



TRANSPORT

DEPOSIT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
UP TO 2021

October 2008

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CYNLLUN ADNEUO DATBLYGU LLEOL
HYD AT 2021

Hydref 2008



**CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Up to 2021**

**BWRDEISTREF SIROL CAERFFILI
CYNLLUN DATBLYGU LLEOL
Hyd at 2021**

**BACKGROUND PAPER 12
TRANSPORT**

**PAPUR CEFNDIR 12
TWRISTIAETH**

**LDP DEPOSIT
October 2008**

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Glossary of Terms

LDP	Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan 2006-2021
UDP	Unitary Development Plan
Government	Government at Westminster
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
RTP	Regional Transport Plan
RTP Outline	Outline of the Regional Transport Plan
LTP	Local Transport Plan
TAN18	Draft Technical Advice Note 18 – Transport (July 2006)
WTS	Wales Transport Strategy
ATP	Assembly Transport Plan
WSP	Wales Spatial Plan
PPW	Planning Policy Wales (2002)
MfS	Manual for Streets
The Companion Guide	Planning Policy Wales Companion Guide
WCSW	The Walking and Cycling Strategy for Wales

1 Introduction

Role of this Document

- 1.1 This document is one of many documents that have been produced as background material to the production of the Local Development Plan (LDP). It sets out the framework against which the transport issues facing the LDP have been considered and underlines how national, regional and local guidance has been taken into account in preparing the LDP. This document does not lay out the transport strategy of the LDP or review possible allocations or options for LDP policy, as that should be encompassed in the LDP itself. The role of this document is to provide the background against which policy decisions are made and consider some of the more important issues that the LDP will need to address. This document should therefore be treated as a supplement to the LDP.
- 1.2 All of the background documents to the LDP are available for reference and printing on the Council's web site and are available, upon request (with a relevant copying charge), from the Ty Pontllanfraith offices in Blackwood.

Background

- 1.3 Transport will be a fundamental issue for the LDP, to ensure that positive action is taken at the local level to achieve wider goals of improving accessibility to jobs and services, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and ensuring sustainable economic growth. Transport, particularly road transport, can have serious and wide reaching impacts upon human health and the environment generally. Road transport is a critical factor contributing to climate change and global warming and can also have significant impacts upon local environments. The LDP will have an important role to play in delivering a transport system that aims to reduce car use, increase the patronage of public transport, and facilitate walking and cycling by the provision of dedicated and safe routes.
- 1.4 Whilst the transport elements of previous development plans have focused on how to facilitate movement, a key consideration in respect of transport in the LDP will be linked to improving accessibility and reducing the need to travel through the spatial location of development. Linking new development to public transport nodes, realising true mixed-use development and locating new development in close proximity to services and major traffic generators is a key consideration to realising more sustainable forms of movement. These issues will be integral to decision making in respect of the spatial distribution of new development sites.
- 1.5 On a more local level, transport infrastructure is a key component in the regeneration of the more deprived areas of the county borough. Improving accessibility by the improvement of transport infrastructure has been, and will continue to be, a key element in regeneration strategies e.g. New Tredegar, Bargoed. Through regeneration strategies the council can promote necessary and appropriate improvement schemes and access regeneration funding sources e.g. Heads of the Valleys, EU Convergence funding. Consequently regeneration is one of the most significant drivers for delivering transport infrastructure improvements that may not otherwise be realised.

2 Policy Framework

- 2.1 The LDP is not written in isolation, but reflects many varied pieces of legislation and guidance issued either by the Welsh Assembly Government or the Government at Westminster. In order to ensure that the LDP is sound it is required to take account of the guidance that is issued by these bodies, as they apply to Wales. It should be noted that the LDP is not required to slavishly follow guidance, but to consider it and if appropriate, justify why certain aspects of the guidance are not being followed.
- 2.2 There are a large number of documents that have an influence on transport issues in the LDP and the most important of these are considered below. These documents set the strategic context for the more detailed consideration of transport issues at the local level.

One Wales

- 2.3 The One Wales (2007) document sets out the strategic agenda of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and commits the Assembly to achieving an overall 3% cut in annual carbon equivalent emissions in areas of devolved competence by 2011 and to setting a specific reduction target for transport. Transport will have an important role to play in meeting national targets for carbon emissions and traffic reduction and this will need to be reflected in the transport policies of both Regional Transport Plans (RTPs) and LDPs.
- 2.4 One Wales also outlines the Assembly's agenda for improving regional and national transport and improving accessibility. At the local level, One Wales includes commitments to, for example, enhance and link up cycle routes across Wales and invest in community transport, cycling, safe routes to school and 20mph zones.

Wales Spatial Plan

- 2.5 The Wales Spatial Plan (WSP) (2008) sets out WAG's planning agenda at a spatial level and guides transport issues that are related to land use planning. The WSP sets out a strategic approach to guide future development and forms the basis for working between local, regional and national levels to meet Assembly objectives.
- 2.6 The WSP splits Wales into six spatial plan areas, providing a vision and strategy for each of the areas. Caerphilly county borough lies within South East Wales 'The Capital Network', which has the following vision: *'An innovative skilled area offering a high quality of life - international yet distinctively Welsh. It will compete internationally by increasing its global visibility through stronger links between the Valleys and the coast and with the UK and the rest of Europe, helping to spread prosperity within the area and benefiting other parts of Wales.'* Improved transport is seen as critical to making the city region work and to the regeneration of Valleys communities. The WSP highlights two key transport issues as the need to improve accessibility to jobs and services and to achieve a change in travel behaviour in response to the effects of climate change.
- 2.7 The WSP identifies 14 key settlements in South East Wales that are seen as critical to the success of the city region. These are Aberdare, Abergavenny, Barry, Blackwood, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Chepstow, Cwmbran/Pontypool, Ebbw Vale, Llantrisant, Merthyr Tydfil, Newport and Pontypridd. The key settlements should be the focus of the area's future development and be linked up through the development of high capacity sustainable transport links to create a networked city region. The importance of Caerphilly and Blackwood as WSP key settlements will need to be reflected in the LDP.

- 2.8 The WSP also identifies three Strategic Opportunity Areas (SOAs) in South East Wales, which are highlighted as having specific sustainable development needs and requiring strong public transport links. The SOAs are:
- ☾ Developments linked to the dualling of the Heads of the Valleys Road (A465),
 - ☾ The area around Llantrisant and North West Cardiff, and
 - ☾ Development in the Vale of Glamorgan at St Athan.
- 2.9 The WSP identifies that the overall objective for achieving sustainable accessibility is to 'enable people and business to have easy access to goods and services that support their economic and social life without damaging the environment'. In order to deliver this objective, the overall priority is to make better use of the area's existing transport infrastructure. The WSP identifies the following in relation to transport in South East Wales, which illustrates the future importance of linking up the WSP key settlements through improved public transport provision:
- ☾ Stretching targets should be set for improving journey times by bus and rail between the key settlements.
 - ☾ Bus priority measures should be implemented on key routes to ensure buses offer rapid travel between the key settlements.
 - ☾ Bus services and community transport should link other communities to these main public transport corridors.
 - ☾ Public transport should operate sufficiently frequently that passengers have the confidence to 'turn up and go'.
 - ☾ Seating capacity should be sufficient to meet normal demand, reducing the need for passengers to stand.
 - ☾ The priority for road transport is to ensure that the existing road capacity is used with maximum efficiency.
 - ☾ Safe cycling and walking routes should be identified for commuters and communities.
- 2.10 The RTP is identified as the main mechanism for delivering the transport goals of the WSP. The RTP will need to take forward WSP objectives of improving connections to and between key settlements, improving access to jobs and services, lowering greenhouse gas emissions and promoting economic growth.
- 2.11 At the local level, the LDP is required to take account of the WSP in its production, as it forms part of one of the tests of soundness that will be scrutinized through the Inquiry procedure. Consequently all of the requirements from the WSP, including the transport elements, will need to be considered in producing the LDP.

Wales Transport Strategy

- 2.12 The Wales Transport Strategy (WTS), One Wales: Connecting the Nation (2008) sets out how the Assembly proposes to deliver its transport duty. The WTS outlines the Assembly's long-term vision for transport and specifies outcomes and strategic priorities that link the WSP and other Assembly strategies and the development of the RTP and LDP.
- 2.13 The goal of the WTS is to 'promote sustainable transport networks that safeguard the environment while strengthening our country's economic and social life'. This overarching goal is to be guided by the three sustainable transport themes of:
- ☾ Achieving a more effective and efficient transport system
 - ☾ Achieving greater use of the more sustainable and healthy forms of travel
 - ☾ Minimising demands on the transport system

- 2.14 The WTS identifies 17 social, economic and environmental outcomes that seek to maximise the contribution transport can make in delivering sustainable development and guide delivery of the WTS and the regional and local levels:

Social

-  Improve access to healthcare
-  Improve access to education, training and lifelong learning
-  Improve access to shopping and leisure facilities
-  Encourage healthy lifestyles
-  Improve the actual and perceived safety of travel

Economic

-  Improve access to employment opportunities
-  Improve connectivity within Wales and internationally
-  Improve the efficient, reliable and sustainable movement of people
-  Improve the efficient, reliable and sustainable movement of freight
-  Improve access to visitor attractions

Environmental

- ➔ Increase the use of more sustainable materials
- ➔ Reduce the contribution of transport to greenhouse gas emissions
- ➔ Adapt to the impacts of climate change
- ➔ Reduce the contribution of transport to air pollution and other harmful emissions
- ➔ Improve the impact of transport on the local environment
- ➔ Improve the impact of transport on our heritage
- ➔ Improve the impact of transport on biodiversity

- 2.15 The WTS also identifies five strategic priorities to guide delivery of the outcomes in the first five years of the strategy. Each priority is supported by a number of key actions and reflects the Assembly's strategic agenda as set out in One Wales. The strategic priorities are:

-  Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts from transport
-  Integrating local transport
-  Improving access between key settlements and sites
-  Enhancing international connectivity
-  Increasing safety and security

- 2.16 Delivery of the WTS at the national level will be through the National Transport Plan, which is to be produced by the Assembly. The outcomes and strategic priorities of the WTS will be delivered at the regional level through the RTP, which will in turn have close links to the LDP at the local level. LDP development will need to take account of the WTS outcomes and the RTP proposals for delivering the outcomes in South East Wales.

Wales Freight Strategy

- 2.17 The Wales Freight Strategy (2008) has been based on the themes of the Wales Transport Strategy through the use of:

- ➔ Spatial policies to influence the overall demand for freight movements,

- Mode switch policies to encourage freight to be transported in the most environmentally sustainable manner,
- Making best use policies to make efficient use of each network and mode.

2.18 The strategy identifies a number of 'steps towards delivery' and the following have direct links to land use planning:

- Develop inter-modal freight interchanges in Wales; road/rail and road/rail/sea,
- Provide parking for road freight transport,
- Identify potential options for rail-road facilities,
- Ensure that land use policies protect opportunities for promoting rail freight facilities and particularly potential road-rail interchanges.

Environment Strategy for Wales

2.19 The Environment Strategy for Wales (ESW) (2006) sets out WAG's proposals for addressing issues related to the environment. As such, the ESW provides the basis for considering transport issues in the wider context of the environment and key to this is the relationship between transport and the issue of climate change. The ESW includes specific outcomes to minimise greenhouse gas emissions (which now relates to the target set out in the One Wales document) and increase the number of people choosing to walk or cycle as a means of transport.

Planning Policy Wales, The Companion Guide and TAN 18 – Transport

2.20 Planning Policy Wales (2002) (PPW) and Technical Advice Note 18 (TAN 18) represent the Assembly's land use planning guidance for transport issues and need to be taken into account when preparing the LDP. The Planning Policy Wales Companion Guide

Planning Policy Wales

2.21 PPW is the principle land use planning document in Wales. It sets out national policy across the whole range of planning and land use issues, providing guidance for preparing development plans, considering planning proposals and also dealing with some enforcement aspects. PPW includes a section on transport and outlines the interrelationship between land use planning and transport. PPW stresses the importance of integration within and between different types of transport, between transport and land use planning and other policy areas e.g. environment, education and health.

2.22 PPW identifies that land use planning can help contribute to transport objectives by:

- Reducing the need to travel, especially by private car, by locating development where there is good access by public transport, walking and cycling;
- Locating development near other related uses to encourage multi-purpose trips and reduce the length of journeys;
- Improving accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport;
- Ensuring that transport is accessible to all, taking into account the needs of disabled and other less mobile people;
- Promoting walking and cycling;
- Supporting the provision of high quality public transport;
- Supporting traffic management measures;
- Promoting sustainable transport options for freight and commerce;
- Supporting sustainable travel options in rural areas;

- Supporting necessary infrastructure improvements; and
- Ensuring that, as far as possible, transport infrastructure does not contribute to land take, urban sprawl or neighbourhood severance.

2.23 The promotion of walking and cycling, particularly for shorter trips, is a key component of the guidance in PPW. Walking and cycling should be pro-actively provided for within new development and facilities to encourage these modes should be accommodated within development proposals.

2.24 In respect of development plans, PPW identifies the link between land use and transport as a key consideration in formulating policies. PPW identifies that locational policies and decisions are key to influencing travel patterns and needs. Development plans are identified as providing the means for achieving integrated land use and transport and for promoting strategies to reduce the need to travel. Detailed policies and allocations should seek to address these principles to assist in achieving sustainable development.

The Companion Guide

2.25 Planning Policy Wales Companion Guide (The Companion Guide) bridges the gap between PPW, which was drafted in respect of UDPs, and the current LDP system. The LDP system advocates that national policy should not be reiterated in LDPs, unless there are local circumstances where the application or interpretation of national policy needs clarification or explanation. The Companion Guide generally sets out the requirements of PPW that should be included in LDPs and what should not. The following table summarises the requirements of The Companion Guide:

Issues for Consideration For Inclusion	Issues The Should be Excluded
Local Transport Plan proposals	Promoting walking and cycling
Measures to assist pedestrians and Cyclists	Promoting public transport
Public transport improvements	Traffic management
Parking standards	Car parks to meet strategic aims
Transport interchanges and other non-road infrastructure	Shift of freight to non-road modes
Safeguarding disused railway infrastructure	Distribution centre location
Accessibility of new development by non-car modes	Airport development
Location of major generators of travel demand	Transport infrastructure impacts
Local Transport Plan proposals	Transport considerations in development control
Measures to assist pedestrians and Cyclists	Transport Assessments and Travel Plans
Public transport improvements	Access to developments
	Motorway and other road junctions

TAN18 – Transport

2.26 TAN 18 – Transport (April 2007), along with PPW, is one of the principle guidance documents relating to the incorporation of transport into the development plan. TAN 18 sets out the key considerations, or pillars, for the consideration of land use planning and transport. The key pillar of TAN 18 is the proactive integration of transport and land use decisions and matters. To further this aim, TAN 18 also seeks a hierarchy of enhancement/ improvement that seeks the facilitation of walking first, then cycling and then public transport, all before improvement for the car. Consequently transport, in this case all forms of transport considerations, need to be integrated into land use decisions.

Effectively addressing the relationship between land use and transport can assist in realising targets for travel and emissions reduction, as well as delivering social improvements in terms of accessibility and social inclusion. TAN 18 identifies the following as considerations that need to be given in the preparation of development plan policies:

- ☺ Promoting resource and travel efficient settlement patterns;
- ☺ Ensuring new development is located where there is, or will be, good access by public transport, walking and cycling thereby minimising the need for travel and fostering social inclusion;
- ☺ Managing parking provision;
- ☺ Ensuring that new developments and major alterations to existing developments include appropriate provision for pedestrians (including those with special access and mobility requirements), cycling, public transport, and traffic management and parking/servicing;
- ☺ Encouraging the location of development near other related uses to encourage multi-purpose trips;
- ☺ Promoting cycling and walking;
- ☺ Supporting the provision of high quality, inclusive public transport;
- ☺ Supporting provision of a reliable and efficient freight network;
- ☺ Promoting the location of warehousing and manufacturing developments to facilitate the use of rail and sea transport for freight;
- ☺ Encouraging good quality design of streets that provide a safe public realm and a distinct sense of place; and
- ☺ Ensuring that transport infrastructure or service improvements necessary to serve new development allow existing transport networks to continue to perform their identified functions.

- 2.27 In addition, it is essential on a local level that community strategies, development plans, health, social care and wellbeing strategies and other relevant local strategies are consistent, complementary and integrated.
- 2.28 The RTP will have a major influence in directing how transport issues are considered and resolved throughout the region. Given the importance of the RTP in considering transport for the LDP period, the key issue for the LDP is how the RTP and LDP will relate to each other. TAN 18 identifies close links between LDPs, RTPs and the WSP. All three documents should ensure they are compatible and integrated with each other.
- 2.29 TAN 18 also identifies the relationship between land use and air quality issues relating to transport. Such issues should be addressed in the LDP and policies and proposals should both take account of any designated air quality control areas and seek to ensure that policies and proposals do not lead to a reduction in air quality.
- 2.30 The location of development proposals is a major influence on travel patterns and transport provision. Key to the achievement of realising sustainable development is the principle of accessibility, i.e. the relative ability of the general public to take up services, employment, markets or facilities along with the promotion of social inclusion. There are many ways of improving accessibility without engendering increases in the need to travel or lengthening journey distances. Improving accessibility is a shift in emphasis from the previous approach relating to mobility, i.e. the ability for everyone to travel everywhere, which resulted in significant levels

of new transport infrastructure, particularly catering for car traffic. Accessibility will be a key factor in determining locations for new development.

- 2.31 Traffic management can complement locational policies in development plans and assist in delivering other travel reduction measures, such as mixed use development and increased urban densities, without corresponding increases in urban traffic. TAN 18 endorses guidance already contained in TAN 12 on Design in relation to layout of development, hierarchy of users, transport routes and spaces (i.e. pedestrian, cyclist, public transport, car in that order) and using the physical layout to adapt travel behaviour.
- 2.32 TAN 18 also provides guidance on design of development and how this can lead to greater utilisation of walking and cycling as modes for shorter distance journeys. The Department of Transport has produced the Manual for Streets (MfS), which replaces Design Bulletin 32, as the basis for the design and layout of roads within developments. MfS builds on the guidance contained in TAN 12 – Design and relates that to the layout and design of streets. It identifies the importance of design on influencing the local environment and people’s travel and movement patterns.
- 2.33 Local authorities should promote walking as the main mode of transport for shorter trips, utilising planning and transport powers. In preparing development plans and in determining planning applications, planning authorities are required to ensure the design of the environment is conducive to encouraging walking and seeks to locate high trip generating uses close to transport hubs. In addition to further encourage walking, TAN 18 advocates the use of mixed developments.
- 2.34 Cycling has the potential to act as a substitute for shorter car journeys or to form part of a longer journey utilising public transport. In preparing development plans and in determining planning applications, local authorities are required to have regard to the need to encourage and facilitate cycling. In particular the design of new developments should take account of cycling issues, including the need to safely store bikes and for changing and showering facilities.
- 2.35 The availability of good quality public transport is a key factor in reducing the use of the private car. Local authorities, transport planners and operators should work together to improve public transport provision in ways that reinforce the effectiveness of locational policies in development plans. Where public transport infrastructure or services require enhancement, but cannot be commercially provided, contributions from developments can be sought.
- 2.36 Development plans should include all proposals for new roads, major transport improvements and indicate improvements of a non-strategic nature over the plan period and beyond, where known, and the broad policy on priorities for minor improvements. The principal means of integrating strategic planning and road programmes is through the Wales Spatial Plan, the RTP and LDPs.
- 2.37 Land use planning can have significant impacts upon distribution through policies and strategies in development plans. Wherever possible encouragement should be given to freight movement by rail, water or pipeline, rather than by road. Development plans should make provision for appropriate development for all forms of transport, including increased use of rail and bus, appropriate policies for aviation and water borne transport.
- 2.38 TAN 18 provides advice on the nature and use of transport assessments and travel plans. Planning conditions should also be used to secure transport measures and facilities from development where their need arises.

- 2.39 The use of planning obligations may be used to secure improvements in public transport, walking and cycling provision, provided they meet the test outlined in circular 13/97 on planning obligations. Development plans and SPG should outline the likely nature and scope of contributions for key sites to assist in implementing transport issues and policies identified in the RTP. The use of obligations in relation to transport should be aimed at securing the satisfactory accessibility to sites by all modes, with the greatest degree of access being achieved by public transport, walking and cycling. Pooled contributions toward infrastructure capacity issues may be appropriate when a number of developments create a combined need or an unacceptable cumulative impact.

Walking and Cycling Strategy for Wales (2003)

- 2.40 The Walking and Cycling Strategy for Wales (WCSW) lays out a simple and clear vision for the future: 'To halt the decline in walking and cycling and then increase their role in how we travel in Wales.'
- 2.41 In order to achieve this vision the WCSW includes a large number of specific actions, to be undertaken by a number of partner organisations. The following actions are those that relate most appropriately to the consideration of transport policies in the LDP:
- 🚲 Increase levels of walking and cycling both through promotion and provision of facilities.
 - 🚲 Reflect the higher priority for walking and cycling in crosscutting policies, guidance and funding.
 - 🚲 Make walking and cycling both safer and more pleasant for all age groups.
 - 🚲 Change public attitudes towards walking and cycling in our society.
 - 🚲 Adopt cycle parking standards and include them within Unitary Development Plans – for commercial premises these standards should include cycle parking for both employees and visitors to the premises.
 - 🚲 Ensure that travel plan production and implementation is tied to all major development as part of agreement for planning consent under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, with travel plans to include the provision of cycle parking in every case and shower and changing facilities in larger premises as appropriate.
 - 🚲 Ensure LDPs, and Community Plans include policies for the protection and enhancement of green spaces to incorporate walking, cycling and horse riding routes and provision for the less able.
 - 🚲 Ensure LDPs and Community Plans include policies for the safeguarding of disused railway lines in both rural and urban areas as routes for walkers, cyclists, the less able and where appropriate for horse riders.

3 Regional Transport Plan

- 3.1 The Transport (Wales) Act 2006 and the Regional Transport Planning (Wales) Order 2006 set the basis for the requirement for local authorities to work jointly together to produce a transport plan that covers their collective area. These are known as Regional Transport Plans (RTP) and have taken the place of the previous Local Transport Plans (LTP). In many instances LTPs were found to be too insular and were unable to form the basis of resolving transport issues of cross-boundary nature. Their revision to RTPs means that such issues can more appropriately be addressed with a more strategic approach.
- 3.2 The South East Wales Transport Alliance (Sewta) is the organisation that is charged with the responsibility of producing the RTP. Sewta is a consortium of ten local authorities in South East Wales (Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Merthyr, Monmouthshire, Newport, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Torfaen and the Vale Of Glamorgan) who, together with other partners, have the role of improving the region's transport system.
- 3.3 The Draft RTP was published for consultation on 2 August 2008, with the consultation ending on 30 September. The Draft RTP, and its earlier documents, has been used to inform this background document, but flexibility will be needed in the development of the LDP to take account of changes to the RTP that may result from the consultation process.
- 3.4 The Draft RTP's vision for the future is 'to provide a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system for South East Wales that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity and protects the environment; where public transport, walking, cycling and sustainable freight provide real travel alternatives'.
- 3.5 The RTP identifies the regional priorities for transport, which are based on an analysis of the region's transport problems and opportunities. The priorities are:
-  To improve access to services, facilities and employment, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling.
 -  To provide a transport system that increases the use of sustainable modes of travel.
 -  To reduce the demand for travel.
 -  To develop an efficient and reliable transport system with reduced levels of congestion and improved transport links within the Sewta region and to the rest of Wales, the UK and Europe.
 -  To provide a transport system that encourages healthy and active lifestyles, is safer and supports local communities.
 -  To reduce significantly the emission of greenhouse gases and air pollution from transport.
 -  To ensure that land use development in South East Wales is supported by sustainable transport measures.
 -  To make better use of the existing transport system.
 -  To play a full role in regenerating South East Wales.
- 3.6 The RTP includes 18 objectives that will guide the direction of the RTP and the transport interventions that are prioritised across the region. The objectives show how the above priorities will be supported and how the region will work towards achieving the national outcomes of the WTS. The objectives are:
-  To ensure that communities have access to a good range of employment opportunities, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling.

- ☺ To improve access to services and facilities, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling.
- ☺ To achieve seamless interchange within and between modes of transport.
- ☺ To achieve a modal shift towards more sustainable forms of transport for moving both people and freight.
- ☺ To improve actual and perceived levels of personal security when travelling.
- ☺ To improve the efficiency and reliability of the transport system.
- ☺ To improve connections between the Sewta region and the rest of Wales, the UK and Europe by improving transport links that do not have an adverse impact on climate change.
- ☺ To reduce traffic growth and traffic congestion.
- ☺ To make better use of the existing road system.
- ☺ To ensure that land use developments in South East Wales are supported by sustainable transport measures.
- ☺ To regenerate town centres, brown-field sites and local communities through appropriate transport provision.
- ☺ To reduce the number and severity of road traffic casualties.
- ☺ To promote travel modes that provide for healthier lifestyles.
- ☺ To reduce the dominance of motor traffic on the local street scene to the benefit of residents, pedestrians and cyclists.
- ☺ To reduce the impact of the transport system on the natural and built environment.
- ☺ To make the transport system more robust with respect to the consequences of climate change.
- ☺ To reduce significantly the emission of greenhouse gases from transport.
- ☺ To make the public more aware of the consequences of their travel choices on climate, the environment and health.

3.7 The RTP recognises the importance of linking transport, land use and public service planning to provide a more effective transport system and to manage the demand for travel. The need for a strong relationship between the RTP, WSP and LDPs is highlighted and the RTP includes a number of policies that will impact on LDP development. For example there are policies to improve public transport links between the WSP key settlements and between key settlements and their hinterlands. There are also policies that refer specifically to LDP development, for example 'Sewta will seek, through the LDPs, supplementary transport planning guidance and development control processes, to establish a pattern of land use that reduces the need to travel, and maximises the potential for sustainable transport infrastructure and services.' The RTP stresses the need for LDPs to contain appropriate planning obligation policies to secure necessary transport infrastructure improvements.

3.8 The RTP includes a five-year programme of interventions and a longer-term strategy outlining how the RTP will work towards meeting its objectives and the outcomes of the WTS. Central to the RTP strategy are proposals to improve public transport to offer a sustainable alternative to the car, improve access to services and address social exclusion. To support this emphasis on public transport improvements, the focus of the RTP's highways strategy will be upon making best use of the existing road network, with few proposals for major new highway schemes. In summary, the RTP programme focuses on the following interventions and these will need to be incorporated into the LDP at the local level:

- ➔ Continuing investment in the regional rail system;

- ➔ Improving quality of bus services;
- ➔ Improving public transport integration;
- ➔ Making better use of the existing road system;
- ➔ Providing better opportunities for walking and cycling; and
- ➔ Developing a Smarter Choices programme e.g. to increase the impact of travel planning.

3.9 Alongside the Consultative Draft RTP are a number of supporting documents that provide further detail about the regional strategy for transport and will inform the content of the LDP in relation to specific transport issues. Such supporting documents include:

- 🚗 Sewta Draft Car Parking Strategic Framework (under development)
- 🚗 Sewta Draft Road Safety Strategic Framework (under development)
- 🚗 Sewta Rail Strategy Prioritised Investment Programme (March 2007)
- 🚗 Sewta Bus Prioritisation Programme (2008)
- 🚗 Sewta Walking and Cycling Strategy (July 2006)
- 🚗 Sewta Highways Strategy (May 2008)

3.10 The LDP will need include transport policies that support the RTP and its aims to encourage land use that reduces the need to travel by motorised modes, improve the local environment, provide much better public transport and make better use of the existing road system.

4 Overview of Current Transport Position

- 4.1 In producing the Council Approved Caerphilly County Borough Council Unitary Development Plan (UDP) the main issues facing the county borough were identified as:
-  The area is peripheral to European markets. Manufacturers face higher transport costs than eastern parts of the country, these being exacerbated by tolls to cross the Severn.
 -  Being a comparatively poor area, a high proportion of the population do not have access to a car and incomes being lower, the cost of travel impinges more highly on people.
 -  The topography of the Valleys produces a parochial view of the world leading some to an unwillingness to change travel habits.
 -  Urban areas have few roads wider than 7.3m. Opportunities for radical on-street measures to assist public transport exist only at the expense of major disbenefits to cars.
 -  Increasing traffic levels combining with increased car ownership levels.
 -  General perception of the 'inadequacy' of public transport provision leads to lack of patronage.
 -  Road safety is seen as a major concern and influences everyday patterns of social behaviour.
 -  Getting to the main towns is perceived as being difficult. Drivers feel access to Cardiff, for instance, is more difficult than it should be and those without a car feel even more isolated from opportunities.
 -  Local facilities are in decline, causing unnecessary motorised journeys and a loss of local community identity.
 -  Congestion in some areas leads to a decline in air quality, with some areas being subject to positive action to manage air quality.
- 4.2 In addition, the need to work towards national targets in respect of emissions and provide an integrated and sustainable transport network were fundamental factors in the consideration of the transport policy in the UDP.
- 4.3 The UDP included policies and allocations that sought to address the issues facing the county borough. Whilst the policies in the UDP sought to encourage alternative modes of transport, the majority of the transport proposals identified improvements to the existing road network, with fewer proposals for other modes. This reflected the fact that the predominant mode of transport throughout the plan period would be car-based, since the change to greater use of alternative modes will only occur over a prolonged period of time. However, it should be noted that the UDP included proposals for the reopening of the Ebbw Valley Rail Line for passenger services, which represents the biggest single investment in public transport in South East Wales.
- 4.4 Overall the UDP has provided the basis for significant improvements to the county borough's highway network. The largest of these, the Sirhowy Enterprise Way, has been constructed and opened. In addition, major improvements to the Heads of the Valleys Road have been undertaken as part of a scheme of WAG improvements. The Nantgarw Hill section of the A468 has been dualled with contributions from developers at the Penrhos site. Further to this, regeneration-assisting proposals were also included in the UDP at New Tredegar (Queens Road Relief Road is completed and open) and Bargoed (construction is well underway on Angel Way as part of the Greater Bargoed Community Regeneration scheme). Improvements to local distributor roads were also identified - Penallta

Link Road has been provided as part of the redevelopment of Penallta Colliery and the Oak Terrace Relief Road, Fleur-de-Lys is now complete. The access road to facilitate the Caerphilly rail station park and ride scheme has also been completed.

- 4.5 One of the main criticisms levelled at the UDP has been that it failed to realise necessary community benefit and planning gain from the windfall development that has taken place throughout the plan period. This has led, in some instances, to development beginning to overload existing facilities and services. In order to avert such a scenario across the Caerphilly Basin strategic highway network, where significant numbers of dwellings were starting to be realised from sites not allocated in the UDP, the council introduced a ground-breaking obligation that required developments to contribute towards improvements to the strategic highway network related to the size of the respective development. In April 2006, the Council adopted the Caerphilly Basin Strategic Highway Network Obligation SPG document. The document includes a list of initially costed improvements required to the Caerphilly northern bypass, and requires that housing development contribute toward these costs on a dwelling-by-dwelling basis. Whilst the SPG was adopted in April 2006, the obligation has been in operation for nearly 3 years and the first improvements are planned for the near future.
- 4.6 In terms of public transport improvements during the UDP period, the re-opening of the Ebbw Valley rail line for passenger services, with three new stations at Risca, Crosskeys and Newbridge, represents the single most significant development in the county borough to encourage greater use of sustainable transport modes, the potential of which must be maximised through subsequent development plans. Improvements have also been realised on the Rhymney Valley line, which will provide further opportunities for increasing modal shift to rail. Signalling and track improvements undertaken as part of the Rhymney Valley Rail Enhancement scheme have increased the frequency of services from Bargoed to Cardiff from two to four trains an hour. Works are ongoing to extend platforms on the line to enable the operation of six-car trains, instead of the current four-car trains, and will be completed in 2008.
- 4.7 Other improvements to public transport have also been realised, with the redevelopment of Blackwood Interchange, the extension of the Caerphilly Park and Ride facility and new access road, and improvements to Blackwood and Newbridge Bus Networks. Park and ride provision at Ystrad Mynach rail station has also been realised with a dedicated rail link/bus service to and from Blackwood. In addition, improvements have been realised to Nelson bus station as a result of regeneration work in the area.
- 4.8 During the UDP period, the Council has completed a number of sections of the National Cycle Network (NCN) within the county borough. NCN Route 4 has been completed between Machen and Caerphilly and NCN Route 47 has been completed between Pontymister and Nelson. The section of the Heads of the Valleys NCN Route 46 along the A465 within the county borough has been the subject of a feasibility study and funding is being sought to progress this part of the route. However, significant work is still required to develop a network of strategic and local routes within the county borough.
- 4.9 In respect of the development of local walking and cycling routes, the Council has completed Safe Routes to Schools schemes at Rhymney Comprehensive and Risca Comprehensive/ Crosskeys College. The Assembly have expanded the initiative into the Safe Routes in Communities programme and schemes are ongoing in the county borough at Newbridge and St. Cenydd.

- 4.10 The UDP realised significant improvements to the transportation system generally throughout the county borough, however highway schemes have dominated the transport improvements undertaken during the UDP period. Without doubt the LDP will need to consider transport improvements on a holistic basis, with greater emphasis on achieving Assembly aims of improving accessibility, increasing use of alternative modes and reducing the need to travel. The LDP will need to consider problems and their solutions inclusive of all modes of transport, rather than from a single mode perspective. However while it is inevitable that large-scale improvements to the highway network will ultimately benefit car travel and may conflict with wider sustainable transport aims, it should be noted that a number of the UDP highway improvements formed part of proposals seeking the regeneration of the more deprived parts of the County Borough. In addition, large parts of the highway network in the Valleys are substandard in highway terms, and are likely to remain substandard until the implementation of significant highway improvement schemes. As such, ongoing issues such as the need to encourage economic regeneration in the north of the borough and to bring environmental relief and air quality improvements to town centres, means that improvements to the highway network will continue to form part of the LDP strategy for transport improvements.

5 Issues for LDP

- 5.1 Since the publication of the UDP issues relating to climate change have become an increasingly more important factor in all walks of life, including land use planning. National targets on reducing greenhouse gas emissions are driving policy to seek reductions in fossil fuel use, and a move to more sustainable forms of energy production and use.
- 5.2 This trend has significant implications for transport during the LDP period. Reducing the ongoing reliance on car travel, reducing the need to travel, and increasing use of alternative, more sustainable modes to the private car are key objectives that are enshrined in all framework documents relating to transport. The need to address these key objectives is fundamental to considering transport policy within the LDP and well beyond.
- 5.3 However, it must be acknowledged that, without legislative intervention or the introduction of fiscal measures, car travel will continue to be the dominant transport mode for the majority of people who live and work within the county borough. Without action from central government to force the issue, it is highly unlikely that any provisions made in the LDP would result in any significant change to the existing pattern and mode of travel. Such change would take significantly longer to achieve than the 15 years that comprises the LDP period. The emerging RTP will consider the long-term strategy for transport in the region and will identify changes that are needed in transport and travel behaviour the longer term.
- 5.4 The principal issues facing the LDP for the plan period are discussed below. However it should be noted that the Draft RTP has only recently been subject of public consultation and the provisions and content of the final RTP may change in the near future. Such changes may be accommodated through the Inquiry into the LDP, otherwise changes will need to be reflected in the first review of the LDP.

The Transport Strategy Element of the LDP

- 5.5 It is clear that transport is intrinsically linked to land use and the two elements work together in the LDP Strategy. It is impossible to separate out the transport element from the land use element, although the transport strategy will need to be guided by the following factors:
- Reducing the reliance upon car travel
 - Increasing levels of walking and cycling for shorter trips
 - Allocating development proposals to reduce the need to travel, encourage travel by sustainable modes and realise more resource efficient settlements
 - Increasing accessibility, rather than mobility

The Location of Development

- 5.6 The interdependence between land use and transport is well documented. Consequently the land use allocations and areas of protection in the LDP will have to be considered carefully to ensure they contribute towards both short and long term transport goals and have a positive impact on meeting Assembly targets for carbon emission reduction.
- 5.7 The LDP strategy has been derived from a series of community involvement exercises that resulted in the identification of 8 pillars upon which the policy framework is based. Each of these pillars requires particular consideration in respect of transport and this consideration will need to be incorporated into the allocations for the LDP.

Allow for development opportunities in the North

- 5.8 For much of the last century the South Wales valleys have suffered from dramatic economic decline and that has brought a plethora of associated issues and problems with it e.g. population loss and ageing, high unemployment, low mobility of population, low educational achievement. However over the past 30 years active programmes aimed at redressing the balance for valleys' communities have seen significant improvements in all but the most isolated locations. The change in fortunes, albeit gradual, is changing the way that these communities are now being considered and developed in development plans. Development plans now seek growth in these areas in order to bolster existing services and to strengthen existing communities. The emerging LDP is no different in this matter, seeking to promote development further north in the valleys than has previously been achieved. To this end the LDP will actively seek to increase the relative proportion of development located in the northern parts of the county borough.
- 5.9 In the north of the county borough, the principal transport consideration and factor driving for improvement, is the need to tackle social exclusion through regeneration activities. Regeneration strategies have already been instrumental in bringing forward highway improvements at New Tredegar and currently Bargoed. Regeneration proposals for the Heads of the Valleys and Northern Connections Corridor strategy areas focus around maximising the functions of settlements and providing efficient links between them, notably the links between Bargoed (leisure), Blackwood (retail, employment) and Ystrad Mynach (administration, health, further education).
- 5.10 Identifying greater development opportunities in the north of the county borough presents some significant transport issues that need to be considered as part of the process of assessing allocations. Firstly it must be acknowledged that significant levels of the county borough's economically active population commute to locations outside of the county borough, with Cardiff being the main destination. Obviously providing more development in the north may result in increases in commuting distances for those people who might move into the area. This is particularly the case with commuting to Cardiff.
- 5.11 Whilst an increase in commuting distances is almost unavoidable with this pillar, the opportunity to enhance existing public transport services, particularly rail, could actually realise a reduction in car trips. Recent frequency improvements to the Rhymney Valley line and ongoing improvements that will result in the ability to use longer trains, will afford the opportunity of accommodating increasing numbers of commuters. Consequently the LDP will need to reflect the need to encourage and facilitate rail as the mode for commuting.
- 5.12 On a different note the north of the county borough, i.e. north of New Tredegar, tends to relate better to the settlements along the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road, than to the remainder of the county borough. This is enhanced by the poor highway links to the south and the recently improved links provided by the Heads of the Valleys road. Whilst not essentially a problem, the LDP will need to consider the issue of whether to try to integrate the northern communities back into the county borough or whether to accept and enhance their links to settlements outside of the county borough along the A465. Linking to the remainder of the county borough will undoubtedly require improvement to the existing highway infrastructure in order to facilitate movement south, which will need to be provided through any development proposed in the area. Linking to the A465 will generally result in a transport system heavily based upon car traffic as there are no cross-valley rail links and bus services run at 20-minute intervals throughout the day. In order to ameliorate the potential for increased car journeys, improvements to the existing public transport provision would be necessary.

Promote a balanced approach to managing future growth

- 5.13 This broad pillar encompasses the need to consider transport as an integral part of the assessment and identification process for allocations within the LDP. The principle of improving accessibility requires that decisions on new allocations will need to carefully consider both the role and function of settlements, as well as the availability of public transport and cycle/pedestrian links.

Exploit brownfield opportunities where appropriate

- 5.14 Whilst this pillar has the potential to undermine Pillar i) (above), as the south of the county borough has a higher proportion of such sites, it raises significantly different transport issues. The strategic network in the south of the county borough, and in the Caerphilly Basin in particular, is under increasing pressure from vehicular traffic. Indeed DDG18 - Caerphilly Basin Strategic Highway Network Obligation has sought to redress the impact of development within the Caerphilly Basin by seeking contributions from windfall housing developments for improvements to the strategic network, to ensure that additional traffic generated by the developments does not have a detrimental impact on the functioning of the network. Whilst this obligation does consider known brownfield sites in the Caerphilly Basin, it is likely that additional development in the area, along with development in close proximity could increase traffic levels. As such, the scope of the Obligation will need to be reviewed to possibly include additional improvements.

Promote resource efficient settlement patterns

- 5.15 This pillar lies at the heart of the aim to reduce traffic. Locating land use developments that are linked by movement, so that the gap between trip origins and destinations is reduced, will result in decreased journey lengths and will increase the potential for the use of alternative modes, particularly walking and cycling, if the distances are reduced significantly.
- 5.16 Resource efficiency is not solely the link between land use and transport. There are many other factors that need to be addressed that may result in compromises to purely transport based solutions, e.g. locational decisions on housing and employment, the fact that uses are already established in certain settlements, the ability to maximise efficiency and use of services and facilities to name but a few.

Ensure development contributes towards the necessary infrastructure improvements

- 5.17 One of the main criticisms of the UDP is that whilst development proceeded according to the strategy, the developments were not accompanied by commensurate provision in terms of infrastructure. In reality the disparity relates to windfall developments only, and not to the allocations in the UDP. The LDP will seek to ensure that new development will make appropriate contributions towards infrastructure improvements that are required as a result of their development. Such improvements will be based upon a holistic approach to transport provision and will encompass improvements to facilitate walking and cycling and to encourage use of public transport as an alternative to the car, as well as any necessary highway improvements.

Ensure development provides the necessary community facilities

- 5.18 Whilst not really a transport related pillar, the provision of community facilities should ensure that sufficient provision is made to encourage both walking and cycling as a means of getting to the facility e.g. formal provision for cycles and cyclists. Such links to services and facilities also enhances accessibility that, as identified above, is becoming of increasing importance, particularly in respect of tackling issues of social exclusion.

Reduce the impact of development upon the countryside

- 5.19 This pillar could have serious implications for transport in the county borough. All of the main congestion points within the county borough are located within the built up areas of the settlements. Focussing development within existing settlements concentrates the population and offers opportunities for the improvement of public transport facilities and also facilitates increased accessibility. This pillar seeks to push development into these settlements. This could seriously increase the level of traffic within these areas. Development in these areas will need to be targeted to ensure that increased congestion is avoided through appropriate highway improvements. This is likely to be particularly relevant to the future development of the Caerphilly Basin, most notably Caerphilly town centre and northern bypass, although the mid valleys area may also be subject to such problems if future development levels for the area are realised.
- 5.20 The LDP will need to ensure that in protecting the countryside, the urban environment, particularly that of the highway network, is not degraded to an unacceptable level.

Target development to reflect the roles and functions of individual settlements

- 5.21 This pillar links to pillars ii) and iv) in providing development that matches the role and function of settlements, complementing what is there and seeks to promote more sustainable settlement patterns. The LDP strategy includes an outline assessment of the general role and functions of the settlements throughout the county borough. Development will be targeted to where it will derive the most benefit in respect of making them more sustainable, by supporting services and functions that may be declining, or even providing the potential for increasing or providing new functions or services. The end result of this should be more efficient settlements, with services being provided at the appropriate level dependent upon a settlement's function. This could result in positive changes in respect of traffic reduction, reducing the need to travel and increasing the use of alternative modes, particularly walking and cycling.

Opportunities and Requirements for the LDPWalking and Cycling

- 5.22 The LDP will need to contain policies to ensure the appropriate infrastructure is put in place to encourage greater use of walking and cycling for shorter trips. Such infrastructure includes providing safe and convenient cycle routes, ensuring new developments are designed for the needs of those walking and cycling and providing necessary facilities at destinations e.g. secure cycle parking.
- 5.23 The RTP includes a 5-year programme of schemes for walking and cycling and will be the main mechanism for obtaining funding from the Assembly to develop a regional network of walking and cycling routes. The development of these strategic routes will be a key factor in promoting walking and cycling as alternative modes for shorter trips. The Caerphilly Basin Radial Routes scheme, which will develop a network of routes in and around the Caerphilly Basin area, is included within the RTP 5-year programme.
- 5.24 Alongside the development of the RTP, Sustrans are also working in partnership with local authorities to develop the Valleys Cycle Network (VCN) proposal, which is a 'vision for a network of walking and cycling routes across the South Wales Valleys'. The VCN is being developed on a regional basis and will form the basis of a bid for EU Convergence funding.

- 5.25 The LDP will need to take account of the strategic walking and cycling schemes being considered by the RTP and the VCN. However, in addition to these regional proposals, the LDP will also provide opportunities to consider more localised walking and cycling schemes. Such schemes may not be considered to have a strategic significance when developing a regional network of routes, but may have considerable benefits from a local perspective.
- 5.26 At the local level, the Assembly's Safe Routes in Communities programme, which has replaced the previous Safe Routes To School initiative, will be an important mechanism for developing local walking and cycling routes. The initiative focuses on developing safe walking and cycling routes within communities, linking to schools and other key facilities. The provision of Safe Routes to Stations will also be important to ensure greater integration of walking, cycling and public transport facilities.
- 5.27 The Council has developed its Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP), which is a 10-year plan for improving Rights of Way within the county borough and developing a network of bridleways. The Council is also developing local routes within the country parks and is in the process of defining an Open Access Management Plan to improve access to open countryside sites within the county borough.
- 5.28 In addition to proposals for walking and cycling routes, the LDP will need to incorporate policies to ensure that all new developments adequately cater for the needs of those walking and cycling e.g. through the provision of facilities such as cycle parking, showers and changing areas. This is in line with guidance in TAN 18 and the national and regional strategies for walking and cycling.

Public Transport

- 5.29 The main issue facing the LDP in respect of public transport is the need to encourage greater use of public transport to reduce the reliance on car travel. To do this public transport must offer a viable and attractive alternative to the private car. In reality this situation can only be achieved over a long period of time, well in excess of the LDP plan period. However improvements to public transport in the short term can have beneficial impacts upon reducing the levels of car use.
- 5.30 The opening of the Ebbw Valley line to passenger services represents a significant opportunity to realise a change in travel patterns and encourage greater use of public transport for those living and working in the eastern part of the county borough. The LDP will need to focus on policies that will assist in achieving the maximum benefit from the passenger service. Key to this will be four factors:
- Targeting rail nodes for allocating development land
- 5.31 Specifically identifying allocations in close proximity to the new stations will facilitate their use. However land in close proximity is in short supply and opportunities should be taken where they are available. Given the limited possibility of developing within close proximity of the new rail stations, the new stations have been designed to incorporate park and ride facilities. This will encourage modal shift and encourage car users to utilise the rail services to Cardiff.
- Targeting public transport nodes that have fast and direct links to the new stations at Risca, Crosskeys and Newbridge for allocating development land.
- 5.32 There are a number of bus routes that have direct linkages to the new stations. Locating development at nodes for these services can facilitate use of the rail service from a wider hinterland, potentially increasing the number of users of the service.

Facilitate movement between Newbridge station and the county borough main employment site at Oakdale

5.33 The county borough's main supply of industrial land is located at the Oakdale Industrial site. The highway network has been improved to provide access to the site by the construction of the Sirhowy Enterprise Way. It is essential that fast, direct and accessible public transport links from Newbridge and Ystrad Mynach stations to the Oakdale site are implemented as part of the Oakdale development, otherwise the site will become the destination for a very significant number of car commuting journeys. The provision of a station at Crumlin would improve links to the employment centre at Oakdale, as this would be located closer to the site than Newbridge station. The Council will continue to promote the advantages of a station at Crumlin and will seek its inclusion within the RTP as part of phase 2 of the Ebbw Valley rail scheme.

Improving links between services and facilities and the rail stations.

5.34 Improving links to all the new stations should be a priority to encourage use of the rail service for a large number of journey purposes, not just commuting trips. Improving public transport links to the stations is a critical part of establishing the line as an important public transport link.

5.35 Whilst the opening of the Ebbw line is a significant benefit for public transport in the county borough, the service is programmed to run to Cardiff, which is already served by the Rhymney Valley line. As part of the original proposals for opening up the Ebbw line, a service to Newport was proposed as part of the phase 2 works. The opening of the link to Newport would necessitate significant signals and junction improvements in order for trains to access Newport Station. There is currently concern that the Phase 2 works may not be realised and the potential for the Ebbw Valley line to open up new commuting destinations via rail may be lost.

5.36 The Rhymney Valley line has benefited from recent and ongoing works to improve frequencies and network capacity between Bargoed and Cardiff. The final stage of THE Rhymney Line Frequency Enhancements scheme is a key priority of the RTP and will provide half hourly services between Bargoed and Rhymney, through provision of a passing loop at Tirphil. The scheme will enable a new station at Energlyn to be provided, which will need to be identified in the LDP. Sewta are currently progressing a EU Convergence funding bid for the scheme and it features within the Consultative Draft RTP 5-year programme.

5.37 The council will continue to seek the introduction of the Cwmbargoed line to passenger services to complete the rail coverage within the county borough. As part of this line a station at Nelson and associated park and ride would be pursued. The council will also seek a station at Tredomen to serve the employment and administrative uses that are in close proximity. However the LDP will not reflect this at the current time as concerns over numbers of stations and journey times need to be assessed to consider its viability.

5.38 Rail improvements represent a major opportunity to increase public transport usage, particularly for commuting trips to Cardiff. However many trips in the county borough are east-west in direction, or do not follow the lines of the rail network. In terms of encouraging greater public transport usage, these trips will need to be catered for by bus services or possibly demand responsive transport services. As already identified above, improved public transport links to the Oakdale site is essential to prevent a massive increase in car trips to this major employment centre. Current bus services do not encourage commuting trips to this site by bus and this will also need to be addressed. This may involve more flexible services than conventional bus services, such as demand responsive transport services.

5.39 Improvements to services will need to be considered within the LDP, notably for servicing proposed allocations for development and to improve accessibility to services and facilities located at major public transport nodes. However this will need to be undertaken in the knowledge of the proposed allocations.

Interchange (Modal Change)

5.40 Provision of good opportunities for interchange between transport modes will be an important factor in improving accessibility and increasing use of public transport. Park and ride facilities at rail stations encourage car users to switch to rail for a significant part of their journey. The stations being served by the Ebbw Valley line have an element of parking to facilitate park and ride from its stations. Patronage of the services on this line will need to be monitored to ensure that the demand for park and ride on this is met over the period of the plan.

5.41 The UDP realised significant improvements to the provision of park and ride facilities along the Rhymney Valley passenger line, with improved facilities being provided at Ystrad Mynach, Aber and Caerphilly. In order to encourage greater use of rail services, particularly for commuting journeys to Cardiff, improved park and ride provision will be sought at four stations along the Rhymney line, namely:

- 🚗 Llanbradach
- 🚗 Pengam
- 🚗 Bargoed
- 🚗 Rhymney

5.42 It is still the council intention to seek additional park and ride provision at Ystrad Mynach Station. However further work to investigate and assess alternatives for increasing this provision needs to be undertaken prior to any allocation being made. In order to prevent confusion over the likely form and location of the additional park and ride provision, this will not be identified in the current LDP. Subsequent review of the LDP will include a proposal as and when the investigative work has been concluded and a scheme has been identified.

5.43 The provision of high quality public transport interchange facilities is crucial if public transport is to offer an attractive alternative to the car. In addition to the recent opening of the rail station, Newbridge also benefits from high frequencies of bus services through the town. In order to improve opportunities for convenient, multi-modal interchange in Newbridge town centre, an improved bus interchange facility will be sought.

Highways

5.44 The UDP incorporated a significant element of highways improvement proposals and much of this has actually been realised. However, the LDP, in line with the RTP and the WTS, will need to consider transport in a more holistic way, with sustainable modes being given more emphasis than has previously been the case.

5.45 However this stance has to be tempered with the fact highway improvements may be required for a large number of reasons, including economic development and regeneration needs. As it is likely that the car will continue to be the predominant mode of transport for the plan period, such improvements will remain an important part of the provision of an efficient transport network. Consequently it would be inappropriate for the LDP not to address the highway network and consider improvements where they are required.

5.46 It is clear that future funding for major highway schemes will be limited and that the focus of the RTP strategy will be on making better use of the existing highway network, with few proposals for new major highway schemes. The Draft RTP has

identified a Strategic Highway Network (SHN), which will be the focus of regional 'making better use' improvements to improve the efficiency of the network. The RTP identifies congestion points on the region's SHN and identifies a number of regional routes as needing further development work, which will be progressed through the RTP. The two routes identified within the county borough are the A472 through Maesycwmmmer and the A468/A469 between Penrhos and Pwllypant.

- 5.47 The SHN will be the focus of future highways investment across the region. Consequently, network improvements that are necessary within the county borough will need to be largely funded by development contributions. It is imperative that the LDP provides the basis for the establishment of Obligations, in the form of SPG, which will provide the mechanism and justification for realising such contributions.

Strategic Network Improvements

- 5.48 Issues relating to the strategic network throughout the Caerphilly Basin are addressed in the existing DDG 18 – Caerphilly Basin Strategic Highway Network Obligation. This document, which has been produced in relation to the UDP, provides the basis for seeking contributions towards identified improvements to the Caerphilly Northern Bypass from residential developments not identified in the UDP. This SPG is being revised to ensure that it is in accordance with the emerging LDP and continues into the LDP period. The revised SPG will include a list of strategic network improvements in the Caerphilly Basin that are necessary to negate the impacts of the housing development sites identified in the LDP. The detail of the obligation relating to the Caerphilly Basin is included in the SPG and is based upon policies in the LDP.
- 5.49 Significant levels of development has taken place in the mid valley corridor during the UDP period. This development has placed existing infrastructure under increasing pressure and this is an issue that the LDP will need to address, both in local terms, and on a more strategic level. The level of development that is expected in the Northern Connections Corridor during the LDP period will increase problems of congestion along strategic routes, particularly at key junctions. The LDP affords the opportunity to develop a comprehensive approach to addressing the issues facing the strategic network in the Northern Connections Corridor area, as well as providing the essential sound basis for any SPG that may be required. The justification for the introduction of a strategic network obligation in the Northern Connections Corridor will be progressed early in the LDP period. The LDP identifies the strategic network improvements within the Northern Connections Corridor that will be considered when developing a future obligation for this area.
- 5.50 In respect of the strategic network in the north of the county borough, the main issue relates to improvements to the A469 from New Tredegar to Rhymney and the A465 Heads of the Valley Road. However, given the likelihood that grant funding will not be available for improvements, development contributions would again be the mechanism for realising any improvements. The north has exhibited very little development activity throughout the UDP period due to low land prices and poor access to the south. Whilst it is the intention of the LDP to encourage development further north in the county borough than has previously been sought, it is unlikely that the north of the county borough would realise sufficient development, nor within a realistic timeframe, to make the use of an obligation a realistic option. Consequently, until the north accommodates significantly increased levels of development, it will not realise the improvements.
- 5.51 The LDP will also need to identify specific instances where highway schemes will be needed to facilitate new development. The Bedwas Colliery site, which has

been identified for mixed-use development in the LDP, does not currently have an access of an appropriate standard to support the development of the site. Consequently any proposed land use development on the site would require the construction of a new access road to facilitate the development. As such the requirement for the Bedwas Colliery Access Road will need to be identified in the LDP. Similarly the development of the Bedwellty Road housing site requires the construction of a new road to access the site and facilitate the development. The need for the Aberbargoed to Bedwellty Relief Road will also be identified in the LDP. The LDP will also identify the highway improvements that are needed to support the development of the Ystrad Mynach Local General Hospital.

- 5.52 The A472 between Ystrad Mynach and Maesycwmmmer is the key link between the dualled Lower Rhymney Relief Road and the Newbridge-Maesycwmmmer bypass. Present traffic levels along the A472 through Maesycwmmmer exceed capacity and the resulting problems of congestion and queuing vehicles, during peak periods, inhibits the efficient functioning of the network. The RTP identifies this section as a congestion point on the region's Strategic Highway Network and the route features in the Draft RTP as one of a number of regional routes in need of further development work, which will be carried out as part of the RTP. Therefore, it is premature to identify a specific scheme as an LDP allocation but the route is identified as one of the strategic network improvements in the Northern Connections Corridor.
- 5.53 In the short term, improvements to the highway network in this area will be carried out as part of the Ystrad Mynach Local General Hospital development (identified under Policy TR7 of the LDP). Whilst the improvements will offer significant benefits over the existing infrastructure, including a new dedicated slip road for traffic travelling between Maesycwmmmer and Caerphilly and improvements to the signalised junction in Maesycwmmmer, the improvements will not resolve the problems in this area. The single carriageway route through Maesycwmmmer will continue to act as a restraint to the overall level of traffic using the network. The functioning of the route will need to be monitored following the highway improvements and, if necessary, options for resolving the issues will be considered as part of the early review of the LDP.

Air Quality

- 5.54 Air quality issues in the county borough are likely to become increasingly important in the future. An Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) has been established within Caerphilly Town Centre. The designation of the AQMA requires investigative work to be completed within 12 months of designation and an Action Plan to be produced based upon the results. Transport, and in particular problems of congestion and queuing traffic, is considered to be a significant contributing factor towards the air quality issues in this area. The role of traffic management measures in the town centre in alleviating the air quality problems will be investigated, however the situation will need to be monitored over time to assess whether larger-scale infrastructure schemes will be necessary to take traffic out of the town centre. In particular the need for and potential of a South Eastern Bypass to remove traffic from the town centre will be investigated.
- 5.55 In order to ensure that any improvements to the transport network will result in the desired improvement of air quality in the town centre, comprehensive investigation of the sources of the problem and assessment of the alternative options will need to be undertaken. Consequently it is premature to include any air quality based improvements to the transport infrastructure within the LDP at the present time. Whilst the LDP is not proposing the South Eastern Bypass, it is important to ensure that whilst the necessary investigative work is underway no development is permitted that could potentially prejudice the future alignment of a bypass.

Consequently, for the time being, the LDP will safeguard land for the Bypass. Upon completion of the AQMA work the council will need to resolve whether to progress the Bypass or not.

General Highway Issues

- 5.56 The UDP contained details of the county borough's road hierarchy, which was made up of the Core Network, County Routes, Distributor Roads and Access Roads. The UDP road hierarchy has been updated for the LDP and has links to the Strategic Highway Network that has been established as part of the RTP process. Whilst the LDP sets out the road hierarchy, the associated restrictions of access and parking relating to each of the levels are included in the appendices.
- 5.57 In addition, the LDP will need to address the issue of car parking within the county borough. A Sewta Car Parking Strategic Framework is being developed alongside the RTP, which will provide the regional framework within which a local car parking strategy for the county borough will need to be devised. The Strategic Framework recommends that each planning authority adopt the CSS Wales – Wales Parking Standards 2008, which replaces the South Wales Parking Guidelines (1993) and its Addendum (2001). The 2008 standards are based upon the principle of a zoning system to determine appropriate parking standards for particular areas. This will require each local authority to define zones within their area according to local circumstances. This provides greater flexibility in how standards are applied and complies with guidance in TAN 18. The document includes standards for the provision of cycle parking and requires that developments of a certain size develop a travel plan as a condition of planning consent. The CSS Wales Parking Standards 2008 will need to be adopted as supplementary planning guidance to the LDP.
- 5.58 The LDP will need to promote travel planning, both through the requirements of the CSS Wales Parking Standards and through specific LDP policies, to ensure that new developments maximise the use of travel plans as a means of reducing car travel and promoting public transport, walking and cycling.

Freight

- 5.59 The vast majority of freight originating within or brought in from outside the county borough is transported on lorries. The only alternative to the lorry for freight movement is rail. However the county borough lacks an interchange where freight can be changed from lorry to rail, or vice versa, and as such the potential for increasing freight transit by rail is very limited. In addition there are currently no known sites that could be developed to provide an interchange facility within the county borough. As a result it is likely that freight transport for the county borough will continue to be lorry based. Consequently the LDP does not include any proposals relating to freight transport.