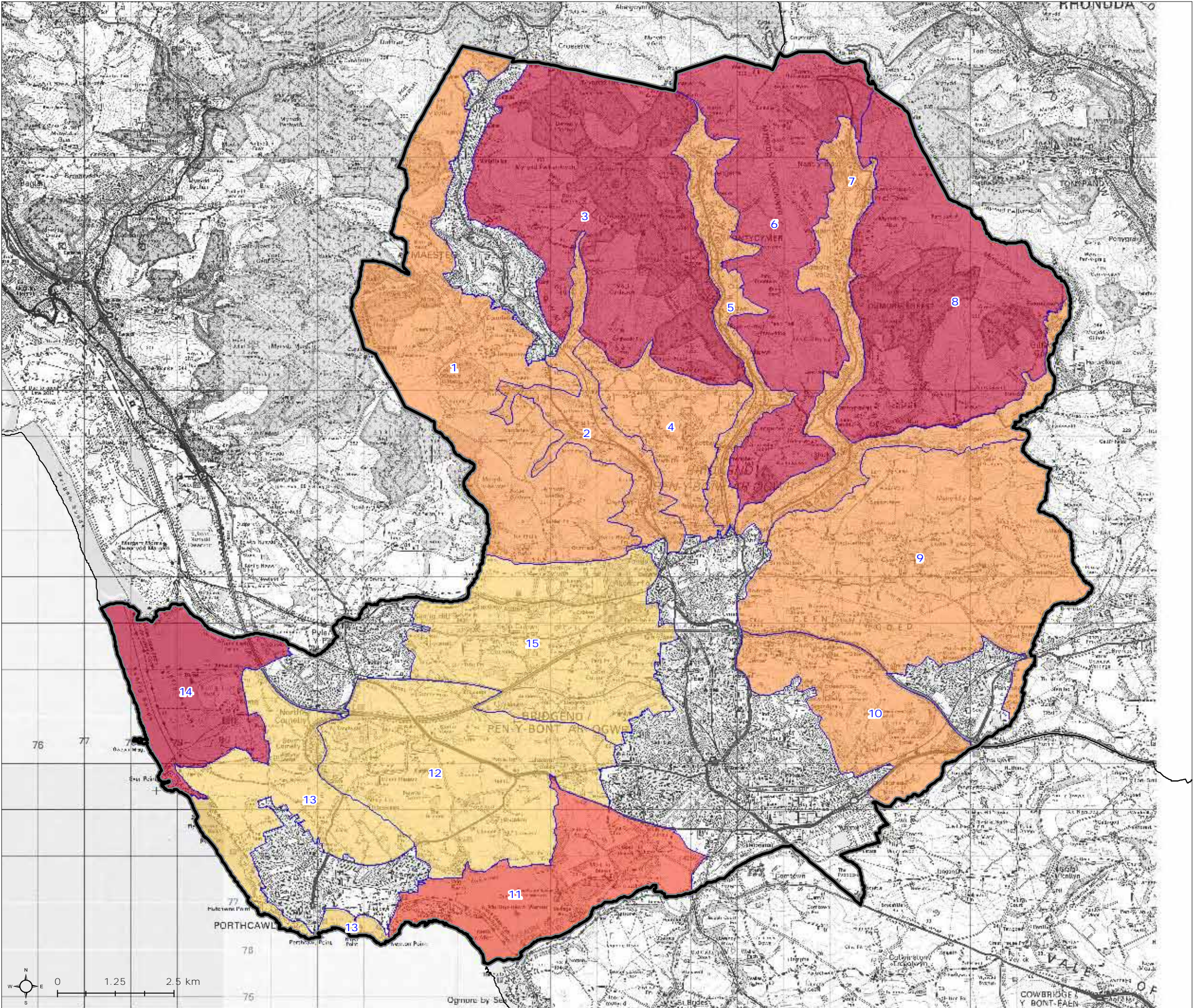
-  1 : Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry
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-  12 : Newton Down Limestone Plateau
-  13 : Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland
-  14 : Kenfig Dunes and Coastline
-  15 : Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland

## Landscape Sensitivity to Very Small Solar PV Developments

-  Low - Moderate
-  Moderate
-  Moderate - High
-  High

Map Scale @ A3: 1:80,000





## Bridgend Landscape Sensitivity Assessment





Figure 3.7  
Landscape Sensitivity to Solar PV Developments - Small (1-5ha)

 Bridgend County Borough Boundary

### Landscape Character Areas

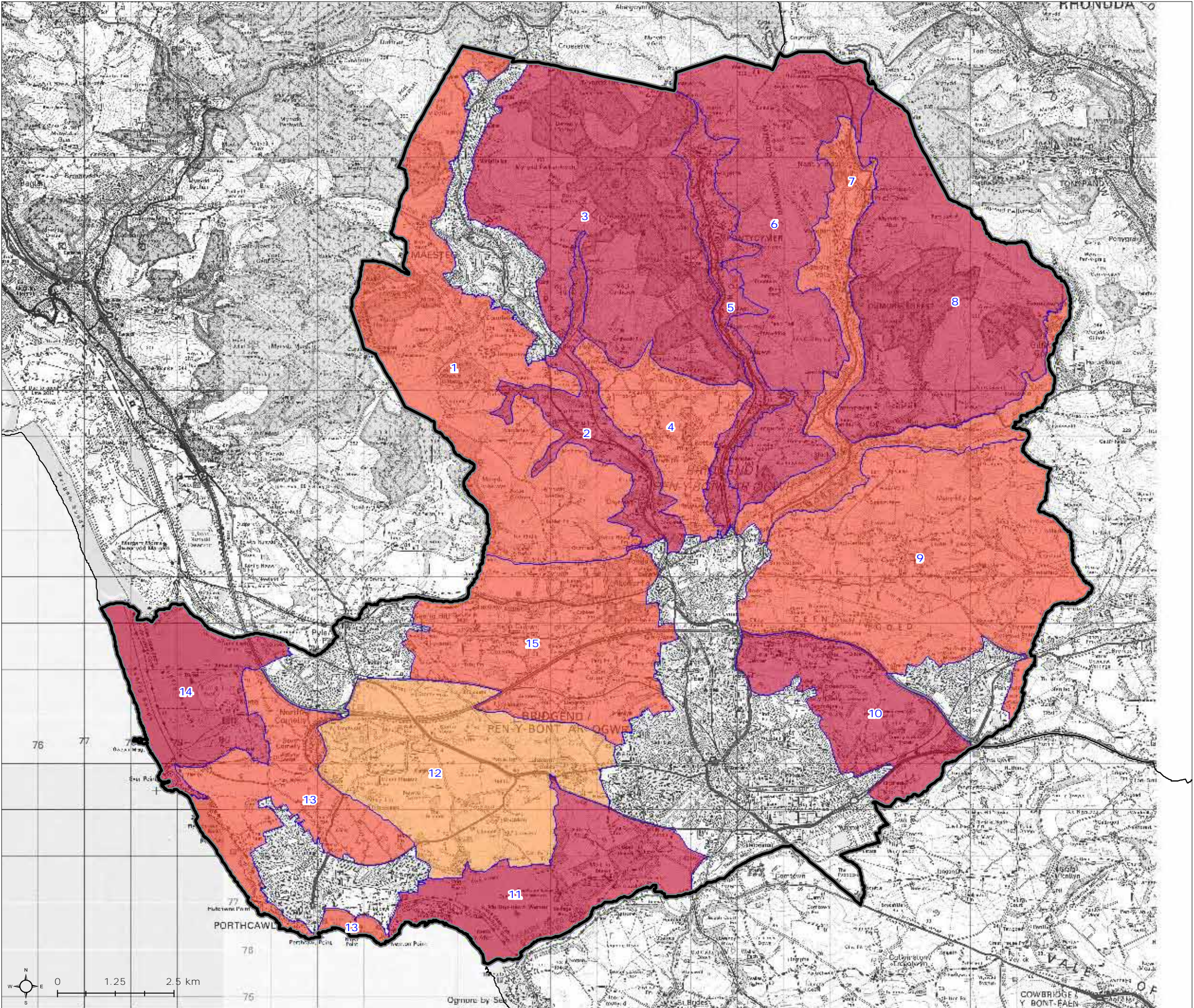
-  1 : Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry
-  2 : Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
-  3 : Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry
-  4 : Bettws Settled Farmland
-  5 : Garw Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
-  6 : Mynydd Llangeinwyr Uplands
-  7 : Ogmore Valley Floor & Lower Slopes
-  8 : Ogmore Forest and Surrounding Uplands
-  9 : Hirwaun Common and Surrounding Ridges
-  10 : Coity Rural Hinterland
-  11 : Merthyr Mawr Farmland, Warren and Coastline
-  12 : Newton Down Limestone Plateau
-  13 : Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland
-  14 : Kenfig Dunes and Coastline
-  15 : Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland

### Landscape Sensitivity to Small Solar PV Developments

-  Low - Moderate
-  Moderate
-  Moderate - High
-  High

Map Scale @ A3: 1:80,000





## Bridgend Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 3.8




Landscape Sensitivity to Solar PV Developments - Medium (5-10ha)

 Bridgend County Borough Boundary

### Landscape Character Areas

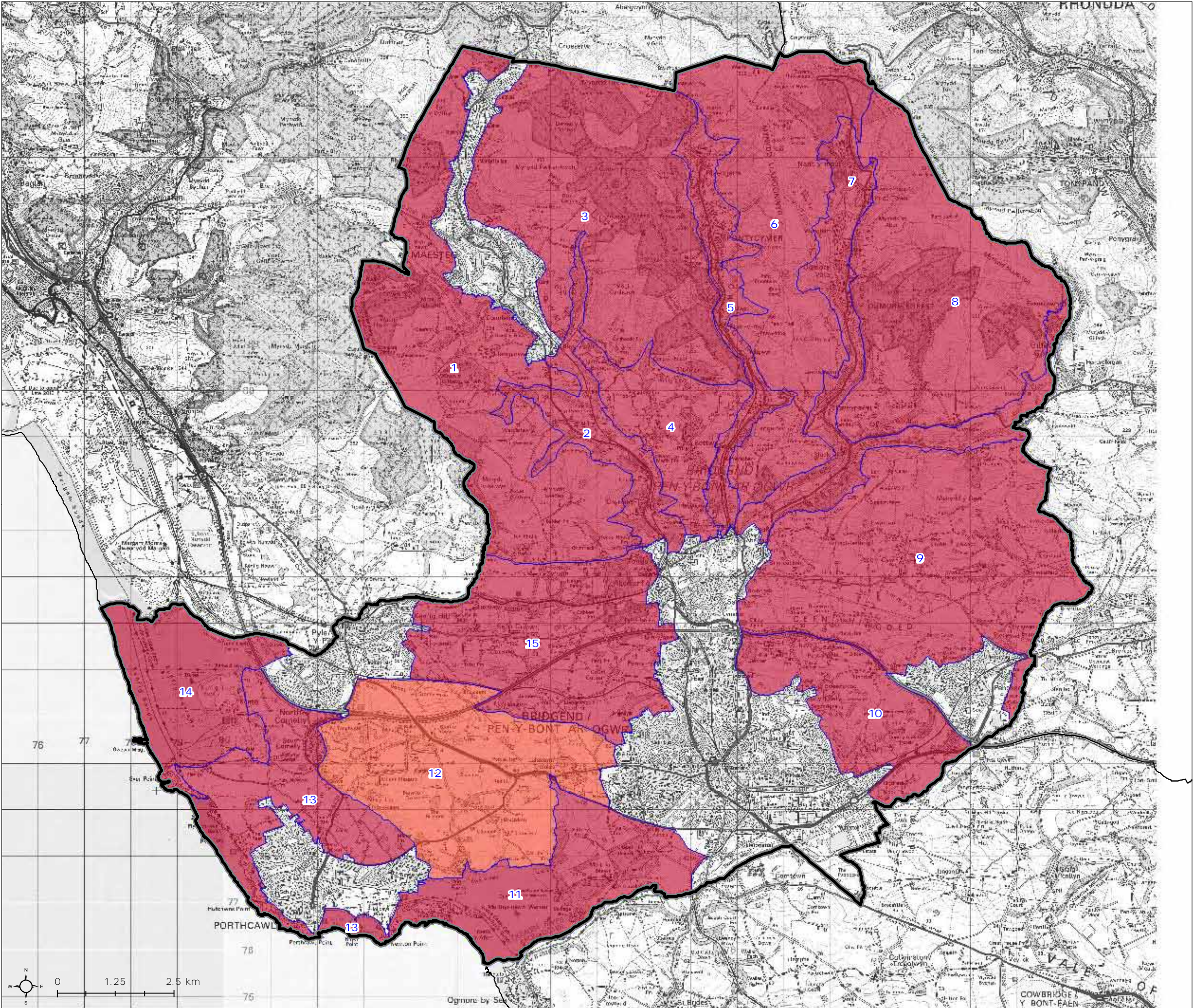
-  1 : Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry
-  2 : Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
-  3 : Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry
-  4 : Bettws Settled Farmland
-  5 : Garw Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
-  6 : Mynydd Llangeinwyr Uplands
-  7 : Ogmore Valley Floor & Lower Slopes
-  8 : Ogmore Forest and Surrounding Uplands
-  9 : Hirwaun Common and Surrounding Ridges
-  10 : Coity Rural Hinterland
-  11 : Merthyr Mawr Farmland, Warren and Coastline
-  12 : Newton Down Limestone Plateau
-  13 : Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland
-  14 : Kenfig Dunes and Coastline
-  15 : Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland

Landscape Sensitivity to Medium Solar PV Developments

-  Moderate
-  Moderate - High
-  High

Map Scale @ A3: 1:80,000





## Bridgend Landscape Sensitivity Assessment



Figure 3.9  
Landscape Sensitivity to Solar PV Developments - Large (10-15ha)

 Bridgend County Borough Boundary

### Landscape Character Areas

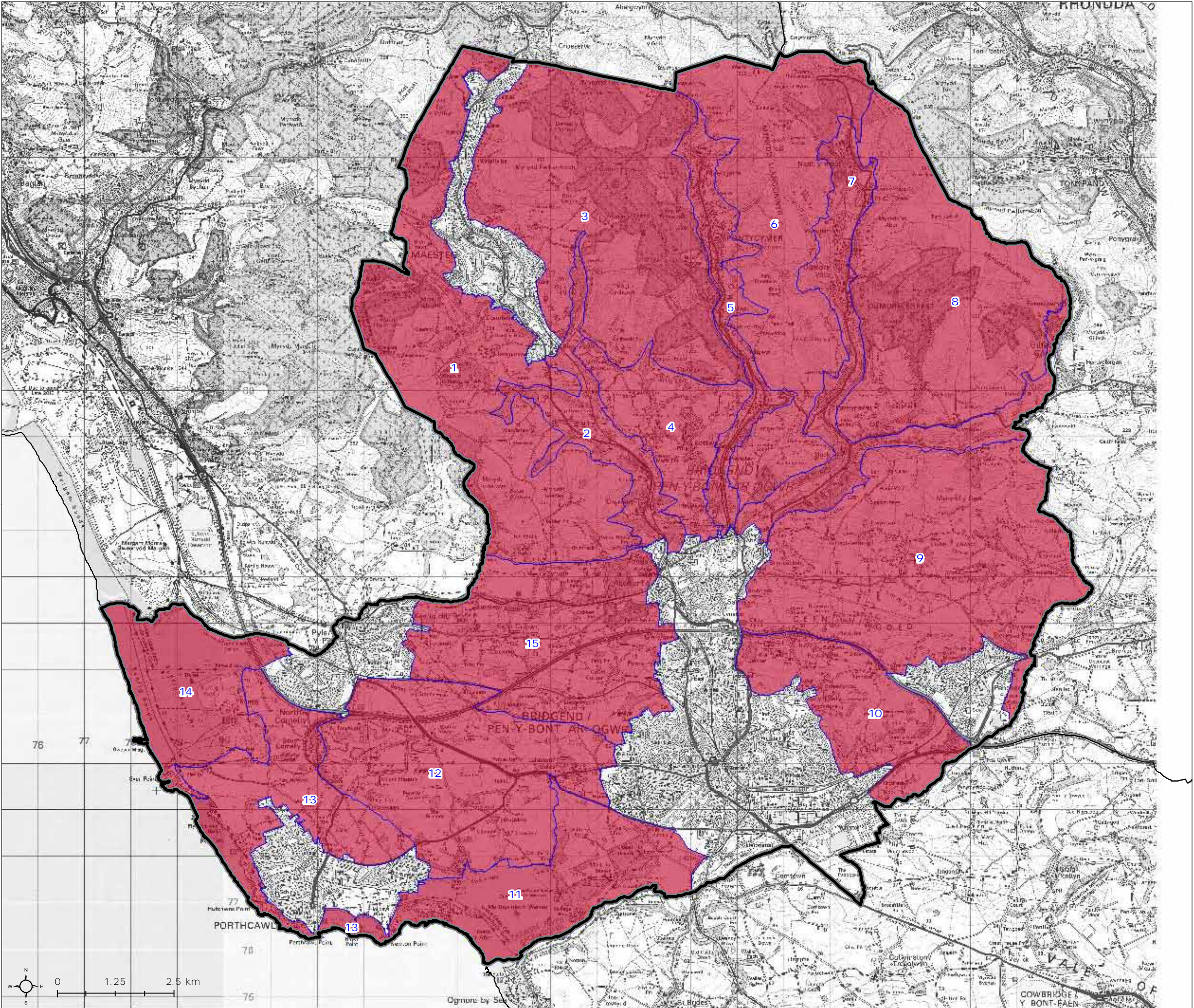
-  1 : Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry
-  2 : Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
-  3 : Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry
-  4 : Bettws Settled Farmland
-  5 : Garw Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
-  6 : Mynydd Llangeinwyr Uplands
-  7 : Ogmore Valley Floor & Lower Slopes
-  8 : Ogmore Forest and Surrounding Uplands
-  9 : Hirwaun Common and Surrounding Ridges
-  10 : Coity Rural Hinterland
-  11 : Merthyr Mawr Farmland, Warren and Coastline
-  12 : Newton Down Limestone Plateau
-  13 : Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland
-  14 : Kenfig Dunes and Coastline
-  15 : Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland

### Landscape Sensitivity to Large Solar PV Developments

-  Moderate - High
-  High

















Map Scale @ A3: 1:80,000






## Bridgend Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 3.10  
Landscape Sensitivity to Solar PV Developments - Very Large (greater than 15ha)

-  Bridgend County Borough Boundary
- Landscape Character Areas
-  1 : Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry
  -  2 : Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
  -  3 : Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry
  -  4 : Bettws Settled Farmland
  -  5 : Garw Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
  -  6 : Mynydd Llangeinwyr Uplands
  -  7 : Ogmore Valley Floor & Lower Slopes
  -  8 : Ogmore Forest and Surrounding Uplands
  -  9 : Hirwaun Common and Surrounding Ridges
  -  10 : Coity Rural Hinterland
  -  11 : Merthyr Mawr Farmland, Warren and Coastline
  -  12 : Newton Down Limestone Plateau
  -  13 : Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland
  -  14 : Kenfig Dunes and Coastline
  -  15 : Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland

Landscape Sensitivity to Very Large Solar PV Developments

 High

Map Scale @ A3: 1:80,000



# General Siting and Design Guidance for Wind Energy Development

- 3.8 This section provides generic guidance on the siting and design of wind energy development in Bridgend County Borough. It will help ensure that adverse landscape and visual effects<sup>9</sup> are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual effects.
- 3.9 The guidance should be read alongside the guidelines contained within BCBC's [Landscape Character Assessment](#) (Part 3 of the separate Landscape Character Area data sheets which are set out in Chapter 3 of the document).

## Siting Wind Energy Development within the Landscape

- 3.10 The following section provides some generic guidance on siting wind energy development in Bridgend County Borough, focussing on minimising landscape and visual effects. It is recognised that technologies need to be sited and designed to ensure a reasonable output.
- 3.11 In all cases the 'Overall Strategy' for the relevant Landscape Character Area to the proposed development site should be considered when choosing potential sites for wind energy development (set out in Chapter 4). The following guidance should be followed for siting any wind energy development, whether it comprises one small turbine or multiple large turbines:
- Site wind energy developments away from dramatic rugged landforms or valued distinct landform features (including prominent headlands).
  - Seek to avoid siting wind turbines where they would detract from the undeveloped character of the coast (as stated in para. 5.7.2 of PPW).
  - Seek to avoid areas valued for their remoteness<sup>10</sup>, areas free from human influence and perceived 'untamed' naturalness e.g. the upland moors.
  - Seek to avoid areas where ground level disturbance affects landscapes that are difficult to restore (e.g. deep peat or bog).
  - Ensure siting of turbines does not adversely affect the distinctive characteristics and special qualities of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast (designated in 1972).
  - Ensure siting of turbines does not damage the special qualities of the landscape as recorded in the Bridgend Landscape Character Area descriptions.
  - Significant effects on views from important viewpoints (including views which are integral to the character of conservation areas and recognised /iconic views), popular tourist and scenic routes, and settlements should be avoided where possible or minimised through careful siting.
  - It is generally less distracting to see a substantial part of a turbine rather than blade tips only – this may be a particular consideration for views from sensitive viewpoints or those frequented by a larger number of viewers.
  - Consider locations in association with business parks and reclaimed, industrial and man-made landscapes where other landscape sensitivities are not compromised.
  - Consider the landscape effects of transmission infrastructure when siting development, aiming for sites that will minimise the need for above ground transmission infrastructure. Undergrounding cables may mitigate effects in sensitive locations.
  - Consider sites where areas of existing vegetation could screen ground-level features of wind energy developments (such as fencing, tracks and transformers).

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<sup>9</sup> Landscape impacts (or effects) derive from changes in the physical landscape, which may give rise to changes in character and how it this is experienced. This may in turn affect the perceived value ascribed to a landscape. Visual impacts (or effects) relate to the changes that arise in the composition of available views as a result of changes to the landscape, to people's responses to the changes, and to the overall effects with respect to visual amenity.

<sup>10</sup> Remoteness can be described as freedom from human activity and disturbance and having a perceived naturalness or a strong feel of traditional rurality with few modern human influences.

- The visibility of turbines from valleys and lower ground may be reduced if they are located on high plateau with concave or steep wooded slopes.
- It is preferable to site turbines where they do not prevent the understanding and appreciation of historic landmarks features such as hilltop monuments or church towers.
- Protect the cultural and heritage values of areas listed on the Cadw register of *Outstanding or Special Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales*, Conservation Areas (including views integral to their character), the setting to listed buildings (where the character of the landscape is an important part of a listed building's setting) and Registered historic parks and gardens (including views to and from, particularly designed views)<sup>11</sup> – see map at Figure 2.4 in Chapter 2 and individual LCA maps in Chapter 4.
- Smaller-scale medieval enclosed landscapes are also likely to be more sensitive due to both scale and inherent historic character, with LANDMAP's Historic Landscape aspect and evaluations being a key source of information to identify such locations<sup>12</sup>. Some more recent but discrete enclosed landscapes may also be sensitive, such as 19<sup>th</sup> century fields created on the upland fringes, particularly when associated with a Listed historic farmstead.
- When siting medium or large-scale wind energy development (i.e. those with multiple turbines over 50m tip height), select sites in simple, regular landscapes with extensive areas of consistent ground cover over landscapes with more complex or irregular land cover patterns, smaller field sizes and landscapes with frequent human scale features (subject to satisfying other sensitivities).
- When siting medium or large-scale turbines (i.e. those over 50m tip height), avoid selecting sites on important undeveloped or distinctive skylines, or skylines with important cultural or historic landmark features (including skylines of elevated coastlines and coastal headlands).
- When selecting sites consider potential effects of transporting turbines to site, and the possible limitations presented by winding narrow lanes bounded by hedgerows.

**When siting single turbines the following guidance should be considered:**

- Consider siting turbines so they are perceived as part of other built development /in association with a building group where effects on amenity allow. For example, there may be some opportunity to site smaller single turbines in relation to farm buildings with larger scale single turbines sited in relation to larger businesses or community buildings - development should be commensurate with (or reflect) the scale of the associated buildings.

**When siting multiple turbines the following guidance should be considered:**

- Locate turbines on the most level part of a site or following contours to avoid a discordant variation of turbine heights.
- Ensure the size and grouping of turbines responds to landscape character, reinforcing the difference between distinct types of and scales of landscape character.
- Seek to keep a turbine group within one type of landscape (particularly as perceived in sensitive views) so that turbines do not span across marked changes in character on the ground, such as changes in topography.

## Detailed Layout and Design

- 3.12 The next stage in planning a wind energy scheme is the detailed layout and design. Alternative options should be investigated to find the optimum layout and design of a wind energy development. PPW (Section 4.11) states that good design should be inclusive and acknowledges the community involved in the design process. The landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) may aid this process. The following should be considered:
- Site layout, including number and arrangement of turbines;
  - Turbine design and relationship with their landscape setting;

<sup>11</sup> BCBC's Conservation and Design Team or Cadw should be approached directly to obtain advice on development that could affect these historic and cultural heritage assets.

<sup>12</sup> See Natural Resources Wales (May 2013) *LANDMAP Guidance Note 3: Using LANDMAP for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of Onshore Wind Turbines*. This note also provides guidance on the use of other aspect areas/layers when conducting windfarm LVIA's.

- Ancillary features, including access tracks, transformers and other buildings / infrastructure;
- Land management and land use changes including opportunities for habitat creation/ enhancement appropriate for the character area, following the guidance of the appropriate Landscape Character Area (section 3 of the LCA data sheets included in Chapter 3 of the Landscape Character Assessment).

### Site layout

- When developing multiple turbines, ensure that turbines read as a coherent group in all the main views – aim for a composition that is visually balanced, simple and consistent in image as it is viewed from various directions, minimising views of blade tips only in views (which can be distracting).
- When developing multiple turbines, seek to avoid 'stacking' of turbines when seen from one direction as far as possible (such as is experienced when looking along a row).
- When developing multiple turbines, seek to avoid siting turbines which are remote from the rest of the group – maintain a clear balanced cluster.
- Ensure turbine size does not overwhelm the scale of distinct hills and ridges.
- When developing multiple turbines, ensure cluster size is in proportion with the scale of the landscape, including landform features and landscape elements such as woodlands and fields.
- Ensure wind turbines respect the hierarchy of elements in the landscape and do not compete with, or create clutter when seen together with, other man-made landscape elements such as pylons.
- In urban fringe or industrial contexts, developments should respond to the scale of the built form and sit comfortably alongside buildings or structures.
- Use information on landscape scale contained within published landscape character assessments to inform choice of turbine size and cluster size.
- Ensure the layout and design of the development responds to other wind energy developments in the same type of landscape to minimise cumulative effects – this is more important the closer sites are together.

### Turbine design and relationship with the landscape

- Ensure the height of turbines does not overwhelm the scale of hills, ridges, or historic monuments.
- Ensure that the proportion of rotor diameter to tower height is balanced - short blades on a tall tower or long blades on a short tower may look unbalanced. Aim for a ratio of approximately 1:1 for tower height: blade diameter for medium and large turbines.
- Three bladed turbines tend to look more balanced than two bladed turbines, and should be the preferred turbine design wherever possible.
- Tubular steel towers tend to look simpler and less 'industrial' than lattice towers, and are therefore the preferred tower design for developments in the County Borough.
- Hubs are more aesthetically pleasing when oval shaped with flowing lines, rather than 'boxy' shapes.
- Simple, pale grey coloured turbines will be most suitable for most turbines over 25m to tip (to reduce contrast with the sky), with a semi-matt finish to reduce any potential glare. However, in some cases darker colours may be suitable for very small turbines (less than 25 metres) to help them blend into their setting.
- Opinion is divided about how effective graduated bases (usually from green to grey) are at integrating turbine towers into the landscape, but these may be appropriate in certain situations.
- All turbines on a site should rotate at the same speed and direction.
- Speed of blade rotations should be kept as low as possible (particularly on smaller turbines) to reduce visual impact.
- Avoid use of advertising on turbines, particularly in rural areas.

### Ancillary features

- Minimise the width and length of new tracks introduced into the landscape, using existing routes wherever possible.
- Any new tracks should follow contours, avoiding steep slopes or wet ground where possible, and following field boundaries or woodland edges where possible – in some cases this may result in slightly longer lengths of track being required.
- Ensure the surface of tracks blend into the surrounding landscape and aim to re-vegetate tracks (in full or in part) following construction.
- Minimise works to offsite roads, particularly rural roads, and prevent damage and alterations to stone walls, hedges, flower rich verges, trees, historic bridges and gateposts - repair and replace any features affected ensuring materials and planting are in keeping with local context and character.
- Where possible, house transformers within the turbine towers to reduce their visual effects.
- Substation and control buildings should be carefully sited and should generally avoid high or exposed locations – use existing buildings where possible, or existing and locally occurring vegetation to screen new buildings.
- Ancillary features should match the local vernacular where they are visible (e.g. using locally occurring materials on substations, control buildings, and transformer cabins if not housed within the turbines).
- Avoid use of urbanising elements in rural situations, such as kerbs, and minimise areas of hard surfacing, fencing and lighting.
- Ensure on-site cables are buried underground (without damage to existing hedges or archaeology) to minimise effects on landscape character and visual amenity – on-site grid connections should be underground wherever possible and crane hard standings re-vegetated during operation of the turbines.
- If lighting is required on turbines for aviation purposes, use infra-red lighting to minimise visual effects at night, particularly in darker areas (para. 13.13.2 of PPW encourages a balance between the provision of lighting and protection of the natural and historic environment and retention of dark skies).

### Land management and land use changes

- Continue the existing land use underneath the turbines so that the landscape flows underneath and around the turbines, or link land use to adjoining land uses especially if this can create more robust semi natural habitats and reduce habitat fragmentation.
- Provide enhanced management of landscape features, habitats and historic assets as part of a development, including contributing to wider landscape scale targets and projects in Bridgend's Local Biodiversity Action Plan and Landscape Character Assessment.
- Encourage traditional management of farmland including maintaining small fields, hedgerows and stone walls.
- Developers should provide a design statement to set out how the design has evolved, how the design responds to landscape character, how visual issues have been addressed and how this guidance has been taken on board.
- Developers should provide a land management plan for land surrounding/under installations to demonstrate proposed land use and management through the operational phase and restoration/aftercare after decommissioning.

## Designing for Multiple Wind Energy Developments

- 3.13 As larger numbers of wind energy developments are built, it is increasingly necessary to consider their cumulative effects. Some general guidance is provided below.

## Guidance for designing multiple developments

- When designing a wind energy development it is important to consider how the scheme fits with other existing, consented and proposed schemes (including within neighbouring planning authorities) to minimise cumulative effects.
- If wind energy development already exists in a particular type of landscape, further wind energy development should continue this pattern of development (e.g. small cluster on hill tops, or single turbines associated with buildings), as long as the existing development is considered appropriate in the context of landscape character.
- Ensure multiple developments do not obscure distinctive landforms and are in scale with ridges and hills.
- If two or more wind energy developments are clearly visible in the same view and appear in the same type of landscape they should appear of similar scale and design (including the number of blades and proportion of rotor diameter to tower height), unless the existing design is considered inappropriate – the closer they are to each other the more important this is.
- Ensure any wind energy scheme, or extension to an existing scheme, takes account of landscape sensitivity as well as any landscape strategies for wind energy development that may be available.
- It will be important to ensure that wind energy developments do not have a defining influence on the overall experience of the landscape and that some open views devoid of turbines are maintained within Bridgend County Borough.
- As multiple wind energy developments are built they may 'compete' with the landscape's original foci – it is important to maintain a hierarchy of focal points so that the original foci can still be appreciated in the landscape.
- Consider views from settlements when designing multiple wind energy developments – avoid 'surrounding' a settlement with wind turbines.
- Consider views from protected landscapes when designing multiple wind energy developments – avoid 'surrounding' a protected landscape with wind turbines.
- Individual wind energy developments should generally appear visually separate from each other unless specifically designed to create the appearance of a single combined wind farm.
- When designing wind farm extensions it will be important that scale of turbines (including the proportion of rotor diameter to tower height) and rotation speeds are compatible.

## Summary of Information Required When Submitting a Planning Application

- 3.14 Planning permission is currently required to install any size or number of wind turbines in Wales. For information on Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) planning requirements please refer to Part 3 of the *Planning Guidance for Wind Turbine Development: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Requirements* for more detailed information (Gillespies LLP, 2014).

# General Siting and Design Guidance for Solar PV Development

- 3.15 This section is designed to provide generic guidance on the siting and design of free-standing solar PV development in Bridgend County Borough. It will help ensure that adverse landscape and visual effects<sup>13</sup> are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual effects. The guidelines presented here are in line with existing guidance from the UK<sup>14</sup>.
- 3.16 The guidance should be read alongside the guidelines contained within BCBC's [Landscape Character Assessment](#) (Part 3 of the separate Landscape Character Area data sheets which are set out in Chapter 3 of the document).

## Generic Guidance on Siting Solar PV Development in the Landscape

- 3.17 The following provides some generic guidance on siting solar PV development in Bridgend County Borough focussing on minimising landscape and visual effects. It is recognised that technologies need to be sited and designed to ensure a reasonable output. In all cases the 'Overall Strategy' for the relevant Landscape Character Area to the proposed development site should be considered when choosing potential sites for wind energy development (as set out in Chapter 4).

### Generic guidance for siting solar PV development in the landscape

- Site solar PV development on lower slopes/within folds in gently undulating lowland landscapes or on flat plateau sites rather than on upper slopes or coastal headlands.
- Any PV development on plateau landscapes should generally be set back from edges to minimise effects on views from surrounding areas.
- Site development in landscapes with a sense of enclosure (e.g. provided by woodland or high hedges) rather than in open and unenclosed landscapes.
- Consider views from local viewpoints, popular routes, recognised /iconic views, and designated landscapes when considering the siting of solar PV development in the landscape - site panels in areas where they can be well concealed or integrated into sensitive views.
- When siting development, consider the appearance of the development as viewed from the 'backs' and 'sides' (where frames will be more visible) as well as from the 'front'.
- For sites that are overlooked by higher ground the design of the site and how it integrates with the landscape will be particularly important.
- Small-scale medieval enclosures (including strip fields) are likely to be more sensitive to the introduction of solar PV development than more modern (regular and larger-scale) fields.
- Ensure sites do not span across marked changes in character on the ground.
- Site field-scale PV development away from areas of undeveloped coastline. Ensure siting of solar PV development does not adversely affect the distinctive characteristics and special qualities of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast (designated in 1972) - the more visible a development is in the landscape, the higher the risk that it may affect scenic quality/natural beauty.
- Site field-scale PV development away from areas valued for their remoteness, areas free from human influence and perceived 'untamed' naturalness e.g. the upland moors.
- Significant effects on views from important viewpoints (including views which are integral to the character of conservation areas and viewpoints in sensitive areas including recognised /iconic views), popular tourist and scenic routes and settlements should be minimised.

<sup>13</sup> Landscape impacts (or effects) derive from changes in the physical landscape, which may give rise to changes in character and how it this is experienced. This may in turn affect the perceived value ascribed to a landscape. Visual impacts (or effects) relate to the changes that arise in the composition of available views as a result of changes to the landscape, to people's responses to the changes, and to the overall effects with respect to visual amenity.

<sup>14</sup> This includes the recently produced *Planning Guidance for the Development of Large-scale Ground-mounted Solar PV Systems*. BRE National Solar Centre and Cornwall Council, available at [http://www.solar-trade.org.uk/media/NSC\\_Planning\\_Guidance\\_reduced.pdf](http://www.solar-trade.org.uk/media/NSC_Planning_Guidance_reduced.pdf)

- Sites in naturalistic landscapes will be more sensitive than sites in areas containing existing hard surfacing or built elements (e.g. urban areas, brownfield sites or large-scale horticulture).
- Consider providing enhanced management of landscape features, habitats and historic assets as part of a development, including contributing to wider landscape scale targets and projects in Bridgend's Local Biodiversity Action Plan and the guidelines in Bridgend's Landscape Character Assessment.
- Consider how panels will be transported to site – many rural lanes are very narrow and have high hedges or stone walls either side. Damage should be avoided, but if damage occurs reinstatement will be required.
- Ensure siting of solar PV development does not harm the special qualities of the landscape as recorded in Bridgend's Landscape Character Area descriptions.
- Protect the cultural and heritage values of areas listed on the Cadw register of *Outstanding or Special Historic Interest in Wales*, Conservation Areas (including views integral to their character), the setting to listed buildings (where the character of the landscape is an important part of a listed building's setting) and registered Historic Parks and Gardens (including views to and from, particularly designed views)<sup>15</sup> – see map at Figure 2.4 and individual LCA maps at Chapter 4.

## Detailed Layout and Design

- 3.18 The next stage in planning a solar PV development is the detailed layout and design. Alternative site layouts should be investigated to compare the effects of different designs and to find the optimum layout and design of a solar PV development. PPW (Section 4.11) states that good design should be inclusive and acknowledges the community involved in the design process. The landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) may aid this process. The following should be considered:
- Layout and number of panels (including extent).
  - Site access and transporting panels to site.
  - Location of onsite cables.
  - Location and restoration of construction compounds.
  - Type of security arrangements.
  - Location and design of cabinets/ building(s) to house inverters, transformers, switchgear/ substations and spare parts.
  - Land management changes (hedges and land beneath panels) including opportunities for appropriate habitat creation/ enhancement, following the guidance of the appropriate Landscape Character Area (section 3 of the LCA data sheets included in Chapter 3 of the Landscape Character Assessment).
- 3.19 The following themed boxes provide generic guidance on the detailed layout and design of solar PV development in Bridgend County Borough.

### Siting and design of solar PV panels

- Ensure the area of development is in scale with the landscape in which it lies – it is likely that areas with smaller scale fields will accommodate smaller developments (information on landscape scale contained within the Landscape Character Assessment may provide an indication of suitable development sizes).
- Fit panels comfortably into the fields (for example avoiding straight edges in irregular landscapes).
- Existing trees and hedgerows should be retained and protected. Trees should be protected in accordance with BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction as appropriate, and hedges and hedgerows should be protected to similar standards. The location of the protective fences needs to be informed by professional judgement but a minimum distance of 4m from the base of the hedge or hedgerow would be expected.
- Careful consideration should be given to the location of solar panels so that vegetation does not have to be felled as a result of shading.

<sup>15</sup> BCBC's Conservation and Design Team or Cadw should be approached directly to obtain advice on development that could affect these historic and cultural heritage assets.

- Minimise height of panels so that they will be as unobtrusive as possible in the landscape – in areas with hedgerows aim to site them below the height of the hedge.
- When designing the layout of panels, consider the appearance of the development as viewed from the 'backs' and 'sides' (where frames will be more visible) as well as from the 'front'.
- Dark, recessive colours in natural hues and non-reflective materials for structures associated with the PV panels (including frames, fencing and ancillary structures) are generally considered to be less visually intrusive than shiny materials and bright colours.
- Landform modelling (less than 2m high) can sometimes assist in reducing the visual/landscaping impact of a proposed solar installation. However, it should be in keeping with landscape character, not have detrimental visual/landscape effect itself and management should be consistent with neighbouring uses.
- Ensure the panels/arrays follow contours and fit within existing enclosure patterns - avoid siting panels that are remote from the rest of the group.
- Maintain land uses on the site that fit with the character of the area and manage vegetation under the solar panels to avoid the site becoming overgrown e.g. by grazing – mulching large areas should be avoided (including plastics to suppress weed growth), particularly on visible sites. Land use should be set out in a landscape management strategy for the lifespan of the development.
- On greenfield sites minimise trenching and concrete foundations - use pile driven or screw anchored bases (as opposed to concrete bases) where archaeological constraints allow. On decommissioning ensure the ground is fully restored - any concrete should be broken up, removed from site and the area backfilled and reseeded.

In addition, when designing a scheme across multiple fields the following guidance should be considered:

- Preserve the legibility of field patterns by minimising the number of adjacent fields that are developed and setting PV panels back from the edges of fields. This will also enable effective hedgerow management.
- Designing a site layout around existing hedgerows/ woodland will help to break up the massing of panels.
- Seek to avoid dominating character in a local area – maintain a diversity of landcover types in any one area.

### Ancillary features

- Use existing access points and minimise introduction of new tracks into the landscape – consider using existing tracks or laying temporary surfaces to transport panels onto site where possible. Avoid access tracks between rows of panels as far as possible.
- Avoid use of urbanising elements in rural situations, such as kerbs, and minimise areas of hard surfacing, urban style fencing, gates and lighting (particularly in the darkest landscapes).
- Ensure on-site cables are buried underground (without damage to existing hedgerows or archaeology) to minimise effects on landscape character and visual amenity - grid connections should be underground wherever possible.
- House inverters in existing buildings where possible, particularly where these are of local vernacular and located near the site.
- Cabinets or buildings should be carefully sited and should generally avoid high or exposed locations – use existing and locally occurring vegetation to screen such features.
- Ensure new buildings constructed as part of a solar PV development match the local vernacular, in terms of colours used and scale.
- Use existing or new landscape features to integrate security features into the landscape e.g. security fencing. Set fences back from hedge boundaries on the site's perimeter to reduce their overall height when viewed from outside the site and use planting to screen views of the fences.
- Landscape features used for security or screening should be in character with the landscape – different features may be appropriate for different landscapes e.g. ditches, berms (bunds), tall crops, hedges or tree lines. Ensure any planting is of locally occurring species and in character with the landscape.
- Minimise the use of security lighting – aim to use passive infra-red (PIR) technology where possible and ensure that any visible lighting is designed and installed in a manner which minimises glare or light spill into

the surrounding landscape (para. 13.13.2 of PPW encourages a balance between the provision of lighting and protection of the natural and historic environment and retention of dark skies).

#### Land use / landscape enhancement

- Screening development will be important – however, letting hedgerows grow higher should only be employed where it fits with local landscape character, restores traditional management practices, does not result in deterioration of the hedge and does not produce unreasonable shading of panels. Use native or locally naturalised tree and shrub species for any screening.
- Consider opportunities to provide enhanced management of landscape features and habitats as part of a development, including contributing to wider landscape scale targets and projects in Bridgend's Biodiversity Action Plan and Landscape Character Assessment.
- Encourage traditional management of farmland including maintaining small fields, hedgerows, stone walls and the grazing of land. Allow hedge tree regeneration or, where appropriate, planting of native or locally naturalised tree species in hedges.
- Any development must be reversible and enable full restoration of the site to its original state once the installation is decommissioned.
- Developers should provide:
  - a design statement to set out how the design has evolved, how the design responds to landscape character, and how visual issues have been addressed.
  - agreed mitigation measures accompanied by a 'concept landscape design plan' showing any proposals for landscape and ecological mitigation.
  - details of proposed land management for land surrounding/under installations to demonstrate proposed land use and management through the operational phase and 5 years after decommissioning.

### Designing for Multiple Developments

- 3.20 Cumulative effects of multiple schemes are a significant issue for planning authorities to deal with. The general guidance below can assist in minimising cumulative effects.

#### Guidance for designing multiple solar PV developments in the landscape

- Ensure any solar PV development takes account of landscape sensitivity as well as any landscape strategies for solar PV development that may be available.
- When designing a solar PV development it is important to consider how the scheme fits with other existing, consented and proposed schemes (including within neighbouring planning authorities) to minimise cumulative effects.
- Aim for similarity of design between schemes that fall in the same type of landscape (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response.
- When designing extensions it will be important that scale and appearance of panels are compatible.
- Individual solar PV developments should generally appear visually separate unless specifically designed to create the appearance of a single combined development.
- It will be important to ensure that solar PV developments do not have a defining influence on the overall experience of the landscape and that some open views devoid of PV developments are maintained within Bridgend County Borough (i.e. ensure that rural character remains in Bridgend – ensuring PV developments do not dominate).
- Ensure the area of development is in scale with the landscape in which it lies.
- If two or more solar PV developments are clearly visible in the same view and appear in the same Landscape Character Area they should appear of similar scale (unless the first development is considered too large for its landscape context) and their design should relate to the underlying landscape in the same

way.

- Consider views from settlements when designing multiple solar PV developments – avoid ‘surrounding’ a settlement.

## Summary of Information Required When Submitting a Planning Application

- 3.21 The following summary sets out the landscape and visual information that will be required when making a planning application for a solar PV development. Most ground-mounted solar PV developments require planning permission, but developers should contact the local planning authority if they are unsure of whether consent is required.

### Requirement for full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 3.22 The Screening criteria specified for Schedule 2 developments (which include industrial installations for the production of electricity, such as solar PV) as set out in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland state that **any development of more than 0.5 hectares should be screened for requiring an EIA**. The requirement for full EIA will generally depend upon the scale of the development and its visual impact. This decision will be made at screening stage by the local planning authority.
- 3.23 Information to be submitted with a planning application should be proportional to the size of the scheme, and can be discussed with the Council in advance of submission.

### Landscape and visual assessment / appraisal

- 3.24 A landscape and visual appraisal will be expected to be submitted to accompany any planning application. For EIA developments a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) should be provided, both in accordance with guidance in the Landscape Institute and Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition* (published by Routledge). The accompanying statement of clarification (available to download from <http://www.landscapeinstitute.org/knowledge/GLVIA.php>) provides some additional information about the difference between appraisals/assessments for EIA and non-EIA developments.

#### *Written report*

- 3.25 The written assessment/appraisal should be clear and logical in its layout and presentation. It should be a balanced document providing an unbiased account of the landscape and visual effects, with reasoned and justifiable arguments. It should consider:
- A summary description of the development (including area coverage of the panels in hectares, orientation and positioning of the panels, access arrangements (e.g. temporary or permanent access tracks), location of any compounds, and all ancillary elements).
  - Effects on landscape features/fabric including consideration of loss of elements (e.g. hedges, trees).
  - Effects on landscape character including consideration of direct changes that will occur to the character of the landscape in which the proposal is located and the indirect changes to character of landscapes from where the solar PV development will be visible – this should include how the development will affect perceptions of character and how widespread and prominent the changes will be.
  - Effects on landscape values including consideration of potential change to special qualities of protected landscapes (e.g. the Vale of Glamorgan Heritage Coast and Bridgend’s Special Landscape Areas).
  - Effects on visual amenity of receptors (with reference to representative assessment viewpoints which should be selection in consultation with the the local planning authority).
- 3.26 A glossary of technical terms used in the assessment and a reference list would also be helpful.
- 3.27 For EIA developments, a **non-technical summary** should be provided to enable a non-specialist to understand the landscape and visual effects of the proposal – this should include:
- a summary description of the development (as above), the aspects of landscape character and visual amenity likely to be significantly affected; and
  - the mitigation measures to be implemented.

### *Use of maps, illustrations and visualisations*

- 3.28 The report should be accompanied by maps and illustrations – the number and detail of which will be proportional to the scheme in question, and may also vary according to the sensitivity of the site and the potential for cumulative effects. However, as a guide, the following illustrations will typically be required as part of a LVIA:
- **Location plan** (based on Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 scale mapping showing contours);
  - **A site layout plan** (based on Ordnance Survey 1:500 scale mapping) showing position of arrays, access arrangements (e.g. temporary or permanent access tracks), location of any compounds, and all ancillary elements in the context of the physical landscape fabric (e.g. other buildings, nearby dwellings, woodland, hedges, rivers and ponds). This may already form part of the planning application in which case it can be cross-referenced to;
  - **Study area plan at A3.** The scale of mapping will be determined by the extent of the study area, which should be agreed with the Council.
  - **A map or information indicating which Bridgend Landscape Character Areas and LANDMAP aspect areas (showing overall evaluations)** fall within the study area;
  - **A map showing national and local landscape designations and open access land** within the study area;
  - **Mapping of Historic Parks and Gardens, Cadw registered historic landscapes and Conservation Areas** may also be relevant to the LVIA (this information may also be recorded in the cultural heritage assessment).
- 3.29 Applications for smaller (non-EIA) proposals may not need to submit all of the above information, but this depends on the nature of the scheme. Applicants for non-EIA schemes are advised to discuss with the Council to agree what information should be submitted with their planning application.

### *Zones of Theoretical Visibility*

- 3.30 It will be important to consider views to the site, including widely recognised iconic views and acknowledged important views to, from, or between heritage assets. The need for ZTV should be discussed with the Council, depending on the scale of the development and its location (e.g. in the context of any landscape designations).
- **ZTV indicating the extent of visibility** (including the proportion of the site which will be theoretically visible if possible, and clearly indicating distance radii from the site);
  - **A map showing viewpoint locations overlaid onto the ZTV** (this may be combined with the above map if relevant);
  - **ZTV overlaid onto Bridgend's Landscape Character Areas and any landscape designations** (if considered useful);
  - **Photographs and visualisations** for viewpoints to illustrate the location and extent of development in the landscape, provided and reproduced at a viewing distance of 40-50cm (this could comprise a photograph of the site and shading of field(s) to be affected by panels).

### *Cumulative assessment*

- 3.31 If existing or proposed solar PV schemes are located within proximity to the application site a cumulative assessment may be required. This requirement should be discussed with the Council, including the extent of the search area used to identify other schemes. Additional information required for a cumulative assessment (in addition to the above) should include:
- **Location map for all operational, consented and application sites** within the study area, presented on a 1:50,000 or 1:25,000 OS base with concentric distance bands.
  - **Cumulative ZTV (CZTV) for existing and proposed solar PV schemes in combination with the proposed development** (more than one CZTV may be useful to show different assessment scenarios).
  - **CZTVs overlaid onto Bridgend's Landscape Character Areas, LANDMAP aspect areas (showing their evaluations), landscape designations and cumulative assessment viewpoints** where this helps understand the assessment.

- **Photographs or visualisations of up to 360 degrees** to show the proposed development in the context of other developments - annotated with site name, status (operational, consented, application), distance to each development, and clearly labelled to indicate how the images should be held and viewed.

## 4 Landscape Sensitivity Assessment and Guidance by Landscape Character Area



## 4 Landscape Sensitivity Assessment and Guidance by Landscape Character Area

### Purpose

This Section of the Supplementary Planning Guidance is designed to provide a robust evidence base for informing future planning and management decisions on wind and field-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) developments across the County Borough. It uses the framework of the 15 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) to provide an assessment of sensitivity to wind and solar PV developments that is strongly linked to local landscape character. A strategy and tailored guidance for accommodating future development is also included for each LCA.

### How to use the Landscape Sensitivity Assessments and Guidance

- 4.1 The 'User Guide' on the following page provides a checklist of how to use the information contained in the following Landscape Character Area (LCA) assessments, as well as the preceding chapters of the SPG. It is designed for both developers and decision-makers to help them consider landscape character and sensitivity when making proposals for wind energy or solar PV developments. It is arranged under three key stages, and sets out a series of questions as prompts to assist in using available information within this SPG to shape proposals / assist in planning decisions.
- 4.2 The remainder of this chapter contains the individual LCA assessments, in the following order:
- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| 1) Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry      | Page 60  |
| 2) Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes         | Page 68  |
| 3) Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry           | Page 74  |
| 4) Bettws Settled Farmland                      | Page 80  |
| 5) Garw Valley Floor and Lower Slopes           | Page 87  |
| 6) Mynydd Llangeinwyr Uplands                   | Page 93  |
| 7) Ogmore Valley Floor & Lower Slopes           | Page 100 |
| 8) Ogmore Forest and Surrounding Uplands        | Page 107 |
| 9) Hirwaun Common and Surrounding Ridges        | Page 116 |
| 10) Coity Rural Hinterland                      | Page 123 |
| 11) Merthyr Mawr Farmland, Warren and Coastline | Page 129 |
| 12) Newton Down Limestone Plateau               | Page 137 |
| 13) Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland    | Page 144 |
| 14) Kenfig Dunes and Coastline                  | Page 152 |
| 15) Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland      | Page 159 |
- 4.3 The LCAs above are mapped in Figure 4.1, showing their location within the County Borough.

### Stage 1 – Policy context

- Has the applicant considered how the development accords with the relevant LDP policies, as set out in Chapter 2?

### Stage 2 – Landscape sensitivity

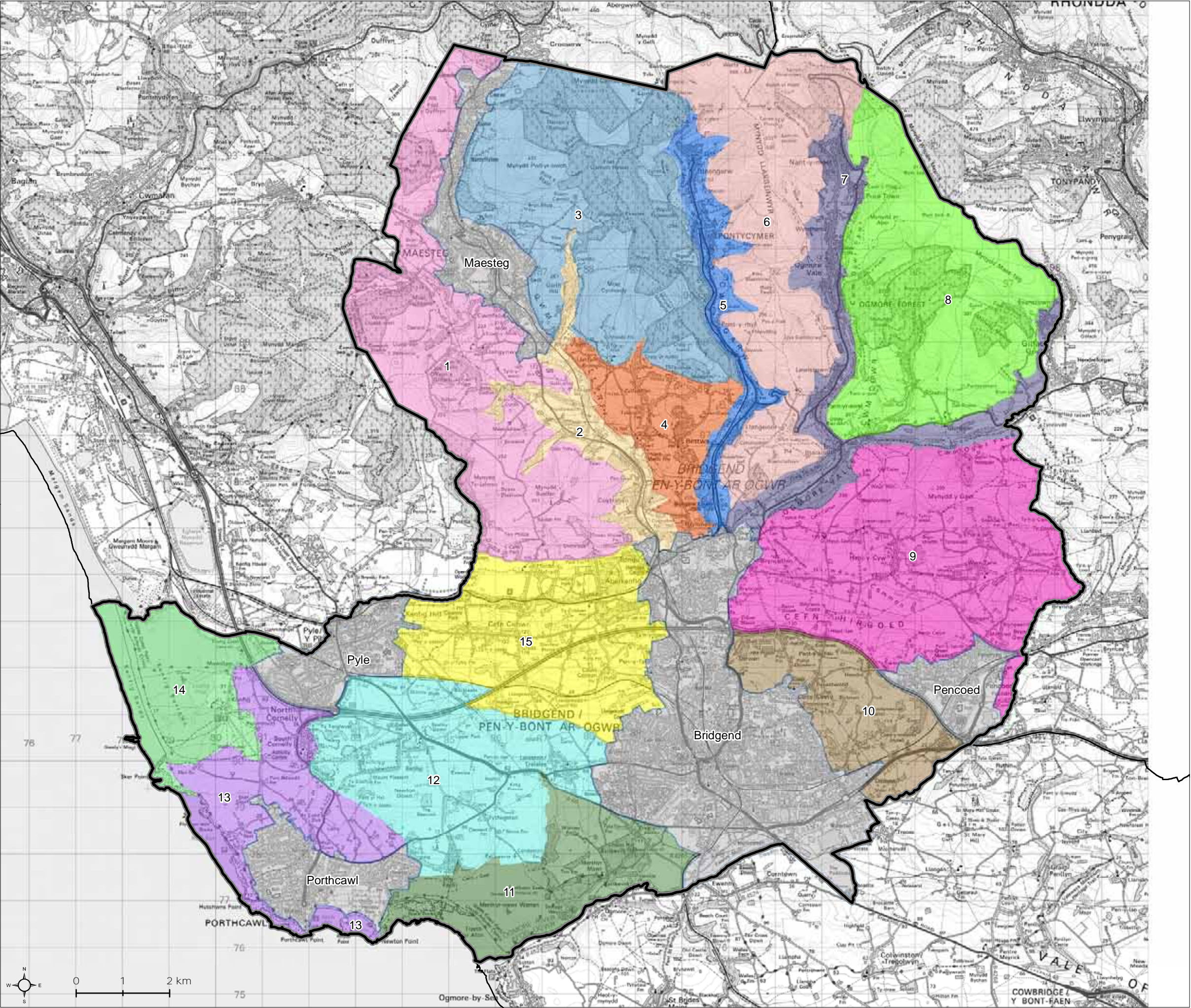
- What size development is proposed (number/height of turbines for wind energy development, or footprint for solar PV)?
- Which Landscape Character Area (LCA) is the proposed development in (see Figure 4.1)?
- Is the site characteristic of the wider LCA (refer to the key characteristics listed at the front of the relevant LCA assessment)?
- What is the sensitivity rating for the LCA and type/scale of development being proposed?

### Stage 3 – Detailed siting and design considerations

- Does the development accord with the generic guidance for that type of development contained in Chapter 3 of this SPG? If not, what aspects of the proposed development conflict with which parts of the guidance?
- Does the siting and design of the scheme accord with the **'LCA-specific guidance for development'** for the relevant LCA? If not, what aspects of the proposed development conflict with which parts of the guidance?
- If the development conflicts with any guidance can the impacts be mitigated?
- If the proposal was developed in the landscape, would this be consistent with the **Overall strategy** for the LCA?

### Stage 4 – Cumulative impact

- Is the development in line with the guidance on **'Designing for multiple developments'** set out in the Chapter 3 of this SPG and the **'Guidance for siting multiple developments'** included for the relevant LCA?
- If not, which guidance does it conflict with?
- Will wind energy/solar PV developments have a defining influence on the overall character of the LCA? Make reference to the key characteristics of the relevant LCA description contained at the beginning of the relevant LCA assessment.



Renewables in the Landscape:  
Supplementary  
Planning Guidance

Figure 4.1

Landscape Character Area  
Framework

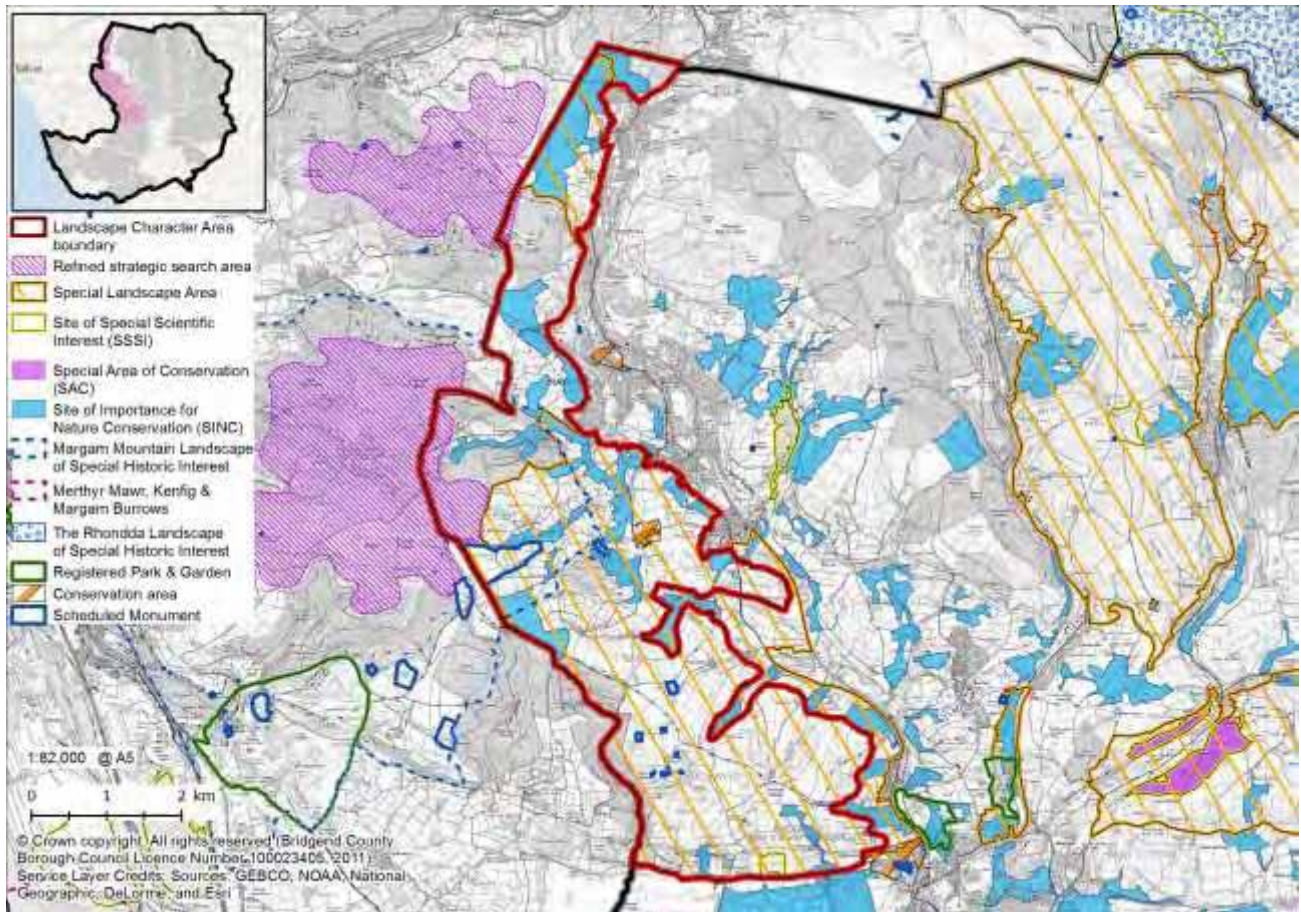
- Bridgend County Borough Boundary
- 1 Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry
- 2 Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
- 3 Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry
- 4 Bettws Settled Farmland
- 5 Garw Valley Floor and Lower Slopes
- 6 Mynydd Llangeinwyr Uplands
- 7 Ogmore Valley Floor & Lower Slopes
- 8 Ogmore Forest and Surrounding Uplands
- 9 Hirwaun Common and Surrounding Ridges
- 10 Coity Rural Hinterland
- 11 Merthyr Mawr Farmland, Warren and Coastline
- 12 Newton Down Limestone Plateau
- 13 Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland
- 14 Kenfig Dunes and Coastline
- 15 Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland
- Urban Area

Map Scale @ A3: 1:80,000



# LCA 1: Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry

## LCA Location Map



*Please note that while this LCA assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.*

### LCA LOCATION AND SNAPSHOT

This LCA is located along the north-western fringes of the County Borough, to the west of Maesteg. All of the landscape is defined as 'Upland' in LANDMAP's Visual & Sensory aspect (Level 2).

The southern half of the LCA falls within the Western Uplands SLA, and a section in the north falls entirely within the Foel y Dyffryn SLA. Other designations include Cwm Risca SSSI, Margam Mountain Landscape of Special Historic Interest, Bwlwarcaw hillfort and Llangynwyd Castle Scheduled Monuments, Llangynwyd Conservation Area and a number of SINC's.

3.4% of the LCA in the west falls within the refined TAN 8 Strategic Search Area *Margam Mountain* and less than 1% of land in the north-west falls within the *Foel y Dyffryn* SSA.

## LCA 1: Key Landscape Characteristics

- Strongly undulating upland landscape with a series of north-east facing slopes and hill summits ranging from 120 to 365 metres AOD.
- Distinctive topography influenced by the heavily dissected Upper Coal Measures plateau greatly modified by the effects of glaciation.
- Landscape crossed by a number of fast-flowing springs and streams, flowing into the Llynfi Valley below.
- Dense coniferous forestry plantations on some slopes and hill summits (e.g. Garn Wen and Waun Lluest-wen) with linear broadleaved woodlands found along valley sides.
- Dark, straight plantation edges providing a stark contrast to the adjacent muted grasslands on rounded slopes.
- Pastoral landscape with significant tracts of rough sheep and pony grazing on higher ground (particularly in the north).
- A strong pattern of irregular fields enclosed by hedgerows, tree belts and stone walls.
- Elevated land around Mynydd Ty-talwyn including large, regular semi-improved pastures divided by fencing.
- Valued habitats including heathland, blanket bog, acid grassland, fen and marsh (with significant areas defined as SINC's).
- Broadleaved semi-natural woodland on slopes and valleys, and nationally important marshy grassland (supporting marsh fritillaries) at Cwm Risca Meadow SSSI.
- Patches of bracken, gorse and rush pasture found throughout.
- Land west of Llangynwyd within the Margam Mountain Landscape of Special Historic Interest, with scheduled archaeological features including Y Bwlwarcu hillfort and the medieval Llangynwyd Castle.
- Cluster of nationally important medieval house platforms and settlement remains around Mynydd Ty Talwyn.
- Nucleated hill-top village of Llangynwyd (a Conservation Area), with prominent 15th century square church tower forming a local landmark.
- Farmsteads and small groups of dwellings thinly dispersed elsewhere.
- A small number of minor roads, tracks and footpaths cross through the landscape. The Ogwr Ridgeway Walk passes through the southern part of the LCA, and areas of higher ground are open access land.
- A strongly rural and tranquil landscape despite the close proximity of nearby development at Maesteg.
- Tranquil qualities eroded by the presence of pylon lines, telecommunications masts and urban fringe land uses close to Maesteg, including a golf course.
- Southern ridgelines affording panoramic views across the County Borough, including wind farm developments on distant skylines.
- Intervisibility with Maesteg a strong feature of the northern half of the LCA.

## LCA 1: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform and scale</b>	Distinctive undulating upland landscape with elevated slopes and hill summits carved by fast-flowing springs and streams.	
<b>Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features</b>	<p>Predominantly pastoral landscape of irregular fields bounded by hedgerows, tree belts and stone walls with rough grazing on the higher ground. Near Mynydd Ty-talwyn fields are larger and more regular and bound by fencing. Broadleaved woodland is found along slopes and valleys, with areas of coniferous plantation on higher ground. Semi-natural habitats including heathland, blanket bog, acid grassland, fen and marsh are also found in this LCA.</p> <p>Human scale features include the hill-top village of Llangynwyd and farmsteads scattered throughout the landscape, while the development of Maesteg is adjacent to this LCA. The areas of woodland and plantation, hedgerows and stone walls also form human scale features in the landscape.</p>	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	This landscape has several distinctive and significant heritage assets, namely Y Bwlwarcu hillfort and medieval Llangynwyd Castle, found in the Margam Mountain Landscape of Special Historic Interest (which covers 20% of the LCA). The key features of the historic landscape include the prehistoric and medieval settlement and associated field systems. Llangynwyd is also designated as a Conservation Area due to its medieval and post-medieval historic importance and associations.	
<b>Skylines</b>	Pylons and telecommunications masts intrude on some of the LCA's skylines, whilst the prominent square church tower at the hill-top village of Llangynwyd forms a local landmark. Otherwise, the majority of skylines are open and undeveloped, occasionally marked by plantations.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	<p>There are panoramic views across the County Borough from the high ridgelines in the south of the LCA, including to Cefn Cribwr (LCA 15) and beyond across the south-west of the County Borough (across the Bristol Channel to Exmoor in clear conditions). The northern half of the LCA has strong intervisibility with the valley settlement of Maesteg (LCA 2).</p> <p>Distant wind energy developments (Ffoch Nest/Pant-y-Wal, Taf Ely to the east, and Ffynnon Oer within Neath Port Talbot CB) also feature in views from elevated positions. Within the LCA itself Llangynwyd church tower is a prominent local landmark.</p>	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	<p>70% of this LCA falls within the Western Uplands Special Landscape Area (SLA), valued for its rural agricultural character despite being close to Maesteg. Llangynwyd is identified as having importance due to its historic and cultural associations. A further 8% of the LCA is designated within the Foel y Dyffryn SLA, valued for the visual backdrop provided to settlements on the valley floor and the presence of Biodiversity Action Plan Habitats.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the open, traditionally grazed uplands with high levels of tranquillity, the historic field and settlement patterns, important semi-natural habitats and archaeological features and panoramic views.</p>	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	This is a strongly rural and tranquil landscape, a sparse settlement pattern, and patches of woodland and semi-natural habitats lead to a sense of naturalness, although this is impacted by existing human influence in the form of pylons and views of urban development and wind turbines in the distance.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	<p>Although this is a large-scale landscape with some existing development such as pylons, telecommunications masts and views of nearby development which may indicate reduced sensitivity to wind energy development, many features and characteristics of the landscape may increase levels of sensitivity. These include in particular the landscape's sense of tranquillity and rural character, valuable semi-natural habitats and the setting of nationally important heritage assets, which results in the landscape being particularly sensitive to developments of 'very large' turbines.</p> <p>The following locational variations in terms of the above summary should be taken into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The area within the Western Uplands Special Landscape Area would be highly sensitive to the development of 'large' and 'very large' turbines due to its smaller scale landscape patterns and strong historic associations (including Llangynwyd Conservation Area).</li> </ul>	
<b>Sensitivity to different turbine heights</b>	Very Small (15-25m)	L
	Small (26-50m)	L-M
	Medium (51-75m)	M
	Large (76-110m)	M
	Very large (111-150m)	M-H

<p><b>Commentary on different cluster sizes</b></p> <p>Single turbine Small (&lt;5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (&gt;25)</p>	<p>Although this is a large-scale landscape with existing man-made structures on skylines, the distinctive topography, presence of frequent human-scale features and the landscape's function as a rural backdrop to views from Maesteg, Bridgend and Cefn Cribwr mean that it would be highly sensitive to 'large' and 'very large' clusters of wind turbines.</p>
<p><b>SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES</b></p>	
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 1: Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry in relation to wind energy development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The distinctive undulating upland topography, with largely undeveloped skylines forming a backdrop to views from nearby settlements.</li> <li>• Panoramic views from high ridgelines in the south across the County Borough and views to the prominent church tower of Llangynwyd, which forms a local landmark and human-scale feature.</li> <li>• Important historic features which are set within the Margam Mountain Landscape of Special Historic Interest, including Y Bwlwarcau hillfort and Llangynwyd Castle Scheduled Monuments.</li> <li>• Areas of valued semi-natural habitats (some of which are designated), including heathland, blanket bog, acid grassland, fen and marsh.</li> <li>• The scenic qualities of the upland landscape, traditionally grazed by sheep with high levels of tranquillity and predominantly pastoral landscape contributing to a locally valued rural character.</li> </ul>	

## LCA 1: Strategy and guidance for wind energy development

<b>Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA</b>
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <a href="http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales">http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales</a>.</p> <p>Baiden Farm currently has two turbines permitted, both in the small (15-25m) size category.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
<b>Overall strategy for wind energy development (outside the SSAs)</b>
<p>The overall strategy for the LCA, outside the Margam Mountain and Foel y Dyffryn Strategic Search Areas (SSAs), is as follows:</p> <p><b>In line with TAN 8, the overall strategy is to maintain landscape character, as per the ‘key landscape characteristics’ set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p> <p>For locations within the Margam Mountain SSA and Foel y Dyffryn SSA (see map on the front page), it is accepted that change to landscape character could result from wind energy development.</p>
<b>LCA-specific guidance for development</b>
<p>When siting and designing any wind energy developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The LCA's important heritage features including Y Bwlwarcau hillfort, Llangynwyd Castle and Llangynwyd Conservation Area are protected.</li><li>• The siting of wind turbines and their ancillary equipment avoids areas of valuable open upland habitats such as heathland, blanket bog, acid grassland, fen and marsh.</li><li>• The presence of wind turbines does not impact on the characteristic views, particularly to the Llangynwyd church tower and the panoramic open views from southern ridgelines across the wider County Borough and beyond.</li><li>• The strong rural and often remote character, locally valued due to the close proximity of urban development, is retained.</li><li>• Wind energy development does not overwhelm the human scale of the landscape features found in the south, including the settlement of Llangynwyd, scattered farmsteads, trees and stone walls.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
<b>Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA</b>
<p>Although it is accepted that change to landscape character could result from wind energy development within the SSAs, outside the SSAs multiple wind energy developments should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape as summarised in the ‘Key landscape Characteristics’ section (and with reference to the definition of ‘landscape capacity’<sup>16</sup>).</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response<sup>17</sup>.</li></ul>

<sup>16</sup> “Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type...” (Countryside Agency and SNH, 2002).

<sup>17</sup> For more detailed guidance please refer to the SNH guidance document *Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape* (December 2009).

## LCA 1: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Solar PV Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform</b>	Distinctive undulating upland landscape with some prominent slopes and hill summits.	
<b>Sense of openness/enclosure</b>	A mixed landscape with some areas of pastoral land and upland – the latter with a more open feel. Some areas of coniferous plantation and tracts of broadleaved woodland provide shelter and enclosure. Fields are bounded by a mixture of hedgerows, tree belts and stone walls.	
<b>Field pattern and scale</b>	A mainly pastoral landscape with a strong pattern of small, irregular medieval fields bounded by a mixture of hedgerows, tree belts and stone walls. In some elevated areas fields are large and more regular and enclosed by fences.	
<b>Land cover</b>	The agricultural land is generally pastoral, with rough grazing found on higher ground. Broadleaved woodland is found along slopes and valleys, with areas of coniferous plantation on higher ground. Semi-natural habitats including heathland, blanket bog, acid grassland, fen and marsh are also found in this LCA.	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	This landscape has several distinctive and significant heritage assets, namely Y Bwlwarcu hillfort and medieval Llangynwyd Castle, found in the Margam Mountain Landscape of Special Historic Interest (which covers 20% of the LCA). The key features of the designated historic landscape include the prehistoric and medieval settlement and associated field systems. Llangynwyd is also designated as a Conservation Area due to its medieval and post-medieval historic importance and associations.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	There are panoramic views across the County Borough from the high ridgelines in the south of the LCA, including to Cefn Cribwr (LCA 15) and beyond across the south-west of the County Borough (across the Bristol Channel to Exmoor in clear conditions). The northern half of the LCA has strong intervisibility with the valley settlement of Maesteg (LCA 2).  Distant wind energy developments (Ffoch Nest/Pant-y-Wal, Taf Ely to the east, and Ffynnon Oer within Neath Port Talbot CB) also feature in views from elevated positions. Within the LCA itself Llangynwyd church tower is a prominent local landmark.	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	70% of this LCA falls within the Western Uplands Special Landscape Area (SLA), valued for its rural agricultural character despite being close to Maesteg. Llangynwyd is identified as having importance due to its historic and cultural associations. A further 8% of the LCA is designated within the Foel y Dyffryn SLA, valued for the visual backdrop provided to settlements on the valley floor and the presence of Biodiversity Action Plan Habitats.  The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the open, traditionally grazed uplands with high levels of tranquillity, the historic field and settlement patterns, important semi-natural habitats and archaeological features and panoramic views.	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	The strong rural and tranquil character of this landscape with its dispersed and sparse settlement pattern, and patches of woodland and semi-natural habitats lead to a sense of naturalness, although this is impacted by existing human influence in the form of pylons and views of urban development and wind turbines in the distance.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	There are some parts of the landscape that are more enclosed by plantations and woodlands, and larger, more regular field patterns also exist – which might indicate a lower landscape sensitivity to solar PV development. However, the open character of the landscape, the presence of prominent elevated slopes, the characteristic small scale, historic field pattern, presence of valued semi-natural habitats, sense of tranquillity and important setting to historic features could all result in increased sensitivity to the development of solar PV.  The following locational variations in landscape sensitivity should be taken account of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The open moorland in the northern part of the LCA (within the Foel y Dyffryn SLA) would be highly sensitive to the development of any solar PV.</li> </ul>	
<b>Sensitivity to different scales of solar PV development</b>	Very Small (<1ha)	L-M
	Small (>1-5ha)	M
	Medium (>5-10ha)	M-H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very large (>15ha)	H
<b>SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES</b>		
A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 1: Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry in relation to solar PV development is included below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong historic pattern of irregular fields enclosed by hedgerows, tree belts and stone walls.</li> <li>The open tracts of traditionally grazed uplands and other valued semi-natural upland habitats including</li> </ul>		

heathland, blanket bog and acid grassland.

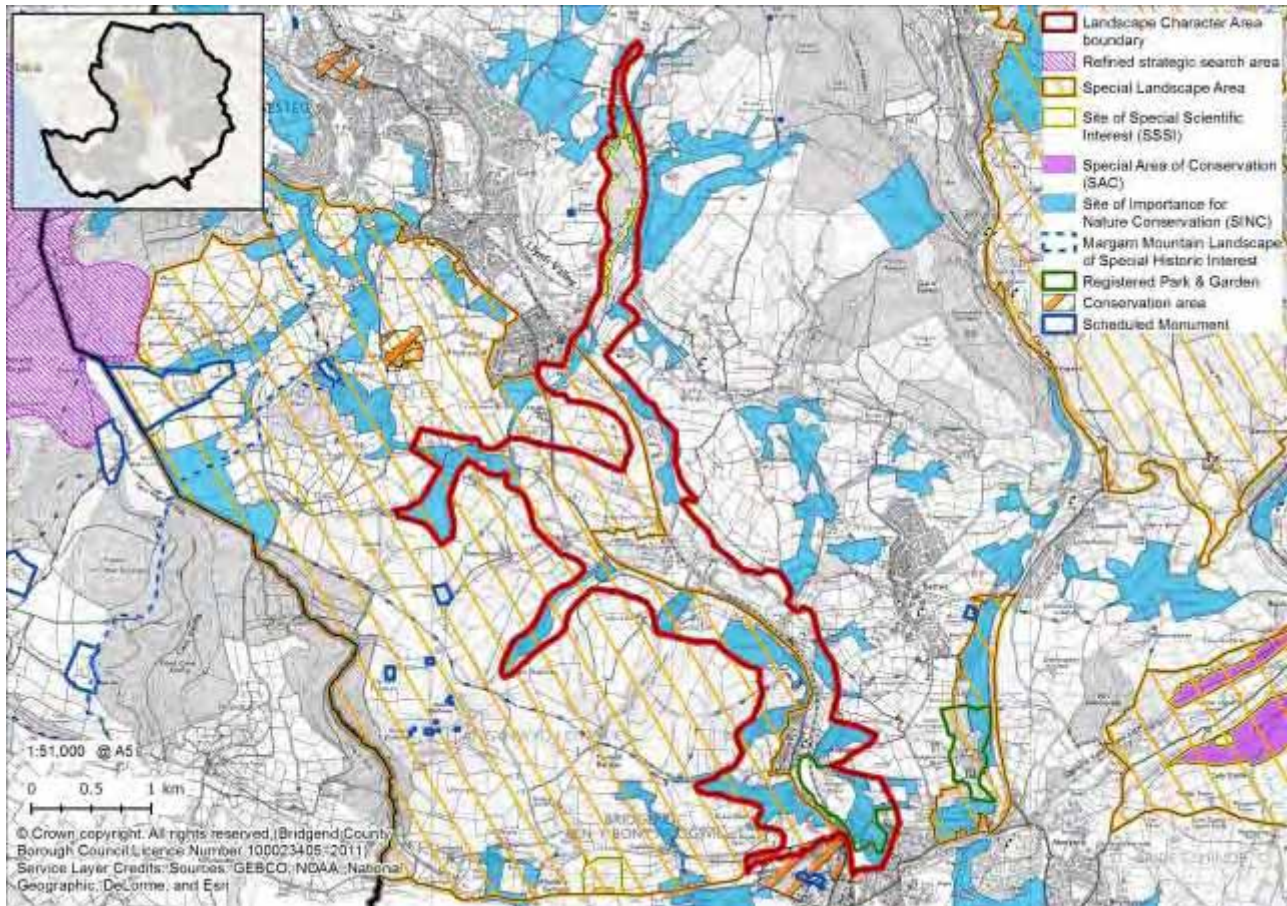
- Important historic features which are set within the Margam Mountain Landscape of Special Historic Interest, including Y Bwlwarcu hillfort and Llangynwyd Castle Scheduled Monuments.
- Its strongly rural and tranquil character, valued due to the close proximity of the LCA to urban development.

## LCA 1: Strategy and guidance for solar PV development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or existing solar PV developments within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for solar PV development
<p>The overall strategy for solar PV development within this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To ensure that solar PV development does not become a defining characteristic of the landscape and to maintain landscape character, as per the ‘key landscape characteristics’ set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
LCA-specific guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any solar PV developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strong field pattern, which is historic in origin and recognised as a characteristic feature in the Margam Mountain Landscape of Special Historic Interest, is not degraded by solar PV development.</li> <li>• Important heritage features including Y Bwlwarcu hillfort, Llangynwyd Castle and Llangynwyd Conservation Area are protected.</li> <li>• Valuable semi-natural habitats associated with upland areas such as heathland, blanket bog, acid grassland, fen and marsh are retained.</li> <li>• The strong rural and tranquil character, locally valued due to the close proximity of urban development, is retained.</li> <li>• Characteristic views to the LCA from surrounding urban developments and the role of the landscape as a backdrop to valley floor settlements are retained.</li> <li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li> </ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Multiple solar PV developments within the LCA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape.</li> <li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCA.</li> </ul>

## LCA 2: Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes

### LCA Location Map



*Please note that while this LCA assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.*

### LCA LOCATION AND SNAPSHOT

This LCA comprises the valley floor and lower slopes of the Llynfi Valley between Bridgend and Maesteg. All of the LCA is classed as 'Lowland Valley' in LANDMAP's Visual & Sensory aspect (Level 2).

The western half of the LCA falls within the Western Uplands Special Landscape Area (SLA). Other designations include Cwm Du Woodlands SSSI, Coytrahen House Registered Park and Garden, part of Tondu Conservation Area and a number of SINCs.

## LCA 2: Key Landscape Characteristics

- South-easterly flowing Llynfi river, with valley sides dissected by frequent tributaries creating a landform of rounded spurs between incised valleys.
- Views to prominent hill summits either side – rising dramatically to over 350 metres at Craig-yr-hudol in the east, and overlooked by the hill summit of Mynydd Baedan (251 metres) in the west.
- Geology dominated by an extensive, heavily dissected plateau of Upper Coal Measures, with glacial boulder clay found on some lower valley slopes, and alluvial deposits along the valley's length.
- Tributary valleys and the undeveloped fringes of the Llynfi River frequently clothed in broadleaved and riparian woodland, creating a sense of enclosure and shelter.
- Lower valley slopes of semi-improved and improved grassland, with relatively large, regular fields bounded by mixed-species hedgerows (oak, ash, hazel, holly).
- Fields on higher slopes defined by dry stone walls, wire fences and occasional weak hedgerows.
- Riparian vegetation and broadleaved semi-natural woodlands on valley sides (including sessile oak woodlands at Cwm Du Woodlands SSSI) – dominated by oak and ash with understoreys including holly, hazel, hawthorn and elder.
- Patches of purple moor grass, rush pasture and scrub contributing to semi-natural character.
- Grade II listed 18th century Coytrahen House estate on the south-eastern banks of the Llynfi. Valued for large-scale walled and terraced gardens in an attractive woodland setting.
- Linear roadside development of 19th century terraces and modern housing at Coytrahen, with occasional hamlets and farmsteads nestled within tributary valleys.
- Valley floor crossed by the snaking forms of the railway line and A4063 linking Bridgend and Maesteg.
- Central valley landscape dominated by the large form of the Bridgend Paper Mills with landmark chimneys, along with further smaller industrial developments and sewage works dotted along the valley floor.
- Perceptual qualities dominated by the sound and movement of traffic on the main transport corridors, along with views/noise from the mills (and high smoke plumes visible from long distances).
- Undeveloped slopes and branch valleys, with sometimes dense woodland cover, providing a relative sense of tranquillity and naturalness to these parts of the landscape.

## LCA 2: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
Landform and scale	Narrow, small-scale valley of the Llynfi River with adjoining tributaries and prominent hill summits either side (within adjacent LCAs). The LCA includes steep lower valley slopes.	
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	<p>Small-medium fields of semi-improved and improved grassland bound by mixed species hedgerows on the lower slopes and stone walls or wire fences on higher ground. Broadleaved and riparian woodland is found along undeveloped valley and tributary slopes. There are semi-natural habitats of purple moor grass, rush pasture and scrub.</p> <p>Human scale features include frequent trees, development at Coytrahen, and occasional hamlets and farmsteads along the tributary valleys.</p>	
Historic landscape character	The south of the LCA includes the Grade II listed 18 <sup>th</sup> century Coytrahen House estate with its walled gardens and wooded parkland.	
Skylines	As this LCA covers the Llynfi Valley, which sits below the neighbouring uplands (LCAs 1, 3 and 4), skylines are not prominent. However, the large paper mill chimneys (and their smoke plumes) form local landmarks that are strongly visible along the main central valley. Views along the valley also frequently feature woodlands and linear development.	
Key views and vistas	The valley is highly intervisible with the surrounding uplands and ridges, and this relationship is identified as a quality that should be protected and conserved in the LCA description. It also provides a rural setting to the southern fringes of Maesteg.	
Scenic and special qualities	<p>53% of this LCA falls within the Western Uplands Special Landscape Area, valued for its rural, agricultural character despite close proximity to industrial settlements.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include valuable semi-natural habitats, the historic landscape associated with Coytrahen House estate, the tranquil character along the undeveloped slopes and intervisibility with the surrounding uplands.</p>	
Perceptual qualities	Activity from the main transport corridors and industrial developments along the main valley floor dominate much of this area, although the undeveloped slopes and tributary valleys with dense woodland cover provide a contrasting sense of tranquillity and naturalness.	
Summary of landscape sensitivity	<p>Existing development and infrastructure in this landscape could indicate that it has relatively low levels of sensitivity. However, the LCA's locations of tranquil, undeveloped character, the presence of the Grade II Listed Coytrahen estate, and the narrow, intricate nature of the valley landform could increase the landscape's sensitivity to wind energy development.</p> <p>This landscape would be highly sensitive to the development of 'medium' to 'very large' turbines (of 51 metres or above) due to its small landscape scale.</p>	
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	L-M
	Small (26-50m)	M
	Medium (51-75m)	H
	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
Commentary on different cluster sizes	<p>Although this landscape has existing areas of development, the enclosed and often intricate scale of the valley landform and the presence of valued areas of semi-natural woodland and wetland habitats mean that it would be highly sensitive to any clusters greater than 'small' in scale.</p> <p>Single turbine Small (&lt;5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (&gt;25)</p>	
SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES		
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 2: Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes in relation to wind energy development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The tranquil and undeveloped character of the tributary valleys and slopes, and role of the LCA as a rural setting to the southern edges of Maesteg.</li><li>The nationally important 18<sup>th</sup> century Grade II listed Coytrahen House estate and its wooded setting.</li><li>The high levels of intervisibility with the surrounding uplands of LCAs 1, 3 and 4.</li><li>Areas of semi-natural habitats, including semi-natural broadleaved woodland (some designated as SSSI), purple moor grass, rush pasture and scrub.</li></ul>		

## LCA 2: Strategy and guidance for wind energy development

<b>Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA</b>
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <a href="http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales">http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales</a>.</p> <p>There are no existing or permitted wind energy schemes within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
<b>Overall strategy for wind energy development</b>
<p>The overall strategy wind energy development within this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
<b>LCA-specific guidance for development</b>
<p>When siting and designing any wind energy developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wind energy development does not impact upon the tranquil and undeveloped character of the tributary valleys and the valley slopes.</li> <li>• Wind turbines do not encroach into the upland fringes, but is linked to existing valley development.</li> <li>• The valued areas of semi-natural habitats, including semi-natural broadleaved woodland, purple moor grass, rush pasture and scrub are retained.</li> <li>• The important heritage assets and historic landscape character associated with the Grade II Listed Coytrahen House estate on the Llynfi River are protected.</li> <li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA</b>
<p>Multiple wind energy developments should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape as summarised in the 'Key landscape Characteristics' section (and with reference to the definition of 'landscape capacity'<sup>18</sup>).</li> <li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response<sup>19</sup>.</li> </ul>

<sup>18</sup> "Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type..." (Countryside Agency and SNH, 2002).

<sup>19</sup> For more detailed guidance please refer to the SNH guidance document *Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape* (December 2009).

## LCA 2: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Solar PV Development

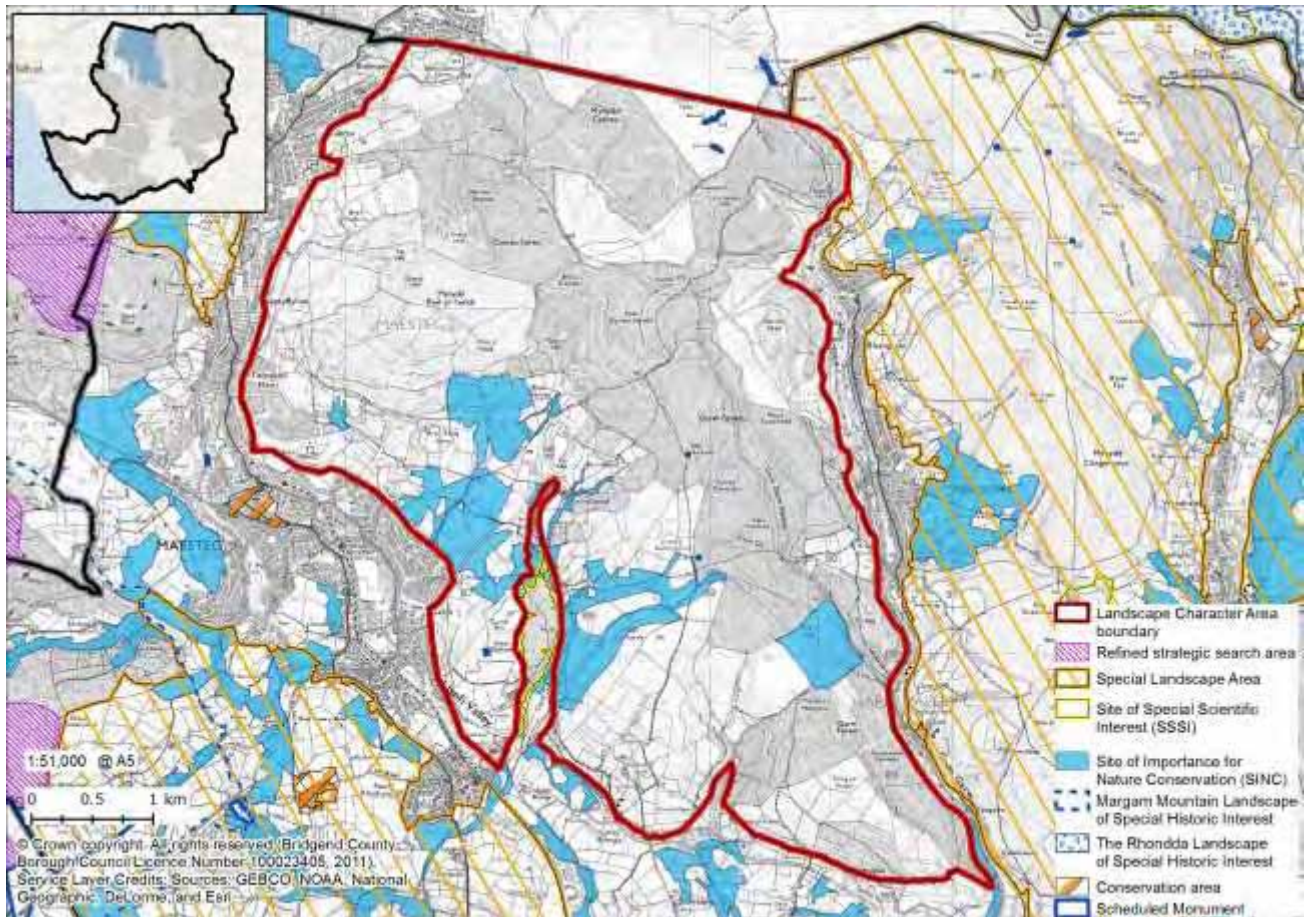
Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform</b>	Narrow, small-scale valley of the Llynfi River with adjoining tributaries and prominent hill summits either side (within adjacent LCAs). The LCA includes steep lower valley slopes.	
<b>Sense of openness/enclosure</b>	The undeveloped smaller tributary slopes in this LCA are often covered in dense woodland which provides a strong sense of enclosure and shelter, although the main valley floor has a more open feel due to less tree cover and the presence of transport infrastructure and development.	
<b>Field pattern and scale</b>	Fields in this LCA are generally small-medium and a mixture of patterns, with boundaries of mixed species hedgerows. On higher slopes, fields are marked by stone walls, fences or more sparse hedgerows.	
<b>Land cover</b>	The valley sides are used for pasture (and very occasional arable) and the undeveloped tributary valleys are cloaked in semi-natural broadleaved and riparian woodland, increasing the sense of enclosure. Valuable semi-natural habitats such as purple moor grass, rush pasture and scrub are found in patches through the LCA. Meanwhile, the main valley floor serves as a key transport corridor (followed by the A4063 and main railway line) and includes the large industrial complex of Bridgend Paper Mills and housing development at Coytrahen.	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	The main heritage feature in this landscape is the Grade II listed 18 <sup>th</sup> century Coytrahen House estate with its walled gardens that is set with attractive woodland.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	The valley is highly intervisible with the surrounding uplands and ridges, and this is identified as a characteristic in need of protection in the LCA. It also provides a rural setting to the southern fringes of Maesteg. The large paper mill chimneys (and their smoke plumes) form local landmarks that are strongly visible along the main central valley.	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	53% of this LCA falls within the Western Uplands Special Landscape Area, valued for its rural, agricultural character despite close proximity to industrial settlements.  The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include valuable semi-natural habitats, the historic landscape associated with Coytrahen House estate, the tranquil character along the undeveloped slopes and intervisibility with the surrounding uplands.	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	Activity from the main transport corridors and industrial developments along the main valley floor dominate much of this area, although the undeveloped slopes and tributary valleys with dense woodland cover provide a contrasting sense of tranquillity and naturalness.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	Although the LCA contains existing human influence and enclosure provided by woodland cover that could result in a lower level of sensitivity to solar PV development, other characteristics that might heighten sensitivity include the presence of prominent valley slopes overlooked by adjacent remote uplands, and valuable tracts of semi-natural habitat and woodland.	
<b>Sensitivity to different scales of solar PV development</b>	Very Small (<1ha)	L-M
	Small (>1-5ha)	M
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very large (>15ha)	H
<b>SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES</b>		
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 2: Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes in relation to solar PV development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The presence of open slopes overlooked by the surrounding upland landscapes (LCAs 1, 3 and 4).</li> <li>• Valuable semi-natural habitats, for instance riparian vegetation and woodland, purple moor grass, rush pasture and scrub.</li> <li>• The undeveloped character of the smaller tributary valleys and valley slopes.</li> <li>• The 18<sup>th</sup> century Grade II listed Coytrahen House estate and its attractive woodland setting.</li> <li>• The landscape's levels of relative tranquillity and rural character away from the transport corridors, and its importance as a setting to the southern fringes of Maesteg.</li> </ul>		

## LCA 2: Strategy and guidance for solar PV development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or existing solar PV developments within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for solar PV development
<p>The overall strategy for solar PV development within this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To ensure that solar PV development does not become a defining characteristic of the landscape and to maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
LCA-specific guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any solar PV developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The landscape's valued semi-natural habitats are protected – including designated areas of broadleaved semi-natural woodland, purple moor grass, rush pasture and scrub.</li><li>• Solar PV development does not affect the valued heritage and historic landscape features of the Grade II listed Coytrahen House and estate.</li><li>• Locally valued areas of tranquillity and naturalness within the tributary valleys are retained.</li><li>• Solar PV development is not located in areas that are highly visible from the surrounding uplands of LCAs 1, 3 and 4.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Multiple solar PV developments within the LCA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape.</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCA.</li></ul>

## LCA 3: Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry

### LCA Location Map



*Please note that while this LCA assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.*

### LCA LOCATION AND SNAPSHOT

This LCA comprises an exposed upland landscape in the north of the County Borough, sitting to the east of Maesteg. All of the LCA is classified as 'Upland' in LANDMAP's Visual & Sensory aspect (Level 2).

There are no Special Landscape Areas within this LCA. Other designations include Scheduled Monuments on Mynydd Caerau and a number of SINC's.

### LCA 3: Key Landscape Characteristics

- Strongly rolling upland landscape with steep slopes and rounded hill summits, reaching a maximum of 556 metres AOD at Mynydd Caerau.
- High land underlain by Upper Coal Measures with complex dip characteristics, forming distinctive rounded hill summits. Upper slopes draining into the Llynfi Valley comprise frequently bedded Middle Coal Measures, with some deposits of glacial boulder clay.
- Functions as a water catchment for the adjacent Llynfi and Garw valleys, with many fast-flowing tributaries and waterfalls carving through the landscape to meet the rivers below.
- Extensive tracts of mature larch and Norway spruce forestry on hill summits and slopes (including Garw Forest), forming prominent geometric blocks.
- Bands of semi-natural broadleaved woodland along streams (oak, ash and birch dominated) and field boundaries, with wind-sculpted, stunted oaks featuring on lower slopes.
- Apart from forestry, the main land use is rough moorland sheep grazing, with enclosed semi-improved pastures on lower slopes with areas of purple moor grass/ rush pasture.
- Large enclosures marked by fencing or lines of wind-sculpted trees.
- Valued habitats include patches of broadleaved semi-natural woodland, marshy grassland, bog, scrub, bracken, acid grassland and heathland, with a number of locally designated SINC's.
- Disused spoil tips, mines and quarries on hillsides are evidence of the area's industrial past.
- Prehistoric round cairns crown hill summits, including a nationally important cluster on Mynydd Caerau and further examples within Garw Forest. The remains of a medieval platform house are also found on Garth Hill.
- Very sparse settlement limited to a handful of scattered farmsteads on lower slopes.
- The town of Maesteg lies to the west of the LCA within the Llynfi Valley, with the only road access into the landscape from the town terminating at the entrance to a former coal mining area below the Garw Forest.
- A large proportion of the forest is open access land, accessible by forestry access tracks and public footpaths/bridleways. There is also a significant area of open access land at Mynydd Bach.
- A strong sense of remoteness and bleakness, particularly in adverse weather conditions.
- Expansive, panoramic views across the county borough and beyond (Brecon Beacons to the north, Bristol Channel and Somerset to the south).
- Lower slopes have strong visual connections with the adjacent Llynfi and Garw valleys and their associated settlements.

### LCA 3: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
Landform and scale	The landform is strongly rolling with steep slopes and rounded hills. Small-scale tributary valleys carve through the moorland into the major valleys below.	
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	<p>Extensive coniferous forestry plantation is found on the high ground and slopes, whilst broadleaved woodland is found along undeveloped streams. Agricultural use on the higher slopes is generally open rough sheep grazing, with large semi-improved pastures on lower ground. Patches of semi-natural habitat typical of uplands are scattered throughout.</p> <p>Human scale features include scattered farmsteads on lower ground, stone walls and distinctive stunted oak trees marking field boundaries on the edge of the moorland.</p>	
Historic landscape character	Evidence of past industrial activity is found throughout the landscape in the form of disused tips, mines and quarries. Several of the prehistoric cairns found on the hill summits throughout the LCA are Scheduled Monuments.	
Skylines	Undeveloped skylines are either open or are wooded due to coniferous plantations and trees along streams and field boundaries. Prehistoric cairns crown some hill summits.	
Key views and vistas	The landscape is undeveloped and remote, with expansive views in clear conditions across to the Brecon Beacons in the north and the Bristol Channel and Exmoor coast in the south. The lower slopes have strong views of, and provide a backdrop to the adjacent valleys (LCA 2 and 5) and their settlements – including Maesteg, Pontycymer and Blaengarw.	
Scenic and special qualities	The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the openness and sense of remoteness of much of the landscape, industrial and prehistoric archaeological features, valuable semi-natural habitats and the expansive views from the LCA.	
Perceptual qualities	The landscape's lack of development evokes a sense of remoteness and relative 'wildness', although this is impacted upon around its fringes by views of development in the adjacent valleys and distant wind turbines (e.g. Ffynnon Oer and Maerdy wind farms in Neath Port Talbot CB).	
Summary of landscape sensitivity	Although this is a large-scale landscape with relatively consistent land cover patterns, its lack of development, exposed and remote nature, along with the variable landform and nationally important archaeological features (including on skylines) are likely to increase levels of sensitivity to wind turbine developments.	
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	L
	Small (26-50m)	L-M
	Medium (51-75m)	M
	Large (76-110m)	M-H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
Commentary on different cluster sizes	Although this is a large-scale landscape, it is likely to be highly sensitive 'very large' clusters of wind turbines, which would remain out of scale with the underlying landform.	
Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)		
SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES		
A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 3: Llynfi and Garw Uplands and Forestry in relation to wind energy development is included below:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The prominent, undeveloped skylines that form a backdrop to views from nearby valley settlements.</li><li>Open landscape with extensive areas of traditionally grazed moorland and distinctive stunted oaks.</li><li>The landscape's role as a setting to industrial and prehistoric heritage and archaeological features, including nationally important prehistoric cairns on hill summits.</li><li>The strong sense of remoteness and relative wildness.</li><li>The expansive, unbroken views to both Brecon Beacons and the Bristol Channel</li><li>Locally designated semi-natural habitats including broadleaved woodland, marshy grassland, bog, scrub, bracken, acid grassland and heathland.</li></ul>		

## LCA 3: Strategy and guidance for wind energy development

<b>Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA</b>
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <a href="http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales">http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales</a>.</p> <p>A development of nine wind turbines (medium sized cluster) with a maximum tip height of 118m (very large) has been consented at Llynfi Afan in the north of this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
<b>Overall strategy for wind energy development</b>
<p>The overall strategy wind energy development in this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To maintain landscape character, as per the ‘key landscape characteristics’ set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
<b>LCA-specific guidance for development</b>
<p>When siting and designing any wind energy developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The naturalistic, upland backdrop provided by the LCA to settlements in the adjacent valleys (LCAs 2 and 5) is retained.</li><li>• Wind energy development does not detract from the strong sense of remoteness and relative ‘wildness’ associated with the landscape.</li><li>• Wind energy development does not detract from the role of the landscape as a setting for valued industrial and prehistoric heritage assets.</li><li>• Valued naturalistic upland habitats are protected - including patches of marshy grassland, bog, scrub, bracken, acid grassland and heathland.</li><li>• It continues to be possible to appreciate the expansive, unbroken views across the County Borough and further afield (Brecon Beacons to the north and Bristol Channel/Exmoor to the south).</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
<b>Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA</b>
<p>Within the LCA, multiple wind energy developments should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape as summarised in the ‘Key landscape Characteristics’ section (and with reference to the definition of ‘landscape capacity’<sup>20</sup>).</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response<sup>21</sup>.</li></ul>

<sup>20</sup> “Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type...” (Countryside Agency and SNH, 2002).

<sup>21</sup> For more detailed guidance please refer to the SNH guidance document *Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape* (December 2009).

## LCA 3: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Solar PV Development

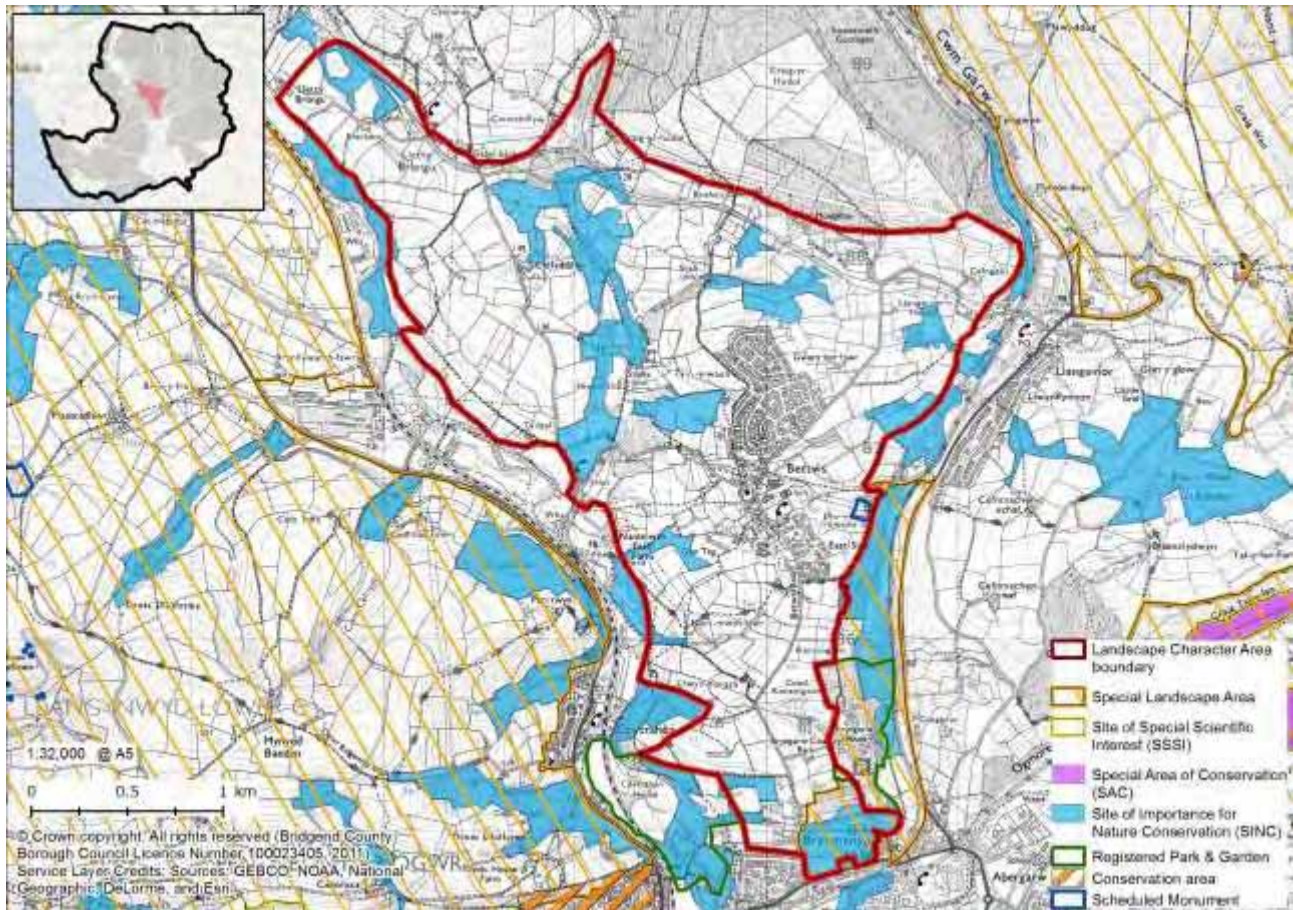
Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform</b>	The landform is strongly rolling with steep slopes and rounded hills. Small-scale tributary valleys carve through the moorland into the major valleys below.	
<b>Sense of openness/enclosure</b>	The undeveloped, upland nature of this landscape results in a high level of exposure and open character. Woodland is generally limited to blocks of coniferous plantation or small bands of broadleaved woodland along streams and field edges.	
<b>Field pattern and scale</b>	The higher land of the LCA is open rough grazing. Lower slopes are divided into medium to large-scale fields of semi-improved pasture. These form a combination of regular and irregular patterns reflecting different periods of enclosure.	
<b>Land cover</b>	The main land cover consists of large geometric blocks of coniferous plantation on the hill summits and upper slopes, interspersed with areas of open rough grazing. Lower slopes are defined by rough pastures and areas of semi-natural habitats including broadleaved woodland, marshy grassland, bog, scrub, bracken, acid grassland and heathland. Human settlement and development is very limited.	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	Evidence of past industrial activity is found throughout the landscape in the form of disused tips, mines and quarries. Several of the prehistoric cairns found on the hill summits throughout the LCA are Scheduled Monuments.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	The landscape is undeveloped and remote, with expansive views in clear conditions across to the Brecon Beacons in the north and the Bristol Channel and Exmoor coast in the south. The lower slopes have strong views of, and provide a backdrop to the adjacent valleys (LCA 2 and 5) and their settlements – including Maesteg, Pontycymer and Blaengarw.	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the openness and sense of remoteness of much of the landscape, industrial and prehistoric archaeological features, valuable semi-natural habitats and the expansive, unbroken views from the LCA.	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	The landscape's lack of development evokes a sense of remoteness and relative wildness, although this is impacted upon around its fringes by views of development in the adjacent valleys and distant wind turbines (e.g. Ffynnon Oer and Maerdy wind farms in Neath Port Talbot County Borough).	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	Although the LCA includes some large-scale fields and levels of enclosure that may lower sensitivity to solar PV development, its steep, highly visible slopes, function of the landscape as a rural, naturalistic backdrop to views, and remote and undeveloped nature could increase sensitivity.	
<b>Sensitivity to different scales of solar PV development</b>	<b>Very Small (&lt;1ha)</b>	<b>M-H</b>
	<b>Small (&gt;1-5ha)</b>	<b>H</b>
	<b>Medium (&gt;5-10ha)</b>	<b>H</b>
	<b>Large (&gt;10-15ha)</b>	<b>H</b>
	<b>Very large (&gt;15ha)</b>	<b>H</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES</b>		
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 3: Llynfi and Garw Uplands and Forestry in relation to solar PV development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The landscape's elevated and highly visible slopes that form a rural backdrop to views from valley settlements.</li> <li>• Strong sense of openness, remoteness and relative wildness.</li> <li>• Expansive, unbroken views across the County Borough and beyond as a result of the elevation of the landscape.</li> <li>• The presence of nationally important heritage and archaeological features from the industrial and prehistoric ages, including ancient burial cairns.</li> <li>• Locally designated semi-natural habitats including broadleaved woodland, marshy grassland, bog, scrub, bracken, acid grassland and open heathland.</li> </ul>		

## LCA 3: Strategy and guidance for solar PV development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or existing solar PV developments within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for solar PV development
<p>The overall strategy for solar PV development within this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To ensure that solar PV development does not become a defining characteristic of the landscape and to maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
LCA-specific guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any solar PV developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The naturalistic, upland backdrop provided by the LCA to settlements in the adjacent valleys (LCAs 2 and 5) is retained.</li><li>• Valued naturalistic upland habitats are protected - including patches of marshy grassland, bog, scrub, bracken, acid grassland and heathland.</li><li>• The important heritage assets, including prehistoric burial cairns and 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial remnants, are protected from development.</li><li>• Solar panels do not mask the pattern of historic irregular fields found on lower slopes.</li><li>• Avoid siting development on the most prominent upper slopes that are highly visible from the surrounding valleys and further afield.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Multiple solar PV developments within the LCA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape.</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCA.</li></ul>

## LCA 4: Bettws Settled Farmland

### LCA Location Map



*Please note that while this LCA assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.*

### LCA LOCATION AND SNAPSHOT

This Landscape Character Area is centred on the hilltop village of Bettws, north of Bridgend and sandwiched between the Llynfi and Garw valleys. All of the LCA is classified as 'Lowland' in LANDMAP's Visual & Sensory aspect (Level 2).

A small part of the LCA in the south-west falls within the Pen-y-Bont ar Ogwr Special Landscape Area. Other designations include Plas-y-Bettws relict garden (a Scheduled Monument) and a number of SINC's.

## LCA 4: Key Landscape Characteristics

- Strongly undulating landscape with generally southerly facing slopes, with the elevated hill summit at Bettws rising up to 160 metres AOD.
- Upper Coal Measures geology sitting below the main coalfield plateau to the north, with numerous springs and streams flowing through the landscape to meet the Llynfi Valley.
- Bands of broadleaved semi-natural woodland following stream courses, linking with mature hedgebanks and in-field trees to produce a well-wooded character.
- Medium-scale irregular semi-improved grassland fields, with some rush pastures along streams.
- Mature hedgebanks and lines of trees form traditional field boundaries, with regular wooden-fenced horse paddocks a feature around Bettws.
- Valued semi-natural woodland habitats, wet grassland and rush pastures along stream-sides, with significant areas designated as SINC.
- Relicts of 19th century industry in evidence around Tyle-Coch, including disused tips, shafts and a Grade II listed tramway bridge. A dismantled railway line runs along the northern LCA boundary.
- Historic core of Bettws includes the 17th century stone-built parish church of St David's (Grade I).
- Nationally important relicts of Plas-y-Bettws garden overlooking the Garw Valley.
- Settlement concentrated at Bettws, whose historic core is surrounded by post-war housing estates spreading along the hillside and sitting prominently on the elevated hill summit.
- Elsewhere scattered farmsteads and hamlets are linked by quiet rural lanes and occasional rights of way, including the Ogwr Ridgeway Walk.
- A largely peaceful, rural landscape eroded locally by prominent housing development at Bettws (occupying a high hill summit).
- Views to the urban edge of Bridgend in the south and ridgeline housing at Pont Rhyd-y-cyff in the west. Important views east and west to the higher undeveloped land of LCAs 1 and 6.

## LCA 4: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
Landform and scale	Strongly undulating, often intricate lowland landscape with south facing slopes and the prominent hill summit of Bettws, with streams draining into the adjacent Llynfi and Garw valleys.	
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	<p>Much of the landscape comprises medium-scale irregular semi-improved grassland fields, with significant areas of rush pastures in wetter locations. Bands of broadleaved woodland cover are also found along many of the field edges and water courses. The settlement of Bettws occupies a prominent hill-top position in the centre of the LCA.</p> <p>Frequent human scale features include the settlement of Bettws, scattered farmsteads, hamlets, trees, woodland and hedgebanks.</p>	
Historic landscape character	The landscape has several features of historical significance and importance. The core settlement of Bettws is 17 <sup>th</sup> Century and includes the Grade I listed building of St David's Church. There are also extensive remains from the industrial period of the 19 <sup>th</sup> century, particularly disused mines, tramways and railways. Plas-t-Bettws relict garden is a Scheduled Monument.	
Skylines	Bands of woodland found on the edges of farmland and lining streams provide a wooded character to some skylines. In the west, pylon lines intrude on the skyline. Housing development at Bettws is located on the most elevated skyline in the LCA.	
Key views and vistas	Views to the remote uplands (LCAs 1, 3 and 6) are identified as a key characteristic of this landscape. It is also intervisible with the adjacent Llynfi and Garw valleys (LCAs 2 and 4), the northern fringes of Bridgend and ridgeline housing at Pont Rhyd-y-cyff in the west. In clear conditions, long views are afforded from high ground across Bridgend towards the coast and beyond to the Bristol Channel and Exmoor.	
Scenic and special qualities	<p>2% of the LCA falls within the Bryngarw Country Park Special Landscape Area, recognised for habitats of high value, including riparian woodland.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the valued semi-natural habitats and wooded character, historic settlement and cultural relicts and an overall high level of peace and tranquillity. Some of these could be affected to a degree by wind energy development.</p>	
Perceptual qualities	This landscape has a peaceful, rural and often historic feel throughout, although this is detracted from locally by the development at Bettws. The area forms a valued rural buffer between the urban developments at Bridgend and Pont Rhyd-y-cyff and the remote uplands of LCAs 1 and 6.	
Summary of landscape sensitivity	Although this landscape includes areas of modern development and man-made structures on skylines, its overarching rural and tranquil character and the presence of valued semi-natural habitats and historic assets all heighten sensitivity. The role of the LCA as a rural backdrop to views from settlements – including Bridgend – also increases sensitivity, particularly to the development of 'large' and 'very large' turbines which would be out of scale in the predominately intricate landform.	
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	L
	Small (26-50m)	M
	Medium (51-75m)	M-H
	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
Commentary on different cluster sizes	<p>The complex and often intricate landform and the presence of frequent human scale features mean that it would be highly sensitive to wind turbine clusters greater than 'small' in size.</p> <p>Single turbine Small (&lt;5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (&gt;25)</p>	
SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES		
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 4: Bettws Settled Farmland in relation to wind energy development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The elevated character of the landscape's rural skylines, forming a backdrop to views from Bridgend and the adjacent valleys.</li><li>Levels of relative peace and tranquillity associated with the sparsely settled rural area surrounding Bettws.</li><li>Historic settlement core of Bettws with its 17<sup>th</sup> Century parish church (Grade I listed).</li></ul>		

- Important cultural remains, including the relicts of Plas-y-Bettws garden and industrial features around Tyle-Coch.
- Its strongly wooded character, with semi-natural woodlands, mature hedgebanks and in-field trees contributing to the human scale of the LCA.
- Its valued tracts of semi-natural habitat, including areas of rush pasture and wet grassland (many designated as SINC's).

## LCA 4: Strategy and guidance for wind energy development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <a href="http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales">http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales</a>.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or operational wind energy schemes within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for wind energy development
<p>The overall strategy for wind energy development within this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
LCA-specific guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any wind energy developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Protect the role of the landscape's rural skylines in providing a backdrop to views, including from the northern fringes of Bridgend.</li><li>• The setting of important heritage features, such as disused 19<sup>th</sup> century mining relicts and the Grade I listed St. David's Church, is respected.</li><li>• The rural and tranquil character of large parts of the landscape is retained.</li><li>• The development of turbines and their ancillary equipment avoids valued naturalistic habitats including semi-natural woodland, wet grassland and rush pastures.</li><li>• The human scale features of the landscape, such as the scattered farmsteads and hamlets, in-field trees and hedgebanks are not overwhelmed by the presence of wind energy development.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Multiple solar PV developments within the LCA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape.</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCA.</li></ul>

## LCA 4: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Solar PV Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform and scale</b>	Strongly undulating lowland landscape with south facing slopes and the prominent hill summit of Bettws, with streams draining into the adjacent Llynfi and Garw valleys.	
<b>Sense of openness/enclosure</b>	The presence of bands of mature hedgerbanks and broadleaved semi-natural woodland along streams and field edges contributes to a strongly wooded character of the area and provides a degree of enclosure and shelter..	
<b>Field pattern and scale</b>	The fields of semi-improved grassland are generally small to medium scale and irregular in form, with mature hedgerbanks and lines of trees forming field boundaries.	
<b>Land cover</b>	Much of the landscape comprises semi-improved grassland fields, frequently bounded by hedges and ancient hedgerbanks, with some rush pastures in wetter areas. Bands of broadleaved woodland cover are also found along many of the field edges and water courses. The settlement of Bettws is found on the main hill summit in the centre of the LCA.	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	The landscape has several features of historical significance and importance. The core settlement of Bettws is 17 <sup>th</sup> Century and includes the Grade I listed building of St David's Church. There are also extensive remains from the industrial period of the 19 <sup>th</sup> century, particularly disused mines, tramways and railways. Plas-t-Bettws relict garden is a Scheduled Monument.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	Views to the remote uplands (LCAs 1, 3 and 6) are identified as a key characteristic of this landscape. It is also intervisible with the adjacent Llynfi and Garw valleys (LCAs 2 and 4), the northern fringes of Bridgend and ridgeline housing at Pont Rhyd-y-cyff in the west. In clear conditions, long views are afforded from high ground across Bridgend towards the coast and beyond to the Bristol Channel and Exmoor.	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	<p>2% of the LCA falls within the Bryngarw Country Park Special Landscape Area, recognised for habitats of high value, including riparian woodland.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the valued semi-natural habitats and wooded character, historic settlement and cultural relicts and an overall high level of peace and tranquillity. Some of these could be affected to some degree by solar PV development.</p>	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	This landscape has a peaceful and rural feel throughout, although this is detracted from locally by the development at Bettws. The area forms a valued rural buffer between the urban developments at Bridgend and Pont Rhyd-y-cyff and the remote uplands of LCAs 1 and 6.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	Although the LCA's enclosed character and the presence of existing human activity and development could reduce the sensitivity of the landscape to wind energy development, its rural nature with high levels of relative tranquillity, historic sense of place and valuable semi-natural habitats heighten levels of sensitivity.	
<b>Sensitivity to different scales of solar PV development</b>	Very Small (<1ha)	L-M
	Small (>1-5ha)	M
	Medium (>5-10ha)	M-H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very large (>15ha)	H
<b>SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES</b>		
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 4: Bettws Settled Farmland in relation to wind energy development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The visual prominence of some south-facing slopes – including from the northern edges of Bridgend. The landscape forms a valued rural backdrop to views from the settlement and adjacent valleys.</li> <li>Areas of small-scale, irregular fields bounded by ancient hedgerbanks.</li> <li>Levels of relative peace and tranquillity associated with the sparsely settled rural area surrounding Bettws.</li> <li>Important cultural remains, including the relicts of Plas-y-Bettws garden and industrial features around Tyle-Coch.</li> <li>Areas of naturalistic character, including semi-natural woodlands, mature hedgerbanks, in-field trees, rush pasture and wet grassland (many designated as SINC).</li> </ul>		

## LCA 4: Strategy and guidance for solar PV development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or existing solar PV developments within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for solar PV development
<p>The overall strategy for solar PV development within this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To ensure that solar PV development does not become a defining characteristic of the landscape and to maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
Guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any solar PV developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The levels of tranquillity associated with the sparsely settled farmland around Bettws, are retained.</li><li>• Valued naturalistic habitats of semi-natural woodland, wet grassland and rush pastures are protected from development.</li><li>• The LCA's historic hedgebanks with ancient trees are protected.</li><li>• The LCA's important heritage features, such as disused 19<sup>th</sup> century mining relicts, are protected from development.</li><li>• Solar PV development is not located on the more prominent slopes in the strongly undulating landform, particularly those that form valued backdrop to views from other landscapes and settlements (e.g. Bridgend and Pont Rhyd-y-cyff).</li><li>• Solar PV development does not mask the well-preserved pattern of historic irregular fieldscapes associated with the LCA.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Multiple solar PV developments within the LCA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape.</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCA.</li></ul>

## LCA 5: Garw Valley Floor and Lower Slopes

### LCA Location Map



*Please note that while this LCA assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.*

### LCA LOCATION AND SNAPSHOT

This LCA comprises the settled valley floor and lower slopes of the Garw Valley to the north of Bridgend. The majority of the LCA is classed as 'Lowland Valley' in LANDMAP's Visual & Sensory aspect (Level 2), with some of the higher slopes falling within the 'Upland' category.

The lower reaches of the valley fall within the Bryngarw Country Park Special Landscape Area (SLA), and the eastern slopes of the valley fall within the Northern Uplands SLA.

## LCA 5: Key Landscape Characteristics

- Valley system following the course of the Garw from its source at the head of the valley to the Brynmenyn confluence (on the northern fringes of Bridgend).
- Overlooked by elevated uplands on either side, including the extensive forestry of the Garw Forest to the west.
- River cutting deeply into the surrounding coalfield plateau in its upper courses, with slopes becoming gentler and less dramatic as it widens and flows south.
- Fragments of broadleaved woodland and scrub in-between development on the lower valley slopes. This includes ornamental plantings associated with Bryngarw Country Park.
- Improved and semi-improved pastures on lower slopes enclosed by a network of hedgerows, grown-out lines of trees and woodland belts, with higher slopes defined by rough grazing land.
- Patches of valued semi-natural habitat tracing the valley's transition from its upland source, including acid grassland, heath, scrub, marshy grassland and oak-dominated broadleaved woodlands (including several SINCs).
- Rich cultural heritage relating to the 19th century coal mining industry, including remnant shafts, coal workings and lines of workers' terraces.
- Historic buildings interspersed within the sprawling settlements, including Grade II listed chapels.
- Grade II listed house and registered parkland estate of Bryngarw House, managed by BCBC as a Country Park.
- Literary connections with Nina Bawden's bestselling children's novel, *Carrie's War* (1973).
- Linear settlement occupying a significant part of the valley floor, with terraces and 20th century development displaying a range of vernacular styles extending along and up valley sides.
- Landscape traversed by the main A4064 (which terminates at Blaengarw), with minor roads linking housing up valley sides. National Cycle Route 883 follows a disused railway line along the valley floor.
- Pockets of tranquillity and naturalistic character in contrast to areas of dense development, including the woodlands and grounds of Bryngarw Country Park and the moorland fringes around Blaengarw.
- Strong intervisibility with the surrounding uplands and forestry.

## LCA 5: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
Landform and scale	Tightly enclosed valley of the Garw, located between two upland LCAs (3 and 6). Steep valley slopes become shallower to the south of the area.	
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	<p>The lower slopes of the valley are characterised by small-scale improved and semi-improved pastures enclosed by hedgerows, giving way to more open rough grazing land on the higher slopes. There are patchy areas of valuable semi-natural habitat throughout the LCA, including acid grassland, heath, scrub, marshy grassland and broadleaved woodlands. The valley floor and lower slopes are dominated by settlement and transport corridors.</p> <p>Hedgerows, frequent trees and rows of terraces within valley settlements bring a human scale to the landscape.</p>	
Historic landscape character	Heritage assets of this landscape are found in the form of 19 <sup>th</sup> century coal industry remnants and listed buildings including the Grade II listed chapels and Bryngarw House Country Park.	
Skylines	Due to the valley landform, skylines in this LCA are not prominent, although views along the valley are frequently marked by woodland and development.	
Key views and vistas	The landscape has high levels of intervisibility with the surrounding uplands (LCAs 3 and 6) and their associated forestry plantations.	
Scenic and special qualities	<p>38% of the LCA falls within the Northern Uplands Special Landscape Area, valued for the semi-natural broadleaved woodland and the role of the lower valley slopes as an urban/rural interface.</p> <p>Additionally, Bryngarw Country Park SLA covers 11% of this LCA, and is designated due to the presence of an early Tudor house and ornamental gardens as well as high value habitats including riparian woodland.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the pastures enclosed by hedgerows on the lower slopes, the valuable semi-natural habitats, the setting of rich cultural and archaeological heritage, pockets of tranquillity the landscape provides in between areas of development and the intervisibility with the surrounding uplands.</p>	
Perceptual qualities	Although a fairly developed landscape, there are important localised areas of relative tranquillity and naturalistic character that, including valued semi-natural habitats, woodland and the grounds of Bryngarw House Country Park.	
Summary of landscape sensitivity	Although this landscape has significant levels of existing development that could reduce sensitivity to wind energy development, the constrained form of the steep-sided valley, pockets of tranquillity forming a rural setting to the valley settlements, its heritage assets and important semi-natural habitats, could increase sensitivity.	
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	L-M
	Small (26-50m)	M
	Medium (51-75m)	H
	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
Commentary on different cluster sizes	The enclosed and constrained nature of the valley (particularly in its upper courses) and small field sizes means this landscape is likely to be highly sensitive to any clusters of wind turbines.	
Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)		
SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES		
A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 5: Garw Valley Floor and Lower Slopes in relation to wind energy development is included below:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Locally valued pockets of tranquillity in-between and surrounding areas of development.</li><li>The role of the valley slopes in providing a rural setting to the LCA's settlements and transition to the adjacent naturalistic uplands.</li><li>Rich cultural and archaeological heritage, including 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial relicts and historic chapels.</li><li>Small-scale pastures enclosed by a strong network of hedgerows, tree lines and woodland belts, with open rough grazing land grading into the adjacent uplands.</li></ul>		

## LCA 5: Strategy and guidance for wind energy development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <a href="http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales">http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales</a>.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or operational wind energy developments within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for wind energy development
<p>The overall strategy for wind energy developments within the LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
LCA-specific guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any wind energy developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wind energy development does not detract from the valued areas of tranquillity located in between existing valley development.</li><li>• The LCA's relicts from the 19<sup>th</sup> century coal mining industry and the Grade II listed parkland estate of Bryngarw House, are protected from development.</li><li>• The valuable semi-natural habitat cover of acid grassland, heath, scrub, marshy grassland and oak-dominated broadleaved woodlands is retained.</li><li>• Wind turbines do not encroach into the upland fringes, but is linked to existing valley development.</li><li>• Wind turbines do not overwhelm the often small scale of the landscape and its frequent human scale features, including buildings, trees and hedgerows.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Multiple wind energy developments should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape as summarised in the 'Key landscape Characteristics' section (and with reference to the definition of 'landscape capacity'<sup>22</sup>).</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response<sup>23</sup>.</li></ul>

<sup>22</sup> "Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type..." (Countryside Agency and SNH, 2002).

<sup>23</sup> For more detailed guidance please refer to the SNH guidance document *Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape* (December 2009).

## LCA 5: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Solar PV Development

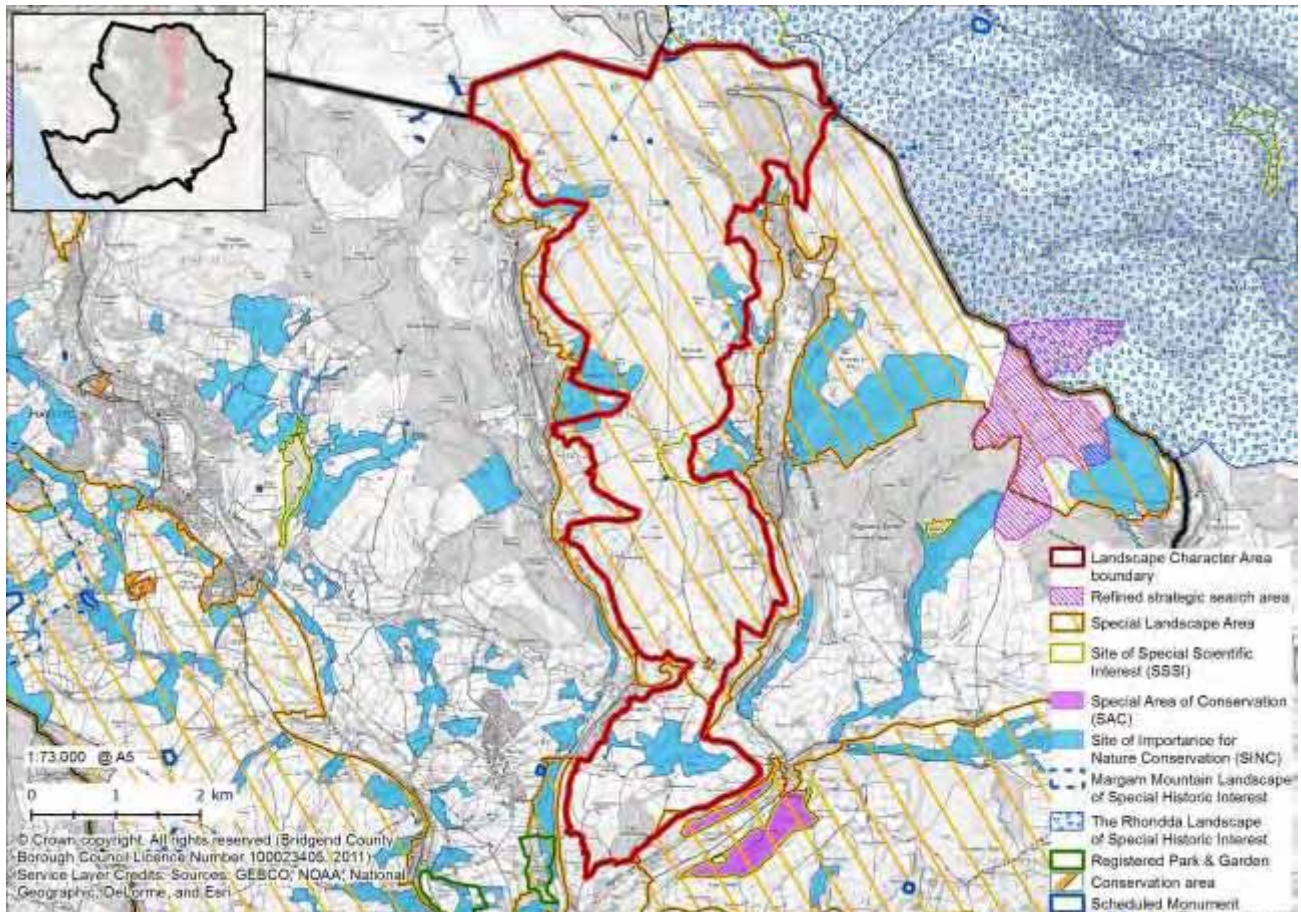
Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform</b>	Valley system following the course of the Garw from its source at the head of the valley to the Brynmenyn confluence. The river cuts deeply into the surrounding coalfield plateau in its upper courses, with slopes gradually becoming gentler and less dramatic as it widens and flows south	
<b>Sense of openness/enclosure</b>	The undeveloped lower slopes of the LCA comprise fields of pasture enclosed by hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland belts that may provide a sense of enclosure. Land on the upper slopes in rough grazing land that is unenclosed and more open. Dense settlement also provides enclosure within the valley floor.	
<b>Field pattern and scale</b>	Varied pattern of pastoral fields, with some smaller irregular fields and areas of larger rectilinear enclosures. More open rough grazing land is found on the upper slopes.	
<b>Land cover</b>	The lower slopes of the valley are characterised by improved and semi-improved pastures enclosed by hedgerows, giving way to more open rough grazing land on the higher slopes. There are patchy areas of valuable semi-natural habitat throughout the LCA, including acid grassland, heath, scrub, marshy grassland and broadleaved woodlands. The valley floor is dominated by settlement and road infrastructure, including Blaengarw, Pont-y-rhyl and Llangeinor.	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	Heritage assets of this landscape are found in the form of 19 <sup>th</sup> century coal industry remnants and listed buildings including the Grade II listed chapels and Bryngarw House Country Park.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	The landscape has high levels of intervisibility with the surrounding uplands (LCAs 3 and 6) and their associated forestry plantations. Views along the valley are frequently marked by woodland and development.	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	<p>38% of the LCA falls within the Northern Uplands Special Landscape Area, valued for the semi-natural broadleaved woodland and the role of the lower valley slopes as an urban/rural interface.</p> <p>Additionally, Bryngarw Country Park SLA covers 11% of this LCA, and is designated due to the presence of an early Tudor house and ornamental gardens as well as high value habitats including riparian woodland.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the pastures enclosed by hedgerows on the lower slopes, the valuable semi-natural habitats, the setting of rich cultural and archaeological heritage, pockets of tranquillity the landscape provides in between areas of development and the intervisibility with the surrounding uplands.</p>	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	Although a fairly developed landscape, there are localised areas of tranquillity and naturalistic character that are valued, including important semi-natural habitats and the grounds of Bryngarw House Country Park.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	Although this landscape includes some areas of enclosure (owing to dense woodland cover) and relatively high levels of existing development compared to the surrounding uplands, its visually prominent and often steep slopes, the valued pockets of tranquillity and presence of important semi-natural habitats all increase sensitivity levels to solar PV energy development.	
<b>Sensitivity to different scales of solar PV development</b>	Very Small (<1ha)	L-M
	Small (>1-5ha)	M
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very large (>15ha)	H
<b>SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES</b>		
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 5: Garw Valley Floor and Lower Slopes in relation to solar PV development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The presence of steep, intricate and highly visible valley slopes overlooked by adjacent remote uplands.</li> <li>Areas of historic, small-scale pastoral fields forming irregular patterns.</li> <li>Valued semi-natural habitats including acid grassland, heathland, scrub, marshy grassland and oak-dominated woodland.</li> <li>Rich cultural and archaeological heritage, including 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial relicts and historic chapels.</li> <li>Pockets of tranquillity in-between and surrounding areas of development.</li> </ul>		

## LCA 5: Strategy and guidance for solar PV development

<b>Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA</b>
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or existing solar PV developments within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
<b>Overall strategy for solar PV development</b>
<p>The overall strategy for solar PV development within this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To ensure that solar PV development does not become a defining characteristic of the landscape and to maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
<b>LCA-specific guidance for development</b>
<p>When siting and designing any solar PV developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Solar PV developments avoid the most visually prominent slopes, particularly in the north of the LCA where they are more steep and intricate.</li><li>• The valuable semi-natural habitat cover of acid grassland, heath, scrub, marshy grassland and oak-dominated broadleaved woodlands is protected.</li><li>• Solar PV development does not intrude on areas valued for their relative levels of tranquillity away from the valley settlements.</li><li>• The LCA's important heritage features, including relicts from the 19<sup>th</sup> century coal mining industry and the Grade II listed parkland estate of Brynagarw House, are protected.</li><li>• Solar PV development does not mask the historically important, small-scale irregular field patterns found in parts of the LCA.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
<b>Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA</b>
<p>Multiple solar PV developments within the LCA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape.</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCA.</li></ul>

## LCA 6: Mynydd Llangeinwyr Uplands

### LCA Location Map



*Please note that while this LCA assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.*

### LCA LOCATION AND SNAPSHOT

Found in the north-eastern part of the County Borough, this remote, upland LCA is located between the Garw and Ogmore valleys. LANDMAP's Sensory and Visual aspect (Level 2) classifies all of the landscape as 'Upland'.

A large proportion of the LCA falls within the Northern Uplands Special Landscape Area (SLA), with a small part in the south included within the wider Mynydd y Gaer SLA.

## LCA 6: Key Landscape Characteristics

- Exposed, elevated plateau landscape sitting dramatically above the Garw and Ogmore valleys, rising to 568 metres on the hill summit of Werfa.
- Upper Coal Measures geology greatly influenced by the effects of glaciation, with truncated streams and waterfalls plunging down hillsides to meet the larger valleys below.
- Prominent Craig Ogwr tors and ridgeline in the north-east of the LCA, displaying outcrops of the Coal Measures geology in cliffs and scree slopes (designated as a RIGS).
- An open landscape with little tree cover – the coniferous plantations at the head of the Ogmore Valley standing out prominently against the muted moorland backdrop.
- Lower-lying farmland in the south including linear belts of woodland along field boundaries and mixed plantation at Parc Cefnmachen.
- Largely unenclosed uplands with rough sheep grazing.
- Small, irregular fields at lower elevations (particularly in the south), comprising semi-improved pastures enclosed by hedgerows, grown-out hedgebanks and stone walls.
- Upland habitats including locally important tracts of acid grassland with patches of heathland, scrub, marshy grassland and flushes.
- Cwm Cyffog SSSI valued for its blanket bog, heathland and rare populations of White Beak-sedge.
- Nationally important archaeological features on hill summits including a prehistoric round barrow, cairns and the defensive dyke of Bwlch yr Afan.
- Sparsely settled, with occasional hamlets, a few farms and the small village of Llangeinor (a Conservation Area) nestled on the lower southern slopes and linked by minor roads.
- Road access limited to the southern part of the LCA, with the A4093 linking Ogmore and Bettws.
- Uplands traversed by footpaths and bridleways, including the Ogwr Ridgeway Trail which passes through the southern part of the landscape. Most of the LCA is designated as statutory open access land.
- Spectacular panoramas across the Vale of Glamorgan and Bristol Channel to the south and the Brecon Beacons to the north.
- Intervisibility with the adjacent valley settlements is a feature of the lower fringes of this LCA.
- Telecommunications masts on the high summit of Werfa and above Blackmill, with long views westwards towards Ffynnon Oer windfarm in Neath Port Talbot.
- An overall remote and wild landscape, with a great degree of exposure.

## LCA 6: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
Landform and scale	Large-scale upland landscape between the Garw and Ogmore valleys, forming an exposed plateau with prominent tors and ridgeline of the Craig Ogwr in the north-east.	
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	<p>The main landcover is unenclosed rough grazing, with tracts of valuable semi-natural upland habitats such as acid grassland with patches of heathland, scrub, marshy grassland and flushes. In the south, the landscape comprises irregular medium to large pastures. Woodland is limited to coniferous plantations and belts of woodland in the lower reaches of the LCA along field boundaries. Settlement in the landscape is sparse and minimal, with the main settlement at the small village of Llangeinor.</p> <p>Human scale features are sparse on the higher ground, but more frequent at lower elevations, including trees, hedgerows, stone walls and occasional farmsteads.</p>	
Historic landscape character	Notable prehistoric features are found in this landscape in the form of round barrows, cairns and dykes on hill summits. Several of these are Scheduled Monuments. Additionally, the settlement of Llangeinor is a designated Conservation Area.	
Skylines	The landscape is defined by its open, elevated skylines occasionally marked by historic monuments and the lines of plantations. These are strongly visible from the surrounding landscapes, forming an upland backdrop to nearby valley settlements including Blaengarw, Price Town, Lewistown and Pant-yr-arwel, as well as Bridgend and Bettws from the south. Telecommunications masts mark the high summit of Werfa and the hill above Blackmill.	
Key views and vistas	There are panoramic views afforded from this LCA across the County Borough and beyond, including north towards the Brecon Beacons and south across the Bristol Channel and towards Exmoor. Telecommunications masts within and existing wind farms outside the County Borough form man-made landmarks (including Ffynnon Oer in Neath Port Talbot; Maerdy and Ferndale in Rhondda Cynon Taf).	
Scenic and special qualities	<p>85% of this LCA is contained within the Northern Uplands Special Landscape Area, designated for its largely intact, attractive upland views and important upland semi-natural habitats.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include its open, remote and wild character, prominent geological features, valued upland habitats, prehistoric features and long, uninterrupted views to the Brecon Beacons and Bristol Channel. Some of these could be affected to a degree by wind energy development.</p>	
Perceptual qualities	The majority of the LCA is a remote and exposed upland landscape, with some of the lower fringing areas impacted in parts by views of existing development. The south of the LCA includes more human influence in the form of enclosed pastoral farmland interspersed with open common land (e.g. Bryn-y-Wrach).	
Summary of landscape sensitivity	<p>Although this is a large-scale landscape with some skylines already marked by man-made structures, its overall open, remote and wild character, role as an upland backdrop to views from adjacent settlements and landscapes, the presence of nationally important historic landmarks on elevated sites and valued areas of semi-natural habitat all increase sensitivity to wind energy development.</p> <p>The following locational variations of sensitivity should be taken into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The enclosed land in the south of the LCA<sup>24</sup> and outside the Northern Uplands SLA would be particularly sensitive to turbines of medium-scale or above, due to the presence of more frequent human-scale features and intricate landscape patterns.</li></ul>	
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	L-M
	Small (26-50m)	M
	Medium (51-75m)	M-H
	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
Commentary on different cluster sizes	Although this is a large-scale landscape with expanses of consistent landcover, it would be highly sensitive to 'large' or 'very large' wind turbine clusters. The enclosed land in the south would also be highly sensitive to 'medium' clusters.	
Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)		

<sup>24</sup> Comprising pastoral farmland below 230m AOD interspersed with pockets of common land.

#### SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 6: Mynydd Llangeinwyr Uplands in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- Elevated and largely undeveloped skylines forming a prominent upland backdrop to views from adjacent settlements and other landscapes across the County Borough and beyond.
- Long, often uninterrupted views to as far as the Bristol Channel and Brecon Beacons.
- The remote and highly tranquil landscape character.
- The open landscape character defined by unenclosed rough sheep grazing.
- Nationally important archaeological features from the prehistoric period on hill summits and visible in skylines.

## LCA 6: Strategy and guidance for wind energy development

<b>Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA</b>
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <a href="http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales">http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales</a>.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or operational wind energy schemes within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
<b>Overall strategy for wind energy development</b>
<p>The overall strategy for wind energy development in this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>The overall strategy is to maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
<b>LCA-specific guidance for development</b>
<p>When siting and designing any wind energy developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The characteristic remote and undeveloped character of the landscape is protected.</li><li>• The important areas of upland habitat and commons are avoided as the sites for wind turbines or ancillary developments, including blanket bog, heathland, acid grassland, scrub and marshy grassland.</li><li>• The heritage assets within the landscape are protected, including nationally important prehistoric cairns on hill summits, and the Conservation Area of Llangeinor.</li><li>• Wind turbines do not impact upon the spectacular, uninterrupted panoramic views from the LCA, including north to the Brecon Beacons and south over the County Borough towards the Bristol Channel (and across to Exmoor in clear conditions).</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
<b>Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA</b>
<p>Although it is accepted that change to landscape character could result from wind energy development within the SSA, outside the SSA multiple wind energy developments should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape as summarised in the 'Key landscape Characteristics' section (and with reference to the definition of 'landscape capacity'<sup>25</sup>).</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response<sup>26</sup>.</li></ul>

<sup>25</sup> "Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type..." (Countryside Agency and SNH, 2002).

<sup>26</sup> For more detailed guidance please refer to the SNH guidance document *Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape* (December 2009).

## LCA 6: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Solar PV Development

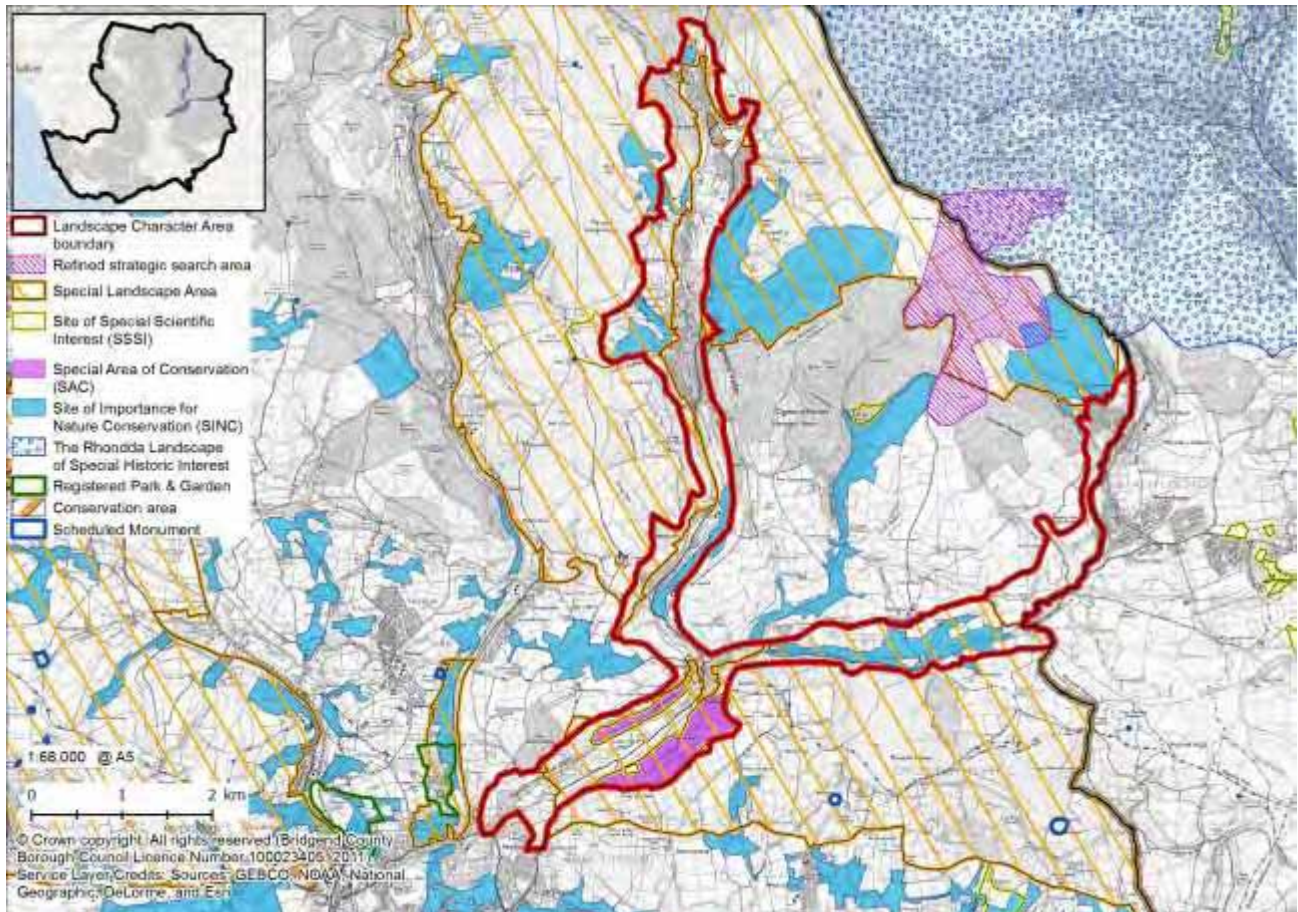
Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform</b>	Large-scale upland landscape between the Garw and Ogmore valleys, forming an exposed plateau with prominent slopes, tors and ridgeline of the Craig Ogwr in the north-east. Undulating land in the south slopes down towards the Brynmenyn confluence north of Bridgend.	
<b>Sense of openness/enclosure</b>	The upland areas that make up the majority of this LCA are generally unenclosed and exposed and there are few trees. Lower areas (particularly in the south) is characterised by fields enclosed by mature hedgerows and hedgebanks which provide localised shelter.	
<b>Field pattern and scale</b>	Medium-scale, irregular fields are only found in the lower elevations of this landscape, and are interspersed with areas of open common (e.g. Bryn-y-Wrach). Hedgerows, mature hedgebanks and stone walls form the field boundaries.	
<b>Land cover</b>	The main landcover is unenclosed rough grazing, with tracts of valuable semi-natural upland habitats such as acid grassland with patches of heathland, scrub, marshy grassland and flushes. Woodland is limited to coniferous plantations and belts of woodland in the lower reaches of the LCA along field boundaries. Pastoral fields characterise the south of the LCA.	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	Notable prehistoric features are found in this landscape in the form of round barrows, cairns and dykes on hill summits. Several of these are Scheduled Monuments. Additionally, the settlement of Llangeinor is a designated Conservation Area.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	There are panoramic views afforded from this LCA across the County Borough and beyond, including north towards the Brecon Beacons and south across the Bristol Channel and towards Exmoor. Telecommunications masts within and existing wind farms outside the County Borough form man-made landmarks (including Ffynnon Oer in Neath Port Talbot; Maerdy and Ferndale in Rhondda Cynon Taf).	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	85% of this LCA is contained within the Northern Uplands Special Landscape Area, designated for its largely intact, attractive upland views and important upland semi-natural habitats.  The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include its open, remote and wild character, prominent geological features, valued upland habitats, prehistoric features and long, uninterrupted views to the Brecon Beacons and Bristol Channel.	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	This is a remote and exposed upland landscape, with some of the lower fringing areas impacted in parts by views of existing development.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	Although this is predominantly a plateau landscape with some enclosure provided by tree/woodland cover, the large expanses of naturalistic upland habitats, prominent slopes, irregular field pattern on lower slopes and function of the LCA as an upland backdrop to adjacent settlements and the wider County Borough all increase levels of landscape sensitivity to solar PV development.  The following locational variations of sensitivity should be taken into account: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The unenclosed and naturalistic upland plateaux within the Northern Uplands SLA, comprising a significant proportion of the LCA, would be highly sensitive to any solar PV developments.</li> </ul>	
<b>Sensitivity to different scales of solar PV development</b>	Very Small (<1ha)	M-H
	Small (>1-5ha)	H
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very large (>15ha)	H
<b>SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES</b>		
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 6: Mynydd Llangeinwyr Uplands in relation to solar PV development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The presence of some prominent slopes, tors and the distinctive Craig Ogwr ridgeline.</li> <li>The remote and naturalistic landscape character, with the majority of the LCA being devoid of development or overt human influence.</li> <li>The open landscape character defined by unenclosed, rough sheep grazing and traditionally managed commons.</li> <li>Valued upland habitats, including acid grassland, heathland, scrub and wetlands (including Cwm Cyffog SSSI).</li> <li>Nationally important archaeological features from the prehistoric period on hill summits.</li> <li>Irregular historic field patterns found in the lower elevations of the LCA.</li> </ul>		

## LCA 6: Strategy and guidance for solar PV development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or existing solar PV developments within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for solar PV development
<p>The overall strategy for solar PV development within this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To ensure that solar PV development does not become a defining characteristic of the landscape and to maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
LCA-specific guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any solar PV developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Solar PV development avoids the most prominent slopes that form a rural, undeveloped backdrop to views from settlements and other LCAs.</li><li>• Solar PV development does not mask the irregular field patterns found on the lower elevations in this LCA.</li><li>• The open, remote character of the landscape is protected, including areas of historically important common land.</li><li>• Important areas of upland habitat are avoided as sites for development, including blanket bog, heathland, acid grassland, scrub and marshy grassland.</li><li>• The significance of heritage assets is protected, including nationally important prehistoric cairns on hill summits and the Conservation Area of Llangeinor.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Multiple solar PV developments within the LCA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape.</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCA.</li></ul>

## LCA 7: Ogmore Valley Floor and Lower Slopes

### LCA Location Map



*Please note that while this LCA assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.*

### LCA LOCATION AND SNAPSHOT

The majority of the LCA is classed as 'Lowland Valley' in LANDMAP's Visual & Sensory aspect (Level 2), with some of the higher slopes falling within the 'Upland' category.

The majority of Cwm Ogwr Fach lies within the Mynydd y Gaer Special Landscape Area (SLA), and the slopes of the Cwm Ogwr Fawr fall within the Northern Uplands SLA. Other designations include the Blackmill Woods SAC and SSSI, Nantymoel Conservation Area and a number of SINCS.

## LCA 7: Key Landscape Characteristics

- Narrow, steep sided valley system comprising the two branches of the River Ogmore (Cwm Ogwr Fawr and Cwm Ogwr Fach). These are met by the Garw at the Brynmenyn confluence north of Bridgend.
- Valleys cutting deeply into the surrounding coalfield plateau, with a series of incised re-entrant valleys and spurs creating dramatic landform features with evidence of their glacial past.
- Frequently heavily wooded valley sides; a mixture of coniferous plantations – particularly in the upper Ogmore – and semi-natural broadleaved woodland.
- Mature hedgerows and lines of trees along field boundaries emphasise the landscape's wooded character.
- Pastoral fields on lower slopes enclosed by a network of hedgerows and woodland belts, with upper slopes defined by rough grassland grazed by sheep.
- Patches of bracken and gorse evoking an upland feel.
- SAC and SSSI ancient sessile oak woodlands at Blackmill, contributing greatly to local character particularly due to their close proximity to built development.).
- Swathes of important semi-natural habitat in-between areas of development, including acid grassland, heath, scrub, marshy grasslands and valued oak-dominated woodlands.
- Rich cultural heritage relating to the 19th century coal mining industry, including disused shafts, coal workings and former railway lines converted to cycle paths (national routes 883 and 4).
- Landscape around Evanstown and Gylfach Goch formed the basis for the famous 1939 novel *How Green Was My Valley* (Richard Llewellyn).
- Linear settlements stretching along valley floors, with rows of former mine workers' terraces sprawling up valley sides in a ribbon effect (e.g. the Nantymoel Conservation Area).
- The characterful terraces are intermixed within a range of 20th century and modern developments displaying varying styles and materials.
- Settlements linked by busy roads including the main A4061 and A4093, eroding levels of tranquillity throughout.
- Large-scale industrial warehouses at Blackmill forming prominent features within the wooded valley.
- Strong visual and cultural links between the valleys and the surrounding uplands, with views to higher ground introducing a relative sense of remoteness to the busy valley floors.
- The settlement of Evanstown overlooked by wind turbines at Fforch Nest.

## LCA 7: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
Landform and scale	Two narrow, steep sided valleys of the Cwm Ogwr Fawr and Cwm Ogwr Fach that converge into the Ogmere River north of Bridgend.	
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	<p>The valley slopes are heavily wooded with a mixture of coniferous plantation and ancient and semi-natural broadleaved woodlands, some of which are designated SAC and SSSI. On the lower slopes agricultural land in the form of pastoral fields bound by hedgerows and belts of woodland are found. Pockets of important semi-natural habitat such as acid grassland, heath, scrub and marshy grassland are found between developed areas.</p> <p>Linear settlements along the valley floors provide a human scale to the landscape, along with the hedgerow trees on the valley slopes and old workers' terraces on the valley sides.</p>	
Historic landscape character	This landscape has a rich cultural heritage relating to the activity of the coal mining industry of the 19 <sup>th</sup> century, including abandoned shafts, coal workings and former railway lines. The distinctive rows of miners' terraces in Nantymoel are designated as a Conservation Area.	
Skylines	Skylines are not prominent owing to the valley landform, although views down the valleys are frequently framed by the wooded valley slopes. Large-scale industrial warehouses form conspicuous features in Blackmill.	
Key views and vistas	The valleys have strong visual links with the surrounding undeveloped uplands (LCAs 6, 8 and 9), providing a contrasting sense of remoteness to the developed valley floors. Existing wind turbines at Fforch Nest and Pant-y-Wal(in LCA 8), as well as Taff Ely wind farm (in Rhondda Cynon Taf) are visible above the settlement of Evanstown.	
Scenic and special qualities	<p>23% of this LCA falls within the Northern Uplands Special Landscape Area (SLA), valued for attractive upland views within and out over Ogmere Vale and the experience of exposure and wilderness. Another 32% of the LCA falls within the Mynydd y Gaer SLA, designated due to its role as the interface between open uplands and lower agricultural land, and the internationally designated areas of woodland on the valley slopes.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the valued swathes of semi-natural broadleaved woodland, locally important semi-natural habitats including acid grassland, heath and scrub, and the strong intervisibility with the largely undeveloped uplands. Some of these could be affected to a degree by wind energy development.</p>	
Perceptual qualities	There is evidence of human influence on much of this landscape in the form of the linear settlements, historic and current industrial activity and transport corridors, particularly on the valley floor. On the slopes, the views to higher ground give a sense of remoteness, as do the patches of upland fringe habitat such as heath, scrub and bracken.	
Summary of landscape sensitivity	Although this landscape already has areas of large scale industrial development, the sensitivity of the landscape to wind energy development is increased by the frequent occurrence of human scale features, valued semi-natural habitats, the strong intervisibility with the remote uplands and the role of the landscape as a setting for heritage features.	
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	L-M
	Small (26-50m)	M
	Medium (51-75m)	M-H
	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
Commentary on different cluster sizes	<p>The enclosed and constrained nature of the valley and its extensive woodland cover means that the LCA is likely to be highly sensitive to any clusters of wind turbines.</p> <p>Single turbine Small (&lt;5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (&gt;25)</p>	
SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES		
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 7: Ogmere Valley Floor and Lower Slopes in relation to wind energy development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strong intervisibility with surrounding remote, naturalistic uplands.</li><li>• Strong wooded character (including internationally important oak woodlands at Blackmill) with valued semi-natural habitats, including acid grassland, heath, scrub and marshy grasslands.</li><li>• Rich industrial heritage, including disused shafts, coal workings and former workers' terraces (e.g.</li></ul>		

Nantymoel Conservation Area).

- The varied land cover of wooded slopes, pastoral fields, semi-natural habitats and linear settlements.

## LCA 7: Strategy and guidance for wind energy development

<b>Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA</b>
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <a href="http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales">http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales</a>.</p> <p>There are no permitted or operational wind energy developments located within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
<b>Overall strategy for wind energy development</b>
<p>The overall strategy for wind energy development in the LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To maintain landscape character, as per the ‘key landscape characteristics’ set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
<b>LCA-specific guidance for development</b>
<p>When siting and designing any wind energy developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The strong wooded character of the valley sides is protected.</li><li>• The development of wind turbines and their ancillary equipment avoids designated semi-natural habitats that are valued as tranquil pockets between areas of development.</li><li>• Wind energy development does not adversely affect the landscape’s rich cultural heritage, including the special historic/architectural interest of the Nantymoel Conservation Area.</li><li>• Wind turbines do not encroach into the upland fringes, but is linked to existing valley development.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
<b>Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA</b>
<p>Multiple wind energy developments should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape as summarised in the ‘Key landscape Characteristics’ section (and with reference to the definition of ‘landscape capacity’<sup>27</sup>).</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response<sup>28</sup>.</li></ul>

<sup>27</sup> “Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type...” (Countryside Agency and SNH, 2002).

<sup>28</sup> For more detailed guidance please refer to the SNH guidance document *Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape* (December 2009).

## LCA 7: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Solar PV Development

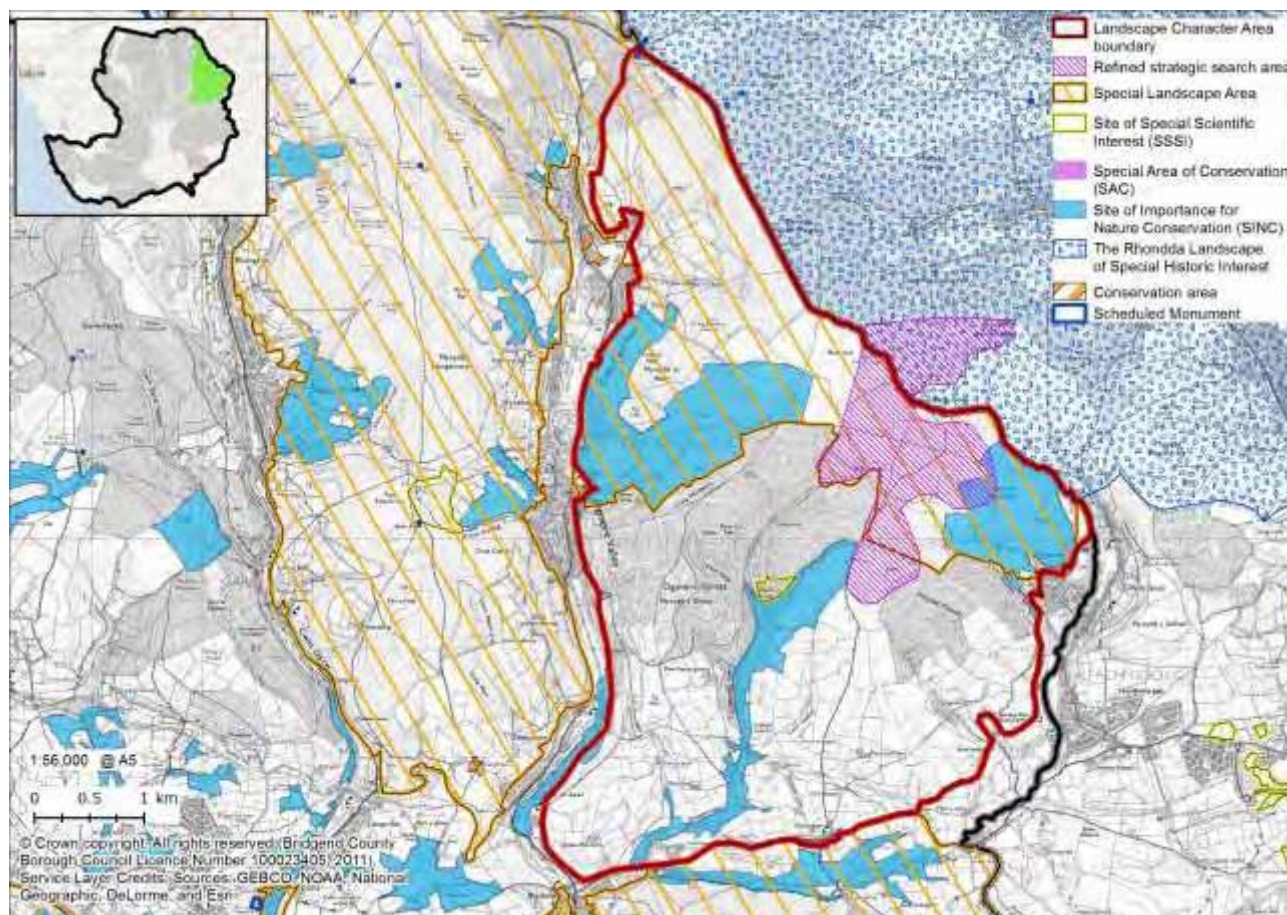
Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform</b>	Two narrow, steep sided valleys of the Cwm Ogwr Fawr and Cwm Ogwr Fach that converge into the Ogmore River north of Bridgend.	
<b>Sense of openness/enclosure</b>	The heavily wooded valley sides provide a sense of enclosure, as do the fields that are bounded by mature hedgerows and lines of trees. The upper slopes are more open as they form the transition to the adjacent uplands.	
<b>Field pattern and scale</b>	The field pattern of this LCA is varied, with the fields on the slopes of Cwm Ogwr Fawr smaller and more irregular in shape than the regular rectilinear field pattern along the Cwm Ogwr Fach.	
<b>Land cover</b>	The valley slopes are heavily wooded with a mixture of coniferous plantation and ancient and semi-natural broadleaved woodlands, some of which are designated SAC and SSSI. On the lower slopes agricultural land in the form of pastoral fields bound by hedgerows and belts of woodland are found. Pockets of important semi-natural habitat such as acid grassland, heath, scrub and marshy grassland are found between developed areas.	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	This landscape has a rich cultural heritage relating to the activity of the coal mining industry of the 19 <sup>th</sup> century, including abandoned shafts, coal workings and former railway lines. The distinctive rows of miners' terraces in Nantymoel are designated as a Conservation Area.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	The valleys have strong visual links with the surrounding undeveloped uplands (LCAs 6, 8 and 9), providing a contrasting sense of remoteness to the developed valley floors. Existing wind turbines at Fforch Nest and Pant-y-Wal (in LCA 8), as well as Taff Ely wind farm (in Rhondda Cynon Taf) are visible above the settlement of Evanstown.	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	<p>23% of this LCA falls within the Northern Uplands Special Landscape Area, valued for attractive upland views within and out over Ogmore Vale and the experience of exposure and wilderness. Another 32% of the LCA falls within the Mynydd y Gaer Special Landscape Area, designated due to its role as the interface between open uplands and lower agricultural land, and the internationally designated areas of woodland on the valley slopes.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the valued swathes of semi-natural broadleaved woodland, locally important semi-natural habitats including acid grassland, heath and scrub, and the strong intervisibility with the undeveloped uplands. Some of these could be affected to a degree by solar PV development.</p>	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	There is evidence of human influence on much of this landscape in the form of the linear settlements, historic and current industrial activity and transport corridors, particularly on the valley floor. On the slopes, the views to higher ground give a sense of remoteness, as do the patches of upland fringe habitat such as heath, scrub and bracken.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	Although this landscape is fairly enclosed due to the heavily wooded valley sides, has existing development and some rectilinear fields that could reduce the sensitivity of the landscape to solar PV development, the presence of steep valley slopes, designated semi-natural habitats and areas of small, irregular fields could increase sensitivity.	
<b>Sensitivity to different scales of solar PV development</b>	Very Small (<1ha)	L-M
	Small (>1-5ha)	M
	Medium (>5-10ha)	M-H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very large (>15ha)	H
<b>SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES</b>		
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 7: Ogmore Valley Floor and Lower Slopes in relation to solar PV development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steep valley slopes overlooked by the surrounding remote and naturalistic uplands.</li> <li>Important semi-natural habitats, including acid grassland, heath, scrub and marshy grasslands.</li> <li>Rich industrial heritage, including disused shafts, coal workings and former mine workers' terraces (e.g. Nantymoel Conservation Area).</li> <li>Nationally and internationally important swathes of semi-natural broadleaved woodland, including at Blackmill (SAC and SSSI designated).</li> <li>Areas of small, irregular field patterns of historic origin.</li> </ul>		

## LCA 7: Strategy and guidance for solar PV development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or existing solar PV developments within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for solar PV development
<p>The overall strategy for solar PV development within this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To ensure that solar PV development does not become a defining characteristic of the landscape and to maintain landscape character, as per the ‘key landscape characteristics’ set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
LCA-specific guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any solar PV developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The strong wooded and naturalistic character of the valley sides is protected.</li><li>• The designated semi-natural habitats that are valued as tranquil pockets between areas of development are retained.</li><li>• Solar PV development is not located on the undeveloped, upper valley sides that are adjacent to the surrounding remote and naturalistic uplands (LCAs 6, 8 and 9).</li><li>• The field pattern of the valley sides, particularly the small, irregular fields on the Cwm Ogwr Fawr, is not masked by the development of solar arrays.</li><li>• Solar PV development does not adversely affect the landscape’s rich cultural heritage, including the special historic/architectural interest of the Nantymoel Conservation Area.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Multiple solar PV developments within the LCA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape.</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCA.</li></ul>

## LCA 8: Ogmore Forest and Surrounding Uplands

### LCA Location Map



***Please note that while this LCA assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.***

### LCA LOCATION AND SNAPSHOT

This is an upland landscape in the north eastern corner of the County Borough, with significant parts covered by the Ogmore Forest. It lies on the boundary with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough. All of the LCA is classed as 'Upland' in LANDMAP's Visual & Sensory aspect (Level 2).

The northern half of this LCA falls within the Northern Uplands Special Landscape Area (SLA). Other designations include Daren y Dimbath SSSI, Bwlch y Clawdd Dyke (a Scheduled earthwork) and a number of SINCs.

8% of the LCA around Gilfach Goch falls within the Northern Uplands TAN 8 Refined Strategic Search Area.

## LCA 8: Key Landscape Characteristics

- Highly undulating plateau and ridge landscape of Upper Coal Measures dissected by steeply incised valleys, draining into the Cwm Ogwr Fawr to the west and Cwm Ogwr Fach to the south.
- Hill summits and ridges reaching over 500 metres AOD in the north of the LCA.
- Fast-flowing streams and springs draining off the uplands and passing under stone hump-backed bridges in their lower courses.
- Forestry plantations (including the Ogmore Forest) with abrupt linear edges on ridges and hill summits, with riparian and broadleaved woodlands on valley sides.
- Rough grazing by sheep predominating (including on upland commons).
- Enclosed land on valley sides, with marginal pastures divided by hedges and mature hedgebanks forming tree lines.
- Patches of gorse, bracken and rush pasture conveying an upland feel.
- Large tracts of semi-improved/semi-natural acid grassland, marshy grassland, heath, bracken and scrub.
- Locally important swathes of broadleaved semi-natural woodland are found within Cwm Dimbath and on the western slopes of Mynydd yr Aber.
- Daren y Dimbath SSSI important for its assemblage of rare Atlantic Ferns.
- Bwlch y Clawdd Dyke (a Scheduled earthwork) situated in a prominent upland position along the county borough boundary, with cairns topping hill summits elsewhere.
- Evidence of the landscape's coal mining heritage, with disused tips on slopes.
- The only settlements are occasional small villages, hamlets and scattered farmsteads nestled on the southern slopes above the Ogmore Valley.
- Minor lanes providing access, whilst a large proportion of the uplands is designated open access land and crossed by rights of way.
- A largely unsettled and inaccessible landscape, heightening senses of remoteness and wildness with exposure to the elements. This is reduced on the fringes of the LCA close to valley settlements.
- Spectacular panoramic views from high ground to the Brecon Beacons and Bristol Channel.

## LCA 8: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform and scale</b>	A large scale undulating landscape with plateaux and ridges reaching to over 500m AOD in some areas. Steep sided valleys carve through the landscape.	
<b>Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features</b>	<p>Large areas of semi-improved and semi-natural grassland with associated upland habitats such as heath, bracken and scrub are interspersed with forestry plantation on the ridges and hills. On the valley sides and slopes, pastures enclosed by hedges and stone walls and areas of broadleaved semi-natural woodlands are found.</p> <p>Human-scale features include occasional small villages, hamlets and scattered farmsteads located on the southern slopes above the Ogmore Valley. Elsewhere, forestry plantations, patches of scrub and valley woodlands provide a human scale to the landscape.</p>	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	The coal mining heritage of the landscape is evident through disused tips. Important historic remains such as the Scheduled Monument of Bwlch y Clawdd Dyke and cairns on hilltops are found in this LCA. None of the LCA is listed on the Register of Outstanding or Special Landscapes in Wales.	
<b>Skylines</b>	The LCA's elevated skylines are prominent and open, frequently crowned by conifer plantations. Some hilltops are topped by ancient burial cairns. The eastern edge of the LCA includes the recent Forch Nest and Pant-y-Wal windfarms, with turbines featuring prominently on the skylines.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	The open, upland nature of this landscape results in long views of the Brecon Beacons to the north and the Bristol Channel to the south. The LCA also forms a backdrop to settlements located within the adjacent branches of the Ogmore Valley (LCA 7, e.g. Nantymoel, Ogmore Vale and Evanstown) and Rhondda, Cynon Taf County Borough (e.g. Tonypany). It also has strong intervisibility with LCAs 6 and 9, including Taff Ely windfarm which lies just outside LCA 9 across the County Borough boundary.	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	<p>42% of this LCA falls within the Northern Uplands Special Landscape Area, valued for its attractive upland views over the Ogmore Vale and to other upland areas, its 'wild', exposed character and its strong sense of place<sup>29</sup>.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, are the open rough grassland grazed by sheep, valuable upland habitats, important archaeological remnants and the unsettled remote openness of the landscape, with long panoramic views. Some of these could be affected to a degree by wind energy development.</p>	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	Significant parts of the landscape are unsettled, remote and inaccessible, which is impacted in part by the presence of existing wind farms. Nevertheless, the absence of development over much of the landscape and its elevated landform also results in a strong exposure to the elements. Levels of tranquillity are reduced on lower slopes where parts of the landscape are influenced by adjacent valley settlements and main roads.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	<p>Although this is a large-scale landscape that is influenced by human activity (in the form of farming, forestry and wind farms), its steep sided valleys, naturalistic land cover patterns including areas of unenclosed moorland, important archaeological features, elevated skylines forming a backdrop to views and its largely undeveloped, remote character all heighten sensitivity to wind energy development.</p> <p>Human influence is greater in the southern half of the LCA<sup>30</sup>, lessening sensitivity, while areas of unenclosed naturalistic land cover in the north have a higher sensitivity. The complex undulating landform and variations in scale mean that the landscape would be particularly sensitive to the development of 'very large' turbines.</p> <p>The following locational variations in terms of the above discussion should be taken into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The lower farmed slopes in the south of the LCA<sup>31</sup> would have a higher sensitivity to turbines of over 75 metres or clusters of more than five turbines, due to smaller scale enclosed landscape patterns and presence of human-scale features including farm buildings.</li> </ul>	
<b>Sensitivity to different turbine heights</b>	Very Small (15-25m)	L
	Small (26-50m)	L-M
	Medium (51-75m)	M
	Large (76-110m)	M
	Very large (111-150m)	M-H

<sup>29</sup> Summarised from TACP (March 2010) *Designation of Special Landscape Areas*. Report for Bridgend County Borough Council.

<sup>30</sup> This area coincides with the LANDMAP Visual & Sensory (Level 2) unit 'Mynydd y Glyn' (ID: CynonVS142).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<b>Commentary on different cluster sizes</b>  Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	Although this is a relatively large-scale landscape, it is still likely to be highly sensitive to 'very large' clusters of wind turbines, which would remain out of scale with the underlying landform.
<b>SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES</b>	
<p>The key sensitive features and characteristics of the LCA in relation to wind energy development are summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Valued upland habitats distributed throughout, including acid and marshy grasslands and heathland, as well as rare Atlantic ferns at Daren y Dimbath SSSI.</li> <li>Prominent undeveloped, elevated skylines often marked by ancient burial cairns and forming a backdrop to views from settlements in the Ogmore Valley and from within Rhondda Cynon Taf.</li> <li>Significant archaeological and industrial remains, including Bwlch y Clawdd Dyke (a Scheduled Monument).</li> <li>The special qualities of the Northern Uplands SLA, particularly its 'wild' and exposed character with a strong sense of place and attractive upland views across the Ogmore Vale and to other uplands.</li> </ul>	

## LCA 8: Strategy and guidance for wind energy development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <a href="http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales">http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales</a>.</p> <p>There are currently two operational wind farms lying adjacent to each other within this LCA: Fforch Nest and Pant-y-Wal. These appear in the landscape as one development, comprising a total of 21 turbines ('large' cluster), each with a tip height of up to 115m (in the 'very large' height bracket). Twelve of the turbines within the combined scheme fall within the Northern Uplands TAN 8 Refined Strategic Search Area (SSA) within the County Borough.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for wind energy development (outside the SSA)
<p>The overall strategy for the LCA, outside the Northern Uplands Strategic Search Areas (SSA), is as follows:</p> <p><b>In line with TAN 8, the overall strategy is to maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p> <p>For locations within the Northern Uplands SSA (see map on front page), it is accepted that change to landscape character could result from wind energy development. As outlined above, developments are already present in this part of the landscape.</p>
LCA-specific guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any wind energy developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wind energy development does not detract from the sense of tranquillity and remoteness of the landscape, especially in the areas most remote from human influence.</li> <li>• Wind energy developments do not detract from the heritage significance of valued archaeological features, including ancient burial cairns on hill summits.</li> <li>• The panoramic views from summits are protected, including those valued as part of the Northern Uplands SLA (over the Ogmere Vale and towards other uplands).</li> <li>• The important naturalistic upland habitats are retained, including acid and marshy grasslands, heathland and bracken.</li> <li>• The presence of wind turbines does not detract from the landscape's role as a remote upland backdrop to settlements within the Ogmere Valley (LCA 7) and Rhondda Cynon Taf.</li> <li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li> </ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Although it is accepted that change to landscape character could result from wind energy development within</p>

the SSA, outside the SSA multiple wind energy developments should:

- Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape as summarised in the 'Key landscape Characteristics' section (and with reference to the definition of 'landscape capacity'<sup>32</sup>).
- Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response<sup>33</sup>.

Within the enclosed farmland to the south of the LCA<sup>34</sup>:

- Any groups of 'medium' (51-75m) turbines should maintain a clear visual hierarchy from 'very small' (15-25m) on-farm/domestic turbines, and aim for a consistent design and size of turbine.

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<sup>32</sup> "Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type..." (Countryside Agency and SNH, 2002).

<sup>33</sup> For more detailed guidance please refer to the SNH guidance document *Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape* (December 2009).

<sup>34</sup> This area coincides with the LANDMAP Visual & Sensory (Level 2) unit 'Mynydd y Glyn' (ID: CynonVS142).

## LCA 8: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Solar PV Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform</b>	A highly undulating landscape with plateaux and ridges reaching to over 500m AOD in some areas. Steep sided valleys carve through the landscape.	
<b>Sense of openness/enclosure</b>	A mixed landscape with some remote areas of open access land and commons on the uplands, but a more enclosed feel around the forestry plantations and pastoral land on valley sides divided by hedges and mature hedgebanks.	
<b>Field pattern and scale</b>	Medium-scale fields (a mixture of historic irregular and regular enclosures) are found on the valley sides, comprising marginal pastures bounded by hedges and mature hedgebanks. Elsewhere the LCA is characterised by open rough grazing land.	
<b>Land cover</b>	Large areas of semi-improved and semi-natural grassland with associated upland habitats such as heath, bracken and scrub are interspersed with forestry plantations on the ridges and hills. On the valley sides, pastures enclosed by hedges and hedgebanks and areas of broadleaved woodlands are found.	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	The coal mining heritage of the landscape is evident through disused tips. Important historic remains such as the Scheduled Monument of Bwlch y Clawdd Dyke and cairns on hilltops are found in this LCA. Some agricultural fields on the lower slopes are historic in origin.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	The open, upland nature of this landscape results in long views of the Brecon Beacons to the north and the Bristol Channel to the south. The LCA also forms a backdrop to settlements located within the adjacent branches of the Ogmore Valley (LCA 7, e.g. Nantymoel, Ogmore Vale and Evanstown) and Rhondda, Cynon Taf County Borough (e.g. Tonypany). It also has strong intervisibility with LCAs 6 and 9, including Taff Ely windfarm which lies just outside LCA 9 across the County Borough boundary.	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	<p>42% of this LCA falls within the Northern Uplands Special Landscape Area, valued for its attractive upland views over the Ogmore Vale and to other upland areas, its 'wild', exposed character and its strong sense of place<sup>35</sup>.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, are the open rough grassland grazed by sheep, valuable upland habitats, important archaeological remnants and the unsettled remote openness of the landscape, with long panoramic views. Some of these could be affected to a degree by solar PV development.</p>	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	The absence of human influence of much of the landscape contributes to a strong sense of remoteness and exposure to the elements. Levels of tranquillity are reduced on lower slopes where parts of the landscape are influenced by adjacent valley settlements.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	<p>Although this landscape includes some areas of enclosure associated with forestry plantations and hedged medium-scale fields, the presence of prominent ridges and slopes which form a backdrop to views, valued tracts of open rough grazing land and semi-natural habitats, and perception of remoteness all heighten levels of sensitivity to solar PV developments.</p> <p>The following locational variations in landscape sensitivity should be taken account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The unenclosed and naturalistic upland plateaux, comprising a significant proportion of the LCA<sup>36</sup>, would be highly sensitive to any solar PV developments.</li> </ul>	
<b>Sensitivity to different scales of solar PV development</b>	<b>Very Small (&lt;1ha)</b>	<b>M-H</b>
	<b>Small (&gt;1-5ha)</b>	<b>H</b>
	<b>Medium (&gt;5-10ha)</b>	<b>H</b>
	<b>Large (&gt;10-15ha)</b>	<b>H</b>
	<b>Very large (&gt;15ha)</b>	<b>H</b>

<sup>35</sup> Summarised from TACP (March 2010) *Designation of Special Landscape Areas*. Report for Bridgend County Borough Council.

<sup>36</sup> This relates to all parts of the LCA apart from the enclosed farmed slopes to the south, which is coincident with the LANDMAP Visual & Sensory (Level 2) unit 'Mynydd y Glyn' (ID: CynonVS142)

#### SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 8: Ogmore Forest and Surrounding Uplands in relation to solar PV development is included below:

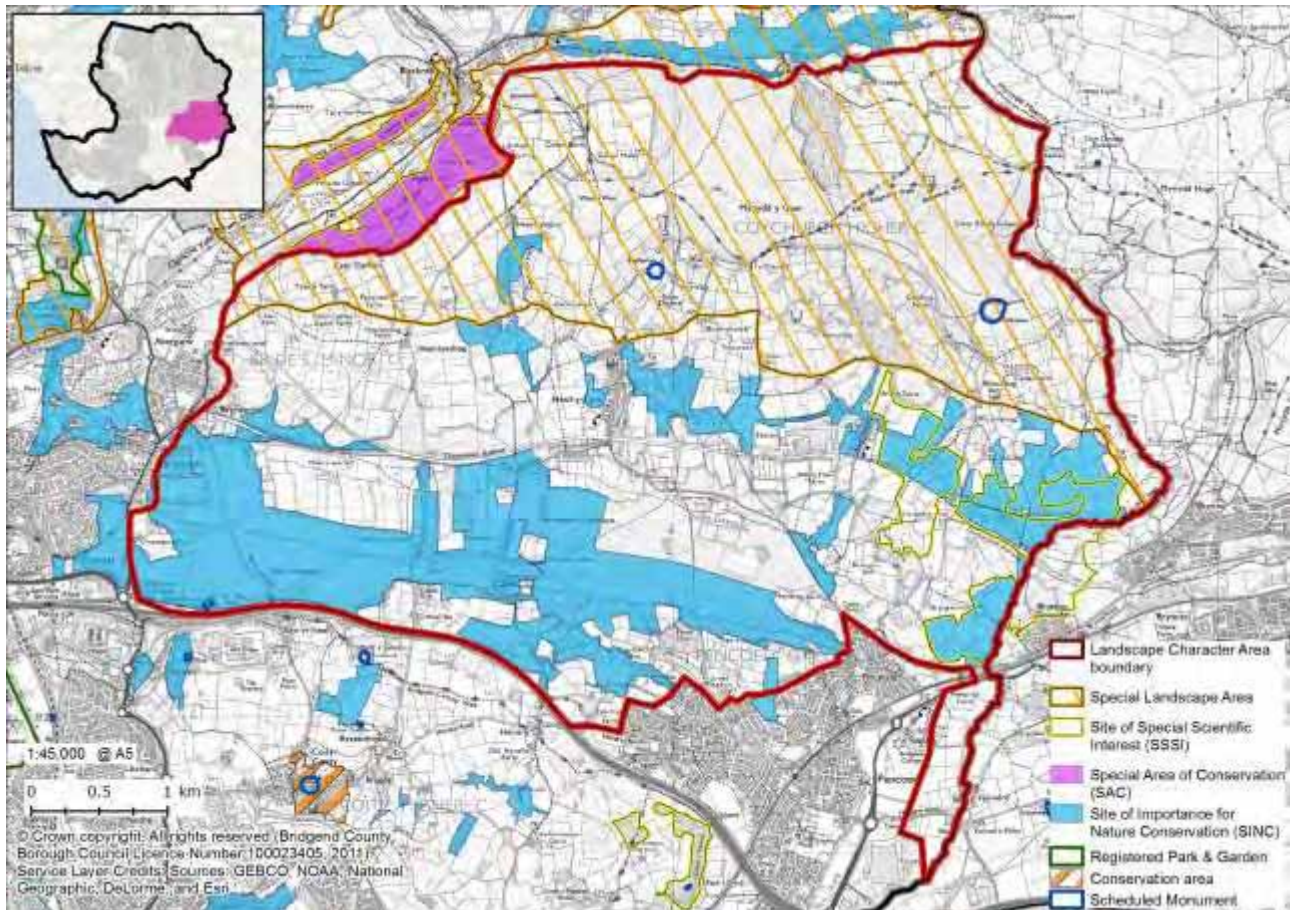
- The landscape's role in providing a backdrop to views, including settlements in the Ogmore Valley, Rhondda Cynon Taf and other upland LCAs.
- Valued upland habitats, including acid and marshy grasslands, heathland and rare Atlantic ferns at Daren y Dimbath SSSI.
- The predominantly open and relatively remote nature of the landscape.
- The field patterns (some historic in origin) of the agricultural enclosures located on the lower slopes.
- Significant archaeological and industrial remains, including Bwlch y Clawdd Dyke (a Scheduled Monument).
- The special qualities of the Northern Uplands SLA, particularly its 'wild' and exposed character with a strong sense of place and attractive upland views across the Ogmore Vale and to other uplands.

## LCA 8: Strategy and guidance for solar PV development

<b>Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA</b>
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or existing solar PV developments within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
<b>Overall strategy for solar PV development</b>
<p>The overall strategy for solar PV development within this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To ensure that solar PV development does not become a defining characteristic of the landscape and to maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
<b>Guidance for development</b>
<p>When siting and designing solar PV developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The strong remote, open and naturalistic character of the landscape is retained.</li><li>• The most visually prominent slopes and ridges are avoided as sites for development.</li><li>• The field patterns on hill slopes are not masked by the development of solar arrays.</li><li>• The valued naturalistic upland habitats are retained, including acid and marshy grasslands, heathland and bracken.</li><li>• Solar PV development does not detract from the landscape's role as a remote, upland backdrop to views from settlements within the Ogmore Valley (LCA 7) and Rhonda Cynon Taf.</li><li>• The heritage significance of valued archaeological assets is not adversely affected by the presence of solar PV developments.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
<b>Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA</b>
<p>Multiple solar PV developments within the LCA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape.</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCA.</li></ul>

## LCA 9: Hirwaun Common and Surrounding Ridges

### LCA Location Map



*Please note that while this LCA assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.*

### LCA LOCATION AND SNAPSHOT

Found in the east of the County Borough, this LCA is flanked by the urban areas of Pencoed to the south and Bridgend to the south-west. It comprises large areas of common land and open ridgelines, and includes the Rockwool Factory. LANDMAP classifies the southern half of the LCA as 'Lowland' and the northern half as 'Upland'.

The northern half of the LCA falls within the Mynydd y Gaer Special Landscape Area (SLA). Other designations include Brynna a Wern Tarw SSSI, Hirwaun Common SINC and several Scheduled Monuments.

## LCA 9: Key Landscape Characteristics

- Strongly undulating landscape with prominent ridgelines at Mynydd y Gaer to the north (295 metres) and the narrow Cefn Hirgoed in the south (130 metres).
- Complex geology, with Mynydd y Gaer marking the southern extent of Upper Coal Measures, Cefn Hirgoed ridgeline formed of resistant Millstone Grit and the LCA's low-lying land overlying sandstone.
- Incised river valleys dissecting Mynydd y Gaer, grading to a low-lying valley bottom criss-crossed by minor streams and springs.
- Coniferous plantations on Mynydd y Gaer and semi-natural woodland on the slopes of Allt y Rhiw forming the largest areas of continuous tree cover in the LCA.
- Open, largely treeless commons and ridges contrasting with surrounding enclosed farmland, with bands of wet woodland along springlines, tree lines forming prominent field boundaries and occasional in-field specimens.
- Large tracts of unimproved grassland, rush pasture and rough upland vegetation predominantly grazed by sheep. Sheep-grazed pastures and wet meadows found elsewhere.
- Blocks of historically important registered common land enclosed by fencing along roadsides, with some edges near housing converted to pony paddocks.
- Enclosed land defined by small to medium-scale irregular and regular fields bounded by square-cut hedges, tall hedgebanks and lines of trees.
- Broadleaved semi-natural woodland on valley sides, unimproved grasslands and heath (e.g. species-rich neutral grassland and wet heath at Brynna a Wern Tarw SSSI; acid grassland/heath at Hirwaun Common SINC).
- Scattered scrub, bracken and trees add to a varied landscape mosaic.
- Strategically-sited Iron Age hillforts on Mynydd y Gaer and a spur overlooking Cwm Llwyd, as well as medieval pillow mounds on Cefn Hirgoed (all Scheduled Monuments).
- Mixed local vernacular, with rendered 19th century terraces and a range of 20th century/modern housing at Heol-y-Cyw.
- Busy B4280 road cutting through the landscape – which forms a route connecting Bridgend with the M4.
- Tracts of registered common land providing valued recreational opportunities.
- A strongly rural landscape with an exposed, upland feel on higher ground.
- Strong intervisibility between the two ridges, with the white/cream rendered housing of Heol-y-Cyw visible in views from Cefn Hirgoed.
- The Rockwool Factory chimney and reservoirs on Hirwaun Common standing out strongly against their muted naturalistic backdrop.
- Extensive ridgetop views to the uplands to the north and the south-east coast in clear conditions. Views east from Mynydd y Gaer dominated by wind turbines on Mynydd Maendy (within RCT County Borough).

## LCA 9: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform and scale</b>	Strongly undulating, large-scale landform with prominent ridgelines and steep river valleys, with minor streams and springs producing areas of smaller scale landform.	
<b>Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features</b>	<p>Mixed land cover comprised of extensive coniferous plantations and semi-natural woodland on the slopes. On the uplands there are exposed and open commons with large tracts of unimproved grassland and heaths that form important semi-natural habitats. At lower elevations, agricultural fields are enclosed by hedges and lines of trees.</p> <p>Human scale features are found in the form of mixed housing styles at Hoel-y-Cyw, the busy B4280 road and industrial development such as the Rockwool Factory.</p>	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	The rich archaeological heritage of this landscape is identified through the Scheduled Monuments that are located here, including Iron Age hillforts and medieval pillow mounds located on hill summits.	
<b>Skylines</b>	The LCA is characterised by open, expansive skylines, some marked by plantations and bands of woodland. Pylons and the Rockwool Factory chimney form prominent man-made features on some skylines. Cefn Hirgoed and Hirwaun Common form an elevated rural backdrop to views from Pen-coed and north-eastern Bridgend.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	From the ridgetops there are extensive views north to the uplands beyond the Ogmore Valley (LCAs 6 and 8), as well as south east to the Vale of Glamorgan coast. Views to the east are frequently dominated by the turbines of Taff Ely wind farm, which appears to form an extension of the LCA's skyline in the north-east (within Rhondda Cynon Taff). Fforch Nest and Pant-y-Wal windfarms form landmark features in views from Mynydd y Gaer.	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	<p>39% of this LCA falls within the Mynydd y Gaer Special Landscape Area (SLA), valued for the open and exposed nature of the higher ground and the contrasting hedgerow bound fields on the agricultural fields and lower elevations.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the open enclosed commons with a strong rural character and extensive views, large areas of semi-natural habitat and woodland and the presence of nationally important archaeological features. Some of these could be affected to some degree by wind energy development.</p>	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	On the higher commons there is an exposed upland feel, and the landscape remains very rural, although in some areas human development intrudes on this perception in the form of modern housing, pylons, the main B4280 road and views of Mynydd Maendy wind farm to the east.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	Although this is a large-scale landscape in many places, with some existing development (including on open skylines), it is still predominantly rural and both the openness of the commons and views from and to the area are recognised as being in need of conservation/protection in the LCA description. The prevalence of semi-natural land cover and archaeological features could also result in increased levels of sensitivity to wind energy development.	
<b>Sensitivity to different turbine heights</b>	Very Small (15-25m)	L-M
	Small (26-50m)	M
	Medium (51-75m)	M
	Large (76-110m)	M-H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
<b>Commentary on different cluster sizes</b>  Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	The presence of expansive tracts of semi-natural land, common land and intricate valleys mean that this LCA is likely to be highly sensitive to any clusters larger than 'small' in scale.	

#### SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 9: Hirwaun Common and Surrounding Ridges in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- Strong rural character, with a sense of remoteness on higher ground.
- Nationally important archaeological features, including Iron Age hillforts and medieval pillow mounds.
- Extensive views from ridges, to the coastline and the nearby uplands of LCA 8.
- Large areas of locally and nationally important semi-natural habitat including broadleaved woodland and open tracts of species rich neutral grassland and wet heath on commons.

## LCA 9: Strategy and guidance for wind energy development

<b>Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA</b>
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <a href="http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales">http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales</a>.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or operational wind energy schemes in this LCA. However, just beyond the boundary within Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough lies Taff Ely windfarm, currently comprising a total of twenty 72 metre turbines (within the 'medium' category). A forthcoming re-powering scheme will replace these turbines with seven 110m turbines (within the 'large' category). Although outside the County Borough, this wind farm is sited on a skyline that appears as a continuation of this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
<b>Overall strategy for wind energy development</b>
<p>The overall strategy for wind energy development in this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
<b>LCA-specific guidance for development</b>
<p>When siting and designing any wind energy developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The role of the landscape's elevated rural skylines as a backdrop to views from Bridgend and Pencoed is protected.</li><li>• The strong rural character of the landscape is retained.</li><li>• The exposed, open feel of the higher ground is protected.</li><li>• The valued semi-natural habitats are protected from development, including areas of broadleaved woodland, open species rich neutral grassland and wet heath.</li><li>• The significance of the LCA's archaeological features such as Iron Age hillforts and medieval pillow mounds is not affected by the presence of wind turbines.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
<b>Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA</b>
<p>Multiple wind energy developments should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape as summarised in the 'Key landscape Characteristics' section (and with reference to the definition of 'landscape capacity'<sup>37</sup>).</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response<sup>38</sup>.</li><li>• Where a site for development is intervisible with other wind turbine developments (within the same or different landscapes), cumulative landscape and visual impacts will need to be considered. For this LCA, this includes consideration of the current Taff Ely windfarm.</li></ul>

<sup>37</sup> "Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type..." (Countryside Agency and SNH, 2002).

<sup>38</sup> For more detailed guidance please refer to the SNH guidance document *Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape* (December 2009).

## LCA 9: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Solar PV Development

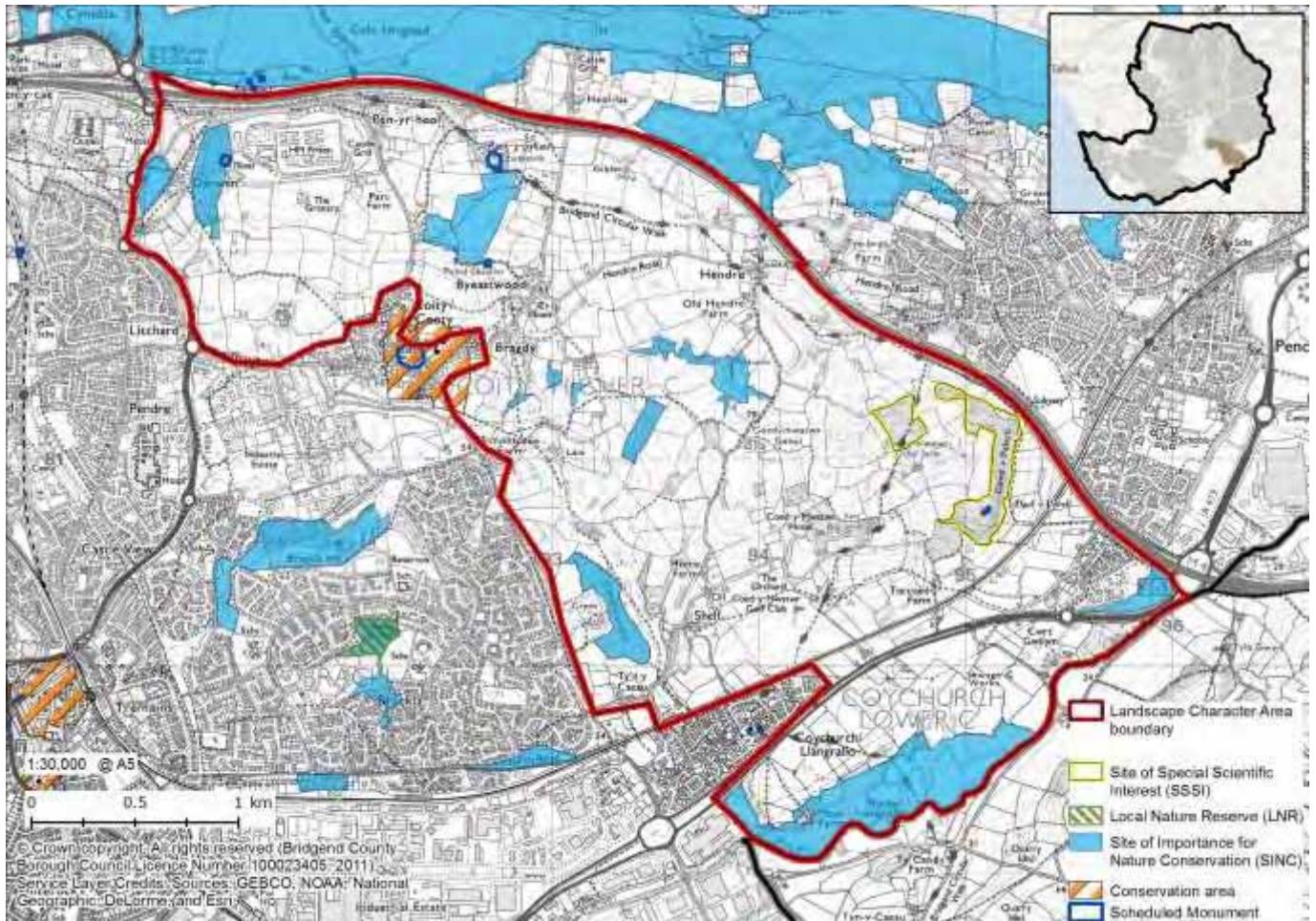
Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform</b>	Strongly undulating landform with prominent ridgelines and slopes. The landscape is incised by steep river valleys, with minor streams and springs.	
<b>Sense of openness/enclosure</b>	The sense of enclosure across the landscape is varied according to the land use in the locality. Fields that are bounded by high hedges or tree belts and areas with high woodland cover will have a greater sense of enclosure. The open commons have an exposed feel.	
<b>Field pattern and scale</b>	Varied field pattern with small to medium scale fields of both regular and irregular shapes. In some upland areas there are large tracts of unimproved grassland and rough grazing.	
<b>Land cover</b>	Mixed land cover comprised of extensive coniferous plantations and semi-natural woodland on the slopes. On the uplands there are exposed and open commons with large tracts of unimproved grassland and heaths that form important semi-natural habitats. At lower elevations, agricultural fields are enclosed by hedges and lines of trees.	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	The rich archaeological heritage of this landscape is identified through the Scheduled Monuments that are located here, including Iron Age hillforts and medieval pillow mounds located on hill summits.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	From the ridgetops there are extensive views north to the uplands beyond the Ogmore Valley (LCAs 6 and 8), as well as south east to the Vale of Glamorgan coast. Views to the east are frequently dominated by the turbines of Taff Ely wind farm, which appears to form an extension of the LCA's skyline in the north-east (within Rhondda Cynon Taff). Fforch Nest and Pant-y-Wal windfarms form landmark features in views from Mynydd y Gaer.	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	<p>39% of this LCA falls within the Mynydd y Gaer Special Landscape Area, valued for the open and exposed nature of the higher ground and the contrasting hedgerow bound fields on the agricultural fields and lower elevations.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the open enclosed commons with a strong rural character and extensive views, large areas of semi-natural habitat and woodland and the presence of nationally important archaeological features. Some of these could be affected to some degree by solar PV energy development.</p>	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	On the higher commons there is an exposed upland feel, and the landscape remains very rural, although in some areas human development intrudes on this perception in the form of modern housing, pylons, the main B4280 road and views of a wind farm to the east.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	Although this landscape has areas that are fairly enclosed or are impacted by existing development, the sensitivity of the landscape to solar PV development is increased by the presence of prominent, elevated slopes, its highly rural character, rich archaeological heritage and open and exposed commons supporting valued habitats.	
<b>Sensitivity to different scales of solar PV development</b>	Very Small (<1ha)	L-M
	Small (>1-5ha)	M
	Medium (>5-10ha)	M-H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very large (>15ha)	H
<b>SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES</b>		
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 9: Hirwaun Common and Surrounding Ridges in relation to solar PV development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elevated and highly visible slopes and ridgelines forming a backdrop to views from across and beyond the LCA.</li> <li>Strong rural, pastoral character, with a sense of remoteness on higher ground.</li> <li>Extensive views from ridges, to the coastline and the nearby uplands of LCAs 6 and 8.</li> <li>Large expanses of nationally and locally important semi-natural habitat, including broadleaved woodland and open species-rich grasslands and wet heath.</li> <li>Nationally important archaeological features, including Iron Age hillforts and medieval pillow mounds.</li> </ul>		

## LCA 9: Strategy and guidance for solar PV development

<b>Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA</b>
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or existing solar PV developments within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
<b>Overall strategy for solar PV development</b>
<p>The overall strategy for solar PV development within this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To ensure that solar PV development does not become a defining characteristic of the landscape and to maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
<b>LCA- specific guidance for development</b>
<p>When siting and designing any solar PV developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Solar PV developments should avoid the most open, visible slopes and ridgelines.</li><li>• The strong rural character of the landscape with an exposed feel on higher ground is protected.</li><li>• The valued semi-natural habitats of broadleaved woodland, species rich neutral grassland and wet heath are protected.</li><li>• The distinctive mixed field pattern (including small, irregular sized fields that are particularly sensitive to solar PV development) is not masked by solar PV development.</li><li>• The open commons are not fragmented by the development of solar PV schemes.</li><li>• Solar PV development does not affect the value and significance of the landscape's Scheduled archaeological features.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
<b>Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA</b>
<p>Multiple solar PV developments within the LCA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape.</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCA.</li></ul>

## LCA 10: Coity Rural Hinterland

### LCA Location Map



*Please note that while this LCA assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.*

### LCA LOCATION AND SNAPSHOT

This is a sparsely settled landscape located in the south east of the County Borough, providing a rural buffer between the settlements of Bridgend and Pencoed. All of the LCA is classified as 'Lowland' in LANDMAP's Visual & Sensory aspect (Level 2).

There are no Special Landscape Areas within this LCA. Other designations include Coed y Mwstwr RIGS, Coed y Mwstwr Woodland SSSI, several Scheduled Monuments, part of Coity Conservation Area and a number of SINCs.

## LCA 10: Key Landscape Characteristics

- Strongly undulating lowland landscape, varying in height from 114 metres AOD to around 30 metres AOD.
- Underlying rocks of Triassic sandstones and mudstones, with a band of limestone in the south-east outcropping along the Coed y Pebyll ridge.
- Locally distinct cave systems at Coed y Mwstwr (designated as a RIGS).
- Includes the distinct sinuous valley of Nant-Bryn-glas and a number of springs.
- Bands and blocks of broadleaved woodland linking to hedgerows (often grown out into tree lines) to produce a strong sense of enclosure and wooded character.
- Distinctive small-scale field pattern of improved and semi-improved pastures, marked by a strong framework of mature hazel, holly and hawthorn hedges with frequent oak and ash standards.
- Horse paddocks divided by wooden fencing on the fringes of Hendre.
- Remnant common land in the north-west and around Coychurch softening the urban edge.
- Semi-natural broadleaved woodlands of nature conservation interest, including the Coed y Mwstwr Woodland SSSI (mixed woodland with a rich limestone ground flora).
- Patches of scrub and neutral grassland also valued locally.
- Rich archaeological heritage including prehistoric earthworks and a burial chamber near Byeastwood, and Ogof y Pebyll cave (which displays evidence of prehistoric occupation).
- A 19th century historic estate character is associated with the landscape around Coed y Mwstwr, which also includes a golf course.
- Sparsely settled, with occasional nucleated hamlets and farmsteads linked by winding lanes, single tracks and a network of footpaths, including the Bridgend Circular Walk.
- Areas of open access land (commons) providing valued recreational spaces.
- HM Prison Parc located in the north-west of the LCA, largely screened by woodland. Large parts of the landscape inaccessible by road.
- Varied local vernacular, with examples of traditional local stone vernacular at Bragdy and Byeastwood, and the Victorian red brick Grade II listed Victorian mansion of the Coed-y-Mwstwr Hotel.
- A highly rural and tranquil landscape in strong contrast to the neighbouring built form of Bridgend.
- Peaceful, unspoilt qualities interrupted by the sound of the M4 traffic along the northern edges, as well as the A473 and main railway line to the south.
- Views from the higher land in the south across the Vale of Glamorgan interrupted by the visual prominence of Bridgend Industrial Estate.
- Unspoilt views to the north characterised by the wooded/semi-natural ridgelines of LCA 8 and the uplands beyond.

## LCA 10: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
Landform and scale	Medium scale strongly undulating lowland landscape, including the sinuous valley of Nant-Bryn-glas.	
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	<p>Small-scale pastoral fields are bounded by mature hedges, with frequent oak and ash trees sometimes adjoining bands of woodland. There are also areas of horse paddocks, common land, and a 19<sup>th</sup> century historic estate at Coed y Mwstwr.</p> <p>Human scale features include occasional hamlets and farmsteads and frequent trees.</p>	
Historic landscape character	<p>This landscape has a rich archaeological heritage of prehistoric, medieval and post medieval features, with several Scheduled Monuments. Important historic features are also associated with the 19<sup>th</sup> century Coed-y-Mwstwr estate, including several Grade II and Grade II* listed buildings. Parts of Coity Conservation Area are within the LCA, with views afforded to the nationally important medieval castle within the village.</p>	
Skylines	<p>Skylines in this LCA are often marked by woodland and trees, and are occasionally marked by historic features, including a prehistoric burial chamber at Coity. . The skylines of areas of open access common land are more open. The LCA forms a valued rural backdrop to views from Bridgend to the west, and Pencoed to the east.</p>	
Key views and vistas	<p>Elevated land affords expansive views to the south across the Vale of Glamorgan, interrupted by Bridgend Industrial Estate, whilst views to LCA 8 in the north are unspoilt and have a wooded and semi-natural character.</p>	
Scenic and special qualities	<p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the strong wooded character, areas of scrub, semi-improved grassland and commons, distinctive small scale field pattern and estate land and the important prehistoric heritage sites and cave systems. Some of these could be affected to a degree by wind energy development.</p>	
Perceptual qualities	<p>This landscape is very rural and tranquil, particularly in the context of its doorstep location to the urban area of Bridgend. The sparsely settled nature of the landscape, coupled with the semi-natural woodland and pastoral fields provide a peaceful, unspoilt quality, although this is interrupted in places by the M4 and urban development of Bridgend.</p>	
Summary of landscape sensitivity	<p>Although the views from and tranquil qualities of this rural landscape are already interrupted in places by existing development, the sensitivity of the LCA to wind development is increased by the occurrence of small scale pastoral fields, elevated undeveloped skylines forming a valued backdrop to views from adjacent urban areas, frequent human scale features and the presence of nationally important heritage features.</p>	
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	L-M
	Small (26-50m)	M
	Medium (51-75m)	M-H
	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
Commentary on different cluster sizes	<p>Although this is a medium-scale landscape with existing urban and industrial influences on the fringes of Bridgend, its small-scale field pattern and historic character means that it is likely to be highly sensitive to any clusters larger than 'small' in scale.</p>	
Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)		
SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES		
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 10: Coity Rural Hinterland in relation to wind energy development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Strongly undulating landscape with wooded rural skylines forming a backdrop to views from Bridgend and Pencoed.</li><li>Rural, tranquil character with long, uninterrupted views from higher ground to the coast to the south and the uplands to the north.</li><li>Its wealth of heritage features, and the 19<sup>th</sup> century estate character associated with Coed y Mwstwr.</li><li>Areas of scrub, semi-improved grassland and remnant commons evoking a naturalistic landscape character.</li></ul>		

## LCA 10: Strategy and guidance for wind energy development

<b>Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA</b>
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <a href="http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales">http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales</a>.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or operational wind energy schemes within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
<b>Overall strategy for wind energy development</b>
<p>The overall strategy for wind energy development in this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
<b>LCA-specific guidance for development</b>
<p>When siting and designing any wind energy developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wind energy development does not dilute the overall rural, tranquil feel of the landscape.</li><li>• The significance of heritage features and 19<sup>th</sup> century estate character of the landscape around Coed y Mwstwr is respected.</li><li>• The character and setting of Coity Conservation Area with its medieval castle is respected in any proposals.</li><li>• The development of wind turbines and their ancillary equipment avoids valued patches of semi-natural broadleaved woodland, scrub and neutral grassland.</li><li>• The unspoilt views north to LCA 8 from wooded ridgelines are protected.</li><li>• Wind energy development does not overwhelm the human scale of the LCA's landscape features, including hedgerows, farmsteads, hamlets and frequent trees.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
<b>Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA</b>
<p>Multiple wind energy developments should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape as summarised in the 'Key landscape Characteristics' section (and with reference to the definition of 'landscape capacity'<sup>39</sup>).</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response<sup>40</sup>.</li></ul>

<sup>39</sup> "Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type..." (Countryside Agency and SNH, 2002).

<sup>40</sup> For more detailed guidance please refer to the SNH guidance document *Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape* (December 2009).

## LCA 10: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Solar PV Development

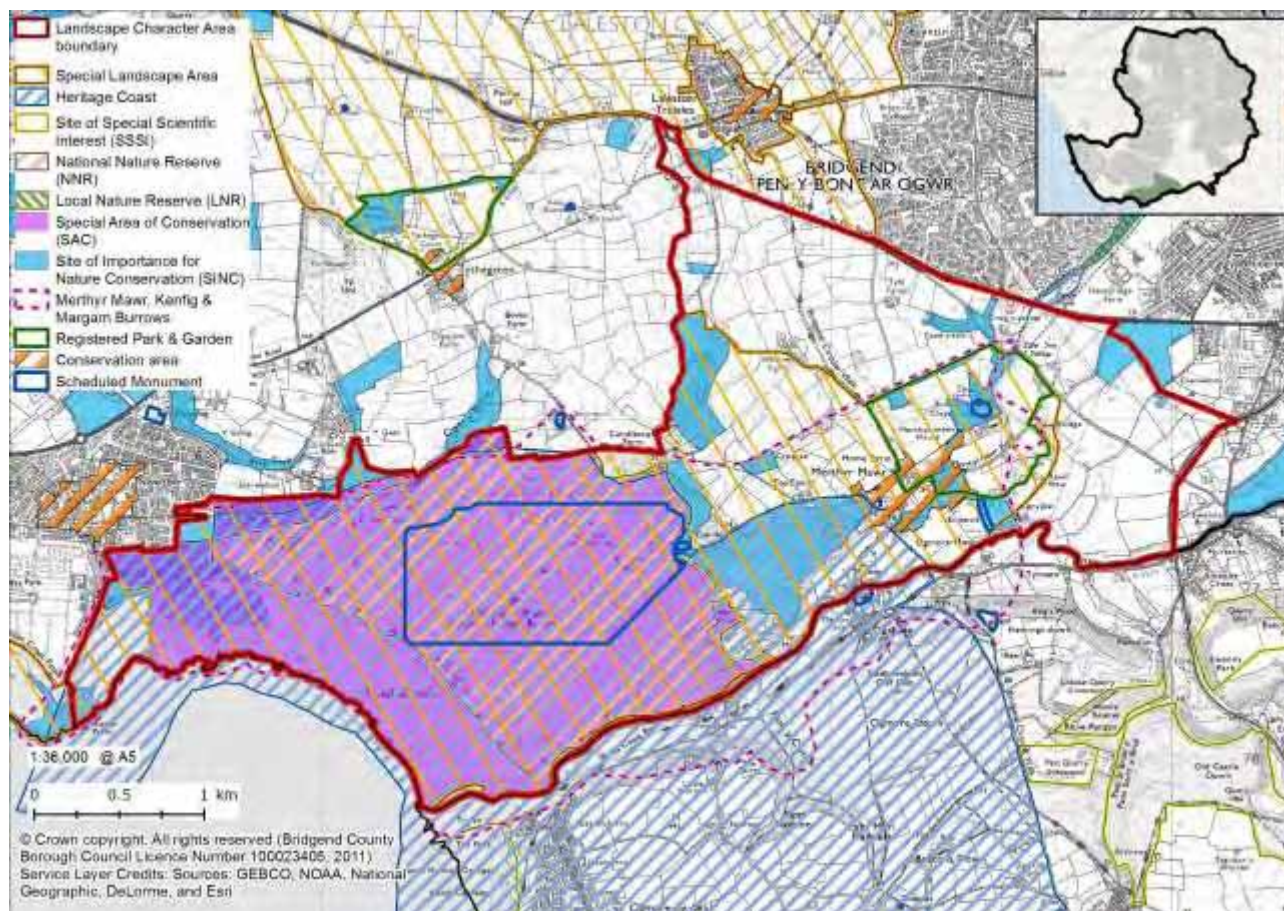
Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
Landform	Strongly undulating lowland landscape, including the sinuous valley of Nant-Bryn-glas.	
Sense of openness/enclosure	The strong wooded character of the area with fields enclosed by mature hedgebanks provides a sense of enclosure to much of the landscape, although there are more open areas found on the remnant commons around settlement edges.	
Field pattern and scale	The field pattern in this landscape is predominantly small-scale, with occasional modern pony paddocks.	
Land cover	Small scale pastoral fields are bound by mature hedges of hazel, holly and hawthorn, with frequent oak and ash trees. In some areas bands of woodland adjoin these hedges. There are also areas of horse paddocks, common land, and a 19 <sup>th</sup> century historic estate at Coed-y-Mwstwr, which includes a golf course.	
Historic landscape character	This landscape has a rich archaeological heritage of prehistoric, medieval and post medieval features, with several Scheduled Monuments. Important historic features are also associated with the 19 <sup>th</sup> century Coed-y-Mwstwr estate, including several Grade II and Grade II* listed buildings and designed parkland. Parts of Coity Conservation Area are within the LCA, with views afforded to the nationally important medieval castle within the village.	
Key views and vistas	Elevated land affords expansive views to the south across the Vale of Glamorgan, interrupted by Bridgend Industrial Estate, whilst views to LCA 8 in the north are unspoilt and have a wooded and semi-natural character.	
Scenic and special qualities	This landscape is very rural and tranquil, particularly in the context of its doorstep location to the urban area of Bridgend. The sparsely settled nature of the landscape, coupled with the semi-natural woodland and pastoral fields provide a peaceful, unspoilt quality, although this is interrupted in places by the M4 and urban development of Bridgend.	
Perceptual qualities	This landscape is very rural and tranquil in comparison to the urban area of Bridgend to the south. The sparsely settled nature of the landscape, coupled with the semi-natural woodland and pastoral fields provide a peaceful, unspoilt quality, although this is interrupted in places by the M4 and urban development of Bridgend.	
Summary of landscape sensitivity	Although this landscape has a high level of enclosure resulting from the abundance of woodland and mature hedgebanks which could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV development, the small scale pastoral fields, predominantly rural or semi-natural landcover and its rural, tranquil and historic landscape character all increase levels of sensitivity.	
Sensitivity to different scales of solar PV development	Very Small (<1ha)	L-M
	Small (>1-5ha)	M
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very large (>15ha)	H
<b>SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES</b>		
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 10: Coity Rural Hinterland in relation to wind energy development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The distinctive historic, small-scale field pattern marked by a strong hedgerow network.</li> <li>Its rural, tranquil character on the doorstep of adjacent urban areas (Bridgend and Pencoed); forming a backdrop to landscapes beyond.</li> <li>Historic landscape character with a number of prehistoric sites and estate land around Coed y Mwstwr.</li> <li>Areas of scrub, semi-improved grassland and remnant commons providing a naturalistic landscape character.</li> </ul>		

## LCA 10: Strategy and guidance for solar PV development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or existing solar PV developments within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for solar PV development
<p>The overall strategy for solar PV development within this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To ensure that solar PV development does not become a defining characteristic of the landscape and to maintain landscape character, as per the ‘key landscape characteristics’ set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
LCA-specific guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any solar PV developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The strongly rural character and levels of relative tranquillity are protected.</li><li>• Solar PV energy development protects the significance of heritage features, the 19<sup>th</sup> century Coedy Mwstwr estate and Coity Conservation Area.</li><li>• Locally valued patches of semi-natural broadleaved woodland, scrub and neutral grassland are avoided as sites for development.</li><li>• The distinctive small scale, historic pattern of pastoral fields is not masked by the development of solar arrays.</li><li>• Solar PV developments avoid the most elevated, sloping land – particularly sites that form a backdrop to views from Bridgend, Pencoed and the remote uplands of LCA 8.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Multiple solar PV developments within the LCA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape.</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCA.</li></ul>

# LCA 11: Merthyr Mawr Farmland, Warren and Coastline

## LCA Location Map



*Please note that while this LCA assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.*

### LCA LOCATION AND SNAPSHOT

Located to the south west of Bridgend Town, this LCA comprises the distinctive sand dunes and coastline of Merthyr Mawr Warren (within the Glamorgan Heritage Coast), along with farmland of an estate character around Merthyr Mawr village. The Warren is classified as 'Coastal' in LANDMAP's Visual & Sensory aspect (Level 2) and the inland farmland as 'Lowland'.

The majority of the LCA falls within the Merthyr Mawr Special Landscape Area (SLA). Other designations include Merthyr Mawr Warren SAC, SSSI and NNR, Newton Fault RIGS, several Scheduled Monuments, Merthyr Mawr village Conservation Area and the Grade II\* Registered Park and Garden of Merthyr Mawr House. Much of the landscape is designated as of Outstanding Historic Importance and all of the coastal area lies within the Glamorgan Heritage Coast.

## LCA 11: Key Landscape Characteristics

- Coastal landscape within the Glamorgan Heritage Coast, dominated by the high sand dunes of Merthyr Mawr, reaching up to 80m AOD, backed by rolling estate farmland.
- Dunes comprising of wind-blown sand forming a superficial layer over Lower Carboniferous Limestone. A band of Oolitic Limestone and Lower Lias strata contains the dunes. The Newton Fault RIGS shows the contrast between the Carboniferous and Triassic strata.
- Sandy beach with shingle and beach cobble occurring in places.
- Landscape drained by the River Ogmore along its southern boundary. Ground water aquifers within the limestone bedrock (emergency water supplies to local communities).
- Varied woodland pattern creating landscape interest, including small spinneys within the sand dunes, broadleaved woodland fringing the River Ogmore, mixed estate plantations and in-field parkland trees.
- Buildings within Merthyr Mawr village nestled within tree groups, frequently Scots Pine.
- Well-developed, loamy brown earths supporting predominantly pastoral farming, wood pasture and parkland, with some arable fields and wet meadows on the floodplain.
- Regular fields enclosed by estate stone walls, railings or low-cut hedges.
- Internationally important habitats on Methyr Mawr Warren including sand dunes, saltmarsh, limestone grasslands and swamp habitats. Dune slacks amongst the most species-rich in the UK.
- Broadleaved estate plantations, patches of semi-natural woodland and remnant unimproved grasslands, many designated as SINCs.
- Historic and archaeological features of national importance including the Norman-origin Ogmore Castle (within the Vale of Glamorgan but strongly associated with this landscape), 14th century fortified manor house of Candleston Castle, Chapel Hill Iron Age hillfort, and the early medieval Vervil Dyke.
- Evidence beneath the dunes of occupation from the Neolithic period. Much is designated a Landscape of Outstanding Historic Importance.
- Grade II\* Merthyr Mawr House and parkland, with pleasure grounds, specimen trees and estate plantations.
- Distinctive village and medieval church of Merthyr Mawr designated as a Conservation Area, including well-maintained stone cottages with thatched or slate roofs.
- Limestone local vernacular creating unity in the landscape – used in buildings, walls and bridges.
- Settlement limited to the historic nucleated village of Merthyr Mawr, with scattered farmsteads linked by minor rural lanes and tracks.
- The Warren crossed by the Wales Coast Path, with the Bridgend Circular Walk providing links from the town to Merthyr Mawr village and Candleston Castle.
- A peaceful and strongly rural landscape on the doorsteps of Bridgend and Porthcawl, with important visual connections with the surrounding coast and seascapes.
- Sand dunes are a popular recreational destination, with increased traffic on the rural roads during peak times impacting on otherwise high levels of tranquillity.

## LCA 11: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform and scale</b>	Predominantly large-scale coastal landscape with a beach of sand, shingle and cobble backed by the high sand dunes of Merthyr Mawr Warren. Beyond the sand dunes the landscape comprises small to medium-scale rolling estate farmland.	
<b>Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features</b>	<p>Varied landcover, which is mainly semi natural or agricultural in nature. Internationally important habitats are found in and around the sand dunes, including saltmarsh, limestone grassland and swamp. The farmland beyond the dunes is predominantly pastoral, and there are woodland cover within the LCA is varied; with small spinneys within the dunes, broadleaved woodland fringing the River Ogmore, estate plantations and in field parkland trees.</p> <p>Frequent human scale features within the farmland include the village and medieval church at Merthyr Mawr, scattered farmsteads, stone walls and frequent specimen and woodland trees.</p>	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	A large portion of this LCA (67%) is designated as a Landscape of Outstanding Historic Importance in Wales owing to its long history of human occupation, and includes several nationally significant heritage features including the Scheduled Monuments of Merthyr Mawr Warren, Candleston Castle and St Rogue's Chapel. The Grade II* Listed Merthyr Mawr House estate influences the character of the land surrounding the village, which is also a Conservation Area	
<b>Skylines</b>	The skylines are open or wooded, and generally free from development. In the north of the LCA, some skylines are interrupted by pylon lines crossing the estate farmland. Traeth yr Afon beach and the high dunes of the warren form dramatic and distinctive coastal features, forming a backdrop to views along the coast, including from Porthcawl and Ogmore-on-Sea (within the Vale of Glamorgan).	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	The high sand dunes provide a frontage for the County Borough from the sea. There are also important visual connections from the Warren and beach in this LCA with the surrounding coastline and across the Bristol Channel to the North Somerset Coast. The ancient, nationally important remains of Ogmore Castle are prominent in views down the Ogmore Valley on the edge of the County Borough. There are some views across the estate farmland from the A48, but these are often restricted by woodland.	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	<p>53% of this LCA falls within the Glamorgan Coast Heritage Coast, valued for the natural undeveloped character of the coastline, historical remnants and geological and ecological scientific value.</p> <p>74% of the LCA is contained in the Merthyr Mawr Warren Special Landscape Area, valued for its dune systems, parklands and historical remains.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the visually prominent sand dunes, internationally important coastal habitats and nationally important archaeological and cultural heritage features. Some of these might be affected to a degree by wind energy development.</p>	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	Peaceful and strongly rural landscape, with the expansive coastal habitats, farmland and historic and parkland Merthyr Mawr House Estate providing an area of relative tranquillity on the doorstep of the urban areas of Bridgend and Porthcawl.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	<p>Although parts of this landscape are large-scale, its distinctive landform of elevated sand dunes and rolling farmland, strong rural, tranquil nature of the landscape on the doorstep of urban areas, its nationally important historic features and landscapes, internationally valued coastal habitats and strong visibility in views along the coast all increase levels of sensitivity to wind energy development.</p> <p>The following locational variations to sensitivity should be taken into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Merthyr Mawr Warren and Traeth Yr Afon beach would be highly sensitive to the development of any scales of wind turbine development.</li> </ul>	
<b>Sensitivity to different turbine heights</b>	Very Small (15-25m)	M-H
	Small (26-50m)	H
	Medium (51-75m)	H
	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
<b>Commentary on different cluster sizes</b>	<p>Although this landscape includes some large-scale landforms, the internationally important sand dunes and historic landscapes associated with this LCA mean that it would be highly sensitive to all but single turbine developments. Merthyr Mawr Warren and Traeth Yr Afon beach would be highly sensitive to the development of any scales of wind turbine.</p> <p>Single turbine Small (&lt;5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (&gt;25)</p>	

#### SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 11: Merthyr Mawr Farmland, Warren and Coastline in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- Visually prominent sand dunes, reaching some 80 metres AOD and forming a distinctive coastal frontage to the County Borough and scenic backdrop to views from Porthcawl and Ogmore-by-Sea.
- Internationally important coastal habitats within the Merthyr Mawr Warren SAC, SSSI and NNR.
- Merthyr Mawr village Conservation Area, with strong local vernacular and surrounding estate character (associated with the Grade II\* parkland estate surrounding Merthyr Mawr House).
- The nationally important historic character and relicts found within the landscape, most of which is designated as a Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales.

## LCA 11: Strategy and guidance for wind energy development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <a href="http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales">http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales</a>.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or operational wind energy schemes within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for wind energy development
<p>The overall strategy wind energy development in this LCA is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>To maintain landscape character, as per the ‘key landscape characteristics’ set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></li></ul>
LCA-specific guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any wind energy developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The role of the sand dunes as a frontage to the County Borough is not damaged by wind turbines.</li><li>• Wind turbines do not negatively impact upon the landscape as a setting for important heritage features including the Scheduled Monuments of Merthyr Mawr Warren, Candleston Castle, Ogmore Castle and St Rogue’s Chapel.</li><li>• Wind turbines do not affect the setting of Merthyr Mawr village Conservation Area.</li><li>• Wind energy development does not degrade the peaceful and strongly rural character of the landscape.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Multiple wind energy developments should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape as summarised in the ‘Key landscape Characteristics’ section (and with reference to the definition of ‘landscape capacity’<sup>41</sup>).</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response<sup>42</sup>.</li></ul>

<sup>41</sup> “Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type...” (Countryside Agency and SNH, 2002).

<sup>42</sup> For more detailed guidance please refer to the SNH guidance document *Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape* (December 2009).

## LCA 11: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Solar PV Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform</b>	Predominantly coastal landscape with a beach of sand, shingle and cobble (Traeth yr Afon) backed by the high and frequently steep sand dunes of Merthyr Mawr Warren. Beyond the sand dunes the landscape comprises rolling estate farmland with some open and relatively steep slopes.	
<b>Sense of openness/enclosure</b>	The coastal parts of the LCA are generally open and exposed to the elements, with small spinneys within the dunes providing limited enclosure. Within the farmland backing the coast enclosure is provided by broadleaved woodland fringing the River Ogmore, mixed estate plantations and field boundaries of stone walls, railings, or low-cut hedges.	
<b>Field pattern and scale</b>	Predominantly pastoral fields are generally regular in shape and of medium scale. There are some larger fields of arable cultivation on slopes south of Merthyr Mawr village.	
<b>Land cover</b>	Varied landcover, which is mainly semi natural or agricultural in nature. Internationally important habitats are found in and around the sand dunes, including saltmarsh, limestone grassland and swamp. The farmland beyond the dunes is predominantly pastoral, and there are woodland cover within the LCA is varied; with small spinneys within the dunes, broadleaved woodland fringing the River Ogmore, estate plantations and in field parkland trees.	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	A large portion of this LCA (67%) is designated as a Landscape of Outstanding Historic Importance in Wales owing to its long history of human occupation, and includes several nationally significant heritage features including the Scheduled Monuments of Merthyr Mawr Warren, Candleston Castle and St Rogue's Chapel. The Grade II* Listed Merthyr Mawr House estate influences the character of the land surrounding the village, which is also a Conservation Area.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	The high sand dunes provide a frontage for the County Borough from the sea. There are also important visual connections from the warren and beach in this LCA with the surrounding coastline and across the Bristol Channel to the North Somerset Coast. The ancient, nationally important remains of Ogmore Castle are prominent in views down the Ogmore Valley on the edge of the County Borough. There are some views across the estate farmland from the A48, but these are often restricted by woodland.	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	<p>53% of this LCA falls within the Glamorgan Coast Heritage Coast, valued for the natural undeveloped character of the coastline, historical remnants and geological and ecological scientific value.</p> <p>74% of the LCA is contained in the Merthyr Mawr Warren Special Landscape Area, valued for its dune systems, parklands and historical remains.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the visually prominent sand dunes, internationally important coastal habitats and nationally important archaeological and cultural heritage features. Some of these might be affected to a degree by solar PV development.</p>	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	Peaceful and strongly rural landscape, with the expansive coastal habitats, farmland and historic and parkland Merthyr Mawr House Estate providing an area of relative tranquillity on the doorstep of the urban areas of Bridgend and Porthcawl.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	<p>Although this landscape has areas of rolling farmland (including arable) with regular, medium-sized fields and enclosure provided by trees and woodland that could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV development, the presence of internationally important semi-natural habitats, nationally important historic landscapes and the role of the dunes in providing a prominent frontage to the County Borough all increase levels of sensitivity.</p> <p>The following locational variations should be taken into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Merthyr Mawr Warren and Traeth Yr Afon beach would be highly sensitive to the development of any scales of solar PV development.</li> </ul>	
<b>Sensitivity to different scales of solar PV development</b>	Very Small (<1ha)	M
	Small (>1-5ha)	M-H
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very large (>15ha)	H
<b>SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES</b>		
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 11: Merthyr Mawr Farmland, Warren and Coastline in relation to solar PV development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internationally important open coastal habitats within the Merthyr Mawr Warren SAC, SSSI and NNR.</li> </ul>		

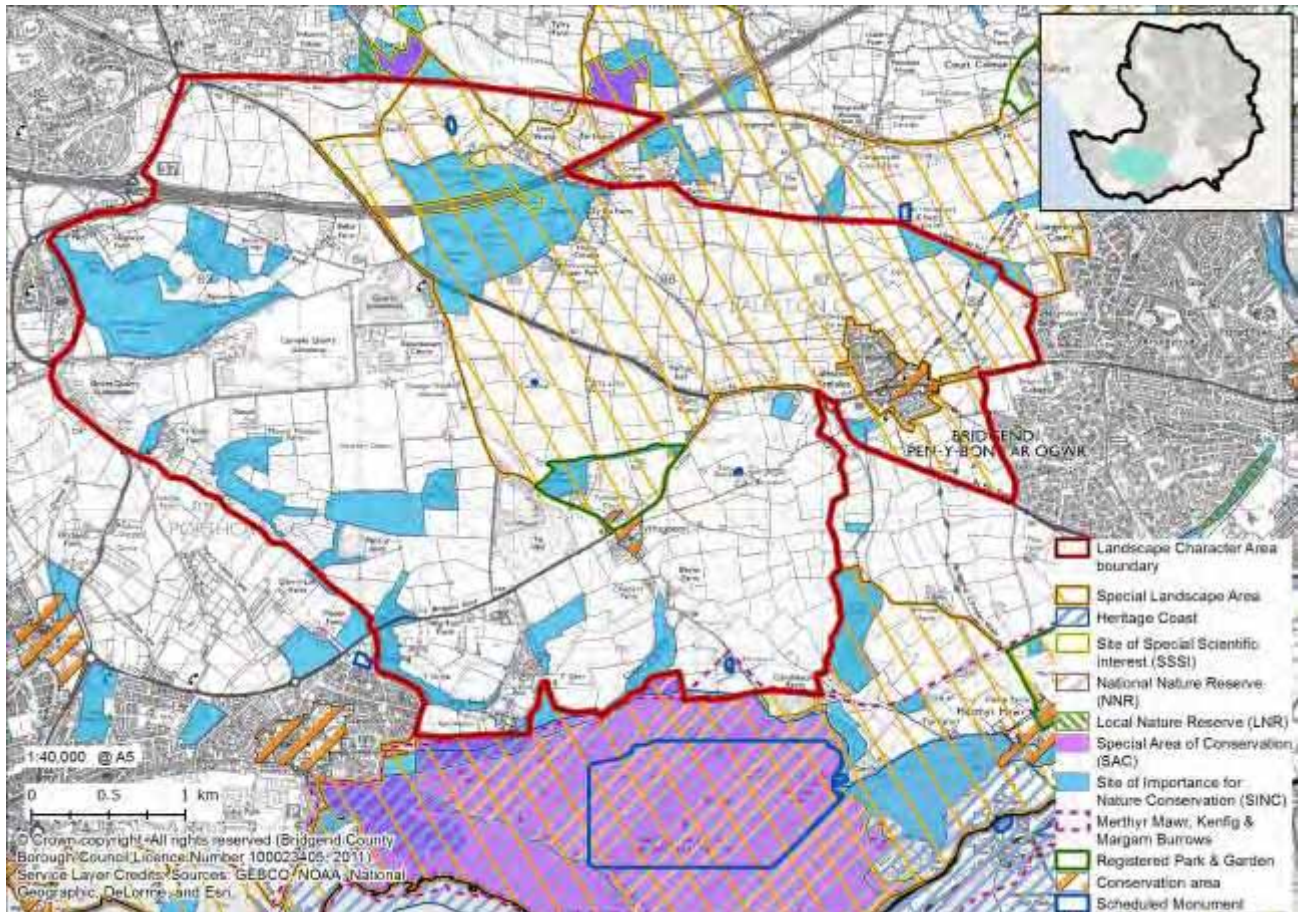
- Visually prominent sand dunes, reaching some 80 metres AOD and forming a distinctive coastal frontage to the County Borough and scenic backdrop to views from Porthcawl and Ogmore-by-Sea.
- Merthyr Mawr village Conservation Area, with strong local vernacular and surrounding estate character (the Grade II\* Merthyr Mawr House parkland estate).
- The nationally important historic character and relicts found within the LCA, much of which is designated as a Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales

## LCA 11: Strategy and guidance for solar PV development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <a href="http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales">http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales</a>.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or existing solar PV developments within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for solar PV development
<p>The overall strategy for solar PV development within this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To ensure that solar PV development does not become a defining characteristic of the landscape and to maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
LCA-Specific guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any solar PV developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The internationally important and designated coastal and dune habitats, including sand dunes, saltmarsh, swamp, unimproved grassland and broadleaved woodland, are protected and not degraded by solar PV development.</li><li>• Solar PV development does not negatively impact on heritage features or their setting, such as the Merthyr Mawr Warren and the Grade II* parkland near to Merthyr Mawr village Conservation Area (as well as the Conservation Area itself).</li><li>• The open and unenclosed character of much of the landscape is retained.</li><li>• Solar PV energy development does not detract from the role of the sand dunes as a frontage for the County Borough.</li><li>• Solar PV development does not adversely affect the usage of this landscape as a recreational resource for local people and visitors to the County Borough.</li><li>• Solar PV development within the farmland backing the Warren should avoid the most open, visible slopes and take advantage of areas of dense woodland and tree cover for screening panels.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Multiple solar PV developments within the LCA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape.</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCA.</li></ul>

## LCA 12: Newton Down Limestone Plateau

### LCA Location Map



***Please note that while this LCA assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.***

### LCA LOCATION AND SNAPSHOT

This LCA is located in the south-central part of the County Borough, located between the settlements of Bridgend, Porthcawl and Pyle. It is a distinctive elevated limestone plateau defined by a steep scarp slope to the south and west, classified by LANDMAP as 'Lowland' (Level 2 of the Visual & Sensory aspect).

The eastern half of the LCA falls within the Laleston Special Landscape Area. Other designations include Gaen and Pant Mawr quarries RIGS, Stormy Down SSSI, RIGS and SINC, Tythegston Court Grade II Registered Park and Garden, Tythegston and Laleston Conservation Areas and several Scheduled Monuments.

## LCA 12: Key Landscape Characteristics

- Gently undulating plateau, with occasional hill summits rising to just over 100 metres AOD. Southern boundary defined by a steep scarp slope dropping away from Newton Down towards the coast.
- Primarily Carboniferous Limestone geology, with a band of Mercia Mudstones to the north-west and Lower Lias to the east. Glacial till, sand and gravel found around the northern fringes. The disused Gaen and Pant Mawr quarries are designated as RIGS.
- SSSI-designated rock exposures on Stormy Down (also a RIGS), containing a mixture of marine and terrestrial fossil remains (of fish, molluscs and dinosaurs) from the Triassic period.
- Intensively farmed landscape around Tythegston softened by the presence of parkland trees, retaining an estate character.
- Mixed and broadleaved plantations on prominent ridgelines (e.g. The Beacons).
- Improved pasture with some fields of arable cultivation.
- Closely trimmed hedgerows or walls dividing a regular pattern of medium-large fields on the plateau, becoming smaller and more irregular on slopes.
- Bracken, semi-improved grassland and broadleaved plantation on Stormy Down (designated as a SINC).
- Other locally important habitats including broadleaved semi-natural woodlands on slopes, patches of relict calcareous grassland on the downs, and scrub colonising the limestone cliffs of Cornelly Quarry.
- Small Grade II listed house, garden and parkland at Tythegston Court (late 18th century).
- Prehistoric barrows and settlement remains found on some hill summits, with the medieval motte of Stormy Castle being a feature in the north.
- Industry relating to the landscape's rich mineral resource forming a key historic driver of the local economy in the wider region (including the steelworks of Neath Port Talbot).
- A lightly settled landscape fringing onto dense development at Bridgend, Pyle and Porthcawl – with nucleated villages at Tythegston and Laleston. Dispersed farms linked by minor roads and tracks.
- Local vernacular of limestone buildings with slate roofs – with examples of historic significance within the Conservation Areas of Tythegston and Laleston.
- Main A48 and A4106 passing through the landscape, linking Bridgend, Porthcawl and Pyle. The M4 and mainline London-Swansea railway line cuts through the northern part of the landscape.
- The Bridgend Circular Walk passes through the east of the LCA, and Stormy Down provides open access for further recreational opportunities.
- Industrial land uses and infrastructure dominating parts of the plateau, including Cornelly Quarry and several other disused quarries.
- Industrial structures on Stormy Down, including a solar farm, prominent in views from across the plateau and beyond (e.g. from Cefn Cribwr).
- Views south from the Newton Down scarp slope to development at Porthcawl and its coastal hinterland. The northern part of the LCA has views to the ridgetop settlement of Cefn Cribwr.

## LCA 12: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform and scale</b>	Medium-large scale gently undulating plateau with occasional hill summits. The south of the LCA is defined by a steep scarp slope dropping away from Newton Down towards the coast.	
<b>Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features</b>	<p>An intensively farmed landscape, primarily pastoral with some areas of arable cultivation in medium-large scale regular fields. The field pattern is smaller and more irregular on slopes. There is parkland associated with the historic Tythegston Court and pockets of semi-natural habitat including bracken, semi-improved grassland and broadleaved semi-natural woodlands and plantations. On parts of the plateau, industrial land uses such as quarries, processing buildings and an existing solar farm dominate.</p> <p>Human scale features include the villages of Tythegston and Laleston, scattered farms, parkland trees and areas of plantations on slopes.</p>	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	The landscape contains several important historical features including Grade II listed buildings and parkland at Tythegston Court and the Scheduled Monuments of Stormy Castle and prehistoric barrows and settlements on hill summits.	
<b>Skylines</b>	Some of the skylines in this LCA are marked by prominent pylon lines, telecommunications masts, large scale agricultural buildings and industrial structures. Others are characterised by landmark plantations (e.g. The Beacons) and prehistoric monuments.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	From this LCA, views to the south are of the urban development of Porthcawl and the coastal hinterland, and views to the north are of the ridgetop settlement of Cefn Cribwr in LCA 15, and beyond to the uplands of LCA 1. Long views south stretch across the Bristol Channel to Exmoor. The elevated character of the landscape, with its prominent scarp slope, forms a backdrop to the south coast of the County Borough (including Porthcawl). The LCA also features in views from Pyle (to the north-west) and Bridgend (to the east).	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	<p>38% of this LCA falls within the Laleston Special Landscape Area, valued for the mixed farmland landscape bounded by hedgerows, internationally designated grassland habitat and the historical estate character.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the strong rural character of the sparsely settled landscape, the open and elevated downland that is highly intervisible with other landscapes in the County Borough, nationally and regionally important geological and semi-natural habitats and historic features and settlements.</p>	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	Although sparsely settled, this landscape is influenced by human activity, with intensive farming, prominent industrial development around Stormy Down and infrastructure and views to development at Porthcawl and Cefn Cribwr. Several main transport routes cut through the landscape, including the M4 and the London-Swansea railway line, which erode levels of tranquillity locally. Overall though, a strong rural character prevails.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	Although this landscape has a gently undulating landform, and contains areas of industrial land use and development on skylines, the presence of important historical features, valuable semi-natural habitats, its function as a rural backdrop to views from long distances and overall strong rural character all increase levels of sensitivity to wind energy development.	
<b>Sensitivity to different turbine heights</b>	Very Small (15-25m)	L-M
	Small (26-50m)	L-M
	Medium (51-75m)	M
	Large (76-110m)	M-H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
<b>Commentary on different cluster sizes</b>  Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	Although the landform of this LCA is relatively simple and large-scale within the context of the County Borough, its strong rural character and presence of valued pockets of semi-natural habitats (including the open Stormy Down) mean it would be highly sensitive to 'large' or 'very large' clusters of turbines.	

#### SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 12: Newton Down Limestone Plateau in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- The distinctive, wooded scarp slope dropping steeply down from the limestone plateau, forming a prominent backdrop to views from the south coast and Porthcawl.
- The open downland, providing an elevated backdrop to other landscapes and urban settlements in the County Borough and surrounding urban areas.
- The historic villages of Tythegston and Laleston, both designated as Conservation Areas.
- The strongly rural and historic character of much of the landscape.
- Nationally important historic features, including prehistoric sites in elevated positions and the 18<sup>th</sup> century Grade II Listed Tythegston estate.

## LCA 12: Strategy and guidance for wind energy development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <a href="http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales">http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales</a>.</p> <p>There are currently two permitted energy schemes within this LCA, at Stormy Down (single turbine of 26m ('small' size category)) and Newton Down (two turbines of 125m ('very large' size category)).</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for wind energy development
<p>The overall strategy for wind energy development in this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>In line with TAN 8, the overall strategy is to maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
LCA-specific guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any wind energy developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The most prominent, undeveloped skylines are avoided as sites for new development, including those visible from the surrounding urban areas.</li><li>• Wind energy development does not detract from the open and tranquil feel of the unenclosed downland at Stormy and Newton Downs.</li><li>• The setting of valued heritage assets such as Tythegston Court and Stormy Castle is respected.</li><li>• The strong rural character of the landscape is protected.</li><li>• The remaining pockets of semi-natural habitats, including rich limestone grassland, bracken, broadleaved woodlands and scrub, are retained.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Multiple wind energy developments should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape as summarised in the 'Key landscape Characteristics' section (and with reference to the definition of 'landscape capacity'<sup>43</sup>).</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response<sup>44</sup>.</li></ul>

<sup>43</sup> "Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type..." (Countryside Agency and SNH, 2002).

<sup>44</sup> For more detailed guidance please refer to the SNH guidance document *Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape* (December 2009).

## LCA 12: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Solar PV Development

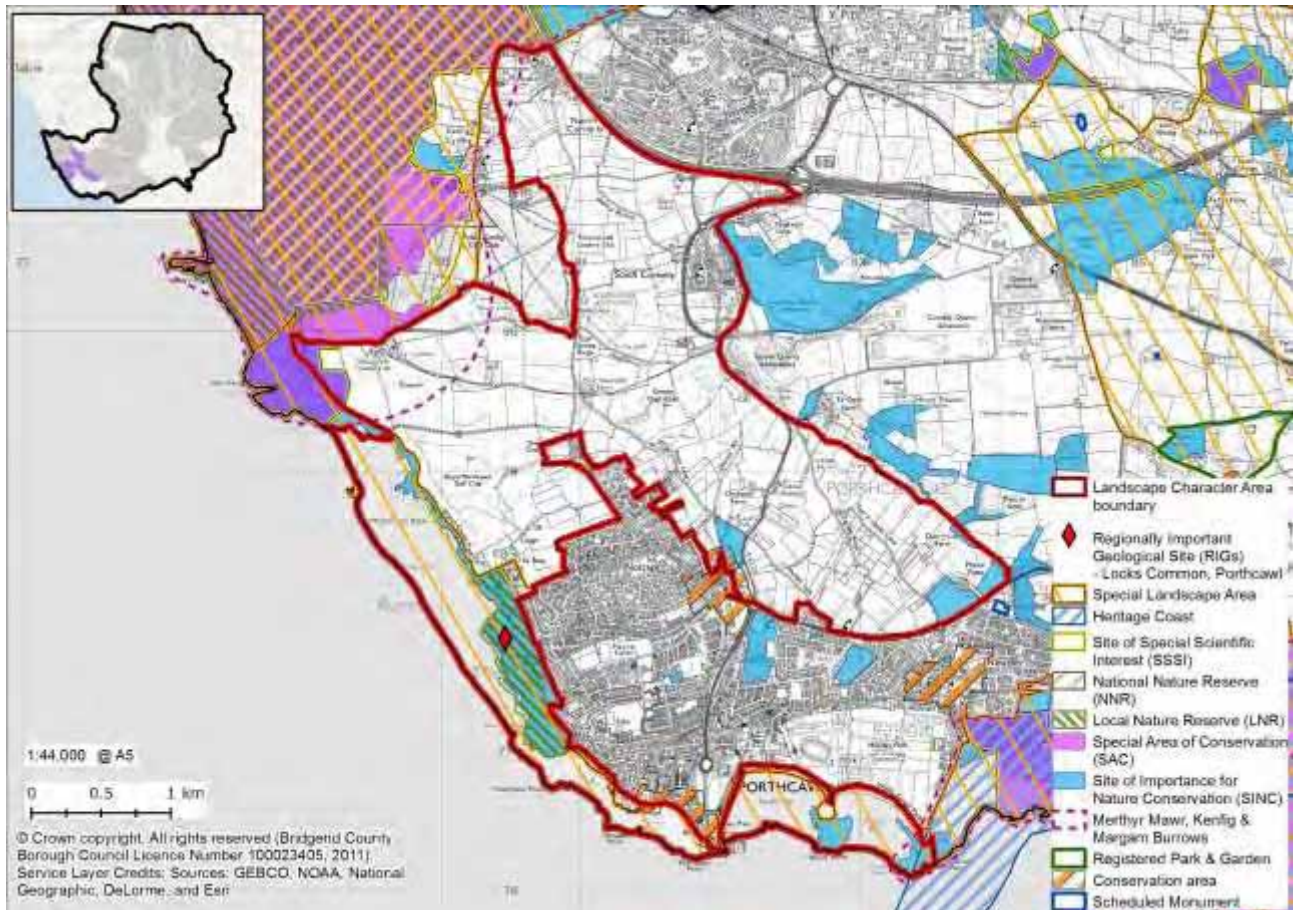
Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform</b>	Gently undulating plateau with occasional hill summits rising to some 100m AOD. The south of the LCA is defined by a steep scarp slope dropping away from Newton Down towards the coast.	
<b>Sense of openness/enclosure</b>	A fairly open landscape due to the gentle undulating nature of the landform and close-cut hedges that serve as field boundaries. Plantations and woodland on slopes provides a greater sense of enclosure in these locations.	
<b>Field pattern and scale</b>	Fields are mostly regular in pattern and medium to large in size. On slopes fields are smaller and more irregular.	
<b>Land cover</b>	An intensively farmed landscape, primarily pastoral with some areas of arable cultivation. There is parkland associated with the historic Tythegston Court and pockets of semi-natural habitat including bracken, semi-improved grassland and broadleaved semi-natural woodlands and plantations. On parts of the plateau, industrial land uses such as quarries, processing buildings and an existing solar farm dominate.	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	The landscape contains several important historical features including Grade II listed buildings and parkland at Tythegston Court and the Scheduled Monuments of Stormy Castle and prehistoric barrows and settlements on hill summits.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	From this LCA, views to the south are of the urban development of Porthcawl and the coastal hinterland, and views to the north are of the ridgetop settlement of Cefn Cribwr in LCA 15, and beyond to the uplands of LCA 1. Long views south stretch across the Bristol Channel to Exmoor. The elevated character of the landscape, with its prominent scarp slope, forms a backdrop to the south coast of the County Borough (including Porthcawl). The LCA also features in views from Pyle (to the north-west) and Bridgend (to the east).	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	<p>38% of this LCA falls within the Laleston Special Landscape Area, valued for the mixed farmland landscape bounded by hedgerows, internationally designated grassland habitat and the historical estate character.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the strong rural character of the sparsely settled landscape, the open and elevated downland that is highly intervisible with other landscapes in the County Borough, nationally and regionally important geological and semi-natural habitats and historic features and settlements.</p>	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	This landscape is influenced by human activity, with intensive farming, prominent industrial development and infrastructure and views to development at Porthcawl and Cefn Cribwr. Several main transport routes cut through the landscape, including the M4 and the London-Swansea railway line, eroding local levels of tranquillity. Overall though, a strong rural character prevails.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	Although this landscape has a gently undulating landform, medium-large regular fields and existing industrial land uses and development which could reduce its sensitivity to solar PV development, the relatively open nature of the LCA, the important historic features and semi-natural habitats, prominent scarp slope and high intervisibility with other areas of the County Borough increase levels of sensitivity.	
<b>Sensitivity to different scales of solar PV development</b>	Very Small (<1ha)	L-M
	Small (>1-5ha)	L-M
	Medium (>5-10ha)	M
	Large (>10-15ha)	M-H
	Very large (>15ha)	H
<b>SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES</b>		
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 12: Newton Down Limestone Plateau in relation to solar PV development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The distinctive, wooded scarp slope dropping steeply down from the limestone plateau, forming a prominent backdrop to views from the south coast and Porthcawl.</li> <li>A lightly settled landscape with a strong rural and historic character.</li> <li>The open, elevated downland, providing strong intervisibility with other landscapes in the County Borough and surrounding urban areas.</li> <li>Important patches of semi-natural habitat, including species-rich limestone grasslands, bracken and scrub.</li> <li>The historic villages of Tythegston and Laleston, both designated as Conservation Areas, and the Grade II listed Tythegston Court and parkland.</li> </ul>		

## LCA 12: Strategy and guidance for solar PV development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme.</p> <p>There is currently one existing solar PV energy development on Stormy Down, which covers 2.2 hectares and is in the 'small' size category.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for solar PV development
<p>The overall strategy for solar PV development within this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To ensure that solar PV development does not become a defining characteristic of the landscape and to maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
LCA-specific guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any solar PV developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most open locations on the prominent south-facing scarp slope are avoided as sites for solar PV development.</li> <li>• The strong rural character of the landscape is protected.</li> <li>• Solar PV development avoids the most open areas in the landscape (e.g. open downland) and those that are highly visible within the landscape (including from other parts of the County Borough).</li> <li>• Areas of semi-natural habitat including broad-leaved semi-natural woodlands, limestone grassland, bracken and scrub are protected.</li> <li>• The field pattern of small, irregular fields on the slopes is protected and not masked by solar PV development.</li> <li>• Solar PV development does not damage or degrade the setting of important heritage features such as Tythegston Court and Stormy Castle.</li> <li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA</b></li> </ul>
<p>Multiple solar PV developments within the LCA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape.</li> <li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCA.</li> </ul>

## LCA 13: Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland

### LCA Location Map



***Please note that while this LCA assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.***

### LCA LOCATION AND SNAPSHOT

This LCA comprises the coastline surrounding Porthcawl, from Newton Point to Sker Rocks, extending inland to the base of the limestone scarp defining LCA 12. It is classified as a combination of 'Coastal' and 'Flat Lowland/Levels' in LANDMAP's Visual & Sensory aspect (Level 2).

The coastal edge falls within the Porthcawl Coast Special Landscape Area (SLA). Other designations include Llocks Common RIGS and LNR and several SINC.

## LCA 13: Key Landscape Characteristics

- Simple, low coastal plateau rising gently inland to approximately 50 metres AOD (at the edge of the limestone scarp slope).
- Simple topography underlain by complex geology; Lower Carboniferous limestone outcropping along the coast (including at Locks Common RIGS). Remainder of the LCA sits above a band of Mercian mudstones.
- Limestone pavements and rocky headlands punctuating wide sandy bays: Trecco Bay, Sandy Bay and Rest Bay.
- Tree/woodland cover generally limited to outgrown hedgerows, shelterbelts and secondary woodland colonising unmanaged land.
- The coast is open and exposed to the elements.
- South-west facing hinterland the most agriculturally productive in the borough, with small rectangular improved pasture fields dominating. Significant areas converted to pony paddocks.
- Square-cut hedgerows, stone walls and wire fences conveying a tidy, well-managed appearance to the farmed landscape.
- Amalgamated pony paddocks divided by pony tape or fencing.
- Rocky shores, cliffs and maritime grassland valued along the coast (Locks Common LNR, Pink Bay, Rhych Point and Newton Point SINCs).
- Occasional areas of semi-natural broadleaved woodland (e.g. Nottage Court Wood SINC) and fragments of unimproved grassland and wetlands inland (e.g. Pink Bay Pond SINC).
- Ancient tumuli near Kenfig Dunes, and a number of Listed Buildings within the landscape, such as the Grade II Listed remains of Sker House (originally built as a Cistercian monastic grange and made famous as the basis of R. D. Blackmore's book *The Maid of Sker*).
- Former tramline and railway bridge (Grade II Listed) on the outskirts of Nottage, and a dismantled railway line providing evidence of the landscape's industrial past (particularly links with nearby quarrying).
- Villages of Mawdlam and South Cornelly on the eastern edge of the LCA, with road links from the nearby M4.
- Sparse settlement elsewhere, with farmsteads and individual properties dispersed throughout and displaying mixed 20th century vernacular styles.
- Significant tracts of land under recreational uses– including the Royal Porthcawl and Grove golf courses, outdoor adventure centre and caravan/camping sites.
- Coastal edge is open access land, crossed by the Wales Coast Path, with some lengths following minor roads. The A4229 crosses through the eastern part of the LCA linking the M4 with Porthcawl.
- Views along the coast and seascape; in clear conditions across to the North Somerset coastline.
- Beaches popular for surfing and other watersports.
- A rural landscape influenced by the proximity of development at Porthcawl, major road corridors and views of the Port Talbot steelworks.

## LCA 13: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
Landform and scale	Simple medium-scale landform comprising a coastal plateau rising gently inland to 50 metres AOD. Limestone pavements and rocky headlands punctuate the wide sandy bays of Trecco Bay, Sandy Bay and Rest Bay.	
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	<p>The inland areas of this LCA are primarily under agricultural use as pasture or pony paddocks in fields of varying shapes and sizes. There are also some fragments of semi-natural habitat including broadleaved woodland, unimproved grasslands and wetlands. The coastal areas comprise important coastal habitats such as rocky shores, cliffs and maritime grassland. Royal Porthcawl and Grove Golf Courses fall entirely within the LCA.</p> <p>Human scale features include the villages of Mawdlam and South Cornelly, hedgerows, occasional farmsteads and individual properties.</p>	
Historic landscape character	A number of important heritage features can be found in this landscape; including ancient burial mounds and a number of listed buildings such as Grade II listed Sker House and the former industrial tramline and railway bridge on the outskirts of Nottage (also designated a Conservation Area). Some of this LCA (8%) also encompasses the Merthyr Mawr, Kenfig and Margam Burrows Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest, which have produced a wealth of archaeological remains from evidence of early prehistoric human settlement to the medieval period and more recent history.	
Skylines	The skylines of the LCA's coastline are exposed and open, facing onto Swansea Bay. Parts of the coast are visible in clear conditions from across the Bristol Channel. Whilst the skylines of some of the pastoral fields are bounded by a mixture of close cut hedgerows with few trees resulting in limited features on the skyline, there are areas where fields are bounded by more outgrown hedgerows or shelterbelts, giving a wooded feel to the generally low lying skylines.	
Key views and vistas	There are views from this LCA of the surrounding coastline of Swansea Bay (dominated by Port Talbot steelworks) and the Vale of Glamorgan and across the Bristol Channel to North Somerset. Much of the LCA is also defined by views of the urban area and resort developments associated with Porthcawl. It is also overlooked by the scarp and elevated land of LCA 12.	
Scenic and special qualities	<p>21% of this LCA falls within the Porthcawl Coast Special Landscape Area, valued for important intertidal habitats, valued seascapes and providing the setting for Sker House.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the undeveloped, geologically significant coastline with long views along the coastline and across the sea, the important archaeological legacy located here, strong pattern of small pastoral fields further inland, and valuable semi-natural habitats. Some of these might be affected to a degree by wind energy development.</p>	
Perceptual qualities	This is a landscape with a strong rural quality and feel, although this is impacted upon by nearby urban and industrial development and the main A4229 and M4 road corridors. The more open, naturalistic coastal area is frequently used for recreational activities such as surfing and other watersports in the summer months, but conveys a sense of relative wildness and exposure during the winter and in times of rough sea conditions.	
Summary of landscape sensitivity	<p>Although the landform of the LCA inland is simple, of a medium scale and has existing visual links to areas of industrial development which could reduce sensitivity levels to wind energy development, sensitivity is increased by the uninterrupted views of the coastline and across the Bristol Channel, role of the landscape as a rural backdrop and scenic coastal frontage to Porthcawl, varied landscape patterns and frequent human-scale features, valuable semi-natural habitats and the undeveloped nature of the coastline.</p> <p>The following localised variations to sensitivity should be taken into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The undeveloped coastal edge<sup>45</sup> would be highly sensitive to the development of any wind turbines.</li></ul>	
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	L-M
	Small (26-50m)	M
	Medium (51-75m)	M-H
	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
Commentary on different cluster sizes	Although this landscape has a simple medium-scale landform and existing industrial influence, its varied landscape patterns and presence of important coastal and farmland habitats mean that it would be highly sensitive to any clusters greater than 'small' in size. The undeveloped coastal edge would be highly sensitive to the development of any turbines.	
Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10)		

<sup>45</sup> Including Sandy Bay, Trecco Bay and Rest Bay.

Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	
SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES	
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 13: Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland in relation to wind energy development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The small scale of the landscape's field patterns and frequent human-scale features.</li> <li>• Long, uninterrupted views along the coastline and surrounding seascape, including across the Bristol Channel to North Somerset.</li> <li>• Sections of undeveloped, geologically important coastline forming a scenic frontage to Porthcawl and the County Borough.</li> <li>• Important archaeological sites and historic features, including those related to the wider area's industrial past.</li> <li>• The landscape's pockets of strong rural character and relative tranquillity away from the main roads, and its function as a valued pastoral backdrop to Porthcawl.</li> </ul>	

## LCA 13: Strategy and guidance for wind energy development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <a href="http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales">http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales</a>.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or operational wind energy schemes located within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment, nor the guidance that follows.</i></p>
Overall strategy for wind energy development
<p>The overall strategy for wind energy development in this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
LCA-specific guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any wind energy developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The predominately rural character of the landscape, and its function as a pastoral backdrop to Porthcawl, is protected.</li><li>• The role of the coastal landscape as a scenic frontage to the County Borough is retained.</li><li>• The setting of heritage assets, including ancient tumuli, industrial relicts and the Grade II listed Sker House, is not adversely impacted by wind turbines.</li><li>• Wind turbines do not interrupt valued long views across Swansea Bay, the Vale of Glamorgan and the Bristol Channel towards the Exmoor coast.</li><li>• Important naturalistic habitats, including maritime grassland, unimproved grassland, wetlands and semi-natural broadleaved woodland, are protected.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Multiple wind energy developments should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape as summarised in the 'Key landscape Characteristics' section (and with reference to the definition of 'landscape capacity'<sup>46</sup>).</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response<sup>47</sup>.</li></ul>

<sup>46</sup> "Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type..." (Countryside Agency and SNH, 2002).

<sup>47</sup> For more detailed guidance please refer to the SNH guidance document *Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape* (December 2009).

## LCA 13: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Solar PV Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform</b>	Simple medium-scale landform comprising a coastal plateau rising gently inland to 50 metres AOD. Limestone pavements and rocky headlands punctuate the wide sandy bays of Trecco Bay, Sandy Bay and Rest Bay.	
<b>Sense of openness/enclosure</b>	Tree and woodland cover in the landscape is limited, and most field boundaries are low square-cut or grown-out hedgerows, walls or wire fences. The coastal areas are unclosed, open and exposed. Hedgerows provide some level of enclosure inland, but overall, this is a relatively open landscape.	
<b>Field pattern and scale</b>	Fields vary in shape and size, with some areas of distinctive, small scale rectilinear patterns and some larger enclosures, including amalgamated pony paddocks.	
<b>Land cover</b>	The inland areas of this LCA are primarily under agricultural use as pasture or pony paddocks. There are also areas of semi-natural habitat including broadleaved woodland, unimproved grasslands and wetlands. The coastal areas comprise important coastal habitats such as rocky shores, cliffs and maritime grassland. The LCA also includes all of Royal Porthcawl and Grove golf courses.	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	A number of important heritage features can be found in this landscape; including ancient burial mounds and a number of listed buildings such as Grade II listed Sker House and the former industrial tramline and railway bridge on the outskirts of Nottage (also designated a Conservation Area). Some of this LCA also encompasses the Merthyr Mawr, Kenfig and Margam Burrows Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest, which have produced a wealth of archaeological remains from evidence of early prehistoric human settlement to the medieval period and more recent history.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	There are views from this LCA of the surrounding coastline of Swansea Bay (dominated by Port Talbot steelworks) and the Vale of Glamorgan and across the Bristol Channel to the Exmoor coast. Much of the LCA is also defined by views of the urban area and resort developments associated with Porthcawl.	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	<p>21% of this LCA falls within the Porthcawl Coast Special Landscape Area, valued for important intertidal habitats, valued seascapes and providing the setting for Sker House.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the undeveloped, geologically significant coastline with long views along the coastline and across the sea, the important archaeological legacy located here, strong pattern of small pastoral fields further inland, and valuable semi-natural habitats. Some of these may be affected by solar PV development.</p>	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	This is a landscape with a strong rural quality and feel, although this is impacted upon by nearby urban and industrial development and the main A4229 and M4 road corridors. The more open, naturalistic coastal area is frequently used for recreational activities such as surfing and other watersports in the summer months, but conveys a sense of relative wildness and exposure during the winter and in times of rough sea conditions.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	<p>Although the sensitivity of this landscape to solar PV development is reduced due to the simple, gently undulating landform and views of existing human influence nearby, its open character, prominent undeveloped coastal edge small field sizes, the presence of important heritage assets and semi-natural habitats all increase sensitivity.</p> <p>The following locational variations in landscape sensitivity should be taken account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The prominent, open and undeveloped coastal edge<sup>48</sup> would be highly sensitive to any scale of solar PV development.</li> <li>The distinctive small-scale, rectilinear fields found in parts of the LCA<sup>49</sup> would also be highly sensitive to medium scale developments.</li> </ul>	
<b>Sensitivity to different scales of solar PV development</b>	Very Small (<1ha)	L-M
	Small (>1-5ha)	L-M
	Medium (>5-10ha)	M-H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very large (>15ha)	H

<sup>48</sup> Including Sandy Bay, Trecco Bay and Rest Bay.

<sup>49</sup> Around Mawdlam in the north and near Newton in the east.

#### SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 13: Porthcawl Coastline and Settled Farmland in relation to solar PV development is included below:

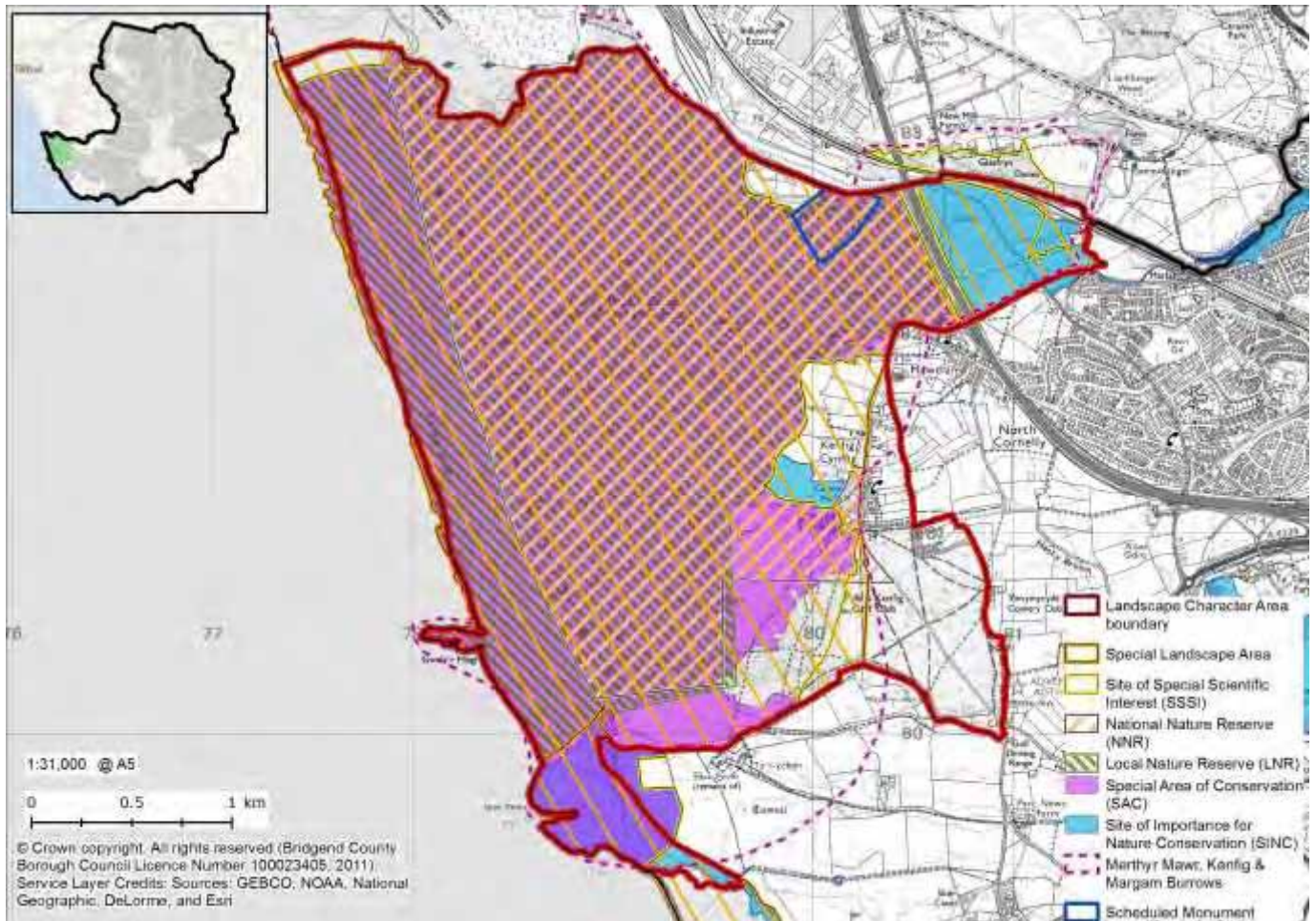
- Sections of undeveloped, geologically important coastline forming a scenic frontage to Porthcawl and the County Borough.
- Strong pattern of small pastoral fields backing the coast and the urban area of Porthcawl.
- Long, unrestricted views along the coastline and surrounding seascape, including across the Bristol Channel to the Exmoor coast.
- The open character of much of the landscape.
- The presence of valued semi-natural habitats and nationally important heritage assets.

## LCA 13: Strategy and guidance for solar PV development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or existing solar PV developments within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for solar PV development
<p>The overall strategy for solar PV development within this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To ensure that solar PV development does not become a defining characteristic of the landscape and to maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
Guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any solar PV developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Important naturalistic habitats, including maritime grassland, unimproved grassland, wetlands and semi-natural broadleaved woodland, are protected.</li><li>• The distinctive small scale rectilinear pattern of pastoral fields in parts of the LCA is not masked by the development of solar arrays.</li><li>• The character and setting of heritage assets, including ancient tumuli, remnants from the industrial revolution and Grade II listed Sker House, is not affected by solar PV development.</li><li>• The rural feel of the landscape is retained, with important pockets of relative tranquillity.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Multiple solar PV developments within the LCA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape.</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCA.</li></ul>

## LCA 14: Kenfig Dunes and Coastline

### LCA Location Map



### LCA LOCATION AND SNAPSHOT

This LCA is centred on Kenfig Dunes and Sands, located on the coast in the far west of the County Borough next to Pyle, and on the border with Neath Port Talbot County Borough. The majority of the landscape is defined as 'Coastal' in LANDMAP's Visual & Sensory aspect (Level 2).

The majority of the LCA falls within the Kenfig Burrows Special Landscape Area (SLA), with a small section in the far south falling within the Porthcawl Coast SLA. Other designations include Kenfig SAC, SSSI and NNR, the Scheduled Monument of Kenfig Castle and medieval borough, and the majority of the LCA is designated as a Landscape of Outstanding Historic Importance.

## LCA 14: Key Landscape Characteristics

- Landscape dominated by one of the largest sand dune systems in Wales, comprising superficial deposits of wind-blown sand over Mercia Mudstones.
- LCA meets the sea at Kenfig Sands – a westerly-facing, wide sandy beach exposed to the prevailing westerly winds.
- The landscape includes Kenfig Pool – the largest freshwater lake in South Wales.
- Nationally and internationally valued wildlife habitats including dune grassland, slack, scrub and woodland as part of the Kenfig SAC, SSSI and NNR. The coastal habitats support internationally important bird populations.
- Pyle and Kenfig Golf Course in the south-east of the LCA, with significant tracts of dune habitats – grasslands, scrub and bracken – interspersed within and between the fairways.
- A Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales owing to its rich buried archaeological remains, including the early medieval castle and fortified borough of Kenfig (a Scheduled Monument submerged in the sand, which has been described as ‘the Pompeii of Britain’).
- Notorious wrecking site of Sker Rocks marking the southern edge of the LCA, with remains of historic wrecks still visible at low tide.
- Largely unsettled landscape, with the nature reserve’s visitor centre, car park, a caravan park and row of 20th century housing overlooking the dunes in the east.
- Dunes are designated open access land, crossed by the Wales Coast Path and a series of waymarked trails, providing a popular site for informal recreation (particularly for dog walkers and beach users).
- Much of the LCA inaccessible by road, enhancing a strong sense of relative remoteness across much of the landscape.
- The eastern fringes of the LCA include a busy minor road and the M4; the distant hum of traffic is perceived from within the dunes.
- Wild and naturalistic character of the coastal landscape also broken by the proximity of development at Pyle and northern coastal views dominated by Port Talbot steelworks.

## LCA 14: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
Landform and scale	Predominantly unsettled large-scale undulating sand dune landscape, fronted by the wide sandy beach of Kenfig Sands and including large freshwater lake of Kenfig Pool.	
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	<p>Land cover is mainly sand dunes and associated nationally and internationally designated semi-natural habitats, such as dune grassland, slack and scrub. Recreational use of the area is also visible in the land cover, particularly Pyle and Kenfig golf course, which also contains semi-natural dune habitats such as grasslands, scrub and bracken.</p> <p>Human scale features are limited to occasional patches of scrub within the dunes, and recreational facilities in the east such as a caravan park, row of housing and the nature reserve visitor centre.</p>	
Historic landscape character	The majority (92%) of this LCA is designated as a Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales on merit of the nationally important buried archaeological features found here, including the Scheduled Monument of Kenfig Castle and Medieval Town.	
Skylines	Skylines are open and undeveloped, characterised by the form of the hummocky sand dunes. The nationally important ruins of Kenfig Castle are visible above the dunes.	
Key views and vistas	The highly distinctive dunes provide a scenic frontage for the County Borough from the sea and across Swansea Bay, and are also part of the setting of settlements in adjacent LCA 13, such as Mawdlam and North Connolly. The urban area of Pyle and the Port Talbot steelworks frequently feature in views north from the LCA, as is the distinctive upland of Mynydd Margam (within Neath Port Talbot).	
Scenic and special qualities	<p>88% of this LCA falls within the Kenfig Burrows Special Landscape Area (SLA), valued for its distinctive and extensive sand dune systems that are internationally designated. A further 3% of the LCA is within the Porthcawl Coast SLA, recognised for important intertidal habitats and seascapes.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the distinctive, characteristic sand dunes, the internationally designated dune and coastal habitats, the nationally significant archaeological features and the role of the landscape providing a wild and naturalistic landscape close to urban development.</p>	
Perceptual qualities	The undeveloped and unsettled quality of this landscape results in a perception of an exposed and wild area with high levels of relative tranquillity, particularly given the proximity of nearby populations and infrastructure. These qualities are detracted from locally by the nearby M4 and other transport routes, and the noise and visual impact of urban and industrial developments in close proximity to the LCA.	
Summary of landscape sensitivity	<p>Although this is a large-scale landscape with few human scale features, it is likely to be highly sensitive to wind energy development. In particular, the distinctive setting provided by the undeveloped sands and dunes to the County Borough, the internationally important dune habitats themselves, and their nationally important cultural heritage mean that the LCA would be highly sensitive to the development of turbines.</p> <p>Locations within the dunes would be unsuitable for any scale of wind turbine development.</p>	
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	M-H
	Small (26-50m)	H
	Medium (51-75m)	H
	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
Commentary on different cluster sizes	<p>The high levels of sensitivity within this LCA mean that it would be highly sensitive to any turbine clusters.</p> <p>Single turbine Small (&lt;5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (&gt;25)</p>	
SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES		
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 14: Kenfig Dunes and Coastline in relation to wind energy development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The role the LCA plays in forming a distinctive, undeveloped coastal frontage to the County Borough.</li><li>The high visibility of the LCA itself in views from along the coast, including adjacent landscapes within Neath Port Talbot County Borough.</li></ul>		

- A wild, naturalistic and unsettled landscape standing in contrast to nearby urban and industrial areas and busy transport infrastructure.
- Highly characteristic and distinctive sand dune systems, designated due to their international and national importance for semi-natural habitats (SAC, SSSI and NNR) and heritage features (Landscape of Outstanding Historic Importance in Wales).

## LCA 14: Strategy and guidance for wind energy development

<b>Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA</b>
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <a href="http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales">http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales</a>.</p> <p>There are no permitted or operational wind energy developments within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
<b>Overall strategy for wind energy development</b>
<p>The overall strategy for wind energy development in this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>The overall strategy is to maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
<b>Guidance for development</b>
<p>When siting and designing any wind energy developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The role of the landscape as a distinctive frontage to the County Borough is retained.</li><li>• Valuable, internationally designated habitats including dune grassland, slack, scrub and woodland are retained.</li><li>• The unsettled, remote character of the dunes is not degraded by the presence of wind turbines.</li><li>• The role of the landscape as a setting for designated heritage features such as Kenfig Castle is not effected by the siting of wind turbines.</li><li>• Opportunities at the site for informal recreation are not affected by wind energy development.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
<b>Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA</b>
<p>Although it is accepted that change to landscape character could result from wind energy development within the SSA, outside the SSA multiple wind energy developments should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape as summarised in the 'Key landscape Characteristics' section (and with reference to the definition of 'landscape capacity'<sup>50</sup>).</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response<sup>51</sup>.</li></ul>

<sup>50</sup> "Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type..." (Countryside Agency and SNH, 2002).

<sup>51</sup> For more detailed guidance please refer to the SNH guidance document *Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape* (December 2009).

## LCA 14: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Solar PV Development

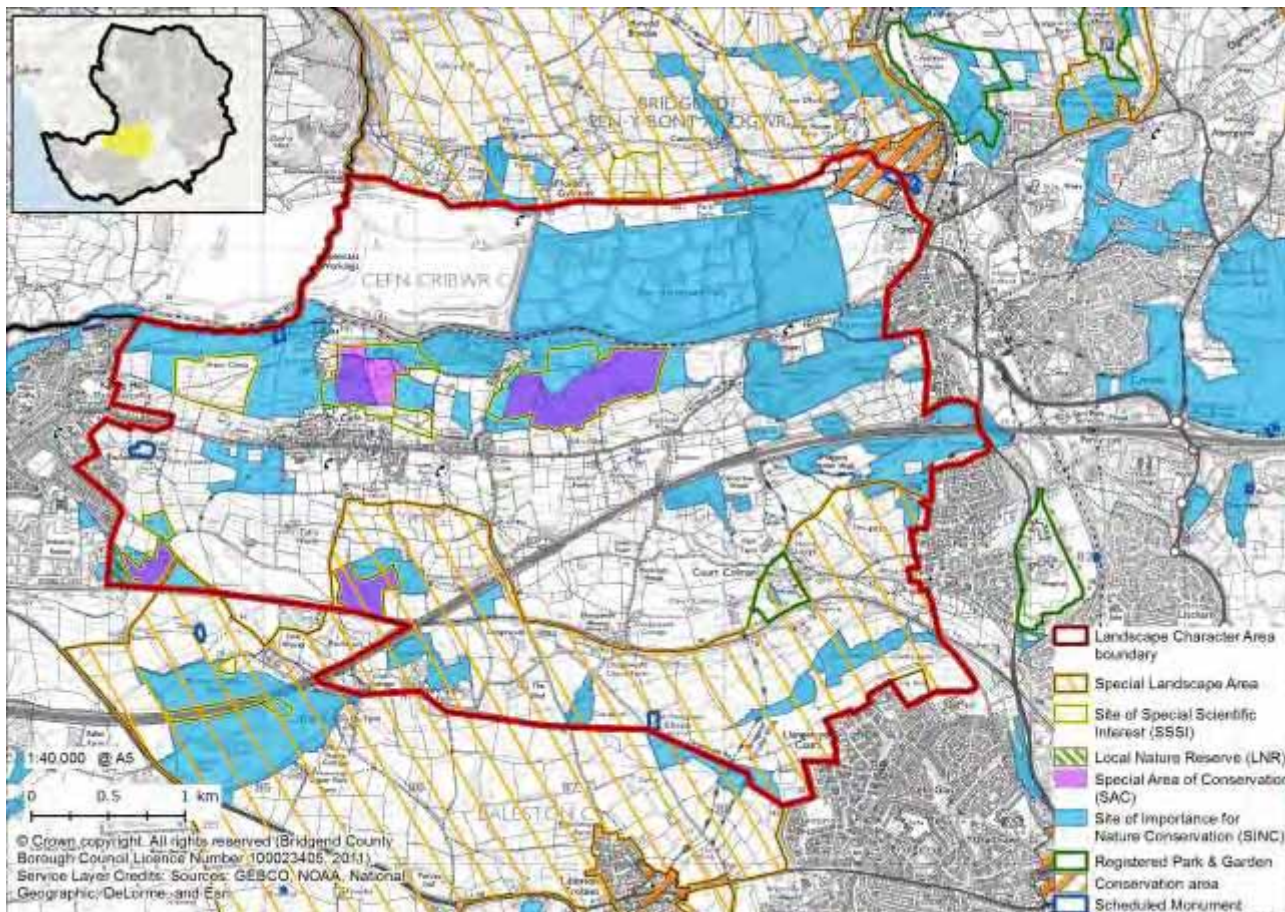
Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform and scale</b>	Large-scale undulating sand dune landscape, fronted by the wide sandy beach of Kenfig Sands and including large freshwater lake of Kenfig Pool.	
<b>Sense of openness/enclosure</b>	The landscape is defined by its open character and exposure to the elements, with little tree cover. Fields fringing the eastern edge of the dunes are enclosed by hedgerows and scrub, providing a degree of enclosure in this part of the LCA.	
<b>Field pattern and scale</b>	Fields are limited to a few small-scale regular sized rectilinear fields on the edge of Kenfig village (fringing the dunes).	
<b>Land cover</b>	Land cover is mainly sand dunes and associated semi-natural habitats, such as dune grassland, slack and scrub. Recreational use of the area is also visible in the land cover, particularly Pyle and Kenfig golf course, which also contains semi-natural dune habitats such as grasslands, scrub and bracken. The landscape also includes a caravan park and car parking serving the Nature Reserve.	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	The majority of this LCA is designated as a Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales as a result of the nationally important buried archaeological features found here, including the Scheduled Monument of the ruins of Kenfig Castle and Medieval Town.	
<b>Key views and vistas</b>	The highly distinctive dunes provide a scenic frontage for the County Borough from the sea and across Swansea Bay, and are also part of the setting of settlements in adjacent LCA 13, such as Mawdlam and North Cornelly. The urban area of Pyle and the Port Talbot steelworks frequently feature in views north from the LCA.	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	<p>88% of this LCA falls within the Kenfig Burrows Special Landscape Area (SLA), valued for its distinctive and extensive sand dune systems that are internationally designated. A further 3% of the LCA is within the Porthcawl Coast SLA, recognised for important intertidal habitats and seascapes.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the distinctive, characteristic sand dunes, the internationally designated dune and coastal habitats, the nationally significant archaeological features and the role of the landscape providing a wild and naturalistic landscape close to urban development.</p>	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	The undeveloped and unsettled quality of this landscape results in a perception of an exposed and wild area with high levels of relative tranquillity, particularly given the proximity of nearby populations and infrastructure. These qualities are detracted from locally by the nearby M4 and other transport routes, and the noise and visual impact of urban and industrial developments in close proximity to the LCA.	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	The undeveloped nature of Kenfig Sands and Dunes, along with their national importance for biodiversity and as a cultural heritage asset means that this large proportion of the LCA would be highly sensitive to any solar PV developments. Although areas of enclosed farmland exist on the fringes of the dunes, these form a sloping backdrop to the National Nature Reserve (and Kenfig Pool), and as such would also be highly sensitive to any solar PV developments.	
<b>Sensitivity to different scales of solar PV development</b>	Very Small (<1ha)	H
	Small (>1-5ha)	H
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very large (>15ha)	H
<b>SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES</b>		
<p>A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 14: Kenfig Dunes and Coastline in relation to solar PV development is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The role the LCA plays in forming a distinctive, undeveloped coastal frontage to the County Borough, visible from across Swansea Bay.</li> <li>A wild and naturalistic landscape with an overall lack of modern development or agricultural practices.</li> <li>Highly characteristic and distinctive sand dune systems, designated due to their international and national importance for semi-natural habitats (SAC, SSSI and NNR) and heritage features (Landscape of Outstanding Historic Importance in Wales).</li> </ul>		

## LCA 14: Strategy and guidance for solar PV development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or existing solar PV developments within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for solar PV development
None of this LCA is likely to be suitable for solar PV development, so a strategy has not been included.
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
N/A
Guidance for development
N/A

## LCA 15: Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland

### LCA Location Map



*Please note that while this LCA assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.*

### LCA LOCATION AND SNAPSHOT

This LCA is located between the settlements of Pyle and Bridgend in the west of the County Borough, and is defined by the prominent ridgeline and settlement of Cefn Cribwr. It is classified by LANDMAP as 'Rolling Lowland' (Visual & Sensory aspect, Level 2).

There are no Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) within this LCA. Other designations include the Cefn Cribwr Grasslands SAC, Waun Cimla SSSI, Panycastell SSSI, Waun-Fawr SSSI, Caeau Cefn Cribwr SSSI, Bryn-Bach SSSI, Frog Pond LNR and a number of SINCs (including Parc Slip Nature Park). The LCA also includes a number of Scheduled Monuments, including Tondur Ironworks, Cefn Cribwr Ironworks, Pen-y-Castell Iron Age hillfort, Cefn Cross prehistoric standing stone and the medieval remains of Llangewydd church. Court Colman is a Grade II Listed Registered Park and Garden.

## LCA 15: Key Landscape Characteristics

- Broad valley at the southern edge of the Coalfield plateau, rising steeply up to the prominent Millstone Grit ridge of Cefn Cribwr (132 metres). Land falls away from the ridge to the south, comprising an intricate landscape of undulating slopes.
- Numerous springs and streams draining from the ridge, with ponds and water-filled former quarries on the valley floor.
- Open cast workings (filled with water) forming a major feature in the western part of the valley.
- Extensive mixed plantations at Parc Slip Nature Park (a reclaimed spoil tip) and conifer-dominated woodland at Pennsylvania Wood on the eastern end of the ridge.
- Frequent bands of woodland following streamlines and estate plantings around Court Colman.
- Pastoral farming dominates, with medium-scale fields bounded by thick hedgerows with frequent hedgerow trees, or wooded banks. Boundaries on higher ground with bracken, bramble and gorse, conveying an upland feel.
- Tightly grazed horse paddocks in some locations, as well as remnant commons and unmanaged land on the fringes of settlements.
- Farming becomes more intensive, with larger improved pasture fields, on the fringes of LCA 12.
- Parc Slip Nature Park with ponds, meadows, rush pasture, neutral grasslands and mixed plantation woodland.
- SAC-designated fen meadows with purple moor grass, neutral grassland and scrub; SSSI-designated marshy grasslands with species-rich neutral grassland, wet heath and semi-natural woodland (supporting the locally rare bog myrtle plant and marsh fritillary butterflies).
- A number of SINCs, including acid grassland, bracken and scrub on Penfai Common, and the Local Nature Reserve of Frog Pond Wood (broadleaved woodland and freshwater pond).
- Nationally important archaeological features including Tondy Ironworks, Cefn Cribwr Ironworks, Pen-y-Castell Iron Age hillfort, Cefn Cross prehistoric standing stone and the medieval remains of Llangewydd church.
- Grade II Listed Court Colman (now a hotel) surrounded by ornamental and mixed estate woodlands and specimen trees.
- Main settlement at Cefn Cribwr, with colourful Victorian terraces interspersed with 20th century developments stretching in linear form along the ridgetop.
- Elsewhere settlement is sparse, with individual properties and farmsteads linked by rural roads and sunken lanes frequently passing through wooded 'tunnels'.
- Parc Slip Nature Park crossed by a number of footpaths. Areas of open access land (e.g. Pennsylvania Wood, Ty'n y garn), lengths of the Bridgend Circular Walk and rights of way providing opportunities for recreation elsewhere.
- Long, panoramic views from Cefn Cribwr across the surrounding landscape; including to Pyle and Bridgend, southwards towards the Bristol Channel and beyond, and north to the uplands. Strong intervisibility between the ridgeline and the opposite slopes of Mynydd Baedan (LCA 1).
- Landscape intersected by the M4 and mainline rail corridors. Along with pylon lines, these introduce prominent man-made features into an otherwise highly rural landscape.

## LCA 15: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
Landform and scale	A medium scale broad valley found on the southern edge of the Coalfield Plateau, with the ridge of Cefn Cribwr rising up 132 metres. Land falls away from the ridge to the south, comprising an intricate landscape of undulating slopes.	
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	<p>Pastoral farming in medium-scale fields dominates, with larger more intensively farmed fields adjacent to LCA 12. Parc Slip Nature Park contains a wealth of semi-natural habitats, including purple moor grass, neutral grassland, rush pasture and wet heath. There are also extensive mixed woodland plantations in the nature park, whilst bands of woodland are found along watercourses elsewhere. The area surrounding Court Colman has a strong estate character with ornamental woodland.</p> <p>Human scale features include the settlement at Cefn Cribwr, individual rural properties and farmsteads and frequent hedgerow, woodland and in-field trees.</p>	
Historic landscape character	There are several nationally important heritage features found within this landscape, ranging from the Tondy and Cefn Cribwr Ironworks to prehistoric stones at Cefn Cross and the medieval Llangewydd church. This LCA also partially encompasses the Tondy Conservation Area. The LCA includes the Grade II Listed Court Colman (now a hotel) surrounded by ornamental and mixed estate woodlands and specimen trees.	
Skylines	Cefn Cribwr is a prominent and distinctive ridgeline in the north of the LCA, marked by the linear settlement of the village itself. Elsewhere, skylines are generally wooded or open, although in places they are crossed by pylon lines.	
Key views, vistas and landmark features (visible in views)	The Cefn Cribwr ridge and settlement is prominent in views from nearby LCAs (particularly LCA 1 to the north and the Stormy Down ridgeline in the south (LCA 12)) and offers long panoramic views south over the coastline towards the Bristol Channel and beyond. The western part of the LCA abuts the settlement of Pyle, with long views across to Port Talbot steelworks to Swansea Bay. Distant views are also possible from elevated locations to the uplands, including LCA 8 with Fforch Nest and Pant-y-Wal wind farms.	
Scenic and special qualities	<p>26% of this LCA falls within the Laleston Special Landscape Area, valued for the mixed farmland landscape bounded by hedgerows, internationally designated grassland habitat and the historical estate character.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the distinctive Millstone Grit ridge of Cefn Cribwr which offers panoramic views, internationally important designated semi-natural habitats including fen meadows, strong wooded, hedged and rural character and nationally significant heritage features.</p>	
Perceptual qualities	This is generally a highly rural landscape with sparse settlement and an abundance of pastoral farming and important semi-natural habitats, although there is intrusion of modern influence in places, particularly pylon lines, the M4, mainline railway line and the ridgetop settlement of Cefn Cribwr (which includes 20 <sup>th</sup> century housing spreading along the ridge).	
Summary of landscape sensitivity	Although this landscape has some existing development on skylines and locations of consistent landcover and large-scale fields, the LCA's levels of sensitivity to wind energy development are increased by its rural nature and historic estate character in parts, varied semi-natural habitats (including SAC-designated fen meadows) and the presence of nationally important heritage features. The frequency of human-scale features, particularly trees, also presents increased levels of sensitivity to wind turbines.	
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	L-M
	Small (26-50m)	M
	Medium (51-75m)	M-H
	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
Commentary on different cluster sizes	Although much of this landscape comprises a medium-scale broad valley, the presence of significant areas of internationally and nationally important habitats and intricate landform characterising much of the LCA means that it would be highly sensitive to any clusters larger than 'small' in scale.	
Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)		
SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES		
A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 15: Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland in relation to wind energy development is included below:		

- The prominent Cefn Cribwr ridgeline, forming a distinctive landscape feature with strong intervisibility with the nearby uplands (LCA 1).
- Strongly rural character away from areas of development, with an historic estate influence around Court Colman.
- Internationally important fen meadows (within the Cefn Cribwr Grasslands SAC) and a range of other semi-natural habitats, including purple moor grass, neutral grasslands, marshy grasslands, wet heath and rush pasture.
- The intricate and undulating landform to the south of the LCA.
- Important historic features that are nationally significant, including Tondu and Cefn Cribwr Ironworks and Cefn Cross prehistoric standing stones.
- The strong wooded character found throughout the landscape in plantations, hedgerows and along watercourses, reinforcing the human scale of the landscape.

## LCA 15: Strategy and guidance for wind energy development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme. A sub-regional database that contains up-to-date information on wind turbine developments in the County Borough and surrounding authorities can be found online at: <a href="http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales">http://viewer.giscloud.com/map/184616/wind-turbines-in-se-wales</a>.</p> <p>There is currently one operational wind energy development, comprised of a single 35m (small category) turbine at Hare Grove Farm.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for wind energy development
<p>The overall strategy for wind energy development in this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
LCA-specific guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any wind energy developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wind energy development does not overwhelm the human scale of the LCA and its frequent landscape features, including hedgerows, woodlands and specimen trees.</li><li>• Wind turbines do not impact upon the landscape's valued heritage features including Pen-y Castell Iron Age hillfort and Court Colman estate (with Grade II listed house).</li><li>• The highly rural and tranquil character of much of the landscape is protected.</li><li>• The distinctive 'wooded tunnels' formed by sunken rural roads in the south of the LCA are not damaged by the delivery of wind turbines.</li><li>• Valued semi-natural habitats are protected from development – including areas of fen meadow, purple moor grass, neutral grasslands, marshy grasslands, wet heath and rush pasture.</li><li>• The development of larger scale wind turbines avoids locations within the more intricate, smaller scale land to the south of the LCA.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Multiple wind energy developments should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape as summarised in the 'Key landscape Characteristics' section (and with reference to the definition of 'landscape capacity'<sup>52</sup>).</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response<sup>53</sup>.</li></ul>

<sup>52</sup> "Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type..." (Countryside Agency and SNH, 2002).

<sup>53</sup> For more detailed guidance please refer to the SNH guidance document *Siting and Designing Windfarms in the Landscape* (December 2009).

## LCA 15: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Solar PV Development

Criteria	Landscape attributes and descriptions	
<b>Landform</b>	A medium scale broad valley found on the southern edge of the Coalfield Plateau, with the ridge of Cefn Cribwr rising up 132 metres. Land falls away from the ridge to the south, comprising an intricate landscape of undulating slopes.	
<b>Sense of openness/enclosure</b>	Significant treed areas, including plantations and semi-natural woodland, as well as thick hedgerows with frequent hedgerow trees and wooded banks, providing a sense of enclosure. Tracts of fen and wet grassland habitats and remnant commons on higher ground are more open (e.g. Ty' n-y-garn).	
<b>Field pattern and scale</b>	Farming is predominantly pastoral, with medium scale fields bounded by hedgerows. This pattern changes near to LCA 12, where farming is more intensive and fields are larger in size.	
<b>Land cover</b>	Pastoral farming dominates the agricultural land, with larger more intensively farmed fields adjacent to LCA 12. Parc Slip Nature Park contains a wealth of semi-natural habitats, including purple moor grass, neutral grassland, rush pasture and wet heath. There are also extensive mixed woodland plantations in the nature park, whilst bands of woodland are found along watercourses elsewhere. The area surrounding Court Colman has a strong estate character with ornamental woodland.	
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	There are several nationally important heritage features found within this landscape, ranging from the Tondy and Cefn Cribwr Ironworks to prehistoric stones at Cefn Cross and the medieval Llangewydd church. This LCA also partially encompasses the Tondy Conservation Area. The LCA includes the Grade II Listed Court Colman (now a hotel) surrounded by ornamental and mixed estate woodlands and specimen trees.	
<b>Key views, vistas and landmark features (visible in views)</b>	The Cefn Cribwr ridge and settlement is prominent in views from nearby LCAs (particularly LCA 1 to the north and the Stormy Down ridgeline in the south (LCA 12)) and offers long panoramic views south over the coastline towards the Bristol Channel and beyond. The western part of the LCA abuts the settlement of Pyle, with long views across to Port Talbot steelworks to Swansea Bay. Distant views are also possible from elevated locations to the uplands, including LCA 8 with Fforch Nest and Pant-y-Wal wind farms.	
<b>Scenic and special qualities</b>	<p>26% of this LCA falls within the Laleston Special Landscape Area, valued for the mixed farmland landscape bounded by hedgerows, internationally designated grassland habitat and areas of historical estate parkland.</p> <p>The sensitive features of this landscape, as recorded in the LCA description, include the distinctive Millstone Grit ridge of Cefn Cribwr which offers panoramic views, internationally important designated semi-natural habitats including fen meadows, strong wooded, hedged and rural character and nationally significant heritage features.</p>	
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>	This is generally a highly rural landscape with sparse settlement and an abundance of pastoral farming and important semi-natural habitats, although there is intrusion of modern influence in places, particularly pylon lines, the M4, mainline railway line and the ridgetop settlement of Cefn Cribwr (which includes 20 <sup>th</sup> century housing spreading along the ridge).	
<b>Summary of landscape sensitivity</b>	<p>Although this landscape has areas with a high level of enclosure and existing development in places, the presence of significant tracts of internationally and nationally valued semi-natural habitats and the highly rural, sparsely settled feel of the landscape with an historic character increase levels of sensitivity to solar PV energy development.</p> <p>The following locational variations in landscape sensitivity should be taken account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The small scale field patterns on the ridge's slopes, and the historic estate landscape around Court Colman would be highly sensitive to developments greater than 'small' in scale.</li> <li>Larger, more intensively managed fields close to the border with LCA 12 would be less sensitive to developments of up to 'medium' in scale (in carefully selected sites).</li> </ul>	
<b>Sensitivity to different scales of solar PV development</b>	Very Small (<1ha)	L-M
	Small (>1-5ha)	L-M
	Medium (>5-10ha)	M-H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very large (>15ha)	H

#### SUMMARY OF SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for LCA 15: Cefn Cribwr Ridge and Settled Farmland in relation to solar PV energy development is included below:

- The prominent Cefn Cribwr ridgeline and slopes, forming a distinctive landscape feature with strong intervisibility with the nearby uplands (LCA 1 and the Stormy Down ridgeline (LCA 12)).
- The intricate landform of the southern half of the LCA, with some visible slopes.
- Strongly rural and historic character away from areas of development.
- Internationally important fen meadows (within the Cefn Cribwr Grasslands SAC) and a range of other semi-natural habitats, including purple moor grass, neutral grasslands, marshy grasslands, wet heath and rush pasture.
- Important historic features that are nationally significant, including Tondy and Cefn Cribwr Ironworks and Cefn Cross prehistoric standing stones.
- The strongly pastoral character of the landscape, with an historic estate influence around Court Colman.

## LCA 15: Strategy and guidance for solar PV development

Permitted and operational schemes within the LCA
<p>Please note that the Council holds up-to-date records of all proposed and operational developments that can be provided on request for anyone considering a particular scheme.</p> <p>There are currently no permitted or existing solar PV developments within this LCA.</p> <p><i>Please note that the presence of operational or proposed schemes within the LCA has not influenced the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.</i></p>
Overall strategy for solar PV development
<p>The overall strategy for solar PV development within this LCA is as follows:</p> <p><b>To ensure that solar PV development does not become a defining characteristic of the landscape and to maintain landscape character, as per the 'key landscape characteristics' set out on the second page of this LCA assessment.</b></p>
LCA-specific guidance for development
<p>When siting and designing any solar PV developments in this LCA, the generic guidance detailed in Chapter 3 should be taken into account. In addition, within this LCA particular care will need to be taken to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The highly rural, pastoral character of the landscape with locally important levels of tranquillity is retained.</li><li>• Solar PV development avoids locations on the prominent Cefn Cribwr ridgeline and more open slopes within the LCA. or</li><li>• Internationally important and locally valued semi-natural habitats are protected – including areas of purple moor grass, neutral grasslands, marshy grasslands, wet heath and rush pasture.</li><li>• The character and setting of nationally important archaeological and cultural features such as Pen-y Castell Iron Age hillfort and the Court Colman estate (with Grade II listed house), is not affected by solar PV development.</li><li>• Opportunities are sought to adopt a Green Infrastructure approach for all development. As well as protecting and enhancing landscape character in line with the guidelines set out in Part 3 of the <a href="#">Landscape Character Assessment</a>, developers should consider multi-functional opportunities associated with supporting biodiversity (see <a href="#">Biodiversity SPG</a>), recreational activities (LDP Policy COM11), agricultural activities, flood mitigation etc.</li></ul>
Guidance for siting multiple developments within the LCA
<p>Multiple solar PV developments within the LCA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collectively not become a key characteristic or have a defining influence on the character of the landscape.</li><li>• Be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCA.</li></ul>

## Appendix A: Renewables in the Landscape Supplementary Planning Guidance Consultation Responses

	Organisation	Section No.	Page No.	Representation	Reasoned response	Decision and Action
1	The Coal Authority			<p><b><u>Background on The Coal Authority</u></b></p> <p>The Coal Authority is a Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC). The Coal Authority was established by Parliament in 1994 to: undertake specific statutory responsibilities associated with the licensing of coal mining operations in Britain; handle subsidence claims which are not the responsibility of licensed coalmine operators; deal with property and historic liability issues; and provide information on coal mining.</p> <p>The main areas of planning interest to the Coal Authority in terms of policy making relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the safeguarding of coal in accordance with the advice contained in The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance in England, Scottish Planning Policy in Scotland, and Minerals Planning Policy Wales and MTAN2 in Wales;</li> <li>the establishment of a suitable policy framework for energy minerals including hydrocarbons in accordance with the advice contained in The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance in England, Scottish Planning Policy in Scotland, and Minerals Planning Policy Wales and MTAN2 in Wales; and</li> <li>ensuring that future development is undertaken safely and reduces the future liability on the tax payer for subsidence and other mining related hazards claims arising from the legacy of coal mining in accordance with the advice in The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance in England, Scottish Planning Policy in Scotland, and Planning Policy Wales and MTAN2 in Wales.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Background on Coal Mining Issues in Bridgend Coal Mining Legacy</u></b></p> <p>As you will be aware, the Bridgend area has been subjected to coal mining which will have left a legacy. Whilst most past mining is generally benign in nature, potential public safety and stability problems can be</p>	<p>The Council welcomes the comments from the Coal Authority however the principle function of the SPG is to provide guidance in the assessment of impacts for wind turbines and solar farms within the different landscapes of the County Borough. The Council is aware of the significant issues of mining legacy within the County Borough and these will be taken account of as material considerations as part of the planning application process, with appropriate consultation with the Coal Authority at that stage. This is reinforced in paragraph 1.8 of the SPG which states that "...when considering planning applications for renewable energy developments the LPA will consider all material considerations relevant to the determination of the planning application."</p> <p>The Council will take into account the advice provided by the Coal Authority and the need to provide a Coal Mining Risk Assessments as part of the planning application process where necessary.</p>	No change.

Organisation	Section No.	Page No.	Representation	Reasoned response	Decision and Action
			<p>triggered and uncovered by development activities.</p> <p>Problems can include collapses of mine entries and shallow coal mine workings, emissions of mine gases, incidents of spontaneous combustion, and the discharge of water from abandoned coal mines. These surface hazards can be found in any coal mining area, particularly where coal exists near to the surface, including existing residential areas.</p> <p>Within the Council area there are approximately 1,814 recorded mine entries and around 159 coal mining related hazards have been reported to The Coal Authority. A range of other mining legacy features are present, in total The Coal Authority High Risk Development Area covers approximately 15% of the Council area.</p> <p>Mine entries may be located in built up areas, often under buildings where the owners and occupiers have no knowledge of their presence unless they have received a mining report during the property transaction. Mine entries can also be present in open space and areas of green infrastructure, potentially just under the surface of grassed areas. Mine entries and mining legacy matters should be considered by Planning Authorities to ensure that site allocations and other policies and programmes will not lead to future public safety hazards. No development should take place over mine entries even when treated.</p> <p>Although mining legacy occurs as a result of mineral workings, it is important that new development recognises the problems and how they can be positively addressed. However, it is important to note that land instability and mining legacy is not always a complete constraint on new development; rather it can be argued that because mining legacy matters have been addressed the new development is safe, stable and sustainable.</p> <p><u>Surface Coal Resources, Deep Coal Resources, Development and Prior Extraction</u></p> <p>As you will be aware, the Bridgend area contains coal resources which are capable of extraction by surface mining operations. In addition there are deep coal resources which are licenced for extraction by underground methods.</p> <p>Whilst renewable energy is classified as temporary</p>		

Organisation	Section No.	Page No.	Representation	Reasoned response	Decision and Action
			<p>development it can have an impact on the sterilisation of mineral resources. Although it is not necessary to consider the impact on the sterilisation of surface coal resources due to national policy in MTAN2, consideration does need to be had to the potential relationship between wind turbines and any operational or proposed underground coal workings. Care needs to be taken to prevent operational sterilisation of the actual or planned underground workings due to the costs associated with potential subsidence liability that may arise with wind turbines. This is because wind turbines by their very nature are structures which require absolute stability.</p> <p><b><u>Specific Comments on the Bridgend Supplementary Planning Guidance - Renewables in the Landscape (Draft)</u></b></p> <p>The comments and/or changes which The Coal Authority would like to make or see in relation to the above document are:</p> <p><b>Representation No.1</b></p> <p><b>Site/Policy/Paragraph/Proposal</b> – Wind Turbines</p> <p><b>Comment</b> – The Coal Authority would like to see the following wording included:  <i>"Coal mining legacy exists in areas of Bridgend, The Coal Authority has defined 'Development High Risk Areas' within these areas in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh National Validation List it will be necessary for a planning application to be accompanied by a Coal Mining Risk Assessment. Wind turbines should not be located directly over mine entries or within their zones of influence, this should be considered in the detailed site layout. It may be necessary to incorporate remedial measures to ensure that the ground is safe and stable where other mining legacy features are present. Consideration also needs to be had to the potential relationship between wind turbines and any operational or proposed licenced underground coal workings. Care needs to be taken to prevent operational sterilisation of the actual or planned licenced underground workings due to the costs associated with potential subsidence liability that may arise with wind turbines sited over underground workings."</i></p> <p><b>Representation No.2</b></p>		

	Organisation	Section No.	Page No.	Representation	Reasoned response	Decision and Action
				<p><b>Site/Policy/Paragraph/Proposal</b> – Solar PV</p> <p><b>Comment</b> – The Coal Authority would like to see the following wording included:  <i>“Coal mining legacy exists in areas of Bridgend, The Coal Authority has defined ‘Development High Risk Areas’ within these areas in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh National Validation List it will be necessary for a planning application to be accompanied by a Coal Mining Risk Assessment. Solar PV farms should not propose to site and panels directly over mine entries or within their zones of influence, this should be considered in the detailed site layout. Detailed layouts should propose to fence off the zones of influence of mine entries to prevent public safety issues arising from delivery plant accidentally traversing over the mine entries.”</i></p> <p><b>CONCLUSION</b>  The Coal Authority welcomes the opportunity to make these comments. We are, of course, willing to discuss the comments made above in further detail if desired and would be happy to negotiate alternative suitable wording to address any of our concerns.</p>		
2	Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust			<p>Thank you for consulting us on this. We welcome the SPG for this type of energy provision, as both wind turbines and solar farms have both a direct physical impact on buried and upstanding archaeological remains, and also an indirect visual impact.</p> <p>We make the following comments regarding detailed points in the document:</p> <p>1.3: Archaeological and Historical Sites: there are hundreds of sites on the Bridgend Historic Environment Record curated by GGAT. Less than 2% of these are on average Scheduled Ancient Monuments: Cadw have responsibility for the SAMs and must be consulted if any development is proposed that may impact them. For sites with non-statutory designations, archaeological mitigation work may be required both pre and post determination to ensure that development complies with Planning Policy Wales Chapter 6: Conserving the Historic Environment, and the Welsh Office Circulars 60/96 and 61/96. Early consultation with GGAT Archaeological Planning, as the advisors to Bridgend County Borough Council, is advisable.</p>	<p>The Council welcomes the comments from Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) and the advice provided regarding the protection of and potential impacts of renewable energy development on the County Borough's many varied heritage assets. Any potential impact will be properly considered as a material consideration at the pre-application and planning application stage of development through early engagement and appropriate consultation with CADW, GGAT and the Council's conservation officers to understand the issues and/or mitigate any adverse effects of development. This will ensure compliance with policies in the LDP, PPW, Welsh Office circulars and the forthcoming Heritage Act.</p> <p>In addition figure 2.3 and location maps within the SPG identifies the extent and location of a number of significant historic designations and heritage assets in the</p>	No change.

Organisation	Section No.	Page No.	Representation	Reasoned response	Decision and Action
			<p>2.1 Landscape. This should not be confused with a Registered Historic Landscape, or Registered Parks and Gardens. The Register is compiled by Cadw, ICOMOS and NRW and any developments of a large scale within a Registered area may need an ASIDOHL report undertaken and submitted (Assessment of the Impact of a Development on a Historic Landscape: guidance is available online from Cadw's website which details methodology <a href="http://cadw.wales.gov.uk/docs/cadw/publications/LandscapeRegisterGoodPractice_EN.pdf">http://cadw.wales.gov.uk/docs/cadw/publications/LandscapeRegisterGoodPractice_EN.pdf</a>). The landscape assessment quoted in the document dates from the Landmap exercise and whilst it is comprehensive and includes aspects of historic landscape, does not relate solely to Registered Landscapes.</p> <p>The impact of a development on the setting of Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings and archaeological features without statutory designations also has to be taken into consideration, and Cadw have produced Conservation Principles, to provide further detailed guidance when dealing with such issues, details at: <a href="http://cadw.wales.gov.uk/docs/cadw/publications/ConservationPrinciples_EN.pdf">http://cadw.wales.gov.uk/docs/cadw/publications/ConservationPrinciples_EN.pdf</a>.</p> <p>It should also be noted that archaeological features and finds exist outside Registered and Scheduled areas and may require pre-planning and conditioned archaeological mitigation. All archaeological work undertaken in relation to planning issues should be undertaken to the Standards and Guidance of the Institute for Archaeologists and it is our policy to recommend that either a Registered Organisation with the IfA or a member with MIfA level membership should undertake the work. Thank you for the opportunity to comment, please do not hesitate to contact us if you require further advice or information.</p>	County Borough within each Landscape Character Area and as such these are taken account of in the sensitivity assessments.	
3 South Wales Police			In relation to the SPG I have no observations to make.		
4 Suzy Davies, AM			<p>I will not be submitting a detailed response to the consultation but I would be grateful if the following points might be taken into account when the responses are being considered.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Supplementary guidance specific to exploratory applications for gas extraction. Clearly not a renewable source of energy, but should the guidance on renewable energy</li> </ol>	The Council welcomes the comments received. With respect to the issue of exploratory proposals for gas extraction it should be noted that this SPG provides guidance and a consistent approach to the assessment of the visual impact of proposed developments for wind turbines and solar farms, within the context of the different and varied landscapes of the	No change.

	Organisation	Section No.	Page No.	Representation	Reasoned response	Decision and Action
				<p>cover the balance a Council may need to strike between different sources, not lease between different renewable sources? Essentially, TAN 8 is also just guidance and the 93/7% split in favour of on-shore wind and can be overcome by a greater local preference for other renewably sourced energy.</p> <p>2. Heritage landscape. There is already guidance on this but Welsh Government will be bringing forward its draft Heritage Act soon. That will have implications for scatter sites and sites which contribute to specific sense of place. Although the new legislation will not be available before your work is completed, how will the new guidance provide for potential strengthening of protection of sites of heritage interest.</p>	<p>County Borough. It is not the function of this SPG to explore the balance or preference for different energy sources, including for gas extraction.</p> <p>With respect to the protection of heritage landscapes and all other heritage assets within the context of the emerging Heritage Act, any impact of renewable energy developments will be properly considered as a material consideration as part of the planning application process. This will be achieved through early engagement and appropriate consultation with the Council's conservation officers and will ensure compliance with policies in the LDP, PPW, Welsh Office circular and the forthcoming Heritage Act. Please also see GGAT response above.</p>	
5	WYG Group			<p>The following comments relate to <b>LCA 8: Ogmere Forest and Surrounding Uplands (pages 100-105 of the draft SPG).</b></p> <p><b>LCA8: Key Landscape Characteristics</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(Second bullet) The hill summits referred to are outside the character area and within the forestry plantations on Mynydd Williams Meyrick and Mynydd Ton (which are located in Rhondda Cynon Taf).</li> <li>(Tenth and eleventh bullets) In our opinion, the Daren y Dimbath SSSI and the Bwlch y Clawdd Dyke (which is at the very northern tip of LCA 8) cannot be regarded as key landscape characteristics of LCA 8.</li> <li>The evidence of the coal mining heritage in the area is much more characteristic than isolated heritage or ecological features.</li> <li>(Thirteenth bullet) "The only settlements are occasional small villages ..." In our opinion, occasional or scattered farms are a key characteristic of the LCA and not villages. The only 'villages' in the LCA are Glynogwr and other small clusters of properties along the A4093, which defines the southern boundary</li> </ol>	<p>LCA8: Key Landscape Characteristics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mynydd William Meyrick trig point is on the boundary line of Bridgend and Rhondda Cynon Taf and is considered as being within BCB. There are also extensive tracts of mountain top areas well in excess of 500m and above the prominent ridgeline and escarpment within the north-eastern part of the LCA.</li> <li>Disagree.</li> <li>Coal mining heritage as evidenced in the landscape is noted in bullet point 12 of the Key Landscape Characteristics.</li> <li>Disagree – the description acknowledges the existence of scattered farmsteads as a key characteristic.</li> <li>Disagree – this is an accurate description in this context of conveying a sense of</li> </ol>	<p>No change.</p> <p>No change.</p> <p>No change.</p> <p>No change.</p>

Organisation	Section No.	Page No.	Representation	Reasoned response	Decision and Action
			<p>of the LCA.</p> <p>5. (Fifteenth bullet) “A largely unsettled and inaccessible landscape...” Large swathes of the LCA are open access land, especially the upland; those parts of the LCA that are not access land are generally the lower level enclosed agricultural land, which are crossed by public footpaths and the bridleways.</p> <p>6. There is no mention in the Key Landscape Characteristics section of the existing wind turbines at Pant-y-wal and Fforch Nest. Do these not contribute to these characteristics? Please note that the front cover of the final report on <i>Landscape Character Assessment for Bridgend County Borough</i> (LUC, July 2013) is of these existing wind farms. It seems odd, therefore, that they should not be mentioned in this section.</p> <p><b>LCA8: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development</b></p> <p>7. Skylines: This refers to the “turbines featuring prominently” (that is, “easily seen without the need for close examination of the landscape”). Given this, it is more surprising that they are not mentioned at all in as a “key landscape characteristic”.</p> <p>8. Scenic and special qualities: The reference “...these could be affected to a degree by wind energy development...” infers, correctly, that these effects are not significant.</p> <p>9. Summary of landscape sensitivity: This refers to the “remote character” of the LCA. Although there is a sense of remoteness, the “human influences” extend beyond those quoted: the mining remains, conifer forestry, etc extend to the northern part of the area, which seems to be identified in the LCA as less affected by human influences.</p> <p>10. Summary of landscape sensitivity: This says: “Human influence is greater in the southern half of the LCA.” In fact, the existing Pant-y-wal and Fforch Nest wind farms are located in</p>	<p>‘inaccessibility’ due to elevation, remoteness and wildness, unrelated to ‘access’ in the traditional sense via networks of footpaths and bridleways.</p> <p>6. The descriptors focus on the key ‘inherent’ qualities of the landscape rather than acknowledging whether it is influenced by the presence of existing or proposed renewable energy developments (refer to paragraph 2.23 of the SPG). The existence of recent wind farms of Fforch Nest and Pant y Wal is however acknowledged under the ‘skyline’ assessment criteria within the eastern part of the LCA, as a landscape attribute.</p> <p>LCA8: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Energy Development</p> <p>7. The descriptors focus on the key ‘inherent’ qualities of the landscape rather than acknowledging whether it is influenced by the presence of existing or proposed renewable energy developments (refer to paragraph 2.23 of the SPG). The existence of recent wind farms of Fforch Nest and Pant y Wal is however acknowledged under the ‘skyline’ assessment criteria within the eastern part of the LCA, as a landscape attribute.</p> <p>8. Comment noted – however it is not ‘inferred’ in the statement that effect on scenic and special qualities are not going to be significant as this can only be determined on a case by case basis.</p> <p>9. The existing wording adequately</p>	<p>No change.</p> <p>No change.</p> <p>No change.</p> <p>No change.</p>

Organisation	Section No.	Page No.	Representation	Reasoned response	Decision and Action
			<p>the centre of the LCA not its southern half.</p> <p>11. Summary of landscape sensitivity: The statement “complex undulating landform and variation in scale”, occurs only on the side slopes of the area, but seems to have been applied to the whole area. The existing wind turbines at Pant-y-wal and Fforch Nest are on an upland plateau.</p> <p>12. Sensitivity to different turbine heights: The assessment of very large (111-150m) turbines in this LCA as M-H (red) is disputed. The existing turbines are 115m and therefore fall in this category: nowhere in this assessment is the change regarded as “significant”.</p> <p>13. Commentary on different cluster sizes: The conclusion of “highly sensitive” is disputed. The existing turbines “fit” with the landscape.</p> <p><b>Overall strategy for wind energy development (outside the SSA)</b></p> <p>14. The reference to the overall strategy being “in line with TAN 8” is inappropriate. TAN8 identified a much larger SSA than the “refined” SSA now included in the LDP. Moreover, TAN8 Annex D paragraph 8.4 notes that: “Within <u>and immediately adjacent</u> to the SSAs, the implicit objective is to <u>accept</u> landscape change <u>i.e. significant change in landscape character</u> from wind turbine development” (underlining added). LDP Policy ENV18 expressly allows for wind farm developments outside the refined SSA.</p> <p><b>LCA-specific guidance for development</b></p> <p>15. (First bullet) In our opinion, no part of the LCA could be described as “remote from human influences”; even the northernmost part is bounded by the Bwlch road, with popular car park, aside from the extensive conifer plantations, evidence of past mining, views of urban settlements in the valleys, etc.</p> <p>16. (Third bullet) “The panoramic views from summits...”: as noted above, the summits are</p>	<p>addresses the point of human influences on the landscape including within the northern part of the LCA.</p> <p>10. Paragraph 2.23 makes it clear that the results of the sensitivity assessment are not influenced by the presence of existing or proposed renewable energy developments in the landscape, it focuses on the inherent landscape sensitivity. As such the Council consider the ‘summary’ is accurate in its overall assessment.</p> <p>11. The Council consider the ‘summary’ is accurate in its overall assessment. The existence of plateau areas within the landscape is recognised in the first bullet point in the LCA8: Key Landscape Characteristics:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Highly undulating plateau and ridge landscape of the Upper Coal measures...”</li> </ul> <p>12. Paragraph 2.23 makes it clear that the results of the sensitivity assessments are not influenced by the presence of existing or proposed renewable energy developments in the landscape, including the very large operational and proposed turbines within LCA8.</p> <p>13. The Council agree with the commentary conclusion, that the landscape of LCA8 is likely be highly sensitive to ‘very large’ clusters of wind turbines (more than 25).</p> <p>14. The reference to the overall strategy being ‘in line with TAN8’ is not inappropriate. TAN8 makes it explicit (Paragraph 2.4</p>	<p>No change.</p> <p>No change.</p> <p>No change.</p> <p>No change.</p>

Organisation	Section No.	Page No.	Representation	Reasoned response	Decision and Action
			<p>within the forestry plantations on Mynydd William Meyrick and Mynydd Ton (in Rhondda Cynon Taf); the views are available from the ridge-tops and plateaux.</p> <p><b>Guidance for siting multiple developments with the LCA</b></p> <p>17. The guidance seeks wind turbines of “similar” scale etc, but note that wind turbines of different scales are already seen together at Taf Ely/Mynydd Portref and it is not apparent in the views available – and as consented development, “acceptable”.</p>	<p>refers) that the, 7 SSAs across Wales were ‘broad brush’ and that the subsequent refinement exercise was a matter for LPAs to undertake in a robust manner. This has resulted in refined SSA boundaries which are delineated on the adopted Bridgend LDP Proposals Map. Outside of these areas the TAN8 objective is to maintain the landscape character i.e. no significant change to landscape character from wind turbine development, (as is stated in the SPG’s overall strategy for LCA8 by maintaining the key landscape characteristics). The strategy notes that it is accepted that change to landscape character could result from wind energy development within the ‘refined’ Northern Uplands SSA, where wind energy developments are already present (or consented).</p> <p>15. Remote from human influence is a relative term to describe varying levels and different aspects of human influence across the LCA. As noted in the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment, a large part (42%) of the LCA falls within the Northern Uplands Special Landscape Area, as identified by Policy ENV3(2) of the adopted LDP. This SLA, especially away from valley settlements has an exposed and wild character, where intrinsically human influence is less evident than other parts of the LCA outside of the SLA.</p> <p>16. Disagree. The summit of Mynydd William Meyrick is adjacent to the forestry area and therefore views are extensive.</p>	<p>No change.</p> <p>No change.</p>

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					17. Disagree – General guidance for the siting of multiple developments, in seeking wind turbines be of similar scale and design when seen together is considered to represent sound advice. Such guidance is also recognised by other similar design guidance relating to the siting of windfarms in the landscape. The existence of different scales of wind turbines as seen in Taff Ely and elsewhere maybe considered 'acceptable' on a case-by-case basis, but their existence should not be allowed to dilute this SPG's overall strategy guidance.	
6	RWE			<p>This response is made on behalf of RWE Innogy UK Ltd to Bridgend County Borough Council's consultation on the Renewables in the Landscape Supplementary Planning Guidance.</p> <p>RWE Innogy UK is a leading developer and operator of renewable electricity generation projects in Wales. We currently operate a wide portfolio of projects in Wales and the UK including onshore and offshore wind farms, hydroelectric projects and biomass generation.</p> <p>Generally, the SPG prepared by BCBC is a well written and well-structured document. The SPG provides useful, evidenced guidance on matters which are expected to be considered by developers of renewable energy projects and, equally, by the Local Planning Authority in making decisions on such projects. The objective nature of the SPG is welcomed and it is made clear throughout that each project will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.</p>	The Council welcomes the comments from RWE Innogy UK.	No change.
7	Natural Resources Wales			<p>A few interim comments on this SPG:</p> <p>a) How does the study relate to the Gillespies LLP guidance on LVIA requirements and Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity? The assessment criteria are slightly different to the Gillespies study?</p> <p>b) Do the assessment criteria relate to</p>	The purposes of the SPG and Gillespies Guidance on LVIA requirements are very different. The primary purpose of the SPG is to provide a strategic-level assessment of the relative sensitivities of the County Borough's landscapes to wind (and solar) energy developments and act as a 'first step' in helping to direct developments, strategically to the least sensitive	No change. However the Council will investigate to improve map resolution in the final document as they appear on the Councils website.

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				<p>LANDMAP and if so how? It is assumed that this is through the Bridgend Landscape Character Assessment.</p> <p>It would be helpful if the scale parameters for wind turbines matched the LLP Gillespies (&amp; NRW draft guidance) for the small, medium, large, very large categories, rather than used slightly different parameters.</p> <p>c) Para. 3.30 could refer to the Gillespies LLP guidance on appropriate ZTVs?</p> <p>d) The maps for each LCA and keys are not easy to read – could be the resolution?</p>	<p>landscapes. The SPG is 'indicative' and is not intended to replace site-level assessments i.e. LVIA or be used in isolation to make decisions on individual applications or to decide whether an EIA is required or not.</p> <p>The primary function of the Gillespies guidance is to help LPAs determine whether an EIA will be required for a particular development. However the Gillespies document is usefully cross referenced in the SPG in paragraph 3.14, with respect to what is required when submitting a planning application.</p> <p>Because the documents have very different primary purposes it would be of no benefit to use common 'scale' and 'cluster' parameters, as any number of combinations of proposal could occur between the two.</p> <p>With respect to the assessment criteria's relationship with LANDMAP it is confirmed that this formed the basis for the desktop study to determine the Landscape Character Area boundaries.</p> <p>It is noted that the quality of the maps within the document make the key difficult to read and the Council will endeavour to improve the resolution of the maps before final publication of the document.</p>	
8	Suncredit			<p>The SPG is an admirable, welcome and proactive step by BCBC to help developers such as ourselves select the most suitable sites for solar farms and ensure that their site design and layout are well thought out and fit into the landscape. However, we believe that the SPG is one dimensional as is it founded entirely on landscape sensitivity analysis and ignores many other real world drivers that dictate where and how solar farms can be sited and developed. Consequently, if the flawed foundation of the SPG is not appropriately and adequately addressed it will preclude many potentially good solar sites from coming forward and being developed to the detriment of the many Council policies</p>	<p>The primary purpose of this SPG is to provide guidance and a consistent approach to the assessment of the visual impact of proposed developments for wind turbines and solar farms within the context of the different and varied landscapes of the County Borough.</p> <p>It is not a primary function of the document to identify suitable areas for development although the guidance can act as a 'final step' in helping to direct developments, strategically to the least sensitive</p>	No change.

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			<p>designed to promote, maximise and encourage the rapid growth of renewable energy.</p> <p>Our biggest concern is that the SPG has failed to recognise, reflect and accommodate the reality of the size and scale of current UK solar farm developments. The SPG effectively imposes a maximum size for a solar farm of 15ha = @ 5MW as the landscape sensitivity analysis suggest that there is no area, location or site within BCBC that is acceptable from a landscape sensitivity perspective for any larger schemes. The attached SolarBuzz pie chart shows that only 6% of the solar farms developed in Q4 2013 and Q1 2014 were below 5MW. So, blind adherence to the SPG would effectively reject 94% of the UK's recent solar farm developments. The SPG clearly does not accord with reality especially as the BCBC planning officers have recommended that the 28ha 15MW Court Colman solar farm be approved when compliance to the SPG would result in it being considered a totally inappropriate site for a solar farm.</p> <p>Most responsible solar farm developers adhere and comply to the 4 stage development process set out on p51 of the SPG:</p> <p>Stage 1 Policy context  Stage 2 Landscape sensitivity  Stage 3 Detailed siting and design considerations  Stage 4 Cumulative impacts</p> <p>So, it is extremely frustrating that the SPG does not provide any assistance to solar farm developers in identifying suitable areas or sites for development. The SPG is essentially a negative guide as it entirely focuses on excluding areas from solar development rather than trying to identify suitable locations for development. In the context of BCBC's renewable energy policies this is not helpful and must be addressed.</p> <p>The SPG completely ignores the biggest key driver and constraint to the siting and development of solar farms – grid availability and capacity. The location and availability of a cost effective grid connection will inevitably drive and require compromises in the location, siting, design, layout and visibility within the landscape of any solar farm development. The SPG fails to recognise that such compromises are inevitable and so must be accommodated by any planning guidance if</p>	<p>landscapes.</p> <p>It is not the intention of the SPG to entirely exclude areas from solar development and the document makes it clear throughout that each proposal will be dealt with on its merit and on a case-by-case basis.</p>	

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			<p>commercial solar projects are to be forthcoming.</p> <p>For your information, we attach a GoogleEarth constraints analysis that shows that there is no fear of BCBC being submerged under a sea of solar panels as it clear that there are only a very limited number of viable locations and sites for commercial scale solar farm projects. Unfortunately, these potential “real world” sites do not accord or overlap very well with the “theoretical” siting guidance of the SPG. The mismatch between our “real world” constraints analysis and the SPG preferential areas is that we have taken into consideration some of the key solar drivers and constraints that have been completely ignored by the one dimensional SPG analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Steep slopes</li> <li>2 North facing slopes</li> <li>3 Agricultural land grade classifications</li> <li>4 Forestry and woodland areas</li> </ul> <p>Of particular note in the SPG is that the land identified and designated as being most suitable for even small scale solar projects is largely Grade 2 agricultural land and as such would not be considered or put forward for development by any responsible solar developer.</p> <p>In short, the SPG is fundamentally and inherently flawed as strict adherence to its guidelines would result in no commercial scale solar farms planning applications ever being consented. It is a NIMBY’s charter! We are certain that this is not what BCBC envisaged when it was drawn up. Consequently, we request that BCBC rethink the SPG to develop some more practical and pragmatic guidance founded upon the “real world” solar constraints and overlaying and interweaving these with the landscape sensitivity analysis to arrive at some pragmatic and useful guidance. The object and intent of the SPG must surely be to facilitate commercial solar farm schemes to ensure BCBC’s renewable energy policies and targets are attained whilst ensuring that they are well sited, well designed and not too obtrusive in the landscape. To achieve this will entail compromises that are not envisaged or considered acceptable under the current draft SPG.</p>		

Late Representations Received

Organisation	Section No.	Page No.	Summary of Representations	Reasoned response	Decision and Action

## Appendix B: Contact details for further information

**Bridgend Planning Department**  
Regeneration and Development  
Communities Directorate  
Bridgend County Borough Council  
Civic Offices Level 3  
Angel Street  
Bridgend, CF31 4WB  
01656 643643,  
[planning@bridgend.co.uk](mailto:planning@bridgend.co.uk)

## **Future Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)**

In addition to the preparation of an SPG relating to Recreation and Residential Development in the new year, work is also progressing on 2 other new SPGs relating to:-

- Safeguarding Retail Services (SPG)

This SPG supplements Strategic Policy SP10 and Policies REG5-REG11 of the LDP. Its main purpose is to provide greater clarity and advice to developers, business owners and planning officers when submitting and determining planning applications which relate to commercial activity in the County Borough

- Landscape and Local Character: A Green Infrastructure Approach (SPG)

This SPG is part of a suite of 'Green Infrastructure' based SPG which have a focus on protecting and enhancing our landscape, local character and biodiversity. The SPG will help decision making on planning applications that affect the form, appearance and setting of the built and natural landscape and its features. It will provide clear and practical design guidance that is intended to embrace the concept of "Green Infrastructure", the overall aim of which is to deliver multiple (social, economic and environmental) benefits.

Work will also progress on updating the Council's suite of design guidance documents. This will include SPG2 – Householder Development, SPG8 – Residential Development and Design Guides including shop fronts and rural building conversions. The design principles adopted in SPG2 are robust and have been tried and tested at numerous appeals. It is anticipated that the updated document will be a consolidation of the existing policies to reflect the adoption of the LDP, new legislation and national planning guidance.

### Recommendation

Members are asked whether they wish to nominate participants to working groups to progress these SPGs, which are likely to be brought forward in the new year.

**MARK SHEPHARD**  
**CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES**

**Background Papers**  
Bridgend LDP, SPG02, SPG08, Design Guides

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## TRAINING LOG

*All training sessions are held in the Council Chamber unless otherwise stated.*

<u>Facilitator</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
Jonathan Parsons - <i>Group Manager Development, BCBC</i>	"Future of the Planning Service"	26 November 2015	12.45pm
<p>- This session will look at the current level of service provided by the Development Section, the performance standards set both locally and nationally, the future of the paid preliminary enquiry service and the potential for collaborative working.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Development Control Customer Charter was last approved by Committee in 2011 at a time when the staffing structure was larger. There are also similar documents on Enforcement, staff conduct and a plethora of general advice leaflets. The time has come to review these documents and the standards in light of the reduction to the Planning Service and changes introduced by Welsh Government. The aim is to produce a single coherent set of standards and advice notes together with a new Members' handbook to reflect the current climate.</li> <li>• The paid PE service was introduced in April 2011 and has proven to be very successful. As part of the Wales Planning Act, it will be compulsory for developers to engage in pre-application discussions for major development. Welsh Government also intend to introduce a base line pre-application advice service for all Welsh planning authorities, which will include charging for householder preliminary enquiries. This provides an opportunity for Bridgend to review its service, build on its success and offer a more bespoke procedure that will offer the advice potential developers need as well as being good value.</li> <li>• Financial constraints forced upon Councils in Wales have had an inevitable impact the services delivered including Planning. The message coming from Welsh Government is as Planning Service is critical for delivering wider benefits to our communities and nationally, that collaboration may provide an answer to dwindling resources and this may include service level agreements, joint procurement processes and even joint development plans. Bridgend may need to investigate the potential for joint working with its neighbours in order to be adequately prepared for the future.</li> </ul>			

Members may wish to look at the information currently provided to the public available on the planning pages on the Council's website and familiarise themselves with the contents before the next training session. The planning web pages are available at the following link:-  
<http://www1.bridgend.gov.uk/services/planning.aspx>

There may be a need for further training sessions on these specific areas in due course.

<u>Facilitator</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
Rhodri Davies - <i>Development &amp; Building Control Manager, BCBC</i>	"Paid pre-application service" -workshop session	January 2016 tbc	tbc

### **Recommendation:**

That the report of the Corporate Director Communities be noted.

**MARK SHEPHARD**  
**CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES**

**Background Papers**  
None.

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