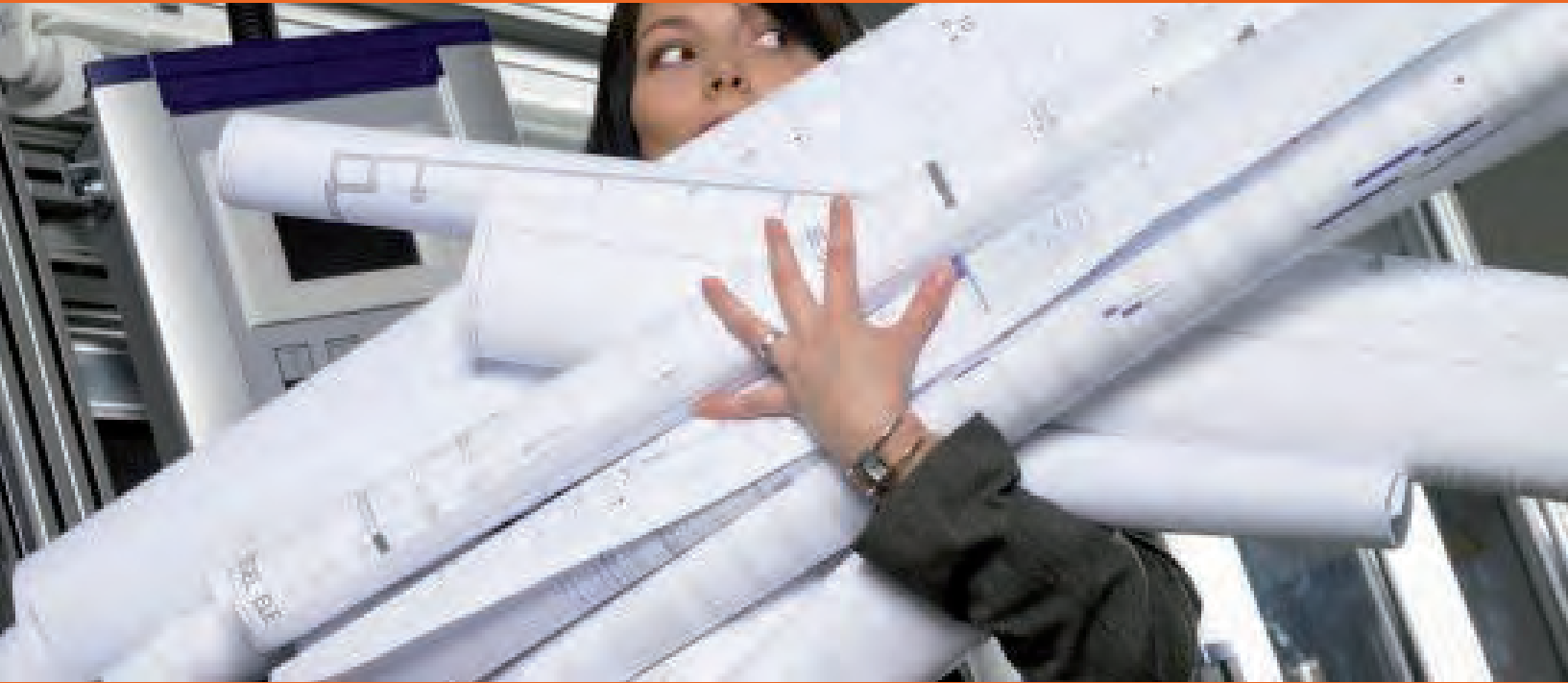


SD30

**Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council**  
Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol Blaenau Gwent



# **Candidate Site Methodology**

## **Methhodoleg Safle'r**

## **Ymgeisydd**

**Deposit Local Development Plan**

Cynllun Adeneuo Datblygu Lleol

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As part of the early stages of the plan preparation, in April 2007, the Council formally invited all developers, landowners, agents, Council departments with an interest in land to submit sites they wished to be considered for development or reuse through the LDP, for a range of uses, including housing, employment, retail, leisure, waste, transport, open space and other community uses. This was undertaken by local advertisements including the Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's website, and through direct correspondence with developers and landowners. The sites submitted as part of the process are referred to as candidate sites. The submission of a candidate site for consideration by the Council does not imply that the site is suitable or otherwise for development. For each site proposed, a candidate site submission form was completed regarding the site's suitability for inclusion in the Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan (LDP). The deadline for the submission of sites for inclusion in the LDP process was 19<sup>th</sup> December 2008.
- 1.2 In total 203 sites, ranging in size were submitted for consideration.
- 1.3 In order to ensure that land identified in the Local Development Plan is capable of development and can contribute to the delivery of the Strategy, candidate sites have undergone stringent assessments to determine their suitability for further consideration as part of the LDP.
- 1.4 The stringent assessments are outlined in this paper and have been designed to ensure that there is a clear, transparent and objective assessment procedure in place, which makes the process accessible to all interested persons and organisations. The assessment procedure can be categorised into a number of stages, each of which will be examined in more detail in the following chapters of this Background Paper.

## 2.0 LDP SITE ASSESSMENT CATEGORY REFERENCE

- 2.1 The following references have been assigned to sites assessed as part of the LDP candidate site assessment process:
- A** – Sites that are located within the Tredegar area
  - B** – Sites that are located within the Ebbw Vale Area
  - C** – Sites that are located within the Upper Ebbw Fach Area
  - D** – Sites that are located within the Lower Ebbw Fach Area
- 2.2 Each category was subject to the same robust site assessment process in order to determine its suitability for inclusion in the Local Development Plan, within the current policy context.

## 3.0 SMALL SITES

### Introduction

- 3.1 The first consideration was to determine whether the sites were too small to be considered as part of the candidate site process. For this, a size threshold of 0.3 hectares was determined on the basis of the proposed density of 30 units/hectare.

Only sites greater than or equal to 0.3 hectares were considered as part of the assessment process. These sites were assessed under the first stage of the candidate site assessment process – Initial Planning Assessment.

**3.2** Sites submitted to the Council for consideration that were smaller than 0.3 hectares were referred to as ‘small sites’ and were dealt with in two different ways, depending on their location:

- The development of small sites within existing settlements is dependent upon the development control process. The development plan will provide criteria based policies for determining planning applications on small sites.
- Small sites that adjoin, or lie in close proximity to; existing (UDP) urban boundaries were assessed as part of the settlement boundary review to determine if they were appropriate for inclusion within the urban boundary, in light of the LDP Preferred Strategy. The results of this process are available in Appendix 5 of the Findings of the Candidate Site Assessment Process.

### **4.0 SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY REVIEW**

#### **Purpose of the Settlement Boundary**

**4.1** A key mechanism for achieving resource-efficient settlements and to indicate where growth will be permitted is the designation of settlement boundaries. The settlement boundary performs a number of important strategic functions, namely:

- Defining the area within which development would normally be allowed, taking into account all other material considerations;
- Promoting the full and effective use of urban land, thus concentrating development within settlements by preventing coalescence, ribbon development and fragmented development, where appropriate; and
- Preventing inappropriate development in the countryside and acting as a tool to guide development control decisions, thus providing certainty to the public and developers.

#### **Methodology**

**4.2** The methodology employed for the Settlement Boundary Review required consideration of the relationship between the small site and the existing urban area.

**4.3** The Settlement Boundary Review assessment is based on similar criteria to that of the first stage of the Candidate Site Assessment Methodology (Initial Planning Assessment). The issues assessed included the current use and condition of the site, its topography, and its relationship with adjacent land uses, access and other possible constraints that would prevent any development of the site. The assessment determined whether or not the site should be included in the urban area or considered to be part of the countryside.

**4.4** Candidate sites adjoining the existing settlement boundaries that were approved for housing allocations were included within the new settlement boundary.

## Planning applications

- 4.5 While reviewing the urban area boundary, extant planning permissions for residential developments adjacent to the boundaries were identified. Sites with extant planning permission within the last five years were included within the boundaries, as the principle for development of these sites has been approved by the Council.

## Anomalies

- 4.6 Allotment gardens, parks, recreation grounds and cemeteries adjoining the existing Unitary Development Plan urban area boundary were excluded from the new settlement boundary. This was to protect the local amenity of communities.
- 4.7 Since the adoption of the Unitary Development Plan, the Council have changed the GIS basemap from Landline to Mastermap, therefore changes were required due to the different basemap and different line work.

## 5.0 CANDIDATE SITE ASSESSMENTS

### Stage 1: Initial Planning Assessment

- 5.1 The first stage of the assessment process focussed on assessing the developability of all sites greater than or equal to 0.3 hectares to identify both the potential for and constraints to development. Initial site visits were undertaken to ascertain the following factors and a site proforma was completed for each submitted site. The site proforma contained the following information:
- Confirm the location of the site and reference details;
  - Provide a general overview of the site in terms of the current use and physical attributes;
  - Identify the means of access to the site;
  - Identify local services and facilities;
  - Comment on the site's relationship to the existing settlement;
  - Note the proximity to sites of national importance for biodiversity;
  - Comment on compatibility with neighbouring uses;
  - Identify flood risk designation; and
  - Note relevant planning history.
- 5.2 The Initial Planning Assessment determines whether a site is considered suitable in planning terms for the proposed use identified by the landowner, or whether an alternative use would be more appropriate. Candidate sites that have been granted planning permission will not be considered further as part of this process.
- 5.3 The proforma used to complete the stage 1 assessment can be found in Appendix 1.

### Stage 2: Expert Assessments

- 5.4 All sites that satisfied the Initial Planning Assessment in stage 1 were subject to detailed expert assessments in stage 2, undertaken by a wide range of specialists including ecologists, arboricultural and woodlands officer, landscape architects,

engineers, environmental health officers and heritage officers. These assessments were based on the preferred land use identified as a result of the initial planning assessment in stage 1.

- 5.5 Detailed assessment proformas have been prepared in respect of the following issues: Countryside and Landscape; Environmental Health; and Highways and Engineers which consider the site in terms of a wide range of criteria.
- 5.6 The proformas and explanatory notes used to complete these assessments can be found in Appendix 2.

### **Countryside and Landscape Assessment**

- 5.7 The Countryside and Landscape assessment examined the principle of allocating sites within the LDP, taking into account landscape issues including trees and hedgerows as well as ecological issues including European, national and local designations and species.
- 5.8 Where part or all of a site has been identified as having particular conservation or landscape value that would preclude the land from being developed, this has been taken into account in the overall assessment of the site's suitability. The feasibility of developing the remaining land has been considered, along with possible conflict between areas to be protected from development and possible access to the site in order to inform a reasoned judgement on the suitability of the site for the type of development specified. Where there was a need for additional surveys to be undertaken prior to development these were identified.

### **Highways Assessment**

- 5.9 The Highways proformas examined the potential impact on the highways network of proposed developments identifying the proposed traffic generation as well as access on to the existing highway network and the level of constraint in achieving an acceptable access. An overall recommendation is provided on whether access can be achieved taking into account all considerations including the viability of proposals and whether additional information such as a Traffic Impact Assessment would be required.

### **Environmental Health Assessment**

- 5.10 The Environmental Health proforma has taken account of issues including odour, light, noise, waste and potential contamination. On sites where potential nuisances have been identified, additional information may be required through surveys and ground investigations prior to a decision on the suitability of the site. The potential constraints identified in these surveys should be weighed up in light of the other assessments, although potential nuisances are not on their own reasons to justify the ruling out of a site if only 'potential' rather than confirmed.

### **Consideration of the Expert Assessments**

- 5.11 A planning assessment team comprising of Planning Policy Officers, Planning Control, Countryside and Landscape, Highways and Engineers, Heritage Officer, Environmental Health, Estates, Housing and Economic Development considered the results of the expert assessments.
- 5.12 On the basis of the expert assessments, the team determined whether a site is suitable for development in full or in part, and whether or not the site should be given further consideration for inclusion within the LDP. It is important to note that at this stage these decisions were considered in principle only.
- 5.13 A significant amount of further work, including consultation with statutory bodies, and assessment of the site against the Preferred Strategy and Sustainability Appraisal was required in order to finally determine the suitability or otherwise, of a site for development and thus for its inclusion in the LDP. It should be noted that the outcome of the site assessment process at this point was provisional and individual sites may have been subsequently re-categorised on the basis of new information.
- 5.14 Sites failing to satisfy the Planning Assessment Team did not proceed to the following stages of the candidate site process.

### **Stage 3: Consultation with Appropriate Bodies**

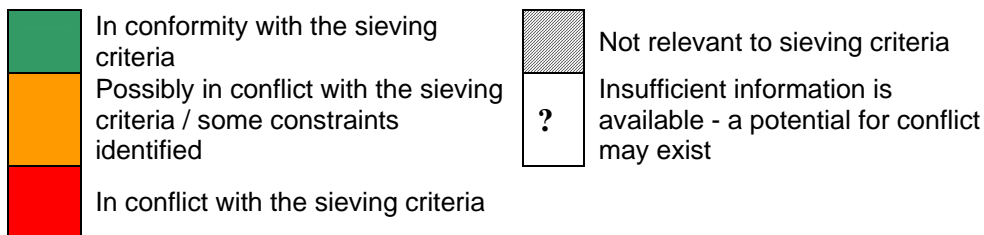
- 5.15 At this stage the Council sought the views of and consulted with the appropriate specific consultation bodies in respect of those sites identified as suitable for future development in stage 2. The specific consultation bodies that were consulted were:
- Countryside Council for Wales;
  - Welsh Assembly Government;
  - Environment Agency Wales;
  - Dwr Cymru / Welsh Water;
  - Glamorgan – Gwent Archaeological Trust;
  - CADW;
  - The Coal Authority;
  - Health & Safety Executive; and
  - Western Power Distribution.

### **Stage 4: Assessment against the Preferred Strategy**

- 5.16 Sites identified as being suitable for further consideration as a result of the expert assessments were then assessed against the Preferred Strategy. The assessment focussed on whether the candidate site has potential to contribute to the strategic direction of the LDP including the level and distribution of growth set out in the Preferred Strategy.
- 5.17 To determine the candidate site's compatibility with the Preferred Strategy objectives, the impact of the candidate site and its proposed development are identified by a colour coding system (see Figure 1 below). Where the candidate site is found to conflict with the objective the site is coded red, where there is potential for conflict the site is coded orange and where no conflict is identified the site is coded green.



**Figure 1: Colour Coding System**



5.18 No sites were discounted for further consideration at this stage and all progressed to stage 5.

## Stage 5: Assessment of the site against the LDP Sustainability Objectives

5.19 It was important to analyse each site in sustainability terms and to assess how they performed against each of the sustainability objectives as part of the Blaenau Gwent Sustainability Appraisal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment). The objectives form part of the Sustainability Appraisal framework which is a set of objectives, indicators and targets which will be used to assess the sustainability implications of the LDP. This was first issued in draft as part of the SA/SEA Scoping Report and following consultation, the objectives have been revised and approved by the Council.

5.20 The Council's Preferred Strategy has been subject to sustainability assessment, details of which can be found in the Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report (November 2008). The subsequent Local Development Plan will also be subject to sustainability assessment and as such it is important that any potential development site is also subject to the same sustainability assessment. Therefore, at stage 5 the sites were scored to determine their performance against each of the 25 sustainability objectives.

5.21 The impacts of the candidate site and the proposed development are identified by a colour coding system, the same used in stage 4 (see Figure 1 above).

## Stage 6: Finalisation of sites for Deposit LDP

### Housing, Employment and Mixed Use Sites

5.22 Where sites were proposed for residential development, employment or a mix of uses including an element of housing, and were deemed suitable for further consideration, a score was given based on the colour coding awarded in the assessments at stages 4 and 5, for example for every colour green awarded, the site would score 3 points, where an orange or question mark was awarded the site would lose one point and where a red was given the site would lose 3 points. Figure 2 sets out the colour coding system including the scores.

**Figure 2: Colour Coding System including scores**

<b>+3 pts</b>	In conformity with the sieving criteria	<b>0 pts</b>	Not relevant to sieving criteria
<b>- 1 pt</b>	Possibly in conflict with the sieving criteria / some constraints identified	<b>? - 1 pt</b>	Insufficient information is available - a potential for conflict may exist
<b>- 3 pts</b>	In conflict with the sieving criteria		

- 5.23** The scores of the stage 4 and 5 assessments were added together and the sites were ranked accordingly.
- 5.24** To determine the housing allocations in Ebbw Vale, Tredegar and Upper Ebbw Fach, the sites which had a combined score of 44 or less were considered to perform poorly against the Sustainability Appraisal and LDP Strategy when compared to other sites proposed for residential use. In Lower Ebbw Fach a lower combined score of 40 or less was taken due to the topographical constraints in the area and the limited number of candidate sites that had come forward. Therefore sites, which scored less than 44 in Ebbw Vale, Tredegar and Upper Ebbw Fach and 40 in Lower Ebbw Fach, were taken out of the process and not proposed for allocation in the LDP.
- 5.25** Although some sites performed well against the Preferred Strategy and Sustainability Appraisal Objectives some sites have issues such as ground stability, presence of mine shafts and uncertainty around the closures of the premises, which means that their viability and deliverability are questionable. Therefore sites with issues such as this have not been taken forward into the LDP.
- 5.26** To determine the employment allocations, the sites which had a combined score of 30 or less were considered to perform poorly against the Sustainability Appraisal and LDP strategy when compared to other sites proposed for employment use and therefore were not included in the Deposit LDP as an employment allocation.
- 5.27** Although some sites performed well against the Preferred Strategy and Sustainability Appraisal Objectives several of the employment sites are undeveloped pockets of otherwise developed employment sites. These sites are considered to be more appropriately protected under the Employment Protection Area policy, rather than as an allocation.
- 5.28** To determine the leisure and tourism, community facility, waste and minerals allocations, the sites were included in the candidate site process to ensure that the sites were developable, sustainable and compatible with the LDP strategy. However, ultimately the relevant departments of the Council and other organisations determined the inclusion of these sites in the Deposit LDP.



# APPENDICES





**General Planning Assessment Proforma (Stage 1)**

**General Information**

**Date of Assessment:**..... **Officer Initials:**.....

**Grid Reference:**.....

**1. Site Number:** .....

**2. Name/ Location of the Site:** .....

**3. Site Area (hectares):** .....

**4. Existing Use of Site:**.....

**5. Proposed LDP allocation of site:**.....

**6. If residential, approximate number of units:**

**7. Is the site on previously developed land (brownfield)?**

Yes  No  Unknown

**8. General Site Description:**

**Ownership**

**9a. Is the site wholly in the ownership of the proposer?**

Yes  No

If No, please provide further details below:

.....  
.....

**9b. Does the proposer own or control any land adjoining the proposed site?**

Yes  No

**9c. Are there any restrictive covenants relating to the use/ buildings contained within the site?**

Yes  No

If Yes, please provide further details below:

.....  
.....



# APPENDIX 1: GENERAL PLANNING ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

## UDP Assessment

### 10. Current UDP Policy Assessment

--

### Relationship to existing settlement

#### 11a. How does the site relate to the existing settlement?

Location	Y/N	Comments
Within existing settlement		
Rounding off settlement		
Edge of settlement		
Out of settlement		

#### 11b. Would this location be acceptable in these terms?

Yes  No

### Compatibility with Neighbouring Uses

#### 12. Is the proposed land use compatible with neighbouring uses?

Yes  No

#### Comment on any potential conflicts:

.....  
.....  
.....

### Accessibility

#### 13a. Is the site accessible from the existing highway network?

Yes  No

#### Comments:

.....  
.....



## APPENDIX 1: GENERAL PLANNING ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

**13b. Is the site located within 400m of a public transport access point?**

Yes  No

**13c. Is the site located within 400m of a community facility (shop/commercial services)?**

Yes  No

**Comments:**

.....  
 .....  
 .....

### Sites of National Importance for Biodiversity

**14a. Is the site located within or within close proximity to an area of international/ national importance for biodiversity?**

	No	Close Proximity	Partial Coverage	Whole Coverage
<b>Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</b>				
<b>Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)</b>				
<b>National Nature Reserve (NNR)</b>				
<b>Local Nature Reserve (LNR)</b>				

**Comments:**

.....  
 .....  
 .....

**14b. Is the site acceptable in relation to these designations?**

Yes  No  Unknown – need further information

### Flood Risk

**15a. Is the site located within a Flood Risk area as defined by TAN 15?**

Flood Zone	Y/N	Partial	Complete	Predominant Zoning
Zone A				
Zone B				
Zone C1				
Zone C2				





# APPENDIX 1: GENERAL PLANNING ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

**Comments:**

.....  
.....  
.....

**15b. Would the proposed development be acceptable in relation to Flood Risk?** (see guidance notes)

Yes  No

**Planning History**

**16. Does the site or part of the site have any valid planning permissions (please state application number and details)?**

Yes  No

Application No.	Application Type	Decision	Details

**Proposed Use of the Site**

**17. Is the applicant's proposed use acceptable?**

Yes  No

**Justification:**

.....  
.....



## APPENDIX 1: GENERAL PLANNING ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

**18. Would the site be suitable for the following uses from a planning policy perspective? (Identify most appropriate).**

Use	Y/N	Justification
<b>Residential</b>		
<b>General Industrial (B2/B8)</b>		
<b>Retail</b>		
<b>Mixed Use</b>		
<b>Commercial Leisure</b>		
<b>Community Facilities</b>		
<b>Sport/Leisure</b>		
<b>Office</b>		

**Overall Conclusion**

**19. Is the site acceptable for further consideration as part of the LDP process?**

Yes  No

If Yes, officers preferred use

.....  
 .....

**Justification for decision:**



# APPENDIX 1: GENERAL PLANNING ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

## Explanatory Note for General Planning Assessment Proforma

### General Information

In order to maintain an accurate record of the site assessment process, general information on the date of assessment, the initials of the officer undertaking the assessment and the grid reference (6 number) for the site in order to identify the site on a map.

#### 1.Site Number

Site Number allocated to the site

#### 2.Name/ Location of the Site

This was the name that was given to the site upon submission of the site for assessment, based on its location. The location is based on the nearest settlement to the site.

#### 3.Site Area

Total site area in hectares

#### 4. Existing Use of the site

As part of the landowners consultation, landowners were asked to identify the existing use of the site.

#### 5. Proposed LDP allocation of the site

As part of the landowners consultation, landowners were asked to identify their proposed use for the site.

#### 6. If residential, approximate number of units

Using the density of 30 per hectare, which has been identified as the average density for development in the County Borough on the basis of the applications approved for 10 or more units as recorded in the Joint Housing Land Availability Study, the number of dwellings for the site can be calculated.

#### 7. Previously Developed Land

Please indicate if the site is on previously developed land (brownfield), if known.

#### 8. General site description

This description should include considerations such as whether it is well related to an existing settlement in terms of proximity to services, if it contains any form of development at present (farmhouse, industrial unit, listed building etc), and if it is steep sloping or flat.

#### 9a-9c. Ownership

As part of the Landowners consultation, the landowners were asked to provide details of the ownership of the site and any restrictive covenants relating to the use/ buildings contained within the site. Please indicate in this space any ownership details released by the proposer.

#### 10.Current UDP Policy Assessment

Please indicate the current designation of the site as illustrated in the UDP i.e. Green Wedge, Housing Site, Special Landscape Area, Brecon Beacons National Park. It will also be important to specify if the site is within in or in close proximity to a Conservation area or Scheduled Ancient Monument or any other UDP policy allocation. Comment should also be made on whether the site is



inside or outside of the exiting settlement boundary. Where existing policy designations are identified, comments should be made as to the efficacy of the policy.

### **11a and 11b Relationship to the existing settlements**

This question refers specifically to how the site relates to the existing settlement. Rather than using the current settlement boundaries as defined in the UDP, a common sense approach should be applied and where a development does abut an existing settlement, eventhough it might be outside our current settlement boundaries that we consider the site as 'edge of settlement'. In addition, where a proposed site appears to logically 'round-off' a settlement, 'rounding-off' should be identified as opposed to 'edge of settlement'. 'Out of settlement' and 'within existing settlement' are self-explanatory.

This assessment should be supported by comments and a decision made on whether this location would be acceptable as a Yes or No answer.

### **12. Compatibility with neighbouring uses**

The second stage of the assessment process will involve environmental health carrying out an in-depth analysis of noise exposure levels/ air pollution/ contaminated land etc. The general planning assessment does not need to provide a detailed assessment on potential conflict but identify where conflicts may occur, such as residential proposed next to an existing employment site or proximity to a major road. A common sense approach needs to be adopted based upon professional judgement.

### **13a-c. Accessibility**

The detailed appraisal of the sites (second stage) of the process will involve Highways and Transport carrying out further analysis of accessibility issues. This proformas ask very general questions about accessibility of the site from the existing highway network and the physical location of the site in relation to a public transport access point and a community facility.

### **14a and b. Sites of national importance for biodiversity that would prohibit development**

There are several sites that have been recognised as being nationally important in terms of biodiversity within Blaenau Gwent County Borough, and as a result there will be a strong presumption against development. The County Borough has 3 sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 2 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and a National Nature Reserve (NNR).

Even if the site is not located within any of these designations, it may be the case that sites that are directly adjacent to these designations may have an unacceptable impact.

In responding to this question, the amount of land that may impact on the designations should be identified (non, partial or whole) and any additional comment in relation to the assessment should be made.

The Countryside section will provide comments on those environmental designations that are of regional or local importance such as SINCS, site supporting LBAP species.

A decision needs to be made on whether development would be acceptable in this locality or whether it may be harmful on the SSSI/ SAC/ NNR. It may be the case that further information needs to be collected on possible impacts.



## APPENDIX 1: GENERAL PLANNING ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

### 15a and b. Flood Risk

Please indicate whether a site falls into a flood risk zone. Where a site is indicated as both C1 and C2 the Environment Agency have confirmed that it should be treated as a C1 zone. The amount of the site that is located in each of the flood risk zones should be identified if appropriate.

The figure below gives a description of zones:

Figure 1

Description of Zone		Use within the precautionary framework
Considered to be at little or no risk of fluvial or tidal/coastal flooding.	A	Used to indicate that justification test is not applicable and no need to consider flood risk further.
Areas known to have flooded in the past evidenced by sedimentary deposits.	B	Used as a part of a precautionary approach to indicate where site levels should be checked against the extreme (0.1%) flood level. If site levels are greater than the flood levels used to define adjacent extreme flood outline there is no need to consider flood risk further.
Based on Environment Agency extreme flood outline, equal to or greater than 0.1% (river, tidal or coastal)	C	Used to indicate that flooding issues should be considered as an integral part of decision making by the application of the justification test including assessment of consequences.
Areas of the floodplain which are developed and served by significant infrastructure, including flood defences.	C1	Used to indicate that development can take place subject to the application of justification test, including acceptability of consequences.
Area of the floodplain without significant flood defence infrastructure	C2	Used to indicate that only less vulnerable development should be considered subject to application of justification test, including acceptability of consequences. Emergency services and highly vulnerable development should not be considered.

Welsh Assembly Government (2004) Technical Advice Note 15: Development and Flood Risk

Figure 2 needs to be given consideration in relation to the proposed use suggested for the site. For instance, residential development is considered 'highly vulnerable' therefore it should not be considered in a C2 flood risk zone. A decision in relation to this should be made to identify whether the proposed development would be acceptable in relation to these designations.



Figure 2

Development Category	Types
Emergency services	Hospitals, ambulance stations, fire stations, police stations, coastguard stations, command centres, emergency depots and buildings used to provide emergency shelter in the time of flood
Highly vulnerable development	All residential premises (including hotels and caravan parks), public buildings (e.g. schools, libraries, leisure centres), especially vulnerable industrial development (e.g. power stations, chemical plants, incinerators), and waste disposal sites.
Less vulnerable development	General industrial, employment, commercial and retail development, transport and utilities infrastructure, car parks, mineral extraction sites and associated processing facilities, excluding waste disposal

Welsh Assembly Government (2004) Technical Advice Note 15: Development and Flood Risk

### 16. Planning History

If the site has been subject to a recent relevant planning application, recent consultations would have been undertaken and can be used in identifying possible constraints. For the purposes of this field, the application number, date of application and brief details should be noted on all applications submitted on a site since 1996. Where part of the identified site only has been subject to this planning application, this should be specified.

### 17. Proposed Use of the Site

As a result of the answers to the previous questions, a recommendation should be made on whether the applicant's proposed use is acceptable and the justification for why this decision has been made.

### 18. Preferred Uses

It may be the case that sites are not suitable for the use proposed by the landowner but may be suitable for another use. The question aims to identify all possible land uses that the site may be suitable for and justification for the decision.

### 19. Overall Conclusion

This is intended to raise the most pertinent points in relation to rejecting/ recommending a site for its suggested use. Where an officer feels that the suggested use of the site is inappropriate, the officer should recommend an appropriate use as identified in the preferred use section of this proforma. A decision should be made on the basis of this information to identify whether the site is acceptable for further consideration as part of the Local Development Plan process and justification for this.

If the site is considered acceptable, it will be subject to a more detailed appraisal. However, if no uses are identified as appropriate, the site will be ruled out as unsuitable in planning terms and no further assessment will be made.



## APPENDIX 1: GENERAL PLANNING ASSESSMENT PROFORMA



**HIGHWAY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA**

To assess the potential impact of proposed developments on the existing Highway Network as part of the Local Development Plan (LDP) process.

January 2008



# APPENDIX 2: HIGHWAY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

## TITLE

Local Development Plan (LDP) - Highway Assessments

## REPORT

## ON

Impact assessment of proposed development sites on the existing Highway Network as part of the LDP process

Job Number:

Site Ref No. & Name:

Client:

Distribution:

Completed By: \_\_\_\_\_

Highway Engineer

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Checked By: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Engineer -  
Highways Planning

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX 2: HIGHWAY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

### General site information

Site Name:

---

---

Site Location:

---

---

Site Reference No. \_\_\_\_\_

Site Area: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of development proposed: \_\_\_\_\_

General site description:

### Potential impact on existing highway network resulting from the proposed development

**Is a trip generation calculation/survey required?**

**YES – Trip Generation Calculation Survey required**

**NO – No calculation required. (proceed to Question 7)**

1. Estimated Trip generation as result of development:

a. Estimated number of units on site (residential use only): \_\_\_\_\_

b. Estimated trip generation (if residential – per unit/24hr): \_\_\_\_\_

c. Estimated Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) generated by the development:

\_\_\_\_\_ Trips/24hr.

d. Estimated hours of peak flow: \_\_\_\_\_ AM \_\_\_\_\_ PM

2. Observations of existing Highway infrastructure to which new access / egress will adjoin:

a. Estimated current Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT):

\_\_\_\_\_ Trips/24hr.



## APPENDIX 2: HIGHWAY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

- b. Provide detailed description of existing highway conditions: (e.g. Evidence of operational, topographical, environmental and safety issues that exist on both the local and wider road network).

<p><u>Observations</u></p>
----------------------------

3. To what extent would the use of this land for the stated purpose impact on the existing highway network in terms of traffic generation?

Estimated increase in vehicular trips on existing network as a result of the development:

- a. Estimated increase in total number of trips made: (Use estimated AADT in Q.1c)

\_\_\_\_\_

- b. What is the estimated percentage increase of vehicular trips on the existing highway network as a result of the traffic generated by the development?

$$\frac{\text{Estimated increase in total number of trips}}{\text{Estimated current Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)}} \times 100 = \text{_____}\%$$

- c. Does traffic to and from the development exceed 10% of the two way flow on the adjoining highway?

YES –Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) recommended

NO



## APPENDIX 2: HIGHWAY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

- d. Does the traffic flow to and from the development exceed 5% of the two-way flow on the adjoining highway where congestion exists?

YES – Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) recommended

NO

4. What implications would this increase in vehicular traffic have on the existing highway network in terms of both creating and or exacerbating existing network problems? (As listed in Q.2b)

Please list all operational, topographical and safety issues:

5. Are there any other candidate LDP development sites in the area that may in conjunction with this one, have a collective negative impact on the surrounding highway network?

YES

NO

If yes, please specify site name and implications:

6.

the existing  
city  
agreement.

**Recommendations:**

## APPENDIX 2: HIGHWAY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

### Accessibility onto existing highway network

7. Is there an existing access to the site: YES  NO

8. Is the existing access(s) and road it adjoins (i.e. if private drive, farm lane etc) adequate to facilitate the movement of traffic generated by the development? (Refer to Q.1c&e for projected trip generation).

YES  NO

9. Provide general description of existing access point(s) and road? (Mark on plan).

10. Considering the area of the development and the proposed use, how many access points would be recommended? (Mark preferred access point(s) on plan provided).

Number of access points recommended =

11. If a new access or accesses were required to the site, onto what hierarchy of road would it/they have to adjoin?

County Route (Class 1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Distributor Route (Class 2)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Residential Road (Class 3 & Unclassified)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Private, Un-adopted/Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. What is the potential of physically providing a new access point(s) onto the existing highway network: (Please 'X' appropriate box for each access point).

Easy access obtainable to existing Highway	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relatively easy access obtainable, although some constraints present	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difficult to provide access to site due to numerous constraints	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access cannot be provided due to severity of constraints	<input type="checkbox"/>



## APPENDIX 2: HIGHWAY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

13. Would a Section 278 Highway Agreement be required to help facilitate access to the site?

YES  NO

**Recommendation:**

Please 'X' appropriate box and provide a summary explanation for recommendation:

Site **IS** suitable to be developed for its intended purpose.

Brief reason for recommendation:

Site is **NOT** suitable to be developed for its intended purpose.

Brief reason for recommendation:



## APPENDIX 2: HIGHWAY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

### Explanatory Note for Highway Assessment Proforma

#### General site information

This section is to be completed by using the information provided by the Planning Division and is located at the front of their assessment proforma that is attached to each site plan. The information provides a general overview of the site including its location, size, number of proposed units (residential), reference number, existing and proposed usage (note: highway assessment to consider Planning Officers recommendation for development type and NOT landowners recommendation) as well as a general description of site conditions.

#### Potential impact on existing highway infrastructure resulting from the proposed development

The allocation of land for development will, depending on its proposed use, have a varying level of impact on the surrounding highway infrastructure. It is therefore important to try and foresee what the potential impact each type and size of development may have on the existing network hierarchy.

Not all sites will require TRICS survey/calculation and therefore, the highway engineer must determine each site on its individual merits. Sites below 20 no. units may be appraised at the time of the site inspection and if there are no concerns with regards to highway conditions, hierarchy and capacity, then no survey is required.

Using a trip generation database (TRICS) to provide traffic flow data for varying types and sizes of development it is possible to estimate the level of traffic likely to be generated as a result of a proposed development.

Q. 1a – The number of units is dependant on the site area, using the known site area the Planning Division will provide the estimated number of units to be built on the site. The number of units will only be given when considering residential developments.

Q. 2b – This is again dependent on the proposed development type. When considering residential developments you can expect the following number of trips per unit:

Residential use – 8 trips per unit/24hr period

However, to determine the number of trips generated as a result of the following development types you must consider the land area and proposed use of the site and not number of units as per residential sites. The Consultant is required to consult with Highways Planning and the TRICS database when considering trips levels for the following development types:

- Sports/Leisure use
- Mixed use
- Office use
- Industrial use
- Retail use



## APPENDIX 2: HIGHWAY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

Q. 1c – To determine the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) generated by a residential development, the following calculation can be performed. However to establish the AADT of other development types (such as above) you are required to consult the TRICS database.

$$\text{Estimated No. of trips per unit} \times \text{No. of proposed units on site} = \text{AADT}$$

Q. 1 d&e – The estimated hours of peak flow will be provided by the TRIC'S database (see Highways Planning).

Q. 2a – This will give an idea of the existing two-way flow on the adjoining highway. To calculate the estimated traffic flow on the existing highway the consultant is required to:

Conduct an off peak (after 9.00am and before 4.00pm) 10 minute two way count of the traffic flow on the highway. Then carry out the following calculation:

$$\text{Total vehicles counted} \times 100 = \text{AADT (Vehicular trips per 24hr period)}$$

Q. 2b – The consultant is required to observe and record site observations in relation to operational, topographical, and environmental issues as well as any safety hazards that might exist on the existing road network.

Q. 3a – Use figure determined in question Q. 1c.

Q. 3b – This calculation will be used to determine the percentage increase of vehicular trips on the existing network as a direct result of the development. This is determined by using the following calculation:

$$\frac{\text{Estimated increase in total number of trips} \times 100}{\text{Estimated current Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)}} = \text{\% increase in vehicular trips}$$

The 'Estimated increase in total number of trips' is determined from Q. 3a and the 'Estimated current Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)' is taken from Q. 2a.

Q. 3 c&d – Will be determined by the percentage given in Q. 3b. The percentage increase in traffic flow on the existing network will establish whether it may be advisable to request a Traffic Impact Assessment prior to the development of the site or not. The determination levels are in accordance with IHT guidance.

Q. 4 – Is the potential increase in traffic generated by the development likely to impact on existing or create new operational or topographical problems on the highway. Capacity and highway safety issues to be considered.

Q. 5 – The highway engineer will be required to observe the spatial plan indicating the location of all the candidate LDP development sites in the Borough. The highway engineer is required to assess whether there will be a collective impact on the network as a result of several developments accessing the same distributor route, access road, roundabout etc.

Sites of concern to be listed and potential implications to highway network stated, for example potential capacity, road safety problems etc.





## APPENDIX 2: HIGHWAY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

Q. 6 – This question considers the impact of the proposed increase in traffic generated by the proposed development and whether any works to the existing network carried out via a Section 106 Planning Agreement would be required to allow for the expected increase in traffic levels on the surrounding network.

### **Accessibility onto the existing highway network**

An assessment of existing and potential access points to the development site is required. Whilst it is accepted that most sites may be made physically accessible at a cost, it is important to recognise what constraints may inhibit this and the potential difficulties that must be overcome.

Q. 7 – Asks whether the site can be accessed by vehicles from the existing highway.

Q. 8 – A site may currently be accessible from the highway, however the current access may not be suitable for the proposed development use. The current access may be narrow, un-surfaced etc and form part of a private drive or access lane before joining with the public highway some distance away. It is therefore necessary to consider the existing access and whether it is suitable to handle the volume of traffic generated by the development (use trip generation figures from Q. 1 c&e). Factors to be considered are access visibility, width, alignments, type of road, lane the access exits onto and its width, class, usage, purpose etc.

Q. 9 – The consultant is required to provide a general description of the existing access point(s) to the site, considering the above factors. Existing access points are to be referenced on a plan and accompanied by photographs.

Q. 10 – The number of access/egress points required to the site is dependant on the size of the development and when considering residential developments the number of units present.

For example under most circumstances, good practice states that a residential development will have one access/egress point for every 300 units on site.

Q. 11 – An important factor that must be considered when assessing potential new access points is Blaenau Gwent's C. B. C's road hierarchy.

Mark the appropriate box(s) for each potential access/egress point required.

The purpose of this hierarchy is to facilitate the efficient use of the highway network and control what transport and development access arrangements may be permitted at what point on the highway.

Q. 12 - The potential to access a site has been graded into four categories of difficulty depending on existing constraints. The consultant must use his/her judgement to assess the potential of providing a suitable access while considering the severity of constraint that may influence access to the site:

1. Easy access obtainable to existing highway
2. Relatively easy access obtainable, although some constraints present
3. Difficult to provide access to site due to numerous constraints
4. Access cannot be provided due to severity of constraints



## APPENDIX 2: HIGHWAY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

Q. 14 – A developer and Highway Authority may, if required, enter into a Section 278 Highway Agreement to allow for the execution of works to the highway to allow access to a development site.

The consultant must envisage whether alterations to the existing highway (i.e. widening of existing junction, layout changes, provision of a roundabout, left/right turning lanes, footway changes etc) may be necessary to allow access to the site and therefore whether a Section 278 Highway Agreement will be required to facilitate these works.

### **Recommendation**

The consultant is required to use the evidence that has been collected for the completion of the proforma to determine whether a site 'is' or 'is not' suitable for the proposed development.

The consultant is required to mark an 'X' in the appropriate box and provide a brief summary referencing evidence in the proforma that supports the final decision.

### **Completion of the proforma**

The assessing officer is required to sign and date each completed proforma.



## APPENDIX 2: HIGHWAY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA



**BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA**

To assess the potential impact of proposed developments on  
biodiversity features

February 2008

## APPENDIX 3: BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

### **General Site Information**

1. Site Name:
2. Site Location:
3. Grid Reference
4. Site Reference No.
5. Site Area:
6. Type of development proposed:
7. General site description:



**Biodiversity Assessment**

**8.** Is the site within or adjacent to an International or European Designated Wildlife Site (ie. Special Area of Conservation) including any candidate or proposed sites?

Within	YES	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adjacent to	YES	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*(Mark extent of site on plan provided and list sites below)*

**9.** Is the site within or adjacent to a Nationally Designated Wildlife Site including any candidate or proposed sites? (ie. National Nature Reserve or Site of Special Scientific Interest). *(Underline the relevant designation)*

Within	YES	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adjacent to	YES	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*(Mark extent of site on plan provided and list sites below)*

**10.** Is the site within a Locally Designated Wildlife Site including any candidate or proposed sites? (ie. Local Nature Reserve or Site of Importance for Nature Conservation). *(Underline the relevant designation)*

Within	YES	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adjacent to	YES	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*(Mark extent of site on plan provided and list sites below)*

**11.** Are there records of European Protected Species for this site? (Bats, Otters, Dormice and Great Crested Newts)

YES  NO

*List species below*



## APPENDIX 3: BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

12. Are there records for species protected under UK legislation (including Wildlife Countryside Act 1991 (as amended), and The Protection of Badgers Act 1992) (not included above)?

YES  NO

*List species below*

13. Are there records for species protected under the Section 42 of the NERC Act 2006?

YES  NO

*List species below*

14. Are there any UK Priority Habitats?

YES  NO

*List habitats below*

15. Are there records for Blaenau Gwent LBAP Species or Habitats (not included above)?

YES  NO

*List species and/or habitats below*



## APPENDIX 3: BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

16. Does the site support habitat suitable for supporting protected species?

YES  NO

*List the habitat and potential species below:*

Habitat	Potential Species

17. Does the site contain “stepping stones” or wildlife corridors (not included above)?

YES  NO

18. Does the site contain woodland?

YES  NO

19. Is the site listed on the Register of Ancient Woodland?

YES  NO

Ancient Semi natural

Ancient Replanted

*(Mark extent on plan provided)*

20. Does the site contain Ancient /Veteran Trees?

YES  NO

*(Mark Ancient/Veteran Trees on plan provided)*

21. Does the site contain hedgerows?

YES  NO

Have any been identified as Important under the Hedgerow Regs?

YES  NO  No survey information

*(Mark hedgerows and Important hedgerows on plan provided)*





## APPENDIX 3: BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

### 22. Summary of Biodiversity Constraints

### 23. Are Biodiversity constraints significant enough to prevent development of:

The whole site?	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
Part of the site?	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

*(Identify parts of the site that should be excluded from development)*

### 24. What additional ecological surveys/ assessments will be required for this site?

### 25. If part of the site can be developed, provide outline mitigation proposals and possible new benefits.

### **Additional comments / observations:**





## APPENDIX 3: BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENT PROFORMA



## **COUNTRYSIDE AND LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT PROFORMA**

To assess the potential impact of proposed developments on  
countryside and landscape features

February 2008



**General Site Information**

1. Site Name:
2. Site Location:
3. Grid Reference:
4. Site Reference No.
5. Site Area:
6. Type of development proposed:
7. General site description:



**Countryside & Landscape Assessment**

**8.** Is the site on the register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historical Interest in Wales?

(Mark extent of site on the plan provided) YES  NO

**9a)** Is the site listed on the register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest

YES  NO

**b)** Does the site lie within 100m of a site of Special Historic Interest?

(Mark extent of site on the plan provided) YES  NO

**10.** What evaluation grade has the site been designated in Landscape Value on Land Map?

10a. Earth Science

Low  Moderate  High  Outstanding

10b. Biodiversity

Low  Moderate  High  Outstanding

10c. Visual & Sensory

Low  Moderate  High  Outstanding

10d. History & Archaeology

Low  Moderate  High  Outstanding

10e. Culture

Low  Moderate  High  Outstanding

Summary of Landmap characteristics:

**11.** Does the site lie within a Special Landscape Area on the Unitary Development Plan

YES NO



**APPENDIX 4: COUNTRYSIDE AND LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT PROFORMA**

**12.** Does the site lie within a Green Wedge on the Unitary Development Plan

YES  NO

**13.** Summary of Landscape Constraints

**14.** Are Landscape constraints significant enough to prevent development of:

The whole site? YES  NO

Part of the site? YES  NO

*(Identify parts of the site that should be excluded from development)*

**15.** What additional landscape surveys/ assessments will be required for this site?



**Additional comments / observations:**

**Countryside and Landscape Summary:**

- |  |                           |                          |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Accept Principle of allocation:</b> | <b>Yes, whole of site</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | <b>Yes, Part of site</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | <b>No</b>                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |





## APPENDIX 4: COUNTRYSIDE AND LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT PROFORMA



# APPENDIX 5: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT

**SITE REFERENCE NO.**  
**SITE LOCATION:-**  
**TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:-**  
**OFFICER'S NAME:-**

CRITERIA	OFFICER COMMENTS	SITE OBSERVATIONS	SIGNATURE
ODOUR		NONE  POTENTIAL ODOUR NUISANCE	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
LIGHT		NONE  POTENTIAL LIGHT NUISANCE	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
NOISE - COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL - TRAFFIC - MIXED - OTHER		NONE  BS4142 TYPE ASSESSMENT REQUIRED  TAN 11 ASSESSMENT REQUIRED  BOTH ASSESSMENTS REQUIRED  NOISE ASSESSMENT REQUIRED	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
WASTE		NONE  POTENTIAL WASTE ISSUE	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
CONTAMINATION		NONE  GROUND INVESTIGATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

# APPENDIX 5: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT

	WITH CURRENT DEFRA GUIDANCE (USING THE CLEA MODEL) AND HAVING REGARD TO CLR 7 TO 11. REASON:- <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
--	---

**ARE THERE ANY NEIGHBOURING LDP DEVELOPMENT SITES THAT MAY, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THIS ONE, HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT: YES/NO**  
**IF YES, PLEASE SPECIFY SITE NAME AND ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**SUMMARY**

SITE IS SUITABLE FOR INTENDED PURPOSE	<input type="checkbox"/>
FURTHER INFORMATION IS REQUIRED PRIOR TO A DECISION ON WHETHER SITE IS SUITABLE FOR ITS INTENDED PURPOSE	<input type="checkbox"/>
DETAIL OF FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
SITE IS <b><u>NOT</u></b> SUITABLE FOR INTENDED PURPOSE	<input type="checkbox"/>
BRIEF REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE PROPOSED USE:-	_____



# APPENDIX 5: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT

1. Residential	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Mixed use	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. General Industrial: B2 General Industry <b><u>NOT</u></b> offices B8 Warehousing/Storage	<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Retail	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Offices	<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Commercial Leisure, eg cinemas	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Sport and Recreation, eg playing pitches	<input type="checkbox"/>
		8. Community Facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>

APPROVED BY:



## APPENDIX 5: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT



**For further information please contact:**

Planning Policy Team  
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council  
Business Resource Centre  
Tafarnaubach Industrial Estate  
Tredegar, Blaenau Gwent  
NP22 3AA

Tel. 01495 354740/355538/355544/355501  
email. [planningpolicy@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk)  
or visit [www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk)