

Appendix A

List of Consultees

Appendix A - List of Consultees

Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC:

- Dave Sherrard – Highways and Transportation
- Debbie Pike – Regeneration Resources
- Michael Bessell – Regeneration Resources
- Rachel Kilby – County Music Service
- Gareth Griffiths – Education Property
- Keith Warren – Development Plans
- Phil Ratcliffe – Development Plans
- Ray Edwards – Countryside
- Corporate Estates – Property Information Centre
- Cultural Services - Library

Arts Council for Wales – Capital Funding Officer
Model House Craft and Design Centre – Jenny Rolfe
Youth Hostel Association – Anna Chapman

Assembly Member Jane Davidson
Members of Llantrisant Old Town Forum
Members of the Public at the exhibition

Appendix B

Context

Appendix B - Context

B.1 Administrative Boundaries

Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council has the second largest resident population of all the twenty-two Unitary Authorities in Wales, and in 2001, its' census population stood at 231,946 people.

The unitary authority comprises fifty-three electoral divisions, of which the "Llantrisant Town" electoral ward boundary area includes the study area. The ward is bordered by or close to the electoral wards of Beddau, Church Village, Gilfach Goch, Llanharan, Llanharry, Pontyclun, Talbot Green, Tonteg and Tonyrefail.

B.2 Socio-Economic and Demographic Characteristics

According to the 2001 Census, Llantrisant Town has a total population of 4,205 people (2,066 Males, and 2,139 females). Table B.1 (overleaf) summarises key information from the 2001 Census, which illustrates that Llantrisant Town has a relatively affluent socio-economic profile in comparison to the rest of the RCT area. Most notably, Llantrisant Town has a higher proportion of people of working age, and of these a large proportion are economically active and employed persons. There is a lower proportion of unemployed persons and students in comparison to the RCT area and Wales as a whole. Llantrisant's residents are also more likely to be employed within professional and management positions (45.9%¹) and have higher levels of educational attainment in Llantrisant than in comparison with the rest of the RCT area and the UK.

This data needs however, to be seen in the context of the surrounding wards, given the catchment area of the old town for services and facilities. The data for the surrounding wards is also given in Table B.1. It can be seen that the neighbouring wards of Talbot Green and Llanharry have relatively high levels of unemployment (3.1% and 3.3% respectively) and high proportions of the population with no qualifications (35.5% and 40.7% respectively), with higher rates of unemployment and lack of qualifications experienced within the nearby wards of Tyn-y-nant, Church Village, Gilfach Goch, Tonyrefail West and Tonyrefail East.

¹ The 45.9% statistic is a combination of those employed within managers and senior officials (14.5%); professional (15.2%); and associate professional & technical positions (16.2%) (2001 Census Llantrisant Town Ward Profile).

Table B.1 Key Census Results for Llantrisant in Comparison to neighbouring wards

ARPs ² in RCT	Ward	2001 Census Category							
		Population	Economically Active (16-74 yrs)	Unemployed	Retired Persons	Students	No qualifications or level unknown	Lower level qualifications ³	Higher level qualifications ⁴
Area 11	Tvn-v-nant	3,755	63.7%	3.8%	12.4%	3.4%	42.8%	32%	17.4%
	Llantwit Fardre	6,214	74.2%	1.9%	10.0%	4.1%	21.0%	38.4%	32.4%
	Church Village	3,320	68.1%	3.3%	9.6%	3.8%	30.6%	37%	25.4%
	Ton-teg	4,459	61.8%	1.8%	17.8%	4.8%	27.2%	34.6%	29.1%
Area 10	Llantrisant	4,205	69.8%	2.2%	13.7%	3.7%	23.4%	37.4%	32.7%
	Pontyclun	5,794	69.6%	2.1%	13.7%	3.4%	21.3%	35%	36.5%
	Talbot Green	2,457	53.8%	3.1%	20.8%	4.3%	35.5%	33.2%	23.8%
	Llanharry ⁵	2,919	62.9%	3.3%	13.2%	3.9%	40.7%	47.4%	19.4%
	Llanharan	3,421	67.0%	2.9%	10.1%	3.5%	34.9%	34.4%	24.7%
	Brynna	3,683	68.6%	2.9%	10.2%	3.5%	32.6%	41.4%	17.6%
Area 9	Gilfach Goch ⁶	3,434	51.6%	4.2%	13.0%	4.0%	54.5%	29.1%	9.8%
	Tonyrefail West	5,234	57.2%	3.2%	3.3%	6.7%	46.8%	31.6%	20.8%
	Tonyrefail East	5,801	56.9%	3.3%	13.2%	3.8%	44.0%	33.3%	22.2%
RCT Total		231,946	57.2%	3.6%	13.7%	5.1%	40.5%	32.8%	19.1%
Wales Total		2,903,085	61.0%	3.5%	14.8%	5.1%	33.0%	35.3%	24.5%

² ARP = Area Regeneration Partnerships

³ Lower qualification attainment = 1+ 'O' level/1+ GCSE/NVQ level 1 and/or 5+ 'O' levels/5+ GCSEs/NVQ level 2

⁴ Higher qualification attainment = 2+ 'A' levels/NVQ level 3 and/or First degree/higher degree/HND/NVQ level 4

⁵ Llanharry is designated as an Objective One Priority 3 Area – the only such designation within Area 10.

⁶ Gilfach Goch and Tonyrefail West are also designated as Communities First Areas.

B.3 Deprivation Issues

Llantrisant is generally considered to be an affluent ward. As shown in Table B.2, Llantrisant is only ranked 822nd out of 865 on the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (NAW, 2000), in comparison to the rest of the RCT area, which has some of the most deprived wards in Wales. However, it is important to recognise that deprivation measured on a local ward level can distort the view of wider economic issues facing the catchment area. Llantrisant has attracted largely affluent incomers due to the scenic outlook from the town, yet local residents in the surrounding area may still suffer from a range of social issues such as low incomes and child poverty. Notably, the nearby wards of Gilfach Goch and Tonyrefail West are “Community First” eligible wards⁷, being ranked 39th and 67th most deprived in Wales.

Table B.2 Index of Multiple Deprivation Scores⁸ for Llantrisant & Neighbouring Wards

Electoral Division name	Index of Multiple Deprivation Score	Rank of Index of Multiple Deprivation (Wales)
Tyn-y-nant	22.17	342
Llantwit Fardre	4.17	836
Church Village	12.65	617
Ton-teg	4.5	832
Llantrisant	5.05	822
Pontyclun	N/A	N/A
Talbot Green	17.75	456
Llanharry	29.40	208
Llanharan	19.15	412
Brynna	10.76	664
Gilfach Goch	52.46	39
Tonyrefail West	46.22	67
Tonyrefail East	33.98	140

Key issues of concern within RCT’s defined Regeneration Area 10 (which includes Llantrisant) are associated with:

- Economic Regeneration: Area 10 is relatively affluent in comparison with the rest of RCT but there are noticeable pockets of deprivation, and the area has the greatest proportion of long-term unemployment in comparison to the rest of RCT (12.3%).
- Community Safety: Although Area 10 has relatively low levels of recorded crime, Talbot Green has the 2nd highest level of reported crime within the whole RCT area (at 42 crimes per 1000 of the population), mainly associated with theft and handling of stolen goods (which stands at 15 incidents per 1000 of the population in comparison to the RCT average of 4).
- Health and Wellbeing: Although Llantrisant is the 3rd least deprived ward in terms of health deprivation with only 17.6% of people with limiting long-term illnesses in comparison to the RCT average of 27.3%, Talbot Green and Llanharry have much higher rates of limiting long-term illness (30.3% and 23.5%).

⁷ RCT has 23 Community First areas in 17 Electoral Wards - the largest number in the whole of Wales, each of which will eventually have its own Partnership Forum and Action Plan.

⁸ Source: National Assembly’s Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation database (2000 Edition)

- Education and Training: Although Area 10 is relatively well served by education and training facilities (including primary and comprehensive schools, Welsh language schools and special needs schemes), Talbot Green and Llanharry have relatively high rates of poor qualification attainment (35.5% and 40.7% respectively).
- Environment: House values within Area 10 are amongst the highest in the RCT area and well-above the Welsh average, but the proportion of households in unsuitable housing within Talbot Green is high compared to RCT as a whole.

Within Llantrisant itself, the key issues of concern include:

- Environment (i.e. parking and speeding, and demand for a train station, bus services).
- Well-being (i.e. lack of outdoor and indoor children's play and leisure facilities, and not enough information on community events).
- Health (i.e. no dentist provision in the area, and inability of GPs in the area to take on new patients).
- Community Safety (i.e. Under 16's have significantly higher perceptions of crime, stating that it is high or very high).

The regeneration of Llantrisant town centre has the potential to benefit the regeneration of more deprived neighbouring wards such as Talbot Green and Llanharry, and wards further afield such as Gilfach Goch and Tonyrefail West.

B.4 Policy Context

This section considers the Regeneration Strategy within the context of national and local planning policy, with regard paid to the Taff Ely Local Plan, adopted 2003 and other supporting documents (including the Council's Economic Regeneration Strategy. Until the Local Development Plan is adopted for the authority area (scheduled 2008), the Mid Glamorgan Structure Plan (adopted 1999) and the Taff Ely Local Plan cover Llantrisant.

B.4.1 Taff Ely Local Plan (Adopted 2003)

Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council has adopted an updated "Taff Ely Local Plan" (Adopted 2003) covering the period 1995-2006. The emerging Unitary Development Plan is no longer being progressed and instead the Local Development Plan is being drafted. The Adopted Local Plan identifies key areas (including Llantrisant) for development restraint, renewal and opportunity, and encourages development on gateway and nodal sites, and town centres. A summary of relevant planning policies within the Llantrisant area are provided below.

Objectives for Llantrisant's Old Town

According to Policy EN2, the Llantrisant policy area covers the Community Council areas of Brynna, Llanharan, Llanharry, Pontyclun, Llantrisant, Llantwit Fadre (except for the Treforest Industrial Estate), and includes extensive areas of countryside and areas of special landscape value and historic value which contribute to the attractive rural character of the approach to the Ely Valley from the M4. The Local Plan states that the Llantrisant area: *"...has a most favourable combination of location advantages and an attractive environment. Infrastructure provision, especially roads and sewers, has tended to lag behind development. Existing and planned investment in roads and sewers is geared to the quite substantial existing allocations of land for housing and employment. It will be important to contain development within the capacity of the infrastructure that it serves"* (para 1.23, pg. 3).

Environmental Policies

Chapter 2 (Environment) recognises that Taf Ely's high quality distinctive rural landscape and undulating topography provides an important visual separation between the more built-up urban areas and hill-top

villages, and provide important wildlife and flora habitats. In addition to local ancient monuments, the chapter also recognises that important heritage contributions made by the "*hillside terraces of worker's cottages, ... (and) larger residences of industrial masters*" (para 2.3).

An area to the immediate east of Llantrisant's Old Town (GW11) is designed as a green wedge to prevent the coalescence of Llantrisant and Beddau (Brynteg), and to maintain the separate identity of Llantrisant (Policy EN4).

This area also forms part of Llantrisant Common (including Rhiwsaeson Hill, Caerau and Llantrisant's Graig and Caerlan hills), described as: "*... a common heath and grassland landscape providing attractive setting for the medieval hill town of Llantrisant... (The) attractive landform of Llantrisant hill to the west (Graig), above (the) A4119, (provides a) setting for the town and acts as a 'focal point'. Rhiwseason and Llantrisant hills to the east (Caerau and Caerlan) (are) covered with (an) attractive mosaic of vegetation, (and the) attractive hills form focal points amidst the undulating farmland*" (pg. 154).

The Common is a designated "Special Landscape Area" (Policy ENV5); and a protected Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) due to its diverse and species-rich grassland landscape (Policy EN10), and the area is protected against any proposed development that would unacceptably damage or detract from the visual qualities of the Common. The Common is also protected from inappropriate development under Policy EN6 (Common Land), which states that: "*common land will be retained for agricultural use and for its landscape and nature conservation value, and where there is public access for general recreation use*". Although Policy EN13 encourages proposals for the enhancement and management of sites and features of importance for nature conservation, the Adopted Local Plan emphasises in para 2.30 that any proposals for sites covered by Policy EN10 will require consultation with the Countryside Council for Wales.

Design and Conservation Area Policies

The Local Plan states that although design matters are important throughout the plan area, they are especially important within designated Conservation Areas. The boundary of the Llantrisant Old Town Conservation Area currently extends to include the whole of the town (including the modern housing developments and Leisure Centre area at the bottom of the hill) and the majority of the Common, although para 2.87 acknowledges:

"part of the Llantrisant Conservation Area – the town centre – is also worthy of special consideration for further environmental protection. It is intended that legislation to control development in part of the area, to be defined after survey, should be tightened by the imposition of an Article 4 Direction" (pg. 48).

Policies EN30 and EN31 emphasis the need for high-quality design of shop fronts, grills and shutters which should "harmonise with the traditional appearance of a buildings and its surroundings; avoid the use of materials which do not enhance environmental amenities; retain features which possess good architectural qualities or contribute to the overall character of the area; and avoid disruption to existing detailing and proportions..." (Policy EN31). Similarly, Policies EN34-42 address the provision of advertisements, with Policy EN42 specifically addressing advertisements within Conservation Areas, and states that they will only be permitted is considered essential for identification or information, are on a site or building which is predominantly in commercial use, and are considered to be sensitive to the architectural quality of the site or building and its surroundings.

Linked to this, Policies EN59 (Open Space), EN60 (Art in the Environment) and EN61 (Environmental Improvements) encourage the protection and enhancement of key open spaces and schemes for environmental improvements. This includes the removal of features that are detrimental to the visual environment, and the rehabilitation of derelict areas and structures, which can contribute to the quality and interest of the environment.

According to Policy EN46, any proposals for new development within designated Conservation Areas (as defined within Policy EN45) must preserve, maintain or enhance the visual environment and are not to harm the historic or architectural character of the area. This is outlined within Policy 47, which states that in order to maintain or enhance the character and appearance of designed Conservation Areas (including

the open spaces in those areas), proposed new development and alterations to existing development will be permitted if it is sympathetically designed (using materials which are in keeping with their surroundings) and it is well related to the scale, character and architectural style of the area).

Policy EN48 discourages demolition within Conservation Areas and will only permit this where the building in question is beyond economic repair or out of character in its setting; and an acceptable intention (with detailed proposals) for rebuilding or environmental enhancement are demonstrated to the satisfaction of the local planning authority. Alternatively, the proposed demolition should be part of a wider approved redevelopment scheme which will maintain or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Similarly, Policy EN49 states that the removal of trees within Conservation Areas will also only be permitted where the local planning authority considers it necessary, and appropriate replacement planting will be required.

Policy EN51 also discourages development which would adversely affect listed buildings or its setting (as addressed by Policy EN53), and Policy EN52 repeats this objective for structures of local historic, architectural or visual interest.

Policy EN54 addresses the protection of nationally-important archaeological remains, and states that development will not be permitted if it will cause damage to a scheduled ancient monument (such as Llantrisant Castle as listed in Appendix 8 of the Local Plan) or other nationally important archaeological remains, or the setting of visible remains. If applications for development are likely to affect known or suspects sites of archaeological interests, the local planning authority will require a satisfactory archaeological field evaluation (in accordance with [Policies EN55](#), [EN56](#) and [EN57](#), with reference to Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd's County Sites and Monuments Records).

Housing Policies

Chapter 3 (Housing) (Policy H1) identifies 105.97ha for 2607 units of new housing over 32 sites within the Llantrisant policy area, of which the following sites are located within the Old Town:

- Ruperra Street (0.30 ha for 14 dwellings) – with planning permission as at 30.06.98, which has now been developed.
- Cefn Mably (2.10 ha for 45 dwellings) - with planning permission at 30.06.98, but subject to satisfactory access and design sensitive to its special setting in the Llantrisant's Old Town Conservation Area. This site has now been completely developed.

Other designated site allocations within the Local Plan have mostly been developed, and new allocated sites are in the process of being allocated as part of the RCT Local Development Framework review process.

Policy H4 addresses residential development on unallocated land and states that residential development, and replacements for existing housing, within the defined settlement boundaries will be permitted provided that the site is not an important open space or off street car park in the urban or rural setting; and that the proposed development would not result in insensitive or inappropriate infilling, and is well related to the existing development in terms of scale, layout, design, use of materials and general character of the surrounding area. It also emphasises the need for community and utility services to be accessible and readily/ economically provided, and access obtained in accordance with the standards required by the local highway authority. It also states that the new development should not be detrimental to local residential amenity, and provide adequate private and public amenity open space within the curtilage and as part of the overall scheme, including adequate car parking, and that it does not conflict with policies to protect the environment.

Policy H5 also states that the maintenance, improvement and rehabilitation of existing older housing stock will be promoted subject to external design in keeping with the traditional character of buildings.

Business, Industry and Storage

Policy E1 identifies a number of sites for new B1 & B2 business developments within the Llantrisant policy area (predominantly associated with the planned extension to the existing Llantrisant Business Park, located north of The Common, and other sites at Llantwit Fadre and Talbot Green). There are no allocated sites for business, industrial or storage use located within the study area. However, Policy E8 addresses business, industrial or storage uses on unallocated land, and states that this will be permitted if these are proposals for the redevelopment, conversion and extension of existing premises not likely to cause increased detriment to residential amenities; and includes business developments with light traffic generation provided that there would be no unacceptable detriment to the environment.

Retailing and Restaurants/Pubs/Cafes

The Local Plan supports the concept of town centre development and management, especially given the proximity of Cardiff which has resulted in the leakage of durable goods expenditure in the past. The Strategy for the County Borough is to improve the range of shops available, and give priority to the renewal of town centres, and to only allow out-of town development where complementary to town centre objectives. Within the identified hierarchy, Pontypridd is identified as a major sub-regional town centre (subject to its own Regeneration Strategy), Talbot Green as a major district town centre and all other existing shopping centres (including Llantrisant) as local or neighbourhood centres. The majority of retailing policies relate to the identified sub-regional, district and out-of-town centres, although the following policies are applicable to the Llantrisant Old Town area:

- Policy S8 states that minor redevelopment's and extensions for A1 retail use for individual or groups of small neighbourhood shops will be permitted within certain areas (Llantrisant town centre is identified) subject to satisfactory building and shop front design.
- Policy S10 states that restaurants, pubs, cafes, snack bars, wine bars and shops for the sale of hot food will be permitted subject to satisfactory building and shop front design, service access, parking and landscaping, and no unacceptable detriment to the environment or residential amenity. Premises permitted under this policy outside the defined central shopping centres will be required to close to the public by 11pm where necessary to protect residential amenity.

Community and Educational Services

Policy C1 encourages proposals that extend the range and quality of community buildings, provided that no detriment to residential amenity would result; and that safe and convenient pedestrian links to residential areas in the catchment of the facility exists or are proposed.

There are no educational proposals within the study area, although reference is made to the proposed new Cefn-yr-Hendy primary school proposed at Pontyclun within the Llantrisant Policy area, which has now been built to replace the Welsh Medium School in Llantrisant. Policy C4 also states that the use of premises for pre-school playgroups will be permitted subject to no detrimental effect on residential amenities.

Recreation and Tourism

The Local Plan's strategy is to encourage appropriate new leisure facilities, new and enhanced tourist attractions, and public enjoyment of the countryside, with priority given to urban fringe sites. The only policy to directly relate to Llantrisant town centre is Policy R10, which states that changes of use of dwellings to appropriate tourist uses directly related to the historical setting will be permitted in the commercial parts of High Street, Bullring and Swan Street, subject to satisfactory shopfront design.

With regard to proposals for the provision and upgrading of visitor accommodation (including hotels, conference facilities, guest houses, visitor accommodation in pubs, camping barns and other farm-based visitor accommodation) such uses will be permitted, provided that there would be no unacceptable

detrimental effect on wildlife interests and the countryside; that there would be no unacceptable detriment to residential amenities; and that traffic generation would be within the capacity of associated highways.

Transport Improvements

Within the wider Llantrisant policy area, Policy T1 identifies land to be safeguarded for major improvements to the highway network, which include the A473 Church Village bypass, the A473 Llanharan bypass, and the A473 Talbot Green bypass dualling. Policy T4 outlines proposals for a new passenger rail service to be provided between Pontyclun and Beddau, with new stations proposed at Talbot Green and at Cardiff Road, Southgate amongst others. Policy T7 also identifies land to be safeguarded for a park and ride scheme at Pontyclun. Policy T12 proposes a dedicated cyclepath to be provided between Talbot Green and Thomastown. All of these schemes would improve public transport accessibility to the wider Llantrisant area, although users would still be reliant upon local bus connections up to Llantrisant town centre.

Policy T9 is applicable to Llantrisant town centre, and states that land will be safeguarded for the possible provision of traffic measures to improve the environment of the town centre, following the completion of the major highway improvement schemes outlined in Policy T1 (para 8.40). This includes potential for pedestrianisation, increasing footway widths, attractive highway surface treatment, street furniture and tree planting combined with traffic calming, and traffic regulation and urban traffic control to make the town centre more attractive for shopping and recreation and encourage greater use of the proposed bypasses (para 8.40).

The Local Plan's strategy for parking is outlined in Chapter 9, and recognises the need to provide more short-stay parking for shoppers and visitors (particularly for Pontypridd), in preference to long-stay parking for employees to support the vitality of the town centre and reduce congestion problems (para 9.4).

With regard to the Local Plan's general parking strategy, Policy P2 states that priority will be given to short-term parking in the car parks most conveniently located for shops, and Policy P3 states that priority will be given to the needs of disabled person's where parking proposals are under consideration. Policy P5 also encourages measures to reduce on-street parking in built-up areas through the provision of off-street car parks.

B.4.2 Local Transport Plan (Annual Progress Report, 2004)

The Council's Local Transport Plan was published in August 2000, and is updated by the 2004 Annual Progress Report. The objectives outlined within the LTP have been prepared in accordance with the Council's Community Plan "A Better Life", and in partnership with the South East Wales Transport Alliance (SEWTA), which was launched in 2003 to oversee all regional transportation developments within South East Wales.

The LTP identifies the work already achieved through the Regional Public Transport Strategy and Local Authority Bus Strategy submitted to the National Assembly for Wales in 2003, which include major enhancements to regional bus and rail networks as identified within the Adopted Local Plan. As part of this, it is understood that the Council has commissioned external consultants to undertake a comprehensive study into longer-term development of community transport within the RCT area, including necessary sources of funding, the potential role of the voluntary sector and improving information provision and standards. (paras 1.8-1.9).

The LTP also identifies the important role for town centre partnerships (with the Chamber of Trade and other organisations such as the police and the WDA) which have been funded by the National Assembly for Wales' Local Regeneration Fund (LRF) for town centres such as Porth and Mountain Ash.

The LTP also recognises the importance of Safer Routes to Schools which include highway improvement schemes (such as 20mph zones, new and widened footways, safety abriers and traffic calming measures. A consultation programme with local schools was launched in 2004, with newsletters provided to local

schools to explain the Safer Routes to Schools strategy and how schools can get involved. Preceding this, the Council launched a “Home to School Transport Information Pack” (2003) for eligible school pupils travelling on contracted bus services, including a “Getting to School Safely” leaflet, free bus passes, timetable information, operator details and contact numbers. This formed part of a wider initiative working in partnership with the Police, Fire Services, Road Safety Team and bus operators to address safety and anti-social behaviour on school bus services – the first of its kind in Wales.

The Local Road Safety Grant from the National Assembly for Wales has enabled a significant programme of road safety and traffic management schemes to be implemented throughout the RCT area in 2003-2004, which has included implementing new traffic-controlled junctions, pedestrian crossings, footways and safety fencing. However, the LTP does not identify any schemes recently implemented or planned within Llantrisant town centre.

B.4.3 Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Community Plan “A Better Life”

This document sets out the following vision for improving the RCT Borough for the next ten years, based around five key themes of: safer communities, living space, health and well-being, boosting the local economy, and learning for growth:

“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, while helping to develop and protect the area for the benefit of others” (pg.3; “A Better Life”).

The Plan identifies the following key issues affecting the RCT area (pgs. 6-7):

- **The area’s growing diversity.** Rhondda Cynon Taf is a series of small communities, rather than one single (homogenous) area. That diversity is a clear strength, but has implications for flexible, local service delivery, for effective communication links across the area, and for action to maintain town centres as vibrant public places for shopping, for work, for recreation, entertainment and cultural activities.
- **The changing local economy.** Rhondda Cynon Taf is successfully transforming itself from an economy based on heavy industry to one which has a more diverse range of job opportunities, which are attractive and accessible to the widest cross section of the population. These include the creation of new jobs in specialised growth areas, such as new media and tourism.
- **The changing social characteristics.** Reflecting local patterns of economic change, areas of growing affluence exist near the M4 corridor, while significant areas of disadvantage remain to be tackled – particularly in the northern valleys. The loss of traditional employment has contributed to a stubborn residue of social deprivation, leaving some communities feeling vulnerable and excluded. Promoting fairness and equality of opportunity in the development of all communities is a key challenge.
- **The health of communities.** Major and unacceptable disparities in the levels of health enjoyed by communities require urgent mutual action to develop new, more effective forms of primary care and health promotion.
- **Prospects for young people.** Children reflect the recent changes in the area. Many now move on to further/higher education, but others, notably in disadvantaged areas, are starved of prospects for the future. 30% of young people’s education is provided through the medium of Welsh, a distinct characteristic which enhances prospects for the future.
- **Reconciling rapid social and economic change with protecting the most vulnerable.** Supporting everyone to play a full part in, and benefit fully from, the social and economic future of the area is a continuing need.

- **Understanding and promoting Rhondda Cynon Taf 's place in the world.** Recognising the need to respond to new regional, national and global challenges, and to influence others positively to recognise the unique attributes we have to offer as a place to invest, work in, live in, and visit.

Key actions to be implemented by 2008 include the following objectives, which are of relevant to this particular project:

- Establishing a new, integrated, multi-agency Community Safety Service – including piloting the introduction of new "Police community support officers" (who will be focused particularly on dealing with nuisance and anti-social behaviour); revamping the Area Crime Watch Co-ordinators service to promote greater community involvement.; and extending the use of CCTV where need is identified and a measured contribution to safety is possible,
- Establishing a Community Transport service in every area, and improve public transport services and limit growth in car use.
- Provide access to recycling services and facilities for every resident and business, and organise annual campaigns to promote cleanliness and recycling.
- Improve streetscape in every area, including the provision of better lighting.
- Establish a Health, Social Care and Well-Being Strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf that addresses identified needs in tackling economic inactivity, improving mental health, support for children, better access to services, maintaining independence and, increasing healthy environments.
- Research and address the causes of economic inactivity, and establish and implement community and area action plans that support the objectives of "A Better Life" at local level, including promoting the success of local business,
- Enable higher and further education to play a direct role in supporting local prosperity, and encourage a higher proportion of pupils and adults with a minimum of Level 2 attainment in literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, and increase investment in early years and parent education programmes.
- Develop all schools as important centres for their communities and as key players in the delivery of the Community Plan.

B.4.4 Rhondda Cynon Taf Economic Regeneration Partnership Economic Regeneration Strategy 2004-2014

This regeneration strategy represents the framework for improving the economy of Rhondda Cynon Taf between 2004 and 2014, based upon the following vision:

"Rhondda Cynon Taf will be a community where everyone who lives, works, or visits the area will enjoy the benefits of a better quality of life, achieving their potential, while helping to develop and protect the area for the benefit of others".

Key objectives are to create more 'quality' jobs and increased employment opportunities in a strong prosperous, self-reliant local economy, to improve and revitalise local towns, villages, streets and homes through new development which is sympathetic to the environment, and creating vibrant communities with a viable long term future. There are also seven action areas identified, including:

- **Creating more varied and stronger businesses** by helping businesses start-up, growing local businesses, exporting to the World, supporting e-commerce and creating vibrant commercial centres.
- **Tackling economic inactivity** by providing support for adult returners, helping hard to reach groups return to work, and helping those with physical and mental ill-health return to work.

- **Stimulating community enterprise** by creating enterprising community ventures, promoting social entrepreneurship, and supporting community networks.
- **Promoting smarter working** by tackling future skills needs, targeting skills gaps in high growth sectors, and training entrepreneurs and managers, making learning fun and making better use of the college and university.
- **Improving where people live** by improving the quality of our living spaces, revitalising communities, working to provide better transport, recycling waste and improving e-connections.
- **Spending public money locally** by creating more effective ways of buying goods and services locally, encouraging private sector contractors to use local goods and skills and services, training local people, and improving management skills in local firms.
- **Promoting a positive image** by marketing Rhondda Cynon Taf, attracting inward investment, promoting heritage through new and existing tourist attractions and creating a visible 'sense of arrival'.

B.4.5 Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC Area Regeneration Partnership Initiative

Twelve Economic Renewal Areas have been identified within the local authority area by the County Borough Council (illustrated in Figure 2.2 overleaf), and "Area Action Plans" have been developed for each of these areas, focusing on securing economic, social and environmental regeneration including short, medium and long term objectives and linked to the quality of life indicators within the Council's "Community Plan".

Llantrisant Town ward is identified as one of six wards in "Economic Renewal Action Area 10". The area includes Llantrisant, Talbot Green, Pontyclun and Llanharan, with a population of 22,479 people (2001 Census).

The Area 10 Action Plan identifies a number key issues affecting the area (including traffic management issues such as lack of signage, speeding traffic, traffic congestion; lack of community facilities, and facilities/activities for young people), and outlines three key objectives for this area:

- Increase in facilities and activities for young people to engage in across the area.
- Increased reliability of public transport and a more joined up service approach for all rail and bus networks. There are concerns across the area regarding traffic management issues in particular speeding, parking, signage, which the community would like to see improved.
- Increased capacity to deal with new housing developments in particular GP's and Schools or assurance that there are plans in place which will ensure that new needs are met.

The Action Plan identifies the role the Llantrisant Old Town Forum have played in establishing initiatives such as:

- the "Beating of the Bounds" street entertainment and craft/folk festivals;
- Christmas lights events;
- £30,000 Project Support Grant awarded for Castle site feasibility study (which included a 5-day public consultation regarding options, and a evaluation and business plan into the potential development of the castle site as a tourist attraction and source for local and county regeneration);
- £5,000 awarded for a Traffic Feasibility Study in partnership with the Integrated Transport Unit and Llantrisant Town Centre Forum and the Access to Work sub-group to identify and cost options to discourage use of Llantrisant as a rat run but encourage visitors to the Town (this has not been undertaken); and

- the creation of websites and visitor information leaflets, plus proposals to encourage increased signage, parking and increase availability of arts and crafts facilities (building upon the success of the Model House Craft Centre).

The Action Plan goes on to identify that Llantrisant Community Council has agreed to £4,000 for the ongoing maintenance of a Youth Shelter and options are being explored by the Regeneration Committee for the RCT area to purchase the Old Police Station for young people and resource it appropriately in conjunction with Area 10 youth consultation. Options for establishing a Skateboard park in Talbot Green as part of the Council's Skateboard Strategy are also put forward.

The Action Plan also identifies the need to attract inward investment to Area 10 that provides more "quality jobs and increased employment opportunities, and identifies £20 million of funding for a proposed Employment site at Llantrisant, Mwyndy, which is a WDA and private sector joint venture, which is anticipated to include the creation of 2,000 new jobs and 180 new houses" (pg. 38). The Action Plan also identifies the potential to introduce a Farmers Market in the Old Town, although no funding is identified for this proposal (pg. 40), in addition to improving signage and visitor information and encouraging more arts and crafts facilities throughout the Old Town to attract more visitors.



Figure B-1 Area 10 Economic Regeneration – which includes Llantrisant.

B.5 Proposed Developments

The appraisal has also included a review the planning application history of key identified sites throughout the Old Town study area to identify any proposed developments. The majority of recent planning applications for sites within study area relate to minor construction and alterations to residential properties (including changes of use to a restaurant on Swan Street, and a cafe), infill residential developments, and modifications to shop fronts.

Significant applications relate to a new housing development off Ruperra Street – some of which has been constructed, although an open area of scrubland remains undeveloped.

It is also noted that planning permission was granted in 1999 for the change of use from commercial to residential and alterations to the façade of the "New Buildings" on the High Street, with previous permission granted in 1997 for conversion to flats – however, it is understood that no work has been undertaken to date to convert these properties. It is understood that a planning application submitted in 2005 for the conversion of commercial units to residential use has been deferred for determination until a site visit can be carried out.

Three applications for planning permission for development of detached buildings off Erw Hir lane including private off-road car parking spaces have recently been submitted to RCTCBC. The first application submitted in 2004 was refused, and a second application submitted in 2005 for an amended

scheme has yet to be determined. A separate application for a similar development on another site off Erw Hir Lane was granted on the 18th February 2005.

There have been applications made to install roller shutters on commercial properties which have been refused due to being in the Conservation Area. However, it is noted a similar style of roller-shutter has been installed on another shop, highlighting the issue of lack of enforcement of planning controls within the Conservation Area.

Appendix C

Exhibition Material & Comments Form