

**BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL
DEVELOPMENT PLAN EXAMINATION**

**SESSION 9: AGRICULTURE AND SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE AREAS
DESIGNATIONS**

**THE COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES' RESPONSE TO THE
PRESENTATION OF A PAPER ON SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE AREA
DESIGNATIONS (REF NO:10)**

The Countryside Council for Wales's (CCW) *Landmap Guidance Note 1: LANDMAP and Special Landscape Areas* (June 2008) provides guidance for local planning authorities when designating non-statutory local landscape designations. Section 7 of the guidance note sets out the four stages to be followed when identifying special landscape areas, which are intended to be an iterative process, and ensure the continued validity of the proposed SLA.

Stage 1 (Strategic Criteria) comprises of an assessment of the need for local landscape designations. The *Proposals for Designation of Special Landscape Areas in Blaenau Gwent – Final Report* (March 2009) (hereafter referred to as the 'Bronwen Thomas Report') identifies that the assessment of need for SLAs was informed by Landmap data together with local criteria. Whilst the CCW has no comment on the local criteria identified in the *Bronwen Thomas Report*, we consider that the approach of identifying need, informed both by Landmap and local criteria, is consistent with the advice set out in *LANDMAP and Special Landscape Areas* (June 2008).

Where a SLA boundary meets a local planning authority boundary, a consensus between the two authorities on the designation of the SLA is appropriate. CCW notes the consensus between Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen regarding the conflicting designation status of the areas and how the differences between the two authorities in each of the identified areas are to be addressed when dealing with development proposals, and has no further comment to make.