



Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan

WM1.1 – Cwmbargoed (A Waste Facilities Site to serve more than One Local Authority Area)

Examination 2010

Caerphilly County Borough Council submission

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**WM1.1 – Cwmbargoed
(A Waste Facilities Site to serve more than One Local Authority Area)**

January 2010

A) INTRODUCTION

This Examination Document relates to Policy WM1.1, which allocates a Waste Facilities Site to serve more than One Local Authority Area. The references for the relevant Deposit Plan Policy, Site Description, and Assessment are contained respectively in:

- *The Deposit Written Statement: (Page 74)*
- *Proposals Map: (Map 4)*
- *Appendix 6: (Page A6.1)*
- *Background Paper 4: (Pages 4.25, 4.29 and 4.30)*

B) OUTLINE OF DOCUMENT

This Document will address issues raised by the Inspector at the Exploratory Meeting held on 8th December 2009, and propose further changes to the Deposit LDP allocation WM1.1; namely it will:

Background

- 1 Set out the extent of discussions and agreement with Merthyr Tydfil CBC and the site owners / operators on all relevant aspects of site development for the purpose identified by the Deposit Plan.
- 2 Explain the Caerphilly LDP relationship with Merthyr Tydfil Council's emerging waste strategy and with the policies and proposals in Merthyr's LDP.
- 3 Contain a description of the Council's original misinterpretation of the candidate site information supplied by the owner / operator as to the site's capability to deliver the policy proposal as identified in the Deposit Plan.

Rationale for Change

- 4 Explain that the outcome of the Council's misinterpretation of the site's capabilities means that it would not be possible to implement the proposal as identified in the Deposit Plan.
- 5 Include a description of the current, confirmed, position of particular interested parties – Miller Argent, MTCBC, WAG, & CCBC.

Proposed Changes

- 6 Contain a justification for the Council to continue to propose to utilise some of the land in this Washery site for Waste Management Facilities.
- 7 Seek to revise the extent of the site area proposed for allocation as a waste management facility.

**WM1.1: Cwmbargoed Waste Facilities Site
Focused Change to the Deposit LDP**

- 8 Seek to identify site WM1.1 as a mixed-use site, including those uses associated with Minerals Handling and Dispatch, and Waste Management Facilities.
- 9 Seek to propose that the permitted land uses should also encompass other acceptable employment activities, which are dependent on rail freight as the main source of transportation for movement of goods or materials associated with the development.
- 10 Explain that the new proposals are completely independent of the continued coal washery and despatch operations through the Plan period.
- 11 Propose a revision to the wording of policy WM 1.1, and concomitant changes elsewhere, in the light of these matters. This revision will need to be presented to Council for approval in order for it to be submitted to the EIP process.

Implications of the Proposed Change on the LDP Strategy

- 12 Contain a description of the contractual arrangements on a joint Authority basis that the Council has entered into, in terms of seeking new sites to deliver on its own responsibilities for Waste Management Facilities.
- 13 Explain that the original site designation and extent are not essential in terms of delivering the Waste Facilities land requirement for the LDP.
- 14 Explain that based upon the provision of an over allocation of Class B2 land to provide a range and choice of sites for Waste Management Facilities, there will be other site opportunities to accommodate a Waste Facilities Site to serve more than One Local Authority Area, if required.

C) **THE DOCUMENT**

1 **Misinterpretation of Candidate Site Information**

1.1 The Cwmbargoed Washery was identified by the owner/operator, Miller Argent, as a potential candidate site for the emerging LDP in January 2006. Officers assessed the proposal and a decision was taken to recommend to Council that the site be allocated as '*A Waste Facilities Site to serve more than One Local Authority Area*'. Subsequent discussions with the Owner/Operator and Agent have established that the Council officers had wrongly interpreted the desires of Miller Argent set out in their candidate site representation earlier in the plan preparation process. Unfortunately, this had not been corrected as the Plan progressed to the Deposit stage and beyond.

Clarification:

1.2 The majority of the WM1.1 site at Cwmbargoed will continue to be required to fulfil its present function as a coal processing and mineral dispatch facility with accommodation and welfare facilities, associated with the operations of the Ffos-y-fran Land Reclamation Scheme. These functions will continue throughout and beyond the Plan Period. However, there are two small areas within the allocated site, which can be utilised for other uses. One area is at the southern extremity of the site and the other (1.9 ha within the Caerphilly CBC boundary) has its own siding in the northwest of the allocation.

Council Officer Error:

1.3 Miller Argent had indicated in their original correspondence that they could make available a site of "between 5 and 50 acres" that might be suitable for a waste facility to serve more than one local authority area. During the subsequent discussions Caerphilly officers discovered that the land referred to was not within its borders but is actually located west of the Cwmbargoed Washery / Disposal Point within the Merthyr Tydfil CBC area. It was this misunderstanding that led Council officers to believe that a good proportion of the Washery site was available for the proposed Waste Management function.

2 **Relationship of the Caerphilly and Merthyr Tydfil LDPs**

2.1 The Cwmbargoed Washery candidate site was assessed by Caerphilly officers early in 2006 and the subsequent decision to allocate it as '*A Waste Facilities Site to serve more than One Local Authority Area*' was communicated to Merthyr Planners later that year. At the time, this proposal was considered to be self-contained and independent of any others. Its allocation was not seen as necessarily requiring some concomitant proposal in the Merthyr Tydfil area.

Allocation Concept confusion

2.2 There would appear to have been some confusion in some quarters as to the nature of the allocation for '*A Waste Facilities Site to serve more than One Local Authority Area*'. It is considered by Caerphilly to be a

single authority allocation that is large enough to house a waste facility that would be capable of dealing with waste streams from a number of local authorities. Some appear to have construed the concept as a cross-boundary allocation, which is possibly an understandable mistake given the chosen site's location.

Relationship of Waste Management solutions in the two LDPs

- 2.3 The future plans to cater for Caerphilly Council's municipal waste responsibilities lie largely within joint authority projects, and the location of the facilities to deliver these contracts are projected to lie outside the Council's area. These solutions for the particular waste streams are each described below in paragraphs 6.3 to 6.10. None of these new contractual arrangements involve Merthyr Tydfil CBC as a partner. Some of the reducing landfill requirement will continue to involve the use of the Trecatty site in Merthyr Tydfil but this is the only municipal waste disposal "contact" between the two areas. Therefore, the two LDPs have no waste management allocations to make in common.
- 2.4 Thus, the WM1.1 site was always considered to be purely a Caerphilly CBC allocation, independent of any similar type of allocation that Merthyr Tydfil, or indeed any other adjacent local authority, might make.

3 Potential Common Ground: Caerphilly CBC and Miller Argent

- 3.1 It has now been established that the amount of vacant land at the Washery site is too limited to support "A Waste Facilities Site to serve more than One Local Authority Area", which it is understood commonly requires the order of 6 ha of land. However, Caerphilly officers and Miller Argent both wish to continue to regard the Washery site as a suitable location for Waste Management Facilities. The Washery site does not have the benefit of Class B2 consent, and therefore, the provisions of Policies SP11 and CW15 would not justify such a proposal. Instead, it will be necessary to specifically allocate it as a waste management site. It is to be agreed that the Council should seek for the LDP to identify site WM1.1 as a mixed-use site instead, restricted to uses associated with Coal Washing and Despatch, and Waste Management Facilities.
- 3.2 In addition, it is to be agreed that the Council should seek also for rail-dependent employment uses to be considered acceptable at this location, because the site is uniquely placed to serve such a need. This restriction is justified by the protected industrial estates and provision of new industrial employment sites identified elsewhere by the LDP, which are considered the most appropriate locations for class B2 uses. Miller Argent will agree to this land use restriction as it is in accord with their aspirations for their land holdings.

- 3.3 Alternative Allocation to serve more than one Local Authority Area:
Miller Argent indicated that they will be seeking a change to the Merthyr Tydfil LDP to achieve an allocation on their land in that Council's area for the purposes of developing Waste Management Facilities and/or rail-head related employment uses. Caerphilly officers indicated that, as a neighbouring authority, they will seek to ensure that no objection be raised by Caerphilly to such a proposal, provided that Merthyr Tydfil CBC were minded to recommend its inclusion in their LDP. However, this support will be dependent on the proviso that the acceptable land uses would be restricted to Waste Management Facilities and for 'rail-dependent' employment activities only.

4 Cross-Boundary Policy Co-ordination with Merthyr Tydfil CBC

- 4.1 Merthyr Tydfil CBC made representations on the original WM1.1 proposals at the Plan's Deposit stage because of their concern over deliverability, given the continued use of the site as a coal washery and despatch point. Having discovered their interpretive error with regard to the Washery site, Caerphilly planners met with their counterparts in Merthyr Tydfil CBC to discuss possible revisions to the allocation. Agreement is anticipated between the two authorities for Caerphilly's revised proposals as outlined in section 8 below. At the suggestion of Merthyr Tydfil planners, "other Minerals Handling and Despatch uses" will also be included as a proposed acceptable activity on the site. It would be logical, and in accord with national planning guidance and Sewta policy, to encourage the transport of minerals by rail. During those discussions, Merthyr Tydfil officers indicated that they will consider the possibility of recommending the allocation of those small parts of the Washery site within their jurisdiction for the same mixed-uses as proposed by Caerphilly CBC on the bulk of the site.

Miller Argent Conclusion

- 4.2 Miller Argent will agree to the described proposed changes to the allocation that Caerphilly officers intend to recommend as described in section 8 below, including the suggestion by Merthyr Tydfil planners that "other Minerals Handling and Despatch uses" also be considered appropriate for the site. It will be possible for Miller Argent and Caerphilly CBC to sign a Statement of Common Ground to that effect.

5 Preferred Solution to the Misinterpretation of the Site's Nature

- 5.1 The amount of land available at the Washery site within the Caerphilly CBC area for "A Waste Facilities Site to serve more than One Local Authority Area" has been rightly questioned. Having received clarification from the site owners that there is potential for limited development only, Caerphilly officers now feel that the Deposit LDP designation for Cwmbargoed is no longer realistic, and that it will not be possible to implement the proposal.

- 5.2 However, Caerphilly officers wish to continue to promote the remaining available areas in the Washery as suitable locations for Waste Management Facilities, and have recognised the wisdom of arguments in favour of also allocating them for rail-head related employment use, and for other Minerals handling.
- 5.3 Therefore, Officers will recommend to Council that a revision to the Deposit LDP be proposed, to designate the whole of the Washery site within Caerphilly County Borough's border as a mixed-use site instead. The acceptable mixed-uses are proposed to be limited to the current operations at the Washery, and also other Minerals Handling and Despatch, Waste Management Facilities, and / or rail-dependent employment activities. Provided this is done, officers believe that the concerns of Miller Argent, the Welsh Assembly Government, and Merthyr Tydfil CBC can be successfully be allayed.
- 5.4 Since the bulk of the Washery site within Caerphilly will continue to be taken up by the Coal Washery and Coal Despatch operations, the alternative uses described are expected to be limited to between 2 ha and 4 ha in extent. Thus, the new proposals will be completely independent of the coal washery and despatch operations through the Plan period, and will not impact detrimentally on that continuing use.

6 Implications of the Proposed Change on the LDP Strategy

Strategic Context

- 6.1 As is explained below, it was not envisaged that this site would be needed to fulfil the Council's contractual requirements for municipal waste arisings. The Cwmbargoed allocation was primarily identified to satisfy the strategic aspirations of the Regional Waste Plan (RWP) in this regard, and also to facilitate any operation, which sought to serve particular private sector waste management requirements across the sub region. Municipal waste arrangements are discussed first, and after that the anticipated requirements of the private waste sector.

Strategic Municipal Waste Requirements

- 6.2 In terms of dealing with Caerphilly's own responsibilities, as discussed in paragraph 2.3, alternative solutions have been planned and the location of each facility is projected to lie outside the Council's area. These solutions are described below in paragraphs 6.3 to 6.10. None of these new contractual arrangements involve Merthyr Tydfil CBC as a partner. Nor would the site appear to be needed by Merthyr Tydfil CBC to satisfy its own municipal requirements for waste treatment facilities (see Appendix A).

Municipal Waste Streams

- 6.3 The amount of municipal material that goes to landfill in the future will be a much-reduced figure than now because more efficient alternative treatment mechanisms will be brought on-stream. However, it is

anticipated that there will always be some waste that cannot be recycled, or sent for recovery or for organic processing, and this will still need to go to landfill. At present, landfill waste mainly goes to the Trecatty site in Merthyr Tydfil County Borough area, and to Silent Valley in Blaenau Gwent County Borough area. These operations are anticipated to continue, albeit at a much smaller rate. Recycling / recovery of materials is undertaken at a range of locations, although the main destination is the material recycling facility at Lamby Way, Cardiff. Organic Processing of food waste and green garden waste is carried out under contract at Bryn Quarry near Gelligaer in the County Borough.

Future Municipal Waste Contract Arrangements

- 6.4 For information, there follows a description of the contractual arrangements on a joint Authority basis that the Council has entered into in terms of seeking new facilities to deliver on its own responsibilities for Waste Management. All these joint contracts will be implemented at Waste Facilities Sites, which by definition will serve more than One Local Authority Area.

Organics Processing Contract

- 6.5 Caerphilly CBC has joined with Blaenau Gwent CBC and Torfaen CBC in a consortium to enable a single waste facility to be provided to deal with food waste and green garden waste.

- 6.6 A joint proposal document, identifying a viable preferred site (Silent Valley in Blaenau Gwent), has been presented to WAG for it to consider providing funding assistance to the scheme. A shortlist has been created for tendering companies and this was sent out in December 2009. The competitive dialog process will begin in February / March 2010. By the end of May 2010 it will be known whether the successful contractor will want to use the Silent Valley site or whether they wish to utilise an alternative location for the service. In the meantime, pre-application background work will be commenced for the Silent Valley site and it is expected that a submission for full planning consent will be sought.

Prosiect Gwyrdd

- 6.7 Prosiect Gwyrdd (Project Green) is a partnership between five local authorities in South East Wales, namely Caerphilly, Cardiff, Monmouthshire, Newport and the Vale of Glamorgan, to deliver a low carbon residual waste treatment after recycling and composting has been maximised in each area.

- 6.8 The partnership is anticipating that several sites in private ownership may be put forward as part of bidder's solutions, as many who are interested in this contract have submitted planning applications for sites in the Prosiect Gwyrdd area. In addition, the partnership is expecting to offer an Optional Site for bidders at Tatton Road, Queensway Meadows in Newport, which could be developed to accommodate a

suitable waste treatment facility. This doesn't mean that this is the chosen site. The partnership will offer the Optional Site for bidders to consider, which should assist competition by enabling more bids for this contract.

- 6.9 The Partnership has put its requirements out to the market in November 2009, to find the best environmental, cost effective and practical solution to residual waste. The partnership is technology neutral and will assess all bids made against agreed criteria. The procurement is expected to take at least two years to ensure a facility is built and operational in 2015.

Municipal Waste Transfer Facility

- 6.10 In the future, having been separated into the different waste streams described, Caerphilly's municipal waste will need to be transferred into larger lorry loads within the county borough before being despatched to the treatment plants beyond the Council's area. This procedure ideally requires a single large facility. This facility is not yet operational, however it is anticipated that appropriate arrangements will be in place in time to deal with the revised waste management treatment processes envisaged.

Strategic Private Waste Requirements

- 6.11 The impending loss of the Cwmbargoed allocation for "*A Waste Facilities Site to serve more than One Local Authority Area*" is not considered a serious strategic omission for the LDP. There is no public sector need and there has been no indication of such need from the private sector within the Caerphilly CBC area.
- 6.12 However, any LDP should embody flexibility and aim to cater for unexpected eventualities arising from the private waste sector, particularly as this principle has been identified as important in the RWP. Nevertheless, it is considered that other opportunities have been identified in the LDP to satisfy such needs. Because the LDP contains a generous allocation of Class B2 land to provide a range and choice of sites for employment proposals and waste management facilities, there will be sufficient alternatives to accommodate "*A Waste Facilities Site to serve more than One Local Authority Area*", if required. Three of the vacant Class B2 sites identified in the LDP under Policy EM1 are large enough at over 6 ha each, and may well be suitable for such a facility (*see LDP Background Paper 4, table 3*).

Conclusion of Strategic Impact

- 6.13 In conclusion, it is considered that there would no detrimental impact on the LDP strategy if this site were re-designated as proposed.

7 Objection from Welsh Assembly Government Planning Division

- 7.1 The main concern of the Welsh Assembly Government regarding the Deposit Plan allocation was its deliverability in view of the continued demands of the coal washery and despatch operations. The Council considers that the proposed change to the allocation resolves any potential conflict at Cwmbargoed between these uses, and that other proposals in the LDP maintain Plan flexibility sufficient to deliver the original intentions of WM1.1 at other locations in the County Borough. (See LDP Background Paper 4, table 3, for the vacant employment sites, see LDP Background Paper 4, table 4, for the existing class B2 employment sites to be protected). This paper has been forwarded to WAG to establish whether they agree with those views and whether their objection made at the Deposit Stage will be resolved by the proposed change.

8 Council Proposed Re-Wording of the Deposit LDP

- 8.1 A revision to the wording of Policy WM1.1, and concomitant changes elsewhere, in the light of these matters is proposed by officers, and this is shown below. This revision will need to be presented to Council for approval in order for it to be submitted to the Examination process.

[To replace the Deposit Written Statement version – Page 74]

SPECIFIC MIXED-USE EMPLOYMENT

Specific Mixed-Use Employment Site

MU 1 A site has been identified as suitable for Minerals Handling and Despatch, Waste Management Facilities and for Rail-Dependent Employment Uses, as follows:

MU 1.1 Cwmbargoed Washery Site, north west of Fochriw

- 3.27 *The Cwmbargoed Washery complex straddles the boundary between Caerphilly County Borough and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough. The majority of this site that lies within Caerphilly County Borough is being utilised for the washing and despatch of opencast coal from the Ffos y fran area. Alternative uses including Aggregate Handling and Despatch, Waste Management Facilities or Rail-Dependent Employment Uses would also be acceptable. A detailed description of this site allocation can be found in **Appendix 6**.*

[To replace Appendix 6 – Page A6.1]

SPECIFIC MIXED-USE SITE DESCRIPTION

HEADS OF THE VALLEYS REGENERATION AREA

***MU 1.1 - Cwmbargoed Washery, north west of Fochriw – 24.2 ha -
Proposal: - Site for Minerals Handling & Despatch, for Waste
Management Facilities and for Rail-Dependent Employment Use.***

Plan Allocation - a brownfield site substantially occupied by a coal washery and despatch facility. The site complex continues into Merthyr Tydfil CBC area in two small parcels. It lies on the edge of the Ffos y fran Coal Recovery operation and has direct access to the rail network. The Coal Washery has its own rail-head and other associated industrial / mineral land uses have been accommodated in the past. Aggregate Handling and Despatch, Waste Management Facilities and Rail-Dependent Employment Activities are also considered acceptable land uses on this site. A tiny sliver of land within the allocated site has been identified as a SINC any future proposals should have regard to the presence of the SINC and provide sufficient mitigation in terms of any likely impact on this part of the site.

APPENDIX A

(Merthyr Tydfil Deposit LDP - Waste Extract)

4.7 Policy AS7:

Strategic waste management facilities – locations of choice

The LDP adopts a hierarchical approach to waste management whereby the preferred option is waste minimisation / avoidance; followed by product re-use; then recovery or recycling (including waste conversion to energy); and finally, safe disposal (including landfill). Using regional search criteria, the Plan has identified sites at the following locations as shown on the LDP Proposals Map in order to help meet regional and local waste management needs:-

- B2 employment sites – as areas of search for appropriate waste management facilities to meet the estimated land requirement of up to 3.2 hectares
- Trecatty – for continued necessary landfill of residual and unavoidable wastes

Within these sites, waste management proposals will normally be permitted subject to the avoidance of unacceptable impacts on people and the environment.

Policy Justification

4.7.1 The land use-planning framework for the sustainable management of waste including the recovery of resources, is provided by the South-East Wales Regional Waste Plan 1st Review (2008), which has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of TAN 21 (2001). These documents require that sufficient and appropriate waste management facilities are put in place to achieve Landfill Directive targets by 2013 and that, in doing so, a hierarchical approach to waste management is followed, incorporating the best practical environmental option.

4.7.2 The LDP takes forward the two primary elements embedded in the Regional Waste Plan 1st Review (i.e. the Technology Strategy and the Spatial Strategy) in deciding what additional waste management facilities are required in Merthyr Tydfil and where they should be located.

In-building facilities - B2 employment sites

4.7.3 Policy AS7 sets out the locations of choice for the siting of new in-building waste management facilities in the County Borough in order to help realise the Preferred Options of the Regional Waste Plan Technology Strategy. The locations of choice have been decided on the basis of the regional search criteria contained within the Spatial Strategy of the Waste Plan.

4.7.4 Advances in technology and the introduction of new legislation, policies and practices mean that many modern waste management / resource recovery facilities look no different on the outside to any other industrial building and, on the inside, contain industrial processes or energy generation activities that are no different to many other modern industrial processes in terms of their operation or impact. For this reason, existing Class B2 'general industrial' employment sites and new B2 sites allocated as part of the development plan process are considered suitable locations for the new generation of in-building waste management facilities that will be required in accordance with the Regional Waste Plan's Technology Strategy. All such areas are shown

on the LDP proposals map as Areas of Search for Strategic Waste Management Facilities and are listed at Appendix 7.

- 4.7.5 The Regional Waste Plan's Spatial Strategy estimates that the total land area required in Merthyr Tydfil for new in-building facilities by 2013 ranges from between 1.1 hectares to 3.2 hectares depending on the type of waste management/resource recovery facility involved. There is, however, approximately 14.65 hectares of B2 'general industrial' employment allocated within the LDP which is considered sufficient to allow both choice and flexibility to the waste management industry and to meet the County Borough's future B2 employment needs. Overall, it is considered that Merthyr Tydfil remains well positioned to contribute to the provision of an integrated and adequate network of waste management facilities within the Region.
- 4.7.6 Whilst the Plan gives an 'in principle' commitment to new facilities being established, it is acknowledged that actual provision must be subject to the most rigorous evaluation. Sufficient capacity should exist within those sites at the time the proposal is made and the facility should be deemed acceptable taking into account potential health impacts and regional need.

Open-air facilities

- 4.7.7 The RWP 1st Review also takes a hierarchical approach to identifying Areas of Search for open-air facilities within the Region. No specific land allocations for open-air facilities, which serve municipal waste streams, has been made within the local development plan due to collaborative arrangements with other local authorities. For instance, the Authority is currently working in partnership with Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council to secure food waste and residual waste treatment facilities that will process municipal waste for both local authorities. Following an earlier evaluation of potential sites, it is anticipated that these waste treatment facilities will be accommodated at a preferred location within Rhondda Cynon Taff.
- 4.7.8 However, in order to adequately assess further waste management / resource recovery proposals, criteria-based Policy TB10 has been developed in order to guide development to the most suitable location. This policy applies to both open-air and in-building facilities.

Trecatty Landfill

- 4.7.9 The Council accepts that landfilling is the least desirable option in environmental terms and fully expects a reduction in landfill waste as alternative technologies and new waste management opportunities come to the fore. However, landfilling is likely to remain a necessary part of all future waste strategies as residues from other waste options will still need to be disposed of.
- 4.7.10 Trecatty landfill at Dowlais Top continues to form the principal destination for much of the residual and unavoidable waste generated in Merthyr Tydfil. The site also imports material from certain neighbouring authorities in accord with the best practical environmental option and the proximity principle. The current Waste Management License permits the disposal of household waste together with industrial and commercial wastes including residual treated solid waste. The site has a remaining capacity of approximately 6,000,000 m³, which gives a life expectancy for the duration of the LDP period provided that the pursuit of the preferred waste management options is successful and national targets for recycling are met.

- 4.7.11 Whilst the existing facility at Trecatty is an accepted component of the LDP's strategy for managing waste, any extension of capacity at Dowlais Top will be resisted, as will the establishment of new landfill capacity elsewhere in the County Borough (see also Policy TB10).

(Merthyr Tydfil Deposit LDP – Waste, Area of Search Extract)

Waste management facilities outside identified locations of choice

5.10 Policy TB10

Development proposals for in-building and open-air waste management facilities other than those involving new landfill capacity/sites will be permitted subject to consideration against the following criteria:-

- 1. The proposal must be considered necessary within the context of the County Borough's waste management requirements and/or the regional need.**
- 2. The siting of the development must be acceptable having regard to dust, odour and noise emissions.**
- 3. The proposal must not have an unacceptable impact on the character and amenity of the immediate neighbourhood.**
- 4. The proposal must not have an unacceptable impact on the character, amenity and landscape quality of the area including any historical features present.**
- 5. The proposal must not pose an unacceptable risk to nature conservation interests including habitats and species present.**
- 6. The proposal must not pose an unacceptable risk to the water environment including watercourses, groundwater catchment areas and river quality.**
- 7. The proposal must not conflict with transportation considerations including access, parking, traffic generation, accessibility to public transport and enjoyment of public rights of way.**
- 8. If necessary, the proposal must be capable of being provided with the relevant utility services and infrastructure.**

Policy Justification

5.10.1 Policy AS7 and Appendix 7 set out the preferred locations of choice for new waste management facilities in the County Borough. Any new facilities provided during the plan period will complement a range of disposal, recycling, processing, recovery and transfer stations that already exist.

5.10.2 Notwithstanding, it is recognised that proposals for new facilities may come forward on land or sites outside the identified locations of choice. In such instances, it is important that adequate policy mechanisms are in place to ensure that the processes involved in the management and treatment of waste do not adversely affect people or the environment.

5.10.3 Policy TB10 has been formulated to allow a full criteria-based consideration of any such projects that may emerge during the plan period. Whilst there are no contemporary proposals to establish new facilities across the County Borough, the Council recognizes the importance of having a more fully integrated waste management network in place and will strive to assist in the drive to a more sustainable future. The over-commitment of land may

therefore be a necessity in order to give a degree of flexibility to the waste management sector and to ensure sufficient investment in the facilities that are required to meet needs and achieve targets.

- 5.10.4 As a necessary component of an integrated approach to waste management in the region, the use of Trecatty landfill will continue throughout the plan period. However, it is anticipated that operations will decrease as the strategy of the Regional Waste Plan and the Council's own waste strategy (War On Waste) continue to take effect. Any extension of landfill capacity at Trecatty will therefore be resisted, as will proposals for the establishment of any new landfill facilities across the County Borough.

(Merthyr Tydfil Deposit LDP - Freight Extract)

Freight traffic

5.12 **Policy TB12**

Subject to detailed planning matters, favourable consideration will be given to proposals that involve the movement of goods and raw materials by rail rather than road. Opportunities to increase the potential of the Cwmbargoed railhead as a freight transfer/distribution facility will be supported.

- 5.12.1 Though freight can be moved by a variety of means, the only realistic alternative to transportation by road in the County Borough, is transportation by rail. The movement of freight by rail is usually most suited to bulk movements over longer distances. Rail can, however, still provide an economically viable option, especially when interchange with road freight is involved, thus playing a crucial part in reducing the number of long range trips by lorry. Developments that would involve the movement of freight by rail rather than road will normally be given favourable consideration by the Council providing that detailed planning considerations can be met.
- 5.12.2 The mineral railway that runs from Cwmbargoed to Trelewis sees regular coal traffic as a result of the ongoing Ffos-y-fran land reclamation scheme, which feeds Aberthaw power station in the Vale of Glamorgan. Whilst the line is therefore likely to have a future beyond the LDP plan period, the Council considers that the potential of the railhead at Cwmbargoed could be better realised through its increased use as a freight distribution / transfer facility. In the first instance, there may be scope to resume the movement of sandstone from Gelligaer Quarry via Cwmbargoed as part of a drive for more sustainable movement of freight.
- 5.12.3 Any increase in usage would depend, not least, on sufficient railway infrastructure capacity being available, not only within the County Borough but in the other local authority areas through which the line passes.