

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

Local Development Plan



Sennybridge and Defynnog Assessment

Part One Report

8th August 2012

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Introduction and Context

Part One Reports

Part One reports provide an overview of the settlement in context, drawing on a diverse range of evidence to consider constraints and opportunities for the future sustainable development of the area. The findings of this review of the evidence base is then summarised into a set of key issues and objectives for the area.

Along with this broad structure this report also aims to provide additional information documenting the rationale and associated evidence to respond to the LDP Inspector's concerns as raised in the Inspector's Preliminary Note of 2nd February 2012.

The Inspector's concerns related to the need to provide further evidence to support the Focused Change relating to Sennybridge and Defynnog. This was identified in Point 4 of the Preliminary Note and is set out below:

FC 3-P-28 proposes to adjoin Sennybridge and Defynnog as one settlement and re-class it from a Level 4 to a Level 2 settlement. There is little evidence to support the change (e.g. whether in doing so it would meet an identified housing need) which undermines the robustness of the settlement assessment process undertaken.

Spatial Strategy & the Location of Development

In order to understand the role that Sennybridge and Defynnog play within the National Park it is first important to understand the rationale behind the NPA's settlement hierarchy.

The LDP Spatial Strategy sets out the appropriate scale and location of growth within the National Park.

Spatial Strategy: Sustainable living in a National Park Landscape

The National Park Authority will ensure that all the communities in the National Park are assured of a vital and sustainable future and are able to meet their day to day needs within each local community. We want to ensure that all development in the Park is able to adapt to the likely effects of climate change beyond the plan period. In order to do this we will ensure that all development takes account of future risks of flooding, is intelligently sited, climate responsive, built with sustainable materials, resource efficient and accessible to all for the lifetime of the development.

As set out in the LDP the NPA has adopted a Hub and Cluster approach as set out in the Wales Spatial Plan. This approach identifies Key Settlements which act as service centres to their region and

encourages collaborative working amongst communities to support their own need and those of the dependent Settlements.

In setting out the Spatial Strategy the NPA has taken direction from the Vision for Central Wales as set out by the Wales Spatial Plan (WSP). As set out in the LDP this vision promotes dynamic models of rural sustainable development, resilient to the challenges and open to the opportunities of climate change whilst recognising the importance of maintaining and enhancing local distinctiveness. In achieving this vision the WSP sets out a Hub and Cluster approach to spatial development, identifying Key Settlements which act as service centres to the region.

The Hub and Cluster area which relates to the National Park, as identified in the WSP, is the 'Brecon Beacons Cluster'. This comprises the following Settlements:

Hub: Brecon (Primary Key Settlement)

Cluster: Talgarth; Hay-on-Wye; Crickhowell; (Key Settlements)

The Primary Key Settlement is identified as a strategic centre within the Brecon Beacons Cluster. Strategically placed to serve its surrounding communities, Brecon will become the spatial hub to support opportunities for new employment and housing.

Key Settlements are identified as having an important strategic function in serving the surrounding communities. These areas will fulfill a role in serving both their resident population and surrounding Settlements, providing links and influence to larger service areas outside of the National Park boundary. Within Key Settlements development will be focused to provide new housing opportunities, near to services and facilities to reduce over reliance on the private car. Employment opportunities will be focused within Key Settlements, servicing the needs of the wider community.

In addition to those settlements identified by the WSP, the NPA has identified the 'Sennybridge & Defynnog Key Settlement'. This is comprised of the Settlements of Sennybridge and Defynnog and defines the area as a 'Key Settlement' with a strategic role for the west of the Park area.

The primary purpose of this report, therefore, is to justify the inclusion of 'Sennybridge & Defynnog' as a Key Settlement.

As set out in the 'Schedule of Proposed Focused Changes', Focused Change number 3-P-28 proposed an additional section to be added to Section 3 of the LDP to include the following information about the Sennybridge and Defynnog Cluster:

- a profile of the character, role and function of the Settlements (Pg 3-27 of FC Schedule21),
- a Vision for the Cluster (3-29)
- objectives for the Cluster (3-33)
- areas vulnerable to the impact of future development (3-36)

The above information is set out in **Section 2** of this paper.

Along with the above, the NPA acknowledge that further additional information documenting the rationale and associated evidence is now required to respond to the Inspector's concerns as raised in the aforementioned Preliminary Note.

Section 1 therefore sets out

- a) Key data relating to the role, function, character and constraints of the settlement
- b) The process by which the amendment to the status of Sennybridge and Defynnog was determined by the Authority, including the Authority's considerations of the implications of this change on the soundness of the LDP's spatial strategy.
- c) The evidence and representations submitted by Maescar Community Council throughout the process in favour of amending the status of the settlement and identifying land which would support its growth.

SECTION 1

- a) *Key data relating to the role, function, character and constraints of the Settlement*

1. Sennybridge & Defynnog Overview and Key Facts

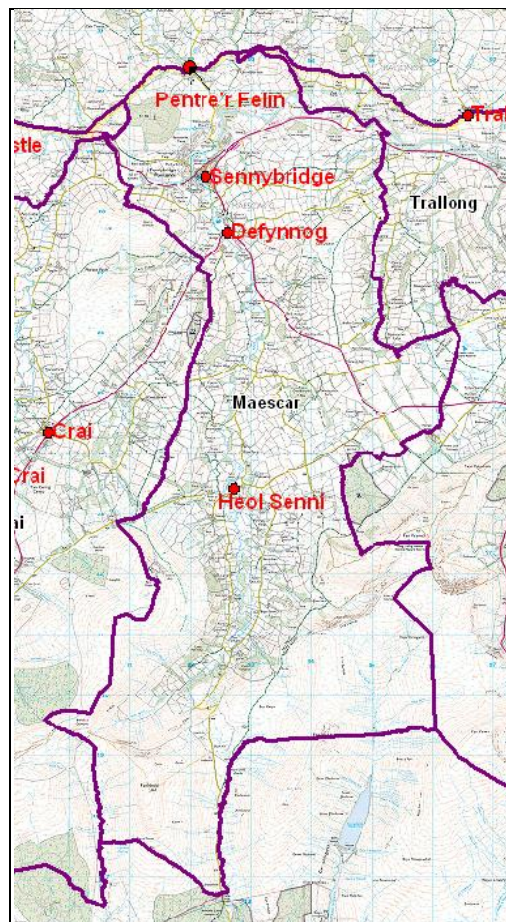
Overview

The Sennybridge & Defynnog Key Settlement is located in the Maescar Community Council area. On the map, Maescar appears as a long, narrow community. It extends from the northern scarp of Mynydd Eppynt southwards across the National Park boundary, the River Usk and the A40T, and up the Senni valley to Fan Nedd and the headwaters of the Afon Mellte. Approximately half its area and most of its population are within the Park.

The Senni valley is an area of scattered farms with a strong agricultural tradition. By contrast, the Usk valley corridor is an important east-west through route.

The largest settlement in the community is Sennybridge, whilst Defynnog lies on the A4067 south of Sennybridge. Other settlements in Maescar are Pentre'r Felin, a hamlet split by the National Park boundary 2km north of Sennybridge; and Heol Senni, located in the Senni valley, consisting of a scatter of old houses along a minor road.

The Maescar Community Council area is shown in the map below:



(Maescar Community Council area)

Sennybridge

Sennybridge, which lies on the A40T at the confluence of the Senni and the Usk, lies 9 miles west of Brecon and approximately 40 miles north of Cardiff.

There was a small castle in Sennybridge in the 13th century, but the village grew in importance after the coach road was built in 1819, and again with the completion of the Neath and Brecon railway (now closed). Since the last War, Sennybridge has been the site of an army camp serving the training area on Mynydd Eppynt.

Sennybridge is an important source of employment, with the army camp, sawmills, haulage contracting, agricultural related stores and local shops. It plays a significant role for the farming industry with its market and related feed and equipment facilities, making the town a hub for the surrounding farming community. The village includes a variety of facilities including shops, pubs, cafes, a community hall, a primary school with sports facilities, and a health clinic. The army camp is known as the Sennybridge Training Area (SENTA) and is thought to be the 3rd largest military training area in the UK.



Top left: Sennybridge High Street

Top right: Sennybridge Training Area.

Bottom: Sennybridge Farmers Market

Defynnog

Defynnog lies on the A4067 immediately south of Sennybridge. The parish church is here, and the village was the centre for a large community until the growth of Sennybridge. The settlement is predominantly linear, following the A4067 to the north and south west, and then splitting off with some development

fronting High Street (A4215) to the south east. There are rows of older terraced cottages around the church and pubs, with newer development along the A4067.



Top left: View looking south of the traditional stone faced terracing lining the A4067 towards the centre of Defynnog

Top right: The Glannau Senni development adjacent to the A4067 to the southwest of Defynnog's historic core

Bottom: The listed Church of St Cynog in the heart of Defynnog

Built Environment

Sennybridge consists of a mixture of housing types, from older terraced properties situated along the A40T, to more recent estates and detached single and two-storey dwellings, constructed on its outskirts. There is a strong contrast between the core of Sennybridge and the Defynnog area of the Cluster. In Defynnog the housing stock is predominately older. A strong sense of place is engendered travelling through Defynnog along the A4067, with traditional stone faced terracing lining the road, forming the historic core. The listed lime-washed church at Defynnog is striking within the valley landscape, forming an iconic and picturesque view of the village on the northern and southern approaches.

The image on the following page shows an aerial view of Sennybridge & Defynnog which demonstrates the settlement form.



Aerial image of Sennybridge & Defynnog

Key Facts – Maescar Community Council Area

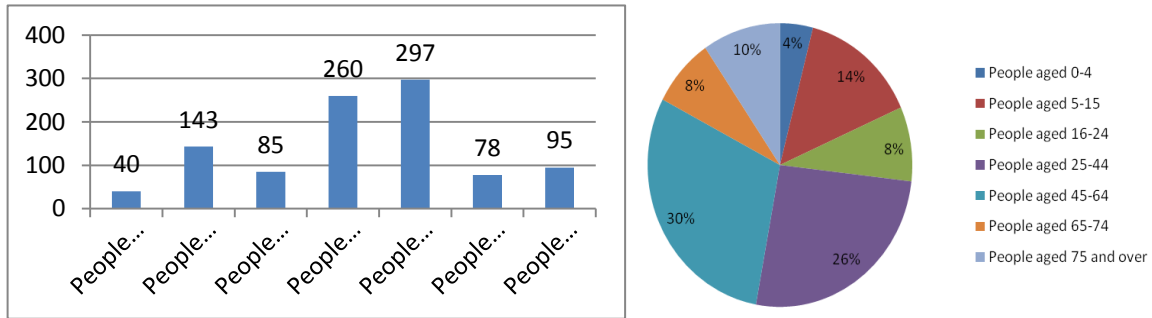
The following key facts and figures have been obtained from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Neighbourhood Statistics. The data is not available for Sennybridge and Defynnog and as such data has instead been obtained for the Maescar Community Council Area, for which Sennybridge and Defynnog are its largest settlements.

Population

There are **998 residents** within **Maescar Community Council Area**. These residents make up **438 households**, making the **average household size** to be **2.28** people.

The **average age** of residents in 2001 was **42**. This is in line with the average age for the County which is high compared to **40** across Wales.

The following chart shows the population figures by age.



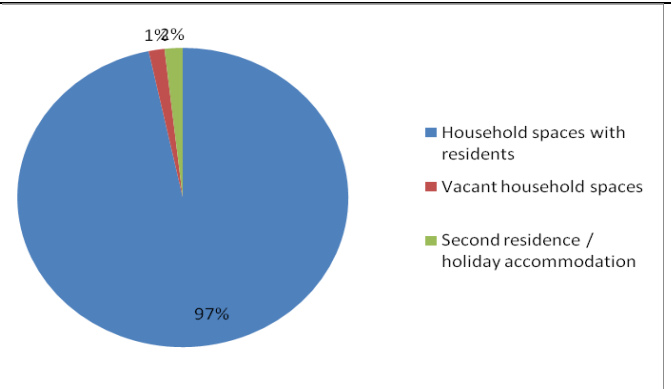
Powys as a whole has an ageing population. This is reflected in Maescar Community.

Ageing populations have an impact on the number of people available for employment.

It also impacts on the availability of housing – as the trend is for older people to remain in the family home as their household size declines.

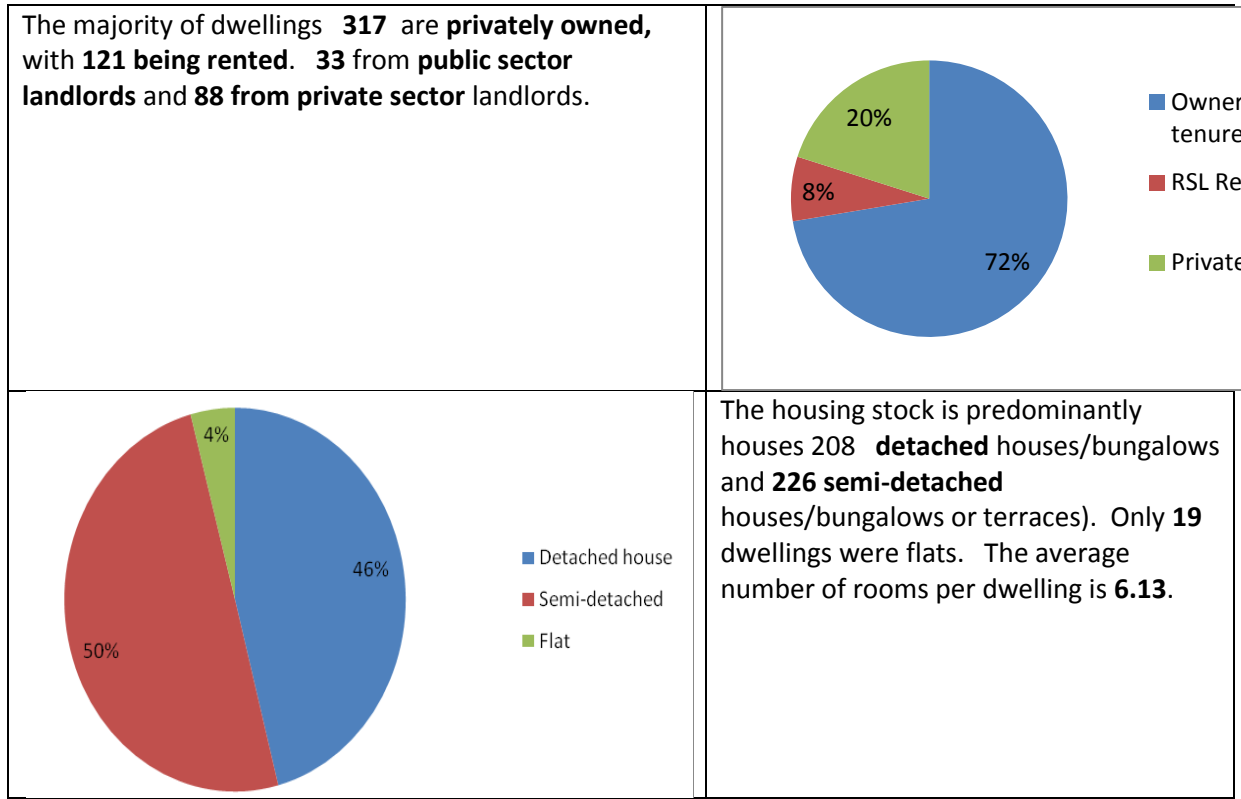
Housing:

In 2001 there were **453 dwellings** available to house these **438 households**.
 Of the remaining **15 dwellings**, **7 were vacant** and **8 were second residences or holiday homes**.



There is therefore no issue with vacant or second homes.

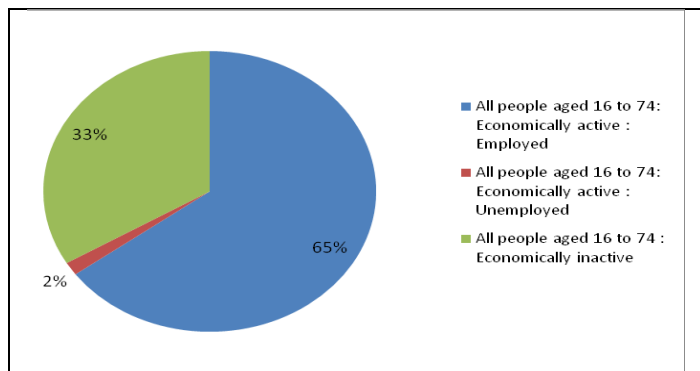
Housing Ownership



Employment & Qualifications

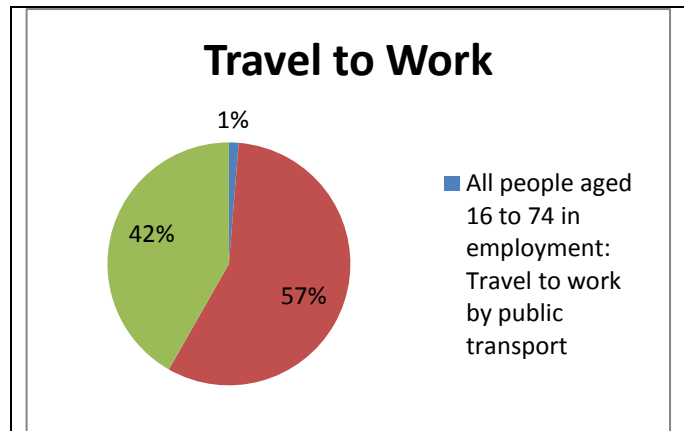
Employment Rates

Of the **998** residents, **720** are of working age. Of these, **465** residents were **employed**. **11** were **unemployed** and **240** were **economically inactive** (retired or unable to work)



Travel to work

The majority of people travel to work by **private motor transport**. Only **6** used public transport. There are a significant number of people who used alternative means of transport or worked from home (195). The average distance travelled to work was **17 miles (27 km)**.



Welsh Language

33% of the Community speak Welsh, which is high compared with the 23% of Powys and 24% of Wales as a whole.

Issues for the LDP to Address:

Ageing population: by providing the right type of new housing the LDP could help to encourage young families to be able to live in Maescar

Employment: Of those able to work, there is a high level of employment.

Existing employment land could be protected by policies to ensure that the land is not lost to alternative uses.

Conclusion

The location of both settlements in the west of the Park, with links to the surrounding agricultural and forestry industry and key services and facilities, make the Sennybridge and Defynnog Key Settlement a strategic centre linking the western area of the National Park with key west Wales settlements such as Llandovery and Llandeilo, and hence supports its inclusion as a Key Settlement within the Plan. The population of Maescar Community Council Area, with Sennybridge & Defynnog as its main settlement, suggests that the population of the Sennybridge & Defynnog Key Settlement is comparable with the other three Key Settlements within the National Park, further strengthening its designation as a Key Settlement.

2. Sennybridge & Defynnog LANDMAP Assessment

The following table summarises the conclusions of the LANDMAP Assessment for Sennybridge & Defynnog. The findings are set out in full in Appendix I.

LANDMAP Assessment	Area Code	Link to assessment	Summary
Landscape Habitat	Sennybridge BRCKNLH867	Sennybridge BRCKNLH867	<i>The overall LANDMAP evaluation of habitat and species for the area is low and is seen as an urbanised area of limited biodiversity interest.</i>
	Defynnog BRCKNLH242	Defynnog BRCKNLH242	<i>The overall LANDMAP evaluation of habitat and species for the area is moderate and is seen as an improved agricultural landscape of local of local nature conservation interest.</i>
Landscape Character	Sennybridge BRCKNVS936	Sennybridge BRCKNVS936	<i>The overall evaluation for scenic quality of the area is low, and it is advised that there are attractive views out of Sennybridge and detractive views into Sennybridge (the Sennybridge Camp a particular detractor). The perceptual and other sensory qualities are listed as unattractive and noisy.</i>
	Senni Valley BRCKNVS966	Senni Valley BRCKNVS966	<i>The overall evaluation for scenic quality of the area is high with primary sensory qualities experienced within the landscape</i>

			<i>listed as attractive, tranquil, safe and settled. There are attractive views both in and out of the area whilst there are said to be no detractive views in nor out of the area.</i>
Historic Landscape	Sennybridge BRCKNHL495	Sennybridge BRCKNHL495	<i>Overall the area is seen as a small ostensibly late post medieval and modern roadside settlement with supposedly medieval castle, which has a moderate historic value.</i>
	Trecastell BRCKNHL260	Trecastell BRCKNHL260	<i>The overall evaluation is of a large and diverse area of irregular fields; sites and landscape features from all periods, most notable small settlements and associated field systems of medieval date; and has a high historic value.</i>
Cultural Evaluation	Trecastell BRCKNHL260	Trecastell BRCKNHL260	<i>The value of the Cultural Landscape is evaluated as moderate and is a settlement with a largely local focus, though the area is known principally regionally.</i>

3. Sennybridge & Defynnog Sustainability Questionnaire

As part of the LDP preferred strategy consultation, Community Councils were asked to complete a sustainability questionnaire for the settlements within their Community Council Area.

The findings of these surveys give a good indication of comparative levels of services and facilities between the settlements in the National Park. They also give a better understanding of how residents access their services.

The settlement survey was coded to determine a sustainability rating for each settlement. This sustainability rating provides a source of information in determining whether a settlement is considered to be a sustainable location for future development.

In the Unitary Development Plan a hierarchy of settlements was developed using the scores derived from a similar process. Community Councils were asked to update this information, this provided a useful monitoring tool to check whether services and facilities were maintained during the intervening period between UDP and LDP preparation and whether there was a correlation between levels of development enabled through the plan and provision of services and facilities.

In preparing the LDP a similar index for scoring sustainability was developed, however the results emerging have led to the conclusion that although this is an interesting measure it cannot be the only source of evaluation in determining the sustainability of a place. The nature of many of the settlements within the National Park means that whilst a place may not have a large range of services within its boundaries, it may still have a strong community and consider itself to be sustainable by other means. The ability to access services by means other than the private car is therefore only one aspect in determining whether a place is a suitable or desirable location for future growth.

Findings of the Sustainability Survey

Sennybridge

The Sustainability Index Score for Sennybridge was 24. This is well above the threshold of 15. The score reflects the good level of services and facilities and particularly employment available within Sennybridge. It also reflects the fact that Sennybridge is within 10 miles of Brecon which offers access to a further range of employment, services and facilities. Sennybridge also scores relatively well by being on one of the Park's more frequent bus routes linking the settlement to Swansea.

Within the settlement residents have access to a variety of facilities including shops, pubs, cafes, a community hall, primary school with sports facilities, a health clinic, and a variety of employment opportunities.

Defynnog

Defynnog scored 19 in the Sustainability Index Survey. Again, this is comfortably above the threshold of 15 and the settlement is within 10 miles of Brecon. Within the settlement residents have access to a community Hall, a pub, and a church. Whilst residents of Defynnog are unable to meet their daily needs within the settlement, their proximity to Sennybridge which has a greater level of services and facilities contributes to its score and improves its sustainability rating. Defynnog is therefore considered to be a sustainable location for growth in terms of its ability to access services and facilities.

The breakdown of the Overall Sustainability Index Scores is illustrated in the following table:

Settlement Name	Is there a stated desire within the community to enable future development	Is the place a sustainable location for growth	Is there capacity to accommodate future development	Sustainability Index Score				
				Overall	Access to Local Facilities	Access and proximity to higher level facilities	Transport	Other Issues
Sennybridge	Y	Y	Y	24	9	4	9	2
Defynnog	Y	Y	Y	19	5	4	9	1

Overall, despite the Sustainability Index Scores of Sennybridge (24) and Defynnog (19) being a fair way behind Talgarth (32) and Hay (36), they are comparable to Crickhowell (27).

4. Sennybridge & Defynnog Connectivity

Road Network

Sennybridge and Defynnog are linked by the A4067 which allows easy access between the settlements. This accessibility is assisted by the fact that the majority of dwellings and buildings within Defynnog are located along the A4067 or on one of its subsidiary roads, whilst the southern and eastern access points into Sennybridge are easily accessible from the A4067.

The existence of a well maintained footpath along the A4067 linking Sennybridge with Defynnog further serves to demonstrate the connectivity and ease of movement between the settlements.

Both settlements have good access to two A roads respectively. Each has easy access to the aforementioned A4067, which runs in a north/south direction from Sennybridge to Swansea, whilst Sennybridge has access to the A40T and Defynnog to the A4215.

The A40T runs in an east/west direction towards Llandovery and Llandeilo to the west and Brecon and Abergavenny to the east, and runs throughout south Wales and into England.

The A4215 runs from Defynnog in a south-easterly direction for approximately 5 miles towards the A470 which in turn links to Merthyr Tydfil and Cardiff in the south and alternatively to Builth Wells and Llandrindod Wells to the north.

The following map shows the proximity of Sennybridge & Defynnog to Brecon in the east, Llandovery to the west and towards the southern areas of the Park and beyond to the south.



Sennybridge & Defynnog Connectivity

Road Hierarchy

- *National Through Route: A470*

This route takes national through traffic.

- *Regional Distributor Routes: A40T and A4067*

These roads take through traffic flows within the south/mid Wales region, but alternatives are available for long-distance and heavy traffic. Improvements to the carrying capacity of regional distributor routes would encourage their use as alternative national through routes, which is contrary to government policy and discouraged by the NPA.

Sustainable Transport Options

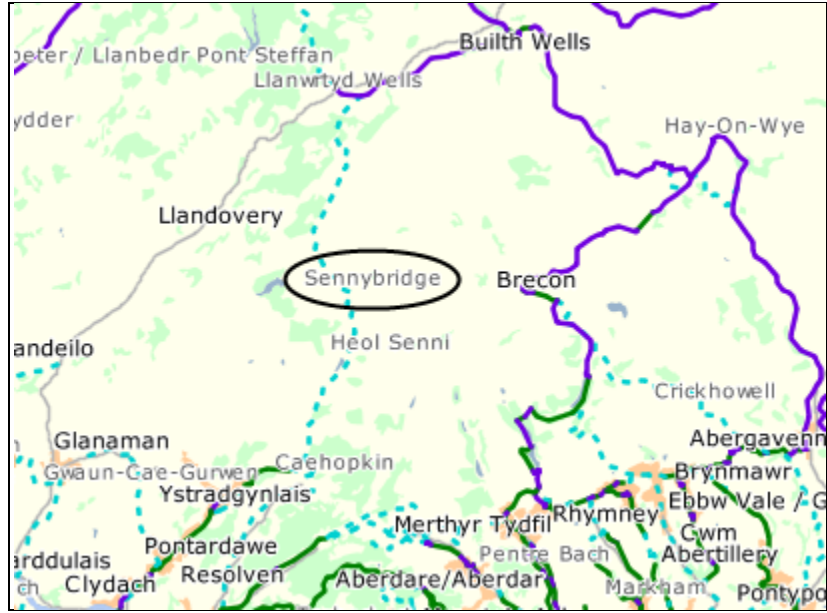
Bus Routes

There is a bus stop at Glannau Senni and at the Lion Inn from where you can catch the two hourly X63 Swansea to Brecon service. <http://www.traveline-cymru.info/>.

This bus service also connects Defynnog to Sennybridge. However there is no service to connect either Sennybridge or Defynnog to Heol Senni or Pentre'r Felin.

Cycle Lanes

There are currently no national cycle lanes that pass through Sennybridge and Defynnog. However, there is a proposed cycling route (National Route 43) which will run approximately 2 miles to the west of Sennybridge and Defynnog and will connect the existing National Route 43 (which currently ends near Ystradgynlais to the south and Llanwrtyd Wells to the north). This would provide excellent cycling and walking accessibility to neighbouring settlements as well as further afield with National Route 43 connecting to various other local, regional and national routes. The proposed route is identified by the staggered blue line on the image below:



Source: <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/map?key=Wales&type=RG>

Relationship of Sennybridge to other settlements within the Maescar Community Council area

Service Centre	Distance in miles	Travel time by car	Public Transport	Time taken by Public Transport
Defynnog	2	4 min	Bus	6 min
Heol Senni	4	11 min	Bus	
Pentre'r Felin	1.5	3 min	Bus	

Relationship of Defynnog to other settlements within the Maescar Community Council area

Service Centre	Distance in miles	Travel time by car	Public Transport	Time taken by Public Transport
Sennybridge	2	4 min	Bus	6 min
Heol Senni	3-4	8 min	Bus	
Pentre'r Felin	2.5	5 min	Bus	

Summary of Connectivity

Residents of Sennybridge and Defynnog have excellent access to both settlements. There are a number of employment opportunities, services and facilities within Sennybridge itself for the residents of both settlements, though further afield residents are likely to look towards Brecon to the east or towards the Swansea Valley to the south for a greater variety and concentration of these attributes.

Connections to service centres in the east of the National Park such as Hay, Talgarth and Crickhowell are weaker. Whilst these places are within reasonable distance by car they are not within a reasonable bus journey. To the west there are reasonable car and bus connections to Llandovery and Llandeilo.

5. Sennybridge & Defynnog Past Planning Policy

Local Plan (adopted May 1999)

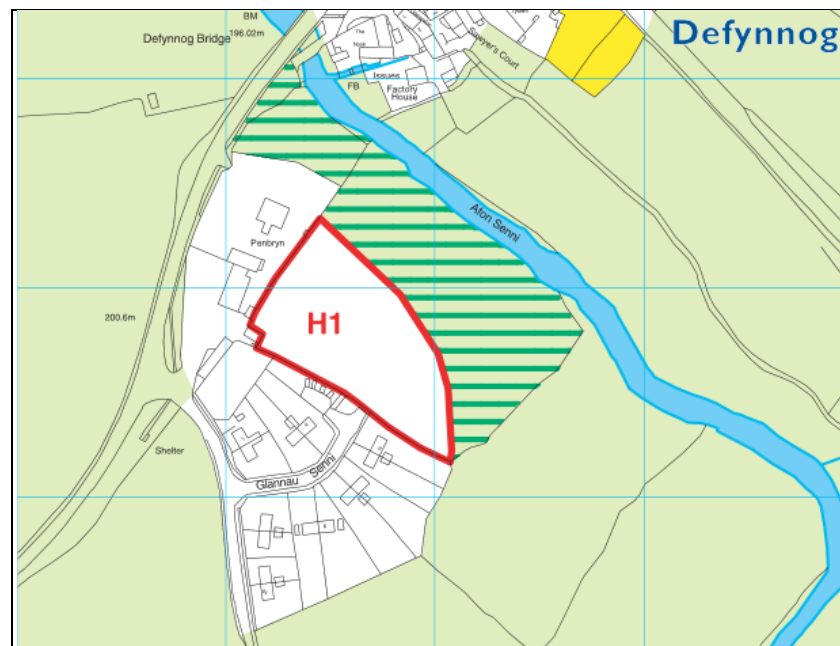
Sennybridge

In the Local Plan it was advised that physical limitations meant there was little room for expansion outside the built up area. As a result, it was anticipated that future housing would be accommodated through infill plots, the use of empty upper floors and the conversion of existing buildings within the village. It was also noted that further estate development would be strongly discouraged, which was in line with local residents' views at the time.

As such, no sites were allocated for residential development in the Local Plan for Sennybridge.

Defynnog

In the Local Plan Defynnog had one site allocated for residential development. The site was allocated for 10 dwellings and is identified on the following extract of the Defynnog Proposals Map. This site was identified as it would form a natural extension to the existing estate. It was also advised that any building in or adjoining the older part of Defynnog must be carefully designed to reflect the character of the small cottages in the village centre.



(Source: BBNPA Local Plan)

Unitary Development Plan (Approved March 2007)

Sennybridge

Sennybridge scored well in the UDP settlement assessment (23 points), ranking 4th in the Hierarchy behind Brecon, Hay-on-Wye and Crickhowell, but ahead of Talgarth which ranked 5th. Sennybridge was defined as a First Tier Settlement.

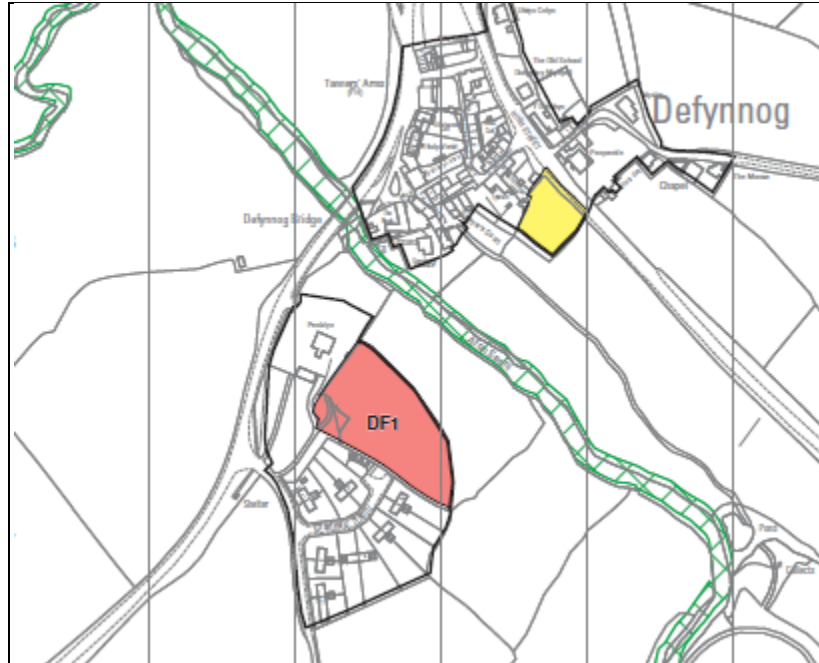
Two sites were allocated for the development of housing within Sennybridge in the UDP. The first, Old Station Yard (S1), was Brownfield land and was allocated for 6 units and was considered to be immediately available for development. The second, Castle Farm (S2), was Greenfield land with an indicative number of units of 42 (based on a density of 30 units per hectare) and was considered to be available for development in 6 to 15 years from the Plan period. Both allocations are outlined in the following extract from the Sennybridge Proposals map:



(Source: BBNPA Approved UDP)

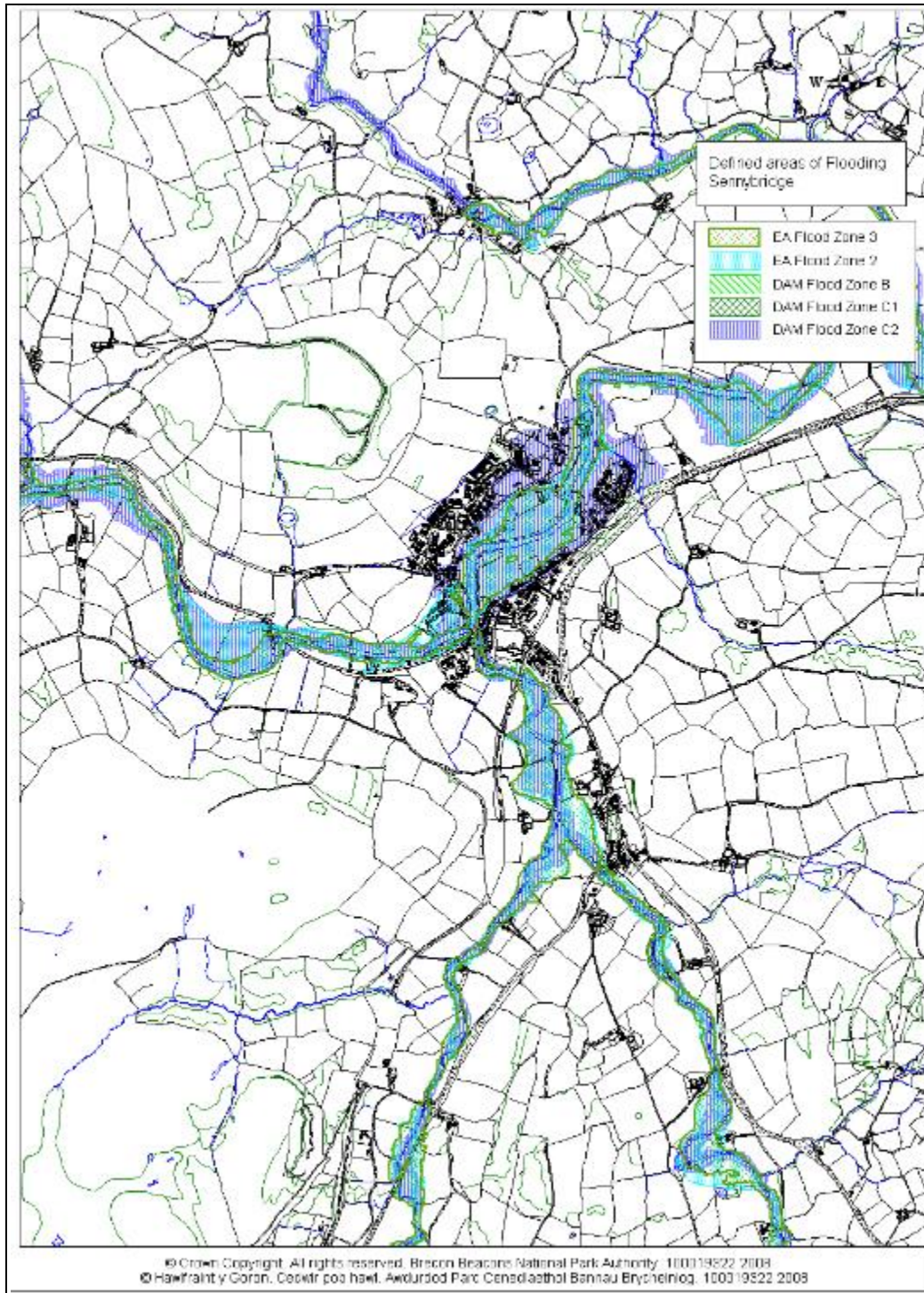
Defynnog

Defynnog was defined as a Second Tier Settlement in the UDP, ranking joint 11th in the Hierarchy on 14 points. One site was allocated for the development of housing within Defynnog in the UDP. The site, Glannau Senni (Site Code DF1), was a Greenfield site and was allocated for 20 units and is seen in the following extract from the Defynnog Proposals Map:



(Source: BBNPA Approved UDP)

6. Sennybridge & Defynnog Flooding



Location of flood: The flood map shows that the risk of flooding restricts development either side of the River **Usk** which runs along the northern edge of Sennybridge. A risk of flooding is also identified either side of the **Afon Senni River** which runs through Sennybridge and to the west of Defynnog. Future development should therefore be located away from these areas.

7. Sennybridge & Defynnog Infrastructure and Tourism

Sennybridge & Defynnog Infrastructure

The National Park Authority received advice from Dwr Cymru Welsh Water relating to known issues affecting settlements within the Park. This included

- Sewerage
- Waste Water Treatment Works
- Water Supply

There were no issues identified in Sennybridge & Defynnog.

Sennybridge & Defynnog Tourism

Assets

There are a number of attractions within five miles of Sennybridge. Gilfach Equitation Centre is a short distance away offering riding opportunities for riders of all abilities whilst there are a number of bridleways surrounding the settlement. The settlement also acts as an ideal base for walkers looking to explore the central Beacons which are also a short distance away, whilst it is also designated as one of the National Park's mountain biking centres with there being a number of trails in the area. Within the settlement is a ruined 13th century castle. Defynnog is home to a 15th century church which houses a font bearing the only Runic inscription in Wales, and in the churchyard stands one of the UK's oldest yew trees.

Accommodation

Visit Wales promotes five listed accommodation providers within a two mile radius of Sennybridge, each of which offer bed and breakfast type accommodation.

<http://www.visitwales.co.uk/things-to-do-in-wales/search-attractions/>

8. Sennybridge & Defynnog Community Defined Issues

Sennybridge

Consultation with the community found that there is a clear desire for growth within Sennybridge. Throughout the process the community have expressed a strong desire to find land to accommodate both affordable and general needs housing in order to ensure a sustainable future for the community. Early community engagement events lead to the identification of candidate sites. More recently the community has expressed the view that Defynnog and Sennybridge should be considered as a single settlement where development in one will meet the needs of the other. There is a recognition of the physical constraints relevant to Sennybridge which results in a limited ability to identify sufficient land to meet the level of growth desired, and that Defynnog could accommodate the desired growth.

Defynnog

As with Sennybridge, the community consultation exercises undertaken found that there is a clear desire for growth within Defynnog. Throughout the process the community have expressed a strong desire to find land to accommodate both affordable and general needs housing in order to ensure a sustainable future for the community. Early community engagement events lead to the identification of candidate sites.

Details of community involvement and representations made are outlined in further detail in Section 1 part b) and c) below.

9. Conclusion - Issues & Objectives

Overall, the aim of this part of the report has been to set out key data relating to the role, function, character and constraints of the Sennybridge & Defynnog key Settlement. The Issues and Objectives identified are set out in Section 2 part c) of this report.

- b) *The process by which the amendment to the status of Sennybridge and Defynnog was determined by the Authority, including the Authority's considerations of the implications of this change on the soundness of the LDP's Spatial Strategy.***

As part of the LDP preparation, a settlement assessment was undertaken to consider

- a) Is there land to accommodate future growth?
- b) Is the settlement a sustainable location?
- c) Is there a community defined need for growth?

The assessment methodology was applied consistently throughout the National Park area and the results have been subject to extensive consultation with communities and National Park Authority Members.

The initial settlement assessment for both Sennybridge and Defynnog resulted in no land being identified as suitable to accommodate future development. This is despite the fact that Sennybridge and Defynnog have been identified as sustainable locations for development. Sennybridge is an important settlement within the wider area, providing a range of services including a post office, public houses, a community centre, a health centre and school. As such, Sennybridge is identified as having an important strategic role within the West of the Park, serving the wider community beyond its immediate locality. The close locational proximity of Defynnog to Sennybridge suggests that future development occurring within Defynnog would be supported by and would help maintain the strategic importance of Sennybridge as a settlement.

Sennybridge could therefore be considered to act as a "hub" for communities west of Brecon. This is in keeping with the vision of Central Wales provided within the WSP 2008 update, which states

The hub and cluster approach seeks to encourage communities to work collaboratively, not competitively, to support their own needs and those of the smaller settlements and hinterlands which gravitate towards them, balancing the needs and aspirations of communities with appropriate plan-led growth and service provision.

Given the above, and in response to community and member input into the settlement assessment process, further consideration has to be given to overriding importance of supporting communities in the West of the Park through the identification of suitable development land within the Sennybridge & Defynnog area.

At the NPA which approved the Settlement Methodology, Members raised concern that there may be exceptional cases where the methodology would produce anomalous results. It is considered that Defynnog & Sennybridge is one such case.

The NPA therefore consider that an exception should be made to the application of the settlement assessment methodology agreed by the NPA. In the case of Sennybridge & Defynnog, for the reasons stated above, all the sites which failed the environmental capacity stage of the assessment were re-assessed. Each of these sites was then passed through to Key Stakeholders to determine their deliverability.

From the Alternative Site consultation it is clear that there is sufficient land available within the settlement hierarchy to support the future development of Sennybridge & Defynnog. Representations from the Community Council proposed considering Sennybridge & Defynnog as a single Hub for future development, as a strategic centre for the west of the Park. Considering the significant role Sennybridge plays in the National Park, particularly in the West, it has been determined that Sennybridge & Defynnog should be designated as a Level 2 Key Settlement. The land allocations identified at Castle Farm (Sennybridge), Defynnog Road (Sennybridge) and Glannau Senni (Defynnog) support this position.

Response to Deposit Representations

The rationale for the change is set out in the evidence base in the NPA's response to the following Deposit Representations:

- 00644/00001/012 Powys County Council Pg 3-62
- 00825/00001/005 Maescar Community Council Pg 3-64
- 00840/00001/001 Hyder Consulting Pg 3-72

In summary the NPA's response stated:

"The Settlement Assessment Matrix enables a sub-categorisation within the levels of the Settlement Hierarchy. This sub-categorisation has been developed to help resolve some of the conflicts inherent within the demand for development in a protected landscape. For example communities which are not located in sustainable locations may demonstrate a need for growth, or conversely, settlements which present as sustainable locations have a valid reasoning for limiting future growth. Policy has been included within the LDP relevant to the settlement sub categories to mitigate for any potential negative impact caused by competing interest and needs within a place.

In the case of Sennybridge assessment determined that there was:

- *A community defined need for growth*
- *That Sennybridge was a sustainable location*
- *That the settlement does not have the environmental capacity to accommodate future growth.*

As such in accordance with the Matrix (ref) Sennybridge is defined as a level 4A settlement. Powys CC rightly identify that environmental capacity is the determining factor in the designation of Sennybridge

as a level 4 settlement, however we would like to reiterate that the environmental capacity of the town is based on extensive assessment and consultation with key stakeholders and the community. The assessment of Sennybridge is therefore compliant with the objectives of the spatial strategy and the settlement hierarchy. We do acknowledge however that this is contrary to the needs of the community who are supportive of expansion of the settlement to support the status of the Settlement.

From the Alternative Site consultation it is clear that there is sufficient land available within the settlement hierarchy to support the future development of Sennybridge. Representations from the Community Council propose considering Sennybridge and Defynnog as a single Hub for future development, as a strategic centre for the west of the Park. Considering the significant role Sennybridge plays in the National Park, it has been determined that Sennybridge should be designated as a level 2 Key Settlement. Supporting land allocations at Defynnog Road, Castle Farm and Glannau Senni to be included to support this position.”

A full breakdown of these representations are set out at Appendix II.

- c) *The evidence and representations submitted by Maescar Community Council throughout the process in favour of amending the status of the settlement and identifying land which would support its growth.***

Feedback from Community Consultations

Maescar Community Council held a consultation event on 30th May 2008 in the Community Hall. The full report of the event created by the Community Council is shown below.

MAESCAR COMMUNITY COUNCIL – LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

INTRODUCTION

An Open Meeting was held on 30 May 2008 from 2.00pm to 8.00pm in the Community Hall.

To help ensure maximum participation letters of invitation were delivered by Community Councillors to every household in the parish (over 400 letters delivered). Posters advertising the meeting were also put up on notice boards and in local shops and public houses.

58 people attended the meeting.

METHODOLOGY

People attending the meeting were invited to give their views using a number of the activities suggested in the Community Participation Tool Kit.

RESULTS

MAPS (LAND IDENTIFIED FOR DEVELOPMENT)

SENNYBRIDGE

- (i) PEN Y BONT field between bypass and sawmills identified for HOUSING and /or RECREATION.
- (ii) CASTLE DU / CASTLE FARM – already given outline planning permission.
- (iii) RHYDYBRIW – HOUSING and/or RECREATION.
- (iv) SCHOOL – RECREATION.

DEFYNNOG

- (i) PENPENTRE fields above and below A4215 – HOUSING.
- (ii) Field across the road from LION INN – HOUSING.
- (iii) PEMBRYN fields between GLANNAU SENNI and RIVER SENNI – HOUSING.
- (iv) Land between GORPHWYSA and GWERNDY – HOUSING.

SENNY and PENTREFELIN no maps provided by NPA so site identification was not possible.

Identified on the 'ideas wall' and relating to the above :-

- a) All development should be small scale clusters rather than high density mass development.
- b) Redundant/surplus MOD buildings on the camp could be used for industrial development.

IDEAS WALL - The most supported ideas identified were :-

- (i) Housing for local people.
- (ii) Housing for old people.
- (iii) Swimming pool.
- (iv) Play/recreation area.

- (v) WAG regulations on barn conversions causing needless delay and frustration to developer.
- (vi) Keep Defynnog and Sennybridge separate.
- (vii) Make sure smaller communities retain their village halls.
- (viii) Better and more frequent public transport.

[Other points made needing to be addressed by Powys CC and/or WAG

:-

- (i) Traffic calming through Defynnog and on the A40.
- (ii) Remove yellow lines
- (iii) Retain Post Office.]

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

COMMUNITY

1. The strongest support was for "Affordable Housing for Local People", followed by "Community Facilities".
2. Community Waste Facilities were also supported with 'post-it' additions indicating the need to locate them away from their present location next to the Community Centre.
3. Cultural Heritage was identified as in need of support.
4. Community Energy Production gained little support

ECONOMY

1. Local Employment and the need for better public transport were well supported.
2. Sustainable Tourism and Local Food Production also gained support.

ENVIRONMENT

Of the three panels (Community, Economy and Environment) this was the least supported panel, with a small support for Conservation/Enhancement of the Environment and Renewable Energy Production.

ACCEPTABLE DEVELOPMENT

3 areas were strongly supported :-

1. Land needed for affordable housing for local people.
2. Land needed for housing on the open market.
3. Land needed for recreational facilities.

LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY (not in any order)

LEAST LIKED

1. Housing being used as second homes and little occupied.
2. Lack of affordable housing for local (young) people.
3. Lack of local employment opportunities.
4. NP Planning regulations.

MOST LIKED

1. Strong community spirit.
2. Local events.
3. Beautiful countryside.
4. Local shops and Post Office.
5. Access to larger towns and their facilities.

On 9 June 2008 the Ideas Wall and Likes/Dislikes activities were used in the village school with the top junior class.

IDEAS WALL

The majority of ideas centred on the need for improved recreation and leisure facilities.

Things liked in the community

1. The small school/community and knowing everyone.
2. Living in a quiet lovely place.
3. Being able to walk to school.

Things disliked

1. Lack of things to do in the holidays.
2. Being away from friends in the holidays/weekends.
3. Roads are busy, too much traffic.
4. Not enough shops.

The most interesting aspect of the children's responses was in the dichotomy of the perceived advantages of living in a rural area – small school, knowing everyone, lovely scenery, and the disadvantages produced by such rurality – isolated from friends, not enough things to do in the holidays.

CONCLUSION

The toolkit exercises showed the greatest demand for change in the community over the next Local Plan period centred on the need for :-

1. More housing for local needs.
2. An increased housing stock including that available on the open market.

These needs are matched by the availability of land proposed for development as indicated on the maps provided.

There was also a clear demand for an improved infrastructure to match the increase in housing, including the provision of improved recreation and sports facilities, maintaining local shops, and an improved public transport service.

A summary of the findings of this event are outlined below.

Maescar – Summary of Consultation Event

Aspects of the community that residents of Maescar enjoy include:

- Strong Community Spirit
- Local Events
- Beautiful Countryside
- Local Shops and post office
- Access to larger towns and their facilities

Aspects of the Community that residents do not like include:

- Large number of second homes in the area
- Lack of affordable housing for local (young) people
- Lack of local employment opportunities
- National Park Planning regulations

Development that residents of Maescar would find acceptable include:

- Land needed for affordable housing for local people
- Land needed for housing on the open market
- Land needed for recreational facilities
- Development in small scale clusters rather than high density
- Improved infrastructure to match increased development

General Comments received include:

- Better and more frequent public transport
- Allow smaller communities to retain village halls
- Easier regulations on barn conversions
- Keep Defynnog and Sennybridge separate

Summary of issues identified for whole community area following consultation event

Second Homes: there is a perceived issue with second homes, however this is not supported by the data. National Planning legislation currently gives local planning no means by which to control second home ownership.

Affordable Housing: LDP policies can provide for affordable housing to meet an identified local need. This housing must remain affordable in perpetuity. It is not however possible for planning policy to

provide open market housing for people who are local to buy. There are no planning restrictions that may be imposed on who is able to buy local market housing.

Issues to be addressed through land allocation

Land needs to be found for

- Open market housing
- Affordable Housing
- Recreation

Issues to be considered when allocating land

- Keep the gap between Sennybridge and Defynnog
- Be of a type and scale that reflects the current settlement patterns rather than large high density estates

Issues to be addressed through Policy

Retention of village halls and other community facilities

Barn conversions

If no land is found for new recreation, then planning obligations policies could be used to ensure that new development contributes to improvements to existing recreation sites.

Deposit Stage Comments and Focused Change Representations

Maescar Community Council submitted Deposit Stage Comments and Focused Change Comments as representations on the LDP.

These comments are set out below:

Maescar Community Council Deposit Stage comments

Customer Reference: 00825/00001/005

Plan Section: Section 3.10 and Policies LGS LP1 – LP3

Before dealing with specific sites identified in the Plan, Maescar Community Council wish to make the following general observations:

- i) *Sennybridge and Defynnog are less than a mile apart and share many services and amenities. We therefore feel both villages should be considered as one area for community development.*

- ii) *We wish to challenge the Spatial Strategy grading. Sennybridge and Defynnog are graded as Level 4 settlements. In the Sustainable Assessment grading Sennybridge scored heavily and was the fifth highest scoring community in the Park. We therefore feel Sennybridge and Defynnog should be reclassified as Level 3 having all the socio-economic infrastructure already in place to maintain a sustainable community capable of absorbing limited growth. (We note, with some astonishment, that Crai, which lacks a shop and school - the children attend Sennybridge school - is a Level 3 community).*
- iii) *When we conducted the community consultation exercise there was strong support for further housing. This exercise re-affirmed the conclusions of the Rural Housing Enabler Assessment produced in 2005 when the need for 22 affordable houses was identified. To date. No such development has taken place.*
- iv) *We accept the view expressed in the current Unitary Development Plan that much of the land in both villages is unsuitable for development because of flood plain considerations. To compensate for this difficulty and to allow the community to grow and thrive, we feel there is a need to review the village boundaries in relation to housing development to satisfy the housing needs for the plan period.*

1. DBR-A – Land adjoining Castle Farm (SALT 092)

We note that this site, although it currently has outline planning permission for 40 dwellings in the Unitary Development Plan, has not been included in the LDP. How can outline planning permission be deemed acceptable in the UDP and not in the proposed LDP? Why is it now considered that the "area would have an unacceptable impact on the landscape character and be an extension of the current settlement form into the countryside" especially when there are houses to the west of the proposed site? As stated previously, we would like the development boundary of Sennybridge to continue to include this site. We do not consider that, with the proper architectural consideration, any development of the site would have a detrimental visual impact

2. CS112 and CS58 – Land adjoining Timber Yard, Defynnog Road (SALT 016)

We note this site was deleted for reasons of access and possible land contamination. Access objections to this site have been withdrawn by the Highways Authority and we feel access could be successfully achieved off the nearby A4067.

We are also concerned that the term 'contamination' has been used when no tests have taken place. Surely contamination should be identified by testing prior to using such a term as a possible reason for deleting the site.

Part of this site was identified for employment development at the community consultation meeting. We feel such development would further enhance the economic sustainability of the community.

3. CS59 and CS116 – Land adjoining Mount Villa (SALT 017 and SALT 090)

We consider a small terraced development, not extending beyond the existing development would be in keeping with the linear development of this part of the village. It would not extend beyond the village boundary and would match development on the south side of the A4067 - Gwemdy House. We are aware that the gas pipeline runs near this site but have seen correspondence indicating TRANSCO would not

object to building works within 6metres of the pipeline. A small development in line with existing houses across the A4067 would be well away from the pipeline.

4. CS24 – Penpentre Fields (SALT 091)

We consider the identified areas are natural extensions to the development boundary of the village because they do not extend beyond existing dwellings (The Manse). Small scale, sympathetically designed dwellings would not have a detrimental effect on the visual impact as you approach the village from Senni.

In conclusion, we wish to reiterate the point that Defynnog and Sennybridge should be regarded to a Level 3 status.

Maescar Community Council Focused Change comments

Customer Reference: 00825/2

Plan Section: Section 3.10 and Policies LGS LP1 – LP3

The Community Council welcomes the revised grading of the community to a Level 2 category. Sennybridge is the hub of the community; its school, post office, shops and garages serving both local and the surrounding communities of Trecastle, Cray, Pentrefelin and Llandeilo'r Fam. It is a major settlement in the west of the park and level 2 recognises the economies and social viability of the community.

Sites in Sennybridge:

Castle Farm site

As stated previously, we approve of development on this site but are concerned about the density of development - we feel there are too many dwellings. When we viewed the plans we were also concerned about the lack of bungalows in the proposed development.

Pen-y-Bont Farm - Field adjoining car park/ saw mills

The mixed development proposed for this site offers the opportunity for both housing and retail/ light industrial development. With possible access directly on to the bypass, we see this site as an ideal location for such mixed site development.

Sites in Defynnog:

Land adjoining Glannau Senni

We fully support the proposed development of this site.

Penpentre Fields and Field opposite (ex) Lion Public House

We would like both these sites re instated. The community council has always favoured small scale developments within the community and both these sites offer such opportunities for growth.

SECTION 2

This Section provides the following information and evidence:

As set out in the 'Schedule of Proposed Focused Changes', Focused Change number 3-P-28 proposed an additional section to be added to Section 3 of the LDP to include the following information about the Sennybridge and Defynnog Cluster:

- a)** a profile of the character, role and function of the Settlements (Pg 3-27 of FC Schedule21)
- b)** a Vision for the Cluster (3-29)
- c)** objectives for the Cluster (3-33)
- d)** areas vulnerable to the impact of future development (3-36)

a) a profile of the character, role and function of the Settlements

Sennybridge and Defynnog Key Settlement	Location & Population	<p>Sennybridge, lies on the A40T at the confluence of the Rivers Senni and Usk. There was a small castle on the site in the 13th century, but the village grew in importance after the coach road was built in 1819, and again with the completion of the Neath and Brecon railway (now closed). Since the last war, Sennybridge has been the site of an army camp serving the training area on Mynydd Eppynt.</p> <p>Defynnog lies on the A4067 south of Sennybridge. The parish church is here, and the village was the centre for a large community until the growth of Sennybridge. There are rows of older terraced cottages around the church and pubs, with newer development along the A4067.</p> <p>Together the two settlements make up the Sennybridge and Defynnog Key Settlement.</p> <p>The Sennybridge and Defynnog Key Settlement is a strategic centre linking the western area of the National Park with key West Wales Settlements such as Llandovery and Llandeilo.</p>
	Built Environment	<p>Sennybridge consists of a mixture of housing types, from older terraced properties situated along the A40T, to more recent estates and detached single and two-storey dwellings, constructed on its outskirts.</p> <p>There is a strong contrast between the core of Sennybridge and the Defynnog area of the Cluster. In Defynnog the housing stock is predominately older. A strong sense of place is engendered travelling through Defynnog along the A4067, with traditional stone faced terracing lining the road, forming the historic core. The listed lime-washed church at Defynnog is striking within the valley landscape, forming an iconic and picturesque view of the village on the northern and southern approaches.</p>
	Economy	<p>Sennybridge is an important source of employment, with the army camp, sawmills, haulage contracting, agricultural related stores and local shops. It plays a significant role for the farming industry with its weekly and monthly market and related feed and equipment facilities. The annual Sennybridge Agricultural Show takes place in late summer. The scale and popularity of the show highlights the important status of Sennybridge for the agricultural community.</p>
	Services	<p>Sennybridge and Defynnog includes a variety of facilities: shops, pubs, cafes, community hall, primary school with sports facilities, and a health clinic. There is a bus service that operates during the day, linking the area with Brecon and Llandovery¹.</p>

¹ 3-P-28

b) a Vision for the Cluster

Section 4.4.2 of the LDP sets out the vision for future development in the Key Settlements. As advised in this section the LDP aims to develop our Key Settlements in accordance with their regional significance and in keeping with their environmental Capacity of the town. The National Park Authority in consultation with local communities, has defined a Vision for the development of each Key Settlement for the next 15 years. The Vision for Sennybridge & Defynnog is set out below. All development proposals within this Key Settlement will need to demonstrate how their scheme works to help achieve the local vision for future development.

Sennybridge and Defynnog Key Settlement 15 Year Vision²

Sennybridge and Defynnog will grow together to form a strong and vibrant community.

Development will capitalise on the significance of the centre to the agricultural economy, with growth in related rural enterprise such as local food production, agricultural contractors, agricultural suppliers, and green industries.

The retail presence within Sennybridge will be encouraged to grow and diversify, giving opportunities for a new vibrancy to develop and strengthen Sennybridge's sense of place

All new development will be built to ensure environmental impact is minimal. Positive contributions to mitigating the likely and predicted affects of climate change are incorporated.

New development proposals will maintain and enhance the setting of Sennybridge and Defynnog within the landscape.

² 3-P-28

c) objectives for the Cluster (3-33)*Sennybridge & Defynnog Issues and Objectives*

As advised in Section 4.4.3.1 of the LDP, in order to realise the vision for the development of our Key Settlements, the National Park Authority has identified Key Issues and Objectives for each Key Settlement. These have been used to formulate appropriate Policy to enable appropriate development within Key Settlements (see K LP2). All development proposals within key settlements will be required to demonstrate how their scheme addresses identified issues and meets the identified objectives relevant to their proposal.

The table on the following page sets out the key issues and objectives identified for the Sennybridge & Defynnog Key Settlement.

Sennybridge Issues and Objectives³			
No.	Objective	LDP Strategic Objective	Issue
1	<u>Strengthening Sustainable Communities</u>	<u>Sustainable Communities: Housing: Affordable Housing</u>	<p>There were 998 residents within Maescar Community Council area at the time of the 2001 census. These residents make up 437 households, with an average household size of 2.28. The average age of residents within the community was 42, higher than the Welsh National Average. The community has been identified as having a generally aging population. Aging populations have an impact on the number of people available for employment within an area, it also impacts on the availability of housing, as the trend is for older people to remain in the family home as their household size declines. Issues with the availability of housing accommodation are underpinned by the 2005 Local Needs Survey undertaken for the area which identified a need for 22 affordable units. To date, no development has come forward to meet this need. It is therefore vital to the future sustainability of the community that the availability of housing increases over the plan period, with a focus on providing a mix of dwelling types and tenures being made available to help the community diversify. The Affordable Housing need must be addressed within the village, and opportunities for Rural Exception Sites should be explored. It is also considered appropriate that new houses within the Sennybridge and Defynnog Key Settlement aim to achieve Life Times Homes Standards. The community have also indicated a need to improve community facilities to help support families who live within the area. The NPA will work with the Community Council to secure contributions towards community facilities from future development schemes within the region. Although Sennybridge and Defynnog are being considered as a single cluster for future development, it is important that the physical separation between the two settlements is maintained.</p>
2	<u>Respecting Sennybridge's unique identity</u>	<u>Cultural Heritage: Landscape; Built Environment</u>	<p>Sennybridge and Defynnog are set within a landscape that has been classified as "outstanding" by CCW's LANDMAP Visual and Sensory</p> <p>Although the two components of the Cluster are closely related in terms of proximity, their character is quite different. Sennybridge is a large village centering on the River Usk. The settlement is essentially linear in character dominated by the A40T which runs through the settlement. Development proposals should respect the settlement character of Sennybridge, consolidating the existing form and function, and aiming to enhance the impact of the built environment on the surrounding high quality landscape.</p> <p>Defynnog setting is the Senni Valley, an outstanding landscape; development focuses on the A4067 although there has been some historic and more modern development up the hillside away from the A4067. The setting of Defynnog within the Landscape is of particular aesthetic value, new development should be able to compliment the landscape setting of the village and be sympathetic to the quality vernacular architecture of the historic core of the village.</p>

³ 3-P-28

3	<u>Strengthening Sennybridge's status as Agricultural Centre.</u>	<u>Cultural Heritage;</u> <u>Employment</u>	At the last census the employment levels within the Maescar Community Council area was relatively high. Moreover, almost half of the economically active persons worked from home or used alternative means of transportation other than private car or bus. suggesting that there are many people living in the area who also work in the area. The employment offer within Sennybridge focuses around the small industrial area off Defynnog Road, which houses a busy Saw Mills, and Agricultural Merchants. The current access to this site is narrow and constrained. It is considered that the mixed use allocation at Defynnog Road to the immediate east of the timber yard could provide an appropriately scaled extension to the existing employment site, provide a new access from the A4067 and improve the commercial viability of the existing operations. Outside of allocated sites the NPA will seek to enable appropriately scaled development that supports the tourism offer in the region, improves the retail offer within Sennybridge or encourages a revitalised high street.
4	<u>Avoiding areas of Flood risk</u>	<u>Flooding</u>	Flooding is identified as a strategic issue for the Sennybridge and Defynnog Key Settlement. Development proposals will be limited to the SW and SE in Sennybridge and to the east in Defynnog.
5.	<u>Protecting Environmental Assets</u>	<u>Biodiversity;</u> <u>Natural Resources</u>	The River Usk SAC and SSSI runs through the Sennybridge and Defynnog Key Settlement, and there are records of bat sightings within the area. New development must seek to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the SSSI and SAC. <i>Table 4.8 Sennybridge Issues and Objectives</i>

d) areas vulnerable to the impact of future development

Section 4.4.5 of the LDP 'Key Settlements: Mitigating Impact' advises that in enabling appropriate development it also is recognised that development has the potential to impact negatively on the social, physical and environmental infrastructure that service the town. It is important that the NPA seek to ensure that any adverse impact is avoided or minimised to acceptable levels in its consideration of new development schemes⁴

The potential constraints on development within Key Settlements as identified in the LDP are set out in Policy K LP3 below, and classified in accordance with the Area Constraints Table on the following page.

K LP3 Mitigating Impact

All proposals for development within Key Settlements will be required to contribute to the vitality of the town and region through positive contribution to the quality of life and mitigation of any strain placed on community and/or environmental infrastructure:

3. **Sennybridge:** Within the Sennybridge and Defynnog Key Settlement the following areas have been identified as being vulnerable to the impact of future development.⁵

- A Biodiversity Significance
- B Water Management
- C Land Stability and Contamination Potential
- D Highways Capacity
- E Water and Sewerage Infrastructure

All proposals for development will be required to demonstrate how these issues (where relevant) have been addressed within the scheme to the satisfaction of the National Park Authority. Where necessary the National Park Authority will utilise Planning Conditions or Planning Obligations to ensure the provision of appropriate mitigation, compensation, and/or enhancement measures relating to development proposals. See also Policy 35.

⁴ 3-T-15

⁵ 3-P-28

Area Code	Key Issue	Key Stakeholder
A	<p><i>Biodiversity Significance</i></p> <p>Development has the potential to impact upon priority habitat listed under Section 42 of the Natural Environment and Communities Act 2006 (habitats and species of principal importance to Wales). Full biodiversity survey and management plan may be required of the development proposal. Potential Planning Obligations necessary to mitigate and enhance against potential impact from development may be requested. There are further duties to compensate for the loss of habitat and to enhance relevant habitats.</p>	CCW / BBNPA Ecologists
B	<p><i>Water Management</i></p> <p>Proactive water management will be necessary in order to ensure that future development does not exacerbate future risk of flooding and/ or put pressure on wider water resources.</p> <p>Development may be dependent on the production and implementation of an active water management plan. Such a plan would satisfy the maximum requirement for Water and Surface Water Run-Off in line with the requirements for the Code For Sustainable Homes and BREEAM standards. Any other necessary requirements the NPA and partner Statutory Authorities deem appropriate to the nature of the site and location such as water saving measures to be built into any future development. (see also Policy 5)</p>	Environment Agency / Dwr Cymru
C	<p><i>Land Stability and Contamination potential</i></p> <p>Prior land use has resulted in land instability or contamination</p> <p>For allocated sites developers should establish whether remediation works have been deemed necessary under the requirements of development.</p> <p>For unallocated sites developers should contact the relevant Environmental Health authority to determine extent of issues.</p> <p>Where instability or contamination of land is identified the NPA will require the soil quality to be fully investigated and where necessary hazards removed, managed or mitigated to the satisfaction of the NPA and partner Statutory Authorities prior to development proceeding.</p>	Relevant Environmental Health Authority / <u>The Coal Authority(in relation to sites affected by former coal mining activities)"</u>
D	<p><i>Highways Capacity</i></p> <p>The highways network has been identified as pressurised or is in other ways constrained.</p> <p>For allocated sites developers should establish whether</p>	Relevant Highways Authority

	<p>highways improvements have been deemed necessary under the requirements of development and accommodated within design schemes or through Planning Obligations.</p> <p>For unallocated sites developers should contact the relevant Highways authority to determine extent of the issue and reach agreement as to mitigatory measures to be incorporated into design scheme, or through Planning Obligations, to be established prior to the submission of any application.</p>	
E	<p><i>Water and Sewerage Infrastructure</i></p> <p>Water, waste water and sewerage treatment infrastructure is inadequate to accommodate sustainable levels of development, for which no regulatory improvements are planned under Dwr Cymru Welsh Water's Current Capital Investment Programme (2010 to 2015). Should land with these constraints be promoted for development in advance of DCWW investment, developers may be required to fund the essential infrastructure improvements. In such circumstances developers must establish the extent of the constraint and reach agreement as to how the issue will be addressed.</p>	Dwr Cymru
F	<p><i>Land Release</i></p> <p>In such areas key stakeholders have requested that land be phased for release towards the end of the plan period, from 2016 onwards. For allocated sites reasons for phasing are given under the requirements of development. In such circumstances if developers can demonstrate that the constraint can be overcome prior to the established release of land the NPA will consider early release subject to conditions and/or Planning Obligations ensuring that the constraint is addressed to the satisfaction of any relevant statutory body and the NPA.</p>	Relevant Statutory body
G	<p><i>Historic Landscape Significance</i></p> <p>Development has the potential to impact upon protected historic landscapes. In such areas design should be responsive to the nature and character of historic landscape setting. In some circumstances this will also be dependent upon the completion of an archaeological survey (recording and evaluation) prior to any development scheme to the satisfaction of the NPA and relevant archaeological trust. Developers should consult the Register of Historic Landscapes to establish the statutory level of protection offered to the region. If the site lies within a registered Historic Landscape, development proposals will be required to be responsive to the context of the Historic in design proposals and to assess the impacts of the proposal in line with the published ASIDOHL2, to the satisfaction of the NPA and Relevant Archaeological trust. Where archaeological trusts have suggested a development scheme requires ASIDOHL2 assessment this is set out at</p>	Relevant Archaeological Trust / BBNPA Heritage Team

	Appendix 2.	
H	<p>Sustainability of Location</p> <p>Due to the unsustainable location, higher levels of sustainable design will be expected of any scheme. Development will be expected to aspire towards level 6 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. Provision towards community renewable energy generation schemes and / or other necessary Planning or any other statutory Obligations towards mitigating the impact of the new development on the carbon emissions of the settlement will be required.</p>	Code for Sustainable Homes Advisors / BREEAM BBNPA Sustainable Communities Team
I	<p>Community Vitality and Viability</p> <p>These are areas where the availability of land places vulnerability on the vitality and viability of the community. Within such areas the NPA will require that all new development is responsive to the needs of the community. Developers will be required to address housing need as evidenced through Local Housing Market Assessment, Housing Authority waiting lists and/or community housing need surveys.</p> <p>The above is relevant to Level 4 and Countryside settlements</p>	Rural Housing Enabler / Relevant Housing Authority
J	<p>Flood Risk</p> <p>Within These areas the Environment Agency has identified a risk of flooding, are defined as being vulnerable to the future risk of flood as set out in the <u>Welsh Government’s Development Advice Maps (DAM)</u>. In accordance with PPW and TAN 15 vulnerable development should only be permitted within the area in flood zone C if the risk can be managed to the satisfaction of the <u>National Park Authority, in consultation with the Environment Agency</u>. Within these areas developers should consult <u>the DAM maps</u> to determine whether flooding presents a risk to their proposal <u>is located in an area identified at being vulnerable to the future risk of flood. In such circumstances there is a presumption against development unless the applicant can prove to the satisfaction of the National Park in consultation with the Environment Agency that flood risk can be managed as part of their proposal. In most such instances this will require the preparation of a Flood Consequences Assessment and Flood Risk Management Plan.</u></p>	Environment Agency

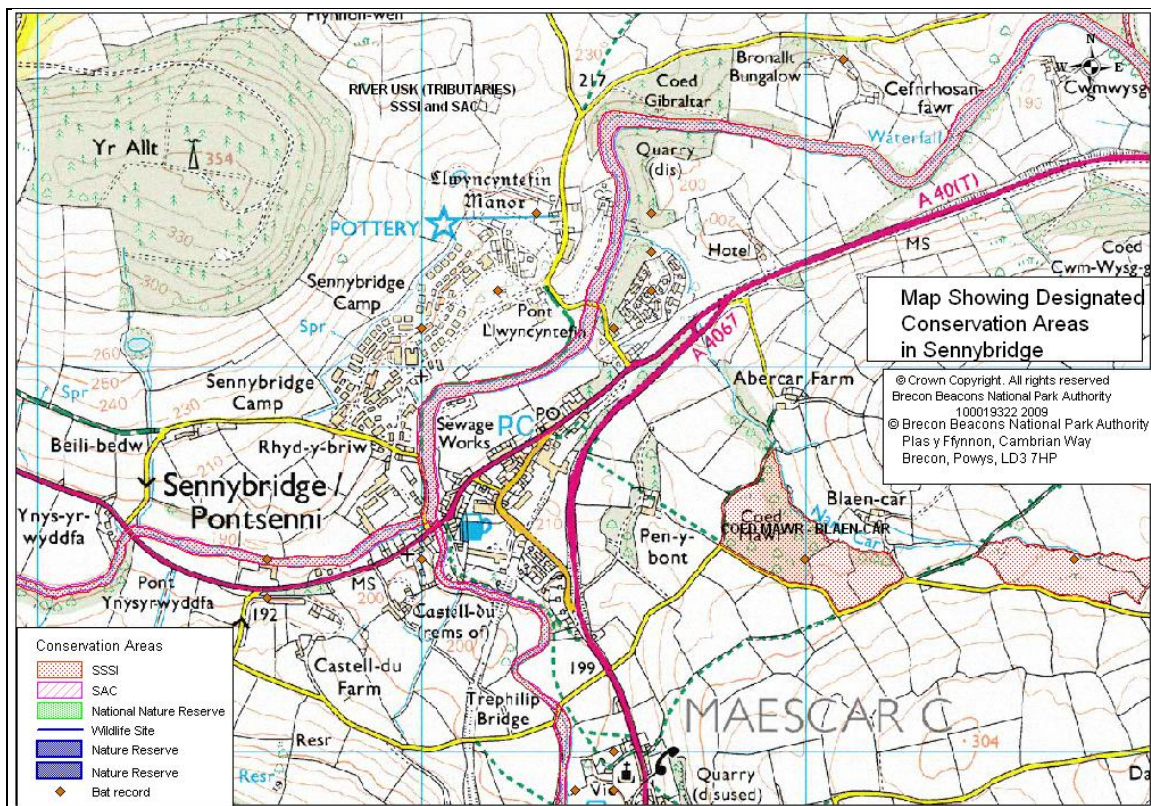
APPENDICES

Appendix I –Sennybridge & Defynnog LANDMAP Assessment Findings

Conservation Issues

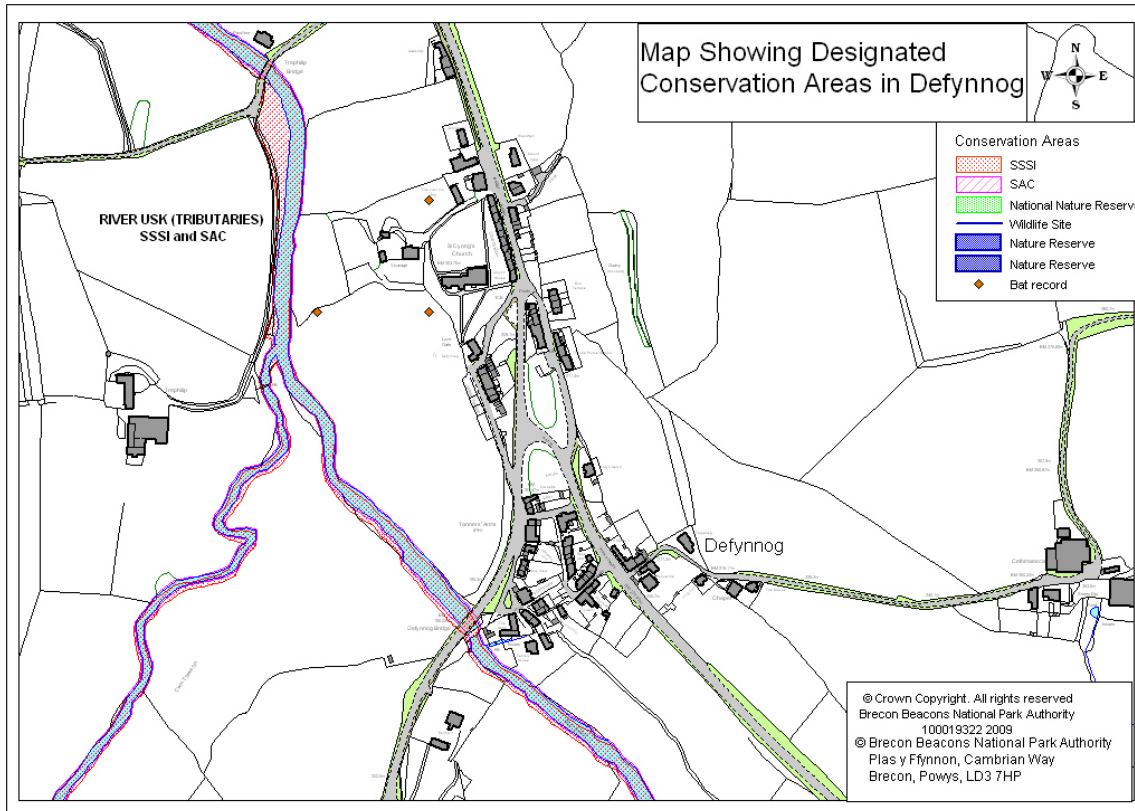
The following maps illustrate the designated Conservation Areas in Sennybridge and Defynnog. These land designations are discussed in detail in the LANDMAP assessments below.

Sennybridge



Designated Conservation Areas in Sennybridge

Defynnog



Designated Conservation Areas in Defynnog

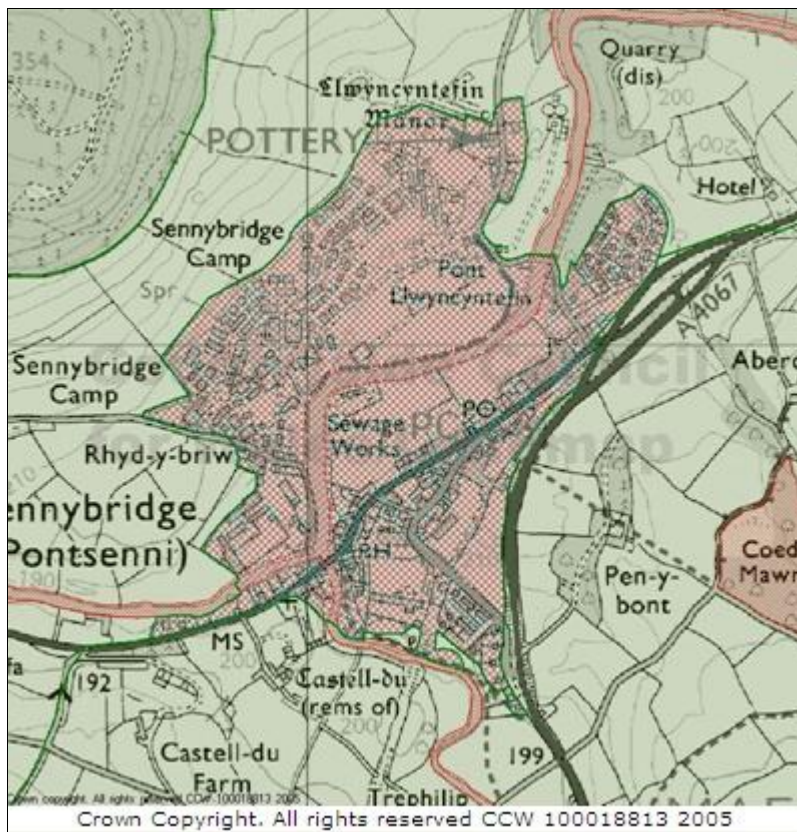
LANDMAP Landscape Habitat

The LANDMAP Landscape Habitats assessment looks at the distribution of vegetation and habitats and the basis for landscape ecology.

- **Sennybridge BRCKNLH867**

<http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk/map/PrintExtendedResults.aspx?filter=LH|BRCKNLH867&MapCollectionName=LandMap&Layer01=LH;BRCKNLH867>

The following map illustrates the LANDMAP Landscape Heritage area for Sennybridge.



The LANDMAP Landscape Habitat area classification is listed as a mix of Dry (Relatively) Terrestrial Habitats; Built Up Areas; Residential; and Green Space. The LANDMAP assessment found that the primary habitat within the area is made up of Buildings (50%), with the remaining habitats being Amenity Grassland (30%) and Improved Grassland (10%). The remaining 10% is made up of land that was not accessed.

The area contains two Protected Sites namely the River Usk SSSI and SAC (UK0013007).

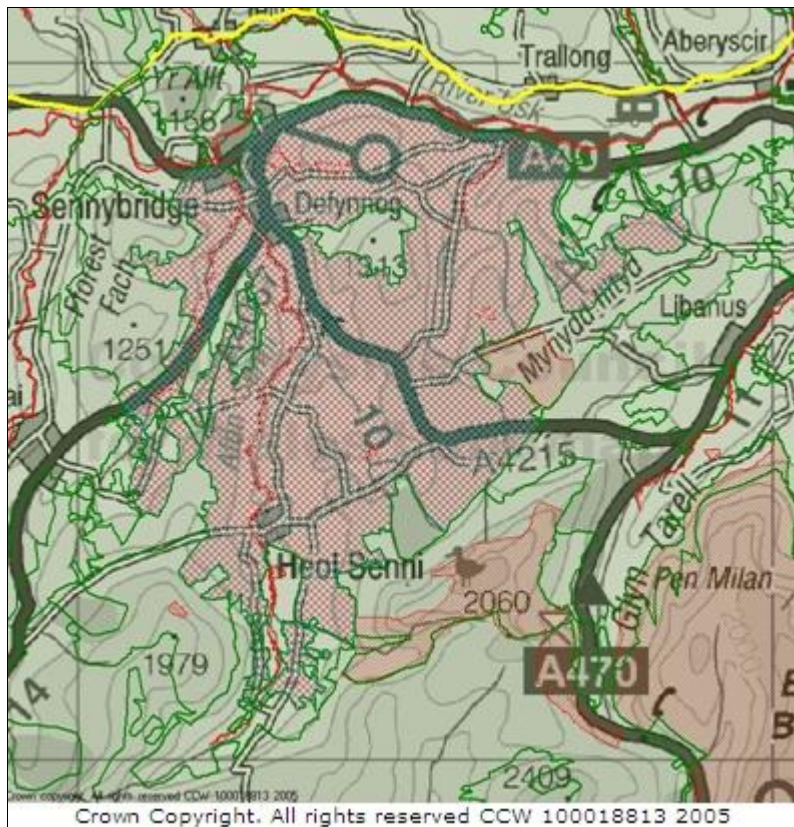
The key areas that define this area's biodiversity character are summarised by LANDMAP as an urban area centred upon the River Usk. The watercourse forms the focus for biodiversity but amenity grassland, building and gardens also contribute.

The overall LANDMAP evaluation of habitat and species for the area is low and is seen as an urbanised area of limited biodiversity interest.

- Defynnog BRCKNLH242

<http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk/map/PrintExtendedResults.aspx?filter=LH|BRCKNLH242&MapCollectionName=LandMap&Layer01=LH;BRCKNLH242>

The following map illustrates the LANDMAP Landscape Heritage area for Defynnog.



The key features that define this area's biodiversity character are summarised by LANDMAP as largely improved agricultural land of the Senni and Camlais valleys. Improved grassland is the dominant habitat type but arable fields, neutral grasslands and wooded copses also have a scattered distribution. Narrow ribbons of fragmented riparian woodland are a key biodiversity feature.

The area contains two Protected Sites:

- SSSI: Coed Mawr - Blaen-car SSSI, Illtyd Pools SSSI, Cae Gwernllertai SSSI
- SAC: River Usk / Afon Wysg (UK0013007)

The overall LANDMAP evaluation of habitat and species for the area is moderate and is seen as an improved agricultural landscape of local of local nature conservation interest.

Landscape Character

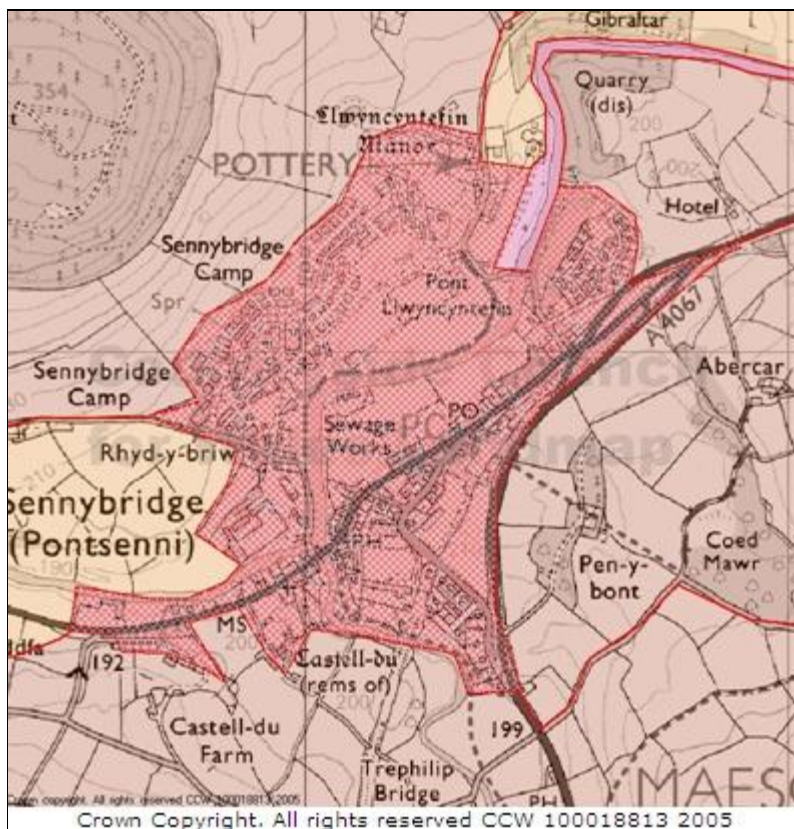
The LANDMAP Visual & Sensory Assessment for the area of Sennybridge & Defynnog considers how the settlement is perceived within the landscape through sensual responses.

Assessment of the area falls into two unique areas:

- **Sennybridge BRCKNV5936**

<http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk/map/PrintExtendedResults.aspx?filter=VS|BRCKNV5936&MapCollectionName=LandMap&Layer01=VS;BRCKNV5936>

The following map illustrates the LANDMAP Visual & Sensory Assessment for Sennybridge.



This area (shaded red in the above map) generally covers the built form of Sennybridge, including the Sennybridge Military Camp, whilst its LANDMAP area classification is a mixture of Development, Built Land and Urban. The LANDMAP summary description for the area states that Sennybridge is a settlement in two halves, set either side of the River Usk on the valley floor. To the south is the traditional settlement which is essentially linear, straddling the A40 and A4067. To the north is the Sennybridge Training Camp with its buildings set in what used to be land (parkland) related to a Manor House. The camp is a functional element in the landscape which does not appear to integrate into the landscape. The settlement is affected by the A40(T) running through it, with associated through traffic, noise and lighting.

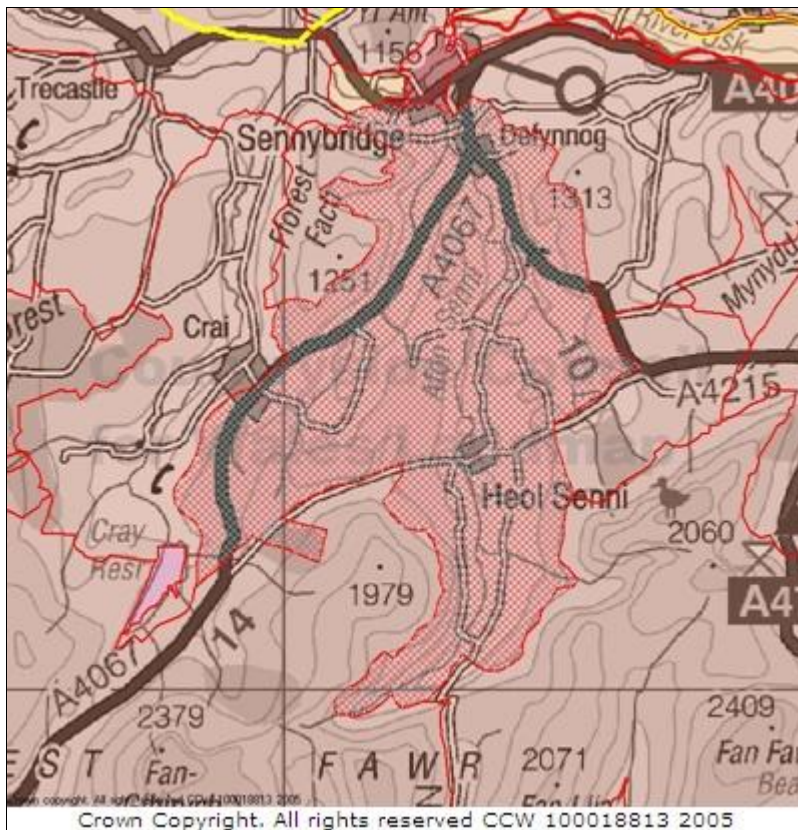
The overall evaluation for scenic quality of the area is low, and it is advised that there are attractive views out of Sennybridge and detractive views into Sennybridge (the Sennybridge Camp a particular detractor). The perceptual and other sensory qualities are listed as unattractive and noisy.

The justification of the overall evaluation of the area is that the Sennybridge camp is a detractor and the main village is adversely affected by the A40 passing through, plus the effects of the military close to the village.

- **Senni Valley BRCKNVS966**

<http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk/map/PrintExtendedResults.aspx?filter=VS|BRCKNVS966&MapCollectionName=LandMap&Layer01=VS;BRCKNVS966>

The following map illustrates the LANDMAP Visual & Sensory Assessment for the Senni Valley.



This area covers both Sennybridge and Defynnog and flows southwards past Heol Senni. The LANDMAP area classification is a mixture of Upland; Upland Valleys; Open; and Wooded Mosaic Upland Valleys.

The LANDMAP summary description for the area is of a tranquil pastoral flat bottomed U shaped upland valley running from 430mAOD on its highest valley sides to 200mAOD near Sennybridge. Upper pastures are being abandoned and are invaded by scrub and bracken. Pasture in the valley bottom is poorly drained in places. Deciduous woodland cover is strong on the valley sides and adds to its charm.

Riparian woodland is prominent. Hedgerows are generally outgrown and include numerous mature trees, which contribute to the enclosure. Conifer blocks and belts with large intervening fields are apparent to the west on the northern fringes of Fforest Fawr. These areas have a different grain and pattern to the rest of the Senni Valley and are visually incongruous. One belt drapes over an otherwise uninterrupted shoulder of land while others disrupt the flow of the landform. The Settlement is scattered farmsteads which complement the valley character. Superb views are available down into the valley from uplands and from the valley up.

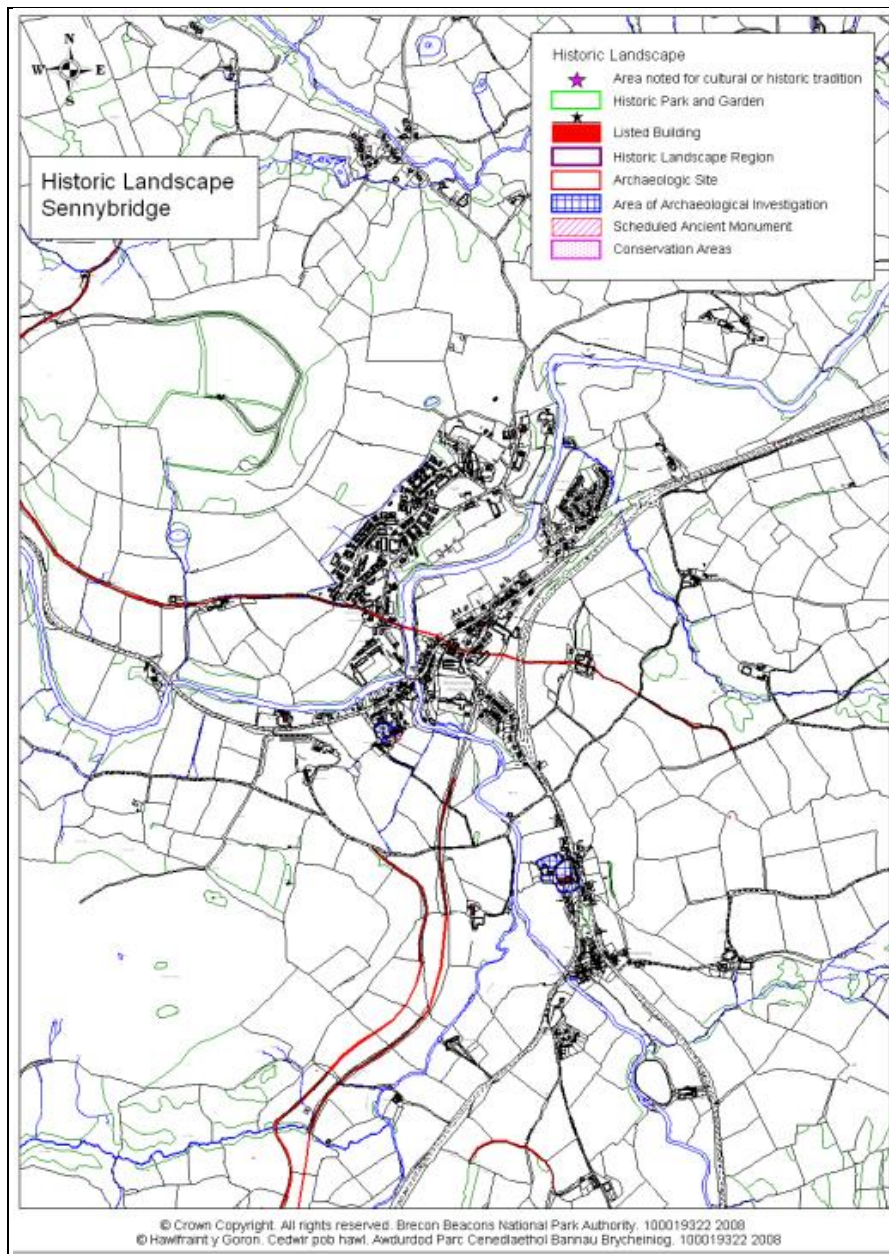
The overall evaluation for scenic quality of the area is high with primary sensory qualities experienced within the landscape listed as attractive, tranquil, safe and settled. There are attractive views both in and out of the area whilst there are said to be no detractive views in nor out of the area.

The justification of the overall evaluation of the area is that the dramatic landform, particularly in the upper valley and the strong deciduous woodland character and pastoral mosaic give the area high scenic quality. Superb views are possible up and down the valley. The area has a fairly distinctive character and is unspoilt apart from the limited area of conifer belts to the west. The area is a superb foil to the bare uplands that surround it.

Cultural Heritage

Historic Designations Map

The following map illustrates the Historic Landscape designations of the Sennybridge & Defynnog area. These designations are discussed in detail in the LANDMAP assessments below.



Sennybridge & Defynnog Historic Landscape

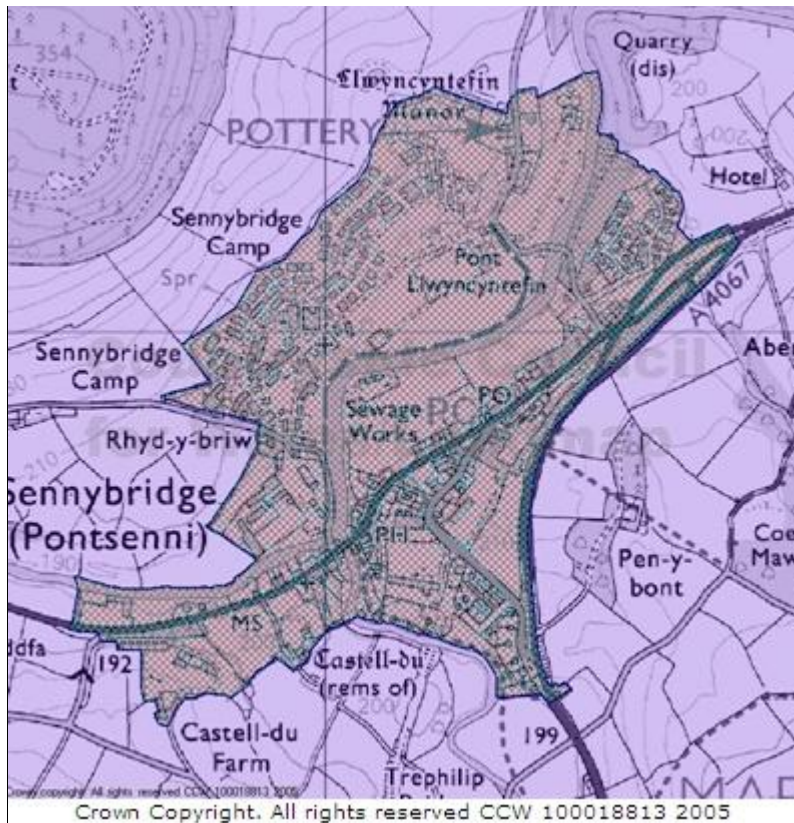
LANDMAP Historic Landscape

The LANDMAP Historic Landscape study focuses on how archaeological and historical sites relate to each other and to the surrounding landscape.

- **Sennybridge BRCKNHL495**

<http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk/map/PrintExtendedResults.aspx?filter=HL|BRCKNHL495&MapCollectionName=LandMap&Layer01=HL;BRCKNHL495>

The following map illustrates the Sennybridge LANDMAP Historic Landscape area.



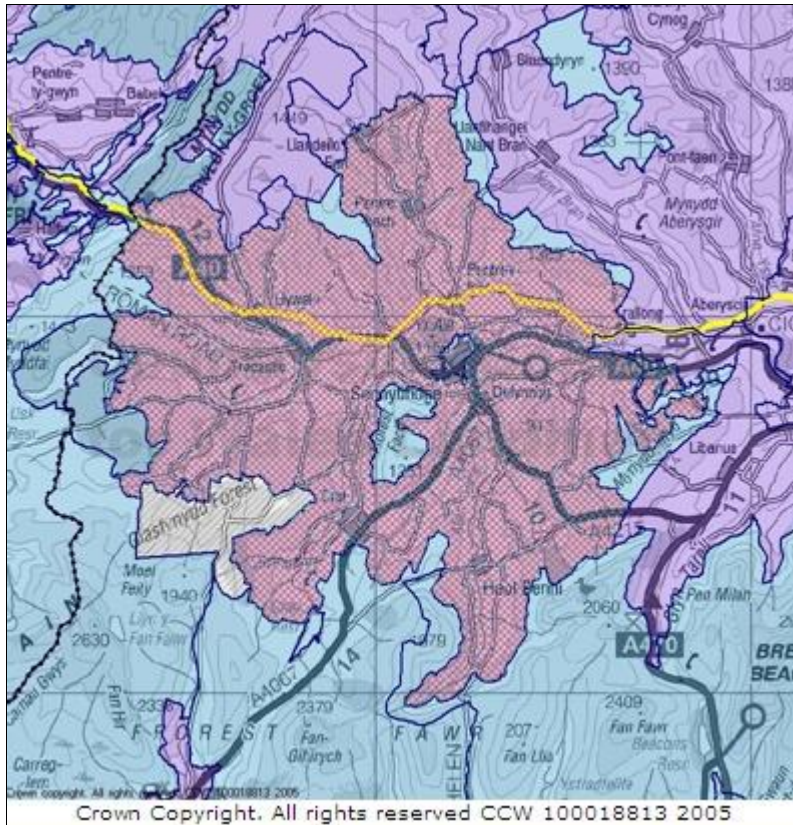
The *LANDMAP* summary description of the key patterns and elements in this area is of a small nucleated settlement which despite its fugitive castle and a handful of older buildings is largely a modern creation, growing up mainly in response to the coming of the Brecon & Neath railway. The settlement's size was subsequently enhanced by the creation of the C20th military ranges on Mynydd Epynt and their administrative "garrison" at Sennybridge Camp which adjoins the settlement to the north.

Overall the area is seen as a small ostensibly late post medieval and modern roadside settlement with supposedly medieval castle, which has a moderate historic value.

- Trecastell BRCKNHL260

<http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk/map/PrintExtendedResults.aspx?filter=HL|BRCKNHL260&MapCollectionName=LandMap&Layer01=HL;BRCKNHL260>

The following map illustrates the wider Trecastell LANDMAP Historic Landscape area.



This area (shaded red in the above map) is a large irregular tract of mixed fieldscape covering much of the undulating terrain both north and south of the Usk to the west of Brecon. The overall field pattern is made up of a large number of dissimilar blocks of mainly straight sided fields, although this is less well in some of the steeper valleys. A predominantly medieval and post medieval agricultural landscape containing a variety of scattered settlements, some (such as Crai, Defynnog, Llandeilo'r Fan, Llywel, Trianglas and Trecastell) significant ones of medieval or even early medieval date together with isolated later farms and farmsteads of later origin. The overall character is mixed with topographical constraints being formative, but most of the small settlements appear to act as focii for discrete field systems of varying date. A variety of prehistoric and Roman archaeology is apparent across the area.

The overall evaluation is of a large and diverse area of irregular fields; sites and landscape features from all periods, most notable small settlements and associated field systems of medieval date; and has a high historic value.

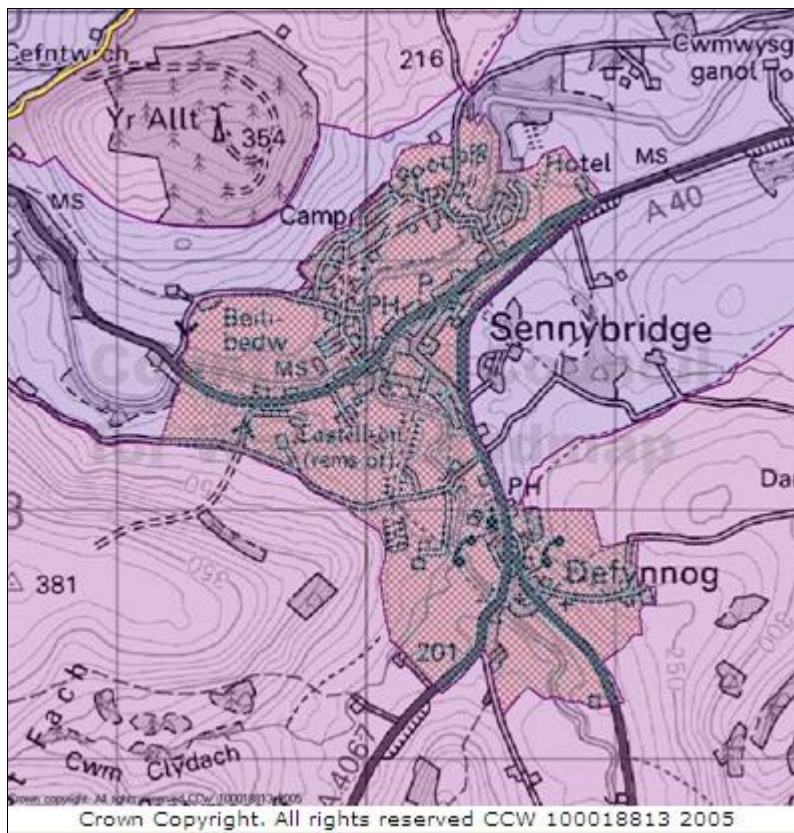
LANDMAP Cultural Evaluation

The LANDMAP Cultural Landscape study considers the relationship that exists between people and places; how people have given meaning to places, how the landscape has shaped their actions and their actions have shaped the landscape.

- Trecastell BRCKNHL260

<http://landmap.ccw.gov.uk/map/PrintExtendedResults.aspx?filter=CL|BRCKNCL327&MapCollectionName=LandMap&Layer01=CL;BRCKNCL327>

The following map illustrates the LANDMAP Cultural Evaluation assessment area around Sennybridge and Defynnog.



This LANDMAP assessment identifies Sennybridge and Defynnog as one settlement. The LANDMAP assessment on the cultural landscape concludes that Sennybridge is a cross roads community that evolved to satisfy the needs of travellers by road and rail, becoming an important staging point on the main road then expanding with the coming of the railway. It is also the nearest settlement to the SENTA military range.

The value of the Cultural Landscape is evaluated as moderate and is a settlement with a largely local focus, though the area is known principally regionally.

Appendix II – Deposit Representations

Representor: Powys County Council

Customer Reference: 00644/00001/012

Summary Comment:

The Settlement Hierarchy is not consistent with and does not achieve the Strategic Objectives in relation to, sustainable communities, location of growth and transport.

Comment in full:

The placement of Sennybridge as a Level 4 limited growth settlement in the sustainable settlement hierarchy does not reflect its role & function in the wider community. Its placement purely reflects its perceived environmental capacity and not its role & functionality. This is not consistent with para 3.2.4 of the deposit LDP which states: 'the LDP sets out at a strategic level, a hierarchy of settlement types, determined by role and functionality.' CE1 - The settlement hierarchy and associated policies do not logically flow from the strategy and objectives.

Officer Suggested Response:

This representation fails to fully understand the process which the BBNPA undertook to arrive at the current spatial strategy and designation of settlements. The representation takes a simplistic view of what makes a "sustainable" community how strategic objectives translate across the plan. The spatial strategy promotes that the majority of development be located within primary key or key settlements which provide a wide access to services. Outside of key settlements, the objective is to provide for development to meet community needs, in sustainable locations, where the settlement has the environmental capacity to accommodate future development.

The position of the strategy is in keeping with the LDP strategic Objectives. In some cases, such as Crai, the example given, supporting sustainable communities, also means providing opportunities for growth which are in keeping with the community aspirations and the capacity of the area to accommodate growth. This position is supported in National Policy, as set out at para 2.2.3 of TAN 6 which states, "where development proposals are intended to meet local needs planning authorities should recognise that a site may be acceptable even though it may not be accessible other than by the private car". This issue is discussed at length in the Scale and Location of Growth Issues Paper, which details why the NPA moved away from relying solely on traditional models of sustainability. See section 6.7.

Representor: Maescar Community Council

Customer Reference: 00825/00001/005

Summary Comment:

The Settlement Hierarchy is not consistent with and does not achieve the Strategic Objectives in relation to, sustainable communities, location of growth and transport.

Comment in full:

*Set out in full in section c) below.

Officer Suggested Response:

The LDP strategy makes clear that the assessment of settlements outside of the strategic centres is based on the following principles. To provide for development within the environmental limits of the National Park. To provide for development within sustainable locations. To provide for development in accordance with community defined need for growth. The Settlement Assessment Matrix enables a sub-categorisation within the levels of the Settlement Hierarchy. This sub-categorisation has been developed to help resolve some of the conflicts inherent within the demand for development in a protected landscape.

For example communities which are not located in sustainable locations may demonstrate a need for growth, or conversely, settlements which present as sustainable locations have a valid reasoning for limiting future growth.

Policy has been included within the LDP relevant to the settlement sub categories to mitigate for any potential.

Representor: Hyder Consulting (UK) Ltd

Customer Reference: 00840/00001/005

Summary Comment: The assessment of site Land adjacent to Defynnog Road was flawed. Which has been detrimental to the future growth of Sennybridge. Sennybridge has the capacity to accommodate future development to support its status as an important settlement within the National Park and should be supported accordingly with appropriate allocations and designation as a level 3 settlement.

Comment in full:

The comments set out below provide supporting information in seeking revisions to the settlement hierarchy in relation to the currently proposed designation of Sennybridge as a Level 4 Settlement within the Deposit Plan.

This submission adds further support to a separate Alternative Site submission made in relation to the allocation on Land adjoining Defynnog Road, Sennybridge, by the same objector for a mixed use development (incorporating residential/business/retail uses), recognising that the case to be made for the inclusion of this site within the LDP, cannot be fully supported until changes are made to the designation of Sennybridge within the settlement hierarchy to permit such development, which will otherwise limit development, largely to that required to meet local needs. 2. Tests of Soundness In accordance with statutory provisions, it is necessary for objectors to the Deposit Plan to state how the Plan is considered to be unsound and what is required to make the Plan sound. The tests of soundness are divided into 3 groups with a requirement to make clear which test(s) of soundness it is considered the Plan fails, recognising that the guidance requires that 'a strong evidence base and consultation process is fundamental. ' (Local Development Plan Manual. WAG. June 2006) The above table has indicated that the Plan principally fails to accord with the following Tests of Soundness: GE1 - The Plan sets out a coherent strategy from which its policies and allocations logically flow and/or, where cross boundary issues are relevant, it is compatible with the development plans prepared by neighbouring authorities. GE2 - The strategy, policies and allocations are realistic and appropriate having considered the relevant alternatives and/or are founded on a robust and credible evidence base. G2 - It has regard to national policy The principal issue surrounding the Test of Soundness concerns the process by which the designation of Sennybridge as a Level 4 Settlement has been made, which it is maintained, has not been founded on a sufficiently robust and credible evidence base (Test CE2). This in-turn has led to the formulation of an incoherent strategy from which the Plan's policy of land allocations has been based. (Test CE1). This process is thereby out of accord with national policy (Test C2) in relation to the process of plan preparation. Evidence has already been presented separately within the Alternative Site

submission in seeking a mixed-use development on Land adjoining Defynnog Road, Sennybridge, to demonstrate that the decision to omit the site as an allocation within the Deposit Plan has not been based on a sound and credible evidence base. It has further been maintained that this decision has been instrumental in the Council's decision to designate Sennybridge as a Level 4 settlement, based around the availability and suitability of development land.

Officer Suggested Response:

The LDP strategy makes clear that the assessment of settlements outside of the strategic centres is based on the following principles.

To provide for development within the environmental limits of the National Park.

To provide for development within sustainable locations.

To provide for development in accordance with community defined need for growth.

The Settlement Assessment Matrix enables a sub-categorisation within the levels of the Settlement Hierarchy. This sub-categorisation has been developed to help resolve some of the conflicts inherent within the demand for development in a protected landscape. For example communities which are not located in sustainable locations may demonstrate a need for growth, or conversely, settlements which present as sustainable locations have a valid reasoning for limiting future growth. Policy has been included within the LDP relevant to the settlement sub categories to mitigate for any potential negative impact caused by competing interest and needs within a place. In the case of Sennybridge assessment determined that there was: A community defined need for growth. That Sennybridge was a sustainable location. That the settlement does not have the environmental capacity to accommodate future growth. As such in accordance with the Matrix (ref) Sennybridge is defined as a level 4A settlement. Powys CC rightly identify that environmental capacity is the determining factor in the designation of Sennybridge as a level 4 settlement, however we would like to reiterate that the environmental capacity of the town is based on extensive assessment and consultation with key stakeholders and the community. The assessment of Sennybridge is therefore compliant with the objectives of the spatial strategy and the settlement hierarchy. We do acknowledge however that this is contrary to the needs of the community who are supportive of expansion of the settlement to support the status of the Settlement. The NPA will review the status of Sennybridge in light of alternative sites put forward as part of the Deposit consultation. From the Alternative Site consultation it is clear that there is sufficient and available within the settlement hierarchy to support the future development of Sennybridge.

Representations from the Community Council propose considering Sennybridge and Defynnog as a single Hub for future development, as a strategic centre for the west of the Park. Considering the significant role Sennybridge plays in the National Park, it has been determined that Sennybridge should be designated as a level 2 Key Settlement. Supporting land allocations at Defynnog Road, Castle Farm and Glannau Senni to be included to support this position.