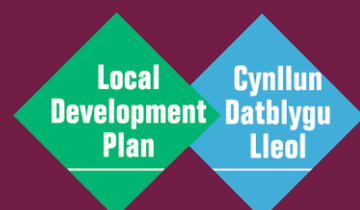


# Tourism and Leisure Development



## Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance

January 2019





# Tourism and Leisure Development Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance

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## Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 1. Introduction .....   | 1  |
| 2. Purpose of the Supplementary Planning Guidance .....   | 2  |
| 3. Status of the Guidance .....   | 3  |
| 4. Legislative and Planning Policy Context .....  | 4  |
| 5. Planning Considerations for Tourism and Leisure .....  | 12 |
| 6. Permitted Development Rights and Tourism / Leisure Developments .....  | 16 |
| 7. Proposals for New Rural Tourism and Leisure Related Developments.....  | 18 |
| 8. Safeguarding Existing Tourism and Leisure Facilities.....  | 24 |
| 9. Further information and Advice.....  | 25 |
| 10. Appendices .....  | 26 |
| 10.1. Appendix 1 – Vale of Glamorgan STEAM Tourism Survey 2016 Results<br>Summary.....                          | 26 |
| 10.2. Appendix 2: Map Showing the Wales Coastal Path, Glamorgan Heritage Coast<br>and Honey Pot Locations ..... | 27 |
| 10.3. Appendix 3: Examples of Tourism and Leisure Developments in the Vale of<br>Glamorgan .....                | 28 |

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Tourism and leisure plays an important role in the Vale of Glamorgan's economy, particularly in the countryside where it contributes significantly to rural diversification. The authority benefits from a vast stretch of coastline (which includes a stretch of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast as well as traditional sea side destinations such as Barry Island and Penarth), large swathes of attractive countryside, country parks, historic market towns such as Cowbridge and numerous picturesque rural villages all of which are important visitor attractions.
- 1.2. While the Vales' proximity to Cardiff provides a substantial local catchment area for day visitors, it also attracts longer stay tourists wishing to explore more widely across South Wales. The Vale of Glamorgan is frequently referred to as "the green lung of South East Wales" and the visitor economy provides important employment opportunities, services and facilities that also benefit the needs of local communities. In 2016, the annual STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Model) survey recorded that tourism in the Vale of Glamorgan attracted almost 4 million visitors, supported almost 3,000 full time equivalent jobs either directly or indirectly and generated in excess of £220 million of revenue to the authority's annual economy (see Appendix 1).
- 1.3. Although new and enhanced tourism and leisure facilities can provide substantial benefits for visitors, residents and the local economy, they can also have negative impacts on local natural and built environments if they are not properly managed or mitigated. For example, when large numbers of people visit one place, a proliferation of tourist facilities and associated paraphernalia such as signage and advertising can have a detrimental visual impact upon the surrounding area. In addition, emissions from visitor's cars can increase air pollution to the detriment of the local community.
- 1.4. In this regard, the planning system has a pivotal role to play in terms of safeguarding and enhancing existing tourism and leisure facilities and managing new developments to ensure that they are delivered sustainably and in appropriate locations. Consequently, the Vale of Glamorgan Adopted Local Development Plan 2011-2026 (LDP) contains a planning policy framework which seeks to encourage new investment in appropriate tourism and leisure facilities and seeks to protect and enhance existing facilities for the benefit of local residents, visitors and the local economy.

## **2. Purpose of the Supplementary Planning Guidance**

- 2.1. This Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) has been prepared to support and provide additional detail to the relevant LDP policies. A number of LDP policies favour proposals for new or enhanced tourism and leisure developments as well as the protection of the Vale's natural and built tourism assets which are important visitor attractions. The LDP also recognises that many of the traditional sectors of rural employment such as agriculture and forestry are in decline. Accordingly, the LDP also seeks to maximise opportunities for rural diversification such as low impact, sustainable tourism and leisure uses. For example, Policy SP 11 (Tourism and Leisure) favours tourism and leisure proposals which encourage rural diversification and promote the sustainable use of the countryside and the Glamorgan Heritage Coast (GHC).
- 2.2. This SPG has therefore been prepared to provide clarity to applicants on how such proposals will be assessed against the LDP policy framework. Specifically, it includes guidance on:
- Relevant material planning considerations;
  - Permitted development rights and tourism / leisure related developments;
  - Different types of tourism and leisure developments;
  - Protecting existing tourism and leisure facilities; and
  - Good practice examples of local tourism and leisure developments.
- 2.3. It is not intended to repeat guidance covered sufficiently within legislation and national planning policy. However, the key parts of relevant Acts and national planning policy are referred to in section 4 of the SPG for ease of reference.

### **3. Status of the Guidance**

- 3.1. This guidance was approved by Cabinet as a draft for public consultation on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018. The Council will take account of comments received during the six week public consultation exercise before finalising the document for development management purposes.
  
- 3.2. Planning Policy Wales, Edition 9, November 2016 (PPW) advises that SPG may be taken into account as a material consideration where it has been prepared in consultation with the general public and interested parties and is consistent with the development plan. Once adopted, the SPG will be a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications and appeals in the Vale of Glamorgan.

## 4. Legislative and Planning Policy Context

### 4.1. National Legislation

- 4.1.1. **The Planning (Wales) Act 2015** - seeks to deliver a planning system which is fair, resilient, enables development and helps create sustainable places. The Act supports the principle of sustainable development and provides opportunities to protect and enhance our most important built and natural environments which provide valuable tourism and recreation opportunities.
- 4.1.2. **Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** - seeks to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It contains seven well-being goals which local authorities as well as other public bodies must seek to achieve in order to improve well-being both now and in the future, several of which support this SPG's promotion of low impact sustainable rural tourism and leisure uses.
- 4.1.3. **Environment (Wales) Act 2016** – puts in place a modern statutory process to plan and manage our natural resources in an integrated and sustainable way.
- 4.1.4. **The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009** – provides a legislative framework for the seas, based on marine spatial planning, that aims to balance conservation, energy and resource needs. It requires all public authorities taking authorisation or enforcement decisions that affect or might affect the UK marine area to do so in accordance with the Marine Policy Statement (2011) unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.1.5. **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990** – provides a legislative framework for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest.
- 4.1.6. **Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016** – provides a legislative framework for the protection and the sustainable management of the Welsh historic environment.

### 4.2. National Policy Context

#### **Planning Policy Wales, Edition 9 (November 2016) (PPW):**

- 4.2.1. PPW sets out the land-use planning policies of the Welsh Government and is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs). Chapter 11 on Tourism, Sport and Recreation sets out the Welsh Government's aim for tourism to grow in a sustainable way and to make an increasing contribution to the economic, social and environmental well-being of Wales (paragraph 11.1.2 of PPW refers).



- 4.2.2. PPW recognises that tourism is vital to economic prosperity and job creation in many parts of Wales. It also states that tourism is a significant and growing source of employment and investment across Wales and that it can be a catalyst for environmental protection, regeneration and improvement in both urban and rural areas. In terms of the latter, paragraph 7.3.1 of PPW states that “small scale enterprises have a vital role in promoting healthy economic activity in rural areas, which can contribute to both local and national competitiveness. New businesses in rural areas are essential to sustain and improve rural communities.”
- 4.2.3. In respect of the planning system, PPW states that sustainable tourism should be encouraged in ways which enable it to contribute to economic development, conservation, rural diversification, urban regeneration and social inclusion, recognising the needs of visitors and local communities.
- 4.2.4. In both urban and rural areas, tourism related development is considered to be an essential element in providing for a healthy, diverse, local and national economy. Moreover, it can contribute to the provision and maintenance of facilities for local communities. However, PPW clarifies that such development should be sympathetic in nature and scale to the local environment (for example in undeveloped coastal areas) and to the needs of the visitors and the local community (paragraph 11.1.7 of PPW refers).
- 4.2.5. National guidance is clear that development plans should encourage the diversification of farm enterprises and other parts of the rural economy for appropriate tourism and leisure uses, subject to adequate safeguards for the character and appearance of the countryside, particularly its landscape, biodiversity and local amenity value (paragraph 11.2.7 of PPW refers).

**Technical Advice Note 6 – Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (2010) (TAN 6):**

- 4.2.6. TAN 6 provides guidance on how the planning system can help support sustainable and vibrant rural communities. Paragraph 2.2.2 states that “new development can help to generate wealth to support local services, ensuring that communities are sustainable in the long term.” In addition, the TAN emphasises the importance of creating strong rural economies to support sustainable and vibrant rural communities.
- 4.2.7. It provides advice on matters including sustainable rural communities and economies, rural affordable housing, rural enterprise dwellings, one planet developments, sustainable rural services and sustainable agriculture. The TAN defines rural enterprises as comprising of businesses directly related to agriculture and forestry, land management activities and tourism and leisure enterprises.

**Technical Advice Note 13 - Tourism (1997) (TAN13):**

- 4.2.8. TAN 13 provides guidance on tourism related issues in planning including matters relating to hotel development, holiday and touring caravans and seasonal and holiday occupancy conditions. As with PPW, the TAN recognises the contribution that tourism makes to the Welsh economy through employment and the benefits that tourism can bring to local economies and communities, particularly in rural areas.

**Technical Advice Note 14 – Coastal Planning (1998) (TAN 14)**

- 4.2.9. TAN 14 provides guidance on key issues relating to planning for the coastal zone and recreational development along the coast, including the type of proposals for development, nature and landscape conservation, recreation and coastal specific considerations.

**Technical Advice Note 23 - Economic Development (2014) (TAN 23)**

- 4.2.10. TAN 23 provides guidance on the role of land use planning in economic development. In terms of tourism and leisure, it recognises that the re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings has an important role to play in meeting the needs of rural areas for a range of uses including tourism and leisure.

**Technical Advice Note 24 – The Historic Environment (2017) (TAN 24)**

- 4.2.11. TAN 24 provides detailed guidance on how different aspects of the historic environment such as listed buildings, scheduled monuments, conservation areas and historic landscapes etc. should be considered by owners, developers and public bodies in the planning process. This is particularly important as the Vale of Glamorgan has a significant number of historic assets which could be affected by proposals for new tourism and leisure development.

**Draft Welsh National Marine Plan (WNMP)**

- 4.2.12. The Draft WNMP sets out the Welsh Government's policy for the sustainable development of the Welsh marine planning area for both inshore and offshore regions. It seeks to ensure the sustainable management of marine natural resources and supports "blue growth" by setting out how and where new proposals should be developed.

### **4.3. Local Policy Context**

**The Vale of Glamorgan Adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) (2011-2026):**

- 4.3.1. The LDP was formally adopted by the Council on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2017 and constitutes the development plan for the area. The LDP provides the local planning policy framework for assessing planning applications for new development / uses and contains a number of relevant objectives associated with new rural tourism and leisure proposals. These are set out below:

- 4.3.2. **Objective 1** seeks “to sustain and further the development of sustainable communities within the Vale of Glamorgan, providing opportunities for living, learning, working and socialising for all.” The supporting text emphasises the need for new development to be of an appropriate scale to its location, support the local economy and sustain and wherever possible improve local services and facilities. The provision of new and enhanced tourism and leisure proposals can be enjoyed by both visitors and local communities alike as well as providing important local employment opportunities.
- 4.3.3. **Objective 2** aims “to ensure that development within the Vale of Glamorgan makes a positive contribution towards reducing the impact of and mitigating the adverse effects of climate change.” New tourism and leisure developments should therefore be accessible by a variety of sustainable means of travel and incorporate sustainable design and building solutions.
- 4.3.4. **Objective 4** refers to the protection and enhancement of the area’s historic, built and natural environment. The Vale of Glamorgan benefits from a significant number of these environmental assets which are highly valued by local residents and visitors alike.
- 4.3.5. **Objective 8** seeks to “foster the development of a diverse and sustainable local economy that meets the needs of the Vale of Glamorgan and that of the South East Wales region.” In both urban and rural areas, tourism and leisure related development is an essential element in providing for a healthy, diverse, local and national economy. The LDP recognises this and favours proposals for new and improved sustainable tourism and leisure facilities in appropriate locations.
- 4.3.6. **Objective 9** aims “to create an attractive tourism destination with a positive image for the Vale of Glamorgan, encouraging sustainable development and quality facilities to enrich the experience for visitors and residents”. This objective is supported by a suite of LDP policies that seek to protect and enhance the range and choice of existing tourism and leisure facilities in the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 4.3.7. In order to support the LDP vision and objectives, there are a number of strategic policies, managing growth policies and managing development policies which are relevant to new tourism and leisure development. However, it should be noted that other LDP policies may apply depending on the nature of the proposal and each application will be dealt with on its own merits. The relevant LDP policies are summarised below:
- **Policy SP1 – Delivering the Strategy** – This policy sets out the framework for delivering the LDP strategy and criterion 7 refers specifically to promoting opportunities for sustainable tourism and recreation. A number of the other criteria e.g. 6 and 8 are also relevant.

- **Policy SP10 – Built and Natural Environment** – This policy recognises the importance of preserving and enhancing the built and natural environment which provides valuable recreation and tourism opportunities for visitors and local residents alike.
- **Policy SP11 – Tourism and Leisure** – This policy favours proposals which promote the Vale of Glamorgan as a tourist and leisure destination as well as those which protect and enhance existing facilities. In particular, it favours proposals which support rural diversification and the rural economy, protect existing tourism assets and promote the sustainable use of the countryside and the GHC.
- **Policy MG17 – Special Landscape Areas (SLAs)** – This policy identifies 6 SLAs which are considered to be important for their geological, visual, historic or cultural significance. In such areas, careful consideration must be given to the design elements of the proposal such as siting, orientation, layout and landscaping to ensure that the special qualities and characteristics of the SLA are protected.
- **Policy MG 27 – Glamorgan Heritage Coast (GHC)** – This policy recognises the special natural environmental qualities of the GHC and restricts the types of development that will be permitted. However, the supporting text recognises that it is an important visitor attraction and supports proposals for low impact tourism and informal recreation.
- **Policy MG 29 – Tourism and Leisure Facilities** – This policy favours the provision of all year round tourism and leisure facilities. It also refers to several tourism related allocations in Barry and the Rural Vale which seek to enhance the existing tourism offer in these areas and create more local employment opportunities.
- **Policy MD1 – Location of New Development** – This policy sets out the framework for future development to take place on unallocated sites within the Vale of Glamorgan. Criterion 3 encourages the provision of new tourism and leisure development where appropriate.
- **Policy MD2 – Design of New Development** - This policy sets out the key principles for new development in terms of design to create high quality, healthy, sustainable and locally distinct places. Criterion 1 is of particular relevance and states that proposals should positively contribute to the context and character of the surrounding natural and built environment and protect existing features of townscape and landscape interest.
- **Policy MD8 – Historic Environment** - This policy states that development proposals must protect the qualities of the historic environment such as conservation areas, listed and locally listed buildings, designated landscapes and historic parks and gardens. The supporting text to the policy states that proposals which enhance and increase the public enjoyment of these historic

environments will be encouraged provided that the facilities do not conflict with their conservation.

- **Policy MD 11 – Conversion and Renovation of Rural Buildings** – This policy acknowledges that with changes in farming practices, many rural buildings are no longer needed or unsuitable for modern needs. Accordingly, it favours the retention and conversion of these redundant buildings to new uses including tourism and leisure facilities which make a positive contribution to the rural economy.
- **Policy MD13 – Tourism and Leisure** – This policy favours the provision of new or enhanced well-designed tourism and leisure facilities in appropriate locations. Accordingly, it favours proposals which form part of a rural enterprise or farm diversification scheme as well as sustainable low impact tourism and leisure proposals in the countryside. It also seeks to prevent the loss of existing tourism and leisure facilities.
- **Policy MD17 – Rural Enterprise** – This policy recognises that many of the traditional sectors of rural employment are in decline. It seeks to encourage proposals for new small scale sustainable employment uses in rural areas which could include tourism and leisure uses.

#### **The Vale of Glamorgan LDP Coastal Study (2013)**

- 4.3.8. The Coastal Study was prepared by White Consultants and informed the preparation of the LDP. The document examines the current development pressures along the Vale of Glamorgan coastline, (including the GHC) and makes a number of recommendations relating to the management of development in coastal areas.

#### **The Vale of Glamorgan Destination Management Plan 2018 – 2020 (DMP)**

- 4.3.9. All destinations in Wales are encouraged by Welsh Government to develop a DMP to formally outline their area's priorities for tourism development. The DMP provides a framework for developing, improving and enhancing the visitor experience within the Vale of Glamorgan. The overarching vision of the DMP is:

*'to create an attractive and vibrant tourism destination with a positive image for the Vale of Glamorgan capitalising on the Heritage Coast and proximity to Cardiff, encouraging the generation of higher spend and local income through sustainable development and quality facilities to enrich the experience for visitors and residents.'*

- 4.3.10. The DMP recognises that the Vale of Glamorgan is an area with unrivalled natural attributes and states that the majority of tourists come here to enjoy the landscape, countryside and beaches. The DMP also contains several ambitions to complement the vision which include "to be known as a rural escape; a

welcome alternative from which to explore the capital city of Wales, offering a stunning coastline and beautiful countryside.”

#### **The Vale of Glamorgan Community Strategy 2011 – 2021**

- 4.3.11. The Vale of Glamorgan Council's Community Strategy 2011 - 2021 seeks to build upon the authority's tourism strengths. It includes the aspiration for the Vale of Glamorgan to become “the Green Lung of South East Wales” recognising the importance of ensuring that tourism is undertaken in a sustainable manner so that the natural and built tourism assets are maintained for the enjoyment of future generations.

#### **The Vale of Glamorgan Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020**

- 4.3.12. The Vale of Glamorgan's Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020 sets out a clear vision for the future: “Strong communities with a bright future” and the 4 key values in delivering that vision are ‘ambitious’, ‘open’, ‘together’ and ‘proud’. Tourism and Leisure sits at the heart of wellbeing outcome 2: an environmentally responsible and prosperous Vale. Objective 3: Promoting regeneration, economic growth and employment and objective 4: Promoting sustainable development and protecting our environment are relevant to tourism and leisure development.

#### **Vale of Glamorgan Rural Local Development Strategy and Action Plan (2014 – 2020)**

- 4.3.13. The Rural Local Development Strategy describes the priorities for action in the rural parts of the authority under the Rural Development Programme for Wales. The strategy has been subject to considerable consultation and is based on a wide range of evidence and analysis. It recognises that the Rural Vale has many important and somewhat under-utilised assets which could help to create more opportunities for jobs and businesses. For example, the Strategy aims to create more economic value from the natural and historic built environment to help increase their business and employment potential and develop more business tourism opportunities.

#### **Commercial Opportunities Feasibility Studies**

- 4.3.14. A Commercial Opportunities Feasibility Study was commissioned by the Council's Creative Rural Communities (CRC) team in 2015 to explore the viable commercial opportunities, outdoor activities and events which could enhance the development of business and employment in and around the GHC. The focus of the 2015 feasibility study was to look at project opportunities in three of the main ‘entry points’ along the GHC at Ogmere by Sea, Dunraven Bay at Southerndown, and Cwm Colhuw, Llantwit Major.
- 4.3.15. A follow up stage 2 report was commissioned by the CRC team in 2016 which examined the feasibility of 3 short listed projects at the Glamorgan Heritage Coast Centre, Dunraven Gardens and the Pen-Y- Bont surf lifesaving club. The follow up report had a specific emphasis on exploring viable commercial

opportunities that will develop destination appeal and enhance the development of businesses in the GHC.

#### **4.4. Supplementary Planning Guidance**

4.4.1. The Council has also produced a number of other Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents in support of the LDP. The following SPG may be of relevance to new rural tourism and leisure related developments:

- Conversion and Renovation of Rural Buildings
- Design in Landscape
- Trees, Woodlands, Hedgerows and Development
- Biodiversity and Development
- Conservation Areas in the Rural Vale
- Parking Standards
- Planning Obligations
- Travel Plans
- Minerals Safeguarding

4.4.2. The following sections provide additional guidance on the considerations and requirements to be taken into account when submitting planning applications for new tourism and leisure related developments or for changes of use of existing tourism / leisure facilities to alternative uses.

## **5. Planning Considerations for Tourism and Leisure**

- 5.1.1. The tourism vision for the Vale of Glamorgan set out in the Destination Management Plan (see paragraph 4.3.9 above) helps to define ambitions and priorities that will greatly contribute to future tourism growth. The LDP seeks to build on this vision by favouring new or enhanced development proposals which promote the Vale of Glamorgan as an attractive tourism and leisure destination and resists the loss of existing tourism and leisure facilities (objective 9, Policies SP 11 and MD13 refer).
- 5.1.2. Notwithstanding the above, it is important that new rural tourism and leisure development is appropriately located and sympathetic in nature and scale to the local environment and to the needs of both visitors and the local community. Proposals for new tourism and leisure development will be assessed in accordance with the relevant LDP policies / SPG together with any relevant material planning considerations as set out below. However, it should be noted that the following list is not exhaustive and planning applications will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

### **5.2. Flood Risk**

- 5.2.1. Welsh Government guidance states that new development should be directed away from those areas which are at high risk of flooding. It is very unlikely that new tourism and leisure related developments will be able to be justified against the tests set out in TAN 15 Development and Flood Risk. Accordingly, new development should be directed away from Zone C and towards suitable land in either Zone A or Zone B, where river or coastal flooding is less of a concern.

### **5.3. Access / Highway Impact**

- 5.3.1. All new development proposals should provide safe highway access to the appropriate highway standards. The Council is keen to encourage the increased use of sustainable modes of transport and to reduce the number of private vehicle journeys. Wherever possible, proposals for new tourism and leisure developments should be accessible by sustainable modes of transport including public transport, cycling and walking. Where new parking provision is to be provided, this will need to be sensitively integrated into the scheme to ensure that the visual impact is kept to a minimum.
- 5.3.2. The majority of new tourism and leisure proposals are likely to be small scale and therefore will not require a formal transport assessment. However, where larger developments are proposed, the Council may require the production of a transport statement to illustrate how any transport issues within and adjoining the site will be addressed. A travel plan may also be required if the impact of the proposed development is likely to be significant or where particular local circumstances exist, such as low levels of on-site car parking.



## **5.4. Amenity**

- 5.4.1. Changes in the use of land can have significant impacts on the amenity of local residents and any existing adjoining uses, particularly in rural areas. New tourism and leisure related developments should therefore be designed in such a way so that they are in harmony with the local natural and built environment.

## **5.5. Heritage**

- 5.5.1. The Vale of Glamorgan has a rich and diverse cultural heritage and its heritage assets are widely dispersed throughout the authority. New tourism and leisure proposals should therefore ensure that the archaeological, architectural, historic and / or cultural assets of the Vale of Glamorgan are conserved and where appropriate enhanced. Where applicable, development proposals should consider the impact on the setting of a heritage asset including any significant views into or out of it, which in many cases are as important as the heritage asset itself.

## **5.6. Character**

- 5.6.1. New tourism and leisure proposals should be sympathetic to the local character and contribute to maintaining a strong sense of place. For example, within the Glamorgan Heritage Coast, the Council has produced a Heritage Coast Sense of Place Palette<sup>1</sup>, which sets out baseline information about the area including culture, biodiversity, heritage, Welsh language, local legends and stories. It also gives advice on how businesses can demonstrate the uniqueness of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast to visitors and local communities. Similarly, in Conservation Areas, the local authority has a statutory duty to ensure that the character of an area is preserved and where appropriate enhanced. Therefore new tourism and leisure development proposals within Conservation Areas will need to have regard to the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans which set out the special qualities of each area.

## **5.7. Landscape**

- 5.7.1. The landscape impact of new development proposals should form an early part of design considerations and include elements such as location, scale, orientation as well as new and existing landscaping. Proposals should seek to complement and enhance key landscape features including long views and open spaces. In sensitive coastal and rural locations such as the Glamorgan Heritage Coast and Special Landscape Areas, it is important that developments are well integrated into the landscape. It should be noted that a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment will be required for any development that is likely to have a considerable impact on landscape character, or have a significant visual effect within the wider landscape (by virtue of its size, prominence or degree of impact on the locality) and should be prepared in accordance with the latest Landscape

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/working/Rural-Communities/Our-Achievements.aspx>.

Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment Guidelines. Further advice is available in the Design in the Landscape SPG.

## **5.8. Agricultural Land Quality**

- 5.8.1. National planning policy states that Grade 1, 2 and 3a agricultural land is the best and most versatile (BMV) and should be conserved as a finite resource for the future. Such land should only be developed “if there is an overriding need for the development, and either previously developed land or land in lower agricultural grades is unavailable, or available lower grade land has an environmental value recognised by a landscape, wildlife, historic or archaeological designation which outweighs the agricultural considerations.” (paragraph 4.10.1 of PPW refers).
- 5.8.2. It is unlikely that new low impact rural tourism and leisure proposals (e.g. camp sites) would result in the permanent sterilisation of BMV agricultural land. However, there may be instances where such proposals seek to include more permanent elements such as access roads or amenity buildings etc. Where such ancillary infrastructure is required, applicants should seek to protect the BMV agricultural land by utilising existing or temporary buildings or providing temporary forms of access tracks.

## **5.9. Biodiversity**

- 5.9.1. The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 places a duty on the local planning authority to preserve and enhance biodiversity wherever it occurs. However, with sensitive and appropriate design, implementation and management, the adverse impact of development proposals can be minimised and may even enhance local biodiversity. The Council has prepared SPG on ‘Biodiversity and Development’ which provides specific guidance on how biodiversity in the Vale of Glamorgan will be conserved and enhanced throughout the planning and development process. The guidance assists developers in meeting the Council's proactive approach towards achieving a high quality natural environment.

## **5.10. Minerals Safeguarding Areas (MSA)**

- 5.10.1. In line with national planning policy, the Council has identified Minerals Safeguarding Areas which seek to protect hard rock and sand and gravel resources within the Vale of Glamorgan from future sterilisation resulting from permanent development.
- 5.10.2. It is unlikely that the types of low impact tourism and leisure development that will be acceptable within rural areas will permanently sterilise identified mineral deposits within the Vale of Glamorgan. However, where more permanent structures e.g. access and service roads are proposed, consideration should be given to protecting any minerals resources present from permanent sterilisation. MSAs are identified on the LDP Proposals Map and the Council has also prepared SPG entitled ‘Development in Minerals Safeguarding Areas’ which provides further information on proposals affecting a MSA.

## **5.11. Wales Coastal Path**

- 5.11.1. The Wales Coastal Path was officially opened in 2012. It was developed out of a desire to build on the economic success of the other existing coastal paths such as the Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail which is a major contributor to the local visitor economy in West Wales. In addition, coastal paths are also considered to be an important initiative in terms of the health and well-being benefits they provide to local residents and visitors alike.
- 5.11.2. The Vale of Glamorgan coastline forms an integral part of the Wales Coastal Path (see Appendix 2) and incorporates natural and built environment assets such as nature reserves and ancient churches. The Wales Coastal Path is regarded as a 'flag ship' tourism project that is capable of bringing significant economic benefits to the coastal communities in the Vale of Glamorgan. Policy SP11 (Tourism and Leisure) in the LDP seeks to protect and enhance existing tourism assets such as the coastal path for the benefit of visitors and the local community alike.

## **6. Permitted Development Rights and Tourism / Leisure Developments**

- 6.1. The use of land as a tented camp site or as a caravan site will require planning permission, unless the use is permitted under the relevant criteria of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) (1995) (as amended). Part 4, Class B of the GPDO permits the temporary use of land as a tented camp site for not more than 28 days in total in any calendar year (including set up and dismantling). This does not apply where the land is within the curtilage of a building or is a site of special scientific interest.
- 6.2. Part 5, Class A of the GPDO permits the use of land, other than a building, as a caravan site, in circumstances when a caravan site licence is not required. These circumstances include the following:
- One caravan at any one time, sited on land by a person travelling with that caravan, who brings the caravan on to the land for a period of not more than two nights at a time. This applies for a total of no more than 28 days in a 12 month period.
  - On sites of 5 acres or more, a maximum of three caravans may be sited on the land for a total of no more than 28 days in a 12 month period.
  - Sites occupied and supervised by exempted organisations (e.g. Caravan Club; Showmans Guild; Guides/Scouts Association)
  - Sites approved annually by an exempted organisation and occupied by no more than 5 caravans belonging to members of that organisation certified location
  - Sites used for meetings of exempted organisations for no more than 5 days at a time.
- 6.3. If use of land as a tented camp or as a caravan site is permitted under the GPDO, planning permission is still likely to be required for any permanent new structures, signage, hard standings, roadways or levelling of land that may be necessary to enable the use to go ahead.
- 6.4. It should be noted that each case is different and the need for planning permission depends on the unique characteristics of the use or works, a site's planning history and an interpretation of the law. It is therefore recommended that operators or owners of temporary / seasonal tourism and leisure activities contact the Council in the first instance to ascertain whether planning permission is required for the proposed activity. The Council provides a statutory pre-application advice service in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Pre-Application Services) (Wales) Regulations 2016 for which a fee is payable depending on the size and scale of the proposed development. Further information on this service can be found on the Council's website.
- 6.5. Any associated 'licensable activity' (e.g. providing entertainment, such as music, dancing or indoor sporting events) on unlicensed premises would require a Temporary Event Notice (TEN) under the Licensing Act 2003. Advice on

licensable activity should be sought from the Council's Licensing Team. In general, an event must have fewer than 500 people at all times (including staff) and last no more than 168 hours (7 days) with a minimum of 24 hours between events. A separate TEN is required for each event held on the same premises and premises can have no more than 15 events per calendar year. Applications for a TEN must be made in advance of the event to the Council's Licensing Team and a fee is payable.

## **7. Proposals for New Rural Tourism and Leisure Related Developments**

7.1.1. LDP Policy MD13 directs new tourism and leisure facilities to locations where new development can be easily integrated within existing settlements, or outside settlements where they form part of a rural enterprise or farm diversification scheme or the conversion of an existing rural building (under policy MD11). Within these locations, proposals such as bed and breakfast accommodation, the conversion of existing rural buildings to holiday accommodation, farm stay holidays or camp sites are encouraged where they are likely to have a limited visual impact on the countryside and require little in the way of ancillary infrastructure.

### **7.2. Bed and Breakfast Accommodation**

7.2.1. The need for planning permission for bed and breakfast accommodation depends mainly on the scale of the proposal. For some small-scale proposals, a planning application may not be needed if the primary use of the house as a private residence is to be maintained. However, it is advisable to contact the Council's planning department for clarification on this matter before submitting a planning application.

### **7.3. Conversion of Rural Buildings**

7.3.1. Proposals which involve the conversion of an existing rural building will be primarily assessed against LDP Policy MD11 (Conversion and Renovation of Rural Buildings). The Council has also produced SPG on this subject which provides further advice on design principles for the conversion of sensitive rural buildings.

### **7.4. Camping and Caravan Sites**

7.4.1. Proposals for new camping and caravan sites (including supporting infrastructure) should be sited unobtrusively to minimise the visual impact on the countryside or coast. Consideration must also be given to the impact on historic and cultural heritage, biodiversity and local amenity, noise and traffic generation. The provision of essential services such as water supply and sewerage facilities must also be taken into account.

### **7.5. Residential Tourism Accommodation**

7.5.1. Modern rural tourism and leisure activities are less seasonally restricted than in the past. Accordingly, there is a greater demand for self-catering accommodation, whether this is in new or converted rural buildings or in caravan / chalet holiday homes. The Council will use conditions to ensure that new residential tourism accommodation in the countryside is restricted so it is not used as permanent residential accommodation or as a main place of residence.

In addition, the Council will also impose a condition requiring the applicant to keep an up to date visitor register at the holiday accommodation which must be available for inspection by the Council upon request.

## **7.6. Equestrian Activities**

- 7.6.1. The use of land for equestrian activities such as stables, field shelters, riding schools, stud farms and livery stables has become increasingly popular in the countryside, particularly on the edge of settlements. Such development requires planning permission and is generally supported as it contributes to the range and choice of rural tourism and leisure facilities on offer and benefits the rural economy.
- 7.6.2. However, the design and location of proposals for new or enhanced horse related leisure / commercial development will be assessed against the criteria set out in Policy MD 2 (Design of New Development). Proposals should therefore be of an appropriate scale and be of a high standard of design that positively contributes to the context and character of the surrounding natural landscape.

## **7.7. Outdoor Rural Tourism / Leisure Attractions**

- 7.7.1. Other outdoor rural tourism / leisure attractions such as farm parks, fisheries, pick your own fruit farms and paintballing are examples of uses which often can operate without the need for a building (or can utilise existing buildings) but may require permission for the change of use of the land. Additionally, proposals for changes of use which do not initially involve new buildings should consider the need for buildings in the future. Where a planning application is required for a change of use, this may be assessed on its impact directly or indirectly on the landscape. The main considerations for the Council will include visual impact, noise pollution, transport and traffic generation, car parking, hours of operation, outdoor lighting, ancillary buildings and storage requirements.

## **7.8. Business Case for New Rural Tourism / Leisure Developments**

- 7.8.1. Applicants will be required to provide a business or management plan in support of proposals for an entirely new tourism / leisure facility in the countryside, in instances where the failure or cessation of the business would have an adverse impact on the local area. This information will be used to assess the future sustainability / viability of the proposal, particularly where new buildings are being proposed as part of the development.
- 7.8.2. The scope of the information required by the Council will be dependent on the scale and nature of the proposal. However, the Council will require applicants to show that the business is financially sound and is expected to be economically sustainable / viable in the future (usually projections for the following 3-5 years will be required).

## **7.9. Staff Accommodation**

- 7.9.1. Where proposals include the provision of permanent on site staff accommodation, applicants will be required to provide evidence to satisfy the functional and financial tests for the accommodation. This will be required for proposals relating to existing and new rural tourism / leisure proposals. The type of information required will include a description of those aspects of the operation and management of the proposal that requires a permanent on site resident worker, and or changes in the circumstances of an existing business that has given rise to a requirement for permanent on site management. The scale of any staff accommodation will be determined by the requirements of the business enterprise rather than the individual needs of the owner or occupier. Full details are set out in TAN 6 – Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities.
- 7.9.2. As an exception to general planning policies regarding residential development in the countryside, staff accommodation will be restricted via planning conditions in terms of the occupancy of the dwelling to an eligible occupier or person(s) eligible for affordable housing if there are no longer any eligible occupiers.

## **7.10. Farm Diversification**

- 7.10.1. Farm incomes have been significantly reduced in recent years and in order to help sustain the core farm business, many farmers have sought new ways to generate additional farm income in order to support the mainstream agricultural activities. Farm diversification can generally be described as any proposal that seeks to supplement the income of working farms and such proposals can usually be categorised into tourism, service, sport and recreation and other uses.
- 7.10.2. Not all farm diversification projects will require planning permission as many will merely extend the existing use and activities of the farm. However, generally projects requiring a change of use of land from agriculture to another use or the erection or conversion of buildings for non-agricultural purposes will require planning permission.
- 7.10.3. Many farm diversification proposals such as the conversion of disused buildings for tourism accommodation and the development of sport and recreation projects, will generally be supported by the Council, where they comply with the relevant LDP policies. However, farm diversification proposals can vary greatly in their nature and scale and consequently their impact upon the surrounding environment will differ from one development to another. Therefore, in assessing such proposals for farm diversification it is essential that the natural environment, biodiversity and cultural heritage of the Vale of Glamorgan are protected and where possible enhanced. Proposals which are considered to adversely impact upon these resources will be resisted.



## **7.11. Low Impact Sustainable Rural Tourism and Leisure Development**

- 7.11.1. In accordance with Policy MD13 (Tourism and Leisure), other than rural enterprise / farm diversification, or the conversion of existing rural buildings, proposals for new or enhanced tourism or leisure developments in the countryside (i.e. outside defined settlement boundaries) will only be permitted if they are regarded as sustainable low impact tourism development. This section sets out what the Council expects from such developments.
- 7.11.2. One of the key priorities in PPW for rural areas is “to secure a thriving and diverse local economy where agriculture related activities are complemented by sustainable tourism” (paragraph 4.6.3 of PPW refers). The LDP therefore seeks to support proposals for sustainable forms of rural tourism and leisure development, but this must be balanced with other environmental and amenity considerations. Policies SP11 (Tourism and Leisure) and MD 13 (Tourism and Leisure) favour the provision of new or enhanced sustainable tourism and leisure facilities in the countryside, particularly low impact developments which have a minimal impact on the landscape and heritage features of the rural Vale of Glamorgan.
- 7.11.3. Sustainable tourism is defined in the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism as *“any form of development, management or tourist activity which ensures the long term protection and preservation of natural, cultural and social resources and contributes in a positive and equitable manner to the economic development and well-being of individuals living, working or staying in protected areas.”* Typically, sustainable low impact tourism and leisure proposals will exhibit the following attributes:
- Are sensitively located and designed to minimise their impact on water, soil and existing landscape features;
  - Utilise sustainable sources of water and energy, and provide servicing without significant modifications to existing infrastructure;
  - Are of an appropriate scale sympathetic to their location and surrounding uses;
  - Are compatible with surrounding land uses, and do not detract from existing agricultural activities where applicable;
  - Utilise existing road infrastructure without the need for highway improvements or avoid causing adverse effects on the existing highway network;
  - Are accessible to sustainable modes of transport e.g. train, bus, cycle tracks and walking routes;
  - Require limited supporting infrastructure such as parking;
  - Contribute directly to nature conservation objectives;
  - Provide opportunities to promote greater understanding and enjoyment of the natural environment and local heritage and
  - Generate wider benefits to the local economy.

- 7.11.4. Examples of low impact tourism development include visitor accommodation in the form of semi-permanent structures such as yurts, tepees or bell tents which can be easily removed and have a minimal impact on the locality. Where a proposal also requires some ancillary infrastructure such as amenity blocks, the preference is for such facilities to be provided in existing rural buildings.
- 7.11.5. Other forms of low impact tourism and leisure developments include informal outdoor recreational activities such as walking, cycling or coastal sports activities (e.g. surfing and kayaking) or tourism activities using existing or compatible land / vegetation features such as fruit / vegetable picking, tree climbing / rope activities etc. These types of uses are considered to be generally compatible with the character of the rural Vale and are generally welcomed. In recent years, there has also been an increase in the number of low impact pop-up outdoor tourism events such as open-air theatre and music performances across the rural Vale. These types of temporary uses are permitted under the provisions of Part 4 of the GPDO (see section 6) and can help to boost the local tourist trade in the rural Vale.

## **7.12. Development within the Glamorgan Heritage Coast**

- 7.12.1. The Glamorgan Heritage Coast was designated by the former Countryside Commission in 1972 and covers a 23km stretch of coastline in the Vale of Glamorgan between St. Athan in the east and Ogmore by Sea in the west (See Appendix 2). The purpose of the designation is to ensure that the special environmental qualities of this section of undeveloped coastline are properly managed and protected. This approach is echoed in PPW (Paragraphs 5.7.4 and 11.1.6 refer) and in the Adopted LDP (Policy MG 27 refers).
- 7.12.2. Notwithstanding the above, the Council recognises that the Glamorgan Heritage Coast is also an important visitor attraction and that there are existing 'honey pot' locations at Ogmore by Sea, Dunraven Bay, Nash Point and Cwm Colhuw which are important for recreational activity. Accordingly, Policy MG27 (Glamorgan Heritage Coast) allows for development that is essential for informal recreation activities (e.g. footpaths, interpretation centres, equipment hire facilities) and low impact tourism which would not prejudice the intrinsic environmental and heritage qualities of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast. Examples of low impact tourism uses could include camp sites, glamping accommodation (such as yurts, teepees, bell tents), pop up open air music events, food and drink festivals and craft fairs which are often seasonal and small scale but can bring significant economic benefits to the local area.

## **7.13. Ancillary Infrastructure**

- 7.13.1. Wherever possible, new tourism facilities / developments should seek in the first instance to utilise existing buildings and structures to accommodate new facilities such as amenity blocks (showers, toilets, kitchen/eating areas etc). Proposals for the conversion of rural buildings to alternative uses will need to comply with LDP

Policy MD11 and the Conversion and Renovation of Rural Buildings SPG together with other relevant policies / SPGs such as those relating to access arrangements and parking provision, impacts on protected habitats or species etc.

- 7.13.2. Any new supporting infrastructure should be minimal and essential to the operation of the proposal. Where new ancillary infrastructure is required, careful consideration should be given to the siting, scale and design of any facility to ensure that landscape, environmental and visual impacts are minimised. Other supporting infrastructure such as access roads or tracks, car parking, drainage equipment and facilities, electricity and water supplies should also be sensitively integrated into the landscape. Supplementary features such as fire pits, BBQ areas etc. should be incorporated within the overall scheme design and should be shown on site layout plans submitted with a planning application. The Council encourages the sustainable use of and management of natural resources such as rain water recycling and renewable energy uses which can assist in minimising the extent of new on site infrastructure.

## **7.14. Advertising**

- 7.14.1. When considering the use of advertising or signage, care should be taken to ensure that they are designed and sited to avoid creating an adverse impact on their surroundings and that a proliferation of individually acceptable signs does not spoil the appearance of the countryside.

## **8. Safeguarding Existing Tourism and Leisure Facilities**

- 8.1. Tourism and Leisure facilities are those places that attract residents or visitors to the area for recreational purposes and may include hotels or tourist accommodation, museums, indoor or outdoor sport venues, outdoor pursuits, riding schools, farm and country parks, theme parks and event / exhibition space. However, this list is not exhaustive and there are many other facilities which could fall within this definition.
- 8.2. In both urban and rural areas, tourism-related development is an essential element in providing for a healthy, diverse, local and national economy. Furthermore, it can contribute to the provision and maintenance of leisure facilities for local communities. In view of this, the LDP seeks to enhance existing tourism and leisure facilities and resist proposals which would result in their loss. Where a proposal involves the loss of an existing tourism or leisure facility, Policy MD13 (Tourism and Leisure) requires applicants to demonstrate that there is either a lack of market demand or that the business is not financially viable. This should be provided in the form of a marketing statement and include the following information:
- Independent valuation;
  - Sales marketing materials and responses;
  - Accounts;
  - Occupancy and achieved room rate data (where applicable);
  - Business plans;
  - Marketing Plan, schedule and brochures;
  - Investment schedule and plans;
  - Details of plans to up-grade/re-position with full costing.
- 8.3. Appropriate marketing should be undertaken for a reasonable period of time before a planning application for a change to use or redevelopment of an existing tourism / leisure facility is considered. The Council considers that a period of 12 months is an appropriate period, and applicants are advised to submit their planning application within 3 months of completing the marketing exercise to avoid outdated evidence.

## 9. Further information and Advice

- 9.1. Further advice on all aspects of this guidance can be sought from the Planning Department. Prior to the formal submission of a planning application, the Council encourages applicants to utilise the Council's pre-application services which can save unnecessary work, costs and delay through negotiation. Further information on the Council's pre-application advice services can be found on the Council's website [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

### **Development Management**

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CF63 4RT  
Tel: 01446 704681  
Email: [planning@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:planning@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

- 9.2. Proposals for tourism and leisure related development proposals may also benefit from contact with the Council's Tourism team and / or the Creative Rural Communities team who work with communities and enterprises to develop innovative projects and ideas that create long term social and economic benefits within the rural Vale.

9.3.

### **Tourism Team**

Tourism Office  
Barry Island Tourist Information Centre  
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The Triangle  
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Email: [tourism@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:tourism@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

### **Creative Rural Communities**

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## 10. Appendices

### 10.1. Appendix 1 – Vale of Glamorgan STEAM Tourism Survey 2016 Results Summary



#### STEAM SUMMARY 2016 VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

|                                     |        |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total economic impact of tourism £M | 221.60 |
| % change on 2015 (£'s 2016)         | -0.5%  |

|                               |      |
|-------------------------------|------|
| Total visitor days (Millions) | 5.40 |
| % change on 2015              | 0.0% |

|                                 |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Staying visitor days (Millions) | 2.02  |
| % change on 2015                | -0.8% |

|                                  |      |
|----------------------------------|------|
| Total visitor numbers (Millions) | 3.97 |
| % change on 2015                 | 0.2% |

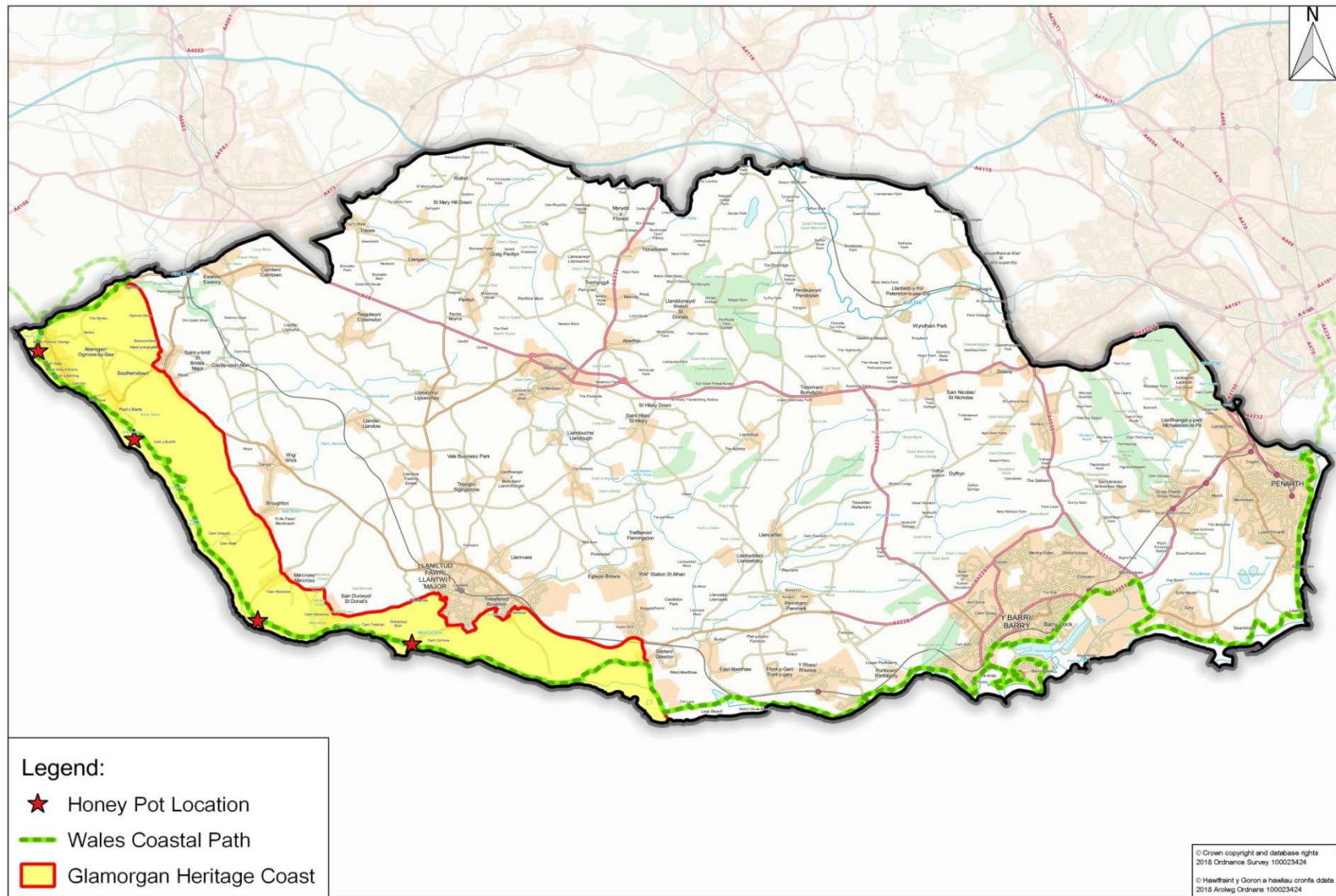
|                                       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Number of staying visitors (Millions) | 0.59  |
| % change on 2015                      | -1.3% |

|                                   |      |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| Number of day visitors (Millions) | 3.38 |
| % change on 2015                  | 0.5% |

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Number of FTE jobs supported by tourism spend | 2,946 |
| % change on 2015                              | 0.0%  |

Prepared by Cathy James, GTS (UK) Ltd

### 10.2. Appendix 2: Map Showing the Wales Coastal Path, Glamorgan Heritage Coast and Honey Pot Locations



### 10.3. Appendix 3: Examples of Tourism and Leisure Developments in the Vale of Glamorgan



**Site Name: West Farm, Southerndown**      **Planning App. Ref: 2009/01364/FUL**

**Development: Change of use from tea shop restaurant to mixed use restaurant, cinema plays, meeting facilities, exhibitions and holiday accommodation**

This application was for a change of use of an existing former barn from a tea room / restaurant to a mix of uses including a tea room/restaurant, cinema/play facility, meeting room and exhibition space, with a separate unit for holiday let accommodation. The mix of ‘function’ uses were accommodated within the ground floor of the building and the left hand side of the first floor, with the holiday let unit located adjacent on the right hand side of the first floor. The holiday let had a lounge area, bathroom and two bedrooms.

The proposed mix of commercial facilities were not readily available elsewhere in such close proximity to the neighbouring rural villages, and it was considered that the application represented a beneficial form of use that would have a positive impact upon tourism in the local area and the wider rural economy. It also satisfied local and national planning policy, in respect of assisting the creation of sustainable communities by providing residents with a range of local services close to their homes.

Similarly, the proposed holiday let unit represented a tourism facility that would assist the rural economy and could either function as a let-able unit in its own right or as well placed ancillary accommodation to customers using the other commercial facilities within the building. There was a clear synergy between the two units and it was considered that the holiday let would positively support the attractiveness of the tea room/restaurant/function room.

In this case the development did not involve any external alterations to the building or the creation of any enlarged parking areas or curtilage. Therefore, the change of use did not adversely affect the character of the building or the special environmental qualities of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast.

Due to its rural location it was considered that a degree of parking was required to support the mixed use functions on site as some visitors would be arriving by car. However the site already benefitted from a parking area which was able to serve the proposed development.





Interior  
of  
Cabans

**Glamping Lodges**

**Site Name: Tresilian Wood, St Donats**

**Planning App. Ref: 2014/01441/FUL**

**Development: Proposed five holiday lodges and upgrade of campsite to include extension of existing reception building to provide five star facilities and two WC and shower units.**

This application was for a change of use of the site to a campsite. The proposal included 5 holiday lodges; six 'Cabans' and a campsite area as well as two new toilet and shower blocks and an extension to the existing reception and shower/toilet building. The extended building also included provision for a moderate sized workshop and storage area for the 'Cabans' when not in use.

The 'Cabans' are temporary structures that can be erected within a few hours. They are of a timber construction with a metal frame in an Octagon Shape. The lodge buildings are slightly larger than the 'Cabans' but were purpose built to maximise the minimal floor space and provide self-sufficient accommodation. The lodges are of wooden construction supported on posts standing on 11 circular concrete pads, which were excavated by hand for each location.

While the proposal was for wooden lodges and 'Cabans', as opposed to caravans and chalets, they are very similar in nature and principle to those forms of accommodation which are usually seen on campsites. PPW stresses the importance of tourism in assisting the local economy and specifically states that in rural areas, tourism-related developments are an essential element in providing for a healthy, diverse, local and national economy. It states that they can contribute to the provision and maintenance of facilities for local communities but acknowledges that development should be sympathetic in nature and scale to the local environment and to the needs of visitors and the local community. Given the importance of developing the rural tourism economy in the Vale, it is imperative to encourage uses such as this proposal in appropriate locations. In this context the proposed development represented the type of development promoted by PPW, which would provide benefits to the rural economy and assist the aims of strategic policy in the LDP.

The proposal did affect a number of trees which had to be removed for the siting of the lodges, however, this was clearly considered in an arboriculturist report provided with the application. Specifically in this case, the trees that were felled in order to accommodate the lodges and parking area were small or failing trees, which would not result in a wider impact on the existing visual amenity at the site.



**Site Name: Three Golden Cups Campsite, Southerndown**

**Planning App. Ref: 2013/00552/FUL**

**Development: Change of use from agricultural land to campsite**

The proposed development on land to the rear of the Three Golden Cups Public House sought to gain planning permission for a campsite for 40 pitches, a permanent shower block, and a new vehicular access to the proposed campsite. The application sought to diversify the business and make the most use of the land relating to the public house. The application was submitted following a trial project organised by the Council's Creative Rural Communities Team, which identified six sites within the Glamorgan Heritage Coast which would benefit from a campsite to promote tourism within the local area.

As the Glamorgan Heritage Coast is considered a crucial asset in promoting the Vale of Glamorgan as a tourist destination it was deemed that the proposed use should be located in an area which maximises the contribution the Glamorgan Heritage Coast makes to the rural tourism economy while preserving its overall character and appearance. Therefore, the proposal was assessed upon its visual impact, the impact upon neighbouring amenity, highway safety and the potential tourism benefits.

The visual impact of the proposal was alleviated due to the position of the site in a well screened area which limited public views into the proposed campsite. The topography of the site, existing buildings, boundary wall, the low level nature of the development and the sensitive design of the shower block all contributed to minimising the visual impact of the proposal. Furthermore, the development was situated within close proximity to the built form of Southerndown which was considered to be a logical position for the campsite due to its closeness to existing access routes to the nearby beach. The applicant submitted a Campsite Rules and Management Structure setting out how the site would be run and included buffer areas between pitches and the neighbouring properties to ensure residential amenity was protected.

The campsite was considered to actively support the aims of the Council's Rural Local Development Strategy by encouraging and improving access to the rural Vale, and strengthening the stock of tourist accommodation available to visitors. Therefore it was considered that the proposal would represent a significant benefit to the local and Vale wide tourism economy. Overall, the proposal was granted permission as it was considered to be a form of low impact tourism and would benefit the rural tourism economy, especially the Glamorgan Heritage Coast.



Sensitive Design Materials



Built in the landscape

**Site Name: Pen Y Bont Surf Lifesaver Centre, Ogmere by Sea**

**Planning App. Ref: 2012/00464/FUL**

**Development: Demolition of existing Surf Lifesavers Centre and replacement with a new Surf Life Savers Centre**

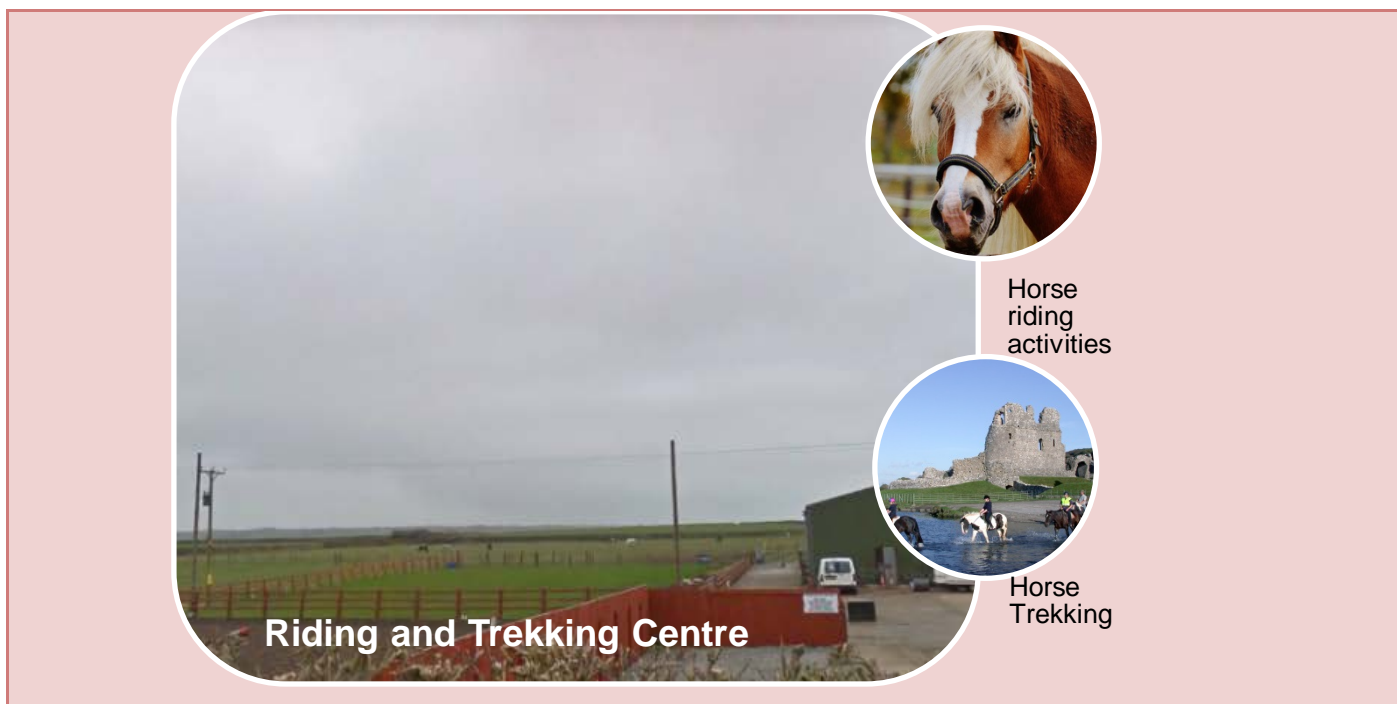
The application was to demolish and replace the existing Surf Lifesavers Centre with a new life guard centre. The proposed building would provide a multi-purpose facility which would be shared by the Local Community, Police, Coastguard, RNLI sections of Surf Life Saving Wales and provide a suitable/functional building for the education of young lifeguards and visitors.

It was recognised that the existing building was no longer “fit for purpose” and that any remedial works to maintain the building or extend it would not be economically viable. Moreover, it was recognised that a new purpose built building would accommodate the necessary storage needs of the club and by re-siting the building it would facilitate direct access onto the new slipway access to the beach.

As the building would be clearly visible from a number of public viewpoints and from within the Glamorgan Heritage Coast, the siting, design and overall appearance of the building needed to be given detailed consideration in relation to its immediate and wider context. In terms of design, the massing, form and proposed detailing of the building reflected the maritime nature of the building and the fact that the location of the building is very exposed to the elements of the sea and weather. It was recognised that the roof form would be the most prominent and therefore visible part of the building. However the “double curved” roof reduces the eaves height to the rear elevation and ‘softens’ the appearance of the gable ends. In relation to the material finishes, the use of dressed local stone, was considered acceptable, in that it reflects the materials found in the locality.

The general approach to landscaping in this application was to maintain the character of the existing natural landscaping. The proposed grassed sand bunds introduced around the car parking areas, were not intended to screen the development but to act as a natural transition between the building and the undulating natural habitat of the sand dune grassland.

Through these specific design solutions the proposal was considered an appropriate form of development and was granted planning permission.



**Site Name: Land Opposite Court Newydd Farm, St. Brides Major**      **Planning App. Ref: 2009/01118/FUL**

**Development: Change of use of land and barn to riding and trekking centre**

The application proposed the regularisation of a change of use of the land to a riding school and trekking centre. The applicant’s supporting statement indicated the land had been used informally for horse riding lessons since 1989, but more formally as a riding and trekking centre since 1999. The proposal related to the use of the existing manege, barn, paddock and parking area and did not involve any new operational development.

Although the proposal did not involve any additional operational development beyond that which had already been approved under previous planning applications it nevertheless remains the case that a commercial proposal of this nature could result in a more intensive use than a domestic horse related development, with a greater visual impact from associated trappings, additional vehicle movements etc.

However, in this case, it was not considered that the proposed use would unacceptably impact upon the character of the area. The riding school has operated for a number of years without the use of visually intrusive signage or other associated commercial trappings, and the use of the parking area is generally limited given the relative infrequency of its use throughout the week and the staggering of visitors on weekends.

In terms of the adopted LDP, proposals of this nature would typically be considered under policies SP11 - Tourism and Leisure, MG29 - Tourism and Leisure Facilities and MD13 -Tourism and Leisure. Considerations may also be given to Policy MD17 Rural Enterprise where the proposed development relates to an existing agricultural use which wishes to diversify its operations.



**Site Name: Beech Clump, Cowbridge**      **Planning App. Ref: 1991/00406/FUL**

**Development: Change of use for adventure training games / paintballing park**

Although the development was under a different planning policy framework it has continued to be a successful business and a good example of low impact tourism in the Rural Vale.

The development related to a woodland area on a southward facing hillside bordered by agricultural meadowland. The woodland area formed part of an attractive landscape in the rural area and bordered the Thaw Valley which was designated as an area of High Landscape Importance in the draft Rural Vale Local Plan at the time. However, the proposed development was situated away from the most high value trees on site which were protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) to ensure that the quality and amenity value of the TPO was maintained.

The proposal mainly used temporary structures throughout the development to create barricades and obstacles for the paintballing activity proposed. Although a wooden castle like permanent structure was proposed, it was reasonably small scale and well screened by the surrounding woodland which limited its visibility within the surrounding landscape.

A number of planning conditions were imposed on the development to ensure that the proposal respected its sensitive setting such as, no overnight camping, additional works to trees requiring written consent to the Local Planning Authority, limiting the time activities could be undertaken on the site to between 10:00am and 7:00pm and limiting the amount of people who could attend the site at any one time to ensure there was no detrimental impact upon local amenity.

Although planning policy has changed considerably since this development was approved the main considerations relating to the impact upon the setting and local amenity would still be relevant under policies in the adopted LDP (e.g. policies SP11 Tourism and Leisure, MG17 - Special landscape Areas, MD1 - Location of New Development, MD2 - Design of New Development, MD13 - Tourism and Leisure and MD17 - Rural Enterprise).



**Civil Marriages & Weddings**

Minimal changes to existing barns

Low impact setting

**Site Name: Cosmeston Medieval Village**

**Planning App. Ref: 2016/01330/REG3**

**Development: Change of use of two barn buildings, forming part of Cosmeston Medieval Village, to allow civil marriages and wedding events**

This application was for a change of use of two of the medieval barns situated within Cosmeston Medieval Village / Country Park (known as Tithe Barn and Reeve's Barn) to allow for civil marriage proceedings.

The proposed development indicated that although the two barns would be licensed to hold ceremonies, only one civil marriage event would take place at any one time. Therefore it was anticipated that the site would host approximately 10 no. civil ceremonies per year. Although the venue would be available for use 7 days a week, it was anticipated that the majority of civil marriage events would take place between Friday and Sunday, between 9am and 5pm, with none being held on bank holidays. The application stated that the organisation of any civil marriage events would be managed by Countryside Services staff, with appropriate licences in place and relevant terms and conditions imposed to control noise, parking etc.

It was considered that the limited use of the barns for civil marriages would both complement and enhance the existing facilities which were being used as a heritage facility. It was also deemed that the proposed use would help maintain the future viability of the country park, thereby serving to safeguard an existing recreational facility.

The proposal did not include any works to the existing barns or any additional on-site parking. However the proposal did include some new works to an existing access to enable emergency and disabled access to the venue and servicing as required. Such works represented new development within the rural landscape but were considered relatively minor when compared with the wider scale of the Country Park and its overall facilities. As such it was concluded that the proposal would have no adverse impact on the character and appearance of the immediate area or the wider undeveloped areas of the country park.

The potential increase in traffic from the proposed use was considered against the existing access arrangements and traffic flow to and from the site associated with its current use as a country park. On balance, it was determined that the increased use of the site for civil marriages and wedding events would not significantly affect the residential amenity of nearby residential properties.





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