

SD23



Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

Regeneration Division

Local Development Plan

Preferred Options Report

March 2008

Contents Page

	Page Number
1.0 Introduction	3
2.0 Identification of Issues and Vision	3
3.0 Development of Options	4
4.0 Choice of Preferred Option	6
5.0 Conclusion	15

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Stakeholders who attended the Issues and Vision Workshop – Friday 27th July 2007	17
Appendix 2 – Members and Stakeholders who attended the Vision and Strategy Options Workshop	18
Appendix 3 – Presentation on the Development of the Options and an outline of each option	21
Appendix 4 – Advantages and Disadvantages identified in Vision and Strategy Options Workshops	26

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In November 2006, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council made the decision to cease work on the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and to start work on the Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Local Development Plan (LDP). The timetable for the various statutory stages of the Local Development Plan is set out in the Delivery Agreement (May 2007).
- 1.2 In order to help develop a preferred strategy, a consultation exercise was undertaken on the Issues Paper and two different sets of workshops were held. The first of which was the Issues and Vision Workshop held on 27th July 2007, at the VITCC in Tredegar. The second was the Vision and Strategy Workshop held on the 19th October 2007 at the VITCC Tredegar and 22nd and 30th November at the Learning Action Centre, Ebbw Vale.

Purpose of the Report

- 1.3 The purpose of the report is: firstly, to record and analyse the information and opinions gathered through the development of the options and choice of preferred option; and secondly, to provide the views of those that attended the workshops to provide a clear indication of the way in which the options were developed and the preferred option chosen.

2.0 IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES AND VISION

Issues and Vision Workshop (July 2007)

- 2.1 A stakeholder 'Issues and Vision' workshop was held on 27th July 2007, in order to build consensus on where we are (issues) and where we want to be (vision) (see appendix 1 for a list of attendees). Only by having a clear picture of the issues and the vision for the future would the Council be able to identify suitable options for the development of the Borough.
- 2.2 A full record of the workshop is set out in the Issues and Vision Workshop Report of Consultation (August 2007) which is available from the Planning Policy Team or from the planning policy pages of the Council's website at www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk.
- 2.3 The workshop attendees agreed issues and prioritised them so that a clear picture emerged of the most significant land use issues, which needed to be addressed by the options for the Local Development Plan. The most significant issues were:
 - ***The implications of the decline in the manufacturing sector and the shift in favour of the service sector and technological industries;***

- ***The need to find a role / function for town centres;***
 - ***The need to create a more balanced population stemming out-migration; and***
 - ***The need to provide a range of housing opportunities, to meet aspirations including the need for affordable housing.***
- 2.4 The options to be developed, were required to overcome these issues to ensure that the Vision for the Borough could be met by the end of the Plan period. The Vision developed after this workshop was:

By 2021, Blaenau Gwent will become a network of sustainable vibrant valley communities; through: providing a range of good quality, affordable homes; diversifying and creating a dynamic and competitive economy; establishing safe and thriving town centres; generating a vibrant visitor destination. Its unique environment, cultural and historic identity will be protected, thereby creating a place where people want to live, work and visit.

Consultation on Issues Paper

- 2.5 The Issues paper was prepared as a discussion document intended to promote debate on the issues of strategic significance for the Authority. The document was placed on the Council's website and sent to; members, key officers, statutory consultees and interested parties. In total, 176 individuals/organisations were consulted. Although the formal consultation took place over a 4-week period between 6th July and 8th August 2007, late responses were accepted. In all 14 responses were received.
- 2.6 For a detailed report of the consultation exercise, refer to the Issues Paper – Report of Consultation (September 2007) which is available from the Planning Policy Team or from the planning policy pages of the Council's website at www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk.

3.0 DEVELOPMENT OF OPTIONS

- 3.1 As a result of feedback from the workshop and consultation on the Issues Paper, three options were prepared for consideration through a further round of workshops. These options were developed to address the identified issues and meet the proposed vision for the Borough.
- 3.2 The options were developed in accordance with WAG advice (LDP Manual), which recommends restricting the options to 2-4 in order that they can be considered seriously. The options have been chosen in accordance with the LDP Manual which indicates that demand and supply issues can be brought together to produce options that range from a strong market led level of growth to a more capacity constrained level of growth. In choosing the options, regard has been had to national planning policy, the Wales Spatial Plan, Regional Plans and the Community Plan.

3.3 The options developed were:

Option 1: Regeneration

This option maintains the current strategy contained within the Blaenau Gwent Adopted Unitary Development Plan (1996-2011), which includes the following features:

- population decline from the 2006 figure
- no new housing allocations (urban containment) and a house build rate of 117 per annum
- continuation of the existing employment allocations and strategy
- the main towns of Tredegar, Ebbw Vale, Brynmawr, Blaina and Abertillery would be the focus of shopping, commercial, cultural, social and leisure activity
- the main expansion of services in Ebbw Vale

Option 2: Growth and Regeneration

This is a growth strategy, which has the following aspects:

- stems out-migration leading to an increase in population to 71,000
- a house build rate of 200 per annum
- emphasis of growth would be in the Heads of Valleys and there would be regeneration focus in the south of the borough
- a new hierarchy of towns with Ebbw Vale becoming the regional centre, with Tredegar, Brynmawr and Abertillery becoming district shopping centres. Blaina would become a local shopping centre.
- specific roles would be provided for town centres, which are currently in decline, in an attempt to encourage their growth.
- new employment opportunities to broaden the job offer

Option 3: Balanced and Interconnected Communities

This option is trend based characterised by the following:

- stems out-migration and stabilises population at 2006 levels.
- the house build rate would be 157 per annum.
- the emphasis is to spread growth according to the share of population which means it would be allocated in the Ebbw Fach Valley
- equalise employment through de-allocating some employment sites in the north and relocating them borough wide, close to towns
- no retail hierarchy but the number of town centres in the borough would be reduced from five to four (Abertillery, Brynmawr, Ebbw Vale and Tredegar) by excluding Blaina.
- new complementary roles for the town centres.

4.0 CHOICE OF PREFERRED OPTION

Vision and Strategy Options Workshops (October and November 2007)

- 4.1 The second workshop was repeated three times in order to engage a wide range of relevant stakeholders, including various local interest groups, organisations from Blaenau Gwent and neighbouring authorities (see appendix 2 for a list of attendees on the individual dates and appendix 3 for the presentation on the development and detail of the three options).

Meeting:	Date:	Venue
Members of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	19th October 2007	ViTCC, Tredegar.
Stakeholders	22nd November 2007	Learning Action Centre, Ebbw Vale
Stakeholders	30th November 2007	Learning Action Centre, Ebbw Vale

- 4.2 In each of workshops the attendees were split into groups, 2 in the first workshop and 3 in the second and third workshops.
- 4.3 In the workshop, stakeholders were provided with the three strategies and asked to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each of them. To assist in this process, the Development Plans Manager presented a summary of how the options had been developed and an outline of what each option included. In addition, each group was provided with two lists of issues the Borough faces, one list was of issues that had been identified through the Sustainability /Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) process and the other was that developed by the earlier workshop held on the 'Issues and Vision'.
- 4.4 For more information on the Vision and Strategy Option workshops refer to the reports of the individual workshops (February 2008) which are available from the Planning Policy Team or from the planning policy pages of the Council's website at www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk.
- 4.5 The following analyses the findings of all three workshops to identify which option was the preferred option.
- 4.6 Option 1: Regeneration (continuation of UDP Strategy)**

Level of Growth

This option takes forward the UDP build rate of 117 dwellings per annum. When these figures are incorporated into the Chelmer population and household model, it forecasts a decline in population of the Borough for the period 2006-2021. A figure of 117 dwellings per annum would not require any further housing allocations

to be made. In fact, some sites may need to be de-allocated. As a result this would lead to an urban containment strategy.

Advantages

- Three groups identified that it may encourage the development of previously developed land, thereby protecting the rest of Blaenau Gwent (including important areas of Greenfield land) against major development.
- Three groups indicated that, as a result of this population loss, there would be less pressure on services.

Disadvantages

- Six of the seven groups expressed concerns that, under this option, there would be a continuing loss of population.
- Four groups considered that there would be a population imbalance, as this approach would result in an ageing population, as less young people would be retained or attracted to the area. This would put more pressure on services and there would be a decline in the number of people of working age. The population imbalance would have an impact on schools and result in a declining school roll.

Housing

There is already sufficient housing land committed to meet the needs of the UDP option and, therefore, this strategy would result in urban containment. Indeed, it could result in the de-allocating of some sites and modification of the urban boundary.

Advantages

- As a result of less development under this option one group stated that there would be less urban sprawl.

Disadvantages

- One group highlighted that there would be less affordable housing as there would be limited housing development, especially in comparison to the growth options.
- Three groups indicated that this option would produce an ageing housing stock and they felt that this would discourage people from moving into the area.
- One group identified that this option fails to meet the house building need identified in the Housing Needs Assessment.

Employment

In terms of employment the area has relied heavily on the manufacturing industry and its decline is one of the key issues facing the Borough. The main feature of this option is that the existing employment allocations of the UDP would remain the same i.e. a concentration on manufacturing use.

Under this option, one objective is to secure the maximum employment on available land allocated for employment/industrial development, whilst being sensitive to the quality of the environment.

Another objective is to actively encourage the growth of industrial and service sector employment to protect existing levels of employment and provide new and improved job opportunities.

Advantages

- There were no advantages identified associated with this Option in terms of employment.

Disadvantages

- It was considered that the employment allocations in the UDP do not effectively address the needs of today because of the declining manufacturing sector and the shift towards the service sector economy.
- Two groups considered this option to be inflexible in that it did not encourage different uses on industrial estates to those traditionally permitted i.e. manufacturing B1, B2 and B8, and did not, therefore, enable or encourage a diversification of employment.
- One group expressed concern that there would be a lack of job opportunities under this option.

Retail

Under this Option there would be 5 town centres, all with equal status and each town centre would have a broad role rather than specialising in a specific role.

One of the main issues facing the Borough is the need to find a role or function for the town centres, as they are in decline, with several being characterised by high vacancy rates.

Advantages

- Four groups were supportive of Option 1 in that all town centres are currently served by it and there is no loss of status for any of the five town centres and they felt that this would help to sustain existing communities.

Disadvantages

- All seven groups commented that the decline of town centres would continue under Option 1 because of a lack of inward investment and falling population.
- Four groups identified lack of inward investment as a disadvantage of this option. In this option, funding would be split between the existing five town centres, and two groups saw this as a disadvantage.

Summary

There was very little support for Option 1 and the only positive aspects highlighted were that it would help to protect greenfield sites, limit urban sprawl, and sustain local communities.

Any advantages were heavily outweighed by the numerous disadvantages associated with the option, which it was felt, did not address the main issues facing Blaenau Gwent in terms of employment, retail, housing and growth.

Consequently it was felt that it would not be appropriate to plan for the next 15 years on the basis of the UDP.

4.7 Option 2: Growth and Regeneration

Level of Growth

The aim of this option is to stem out-migration and achieve growth. The emphasis on the growth would be in the Heads of the Valleys, with a regeneration focus in the south of the Borough. This option would require land to be allocated and this will take place mainly in the northern part of the Borough, where most sites are available. A build rate of 200 dwellings per annum is assumed and when this figure is incorporated into the Chelmer population and household model it forecasts an increase in the population of the Borough for the period 2006-2021. A figure of 200 dwellings per annum would require further housing allocations to be made.

Advantages

- Five out of seven groups liked this option because it was a market led approach and developers could be attracted to the Heads of the Valleys corridor. This growth could be an economic driver for the rest of the Borough.
- Five groups welcomed the anticipated population increase as it would result in an improved financial settlement for the Authority and, with younger people moving into the area, there would be a more balanced population.

Disadvantages

- Four groups raised environmental concerns, as further development may lead to more pressure on Greenfield sites.
- Four groups highlighted that this option could result in possible alienation for the South of the borough, with the growth being focused on the Heads of the Valleys region.
- A housing building representative from one group considered that the growth level in this option was too aspirational and that Blaenau Gwent will not be able to reach their target figure of 200 houses per annum.
- Conversely, a stakeholder in one group questioned whether this option was ambitious enough in terms of the number of homes to be built per annum. It was suggested that the Council should aim for a higher level of growth such as 250 houses per annum.

Housing

There is not sufficient housing land committed to meet the needs of the Growth option and additional land would need to be allocated. This will be mainly in the Heads of the Valleys area.

Advantages

- Five groups were of the opinion that this option would provide more opportunity for planning gain and ensure the provision of more affordable homes.

Disadvantages

- No disadvantages were highlighted in respect of housing.

Employment

This option would address concerns with the economy by broadening the economic base by providing flexibility in allowing different uses on industrial estates to those traditionally permitted. This ‘flexibility’ would take into account the decline of manufacturing industry in the area. It also aims to provide new employment opportunities to those currently available on traditional industrial estates. The focus would be on permitting more mixed-used sites in the Heads of the Valleys area.

Advantages

- Three groups considered that this option would address concerns with the economy, as it would broaden the economic base, with a more flexible approach being adopted in allowing different uses on industrial estates to those traditionally permitted.

Disadvantages

- No disadvantages were highlighted in respect of employment.

Retail

Under this Option there would be 4 town centres, with a new hierarchy of towns. Ebbw Vale would become the regional centre, with Tredegar, Brynmawr and Abertillery becoming district shopping centres, whilst Blaina would become a local shopping centre. Each of the 4 town centres would specialise in a new specific role.

Advantages

- Six groups agreed that introducing a retail hierarchy and identifying a role and function for the four town centres would create sustainable town centres and stop their decline.

Disadvantages

- Whilst it was recognised that this option would halt the decline of town centres, three groups recognised the difficulty or challenge in adapting retail centres for specific roles.
- Two groups stated that reducing the status of Blaina to a local shopping centre could result in further decline with local communities being unable to access goods and services.

Other Advantages/Disadvantages

Advantages

Two groups considered that this option promoted sustainable transport, as development would take place close to existing and planned transport infrastructure i.e. the Heads of the Valley Road and Ebbw Valley Railway.

Summary

There was considerable support for this Option, as it would resolve several of the main issues facing the Borough. For example, it would stop the decline of town centres and improve the economic base. Other benefits include the opportunity to secure more planning gain (including affordable housing) and increased income because of the higher level of population. It was also recognised that the option was market-led and that it was appropriate to concentrate growth in the Heads of the Valleys area. There were, however, concerns over; the increased pressure on greenfield sites, the potential alienation of the South, the loss of status for Blaina, and the difficulty for the town centres to adapt to their new roles.

4.8 Option 3: Balanced and Interconnected Communities

Growth

The aim of this option is to stem out-migration and stabilise population at the 2006 level. Data from the period 2001-2006 have been used to

identify the build rate required. Under this option, there is a limited amount of growth and it is proposed that this is used to equalise growth, which means it would be allocated in the Ebbw Fach Valley.

Advantages

- Two groups felt that this option would stop the decline in population and produce a more balanced population.
- Three groups felt that all communities would benefit, as the option promoted an equal spread of development throughout the Borough.
- One group believed that this option would be less divisive than option 2, as growth would be better spread and that it may stimulate more investment in the transport infrastructure in the south.

Disadvantages

- As this option proposes equalising growth, with primarily new allocations in the Ebbw Fach Valley, three groups considered that it may increase the pressure on existing transport infrastructure.
- Three groups considered that there would be overdevelopment in the south and it would have a potentially detrimental environmental impact because the shortage of brownfield sites could result in the development of greenfield sites.
- One group also highlighted that this option would be less sustainable in terms of transport, as growth should take place close to existing and planned transport infrastructure i.e. the Heads of the Valley Road and Ebbw Valley Railway, rather than in the south, where there are less advanced transport links.
- Three groups pointed out that there would be limited growth and that the option was not ambitious enough.

Housing

Under this option there is a limited amount of growth and it is proposed that this is used to equalise growth, which means housing growth would be allocated in the Ebbw Fach Valley.

Advantages

- Two groups considered that the house build rates were more realistic than Option 2.

Disadvantages

- As the level of growth is not considerable in this option, two groups identified that there would not be as much opportunity for planning gain (including affordable housing) as in Option 2.

Employment

Under this option the emphasis is to spread growth according to the share of population, which would mean de-allocating some employment sites in the north and relocating them borough wide, whilst concentrating on business close to towns.

Advantages

- Three groups recognised that, if new employment sites were located in close proximity to the town centres, it would be more sustainable.
- Two groups considered that new allocations could possibly lead to better use of land, in that employment land could be deallocated from manufacturing and reallocated for service sector uses.

Disadvantages

- Six groups were of the opinion that there would be unrealistic employment goals, in that businesses would continue to be attracted to locations with existing transport infrastructures such as in the north, around the heads of the valleys, instead of locating elsewhere in the borough – this approach was considered to be not in line with market forces.
- Three groups considered that deallocating employment sites in the north of the Borough would offer limited options to the location of new businesses, and thus new businesses could be lost to other authorities with greater options.

Retail

Under this Option there would be 4 town centres as a result of the exclusion of Blaina. Each of the 4 town centres (Ebbw Vale, Tredegar, Brynmawr and Abertillery) would have equal status and specialise in a new complementary role.

Advantages

- One group felt that the option would be beneficial for town centres and also that there would not be so much pressure on services as Option 2.
- Another group believed that the new roles of the areas would be complementary to each area and there would be good quality of regeneration throughout the borough.

Disadvantages

- One group referred to the challenge in finding a complementary role for the town centres.

Summary

There was considerable concern expressed about the implications of development in the Ebbw Fach valley in that it would place pressure on the infrastructure and potentially have a detrimental impact on the environment. It would not promote sustainable transport or be in line with market forces, possibly resulting in the loss of businesses to the area. The suitability and availability of land was also questioned. It was pointed out that, under this option, there would be limited growth and less opportunity for planning gain.

However, there were advantages associated with this option. For example, all communities would benefit. It had more realistic house build rates than Option 2. It would stop the decline in population and promote a better use of employment land. Also, it would be more sustainable if new employment sites were located in close proximity to the town centres, be beneficial for town centres, and result in less pressure on services than Option 2.

** For a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each option see Appendix 4.*

4.9 Alternative Option

Following the evaluation of the three suggested options a further task was set which gave stakeholders the opportunity to put forward their own options to address the issues facing the Borough.

Growth

Six out of seven groups advocated an increase in growth rate in comparison to that contained in the three options previously analysed, although two of the groups expressed concern about protection of the environment. One group suggested a house build rate of 175 to 225 (the reason that the group imposed a range to the house build rate was to be ambitious with a target of 225 yet realistic at the same time with a lower target of 175). Two groups proposed a rate of 250; another wanted an increase in population to 73,000. One group favoured growth back-loaded until 2016, (that is a lower level of build rate at the start of the plan period increasing toward the end of the plan period) whilst another group preferred a slightly lower growth level than Option 2 but higher than Option 3. One group found the growth level suggested in Option 2 acceptable.

Spatial Spread

All the groups favoured the spatial spread identified in Option 2 with growth along the Heads of the Valley, in line with market forces and regeneration in the South. One group identified an alternative spatial

spread in that the focal point of growth could be along the new railway network, but were still positive regarding Option 2.

Employment

There was general agreement that Option 2 was appropriate in terms of employment.

Retail

There was general agreement that Option 2 was suitable in terms of tackling retail issues.

Other Issues

One group referred to 2 key issues that they felt were missing from the strategy options, which focussed on an integrated transport system and increased opportunity for tourism throughout Blaenau Gwent. Another group considered education and community facilities to be missing.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Overall the groups considered Option 2 to be the favoured option. However, there are a few issues that need to be taken into consideration when this option is developed further.
- 5.2 It is suggested that the level of growth will now identify a range of 150 to 250 and that this growth will be back-loaded (150 first 5 years, 200 next 5 year period and 250 in the final 5 year period) to the end of the Plan period.
- 5.3 To address concern with protecting Greenfield sites, a specific objective will be included to develop Brownfield sites in preference to Greenfield sites.
- 5.4 Option 2 will be amended to ensure that the new roles for the town centres will be complementary.
- 5.5 In developing Option 2 to create the Preferred Strategy, the issues considered to be missing such as; integrated transport, tourism, health, education and community facilities will be fully addressed.
- 5.6 The preferred option, including amendments is:

Option 2: Growth and Regeneration

This is a growth strategy, which has the following aspects:

- emphasis of growth would be in the Heads of Valleys and a regeneration focus in the south of the borough
- stems out-migration leading to an increase in population to 71,000

- a house build rate of **150-250 per annum (back-loaded)**
- new employment opportunities to broaden offer
- a new hierarchy of town centres, with Ebbw Vale becoming the regional centre, and Tredegar, Brynmawr and Abertillery becoming district shopping centres. Blaina would become a local shopping centre.
- specific **complementary** roles would be identified for town centres, which are currently in decline, in an attempt to encourage their growth.

Appendix 1

Stakeholders who attended the Issues and Vision Workshop – Friday 27th July 2007

Name	Organisation
Angela Chard	BGCBC Chief Accountant - Corporate Service
Alan Reed	BGCBC Head of Environment Management & Highways Services
Alun Evans	BGCBC Transportation Strategy Manager
Alwyn Hughes	BGCBC Business Development Officer
Alyson Tippings	BGCBC Tourism Officer
Andrew Long	BGCBC Team Leader, General Services
Andrew Parker	BGCBC Research Officer
Bernadette Elias	BGCBC Head of Policy Performance & Development
Bethan Cartwright	BGCBC Ebbw Vale and Tredegar Town Centre Manager
Dave Thompson	BGCBC Team Leader, Grants Policy & Operations
Eirlys Hallett	BGCBC Principal Planning Officer Planning Control
Ged McHugh	BGCBC Head of European and Economic Policy
Gemma White	NHS Local Public Health
Jane Layzell	Local Health Board
Jane McNeil	BGCBC Community Development Manager
Jenny Turner	BGCBC Strategy & Policies Officer
Jeremy Gass	University of the Valleys
Jim Perry	Glamorgan & Gwent Archaeological Trust
Joanna Rhead	BGCBC Group Auditor
John Howells	BGCBC Divisional Head - Development Division (Education)
Kate Rodgers	CCW
Leanne Connor	BGCBC Business Development Support Officer
Louise Horner	BGCBC Senior Estates Officer
Lyn Evans	BGCBC Grounds Maintenance & Countryside Manager
Mark Hopkins	BGCBC Engineer
Wayne Thomas	RISE
Will Beer	NHS Local Public Team
Brian Swain	BGCBC Facilitator
Hayley Spender	BGCBC Facilitator
Lynda Healy	BGCBC Facilitator

Appendix 2

Members who attended Vision and Strategy Options Workshop – Friday 19th October 2007

Name
Councillor K E Barnes
Councillor D L Elias
Councillor K Hayden
Councillor P Hopkins
Councillor D Hughes
Councillor J E Mason
Councillor E G L Moore
Councillor D J Owens
Councillor B M Sutton
Councillor D W White
Councillor D H Wilkshire
Lynda Healy – Development Plans Manager
Hayley Spender – Planning Policy Officer
Brian Swain – Planning Policy Officer
Marie Chislett – Administrative Officer

Stakeholders who attended Vision and Strategy Option Workshop - Thursday 22nd November 2007

Name	Organisation
Roger Leadbeter	
Alun Evans	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Catherine Ashby	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Louise Horner	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Mark Hopkins	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Simon Dobbs	Blaenau Gwent CBC
James Watkins	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Marie Chislett	Blaenau Gwent CBC (Administrative Officer)
Lynda Healy	Blaenau Gwent CBC (Development Plans Manager)
Andrew Parker	Blaenau Gwent CBC (Facilitator)
Dave Rees	Blaenau Gwent CBC (Facilitator)
Ged McHugh	Blaenau Gwent CBC (Head of Economic Development)
Hayley Spender	Blaenau Gwent CBC (Planning Policy Officer)
Brian Swain	Blaenau Gwent CBC (Planning Policy Officer)
Keith Dykes	Chair Abertillery Partnership
Greg Paulsen	Co-ordinator for Cwm, Waunlwyd & Victoria Partnership
Chris Cox	DTZ

Kayna Tregay	Environment Agency
Huw Lewis	GAVO (Facilitator)
Frank Callus	Heads of Valley Strategic Programme Co-ordinator (Education)
John Howells	Local Education Authority
Janice Tse	Merthyr Tydfil CBC
Gemma White	NPHS
Anita Thomas	Princes Trust
Colin Stevens	Rassau Tenants & Residents Association & Blaenau Gwent Federation of T&R Associations
Andrew Jenkins	Rhyd Developments Ltd
Mike O'Dowd	Vice Chair, Nantyglo Communities First

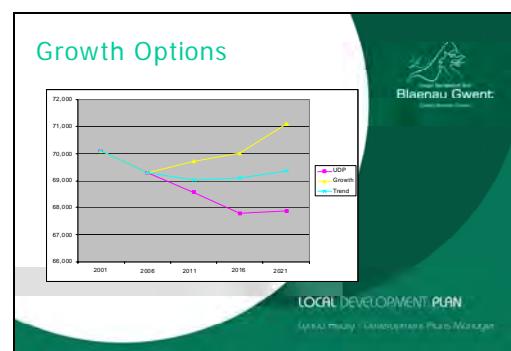
Stakeholders who attended Vision and Strategy Option Workshop – Friday 30th November 2007

Name	Organisation
Jessica Osbourne	Co-ordinator for Tredegar Central & West & Sirhowy Partnership
Tracy Nettleton	Brecon Beacons National Park
Alan Reed	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Alison Hoskins	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Bethan Cartwright	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Eirlys Hallet	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Julian Bosley	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Karin Lamb	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Kelsey Watkins	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Lynn Phillips	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Tony Chivers	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Richard Jones	Countryside Council for Wales
Dr Jayne Layzell	Blaenau Gwent Local Health Board
Brian Kember	Tredegar Development Trust
Mike Johnson	The Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales (Newport & Valleys)
Rob Murray	Torfaen County Borough Council
John Millard	Melin Housing Association
Vic Parkin	Chair of Nantyglo Partnership
Sharon Hill	Co-ordinator for Nantyglo Partnership
Darren Lewis	Co-ordinator for Rassau & Garnlydan Partnership
Rob James	Co-ordinator for Ebbw Vale N & S Partnership
Helen Madden	Co-ordinator for Blaina Partnership
Deborah Beeson	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Edward Robinson	Blaina Senior Citizens
Councillor David Britton	Nantyglo & Blaina Town Council
Trevor Neatherway	Blaenau Gwent Local Health Board
Andrew Parker	Blaenau Gwent CBC

Neil Maylan	Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd
Councillor John Davies	Brynmawr Town Council
Reg Arnold	BGBC Compact
John Davies	Ebbw Vale and District Development Trust
Richard Price	Home Builders Federation
Hayley Spender	Blaenau Gwent CBC (Planning Policy Officer)
Brian Swain	Blaenau Gwent CBC (Planning Policy Officer and Facilitator)
Lynda Healy	Blaenau Gwent CBC (Development Plans Manager)
Jane McNeil	Blaenau Gwent CBC (Facilitator)
Huw Lewis	GAVO (Facilitator)

Appendix3

Presentation on the development of the options and an outline of each option



Share of Growth

Settlement	Share of population	Share of housing	Approx No of committed houses
Upper Sirhowy Valley (Tredgar)	22%	27%	500
Ebbw Fawr (Ebbw Vale)	33%	54%	1000
Upper Ebbw Fach (Brynamor, Nantyglo and Blaenavon)	21%	12%	220
Lower Ebbw Fach (Abercraf)	24%	7%	120

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Lynne Healy - Development Plans Manager

Growth Scenarios

Strategy	Assumed annual build rate	Additional Dwelling Requirement	2021 Population
UDP	117	0	68,000
Growth	200	800	71,000
Trend	156	200	69,500

Spatial Options

UDP = Urban Containment
Growth = Heads of Valleys
Trend = Equalise Growth (Ebbw Fach)

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Lynda Healy - Development Plans Manager

Committed Sites - UDP

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Lynda Healy - Development Plans Manager

Candidate Sites Map

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Lynda Healy - Development Plans Manager

Strategy Options

Option 1: UDP Regeneration
UDP - Urban Containment

Option 2: Growth and Regeneration
Growth - Heads of Valleys focus

Option 3: Networked Communities
Trend - Equalise Growth

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Lynda Healy - Development Plans Manager

Employment Land

Landbank of 64 ha
Annual land take-up 2 ha
Sufficient land – but is it suitable for new business opportunities
Do we need a new Strategy?

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Retail

Do we need a retail hierarchy?
UDP - no (all 5 equal)
Growth - yes
Balanced - yes

Should we have 5 town centres?
UDP - yes (includes Blaina)
Growth - no
Balanced - no

Should we look for new roles?
UDP - no (broaden)
Growth - yes
Balanced - yes

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Main Issues

The implications of the decline in the manufacturing sector and the shift in favour of the services sector and technological industries

Find a role function for town centres

Create a balanced population stemming out-migration

Provide a range of housing opportunities to meet aspirations including the need for affordable housing

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Other Issues

Environment

Education and Skills

Transport

Leisure and Tourism

Renewable Energy

Waste

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Workshop 2: Options

The aim of this workshop is to establish the preferred strategy

Task

Identify the advantages and disadvantages of each option

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Option 1: UDP Regeneration

Population decline from 2006 level

No new housing allocations – urban containment

Continue with existing employment allocations and strategy

Main towns of Tredegar, Ebbw Vale, Brynmawr, Blaina and Abertillery focus of shopping, commercial, cultural, social and leisure activity

Main expansion of services will be in Ebbw Vale

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Option 1: UDP Regeneration

Settlement	Share of population	Share of housing	Approx No of committed houses
Upper Sirhowy Valley (Tredegar)	22%	27%	500
Ebbw Vale (Ebbw Vale)	33%	54%	1000
Upper Ebbw Fach (Brynmawr, Nantyglo and Blaina)	21%	12%	220
Lower Ebbw Fach (Abertillery)	24%	7%	120

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Option 2: Growth and Regeneration

Growth Strategy – stemming out-migration leading to increase in population to 71,110

House build rate of 200 per annum

Emphasis of growth in Heads of Valleys with a regeneration focus in the south of the borough

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Option 2: Growth and Regeneration



New employment opportunities to broaden offer
The identification of a few large sites will provide the opportunity for new/improved service provision
New hierarchy of towns with Ebbw Vale becoming the regional centre.
Tredegar, Brynmawr and Abertillery district shopping centres

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Option 2: Growth and Regeneration



Option 2 : Growth & Regeneration



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Option 3: Balanced and Inter-connected Communities



Trend Based – stemming out-migration and stabilising population at 2006 level
House build rate of 157 per annum
Emphasis is to spread growth according to share of population
Employment growth focused around regeneration of Ebbw Vale

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Option 3: Network of interconnected communities



Tredegar, Ebbw Vale, Brynmawr and Abertillery will provide broad range of services
Little opportunity for planning gain

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Option 3: Network of interconnected communities



Settlement Share of population Share of housing Approx No of houses
Upper Sirhowy Valley (Tredegar) 22% 24% 500
Ebbw Fach (Ebbw Vale) 33% 49% 1000
Upper Ebbw Fach (Brynmawr, Nantyglo and Blaina) 21% 16% 320 (100)
Lower Ebbw Fach (Abertillery) 24% 11% 220 (100)

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Appendix 4

Advantages and Disadvantages identified in Vision and Strategy Options workshops

OPTION 1: REGENERATION (CONTINUATION OF THE UDP STRATEGY) All Groups Combined (no. of votes received)

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustain existing communities as all town centres are served (4)• Less pressure on services as population loss (3)• Encourage development of previously developed land (3)• Less urban sprawl (1)• More places to play (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Further decline of town centres (7)• Further decline of communities (1)• Lack of job opportunities (1)• Less affordable housing (1)• Ageing housing stock so unable to attract people to area (3)• Population loss and less money from WAG (6)• Not market-led as funding split between 5 town centres (2)• Ageing population/ population imbalance so more pressure on services (4)• Lack of inward investment (4)• Lack of flexibility in employment/no diversification of economy (2)

OPTION 2: GROWTH AND REGENERATION All Groups Combined
(no. of votes received)

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable transport (2) • More planning gain including affordable housing (5) • Decline in town centres halted (6) • Worked with the market (5) • Increased income from population increase (5) • Improve economic base (3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure on Greenfield sites (4) • South could become alienated (4) • Loss of status/decline for Blaina town centre (2) • It will be a big challenge for town centres to adapt to a new role (3) • Growth too inspirational (1) • Growth not ambitious enough (1)

OPTION 3: GROWTH AND REGENERATION All Groups Combined
(no. of votes received)

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal spread of growth (3) • Less divisive (1) • House build rates more realistic than Option 2 (2) • Stop decline in town centres (2) • Better use of employment land (2) • Sustainable as employment close to town centres (3) • Beneficial for town centres (1) • Complementary roles of areas (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase pressure on infrastructure (3) • Less sustainable in terms of transport (1) • Limited growth (3) • Impact on environment (3) • Less opportunity for planning gain (2) • Not in line with market forces (6) • Loss of businesses (3)