

## **6.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

6.1 LANDMAP information

6.2 Status of LVIA Guidelines Edition 3 March 2013

## L1.0 LANDMAP

L1.1 LANDMAP<sup>1</sup> is “the national information system, devised by the Countryside Council for Wales, for taking landscape into account in decision-making”. It allows “information about landscape to be gathered, organised and evaluated into a nationally consistent data set ... that aims to be as objective as possible”. The information database contains “both relatively objective information - such as rock type and historical information - and more subjective information, such as sensory responses and cultural interpretation”. Individual studies of topics, or “aspects”, of the landscape are carried out: the Visual and Sensory Aspect (VS), the Geological Landscape (GL), Landscape Habitats (LH), Historic Landscape (HL), and the Cultural Landscape (CL).

L1.2 Aspect Areas are evaluated, according to the following criteria:

<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
Outstanding	of international or national importance
High	of regional or county importance
Moderate	of local importance
Low	of little or no importance
Unknown	insufficient information exists to evaluate
<i>NB: Where the Evaluation refers to ‘importance’ it is in terms of that particular Aspect only</i>	

L1.3 The LANDMAP information for the landscape context study area has been published on the CCW website<sup>2</sup>. The VS aspect area classification, summary descriptions, and justification for the overall evaluation of the aspect areas occurring within the context of the site are set out in the following tables.

**Table 1 Visual & Sensory Aspect Areas**

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
<b>BRCKNVS597 Coed-y-Rhaiadr</b>	Upland / Upland Valleys / Open / Wooded Upland Valleys (Level 3).  An extensive area of coniferous plantation dominated by spruce with some larch. The area covers previously enclosed land and there is a central area of rough pasture which is still retained with two dwellings. The area acts as simple backcloth to Nedd Valley. Within the lower part of the Nedd Valley there is deciduous woodland with waterfalls on the river. There is public access and this is a popular visitor attraction serviced by car parks to the south and north.	Moderate	The forestry plantation is consistently managed and has a consistent character with integrity. It is dominated by a single species which leads to some monotony visually. The Nedd Valley lower area is covered with deciduous woodland focussing on the river with impressive waterfalls and rocky channel. This area is of outstanding quality in all categories.
<b>BRCKNVS876 Nedd Fechan and Mellte Valleys</b>	Upland / Upland Valleys / Open / Wooded Mosaic Upland Valleys (Level 3).  The pastoral upland valleys of the Mellte and Nedd Fechan run south from the upland massif of Fforest Fawr cutting through the limestone upland. Between them is a low ridge which has rock outcrops and common land in places. This area is more open with larger fields and little woody vegetation. The landcover is dominated	Outstanding	The valleys have a high scenic quality through their unspoilt upland pastoral mosaic character. The main interest is in the river courses with their superb landscape of rocky beds, waterfalls and caves in a woodland setting. The area is known as Waterfall

<sup>1</sup> Countryside Council for Wales, <http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk/> and <http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk/methodology/>

<sup>2</sup> Countryside Council for Wales LANDMAP website: <http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk/map/Map.aspx>, <http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk/map/Map2.aspx?Editable=False&Action=Dynamic&MapCollectionName=Landmap&Layer01=settlmnt;Aberdare>

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
	by pasture with riparian deciduous woodland, particularly on steep slopes, and grown out hedgerows, all of which contribute to an enclosed, sheltered landscape. Some of the woodlands are grazed, eliminating understorey and allowing clear views. Rectilinear blocks of coniferous forest lie on the upper slopes below Fan Llia and Fan Nedd. Occasional conifers associated with dwellings reinforce the upland character. Settlement is mainly scattered farmsteads. Ystradfellte and Pontneddfechan are the only settlements, nestling in the valley floor of the Mellte and Nedd Fechan respectively. The latter has crept up the hill with suburban housing which is out of character. The main interest in the area is focussed on the rivers with their associated waterfalls and limestone caves. The river courses are rocky and have strong riparian vegetation. Visitors focus on these areas for walking and caving.		Country and has a strong sense of place. It is well visited for the beauty of the countryside as setting for the waterfalls which indicates consensus on value. The area is generally of consistent character.
<b>BRCKNVS911 Gwaun Hepste</b>	Upland / Upland Valleys / Open / Wooded Upland Valleys (Level 3).  A significant area of coniferous forestry, some relatively immature and some already felled on a ridge between Mellte and Hepste Valleys. A small part of the coniferous forest lies west of the Mellte. The plantations are dominated by spruce but have some other species such as larch and are somewhat monotonous, visually. They form an abrupt edge against the adjoining pasture. The cleared areas are unsightly. The deciduous woodland of the Mellte Valley is very attractive. The river with waterfalls and rocky course is very attractive and is used by cavers and others for recreation. There are paths through this area and the coniferous woodland.	Moderate	The forestry plantation is consistently managed and has consistent character with integrity. It is dominated by a single species which leads to monotony visually. The Mellte Valley is covered with deciduous woodland focussing on the impressive water falls and rocky channel. This area is of outstanding/high value.
<b>CynonVS368 Opencast</b>	Development / Developed Unbuilt Land / Excavation (Level 3)  Area of opencast mining	Low	75% criteria low
<b>CynonVS430 Hirwaun Common</b>	Upland / Exposed Upland/Plateau / Upland Grazing (Level 3).  Dramatic landscape of rough grazed grassland with rock outcrops and some marshy areas lying between approximately 200m and 515m AOD. Wind noise is a dominant aesthetic factor which evokes particular experience of exposure and wildness. Attractive upland views within and attractive rolling terrain to north. A475 is a visual detractor.	High	Attractive largely unspoilt upland area with strong sense of place and good views.
<b>CynonVS580 St Gwynno</b>	Upland / Exposed Upland / Plateau / Wooded Upland & Plateaux (Level 3).  Upland landscape dominated by coniferous forest with small areas of rough grazing/open land interspersed. Strongly defined undulating topography with ridges and valleys creates a multi-scaled landscape with a variety of spaces. Limited views out to upland areas. Some car/refuse dumping minor eyesore/visual detractor.	Moderate	All criteria moderate for this typical upland plantation. It should be noted that the area has a recreational amenity value, indicated by picnic sites, trails and car parking.
<b>CYNONVS833 Penderyn</b>	Upland / Hills, Lower Plateau & Scarp Slopes / Hillside & Scarp Slopes Mosaic (Level 3).  Upper valley sides with strong upland feel-both	Moderate	All criteria moderate.

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	from the strong visual link that exists and the rough grazing with some woodland/conifer elements. Slight urban feel on lower slopes but dominant character is that of an upland area. Visual detractors include pylons and the sharply defined urban edge. Noise and movement from the A465. Scattered farmsteads.		
<b>NPTVS252 A465 (T)</b>	Development / Developed Unbuilt Land / Road Corridor (Level 3). Major dualled road running up the Neath valley, including split level junctions, signage, lighting and surrounding verges etc. The busy road follows the edge and then middle of the valley, frequently raised above the valley floor on embankment and in places diverting the River Neath. Its presence is a detractor through much of the valley both visually and aurally as are elements associated with it including signage and lighting around junctions. The road affords views of the surrounding valley to large numbers of people.	Low	The road is a detractor within the valley, vehicles producing almost constant noise and considerable light pollution. The road affords views of the Neath valley to a large number of people.
<b>NPTVS357 Hirfynydd</b>	Upland / Exposed Upland / Plateau / Wooded Upland & Plateaux (Level 3). Woodland stretching from Vale of Neath over shoulder to Dulais valley. Rising from approx 50m AOD in the Neath valley to 481m AOD forming the steep northern flank of the valley. The cover is almost entirely coniferous woodland with only small areas of open ground. The woodland and landform creates a constant and imposing feature along the Neath valley from Glynnedd to Clyne. In the Dulais valley fingers of woodland descend low down into the valley, breaking up the pastoral mosaic. Generally the forest edges contain deciduous vegetation or are irregular and are complimentary to the surrounding landscape. In places, an abrupt edge and clear felling act as detractors. There is only minimal access into the area, with St Illtyds Way and the Roman road crossing. The absence of dwellings reinforce the remote character of this area.	Moderate	The area has a tranquil and remote feeling, removed from settlements and dwellings. The topography and woodland cover of the area makes this a significant and at times dramatic feature. It dominates the northern slopes of the Neath valley and southern slopes of Dulais. The management is consistent throughout.
<b>NPTVS430 Gelliceibryn / Pont Walby</b>	Upland / Upland Valleys / Wooded Upland Valleys (Level 3). Both sides of Neath valley east of Glynnedd, deeply cut with minor valleys. The areas are heavily wooded with enclosed areas of pasture, boundaries of which are predominantly grown out hedges. The deciduous cover gives a more sheltered, settled feel than much of the surrounding area. The woodland hides evidence of workings to the south west. There are scattered settlements throughout the area and only minor roads and footpaths. Deciduous woodland contrasts with surrounding land cover - moorland/ coniferous plantations. This area appears run down with areas of encroachment of bracken and scrub.	Moderate	Heavily wooded pastoral landscape with an intimate scenic quality. Although there has been some disturbance in areas, deciduous cover helps maintain a constant character throughout the area. To the east, in the Nedd Fechan valley, a series of waterfalls attract visitors, confirming the scenic quality of the area.
<b>NPTVS431 Neath valley (bottom)</b>	Upland / Upland Valleys / Open / Wooded Mosaic Upland Valleys (Level 3). Wide valley bottom of the Neath Valley gently rising from approx 20m AOD at Neath to approx	Moderate	The combination of river, canal and hidden elements among the wooded/pastoral mosaic provide a strong scenic

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
	<p>70m AOD at the county borough boundary. A mixture of settlements, individual dwellings and scattered commercial units lie within a mosaic of pasture, bounded predominantly by fences and deciduous woodland which enhances the sense of enclosure. In places, the boundary trees add interest and mark where boundaries once lay. The dualled A465(T) runs through the area, as do a number of minor roads which give a sense, with the Neath canal of a strong communication corridor. The River Neath winds its way down the valley and is complemented by the Neath canal - both containing attractive features including locks, bridges etc. which add to the settled character of the valley floor. The river has riparian vegetation and a natural course which has been canalised in places. The valley floor also contains a number of large tracts of water related to the A465 and industrial works. On the whole the main settlements are industrial in character and do not have a strong relationship with the river or with the surrounding landscape.</p>		<p>quality through sections of the valley. This is enhanced by the sense of enclosure. However the presence of commercial developments and road corridor detracts from the area. Pleasant views are afforded to higher ground around.</p>
<p><b>NPTVS661</b> <b>Head of Dulais Valley</b></p>	<p>Upland / Exposed Upland/Plateau / Upland Grazing (Level 3).</p> <p>Area at the head of Dulais valley, rising from approx 170m AOD to approx 300m AOD. The landcover is rough grass and grazed pasture. There are numerous minor water courses, the larger ones with significant riparian vegetation. There are significant levels of disturbance to the landscape with disused workings, reclaimed with new hedge planting and fenced enclosures. The disturbed landscape appearing better maintained, with less coarse grass and more intact hedges than undisturbed land. Additional areas of woodland, both coniferous blocks and deciduous copses add interest. New deciduous planting is not yet of sufficient maturity to influence the character. There are few scattered dwellings. Pylons are in evidence on the skyline.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>The area acts as a transitional area between the settled Dulais valley and the disturbed landscape beyond, both in a visual manner and as a communication corridor – road and rail. Coniferous planting, although harsh edged and dominant, adds character to the landscape as does riparian vegetation and field pattern to the north.</p>
<p><b>NPTVS962</b> <b>Mynydd Nant y bar / Mynydd Blaenafan</b></p>	<p>Upland / Exposed Upland / Plateau / Wooded Upland &amp; Plateaux (Level 3).</p> <p>Large area of undulating plateau running across the high ground between the Afan valley and Neath valley to the east of county borough. Rising from approx 50m AOD in Neath valley to 600m AOD. Numerous small valleys provide added topographical interest to this landscape which the conifers emphasise and add drama to. The area is almost entirely covered with coniferous plantation, mainly spruce, with larch which leads to a monotonous cover on the plateau tops. There are some areas of open ground and exposed rock, primarily at summits or steeper ground. There are no roads or settlements in this area although the Coed Morgannwy Way which almost dissects the area and provides access along a long distance trail. In many areas the abrupt forest edge sits uncomfortably with the surrounding open landscape. Cleared areas of forest are unsightly.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Area of forestry is consistently managed and contains numerous landscape features, exposed rock and open upland, which add to the aesthetic quality of this area. The edges and skyline against the Afan and Neath valley complement the valleys' characters.</p>

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<b>NPTVS967</b> <b>Neath Valley Settlements</b>	Development / Built Land / Village (Level 3). Settlements of Tonna, Resolven, Blaengwrach and Glynneath lying in the base of the Neath Valley, aligned along valley roads which have been superseded by the A465(T) which bypasses the settlements, reducing the vehicle impact on the villages. The cores of the settlements are comprised of stone built dwellings and retail, the centres consisting primarily of terraced dwellings. Outside the core the form of the settlement is much more dispersed with semi detached and detached houses of both brick and render facades. These new developments have reduced the link to the surrounding landscape from the core, also none of the settlements have any significant link to the river. Commercial development has occurred expanding the settlements on the valley floor.	Low	Although there has been significant deterioration of the character of the settlements through newer development, the small scale of the settlements prevents the intrinsic character of the core being lost. Each of the settlements has a similar character, enhanced by removal of much of the valley traffic.
<b>NPTVS970</b> <b>Banwen Pyrdin</b>	Upland / Exposed Upland / Plateau / Upland Grazing (Level 3). Area of grazed upland plateau from approx 180m AOD to approx 300m AOD, running between the head of Dulais valley and the upper Neath valley. In many areas pasture is being reduced by encroachment of coarse grasses, scrub, bracken and in places, wetland species. The inter valley A road cuts through the area. Land to the east of the road, has a more sheltered character and falls away and facilitates broad views out to the uplands to the north. To the south of the road the area gradually becomes more exposed, but mixed shelterbelts, following the field pattern provide some shelter. There are a number of scattered dwellings. Field boundaries are predominantly overgrown hedges and some new hedge planting has occurred.	Moderate	This upland pastoral area has relatively low scenic quality due to its slightly degraded character but facilitates views out to the north east. The landscape management /character is fairly consistent throughout, with variations in intensity of management. A series of shelterbelts along field boundaries add a distinctive element.

**Table 2 Geological Landscape Aspect Areas**

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
<b>BRCKNGL884</b> <b>Coed y Rhaiadr</b>	Mountain and upland valley / Undulating upland terrain and dissected plateau / Upland valley slope (Level 3). S-facing moderate to low slopes in S-dipping Upper Millstone Grit and Lower Coal Measures shales and sandstones, dissected by NE-SW Nedd Fechan and Nant Llech valleys. Thick cover of boulder clay, some upland peat on higher slopes. NNW-SSE faults forming topographic features along Nedd Fechan valley and Henrhyd Fault.	Outstanding	River valleys (SSSI Dyffrynoedd Nedd a Mellte a Moel Penderyn 291959 209324) into arboniferous karst, Variscan structures; Millstone Grit Middle Shales-Farewell Rock stratigraphy.
<b>CynonGL020</b> <b>Upper Cynon Valley - west</b>	Mountain and upland valley / Glaciated mountain terrain / Glacial mountain valley (Level 3). U-shaped valley with steep slopes in gently S-dipping Pennant sandstones (Upper Carboniferous), containing well-preserved glacial cirques in Cwm Dare & Craig y Bwlch... Lower slopes underlain by Productive Coal Fm mudstones covered by extensive boulder clay	High	Landscape with important glacial features of at least regional importance (potential RIGS sites), including cirques in Pennant sandstones (Cwm Dare & Craig y Bwlch) and glacial lake at Hirwaun.

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
	and patches of peat, infilling glacial lake at Hirwaun Ponds. Alluvial fan developed at mouth of Cwm Dare. Dip slope in Namurian (Upper Carboniferous) with swallow holes & clutter. Major NNW faults at low angle to valley trend. Partially reclaimed opencast site.		
<b>CynonGL021 Penderyn</b>	Mountain and upland valley / Undulating upland terrain and dissected plateau / Upland plateau (Level 3).  Dip slope of S- and N-dipping Dinantian limestones (Lower Carboniferous), with swallow holes, to S of Neath fault zone. Minor strike valley filled by boulder clay on Lower Limestone Shale Group forms part of Cwm Cadlan, with underground drainage. Limestone dip steepens westwards to zone of folding fault zone at Moel Penderyn & Neath-Mellte SSSI. Large working limestone Penderyn Quarry & many disused limestone quarries.	Outstanding	Includes important exposure of Lower Carboniferous limestone in working quarry and karstic features, also Dyffrynoedd Nedd a Mellte, a Moel Penderyn SSSI.
<b>CynonGL023 Neath Fault Zone</b>	Tectonically controlled topography / Tectonically controlled topography / Valley following folds, fault controlled gorges, or scarps (Level 3).  Upland eastern part of ENE trending Neath fault zone, with complex fold & fault pattern developed in Old Red Sandstone (Devonian), Dinantian, Namurian & lower Coal Measures (all Carboniferous). N & S dip slopes bound ridge features. Widespread boulder clay and peat cover. Numerous swallow holes & extensive areas of loose sandstone/conglomerate blocks overlying Namurian basal Grit outcrop. Area from upper Taff valley in ENE, across upper Cynon, to Neath valley in SW.	Outstanding	Upland area with no development and important karstic features, also Dyffrynoedd Nedd a Mellte, a Moel Penderyn SSSI and Neath Fault Zone.
<b>CynonGL025 Rhondda Fach Valley</b>	Mountain and upland valley / Glaciated mountain terrain / Glacial mountain valley (Level 3).  Major U-shaped tributary valley to Rhondda Fawr, eroding high-level plateau & crossing regional E-W Gelligaer synform. Valley narrows through Pennant sandstones (Upper Carboniferous); cliffs to SW have incipient cirques. Valley floored by upper Coal Measure Group mudstones (Upper Carboniferous), overlain by boulder clay in N, & with glacial sand/gravel, terraces & alluvium in S. Extensive landslips of sandstones in steep valley sides. Disused Pennant sandstone quarries & closed colliery shafts & waste tips.	Moderate	Glacial valley dominated by widespread Pennant succession.
<b>CynonGL026 Upper Rhondda Fawr - East</b>	Mountain and upland valley / Glaciated mountain terrain / Glacial mountain valley (Level 3).  East side of the asymmetric Upper Rhondda Fawr U-shaped valley, with tributary Orci hanging valley. Valley floor in gently S-dipping Productive Coal Fm (Upper Carboniferous), with steep valley sides in Pennant sandstones (Upper Carboniferous), extensively landslipped. Valley floor covered with boulder clay & overlying glacial sand/gravel & alluvium. Cwm Orci has thick boulder clay fill & incipient cirque form. Disused colliery shafts & waste tips.	Outstanding	Includes nationally important sites for Wesphalian stratigraphy (Upper Carboniferous - Blaen Rhondda road cutting SSSI and edge of Craig y Llyn SSSI).
<b>CynonGL027</b>	Mountain and upland valley / Glaciated	Outstanding	Dominantly upland area

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<b>Upper Rhondda Fawr - West</b>	mountain terrain / Glacial mountain valley (Level 3). W side of asymmetric Upper Rhondda Fawr U-shaped valley cut into high-level sandstone plateau, with several hanging tributary valleys ringed with exceptionally well-preserved cirques. Valley floors cut in Productive Coal Fm (Upper Carboniferous), with steep valley side in Pennant sandstones (Upper Carboniferous), and with extensive land slipping. NW Dinas fault isolates buttresses along the main valley. Valley floor with morainic boulder clay, & alluvium in Blaen Cwm, with alluvial fan at the N of Cwm Parc.		with exceptional glacial geomorphology in the form of well preserved cirques. Includes Mynydd Ty Isaf SSSI.
<b>CynonGL028 Rhigos</b>	Mountain and upland valley / Glaciated mountain Terrain / Glacial mountain valley (Level 3). S margin of the NE-SW Upper Neath valley, S of the Neath fault zone (including part of SSSI Dyffrynoedd Nedd a Mellte, a Moel Penderyn SSSI). Steep scarp slope in gently S-dipping Pennant sandstones (Upper Carboniferous), eroded into prominent cirque with landslips in Craig y Llyn SSSI. Lower gentle slopes in Productive Coal Fm (Upper Carboniferous), covered with extensive boulder clay & patches of peat, which fills a glacial lake at Hirwaun Ponds. NW-SE Hirwaun fault zone. Coal Measures worked in Tower colliery & reclaimed opencast sites. Adits in Pennant measures.	Outstanding	Southern area includes edge of plateau with well developed cirques - includes Dyffrynoedd Nedd a Mellte, a Moel Penderyn and Craig y LlynSSSIs with interests including Westphalian stratigraphy (UpperCarboniferous).
<b>NPTGL015 Hirfynydd</b>	Mountain and upland valley / Undulating upland terrain and dissected plateau / Upland plateau (Level 3). Upland plateau with NW-SE strike ridges of South Wales Pennant Formation (Llynfi-Brithdir Beds) sandstones with coals forming SW plunging regional synform, dissected deeply by N-S tributary valleys to Afon Nedd and E-W Crynant valley into Afon Dulais. N-S major faults (Dip Fach, Tweedle) controlling valleys. U-shaped Rheola Brook valley with cirque (Craig Clwd Fechan) at head. Landslips on steep valley sides below sandstones at Craig Clwyd Fechan and Craig Clwyd. Waterfalls over sandstone steps in valley streams/rivers. Small opencasts, disused coal mines and pits. Boulder clay in valleys, peat on upland slopes.	High	Pennant sandstone succession in regional synform, forming plateau dissected by fault controlled valleys with cirques at heads; landslips.
<b>NPTGL017 Rheola Wood</b>	Mountain and upland valley / Undulating upland terrain and dissected plateau / Upland valley slope (Level 3). Steep SE facing lower scarp slopes of U-shaped, fault-controlled Afon Nedd valley in NE dipping Productive Coal Formation mudstones with coals. Large landslip below South Wales Pennant Formation sandstones at Crugau Wood; also entre-clwydau. Boulder clay on lower slopes. NW-SE to N-S faults, and NE-SW fault at foot of slope along valley.	Moderate	Productive Coal Formation mudstones with coals forming SE-facing slopes of Nedd valley; large landslips.
<b>NPTGL018 Banwen</b>	Mountain and upland valley / Undulating upland terrain and dissected plateau / Upland plateau (Level 3) Steep E and S facing slopes below South Wales	High	Glacial drift covered Productive Coal Fm with large opencast; made ground in worked out areas.

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
	Pennant Formation in S-W and N-dipping mudstones and coals of Productive Coal Formation around closure of plunging NE-SW regional synform, cut by major NNW-SSE faults and forming slopes to NW-SE Afon Pyrddin. Extensive cover of boulder clay on lower slopes and some peat. Very large worked out opencast area and opencast workings on E facing slopes, with areas of made ground.		
<b>NPTGL019 Pryddin valley</b>	Mountain and upland valley / Undulating upland terrain and dissected plateau / Upland plateau (Level 3).  E to N facing slopes in Farewell Rock sandstones - lower Productive Coal Formation mudstones dipping NW-W-SW around closure of regional NE-SW synform, dissected by Afon Pyrddin NW-SE to N-S valley. Valley slopes steep, cutting down to Millstone Grit sandstones along river. Waterfalls over sandstone steps in river valley. Landslip below Farewell Rock into valley below Craig Tonygillfach. NNW-SSE faults. Boulder clay on slopes, and peat.	Outstanding	SSSI Dyffrynoedd Nedda Mellte a Moel Penderyn 291959 209324 – U Carboniferous, Variscan structures.
<b>NPTGL020 Afon Nedd</b>	Tectonically controlled topography / Tectonically controlled topography / Valley following folds, fault controlled gorges, or scarps (Level 3).  NE-SW fault controlled U-shaped broad valley floodplain and channel, flanked by steep valley slopes, broadening below Neath to plain with sand flats. Alluvium in valley floor. Terraces of sand and gravel flank floodplain in upper stretch, with alluvial fans at valley mouths. Glacial sand and gravel terraces, recessional moraine at Tonna, Aberdulais and Clyne, lake sediments at Resolven. Fluvio-glacial terrace below Aberdulais, broadening at Neath. Sand flats on both sides and widely meandering channel at Briton Ferry.	High	Neath Fault Zone tectonically controlled, major glacial valley.
<b>NPTGL021 Blaengwrath</b>	Mountain and upland valley / Undulating upland terrain and dissected plateau / Upland plateau (Level 3).  N-facing slopes of SW-S dipping Productive Coal Formation – South Wales Pennant Formation Llynfi Beds mudstone dominated Coal Measures, with coals dissected by NNW-SSE faults controlling Ndraining tributaries to Nedd. Extensive boulder clay cover on slopes, with patches of peat. Disused mines and made ground, and opencasts (Selar) across wide areas of strike. Landslip below overlying South Wales Pennant sandstones W of Twyn Gwyn.	Outstanding	SSSI Cwm Grwelych and Nant Llyn Fach Streams 290554 215211– U Carboniferous.
<b>NPTGL022 Mynydd Resolven</b>	Mountain and upland valley / Undulating upland terrain and dissected plateau / Upland plateau (Level 3).  NW facing steep slopes in South Wales Pennant Formation sandstones of Llynfi-Brithdir Beds (Lower Pennant Measures) below Hughes Beds sandstone plateau, dissected by deep and steep; NE-SW into ESEWSW U-shaped Clydach Brook valley with NW-facing cirque at head. Boulder clay in valley floor and on broad, U-shaped but less steep Melin Court Brook SE-NW valley with eroded cirque. Mines and levels	Moderate	Dissected slopes in Pennant (Llynfi-Brithdir Beds) sandstone succession; glacial cirques; landslips, mining.

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
	along slopes. NW-SE to NNW-SSE faults controlling topography. Waterfalls over sandstone steps in river valleys. Large landslips below plateau W of Moel y Hyrddod. Peat on higher slopes.		
<b>NPTGL023 Foel Fynyddau</b>	Mountain and upland valley Undulating upland terrain and dissected plateau / Upland plateau (Level 3).  Steep upland slopes in NE-SW striking N and NE dipping sandstones and coals of the South Wales Pennant Formation Llynfi-Brithdir Beds (Lower Pennant Measures), dissected by NE-SW Afon Afan river valley and tributaries. Deeply dissected U-shaped valley with steep slopes, anastomosing course and deep tributary valleys with cwms at heads. Valley slopes with boulder clay, alluvium in floors; glacial sand and gravel terraces in Afon valley. Broad gentle slopes covered with boulder clay, facing NW into Nedd in W of area. Coal mines and levels, landslips along Cwm Correg N-facing slopes and Cwm yr Argoed. NNW-SSE faults.	High	Pennant (Llynfi-Brithdir Beds) sandstones with coals in dissected plateau; glacial valleys with cwms at heads; landslips (including Duffryn), mining.
<b>NPTGL024 Mynydd Blaenafon</b>	Mountain and upland valley Undulating upland terrain and dissected plateau / Upland plateau (Level 3).  High sandstone plateau in gently dipping South Wales Pennant Formation Hughes Beds in core of ENE-WSW regional synform, dissected by steep and deep tributary U-shaped valleys to Afon Afan, with SW to W facing cirques at heads, and by tributary valleys to Nedd with N facing cirques at head. Shafts and levels of coal mines (disused) and quarries. Upland peat across plateau, boulder clay in upper valley slopes, cut by NNW-SSE to NW-SE faults. Landslips on hillslopes of plateau e.g. Ffynnon Oer.	Moderate	Dissected upland plateau of Hughes Beds sandstones; glacial valleys with cirques; landslips; coal mining.

**Table 3 Landscape Habitat Aspect Areas**

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
<b>BRCKNHL156 Pontneddfechan Ystradfellte</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Grassland & Marsh / Marsh/Marshy Grassland (Level3).  Poorly draining but base-enriched land of the Nedd Fechan and Mellte river valleys including limited areas of outcropping limestone near Ystradfellte. Marshy grassland, wet heath and fen communities dominate but areas of unimproved acid and toward the north, calcareous grassland are also present.	Outstanding	Concentration of semi-natural habitats of outstanding value supporting known protected species. Marsh Fritillary known from area.
<b>BRCKNLH776 Pontneddfechan</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Grassland & Marsh / Neutral Grassland (Level3).  Semi-improved grasslands in the vicinity of Pontneddfechan. Includes a central core of amenity grassland and a mixture of neutral, marshy, and acid grassland with small areas of broadleaved woodland toward the periphery.	High	Concentration of semi-natural grassland habitat of nature conservation interest.
<b>BRCKNLH779 Nedd Fechan - Afon Mellte</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Woodland & Scrub / Coniferous Woodland (Level 3).  Upland conifer plantations of the Nedd and Mellte valleys. Heathland is present at woodland	Moderate	Habitat of local interest for wildlife.

	edges.		
<b>BRCKNLH797</b> <b>Pontnedd- fechan</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Woodland & Scrub / Broadleaved Woodland (Level 3). Dissected valleys with fast flowing rivers. Acidic and humid Oak woods with a diverse bryophyte flora characterise the lower parts of the valley but to the north the influence of limestone geology is reflected by woodlands with a greater mix of Hazel and Ash.	Outstanding	Concentration and interconnectivity of semi-natural habitat including some of restricted distribution and including rare or otherwise protected species is of outstanding nature conservation interest.
<b>BRCKNLH929</b> <b>Pontnedd- Fechan - Penderyn</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Grassland & Marsh / Improved Grassland (Level 3). Improved grassland habitat of the Neath and Mellte catchments.	Moderate	Habitat of local wildlife value. Includes only limited habitat designated as SSSI.
<b>CynonLH046</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Woodland & Scrub / Broadleaved Woodland (Level 3). Diverse semi natural woodland with outstanding assemblages of mosses, liverworts and lichens. Includes area of conifers, bracken and marshy grassland.	Outstanding	Area is designated as SAC and is Priority habitat of great ecological value.
<b>CynonLH048</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Heathland / Mosaic (Level 3). Area of wet and dry heath, acid grassland but with flushes and upland limestone grassland.	High	Habitat is of high value particularly the calcareous grassland.
<b>CynonLH050</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Grassland & Marsh / Improved Grassland (Level 3). Improved grassland with frequent rush vegetation.	Moderate	Habitat is generally of limited value but is getting better and some areas are of high value and support Marsh Fritillary. The area has potential.
<b>CynonLH051</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Grassland & Marsh / Marsh / Marshy Grassland (Level 3). Lowland marshy grassland with transition to upland marshy grassland including the largest area of peat based valley mire in Mid Glamorgan. Hirwaun ponds supports a rich dragonfly fauna.	High	A large area of a much declined, threatened Priority habitat as well as valuable areas of semi-improved grassland. Area has both SSSI and SAC designations within it which show its great value. An important area for Marsh Fritillary.
<b>CynonLH053</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Grassland & Marsh / Improved Grassland (Level 3) Reclaimed mine workings and spoil -improved featureless, ryegrass monoculture lacking biodiversity interest.	Low	Low ecological value habitat with no key species.
<b>CynonLH054</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Grassland & Marsh / Marsh / Acid Grassland (Level 3). Post industrial landscape now reverted to acid grassland, dry and wet heath, marshy grassland mosaic with occasional flushes.	High	High value habitat, lack of key species may be due to relatively recent formation of habitat and given time the area may support key species.
<b>CynonLH057</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Woodland & Scrub / Coniferous Woodland (Level 3). Conifer plantation with marshy grassland rides and limited mixed broadleaved woodland alongside streams and inaccessible areas.	Moderate	Area is generally low value but there are some areas of more valuable habitat present that are worthy of SINC designation. Area has potential for enhancement by altering felling/planting regime of coniferous woodland to increase the ecological

			value.
<b>CynonLH058</b>	Costal & Marine Habitats / Mosaic / Mosaic (Level 3). Unenclosed upland Molinia marshy grassland, unimproved acid grassland with some scree, drier areas of bilberry heath and open water at Llyn Fawr.	High	A large area of largely unspoilt habitat including SSSI area and Priority habitats. Area supports number of key species.
<b>CynonLH067</b>	Costal & Marine Habitats / Mosaic / Mosaic (Level 3). Upland river valley including Lluest-wen reservoir, marshy grassland, mixed heath and some bracken.	High	A good variety of habitat and Otters are present.
<b>NPTLH018</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Cultivated/Disturbed Land / Mosaic (Level 3). Active and spreading opencast activity on an area of former upland common (Hirfynydd Common).	Low	Area of extensive, broadscale disturbance and modification from opencast mining; few habitat features of value remaining, and these under threat in short term.
<b>NPTLH020</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Grassland & Marsh / Acid Grassland (Level). Extensive areas of former mine spoil, now largely revegetated by acid grasslands and some grass-heath, with wetter areas of acid flush; remnant areas of semi-natural marshy grassland and SI neutral grassland; some areas reseeded.	Low	Area of former mine spoil, restored to mainly grassland habitats of low diversity; only small remnant areas of semi-natural habitats remaining; greatly modified and disturbed.
<b>NPTLH021</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Woodland & Scrub / Broadleaved Woodland (Level 3). Part of an extremely important wooded upland river and woodland system, considered to represent some of the most diverse in Wales.	Outstanding	Area of internationally significant habitats.
<b>NPTLH023</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Grassland & Marsh / Improved Grassland (Level 3). Large area of improved pastures on sloping lands above the Afon Pryddin and Afon Neath, at least partly on revegetated (reseeded) mine spoil.	Low	Area of improved pastures of low diversity and interest.
<b>NPTLH024</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Grassland & Marsh / Marsh / Marshy Grassland (Level 3). Aspect Area comprises eleven separate geographical units considered to be of similar character and value at the landscape level; mosaic areas of valleyside ffridd and woodland habitats on slopes above the valley of the Afon Neath.	High	Large areas of fairly traditionally managed, low intensity seminatural "ffridd" and woodland habitats.
<b>NPTLH025</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Woodland & Scrub / Broadleaved Woodland (Level 3). Semi-upland wooded valleysides and tributary stream valley on flank of the Afon Neath; mainly acid sessile oak wood, with areas of greater diversity.	High	Area of unmodified ancient woodland habitats of high biodiversity, including Priority Habitats; contains the Blaenant y Gwyddyl Wildlife Trust Reserve.
<b>NPTLH026</b>	Wet Terrestrial Habitats / Open Water/ River Corridors (Level 3). Aspect Area comprises two separate geographical units considered to be of similar character and value at the landscape level; major river valley floor flowing from semi-upland to sea level.	High	Major river system, supporting Priority Habitats and Species.

<b>NPTLH027</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Cultivated / Disturbed Land / Mosaic (Level 3). A large area of opencast mining in an area formerly of high biodiversity value.	Low	Biodiversity value much degraded by opencast mining activity.
<b>NPTLH028</b>	Wet Terrestrial Habitats / Open Water / River Corridors (Level 3). Wooded upland river system in steep glacial valley, forming lakes in deep hollows surrounded by acid grassland and acid flushes.	Outstanding	Unmodified upland watercourse and associated wetland features supporting Priority Habitats; contains SSSIs and Llyn Fach Wildlife Trust reserve.
<b>NPTLH081</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Built Up Areas / Residential / Green Space (Level 3). Area of urban and suburban development; mostly houses with gardens; also amenity areas, parks, roads, commercial premises, small factories, schools etc; opportunities for anthropophilic species; wide range of common flora and fauna species present; small remnant areas of semi-natural habitats locally.	Low	garden areas collectively represent a significant resource of habitats, but is highly fragmented and of very variable quality; not as valuable as equivalent areas of semi-natural habitat; few rare species associated with urban areas.
<b>NPTLH082</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Built Up Areas / Residential / Green Space (Level 3). Area of urban and suburban development; mostly houses with gardens; also amenity areas, parks, roads, commercial premises, small factories, schools etc; opportunities for anthropophilic species; wide range of common flora and fauna species present; small remnant areas of semi-natural habitats locally.	Low	garden areas collectively represent a significant resource of habitats, but is highly fragmented and of very variable quality; not as valuable as equivalent areas of semi-natural habitat; few rare species associated with urban areas.
<b>NPTLH096</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Woodland & Scrub / Coniferous Woodland (Level3). Very large area of secondary semi-upland and upland conifer plantation.	Moderate	-
<b>NPTLH098</b>	Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats / Woodland & Scrub / Coniferous Woodland (Level 3) Huge area of secondary conifer plantation on upland plateau.	Moderate	Very large area of secondary semi-upland conifer plantation; no known Priority Habitats or Species, but with numerous remnants of former upland habitats.

**Table 4 Historic Landscape Aspect Areas**

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
<b>BRCKNHL461 Coed y Rhaiadr</b>	Rural environment / Non agricultural / Woodland (Level3). Extensive 20th-century conifer woodland on the southern edge of Fforest Fawr including isolated areas of irregular fields and some residual ancient broadleaved woodland along stream valleys. Early settlement and land use indicated by early prehistoric burial mounds. The Sarn Helen Roman road crosses the area. Post-medieval settlement and land use pre-dating afforestation represented by abandoned and now ruinous dispersed farmsteads and house sites, relict irregular field boundaries, groups of artificial rabbit warrens and limekilns.	Moderate	Afforested upland with residual farming and mining landscape and occasional prehistoric interest, but mostly obscured by present landuse.
<b>BRCKNHL798</b>	Rural environment / Agricultural / Irregular Fieldscapes (Level3)	High	A mixed landscape of small irregular fields of

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
<b>Ystradfellte</b>	Valley-bottom and hillside with landscape of small, evolved and irregular fields, dispersed farms and houses of medieval and early postmedieval origin. Residual areas of ancient broadleaved woodland along some watercourses and steeper slopes and including a small area of common. Early settlement and land use indicated by early prehistoric house sites and burial monuments and later prehistoric defended enclosure. Early medieval and medieval settlement denoted by inscribed stone, medieval settlement being represented by the small nucleated church settlement at Ystradfellte and castle at Castell Coch. Postmedieval industry represented by scattered small quarries and limekilns. Rural depopulation in the 19th and early 20th centuries represented by abandoned and derelict farmhouses and cottages.		medieval / early post medieval date with woodland. Archaeological sites surviving from all periods which increases its score
<b>BRCKNHL830 Pontneddfechan</b>	Built environment / Settlement / Other Settlement (Level3). Small nucleated settlement associated with 19 <sup>th</sup> - and early 20 <sup>th</sup> - century industrial sites including mill complexes, gun powder works and tramways along the Afon Mellte. Ancient broadleaved woodland on steeper slopes along the river.	Outstanding	Small nucleated settlement and extensive industrial remains sitting in strip of mixed woodland along sides of valley containing 19 <sup>th</sup> - and early 20 <sup>th</sup> - century industrial sites. Complex industrial history scoring highly.
<b>CynonHL117 Cynon Valley Corridor</b>	Built environment / Settlement / Nucleated Settlement (Level 3). This aspect area is characterised as an urban and industrial transport and communication corridor stretching along the length of the Cynon Valley from Abercynon, north to Pontneddfechan. This aspect area includes the settlements of Mountain Ash, Cwmaman, Aberdare and Hirwaun. The aspect area has a strong prehistoric presence to the north of the valley corridor; many Bronze Age funerary cairns adorn the valley slopes. Abercynon was once a hamlet called Navigation before the main colliery and new town took the name in the 1880s. Aberdare was one of the county's ancient upland parishes (strictly, a chapelry of Llantrisant), as humble medieval St John's church indicates. Industrial growth began early in the 19th century with the Gadlys Ironworks opening in 1827, and the first steam-coal mine a decade later. During the middle decades of the century, the Cynon Valley, with Aberdare at its head, became the most prolific centre of steam-coal production. By 1856 Aberdare's output of coal exceeded one million tons. Industry retreated in the latter half of the 19th century, leaving Aberdare with the air of a market town. What survives of Aberdare's early industry is of great historical importance. Gadlys Ironworks, is one of the most complete remaining groups of ironworks buildings in South Wales. Matthew Wayne, ironmaster and coal-owner of Merthyr Tydfil, in conjunction with G.R.Morgan and E.M.Williams, founded the works in 1827. Two large masonry blast furnaces and a blowing engine house remain intact (Newman 1995,	Outstanding	An area of outstanding historic importance, based on the fact that it contains some of the best preserved industrial monuments surviving not only within the Caerphilly/RCT historic landscape, but in South Wales generally.

Aspect area	Classification and description	Overall Evaluation	Justification
	<p>133/9). Mountain Ash's urban and industrial growth came about through the actions of Henry Austin Bruce, later Lord Aberdare, Thomas Powell and John Nixon. Thomas Powell was sinking pits on the Duffryn estate by the 1840s, and John Nixon's company worked the famous Deep Duffryn mine from the 1850s. By 1863 the population of Mountain Ash was already 6000. In the last twenty years of the 19th century Miskin developed, and Penrhiwceiber Woods were felled as a further colliery and terraces set on the steeply sloping hillside took their place. By the turn of the century the present continuous 3.22-km long development was complete. Only the collieries have subsequently disappeared, their spoil-tips gradually giving way to light industry and to grass (Newman 1995, 451/2). Hirwaun was an early centre of iron working, with a furnace possibly dating to the 17th century. From the 1830s coal mining began on the Moor to the south. There remains four blast furnaces standing against a high retaining wall on the north bank of the River Cynon at Hirwaun. To the northwest stood the manager's house, Tv-mawr, and to the northeast two limekilns, with the tram-road causeway to the southeast and the infilled water-storage reservoirs to the northwest. There is evidence that the present works were started by the ironmaster John Maybery in 1757, but a charcoal-fired furnace may have been in existence already by the 1660s. By 1813 there were two furnaces 12.2m high. William Crawshay, who acquired the works in 1819, made improvements, including the erection of a series of steam-powered blast (or "blowing") engines for the furnaces (four by 1824), made at the Neath Abbey Ironworks, and the addition of large new ranges of forges and cast-houses, with typical Crawshay style cast iron arcades and roofs. After 1880 the furnaces were heightened to 16.5m and had a 4.9m diameter, but the site soon declined to the status of a general foundry. The four furnaces survive as large, grass-covered mounds with the rings of their internal lining of refractory brick protruding from their summits. George Overton, 1806-8, built, at the time, the longest tramroad causeway in South Wales to the Hirwaun ironworks. The stone rubble-built cause way is 13 ft 9 in. (4.2 metres) wide with a high arch over the Afon Cynon. Its deck carried a curved single line of tramroad, of which many stone sleeper blocks survive. At the north end their multiplication marks the divergence of tracks to the ironworks charging bank and to the Penderyn limestone quarries farther north (Newman 1995, 364/5). The six-mile Aberdare Canal was authorised in 1793 to join with the Glamorganshire Canal and included powers for the construction of tramroads, the canal opened in 1812. The Aberdare Railway Company opened up the Cynon Valley from 1845 to minerals and passengers; by the late 20th century with the countrywide closure of many collieries, much of the Cynon Valley line was</p>		

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
	closed to goods (Barrie 1994, 290).		
<b>CynonHL150 Moel Penderyn</b>	<p>Rural environment / Non agricultural / Marginal Land (Level 3).</p> <p>An island of exposed carboniferous limestone supporting unenclosed upland pasture surrounded by enclosed fieldscapes and forestry. Our earliest endeavours within the landscape are represented by Craig y Ddinas Iron Age hillfort. The hillfort is situated at the southwestern end of the long narrow limestone promontory of Moel Penderyn at the confluence of Afon Mellte and Afon Sychryd. The occupants took advantage of this natural promontory, with its sheer cliffs to the north and south, to build a domestic and defensive space enclosed by two linear earthworks (RCAHMMW 1986, 24/5).</p> <p>More recently the hillfort has had aspects of its western and northern boundary quarried away in the pursuit of silica. A tramroad now dissects the extreme western edge of the forts ramparts, a testament to its recent industrial history. It is this period of activity, which so defines the appearance, and nature of the present landscape.</p>	Outstanding	The outstanding value assigned to this landscape lies primarily in the rich industrial heritage which it contains, in particular the extensive remains of the Glyn Neath Gunpowder works on the western edge of the aspect area, which represent a unique survival within the Caerphilly/RCT historic landscape and further to the E, the 18th - 19th century quarries and associated tramroad network on Moel Penderyn.
<b>CynonHL176 Penderyn</b>	<p>Rural environment / Agricultural / Other fieldscapes (Level 3).</p> <p>A large rural aspect characterized by regular fieldscapes interspersed with natural woodland. Several large reservoirs define the character area's most southerly and easterly aspect. The dominant field boundary within the aspect is drystone boulder dykes and earth and stone banks, although deteriorated post and wire fencing has patched some breeches in the aforementioned boundaries. The aspect is bounded to the north and east by the interface between the unenclosed upland of Cefn Cadlan, Cefn Sychbant and Mynydd-y-glog, and Cwm Cadlan's enclosed fieldscape. The now dismantled Trappenden's tramroad from Bryngwyn to Glyn-neath defines the aspect's limit to the south, whilst the unenclosed aspect CynonHL150 borders the west. The eastern and northern area of this aspect belong to the Registered Historic Landscape HLW(MGI/P)3.</p> <p>The dramatic landscape south of Fforest Fawr was first manipulated in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages.</p>	Outstanding	An important, multi-period landscape with significant evidence of prehistoric funerary activity/field clearance incorporated into a later medieval/post medieval fieldscape, with substantial remains of 18th-20th century industrial activity superimposed onto this landscape.
<b>CynonHL183 Tower Colliery</b>	<p>Rural environment / Non agricultural / Reclaimed land (Level 3).</p> <p>This aspect represents the extent of opencast industrial activity to the west of Hirwaun common (CynonHL903), north of the Rhondda Uplands (CynonHL687), and south of the Hirwaun transport corridor (CynonHL117). This radically altered landscape is the result of recent opencast exploitation of the mineral resource over the past several centuries. The landscape, once open moorland, has been irrevocably altered by this industry and recently altered once more by the complete reclamation and</p>	High	The high value of this aspect area is chiefly due to the survival of substantial and historically important remains of 19th - 20th century industrial extractive activity (in particular the Tower No.4 Colliery); extensive modern opencast mining and forestry plantation has largely obliterated earlier patterns of settlement and consequently the

Aspect area	Classification and description	Overall Evaluation	Justification
	<p>drainage of this area converting coal faces and tips into open improved pasture. The industrial activity within this landscape seems to have obliterated all evidence of past human activity; however not without record.</p> <p>During the Bronze Age this aspect was predominantly open moorland; within this landscape funerary activities have been suggested to have taken place with the construction of stone cairns. Partly excavated before destruction by opencast mining in 1992, none of the excavated cairns gave any evidence for burials, or any structure other than the piling of smaller stones around naturally occurring slabs or boulders... Aerial photography by the RAF has suggested a possible oval earthwork feature c20m in width immediately south of the aforementioned cairns (Ref: RAF 58/1452 0091-009), which could well have been a cairn or barrow. During opencast working a bronze spearhead was recovered in the Hugh Patches Colliery site. The implement was in a badly corroded condition; however this find does indicate that, whether casually discarded as an isolated incident or lost by the occupants of a busy landscape, such as CynonHL176 and CynonHL580 a little farther north, some sort of occupation activity did exist here in the Bronze Age.</p> <p>Roman influence within the area is represented by a Follis (coin) of Constantius I ("Chlorus") recovered from the extreme east of this aspect, another coin is said to have been found on the same coal site; however this is remains unsubstantiated. An inscribed stone was reported in 1827 to be on Hirwaun Common, close to the coin recovery site (RCAHMW 1976, 39). The Inscription illustrated in the original publication read;  "ERECOR/MAGLORI/CVNIIAC/FICIT" possibly relating to an Irish non-personal name "ERECOB" in conjunction with the more common name "MAGLORI CVNIIAC," "FICIT" most likely indicates that 'ERECOB MAGLORI CVNIIAC' made this inscription (FICIT). All are in Roman capitals except for cursive forms of G and L, implying an Early Christian inscription of late C5th (RCAHMW 1976, 39).</p> <p>Two farms located within an enclosed landscape represent the post-medieval activity within the aspect. Either side of the A465 lay the remnants of a turf-stone walled landscape, which probably predates industrial activity in the area and may represent the pre-industrial boundary form. Blaengrwangon farm, a farmstead with un-mortared rubble walls in longhouse form, was derelict by 1875 although was occupied in 1824. Gwrangan Ganol Farm, now entirely removed, was in use in 1824, but derelict by 1875.</p> <p>Industrial monuments such as the Tower and Hugh Patches Collieries are responsible for the</p>		<p>archaeological record for this area prior to the 19th century is very limited.</p>

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
	<p>impressive transformation of this landscape over the previous several centuries. Tower Colliery was established by the Marquis of Bute in about 1870. The Engine House and Fan House date from the Powell Duffryn period of expansion, and contain the winding engine, compressor engines, switchgear, and fan. The headframe dates from the 1930s and is of the steel lattice girder type, which currently survives at only 2 other sites in South Wales. The Tower Colliery Pit Head still survives; the pit top is enclosed by an irregular single-storey brick building between the legs of the frame. The Tower road now replaces the former tramroad from the dismantle Bute Colliery to Hirwaun. South of the A465, and close to the second roundabout west of Hirwaun, are extensive coal-tippings that date from the nineteenth/twentieth century's. Standing around 25m high and running for 300m.</p>		
<p><b>CynonHL687</b> <b>Rhondda Uplands</b></p>	<p>Rural environment / Non agricultural / Marginal Land (Level 3).</p> <p>This aspect area of dramatic escarpments of Pennant Sandstone cliffs, glacial cymoedd or corries, and extensive open upland ridges and mountain is a landscape of some importance recognised by its inclusion within the Rhondda Historic Landscape on the Cadw/ICOMOS Register. It is characterised as a relict upland agricultural landscape, chiefly mountain sheepwalk, though partially forested with post-medieval industrial incursion typically extraction related. The area is a multi-period and multi-functional upland landscape dominated by prehistoric funerary and ritual features, and with prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval upland settlement, also included are Roman and medieval military structures, prehistoric/early medieval boundaries, the cross dykes (some with administrative significance from at least the early medieval period) are also visible and characteristic features of the area. The area was also established as a ridge-top communication corridor from the prehistoric period. During the medieval period the area encompassed at least one, possibly two medieval hunting parks. Lesser features include relict post-medieval field boundaries and industrial remains now largely reclaimed. The area displays a variety of archaeologically important sites of all periods since, and including the Mesolithic, with numerous finds of prehistoric flint tool assemblages. The area is dominated, literally, by prehistoric funerary monuments, burial cairns of the Bronze Age, which include Bachgen Carreg (SAM Gm 234), Carn Fach, Carn-y-Pigwn (SAM Gm 372), Carn-y-wiwer (SAM Gm 323), Carn-y-Bica, Bedd Eiddil, Carn Fawr, Garnwen, Pebyll, the cairn and cist on Mynydd Penygraig, Mynydd Brithweunydd and Mynydd Troed-y-rhiw, and the cairn group on Mynydd Ton. Unusual for the uplands, is the ditched barrow, Crug-yr-Afan (SAM Gm 233), similar to the bell barrows of Wessex (c. 2000-1450 BC), excavated in 1902.</p>	<p>Outstanding</p>	<p>The outstanding value assigned to this area is based on the fact that it represents a remarkably well preserved multi-period upland landscape, containing evidence of human activity dating back to the Mesolithic era, including sites of national importance such as the extensive settlement site of Hen Dre'r Mynydd, the largest undefended Iron Age settlement in SE Wales.</p>

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
	Prehistoric settlement in the area dates back to the Mesolithic.		
<b>CynonHL772 Cwm Wyrfa</b>	<p>Rural environment / Agricultural / Regular Fieldscapes (Level 3).</p> <p>This aspect area is characterised by a regular fieldscape, influenced heavily by early industrial activities. The aspect area is bounded to the north by the Cynon Valley transport and communication corridor (CynonHL117). The eastern boundary is defined by the extent of industrial opencast encroachment from Tower Colliery into this aspect area. The southern boundary is defined by the extent of the Rhondda Uplands (CynonHL687); the Unitary Authority boundary limits the western extent of this aspect area. A tramroad depicted as 'old' on the 1st Edition OS map (1885) divides the aspect area neatly in two; it ran from the Levels at Twyn Gelli-geibren to the tips at Hughes Patches. A gliding club represents modern recreational activities within the aspect area.</p>	Moderate	An extensive tract of enclosed upland common influenced by early industrial activities; the pattern of rectilinear field enclosure has remained essentially unchanged from that shown on the OS 1st edition map of 1885. The moderate value assigned to this area reflects the limited nature of the archaeological record and the encroachment on its eastern edge by opencast mining activity.
<b>NPTHL019 Banwaen Tor-y-Betal</b>	<p>Rural Environment / Agricultural / Other fieldscapes (Level 3).</p> <p>A large area of generally unenclosed moorland following the south side of the Afon Pyrddin valley from the Vale of Neath (HL39) to the Crynant and Severn Sisters urban corridor (HL46). Both the Afon Pyrddin and the Unitary Authority boundary bound the aspect area to the north. The southern boundary is defined by the upper limit of the Afon Pyrddin valley where the valley meets the Hirfynydd Mountain. To the west the boundary is defined by the 19th and 20th century industrial workings at Banwen and Onllwyn, whilst the irregular fieldscape of the Vale of Neath (HL39) bounds the aspect area's eastern limits. A historically busy landscape with significant archaeological remains spanning the last two millennia. The earliest evidence for human occupation of the valley comes in the form of a chert javelin-head dated to the mid-late Bronze Age; the find was discovered in the Afon Pyrddin a short distance from the Roman fort of Coelbren. The Roman period has left a significant quantity of wellpreserved remains; the earliest activity comes in the form of a large rectangular marching camp located on a roughly north facing slope to the south of Ton Castell farmhouse (Gm343). The camp, probably built during the Frontinan campaigns is characterised by a subrectangular earthen bank and ditch with rounded corners enclosing an area of around 35 acres (14 ha). To the northwest of the marching camp is the more permanent Roman fort at Coelbren (Gm146). The fort occupies low ridge with the Gors Llwyn marsh to the northwest and the Afon Pyrddin to the east. The fort is a typical example of Roman military establishments, the main feature being a square earthwork with rounded corners surrounded by concentric ditches, enclosing an area of just over 5 acres (2.1 ha). Col. William Lloyd Morgan excavated the site during the early part of the last century, concentrating his efforts on the ramparts and</p>	Outstanding	This area has been assessed as being of outstanding value, representing a landscape of considerable significance in historical and archaeological terms, dominated by extensive and well-preserved remains of Roman military occupation (Coelbren Fort and adjacent marching camp and Sarn Helen) and post-medieval industrial activity (represented by the Banwen Ironworks and associated Ironworks Railway).

Aspect area	Classification and description	Overall Evaluation	Justification
	<p>interior. The ramparts were constructed of timber and earth, whilst the interior contained a series of features such as floors, hearths and the foundations of a building in the southeast corner (Pearson 2002). Small finds included Samian sherds of Flavian date and flagons, flanged bowls and amphora shards mostly dating to the late 1st and early 2nd centuries AD. Occupation does not appear to have continued much beyond the 2nd century. The Roman road of Sarn Helen intersects the fort from the direction of Hirfynydd Mountain and is one of the best-preserved Roman roads found in Wales. The road was the main route linking the Roman fort at Neath with Brecon Gaer. The road inter-sects Coelbren from the south and exits the fort to the east before continuing northeast toward Brecon (Br074). The scheduled area of the road can be seen as an agger, or raised causeway. The Afon Pyrddin valley has a rich industrial heritage. The Banwen Ironworks, just to the south of the application boundary, is the most intact example of an anthracite-bloom furnace found on the anthracite-coalfield northwest of Swansea. A large section of the Brecon Forest Tramroad is preserved within the aspect area. It connected the Banwen ironworks to the Coelbren junction of the Ystalyfera to Sennybridge Brecon Forest Tramroad. Here the tramroad served both to import iron ore to the ironworks, from the mines and quarries north of Coelbren and those to the south at Banwen, and also to export the smelted iron back to the Coelbren junction. The finished iron was then distributed south to the Swansea Canal bound for Swansea and Briton Ferry docks (Lewis 2003c). Industrial activity is now restricted to Banwen and Onllwyn outside of the aspect area, the landscape is characterised by well-drained open moor supporting wetland sour grasses.</p>		
<p><b>NPTHL026</b> <b>Afan Wallia</b></p>	<p>Rural environment / Non agricultural / Marginal Land (Level 3).</p> <p>Afan Wallia is the largest of all the aspect areas discussed in this study. The aspect area is characterised as an extensive expanse of unenclosed upland moor between the Cwm Afan and Cwm Nedd. The aspect area does include some post-medieval and later field systems; however these tend to belong to modern enclosure, such as at Mynydd Fforch-dwm and Mynydd Resolven, and still retain much of their upland character. Almost the entire area is now covered by modern forestry with some isolated pockets of improved pasture; one such island can be found on Mynydd Fforch-dwm. The remainder of these open areas, such as Tarren Cefn-mawr, Moel yr Hyrddod and Twyn y Lluest, tend more to marginal upland moor characterised by rough grazing on sour grasses. The boundary to the south generally follows the extent of enclosure from the Cwm Afan (HL45) into the mountain moorland. The Unitary Authority boundary defines the eastern extremities of the aspect</p>	<p>Outstanding</p>	<p>This area has been assigned an outstanding value as it represents an exceptionally rich multi-period landscape with evidence of a remarkable continuity of human activity and adaptation of the landscape from the Mesolithic period to the present day, although modern forestry plantation has slightly diminished the coherence of what was formerly a landscape of predominantly unenclosed upland moor.</p>

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
	<p>area, whilst to the west (HL55) and north (HL39) the boundary is again defined by the extent of enclosure into this upland moor. As one would expect with an aspect area this large the record of human history is prolific with evidence from our earliest endeavours to manipulate the environment through to the Industrial Revolution and beyond. During the Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) hunter-gatherer peoples utilised this upland environment along Blaencorrgw, Mynydd Blaengwynfi and Tarren Cefn-mawr. These peoples left behind discarded lithic blades and awls, with cores and flakes; reflecting a commitment to an area, a specific place, long enough to create highly skilled lithic tools. The Neolithic is somewhat less represented with only one find of a rare leaf-shaped arrow-head on Mynydd Pen-y-cae; this may reflect a decline in hunting and gathering with the emphasis placed on a more sedentary lifestyle. However with only one find it is difficult to draw coherent conclusions. What we can be certain of is that during the Bronze Age this upland environment was chosen as an arena for the siting and acting out of certain aspects (cairn building) belonging to funerary and ritual beliefs. The location of these sites tends toward elevated positions with commanding views of watercourses and or valleys. Of the more notable cairns several are scheduled; Carn Caca cemetery (Gm385), Bryn Llydan (Gm538), Foel Chwern (Gm235), Penrhiw Angharad cairnfield (Gm276) and Bachgen Garreg (Gm234). At the head of the Melin Court Valley are located two settlements of Iron Age and Roman date; Carn Caca Hillfort (Gm366) and Melin Court Marching Camp (GM367), representing the continuity of settlement into the historic period. With the exception of Carn Caca hillfort and Melin Court marching camp, the majority of prehistoric sites are now under forestry. Recognition and preservation of prehistoric landscapes beneath this evergreen canopy has been seriously lacking during the last century, although work by the Forestry Commission in recent years has gone some way in rectifying this bias situation.</p> <p>Pre-afforestation this unenclosed landscape was scattered with medieval house platforms and small settlements. These are found mainly on the more sheltered valley sides of Cwm Melin Cwrt and Cwm yr Allor. Lluest Nant Gruffydd, in Cwm yr Allor, is a complex situated within a large enclosed field consisting of two rectangular stone buildings and a barn; medieval structural survival is quite extensive here. All that remains of the medieval remains at Cwm Melin Cwrt are grassed over platforms built into elevated slopes. It is quite possible that agricultural settlement during the medieval period relates to one of the local granges subservient to the main abbeys of Neath and Margam, both holding sway over part of the aspect area. Coed Morgannwg Way, a national recreational path, aligned northeast-southwest,</p>		

Aspect area	Classification and description	Overall Evaluation	Justification
	<p>dissects the aspect area neatly in two. The route was first used during the Roman period and later as the medieval St Illtyd"s Walk.</p> <p>During the post-medieval period the aspect area was a witness to some major industrial activity, from the sinking of collieries and levels to the construction of huge engineering projects such as tramroads and viaducts. The Glyncoirwg Tramroad, also known as Parsons Folly, is one such engineering feat. It ran from Aberdulais, through Tonna and over the mountain to Tonmawr, then up the side of the mountain and on to Blaencregan. Built by Robert Parsons and Charles Strange between 1839 and 1843, it opened for mineral traffic in 1842. Work carried on to try to reach Glyncoirwg, but the railway only achieved Blaencregan before finances ran out. Parsons had to pay way levies of 4/11 per ton of coal when at Aberdulais, they only received 4/9 a ton on delivery and so ran at a loss; hence the name Parson"s Folly (Lewis 2003b, 9). The tramroad runs through the Fforch Dwm forest and is aligned east-west; the earthwork is 2-3m wide and up to 2m high in places.</p> <p>The aspect area is littered with the remains of many industrial projects; in excess of 150 collieries and levels, over 15 tramroads-Parsons Folly the most infamous, a viaduct and numerous quarries. The only rival to these monuments is the abundant agricultural remains now buried beneath the modern forestry. Numerous sheepfolds, some dry stonewalls, hedges, enclosures and stone boundary markers can be found distributed throughout the aspect area. The sheepfolds and some enclosures tend toward higher elevations whilst the walls and hedges occupy much lower elevations along the valley periphery, reflecting the use of the upland as marginal grazing pre-afforestation. In short this aspect area represent a huge archaeological resource recording activity from the Mesolithic into the present, many monuments remain preserved creating an important multi-period landscape.</p>		
<p><b>NPTHL027</b> <b>Hirfynydd</b></p>	<p>Rural environment / Non agricultural / Marginal Land (Level 3).</p> <p>An extensive area of unenclosed upland situated between the Vale of Neath (HL39) and the Dulais Valley (HL48), with Banwen Tor y Betal (HL19) bounding the north. Largely under modern forestry the aspect area has few surviving tracts of open moorland; Waun Glynnyd, Gellibenuchel, and to the north of Craig Clwyd Fechan, for example. The aspect area supports a wealth of archaeological monuments and records occupation evidence from the Bronze Age into the present. The most prolific monuments are those belonging to Bronze Age funerary and ritual activities; an extensive and impressive assemblage of cairns adorn the elevated slopes and the ridge crest of Mynydd Hirfynydd, they appear singularly, in pairs and in cemeteries. The well-preserved Roman road of</p>	<p>Outstanding</p>	<p>This area has been assessed as "outstanding" as it represents a rich multi-period landscape with a wealth of surviving archaeological monuments attesting to occupation from the Bronze Age, Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods. Modern forestry plantation and opencast mining has detracted slightly from the coherence of the landscape but has not significantly affected its overall value.</p>

Aspect area	Classification and description	Overall Evaluation	Justification
	<p>Sarn Helen runs along the ridge of Mynydd Hirfynydd; beacon towers are interspersed at regular intervals along the road. This road continued in use into the medieval period and is used today as a byway. Medieval house platforms are located on the northwestern slope of the mountain in open moor to the west of Carn Cornel (RCAHMW 1982, 26). A medieval grange is located to the south of the mountain, which is now restored as part of the Rheola estate (HL42); it is therefore likely that the mountain would have been used for upland grazing with tithe paid to Neath Abbey (RCAHMW 1982, 253). Industry is limited to the periphery of the aspect area and consists of modern quarries and drift levels, some dating to as late as the 1980's such as Carn Cornel Mine and Darrell Colliery, the latter opened in 1979, located to the north of the aspect area on the boundary with the Dulais Valley. The Heol Hen Mine, Ivyrock Mine and Rheadr Mine located along the northern slope of the mountain all belong to the 1980's. Modern opencast workings dominate the northeast of the aspect area to the north of Glynneath. This aspect area has been important landscape from the Bronze Age into the present. The ridge of Mynydd Hirfynydd has been a significant route through the landscape from the prehistoric period through into the medieval period. The road now is used as an historic walk much like St Illtyds Walk which cuts Sarn Helen to the south of the aspect area. In excess of 20 marker stones recorded on 2nd edition OS maps existed across the mountain, as did several Roman milestones. Numerous sheepfolds lost beneath the evergreen canopy can be traced through the 1st edition OS map indicating the importance of animal husbandry, across the aspect area, in the post-medieval period.</p>		
<p><b>NPTHL039</b> <b>Vale of Neath (southern valley side)</b></p>	<p>Rural environment / Agricultural / Irregular Fieldscapes (Level 3).</p> <p>This aspect area is characterised by the enclosed irregular fieldscape which adheres to the valley sides of the Vale of Neath, from Aberdulais to the Unitary Authority boundary at Pontneddfechan. The aspect area is bounded to the north by the unenclosed upland of Hirfynydd (HL027) and to the south by Afan Wallia (HL026), Cefn Morfudd (HL055) and the Gnoll Estate (HL017). The internal boundary of the aspect area follows the valley bottom, a communications corridor of roads, tramroads, railways, canals and the Afon Nedd, effectively cutting the aspect area in two. This is an aspect area, which exhibits evidence of almost all periods. During the Bronze Age the elevated slopes were chosen as funerary and ritual sites to build cairns; singular, in pairs and in cemeteries such as at Gwenffrwd. To the east of this cairn cemetery lie the extensive remains of the Blaen-cwmbach Roman Marching Camp (Gm258) and Blaen-cwmbach Iron Age hillfort (Gm277), both bordering this the southern boundary of this aspect area. The Vale of Neath</p>	<p>Outstanding</p>	<p>This area presents some problems in assessment; while the appearance of the heavily wooded valley may well superficially resemble that captured by late 18<sup>th</sup> – early 19<sup>th</sup> - century landscape painters such as Hornor, it should be emphasised that much of the existing woodland represents modern coniferous plantation, not the ancient and semi-natural woodland which is shown on the OS 1st edition map. Much of the irregular fieldscape and pattern of dispersed settlement shown in this area on historic maps has survived; however, there has been limited loss of field boundaries and some farmsteads are in a ruined,</p>

Aspect area	Classification and description	Overall Evaluation	Justification
	<p>has strong ecclesiastical ties with both Neath Abbey and Margam Abbey. Aberpergwm Grange stood on the north side of the vale opposite what is now the modern settlement of Blaengwrach. It stands in the grounds of the 19th century Aberpergwm House, now ruinous, in a field called Cae Capel. This grange belonged to Neath Abbey as did Rheola Grange a little farther south (see HL042). Margam Abbey had at least one grange in the vale on the southern slope of Mynydd Resolfen overlooking Cwm Fforch. The traditional story of the grange is that Morgan ap Caradog, Lord of Afan, surrendered Canaythen ap Robert as a hostage to his overlord, William Earl of Gloucester (1174). Morgan subsequently rebelled against the earl who then gouged out the eyes of poor Canaythen and returned him to Morgan. Filled with remorse Morgan gave lands around Resolfen to Canaythen who in turn gave them to the monks of Margam and entered the monastery himself (RCAHMW 1982, 266).</p> <p>Much of the landscape of the Vale of Neath is now under modern forestry; beneath this evergreen canopy a relict post-medieval fieldscape is preserved. Large areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland existed along the valley sides; but have since been swallowed by the modern forestry. Cut into the hillslopes of the valley, on both the north and south sides, are many small collieries, levels and quarries. To the south the Glynccorwg Mineral Tramroad, or Parson's Folly, dissects the vale on route to the Neath Canal. This section of the tramroad, built between 1839 and 1841 to carry coal from mines in the Gwenffrwd, Pelenna and Cregan valleys, is outstanding and represents the peak of civil engineering reached by horse-operated tramroads. To the south of the Vale, at Melin Court Waterfall, lie the remains of an 18th century furnace. Started in 1708, converted to coke in 1795 and closed in 1808, the pig which it produced was taken to the Dylais Forge at Aberdulais (HL043) for conversion into wrought iron. The furnace was powered by a waterwheel fed by a series of leats higher up the valley. The larger Wenallt Ironworks, south of Blaengwrach, were constructed in 1839 to smelt iron with anthracite; the site fell out of use by 1854 and was later demolished during conversion to a patent fuel works (Hughes and Reynolds 1989).</p> <p>The landscape is relatively unspoiled and in many respects retains its early 19th century appearance, when painted by artists such as Thomas Horner. The upper Neath valley draws its importance for what must be a relatively undisturbed medieval or early post-medieval landscape. The extensive area of ancient semi-natural and ancient replanted woodland perhaps closely reflects the landscape of the Welsh Valleys during the medieval period.</p>		<p>derelict state or have completely vanished. However, while taking this serious loss of coherence into account, it has been decided to categorise this area as being of overall outstanding importance, in view of the presence of industrial remains of exceptional rarity and national importance, in particular the remains of the early ironworking site at Melincwrt and the remarkably well preserved remains of the Glynneath inclined plane on the Cefn Rhigos Tramroad, the second oldest steam-powered incline known to have been built in the United Kingdom.</p>
<p><b>NPTHL043</b> <b>Neath Valley Bottom</b></p>	<p>Built environment / Other built environment / Communications (Level 3). The Neath Valley Bottom is identified as a broad</p>	<p>Outstanding</p>	<p>This area has been assessed as being of outstanding overall value as an historically important</p>

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
	<p>floodplain, a communications corridor characterised by roads, tramroads, railways, canals, and the meandering of the Afon Nedd through a fieldscape of large regular enclosures, which stretches northwest from Aberdulais to the Unitary Authority boundary at Pontneddfechan. The aspect area is bounded on both the north and south sides by the enclosed fieldscape of the Vale of Neath (HL39). The Neath valley bottom resembles that of the Tawe valley in terms of its geological and early history. However, the Neath valley is much broader than the Swansea valley with the slopes broken up by terracing and hanging valleys. The character of the valley bottom can be identified as an almost entirely industrial aspect area interspersed with large wetland meadows and isolated farmsteads. The modern settlements of Resolfen, Blaengwrach and Glynneath have been built on the floodplain and surrounding valley sides. One of the most significant sites in the industrial history of the Vale of Neath is at Ynys-y-Gerwyn. This was the site of an early tinplate works probably built c1750 to roll tin sheets supplied from the iron forge at Aberdulais. The Neath Canal was built shortly after Ynys y Gerwyn in 1791-96 with moneys provided by the people of Neath to enable the exploitation of the coal reserves of the Upper Neath Valley. The canal linked the valley with Briton Ferry Dock and later was connected to the Tennant Canal (1820), with traffic ceasing only in the 1920"s. Several canal features survive along its route, the most architecturally striking are three castiron aqueducts. Aberpergwm Aqueduct carried the Nant Pergwm over the canal and was cast at Neath Abbey Ironworks in 1835; likewise the Resolfen Aqueduct carried a stream over the canal and was identical in design to the Aberpergwm Aqueduct. Rheola Brook Aqueduct is the most elaborate of the three cast-iron aqueducts, like those at Aberpergwm and Resolfen, Rheola was probably cast at Neath Abbey Ironworks in the 1830"s. Ynysbwlllog Aqueduct was once a fine six-arch stone structure until a flood in the latter part of the last century carried away the larger part of two arches. The half mile long incline on the Cefn Rhigos tramroad, which connected the ironworks at Aberdare to the Neath Canal, was built in 1803-5. This was the second oldest steam powered incline to have been built in Britain, and possibly the world (Hughes and Reynolds 1989, 32-6).</p> <p>Several collieries and brickworks identified on the 1st edition OS map existed along the route of the canal. Clyne Colliery is situated to the south of Clyne, although the modern settlement of the same name is absent in 1884. A substantial brickworks at Melin Court was also identified but has since disappeared.</p> <p>The Vale of Neath Railway was built to connect the iron and coal producing areas of Aberdare and Merthyr Tydfil with the ports of Neath</p>		<p>industrial communications corridor with key components, such as the Neath Canal and the Vale of Neath Railway, surviving in generally well-preserved condition, including some individual monuments of exceptional importance (e.g. the 10-arched Aberdulais Aqueduct and Basin).</p>

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
	<p>(Tonna canal port), Briton Ferry and the Swansea Docks. The route snakes up the southern side of the valley bottom and was engineered by Brunel. It opened from Neath to Aberdare in 1851, and then extended to Pontypool Road to provide a link with the English Midlands. The route was closed in the latter part of the last century (Hughes and Reynolds 1989, 45). The main A465 road built during the latter part of the last century has completely replaced all other lines of communication along the valley floor.</p> <p>This aspect area is a communications corridor in the truest sense. The valley bottom has played a significant role as a busy route from at least the medieval period (see HL39). Even before this we can postulate that the cairn builders of the upper valley sides used the valley bottom for access. It is industry though, in the form of roads; tramroads, railways and canals, that has left the most significant mark on the landscape.</p>		
<p><b>NPTHL046</b> <b>Crynant &amp; Seven Sisters Urban Corridor</b></p>	<p>Built environment / Other built environment / Communications (Level 3).</p> <p>This aspect area consists of a narrow communications corridor linking Aberdulais and Crynant with Severn Sisters, Onllwyn and Banwen. The settlements of Crynant and Severn Sisters were little more than small hamlets, centred on collieries such as Severn Sisters and Maes-mawr, and spreading along the route of the Neath and Brecon Railway, by the time of the 1st edition OS survey (1884).</p> <p>Earlier origins are evident; the Chapel of Ease at Crynant has a medieval foundation, and several of the houses in the village appear to be of 18th century date. The Neath and Brecon Railway has been described as a typical contractor's railway, the contractor in this case being John Dickson. The railway opened from Neath to Onllwyn in 1864 and on to Brecon in 1866. Between Onllwyn and Sennybridge it closely followed the course of the Brecon Forest Tramroad. The route became part of the Swansea - Hereford line when a connection to the Swansea Vale Railway was made in 1873.</p>	High	<p>This area has been assessed as being of high value, representing a reasonably well-preserved example of an industrial communications/settlement corridor. During the late 19<sup>th</sup> - early 20<sup>th</sup> - century the collieries at Seven Sisters and Cefncoed near Crynant represented some of the most important anthracite collieries in the South Wales Coalfield; the extensive remains of the Cefncoed Colliery (now a museum) eloquently attest to this remarkable period of industrial growth.</p>
<p><b>NPTHL072</b> <b>Vale of Neath (northern valley side)</b></p>	<p>Rural environment / Agricultural / Irregular Fieldscapes (Level 3).</p> <p>Discontinuous area of similar landscape character and historical identity to the Vale of Neath (southern valley side); please refer to HL039 for technical information.</p>	High	<p>Extensive modern forestry plantation has obscured and detracted from the coherence of the irregular fieldscape and pattern of dispersed settlement shown on the OS 1st-3rd edition maps, however the area does contain the historically important remains of Aberpergwm House, the residence of the influential Williams family and the site of a monastic grange of Neath Abbey during the medieval period. The industrial</p>

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
			remains in this area, though extensive, are not of quite as high importance as those surviving on the southern slopes of the Vale (e.g. Melincwrt Furnace) which have contributed to the overall decision to categorise this area as high rather than outstanding.

**Table 5 Cultural Landscape Aspect Areas**

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
<b>BRCKNCL501 Waterfall Country</b>	Associations / Notional Expressions / Customs / Leisure / Recreation (Level 4).  The combination of waterfalls, rivers, the variety of scenery and their importance as a visitor attraction over the past 200 years has given the area great significance. Its importance is enhanced by the number of historic references to the beauty and delights of the area. During the 19th and 20th centuries it was also a small scale centre of industry with quarrying, mining and explosives production. The intricate and complex geology of the area has been the subject of study for some 100 years. Besides the foregoing it is also an area that is rich in legend and folk lore. For example King Arthur is said to rest beneath Ogof Craig Dinas	High	A popular area that is growing in recognition and use.
<b>CynonCL041 The Rhigos</b>	Associations / Notional Expressions / Places / Sense of Place (Level 4).  The name "The Rhigos" is not so much one place as an idea. It exists physically, but its value is in what can be seen. The Aspect Area is based on a small informal viewpoint in a pull-off from the mountain road above the Rhondda Valleys. From here can be seen a microcosm of the cultural influences of the Study Area - man-made reservoirs, roads, prehistoric remains, colliery workings, relict quarries and small industrial workings, forestry.	High	High because there is a palpable sense of history and of place, leading to an idea of small-scale exploitation and use over millennia.
<b>CynonCL042</b>	Influences / Material Expressions /Industrial / Heavy Industry (Level 4).  Hirwaun is situated on a ridge above the Neath and Cynon Valleys. It was an early centre of ironworking, being the first place in Wales where iron was smelted using coke. The Ironworks was established in 1757 on the site of an earlier charcoal-fuelled furnace. The settlement is surrounded by evidence of coal mining - in modern times, mostly open cast. Inside the settlement street patterns follow the lines of tram roads; externally, the image of Hirwaun to passers-by is conveyed by the bulk of the pair of high-rise tower blocks, incongruous both in this terrain and in the vernacular culture of residential development in the Valleys.	High	High as a ridge-top settlement where signs of sequential development are still evident, and benefiting from proximity to the A465 Heads of the Valleys road.
<b>CynonCL043</b>	Associations / Recorded Expressions / Media	Outstanding	The Tower Colliery story

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
	(Level 3). Tower Colliery is a success story. Tyrone O'Sullivan's charismatic leadership in organising a miners' buyout of this, the last deep mine in Wales, resulted in one of the most widely reported success stories of the late 20th century. His exploits in establishing a co-operative not only caught the attention of the news media, but the story has also inspired other cultural activity - such as the opera by Professor Alun Hoddinot, the leading musical composer in Wales in the 20th century.		has captured the attention of international media and creative artists, resulting in dissemination of it throughout the world.
<b>CynonCL044</b>	Associations / National Expressions / Institutions / Land Divisions (Level 4). Brecon Beacons National Park has been designated over 1344 sq km. There is a relatively small portion of its southern part in the Study Area, though larger tracts of land about it. The landscape here typifies the contrast between high moorland to the north of the Coal Measures and A465 trunk road, and the deeply incised valleys to the south. The portion within the Study Area lies to the south of the looming bulk of Pen-y-Fan, and consists mostly of sheep-grazed moorland which contains much evidence of prehistoric occupation and exploitation. On its western edge there are extensive eroded landscapes, cave systems and a spectacular series of waterfalls in the Neath River's headwaters.	Outstanding	Outstanding as a component part of the wider Brecon Beacons National Park, itself a widely recognised cultural area of outstanding designated landscape.
<b>CynonCL056 Designated Landscape Areas</b>	Associations / Notional Expressions / Institutions / Other Institutions (specify) (Level 4). Large expanses of (mostly) upland and moorland landscape that are present throughout the Study Area. They have been variously designated statutorily as Sites of Special Scientific Interest by the Countryside Council for Wales, or by Unitary Authorities as Special Landscape Areas, Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation or as part of the Coalfield Plateaux. Such designations are a reflection of 20th/21st century perceptions of the value of protecting both natural habitats and of rural areas of lesser importance though possessing much aesthetic and sensory value. They contain variously historic and contemporary evidence of human occupation and exploitation in the form of prehistoric monuments, redundant industrial workings and transport systems, and of forestry. As such they are a commodity for leisure enjoyment as well as providing very extensive "green lungs" to supplement those identified in urban landscapes that they surround.	High	High because there is a palpable sense of history and of place, leading to an idea of small-scale exploitation and use over millennia.
<b>NPTCL016 A465</b>	Influences / Material expressions / Infrastructure / Communications & Transport (Level 4). The A465 dual carriageway through the Vale of Neath has recently been completed, resulting in (a) re-alignment of lengths of the Neath River; (b) improving the efficiency of travel for industrial, commercial and leisure purposes, (c) affecting the viability of business along the old road, (d) improving the safety of settlement	Outstanding	Major highway link adding to the importance of the Vale of Neath and contributing to the efficiency of business, commerce, industry and tourism/leisure transportation. Of very high value to local people who have campaigned for

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
	residents along the old road.		the completion of the 'missing link' for decades.
<b>NPTCL035 Rheola and Aberpergwm</b>	Associations / Recorded Expressions / Artistic / Other Artistic (specify) (Level 4)  Two former gentry estates that add to cultural essence of Vale of Neath through their artistic and literary connections in addition to. Aberpergwm having been subsumed into the National Coal Board estate, and Rheola having a vast aluminium factory built to destroy its prospect during World War 2. Nonetheless, literary, musical and artistic connections survive along with Aberpergwm's estate church of St Cadoc, its fine set of wrought-iron gates and Rheola's registered estate landscape.	High	High because there is a palpable sense of history and of place, leading to an idea of small-scale exploitation and use over millennia.
<b>NPTCL036 Glynneath, Pont Walby, Blaengwrach and Cwmgrach</b>	Influences / Material expressions / Infrastructure / Communications & Transport (Level 4)  The four settlements in this Aspect Area owe much to the building of the Neath Canal, Vale of Neath Railway, mineral railway and the road system, and to the coal extracting enterprises of the Williams family of Aberpergwm. Each component element is surrounded by relict industrial workings - notably the Glynneath Inclined Plane and the Venallt Ironworks. Glynneath's profile has been lifted in the late 20th/early 21st century by it being the birthplace and home of Max Boyce, comedian/singer and fanatical rugby supporter.	High	The survival of these vibrant communities is commendable; a High rating is given because of determined plans to regenerate with the Glynneath Business Park and other initiatives (even including the proposal to create the secure training centre for young offenders on the Business Park - itself a sign of social regeneration).
<b>NPTCL045 West Central High Ridge: Mynydd Marchywel and Hirfynydd</b>	Associations / Notional Expressions / Institutions / Land Divisions (Level 4)  Although connections are mostly Roman, the landscape contains many examples of prehistoric landscape use alongside the Roman camps and fortlets. The high ridge conveys the sense of the terrain having formed the ancient tribal frontier between the Silures and Demetae. Although now heavily forested in the east, open cast mining in the north of the Aspect Area also demonstrates a geological "frontier" between surface outcrops and the deep mines of the Tawe, Dulais and Neath Valleys. The north-east is geologically and topographically dominated by sundry small rivers and waterfalls, suggesting a natural boundary between the CBC administrative area and the high moorland below the Breconshire Fans. This areas is also notable for its SSSI.	High	High as an evolved landscape containing evidence from prehistory, important Roman remains, open cast and forestry - but especially as a landscape containing evidence of being a "frontier".
<b>NPTCL046 Eastern High Lands: Resolven Mountain, Mynydd Abergwynfi, Cefn yr Argoed</b>	Influences / Material expressions / Rural / Forestry (Level 4).  Cultural distinctiveness is of a landscape now given over to conifer forest plantations, an activity that has subsumed extensive evidence of human occupation in prehistory and through the mediaeval periods to the 19th and 20th centuries.  The Aspect Area contains extensive SSSI designations between Pont Walby and through Cwm Ceffyl to Llyn Fach adjacent to the leisure trail of Coed Morgannwg/St Illtyd's Way that traverses the mountainous terrain from Carn Foesen to Melincourt and Resolven, with a	High	High because there is a palpable sense of history and of place, leading to an idea of small-scale exploitation and use over millennia.

<b>Aspect area</b>	<b>Classification and description</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
	branch down the presumed Roman Way to Fairyland past the Roman camps at Blaen Cwmbach and Banwen Torybetel.		
<b>NPTCL047 Vale of Neath</b>	Associations / Recorded Expressions / Artistic / Other Artistic (specify) (Level 4). From Aberdulais to Glynneath the Vale of Neath's topographical beauties have attracted painters, poets, photographers in large numbers over several centuries. It is their interest and the result of their activities that have caused the identification of this Aspect Area.	Outstanding	High because there is a palpable sense of history and of place, leading to an idea of small-scale exploitation and use over millennia.



1. The Landscape and Visual Impact assessment (LVIA) for the proposed Selar Central development was largely prepared between January and March 2013, using the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment as the basis for the assessment methodology.
2. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of the Guidelines was published on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2013. In response to queries from members, the LI's Technical Committee produced a statement on the transition from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, which was published on the LI's website, <http://www.landscapeinstitute.org/knowledge/GLVIA.php>.
3. This is the Statement from the LI on the "transition":

*GLVIA3 replaces the second edition GLVIA2. In general terms the approach and methodologies in the new edition are the same. The main difference is that GLVIA3 places greater emphasis on professional judgement and less emphasis on a formulaic approach. Members have asked for clarification on the status of projects developed under GLVIA2, but reviewed or implemented after publication of the third edition.*

*An assessment started using GLVIA2 should be completed using that edition. However, if in the view of the professional a comparison should be undertaken with GLVIA3, and subsequently if necessary a re-assessment undertaken according to GLVIA3, then this should be discussed and agreed with the client in the first instance. Obviously, assessments started after the publication of GLVIA3 should use it, rather than GLVIA2*

4. In principle, then, the LVIA for Selar should be completed using GLVIA 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition guidance, even though it will be submitted with a planning application more than 2 months after publication of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition.
5. Although the approach and methodologies in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition are the same in principle, the new Guidelines set out a step-wise approach to assessing sensitivity of receptor, magnitude of change and significance of effect. The terminology of GLVIA3 is not used in the LVIA for Selar Central, but a clear chain of reasoning is set out, from description of the baseline, through consideration of the changes likely to arise from the development proposals, the sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors to those changes, the magnitude of the changes and, hence, the level significance of the effect.

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