

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2011-2026)



**EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC:**  
**Matter 10: Culture & Heritage**



**Action Point 5**

*The Council, in agreement with Jane Hennell and Gareth Hughes, will provide amended wording for Policy BE3 (2) and the reasoned justification of the policy which outlines support for the provision of an integrated canal network in NPT.*

*In the event that all parties are unable to reach agreement on the proposed amendments, a joint submission should be made stating the preferred wording of each party. The action point is to be completed by Monday 11 May 2015.*

***Note for the Inspectors***

Whilst every effort has been made by all parties to reach agreement, given the number of Stakeholders involved, it has nevertheless proved difficult to reach a consensus within the timescale. Accordingly, the response below encompasses a joint submission and presents the preferred wording of the Council and Canal Stakeholders respectively, with the text in *red* highlighting those amendments where all parties are in agreement.

The Council also wishes to draw attention to the fact that the response from the Canal Stakeholders presents amendments to the title and Part 1 of the Policy and in this respect goes beyond the requirement of the Action Point.

**Council's Response**

If deemed acceptable and appropriate by the Inspectors, the Council would propose the following changes to the Plan to be addressed via Matters Arising Changes:

**Policy BE3 The Canal Network - amend Part 2 to read:**

*'Developments affecting locations where lengths of canal have been drained, infilled or cut off from the remainder of the network, but where there is the possibility of future reinstatement, will be expected to take into account the historic line of the canal and to avoid ~~where possible~~ the introduction of buildings or structures that would prevent reinstatement'.*

**Paragraph 5.5.23 - amend to read:**

*'The canal network is an important part of the County Borough's historic heritage and is also significant for recreation, biodiversity and landscape reasons. There are three principal canals within Neath Port Talbot, comprising the Neath, Tennant and Swansea canals. Significant lengths of these canals have now been restored to navigable standards and they form part of a wider network of green corridors which encourage walking and*

cycling attracting visitors to the area. There are however gaps in the network where the line of the canals have been lost or navigation is prevented by obstructions such as low bridges. *Aspirations to restore and reinstate further lengths of canal and to link the three principal canals to create an integrated waterway system are supported in principle by the Council in recognition of the potential benefits this would bring, including the enhancement of recreation and tourism interests*'.

Paragraph 5.5.25 - delete/remove Proposed Focussed Change FC30<sup>1</sup> (i.e. addition of 'where possible' to Paragraph 5.5.25).

### Jane Hennell / Gareth Hughes Response

If deemed acceptable and appropriate by the Inspectors, Jane Hennell / Gareth Hughes would propose the following changes to the Plan to be addressed via Matters Arising Changes:

Policy BE3 The Canal Network - amend to read:

#### *'Policy BE 3 The Canals ~~Canal Network~~*

1. *In order to protect, conserve and promote the regeneration of the canals ~~and conserve the canal network~~, the following lengths of canal will be safeguarded:*

*(a) The Swansea Canal at Trebanos from the County Borough boundary to the southern edge of the Pontardawe playing fields;*

*(b) The Swansea Canal from Pontardawe Town Centre to Godre'r Graig;*

*(c) The Tennant Canal;*

*(d) The Neath Canal from Briton Ferry to Ysgwrfa Bridge, Aberpergwm.*

*Proposals which would prejudice the conservation, restoration or ~~and~~ operation of the ~~these~~ safeguarded lengths of canal will be resisted. Proposals will need to demonstrate that they would not adversely affect the setting of the canals or prevent or discourage the use of the canals for recreation and water supply;*

2. *Developments affecting other locations where lengths of canal have been drained, infilled, culverted or otherwise obstructed ~~or cut off from the remainder of the network~~, but where there is the possibility of future reinstatement, will be required ~~expected~~ to take into account the historic line of the canal and to avoid ~~where possible~~ the introduction of buildings or structures that would prevent reinstatement.*

*The lengths of canal concerned comprise:*

*(a) From the Pontardawe Playing Fields, Trebanos to the northern exit/entrance of the subway under the A474 in Pontardawe;*

*(b) From the northern exit/entrance to the Swansea Canal Nature Reserve, Godre'r Graig to Woodmans Terrace, Ystalyfera;*

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<sup>1</sup> Schedule of Proposed Focussed Changes - Document Ref: SD20.

(c) *The Neath Canal from Ysgwrfa Bridge Aberpergwm to Manor Drive, Glynneath*'.

Paragraph 5.5.23 - amend to read:

*'The canals are ~~canal network~~ is an important part of the County Borough's historic heritage and are is also significant for recreation, biodiversity and landscape reasons. There are three principal canals within Neath Port Talbot, comprising the Neath, Tennant and Swansea canals. Significant lengths of these canals have now been restored to navigable standards and they form ~~part of~~ a wider network of green corridors which encourage walking and cycling attracting visitors to the area. There are however gaps where a length of canal has been in-filled, culverted ~~in the network where the line of the canals have been lost~~, or navigation is prevented by obstructions such as low bridges. Aspirations to restore and reinstate further lengths of canal and to link the three principal canals to create an integrated waterway system are supported in principle by the Council in recognition of the potential benefits this would bring, including the enhancement of recreation and tourism interests*'.

Paragraph 5.5.24 - amend to read:

*'The policy seeks to protect the canals ~~where appropriate, in particular in areas~~ where development could compromise their use, future restoration and conservation as green-corridors ~~and future restoration~~. Remaining extant lengths of canal and lengths where there is a realistic prospect of restoration are safeguarded by the policy thereby ensuring that they are not adversely affected by future development. Such lengths ~~of canal~~ are identified on the Proposals Map*'.

Paragraph 5.5.25 - amend to read:

*'The stretches of canal where restoration currently appears to be less likely, but may be feasible in the future, are also protected by the policy to ensure that new development does not cause any physical impediment. Such stretches of canal are identified on the Proposals Map*'.