

Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan (2006-2021)

Preferred Strategy Sustainability Appraisal

(incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment)

January 2007

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF
TREFTADAETH GADARN | DYFODOL SICR

Preferred Strategy Sustainability Appraisal

(incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment)

for and on behalf of Enfusion Ltd

<i>date:</i>	<i>December 2006</i>	
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NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Introduction

- 1 This document is the summary of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report for Rhondda Cynon Taf's Local Development Plan (2006-2021) Preferred Strategy. It describes how the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process was used to assist in planning for the development and use of land within the County Borough, as required by legislation and government guidance. The SA assists sustainable development through ongoing dialogue and assessment during the preparation of Local Development Plans (LDPs) and considers the implications of social, economic and environmental demands on spatial planning and land use.
- 2 Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council commissioned consultants Enfusion in 2005 to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) on the Local Development Plan (2006-2021). This summary report presents progress on the SA work so far with the LDP to Preferred Strategy stage. The SA Report is published for public consultation alongside the Preferred Strategy of the LDP and details of how to comment are given at the end of this summary.

The Local Development Plan

- 3 The UK Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004¹ requires each authority in Wales to prepare a local development plan (LDP) for its area, comprising a strategy, integrated set of policies and site specific proposals. Authorities are required by law to prepare LDPs with the overall objective of contributing to sustainable development (SD). The Welsh Assembly Government's Sustainable Development Scheme (2000, revised 2004) defines SD as "*development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*". The LDP is being prepared in accordance with guidance produced by the Welsh Assembly Government "*Local Development Plan Manual, June 2006*".

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) & Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 4 Planning legislation requires that the LDP is subject to a SA, a systematic process that is designed to evaluate the predicted social, economic and environmental effects of development planning. European & UK legislation require that the LDP is also subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), a process that considers the effects of development planning on the environment. Where significant effects are predicted, the SEA aims to identify means to

¹ The Assembly LDP Regulations became effective On 15 October 2005.

avoid or mitigate such effects. Government guidance advises that these two processes should be carried out together and requires an integrated approach such that the LDP is subject to a SA incorporating SEA. Rhondda Cynon Taf's Preferred Strategy LDP has been prepared in accordance with these requirements for a SA/SEA.

- 5 Sustainable Development is the core principle and key aim of the new planning system - to work towards a better quality of life for everyone, now and in the future. The purpose of SA is to achieve better integration of sustainability objectives during the preparation of Development Plans through an iterative and ongoing interaction.

The Stages of Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

- 6 Government guidance requires a number of stages of SA work that need to be carried out as the LDP is being prepared:

Stage A: Setting Context and Scope

Stage B: Developing Options and Assessing Effects

Stage C: Preparing the SA Report

Stage D: Consulting on the Plan and the SA

Stage E: Monitoring Implementation of the Plan

Stages A, B and C of the SA for the Preferred Strategy of the LDP were carried out between January and December 2006.

The Character of Rhondda Cynon Taf Borough

- 7 Rhondda Cynon Taf covers an area of the South Wales Valleys, stretching from the Brecon Beacons National Park in the north to the outskirts of Cardiff in the south. It comprises a mixture of urban, semi-urban and rural communities, situated in a varied countryside of valleys, mountains and lowland farmland. It is the second largest local authority in Wales in population terms, covering 424 square kilometres, and with a population of 231,946 (2001 Census).

SA Scoping & Issues for Sustainability

- 8 During early 2006 a scoping process for the SA was carried out to help ensure that the SA would cover the key sustainability issues that are relevant to the development planning system for Rhondda Cynon Taf. Relevant plans, programmes and other baseline information were reviewed to develop a wider understanding of issues and priorities, together with a description of the current and predicted social, economic and environmental characteristics of the area.
- 9 From these studies, the key sustainability problems, issues and opportunities identified are associated with the need to manage/adapt to climate change; the inter-related problems of high levels of economic inactivity, poor quality housing and health problems; transport &

accessibility; protection of landscape & biodiversity with development pressure on greenfield sites; retaining town centre vitality; and protection of cultural heritage.

Consultation & Preparing the SA Framework

- 10 An SA Framework was compiled and included a list of 16 SA Objectives that aim to help resolve the issues and problems identified. These SA Objectives were used to test the draft LDP Vision, Objectives, Spatial Strategic Options, and Selection Method for Strategic Sites as they were being prepared. The SA Objectives covered the following: Housing; Culture & Heritage; Communities; Health; Economy; Employment; Transport; Built Environment; Landscape; Biodiversity; Water; Climate change; Energy; Land & Soils; Waste; Minerals.
- 11 The issues for sustainability and Rhondda Cynon Taf, and the draft SA Framework were debated and agreed at a Technical Workshop with key stakeholders in January 2006. This approach and the proposals for testing the LDP were presented in a SA Scoping Report that was sent to a wide range of organisations and also made available on the Council's website during March- April 2006. Comments were invited and received from a number of these organisations, and these were incorporated into the SA Framework.
- 12 Each stage of the LDP Strategy was appraised systematically using the SA Objectives. A strategic-level appraisal was undertaken of the LDP Vision and a Compatibility Analysis was made of the LDP Objectives with the SA Objectives. Detailed appraisal was carried out on the Spatial Strategic Options and the Strategic Policies. This recognised 6 categories of predicted effects, each represented by a different colour, as illustrated in the key below:

Categories of Sustainability Effects

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

- 13 Where it was considered that there were opportunities to enhance the sustainability of the proposals, recommendations were made. These were primarily with respect to minimising the sustainability impacts arising from increased population and employment growth, and managing the accompanying social, cultural and environmental changes.

**Appraisal of the LDP Vision;
Compatibility Analyses of the LDP & the SA Objectives**

- 14 The Vision and Strategic Objectives set out the scope and intentions for the LDP, and these were the first aspect of the LDP to be appraised. This involved considering how sustainable the vision is, and a comparison, or ‘compatibility analysis’ of the LDP Objectives against the SA objectives.
- 15 The Vision was considered to provide a sustainable and positive overall aim for the LDP, whilst the Strategic Objectives were found to be broadly compatible with those sustainability objectives concerning economic and social issues. Minor amendments were suggested to better progress the environmental SA objectives.

Alternatives Considered: Appraisal of the Spatial Strategy Options

- 16 5 different spatial strategy options were identified by Rhondda Cynon Taf, and these were subject to Sustainability Appraisal. The five options consisted of a market-led ‘trends-based’ strategy; a dispersed ‘local needs’ strategy; a ‘consolidation’ strategy focusing development on the upper and lower valley areas to maximise regeneration opportunities; a ‘sustainable growth strategy’, and a hybrid ‘growth/local needs strategy’. The following summarises the results of the SA of the 5 options:

TRENDS BASED STRATEGY	LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY	CONSOLIDATION STRATEGY	SUSTAINABLE GROWTH STRATEGY	GROWTH / LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY
Absolute sustainability constraints to development.	No sustainability constraints and strategy acceptable.	Potential sustainability issues; mitigation and /or negotiation possible.	No sustainability constraints and strategy acceptable.	Strategy actively encouraged, as it would resolve existing sustainability problems.

- 17 The hybrid Local Need/Sustainable Growth Strategy was found to be the most sustainable option, scoring best against all sustainability objectives. This option meets environmental objectives in terms of energy and resource efficiency, and addresses social and economic

objectives by creating a critical mass for accessible facilities, supporting the viability of town centres, and economic diversification.

Appraisal of the LDP Strategic Policies

- 18 The 12 LDP Strategic Policies were then subject to a detailed SA, with suggestions made for the mitigation of negative effects, where appropriate. Where available, evidence from the SA Scoping Stage and from other researched sources has been used to justify the prediction of effects.
- 19 All of the strategic policies received an average overall rating of blue (neutral) or green (no sustainability constraints and development acceptable). Recommendations have been provided to further improve the sustainability rating of individual policies. Some policies performed negatively against a number of the environmental SA objectives, in particular those relating to the use of resources, climate change and energy efficiency. This is particularly the case with the strategic transportation policy. A more indirect or neutral impact has been observed for SA objectives relating to waste and minerals. Overall, the set of strategic policies performs well against social and economic SA objectives, such as the development strategy, housing, culture, employment and community.

Appraisal of the Site Specific Allocations Selection Methodology

- 20 Rhondda Cynon Taf is using a Candidate Site Assessment Methodology (CSAM) to identify preferred site allocations for housing, employment and mixed uses. An SA was undertaken of the proposed methodology considering whether the methodology used is compatible with the SA Framework, and whether it is a robust and defensible methodology from a sustainability perspective.
- 21 The CSAM involves a two stage process assessment process. The first stage consists of initial appraisal, looking at physical characteristics, history, location and potential for development. Following on from this, a more detailed assessment would be made of the sites against 6 assessment categories. These assessment categories were subject to Sustainability Appraisal, and it was found that generally, the CSAM would lead to a selection of sites that should positively progress most of the SA objectives. However, it was recommended that the sustainability of the method could be improved by adding a 7th category that estimates the potential of the site for environmentally sound building construction, management or production techniques. Site selection could also consider the potential of sites to enhance the environment, for example through providing green corridors between wildlife habitats.
- 22 It is recommended that in more detailed site selection assessments, further sustainability appraisal be carried out individually on the larger

strategic sites to evaluate any potential impact and inform possible mitigation measures for strategic development sites.

Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening

- 23 European Directive 92/43/EEC (The Habitats Directive) requires that the effects of plans on sites of European nature conservation importance (Natura 2000 sites) are assessed to ensure the integrity of the sites will not be adversely affected, and this process is known as 'Appropriate Assessment'.
- 24 Enfusion, in association with Soltys Brewster Ecology has undertaken the first stage (the Screening stage) of Appropriate Assessment for the Rhondda Cynon Taf. This involved the consideration of the likely significant effects of the emerging LDP on the 4 Natura 2000 sites within or adjacent to the Rhondda Cynon Taf boundary: Cwm Cadlan Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Coedydd Neddy Mellte SAC, Cardiff Beech Woods SAC and Blaen Cynon SAC.
- 25 The screening assessment determined that there is potential for negative impacts on only one of the 4 sites, Blaen Cynon SAC, due to proposed residential development to the south and west of the SAC, in addition to plans to upgrade the A465 Abergavenny / Hirwaun to a dual carriageway. The report recommends further Appropriate Assessment is undertaken early in 2007 to ascertain what, if any, effect this may have on the site's integrity and to inform the continued development of the LDP. The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report is available separately.

Monitoring the Implementation of the LDP

- 26 Both the Planning Act (2004) and the SEA Directive require that a Monitoring Strategy be prepared for publication to monitor the main significant sustainability effects of the LDP, and the Council believes that all stakeholders should have an early opportunity to be part of the process.
- 27 The Council intends to develop one set of indicators to meet the monitoring requirements for both the LDP and SA processes. The key sustainability issues identified in the SA Scoping Report, including consultation, and the SA of the Preferred Strategy have assisted in developing potential indicators and targets for monitoring, which will contribute to the overall Monitoring Strategy for the LDP.

Likely Significant Effects of the Plan & How the SA has Influenced the LDP

- 28 The SA of the Rhondda Cynon Taf's LDP has found that the Preferred Strategy will make a significant contribution to the progression of

Sustainable Development Objectives for Rhondda Cynon Taf within the context of the expected growth in population and employment.

- 29 The key challenge for the County Borough in the preparation of its LDP will be to minimise the sustainability impacts arising from increased population and employment growth, and manage the accompanying social, cultural and environmental changes. Of particular note is the cumulative effect of development within the County Borough, which when combined with the overall redevelopment plans for South Wales will increase the use of energy and natural resources. The scale of development is also likely to lead to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions which will contribute to global climatic changes.
- 30 Whilst there are arising from the proposed level of growth, there are also extensive opportunities to improve quality of life across the County Borough, minimising inequalities and improving opportunities for employment.
- 31 The SA has influenced the development of the LDP in a number of ways. For example, in the SA of the Objectives it was recommended to insert a preference to refurbish buildings rather than opting for new build, and to favour the use of brownfield land, concentrate development in existing settlements and employ sustainable construction and management techniques. All of these (and three other key recommendations) have been agreed by Rhondda Cynon Taf Borough Council and the Preferred Strategy has been amended accordingly. Similarly, the SA of Strategic Policies recommended twelve amendments to the policies including recommendations to reduce car usage and 'out-commuting' promote public transport, walking and cycling and improve energy efficiency. Ten of these twelve recommendations have been agreed by Rhondda Cynon Taf Borough Council and incorporated into the Preferred Strategy.

Next Steps

- 32 The LDP process will be ongoing until the final LDP adoption which is proposed for 2007. Enfusion will then carry out a further SA, to determine whether the last stage of policy refinement has progressed the SA Objectives further and a Revised SA Report will be published alongside the LDP Submission Document.
- 33 During the LDP preparation process there will be statutory periods for consultation on both the LDP documents and the accompanying SAs.

Further Information & How to Comment on the SA Report and the LDP

- 34 Rhondda Cynon Taf Borough Council is inviting comments and suggestions on this SA report and the LDP Preferred Strategy during the public consultation period (January-February, 2007).

Representation can be made and further information obtained by contacting the Council by post at:

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Development Planning Team
Development and Regeneration Unit
Valleys Innovation Centre
Navigation Park
Abercynon
CF45 4SN

or by email at LDP@rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council commissioned consultants Enfusion in 2005 to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) on the Local Development Plan (2006-2021). This report presents progress on the SA work so far with the LDP to Preferred Strategy stage. It is published for public consultation alongside the Preferred Strategy of the LDP and details of how to comment are given at the end of this section.

The Local Development Plan

- 1.2 The UK Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004² requires each authority in Wales to prepare a Local Development Plan (LDP) for its area, comprising a strategy, integrated set of policies and site specific proposals. Authorities are required by law to prepare LDPs with the overall objective of contributing to sustainable development (SD). The Welsh Assembly Government's Sustainable Development Scheme (2000, revised 2004) defines SD as "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". The LDP is being prepared in accordance with guidance produced by the Welsh Assembly Government "Local Development Plan Manual, June 2006".

SA Scoping & Issues for Sustainability

- 1.3 During early 2006 a scoping process for the SA was carried out to help ensure that the SA would cover the key sustainability issues that are relevant to the development planning system for Rhondda Cynon Taf. Relevant plans, programmes and other baseline information were reviewed to develop a wider understanding of issues and priorities, together with a description of the current and predicted social, economic and environmental characteristics of the area.
- 1.4 From these studies, the key sustainability problems, issues and opportunities identified are associated with the need to manage/adapt to climate change; the inter-related problems of high levels of economic inactivity, poor quality housing and health problems; transport & accessibility; protection of landscape & biodiversity with development pressure on greenfield sites; retaining town centre vitality; and protection of cultural heritage.
- 1.5 An SA Framework was compiled and included SA Objectives that aim to resolve the issues and problems identified. It was proposed to use these SA Objectives to test the LDP during its preparation. This approach and the proposals for testing the development planning

² The Assembly LDP Regulations became effective On 15 October 2005.

process was written up into an SA Scoping Report that was sent to a wide range of organisations and was also made available on the Council's website. Comments were invited and received from a number of these organisations, which helped to improve the SA Framework.

- 1.6 Each stage of the preparation of the LDP was appraised systematically using the SA Objectives. Where it was considered that there were opportunities to enhance the sustainability of the proposals, recommendations were made. These were primarily with respect to minimising the sustainability impacts arising from increased population and employment growth, and managing the accompanying social, cultural and environmental changes. The majority of these recommendations have been accepted by Rhondda Cynon Taf.

LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS OF THE PLAN

- 1.7 The SA of the Rhondda Cynon Taf's LDP has found that the Preferred Strategy will make a significant contribution to the progression of Sustainable Development Objectives for Rhondda Cynon Taf within the context of the expected growth in population and employment.
- 1.8 The key challenge for the County Borough in the preparation of its LDP will be to minimise the sustainability impacts arising from increased population and employment growth, and manage the accompanying social, cultural and environmental changes. Of particular note is the cumulative effect of development within the County Borough, which when combined with the overall redevelopment plans for South Wales will increase the use of energy and natural resources. The scale of development is also likely to lead to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions which will contribute to global climatic changes.
- 1.9 Whilst there are issues arising from the proposed level of growth, there are also extensive opportunities to improve quality of life across the County Borough, minimising inequalities and improving opportunities for employment.

HOW THE SA HAS INFLUENCED THE LDP

- 1.10 The SA has influenced the development of the LDP in a number of ways. For example, in the SA of the Objectives it was recommended to insert a preference to refurbish buildings rather than opting for new build, and to favour the use of brownfield land, concentrate development in existing settlements and employ sustainable construction and management techniques. All of these (and three other

³ The Assembly LDP Regulations became effective On 15 October 2005.

⁴ Sustainability Appraisal of UDPs in Wales 2002. Paragraph 4.32 (Presentation of Findings) states that "The purpose of a Sustainability Appraisal is not to produce a document. The real purpose is to undertake a process that helps to shape the plan being produced. Recommendations and conclusions are the purpose of the appraisal and should be what the appraisal report is centred on.

key recommendations) have been agreed by Rhondda Cynon Taf Borough Council and the Preferred Strategy has been amended accordingly. Similarly, the SA of Strategic Policies recommended twelve amendments to the policies including recommendations to reduce car usage and 'out-commuting', promote public transport, walking and cycling and improve energy efficiency. Ten of these twelve recommendations have been agreed by Rhondda Cynon Taf Borough Council and the Preferred Strategy has been amended accordingly

HOW TO COMMENT ON THE SA REPORT AND THE LDP

- 1.11 Rhondda Cynon Taf Borough Council is inviting comments and suggestions on this SA report and the LDP Preferred Strategy during the public consultation period (January-February, 2007). Representation can be made and further information obtained by contacting the Council by post at:

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
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2.0 BACKGROUND

PURPOSE OF THE SA REPORT

- 2.1 Sustainable Development is the core principle of the reformed planning system and the purpose of SA is to ensure better integration of sustainability objectives during the preparation of Development Plans.
- 2.2 Sustainability Appraisal is a tool that measures and evaluates the predicted social, environmental and economic effects of the Development Plan and tests the performance of its objectives, policies and proposals in order to assess their contribution to sustainable development. Conducted throughout the plan preparation process, the SA identifies potential conflicts, suggests mitigation measures and enables appropriate amendments to be made, therefore ensuring that future decisions accord with sustainable development principles.

PURPOSE OF THE LDP

- 2.3 The purpose of the LDP is to provide a vision for the Borough and set out key aims, objectives, policies and strategic options for development in the County Borough. The contents and the objectives of the LDP are set out below. However, this SA Report should be read in conjunction with the LDP itself.

Contents of the Pre deposit LDP

- Foreword
 - Introduction
 - Policy Framework
 - Key Issues in Rhondda Cynon Taf
 - Vision and Objectives of the Rhondda Cynon Taf *
 - Local Development Plan
 - Spatial Strategy Options
 - Site Specific Allocations*
 - The Preferred Strategy Option*
 - Strategic Policies*
- 2.4 In accordance with LDP Regulation 15, the Preferred Strategy of Rhondda Cynon Taf's Pre deposit LDP (those elements marked with a *) have been subjected to this SA.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

LDPs

- 2.5 Part 6, section 62 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004⁵ requires each authority in Wales to prepare a local development plan

⁵ The Assembly LDP Regulations became effective On 15 October 2005.

(LDP) for its area, comprising a strategy and integrated set of policies and site specific proposals. Authorities are required by Section 39 (2) to prepare LDPs with the objective of contributing to sustainable development. The Assembly Government's Sustainable Development Scheme (2000, revised 2004) defines it as "*development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*".

SA/SEA

- 2.6 Section 62(6) of the Planning Act states that the authority must carry out an appraisal of the sustainability of the LDP and prepare a report of the findings as an integral part of the process of plan preparation.
- 2.7 Authorities must also comply with the European Union Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, (commonly known as the *SEA Directive*). The Directive has been incorporated into Welsh law by virtue of the *Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations)*. Authorities must comply with these SEA Regulations as well as the LDP Regulations ("*The Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations*" 2005) under Part 6 of the 2004 Act when preparing LDPs.
- 2.8 The LDP Regulations recommend an integrated approach to SA/SEA to avoid 'unnecessary confusion and duplication'. Therefore, the SA for the Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP is being undertaken to incorporate the requirements of SEA as one integrated process, hereafter referred to as SA.
- 2.9 The process adopted in undertaking Rhondda Cynon Taf's SA complies with the statutory procedures for LDP preparation and SAs of development plans set out within "*The Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan)(Wales) Regulations*" 2005. This report has also been prepared in line with guidance produced by the Welsh Assembly Government in June 2006 ("*Local Development Plan Manual*").

⁶ Sustainability Appraisal of UDPs in Wales 2002. Paragraph 4.32 (Presentation of Findings) states that "The purpose of a Sustainability Appraisal is not to produce a document. The real purpose is to undertake a process that helps to shape the plan being produced. Recommendations and conclusions are the purpose of the appraisal and should be what the appraisal report is centred on.

⁷ The Assembly LDP Regulations became effective On 15 October 2005.

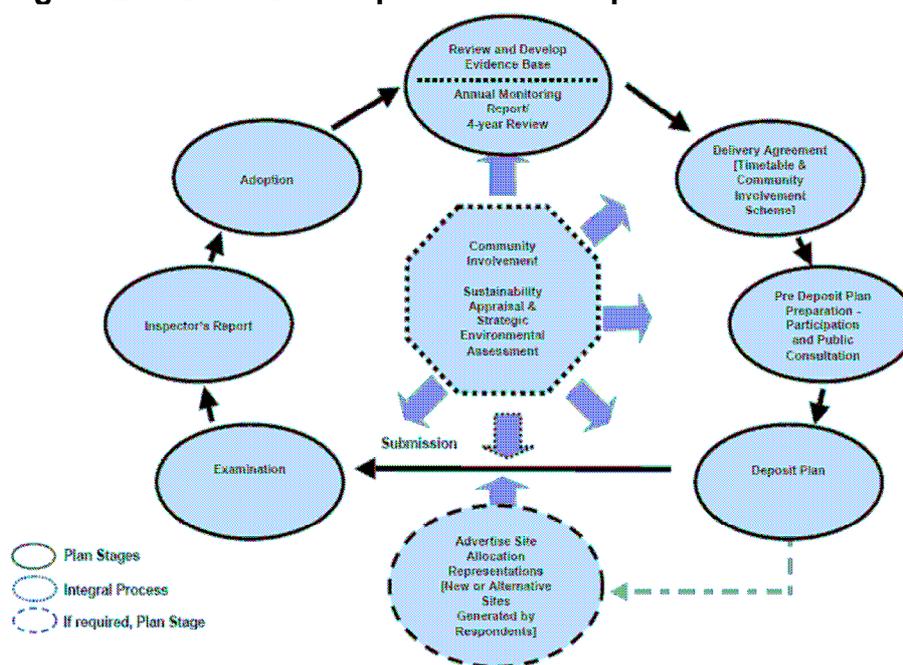
⁸ Sustainability Appraisal of UDPs in Wales 2002. Paragraph 4.32 (Presentation of Findings) states that "The purpose of a Sustainability Appraisal is not to produce a document. The real purpose is to undertake a process that helps to shape the plan being produced. Recommendations and conclusions are the purpose of the appraisal and should be what the appraisal report is centred on.

⁹ Sustainability Appraisal of UDPs in Wales 2002. Paragraph 4.32 (Presentation of Findings) states that "The purpose of a Sustainability Appraisal is not to produce a document. The real purpose is to undertake a process that helps to shape the plan being produced. Recommendations and conclusions are the purpose of the appraisal and should be what the appraisal report is centred on.

Sustainable Development in Wales

- 2.10 The Welsh Assembly Government's objectives to integrate sustainable development and spatial planning within the new LDP is reiterated in their guidance "*Local Development Plans Wales*" (2005), advising that the planning system should provide for an adequate and continuous supply of land to meet society's needs in a way that is consistent with overall sustainability principles and objectives. This commitment to creating sustainable communities in Wales is reflected in section 62 of the 2004 Act, stating that authorities in Wales must also have regard to the Welsh Assembly Government's national land use policy ("*Planning Policy Wales*") as well as the Wales Spatial Plan ("*People, Places, Futures*", 2004) in the preparation of LDPs and their SAs.
- 2.11 Under the new system, the LDP preparation process is divided into 7 stages of a cycle, as detailed in figure 2.1, and is designed to incorporate best practice regarding sustainable development and the requirements of the SEA Regulations.

Figure 2.1: Local Development Plan Preparation Process



"*Local Development Plans Wales*" (2005)

- 2.12 Throughout this pre-deposit participation stage (LDP Regulation 14), authorities must undertake sustainability appraisal of the strategic options and work with the environmental consultation bodies (under the SEA Regulations) and stakeholders on an initial Sustainability Appraisal report. This will inform the decision-making process and identification and development of the preferred strategy. At pre-deposit public consultation stage (LDP Regulation 15), authorities must consult on the initial sustainability appraisal report alongside the preferred

strategy document. Environmental consultation bodies under the SEA Regulations are the Countryside Council for Wales, the Environment Agency and Cadw.

- 2.13 Responses to the pre-deposit public consultation should be used to inform the development of the deposit plan and revisions to the sustainability appraisal report. At deposit and submission stages, it should be clear what elements of the appraisal have informed the policies and proposals in the plan.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE SEA DIRECTIVE/REGULATIONS

- 2.14 The SEA Regulations are described in 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' produced by the Welsh Assembly Government, The Scottish Executive and the Department of the Environment in September 2005. These guidelines set out certain requirements for reporting the SEA process, and specify that if an integrated appraisal is undertaken (i.e. SEA is subsumed within the SA process, as for the SA of this Core Strategy), then the sections of the SA Report that meet the requirements set out for reporting the SEA process must be clearly signposted. Consequently the requirements for reporting the SEA process are set out below, and the section of this SA Report that progresses each requirement indicated.
- 2.15 *An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans:*
- Section 2 of this SA Report sets out the contents and Section 6 sets out the Objectives of the Local Development Plan. The relationship with other relevant plans is also summarised in Section 2 (Statutory Requirements).
- 2.16 *The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan:*
- Section 3 of this SA Report summarises the relevant baseline conditions for sustainability (including the state of relevant environmental aspects) in Rhondda Cynon Taf. A separate baseline report (a 'living' document) is also available to provide this information in more detail. The likely evolution of current conditions ('trends') are also detailed in this baseline report.
- 2.17 *The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected:*
- Where relevant and available, information regarding particular areas has been included in the baseline report. Good practice guidance specifies that the contents and level of detail of information required should be relevant to the particular plan being assessed. The role of the LDP is to set out a *strategic* spatial

strategy and *strategic* policies – and therefore it does not deal with site specific issues. Accordingly, the baseline information is provided at a scale which remains strategic but relevant at the District level.

- 2.18 *Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance:*

Section 3 of this Report summarises existing sustainability problems (including environmental problems) for Rhondda Cynon Taf.

- 2.19 *The environmental protection objectives relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation:*

- A separate report (a 'living document') entitled 'Review of Relevant Plans and Programmes' provides the summary of objectives from relevant Plans and Programmes for sustainability in Rhondda Cynon Taf (including environmental objectives), and the implications of these objectives for the LDP.

- 2.20 *The likely significant effects on the environment including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects:*

- The SA Framework of Objectives presented in Section 3 of this Report shows which of the issues listed by the SEA Regulations are progressed by which SA Objectives. This assures that all of the issues are considered during the assessment of each part of the LDP, since each part of the LDP is assessed against each SA objective. The likely effects of the LDP (including environmental effects, as well as an indication of whether the effect is likely to be cumulative, short, medium and long-term etc) are summarised in sections 5 and 6: see also appendices IV and V.

- 2.21 *The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan:*

- Where significant adverse effects, including environmental effects, have been predicted, the SA has sought where possible to identify means of offsetting these effects. These are provided in the form of recommendations in the appraisal matrices (see Appendix V) and summarised in sections 5 and 6.

2.22 *An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties encountered in compiling the required information:*

- Justification for the different options considered in the LDP is provided in section 5 (alternatives considered). Details of how the assessment was undertaken are provided in section 4 of this report (appraisal methodology). Any difficulties encountered in compiling information are summarised in section 3: Limitations/ Data Gaps.

2.23 *A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring:*

- Measures envisaged concerning the monitoring of the sustainability effects (including environmental effects) of implementing the LDP are provided in Section 7 of this Report.

2.24 *A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings:*

- The non-technical summary is set out at the beginning of this SA Report and is available as a separate document.

HABITATS DIRECTIVE: APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

2.25 European Directive 92/43/EEC (The Habitats Directive) requires that the effects of plans on sites of European nature conservation importance (Natura 2000 sites) are assessed to ensure the integrity of the sites will not be adversely affected, and this process is known as 'Appropriate Assessment'.

2.26 Enfusion, in association with Soltys Brewster Ecology has undertaken the first stage (the Screening stage) of Appropriate Assessment for the Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP. This involved the consideration of the likely significant effects of the emerging LDP on the 4 Natura 2000 sites within or adjacent to the Rhondda Cynon Taf boundary: Cwm Cadlan Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Coedydd Nedd y Mellte SAC, Cardiff Beech Woods SAC and Blaen Cynon SAC.

2.27 The screening assessment determined that there is potential for negative impacts on only one of the 4 sites, Blaen Cynon SAC, due to proposed residential development to the south and west of the SAC, in addition to plans to upgrade the A465 Abergavenny / Hirwaun to a dual carriageway. The report recommends further Appropriate Assessment is undertaken early in 2007 to ascertain what, if any, effect this may have on the site's integrity and to inform the continued development of the LDP. The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report is available separately.

¹⁰ Case C-06-/04 (Commission v United Kingdom). European Court of Justice (ECJ) .20 October 2005.

3.0 SUSTAINABILITY CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The SA Guidance sets out a phased approach to the SA process:
Stage A – Scoping: Context and Objectives and Baseline information.
Stage B - Developing and Refining Options
Stage C - Appraising the Effects of the draft Plan
Stage D - Consulting on the draft Plan and Sustainability Appraisal Report
Stage E - Monitoring Implementation of the Plan

SA SCOPING

- 3.2 Authorities undertaking preparatory work in developing an LDP information and evidence base must also produce a sustainability appraisal scoping report. A scoping study with the environmental consultation bodies and stakeholders (i.e. other local partners) should identify the main issues to be addressed and level of detail required.
- 3.3 The Sustainability Scoping Report for Rhondda Cynon Taf was prepared by Enfusion in February 2006, to present the results of the sustainability scoping process. Plans and Programmes relevant to the LDP were reviewed and baseline conditions collated in order to identify sustainability problems, objectives and key issues for Rhondda Cynon Taf. An appraisal method was suggested. Taking into account initial consultation (including an SA Technical Workshop) the scoping report presented the draft SA Framework of objectives. This framework aims to resolve the issues and problems identified, and suggest possible indicators and targets to assist with future monitoring of the sustainability of the LDP after it has been adopted.

CONSULTATION

- 3.4 The draft SA Scoping Report was published for public consultation on 23rd March 2006 for a five week period ending on 28th April 2006. The Scoping Report was sent to three statutory Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) consultees, Countryside Council Wales, Cadw (Welsh Historic Monuments) and the Environment Agency Wales. As the process comprises an integrated appraisal combining SEA and Sustainability Appraisal (SA), the Scoping Report was also sent to key stakeholders and made available on the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council website. Changes made to the SA framework and monitoring indicators and targets have been incorporated into this report. Suggested changes to the Plans and Policy Review and Baseline information prepared in the scoping stage can be amended in any future revisions to either document. The scoping report and the consultation results report are attached in appendices I and II.

SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES FOR RHONDDA CYNON TAF

3.5 The following list shows the sustainability issues that were identified during the scoping process:

Environment

- Rhondda Cynon Taf has a large amount of land designated for biodiversity protection.
- The previous industrial use of the area has led to degradation of the water environment.
- There are 20 wind turbines in the Plan area. Part of the County Borough is encompassed by one of the proposed TAN8 Strategic Search Areas Wales.
- The topography and water environment of Rhondda Cynon Taf means that it is prone to flooding, especially along river frontages where ribbon development has occurred.
- 4.2% of the Brecon Beacons National Park lies within the plan area to the north.
- 94.1% of the land in Rhondda Cynon Taf is of Grade 4 or 5 (low grade).
- Degradation of the landscape.

Waste

- Rhondda Cynon Taf show a net import of waste to its' landfill sites of 132,000 tonnes in 2003
- Rhondda Cynon Taf has shown a relative decrease in municipal waste generated compared to neighbouring County Boroughs.

Development

- The undulating nature of the topography of the area will guide suitability of locations for development.
- Rhondda Cynon Taf's foul drainage system is old and overloaded.

Communities/Health

- Rhondda Cynon Taf ranks 5th in England and Wales (out of 376 areas), for the proportion of population with a limiting long-term illness, and general health 'not good'.
- 17 of Rhondda Cynon Taf's 53 electoral wards are amongst the 100 most deprived in Wales
- 53% of the housing stock is terraced.
- Depopulation affecting the valleys
- Decreasing population

Transport

- Away from the two-north/south main routes, accessibility in the County Borough is poor.
- 62% of people travel to work by car, ranking 19th out of 376 for England and Wales, however, 31.6% of households do not have a car.
- Poor access to facilities

Culture

- Rhondda Cynon Taf has a rich cultural heritage but few sites are statutorily protected.
- Rhondda Cynon Taf has the highest percentage of Welsh speakers in Mid Glamorgan.

Employment

- 18.8% of all residents work outside the County Borough, the third largest percentage net outflow in Wales.
- The County Borough is covered by Objective 1 European funding. The Gross Domestic Product for Rhondda Cynon Taf was estimated, at the time of Objective 1 designation, as being 64.5% of the EU average.
- The majority of people are employed in manufacturing (22.9%)
- 221.61 ha of land allocated for employment in the previous plan has not been taken up
- 44% of the population have no qualifications.
- Mineral extraction is an important industry within the economy of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Potential sustainability issues

3.6 Key trends identified from the available baseline data, and therefore potential sustainability issues, are as follows:

- An increase in emissions per capita of carbon dioxide (CO₂) as a result of car usage over other forms of transport
- A difficulty in providing adequate water supplies for parts of Wales during dry summers by 2025
- An increase in flooding in low lying areas
- An increase in renewable energy projects
- A decrease in water quality through an inadequate sewerage system
- A decrease in municipal waste generated
- An increase in household waste recycling
- A decrease in soil quality
- Continuing depopulation
- An increase in deprivation
- An increase in ill-health
- An increase in drug-related crime
- An increase in development on unprotected sites which are potentially of importance for cultural or archaeological heritage
- A decrease in speakers of the Welsh Language
- Increase in tourism
- An increase in people travelling to work by car
- An increase in roads and other access routes

LIMITATIONS/ DATA GAPS

Uncertainties and Limitations

- 3.7 The principal uncertainty that the SA revealed was during the Compatibility Analysis of the Candidate Site Assessment Methodology. This is because the CSAM focuses on the location of a site, whereas there are a range of other factors that will determine the overall sustainability of a development (for example site density, construction methods). It is therefore not possible to predict accurately the overall sustainability effect of a new development or growth area, until further details are available.
- 3.8 The SA of Strategic Policies has shown that at a strategic level it is not always possible to measure impacts on each of the SA Objectives. For example, the impacts of anthropogenic climate change are difficult to predict, particularly at the regional level. The baseline study for this SA showed that greenhouse gases (overall/ per capita) information is not available. Thus, all policies should reflect the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change by choosing the most sustainable options for development, for example, by making use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and reducing car usage.

Baseline Data Gaps

- 3.9 It is inevitable that there will be information gaps in the baseline information, particularly during this initial SA/SEA process. This is because the need to collect data for SA/SEA is new and part of the purpose of the process is to identify what data would be beneficial and practical to collect as part of subsequent monitoring of the effects of the LDP and to inform the preparation of future plans. The baseline matrices present topics and potential information types for which it could be useful to collect data, including the topics specified by the SEA Directive. A brief summary of information gaps from the SA Scoping process is depicted in the table below:

Summary of Data Gaps

Topic	Data Gaps
Biodiversity*	Populations of Wild Birds – limited or no data
Climatic Factors*	Greenhouse gas emissions (overall/ per capita)
Water Resources	River habitat classification
Landscape and Townscape	Special Landscape Areas, LANDMAP, Countryside Strategy, Cynon and Taff River Park
Minerals	Building stone Oil and gas (hydrocarbons) Forecasts

* = SEA Topic

THE SA FRAMEWORK

- 3.10 The SA Framework provides a system for describing, analysing and comparing the sustainability effects of the LDP.
- 3.11 The SA Framework presented in Table 2.1 (below) includes a set of sustainability objectives together with decision-aiding questions. The decision aiding questions have been designed to aid the appraiser by improving objectivity as they clarify the details of the sustainability issues relevant to the sustainability objectives. They help avoid duplication and demonstrate a clear audit trail.
- 3.12 To effectively aid the LDP preparation process, it is important that the SA Framework reflects local circumstances specific to Rhondda Cynon Taf that can be influenced by the new development planning system. As a spatial plan the LDP will not be able to address every sustainability issue and the decision-aiding questions intend to reflect the *potential* of the LDP to progress sustainability objectives.
- 3.13 The table below shows the SA Framework Objectives and decision-aiding questions. Changes and additions to the table recommended during the public consultation period (March-April 2006) are in red and have been struck through and italicised respectively. This consultation period is described in detail in Appendix II.

TABLE 3.1: SA Framework Objectives and Decision-Aiding Questions

	SA OBJECTIVE	DECISION AIDING QUESTIONS WILL THE POLICY...?
1	Housing	
	Provide for the overall housing requirement through a mix of dwelling types catering for all needs to promote integrated and thriving communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver good quality housing ▪ Promote a mix of housing size, type and tenure within each settlement? ▪ Promote housing that meets the requirements of those with special needs? ▪ Help meet affordable housing needs to allow local people to remain within communities? ▪ Protect and enhance the existing housing stock including the characteristic terraces
2	Culture and Heritage	
	Promote, protect and enhance the Culture and Heritage including	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protect and enhance areas and buildings of historical, archaeological or cultural

	landscape, archaeology and language	<p>importance, and the historic landscape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have regard for the entire historic environment, whether protected by legislation or not. ▪ <i>Promote, protect and enhance the Culture and Heritage, including landscape, archaeology and language</i> ▪ Protect and enhance the industrial heritage ▪ Promote the retention of the Welsh language ▪ Promote sustainable access to cultural sites
3	Communities	
	Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage provision of local community facilities and employment opportunities in accessible locations ▪ Help reduce disparities between the northern and southern wards ▪ Promote access to education for all ▪ Consider the needs of vulnerable groups ▪ Plan places with opportunities for active citizenship to promote community engagement ▪ Accommodate meeting places for different cultures ▪ Promote mixed development ▪ Provide equality of access for all
4	Health	
	Provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote provision of and access to healthcare facilities ▪ Prevent unacceptable levels of noise, light, odour and air pollution ▪ Provide spaces such as allotments which will promote healthy eating ▪ Protect existing open spaces ▪ Promote provision of facilities for physical recreational activities and play ▪ <i>Public access to natural</i>

		<p><i>greenspace</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Air quality indicators including NOx and ozone figures</i>
5	Economy	
	Provide for a sustainable economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage local growth, especially in areas of high unemployment and economic inactivity ▪ Encourage appropriate inward and indigenous investment ▪ Support the rural economy ▪ Promote good quality sustainable tourism ▪ Ensure the allocation of land to accommodate the economic needs of the population ▪ Maintain an appropriate land bank ▪ Promote healthy town centres
6	Employment	
	Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maximise employment opportunities ▪ Provide various opportunities for a range of skills levels ▪ Provide jobs in accessible locations ▪ Accommodate training facilities to help develop a flexible skills base ▪ Promote good quality jobs within key sectors ▪ Reduce the need for out commuting from the Borough for work ▪ Support the retail hierarchy ▪ Promote healthy, vibrant and attractive town centres
7	Transport	
	Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide for alternatives to the private car and Improve public transport links within an integrated transport strategy ▪ Improve the existing road and rail network, especially to provide access to isolated areas ▪ Provide for safe and attractive walking and cycling ▪ Provide for appropriate levels of car parking to serve the

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> needs of Rhondda Cynon Taf Reduce the need to travel in new developments
8	Built Environment	
	Provide a high quality built environment that promotes community pride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure high standards of design in all new development Protect and enhance local character and distinctiveness, but recognise the role of innovation in the built environment Promote methods of sustainable construction <i>Energy and water efficiency of new buildings and developments</i> Promote Green Infrastructure for people and wildlife Promote high density development where appropriate
9	Landscape	
	Improve, protect and enhance the countryside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the improvement of the landscape where it has been degraded as a legacy of previous industrial use Protect and enhance designated areas Increase opportunities for enjoyment of the countryside where appropriate
10	Biodiversity	
	Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and native species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect and enhance valuable wildlife habitats and species, both those statutorily designated and those of local value Avoid and, where possible, reverse habitat fragmentation Improve, protect and enhance the biodiversity within the water environment Integrate protection and creation of habitat into the design of new development from the outset Promote ecologically based land management
11	Water	
	Promote <i>sustainable</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce and/or avoid pollution

	<p><i>water management including promoting use of sustainable drainage systems</i></p>	<p>to water <i>environment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote use of sustainable drainage systems ▪ Manage and avoid exacerbating flood risk especially along river frontages ▪ Manage and reduce flood risk rivers, minor water courses and sewerage by adopting SUDS and avoiding flood risk areas for new development ▪ Use water efficiently ▪ Protect groundwater sources ▪ Prevent new development that will exacerbate current foul drainage problems
12	Climate Change	
	<p>Manage the effects of climate change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider the likely impacts of climate change on all types of infrastructure, existing and new ▪ Provide habitat routes to allow species to adapt to the changing environment ▪ Minimise greenhouse gas emissions ▪ Contribute to a carbon-neutral community ▪ <i>Reduce flood risk to people, property and maintain integrity of floodplain.</i>
13	Energy	
	<p>Increase the supply of renewable energy and reduce energy consumption</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote energy efficiency ▪ Encourage the development of renewables, including micro-generation ▪ Encourage high standards of energy efficiency in all new developments
14	Land and Soils	
	<p>Promote efficient use of land and soils</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage safe restoration of previously developed land ▪ Re-use previously developed land and buildings as a priority, where appropriate ▪ Optimise use of greenfield land ▪ Prevent and control pollution to land
15	Waste	

	Minimise waste, especially waste to landfill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Further improve on good recycling performance including provision of facilities (domestic and commercial) ▪ Avoid, reduce, re-use, recycle and recover before disposal to landfill ▪ Support development of alternatives to landfill, including composting facilities and energy from waste ▪ Promote self sufficiency in terms of waste management where appropriate
16	Minerals	
	Promote efficient and appropriate use of minerals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safeguard mineral resources ▪ Reuse and recycle aggregates on site

4.0 APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The SA methodology involved appraising each element of the draft LDP systematically against the SA framework objectives.
- 4.2 Comments about whether the LDP is likely to progress or conflict with each SA objective were recorded in matrixes. Where significant conflicts or opportunities to enhance the sustainability of the proposals were identified, possible mitigation measures were considered and recommendations provided to amend the LDP contents accordingly. Evidence from the SA Scoping Stage (in particular the Plans and Programmes Review, and the Baseline information), and from other researched sources has been provided to justify the prediction of effects.
- 4.3 The impact of any sustainability effects were assessed as to whether they were:
- Negative (adverse), neutral or positive (beneficial)
 - Direct or indirect
 - Short, medium or long term,
 - Isolated or cumulative
 - Reversible or irreversible
 - Whether mitigation measures are realistically possible.
- 4.4 Three different assessment methods were employed; each adapted for varying elements of the LDP.

Compatibility Analyses

- 4.5 This method was applied to assess the extent to which the LDP objectives are compatible with the SA objectives and vice versa. It was also

used to judge whether the selection criteria for the site-specific allocations (rather than the identified sites) themselves comply with SA objective. The appraisal range is as follows:

- ++ Positive compatible
- + Compatible
- O Neutral, or not relevant to the SA objective
- Potential conflict
- Incompatible
- ? Uncertain - dependent on other factors or further details

Assessment to identify the most sustainable Spatial Strategy Option

4.6 The 5 options for the Spatial Strategy were assessed against each of the SA framework objectives and colour coded to illustrate their ability to progress the SA objectives. The most sustainable option was thus identified.

Strategic policy Appraisal

- 4.7 The 12 strategic policies were assessed in detail against the SA framework objectives, and colour coded to illustrate their ability to progress the SA objectives.
- 4.8 This enables not only a prediction on the sustainability impact for each of the strategic policies, but also the consideration of the cumulative effects of all of the strategic policies on the individual SA objectives. For example, this allows the impact of *all* strategic policies on, say, the biodiversity SA objective to be considered collectively. It may be that some policies have a potential negative effect, but combined with the other policies, this could be offset and reversed into a positive effect. Recommendations have been provide for each of the policies to improve their sustainability rating.

Categories of Sustainability Effects

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

- 4.9 The results and recommendations of the appraisals are presented in sections 5 and 6. All completed matrices can be found in the appendices.

5.0 PLAN ISSUES AND OPTIONS

SA OF LDP SPATIAL STRATEGY OPTIONS

- 5.1 Rhondda Cynon Taf's LDP is at Pre Deposit Plan Preparation (LDP Regulations 14 to 16) stage. The "*Draft Spatial Strategy And Preferred Options Paper*" (June 2006) set out for consultation the preferred options for the spatial vision, objectives, and strategy option, strategic policies as well as site-specific allocations. The document was informed by consultation responses on the first stage, the "*Delivery Agreement* (January 2006)" which included the production of a sustainability scoping report. The next document to be produced for consultation by Rhondda Cynon Taf Borough Council will be an updated version of the "*Draft Spatial Strategy And Preferred Options Paper*", the LDP (2006-2021) "Preferred Strategy", due for consultation in January 2007. The Preferred Strategy is to be read in conjunction with this SA Report.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- 5.2 Five options were put forward by Rhondda Cynon Taf for their Spatial Strategy. A number of strategy options were originally identified involving different levels and distribution of growth of potential growth distribution. These were refined through the pre-deposit consultation process to the following options:

Trends Based Strategy

- 5.3 *This strategy would involve a non-intervention or non-strategy scenario where the scale and location of development would be determined by market forces. This would probably result in large-scale growth in the south which would reflect previous and ongoing development pressures and rates of growth. Again, if linked to past trends, development in the valleys areas would be limited in comparison.*

Local Needs Strategy

- 5.4 *By concentrating on addressing development needs of each individual settlement a dispersed form of growth would be encouraged. This would reflect previous Local Plan policies where, in broad terms, proportionate development allocations were made to reflect the size and scale of associated settlement patterns.*

Consolidation Strategy

- 5.5 *By restricting development in the south to local needs only, growth would be encouraged in the upper and lower valley areas to maximise regeneration opportunities. This strategy would reflect that which was derived through the early stages of Unitary Development Plan preparation, which puts an emphasis on major policy intervention.*

Sustainable Growth Strategy

- 5.6 *This strategy option would involve the concentration of growth in several key areas which could potentially provide benefits of scale in terms of infrastructure improvements and enhance existing communities by provision of an appropriate mix of uses. Such sustainable and comprehensively planned growth could also assist in achieving regeneration objectives by focussing growth in locations where wider benefits are more likely to occur.*

Growth / Local Needs Strategy

- 5.7 *This strategy was derived as a result of the Visioning Events which took place in late January 2006. It acknowledges that due to constraints such as landform and topography, the sustainable growth scenario may be difficult to apply to valleys where there are limited opportunities for the lateral expansion of settlements. A hybrid strategy combining a growth scenario, where appropriate, and linked to a local needs strategy, which reflects the needs of all communities was considered to be a more sustainable and realistic option.*

Sustainability performance of 5 options

TRENDS BASED STRATEGY	LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY	CONSOLIDATION STRATEGY	SUSTAINABLE GROWTH STRATEGY	GROWTH / LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY
Absolute sustainability constraints to development.	No sustainability constraints and strategy acceptable.	Potential sustainability issues; mitigation and /or negotiation possible.	No sustainability constraints and strategy acceptable.	Strategy actively encouraged, as it would resolve existing sustainability problems.

- 5.8 The hybrid Local Needs/Sustainable Growth Strategy is the most sustainable option, scoring best against all sustainability objectives. Concentrating development in key settlements will assist in meeting environmental objectives in terms of energy and resource efficiency, use of previously developed land, and a reduced need to travel. It would also assist in addressing social and economic objectives by creating a critical mass for accessible community, health and education facilities, supporting the viability of town centres, and encouraging economic diversification by developing geographic clusters and new

sectors in strategic locations. The positive effects are enhanced when tailoring this strategy to local circumstances based on the social needs of the population, economic requirements in terms of access to resources or markets, environmental features, such as topography or habitats; or culture and heritage characteristics regarding historic legacy and local tradition.

- 5.9 The detailed appraisal matrix of Spatial Strategy Options can be found in Appendix IV.

6.0 PLAN POLICIES

SA of LDP VISION

- 6.1 The overall aim of the Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP is derived from its Community Plan. The LDP will seek to ensure that:
“Rhondda Cynon Taf will be a community where everyone who lives, works in or visits the area will enjoy the benefits of a better quality of life, achieving their potential, whilst helping to develop and protect the area for future generations.”
- 6.2 Since the draft Vision comprised an overarching and succinct statement, it cannot be expected to refer explicitly to all the different sustainability priorities for the County Borough. Consequently, it was not considered appropriate to undertake a detailed appraisal of the draft Vision against each SA Objective. Rather, a strategic overview of the sustainability implications of the draft Vision was undertaken.
- 6.3 It was considered that the Vision would provide a sustainable and positive component of the LDP, appropriate to the local context

COMPATIBILITY ANALYSIS (LDP /SA OBJECTIVES)

- 6.4 The LDP translates this vision into a series of social, economic and environmental objectives. These objectives are at the centre of the LDP and will form the basis for future policy development.
- 6.5 **The social objectives** of the Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP are to
- *Provide for the overall housing requirements through a mix of dwelling types catering for all needs to promote integrated and thriving communities*
 - *Promote and protect the culture and heritage including landscape, archaeology and language*
 - *Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all*
 - *Provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well being*
 - *Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport*
 - *Minimise waste, especially waste to landfill*

- 6.6 **The economic objectives** of the Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP are to
- *Provide for a sustainable economy*
 - *Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities*
 - *Promote efficient and appropriate use of minerals*
- 6.7 **The environmental objectives** of the Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP are to
- *Improve, protect and enhance the landscape*
 - *Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and native species*
 - *Improve, protect and enhance the water environment*
 - *Manage the effects of climate change*
 - *Increase the supply of renewable energy and reduce energy consumption*
 - *Promote efficient use of land and soils*
- 6.8 The SA found that most of the LDP objectives are identical to the SA objectives, and there were no incompatibilities when tested against the SA Framework. However, the LDP objectives address a variety of inter-thematic issues and it was suggested they would be more effective in guiding sustainable development if the headings (i.e. social, economic and environmental) under which they are grouped were to be removed.
- 6.9 The only potential conflicts appear between LDP objectives that refer to the construction of buildings (e.g. housing provision) and infrastructure, and environmental SA objectives, due to the lack of information regarding construction materials and location. These objectives could be improved by inserting a preference for refurbishing existing buildings rather than focusing on new-build. The objectives could also further encourage the use of brownfield land, and concentrate development within existing settlements. It would also be beneficial to include a requirement for sustainable construction and management techniques. It is recommended to add SA objective 8, which deals with these issues, to the LDP objectives.
- 6.10 SA objective 9 seeks to protect the countryside. The equivalent LDP objective should be expanded to that respect as it currently only refers to “landscape”.
- 6.11 To avoid the uncertainties about the compatibility of the economic and social LDP objectives with environmental SA objectives it is recommended to insert a reference to sustainable construction/production techniques, and a reference to supporting jobs and business in environmental protection/ innovation industries, such as recycling, pollution control, insulation etc. The detailed appraisal matrix can be found in Appendix III.

SA OF STRATEGIC POLICIES

- 6.12 The Pre-deposit LDP contains 12 Strategic Policies. Results and recommendations are presented for each of the policies, followed by an outline of the combined effects. The detailed appraisal matrix can be found in Appendix V.

SP 1 – Locational Strategy - Development in the North

- 6.13 *Development proposals in the Northern Strategy Area will encourage appropriate forms of growth to address problems of deprivation, and high levels of social and economic need, and will help build sustainable communities.*
- 6.14 The policy performs well on social and economic objectives, but there are some environmental concerns relating to increased development pressure in rural areas and how this will impact upon the rural environment and environmental and cultural heritage. Therefore the overall effect is neutral. The policy could receive a higher rating if a requirement is added to take into account local environmental and built characteristics as well as heritage. Further policies should ensure the reuse of land, buildings and materials, employ energy efficient construction and management techniques and consider the impact of construction on climate change.

SP 2 – Locational Strategy - Development in the South

- 6.15 *Development proposals in the Southern Strategy area will promote sustainable development by encouraging a managed form of growth which will consolidate existing settlement patterns, having regard to the function and identity of settlements and the surrounding countryside, and existing or potential capacity to provide necessary infrastructure.*
- 6.16 The policy progresses most sustainability objectives positively through consolidating development and having regard to function and identity. It could be more explicit about what is meant by ‘function’, and include specific reference to the need to address high levels of out-commuting.

SP 3 - Sustainable Development

- 6.17 *The development and use of land throughout the County Borough will be determined on the basis of the area’s housing, economic and social needs, protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment, prudent use of resources, and minimising energy consumption.*
- 6.18 The policy positively progresses most of the SA objectives, but could better reflect the UK Sustainable Development Strategy through consideration of environmental limits.

SP 4 - Housing Requirements

- 6.19 *Provision will be made for the development of 14,850 new dwellings in Rhondda Cynon Taf during the period 2006 – 2021. Residential development proposals will be expected to contribute to local housing needs. Where a community housing need has been established, the*

local planning authority will seek the provision of an appropriate proportion of affordable housing on large sites.

- 6.20 The policy performs well in meeting social and economic SA objectives, but could be expanded to consider environmental concerns equally well. It is recommended that the policy include reference to energy efficiency, sustainable construction and management techniques as well as a preference to reuse land, building and material.

SP 5 – Employment Requirements

- 6.21 *The economic development needs of Rhondda Cynon Taf will be met through maintaining a land bank for general employment and business park use during the period 2006 – 2021, and the retention of existing suitably located employment sites. Employment generating development proposals which diversify the local economy and extend the range of high value, well paid employment opportunities available locally will be encouraged.*

- 6.22 The concept of a flexible land bank for employment land and the promotion of high value and well-paid employment are supported, however the policy could be strengthened with stronger consideration of the environment. Further consideration should be given to opportunities to promote mixed-use development, rather than separating housing and employment development.

SP 6 Town Centres

- 6.23 *Proposals which contribute to sustaining and enhancing town centre vitality, cultural identity, attractiveness and viability will be encouraged.*
- 6.24 The policy performs well against economic, social and cultural SA objectives. Potential sustainability issues arise regarding environmental objectives, especially energy efficiency and use of resources. The inclusion of a reference to energy efficiency, biodiversity and reduction of greenhouse gases is recommended. Town centres could become showcases for good practice in sustainable urban design and architecture.

SP 7 - Transportation

- 6.25 *The Council will seek to implement transportation schemes and initiatives which will achieve sustainable regeneration, improve the economy, reduce congestion, and improve road safety by:-*
1. *Maintaining and improving accessibility for all sections of the community;*
 2. *Supporting transportation schemes which benefit the economy of the County Borough;*
 3. *Supporting and enhancing public transport; walking and cycling provision; and achieving integration of all modes of transportation;*
 4. *Minimising adverse effects of traffic and parking on local amenities and the environment as a whole.*

- 6.26 Although the policy adequately addresses those SA objectives relating to the economy, housing and communities, there are some problematic areas where mitigation would be difficult or expensive. The policy could perform better against environmental objectives if a requirement was added to reduce the need to travel by car and to better promote use of public transport, walking and cycling. This will have a positive effect on climate change, energy efficiency, biodiversity, use of land and protection against water, air and soil pollution.

SP 8 - Environmental Protection and Enhancement

- 6.27 *The quality of life in Rhondda Cynon Taf will be preserved or enhanced by the protection of the natural and historic environment and landscape from inappropriate development. Development proposals will not cause unacceptable harm to the following:-*

- a) *the quality of natural resources including water, air, soil and biodiversity;*
- b) *natural drainage of surface water;*
- c) *the character and quality of local landscapes and the wider countryside;*
- d) *local distinctiveness, character, townscape and setting of settlements; and,*
- e) *historic and cultural features of acknowledged importance.*

Where the benefits of development outweigh the conservation interest, mitigation measures required to offset adverse effects will be secured by planning conditions and/or obligations.

- 6.28 The policy attempts to address a wide range of environmental issues and the current policy wording may not be as effective as it could be in preventing proposals with a potential harmful effect. It is recommended to devise two separate policies, one addressing environmental concerns relating to physical appearance and cultural values, and another that deals with ecological aspects in terms of climate change and use of resources.

SP 9 - Community Infrastructure

- 6.29 *The impact of developments on local community infrastructure will need to be addressed by appropriate on site provision or contributions to off site improvements. Planning obligations will be sought to secure the necessary physical, social, economic and environmental infrastructure related to the development. Such requirements will include:*

- a) *affordable housing;*
- b) *open space and play facilities;*
- c) *investment in local education provision;*
- d) *highways and public transport improvements;*
- e) *environmental works including benefits to the natural and historic environment;*
- f) *waste management and recycling;*
- g) *investment in community and indoor leisure provision;*

h) public artworks.

6.30 The policy could be expanded to enable the use of planning obligations to provide environmental benefits as well as social ones. This would mainly relate to buildings and physical infrastructure where contributions could be required to employ sustainable, energy efficiency construction and building management technology or enable the use of renewable energy sources. Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides guidance on the scope and potential to impose planning obligations.

SP 10 - Waste

6.31 *The sustainable management of waste arising in Rhondda Cynon Taf will be facilitated by:*

- a) Supporting initiatives for waste reduction and encouraging more use of existing facilities for re-use and materials recovery;*
- b) the provision of new facilities for re-use, recycling and composting;*
- c) supporting the development of new technological initiatives;*
- d) significantly reducing the amount of waste disposed of by landfill;*
- e) encouraging new waste related initiatives which link with economic regeneration and community based strategies.*

6.32 The policy should be more specific in promoting the avoidance of waste, recycling facilities and sustainable treatment of residual waste. A statement could be included that any further landfill site will not be permitted, and that incineration should be connected to energy recovery if possible.

SP 11 – Renewable Energy

6.33 *Development proposals which contribute to meeting national renewable and energy efficiency targets will be encouraged where it can be demonstrated that there is no unacceptable impact upon the interests of agriculture, conservation, areas of ecological, wildlife and landscape importance and residential amenity.*

6.34 It is recommended that the second part of the policy starting with: “where it can be demonstrated that there is no unacceptable impact upon the interests of ...” be deleted. Any short term impact on agriculture, conservation, areas of ecological, wildlife and landscape importance and residential amenity would be reversed into a positive effect due to the long-term benefits of not burning fossil fuels.

SP 12 - Minerals

6.35 *Rhondda Cynon Taf will seek to contribute to regional demand in providing a continuous supply of minerals to meet the needs of industry and society as a whole, by: -*

- maintaining a 20 year landbank of permitted reserves and protecting future resources, taking into account the range and*

extent of resources and environmental and other planning considerations;

- *ensuring that impacts caused by mineral operations and the transportation of minerals are limited to an acceptable minimum;*
- *encouraging efficient usage, minimising production of waste, and promoting alternatives to primary aggregates.*

6.36 The policy has a neutral effect on social, cultural and economic SA objectives, but would positively progress the more environmental objectives. The sustainability performance of the policy could be increased by requiring stricter reclamation and remedial measures. The phrase “acceptable” (2nd bullet point) ought to be defined within the policy or qualified by adding “as defined by Rhondda Cynon Taf” or “to a limit proven safe.”

Summary of SA of Strategic Policies

6.37 All of the strategic policies received an average overall rating of blue (neutral) or green (no sustainability constraints and development acceptable). Recommendations have been provided to further improve the sustainability rating of individual policies. Some policies performed negatively against a number of the environmental SA objectives, in particular those relating to the use of resources, climate change and energy efficiency. This is particularly the case with the strategic transportation policy. A more indirect or neutral impact has been observed for SA objectives relating to waste and minerals. Overall, the set of strategic policies performs well against social and economic SA objectives, such as the development strategy, housing, culture, employment and community.

COMPATIBILITY ANALYSIS OF SITE SPECIFIC ALLOCATIONS SELECTION METHODOLOGY

6.38 Rhondda Cynon Taf is using a Candidate Site Assessment Methodology (CSAM) to identify preferred site allocations over 0.3 hectares for housing, employment and mixed uses. An SA was undertaken of the proposed methodology considering whether the methodology used is compatible with the SA Framework, and whether it is a robust and defensible methodology from a sustainability perspective.

6.39 The CSAM involves a two stage assessment process. The first stage consists of initial appraisal, looking at physical characteristics, history, location and potential for development. The initial selection process is followed by a more detailed performance analysis against 18 objectives divided into 6 areas:

Economic viability – *considering the location of the site with regard to market and workforce characteristics;*

Accessibility and ease of movement – considering the suitability of vehicular access to the site, location of the site with regard to public transport routes, and accessibility by foot or cycle to a range of community facilities;

Environmental capital – considering whether or not the site is at risk from flooding, would there result in the loss of agricultural land, is the site considered to be greenfield or brownfield land, whether or not the site is protected by environmental designations, whether the site would present an opportunity to remove an eyesore, and whether or not the site is considered to have environmental value;

Site context and character – whether topographical characteristics of the site may present an obstacle to development, whether development would have an impact on important views/vistas, whether the site is in close proximity to existing infrastructure and whether or not there would be potential adverse impact from adjoining land uses;

Continuity and enclosure – whether development of the site would provide continuity and enclosure in respect to adjacent land uses and whether it would contribute to an active high street frontage.

Potential use - Finally, an assessment will be made as to the potential use of the site.

- 6.40 These 6 assessment categories were subject to Sustainability Appraisal, and it was found that generally, the CSAM would lead to a selection of sites that should positively progress most of the SA objectives. However, it was recommended that the sustainability of the method could be improved by adding a 7th category that estimates the potential of the site for environmentally sound building construction, management or production techniques, for example proximity to renewable energy source (water/wind), orientation (passive solar energy), existing resources or features on site (topography and foliage to achieve shading/cooling), and the possibility to reuse existing buildings, demolition materials or infrastructure.
- 6.41 SA objective 14 seeks to protect land and soil. The site selection criteria would be more compatible (currently neutral/uncertain) by including the degree of contamination, scope for reclamation and potential for save restoration of existing structures. This is especially important for Rhondda Cynon Taf given its industrial legacy.
- 6.42 The criteria “site context and character” could be expanded to consider acceptance of potential uses by the local community. The existence of locally well-known present or past landmark features would be worth taking into account when determining suitable uses in respect of cultural heritage. Site selection could also consider the potential of sites to enhance the environment, for example through providing green corridors between wildlife habitats.
- 6.43 The ability to replace existing features or facilities (expected to be lost by the proposed use/development) to the same or better quality in reasonable proximity, as well as the potential to offset an identified

shortfall within the local areas, should also be assessed. This not only concerns ecologically but also recreationally important assets.

- 6.44 It is recommended that in more detailed site selection assessments, further sustainability appraisal be carried out individually on the larger strategic sites to evaluate any potential impact and inform possible mitigation measures for strategic development sites.

7.0 IMPLEMENTATION

PROPOSALS FOR MONITORING

- 7.1 Both the Planning Act (2004) and the SEA Directive require that a 'Monitoring Strategy' be prepared for publication to monitor the main significant sustainability effects of the LDP. Potential indicators and targets for each sustainability objective from the SA Framework have been developed and were consulted on during the public consultation scoping exercise from March to April, 2006 (see Appendix II). Changes and additions to the table recommended during the scoping are in red and have been struck through and italicised respectively. The monitoring strategy will be further developed alongside the progression of the LDP, and the SA process will continue to inform the strategy through ensuring targets and indicators make a positive contribution to sustainability.

Table 7.1: Sustainability Monitoring Targets and Indicators

	Potential Targets	Potential Indicators
Housing		
1	Reduce discrepancies between housing requirement, especially for affordable and special needs housing, and stock.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ratio of annual affordable or special needs housing requirement / stock of affordable or special needs housing ▪ Average house price compared with average earnings ▪ Proportion of households unable to purchase a property ▪ Population structure ▪ <i>Number of housing completions by dwelling type</i>
Culture and Heritage		
2	Increase proportion of new development that protects or enhances sites of historical and cultural interest Increase number of sites officially protected for their cultural, historical or archaeological importance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of sites designated for cultural heritage value ▪ Listed buildings ▪ Areas of high archaeological value ▪ Quality of sites
Communities		
3	All people to have access to a GP, post office, play area, pub and village hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage with access to a daily bus service ▪ Percentage with access to a GP, post office, play area, pub, village hall ▪ Distance to local services
	Reduce the number of wards that are among the 100 most deprived in Wales Increase percentage of people with qualifications and improve skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proportion of the population who live in wards that rank amongst the 100 most deprived in Wales ▪ Differences in car ownership between wards ▪ Gap in infant and early childhood death and illness between socio-economic groups ▪ Adult education ▪ Voluntary activity
Health		

	Potential Targets	Potential Indicators
	<p>Increase access to physical recreation facilities Design to encourage walking and cycling Decrease in the number of people with limiting long term illness or general health 'not good'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Life expectancy ▪ Death rates from circulatory disease, cancer, accidents and suicide ▪ Residents' description of their own health ▪ Proportion of residents who feel safe or fairly safe ▪ Area of space allocated for physical recreation ▪ Length of cycle routes and footpaths.
Economy		
	<p>Broaden Economic base Increase opportunities to work within the district Support rural economy Support Objective 1 funding aims</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of economic activity by sector ▪ Gross Domestic Product or Gross Value Added as a percentage of the EU average ▪ Allocations that provide premises for a range of different employment needs ▪ Number of visitors to Rhondda Cynon Taf ▪ <i>The number of new businesses in each borough at the start of each year (year by year comparison) and numbers employed north and south of Rhondda Cynon Taf</i>
Employment		
	<p>Decrease unemployment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of resident working age population employed ▪ Percentage of population receiving benefits ▪ Distribution of workforce across sectors (percentages) ▪ Proportion of workforce employed in the agricultural sector ▪ Percentage of people living as well as working within the County Borough ▪ Percentage of allocated employment land taken up
Transport		
	<p>Build on existing road and rail network Locate new development in sustainable locations,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage change in public transport use ▪ Number of public transport routes connecting service

Potential Targets	Potential Indicators
<p>reducing the need to travel Promote more sustainable modes of transport.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> centres with residential areas ▪ Length of cycle and walking routes ▪ Percentage of people travelling to work by car ▪ <i>Percentage of residents working population commuting to work outside council area</i> ▪ <i>Average commuting distance</i> ▪ <i>Average shopping distance per trip</i>
Built Environment	
<p>Increase opportunities for community participation in design of new developments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community perception of design quality ▪ Proportion of new developments delivering benefits for the public realm ▪ Energy efficiency of new buildings and developments
Landscape	
<p>Achieve favourable conditions of nationally and locally important landscape designations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proportion of designated and non designated landscapes and in favourable condition ▪ Change in countryside character and quality ▪ Change in access to the countryside by means other than the car ▪ Amount of new build within designated areas
Biodiversity	
<p>Protect and enhance the rich biodiversity Achieve an improvement in the water environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage change in Rhondda Cynon Taf BAP priority habitats and species ▪ Area, quality of habitats created, maintained and enhanced <i>and connectivity of biodiversity habitats (potentially categorised e.g. woodland)</i> ▪ Changes in populations size and distribution <i>of selected characteristic species</i> ▪ Proportion of new developments delivering habitat creation or restoration ▪ Improvement in fish stocks within the water environment ▪ <i>Areas of habitat lost as a result</i>

Potential Targets	Potential Indicators
	<p><i>of development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Area of buffer zones protecting habitats from potentially disturbing/ damaging developments, length of linear habitats created, maintained or enhanced, which increase the connectivity of biodiversity habitats</i>
Water	
<p>Improve water quality No development should exacerbate current foul drainage problems. <i>Flood Risk to be considered in new development.</i> <i>Reduce flood risk to people, property and maintain integrity of floodplain</i> Developments over x ha to incorporate sustainable drainage systems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ River water quality ▪ % of total classified river length complying with water quality objective (or of “good status”) ▪ Properties at risk from flooding ▪ <i>Properties at risk of flooding and amount of development within C1 and C2 defined by TAN15</i> ▪ % of new developments with Sustainable Drainage Systems ▪ Water consumption per household ▪ Development within groundwater Source Protection Zones
Climate Change	
<p>Decrease greenhouse gas emissions Decrease impacts from the effects of Climate Change <i>Reduce flood risk to people, property and maintain integrity of floodplain</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Average summer and winter temperatures in Rhondda Cynon Taf ▪ Flood events ▪ <i>Amount of development within C1 and C2 defined by TAN15</i> ▪ Emissions of greenhouse gases
Energy	
<p>Maximise the use of renewable energy Encourage efficient design in development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of developments and buildings meeting BREEAM Standards ▪ MW of energy generated from renewable sources ▪ Proportion of energy needs being met from renewable sources ▪ Energy consumption ▪ Percentage of land taken up through renewable energy projects such as wind turbines

Potential Targets	Potential Indicators
Land and Soils	
Percentage of development on previously developed land Decrease percentage of contaminated land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of new housing on previously developed land ▪ Development density ▪ Percentage of land classed as 'contaminated'
Waste	
Reduce tonnage of waste to landfill Move waste up the waste hierarchy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recycling rate ▪ Municipal waste recovery ▪ Access to Household Recycling Schemes/Recycling Banks ▪ Tonnage of household waste to landfill ▪ Waste per household ▪ Waste imports/exports ▪ <i>Number of fly-tipping incidents reported per annum</i> ▪ <i>Quantity of commercial waste produced, recycled, landfilled etc</i>
Minerals	
Increase percentage use of aggregates from secondary and recycled sources Balance development with environment, communities and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage use of aggregates from secondary and recycled sources

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The SA of Rhondda Cynon Taf's LDP has found that the Preferred Strategy will make a significant contribution to the progression of Sustainable Development Objectives for the County Borough, within the context of the expected growth in population and employment.
- 8.2 As a continuing process the SA of the next LDP preparation stages will ensure potentially significant sustainability effects are identified and relevant mitigation measures can be put in place. This will assist the LDP in further progressing the SA objectives.
- 8.3 The key challenge for the Borough in the preparation of its LDP will be to minimise the sustainability impacts arising from increased population and employment growth, and to manage the accompanying social, cultural and environmental changes.
- 8.4 Of particular note is the cumulative effect of development within the County Borough, which when combined with the overall redevelopment plans for South Wales will have significant effects on the use of energy and natural resources. The scale of development is also likely to lead to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions which will contribute to global climatic changes.
- 8.5 Whilst there are a number of potential environmental effects arising from the proposed level of growth, there are extensive opportunities to improve quality of life across the County Borough.
- 8.6 The majority of recommendations contained in this SA have been accepted by the County Borough and will assist in further strengthening the sustainability of the emerging LDP. Enfusion will continue to work with Rhondda Cynon Taf through the final stages of policy refinement and a Revised SA Report will be published alongside the LDP Submission Document.

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Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan

Sustainability Appraisal/
Strategic Environmental Assessment

Scoping Report
(Summary)

March 2006

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Report

- 1.1 This document has been prepared as the Scoping Report for the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan (LDP) 2006 - 2021. It sets out the key sustainability issues and objectives for the County Borough, and is intended, through consultation, to make the plan more sustainable. The issues and sustainability objectives identified during this Scoping stage will form the basis for subsequent SAs of the LDP. The goal of sustainable development¹¹ is to enable people to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising future generations.

Requirements for Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.2 In accordance with the Planning Act (2004)¹², LDPs must be subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The SA process assists Local Authorities to fulfil the requirement of “*contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development*” in land use plan making.
- 1.3 In preparing the LDP, Local Authorities are also required to carry out Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with European and UK legislation.¹³¹⁴ The UK Government has prepared SA Guidance¹⁵ on undertaking SA of LDPs. This advises that an integrated approach to SA and SEA should be pursued, so that the SA process incorporates the SEA requirements. This involves extending the breadth of (predominantly environmental) issues required to be considered under SEA to cover the full range of aspects (including social and economic aspects) for sustainability. The Welsh Assembly Government has produced draft guidance on undertaking SA of LDPs.⁶ This guidance recommends an integrated approach to SA/SEA to avoid ‘*unnecessary confusion and duplication*’. Therefore, the SA for the Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP is being undertaken to incorporate the requirements of SEA as one integrated process. This integrated process is hereafter referred to in this document as SA.

The Purpose of SA/SEA

- 1.4 SA assists in promoting sustainable development through integrating sustainability considerations into plan making. It is an iterative, ongoing process and integral to plan making. SEA considers the effects of the emerging LDP on the environment. It must predict and evaluate the significant effects of the plan, including alternatives and propose measures to

¹¹ One Future – different paths: the UK’s shared framework for sustainable development, Defra, 2005

¹² Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

¹³ EU directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes

¹⁴ Environmental assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (SI No 1633)

¹⁵ ODPM November 2005 Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents

⁶ Welsh Assembly Government, September 2005. Local Development Plan Manual: Consultation Draft.

offset any adverse effects identified. SA also includes measures to monitor the sustainability impacts of the LDP during its implementation.

The SA Process

1.5 The SA Guidance⁵ sets out a staged approach to the SA process:

- Stage A - Setting the Context and Objectives, Establishing the Baseline and deciding on the Scope
- Stage B - Developing and Refining Options
- Stage C - Appraising the Effects of the draft Plan
- Stage D - Consulting on the draft Plan and Sustainability Appraisal Report
- Stage E - Monitoring Implementation of the Plan

The SA Scoping Process and this SA Scoping Report

1.6 The Scoping process includes the following key aspects:

- Identifying other relevant plans, programmes and sustainability objectives
- Collecting relevant baseline information including social, economic and environmental information
- Identifying sustainability problems, objectives and key issues for the SA, and LDP to address
- Developing the SA Framework consisting of the SA objectives to be used for appraisal, suggesting indicators and targets to be used for monitoring progress
- Consulting on the scope of the SA

1.7 The scoping process helps to ensure that the SA covers the key sustainability issues that are relevant to the development planning system in Rhondda Cynon Taf. This Scoping Report summarises the studies carried out so far under Stage A of the Sustainability Appraisal process. It is presented as a summary report to assist the consultees by directing them to key issues for comment.

SA/SEA Consultation

1.8 The aim of the scoping consultation is to ensure that all the relevant sustainability issues are identified in order that they may inform the further development of the LDP. Scope of the appraisal should be undertaken with the three statutory SEA consultees (Countryside Council Wales, Cadw (Welsh Historic Monuments), and the Environment Agency Wales). Since we are undertaking an integrated appraisal (considering social and economic as well as environmental aspects), we are also sending the Scoping Report to other key stakeholders, as well as making it available to the public on the Council's Website (<http://www.rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk>) to promote debate.

1.9 This scoping Report will be available for consideration for a period of five weeks from 23rd March – 28th April 2006

Considerations for Consultees

1.10 This Scoping Report presents a proposed SA Framework (sustainability objectives, and decision aiding questions). It also suggests possible indicators and targets to assist with future monitoring of the sustainability of the plan. Although the current list is exhaustive it is intended to select a small number of the most useful indicators for this process. The framework has been developed from a review of relevant plans and programmes, analysis of baseline information, and identification of sustainability issues for Rhondda Cynon Taf. Through a technical workshop held with officers and key stakeholders. Consultees are invited to consider the following questions:

- **Are there any additional key sustainability problems, objectives or issues relevant to land use planning for which sustainability objectives should be developed?**
- **Are there any other relevant decision-aiding questions that could help with the Appraisal and what the LDP can do?**
- **Is there any further information available that could be used to measure whether sustainability objectives are being progressed?**
- **Which Targets and Indicators are most appropriate for future measurement of progress towards each sustainability objective?**

Please send responses by 28th April 2006 to:

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2.0 REVIEW OF RELEVANT PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

Introduction

- 2.1 In order to establish a clear scope for the SA of the LDP it is necessary, and a requirement of SEA, to review and develop an understanding of the wider range of policies, plans and strategies that are relevant to the LDP. This includes International, EU, National, Regional and local level policies, plans and strategies.

Methodology

- 2.2 A list of relevant plans and programmes (PPs) for the SA was compiled and for each PP, objectives and issues relevant to the SA and LDP processes were identified. The review of relevant PPs is set out in Appendix I

Key Issues and Opportunities

- 2.3 Key issues and opportunities identified for Rhondda Cynon Taf from the review of relevant plans and programmes (PP) include:
- the need for a coherent framework for service delivery across the County Borough
 - recognising the importance of good housing conditions to good health, well being and education
 - developing an integrated transport structure
 - the need for public transport to combat social exclusion
 - the need to support the creation of new employment and regeneration opportunities
 - protecting and enhancing the quality of the environment, local distinctiveness, cultural and historical heritage
 - adhering to the waste hierarchy and maximising recycling
 - promoting sustainable travel and access to services and facilities
 - conserve and enhance the biodiversity of Rhondda Cynon Taf
 - protection and enhancement of the Brecon Beacons National Park
 - the role of education in promoting employment opportunities and standards of living
- 2.4 The findings of this review of relevant plans and programmes has informed Section 5 of this report (sustainability problems, objectives and key issues) which provides a summary of how, or if, the SA of the LDP can address the identified issues. It will be drawn upon as part of the evidence base during the assessment of predicted effects of particular aspects of the emerging LDP including plan options and policies.

3.0 BASELINE CONDITIONS

- 3.1 Collection of baseline information is required under SEA legislation, and is fundamental to the SA process to provide a background to, and evidence base for, identifying sustainability problems and opportunities in Rhondda Cynon Taf and providing the basis for predicting the effects of the LDP. To make judgements about how the emerging content of the LDP will progress or hinder sustainable development, it is essential to understand the economic, environmental and social circumstances in Rhondda Cynon Taf today and their likely evolution in the future. The aim is to collect only relevant and sufficient data on the present and future state of the County Borough to allow the potential effects of the Local Development Plan to be adequately predicted.
- 3.2 The draft WAG SA Guidance proposes a practical approach to data collection, recognising that information may not yet be available, and that information gaps for future improvements should be reported as well as the need to consider uncertainties in data. Collection of baseline information should be continuous as the SA process guides plan making and as new information becomes available.
- 3.3 SA Guidance advises that, where possible, information should be collated to include:
- ‘comparators’ – (i.e. the same information for different areas) - as points of reference against which local data may be compared
 - established targets, which will highlight how far the current situation is from such thresholds
 - trends – to ascertain whether the situation is currently improving or deteriorating
- 3.4 The baseline information has been compiled in a table showing data for Rhondda Cynon Taf compared with data, where available, for, the South Wales Region, and Wales. We have also sought to identify targets and trends, and summarise the key issues arising for particular SA topics. Identification of key sustainability problems, objectives and issues assist in developing the SA Framework. This table is presented in Appendix II. Key examples of characteristics apparent from the baseline information, relative to other areas, are summarised below.

Environment

- Rhondda Cynon Taf has a large amount of land designated for biodiversity protection.
- The previous industrial use of the area has led to degradation of the water environment.
- There are 20 wind turbines in the Plan area. Part of the County Borough is encompassed by one of the proposed TAN8 (Wales) Strategic Search Areas .
- The topography and water environment of Rhondda Cynon Taf means that large areas of the valley floors are prone to flooding, especially along river frontages where ribbon development has occurred.

- 4.2% of the Brecon Beacons National Park lies within the plan area to the north.
- 94.1% of the land in Rhondda Cynon Taf is of Grade 4 or 5 (low grade).
- Degradation of the landscape.

Waste

- Rhondda Cynon Taf show a net import of waste to its' landfill sites of 132,000 tonnes in 2003
- Rhondda Cynon Taf has shown a relative decrease in municipal waste generated compared to neighbouring County Boroughs.

Development

- The undulating nature of the topography of the area will guide suitability of locations for development.
- Rhondda Cynon Taf's foul drainage system is old and overloaded.

Communities/Health

- Rhondda Cynon Taf ranks 5th in England and Wales (out of 376 areas), for the proportion of population with a limiting long term illness, and general health 'not good'.
- 17 of Rhondda Cynon Taf's 53 electoral wards are amongst the 100 most deprived in Wales
- 53% of the housing stock is terraced.
- Depopulation affecting the valleys
- Decreasing population overall but increase in south

Transport

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

Culture

- Rhondda Cynon Taf has a rich cultural heritage but few sites are statutorily protected.
- Rhondda Cynon Taf has the highest percentage of Welsh speakers in Mid Glamorgan (9.8% speak, read and write Welsh).

Employment

- 18.8% of all residents work outside the County Borough, the third largest percentage net outflow in Wales.
- The County Borough is covered by Objective 1 European funding. The Gross Domestic Product for Rhondda Cynon Taff was estimated, at the time of Objective 1 designation, as being 64.5% of the EU average.
- The majority of people are employed in manufacturing (22.9%)
- 221.61 ha of land allocated for employment in the previous plan has not been taken up
- 44% of the population have no qualifications.

- Mineral extraction is an important industry within the economy of Rhondda Cynon Taf (Tower Colliery is the only deep mine left in Wales).
- 3.5 The SEA Directive requires identification of "*the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme*". Prediction of **future trends** can be highly uncertain but key trends identified from the available baseline data, and therefore potential sustainability issues, are as follows:
- An increase in emissions per capita of CO² as a result of car usage over other forms of transport
 - A difficulty in providing adequate water supplies for parts of Wales during dry summers by 2025
 - An increase in flooding in low lying areas
 - An increase in renewable energy projects
 - A decrease in water quality through an inadequate sewerage system
 - A decrease in municipal waste generated
 - An increase in household waste recycling
 - A decrease in soil quality
 - Continuing depopulation
 - An increase in deprivation
 - An increase in ill-health
 - An increase in drug-related crime
 - An increase in development on unprotected sites which are potentially of importance for cultural or archaeological heritage
 - A decrease in speakers of the Welsh Language
 - Increase in tourism
 - An increase in people travelling to work by car
 - An increase in roads/access
- 3.6 As a land use plan the LDP will not be able to address every sustainability problem, objective and key issue identified through the review of PPs and baseline information. The key issues for sustainability outlined above are focused within the remit of the LDP. The decision-aiding questions within the proposed SA Framework in the following section are also intended to reflect what the LDP can do about sustainability issues.

4.0 SA TECHNICAL WORKSHOP

4.1 In order to ensure a participative scoping process, a workshop was held to provide the opportunity for stakeholders to debate sustainability issues in Rhondda Cynon Taf, and what the land use planning process could do to help address them. Participants were from a range of functions both within Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC and external to the Council. The following positions/departments/teams from Rhondda Cynon Taf were represented:

- Public Health
- Sustainability Officer
- Countryside Services
- Land Reclamation
- Regeneration Resources
- Community Safety
- Children's Services
- Community Health
- Housing Strategy
- Area Regeneration Partnerships
- Public Arts
- Commercial Development
- Development Planning Team

4.2 Representatives from the following external organisations also attended the workshop:

- CCW
- Cardiff County Council
- Bridgend County Borough Council
- Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
- Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

4.3 Upon arrival workshop participants were invited to record their two priorities for sustainability in the Borough on postcards and to arrange them in sections under high, medium and low priority. The three most prevalent issues in the high priority section were a) the provision of, and access to, housing, health, education and leisure facilities for all including the most vulnerable groups b) climate change and protection of the environment and c) economic development/employment opportunities. Other topics were the quality of the built environment, reducing the need to travel by car, town centre viability, mixed use development and the need for sustainable development to be at the heart of issues rather than an add on. The need for community involvement in plan making was also stressed.

4.4 The medium priority issues included action to reduce economic inactivity, maximising the use of brownfield sites for employment, the need for training and education and also reiterated many of the issues above. The need for locally created jobs for local people was identified particularly though

- securing land and spaces for small/medium scale Community Enterprise Developments, including in the cultural and creative spheres.
- 4.5 Only one issue was raised under low priority and this was the need for the LDP policies and proposals to marry with those of Cardiff Council.
 - 4.6 The draft SA Framework, derived as sustainability objectives and decision aiding questions from the PP review and baseline conditions, was then discussed in three separate groups, to provide the opportunity for workshop participants to debate and suggest modifications and/or additions to the sustainability objectives. It is very important that the SA Framework is appropriate for Rhondda Cynon Taf since the content of the LDP will be assessed against it.
 - 4.7 Drawing on the local knowledge of the participants has enabled us to ensure local specificity in the SA Framework, and a substantial number of changes were made to the proposed Framework in the light of participants' comments. The SA Framework incorporating these changes is presented in Section 6 of this report.

5.0 SUSTAINABILITY PROBLEMS, OBJECTIVES AND KEY ISSUES

- 5.1 Identification of key sustainability problems, objectives and issues assist in identifying the relevant baseline information and developing the SA Framework. It is also a requirement of SEA.
- 5.2 Key sustainability problems, objectives and issues have been identified through:
- review of other relevant PPs
 - analysis of currently available baseline information
 - the workshop with officers of the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and neighbouring authorities.
- 5.3 The key strategic problems, objectives and issues for sustainability identified for Rhondda Cynon Taf are set out below and are focused within the remit of the LDP. These broad issues are expanded on within the proposed SA Framework to give a directly relevant local context. The LDP is a key component in the delivery of the wider strategies for the Borough and is only able to promote sustainable development through its directions on land use. The decision aiding questions within the proposed SA Framework are designed to aid the appraiser, make the assessment locally specific, to avoid duplication and to demonstrate a clear audit trail.

Climate change

- 5.4 This issue will be affected by many of the decisions taken in the production of the LDP and its' constituent parts. The nature and location of development with the concurrent implications for car use will be fundamental in the overall development strategy. Building construction methods and the production of energy will also be significant.

Economic development/housing provision

- 5.5 This scoping exercise has revealed the need for both economic and housing development to address issues of employment levels and opportunities and choice in housing. High levels of economic inactivity, poor quality housing and depopulation combined with significant health problems are inter-related problems which the Council seeks to address. Decisions over the proposed level of development to be sought/accepted by the County will have a significant impact on the future of the area and the social and economic advantages will need to be carefully balanced against adverse environmental impact.

Transport

- 5.6 Access to employment and facilities including health and education have been identified as a very significant problem and will be a major issue to be addressed in the LDP. Some conflict between addressing the need and desire for mobility and the impacts of infrastructure development on the landscape and environment will inevitably occur and will require careful consideration of the issues raised. An integrated transport system is seen as vital to address issues of social exclusion and communication across the County.

Protection of the landscape and biodiversity

- 5.7 The quality of much of the landscape is recognised as an important factor in the future of the Borough. Whilst the landscape is valued for its own sake it could also play an important in creating a desirable environment in which to live and work and be the basis for an improved tourist and leisure economy for this part of Wales.

Town centre vitality

- 5.8 Regeneration of town centres could be central to retaining skills and spend within the Borough. Currently there is both skills and spend leakage which does not support the development of sustainable communities. More employment opportunities, higher quality town housing and the creation of an improved built environment could help address this issue.

Cultural heritage

- 5.9 The protection of the cultural heritage through the language, archaeology and historic landscape and built environment is important to the local community. However it has been stressed that culture should be living as well as retrospective and can play an important part in the economy of the County.

6.0 PROPOSED SA FRAMEWORK

- 6.1 The SA Framework presented in table 1 of this section includes a set of objectives for sustainability together with decision-aiding questions. The decision-aiding questions have been designed to assist in the appraisal as they clarify the details of the sustainability issues relevant to the sustainability objectives, as well as improving appraiser objectivity. They also ensure that the appraisal is relevant to land use planning, and make the appraisal more specific to Rhondda Cynon Taf. It is important that the SA Framework reflects local circumstances that can be influenced by the new development planning system.
- 6.2 Sustainable Development recognises that social, economic and environmental factors are interconnected, and SA aims to take an integrated approach. Accordingly, the proposed SA Framework does not categorise Objectives into Social, Economic and Environmental. It is also necessary to demonstrate compliance with the SEA requirement to assess certain environmental topics and for each SA objective we have specified the relevant SEA topics.
- 6.3 The SA Framework provides a way in which sustainability effects of a plan or programme can be described, analysed and compared. The SA methodology involves considering the content of the LDP against each SA objective. Comments about whether the content of the LDP is likely to assist or conflict with each SA objective will be recorded in tables. Where significant conflicts are identified, possible measures to offset adverse effects will be considered, with recommendations to amend the content accordingly. Underling in the table below indicates where changes were made as a result of the Technical Workshop.

Table 1: SA FRAMEWORK

	SA OBJECTIVE	DECISION AIDING QUESTIONS WILL THE POLICY OR PLAN ELEMENT...?
1	Housing	
	Provide for the overall housing requirement through a mix of dwelling types catering for all needs to promote integrated and thriving communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver good quality housing ▪ Promote a mix of housing size, type and tenure within each settlement? ▪ Promote housing that meets the requirements of those with special needs? ▪ Help meet affordable housing needs to allow local people to remain within communities? ▪ Protect and enhance the existing housing stock including the characteristic terraces
2	Culture and Heritage	
	Promote and protect the Culture and Heritage including landscape, archaeology and language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protect and enhance areas and buildings of historical, archaeological or cultural importance, and the historic landscape ▪ Have regard for the entire historic environment, whether protected by legislation or not. ▪ Protect and enhance the industrial heritage

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote the retention of the Welsh language ▪ Promote sustainable access to cultural sites
3	Communities	
	Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage provision of local community facilities and employment opportunities in accessible locations ▪ Help reduce disparities between the northern and southern wards • Promote access to education for all ▪ Consider the needs of vulnerable groups ▪ Plan places with opportunities for active citizenship to promote community engagement ▪ Accommodate meeting places for different cultures ▪ Promote mixed development ▪ Provide equality of access for all
4	Health	
	Provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote provision of and access to healthcare facilities ▪ Prevent unacceptable levels of noise, light, odour and air pollution ▪ Provide spaces such as allotments which will promote healthy eating ▪ Protect existing open spaces ▪ Promote provision of facilities for physical recreational activities and play
5	Economy	
	Provide for a sustainable economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage local growth, especially in areas of high unemployment and economic inactivity ▪ Encourage appropriate inward and indigenous investment ▪ Support the rural economy ▪ Promote good quality sustainable tourism ▪ Ensure the allocation of land to accommodate the economic needs of the population ▪ Maintain an appropriate land bank ▪ Promote healthy town centres
6	Employment	
	Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maximise employment opportunities ▪ Provide various opportunities for a range of skills levels ▪ Provide jobs in accessible locations ▪ Accommodate training facilities to help develop a flexible skills base ▪ Promote good quality jobs within key sectors ▪ Reduce the need for out commuting from the Borough for work ▪ Support the retail hierarchy ▪ Promote healthy, vibrant and attractive town centres

7	Transport	
	Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide for alternatives to the private car and Improve public transport links within an integrated transport strategy ▪ Improve the existing road and rail network, especially to provide access to isolated areas ▪ Provide for safe and attractive walking and cycling ▪ Provide for appropriate levels of car parking to serve the needs of Rhondda Cynon Taf ▪ Reduce the need to travel in new developments
8	Built Environment	
	Provide a high quality built environment that promotes community pride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure high standards of design in all new development ▪ Protect and enhance local character and distinctiveness, but recognise the role of innovation in the built environment ▪ Promote methods of sustainable construction ▪ Promote Green Infrastructure for people and wildlife ▪ Promote high density development where appropriate
9	Landscape	
	Improve, protect and enhance the countryside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote the improvement of the landscape where it has been degraded as a legacy of previous industrial use ▪ Protect and enhance designated areas ▪ Increase opportunities for enjoyment of the countryside where appropriate
10	Biodiversity	
	Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and native species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protect and enhance valuable wildlife habitats and species, both those statutorily designated and those of local value ▪ Avoid and, where possible, reverse habitat fragmentation ▪ Improve, protect and enhance the biodiversity within the water environment ▪ Integrate protection and creation of habitat into the design of new development from the outset ▪ Promote ecologically based land management
11	Water	
	Improve, protect and enhance the water environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduce and/or avoid pollution to water ▪ Promote use of sustainable drainage systems ▪ Manage and avoid exacerbating flood risk especially along river frontages ▪ Use water efficiently ▪ Protect groundwater sources ▪ Prevent new development that will exacerbate current foul drainage problems

12	Climate Change	
	Manage the effects of climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider the likely impacts of climate change on all types of infrastructure, existing and new ▪ Provide habitat routes to allow species to adapt to the changing environment ▪ Minimise greenhouse gas emissions ▪ Contribute to a carbon-neutral community
13	Energy	
	Increase the supply of renewable energy and reduce energy consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote energy efficiency ▪ Encourage the development of renewables, including micro-generation ▪ Encourage high standards of energy efficiency in all new developments
14	Land and Soils	
	Promote efficient use of land and soils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage safe restoration of previously developed land ▪ Re-use previously developed land and buildings as a priority, where appropriate ▪ Optimise use of greenfield land ▪ Prevent and control pollution to land and soils
15	Waste	
	Minimise waste, especially waste to landfill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Further improve on good recycling performance including provision of facilities (domestic and commercial) ▪ Avoid, reduce, re-use, recycle and recover before disposal to landfill ▪ Support development of alternatives to landfill, including composting facilities and energy from waste ▪ Promote self sufficiency in terms of waste management where appropriate
16	Minerals	
	Promote efficient and appropriate use of minerals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safeguard mineral resources ▪ Reuse and recycle aggregates on site ▪ Limit environmental impact of mineral extraction ▪ Achieve a high standard of restoration and aftercare

6.4 The table below indicates the method of assessment used when appraising the impact of the LDP against the SA Framework. The range of predicted impact runs from ++ where the impact is considered to be positive in aiding the objective to – where there will be considerable negative impact.

++	Option/Policy will considerably assist the sustainability objective
+	Option/Policy will assist the sustainability objective to an extent
0	No effect – the option/policy will not affect the sustainability objective
-	Option/Policy will conflict with the sustainability objective to an extent
--	Option/Policy will conflict considerably with the sustainability objective
?	Effect unclear – it is not possible to tell how the option/policy will affect the sustainability objective

SA MONITORING: POTENTIAL TARGETS AND INDICATORS

- 6.5 This section discusses potential indicators and targets to help monitor the sustainability effects of the LDP. At this stage we have identified possible targets and/or indicators for each sustainability objective (from the SA Framework) to provide a suggested list for discussion. The SEA Directive requires that a ‘Monitoring Strategy’ is prepared for publication at a later stage for monitoring the main significant sustainability effects of the LDP. Rhondda Cynon Taf will be developing targets and indicators for monitoring both the LDP and the SA.
- 6.6 The Planning Act (2004) requires local planning authorities to produce Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs). According to recent guidance from ODPM, “*These need to include the findings of SA monitoring*”¹⁶. **It is intended to choose a small number of relevant and manageable indicators.**
- 6.7 Comments/suggestions regarding these and other potential targets and indicators, as well as possible sources of data, are welcome.

Table 2: Potential Sustainability Targets and Indicators

	Potential Targets	Potential Indicators
	Housing	
1	Reduce discrepancies between housing requirement, especially for affordable and special needs housing, and stock.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ratio of annual affordable or special needs housing requirement / stock of affordable or special needs housing ▪ Average house price compared with average earnings ▪ Proportion of households unable to purchase a property ▪ Population structure
	Culture and Heritage	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of sites designated for cultural

¹⁶ *Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents* ODPM, November 2005

	Potential Targets	Potential Indicators
	<p>proportion of new development that protects or enhances sites of historical and cultural interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase number of sites officially protected for their cultural, historical or archaeological importance. 	<p>heritage value</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listed buildings Areas of high archaeological value Quality of sites
Communities		
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All people to have access to a GP, post office, play area, pub and village hall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage with access to a daily bus service Percentage with access to a GP, post office, play area, pub, village hall Distance to local services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the number of wards that are among the 100 most deprived in Wales Increase percentage of people with qualifications and improve skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of the population who live in wards that rank amongst the 100 most deprived in Wales Differences in car ownership between wards Gap in infant and early childhood death and illness between socio-economic groups Adult education Voluntary activity
Health		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase access to physical recreation facilities Design to encourage walking and cycling Decrease in the number of people with limiting long term illness or general health 'not good' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life expectancy Death rates from circulatory disease, cancer, accidents and suicide Residents' description of their own health Proportion of residents who feel safe or fairly safe Area of space allocated for physical recreation Length of cycle routes and footpaths.
Economy		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broaden Economic base Increase opportunities to work within the district Support rural economy Support Objective 1 funding aims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of economic activity by sector Gross Domestic Product or Gross Value Added as a percentage of the EU average Allocations that provide premises for a range of different employment needs Number of visitors to Rhondda Cynon Taf Town centre vacancy rates
Employment		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease unemployment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of resident working age population employed Percentage of population receiving benefits Distribution of workforce across sectors (percentages) Proportion of workforce employed in the agricultural sector Percentage of people living as well as working within the County Borough Percentage of allocated employment land taken up

Potential Targets	Potential Indicators
Transport	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build on existing road and rail network ▪ Locate new development in sustainable locations, reducing the need to travel ▪ Promote more sustainable modes of transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage change in public transport use ▪ Number of public transport routes connecting service centres with residential areas ▪ Length of cycle and walking routes ▪ Percentage of people travelling to work by car
Built Environment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase opportunities for community participation in design of new developments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community perception of design quality ▪ Proportion of new developments delivering benefits for the public realm ▪ Energy efficiency of new buildings and developments
Landscape	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Achieve favourable conditions of nationally and locally important landscape designations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proportion of designated and non designated landscapes and in favourable condition ▪ Change in countryside character and quality ▪ Change in access to the countryside by means other than the car ▪ Amount of new build within designated areas
Biodiversity	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protect and enhance the rich biodiversity ▪ Achieve an improvement in the water environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage change in Rhondda Cynon Taf BAP priority habitats and species ▪ Area, quality and connectivity of biodiversity habitats (potentially categorised e.g. woodland) ▪ Changes in populations of selected characteristic species ▪ Proportion of new developments delivering habitat creation or restoration ▪ Improvement in fish stocks within the water environment
Water	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve water quality ▪ No development should exacerbate current foul drainage problems. ▪ Flood Risk to be considered in new development. ▪ developments over x ha to incorporate sustainable drainage systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ River water quality ▪ Properties at risk from flooding ▪ % of new developments with Sustainable Drainage Systems ▪ Water consumption per household ▪ Development within groundwater Source Protection Zones
Climate Change	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Decrease greenhouse gas emissions ▪ Decrease impacts from the effects of Climate Change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flood events ▪ Emissions of greenhouse gases
Energy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maximise the use of renewable energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of developments and buildings meeting BREEM Standards

	Potential Targets	Potential Indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage efficient design in development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MW of energy generated from renewable sources ▪ Proportion of energy needs being met from renewable sources ▪ Energy consumption ▪ Percentage of land taken up through renewable energy projects such as wind turbines
Land and Soils		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of development on previously developed land ▪ Decrease percentage of contaminated land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of new housing on previously developed land ▪ Development density ▪ Percentage of land classed as 'contaminated'
Waste		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduce tonnage of waste to landfill ▪ Move waste up the waste hierarchy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recycling rate ▪ Municipal waste recovery ▪ Access to Household Recycling Schemes/Recycling Banks ▪ Tonnage of household waste to landfill ▪ Waste per household ▪ Waste imports/exports
Minerals		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase percentage use of aggregates from secondary and recycled sources ▪ Balance development with environment, communities and employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage use of aggregates from secondary and recycled sources

7.0 SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

- 7.1 This document sets out the baseline situation for the CBC. It also reviews plans and policies which influence the LDP, current sustainability issues, problems and opportunities facing the district and the SA Framework for assessing the LDP.
- 7.2 The comments received on the SA Scoping Report will be taken into account in preparing the finalised SA Framework which will be used to test the emerging LDP. The results of the assessments will be set out in SA Reports and published with each LDP Document for public consultation.
- 7.3 The LDP process will be ongoing until final adoption which is proposed in 2009. During the process there will be statutory periods for consultation on both the LDP documents and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisals.

APPENDIX II: STATEMENT OF CONSULTATION AND SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO THE DRAFT SCOPING REPORT

Appendix II: Statement of consultation and summary of responses to the draft scoping report

Consultation process

- 1 The draft SA Scoping Report (Appendix 4) was published for public consultation on 23rd March 2006 for a five-week period ending on 28th April 2006. The Scoping Report was sent to three statutory Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) consultees, Countryside Council Wales, Cadw (Welsh Historic Monuments) and the Environment Agency Wales. As the process comprises an integrated appraisal combining SEA and Sustainability Appraisal (SA), the Scoping Report was also sent to key stakeholders and made available on the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council website.

Response from consultees

- 2 Comments were received from the following organisations:
 - Pontypridd YMCA
 - Cynon Valley Business Community
 - Cwmni Community Group.
 - Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water
 - Environment Agency Wales
 - Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC Countryside Team
 - Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC Land Rec/Drainage Team
 - Glamorgan- Gwent Archaeological Trust
 - Countryside Council for Wales
 - Caerphilly County Borough Council
 - Cadw
 - Redrow Homes
- 3 This represents a good response at this stage and combined with the consultation undertaken with stakeholders through the visioning and a technical workshop has ensured input at strategic and local levels to the process. Table 1 attached details the above responses and the corresponding proposed amendments to the SA Scoping Report.

Key Issues

- 4 The key issues emerging from the consultation are the themes identified in the Scoping Report and which are included in the proposed SA Framework:
 - Water – protection of the water environment and supply
 - Flood risk/climate change
 - Sewerage infrastructure – recognition of the deficiencies of the existing infrastructure

- Level of development
 - Protection of the natural and historic environment – with more emphasis on biodiversity.
 - Transport – the need for better links and public transport
- 5 Much useful information has been supplied on data sources and plans and programmes to improve those parts of the Scoping Report. As this process is ongoing and iterative these have been noted and will be incorporated in the later stages of the SA process.
- 6 The consultees have also brought forward suggestions to improve the constituent parts of the SA. This included responses to the following key questions in the Scoping Report:

Question 1: Are there any additional key sustainability problems, objectives or issues relevant to land use planning for which sustainability objectives should be developed?

Question 2: Are there any other relevant decision-aiding questions that could help with the Appraisal and what the LDP can do?

Question 3: Is there any further information available that could be used to measure whether sustainability objectives are being progressed?

Question 4: Which Targets and Indicators are most appropriate for future measurement of progress towards each sustainability objective?

- 7 Consultees also offered suggestions to amend the framework, including amendments to Sustainability Objectives, decision aiding questions, targets and indicators. Wherever possible these have been taken on board and amendments recommended to the draft Scoping Report. Government Guidance defines the scope of the SA and emphasise that care must be taken that the targets and indicators are manageable within the resources and information available to, or attainable by, the Council. The potential targets and indicators will be further refined as part of the ongoing process.
- 8 Some responses included items outside the scope of the SA and the forthcoming LDP and a level of detail inappropriate for a strategic appraisal. However suggestions which are appropriate for inclusion in the LDP, rather than in the SA, have been noted for consideration in the preparation of the Plan. All responses from Rhondda Cynon Taf Borough Council are listed in the right-hand column of the table (Response/Action).

Conclusion

- 9 A good response has been received to the consultation which has provided further useful information to incorporate in the SA/SEA process. Overall the key sustainability issues for Rhondda Cynon Taf which were identified in the Scoping Report have been upheld through the consultation process and a consensus has been achieved on which to proceed.

TABLE 1: SCOPING CONSULATION

Comment	Response/Action
Pontypridd YMCA	
<p>Question 1</p> <p>Education: The need to develop better ways of planning future education provision in the borough to eliminate duplication of school transport. To link also with future economic and commercial demands on CBC.</p> <p>Question 3:</p> <p>Housing: Look at rented accommodation in light of second homes used for pension plans hence maybe increase affordable rental accommodation.</p> <p>Culture and Heritage: Look at access to such sites by public transport</p> <p>Health: Community access to medical provision away from town centres look out for increased drug/alcohol/mental health problems and need in planning centres capable of meeting need.</p> <p>Question 4: Housing – rethink valley floor</p> <p>Minerals – Still over 300 yrs of coal left in the valleys</p>	<p>The Scoping Report recognises that access to facilities, including education, is a key issue for the Borough. Objectives 3 (Communities), 6 (Employment) and 7 (Transport) provide the framework for appraisal.</p> <p>The issue of second homes is difficult to address through planning policy. This is a matter for the Borough’s Housing Strategy.</p> <p>This is addressed in bullet point 5 under Objective 2.</p> <p>The Scoping Report recognises that access to facilities, including education, is a key issue for the Borough. Objectives 3 (Communities), 4 (Health) and 7 (Transport) provide the framework for appraisal.</p> <p>The location of development will be addressed through the allocations of land and related sites which will be produced as part of the LDP.</p> <p>Noted and was discussed in both the</p>

<p>Employment – Social enterprise/construction skills.</p> <p>General comment:</p> <p>The targets and indicators were appropriate in the scoping report though sustainability is linked to how the local economy is managed, to include all within the community.</p>	<p>Visioning and Technical Workshops.</p> <p>This need is recognised in Objectives 3 (Economy) and 4 (Employment).</p> <p>Support noted and the importance of inclusion in the local economy is recognised.</p>
<p>Cynon Valley Business Community</p>	
<p>Question 1: R.C.T should benefit by bringing tourism to the forefront and forming a strategy to link possible heritage sites as industrial trail.</p>	<p>Objective 5 (Economy), bullet point 4 recognises the role of tourism. However, the SA Framework is a tool to assess policies and strategies rather than to require the production of specific policies. Could be considered in the LDP.</p>
<p>Cwmni Community Group</p>	
<p>Additional key sustainability problems, objectives or issues relevant to land use planning:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accessibility 2. Ongoing economic advantage to land development 3. Use of available land to upgrade the borough in the eyes and opinions of outsiders 4. Stricter Control over planned development (planning applications and associated conclusions) and enforcement action taken in event of non-adherence to conditions 5. Stricter limits on completion of developments and refusal of extensions when no effort has been made on implementing the development. Developers should be given start and finish dates for 	<p>These issues are reflected and recognised in the Scoping Report and the proposed SA Objectives.</p> <p>These are matters for the Development Control Section of RCT CBC.</p>

<p>development, so that development process can be instituted.</p> <p>6. The new Environment Act requirements should be enforced on all land particularly where planning permission granted as well as on all industrial sites.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Other relevant decision aiding questions that could help with the Appraisal and what the LDP can do:</p> <p>1. The scoping report on page 6 says “The undulating nature of the topography of the area will guide suitability for development”. This is a known fact – but who is looking at this problem? If indeed is a problem, to solve what suitable development can take place that is of benefit to the community</p> <p>2. On page 6 it says “R.C.T. drainage system is old and overloaded” and page 7 it says “a decrease in water quality through an inadequate sewerage system” surely one follows the other. Yet in the Visioning Report page 5 it refers to the need for more housing in both towns and valleys. It seems there is a lack of communication as if the drainage system is inadequate now; more housing and town centre development will exacerbate the problem. This seems to be an overriding problem that needs solving if the development envisaged is to come to fruition.</p>	<p>The location of development will be addressed through the allocations of land and related sites which will be produced as part of the LDP.</p> <p>There is general agreement that new development is required to achieve sustainable communities. Existing problems have been identified which will need resolution with the appropriate service providers and agencies.</p> <p>(see responses to Welsh Environment Agency and Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water.)</p>
<p>Further information available that could be used to measure whether sustainability objectives are being progressed:</p> <p>1. Raising of educational standards.</p>	<p>A potential target under communities is an increase in the percentage of people with qualifications.</p>

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The provision of more skilled training courses available to school leavers and unemployed. 3. An increase in the GDP within each of the Boroughs. Rhondda Cynon Taf. So that residents can see where economic activity is paying off. 4. The WAG annual budget report on funding for the valleys and need schemes to make the valleys more accessible. 5. The number of new businesses in each borough at the start of the year (year by year comparison) and numbers employed north and south of RCT. 	<p>As above. And also covered under Objective 3, bullet point 3.</p> <p>Potential indicator 2 under Economy targets.</p> <p>This will not necessarily measure sustainability.</p> <p>Agreed. Add to potential indicators under Economy.</p>
<p>Question 4:</p> <p>Residents' satisfaction survey based on 1 in 10 households.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water</p>	
<p>Question 1:</p> <p>Is there adequate water supply and sewerage infrastructure in place to accommodate development?</p>	<p>This will be subject to consultation when the location and extent of development is addressed through the allocations of land and related sites which will be produced as part of the LDP.</p>
<p>Environment Agency Wales</p>	
<p>Are there any additional key sustainability problems, objectives or issues relevant to land use planning for which sustainability objectives should be developed?</p>	

11. Water; Following amendments/additions:

“Promote sustainable water management including promoting use of sustainable drainage systems”.

~~Manage and avoid exacerbating flood risk especially along river frontages:~~ to be replaced with: “Manage and reduce flood risk rivers, minor water courses and sewerage by adopting SUDS and avoiding flood risk areas for new development”.

Addition of: “Need to reduce impact from sewers and urban run-off on water quality of rivers by employing separate drainage systems for new and replacement development (reducing surface water discharge to combined sewers) and source control of industrial/urban drainage using passive treatment methods.

12. Climate Change:
Addition of: “Reduce flood risk to people, property and maintain integrity of floodplain.

14. Land and Soils:
Amendment: “Prevent and control pollution to land, soils and controlled waters.”

15. Waste:
Addition of: “Need to reduce litter, fly tipping, graffiti, dog mess etc. by education, financial incentives and better enforcement”.

16. Minerals:
Amendment: “limit environmental impact of mineral extraction and in relation to water resources”.

Agreed. Amend to read :
“**Promote sustainable water management including promoting use of sustainable drainage systems**”.

Agreed. Amend to read:
Manage and reduce flood risk rivers, minor water courses and sewerage by adopting SUDS and avoiding flood risk areas for new development”.

Objective 11 states “reduce and/or avoid pollution to water”.
Amend by the addition of word environment to read:
“**reduce and/or avoid pollution to water environment**” thereby covering these comments strategically.
The full text recommended here would be more appropriate as part of a development control policy.

Agreed. Amend to read:
“**Reduce flood risk to people, property and maintain integrity of floodplain.**”

It is considered that is adequately covered by the Water Objective.

This cannot be controlled or influenced through the LDP and is therefore outside the scope of this report.

It is considered that is adequately covered by the Water Objective and also implicit in environmental impact.

<p>Is there any further information available that could be used to measure whether sustainability objectives are being progressed?</p> <p>It is appreciated that much strategic environmental information is not yet collected but should be recorded to encourage instigation of monitoring to address existing deficiencies and improve the availability of such information for subsequent SEA and plan making. We welcome the inclusion of statements in the report that identify this shortfall/deficiency.</p> <p>Consideration for the following information: Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (CAMS), drawing attention to the recent strategy for this area, which indicates the likely restrictions that would be placed on any new abstraction licenses granted in this area.</p> <p>Asset Management Plan (AMP); AMP, produced by the Sewerage Undertaker (Welsh Water/Dwr Cymru and Severn Trent Water). These plans will identify where there are sewerage infrastructure constraints planned improvements. Consultations with the Sewerage Undertaker and/or their agents is advised.</p> <p>High Level Target Report; The High Level Target Report provided to the Welsh Assembly Government may be a useful source of information with regard to flood risk measures.</p> <p>A Living and Working Environment for Wales: the state of the Welsh Environment 2003. The SA should consider issues identified at all levels and this document refers to sustainability issues facing Wales, including climate change, energy</p>	<p>Support noted - the baseline and PP review are living documents that can be continually updated.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
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<p>supply, wildlife, pollution, land use and use of resources. This document may be a useful source for comparable data at a Wales level.</p>	
<p>Which Targets and indicators are most appropriate for future measurement of progress towards each sustainability objective?</p> <p>Table 2: Potential Targets and Indicators;</p> <p>Transport: Indicators: Addition of: “Percentage of residents working population commuting to work outside council area” “average commuting distance” “average shopping distance per trip”</p> <p>Biodiversity: Indicators: Amendment: “area, quality of habitats created, maintained and enhanced and connectivity of biodiversity habitats (potentially categorised e.g. woodland)”</p> <p>Addition: “Areas of habitat lost as a result of development”.</p> <p>Amendment: “changes in population size and distribution”.</p> <p>Addition: “Area of buffer zones protecting habitats from potentially disturbing/damaging developments, length of linear habitats created, maintained or enhanced, which increase the connectivity of biodiversity habitats”</p> <p>Water: Targets: Amendment: “Flood Risk to be considered in new development Reduce flood risk to people, property and maintain integrity of floodplain”</p>	<p>Agreed will be useful to consider when refining indicators. Amend indicators accordingly.</p> <p>Agreed. Amend accordingly.</p> <p>Agreed will be useful to consider when refining indicators. Amend accordingly.</p> <p>Covered by “changes in population”.</p> <p>Agreed would be useful to consider when refining indicators but am concerned about the source of this information.</p> <p>Agreed. Amend accordingly.</p>

<p>Indicators: Amendment: “River water quality % of total classified river length complying with water quality objective (or of “good status”)”.</p> <p>Amendment: “properties at risk from flooding Amount of development within C1 and C2 defined by TAN15”</p> <p>Climate Change: Targets: Addition: “Reduce flood risk to people, property and maintain integrity of floodplain”</p> <p>Indicators: Amendment: “Flood events Amount of development within C1 and C2 as defined by TAN15”</p> <p>Waste: Indicators: Addition: “Number of fly-tipping incidents reported per annum” Addition: “Quantity of commercial waste produced, recycled, landfilled etc”</p>	<p>Agreed. Amend accordingly.</p> <p>The existing indicator covers existing, as well as new properties, and the reference to Government documents needs explanation to ensure the document is in plain English/Welsh. recommend amendment to read: “Properties at risk of flooding and amount of development within C1 and C2 defined by TAN15”</p> <p>Agreed will be useful to consider when refining targets. Amend accordingly.</p> <p>Covered above and the document should avoid duplication.</p> <p>It is considered that these are covered by the existing indicators.</p>
<p>Comments on the SA Report Text: Paragraph 1.3, introduction: We note comments contained within paragraph 1.3 of the draft scoping report, that is, the SA/SEA is being undertaken as one integrated process and referred to as SA.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Review of Relevant Plans and Programmes</p> <p>Paragraph 2.2, Methodology, Review of Relevant Plans and Programmes: To aid clarity and understanding, it would be helpful for the text contained</p>	<p>It is considered that this is evident in the comments.</p>

<p>in Appendix I to clearly state which comments applies to SA and LDP process more generally and to which text refers to RCT SA/LDP process specifically.</p>	
<p>Appendix 1: Review of other plans and programmes.</p> <p>Page 15/38, TAN15 Development and Flood Risk, Objectives, Targets and Indicators. The following replacement text to the second bullet is requested: Highly vulnerable development should not be permitted in zone C2. Any other development should only be made in zone C if it can be justified that development/use has to be located there in accordance with section 6 and if consequences of locating development are acceptable, in accordance with section 7 and appendix 1.</p>	<p>Agreed. Amend accordingly.</p>
<p>Page 15/38 TAN15 Development and Flood Risk, Implications for the Plan and SA; The following is suggested to replace the existing text: Where flooding is a strategic issue that significantly constrains development options, local authorities should use the precautionary framework as part of considering sustainability options and, where necessary, set out the positive steps which have been taken to promote development in zones A and B.</p> <p>The requirements of the TAN15 will be a material factor in formulation of specific policies and allocation of sites within the LDP.</p>	<p>Agreed. Amend accordingly.</p>
<p>Baseline Conditions</p> <p>Paragraph 3.4, Environment Although the text contained within paragraph 3.4 refers to a summary of key characteristics apparent from</p>	<p>It is considered that this section is adequate.</p> <p>Environment – 94.1 – grade 4/5</p>

<p>baseline information, environmental issues appear to be summarised under two sub headings i.e. environment and waste. This summary appears to be very short and should be expanded due to SEA emphasis on environmental issues.</p>	<p>Agricultural.</p>
<p>Paragraph 3.4, Development The link between the bullet points and sub heading of 'Development' is not apparent. It may be more appropriate to place the text of the first bullet point under the sub heading of Environment and a new sub heading for the second bullet 'Existing Utilities/Infrastructure'?</p>	<p>No change.</p>
<p>Paragraph 3.5, baseline conditions, the following amended bullet is requested; An increase in flooding in low lying areas (frequency and magnitude.</p>	<p>Agreed. Amend to read: An increase in flooding in low lying areas in both frequency and magnitude.</p>
<p>Appendix 2: Collation and Analysis of Baseline Information: Page 1/67, Biodiversity, Environmental Stress, the context with regard to flood risk is unclear. Introducing SUDs to new developments does restrict run-off and therefore is likely to prevent erosion to habitats. The LDP and sustainability issues may also need to consider culverting aspects.</p> <p>Page 14/67, Main River Catchments, the River Ely should also be included.</p> <p>Page 15/67, Properties at risk from flooding, we welcome the seeking of advice on development and flooding. We agree that an objective should be included in the SA to prevent risk of flooding. "Issues for the LDP" may also include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. No increase in development in floodplain causing exacerbated flooding to current at risk properties 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Amend accordingly.</p> <p>Support noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. Flood awareness/warning. iii. Managed Retreat, to reduce the number of existing properties from areas at risk of flooding. 	
<p>Page 15, Ribbon development in floodplains</p> <p>Page 16, Flood Defences:</p> <p>As a point of clarity the flood alleviation schemes were designed to provide alleviation for a 1 in 100 year flood event at the time of construction and therefore the current standard of service may be less. The LDP issues must consider Planning Policy Wales (March 2000). Paragraph 13.2.3 identifies a move away from flood defence and mitigation of consequences of new development in areas towards a more positive avoidance of development in areas defined as being of flood hazard.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Future Monitoring:</p> <p>We would welcome any further details of monitoring, setting out targets and indicators, reviews and/or the reporting regime to be put in place. In instances where baseline data is not available, not comparable or out-of-date then the Environment Agency would request clarification on what will be used as baseline information or comparable data.</p>	<p>The EA will be consulted and informed of each stage of the process.</p>

Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC Countryside Team

SA Scoping Report

In 2.3 Key issues – we suggest you add **plus environmental protection** in with reasons for the role of education.

Environmental protection is covered in the key issues and this point is specifically about the need to improve education and life chances.

In Section 3.0 under 3.4 the environment sub-section refers under the first bullet point to ‘RCT has a large amount of land designated for biodiversity protection’ – this statement needs some more clarification – firstly that ‘biodiversity of RCT is of significance in a Wales/UK context and this is reflected in a functioning network of SINC (local) designated sites’, but conversely ‘the County Borough has a low coverage of biological SSSI’

Amend bullet point to read:
RCT has a large amount of land designated for biodiversity protection of both national and local (SINC sites) significance but has a low coverage of biological SSSIs.

Under the last bullet point we feel that the statement ‘Degradation of the landscape’ needs clarification. It would be very misleading to suggest that RCTs landscape is degraded in relation to other relative areas – that is not the case. The landscape is a significant asset for the County Borough, in which the scars of mining have naturally healed and become part of a significant landscape heritage which is now appreciated and valued by local people and visitors as a major positive attribute of the County Borough

Amend bullet point to read:
Degradation of the landscape – although it should be recognised that the impact of mining has become part of a significant landscape heritage.

Under the **Employment section**; issue, are the majority of people in RCT in manufacturing?

Agreed. Delete reference to the majority to read:
22.9% are employed in manufacturing

In **Section 3.5** we suggest that overload of the existing often antiquated drainage systems and threats of land stability and retaining walls are relevant issues. We Also feel the ‘Continuing

Agreed. Amend to read
Continuing depopulation in the valleys.

depopulation' issue should refer specifically to the Valleys - it does not reflect the situation in the south of the County Borough.	
Under Table 2 potential sustainability targets and indicators we need the Biodiversity indicators to match those coming out of the Biodiversity and Rivers sub-group of Community Strategy/Better Life.	This needs inter-departmental discussion.
Appendix 1 : Review of other plans and programmes Under Ambient Air Quality (3/38) we wonder why implications for the plan and the SA refer only to 'emissions caused by transportation' and not just any 'emissions'.	Agreed. Amend accordingly.
Under Environment 2010 (5/38) the implications of the Plan and SA should include 'halting biodiversity loss'.	Agreed. Amend accordingly.
There is no heritage objective in Appendix 1	See page 4
There is a new draft TAN 5 for Nature Conservation which Enfusion should review.	Until adoption the existing TAN remains the statutory document.
On page 18/38 there is reference to AONBs we unfortunately have none and this reference is not needed.	Noted. Delete reference.
DETR (2000) Government Rural White Paper: Our Countryside, the future - A deal for Rural England (Page 21/38) should refer to the Welsh equivalent.	Noted.
Under Warm Homes - Fuel Poverty on Page 21/38 one of the implications of the Plan should be to use renewable energy as a long-term solution to fuel poverty.	This is a side benefit of the use of renewable energy.
Somewhere there should be reference to Climbing Higher and its targets for 95% of population to be within 10 minutes walk of footpath/cycle track and no one more than 6 minutes (300 m) from	Noted.

<p>for many areas and if quality of environment is to be achieved in RCT specific usable Design Guidance is needed. The use of LandMap in the identification of Special Landscape areas needs review - the exercise undertaken by TACP with regards to the UDP needs to be looked again.</p>	
<p>On page 46/67 under Tourist Attractions; reference to too many visitors wanting to use lakes and reservoirs for activities such as canoeing and rowing are overstated. References should reflect the actual situation in RCT and not a perception of what would be expected.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Under the Travel to Work section (52/67) is there no data on walking or cycling as a means of transport??</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Under Employment Land Availability (64/67) there is reference to a review of land allocated for development as to why it has not been developed - one of the review issues should be biodiversity and local community/amenity use.</p>	<p>Noted for action by RCT.</p>
<p>Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC Land Rec/Drainage Teams</p>	
<p>Paragraph 2.3 'the need for public transport to combat social exclusion' Although not an area within our particular area of interest, comment: it is unclear whether the primary issue is public transport or social exclusion.</p> <p>A number of the issues identified in section 2.3 can be seen to be inter-related and it is appreciated that the Authority is dealing with a very complex matrix. However care should be taken, particularly at the current stage, to avoid diminishing the importance of one issue in favour of highlighting another issue.</p>	<p>Increased use of public transport is a national aim to reduce carbon emissions and this is recognised throughout the document. In RCT there is a specific need to improve public transport to reduce social exclusion.</p>
<p>'Comparators' - One of the issues identified in a number of places in the</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

<p>Draft relates to sewers. The appended table (Appendix 'A') indicates the proportion of combined sewers (vs. separate foul and storm sewers) for various districts in Wales. An issue is that those populations with higher proportions of combined sewers are more likely to be exposed to development and other (considerable) penalties owing to the problems associated with combined sewers and neglect of the issues. A curious feature evident in the data is the similarities with other socio-geographic indicators in Wales (refer Figure 5, Peoples, Places, Futures – The Wales Spatial Plan).</p>	
<p>'Established targets' – There are at least four primary 'players' currently involved with drainage issues: the Sewerage Undertaker, the Land Owner, the Environment Agency Wales (Main Rivers and Critical Ordinary Watercourses), and the Local Authority. In the case of the latter, roles can be further defined in terms of the Land Drainage Authority (ordinary watercourses), Highway Authority (highway drainage and land drainage within the highway) and the Public Health Authority. Established targets for each of the four primary 'players' may differ and in some instances conflict. It is critical that any targets that are to be drawn into the LDP process are based upon an objective and sustainable approach to drainage issues rather than an agglomeration of individual corporate targets.</p>	<p>It will be for RCT to reconcile these bodies when considering new development.</p>
<p>3.3 Environment, previous industrial use – It is acknowledged that previous industrial activity has, at least in the past, led to/contributed to degradation of water quality and the water environment. It should be noted however that much of this industrial activity has long</p>	<p>These issues are covered throughout the document. The need to protect the water environment and the condition of the sewerage infrastructure are addressed.</p>

<p>since ceased. Undoubtedly there are residuals of this activity that continue to affect or pose risk to the water environment but at a reduced/reducing scale. It could be considered that degradation/suppression of the water environment is continuing in the present tense owing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Extending development adjacent to or in close proximity to watercourses (intrusion into the water environment). An apparent anomaly regarding this intrusion relates to programs supported by the EAW and Defra discouraging farmers from grazing stock to the edge of bank on watercourses whereas no similar program or policy appears to be applied with respect to urban development. It is suggested that this issue should be given further consideration during the course of developing the LDP. b) A failure to improve those elements of the sewerage infrastructure that were constructed in support of the industrial communities. The design philosophy employed at the time of construction radically differs from contemporary approaches however there is little if any evidence that there is any intent to address the apparent imbalance but rather a strategy of 'stretching the assets' has been adopted. Further comment is provided below. 	
<p>onment, topography and water</p>	<p>The need to avoid increased flood risk</p>

<p>environment – vegetation, soil characteristics, land use, meteorological, and hydro-geological conditions as well as topography are all inter-active environmental factors which contribute to flood risk in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The hazard (potential scale of damage) is greater along the valley floors, however, the vast majority of flooding events notified to the Land Drainage Authority relate to developed areas located on the sides of the valleys, quite often at the development boundaries. Three factors contributing to this situation are: Lack of adequate historical data relating to culverted watercourses from which effective management of these watercourses can be provided.</p> <p>y high proportion of development in the coal mining communities was undertaken at a time when groundwater levels were artificially depressed owing to mine water pumping. The groundwater levels have subsequently rebounded since pumping ceased resulting in increased flows in watercourses and, in some instances opening of new water issues in the ground One of the most concerning issues relating to the environment with respect to flooding is the lack of an adequate framework and effective management regime to address drainage matters.</p>	<p>is highlighted in the SA Framework.</p>
<p>Development, undulating nature of the topography – The topography of the Taff-Ely areas might be considered undulating, the topography of the Rhondda Valleys and the Cynon Valleys might better be described as steep, it should also be noted that, in the case of potential land instability, geotechnical and other environmental factors can be dominant factors rather than</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

topography.	
<p>Development. RCT's foul drainage system is old and overloaded. In the event that it is intended to garner or allow these sewers to be garnered for predominant use as foul sewers then questions must surely arise in respect of storm/ surface water drainage for the areas affected. The Water Industries Act (S94) places a statutory duty on Sewerage Undertakers to "provide, improve and extend such a system of public sewers to ensure that an area is effectually drained". The statement provided in the Draft infers that the Sewerage Undertaker is defaulting in its statutory duties (I am not necessarily in disagreement with this conclusion). What is of concern is that the LDP might be constructed in support of defaulting on statutory duties, particularly where it is most likely that the Local Authority/local residents will bear the cost burden for addressing the apparent degradation of existing storm/surface water drainage systems as shortcomings in current approach become apparent in the future.</p>	Noted.
<p>4.1 The question might arise as to representations in respect of Leisure and Recreation. To the public, the issue may be as significant if not more significant than, say, Land Reclamation and Engineering (!)</p>	Noted.

GENERAL COMMENT

The Sewerage Undertaker consulted Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council prior to submitting its AMP4 Business Plan to the Director General of Water Services. The position advised to the Sewerage Undertaker at the time was that the Authority was not in a position to support the Plan. Further consultations ensued however it became apparent that the Sewerage Undertaker did not have it in its intent to address the issues of principle in a meaningful manner and that a much distorted interpretation was being applied to addressing public sewer issues. The Director General of Ofwat, to our knowledge, did not consult directly with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.

It is strongly recommended that the whole issue of drainage and sewers is explored further prior to finalising the Scoping Report. The Working Group might consider inviting the Sewerage Undertaker, drainage engineers from adjoining authorities, representatives from the Environment Agency Wales and Consumer Council for Water Wales to a joint meeting in order that issues relating to drainage may be addressed in a sustainable manner in the LDP.

Noted. The SA framework has highlighted the issues raised by this consultee and these will be taken forward in the production of the LDP.

Glamorgan- Gwent Archaeological Trust

<p>The sections in the Cadw paper referring to Environmental Characteristics and Relevant Plans and Programmes need no addition (although in RCT, Designated Wreck Sites will not be relevant). It should however, be noted that currently a Heritage Protection Review is being undertaken by the Westminster Government that is likely to lead to a new Bill to replace both the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The timing of this new Act is not certain but it could be enacted before the completion of the RCT LDP.</p>	<p>Noted for future information.</p>
<p>Information on sites in the schedule of ancient monuments can be obtained from Cadw (see Scheduled Ancient Monuments section of Cadw paper)</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>No area of archaeological importance has ever been designated in Wales.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>RCT adopted the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) curated by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) by resolution of the Council as its historic environment database in 1996 in order to satisfy the relevant requirement of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995. A policy or statement explaining this link should be included in the Local Development Plan</p>	<p>Noted by RCT CBC for production of LDP.</p>
<p>Information on non-statutorily protected areas of archaeological significance can be obtained from the SMR maintained by GGAT</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Suggested Indicators: Primary</p>	

<p>Number of sites designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments Number of Listed Buildings Number of archaeological sites contained in the RCT SMR (HER). Number of Registered Parks, Gardens and Landscapes of Historic Importance Number of historic sites owned by RCT Number of Conservation Areas Number of Locally Designated Archaeologically Sensitive Areas</p>	<p>This information would be better positioned in the baseline data and will be included/ updated.</p>
<p>Suggested Indicators: Improvement Indicators:</p> <p>Number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments with a Management Plan</p> <p>Number of Listed Buildings on Buildings at Risk Register</p> <p>Number of listed buildings affected by full or partial demolition.</p> <p>Number of listed buildings de-listed</p> <p>Number of listed buildings adversely affected by new development/plan proposals.</p> <p>Number of archaeological sites with condition reports (including percentage of relevant number in SMR.</p> <p>Number of archaeological sites affected by development (i.e. those where conditions to protect the archaeological site either by record or in-situ have been attached to planning consents)</p> <p>Number of reports on archaeological work undertaken to meet planning conditions presented to the public.</p> <p>Number of historic sites owned by</p>	<p>Many of these statistics would be useful to consider when refining indicators. However care needs to be taken that the number of targets and indicators are manageable. As the process continues this will be an issue for further discussion. Also see CCW response below.</p>

<p>RCT with Management Plan</p> <p>Percentage of Conservation Areas with an up to date character appraisal</p> <p>Percentage of Conservation Areas reviewed for the applicability of article 4 Directions.</p> <p>Number of Conservation Areas adversely affected by new development/plan proposals</p> <p>Percentage of Registered historic landscapes with an up to date landscape character appraisal.</p> <p>Area of historic landscapes with an up to date landscape character appraisal.</p> <p>Area of land within identified historic landscapes affected by development</p> <p>Number of registered historic parks and gardens with management plans.</p> <p>Percentage of Archaeologically Sensitive Areas appraised</p>	
<p>Countryside Council for Wales</p>	
<p>In general CCW welcomes and supports the content and process identified in the Scoping Report.</p> <p>Scoping Report</p> <p>Page 1 Footnote 4 (and associated main text); these regulations do not apply to a plan or programme relating solely to the whole or any part of Wales. The Welsh regulations are 'The Environmental Assessments of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004'.</p> <p>Suggested reference; 'Strategic Environmental Assessment of Unitary Development Plans: Interim Good</p>	<p>Support noted.</p> <p>Amend footnote accordingly.</p>

Practice Guide'/ Welsh Assembly 2004	
Paragraph 1.1; The scoping report only states the aim of 'making the plan more stable'. The aim of SEA process is to provide a high level of environmental protection, integrate environmental concerns into plans/programmes and to promote sustainable development.	Paragraph 1.4 clearly sets out the aim of the SEA process.
Paragraphs 1.2/1.3; we acknowledge and support the proposal to undertake a joint SA/SEA process. However, care must be taken to ensure that the requirements of the SEA Directive and Regulations are met in full (in terms of both process and content)	Noted.
Paragraph 3.1; The LDP and the SA/SEA must be careful not to confuse sustainability and SA with environmental effects.	Paragraph 1.4 clearly sets out the aim of the SEA process.
Section 5.4 Climate change; We support the recognition that this is one of the key issues that will be affected by decisions taken in the LDP. However, it is also important to consider the effects of climate change on Rhondda Cynon Taff – e.g. temperature changes, ppt, flooding risk – and what the LDP can do to adapt the area to these changes. The SEA needs to consider mitigation for climate change and adaptation to forthcoming predicted climate changes. Energy use across all sectors (in addition to car use/transport) are major issues, as will be adapting existing development to the effects of climate change e.g. flood hazards, sustainable drainage schemes (SDS), water resource management.	Support noted. The proposed Sustainability Framework objectives, targets and indicators reflect these concerns including mitigation for climate change.
5.6 Transport; this section recognises the need to consider the possible	Amend to refer to biodiversity in the second sentence.

<p>conflicts between the need for infrastructure development and landscape/environment protection. Biodiversity must be included as an issue in this section, whether or not it is that protected by legislation.</p>	
<p>Table 1: SA framework;</p> <p>Culture and heritage – please clarify what is meant by ‘have regard for the entire historic environment’ We recommend these questions are more pro-active and drive/promote a change in condition of the SA objective. To ‘have regard for’ is neutral – not positive or negative.</p> <p>Health – this should include improving public access to natural green space – CCW can provide further information/guidance on this.</p> <p>Economy – Please clarify what is meant by ‘indigenous investment’ Economic objectives need to have regard for adaptation to climate change.</p> <p>Landscape – This should be cross-referenced to indicators/questions on light pollution and measures of tranquillity. This section should also include measures to promote best practice/proactive improvement in non-designated landscapes areas e.g. field boundaries, street and road landscapes, settlement patterns, priority habitats, common land.</p>	<p>The entire historic environment includes those areas not covered by designation.</p> <p>Amend Objective 2 to read: Promote, protect and <u>enhance</u> the Culture and heritage including landscape, archaeology and language to give a more positive emphasis to the objective.</p> <p>Objective 8 seeks the promotion of green infrastructure and Objective 9 seeks increased opportunities for enjoyment of the countryside.</p> <p>Investment from within the Borough. The identified factors affecting climate change are applicable to economic development.</p> <p>It is considered that light pollution can be covered by an appropriate LDP policy. The SA framework is a tool to assess the LDP and these issues are outside the scope of the documents.</p>
<p>Table 2: Potential sustainability targets and indicators;</p> <p>Culture and Heritage – CCW does not consider the ‘number of sites designated for cultural heritage’ as a valid indicator of LDPs potential to deliver cultural heritage objectives;</p>	<p>Agreed. See response to Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust above.</p>

<p>the designation of sites does not relate to the plan under assessment – the number of sites is neither relevant (altered by the plan) or reactive (to the plans implementation). Indicators of the quality and integrity of sites designated for cultural heritage (e.g. within ASIDOHL, Conservation Area management plans) would be more informative.</p> <p>Health – as well as area of space allocated for physical recreation, another potential indicator is public access to natural green space. Health targets/indicators could usefully be linked to air quality.</p> <p>Transport – Potential indicators (which can be cross-referenced to air quality and climate change) include NOx and ozone figures.</p> <p>Built environment – the third indicator should be amended to ‘energy and water efficiency of new buildings and developments’ – this should include the number of new and existing developments incorporating SDS.</p> <p>Landscape – Additional measurable indicators could include: urbanisation of rural areas; nightblight; measures of tranquillity; fly tipping; traditional field systems/boundaries; road verges; common land; trees and woodland; plantation forestry.</p> <p>Biodiversity and Water – Suggest the last indicator includes both fish stocks and wider river habitat quality. Potential indicators – the Water Framework Directive and Regulations places a duty on the Environment Agency Wales to establish monitoring programmes in each river basin district to report on water quality</p> <p>Water – ‘flood risk to be considered in</p>	<p>Agreed. Addition of indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public access to natural green space. • Air quality indicators including NOx and ozone figures. <p>See above.</p> <p>Agreed. Amend accordingly. New developments with SDS covered under Water.</p> <p>Whilst needing an understanding of the state of the countryside, most of these indicators are outside the scope of an LDP.</p> <p>River quality is included in the indicators but there is concern over where other data would come from.</p> <p>The LDP cannot address existing</p>
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<p>new development'. This target should be strengthened to 'consider mitigation of flood risk on existing development and avoidance of flood risk on new development'</p>	<p>development; only ensure that conditions are not exacerbated. Avoidance of flood risk for new development is addressed.</p>
<p>Page 14, TAN 5; CCW should be consulted on all developments likely to affect protected species as well as sites. TAN5 published in 1996(?) and does not reflect legislation since then. A consultation draft of the new TAN5 has been published and should be available.</p>	<p>Will be updated when the draft becomes the statutory document.</p>
<p>Page 21, DETR 2000 Government Rural White Paper: our countryside – the future; This applies to England only, not Wales.</p>	<p>Will delete.</p>
<p>Appendix II Baseline Information</p> <p>Page 1, Environmental Stress; The Environment sub-set of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation may usefully inform this topic. Also, as well as mitigating for the effects of climate change, the LDP should also consider avoiding and adapting to these effects.</p> <p>Page 1, Special Areas of Conservation; Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Directive require 'appropriate assessment' for any plan or project (either alone or in combination with other plans/projects) that is likely to have a significant effect on a SAC or other Natura 2000 site.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Insert the following text: <i>Appropriate Assessment</i> In October 2005 a European Court of Justice ruling directed that land use plans should be subject to Appropriate Assessment (AA) of their implications for European Sites.^[1] ^[2]The purpose of AA is to assess the impacts of a land-use plan against the conservation objectives of a European site and to ascertain whether it would adversely affect the integrity of that site. Where significant negative effects are identified, alternative options should be examined to avoid any potential damaging effects. It is the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority to assess whether or not an AA is required and to carry out the AA</p>

	<p>in the preparation of a DPD or SPD where it is required. Best practice will be to scope out whether an AA is required at the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Stage and to undertake the AA alongside the development options prior to the statutory formal consultation periods for DPDs and SPDs.</p> <p>Due to the European designated site in RCT it may be necessary to carry out an AA when considering the potential strategic development options. However at this stage it is considered to be sufficient to acknowledge that this new process may be required and, to ensure that it is not inadvertently overlooked, an extra bullet point has been added to the decision aiding questions. As designated areas often cross-district, county or county borough boundaries the guidance recommends a consistent approach between authorities which RCT will discuss with neighbouring authorities.</p> <p>^[1] Article 6 (3) and (4) of Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive) ² European Sites consist of Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and sites on draft lists for protection as outlined in Regulation 10 of the Habitats Regulations 1994.</p>
<p>Page 2, SSSIs; This list of SSSI is not current or comprehensive – the LANDMAP website is not the best source of data on SSSI or designated sites. The SSSIs shown appear to be those that were notified at the time of the LANDMAP study and are not kept updated. Current SSSI, LNR and NNR site boundaries can be downloaded from the CCW website. Other information on individual sites (including SSSI citations) can also be accessed from the website.</p>	<p>Noted and will be updated as part of the ongoing process.</p>

<p>Page 8, Climatic factors; As well as energy efficiency, the plan should also consider water conservation at the domestic level and the need to reduce/mitigate for non-permeable surfaces and drive ways.</p>	<p>Water conservation is now included. The need for non-permeable surfaces can be the subject of an LDP development control policy.</p>
<p>Page 25, Historic Landscape Areas: See also p.43 Historic Landscape. There are two areas within RCT on the Register of Welsh Historic Landscapes 1) The Rhondda and 2) East Fforest-Faw and Mynydd y Glog.</p>	<p>Noted and will be updated as part of the ongoing process.</p> <p>Not included in the plan area</p>
<p>Page 26, National Park; 13% of RCT is within BBNP.</p> <p>Page 26, AONB; There are no AONBs within or in close proximity to Rhondda Cynon Taf.</p> <p>Page 26, LANDMAP Countryside Strategy Special Landscape Areas Cynon and Taff River park; LANDMAP data is available on CCW LandMap website (http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk) for the following aspects: historic; habitat geology.</p>	<p>Amend.</p> <p>Delete.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
<p>Page 29, use of brownfield sites; This should include the remediation of contaminated land as an issue for the LDP; the reuse of this land may alleviate or reduce the need for Greenfield development. Invasive species (e.g. Japanese Knotweed) can be serious issues on reuse of previously developed land.</p>	
<p>Page 31, Oil and Gas (hydrocarbons); Exploration licenses have been granted in South Wales by the DTI. There us a current round of license applications that is also undergoing SEA. Contact Energy Resources and Development Unit DTI, 1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Caerphilly County Borough Council

General Comments:
Although different in structure and layout, the targets and indicators set out in this Scoping Report are sufficiently similar to those in Caerphilly County Borough Council's own Scoping Report not to raise any comments. An officer report is currently being reviewed by Council Management and Members to this effect. Whilst the outcome of this discussion is still awaited there are no targets and indicators additional to those in the respective Scoping Reports which are thought to be required at this stage.

Comments noted.

Cadw

Key Sustainability problems, objectives or issues:

Page 6, Culture; indent 1 – Our records show that there are in fact 85 scheduled ancient monuments and 368 Listed Building Records in the county borough, together with 5 registered historic parks and gardens and the registered “The Rhondda” historic landscape. Perhaps a better way of phrasing the sentence would be “Rhondda Cynon Taf has a rich historic environment, the greater part of which is not statutorily protected”

Noted and see above.

Amend to read:
“Rhondda Cynon Taf has a rich historic environment, the greater part of which is not statutorily protected”

Page 7, paragraph 3.5, indent 13 – The future trend identified is valid but can also affect sites of recognised importance, particularly through development pressures such as wind farms in historic landscapes. Therefore, following on from the above, perhaps the sentence could be better phrased as “an increase in development affecting historic sites, particularly those without statutory

Amend to read:
an increase in development affecting historic sites, particularly those without statutory protection which are potentially of importance for cultural or archaeological heritage.

protection which are...”	
<p>Page 11, paragraph 5.9 – Again this is a fair point. However, it is important not to separate the living and retrospective culture too rigidly. That is to say the industrial heritage of the area, as represented by the relict historic landscape and industrial monuments, is important in understanding living cultural identity.</p>	Noted.
<p>Relevant Decision-Aiding Questions</p> <p>Page 12, Table 1 SA Objective – It would be best to have the word “Enhance” included</p> <p>Decision Aiding Questions – Indent 2 – This is fine, but Planning Policy Wales already largely provides for this.</p> <p>Potential Sustainability Targets and Indicators</p> <p>Information sheet prepared by CADW which sets out a number of possible indicators used elsewhere in SEAs for LDPs/UDPs and other plans</p> <p>Indent 1 – Not clear how this is to be defined or the linkage with the LDP. The key designations rest with CADW and, with the listing resurvey of Wales recently completed, would link with Assembly rather than LDP objectives.</p>	<p>Agreed. See above.</p> <p>The questions act a check list to ensure the wider objective is met.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Although administered nationally is still of local significance.</p>

<p>Indent 2 – I am not sure what is intended. As mentioned above the number of listed buildings is unlikely to change significantly over the life of the plan. Our recommendation for useful indicator would be about positive or negative change in Buildings at Risk Register for the county borough.</p>	<p>See changes recommended above which concur with this point.</p>
<p>Indicator 3 – If the intention is to link this Supplementary Planning Guidance for the creation of locally designated Archaeologically Sensitive Areas, this would be a useful indicator.</p>	<p>Noted and will be addressed by RCT CBC.</p>
<p>Indicators 4 – An indicator drawing on the condition of scheduled ancient monuments based on CADW data is possible as indicated in the fact sheet.</p>	<p>See changes recommended above which concur with this point</p>
<p>However, given that the first indent suggest a target on the proportion of development that protects or enhances cultural sites perhaps it would be sensible to develop indicators based around the plan development control process such as the number of archaeological sites/listed buildings adversely affected by development/plan proposals.</p>	<p>See changes recommended above which concur with this point</p>
<p>Baseline Data</p> <p>Reference should be made to the numbers of scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas etc as referred to above.</p>	<p>See changes recommended above which concur with this point</p>
<p>Redrow Homes</p>	
<p>1. Are there any additional key sustainability problems, objectives or issues relevant to land use planning for which sustainability</p>	<p>The paragraph recognises the need for development but acknowledges</p>

<p>objectives should be developed?</p> <p>Paragraph 5.5 implies new developments will have adverse environmental impacts – often developments can improve areas.</p>	<p>that development can have an adverse impact which should be avoided. It is agreed that development can bring about improvements.</p>
<p>2. Are there any other relevant decision aiding questions that could help with the appraisal and what the LDP can do?</p> <p>P.13 Economy and Employers: comments/suggestions: “Encourage” and not “promote” investment.</p> <p>The section says “land for needs of population” and not “employers/investors”. There are no commitments to encourage management to live in RCT, need good schools and housing.</p>	<p>Question 2 already reads “Encourage appropriate inward and indigenous investment”.</p> <p>Employers and investors meet the economic needs of the population.</p> <p>The LDP cannot engage in social engineering but there are commitments to better education and diversity of dwellings.</p>
<p>P.12 Housing: comments /suggestions:</p> <p>Needs to promote private sector investment</p> <p>Needs to promote land banks</p> <p>Needs to raise and tackle issue of clearance and redevelopment</p>	<p>The need for development is clearly expressed and this will inevitably come through the private sector.</p> <p>The LDP needs viable allocations and development rather than land banks.</p> <p>The issue of clearance and redevelopment was widely discussed in the Visioning and Technical workshops. The LDP will reflect the need for some redevelopment but also the retention of the best stock.</p>
<p>P.7 Transport: comments /suggestions:</p> <p>Need to provide for business related transport.</p>	<p>The framework seeks an integrated transport strategy which should include business needs.</p>
<p>3. Is there any further information available that could be used to measure whether sustainability</p>	

<p>objectives are being progressed?</p> <p>P.16 Housing:</p> <p>The indicators are social housing focused. Need to reference land bank/monitor levels of private sector investment/provide houses to support business – i.e. for management levels.</p>	<p>New indicator in response to comments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of housing completions by dwelling type.
<p>P.17 Economy and Investment:</p> <p>There are not targets or indicators for private sector investment.</p>	<p>Indicators 1 and 2 include economic activity by sector and GDP.</p>
<p>P.18 Built Environment:</p> <p>Clearance programmes?</p> <p>P.18 Biodiversity/climate change etc: How will they be measured?</p>	<p>See above.</p> <p>Emissions can now be measured with data available on the www.</p>
<p>4. Which targets and indicators are most appropriate for future measurement of progress towards each sustainability objective?</p> <p>Targets and indicators must be measurable – at present some appear to be aspirations and not measurable targets.</p> <p>There should be more focus on private sector interests.</p> <p>Land and property decisions, the LDP will be governed very much by sustainable location assessments. What are the criteria? These should be set out in the SA.</p> <p>The document needs to be less generic and more specific to RCT. There needs to be more focus on private sector interests and how they may assist in delivering objectives.</p>	<p>Agreed. The list of potential targets and indicators will be refined to a manageable list with available and accurate data.</p> <p>This is not a matter for this exercise which is concerned with sustainable development whether private for public sector funded.</p> <p>Guidance on sustainable locations is given in TAN guidance and will be reflected in the LDP.</p> <p>There are basic principles for sustainability which have to be adhered to. The document has sought to identify environmental and sustainability issues specific to RCT. How the objectives are met will be addressed in RCT's strategy documents.</p>

APPENDIX III: COMPATIBILITY ANALYSIS OF KEY LDP OBJECTIVES WITH SA OBJECTIVES

Compatibility analysis of Key LDP Objectives with the SA Framework objectives																
SA Objectives	Social Objectives						Economic Objectives				Environmental Objectives					
	Provide for the overall housing requirements through a mix of dwelling types	Promote & protect the culture & heritage incl. landscape, archaeology & language	Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working & socialising for all	Provide an environment that encourages a healthy & safe lifestyle & promotes well being	Reduce the need to travel & promote more sustainable modes of transport	Minimise waste, especially waste to landfill	Provide for a sustainable economy	Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities	Promote efficient and appropriate use of minerals	Improve, protect and enhance the landscape	Protect & enhance the diversity & abundance of wildlife habitats & native species	Improve, protect and enhance the water environment	Manage the effects of climate change	Increase the supply of renewable energy & reduce energy consumption	Promote efficient use of land and soils	
1 Housing	++	+	+	+	++	?	+	+	+	0	-?	0	?	-	0?	
2 Culture & Heritage	+	++	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	0?	0	0	0	?	+	
3 Communities	+	+	++	+	+	?	++	0	0	0	-?	?	+	?	++	
4 Health	+	0	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-?	
5 Economy	+	+	++	0	++	0	++	+	+	+	-?	?	?	-?	-?	
6 Employment	+	+	++	0	++	0	++	+	+	+	?	?	?	?	?	
7 Transport	++	+	+	+	++	+	++	+	+	+	0?	++	++	++	+	
8 Built Environment	++	+	+	0	++	+	0?	+	+	+	+	+	++	++	+	
9 Landscape	-?	0?	0	+	+	+	0	+	+	++	+	+	0?	0	+	
10 Biodiversity	-?	0	-?	0	++	++	0	+	+	++	++	++	++	0+	+	
11 Water	-?	0	?	?	0?	++	-?	0	+	++	++	++	++	++	+	
12 Climate Change	?	0	-?	0	++	++	?	+	0?	++	++	++	++	++	+	
13 Energy	-	?	?	0	++	++	?	+	+	0	++	++	++	++	++	
14 Land and Soils	?	+	?	0	+	++	?	0	+	++	++	++	++	++	++	
15 Waste	?	0	0	0	+	++	0	+	+	++	++	++	++	++	++	
16 Minerals	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	++	-?	0	0	+	+	+	+	

Summary

- Most LDP objectives are identical to the SA objectives, and none of them are therefore incompatible when tested against the SA Framework.
- The LDP objectives address a variety of inter-thematic issues and would be more effective in guiding sustainable development if the headings (i.e. social, economic and environmental) under which they are grouped were to be removed.
- The only potential conflicts appear between LDP objectives that refer to the construction of buildings (e.g. housing provision) and infrastructure, and environmental SA objectives, due to the lack of information regarding construction material and location. They could be improved by inserting a preference for the refurbishment of buildings to new build, the use of brownfield land, and concentrating development within existing settlements. Also beneficial would be to include a requirement for sustainable construction and management techniques. It is recommended to add SA objective 8, which deals with such issues, to the LDP objectives.
- SA objective 9 seeks to protect the countryside. The equivalent LDP objectives should be expanded to that respect as it currently only refers to "landscape".
- To avoid the uncertainties about the compatibility of the economic and social LDP objectives with environmental SA objectives it is recommended to insert a references to sustainable construction/production techniques, and for supporting jobs and business in environmental protection/ innovation industries, such as recycling, pollution control, insulation etc.

Key

- ++ Positive compatible
- + Compatible
- O Neutral, or not relevant to the SA objective
- Potential conflict
- Incompatible
- ? Uncertain - dependent on other factors or further details

APPENDIX IV: SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF SPATIAL STRATEGY OPTIONS

Key:

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

SA OBJECTIVE	TRENDS BASED STRATEGY	LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY	CONSOLIDATION STRATEGY	SUSTAINABLE GROWTH STRATEGY	GROWTH / LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY
1 HOUSING	Would reduce dwelling choices and would not allow people to remain in their communities. Unlikely to protect existing housing stock due to increased use of greenfield site for new units.	Would contribute to integrated communities by allowing local people to remain in their communities and by promoting development based on need, including housing need.	May protect and enhance communities in the north but could lead to decline in southern settlements and their facilities, preventing local residents from finding suitable dwellings within their community.	Concentrating population in growth areas will provide a wide range of dwelling types, with various facilities close by. This would encourage more self sustained communities with fewer local people needing to leave or commute.	Would build on the choice benefits of growth areas, by allowing locally guided development in some settlements. This would increase local identity as well as meeting housing needs.
2 CULTURE AND HERITAGE	Would lead to a loss of local identity and industrial heritage, especially in the north, where a decline in population may also threaten the retention of the Welsh language.	Would assist in preserving and enhancing cultural heritage in existing settlements.	Would help preserve local identity and industrial heritage, especially in the north.	Would help protect local heritage and cultural identity by channelling new developments in key growth areas.	Would help protect local heritage and cultural identity by channelling new developments in key growth areas as well as protecting locally defined country side areas and historic settlements.

SA OBJECTIVE	TRENDS BASED STRATEGY	LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY	CONSOLIDATION STRATEGY	SUSTAINABLE GROWTH STRATEGY	GROWTH / LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY
3 COMMUNITIES Would severely increase disparities between northern and southern wards. It does not promote mixed development and would therefore limit provision of local community facilities in accessible places.	F Could promote integrated communities by encouraging provision of local facilities in accessible locations and support the viability of town centres.	Would help reduce disparities between the northern and southern wards and therefore encourage the provision of more accessible community and education facilities as well as employment opportunities. Could revive community engagement and active citizenship	Would promote compact communities, providing the critical mass for accessible opportunities for living, working and socialising. Help reduce disparities between the northern and southern wards.	Would promote compact settlements, which provide the critical mass for accessible opportunities for living, working and socialising. Would help reduce disparities between the northern and southern wards, whilst considering individual local need	
4. HEALTH Due to the expected low-density development structure beyond confined towns and villages, access to healthcare facilities would be reduced, and limited to car use. This, in addition to reduced recreational opportunities and open space (even though more units would be provided with gardens) would not lead to an environment that promotes a healthy and safe lifestyle or one that promotes well-being.	N Would enhance access to healthcare facilities, and provide recreational facilities and open spaces tailored to local circumstances. May lead to reduced car use, with associated lower levels of noise, light, odour and air pollution.	Would, especially in northern communities, improve access to healthcare and recreational facilities thereby contributing to an environment that encourages a healthy, safe lifestyle and promotes well being.	Compact settlements would provide the critical mass for accessible healthcare and leisure facilities as well as reducing the need to travel by car with associated lower levels of noise, light, odour and air pollution. Would provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being.	Compact settlements would provide the critical mass for accessible healthcare and leisure facilities and reduce need the need to travel by car with associated lower levels of noise, light, odour and air pollution. Would encourage a healthy and safe lifestyle. Would provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being based on individual local circumstances.	

SA OBJECTIVE	TRENDS BASED STRATEGY	LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY	CONSOLIDATION STRATEGY	SUSTAINABLE GROWTH STRATEGY	GROWTH / LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY
<p>5 ECONOMY</p>	<p>Would not provide for a sustainable economy: neither encourages local growth, nor take into account identified strategic economic aspirations. Would accelerate decline and deprivation in the northern areas of high unemployment and economic inactivity. The rural economy and sustainable tourism would not be supported. Disperse population in low density development would jeopardise the vitality of town centres.</p>	<p>Could provide for a sustainable economy based on local circumstances. Would encourage indigenous investment, promote healthy town centres and may support the rural economy and sustainable tourism. Would, however, not cater for borough wide and strategic economic aspirations to diversify into new sectors in sub-regionally significant growth locations.</p>	<p>Could provide for a sustainable economy especially in northern areas of high unemployment and economic inactivity. Would lead to a district wide balanced land bank and encourage appropriate inward and indigenous investment. Would support the rural economy and sustainable tourism. Could help in promoting healthy town centres, especially in northern wards.</p>	<p>Would provide for a sustainable economy, by concentrating growth in compact settlements. Would encourage appropriate indigenous investment and promotes healthy town centres.</p>	<p>Would provide for a sustainable economy by concentrating development in compact growth settlements and tailoring economic activities to individual local circumstances. Would encourage appropriate inward and indigenous investment as well as promoting healthy town centres.</p>
<p>6 EMPLOYMENT</p>	<p>Left to market forces it is unlikely that this strategy would deliver a diverse range of job and training opportunities for a range of skills in accessible locations.</p>	<p>Would provide local jobs in accessible locations and therefore reduce the need for commuting, but it would not diversify or maximise employment opportunities as it does not aim to supply the spatial framework to address strategic economic aspiration e.g. requires new sector clusters in key growth locations.</p>	<p>Would increase the diversity of range of job opportunities within the northern wards and reduces the need for commuting. Could balance out employment opportunities for a range of skills levels across the borough.</p>	<p>Would provide for a diverse range of job opportunities by maximising employment opportunities for a range of skills levels in accessible growth areas, thereby reducing the need for out-commuting from the Borough for work.</p>	<p>Would provide for a diverse range of job opportunities by maximising employment opportunities for a range of skills levels in accessible growth areas as well as in identified settlements based on individual local requirements. Would reduce the need for out-commuting from the Borough & support the vitality of town centres.</p>

SA OBJECTIVE	TRENDS BASED STRATEGY	LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY	CONSOLIDATION STRATEGY	SUSTAINABLE GROWTH STRATEGY	GROWTH / LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY
7 TRANSPORT	<p>F The low density development pattern with community facilities and shops dispersed outside town centres would and increase the need to travel, mainly by car. Without key transport originators and destinations an integrated transport system cannot function well enough to provide a realistic alternative to the private car.</p>	<p>I Would reduce the need to travel due to transport destinations being concentrated within individual settlements. Such a land-use pattern with accessible interchanges would create demand for public transport, and naturally encourages walking and cycling due to shorter distances.</p>	<p>I Reduce the need for commuting in northern area but would not encourage an integrated urban transport system due to the lack of defined settlements in which facilities, shops, housing and jobs are concentrated.</p>	<p>I Concentrating development in compact key areas would reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport. A public transport system within and between urban settlements becomes viable and shorter journey lengths would naturally encourage walking and cycling.</p>	<p>I Concentrating development in compact key areas would reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport, especially if it is tailored to local circumstances. A public transport system within and between urban settlements becomes viable and shorter journey lengths would encourage walking & cycling.</p>
8 BUILT ENVIRONMENT	<p>F Would lead to low density, sub-urban type settlements, and would erode local character and distinctiveness. Such a land use pattern has a high land take and will increase pressure on the release of green fields sites. It is unlikely to promote methods of sustainable construction or provide green infrastructure corridors for people and wildlife.</p>	<p>I Likely to result in a high quality built environment that promotes community pride, by protecting and enhancing local character and distinctiveness. Such settlement forms present a good opportunity to promote green infrastructure corridors for people and wildlife.</p>	<p>I Would protect and enhance local character and distinctiveness, especially in northern settlements and would ease development pressure in southern areas, preserving the character of smaller settlements.</p>	<p>I Would promote high-density development within the key growth areas. The expected increase in new buildings would lead to (given latest planning requirements) higher design standards, incorporating methods of sustainable construction and green infrastructure. Would ease development pressure in other settlements, preserving their local character and distinctiveness</p>	<p>I Would promote high-density development within the key growth areas. The expected increase in new building would lead to (given latest planning requirements) higher design standards, incorporating methods of sustainable construction and green infrastructure. Would not only preserve the local character and distinctiveness but also takes into account based on local potential.</p>

SA OBJECTIVE	TRENDS BASED STRATEGY	LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY	CONSOLIDATION STRATEGY	SUSTAINABLE GROWTH STRATEGY	GROWTH / LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY
<p>9 LANDSCAPE</p>	<p>F Would harm the countryside by increasing pressure for the release of greenfield sites.</p>	<p>I Although it would focus development in existing settlements, these may be expanded based on identified individual need, especially within northern wards. This and the necessary transport links between these dispersed settlements could lead to further take up of previously undeveloped land.</p>	<p>Would lead to development within the country side especially within the north areas. This may increase the pressure to develop land in designated areas.</p>	<p>Would protect the countryside by channelling investment in identified growth areas. It would decrease development pressure on peripheral settlements.</p>	<p>Would greatly improve, protect and enhance the countryside as well as designated and other sensitive areas by taking into account individual local natural features when identifying key growth areas.</p>
<p>10 BIODIVERSITY</p>	<p>F Would lead to an increased uptake of greenfield sites, especially in the south and may therefore reduce the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and native species. This would mostly affect undesignated areas of local value. The low density layout could not integrate the protection or creation of habitat into the design of new development and would not promote ecologically based land management.</p>	<p>I Would protect and enhance wildlife habitats and species, of local value, but a disperse land use pattern could lead to fragmentation of larger habitats.</p>	<p>Would in northern wards result in erosion and fragmentation of valuable wildlife habitats.</p>	<p>Concentrating development and growth in several key areas would protect biodiversity within the remaining countryside.</p>	<p>Concentrating development and growth in several key areas, and taking into account local circumstances would protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and native species borough-wide as well as protecting locally important areas, especially when this is coupled with green corridors, wild live routes and small scale habitats within built up areas.</p>

SA OBJECTIVE	TRENDS BASED STRATEGY	LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY	CONSOLIDATION STRATEGY	SUSTAINABLE GROWTH STRATEGY	GROWTH / LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY
<p>11 WATER</p>	<p>Dispersed, uncontrolled development is more likely to impact upon water resources, including through diffuse pollution. There would be less opportunities to implement sustainable water management.</p>	<p>Would create a dispersed spatial settlement pattern that renders the protection of the water environment (apart from some locally important wetlands and river frontages) and promotion of sustainable water management difficult and, due to lack of economies of scale, prohibitively expensive.</p>	<p>Increased development and population in northern wards would increase pressure on water resources, supply and drainage.</p>	<p>Concentrating development and growth in several key areas would inevitably preserve the water environment within the surrounding countryside. A geographically confined population would enable sustainable water management including efficient water usage and use of sustainable drainage systems, to protect groundwater sources.</p>	<p>Concentrating development and growth in several key areas would inevitably preserve the water environment within the surrounding countryside. A geographically confined population would enable sustainable water management including efficient water usages and use of sustainable drainage systems, to protect groundwater sources. Tailoring solutions to individual local circumstances will increase this effect.</p>
<p>12 CLIMATE CHANGE</p>	<p>The inefficient use of land, resources and infrastructure together with the increased need to travel by car, resulting from this spatial development pattern, would in fact accelerate climate change by contributing to the greenhouse effect.</p>	<p>Uncertain. Impact on climate change is dependent on other factors and further details. Although a dispersed settlement is unlikely to contribute to a carbon-neutral community, the reduce need to travel may lead to less greenhouse gas emissions.</p>	<p>Uncertain. Impact on climate change is dependent on other factors and further details. Although higher building rates and the increased pressure on resources within northern wards would not contribute to carbon-neutral communities, the reduce need to commute would lead to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.</p>	<p>Concentrating population in compact settlements would help manage the effects of climate change due to efficient use of infrastructures, buildings and reduced need to travel.</p>	<p>Concentrating population in compact settlements would help manage the effects of climate change, due to efficient use of infrastructures, buildings and reduced need to travel. Applying locally derived measures to individual circumstances will greatly increase the positive effects, for instance through the use of locally available energy sources.</p>

SA OBJECTIVE	TRENDS BASED STRATEGY	LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY	CONSOLIDATION STRATEGY	SUSTAINABLE GROWTH STRATEGY	GROWTH / LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY
<p>13 ENERGY</p>	<p>F Would lead to more newly-built detached dwellings instead of reusing the existing built fabric, resulting in inefficient use of resources and increased need to travel by car. Higher energy consumption and use of non renewable fossil fuel is inevitable.</p>	<p>I Uncertain. Impact on energy consumption is dependent on other factors and further details. Although dispersed settlements are unlikely to contribute to energy efficient construction and management practices, the reduced need to travel may decrease consumption of non-renewable energy sources.</p>	<p>I Uncertain. Impact on energy consumption is dependent on other factors and further details. Although higher building rates and use of material would increase energy consumption in northern wards, the reduced need to commute may decrease consumption of non-renewable energy sources.</p>	<p>Compact settlements would enable the application of energy saving construction methods as well as reducing energy consumption during management/ maintenance. Shorter journey lengths would allow measures to reduce traffic to be more successful and therefore reduce fuel consumption. High density, especially high-rise office building and apartments have greater potential to incorporate energy efficiency measures, especially regarding insulation and temperature regulation.</p>	<p>Compact settlements would enable the application of energy saving construction methods as well as reducing energy consumption during management/ maintenance. Reduced need to travel would lower fuel consumption. High-rise building, have greater potential to apply energy efficiency measures. Applying locally derived measures to individual circumstances will greatly increase the positive effects, such as using passive solar energy at south facing hill sides, wind energy on higher ground, or hydroelectric energy from rivers and increased insulation within sheltered valleys.</p>

SA OBJECTIVE	TRENDS BASED STRATEGY	LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY	CONSOLIDATION STRATEGY	SUSTAINABLE GROWTH STRATEGY	GROWTH / LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY
14 LAND AND SOILS	The expected low density, suburban-type built form in marketable locations would increase general land take up, especially on green field sites, and does not encourage the reuse of previously developed land.	Would promote efficient use of land and soils by encouraging the reuse of previously developed land in existing settlements.	Promoting growth in northern wards would lead to the development of greenfield land. Lack of investment in southern area could deter the reclamation of contaminated land, thereby exacerbating dereliction and pollution to land and soils.	High density developments in compact settlements would result in more efficient use of land and soils, as it requires the reuse of previously developed land and buildings and (due to demand) would trigger their restoration and reclamation.	High-density development in compact settlement will promote efficient use of land and soils, as it requires the re-use of previously developed land and buildings and (due to demand) would trigger their restoration and reclamation. The positive effect is enhanced when local circumstances are taken into account, such as topography and the regeneration potential offered by the industrial heritage.
15 Waste	Uncertain. Waste production and treatment is dependent on other factors and further details. Low density settlement patterns are unlikely to achieve efficient waste treatment, or successful recycling schemes.	Uncertain. Waste production and treatment is dependent on other factors and further details	Uncertain. Waste production and treatment is dependent on other factors and further details	Although waste production and treatment is dependent on other factors and further details, compact settlements, due to shared use of building and infrastructure tend to generate less waste and have greater potential for successful recycling and sustainable waster treatment schemes.	Although waste production and treatment is dependent on other factors and further details, compact settlements, due to shared use of building and infrastructure, tend to generate less waste and have greater potential for successful recycling and sustainable waster treatment schemes.
16 MINERALS	Increase construction activity for detached dwellings and infrastructure would increase the use of minerals.	Uncertain. Mineral consumption is dependent on other factors and further details.	Increase construction activity in northern areas for dwellings and infrastructure would increase the use of minerals.	Compact settlements have potential to use minerals efficiently.	Compact settlements have potential to use minerals efficiently. Especially when locally sourced.

SA OBJECTIVE	TRENDS BASED STRATEGY	LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY	CONSOLIDATION STRATEGY	SUSTAINABLE GROWTH STRATEGY	GROWTH / LOCAL NEEDS STRATEGY
SA SYNOPSIS	Absolute sustainability constraints to development.	No sustainability constraints and strategy acceptable.	Potential sustainability issues; mitigation and /or negotiation possible.	No sustainability constraints and strategy acceptable.	Strategy actively encouraged, as it would resolve existing sustainability problems.

SUMMARY:

The hybrid Local Need/Sustainable Growth Strategy is the most sustainable option, scoring best against all sustainability objectives. Concentrating development in key settlements will especially meet environmental objectives in terms of energy and resource efficiency, use of previously developed land, and a reduced need to travel. It would also assist in addressing social and economic objectives by creating a critical mass for accessible community, health and education facilities, supporting the viability of town centres, as well as encouraging economic diversification by developing geographic clusters and new sectors in strategic location. The positive effects are enhanced when tailoring this strategy to local circumstance based on the social needs of the population, economic requirements in terms of access to resources or markets, environmental features, such as topography or habitats, or culture and heritage characteristics regarding historic legacy and local tradition.

APPENDIX V: SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF STRATEGIC POLICIES

Summary

All of the strategic policies have received an average total of a blue or green score. Recommendations have been provided to further improve the sustainability rating. There is a marked division on how well the strategic policies progress individual SA objectives: potential sustainability issues (yellow rating), as well as isolated problematic concerns where mitigation is difficult or expensive (orange), were identified for SA objectives that relate to environmental aspects, such as use of resources, climate change and energy efficiency. This is particularly the case with the strategic transportation policy. A more indirect or neutral impact has been observed for SA objectives relating to waste and minerals. Overall, strategic policies such as the development strategy, housing, culture, employment and community perform well against social and economic SA objectives.

Key:

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

<p>SP 1 – Locational Strategy - Development in the North</p> <p>Development proposals in the Northern Strategy Area will encourage appropriate forms of growth to address problems of deprivation, and high levels of social and economic need, and will help build sustainable communities.</p>					
SA Objective	Nature of the sustainability effect of policy (including magnitude, timing, duration and reversibility of effects where known).	Assessment	Evidence and reference	Suggested mitigation and enhancement measures (<i>those in italics are already proposed in the Plan</i>)	
1 Housing Provide for the overall housing requirement through a mix of dwelling types catering for all needs to promote integrated and thriving communities	Would increase housing choice and meet local need, thereby allowing local people to remain in their communities. Raised demand for accommodation should promote greater choice in term of size and type. Higher number of units would render the provision of affordable housing economically viable.	LG	PPS 3		
2 Culture and Heritage Promote, protect and enhance the Culture and Heritage including landscape, archaeology and language	Would assist in preserving local cultural identity and industrial heritage, but in order to accommodate the anticipated growth, may lead to increased development pressure on the surrounding country side, locally important or protected areas as well as historic settlements.	B		Could receive higher rating if a reference is added to take into consideration natural and built features of heritage and cultural values.	
3 Communities Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all	Would assist in reducing disparities between the northern and southern wards and would promote more compact settlements. The resulting critical mass would encourage the provision of more accessible community, education and leisure facilities as well as shopping and employment opportunities. Would improve access to healthcare facilities, and	DG	Depopulation affecting the valleys		
4 Health		LG	RCT ranks 5th in England and Wales		

	Provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being	may lead to reduced car use, with associated lower levels of noise, light, odour and air pollution.	(out of 376 areas), for the proportion of population with a limiting long-term illness, and general health 'not good'.	
5	Economy Provide for a sustainable economy	Would encourage indigenous investment, promote healthy town centres in northern areas of high unemployment and economic inactivity. Could in the long-term benefit the rural economy and sustainable tourism.	Litchfield, N, Rhondda Cynon Taf: Retail Capacity Assessment (2003)	LG
6	Employment Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities	Would in northern wards create conditions that may lead to new and more diverse jobs in more accessible locations. By creating demand for goods and facilities would promote employment within retail and servicing in town centres.	Huggins, R, Review of Rhondda Cynon Taf Economic Regeneration Strategy (2006)	LG
7	Transport Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport	Would in the short term increase traffic, but once initial investment took place, would result in shorter distances shopping, health and leisure facilities, as well as eventually reducing the need for commuting. Public transport within and between settlements would then become viable, and shorter journey lengths would help to encourage walking and cycling.	18.8% of all residents work outside the County Borough, the third largest percentage net outflow in Wales.	LG
8	Built Environment Provide a high quality built environment that promotes community pride	Could preserve and enhance local character and distinctiveness in northern settlements. The expected increase in new buildings would lead (given latest planning requirements and expected rise in disposable income) to higher design standards, incorporating methods of sustainable construction and green infrastructure.		LG
9	Landscape Improve, protect and enhance the countryside	Expanded settlements, together with the necessary transport links would lead to further take up of previously undeveloped land, and could increase the pressure to release designated, locally important and other sensitive areas.	94.1% of the land in RCT is of Grade 4 or 5 (low grade).	Y
10	Biodiversity Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and native	Could result in erosion and fragmentation of wildlife habitats.	RCT has a large amount of land designated for biodiversity protection.	Y
			Could receive higher rating if a reference is added to take into consideration natural and built features of heritage and cultural values.	

11	species Water Promote sustainable water management including promoting use of sustainable drainage systems	Increase development and population would increase pressure on water resources, supply and drainage.	Y	The previous industrial use of the area has led to degradation of the water environment.	Could receive higher rating if a reference is added to take into consideration natural and built features of heritage and cultural values.
12	Climate Change Manage the effects of climate change	Uncertain. Impact on climate change is dependent on other factors, including balancing employment and housing where possible to reduce commuting.	B		
13	Energy Increase the supply of renewable energy and reduce energy consumption	Uncertain. Impact on energy consumption is dependent on other factors and further details. Although higher building rates and use of material would increase energy consumption in northern wards, if the economy is boosted and jobs created in the northern wards, there may be a reduced need to commute. Shorter journey lengths would allow measures to reduce traffic to be more successful and therefore reduce fuel consumption.	B		
14	Land and Soils Promote efficient use of land and soils	Promoting growth in northern wards is likely to lead to the development of greenfield land.	Y		Policies should state a specific preference for developed or brownfield over greenfield land.
15	Waste Minimise waste, especially waste to landfill	Although waste production and treatment is dependent on other factors and further details, an increased population will produce more waste.	Y		
16	Minerals Promote efficient and appropriate use of minerals	Increase construction activity in northern areas for dwellings and infrastructure would increase the use of minerals.	B		The use of locally sourced materials should be considered in the preparation of specific policies and proposals.
Median Sustainability Rating: LG					
Summary:					
The policy scores well on social and economic objectives, but there are some environmental concerns relating to increased development pressure in rural areas and how this will impact upon the rural environment and environmental and cultural heritage. The policy could receive a higher rating if a requirement is added to take into account local environmental and built characteristics as well as heritage. Further policies should ensure the re-use of land, buildings and materials, employ energy efficient construction and management techniques and consider the impact on climate change.					

SP 2 – Locational Strategy - Development in the South				
Development proposals in the Southern Strategy area will promote sustainable development by encouraging a managed form of growth which will consolidate existing settlement patterns, having regard to the function and identity of settlements and the surrounding countryside, and existing or potential capacity to provide necessary infrastructure.				
SA Objective	Nature of the sustainability effect of policy (including magnitude, timing, duration and reversibility of effects where known).	Assessment	Evidence and reference	Suggested mitigation and enhancement measures (<i>those in italics are already proposed in the Plan</i>)
1 Housing Provide for the overall housing requirement through a mix of dwelling types catering for all needs to promote integrated and thriving communities	Would build on the choice benefits of growth areas by allowing locally guided development in defined settlements. This would encourage the re-use of the existing building stock, increases local identity as well as meeting housing need.	LG		
2 Culture and Heritage Promote, protect and enhance the Culture and Heritage including landscape, archaeology and language	Would assist in protecting local heritage, and cultural identity by directing developments into settlements based on their function and identity. A defined built up area would protect the surrounding countryside areas, as well as encourage the restoration and refurbishment of historic building and industrial sites.	LG	RCT has a rich cultural heritage but few sites are statutorily protected.	
3 Communities Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all	Could result in more integrated communities by promoting compact settlements, which provide the critical mass for accessible opportunities for living, working and socialising. This would strengthen the viability of town centres.	LG		
4 Health Provide an	Would improve access to healthcare and leisure facilities, as well as reducing the need to travel by car	B		

	environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being	with associated lower levels of noise, light, odour and air pollution. Could, however, increase the pressure to develop inner urban playing fields and public open space.			
5	Economy Provide for a sustainable economy	Would create spatial land use pattern that accommodates borough wide and strategic economic diversification aspirations as well as encouraging appropriate inward and indigenous investment and promotes healthy town centres based on local circumstances.	LG		Could consider rural economy/sustainable tourism.
6	Employment Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities	Would provide local jobs in accessible locations and therefore reduce the need for commuting. The spatial land use pattern may attract investment that meet borough wide and strategic economic diversification aspirations, thereby diversifying and maximising employment opportunities for a range of skills levels.	LG	18.8% of all residents work outside the County Borough, the third largest percentage net outflow in Wales.	
7	Transport Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport	Concentrating development in defined settlements would reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport. A public transport system within and between urban settlements becomes viable and shorter journey lengths would naturally encourage walking and cycling, especially if it is tailored to local circumstances.	LG		
8	Built Environment Provide a high quality built environment that promotes community pride	Would promote high-density development within the key growth areas. The expected increase in new building would lead to (given latest planning requirements) higher design standards, incorporating methods of sustainable construction and green infrastructure. Restricting development to within defined area would encourage the re-use of the existing building stock, preserving local character and distinctiveness.	LG		
9	Landscape Improve, protect and enhance the countryside	Although it would protect the countryside by channelling investment in defined settlements, it would result in land take around identified growth areas, and necessary transport links between these areas could further impact on the functioning of the	B		

10	Biodiversity Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and native species	country side. Concentrating development and growth in several key areas would protect biodiversity within the remaining countryside but could result in erosion and fragmentation of valuable habitats within settlements identified for expansion.	B		
11	Water Promote sustainable water management including promoting use of sustainable drainage systems	Although additional development would inevitably increase pressure on water resources, supply and drainage, a geographically confined population would result in preserving the water environment within the surrounding countryside, and would render the promotion of sustainable water management economically viable.	LG		
12	Climate Change Manage the effects of climate change	Although expanded settlement with an increased population and higher building rates is unlikely to contribute to a carbon-neutral community, compact settlements would help manage the effects of climate change due to efficient use of infrastructure. Impact on climate change is dependent on other factors and further details.	B		
13	Energy Increase the supply of renewable energy and reduce energy consumption	Although higher building rates and use of material would increase energy consumption in the short term, compact settlements would enable the application of energy saving construction methods for buildings and infrastructure as well as reducing energy consumption during their management and maintenance. Shorter journey lengths would allow measures to reduce traffic to be more successful and therefore reduce fuel consumption. High density, especially high-rise office building and apartments have greater potential to incorporate energy efficiency measures, especially regarding insulation and temperature regulation.	LG		
14	Land and Soils Promote efficient use of land and soils	High density development in compact settlements would result in more efficient use of land and soils, as it requires the re-use of previously developed land and buildings and (due to demand) would trigger their restoration and reclamation, reducing dereliction,	LG	Welsh Assembly Government, Heads We Win – Heads of the Valley Strategy (2005)	

15	Waste Minimise waste, especially waste to landfill	contaminated land, and pollution to land and soils.. Although waste production and treatment is dependent on other factors and further details, compact settlements, due to shared use of building and infrastructure, tend to generate less waste and have greater potential for successful recycling and sustainable waster treatment schemes.	B		
16	Minerals Promote efficient and appropriate use of minerals	Uncertain. Mineral consumption is dependent on other factors and further details. Although increased construction activity for dwellings and infrastructure would increase the use of minerals. Compact settlements have the potential to use resources more efficiently.	B		
Median Sustainability Rating: LG					
Summary: The policy progresses most sustainability objectives positively through consolidating and having regard to function and identity. It could be more explicit about what is meant by 'function', and include specific reference to the need to address high levels of out-commuting.					

SP 3 - Sustainable Development					
The development and use of land throughout the County Borough will be determined on the basis of the area's housing, economic and social needs, protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment, prudent use of resources, and minimising of energy consumption.					
SA Objective	Nature of the sustainability effect of policy (including magnitude, timing, duration and reversibility of effects where known).	Assessment	Evidence and reference	Suggested mitigation and enhancement measures (those in italics are already proposed in the Plan)	
1	Housing Provide for the overall housing requirement through a mix of	DG Although the policy could result in an increase in material, resources land take, it would in the medium and long run provide a mix of dwellings, secure the re-use of existing buildings and help meet housing			

	dwelling types catering for all needs to promote integrated and thriving communities	need to allow people to remain within their communities. With advancing knowledge in sustainable construction techniques, the housing stock would be updated gradually.		
2	Culture and Heritage Promote, protect and enhance the Culture and Heritage including landscape, archaeology and language	Could have positive effect on preservation of cultural identity and historic environment	LG	
3	Communities Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all	Would enable communities to flourish and be more self-sufficient.	DG	
4	Health Provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being	Uncertain, dependent on interpretation of other policies. The preservation of a playing field (positive) may lead to the development of building for health purposes on the less accessible periphery of a settlement (negative).	B	
5	Economy Provide for a sustainable economy	A diverse economy would bring prosperity allowing potential investment in ecological sound manufacturing methods and sustainable sectors such as recycling and energy production from renewable resources.	LG	
6	Employment Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities	Could lead to more diverse and higher quality employment opportunities, and, by attracting investment in various sectors could secure long-term employment prospects.	LG	
7	Transport Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport	The policy does not directly mention transport or to reduce the need to travel.	Y	62% of people travel to work by car, ranking 19th out of 376 for England and Wales, however, 31.6% of households do not have a car. The policy could refer to transportation needs in addition to housing, economic and social.

8	Built Environment Provide a high quality built environment that promotes community pride	Would assist in protecting and enhancing local character and distinctiveness and, considers sustainable construction.	DG		
9	Landscape Improve, protect and enhance the countryside	Likely to lead to a reduced rate of land take and more efficient forms of development within the countryside.	LG		
10	Biodiversity Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and native species	The inclusion of ecological consideration would have positive indirect effect on habitats, especially in the long term, when previously damaged habitats would have been restored.	LG	RCT has a large amount of land designated for biodiversity protection.	
11	Water Promote sustainable water management including promoting use of sustainable drainage systems	Would indirectly lead to an improved water environment and would encourage sustainable water management techniques	LG		Specific policies should refer to sustainable construction, management and maintenance techniques.
12	Climate Change Manage the effects of climate change	By considering all aspects of spatial development in RCT, the policy will have a positive effect /on the emission of green house gases, which in the long term may slow down global warming.	DG		
13	Energy Increase the supply of renewable energy and reduce energy consumption	Likely to indirectly reduce energy consumption	LG		
14	Land and Soils Promote efficient use of land and soils	Although implied, the policy does not specifically address contamination, dereliction or re-use of previously development land and building	B		
15	Waste Minimise waste, especially waste to landfill	The reduction, recycling or treatment of waste is implied through the 'prudent use of resource'.	B		
16	Minerals Promote efficient and	Would indirectly result in reduced consumption of minerals	LG		

appropriate use of minerals		
Median Sustainability Rating: LG		
<p>Summary: The policy positively progresses most of the SA objectives, but could better reflect the UK Sustainable Development Strategy through consideration of environmental limits.</p>		

SP 4 – Housing Requirements				
Provision will be made for the development of 14,850 new dwellings in Rhondda Cynon Taf during the period 2006 – 2021. Residential development proposals will be expected to contribute to local housing needs. Where a community housing need has been established, the local planning authority will seek the provision of an appropriate proportion of affordable housing on large sites.				
SA Objective	Nature of the sustainability effect of policy (including magnitude, timing, duration and reversibility of effects where known).	Assessment	Evidence and reference	Suggested mitigation and enhancement measures (<i>those in italics are already proposed in the Plan</i>)
1	<p>Housing Provide for the overall housing requirement through a mix of dwelling types catering for all needs to promote integrated and thriving communities</p>	LG	<p>Welsh Assembly Government, Household Projections for South East Wales (2006) Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, Local Housing Strategy (2004) 53% of the housing stock is terraced.</p>	
2	<p>Culture and Heritage Promote, protect and enhance the Culture and Heritage including landscape,</p>	B		<p>Policy should include a reference to the need to maintain and support the areas cultural and environmental heritage</p>

	archaeology and language						
3	Communities Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all	Would increase housing choice by requiring a housing mix, based on locally derived need assessment. And therefore allowing residents to remain within their community.	LG	Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, Community Profile (2005)			
4	Health Provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being	Uncertain. The level of growth proposed would create additional demand for health care services, which will need to be met.	B			Specific policies and proposals should refer to the need to "contribute to provision of facilities to health, sport and recreation facilities and public open space.	
5	Economy Provide for a sustainable economy	Covered indirectly: Although it would contribute to a rise in construction, the effect is relatively short term.	B		The majority of people are employed in manufacturing (22.9%)		
6	Employment Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities	Increased housing growth will provide jobs in construction and will contribute to economic growth, fuelling employment. It must, however, be accompanied by provision of employment land and be located so as to reduce commuting.	B				
7	Transport Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport	The level of growth may assist in providing a critical mass to assist in the provision of transport services. However, it will also likely lead to increased congestion and air pollution.	B			Specific policies will need to address the transportation needs of a growing population, in particular the provision of public transport. Development location and layout should maximise opportunities for public transport, cycling and walking.	
8	Built Environment Provide a high quality built environment that promotes community pride	The policy refers to quantity and mix but not design, density or quality of the units.	Y	Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, Our Living Space (2006)		Specific policies should refer to design quality, density and preference for refurbishment or conversion of existing building in favour of new built. Include reference to sustainable construction techniques and green wildlife corridors.	Add preference for brownfield sites.
9	Landscape Improve, protect and enhance the countryside	The policy refers to new dwellings but does not contain any locational requirement, which could potentially increase pressure to release inner urban green field site as well as within the surrounding	Y				

10	Biodiversity Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and native species	country side. Could lead to habitat fragmentation and endanger species and wildlife.	Y	Specific policies should refer to ecological sound construction techniques, building and land management as well as inclusion of habitat routes
11	Water Promote sustainable water management including promoting use of sustainable drainage systems	Additional development and residents will increase water usage.	Y	Specific policies should include a requirement for efficient water usage and sustainable supply and treatment systems.
12	Climate Change Manage the effects of climate change	Potential negative effect as the policy does not consider the likely impacts of climate change.	B	Specific policies should refer to the need to reduce green house gas emissions and to contribute to a carbon neutral community.
13	Energy Increase the supply of renewable energy and reduce energy consumption	No reference to promote energy efficiency or use of renewable energy sources.	B	Specific policies should include requirement for energy especially high standards of insulation. Promote the application of environmentally sound construction and managements technique with extra reference to sustainable heating/cooling systems
14	Land and Soils Promote efficient use of land and soils	The policy does not require the use of brownfield sites or encourage the re-use of previously developed land and buildings.	Y	Specific policies should include preference for brownfield sites and re-use of the existing built fabric.
15	Waste Minimise waste, especially waste to landfill	Uncertain. Although waste production and treatment is dependent on other factors and further details. Compact and higher density sites tend to generate less waste (in construction,) and have greater potential for successful recycling and sustainable waster treatment schemes.	B	Specific policies should include a requirement to consider the effect of waste treatment during the design stage, especially waste to heat systems.
16	Minerals	Unless recycled or material from renewable sources	Y	Specific policies should require that all

Promote efficient and appropriate use of minerals	are used, effect of increase construction activity for dwellings would increase the use of minerals.		building should contain a certain percentage of recycled materials or those form renewable sources.
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Median Sustainability Rating: B

Summary:

Policy scores high in meeting social and economic SA objectives, but could be expanded to consider environmental concerns equally well. Add reference to address energy efficiency, sustainable construction and management techniques as well as a preference to re-use land, building and material.

SP 5 – Employment Requirements

The economic development needs of Rhondda Cynon Taf will be met through maintaining a landbank for general employment and business park use during the period 2006 – 2021, and the retention of existing suitably located employment sites. Employment generating development proposals which diversify the local economy and extend the range of high value, well paid employment opportunities available locally will be encouraged.

SA Objective	Nature of the sustainability effect of policy (including magnitude, timing, duration and reversibility of effects where known).	Assessment	Evidence and reference	Suggested mitigation and enhancement measures (<i>those in italics are already proposed in the Plan</i>)
1 Housing Provide for the overall housing requirement through a mix of dwelling types catering for all needs to promote integrated and thriving communities	The policy may have an indirect effect through increased prosperity and could result in a higher demand for a greater variety of homes.	B		
2 Culture and Heritage Promote, protect and enhance the Culture and Heritage	The policy does not promote rural enterprises or sustainable tourism.	B	Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, Boosting Our Local Economy (2005)	Policy (or more detailed specific policies) should consider the support of rural enterprises and sustainable tourism.

	including landscape, archaeology and language					
3	Communities Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all	Policy promotes provision of accessible and diverse employment opportunities, which via increased spending power, supports town centres and other services. The diversification of the local economy will contribute to community integration.	LG			Include training and education, mixed use location
4	Health Provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being	A striving economy is likely to have a knock-on effect, through reducing employment and associated mental health conditions.	LG			
5	Economy Provide for a sustainable economy	Policy promotes a diverse local economy, but does not refer to the preferred location.	LG	17 of RCT's 53 electoral wards are amongst the 100 most deprived in Wales. The Gross Domestic Product for Rhondda Cynon Taff was estimated as being 64.5% of the EU average. 221.61 ha of land allocated for employment in the previous plan have not been taken up.		Could be dark green by adding reference to promoting town centre businesses, rural economy and sustainable tourism
6	Employment Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities	Policy promotes high value and well-paid employment, but does not refer to locational criteria or the need to reduce commuting.	Y	18.8% of all residents work outside the County Borough, the third largest percentage net outflow in Wales 44% of the population have no qualifications.		Employment policies should promote town centre businesses, the rural economy and sustainable tourism, as well as advocate investment in accessible locations to reduce commuting.
7	Transport Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport	Transportation requirements should be a key consideration in the development of employment policies, in particular, issues relating to transport accessibility.	Y	Away from the two north/south main routes, accessibility in the County Borough is poor. 62% of people travel to work by car, ranking 19th out of 376 for England and Wales, however, 31.6% of		Further consideration could be given to transportation in this policy given its key importance.

8	Built Environment Provide a high quality built environment that promotes community pride	The policy does not provide any guidance on the quality of design, important to protect and enhance local character and distinctiveness, particularly so within the advocated mix used areas. The policy also does not address sustainable construction or building management techniques.	Y	households do not have a car.	Add reference to quality of design and sustainable construction or building management techniques factory building, especially with regards to cooling of office and other work places.
9	Landscape Improve, protect and enhance the countryside	There is no consideration within this policy of landscape and countryside protection.	Y		It is recommended that the policy state a preference for previously developed, rather than Greenfield sites.
10	Biodiversity Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and native species	Could lead to fragmentation and erosion of habitat, particularly if it involves the redevelopment of vacant industrial sites (which, if undisturbed, can have high biodiversity values).	B	RCT has a large amount of land designated for biodiversity protection.	Specific policies should be developed to preserve habitat and maintain biodiversity.
11	Water Promote sustainable water management including promoting use of sustainable drainage systems	Additional development and residents will increase water usage.	B		Further specific policies should include requirement for efficient water usage and sustainable supply and treatment systems.
12	Climate Change Manage the effects of climate change	Potential negative effect as the policy does not consider the likely impacts of climate change.	Y	UK Sustainable Development Strategy	Add reference to reduce green house gas emissions and the need to contribute to a carbon neutral community.
13	Energy Increase the supply of renewable energy and reduce energy consumption	No reference to promote energy efficiency or use of renewable energy sources. The policy also does not address sustainable construction or building management techniques. The cooling of office and factory building are especially energy intensive.	Y		Include requirement for energy especially high standards of insulation. Promote the application of environmentally sound construction and managements technique with extra reference to sustainable heating/cooling systems
14	Land and Soils Promote efficient use of land and soils	The policy does not require the use of brownfield sites or encourage the re-use of previously developed land and buildings. This would slow down the rate of reclaiming contaminated land and would not encourage developers to refurbish existing derelict	Y	The County Borough is covered by Objective 1 European funding.	Further, more specific policies should include preference for brownfield sites and re-use of the existing built fabric.

15	<p>Waste Minimise waste, especially waste to landfill</p>	<p>building Waste issues are not addressed. Although waste production and treatment is dependent on other factors and further details, industrial process tend to generate waste, but compact and higher density office building due to shared use of facilities and infrastructure, tend generate less waste and have greater potential for successful recycling and sustainable waster treatment schemes.</p>	<p>B</p>	<p>Specific policies could include a requirement to consider the effect of waste treatment during the design stage, especially waste to heat systems.</p>
16	<p>Minerals Promote efficient and appropriate use of minerals</p>	<p>Unless recycled or material from renewable sources are used, effect of increase construction activity for dwellings would increase the use of minerals</p>	<p>B</p> <p>Mineral extraction is an important industry within the economy of RCT.</p>	<p>Specific policies could include requirement that all building should contain a certain percentage of recycled materials or those from renewable sources.</p>
<p>Median Sustainability Rating: Y</p>				
<p>Summary: The concept of a flexible land bank for employment land and the promotion of high value and well-paid employment are supported, however the policy could be strengthened with stronger consideration of the environment. Further consideration should be given to opportunities to promote mixed-use development, rather than separating housing and employment development.</p>				

<p>SP 6 Town Centres</p> <p>Proposals which contribute to sustaining and enhancing town centre vitality, cultural identity, attractiveness and viability will be encouraged.</p>					
SA Objective	Nature of the sustainability effect of policy (including magnitude, timing, duration and reversibility of effects where known).	Assessment	Evidence and reference	Suggested mitigation and enhancement measures (<i>those in italics are already proposed in the Plan</i>)	
1 Housing Provide for the overall housing requirement through a mix of dwelling types catering for all needs to promote integrated and thriving communities	Although the effect is indirect, vibrant town centres are an important factor in the increased demand to live in adjacent residential areas. Often this results in refurbishment and upgrading of traditional terraces, but also to the re use of previous industrial sites for housing.	LG			
2 Culture and Heritage Promote, protect and enhance the Culture and Heritage including landscape, archaeology and language	Historic building and those of cultural heritage value are concentrated in the older parts of town centres. Such areas often benefit from town centre improvement schemes or private investment.	DG		Could receive higher rating if a reference is added to consider historic buildings.	
3 Communities Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all	Town Centres are the focal point for a range of activities including shopping, employment, leisure and community facilities, all in an accessible location. The policy encourages investment in town centres and this would result in opportunities for community engagement and active citizenship. By promoting healthy town centres, the policy would	DG			
4 Health		LG			

	Provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being	create the precondition that enables provision of health care facilities in accessible location.			
5	Economy Provide for a sustainable economy	Town centres are the prime location for accessible retail and office based business, providing a boost to the economy.	DG	Litchfield, N, Rhondda Cynon Taf: Retail Capacity Assessment (2003) · Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, Boosting Our Local Economy (2005)	The Policy should highlight the economic importance of town centres.
6	Employment Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities	Healthy town centres provide opportunities for retail, office and leisure employment without the need for commuting.	DG	Welsh Assembly Government, Heads We Win – Heads of the Valley Strategy (2005)	Policy could highlight the importance of town centres for employment creation and retention
7	Transport Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport	Integrated transport systems with efficient interchange require a critical mass in terms of origin, destination and passengers in order to be economically viable. This can only be provided in town centres. The policy does not contain a reference to accessibility.	LG	31.6% of households do not have a car. Generally poor access to facilities	Add reference to accessibility.
8	Built Environment Provide a high quality built environment that promotes community pride	Would encourage higher quality design and enhance local character and distinctiveness.	LG	Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, Our Living Space (2006)	Could add reference to sustainable construction and management techniques.
9	Landscape Improve, protect and enhance the countryside	A strong policy to protect the vitality and viability of town centres will assist in preventing further out of town retail or leisure scheme on green field site.	LG		Add reference to the “town centre first” principle or sequential test.
10	Biodiversity Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and native species	Town Centres are normally already established, and any measures to include ecological sound refurbishment or upgrading could enhance urban biodiversity.	B		Would receive green rating if a reference were added to “take into consideration protection and provision of small urban wildlife habitats and corridors.
11	Water Promote sustainable water management including promoting use of sustainable	Town Centres are normally already established, and any new investment or regeneration scheme can improve efficiency in water usage and treatment by including sustainable management practices.	B		Would receive green rating if reference to efficient use of resources /sustainable building management methods were added.

12	drainage systems Climate Change Manage the effects of climate change	Town Centres are normally already established, and any new investment or regeneration scheme can assist in minimising greenhouse gas emissions and becoming carbon neutral.	B	Add requirement to reduce green house gas emissions.
13	Energy Increase the supply of renewable energy and reduce energy consumption	Town Centres are normally already established, and any new investment or regeneration scheme can assist in energy efficiency. Without such measures this could become potentially unsustainable.	Y	Policies should include a requirement to promote energy efficiency, environmentally sound construction and management techniques.
14	Land and Soils Promote efficient use of land and soils	Due to the scarcity and cost of land within town centres, they necessitate the re-use of land for building; they therefore make the refurbishment of derelict sites and reclamation of contaminated land economically viable.	LG	Could receive a dark green rating if the re-use of land and building is included as a preference to new build.
15	Waste Minimise waste, especially waste to landfill	Waste issues are not addressed. Although waste production and treatment is dependent on other factors and further details, the concentration of people and activities within town centres generates vast amounts of waste. Conversely, compact and higher density office buildings due to shared use of facilities and infrastructure, tend to have greater potential for successful recycling and sustainable waste treatment schemes.	Y	Specific policies should include a requirement to consider the effect of waste production, recycling and treatment.
16	Minerals Promote efficient and appropriate use of minerals	Unless recycled or material from renewable sources are used, the effects of increased construction activity for dwellings would increase the use of minerals.	Y	Could receive green rating if a requirement that all new or refurbished building should contain a certain percentage of recycled materials or materials from renewable sources is included.
Median Sustainability Rating: LG				
Summary: The policy performs well against the economic, social and cultural SA objectives. Potential sustainability issues arise regarding environmental objectives, especially energy efficiency and use of resources. It is recommended to include a reference to energy efficiency, biodiversity and reduction of greenhouse gases. Town centres could become showcases for good practice in sustainable urban design and architecture.				

SP 7 Transportation					
<p>The Council will seek to implement transportation schemes and initiatives which will achieve sustainable regeneration, improve the economy, reduce congestion, and improve road safety by:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining and improving accessibility for all sections of the community; Supporting transportation schemes which benefit the economy of the County Borough; Supporting and enhancing public transport; walking and cycling provision; and achieving integration of all modes of transportation; Minimising adverse effects of traffic and parking on local amenities and the environment as a whole. 					
SA Objective	Nature of the sustainability effect of policy (including magnitude, timing, duration and reversibility of effects where known).	Assessment	Evidence and reference	Suggested mitigation and enhancement measures (<i>those in italics are already proposed in the Plan</i>)	
1 Housing Provide for the overall housing requirement through a mix of dwelling types catering for all needs to promote integrated and thriving communities	Would indirectly contribute to a greater mix of housing types and sizes in the long term. The expected improved accessibility to employment, retail and community facilities by a choice of transport modes would increase demand for urban living and therefore trigger the re-use of existing housing stock.	LG		Could receive a dark green rating if a specific reference is included to reduce the need to travel by car.	
2 Culture and Heritage Promote, protect and enhance the Culture and Heritage including landscape, archaeology and language	Would indirectly lead to the enhancement of areas and buildings of historical, archaeological or cultural importance and industrial heritage. Improving access would increase the number of visitors, providing income for maintenance and further build on their tourism potential.	LG	Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, Community Plan: A Better Life, (2004)	Could receive a dark green rating if a specific reference is included to reduce the need to travel by car.	
3 Communities Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and	Reducing the need to travel and providing a choice of transport modes would contribute towards achieving equality of access for all members of society to sources of employment, vital civic and health facilities, and also to places of cultural and leisure	LG	Away from the two north/south main routes, accessibility in the County Borough is poor.	Could receive a dark green rating if a specific reference is included to reduce the need to travel by car.	

4	socialising for all Health Provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being	interest. Would increase access to health facilities, sport, recreation, and public open spaces, as well as reducing levels of noise and air pollution.	LG		Could receive a dark green rating if a specific reference is included to reduce the need to travel by car.
5	Economy Provide for a sustainable economy	Access to staff, customers, resources and markets is vital for economic prosperity, especially for town centre vitality, the rural economy and tourism.	LG	Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, Boosting Our Local Economy (2005)	Could receive a dark green rating if a specific reference is included to reduce the need to travel by car, and to transport resource as and goods by trains.
6	Employment Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities	Would increase employment opportunities, by creating the conditions to provide jobs in accessible locations and reduce the need for out-commuting from the Borough for work. An efficient integrated transport system would attract well-skilled employees and would promote healthy, town centres.	LG	62% of people travel to work by car, ranking 19th out of 376 for England and Wales, however, 31.6% of households do not have a car. 18.8% of all residents work outside the County Borough, the third largest percentage net outflow in Wales.	Could receive a dark green rating if a specific reference is included to reduce the need to travel by car.
7	Transport Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport	Although the policy is acceptable in meeting the SA objective relating to transport, it is not specific enough in reducing the need to travel by car. Most of the means listed by which the policy aims to improve access could be interpreted as still tolerating new infrastructure for car-borne traffic.	LG	Away from the two north/south main routes, accessibility in the County Borough is poor.	Could receive a dark green rating if a specific reference is included to reduce the need to travel by car.
8	Built Environment Provide a high quality built environment that promotes community pride	Promotion of public transport, walking and cycling would reduce the need for new road schemes, which in urban areas would save older buildings from demolition. Planned road schemes have in the past often served to discourage investment. On the other hand, an integrated transport system would make urban living more convenient and attractive and the increased demand would trigger the re-use of existing building stock.	B		Could receive a green rating if a specific reference is included to reduce the need to travel by car.
9	Landscape Improve, protect and enhance the countryside	Although increased transport choice would enhance access to the countryside, the policy is not specific enough about reducing the need to travel by car. This could lead to new roads being constructed in order to increase access, especially in rural areas. This could	B		Could receive a green rating if a specific reference is included to reduce the need to travel by car.

10	Biodiversity Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and native species	lead to additional take up of green field land. Habitats and green corridors could potentially be fragmented by road building.	O	RCT has a large amount of land designated for biodiversity protection.	Could receive a higher rating if a specific reference is included to reduce the need to travel by car
11	Water Promote sustainable water management including promoting use of sustainable drainage systems	Natural water environments potentially affected by road building, putting further pressure on the drainage system.	O	RCT's drainage system is old and overloaded	Could receive a higher rating if a specific reference is included to reduce the need to travel by car
12	Climate Change Manage the effects of climate change	Could potentially increase greenhouse gas emissions.	O		Could receive a higher rating if a specific reference is included to reduce the need to travel by car
13	Energy Increase the supply of renewable energy and reduce energy consumption	Could lead to increased energy use due to road buildings and car usage.	O		Could receive a higher rating if a specific reference is included to reduce the need to travel by car
14	Land and Soils Promote efficient use of land and soils	Would increase land-take through road building in both town (where land is scarce) and country. Increased pollution through car usage.	O		Could receive a higher rating if a specific reference is included to reduce the need to travel by car
15	Waste Minimise waste, especially waste to landfill	Continuous creation of car related waste, some components of which are non-recyclable and toxic.	Y		Could receive a higher rating if a specific reference is included to reduce the need to travel by car
16	Minerals Promote efficient and appropriate use of minerals	Continuous use of tarmac.	O		Could receive a higher rating if a specific reference is included to reduce the need to travel by car
Median Sustainability Rating: LG					
Summary: Although the policy adequately addresses those SA objectives relating to the economy, housing and communities, there are some problematic areas where mitigation would be difficult or expensive. The policy could perform better with environmental objectives if a requirement was added to reduce the need to travel by car and to stronger promote use of public transport, walking and cycling. This will have a positive effect on climate change, energy efficiency, biodiversity, use of land and protection against pollution of water, air and soil.					

SP 8 - Environmental Protection and Enhancement				
The quality of life in Rhondda Cynon Taf will be preserved or enhanced by the protection of the natural and historic environment and landscape from inappropriate development. Development proposals will not cause unacceptable harm to the following:-				
a) the quality of natural resources including water, air, soil and biodiversity; b) natural drainage of surface water; c) the character and quality of local landscapes and the wider countryside; d) local distinctiveness, character, townscape and setting of settlements; and, e) historic and cultural features of acknowledged importance.				
SA Objective	Nature of the sustainability effect of policy (including magnitude, timing, duration and reversibility of effects where known).	Assessment	Evidence and reference	Suggested mitigation and enhancement measures (<i>those in italics are already proposed in the Plan</i>)
1 Housing Provide for the overall housing requirement through a mix of dwelling types catering for all needs to promote integrated and thriving communities	Indirect effect. In the short-term it would slow down the rate of new housing development and favour the re-use of existing stock. Increasing knowledge of sustainable construction/management techniques could lead to new housing in sustainable locations.	LG		Wording should be more specific.
2 Culture and Heritage Promote, protect and enhance the Culture and Heritage including landscape, archaeology and language	Would indirectly lead to the enhancement of areas and buildings of historical, archaeological or cultural importance and industrial heritage.	LG		A separate strategic policy concerning culture and heritage of the built environment.
3 Communities	Only indirectly by protecting environmental amenity.	B	Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC,	

	Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all			Community Plan: A Better Life, (2004)	
4	Health Provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being	No direct impact.	B		
5	Economy Provide for a sustainable economy	Would support the economy by protecting tourism assets and create an improved urban environment that could act as a pull factor for inward investment, even though it could prevent new business development initially.	LG	Welsh Assembly Government, Heads We Win – Heads of the Valley Strategy (2005)	
6	Employment Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities	Enhanced amenity might attract new employees to CBT and prevent the outward migration from others. May lead to the creation of new jobs in businesses attracted by the improved environment	LG		
7	Transport Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport	No direct link, although an improved urban environment may encourage walking and cycling and contribute to a sense of safety and security.	B		
8	Built Environment Provide a high quality built environment that promotes community pride	Although the policy would protect and enhance local character and townscape, the wording is too un-specific to prevent undesirable development.	B		
9	Landscape Improve, protect and enhance the countryside	Even though the policy could prevent development that may cause irreversible damage to the countryside, the policy is too broadly phrased to guard the countryside from activities that could have indirect negative effects in the long-term.	B		
10	Biodiversity Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife	Although the policy could prevent development that may cause irreversible damage to biodiversity, the policy is too broadly phrased to guard wildlife and habitats from activities that could have indirect	B	RCCT has a large amount of land designated for biodiversity protection.	

	habitats and native species	negative effects in the long-term.			
11	Water Promote sustainable water management including promoting use of sustainable drainage systems	Although the policy could prevent development that may cause irreversible damage to the water environment, the policy is too broadly phrased to guard water resources wildlife and habitats from activities that could have indirect negative effects in the long-term.	B	The previous industrial use of the area has led to degradation of the water environment.	
12	Climate Change Manage the effects of climate change	The policy does not consider the likely impacts on climate change, and does not address greenhouse gas emissions. It fails to contribute to a carbon-neutral community.	O	UK Sustainable Development Strategy	A separate policy to deal with environmental protection in the ecological sense should be prepared.
13	Energy Increase the supply of renewable energy and reduce energy consumption	Issue is dealt with by a separate policy.	B		
14	Land and Soils Promote efficient use of land and soils	Although the policy could prevent development that may cause irreversible damage to land and soil, the policy is too broad to encourage the reclamation of contaminated land or protect it from activities that could have indirect negative effects in the long term	Y		A separate policy to deal with environmental protection in the ecological sense should be prepared.
15	Waste Minimise waste, especially waste to landfill	Issue is dealt with by a separate policy.	B		
16	Minerals Promote efficient and appropriate use of minerals	Issue is dealt with by a separate policy.	B		
Median Sustainability Rating: B					
Summary:					
The policy attempts to address a wide range of environmental issues and the current policy wording could be interpreted in a manner that may not be as effective as possible in preventing proposals with a potentially harmful effect. It is recommended to devise two separate policies, one addressing environmental concerns relating to physical appearance and cultural values, and another that deals with ecological aspects in terms of climate change and use of resources.					

<p>SP 9 - Community Infrastructure</p> <p>The impact of developments on local community infrastructure will need to be addressed by appropriate on site provision or contributions to off site improvements. Planning obligations will be sought to secure the necessary physical, social, economic and environmental infrastructure related to the development. Such requirements will include:</p> <p>a) affordable housing; b) open space and play facilities; c) investment in local education provision; d) highways and public transport improvements; e) environmental works including benefits to the natural and historic environment; f) waste management and recycling; g) investment in community and indoor leisure provision; h) public artworks.</p>					<p>Suggested mitigation and enhancement measures (those in italics are already proposed in the Plan)</p>	
<p>SA Objective</p>		<p>Nature of the sustainability effect of policy (including magnitude, timing, duration and reversibility of effects where known).</p>	<p>Assessment</p>	<p>Evidence and reference</p>	<p>Suggested mitigation and enhancement measures (those in italics are already proposed in the Plan)</p>	
<p>1</p> <p>Housing Provide for the overall housing requirement through a mix of dwelling types catering for all needs to promote integrated and thriving communities</p>	<p>Positive effect as it would enable the provision of affordable housing that may not be possible to a significant extent without this policy.</p>	<p>DG</p>	<p>PPS 3 (housing) Welsh Assembly Government, Household Projections for South East Wales (2006) Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, Local Housing Strategy (2004)</p>			
<p>2</p> <p>Culture and Heritage Promote, protect and enhance the Culture and Heritage including landscape, archaeology and</p>	<p>Positive effect as it would enable the provision of environmental works to the historic environment that may not have been possible to a significant extent without it.</p>	<p>LG</p>		<p>Could receive a dark green rating if culture and heritage are included more specifically.</p>		

3	language Communities Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all	Positive effect as it would enable the provision of recreation, education, culture and other community facilities that may not have been possible to a significant extent without it.	DG	Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, Community Profile (2005)					
4	Health Provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being	Indirect positive effect as it would enable the provision of facilities for sport and informal recreation, such as open space and play areas that may not have been possible to a significant extent without it.	LG					Could receive a dark green rating if the following are included more specifically b) add "playing field" g) add "sport"	
5	Economy Provide for a sustainable economy	Neutral	B						
6	Employment Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities	No significant effect, although the provision of a high quality and well functioning community infrastructure could attract higher skilled labours to accept jobs within RCT, and may prevent others from leaving.	B						
7	Transport Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport	Positive effect as it would enable the provision of transport infrastructure that may not have been possible to a significant extent without it.	DG						
8	Built Environment Provide a high quality built environment that promotes community pride	Positive effect as it would enable the provision of hard and soft landscaping, public art, work recreation and other physical improvement schemes, that may not have been possible to a significant extent without it.	DG						
9	Landscape Improve, protect and enhance the countryside	Positive effect as it could secure new access arrangements to the countryside as well as able the provision improves maintenance/management arrangements that may not have been possible to a significant extent without it.	LG					Could receive a dark green rating if a new bullet point is added. "i) access and management arrangement for country side areas."	
10	Biodiversity Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife	Policy does not specifically address biodiversity other than indirectly under "natural environment." This could result in the degradation of habitats.	Y					Could receive a green rating if a new bullet point is added. "i) biodiversity."	

	habitats and native species				
11	Water Promote sustainable water management including promoting use of sustainable drainage systems	Policy does not specifically address the water management other than indirectly under "natural environment". This could result in the degradation of habitats.	Y		Could receive a green rating if a new bullet point is added. "Sustainable water management techniques."
12	Climate Change Manage the effects of climate change	Policy does not specifically consider the likely impacts on climate change, and does not address greenhouse gas emission. It fails to contribute to a carbon-neutral community.	Y		Could receive a green rating if a new bullet point is added. "investment in technology that does not lead to the production of greenhouse gases".
13	Energy Increase the supply of renewable energy and reduce energy consumption	Policy does not specifically require contributions to energy efficient infrastructure.	Y		Could receive a green rating if a new bullet point is added. "Investment in energy efficient technology or those that enable use of renewable energy sources."
14	Land and Soils Promote efficient use of land and soils	Policy does not specifically require contribution to remedy pollution to land and soil. It is acknowledged that pollution control is covered by other legislation.	B		Could receive a dark green rating if the a new bullet point is added: "remedial or reclamation works to contamination or derelict land, building or infrastructure."
15	Waste Minimise waste, especially waste to landfill	Positive effect as it could secure waste management facilities and systems that could not have been possible to a significant extent without it.	LG		Could receive a dark green rating if the "sustainable" is added under bullet point f): "sustainable"
16	Minerals Promote efficient and appropriate use of minerals	Neutral	B		Could be rated higher if a requirement to added that enabled condition to be imposed relating to ecological restoration, remediation or replacement projects.

Median Sustainability Rating: DG/LG/B/Y

Summary: Policy could be expanded to enable the use of planning obligations to provide environmental benefits as positively as social ones. This would mainly relate to buildings and physical infrastructure where contributions could be required to employ sustainable, energy efficiency construction and building management technology or enable the use of renewable energy sources. Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides guidance on the scope and potential to impose planning obligations.

SP 10 - Waste					
<p>The sustainable management of waste arisings in Rhondda Cynon Taf will be facilitated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Supporting initiatives for waste reduction and encouraging more use of existing facilities for re-use and materials recovery; b) the provision of new facilities for re-use, recycling and composting; c) supporting the development of new technological initiatives; d) significantly reducing the amount of waste disposed of by landfill f) encouraging new waste related initiatives which link with economic regeneration and community based strategies. 					
SA Objective	Nature of the sustainability effect of policy (including magnitude, timing, duration and reversibility of effects where known).	Assessment	Evidence and reference	Suggested mitigation and enhancement measures (those in italics are already proposed in the Plan)	
1 Housing Provide for the overall housing requirement through a mix of dwelling types catering for all needs to promote integrated and thriving communities	Although an increase in population will produce additional waste, this may be offset with an increase in awareness of waste avoidance and additional recycling facilities. Therefore the overall effect on housing provision is anticipated to be neutral.	B	RCT has already shown a relative decrease in municipal waste generated compared to neighbouring County Boroughs.		
2 Culture and Heritage	Neutral	B			

	Promote, protect and enhance the Culture and Heritage including landscape, archaeology and language				
3	Communities Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all	Neutral /indirectly.	B		
4	Health Provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being	Waste reduction, recycling, composting and re-use of waste would have a positive effect on health, as it would lower the existing levels of air, water and soil pollution.	LG		
5	Economy Provide for a sustainable economy	Stricter requirements for waste treatment may have a minor deterrent effect on economic processes initially, but this would be offset by long-term benefits, especially once new, more sustainable building management, transport and production methods have been installed.	B		
6	Employment Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities	Stricter requirements for waste treatment may have a minor deterrent effect initially, but would eventually create jobs in new recycling/waste related sectors.	B		
7	Transport Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport	Reducing the amount of waste disposed of in landfill sites would reduce the number of HGV trips. In future, stricter regulation/fines on the production of waste would also reduce the number of private vehicle trips to landfill sites.	B		
8	Built Environment Provide a high quality built environment that promotes community pride	Waste reduction would have an indirect effect on the local character and distinctiveness on the long-term, due to the reduced need to collect and treat remaining waste. Recycling facilities and new infrastructure needed to treat the remaining waste, especially when coupled with heat production, could	B		

			have an intrusive impact. This impact could be mitigated by design solutions and become more publicly acceptable through education campaigns and public participation.			
9	Landscape Improve, protect and enhance the countryside		Any amount of waste disposed of in landfill will have a detrimental effect on the landscape and countryside, especially adjacent to built-up areas, where they tend to be located.	O	RCT show a net import of waste to its' landfill sites of 132,000 tonnes in 2003.	Policy should include a reference to state that further landfill site will not be permitted and also set a target date for phasing out existing ones
10	Biodiversity Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and native species		Any amount of waste disposed of in landfill could potentially have a detrimental effect on biodiversity, with mitigation measures too expensive to achieve a proven safe level.	Y		Policy should include a reference to state that further landfill site will not be permitted and also set a target date for phasing out existing ones.
11	Water Promote sustainable water management including promoting use of sustainable drainage systems		Any amount of waste disposed of in landfill could potentially have a detrimental effect on the water environment with mitigation measure too expensive to achieve a safe water standard.	Y		Policy should include a reference to state that further landfill site will not be permitted and also set a target date for phasing out existing ones.
12	Climate Change Manage the effects of climate change		Any amount of waste created, recycled or treated will produce greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and methane.	O		Policy should include a stricter requirement to encourage waste avoidance.
13	Energy Increase the supply of renewable energy and reduce energy consumption		Any amount of waste created, recycled or treated will use energy, which will, especially in the short and medium term, be from non- renewable sources	Y		Policy should include a stricter requirement to encourage waste avoidance.
14	Land and Soils Promote efficient use of land and soils		Any amount of waste deposited on landfills could potentially have a detrimental effect on land and soils, with mitigation measure too expensive to achieve a level proven to be safe. The policy would lead to waste reduction.	O		Policy should include a stricter requirement to encourage waste avoidance.
15	Waste Minimise waste, especially waste to landfill			LG		Policy should include a reference that states that further landfill sites will not be permitted and also set a target date for phasing out existing ones. Policy should also incorporate stricter requirements to encourage waste avoidance.

16	Minerals Promote efficient and appropriate use of minerals	Due to the expected stricter regulation expected to result from this policy, especially in the long-term, a more efficient use of minerals and an increase in recycling would be achieved.	LG	
Median Sustainability Rating: B				
Summary: Policy should be more specific in promoting the avoidance of waste, recycling facilities and sustainable treatment of rest waste. A statement could be included that any further landfill site will not be permitted, and that incineration should be connected to heat production if geographically possible.				

SP 11 – Renewable Energy				
Development proposals which contribute to meeting national renewable and energy efficiency targets will be encouraged where it can be demonstrated that there is no unacceptable impact upon the interests of agriculture, conservation, areas of ecological, wildlife and landscape importance and residential amenity				
SA Objective	Nature of the sustainability effect of policy (including magnitude, timing, duration and reversibility of effects where known).	Evidence and reference	Suggested mitigation and enhancement measures (those in italics are already proposed in the Plan)	
1	Housing Provide for the overall housing requirement through a mix of dwelling types catering for all needs to promote integrated and thriving communities	Would lead to improved residential amenity, and higher quality dwellings.	Assessment LG	
2	Culture and Heritage Promote, protect and enhance the Culture	Indirect positive effect, especially in the long term, as it encourages the re-use of existing man-made and natural features.	LG	

	and Heritage including landscape, archaeology and language				
3	Communities Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all	Neutral	B		
4	Health Provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being	Long-term benefit due to reduced air pollution and radiation.	LG	There are 20 wind turbines in the Plan area. Part of the County Borough is encompassed by one of the proposed TAN8 Strategic Search Areas Wales	
5	Economy Provide for a sustainable economy	Stricter requirements for energy efficiency may have a minor deterrent effect to the local economy initially, but this would be offset by long-term benefits, especially once new building management, transport and production methods have been installed.	LG	Dulas, Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP – Renewable Energy Study (2005)	
6	Employment Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities	Stricter requirements for energy efficiency may have a minor deterrent effect initially, but would eventually create replacement jobs within new recycling/waste related sectors.	LG		
7	Transport Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport	Would result in the promotion of non-motorised transport modes.	DG		
8	Built Environment Provide a high quality built environment that promotes community pride	Stricter requirements for energy efficiency would greatly encourage the use of environmentally sound construction methods, and other innovative designs.	LG		Policy could contain more detailed guidance on energy saving measures.
9	Landscape Improve, protect and enhance the countryside	Efficient use of energy would indirectly and in the long-run preserve rural resources.	LG		

10	Biodiversity Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and native species	Indirect positive long-term effect on wildlife via habitat preservation and reduced pollution.	LG		Policy could contain more detailed guidance on energy saving measures
11	Water Promote sustainable water management including promoting use of sustainable drainage systems	Direct medium-term effect on the preservation of the water environment and, due to stricter regulations, encouragement of sustainable drainage and treatment methods in favour of the existing energy intensive mechanism.	DG		
12	Climate Change Manage the effects of climate change	Immediate and positive effect on the use of greenhouse gases as well as long term impact on global warming.	DG	There are 20 wind turbines in the Plan area. Part of the County Borough is encompassed by one of the proposed TAN8 Strategic Search Areas Wales	Policy could contain more detailed guidance on energy saving measures
13	Energy Increase the supply of renewable energy and reduce energy consumption	Would promote energy efficiency.	DG	Dulas, Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP – Renewable Energy Study (2005)	Policy could contain more detailed guidance on energy saving measures
14	Land and Soils Promote efficient use of land and soils	Indirect, medium term effect due to reduced pollution caused by burning fossil fuel or treatment of waste.	LG		
15	Waste Minimise waste, especially waste to landfill	Stricter requirements for energy efficiency would have a positive indirect medium-term impact on the avoidance of waste, as the production, recycling and treatment of waste are all energy intensive.	LG		
16	Minerals Promote efficient and appropriate use of minerals	Stricter requirements for energy efficiency would result in more prudent use of minerals	LG		Policy could contain more detailed guidance on energy saving measures
Median Sustainability Rating: LG					
Summary: Remove second part of the policy starting with: “where it can be demonstrated that there is no unacceptable impact upon the interests of” Any short term impact on agriculture, conservation, areas of ecological, wildlife and landscape importance and residential amenity would be reversed into a positive effect due to the long-term benefits of not burning fossil fuels, and reducing the legacy of domestic waste.					

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<p>SP 12 - Minerals</p> <p>Rhondda Cynon Taf will seek to contribute to regional demand in providing a continuous supply of minerals to meet the needs of industry and society as a whole, by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. maintaining a 20 year landbank of permitted reserves and protecting future resources, taking into account the range and extent of resources and environmental and other planning considerations; 2. ensuring that impacts caused by mineral operations and the transportation of minerals are limited to an acceptable minimum; 3. encouraging efficient usage, minimising production of waste, and promoting alternatives to primary won aggregates. 				
SA Objective	Nature of the sustainability effect of policy (including magnitude, timing, duration and reversibility of effects where known).	Assessment	Evidence and reference	Suggested mitigation and enhancement measures (<i>those in italics are already proposed in the Plan</i>)
1	<p>Housing Provide for the overall housing requirement through a mix of dwelling types catering for all needs to promote integrated and thriving communities</p>	B		
2	<p>Culture and Heritage Promote, protect and enhance the Culture and Heritage including landscape, archaeology and language</p>	B		

3	Communities Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all	No direct impact	B		
4	Health Provide an environment that encourages a healthy and safe lifestyle and promotes well-being	No direct impact but could indirectly lead to reduced levels of noise and air pollution.	B		
5	Economy Provide for a sustainable economy	Potential shortage caused by restrictions to achieve more efficient use will be off-set by long lasting resources.	B	Mineral extraction is an important industry within the economy of RCT.	
6	Employment Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities	Jobs lost initially would in the long run be replaced by jobs in alternative industries.	B	Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, Boosting Our Local Economy (2005)	
7	Transport Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport	The positive effects due to the reduced need for transportation will be negated if the remaining traffic continues to take place on roads rather than rail.	B		Policy should encourage rail transport and promote locally sourced aggregates.
8	Built Environment Provide a high quality built environment that promotes community pride	Potential shortage caused by restrictions to achieve more efficient use will be off-set by long lasting resources.	B		
9	Landscapes Improve, protect and enhance the countryside	Positive effect due to fewer mineral sites necessary.	LG		
10	Biodiversity Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and native species	Would preserve or restore habitats.	LG		

11	Water Promote sustainable water management including promoting use of sustainable drainage systems	Would reduce water pollution and the need for drainage and wastewater treatment during extraction processes.	LG		
12	Climate Change Manage the effects of climate change	Would reduce emission of greenhouse gases.	LG		
13	Energy Increase the supply of renewable energy and reduce energy consumption	Would reduce energy consumption.	LG		
14	Land and Soils Promote efficient use of land and soils	Potentially harmful if no remediation measures are required.	Y		The policy should include a requirement for stricter reclamation and remedial measures
15	Waste Minimise waste, especially waste to landfill	Although the policy proposes waste minimisation, any mineral extraction processes result in the production of large amounts of waste.	B		
16	Minerals Promote efficient and appropriate use of minerals	Would help achieve SA objectives	DG	Welsh Assembly Government, The Wales Spatial Plan: People, Place, Futures (2005)	
Median Sustainability Rating: B					
Summary: The policy has a neutral effect on social, cultural and economic SA objectives, but would positively progress the more environmental objectives. The sustainability performance of the policy could be increased by requiring stricter reclamation and remedial measures. The term "acceptable" (2 nd bullet point) ought to be defined within the policy or be qualified by adding "as defined by RCT" or "to a limit proven safe."					

Appendix VI: Compatibility Analysis of Candidate Site Assessment Methodology with SA Objectives

Compatibility analysis of Candidate Site Assessment Methodology (CSAM) with the SA Framework objectives						
SA Objectives	Economic viability – considers the location of the site with regard to market and workforce characteristics.	Accessibility and ease of movement – considers the suitability of vehicular access to the site, location of the site with regard to public transport routes, and accessibility by foot or cycle to a range of community facilities;	Environmental capital – considers whether or not the site is at risk from flooding, whether there will be a loss of agricultural land, whether the site is considered to be greenfield or brownfield land, whether or not the site is protected by environmental designations, whether the site would present an opportunity to remove an	Site context and character – whether topographical characteristics of the site may present an obstacle to development, whether an impact on important views/vistas, whether the site is in close proximity to existing infrastructure and whether or not there would be potential adverse impacts from	Continuity and enclosure – whether development of the site would provide continuity and enclosure in respect to adjacent land uses and whether it would contribute to an active high street frontage.	Potential use – an assessment will be made as to the potential use of the site.
1 Housing	+	++	+	+	+	O
2 Culture & Heritage	+	+	+	++	++	O
3 Communities	++	++	++	++	++	O
4 Health	O	+	++	++	O	O
5 Economy	++	++	+	+	+	O
6 Employment	++	++	+	O	O	O
7 Transport	++	++	+	++	O	O
8 Built Environment	O	+	++	++	++	O
9 Landscape	O	O	++	++	?	O
10 Biodiversity	?	?	+	?	?	O
11 Water	?	O	++	?	O	O
12 Climate Change	?	++	+	?	O	O
13 Energy	?	++	+	?	?	O
14 Land and Soils	?	O	++	?	O	O
15 Waste	?	O	O	?	O	O
16 Minerals	O	O	O	O	O	O

Candidate Site Assessment Methodology (CSAM)

The Candidate Site Assessment Methodology evaluates identified land over 0.3 hectares by means of a two-stage assessment process to ensure the proposed Site Specific Allocations meet LDF objectives and are suitable of being developed. The first stage consists of a preliminary descriptive appraisal, comprising of physical characteristics, history, location and potential for development. The initial selection process is followed by a more detailed performance analysis against 18 objectives divided into 6 areas. These selection criteria have been subjected to the above Sustainability Appraisal. During the second part, the sustainability impact of each individual site and its proposed development will be identified. At this stage the Draft LDP Spatial Strategy and Preferred Options Paper only lists 8 large Strategic Sites of between 30 and 225 ha, and it is advised that due to their size, a sustainability appraisal should be conducted for these (rather than just their selection processes) as part of this assessment, to evaluate any potential impact and inform on possible mitigation measures.

Summary

- Generally, the CSAM would lead to a selection of sites that should positively progress most of the SA objectives. None of the 6 assessment criteria are therefore incompatible when tested against the SA Framework.
- As the CSAM evaluates sites rather than buildings or future processes, compatibility with SA objectives can not be accurately assessed in some cases, which explains, for instance, the high number of the uncertainties (?) about the compatibility of the economic site assessment criteria with environmental SA objectives. This rating could be improved by adding a 7th criteria that intends to estimate the *potential* of the site for environmentally sound building construction, management or production techniques, such as proximity to renewable energy source (water/wind), orientation (passive solar energy), existing resources or features on site (topography and foliage to achieve shading/cooling), and the possibility to reuse existing buildings, demolition materials or infrastructure.
- SA objective 14 seeks to protect land and soil. The site selection criteria would be more compatible (currently neutral/uncertain) by including the degree of contamination, scope for reclamation and potential for restoration of existing structures. This is especially important for RCT given its industrial legacy.
- The criteria "site context and character" could be expanded to gauge future acceptance of potential uses by the local community, which could be estimated by examining past perception ("reputation"), e.g. through the number of complaints about previous uses of the site or similar usage sites nearby. This could be beneficial, for instance, for the redevelopment of unpopular housing estates. The existence of locally well-known present or past landmark features would also be worth taking into account when determining suitable uses with respect to cultural heritage.
- The "environmental capital" criteria could include the accessibility of the site via green infrastructure for people as well as green corridors between habitats for wildlife, again both existing or potential.
- Also assessed should be the ability to replace existing features or facilities (expected to be lost by the proposed use/development) to the same or better quality in reasonable proximity, as well as the potential to offset an identified shortfall within the local areas. This concerns assets that are both ecologically and recreationally important.

Key

- ++ Positive compatible
- + Compatible
- O Neutral, or not relevant to the SA objective
- Potential conflict
- Incompatible
- ? Uncertain - dependent on other factors or further details