

GLAMORGAN HERITAGE COAST

County Borough Council

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol



CD-064



PLAN STATEMENT

First Review

GLAMORGAN HERITAGE COAST

PLAN STATEMENT : FIRST REVIEW 1984

The first review of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast Plan Statement was carried out by the Heritage Coast Officer assisted by officers of the four constituent local authorities

County of South Glamorgan

Vale of Glamorgan Borough Council

Mid Glamorgan County Council

Ogwr Borough Council, and

the Countryside Commission.

December 1984

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Glamorgan Heritage Coast Plan Statement was approved and published in 1976. Since then, much progress has been made both in promoting the concept of coastal conservation and in many notable physical achievements on the ground. In addition, the County Structure Plans have been produced for Mid and South Glamorgan. These incorporate the principles of the Plan Statement in the form of statutorily approved Structure Plan policies (see appendix 1).

1.2 The survey information, which was collected as the basis for the Plan Statement, for the most part remains valid. Clearly circumstances have evolved since the original document, but the objectives and the policy basis remain as the cornerstone for all future work on the Glamorgan Heritage Coast. This First Review document represents the application of one of the original objectives, i.e.

"To monitor and review the progress of the project and the continuing exercises, in order to provide a basic future programme for the implementation of effective management proposals".

Section 5 to 8 of the Plan Statement require updating, but it is not proposed to rewrite the whole document, notwithstanding the need for some minor amendments. Accordingly this First Review should be read in conjunction with the original Plan Statement.

1.3 Two important aspects of the Project need special attention. Firstly, the Project has moved out of the experimental period. It now has an established role with three full time officers backed by a large team appointed under the Manpower Services Commission Scheme. The Project has a perceivable identity and many first class achievements to its credit, including a Civic Trust Commendation and a Prince of Wales Award.

1.4 Secondly, the strategy of channelling visitors to specific recreation sites and thereby reducing access to and within the remote zones, has been successfully applied. The most notable opportunities for environmental improvement have been realised. There will always be a need for other improvements, and for continuing care and maintenance, and for the Heritage Coast Officer and the Project team to be on hand to resolve conflicts and to respond quickly for emergencies and small scale works. However, the Project now has a growing emphasis towards people-based activities rather than land based projects. The new Heritage Centre has been opened at Dunraven, interpretative guides have been produced for many topics, illustrated talks and guided walks demand an increasing share of project time and effort. This change of emphasis is the correct approach: it must be recognised and formalised. Public awareness, education and interpretation merit more positive promotion through this review, and will be reflected in the revised priorities.

2. MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

- 2.1 Undoubtedly the principal achievement of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast Project over the last seven years has been to demonstrate the validity of an area management approach to countryside and coastal planning. The Project began as a two year experiment conceived by the Countryside Commission. It now has an established role in this part of South Wales, with a unique identity synonymous with positive conservation. This is due in no small part to the dedication and enthusiasm of the Heritage Coast Officer and his team headed by the two full time wardens.
- 2.2 The achievements so far would not have been possible without the support of the Countryside Commission, the local authorities and the co-operation of the local communities. Resources in the form of finance, materials, equipment and labour have been willingly donated by companies, organisations and individuals. Many of those with doubts about the very concept of the Project in its early life have now been won over. A spin-off of this growing support has been the increasing public awareness of the Project and its aims. The opening of the Heritage Centre provides an opportunity to maintain the momentum of the Project.
- 2.3 Much of the practical programme outlined in the Plan Statement has been achieved. Where appropriate, those proposals not yet implemented will be carried forward into the future work programme (See Section 5). The most notable site improvements are:
- (i) the acquisition of the lease for, and the conversion of the former Seamount Cafe building at Dunraven to a Heritage Centre. This provides a coastal base for the Project and accommodation for exhibitions, meetings and overnight stays. The establishment of the Centre provides the Project with an identifiable physical focal point, and exemplifies the changing emphasis of the Project described in Section 1.3. The facility has been possible through the generosity of the Dunraven Estate, the hard work of the Project team and the willing help of many volunteers;
 - (ii) the development of Dunraven Park as a major visitor centre by Dunraven Estate, with a heavy commitment of resources by the Heritage Coast Project. Car parking has been rationalised; new footpaths and walls provided; weirs have been created in the stream as a physical barrier and a visual improvement; the castle garden has been cleared and renovated (to provide the setting for an open air concert on one occasion); many dead trees have been removed and new planting has taken place. Where possible local materials and designs have been used, including the form of the estate wall and incorporation of the Dunraven coat of arms;
 - (iii) some 36 acres centred on Llantwit Major Cwm has been acquired by South Glamorgan County Council. Unsightly buildings have been removed, a new safe amenity area has been created with a new public shelter. The meadow car park has been re-seeded and provided with new access ways. The sea front area has been resurfaced and a natural storm beach recreated. A mound has been created to screen the unsightly caravans and many trees have been planted. These improvements have been carried out partly by contractors and partly by the Project team. Agreement has been reached between the County Council and The Glamorgan Naturalists Trust for the Cwm side and cliff top meadow to be managed as a nature reserve by the Trust. Many small scale environmental improvements have been carried out at other locations in and around the Cwm;

- (iv) at Nash Point safety markers have been provided for the cliff top car park, and access for vehicles into the Cwm has been restricted by a new barrier and grassed mound. In the nearby Cwm Marcross an attractive nature trail has been established, linked to Marcross Village by a negotiated permissive footpath;
- (v) an access agreement has been negotiated for Summerhouse Point, a pre-Roman promontory fort which is also a haven for flora and fauna. A small car park has been provided, with an information board. The former Summerhouse has been made safe and renovated and part of the camp has been cleared of vegetation to reveal its ground form;
- (vi) following an agreement with Atlantic College, the coastal footpath has been extended around the College, and a picnic site has been created on the cliff top at a site offering magnificent coastal views;
- (vii) most of the footpath proposals in the Plan Statement have been carried out, including the establishment of a virtually continuous coastal footpath, and the Project now has a heavy maintenance commitment. Many improvements by re-routing, new steps, stiles and gates have been carried out;
- (viii) an attractive series of pocket size leaflets have been produced by the Project. These provide information on specific sites and features of interest on the coast. A booklet on the geology of the coast has been produced in association with University College Cardiff. Numerous information boards and way marking signs have been erected. More brochures and information boards are currently in preparation;
- (ix) numerous important achievements by the Project cannot be seen on the ground. Examples are the help given to the emergency services; practical aid to local farmers; talks to organisations and educational visits to schools. One very significant achievement, though really a spin-off from the Project, has been the rewarding work experience given to unemployed young people. Through the sponsorship of the Manpower Services Commission, many young people have thrived on a year's work undertaking Project tasks;
- (x) a significant facet of these achievements has been that they have been accomplished with limited financial resources and represents a highly creditable record.

3. OBJECTIVES

The six objectives of the Project are:

- (1) to conserve the natural, undeveloped character of the coastal scenery and to improve it where necessary;
- (2) to encourage a general appreciation of the high quality of the coastline and to highlight the need for community concern in its protection;
- (3) to protect for posterity the most valuable parts of the coastal area in terms of agriculture, archaeology, ecology and geology;

- (4) to make the best use of the coastal resources in order to manage efficiently the area in the interests of all users, including farmers, residents, conservationists and visitors;
- (5) to promote the enjoyment of the natural qualities of the coast by the encouragement or provision of appropriate recreational facilities which are consistent with the conservation of nationally important scenery;
- (6) to monitor and review the progress of the project and the continuing exercises, in order to provide a basic future programme for the implementation of effective management proposals.

The change of emphasis discussed in 1.3 is embodied in objective (2), but this does not imply that other objectives are any less important.

4. POLICIES

4.1 Area

The policies of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast will apply to the area defined on Map 1. Some policies are written in the context of a wider area.

4.2 Strategy

- 4.2.1 In "remote zones", which cover most of the coastal area, priority will be given to agriculture and ecological conservation. Vehicular access will not be encouraged and pedestrians will be limited to rights of way.
- 4.2.2 Recreation sites, as defined on Map 1, will provide the focus for informal recreation and interpretation. Ancillary facilities and car parking on an appropriate scale will be encouraged.

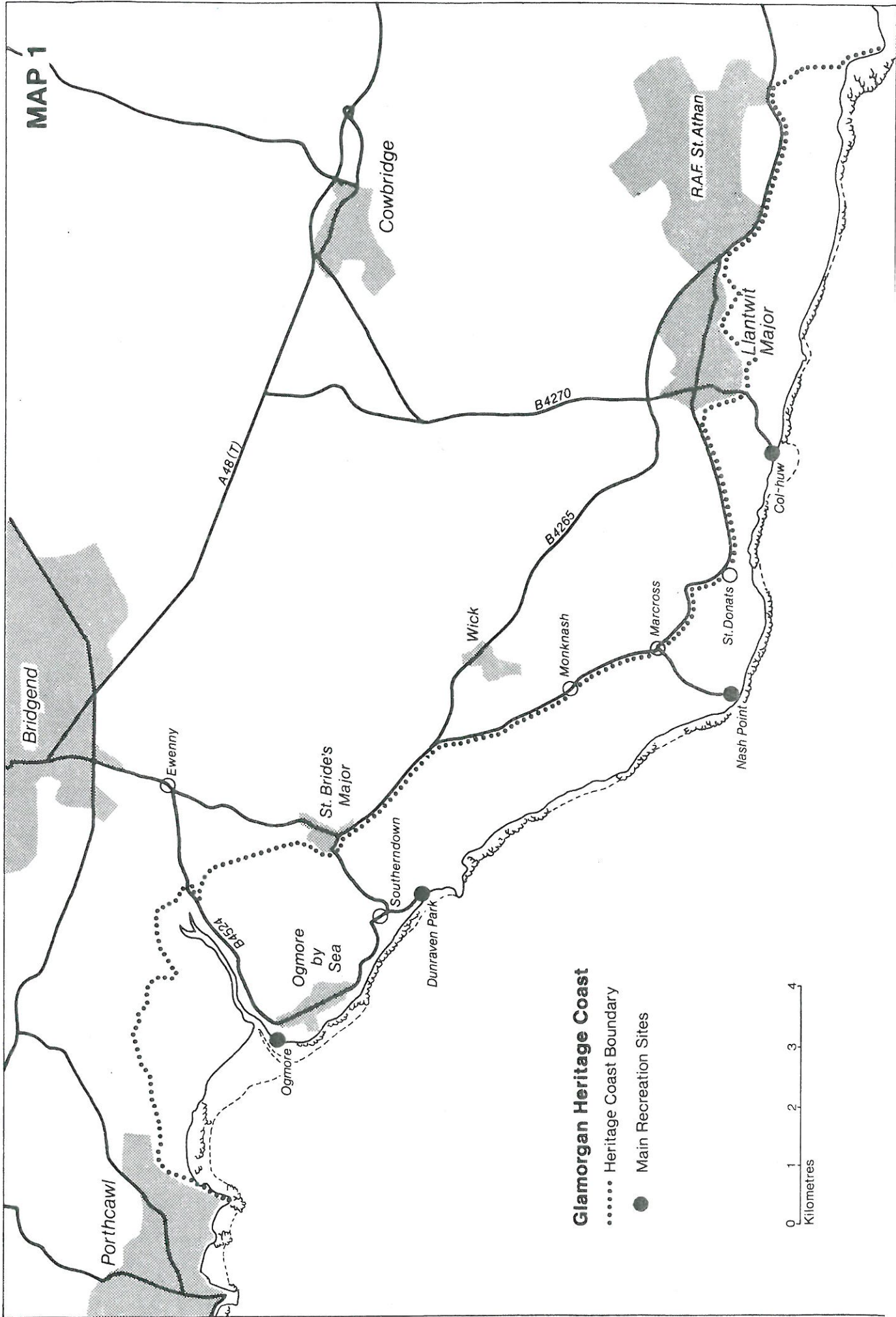
4.3 Agriculture

- 4.3.1 Farming is the major activity on the high quality land within the Heritage Coast area. Agricultural land must, therefore be protected from any influences which inhibit good farm management. The project team will continue close liaison with the landowners, particularly to ensure that boundaries are respected, footpaths are clearly way-marked, and that public awareness of farming practices is encouraged.
- 4.3.2 Good farm management can be synonymous with ecological care, so encouragement will continue to be given to the retention of woodland and hedgerows, the planting of shelter belts and copses within non productive areas. It is hoped that the benefits of tree and hedgerow planting can be demonstrated on a selected farm within the area. Maximum advantage will be taken of grant aid opportunities.

4.4. Footpaths

- 4.4.1 The hierarchical strategy for the footpath system within the coastal area will be continued, priority being given to those footpaths giving access to the recreational sites.

MAP 1



4.4.2 Careful monitoring of the use and condition of the footpaths will continue, with priority being given to gate, stile and boundary maintenance. Waymarking will be used and improved to provide clear route definition. Safety will continue to be accorded the highest priority.

4.5 Scientific Interest

4.5.1 Sites of ecological and geological importance will continue to be protected. In particular a scheme of management for Merthyr Mawr Warren is being investigated in conjunction with the landowner and the Nature Conservancy Council. A similar scheme for Cwm Mawr will also be considered.

4.5.2 Interpretive literature will continue to exclude rare species and important sites. Visitors will be encouraged to leave specimens for others to enjoy, rather than to collect them. Anglers will be encouraged to return immature fish to the sea.

4.6 Landscape

4.6.1 In this area which has a notable lack of tree cover, efforts will continue to be made:

- (1) to protect the best of the remaining tree cover, preferably through the constructive approach of management agreements;
- (2) to encourage new planting, particularly on unproductive land and with emphasis on hard woods;
- (3) to establish a practical demonstration of the benefits of new planting at a farm within the area.

4.6.2 It is intended that eyesores within the area should be removed or screened, and that new prominent man-made features should be of sympathetic siting, design and materials.

Encouragement will be given to proposals to remove unsightly overhead wires from obtrusive locations, and new incongruous elements will be discouraged. Where possible, unsympathetic street furniture will be made less obtrusive.

4.7 Development

4.7.1 The undeveloped, unspoilt nature of the coastline is fundamental to the existence of the Heritage Coast. Proposals for new development in the Heritage Coast will be controlled in accordance with the appropriate policies contained in the Structure Plans for Mid Glamorgan and South Glamorgan.

4.7.2 Encouragement will be given to the use of natural materials and "countryside colours" in repair and renovation of existing buildings. Advice and practical help is available from the local authorities and when appropriate, from the Project Officer.

4.8 Recreation

- 4.8.1 During the formative years of the project, both resident and visitor reaction has overwhelmingly endorsed the policy of providing only for informal recreation. Thus, with the addition of simple and appropriate facilities like picnic areas (as at Llantwit Major Cwm) the principle will continue.
- 4.8.2 The coastal footpath is virtually complete along the length of the Heritage Coast, and will be the only access to all parts of the coastline. Visitors will not be encouraged into the remote zones.
- 4.8.3 Those remaining static caravan sites within the area demonstrate the visually intrusive nature of such uses. It will, therefore, be a continuing aim to remove such sites where possible. Where this is not possible, expansion of sites will be resisted, and landscaping will be encouraged to reduce the visual impact of caravans at the coast. A small touring caravan site has now been established at Rosedew Farm, Llantwit Major, in association with a holiday caravan and tent site. This provides for the need described in the Plan Statement. Further touring caravan sites will be resisted, as will any expansion of this site. There has been no great demand for caravan rallies in the area, and no specific provision is intended. Caravan rallies held outside the Heritage Coast boundary, but in close proximity to it, will be monitored.
- 4.8.4 Winter storage of caravans within the Heritage Coast area is considered inappropriate because this would conflict with one of the basic objectives of the Heritage Coast which is to conserve the natural undeveloped nature of the coastal scenery. Mobile sales vans are only appropriate at recognised recreation sites where no alternative facilities exist.

4.9 Pollution

- 4.9.1 Pollution of watercourses and coastal waters remains a serious problem, and one which is the responsibility of the Welsh Water Authority. Every encouragement will continue to be given by the Project and the authorities, though it is recognised that lack of finance will continue to inhibit progress. It is hoped that proposals to improve the sewerage system will not conflict with coastal conservation principles, and that satisfactory solutions can be reached.
- 4.9.2 Litter continues to be a problem, though some significant progress has been made. The "please take your litter home" experiment at St. Donats has proved most successful and may be extended to other appropriate locations. Much effort is made by more frequent local authority collections and by volunteers undertaking "litter picks" at major recreational sites. The source of the problem remains one of public ignorance, and continuing support will, therefore, be given to the "Keep Wales Tidy" campaign especially through the medium of talks and leaflets.

4.10 Interpretation

- 4.10.1 Great progress has been made in producing leaflets; in giving talks and conducting guided walks; in erecting sign boards and waymarking; and in opening the Heritage Centre at Dunraven. All these methods of interpretation have been received with great enthusiasm, particularly by

young people. The Centre at Dunraven is particularly important in providing a focus for a variety of activities and a first class base for the Project on the coast.

- 4.10.2 It is hoped that support from the Manpower Services Commission will continue, to enable an increasing momentum to be given to all the following aspects of interpretation:
- (i) written material, in the form of leaflets, books and other literature relating to particular topics or sites on the coast. Interpretive boards, particularly at recreation sites will be increased in number, and waymarking will continue to provide for more casual visits;
 - (ii) talks to interested groups and an enhanced programme of guided walks during the Summer. The wardens will have a growing role in providing help of all kinds to visitors, where this is consistent with their duties;
 - (iii) personal experience : the Heritage Centre at Dunraven and the Summer camps for young volunteers provide great opportunities for people to understand the countryside and coast at first hand. A variety of educational projects will be encouraged with publicity and occasional competitions for particular events.

- 4.10.3 A consistent approach to interpretive planning will be maintained throughout the Heritage Coast area, using the logo and the distinctive Heritage Coast design style which has provided the project with a particular identity. Investigation of alternative interpretation methods will continue.

4.11 Policy Changes

- 4.11.1 It is no longer considered appropriate to establish a consultative forum as was proposed in the Plan Statement. Rather, consultations will continue to be made on specific issues with the relevant bodies. Sufficiently detailed policy guidance is given in this review document for most purposes.
- 4.11.2 Similarly, it is not intended to produce a design guide for coastal development. Experience has shown that circumstances vary so significantly between individual proposals that a general guide would serve no useful purpose. Existing development control procedure is perfectly adequate.

5. PROPOSALS AND INTENTIONS

- 5.1 As a result of the improvements carried out to date along the coast, the Project has a continuing and growing maintenance commitment. In addition, the Project team must continue to be responsive to needs for urgent practical help due to storm damage, vandalism or emergencies.
- 5.2 The emphasis of practical works will continue to be at specific sites, in particular the main recreation centres. These specific proposals include:
- (i) Ogmores-by-Sea car park : a management and landscape improvement scheme;
 - (ii) Llantwit Major Cwm : further enhancement works are necessary including tree planting and re-seeding. Better access to toilets or new, more accessible toilets, are needed. Realignment of the

footpath up the west side of the Cwm are intended. An interpretation board is to be erected and a series of leaflets is to be produced. Better management of the car park is needed.

- (iii) Renegotiation of the lease for rest area at St. Donats.
- (iv) Merthyr Mawr Warren (and Cwm Mawr) : a comprehensive management scheme is urgently required and designation as a Local or National Nature Reserve should be investigated by the interested bodies.
- (v) Further improvements at Dunraven Park are intended including better access, additional planting and provision of more information.
- (vi) The development of the Heritage Centre as the main focus of the coast, to be used as a visitor centre, for educational work and as the Project base.
- (vii) The establishing of a bridleway circuit on Ogmores Common.
- (viii) To secure improvements at Gileston beach and westward to Summerhouse Point.

5.3 A number of specific footpath proposals need completing. These include:

- (i) negotiations to be concluded for footpaths between Cwm Bach and Seamount; between Ogmores Common and Ogmores Castle, Ogmores bridleway system; Boverton to Beach Road, Llantwit Major; Ogmores Castle to Treaeth yr Afon in accord with management proposals agreed for the Warren;
- (ii) completion of Merthyr Mawr to Ogmores Castle route; realignment at Llantwit Major Cwm.

5.4 A number of proposals are more general in nature and apply throughout the Heritage Coast area:

- (i) The encouragement of additional planting and woodland management on private land, using all grant aid opportunities.
- (ii) The provision of seats at appropriate locations along the coastal footpath, e.g. Tresilian.
- (iii) Additional safety measures on coastal footpath and visitor sites, including fencing/hedging/warning signs, in association with the local authorities and landowners.
- (iv) A comprehensive strategy for picnic sites and small parking areas at appropriate locations.
- (v) Detailed consideration of the needs of the disabled, particularly easy parking, safe access to the coast and toilet facilities.

EXTRACT FROM COUNTY OF SOUTH GLAMORGAN STRUCTURE PLAN
(OPERATIVE FROM 29TH FEBRUARY, 1980)

POLICY NO. 56 IT IS THE POLICY OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL THAT THERE SHALL BE A PRESUMPTION AGAINST NEW DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE EXISTING SETTLEMENTS IN THAT PART OF THE GLAMORGAN HERITAGE COAST WITHIN SOUTH GLAMORGAN.

POLICY NO. 57 IT IS THE POLICY OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL THAT MANAGEMENT SCHEMES BE IMPLEMENTED TO CONSERVE AND ENHANCE THE SPECIAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITIES OF THE GLAMORGAN HERITAGE COAST, CONCENTRATING RECREATION PROVISION AT NASH POINT AND COLHUGH BEACH, LLANTWIT MAJOR.

SUPPORTING POLICY J WITH THE EXCEPTION OF COLHUGH BEACH AND NASH POINT, THE AREA SHOULD BE TREATED AS A REMOTE ZONE WHERE PRIORITY IS GIVEN TO AGRICULTURE AND NATURE CONSERVATION, VEHICULAR ACCESS RESTRAINED AND PEDESTRIANS LIMITED TO RIGHTS OF WAY ONLY. THE EXISTING FACILITIES AT COLHUGH BEACH AND NASH POINT SHOULD BE IMPROVED BUT NOT ENLARGED. OTHER PLANNING MEASURES SHOULD INCLUDE LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT AND "FACE LIFT" OPERATIONS.

EXTRACT FROM MID GLAMORGAN COUNTY STRUCTURE PLAN
(OPERATIVE FROM 22ND APRIL, 1982)

POLICY LC1 THERE WILL BE PRESUMPTION AGAINST DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AREAS DEFINED AS HERITAGE COAST AND THE KENFIG POOL AND DUNES LOCAL NATURE RESERVE. IT IS THE COUNCIL'S POLICY TO ENHANCE THESE AREAS IN THE INTEREST OF LANDSCAPE AND NATURE CONSERVATION AND FOR PUBLIC ENJOYMENT.

POLICY LC2 THERE WILL BE A PRESUMPTION AGAINST SAND EXTRACTION ALONG THE ENTIRE FORESHORE AND THE DUNE SYSTEMS OF THE MID GLAMORGAN COASTLINE.

POLICY LC3 THERE WILL BE A PRESUMPTION AGAINST RECREATIONAL USE OF THE FORESHORE AND DUNE SYSTEMS IN MID GLAMORGAN UNLESS SUCH USE IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE PRIMARY CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE FOR THESE AREAS.

