

VALE OF GLAMORGAN  
REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN  
2021 - 2036

# SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS

November 2025



BACKGROUND PAPER - BP28



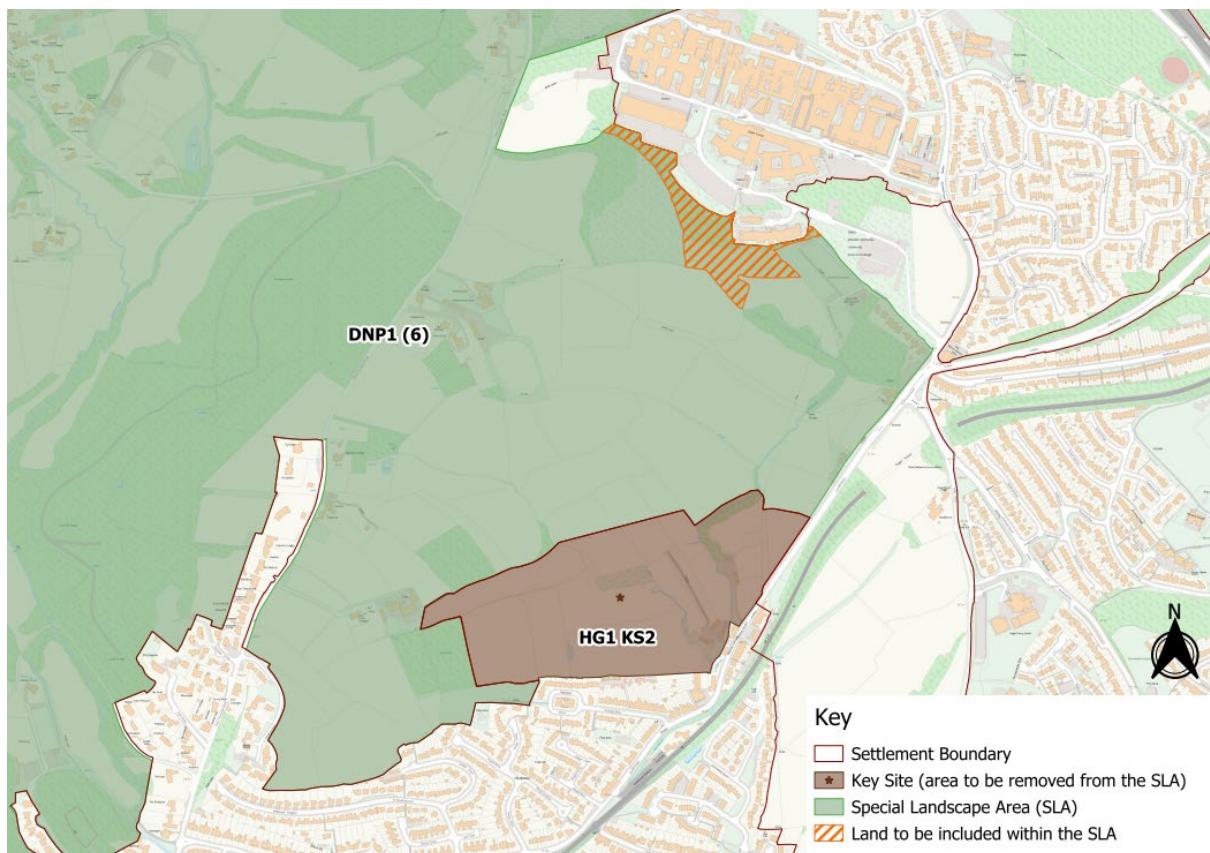
## Background Paper Update 2025

- 1.1 The use of non-statutory designations to protect areas of landscape, such as Special Landscape Areas (SLAs), has long been a policy tool within the UK planning system. Such designations have been used by local planning authorities as a means of protecting sensitive landscapes and in developing an understanding and awareness of those features and characteristics that give local areas a sense of place.
- 1.2 The Vale of Glamorgan Council's '*Designation of Special Landscape Areas - Final Report*' was prepared by independent consultants acting on behalf of the Council in 2008. The assessment and final report updated previous landscape assessments and SLA designations prepared and used by the Council since 1999 and the SLA were based on Level 3 LANDMAP information collated and quality assured in partnership with Natural Resources Wales (previously the Countryside Council for Wales).
- 1.3 The SLA identified were defined using the approved Special Landscape Area designation criteria methodology developed for the South East Wales Local Authority Consortium which utilised LANDMAP data and allowed information about the landscape to be gathered, organised and evaluated in a nationally consistent, quality assured data set.
- 1.4 In total the report recommended six SLA. These were:
  1. Castle Upon Alun
  2. Upper & Lower Thaw Valley
  3. Ely Valley & Ridge Slopes
  4. Nant Llancarfan
  5. Dyffryn Basin & Ridge Slopes
  6. Cwrt-yr-ala-Basin
- 1.5 These SLA were included within the Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan 2011-2026 (June 2017) (LDP) as Policy MG17 - Special Landscape Areas.
- 1.6 The designation of the SLA was not intended to prevent development, but to ensure that where development was acceptable, careful consideration was given to the design elements of the proposal such as the siting, orientation, layout and landscaping, to ensure that the special qualities and characteristics for which the SLAs have been designated are protected.
- 1.7 Since the adoption of the LDP, there have been numerous residential, employment and renewable energy applications considered and approved within the Vale of Glamorgan and the impact of each has been considered against the policies of the adopted plan (including Policy MG17) and national guidance.
- 1.8 The Council considers that the SLA as defined in the 2008 '*Designation of Special Landscape Areas - Final Report*' remain relevant, up-to-date, and based on current best practise and have therefore not undertaken a review of the report to inform the emerging Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP).
- 1.9 In preparing the RLDP, following a robust multi-stage assessment process in line with the approved Candidate Site Assessment Methodology, the Council has identified 5 key development sites which due to their location near to sustainable transport links, the availability of services and facilities and their viability and deliverability and having

regard for constraints, which along rolled forward sites, will form the basis of the RLDP housing requirement.

- 1.10 In identifying the key sites, the Council has considered the strategic objectives of the RLDP and the implications of future development on existing designations including the SLAs.
- 1.11 One of the key sites (HG1KS2 North of Dinas Powys off Cardiff Road) will necessitate amendments to the SLA boundary as included in the adopted LDP (Policy MG17 (6) Cwrt Yr Ala Basin refers) and future development proposals for the site will be required to incorporate mitigation to reduce the impact of the site on the SLA.
- 1.12 These amendments to the SLA boundary will be incorporated at the Deposit Plan stage and Figure 1 below illustrates the key site HG1 KS2 and the revision to the SLA boundary (DNP1(6)).
- 1.13 In addition to the amendments relating to the Key Site HG1 KS2, it is proposed to extend the SLA to align with the revised Settlement Boundary to the south of Llandough Hospital. This area was previously excluded from the SLA in the adopted Local Development Plan 2011-2026 to enable the future expansion of the hospital and is no longer required. This amendment, which does not include the land to the west of the hospital used as a therapeutic outdoor health facility, is also shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Proposed amendments to Special Landscape Area DNP1 (6) Cwrt Yr Ala Basin.**



- 1.14 In addition to the specific changes detailed above, minor consequential changes have been made to several of the SLA boundaries following a review of the existing settlement boundaries. The review sought to ensure that the settlement boundaries remain up to date and robust and reflect the existing circumstances on the ground since they were previously last assessed through the Local Development Plan. The

minor changes to the settlement boundaries and the subsequent changes to the SLAs have been made to align mapped designations. The review of the settlement boundaries undertaken as a part of the RLDP is available as a separate background paper (BP46 refers).

1.15 The following minor consequential changes have been made to the SLA boundaries following the settlement boundary review:

Settlement	Special Landscape Area	Change
Aberthin	SLA (2) Upper & Lower Thaw Valley	HG4(2) Land West of Maendy Road, Aberthin has been identified as a rural affordable housing led scheme and has been allocated within the RLDP. The settlement boundary and the Special Landscape area have been amended accordingly.
Cowbridge	SLA (2) Upper & Lower Thaw Valley	Llyswen House, Windmill Lane has been included in the settlement boundary and removed from the Special Landscape Area.
St. Athan	SLA (2) Upper & Lower Thaw Valley	The site to the south of Clive Road has been assessed through the RLDP process and allocated for housing (HG1(8) Clive Road refers). The site has therefore been included within the St Athan settlement boundary and removed from the Special Landscape Area.
St. Nicholas	SLA (3) Ely Valley & Ridge Slopes	The settlement boundary has been amended to reflect recent developments at St Nicholas Church in Wales Primary School and Kingfisher Hall, planning applications 2022/00066/FUL and 2018/00392/FUL respectively and the Special Landscape Area has been amended accordingly.
Wenvoe	SLA (5) Dyffryn Basin & Ridge Slopes	The settlement boundary review determined that the garden centre warrants inclusion in the Wenvoe settlement boundary. The settlement boundary has therefore been extended to include the garden centre site, and the SLA has been amended accordingly.

1.16 In addition to the changes detailed above, some settlements e.g. Fferr Goch, Graig Penllyn, are fully within and covered by the SLA. In such settlements, while there may have been amendments to the identified settlement boundary, this has not affected the SLA designation in these areas.

**Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council**  
**DESIGNATION OF SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS**

**FINAL REPORT**  
**March 2008**



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## **VALE OF GLAMORGAN**

### **DESIGNATION OF SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS**

**MARCH 2008**

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**Project no: 8243  
Project Status: Final Report**

Revision No.	Date of Revision	Checked by	Date	Approved by	Date
0		CD	20/12/07	LJ	20/12/07
1	14/02/08	CD	14/02/08	LJ	14/02/08
2	04.03.08	CD	04.03.08	LJ	04.03.08
3	17.03.08	CD	17.03.08	PMcC	17.03.08

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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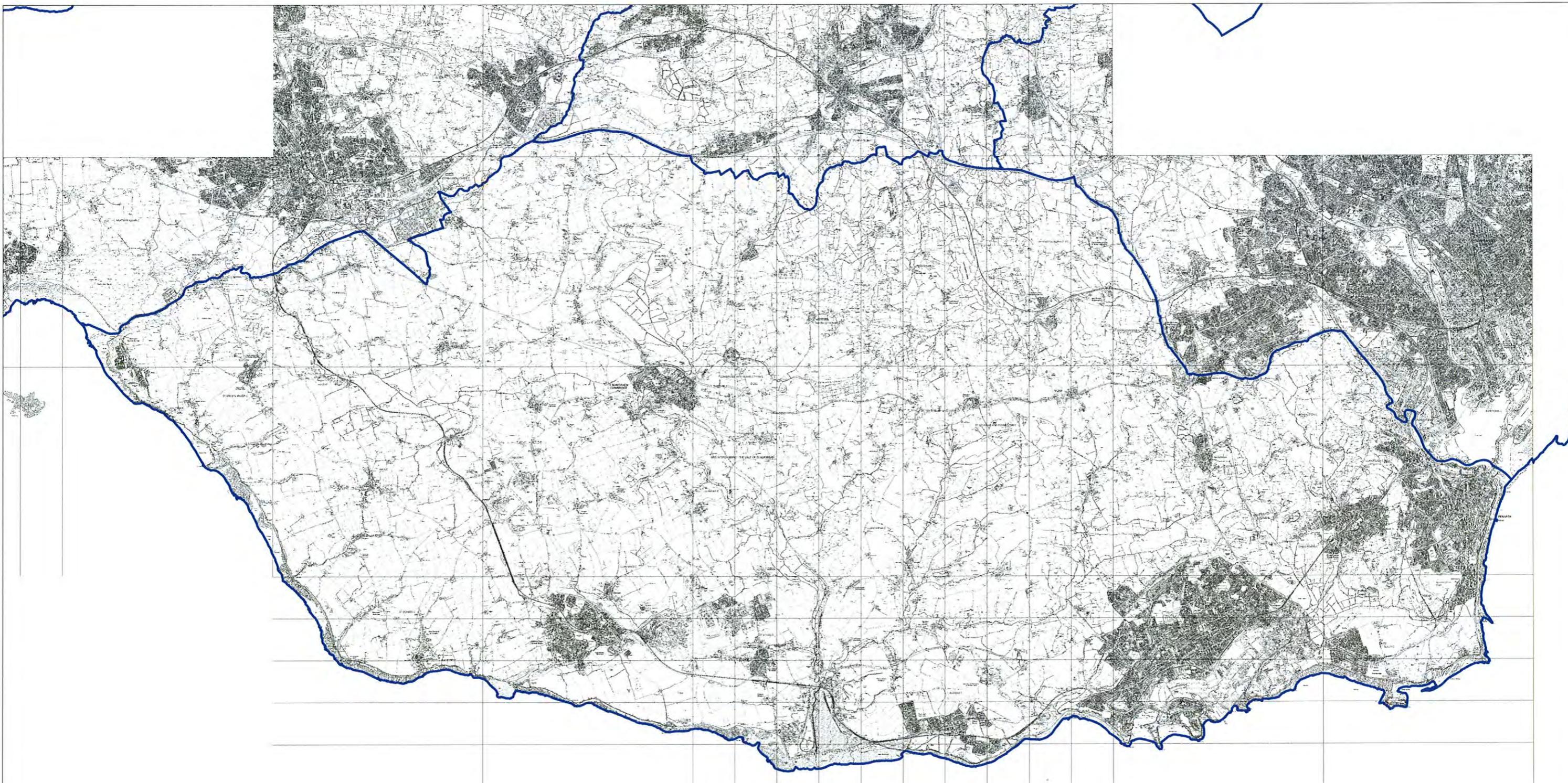
The Vale of Glamorgan LANDMAP study has recently been updated to Level 3 using the current 2003 methodology developed by the Countryside Council for Wales. In addition the Council have commenced the development of the Local Development Plan to replace the Unitary Development Plan. Accordingly the Council have decided to review the non-statutory Special Landscape Areas previously identified for their area.

The study used the recently adapted Special Landscape Area designation criteria methodology developed for the South East Wales Local Authority Consortium. In all, six Special Landscape Areas have been identified for consideration by the Council. They closely follow the existing areas with amendments reflecting the information provided from the updated LANDMAP study.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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- 1.1 TACP Consultants were commissioned in July 2007 by Vale of Glamorgan Council (refer to Figure 1.0) to carry out a review of the Special Landscape Area (SLA) designations within their administrative area. This was to use the recently approved Special Landscape Area Designation Criteria methodology developed by the South East Wales Local Authority Consortium which utilises data from within the LANDMAP Information System. The commission was based on the fact that the Council had recently updated their LANDMAP information system to the current 2003 methodology used by the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW). In addition they were commencing the development of the Local Development Plan which will replace the current Unitary Development Plan.
- 1.2 The study has reviewed all of the Council area and has included an overview of the existing SLA designations developed for the Authority following the publication of the Vale of Glamorgan Landscape Study.
- 1.3 The Special Landscape Area Designation Criteria has highlighted six areas that qualify for SLA designation. These boundaries are recommendations based on the investigation of the updated LANDMAP information. The detailed boundaries will need to be reviewed by the Council to take into account any plan or policy developments as the Local Development Plan process progresses.



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NOTES

**VALE OF GLAMORGAN  
STUDY AREA LOCATION**

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NOT TO SCALE       DATE DECEMBER 2007

**FIGURE / DRAWING NO.**  
**FIGURE 1.0**

**REV**

## 2.0 STUDY CONTEXT

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**2.1** The use of non-statutory designations to protect areas of landscape, such as Special Landscape Areas (SLAs), has long been a policy tool within the UK planning system. They have been seen by local planning authorities as a means of protecting sensitive landscapes and in developing an understanding and awareness of those features and characteristics that give local areas a sense of place.

The methodology used for SLA designation was that developed by the then Countryside Commission (Guidance Document CCP243) and was accepted practice at the time of the studies. This was based primarily on an appreciation of the visual qualities of the landscape and took into account the following criteria:-

- Landscape as a resource
- Scenic Quality
- Unspoilt Character and Integrity
- Sense of Place
- Conservation Interest
- Consensus

**2.2** The current SLAs (see Figure 2.0) within the Vale of Glamorgan were identified as part of the development work for the adopted Unitary Development Plan and was based upon the findings of the Landscapes Working for Wales study undertaken in 1999. This was one of the first studies carried out using the then emerging LANDMAP methodology developed by CCW.

**2.3** In 2006-2007, the Vale of Glamorgan renewed the LANDMAP data utilising the current (2003) methodology used by CCW which includes a quality assurance exercise to ensure consistency of approach across Wales. The updated method still retains the five evaluated aspect topic layers, namely:-

- Geological Landscapes
- Landscape Habitats
- Visual and Sensory Landscapes
- Historic Landscapes
- Cultural Landscapes

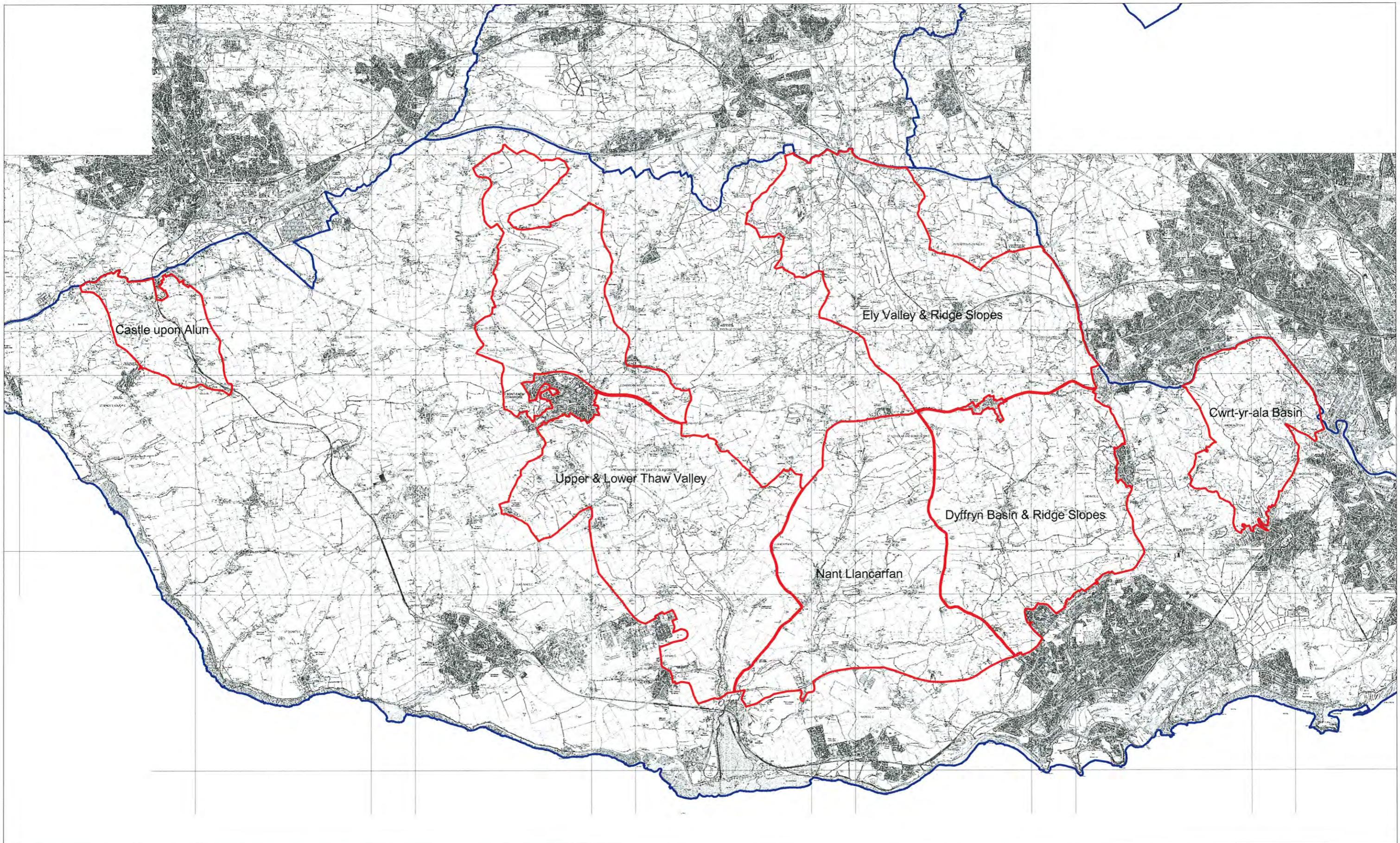
For each of the aspect topic layers, discrete geographical units known as aspect areas are identified and mapped and a data set is developed that includes a description, classification and evaluation of quality. In addition, other information sets are developed including a Form and Function Layer (i.e. landscape type and use) and a Public Perception Study is also carried

out. This was undertaken on earlier work and not as a part of this review). This brings together the findings from focus groups and questionnaire exercises.

**2.4** In parallel to this change in the details of the LANDMAP Information System, the requirements in relation to local authority development plans have also changed. Under the Planning and Compensation Act 2004, the existing Unitary Development Plan system has been replaced by a requirement for local authorities in Wales to prepare Local Development Plans. In view of the updating and amending of the LANDMAP information and this change in development plan format, the South East Wales Local Authority Consortium commissioned a study to develop a methodology for the designation of SLAs using the LANDMAP Information System<sup>1</sup>. This report was published in June 2007 and the methodology has been used in the conduct of this study.

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<sup>1</sup> See "Development of Criteria for Special Landscape Area Designation for South East Wales Local Authorities" (Caerphilly County Borough Council host authority) June 2007.



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NOTES

VALE OF GLAMORGAN  
EXISTING SPECIAL LANDSCAPE  
AREAS

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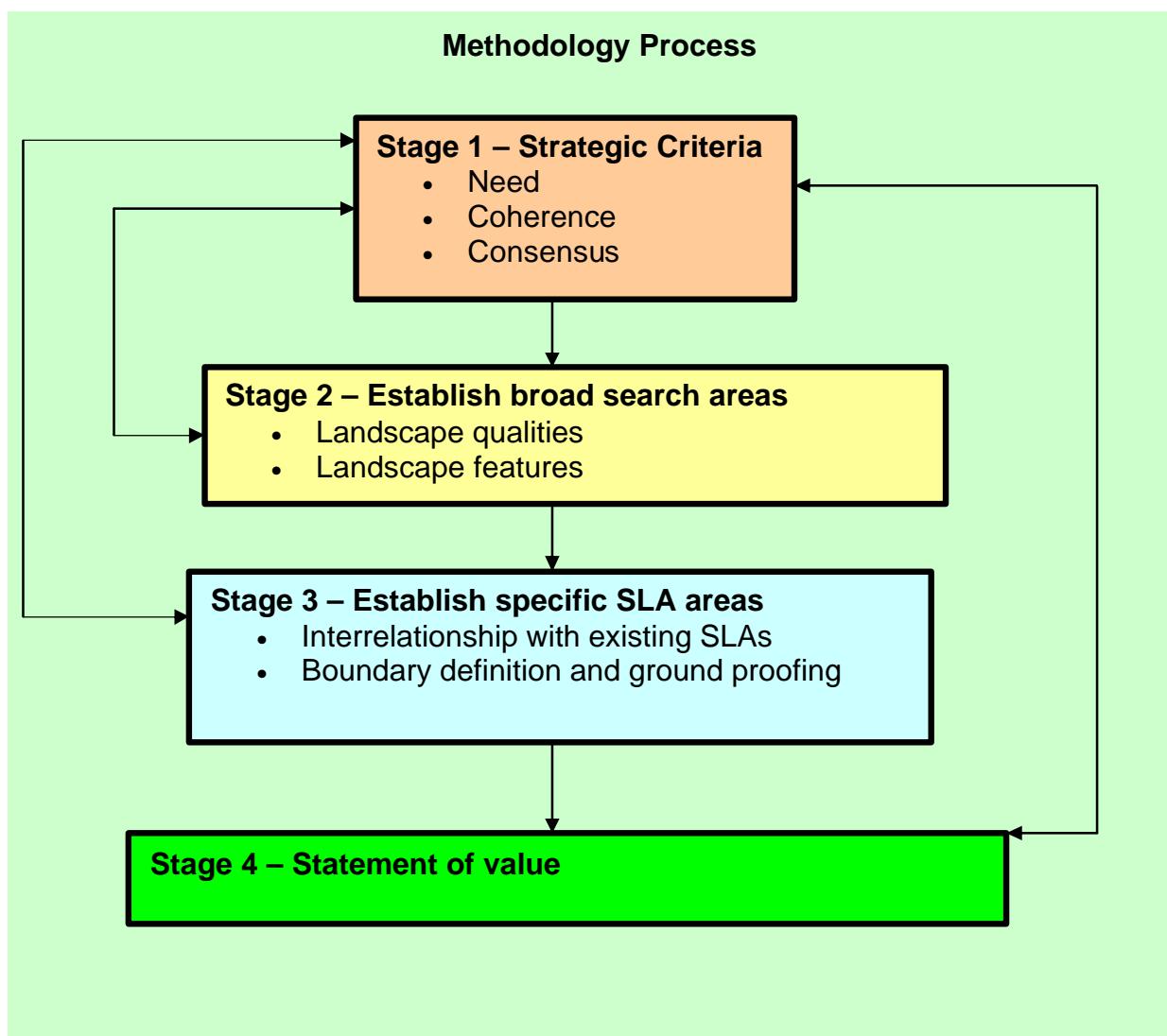
FIGURE / DRAWING NO.  
FIGURE 2.0

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## 3.0 SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA REVIEW

3.1 The regional SLA Assessment methodology took into account the requirement to utilise the LANDMAP Information System. This reflects the guidance in Planning Policy Wales (2002) Section 5.3.11 “.... *Non statutory designations such as Special Landscape Areas ... should be based on a formal scientific assessment of the ..... landscape value of the site ..... . Local Planning authorities should apply these designations where there is good reason to believe that normal planning policies cannot provide the necessary protection ...*” and 5.3.13 “*CCW LANDMAP information system methodology is an important resource upon which local authorities can draw....*”

3.2 The methodology ensures a structured, iterative process is used. This is illustrated in Figure 3.0 below.



### 3.3 Vale of Glamorgan Council – Special Landscape Area Review

**3.3.1** In carrying out this process in the Vale of Glamorgan a series of meetings have been held at each task hold point.

**3.3.2** The Stage 1 and Stage 2 tasks were combined with the agreement of the client team and the findings were discussed at a meeting held on 22 November 2007, the results of which were as follows:

#### Stage 1 - Review of Strategic Criteria

Strategic Criteria	Response
<b>(1) Need</b> – to what extent will designation be more effective in safeguarding, managing or providing the special attributes of the area.	Currently some 40% of the Borough is designated as SLAs. From the discussions it is apparent that in terms of development control and landscape management the designation is widely used by the local authority in considering development proposals. Likewise, in terms of planning policy, value was attached to SLAs in terms of raising design standards.
<b>(2) Coherence</b> – ensure that areas considered for designation are both coherent enough and of sufficient size to make it practical to develop policies for its protection, management or promotion.	All parties agreed this was an important consideration in designating areas. Too many small areas could undermine the intention of the designation.
<b>(3) Consensus</b> - agreement and sufficient support for designation, and must include all stakeholders including community as well as professional groups.	At this initial stage only professional stakeholders have been consulted. All agreed that SLAs make an important contribution to local pride and sense of place, local communities place great attachment to the designation. LDP process offers the potential to include a wider range of groups as part of the plan making process
<b>Conclusion</b>	
Currently SLA designation makes a positive contribution to the Council's decision making and policy formulation. Community value is recognised and in view of the change in landscape appraisal methodology the SLA review should be taken forward.	

### 3.3.3 Stage 2 - Establish Broad Search Areas

Figures 4.0-4.4, which follow, illustrate the iterative process used in defining the broad search areas for potential SLAs. These are established by considering the evaluation levels given for each aspect area within the five LANDMAP aspect topics. From this the clustering of “Outstanding” and “High” levels of evaluated aspect areas identify the broad search areas required. Figure 4.4 illustrates the six broad search areas which are as follows:-

- (i) Ogmore Down & Castle Upon Alun
- (ii) Upper & Lower Thaw Valley
- (iii) Ely Valley & Ridge Slopes
- (iv) Nant Llancarfan
- (v) Dyffryn Basin & Ridge Slopes
- (vi) Cwrt-yr-ala-Basin

These areas relate closely to the existing SLAs used by the Council. The main difference relates to the wider aspect topics, such as Geological and Cultural Landscapes, influencing boundary choice.

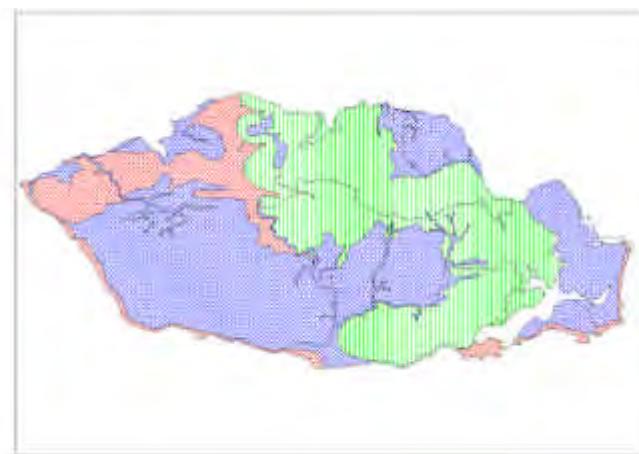


Figure 4.0 Geological Layer

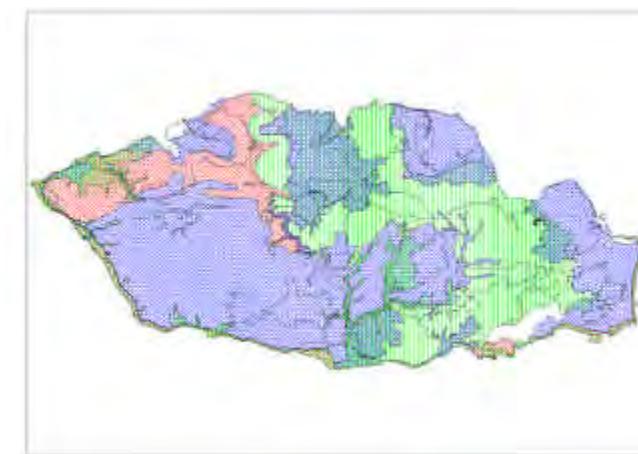


Figure 4.1 Geological & Landscape Habitats Layers

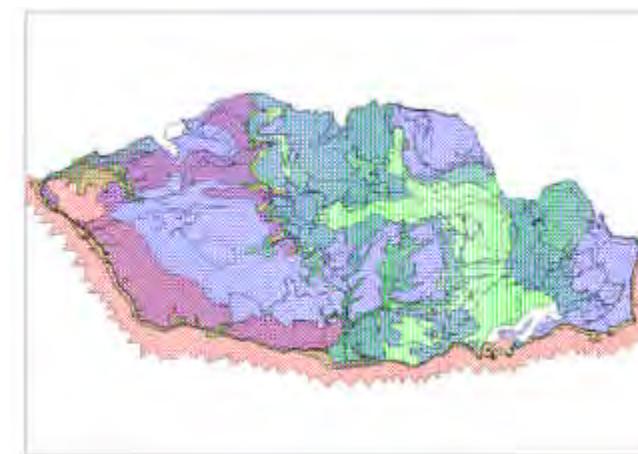


Figure 4.2 Geological, Landscape Habitats & Visual and Sensory Layers

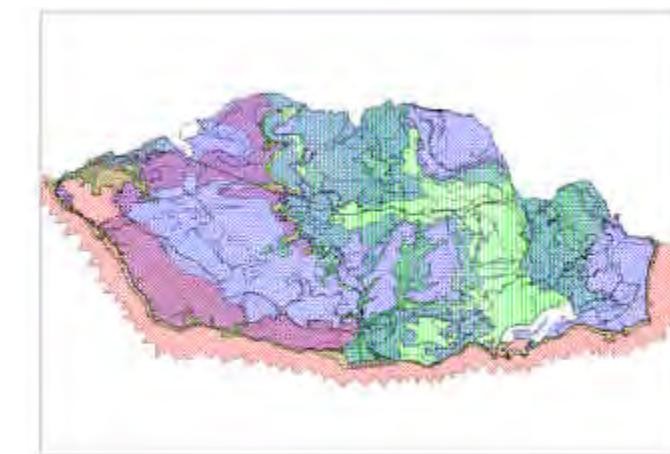
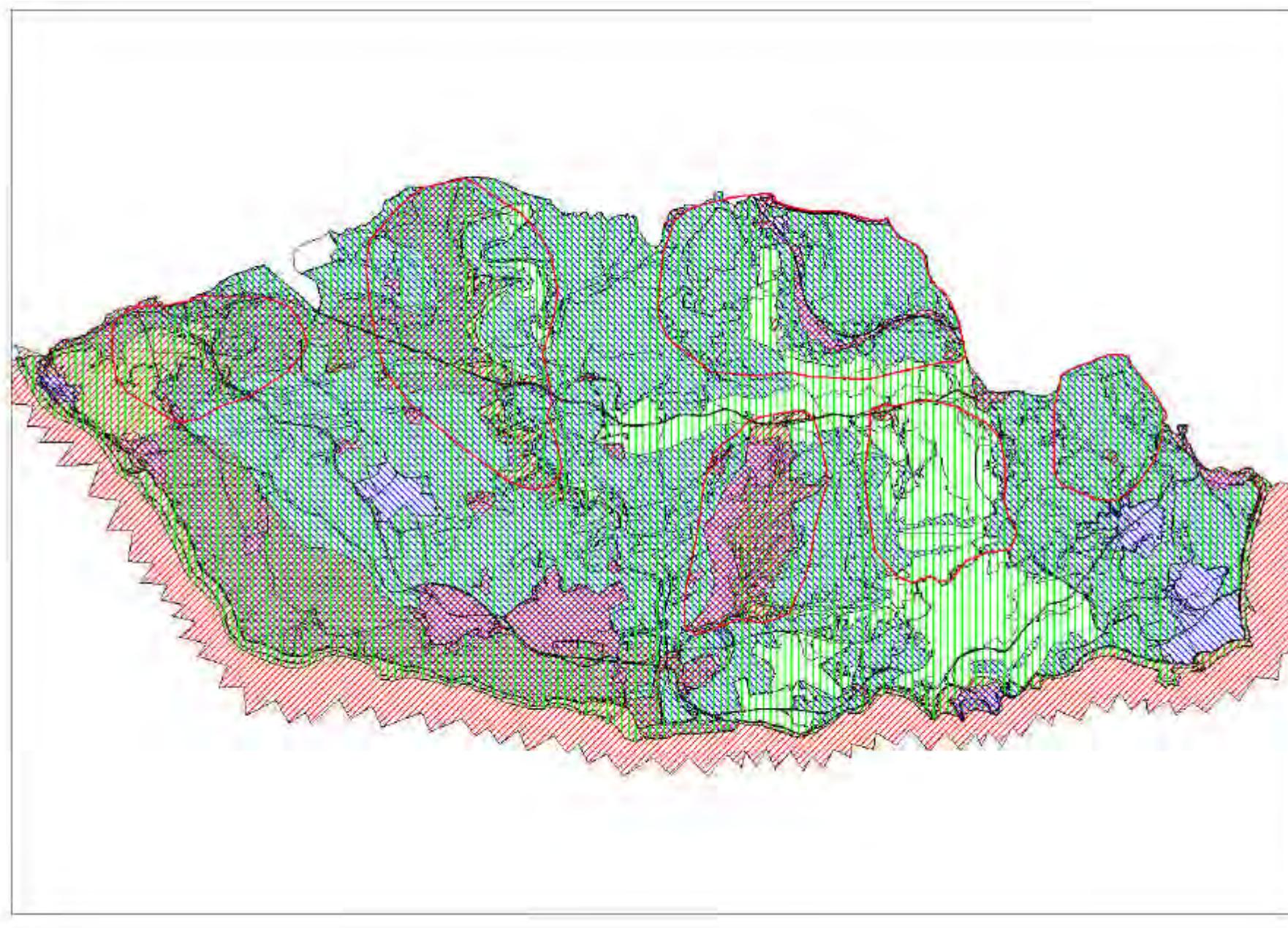


Figure 4.3 Geological, Landscape Habitats, Visual and Sensory Layers & Historic Landscapes Layers



**Legend**

<span style="background-color: red; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span>	Outstanding
<span style="background-color: green; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span>	High
<span style="background-color: blue; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span>	Moderate
<span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span>	Low or Unassessed

Figure 4.4 Geological, Landscape Habitats, Visual and Sensory, Historic Landscapes & Cultural Layers and Broad Search Areas

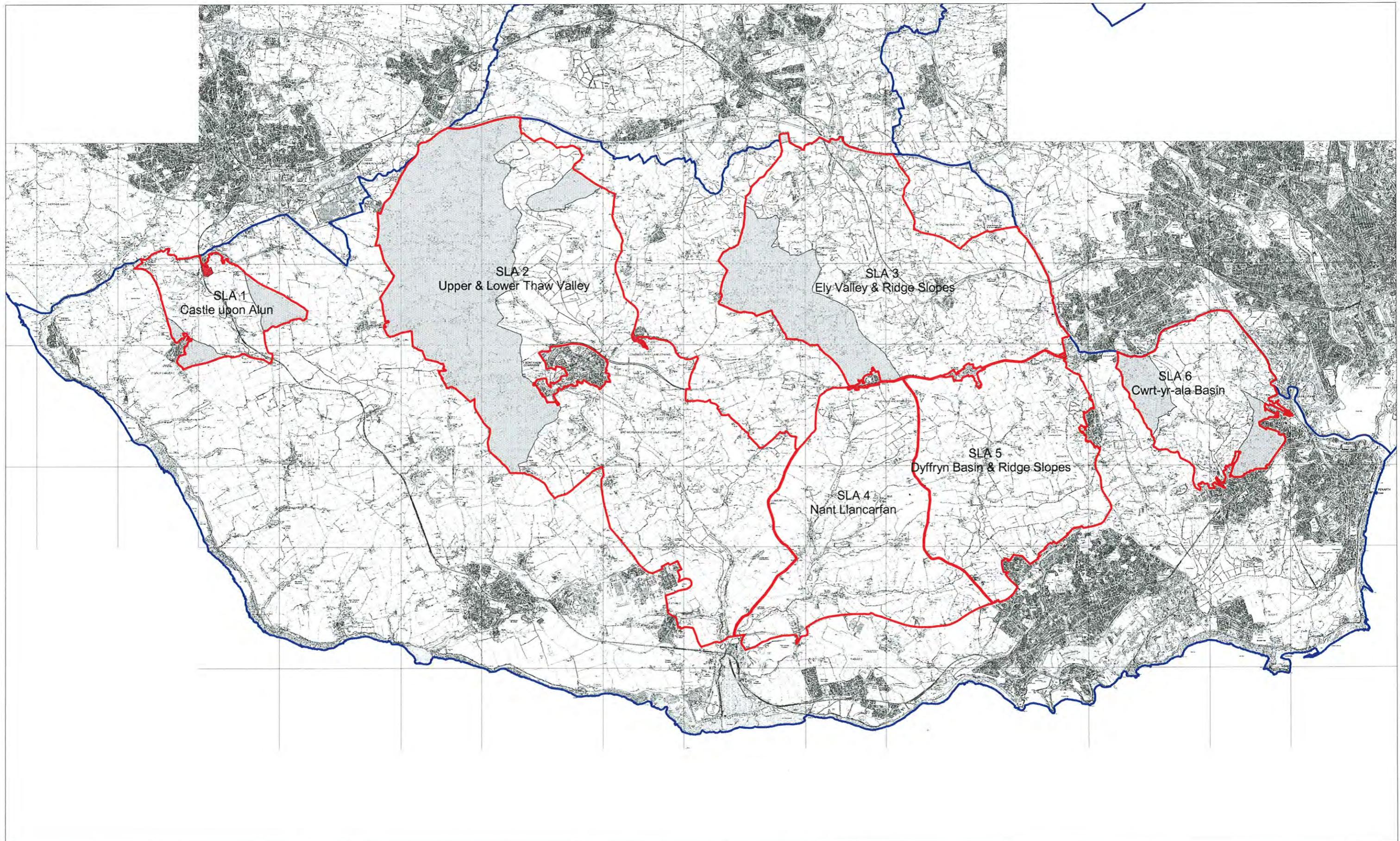
### 3.3.4 Stage 3 - Establish the Specific Areas

The primary function of this stage in the process is to establish clear, defensible boundaries to the broad search areas. This is undertaken through a combination of a desk survey of OS plans supported by field survey to confirm boundary choices. Permanent features such as roads, river courses or Unitary Authority boundaries are considered defensible, whereas field boundaries are insufficiently clear at ground level and subject to change more easily. Boundaries may subsequently include areas of low evaluation or exclude areas of high evaluation in order to provide coherence and defensibility. Adjacent Local Authority boundaries have been considered when assessing the data and defining the SLA.

The survey work was undertaken in December 2007. Each of the broad search areas was reviewed in turn and they were refined as illustrated on Figure 5.0.

- (i) Ogmore Down & Castle Upon Alun - extension of boundary to the east in response to a larger area being identified by LANDMAP data. The broad search area was reduced to the west as it covered areas already included by the Heritage Coast designation.
- (ii) Upper & Lower Thaw Valley - exclusion of Cowbridge town and extension of the boundary to the south, to include further Visual and Sensory, Cultural and Habitat aspects of high value and to include the whole valley landscape.
- (iii) Ely Valley & Ridge Slopes - exclusion of NE corner and extension south to the A48.
- (iv) Nant Llancarfan - extension SE towards a clearly defensible boundary.
- (v) Dyffryn Basin & Ridge Slopes - extension SW to include areas of high value and to form a defensible boundary.
- (vi) Cwrt-yr-ala Basin - inclusion of land of high habitat value

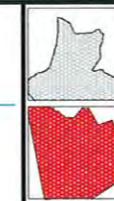
These have been discussed with the client team and a number of issues were raised that have now been considered and, where relevant, incorporated into the study findings.



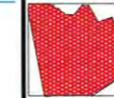
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Areas now included in Special  
Landscape Areas



Areas now excluded from  
Special Landscape Areas

NOTES

**VALE OF GLAMORGAN  
SPECIFIC SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS  
& UNITARY AUTHORITY BOUNDARIES**

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FIGURE / DRAWING NO.  
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### **3.4 Statement of Value**

The approved methodology allows for the development of statements of value for each proposed SLA to an agreed format.

The recommended SLA areas are:

1. Castle Upon Alun
2. Upper & Lower Thaw Valley
3. Ely Valley & Ridge Slopes
4. Nant Llancarfan
5. Dyffryn Basin & Ridge Slopes
6. Cwrt-yr-ala-Basin

The Statement of Value (Stage 4) includes a plan of the proposed SLA area, an assessment against the Stage 1 Review of Strategic Criteria (Need, Coherence, Consensus), a brief description of the area and land management issues (threats, potential for improvement etc), a boundary justification agreed with relevant stakeholders<sup>2</sup> (CCW, Cadw, EA, Community and Town Councils, adjacent authorities, Non statutory groups eg CPRW) and the LANDMAP data set tables for each aspect within the area.

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<sup>2</sup> It also includes the requirement for final boundary justification to be determined by the Local Authority. This is an amendment to the regional methodology study made by CCW in the light of experience gained in applying the methodology elsewhere in Wales.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

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- 4.1** The study has identified six areas worthy of designation as SLA's using the adapted methodology. They closely follow the existing designated SLA's which is a reflection, in many ways of the form and character of the Vale of Glamorgan landscape.
- 4.2** The main differences relate to additional areas being included and others being deleted, reflecting the updated LANDMAP information. These are as follows:-

### SLA 1 – Castle upon Alun

The western section of the SLA included an area already included within the Heritage Coast designation and was thus excluded. The eastern boundary identified in Stage 3 included an area further to the east to reflect aspect areas identified in the LANDMAP study. Following review, this area was excluded and the boundary established as identified on Drawing No 8243/01.

### SLA 2 – Upper and Lower Thaw Valleys

A larger area to the west has been included reflecting Cultural, Landscape Habitats and Geological Landscapes data (see Drawing No. 8243/02).

### SLA 3 – Ely Valley Ridge and Slopes

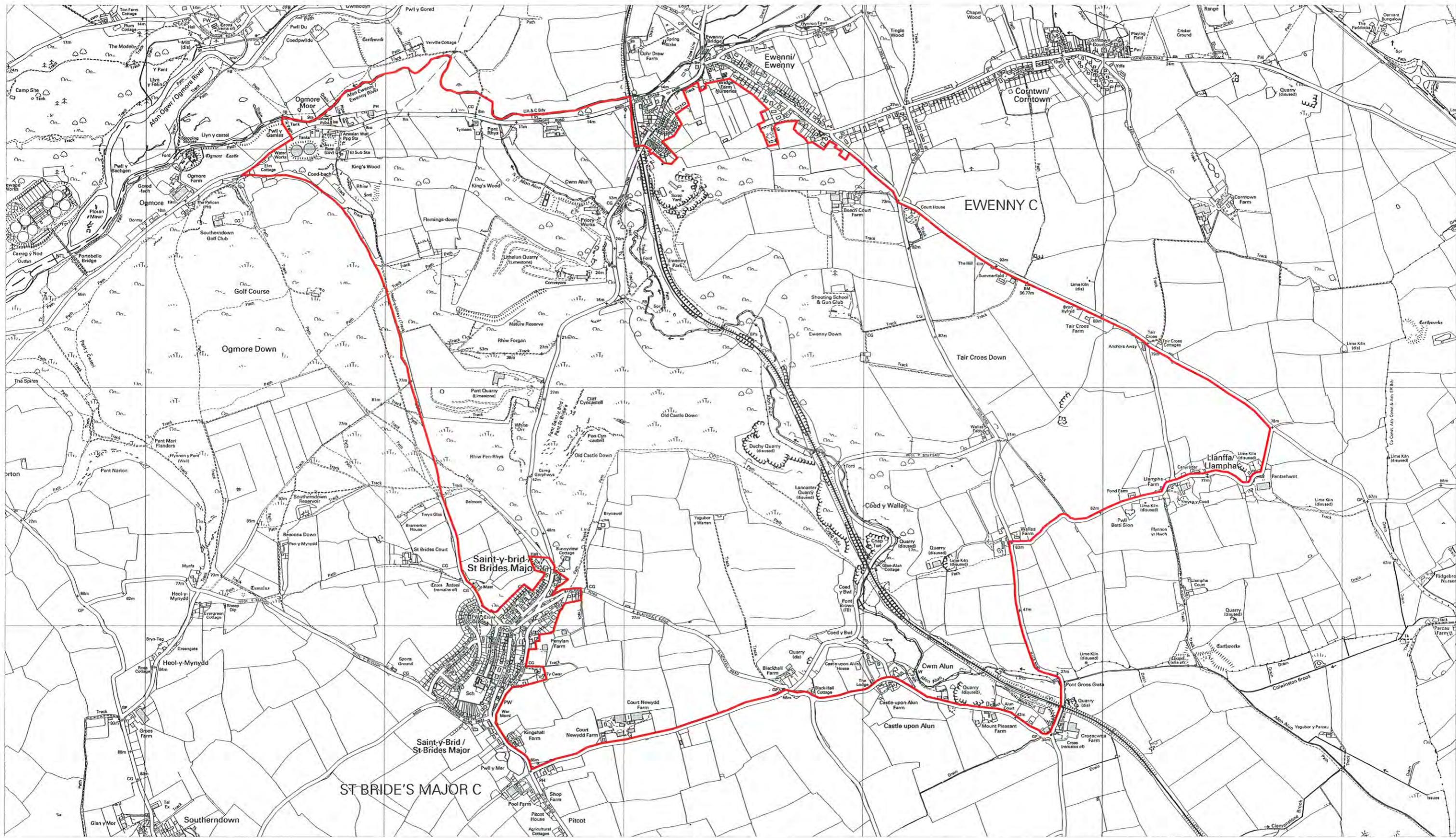
A larger area to the west has been included reflecting Cultural, Geological and Landscape Habitats data.

### SLA 6 – Cwrt yr Ala Basin

The areas around Wenvoe Quarry and Llandough have been included reflecting Geological Landscape, Cultural and Landscape Habitats data.

The remainder of the SLA's boundaries remain unchanged.

LOCATION (PLAN)



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NOTES  
VALE OF GLAMORGAN  
SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA 1  
CASTLE UPON ALUN

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NOT TO SCALE      DATE: DECEMBER 2007  
FIGURE / DRAWING NO.  
8243/01

## SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA 1 – CASTLE UPON ALUN

### Photograph(s)



Plateau at St. Brides Major



Ford at Heol y Stepsau crossing

### Relevance against Strategic Criteria

#### • Need

The area has a very strong sense of place, in which context is strongly related to cultural identity. Coastal areas and river valleys are of outstanding quality in several aspects, and include habitats for several rare species. Intensive agricultural management practices are having some negative impact. The openness of this landscape makes it sensitive to development.

#### • Coherence

The broad search area identified by the LANDMAP data extends west into areas covered by the Heritage Coast designation. The existing and proposed western SLA boundaries therefore follow this boundary. The broad search area identified a larger area than originally designated due to the wider range of aspect topics (geological, habitats and cultural significance) now being considered and the boundary has been extended to the east, following the minor road from Croescwtta Farm to Llanffa.

#### • Consensus

The proposed SLA boundary closely follows the existing boundary and, in combination with the adjacent Heritage Coast boundary, provides a substantial designated area.

## **Primary Landscape Qualities and Features**

SLA 1 is at the western edge of the Vale of Glamorgan and abuts the Heritage Coast boundary. It is of outstanding value over large areas in the geological, habitat, and visual and sensory aspects. It is characterised by broad plateaus, gentle rolling hills and the Ewenny and Alun River valleys.

The Alun Valley is a narrow, confined, wooded lowland valley and although much of the woodland is inappropriately managed (leaving bare or degraded areas) and gives a discordant feeling, it is still an attractive landscape and contains several SSSIs. The form and natural vegetation give the valley a distinctive character complemented by the downs to the south and contrasting with farmed landscape to the north. However, there is a threat of conversion of further woodland into intensively managed farmland and from bracken invasion, which prevents woodland regeneration.

The Ewenny Valley to the north feels sheltered due to the enclosing topography of valley sides and wooded hillsides. It is an open, large scale and exposed landscape with few, scattered settlements and some agricultural fields. Vegetation is typically semi-improved, dry grasslands and heaths. The linear settlement of Ewenny has an inappropriate, suburban feeling and has been excluded from the SLA.

Around the valleys, the landscape is open, rolling lowland plateau with high intervisibility and an exposed character. Fences replacing hedgerows are reducing the field boundary quality and intensive farming is reducing interest and is of little value to biodiversity. However, the feeling is tranquil with visually calming unity. To the west, and outside the UA boundary, The Ogmore River provides a specific marsh landscape and dune system of international importance. It contains SSSI and GCR designations and habitats for several protected species. Exposed, elevated areas give wide, generally unspoilt views across the Ogmore Valley, estuary and Bristol Channel.

Old Castle Down (with SSSI designation) is an attractive and distinctive heath area, rare in the Vale and supporting important species. The Pant St Bride's separates it from Ogmore Down, which falls within the Heritage Coast designation. The strong topography and 'natural' vegetation create a rugged and wild landscape with a strong sense of place and character. The plateau slopes towards the coast and has a sense of openness and a strong sense of place from its location, wind sculpted trees and use of stone in walls and vernacular buildings.

## **Key Policy and Management Issues**

- Impact of grazing and fertilizer application intensity.
- Heath should be maintained, enhanced and enlarged.
- Manage broadleaf woodland and semi-natural vegetation.
- Introduce blocks of broadleaf woodland to integrate settlement/farm development and into stream valleys.
- Restrict quarrying to ensure it does not widen its impact on the landscape.
- Restrict development in widely visible areas and improve detailing to road approaches and settlement to reflect area character.
- Reinforce screening to absorb development.

## **Boundary Justification**

The Special Landscape Areas boundaries identified have been drawn to coincide with permanent physical landscape features that are robust, defensible and readily identifiable and have been defined to reflect the relevant quality assured LANDMAP information for the Vale of Glamorgan.

## **Cross Reference to LANDMAP data set.**

The validation of the SLA designations has been made against the criteria used to produce the evaluation level for each of the five evaluated aspect area topics. These are shown on the evaluation matrix.

In all a maximum of nine criteria exist for any one aspect topic, as follows:

Geological Landscapes 1 - Research/Educational Value

- 2 - Historic Value
- 3 - Rarity/Uniqueness
- 4 - Classic Example

Landscape Habitats 1 - Priority Habitats

- 2 - Significance
- 3 - Opportunity
- 4 - Decline Rates
- 5 - Threat
- 6 - Fragmentation
- 7 - Habitat Evaluation
- 8 - Importance for Key Species

Visual and Sensory	1 – Scenic Quality 2 – Integrity 3 – Character 4 – Rarity
Historic Landscapes	1 – Rarity 2 – Survival/Preservation 3 – Coherence 4 – Potential 5 – Amenity Value
Cultural Landscapes	1 – Recognition/Transparency 2 – Period 3 – Rarity 4 – Documentation 5 – Group Value 6 – Survival 7 – Vulnerability 8 – Diversity 9 – Potential

Detailed designations of each of the criteria are available in the LANDMAP handbook or through the LANDMAP website <http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk/>

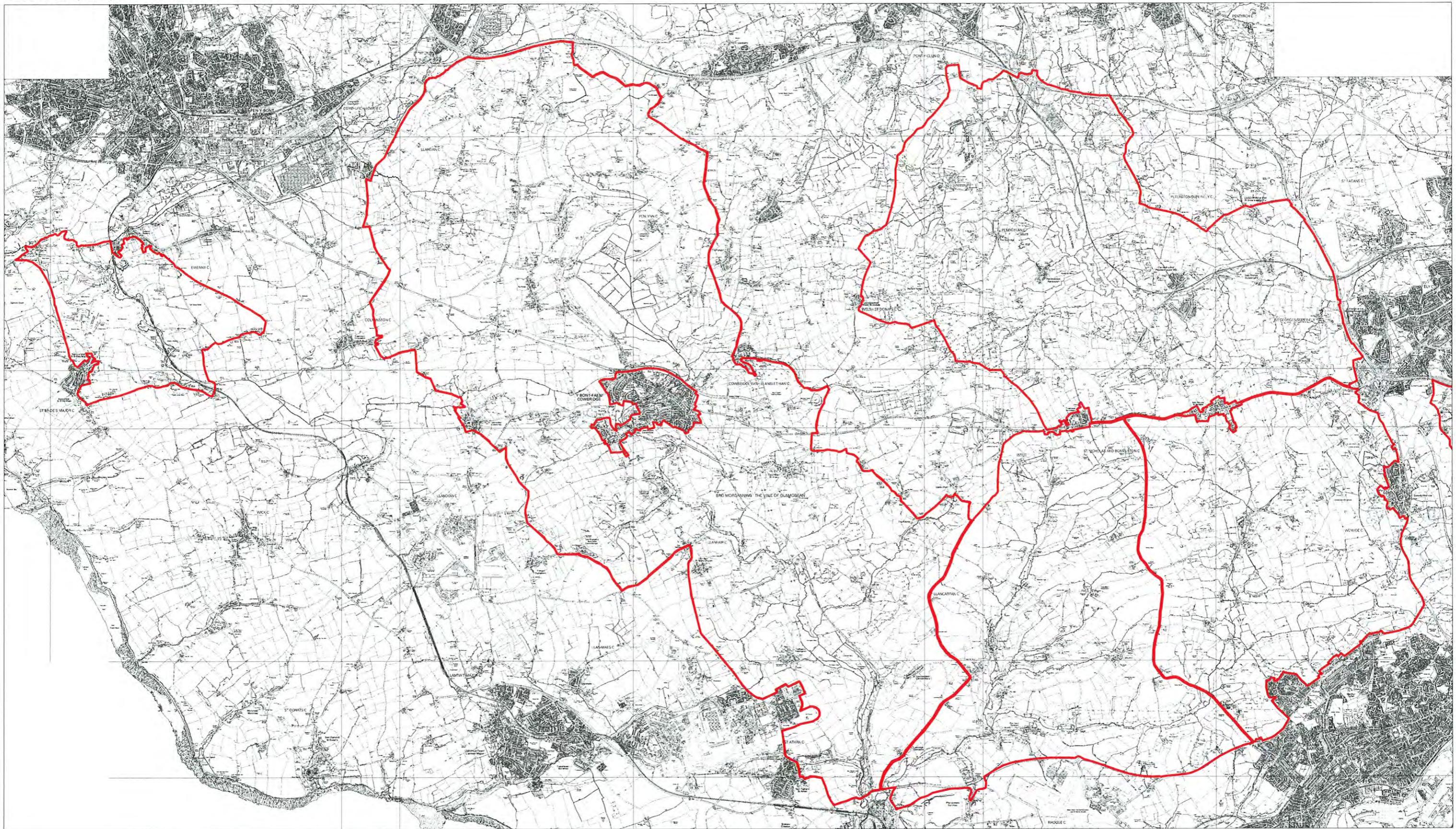
Each of the aspect tables are colour coded as detailed below:

- Red – Outstanding
- Green – High
- Blue – Moderate
- Yellow – Low
- White – Unassessed

## Evaluation Matrix

Aspect	Aspect Area	Evaluation	Criteria								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Geological	GL 275	Moderate	L	L	M	L					
	GL 492	Outstanding	O	O	O	O					
	GL 709	Moderate	L	L	L	L					
	GL 747	Outstanding	H	O	O	O					
	GL 863	Moderate	M	M	H	M					
	GL 885	Moderate	H	L	M	M					
Landscape Habitats	LH 385	Outstanding	H	H	U	U	U	M	H	O	
	LH 435	Moderate	M	L	H	U	L	L	M	U	
	LH 582	Moderate	M	L	M	U	L	M	L	H	
	LH 659	Outstanding	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	
Visual and Sensory	VS 378	High	H	M	H	M					
	VS 663	Outstanding	O	M	O	H					
	VS 797	Moderate	M	M	M	M					
	VS 805	Moderate	M	M	M	M					
	VS 890	Outstanding	O	H	O	H					
	VS 943	Moderate	M	M	M	M					
Historical Landscapes	HL 002	Unassessed									
	HL 022	Unassessed									
	HL 034	Unassessed									
	HL 036	Unassessed									
	HL 051	Unassessed									
	HL 052	Unassessed									
	HL 057	Unassessed									
Cultural	CL 002	High	L	H	M	U	H	H	L	H	U
	CL 007	High	L	U	L	U	H	U	U	L	U
	CL 009	High	M	H	H	U	L	H	L	U	M
	CL 023	Outstanding	L	O	L	U	H	H	L	H	U
	CL 024	High	M	H	H	U	H	H	L	H	U
	CL 028	Outstanding	M	H	L	M	O	H	L	L	U
	CL 039	High	H	O	L	U	O	H	L	H	L

LOCATION (PLAN)



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**TACP**

NOTES

VALE OF GLAMORGAN  
SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA 2  
UPPER & LOWER THAW VALLEY

DRAWN CD       CHECKED LJ       OFFICE : CARDIFF  
 NOT TO SCALE       DATE DECEMBER 2007

FIGURE / DRAWING NO.  
8243/02

REV

## SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA 2 – UPPER & LOWER THAW VALLEY

### Photograph(s)



View from A48 approaching Cowbridge



View from City to south, Thaw Valley

### Relevance against Strategic Criteria

#### • Need

The Thaw Valley is of high value visually and culturally, has outstanding geological features and includes some areas of high habitat value. Suburban development is eroding the character, along with intensive agricultural practices and substitution of fences for hedgerows.

#### • Coherence

The Broad Search Area boundary identified aspects of value further west of the existing boundary, but excluded the lower Thaw valley. The refined boundary however includes the original designation to the south. This includes high visual and sensory, cultural and habitat evaluations, and outstanding geological aspect evaluations. These evaluations are generally associated with the narrow valleys but the need for defensible boundaries has increased the whole area designated and resulted in almost completely replicating the existing boundary. Cowbridge is excluded (valuable areas are covered by Conservation Area status and much of the outskirts are of ordinary, suburban character). The northern boundary follows the Unitary Authority Boundary.

#### • Consensus

The boundary closely follows the existing SLA boundary and extension to the north-west relates primarily to the Outstanding geological evaluation and High Cultural evaluation.

## **Primary Landscape Qualities and Features**

The SLA is dissected by the Thaw River valley. To the north, the area is sparsely settled with small villages and several farms. The generally open landscape has high intervisibility and overlooks Bridgend, bordering the M4, and colouring the perception of the area. Mynydd Maendy wind farm to the north also has a visual impact on the sense of place. There are a number of pleasant views to well-managed fields and wooded areas, but these are affected in places by gappy hedgerows and housing development. Trees and hedgerows are declining in the area but introducing blocks of broadleaf woodland would help to integrate settlement, whilst future development should be restricted in widely visible areas.

The dramatic valley form has distinctive steep wooded slopes and a strong sense of place and is relatively uncommon. It is enclosed by a plateau landscape and has a strong relationship with Cowbridge. The SLA boundary excludes Cowbridge, the suburbs of which are eroding the rural character. The town centre areas of historic and aesthetic value are protected by Conservation Area status.

The valley to the south is a confined, sinuous lowland valley with steep wooded sides and hedgerowed field valley floor with streams and wet ditches contributing to biodiversity. The strong valley, semi-natural and planted broadleaf woodland, and juxtaposition with valley settlements is very attractive and one of the best examples of this landscape in the Vale. Woodland is fragmented in places and linkages should be created by pursuing the Forestry Commission's Woodland Grant Scheme and Native Woodland Plans. Elsewhere the landscape is rolling lowland with some views out to the coast.

## **Key Policy and Management Issues**

- Maintain hedgerow and tree cover.
- Incorporate agri-environment schemes.
- Improve development to ensure rural detailing and character.
- Restrict development in widely visible areas and introduce blocks of broadleaf woodland to integrate settlement/Ford related development.
- Encourage woodland management for continuous cover and pursue Forestry Commission Woodland Grant Schemes and Native Woodland Plans.

## **Boundary Justification**

The Special Landscape Areas (SLA) boundaries identified have been drawn to coincide with permanent physical landscape features that are robust, defensible and readily identifiable and have been defined to reflect the relevant quality assured LANDMAP information for the Vale of Glamorgan.

## **Cross Reference to LANDMAP data set.**

The validation of the SLA designations has been made against the criteria used to produce the evaluation level for each of the five evaluated aspect area topics. These are shown on the evaluation matrix.



In all a maximum of nine criteria exist for any one aspect topic, as follows:

Geological Landscapes	1 – Research/Educational Value 2 – Historic Value 3 – Rarity/Uniqueness 4 – Classic Example
Landscape Habitats	1 – Priority Habitats 2 – Significance 3 – Opportunity 4 – Decline Rates 5 – Threat 6 – Fragmentation 7 – Habitat Evaluation 8 – Importance for Key Species
Visual and Sensory	1 – Scenic Quality 2 – Integrity 3 – Character 4 – Rarity
Historic Landscapes	1 – Rarity 2 – Survival/Preservation 3 – Coherence 4 – Potential 5 – Amenity Value
Cultural Landscapes	1 – Recognition/Transparency 2 – Period 3 – Rarity 4 – Documentation 5 – Group Value 6 – Survival 7 – Vulnerability 8 – Diversity 9 – Potential

Detailed designations of each of the criteria are available in the LANDMAP handbook or through the LANDMAP website <http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk/>

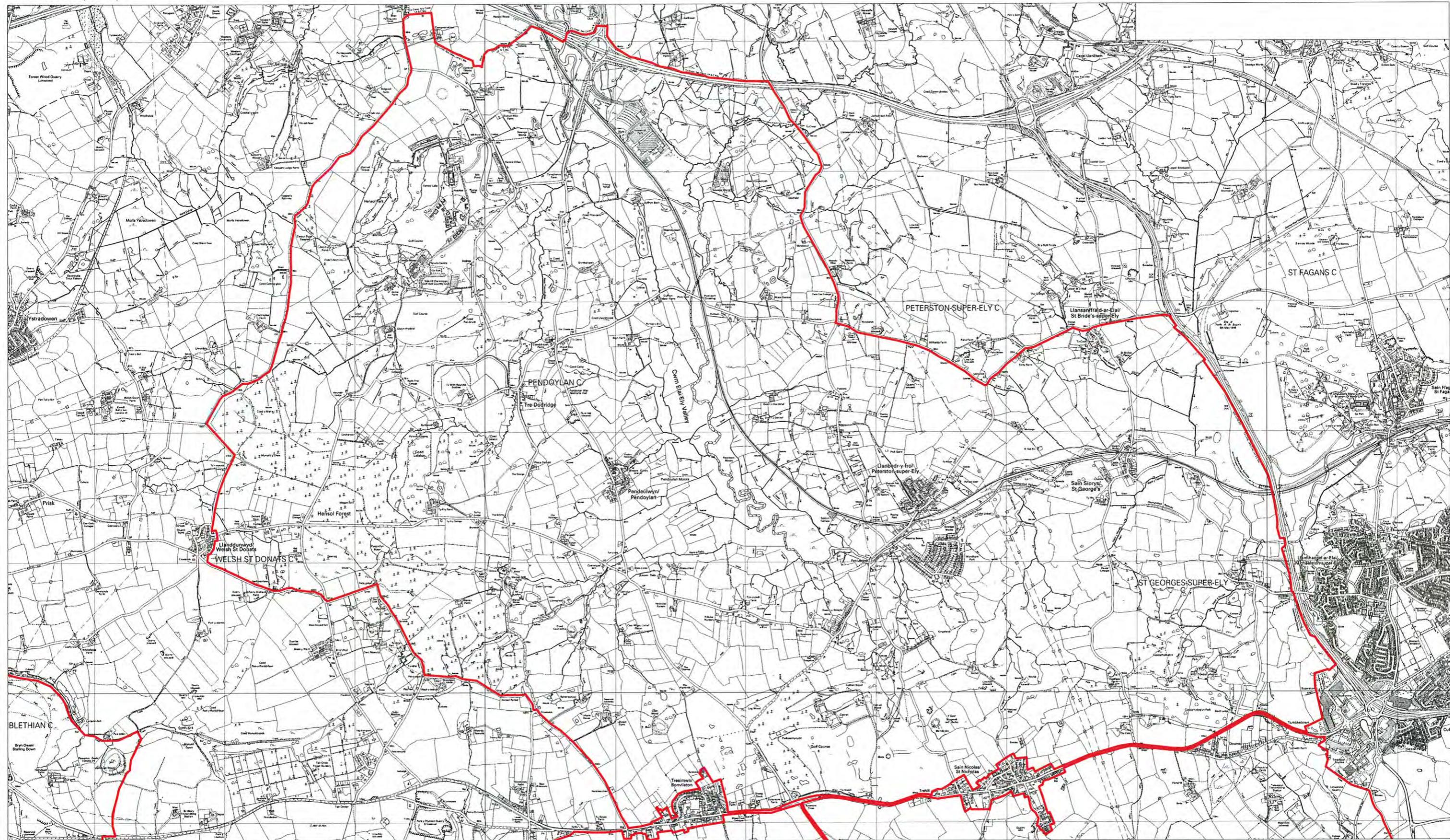
Each of the aspect tables are colour coded as detailed below:

- Red – Outstanding
- Green – High
- Blue – Moderate
- Yellow – Low
- White – Unassessed

## Evaluation Matrix

Aspect	Aspect Area	Evaluation	Criteria								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Geological	GL 282	High	M	M	M	L					
	GL 298	Moderate	H	M	H	M					
	GL 492	Outstanding	O	O	O	O					
	GL 514	Moderate	M	L	L	L					
	GL 532	High	H	M	M	M					
	GL 630	Moderate	L	L	L	L					
	GL 658	High	H	M	M	M					
	GL 709	Moderate	L	L	L	L					
	GL 863	Moderate	M	M	H	M					
Landscape Habitats	LH 103	Low	U	U	U	U	U	U	L	M	
	LH 118	Moderate	L	L	H	U	L	M	M	H	
	LH 394	High	H	M	U	U	U	M	H	U	
	LH 435	Moderate	M	L	H	U	L	L	M	U	
	LH 436	High	H	M	U	U	U	M	H	H	
	LH 782	High	H	H	U	U	U	H	H	U	
	LH 808	Moderate	H	H	U	U	H	M	M	H	
Visual and Sensory	VS 139	High	H	H	H	H					
	VS 146	Moderate	M	M	M	M					
	VS 161	Moderate	M	M	M	M					
	VS 805	Moderate	M	M	M	M					
	VS 864	Moderate	M	M	H	M					
	VS 933	High	H	M	H	H					
	VS 943	Moderate	M	M	M	M					
	VS 962	Moderate	H	M	M	M					
Historical Landscapes	HL 022	Unassessed									
	HL 042	Unassessed									
	HL 046	Unassessed									
	HL 049	Unassessed									
	HL 052	Unassessed									
	HL 053	Unassessed									
	HL 054	Unassessed									
Cultural	CL 008	Outstanding	H	M	O	U	H	H	L	H	U
	CL 020	Outstanding	H	H	L	O	H	U	M	U	U
	CL 028	Outstanding	M	H	L	M	O	H	L	L	U
	CL 037	Outstanding	M	H	L	M	O	H	L	L	U
	CL 039	High	H	O	L	U	O	H	L	H	L

LOCATION (PLAN)



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NOTES  
**VALE OF GLAMORGAN  
SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA 3  
ELY VALLEY & RIDGE SLOPES**

DRAWN CD       CHECKED LJ       OFFICE : CARDIFF  
 NOT TO SCALE       DATE DECEMBER 2007  
**FIGURE / DRAWING NO.** 8243/03      **REV**

## **SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA 3 – ELY VALLEY & RIDGE SLOPES**

### **Photograph(s)**



Llangibon to SE



Hensol Forest



Clawdd Coch to Pendoylan Road, towards the SE

### **Relevance against Strategic Criteria**

#### **• Need**

The area surrounds the Ely Valley and adjacent major rail link. Areas are considered to be declining (pylons, the M4, A4232 and development along the A48, inappropriate farm conversions and suburban detailing) therefore designation would benefit future development.

#### **• Coherence**

The SLA has been extended to include Hensol Forest as a result of high evaluations in the visual and sensory, geological, habitat and cultural aspect data. The boundaries follow major transport corridors, excluding settlements, and the Unitary Authority boundary to the north and east. The north east corner has been excluded as it had insufficiently high aspect topic evaluations to justify inclusion.

#### **• Consensus**

The proposed SLA equates almost entirely with the area previously identified. Changes to the boundary result from several high aspect topic evaluations to the west.

## **Primary Landscape Qualities and Features**

The area is predominantly a lowland rolling landscape with the Ely River valley running through it from north to south-east. The majority of the lowland valley floor is flood plain, with a sense of openness that contrasts with the rising valley sides. A rectilinear pattern of drainage ditches, creating much improved pasture, runs into the River Ely. Towards the east, enclosing the Ely floodplain, the landscape has an intact pastoral field pattern and traditional settlement pattern. Hillsides contain headwaters that feed into the River Ely, and the slopes support improved grassland, arable and some neutral grassland. There are areas of severely fragmented woodland. The M4 and A4232 are significant detractors but character is generally consistent with few areas affected by urban fringe and industry. Pylons in Ely Valley North detract from otherwise attractive views in and out of this area. Inappropriate development of farms into dwellings and poor land management are threatening the character integrity here, and drainage and agricultural improvement threatens habitats. To the north-west, the landscape is one of lowland valleys and hills, forming the upper reaches of various tributaries that flow into the Thaw and Ely valleys. It is a well-maintained landscape with a tranquil feeling. With strong hedgerow and woodland cover, it has high scenic, but low habitat value.

The southern boundary includes a ridge crest, prominent in the landscape and providing views across the Vale. The A48 bisects this ridge and linear settlements dominate. The landscape includes semi-natural broadleaf woodland, improved grassland, arable and amenity grassland. The southwest corner is more intensively farmed, with inappropriate grazing, chemical improvement, drainage, and infrastructure development all creating pressure on habitats.

The boundary has been extended to the west to include Hensol Forest. The forest is largely planted coniferous, with some semi-natural woodland, and is on a hilltop so is visible from the surrounding landscape. Confined to watercourses and steep slopes, it creates a landscape of uniform diversity with a sheltering, tranquil and safe feeling. Hensol lake has a secluded and distinct sense of place. The area is popular with visitors for recreation and the infrastructure is showing signs of wear. Hensol Castle is a substantial mock-gothic building and there are plans for the rehabilitation of the castle and its grounds as a conference facility, giving it a viable future and hopefully matching the careful management evident in the Vale Hotel, Golf and Spa Resort under the same ownership.

## **Key Policy and Management Issues**

- Create links between fragmented woodland through new planting of green corridors.
- Improve Hensol Forest as a focus for recreation and increase broadleaf cover.
- Improve deteriorating broadleaf tree cover and hedgerows.
- Maintain coherence of field pattern and improve land management.
- Pursue favourable management of neutral grassland close to conurbation.
- Manage priority habitats following the LBAP.
- Control housing development and farm conversions.
- Restrict development so it does not impinge on the ridge line and create linear development along the A48.

## **Boundary Justification**

The Special Landscape Areas (SLA) boundaries identified have been drawn to coincide with permanent physical landscape features that are robust, defensible and readily identifiable and have been defined to reflect the relevant quality assured LANDMAP information for the Vale of Glamorgan.

## **Cross Reference to LANDMAP data set.**

The validation of the SLA designations has been made against the criteria used to produce the evaluation level for each of the five evaluated aspect area topics. These are shown on the evaluation matrix.

In all a maximum of nine criteria exist for any one aspect topic, as follows:

Geological Landscapes 1 - Research/Educational Value  
2 - Historic Value  
3 - Rarity/Uniqueness  
4 - Classic Example

Landscape Habitats	1 – Priority Habitats 2 – Significance 3 – Opportunity 4 – Decline Rates 5 – Threat 6 – Fragmentation 7 – Habitat Evaluation 8 – Importance for Key Species
Visual and Sensory	1 – Scenic Quality 2 – Integrity 3 – Character 4 – Rarity
Historic Landscapes	1 – Rarity 2 – Survival/Preservation 3 – Coherence 4 – Potential 5 – Amenity Value
Cultural Landscapes	1 – Recognition/Transparency 2 – Period 3 – Rarity 4 – Documentation 5 – Group Value 6 – Survival 7 – Vulnerability 8 – Diversity 9 – Potential

Detailed designations of each of the criteria are available in the LANDMAP handbook or through the LANDMAP website <http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk/>

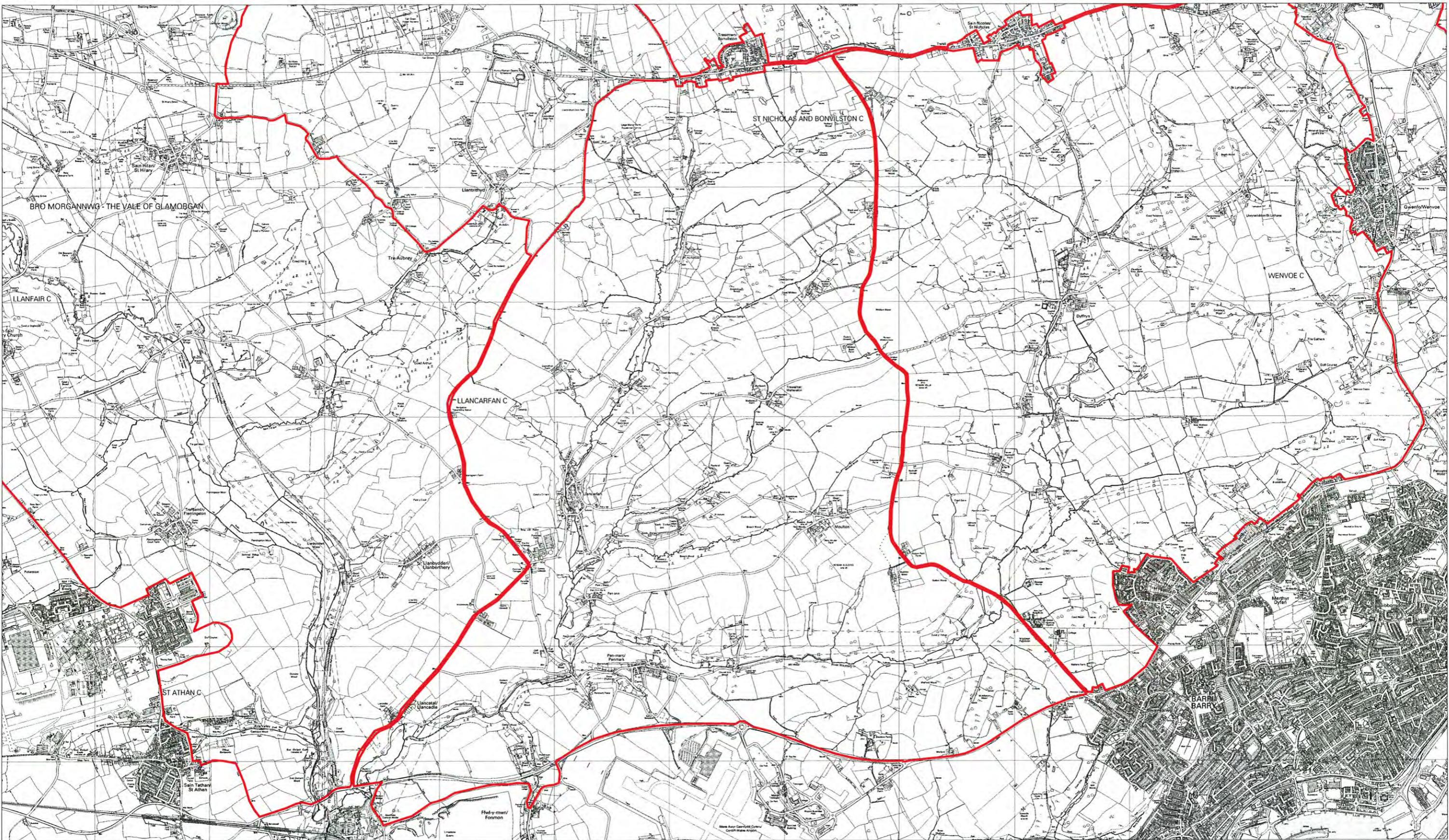
Each of the aspect tables are colour coded as detailed below:

- Red – Outstanding
- Green – High
- Blue – Moderate
- Yellow – Low
- White – Unassessed

## Evaluation Matrix

Aspect	Aspect Area	Evaluation	Criteria								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Geological	GL 263	Moderate	M	L	M	L					
	GL 532	High	H	M	M	M					
	GL 947	Moderate	L	L	M	L					
	GL 986	High	M	L	H	L					
Landscape Habitats	LH 001	High	H	H	M	U	U	H	H	H	
	LH 118	Moderate	L	L	H	U	U	U	L	M	
	LH 403	High	H	H	U	U	H	L	H	H	
	LH 471	High	H	H	H	U	M	H	H	H	
	LH 476	High	H	M	M	U	M	H	H	H	
	LH 853	Moderate	M	M	U	U	U	U	M	U	
	LH 958	Moderate	H	O	M	U	U	M	M	M	
	LH 992	High	H	H	M	U	U	U	H	U	
Visual and Sensory	VS 389	Moderate	M	H	M	M					
	VS 406	Moderate	H	M	H	M					
	VS 614	High	H	M	H	H					
	VS 683	High	H	H	M	M					
	VS 913	High	M	H	H	M					
	VS 962	Moderate	H	M	M	M					
Historical Landscapes	HL 043	Unassessed									
	HL 044	Unassessed									
	HL 045	Unassessed									
	HL 053	Unassessed									
	HL 054	Unassessed									
	HL 055	Unassessed									
	HL 056	Unassessed									
Cultural	CL 001	Outstanding	O	H	L	U	H	U	L	L	H
	CL 022	Outstanding	L	H	L	U	M	H	L	U	O
	CL 028	Outstanding	M	H	L	M	O	H	L	L	U
	CL 031	High	L	H	H	U	H	M	U	H	U
	CL 032	Low	L	H	L	L	U	H	U	U	U
	CL 033	High	M	H	M	U	H	H	L	U	H
	CL 034	High	H	H	H	U	H	H	M	H	M
	CL 035	Outstanding	O	H	L	U	H	H	L	H	L
	CL 039	High	H	O	L	U	O	H	L	H	L

LOCATION (PLAN)



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NOTES

VALE OF GLAMORGAN  
SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA 4  
NANT LLANCARFAN

DRAWN CD       CHECKED LJ       OFFICE : CARDIFF  
 NOT TO SCALE       DATE DECEMBER 2007

FIGURE / DRAWING NO.  
8243/04

REV

## SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA 4 – NANT LLANCARFAN

### Photograph(s)



Pylons from Llanberthery to NW



View to power station and coast

### Relevance against Strategic Criteria

#### • Need

Aspect area data identified High and Outstanding evaluations associated with the Nant Llancarfan valley. The narrow and enclosed lowland Waycock Valley, with many villages designated as Conservation Areas, occupies the southern region of this SLA. Development to the southeast and the presence of Cardiff Airport is encroaching on this area.

#### • Coherence

The eastern boundary along the A4226 abuts the SLA 5 boundary, as it did before. The north, south and west boundaries follow major roads.

#### • Consensus

The boundary follows the existing SLA boundary. The LANDMAP data identified a broad search area similar to the existing SLA and the only defensible boundaries were those already used.

## **Primary Landscape Qualities and Features**

The majority of the area is rolling lowland, dissected by the Nant Llancarfan valley. This central area is highly enclosed by the adjacent plateau landscape. It is a steep sided, narrow lowland valley, which contains a tranquil and historic landscape of streams, semi-natural broadleaf woodlands, planted coniferous woodland and small farms. It has a strong, small scale, pastoral pattern and traditional settlement form including villages with Conservation Area designation. It is of high scenic quality with a strong sense of place. There is a diverse range of habitats of local and international importance, including lagoons of international value, 4 BAPs and Nant Whitton Woodlands SSSI. Agricultural improvement (grazing, drainage and chemicals) threatens neutral grasslands and rush pastures have suffered substantial and rapid decline. The ancient settlement of Llancarfan village stands within a Registered Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest and contains a Conservation Area. It is evaluated as Outstanding as one of the best surviving and most complete typical parts of the Vale of Glamorgan with the setting of the large church within the nucleated village.

A tranquil atmosphere prevails despite the main roads. The scattered rural/farm landscape is of outstanding value as being picturesque, for the preservation of historic communities and the richness of historic past.

To the north the prominent ridge crest features, along with the A48 and associated linear development. The A48 follows the course of the Cardiff to Neath Roman road on an east-west alignment, dividing the Vale in two.

At the south, on the coastal plateau, there are detractive views to Cardiff Airport hangar and Aberthaw Power Station, and road detailing becomes suburban. Possible development of Aberthaw Cement Works poses a threat. There is planted broadleaf woodland and improved grassland, but the majority of this area is managed intensively for agriculture, with hedgerows in decline, and the feel is generally exposed and open. This area is boundary to the steeper valley slopes and wooded edges of Waycock Valley, Penmark being a particularly picturesque village. Grade 1 Fonmon Castle is surrounded by a registered park and garden and is one of the few medieval castles in Wales still lived in as a home.

## **Key Policy and Management Issues**

- Improve rural roads and restrict development to ensure rural detailing and character.
- Remove power lines in Waycock Valley where possible.
- Retain and enhance intrinsic character through woodland and hedgerow management and development restriction.
- Maintain tree cover on ridgeline to the north to integrate development.
- Improve hedgerow cover and woodland blocks.
- Buffer stream and river corridors with low input farming and woodland using agri-environment schemes.
- Use LBAP to maintain, enlarge and expand unimproved meadows to the east.

## **Boundary Justification**

The Special Landscape Areas (SLA) boundaries identified have been drawn to coincide with permanent physical landscape features that are robust, defensible and readily identifiable and have been defined to reflect the relevant quality assured LANDMAP information for the Vale of Glamorgan.

## **Cross Reference to LANDMAP data set.**

The validation of the SLA designations has been made against the criteria used to produce the evaluation level for each of the five evaluated aspect area topics. These are shown on the evaluation matrix.

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2 - Historic Value  
3 - Rarity/Uniqueness  
4 - Classic Example

Landscape Habitats	1 – Priority Habitats 2 – Significance 3 – Opportunity 4 – Decline Rates 5 – Threat 6 – Fragmentation 7 – Habitat Evaluation 8 – Importance for Key Species
Visual and Sensory	1 – Scenic Quality 2 – Integrity 3 – Character 4 – Rarity
Historic Landscapes	1 – Rarity 2 – Survival/Preservation 3 – Coherence 4 – Potential 5 – Amenity Value
Cultural Landscapes	1 – Recognition/Transparency 2 – Period 3 – Rarity 4 – Documentation 5 – Group Value 6 – Survival 7 – Vulnerability 8 – Diversity 9 – Potential

Detailed designations of each of the criteria are available in the LANDMAP handbook or through the LANDMAP website <http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk/>

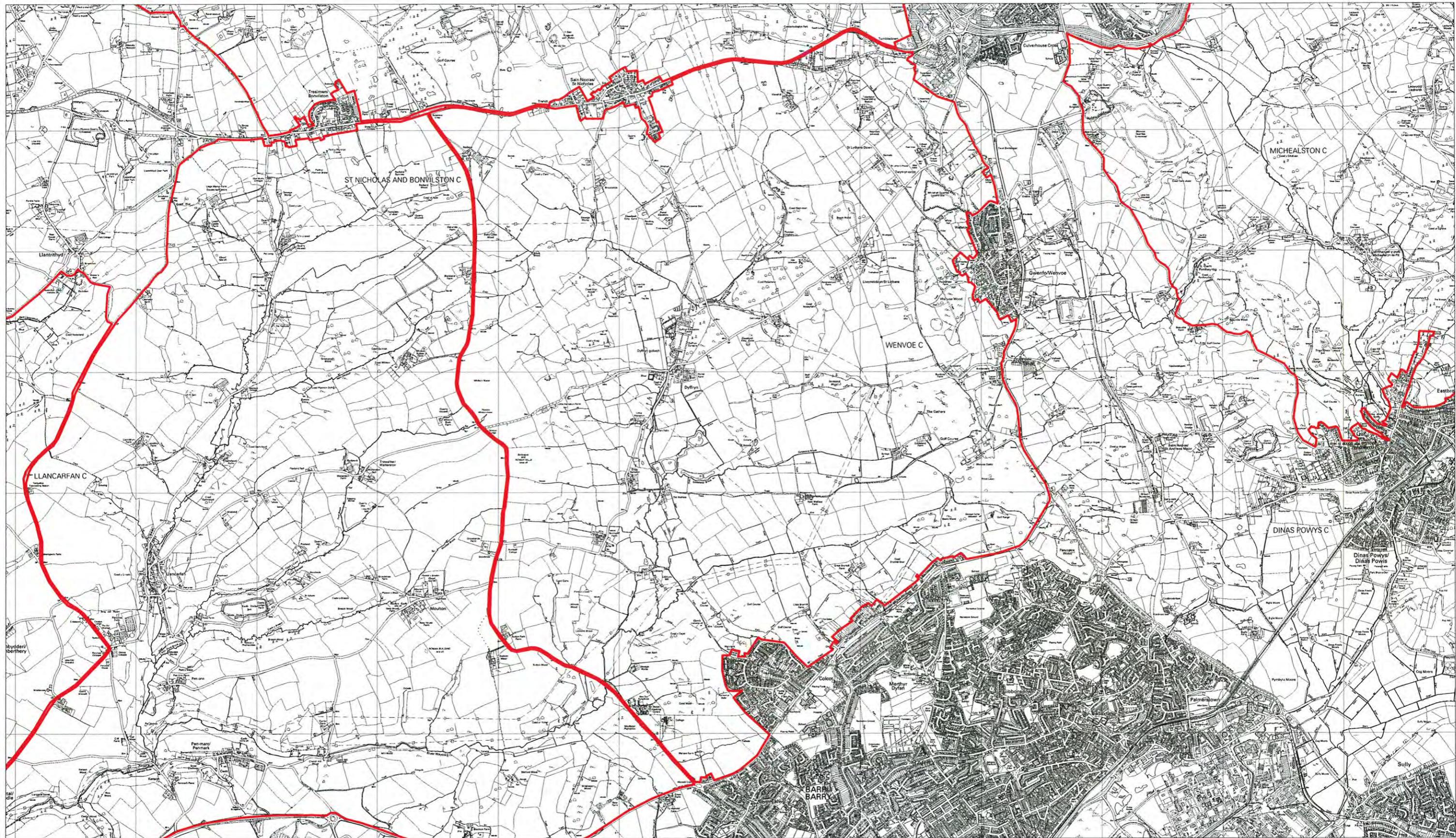
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- White – Unassessed

## Evaluation Matrix

Aspect	Aspect Area	Evaluation	Criteria								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Geological	GL 170	Moderate	L	L	M	L					
	GL 282	High	M	M	M	L					
	GL 514	Moderate	M	L	L	L					
	GL 532	High	H	M	M	M					
	GL 953	Moderate	L	L	L	M					
	GL 962	High	H	M	M	M					
Landscape Habitats	LH 582	Moderate	M	L	M	U	L	M	L	H	
	LH 786	High	H	O	M	U	U	H	H	H	
	LH 839	Moderate	M	M	U	U	U	U	M	M	
	LH 840	Moderate	M	M	U	U	U	M	M	M	
Visual and Sensory	VS 110	High	H	M	H	H					
	VS 146	Moderate	M	M	M	M					
	VS 271	High	H	M	M	H					
	VS 453	High	H	H	H	H					
	VS 641	Moderate	M	M	M	M					
	VS 952	Moderate	M	H	M	M					
Historical Landscapes	HL 022	Unassessed									
	HL 032	Unassessed									
	HL 039	Unassessed									
	HL 054	Unassessed									
Cultural	CL 020	Outstanding	H	H	L	O	H	U	M	U	U
	CL 021	Outstanding	L	H	L	U	H	H	L	H	U
	CL 028	Outstanding	M	H	L	M	O	H	L	L	U
	CL 039	High	H	O	L	U	O	H	L	H	L

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NOTES

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**VALE OF GLAMORGAN  
SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA 5  
DYFFRYN BASIN & RIDGE SLOPES**

○ DRAWN CD	○ CHECKED LJ	○ OFFICE : CARDIFF
○ NOT TO SCALE	○ DATE DECEMBER 2007	
<b>FIGURE / DRAWING NO.</b>		<b>REV</b>
<b>8243/05</b>		

## **SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA 5 – DYFFRYN BASIN & RIDGE SLOPES**

### **Photograph(s)**



View towards Dyffryn Mill



### **Relevance against Strategic Criteria**

#### **• Need**

Development including Wenvoe to the east and Barry to the south is eroding the otherwise fairly strong rural identity and integrity of the area.

#### **• Coherence**

Landmap data again identified a broad search area that was consistent with the existing SLA. Defensible boundaries are formed by: the adjacent SLA 4 to the west, the A48 to the north, urban settlement to the south and the A4050 to the east.

#### **• Consensus**

This follows the previously defined SLA boundary.

## **Primary Landscape Qualities and Features**

The majority of the area is an attractive, gentle valley of the Nant Bran and River Waycock. There are broad, pleasing views to well-managed countryside which retains a coherent large field pattern and woodlands. It is a relatively unspoiled historic rural landscape and the area includes several BAPs. Settlements are well integrated with the landscape and surrounding vegetation. The combination of road, stream/drainage ditch, stone wall/garden or dwelling is typical and representative of the Vale in this area. This combination has kept a high integrity and is well managed, hence rare.

Dyffryn Gardens, at the centre of the SLA, is discretely enclosed by woodlands. It is an exceptional example of a planned landscape by Thomas Mawson and Grade 1 on the Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales and is open to the public.

The highest point to the east is a valley side by Wenvoe quarry. Development at Wenvoe and the quarry does not respond to local materials. It is an otherwise pleasant area with hedgerows, topography and tree areas providing shelter and safety but suffers from closeness to Cardiff and Barry. The Wenvoe area is a prime example of how a landscape has evolved over millennia, containing relics of multi-period occupation and exploitation, with high value as an evolved physical and social landscape. Wenvoe Castle, a Robert Adam mansion, is now home to a golf club.

To the north, the area acts as a prominent sloping edge to the Ely and Wenvoe Valley. Strong steep slopes with wooded covers and small field enclosures have ancient trackways and high hedgerows to roads give a sheltered feel. The area has a distinct sense of place. However, broadleaf cover is old and deteriorating and there are detractive views (to Culverhouse Cross and Cardiff) with the negative visual impact of the TV mast.

## **Key Policy and Management Issues**

- Reinforce rural character and minimise the impact of new development, restricting development on slopes in particular.
- Develop woodland cover and hedgerows to better integrate settlement.
- Improve the road corridor and associated development, including detailing.
- Pursue favourable management of neutral grassland close to conurbation and manage scrub on grassland.
- Seek to buffer stream and river corridors with low input farming and woodland using agri-environment schemes.
- Identify and implement solutions for infrastructure improvements at Dyffryn Gardens.

## **Boundary Justification**

The Special Landscape Areas (SLA) boundaries identified have been drawn to coincide with permanent physical landscape features that are robust, defensible and readily identifiable and have been defined to reflect the relevant quality assured LANDMAP information for the Vale of Glamorgan

## **Cross Reference to LANDMAP data set.**

The validation of the SLA designations has been made against the criteria used to produce the evaluation level for each of the five evaluated aspect area topics.

These are shown on the evaluation matrix.

In all a maximum of nine criteria exist for any one aspect topic, as follows:

Geological Landscapes 1 - Research/Educational Value

- 2 - Historic Value
- 3 - Rarity/Uniqueness
- 4 - Classic Example

Landscape Habitats 1 - Priority Habitats

- 2 - Significance
- 3 - Opportunity
- 4 - Decline Rates
- 5 - Threat
- 6 - Fragmentation
- 7 - Habitat Evaluation
- 8 - Importance for Key Species

Visual and Sensory	1 – Scenic Quality 2 – Integrity 3 – Character 4 – Rarity
Historic Landscapes	1 – Rarity 2 – Survival/Preservation 3 – Coherence 4 – Potential 5 – Amenity Value
Cultural Landscapes	1 – Recognition/Transparency 2 – Period 3 – Rarity 4 – Documentation 5 – Group Value 6 – Survival 7 – Vulnerability 8 – Diversity 9 – Potential

Detailed designations of each of the criteria are available in the LANDMAP handbook or through the LANDMAP website <http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk/>

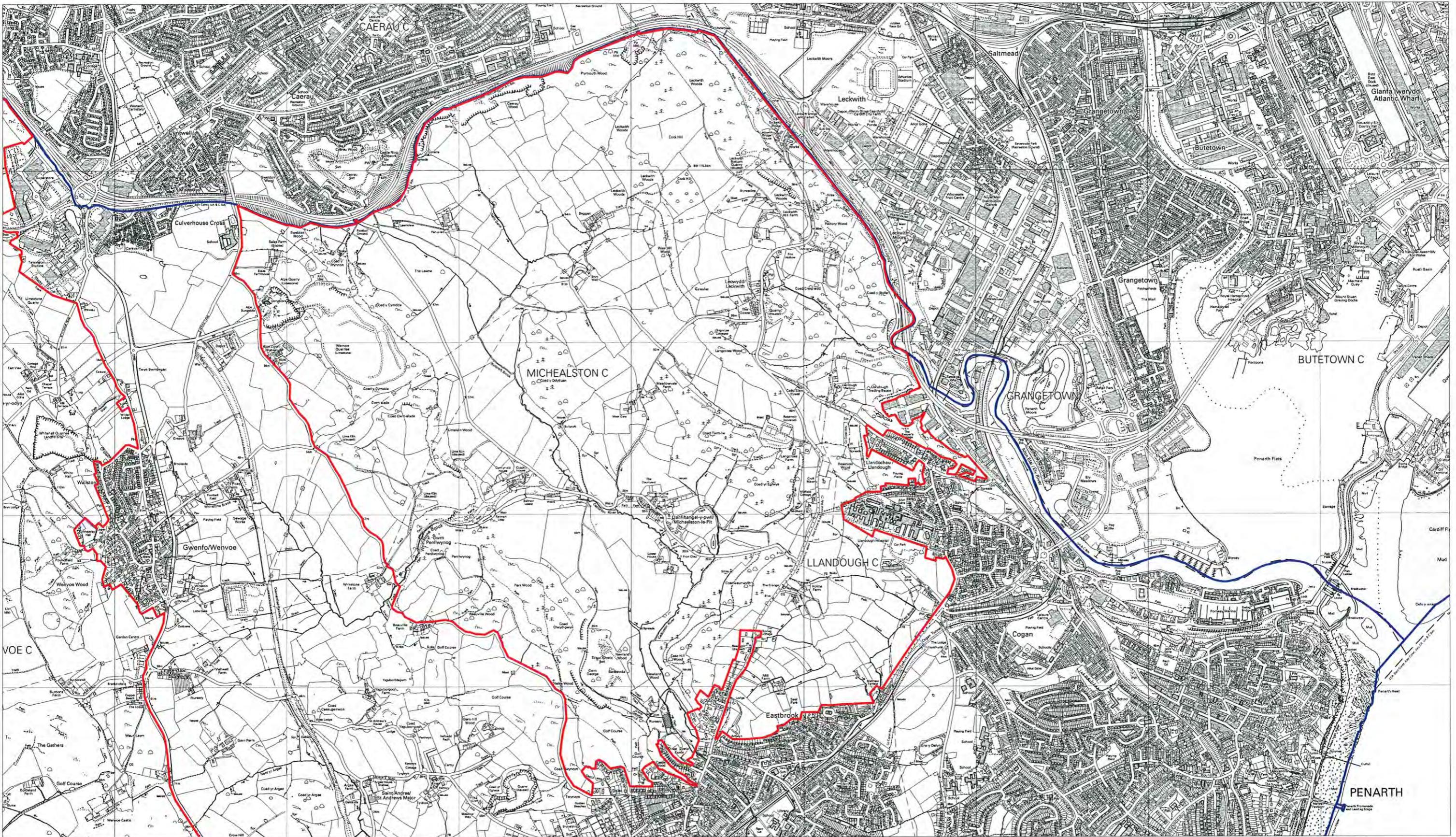
Each of the aspect tables are colour coded as detailed below:

- Red – Outstanding
- Green – High
- Blue – Moderate
- Yellow – Low
- White – Unassessed

## Evaluation Matrix

Aspect	Aspect Area	Evaluation	Criteria								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Geological	GL 108	Low	L	L	L	L					
	GL 238	Moderate	L	L	M	L					
	GL 523	Low	L	L	L	L					
	GL 749	High	H	M	M	L					
Landscape Habitats	LH 814	Low	L	U	U	U	U	U	L	U	
	LH 958	Moderate	H	O	M	U	U	M	M	M	
	LH 988	High	H	H	U	U	U	H	H	H	
Visual and Sensory	VS 152	Moderate	M	M	H	M					
	VS 213	High	H	H	H	H					
	VS 473	Moderate	M	M	M	L					
	VS 596	High	H	H	H	H					
	VS 620	Moderate	M	M	M	M					
Historical Landscapes	HL 012	Unassessed									
	HL 013	Unassessed									
	HL 019	Unassessed									
	HL 020	Unassessed									
	HL 021	Unassessed									
	HL 024	Unassessed									
	HL 025	Unassessed									
Cultural	CL 016	Moderate	M	M	M	U	M	H	L	M	U
	CL 017	High	H	H	L	U	U	U	U	U	U
	CL 028	Outstanding	M	H	L	M	O	H	L	L	U
	CL 039	High	H	O	L	U	O	H	L	H	L

LOCATION (PLAN)



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NOTES  
VALE OF GLAMORGAN  
SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA 6  
CWRT-YR-ALA BASIN

DRAWN CD       CHECKED LJ       OFFICE : CARDIFF  
 NOT TO SCALE       DATE DECEMBER 2007

FIGURE / DRAWING NO.  
8243/06

REV

## SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA 6 – CWRT-YR-ALA BASIN

### Photograph(s)



View from A4252 travelling NW



Corbett Road to SW over allotments

### Relevance against Strategic Criteria

- **Need**

SLA 6 is surrounded on three sides by large conurbation representing a significant threat through housing and infrastructure development. Its proximity to population also accounts for a large proportion of amenity grassland.

- **Coherence**

The boundary was extended to the southeast to avoid leaving a pocket of undesignated land between the SLA and existing development. This area serves as a link in the eastern green corridor from the existing SLA, between Dinas Powis and Penarth, to the coast. Extension to the west includes areas of high habitat and visual and sensory value.

- **Consensus**

The broad search area related closely to previously identified SLA with its boundaries formed by settlement, major roads and the UA boundary. Extensions to the boundary are justified by high habitat, visual and sensory and cultural aspect area evaluations.

## **Primary Landscape Qualities and Features**

The majority of the SLA area landscape is focused on the Cwrt-yr-ala valley, forming the headwaters of the Cadoxton Valley. There is a strong sense of place with streams, dammed ponds, wooded valley sides and pleasant settlement in the valley bottom. The farmland is generally well maintained but there are signs of urban fringe pressure on lanes. The enclosed topography in association with woodland creates a sense of enclosure and the steep sided valleys dominate the character of the landscape and habitats. Woodland is semi-natural and planted broadleaf and includes a SSSI. There is potential to sympathetically manage and thus improve the quality of this mixed woodland resource.

To the north and east a scarp slope acts as a western edge to Cardiff basin. The slope is dominated by broadleaf and mixed woodland giving way to riverside vegetation and limited commercial development. The exposed hillside rises steeply to overlook the flat land of Cardiff Bay and City. There are detractive views to Leckwith Industrial Estate and noise from the A48. The natural landscape has been significantly altered by urban expansion and, despite the SLA area itself having few settlements, it feels very settled due to the proximity to Cardiff.

There is an extensive area of current and former parks of Cwrt-yr-ala House. Allotments, orchards and reservoirs/artificial lakes add to the character. There is an irregular fieldscape of small fields and two medieval settlements to the north of Dinas Powys and Barry. Smaller roads are hedgerowed and have a feeling of being tranquil and sheltered. The SLA boundary has been extended to include the open space buffer between Penarth and Dinas Powys, which should be maintained for Dinas Powys' character as one of few such large villages in SE Wales. The eastern boundary abuts Llandough District General Hospital which has high cultural associations, being identified with this area. The area offers attractive views but many are affected by inappropriate built form and hedgerows are gappy and poorly managed in places. The southeast boundary is Penarth, which provided housing for dock workers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## **Key Policy and Management Issues**

- Promote Forestry Commission grant uptake to extend, plan and manage woodland compartments paying particular attention to those around the SSSI.
- Pursue favourable management of neutral grassland, especially close to conurbation.
- Manage woodland to maintain continuous tree cover, especially on the skyline.
- Maintain hedgerows and as a strong visual framework and the rural qualities and vegetated nature of the valley.
- Maintain the green wedge between Dinas Powys and Penarth, improve management of boundaries and improve structures.

## **Boundary Justification**

The Special Landscape Areas (SLA) boundaries identified have been drawn to coincide with permanent physical landscape features that are robust, defensible and readily identifiable and have been defined to reflect the relevant quality assured LANDMAP information for the Vale of Glamorgan

## **Cross Reference to LANDMAP data set.**

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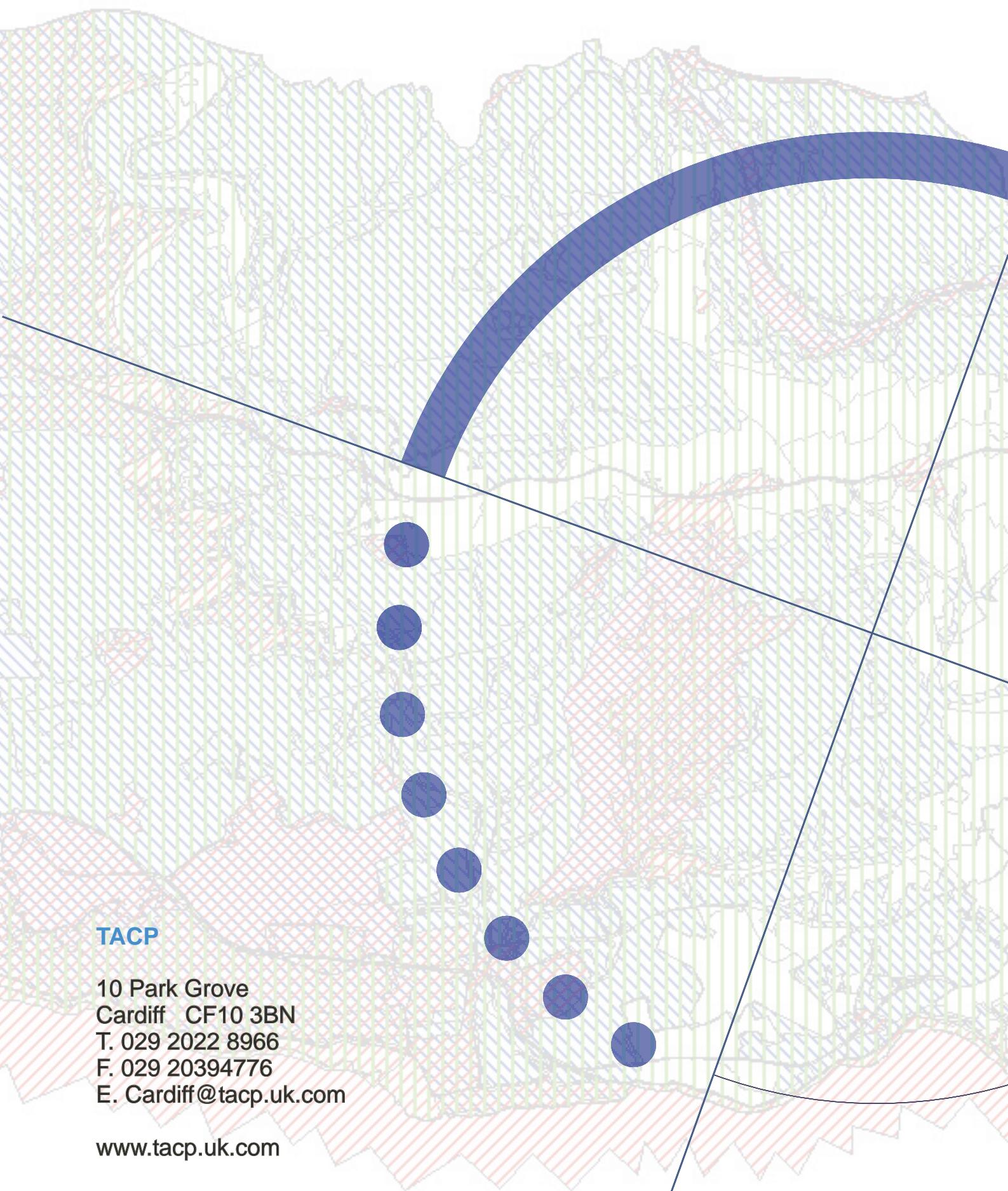
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## Evaluation Matrix

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			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Geological	GL 170	Moderate	L	L	M	L					
	GL 282	High	M	M	M	L					
	GL 514	Moderate	M	L	L	L					
	GL 532	High	H	M	M	M					
	GL 749	High	H	M	M	L					
	GL 962	High	H	M	M	M					
Landscape Habitats	LH 203	Low	M	U	U	U	U	U	L	U	
	LH 786	High	H	O	M	U	U	H	H	H	
	LH 958	Moderate	H	O	M	U	U	M	M	M	
Visual and Sensory	VS 146	Moderate	M	M	M	M					
	VS 219	Low	L	L	M	M					
	VS 271	High	H	M	M	H					
	VS 614	High	H	M	H	H					
	VS 620	Moderate	M	M	M	M					
	VS 696	Moderate	L	M	M	L					
Historical Landscapes	HL 004	Unassessed									
	HL 022	Unassessed									
	HL 023	Unassessed									
	HL 024	Unassessed									
	HL 026	Unassessed									
	HL 027	Unassessed									
	HL 050	Unassessed									
	HL 054	Unassessed									
Cultural	CL 012	High	H	H	L	U	M	H	L	H	U
	CL 020	Outstanding	H	H	L	O	H	U	M	U	U
	CL 028	Outstanding	M	H	L	M	O	H	L	L	U
	CL 029	High	M	H	L	O	H	H	U	H	U
	CL 030	High	H	H	H	H	L	H	L	H	H
	CL 039	High	H	O	L	U	O	H	L	H	L



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