

## An Exploration into the Potential for Strategies of 'Temporary Urbanism' to Re-activate Shrinking Territories in the Rhondda Valley, South Wales

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## Shrinking, poverty and deprivation

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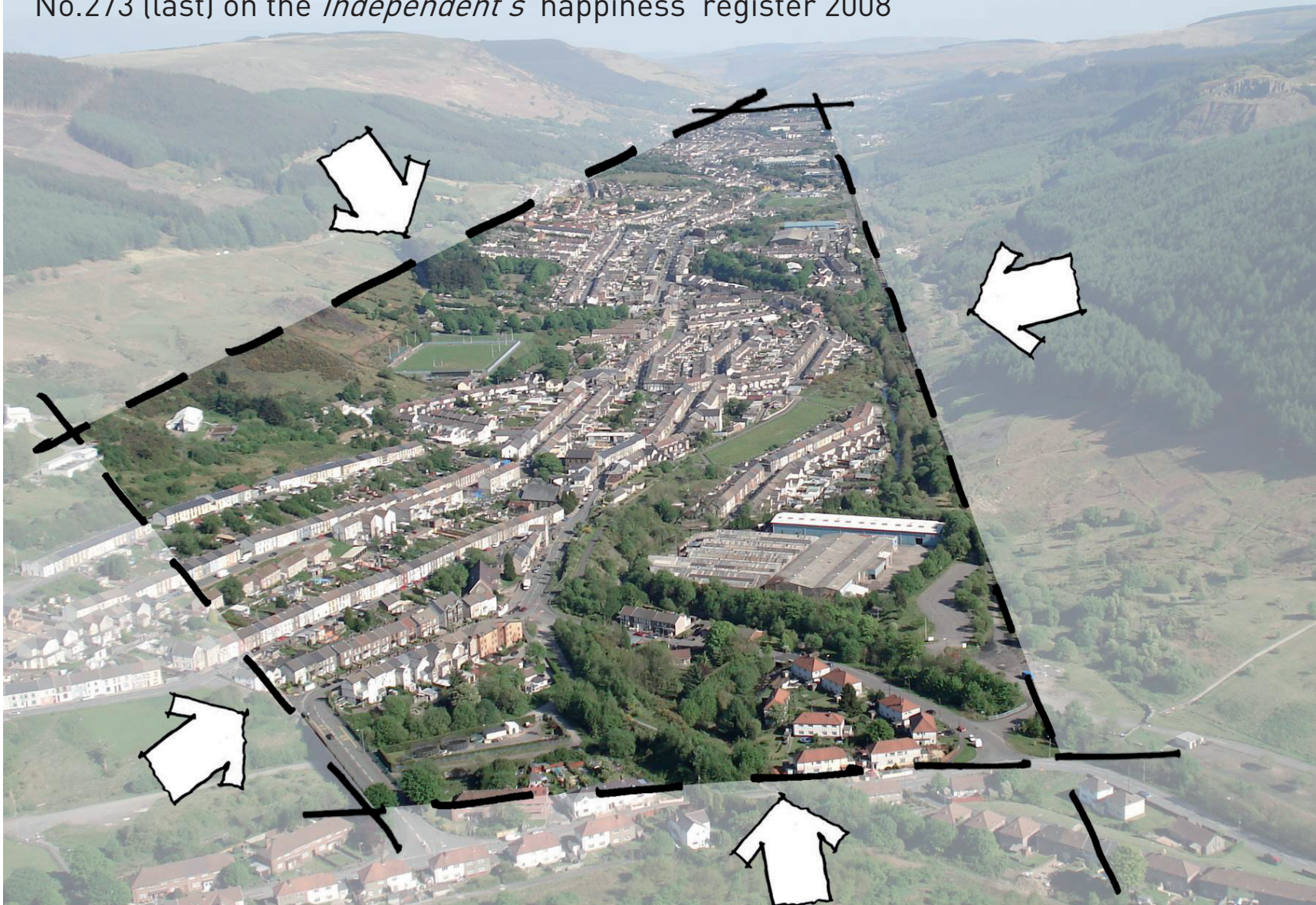


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## Executive Summary

Following the mid-19th Century emergence of mass coal mining in the Rhondda Valley, the once pastoral farm land had by 1924 increased its population by an astonishing 5500%. From this peak, the Second World War initiated a rapid process of ‘shrinking’ impacting both its economy and urban density, as well as reducing its population by an alarming 52%.

Now in the 21st century, the post-industrial Rhondda is a visibly troubled landscape of shrinking territories. In order to address this complex condition, the research explores the concept of temporary urbanism and its potential to re-activate space.

Temporary urbanism is an alternative and dynamic concept in urban design used to describe a broad range of theories, agendas, everyday urban situations and architectural or artistic projects, all of which are characterised by a definitively short or ambiguous life-span. Temporary urbanism can be expedient and low-cost, employed to unite communities, support entrepreneurship, enliven public space or even occupy frozen construction sites.

When a strategy of temporary urbanism is explored on case study sites in the Rhondda, the inquiry reveals key tactics specific to the Valley such as; attracting tourism, reinforcing heritage, engaging the industry, encouraging inter-generational exchange, stewardship and collaborative partnerships. However, the research also reveals issues and dilemmas associated with temporary urbanism, predominantly the question of legality, deregulation, the role of the ‘designer’, limitations of conventional site analysis, key agents and relationships, as well as the politics of post-industrial landscapes.

The research concludes that the territorial synchronisation of small-scale temporary use projects within the Valley’s existing infrastructure and events networks, could serve as viable catalysts for re-activating residual space and a tool of empowerment for local communities.



Fig. 2: Parasite Objects Exploration



## Glossary of Terms

(As understood within the proceeding research)

### Shrinking Territories

Reduction of territories (including both urban and semi-rural areas) characterised by economic, demographic and spatial contraction.

### Residual Space

Space left over/resulting from shrinking territories such as: vacant land, derelict buildings, forgotten edges, non-spaces, voids between infrastructures etc.

### Temporary Urbanism

Alternative approach to urban development; generally short-term, expedient, flexible low cost and multi-disciplinary with potential to re-activate residual space and address shrinking territories.

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“The true essence of the world is in ‘events’ not ‘things’”

- Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus

## Introduction

The basis of this research is to highlight the effect of a ‘shrinking urbanism’ in the Rhondda Valley, South Wales. Shrinking urbanism is a multi-dimensional phenomenon describing territories that are experiencing a dramatic decline in their urban, economic and social bases. The Rhondda is an essential case due to the nature at which it expanded through industrialisation, as well as the speed it has been contracting since the closure of the coal mines.

To address the process of ‘shrinking’, the research investigates the concept of temporary urbanism and its strategic potential to re-activate. During a period of global economic downturn and amplified de-industrialisation, I believe the value of this study is in exploring the potential for temporary urbanism to reinforce links between neighbouring towns and bring new vitality and development interest to the Valley.

There is significant precedent for this project in cities such as Berlin, Germany that have been successful in employing temporary urbanism as a means of reinvigorating its numerous residual spaces resulting from its complex history. There is also a wide-range of theoretical literature connected to the subject but very little that captures the common factors and characteristics of temporary urban environments.

Temporary interventions are multi-functional and multi-disciplined by nature; they can question conventions, generate variability, give rise to cultural events and represent social attractors. Temporary projects can be faster, more economical, inclusive, flexible, realised through unobtrusive and open-ended means. In order to interrogate the potential for temporary urbanism in the Rhondda, the research defines the following primary objectives:

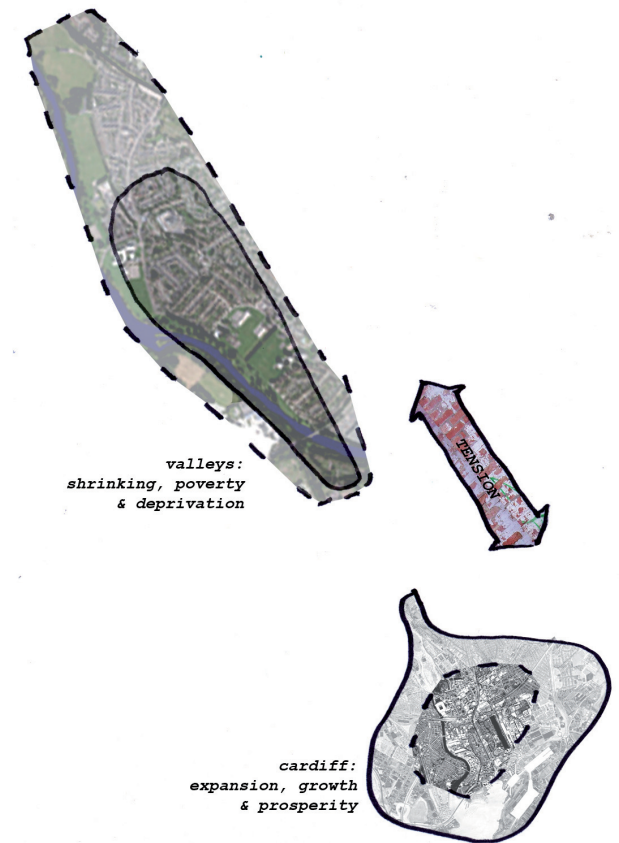


Fig. 3: Polarised Map of South Wales





Fig. 4: Rhondda Forgotten Space

- Firstly, to analyse the impact of urban shrinking in the Rhondda Valley.
- To dissect past and present literature on the subject and critically appraise the emergence, divergent theories and movements of temporary urbanism relevant to the Rhondda Valley condition.
- To review a cross-section of projects related to temporary urbanism as a means of establishing common transcending characteristics such as scale, duration, funding and strategy etc, applicable to the context.
- To test temporary urbanism strategies established from the analysis against existing residual spaces in the Rhondda Valley in order to abstract site specific tactics that may inform future developments or benefit other designers.

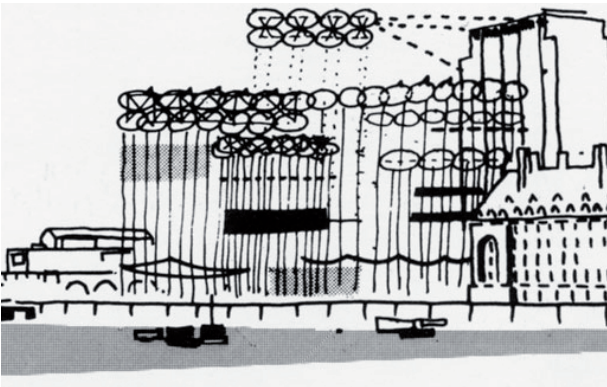


Fig. 5: Cedric Price, Drawing for South Bank Centre, London

The research is structured into five interrelated parts, beginning with a discussion on the phenomenon of a shrinking urbanism and its impact on post-industrial landscapes. The Rhondda Valley is highlighted as a prime example of a 'shrinking' region with numerous complex residual spaces.

Part two presents the concept of temporary urbanism as a more flexible and expedient means for re-inventing residual spaces. As part of this process, the writing investigates the complex definition of temporary in the built environment coupled with an exploration of 20th century movements and divergent groups related to the subject. This is followed by a review of contemporary literature and projects related to temporary urbanism, in addition to a comparison study with the Ruhr Valley in Germany.

In the third part, a selection of the Rhondda's residual spaces are analysed and compared in a matrix to determine a shortlist of sites for reactivation. The matrix, along with the conclusions of the previous chapter, inform a strategy of temporary urbanism composed of multiple strands that reflect urban issues apparent in the Valley. It questions how can the Rhondda reverse a process of shrinking and embrace non-traditional tools of development?



In order to reveal the opportunities and constraints of temporary Urbanism, the strategy is modified into site specific tactics through three case study sites. The first two case studies consider in outline the role of context, legal ownership, resources, access, topography, funding, partnerships, planning restrictions and local authority initiatives. The third and final case study goes further to question the dilemma between the 'formal' and 'informal' in temporary urbanism, as well as the practical relationship of the site to its local and regional context.

The research concludes by summarising both the common and case specific tactics for temporary urbanism applicable to the Rhondda, as well as reflecting on the issues, observations and limitations.



Fig. 6: Temporary Urbanism - Berlin Urban Beach

## Methodology

The primary aim of the research is to explore and evaluate the potential of temporary urbanism as a means of reviving residual space resulting from shrinking territories in the Rhondda Valley. The method of inquiry relevant to this paradigm, and to be employed towards verifying this assumption is based on a three stage process of; observation, literature/project analysis, and strategic explorations.

### [i] Observation

As part of the observation, the inquiry will analyse and record shrinking territories in the Rhondda Valley and their residual spaces. Observation will encompass first hand experience, virtual mapping, OS data, planning context and legal ownership. Collectively, the results of the observation will be strategically analysed in a matrix. The parameters of the survey are set by the mapped extents of shrinking territories in the Rhondda Valley, physical access to sites and the extent to which third party information can be obtained.

### [ii] Temporary Urbanism Analysis

In the subject literature, the method will distinguish among competing interpretations of temporary urbanism and its validity, as well as critically evaluate research conducted from alternative time periods, geographical context and perspectives. For realised temporary urbanism projects, the objective are too summarise core strategies to inform a strategy for the Rhondda. The literature and projects chosen intend to form an overview of temporary urbanism relevant to the paradigm.

### [iii] Strategic Explorations

This research proposes temporary urbanism as viable strategy towards intervening in shrinking territories, due its capacity to rapidly engage with space and initiate change. It is expected that temporary urbanism can tackle the Rhondda Valley incrementally; dealing with parts and fragments through medium to small-scale interventions. The aims of the strategy are to change perceptions, re-brand and reactivate, whilst also to channel memory through creative reuse of the existing. The exploration will question how could a strategy of temporary urbanism offer new ideas for residual space with potential to resonate throughout the Valley's shrinking territories? Can a strategy change social aspects of space, question land uses or reinforce culture? Also, what do precedent projects reveal of the wider impact of temporary urbanism? What are the issues, limitations, legality and dilemmas of implementing a temporary urbanism?

The viability of the strategy will firstly be explored over the shortlist of suitable residual spaces identified in the Rhondda analysis and then further interrogated through the case studies. It is expected that the strategy will be verified, refined or adapted into site specific tactics.

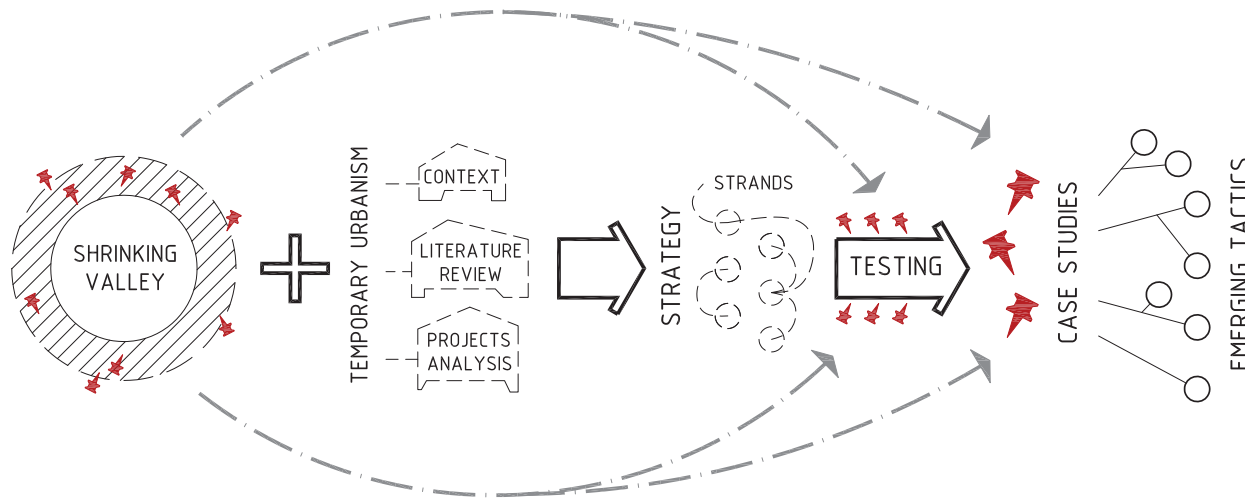


Fig. 7: Methodology Diagram



# 1

## SHRINKING VALLEY: RESIDUAL SPACE IN THE RHONDDA

- 1.1 \_ Urban Shrinking
- 1.2 \_ Defining Residual Space
- 1.3 \_ Reading the Valley



# 1 . 1 URBAN SHRINKING

## 1.11 \_ Introduction

The research will begin by presenting the phenomenon of ‘Urban Shrinkage’ and its prevalence in the Rhondda Valley. It will also discuss current research on the subject and overview the key historical narrative of South Wales that has led to its ongoing urban issues of ‘shrinking’.

## 1.12 \_ Shrinking Territories

Urban shrinking in its most literal sense is the reduction of an urban area characterised by economic, demographic and spatial contraction<sup>1</sup>. It is a phenomenon that has no concrete definition, but has become a ubiquitous umbrella term to describe numerous issues connected by; globalization, de-population, economic transformation and structural crisis, in the fields of urban planning and development<sup>2</sup>. Certain research (Rugare, 2008) maintains that the reality of a shrinking urbanism has come to represent a ‘new volatility’<sup>3</sup> that is fundamentally questioning the traditional tools of urbanism.

In response, there is currently a broad-spectrum of research being undertaken in Europe and America on the effects and causes of shrinking cities and regions, such as the multi-disciplinary ‘Shrinking Cities’ network (SCiRN<sup>TM</sup>). Equally, there are several emergent movements and projects that are proposing permanent and temporary solutions to combat

1 Urban Matrix [<http://www.urban-matrix.net>]

2 Oswalt, Philipp. (2008) ‘Hypotheses on Urban Shrinking in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’. Shrinking Cities Prognosis [<http://www.shrinkingcities.com/prognose>]

3 Rugare, Steve. (2008) Cities Growing Smaller, Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative: Kent State University



Fig. 1: Shrinking Cities - Vacant lots in Detroit



Fig. 2: Shrinking Territories - Vacant land in ‘Blaenrhondda’, Rhondda Valley

the effects of the phenomenon in the built environment.

Urban shrinking is not restricted to large cities and its affect can be seen on South East Wales; especially its post-industrial valley regions. The wider impact means a polarised map where Cardiff enjoys unprecedented boom and regeneration while the valleys failed to absorb vast open centrally located areas now left discarded.

Since the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Rhondda Valley in particular has been a victim of urban shrinking in its population, economy and urban density. Towns have literally disappeared<sup>4</sup> (fig.2) over the past sixty years and there is an excess of residual space perforating the urban landscape. These gaps are breaking down the coherence of the greater Cardiff networks which are considered absolutely essential in the regions future development.

The Rhondda, once a pastoral farming land of 3000 people, was mined intensely during the industrial revolution until its production soared and valleys population experienced a 5500% (167,900<sup>5</sup>) increase between 1860 and 1924. At this time, the Valleys economic activity, population and urban density reached its absolute zenith<sup>6</sup> (fig.5).

Following the First World War, the valleys experienced a rapid decline in population through out-migration, social problems, economic depression and mass unemployment (fig.3). The fallout of such an intensive shift in occupation for the valleys meant its towns were contracting at an alarming rate. By 1981, the Rhondda's population had reduced by 52% (81,089<sup>7</sup>), almost half of its peak.

With the exit of the mining industry, the Rhondda welcomed several commercial developments that were slowly re-structuring the economy until the credit crunch struck in

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4 Correspondence with Ray Smith, former Fernhill Colliery employee (12.12.2010).  
See annex 8.2.

5 Note authors approximate percentage calculation from the book: May, John. (2003) 'Rhondda: 1203-2003: The Story of Two Valleys', Castle Publications: Cardiff

6 May, John. (2003) 'Rhondda: 1203-2003: The Story of Two Valleys', Castle Publications: Cardiff, p.41

7 Ibid., p.57



September 2008. As a result of the global economic crisis, the region has been pushed into further crisis<sup>8</sup> and accelerated shrinking. The Rhondda, like most urban areas of South Wales are particularly dependant on the manufacturing industry in meeting job needs<sup>9</sup> and with the recent loss of several large scale factories (fig.4)<sup>10</sup> and subsequent extensive abandoned space on the valley floor, the narrative of shrinking will inevitably continue<sup>11</sup>.

### 1.13 \_ Conclusion

The Rhondda has experienced prolonged shrinking over the past century that has impacted on its society, economy and culture whilst leaving a ‘rust-belt’ of derelict industry and vacant land. The shrinking of the Rhondda’s urban landscape demands new strategies and methods, and not least the development of a new narrative of urbanity that does not depend on growth.



Fig. 3: Cambrian Colliery Strikers marching to Pontypridd, 1911



Fig. 4: Rhondda Burberry Factory closure, 1997

- 8 'In and around the Rhondda hundreds of jobs have been lost at big name companies such as Burberry, Bosch, L'Oreal, Staedtler and the Serious Food Company' from; Williams, Kate Scott. (22.04.2010) 'Election 2010: Reviving Rhondda's Economic Fortunes', BBC News. [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk\_politics/election\_2010/constituencies/8633006.stm]
- 9 Alden J. D. (1977) 'Economic problems facing urban areas in South Wales', Reg. Studies 11, pp.285-296.
- 10 Daily Mail (20.01.2009) 'Burberry cuts 300 jobs and closes factory as credit crunch hits luxury brands'
- 11 'Insider Media' news article on future of employment in South Wales [http://www.insidermedia.com/insider/wales/5350-evolve-or-get-left-behind/index.html]

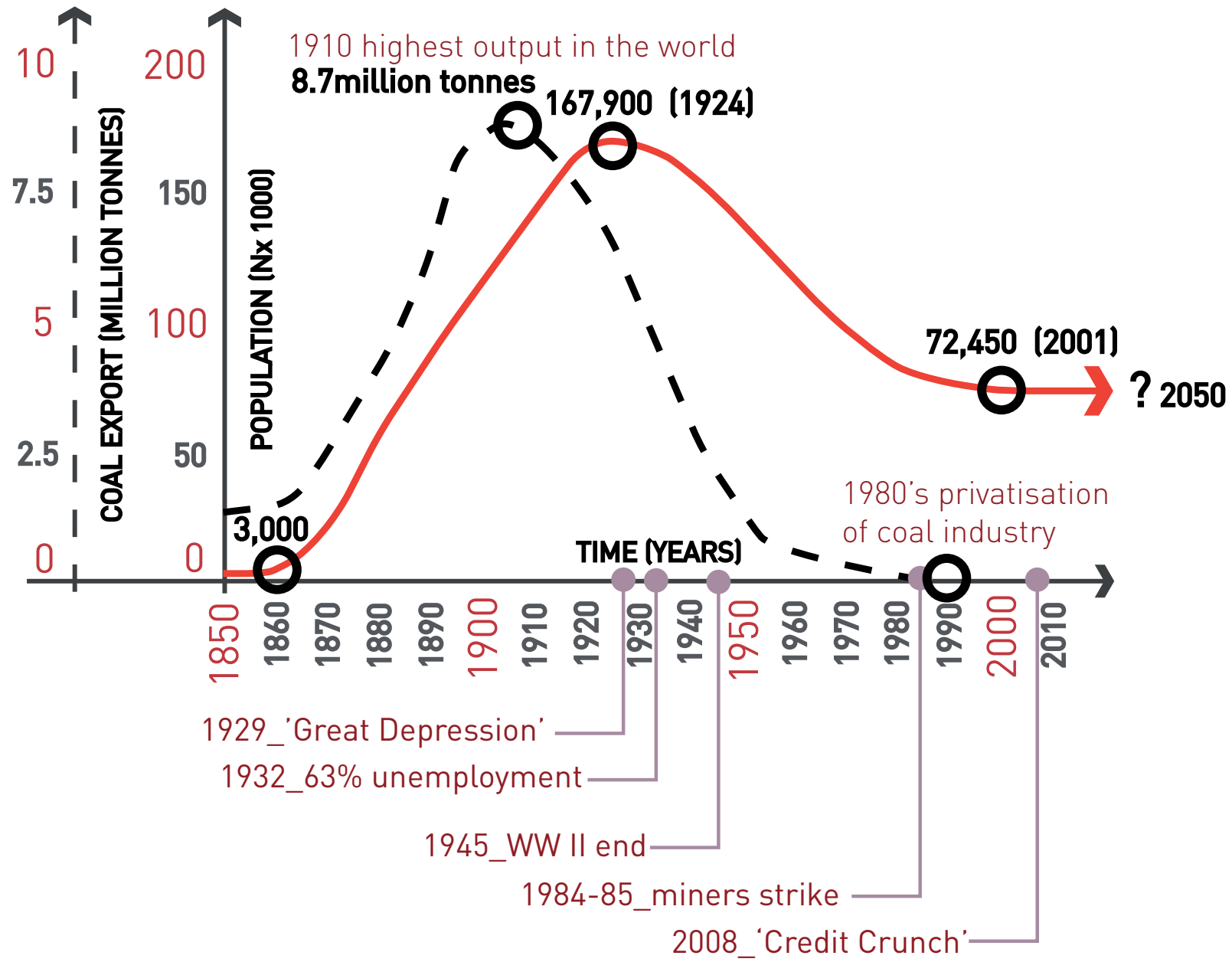


Fig. 5: Population rise and decline in the Rhondda Valley

# 1 . 2 DEFINING RESIDUAL SPACE

“Residual: adj. 1. Of, relating to, or designating a residue or remainder; remaining, left over”

## 1.2.1 \_ Introduction

In the previous section, we have seen how the Rhondda has for a long time been fighting a process of shrinking resulting in an excess of residual space. The difficulty with defining residual space is that its typologies are many and diverse. To draw light on this phenomenon, the research will explore the broad descriptions of residual space; from the perceived absoluteness of planning terminology to more ambiguous references.

## 1.2.2 \_ Planning & Governmental Labelling

From a planning viewpoint, there are numerous independent and governmental bodies that record residual spaces and classify them under pre-determined criteria. In the final report of the Urban Task Force, ‘Towards an Urban Renaissance’ (1999), the following definitions are used in assessing types of ‘brownfield’ land<sup>12</sup>:

‘Derelict Land’ (Derelict Land Survey [DLS]; National Land Use Database [NLUD]):

“Land so damaged by industrial or other developments that it is incapable of beneficial use without treatment”

12 Urban Task Force. (1999) ‘Towards an Urban Renaissance’, E & F Spon: London. p.178. See also: the Communities and Local Government Document , ‘National Land Use Database: Land Use and Land Cover Classification’ (2006, downloadable from: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/nationallanduse>)



Fig. 6: Derelict land in Shrink East Leipzig



Fig. 7: Vacant land, Crewe City Centre



Fig. 8: Vacant buildings in London. From online article, ‘Empty Retail Space in the UK May be Converted to Schools’ (15.07.2010) [www.psfk.com]

‘Vacant Land’ (NLUD; Vacant Land Survey [VLS]):

“Land that was previously developed and is now vacant which could be developed without treatment”

‘Vacant Buildings’ (NLUD; English Housing Survey: Land Use Change Statistics [LUCS]):

“Unoccupied buildings that are structurally sound and in a reasonable state of repair”

The reason why these definitions cannot be as easily employed in the Rhondda is that they do not account for rural areas and their associated data sources are limited to England and not Wales. However, it is clear that the classification of vacant land and buildings is not broad enough to account for residual spaces that often do not appear on the statistical radar.

The most comprehensive document on this subject was produced by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), as part of the report series, ‘Public Space Lessons’. The report, ‘Land in Limbo: Making the Best of Vacant Urban Spaces’ (May 2008) by ‘CABE Space’ (a specialist unit within CABE focusing on parks and public spaces), is based on an earlier enabling paper, ‘Land in Limbo: the Interim Use of Temporarily Vacant Urban Open Space’.

The objectives of the CABE report are to set-out the constraints and opportunities of vacant urban land and outline the methods required to re-activate them with reference to; local authorities, landowners and regeneration professionals. Their mission statement is as follows;

“Vacant urban open space is a valuable resource – but it’s often overlooked and underused. These derelict and neglected spaces, frozen between long-term uses, are wasted opportunities. Land in Limbo looks at how to transform these spaces into public assets.”<sup>13</sup>

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13 Taylor, David. (2008) Land in Limbo: Making the Best of Vacant Urban Spaces, CABE Space: London [www.cabe.org.uk]

CABE presses the topic of vacant urban land as being an important issue, one that requires our mindsets as a public to change. The report affirms that land areas that ‘falls prey to blight and the detritus of city living’ need not to be ignored and should be positively recognized.<sup>14</sup> Significantly, the research undertaken as part of the report concludes that the obstacles to regenerating vacant land are:

- Complex and confusing land ownership
- Reluctance to encourage positive short-term use
- ‘Neglect is an easy option’
- Fear of anti-social behaviour
- Rigid land-use planning
- Disjointed development processes
- Inflexible funding
- ‘(Not) great expectations’

With reference to the Rhondda, this document is a useful tool in addressing residual space however its scope is focused within a limited space typology of ‘vacant open land’.

### 1.2.3 \_ Ephemeral Space

Due to the dynamics of a shrinking urbanism, the Rhondda’s residual spaces could also be described as ‘ephemeral’. The research project, ‘Ephemeral Landscapes at the Rural-Urban Fringe’ (2008), is a study that stands in stark contrast to the narrowing methodology of the CABE report and sets out to explore the ‘in-between’ character of ‘flux landscapes’ from a humanistic landscape perspective.

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14 Ibid., p.1





Fig. 9: Ephemeral Landscapes – Urban/Rural Fringe, Sweden

The four year study documents and analyses ephemeral/transient landscapes (fig.9) at the ‘urban fringe’ of the Swedish cities of Malmo and Goteborg by examining their values, threats and potentials. The conclusions of the research are that ephemeral landscapes are almost invisible in archives and statistics<sup>15</sup>.

#### 1.2.4 \_ Palimpsest/Flux Space

In order to understand the Rhondda’s shrinking territories, one must look to environments that have also experienced dramatic changes. For example, the rapturous history of Berlin has made the city notorious for its past and present residual spaces. The German capital has stood at the centre of 20<sup>th</sup> century European politics, war, revolution, Democracy, Facism, Stalinism, The Cold War. As a boiling pot of cultures that sprawls a unique patchwork landscape of social and urban experiments.

In the essay, ‘The Voids of Berlin’ (Future City, 2005), Andreas Huyssen describes Berlin as a city text frantically being ‘written and re-written’ through a characteristically ‘palimpsest’ type process,

“Berlin as palimpsest implies voids, illegibilities and erasures”<sup>16</sup>

‘Palimpsest’ is a manuscript page from scroll or book that has been scraped off and used again. This is an accurate metaphor for Berlin and the Rhondda, whose core have been continuously transformed, punctured, scarred and re-started but the residue of previous eras remain to layer the modern day collage.

The fallout of this volatile narrative is a complex urban discourse that engages the politics

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15 Qvistrom, Mattias. Saltzman, Katrina. (2008) ‘Ephemeral Landscapes at the Rural-Urban Fringe’, p.7

16 Huyssen, Andreas. (2005) ‘Future City: The Voids of Berlin’. Spon: New York, p.97

of memory and the value of residual space<sup>17</sup>.

In addition to residual ‘palimpsest’ type spaces, Berlin can be simultaneously seen as a patchwork of ‘flux’ spaces. On one side, there commonly exists the positive facade of the city understood as a place for society and everyday public life, which is also juxtaposed by the ‘negative city’,

“abandoned areas or spaces that are not useful for the positive pattern, but nonetheless exist in an osmotic relationship with it”<sup>18</sup>

Subsequently, we see that Berlin’s troubled territories are similar to the Rhondda, both are ‘living organisms’, constantly fluctuating with the vigorous processes of ‘transformation, shrinking and development’<sup>19</sup>.

### 1.2.6 \_ Ambiguous Space

A common aspect of the Rhondda’s peripheral landscape is the undistinguishable nature in which it exists, a condition tackled by architects, Kenny Cupers and Marcus Miessen, in the network, exhibition and publication, ‘Spaces of Uncertainty’ (2002).

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17 Huyssen, Andreas. (2003) ‘Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory’, Stanford University Press: California. p.75

18 Ferguson, Francesca. (Ed.). (2006) Talking Cities: The Micro-politics of Urban Space, Birkhauser: Berlin, p.67

19 Studio E.U Architects [<http://www.studioeu.net>]. From the urban cartography photo series, ‘Berlin Wall(k)’ (2005)



“The phenomena of derelicted sites caused by de-industrialization processes, abundance of infrastructure or political faults are not only Berlin specific but represent a common part of the urban fabric.....”<sup>20</sup>

Through photographic and theoretical essays, their collective works questions the social spectrum of urban spaces, describing the city as, ‘a material phenomenon and as a social and philosophical idea’<sup>21</sup>. From this standpoint, they oppose the negative connotations associated with residual space by acknowledging its existence as a condition beyond traditional interpretations of urbanism.

“Left with enormous amounts of infill and fallow land, Berlin is a city in which residual space and public space lose their definitions. As playgrounds for micro-political activities, permanent hiding-places or areas for temporary occupation, its residual spaces prove their necessity. Shy and unassuming, these very spaces of uncertainty show their value for public life.....”<sup>22</sup>

Whereas ‘Spaces of Uncertainty’ expresses positivism in the potential of residual space, the more common rhetoric is to analyse the ever increasing problems of contemporary urbanism.

### 1.2.7 \_ Forgotten Spaces

In addition to ambiguous space, the Rhondda is paralysed by its ‘forgotten spaces’, an issue

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20 Misslwitz, P. Oswald, P. Overmeyer, K. (2003) Urban Catalyst: Strategies for Temporary Uses – Potential for Development of Urban Residual Areas, Studio UC: Berlin.

See also ‘Urban Catalyst’ Website [<http://www.urbancatalyst.net>]

21 Studio Miessen [<http://www.studiomiessen.com/>]

22 Spaces of Uncertainty [<http://www.gsd.harvard.edu/users/kcupers/spacesofuncertainty/>]

that is also becoming increasingly prevalent in architectural discourse. So much so, the Royal Institute of British Architects launched a competition in February 2010 to highlight ‘forgotten spaces’ in Greater London. Douglas Hine, founder of the ‘Space Makers Agency’, (<http://spacemakers.org.uk/>) describes three typical typologies of ‘forgotten space’:

1. Overlooked Spaces: An urban wall covered in Graffiti can function as an offline version of a message board.
2. Left-over Spaces: Volumes of the built environment lost to intrusive highway infrastructure can be used positively or negatively. i.e. sports facilities below the Westway flyover in West London.
3. Tucked Away Spaces: Dislocated and hidden spaces between buildings can be both a problem and opportunity. Disuse does not have to mean forgotten<sup>23</sup>.

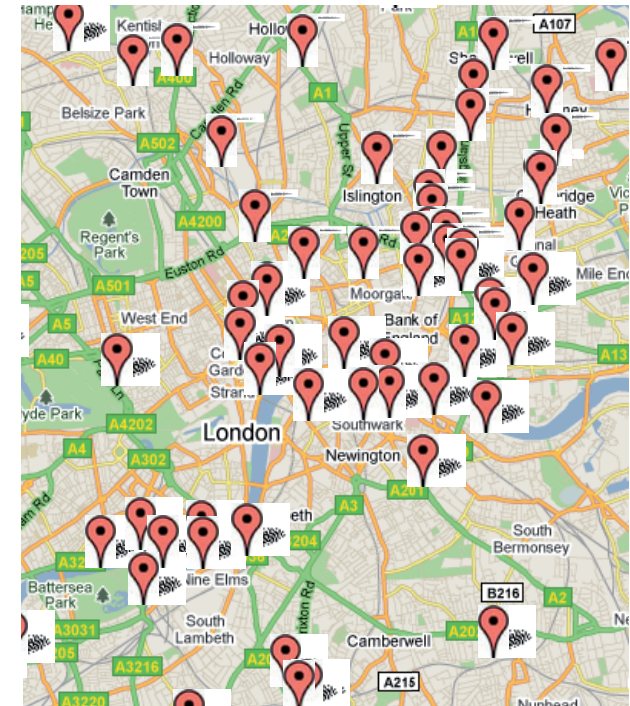


Fig. 10: Map of Forgotten Spaces in Greater London

Note: As part of the RIBA research competition, entrants were required to register their forgotten space site on the ‘Mapping Forgotten Spaces’ website ([www.ribaforgotten.spacemakers.org.uk](http://www.ribaforgotten.spacemakers.org.uk)). The Website is described as a mapping resource intended to unearth, remember and highlight spaces across London that have been forgotten or neglected. It was also intended to become a forum for discussion on residual areas to encourage individuals to, ‘comment, suggest and debate ideas for how these spaces could be better used in future.

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23 RIBA Forgotten Space Competition [<http://www.ribaforgotten.spacemakers.org.uk>]

### 1.2.8 \_ Conclusion

To conclude, we see that residual space is a common condition resulting from a shrinking urbanism and the unprecedented political, social, economic, cultural and environmental challenges. When understood together, the assimilation of; theory, planning information, land identification tools, landscape discourse and first-hand experience, allow for a more complete analysis of residual space.

It is apparent that there are numerous definitions of 'residual space' that overlap and merge into each other, definitions that vary from town planning to urban discourse but live within a sphere of similar terms such as: interstitial, 'left-over/ neglected/ forgotten' (Trancick, 1986), dead (Jacobs, 1961), edge (Garreau, 1992/Charlesworth, 2005), ambiguous and overlooked or tucked away spaces.

In Berlin and other European Cities, residual space is arguably about nurturing or eradicating memory (Huyssen, 2003). As such, these cities are expanding the knowledge base on central and peripheral residual spaces due to the variety of complex conditions that they are obliged to analyse in order to safeguard their future. Also, the presence of young creative industries are contradicting political objectives and challenging the future of residual spaces. In order to identify and analyse residual space in the Rhondda Valley, the research will consider a cross-section of residual space typologies which may possess similar characteristics but demand a wider definition.





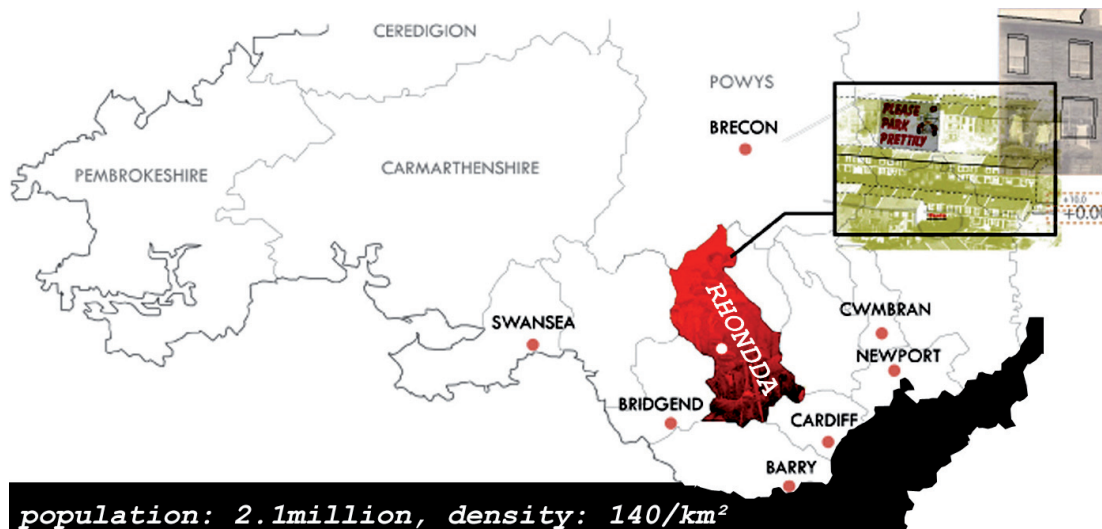
Fig. 11: 'Did he Jump' Pedestrian Bridge, Hopkinstown

# 1 . 3 READING THE VALLEY

## 1.3.1 \_ Introduction

The following segment will provide a graphical narrative on the Rhondda under topics of History, Environment, Urbanism and Culture. Although the subjects discussed are divided, they are not mutually exclusive, and have origins in both the topography and geology of the Rhondda, and in the same socio-economic and historical background; the discovery, exploitation and subsequent near-exhaustion of the coal reserves in the Valleys.

To solidify the existence of urban shrinking in the Rhondda, the research delves into a historical examination of the morphological development of the valley coupled with a commentary of the socio-economic situation of the time leading to the most current land information on the Rhondda Valley.



Note: The South Wales Valleys stretch from Eastern Carmarthenshire in the West to Western Monmouthshire in the East and from the heads of the valleys in the north to the lower lying pastoral county of the Vale of Glamorgan and the coastal plain around Swansea Bay, Bridgend, Cardiff and Newport.

**population: 2.1million, density: 140/km<sup>2</sup>**

Fig. 12: South Wales Valleys, UK & Rhondda Cynon Taff County Ward Context



### 1.3.2 \_ The Rhondda Valley

The South Wales Valleys are a number of industrialised valleys comprising a mixture of urban, semi-urban and rural communities<sup>24</sup>. Many of the valleys run generally parallel to each other (fig.15) and the Rhondda is located roughly in the centre, focal to the county borough of Rhondda Cynon Taff, Wales' is second most populous area after the capital<sup>25</sup>.

24 Enfuson. (2009) 'Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council SA Report: Deposit Plan', p.5  
 25 'Rhondda Cynon Taff Borough County Council website' [<http://www.rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk/>]

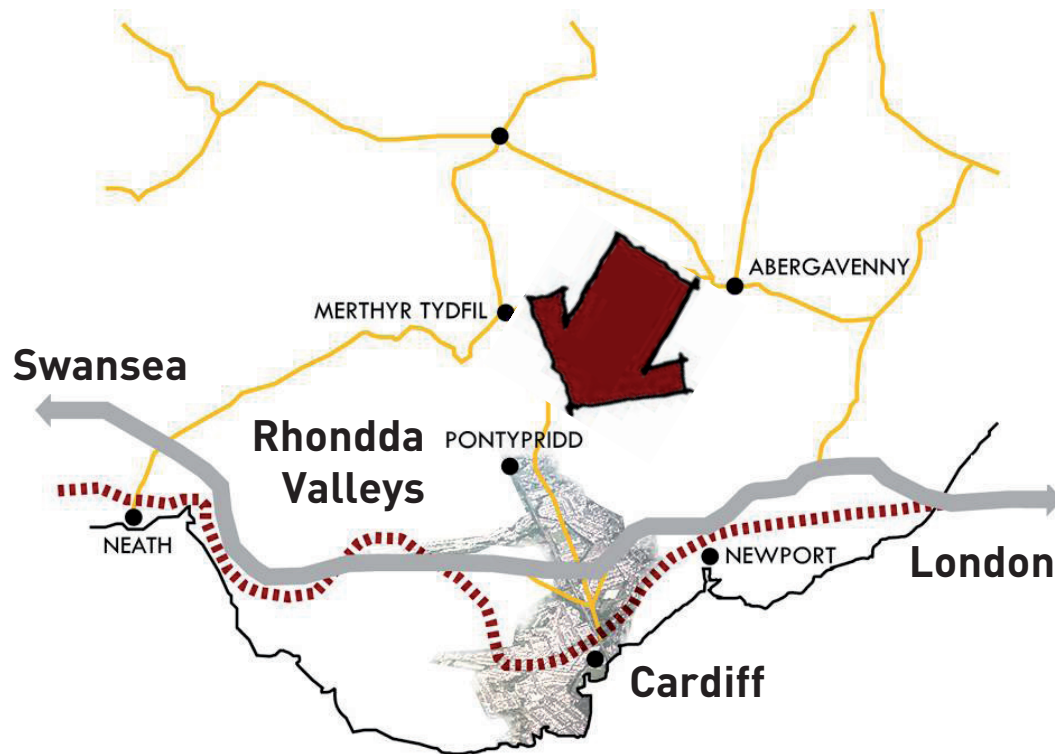


Fig. 13: South East Wales, Rhondda Valley Context

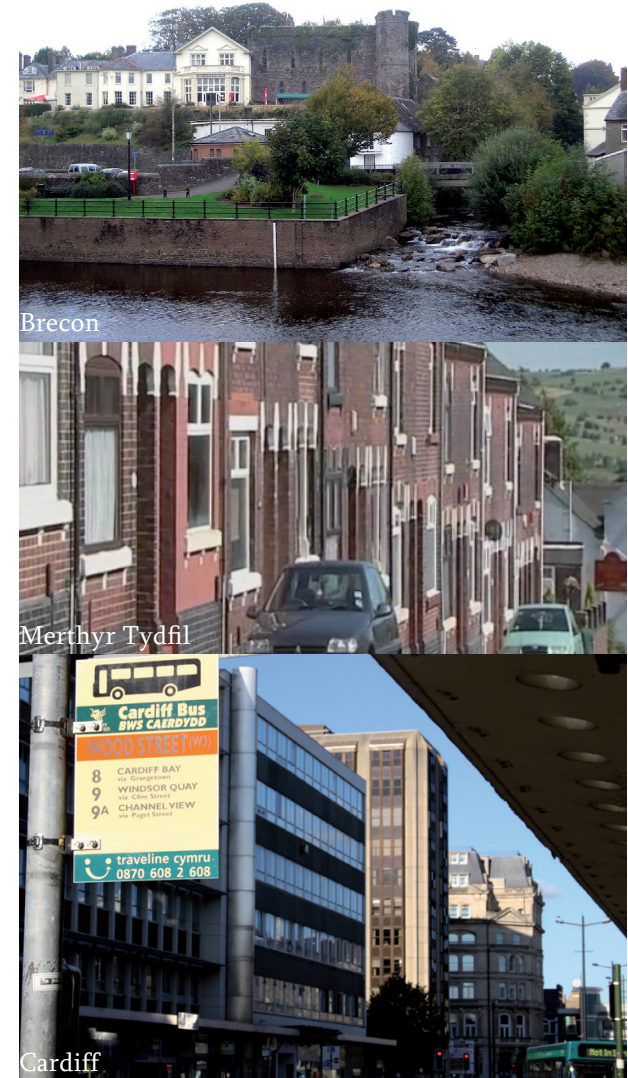


Fig. 14: Scales of Urbanity, Brecon - Cardiff

Note: The valley itself is poised between the M4 motorway linking to London, and the heads of the valleys A465 trunk road from Cardiff to the east.

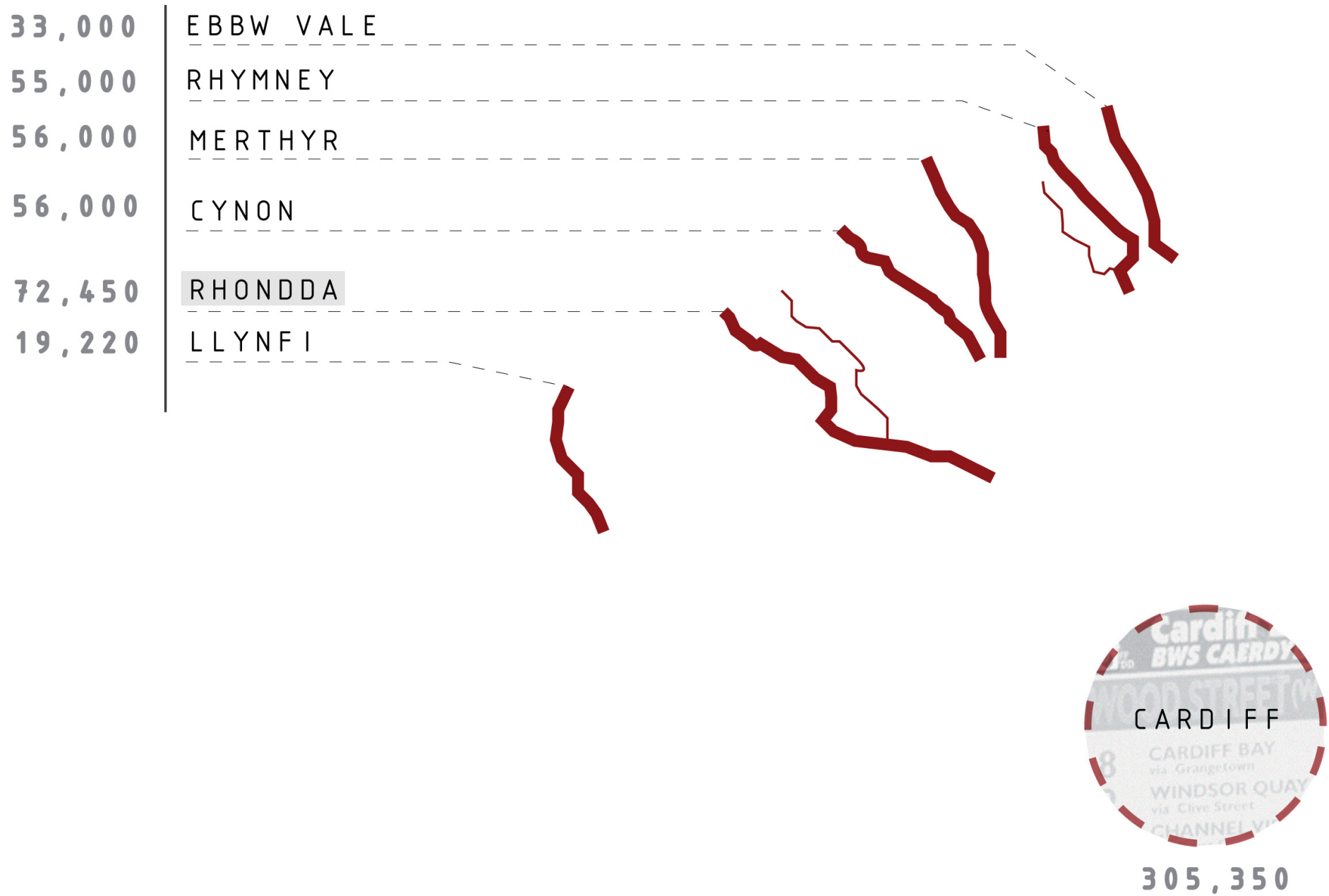


Fig. 15: South East Wales Valleys & Population



The Rhondda comprises of two valleys consisting of 16 communities built around the River Rhondda (fig.17). Until the mid-18<sup>th</sup> Century the Rhondda was an unspoilt rural area and it was not until the first prospecting for steam coal that intensive commercial development began<sup>26</sup>.

The district developed from the discovery and mining, primarily for export, of high-quality Welsh coals, such as steam coal via Cardiff and Barry docks. The landscape during this time was dominated by densely packed Victorian terrace housing, coal waste heaps and deep mine pit heads<sup>27</sup>. In the 1980's, privatisation of British Coal resulted in the closure of many of the coal mining activities in the valley, devastating the local economy.

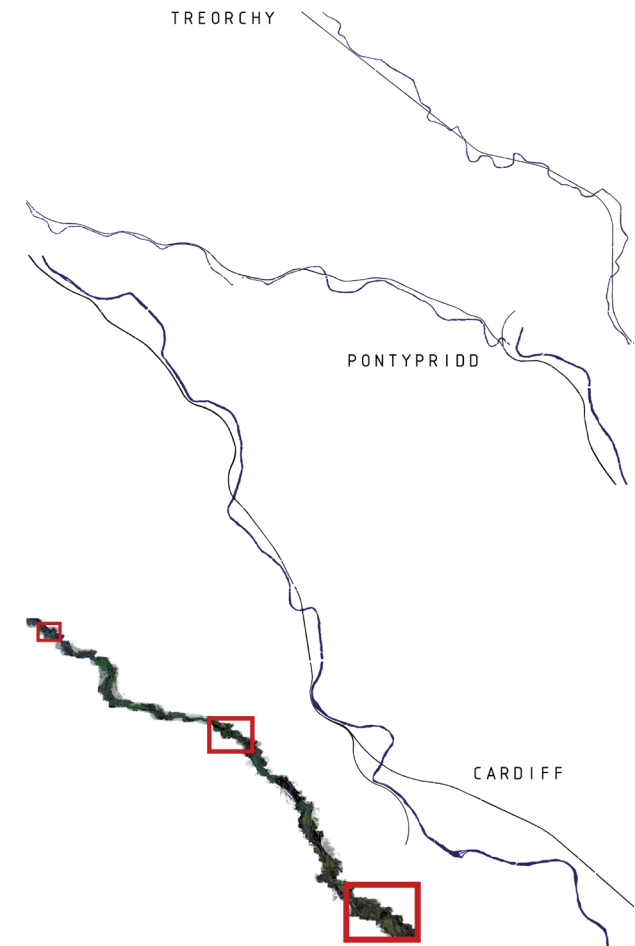


Fig. 16: Natural & Man Made Infrastructure - Relationship of River to Rail

26 The Rhondda Valleys History [<http://www.rhonddavalleys.co.uk>]

27 Ibid.

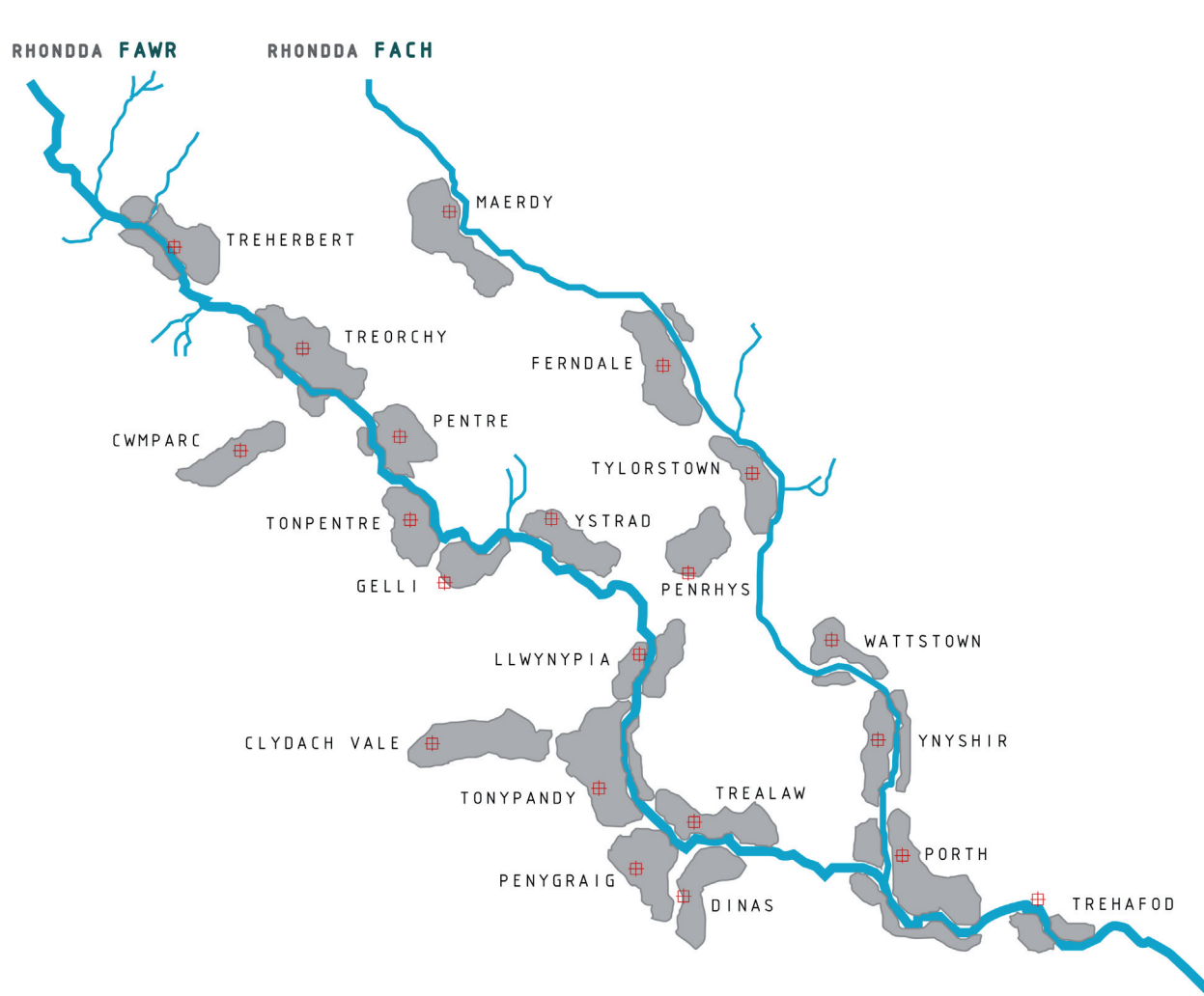
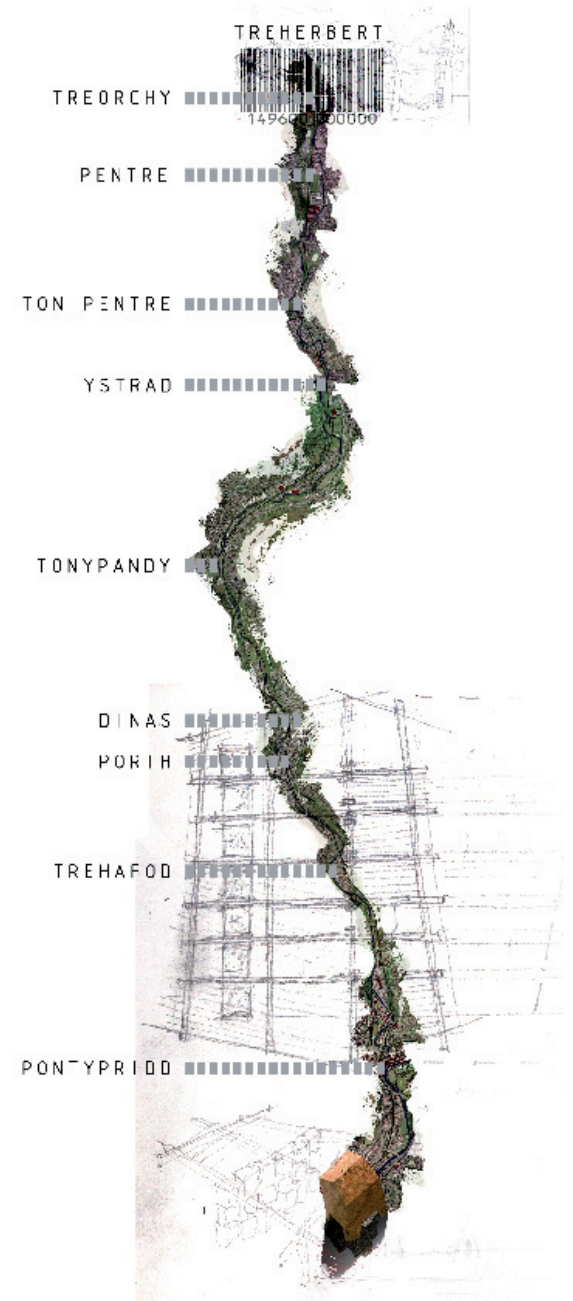


Fig. 17: Rhondda Valleys - Towns & Urbanised Areas



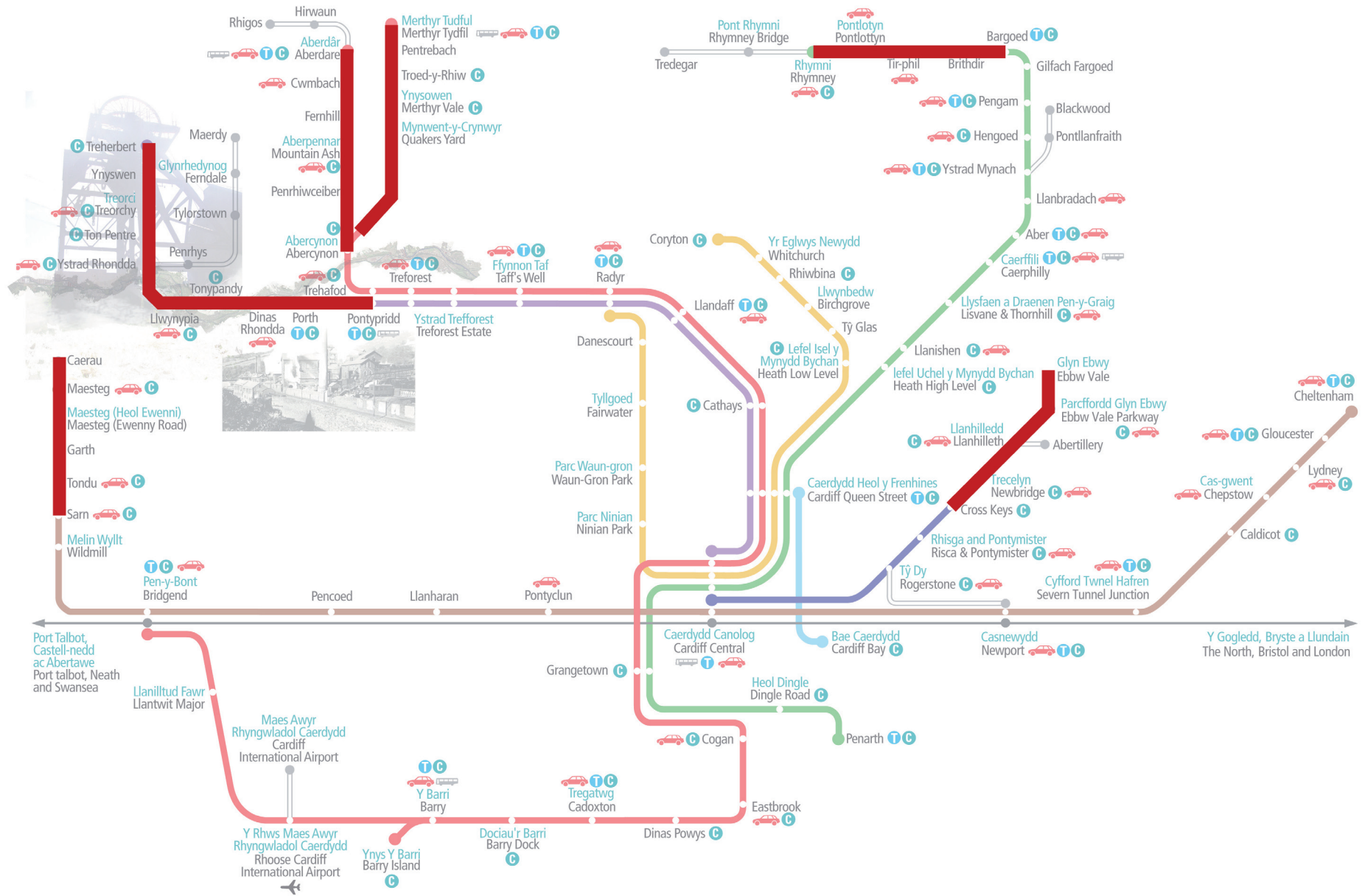


Fig. 18: Network Map – Valleys & Cardiff Local Routes

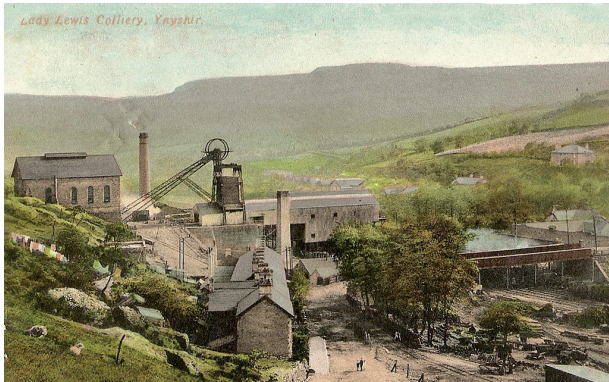


Fig. 19: Ynyshir, Lady Lewis Colliery, 1909



Fig. 20: Ribbon Terraces - View of 'Clydach Vale' Subsidiary Valley, from Town of Tonypandy

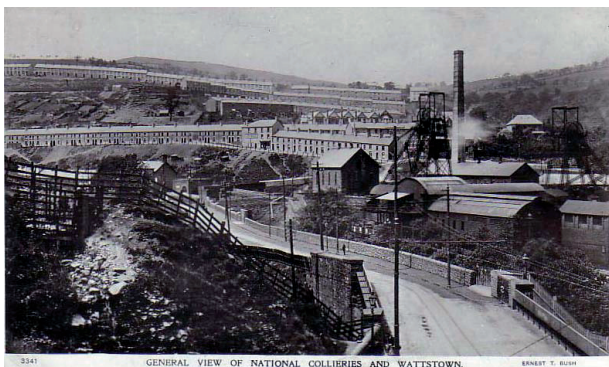


Fig. 21: Live-Work Relationship, Wattstown Colliery, 1910.

### 1.3.3 \_ History

Until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century the Rhondda Valleys were entirely rural in character considered amongst the most picturesque in Wales described as having;

“meadows of emerald greenness”, and the air as being “aromatic with the scent of wild flowers and mountain plants”.<sup>28</sup>

With the discovery of large reserves of coal the population of the valleys rose dramatically through in-migration and subsequent natural growth. With rapid population growth went equally rapid urbanisation in the tight valley floor areas and allied to the intensive exploitation of the coal, the creation of indiscriminate colliery waste tipping on a vast scale.

During this industrial period, every free inch of space in the Rhondda was used to support the functioning of the collieries. Fig. 22 shows the intensity of mining processes in the centre of one of the Valley's largest town's, 'Porth'.

The Rhondda has always possessed a direct relationship between working and living<sup>29</sup>. This urban symmetry is epitomised in Fig.20 which captures the ribboning<sup>30</sup> of miners houses across the mountainsides above the collieries responding to topography, environment and the industrial development of the valley floor.

28 Charles Clifles quoted in; Rhondda History  
[[http://www.anglesey.info/Rhondda\\_History](http://www.anglesey.info/Rhondda_History)]

29 May, John. (2003) 'Rhondda: 1203-2003: The Story of Two Valleys', Castle Publications: Cardiff.

30 'Historic Landscape Characterisation of the Rhondda'  
[[http://www.ggat.org.uk/cadw/historic\\_landscape/Rhondda/](http://www.ggat.org.uk/cadw/historic_landscape/Rhondda/)]





Fig. 22: 'Near-Exhaustion', Britannia and Lewis Merthyr Colliery II, Industrial Porth. The historical image illustrates the former 'Cymmer Colliery' position buried into the floor of the valley, slotted between the resource of the river and the once numerous coal transit train line networks.

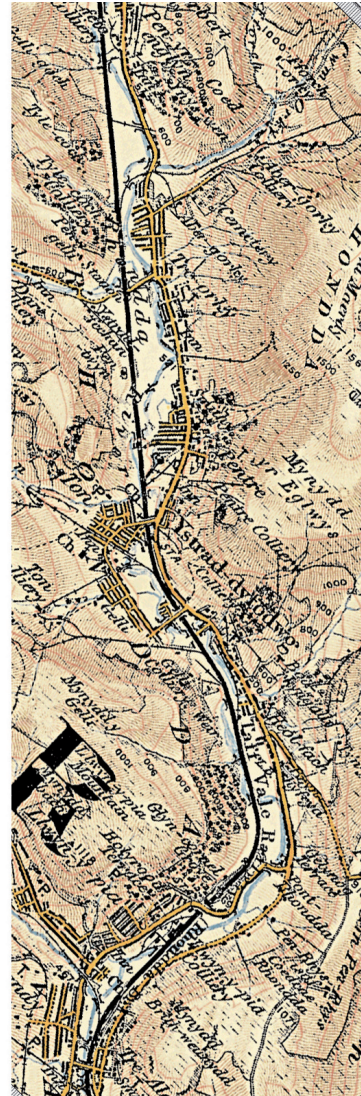


TREORCHY

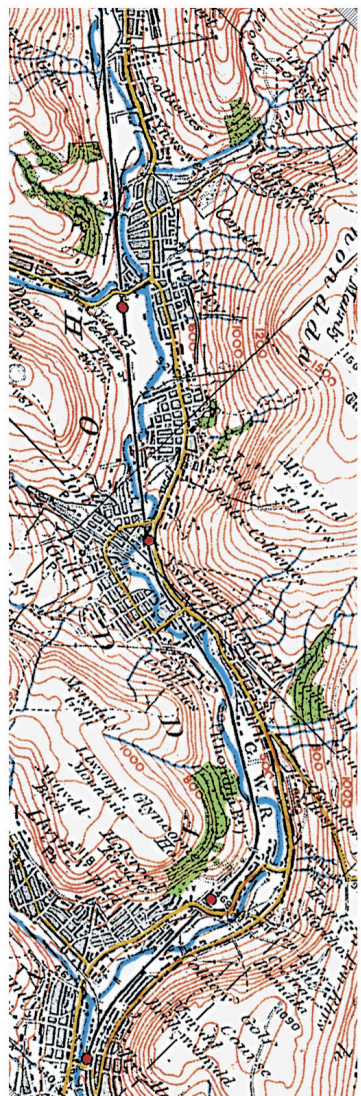
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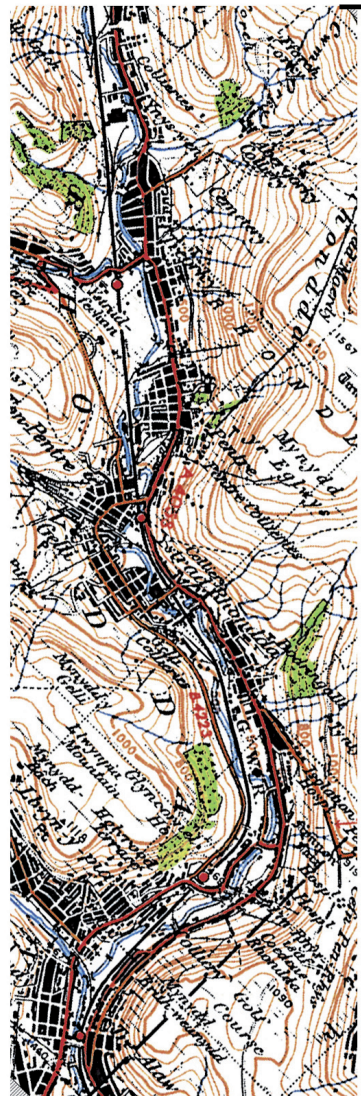
1830-1833



1899-1900



1919-1923



1947



Fig. 23: Rhondda Valley Morphological Development



In general, the historical morphological development of the Valleys viewed through the maps (fig.23), illustrate a process of shrinking in the Valley whereby urban density is visibly reduced between towns. The 19<sup>th</sup> century maps show consistent density along the main road, rail and river through the valley with intensification in towns around central collieries. In contrast, the comparison to late 20<sup>th</sup> Century exposes a very different environment with large portions of redundant industrial land between towns and the increase of commercial developments replacing the demolished collieries. Analysis of the maps series also show the dominance of the Great Western Railway with its tree like structure of multi-track train lines and off-shoot branches cutting through towns to mountainside collieries. The decommissioning of these secondary train lines due to the closure of the mines would have inadvertently created stringent residual spaces and inaccessible areas.



Fig. 24: 'Prosperity' - Discovery/Mining/Export, Cardiff Docks



Fig. 25: 'Abject Urbanism', Hopkinstown



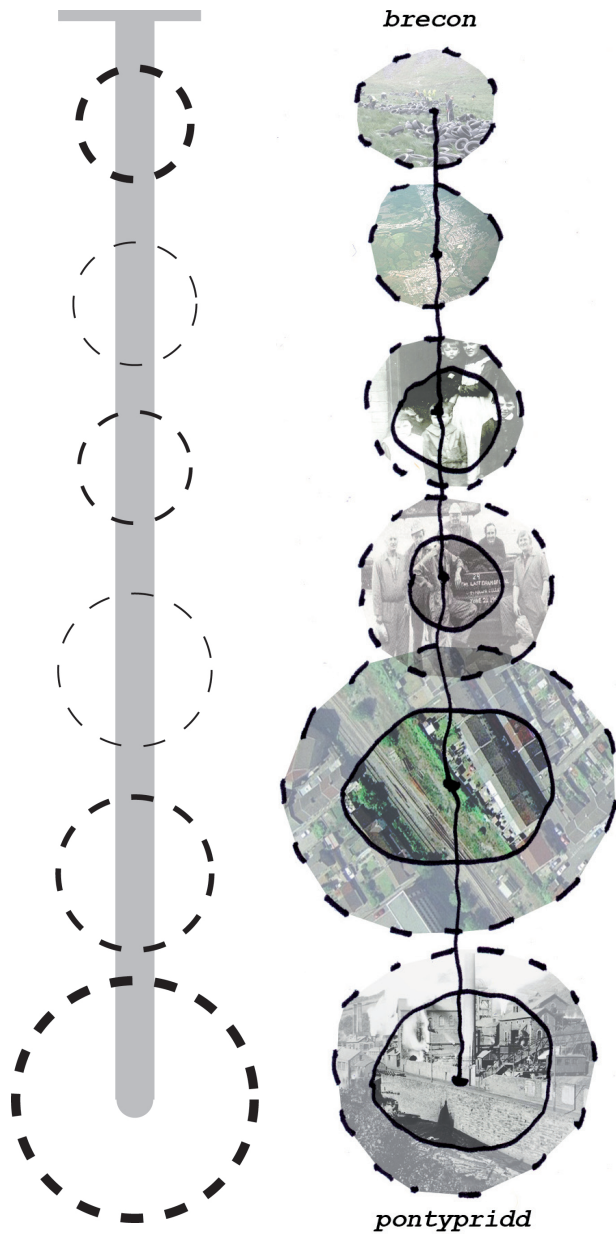


Fig. 26: Linear urban structure of the 'shrinking Valley'

### 1.3.4 \_ Urbanism

The Rhondda is both a curious and fascinating place, a place of contradictions between urbanity and nature, poverty and wealth, isolation and exposure. The Valleys have urbanised and peripheral landscapes where industrial monuments, terraced housing, forgotten lido's, commercial developments and suburban allotments coalesce. The valley is ugly and beautiful, and whose complex characteristics require a layered understanding.

When entering the Rhondda valleys from Pontypridd, the patchwork landscape forms a seemingly endless continuum, worn at its base by 200 years of urban development. The shrinking territories apparent in the Rhondda form a patchwork that closely follow the linear network of towns along the train line (fig.26). In general, one can identify typologies of residual space that occur whose common features include a degree of abandonment identifiable by fly tipping, overgrown wildlife and disconnection. Residual spaces are found near ambiguous boundaries between private and public land, abject structures, and where natural and man-made infrastructure intersect (fig.27).

The most extreme effect of urban shrinking can be seen at the head of the valley<sup>31</sup> where only an eerie landscape of building-less streets remain following the closure of Fernhill colliery (fig.29). Also, the village of 'Penrhys', developed in 1966 as the largest public sector housing in Wales, has shrunk significantly due to outward migration, third generation unemployment, a high turn over of tenancies and demolition of vacant buildings<sup>32</sup>.

31 Correspondence with Ray Smith, former Fernhill Colliery employee (12.12.2010). See annex 8.2

32 Penrhys Estate [<http://www.penrhys.com/history.asp>]

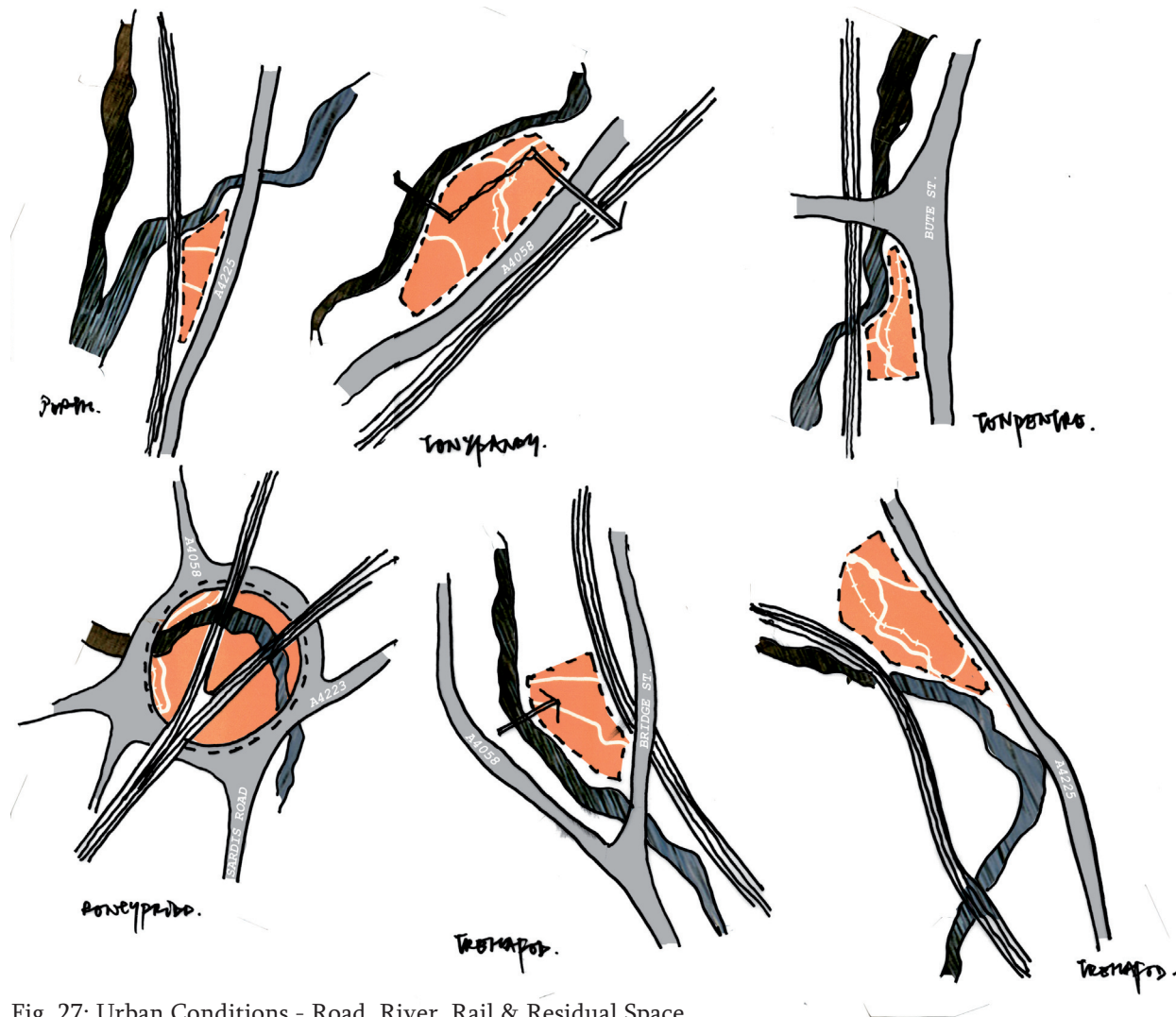
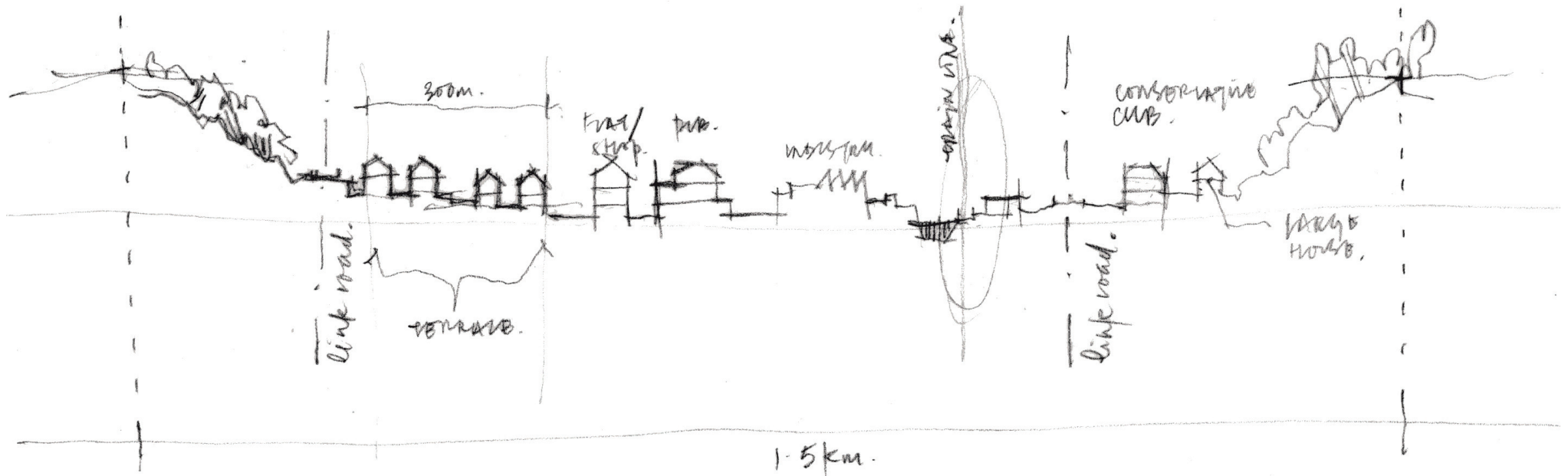


Fig. 27: Urban Conditions - Road, River, Rail & Residual Space

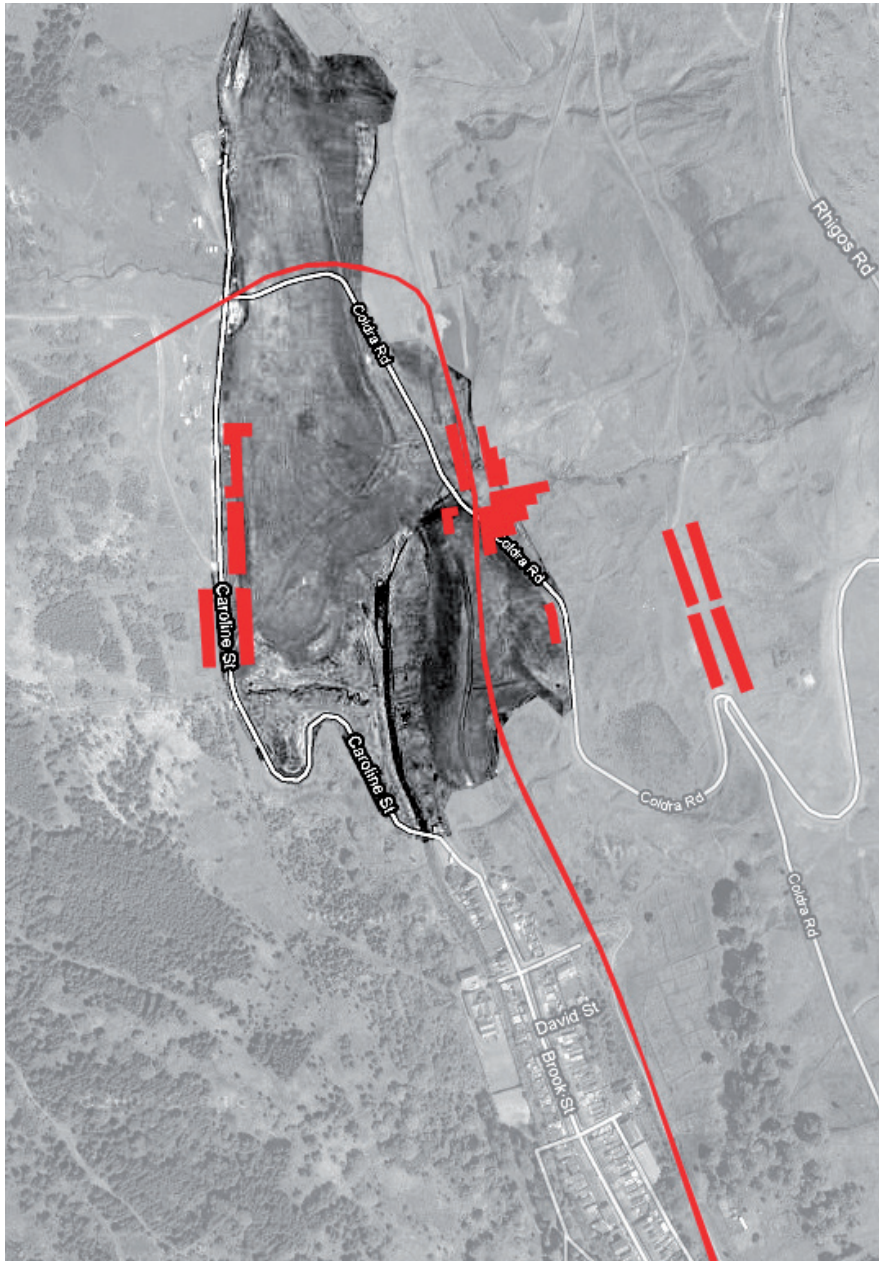


The urban zone is often divided from the mountain forests by the link roads that support local networks roads. The Valley townscape is subjugated by the traditional 2 storey terrace, 3-4 storey buildings are clustered around high streets and are usually public houses, shops or political clubs.

The hills and mountains of the Rhondda dwarf anything within it and evoke a partially suffocating, yet primitive sense of enclosure which is significantly amplified the further one travels 'up the valley'.

In section, the Rhondda can be understood as a concentration of urban development that extends to a relatively consistent height on the mountain sides referred to in planning terms as the 'settlement boundary'. The valley width varies along its length averaging an approximate 1.5km width from highest urbanised points. Within the 'urbanised' zone, commerce and light industry is commonly grouped at the lower levels coincident with the river and main roads. Further up, on the Valley sides there are long ribbon terraces that follow the mountain contours and where population density reaches its peak

Fig. 28: Rhondda urban structure sectional diagram



The red tone illustrates built form that existed in 'Blaenrhondda' during the 1960's and has since been demolished following the closure of the Fernhill Colliery.

Fig. 29: Blaenrhondda 1960-2010 comparison.



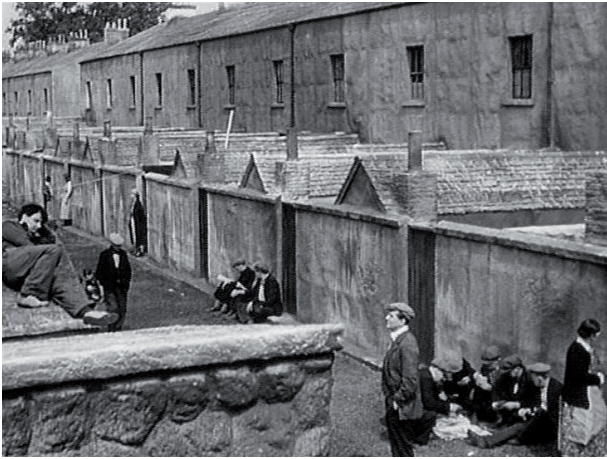


Fig. 30: Film Still from 'The Stars Look Down' (1940)  
Set in The Rhondda

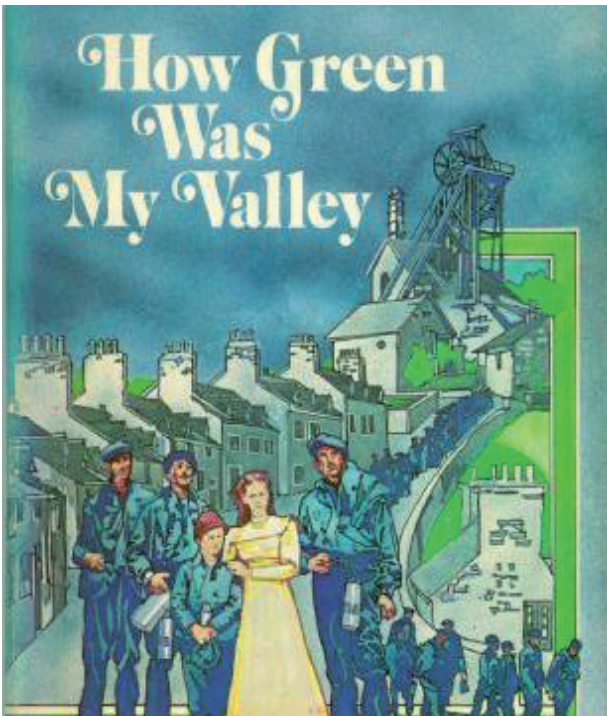


Fig. 31: Cover of Richard Llewellyn's 1939 Novel, 'How Green Was My Valley'

### 1.3.5 \_ Culture

In contrast to its urban issues, The Rhondda Valley has a positive, rich and diverse culture, producing world famous artists, actors, historians, musicians, poets, politicians, sportspeople and writers. The Welsh government believes that culture will play a central role in the Rhondda's future regeneration through community led projects. Leighton Andrews, the Assembly Member for the Rhondda writes;

“Changing patterns and changing perceptions is what we are seeking to do in regenerating the Valleys. Culture is ordinary. Culture is central.”<sup>33</sup>

In light of this objective, it is ironic that some of the most powerful works to have emerged from the Valley are manifested in response to deep cultural issues resulting from the Rhondda's political space and social struggle. In literature this is epitomised by the book, 'How Green was my Valley' (1939) by Richard Llewellyn, a story that chronicles the socio-economic way of life passing and the family unit disintegrating at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

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33 Leighton Andrews, Assembly Member for the Rhondda on 'Culture & Regeneration'  
[<http://www.therhondda.com/files/culture-and-regeneration>]



Fig. 32: 'Living in the Goldfishbowl'

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the contemporary writer Rachel Trezise, has written prolifically on the neurosis, claustrophobia and sub-culture of the Valleys. 'In and Out of the Goldfishbowl' (2002), is a part-autobiographical narrative on broken homes, child abuse and the poverty of the post-industrial, 'drug-addled' Welsh valleys<sup>34</sup>.

Significantly in August 2008, a BBC survey announced the Rhondda Valley as the most unhappiest place in Britain. Drug addiction is a massive problem and the statistics are frightening with estimates suggesting that as many as 12 people a week in the area overdose on heroin<sup>35</sup>.



Fig. 33: 'Quirkiness', Chip Shop, Ton Pentre (Mid-Valley)

34 Rachel Trezise [<http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/arts/sites/rachel-trezise/>]

35 'Drugs challenge on valley future (14.06.2002) [<http://news.bbc.co.uk/>]





Fig. 34: Pollution of Rhondda Fawr River during Industrial Era



Fig. 35: 'Industrial Scars', Colliery Winding Gear Plinth

### 1.3.6 \_ Environment

The coal industry has had major adverse impacts on the quality of the environment, such that most of the rivers were severely polluted to the exclusion of all fish life. The Rhondda Fawr River is significant in the shaping of the valley's towns and its quality has been much improved during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century however it was once a disease ridden element that represented a major health hazard. In 1893, the Medical Officer of Health stated to the Rhondda Urban District council,

“The river contained a large proportion of human excrement, stable and pig sty manure, congealed blood, the offal and entrails from the slaughter houses, the rotten carcasses of animals... street refuse and a host of other articles...in dry weather the stench becomes unbearable.”<sup>36</sup>

Recent decades have shown great improvement with the return of Salmon recorded in the River Taff and the river Rhondda but the continued presence of man-made obstacles in the rivers is inhibiting regeneration of their pre-industrial numbers and condition.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Rhondda is leading the way in Wales on innovative and practical methods of sustainability towards a greener valley and healthy living. The county ward of RCT as a whole has 67 allotments and recycle record breaking quantities of recyclable waste<sup>37</sup>.

36 'A Tribute to the Rhondda', [<http://www.therhondda.co.uk/intro.html>]

37 'RCT Are Recycling Record Breakers' (05.2008) Aberdare Online [<http://www.aberdareonline.co.uk/content/rct-are-recycling-record-breakers>]





Fig. 36: 'Nature Prevails', View down the Valleys Train Line tracks towards Hopkinstown



Fig. 37: Juxtaposition of Nature & Urbanity

### 1.3.7 \_ Planning Context

The Rhondda Valley is central to any discussion on planning and development in Wales and plays an important role in the ‘Wales Spatial Plan’ (2008) - a 20 year plan for sustainable development. The goal set in the ‘Area Framework’ for the Rhondda is to join Cardiff, Newport and neighbouring valleys as a networked city region of 1.4million people. The strategic objectives are to,

“Strengthen and reintegrate the existing system of towns so that the area functions as a coherent urban network, and can compete internationally.” And, “To develop an ambitious programme of joined-up regeneration along the heads of the Valley corridor”<sup>38</sup>

The ambition is clear from the ‘Wales Spatial Plan’, but the ‘blue skies’ approach is difficult to relate to the Valley’s shrinking territories. Since the end of the coal mining industry, the Rhondda has seen numerous action plans that have set out to ‘fix’ the Rhondda, most of which were scrapped due to lack of funding (fig.38).

At the start of 2010, the council borough of Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT) published its new Local Development Plan that focuses on building ‘sustainable communities’ and identification of strategic sites and ‘growth areas’ within the Northern Rhondda Area. As a whole, the Rhondda Valley itself has 1 strategic site in Treherbert and 4 key growth areas; Pontypridd (principal town), Porth, Tonypany and Treorchy (key settlements). It is acknowledged in the document that Rhondda Cynon Taff has a number of deprived communities, an issue which is given front seat in the strategic proposals to be achieved through;

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38 Welsh Assembly Government (2008 Update Consultation) ‘PEOPLE, PLACES, FUTURES: The Wales Spatial Plan’, p.93



the efficient use of land, an improved sense of place and an appropriate mix of land uses<sup>39</sup>.

The LDP is very broad and generic, revealing little on how the Rhondda might reflect the Wales Spatial Plan objective for strong networks of towns and an economically unified South East Wales. In fact, the LDP ignores the residual areas between towns in favour of boosting existing ‘key settlements’ and their commercial centres. The Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) however provides more specific guidelines. Significantly, the term ‘left-over’ appears consistently and it is clear that residual space is a real issue in the Rhondda linked to topography, development characteristics, preservation of historic and listed sites, as well as numerous environmental issues.

For example, the ‘placemaking’ guidelines urges new urban proposals to respect the local topography (section 3.5), explaining the greatest concern for quality neighbourhoods in the Valley is the creation of ‘left-over’ spaces resulting from poorly planned developments<sup>40</sup>. Positives for residual space in the Rhondda can be extracted from the latest planning documents which place greater emphasis on biodiversity stressing the importance of linear corridors of landscaping wherever practical to strengthen ecological connectivity between habitat patches in both urban and rural areas<sup>41</sup>.

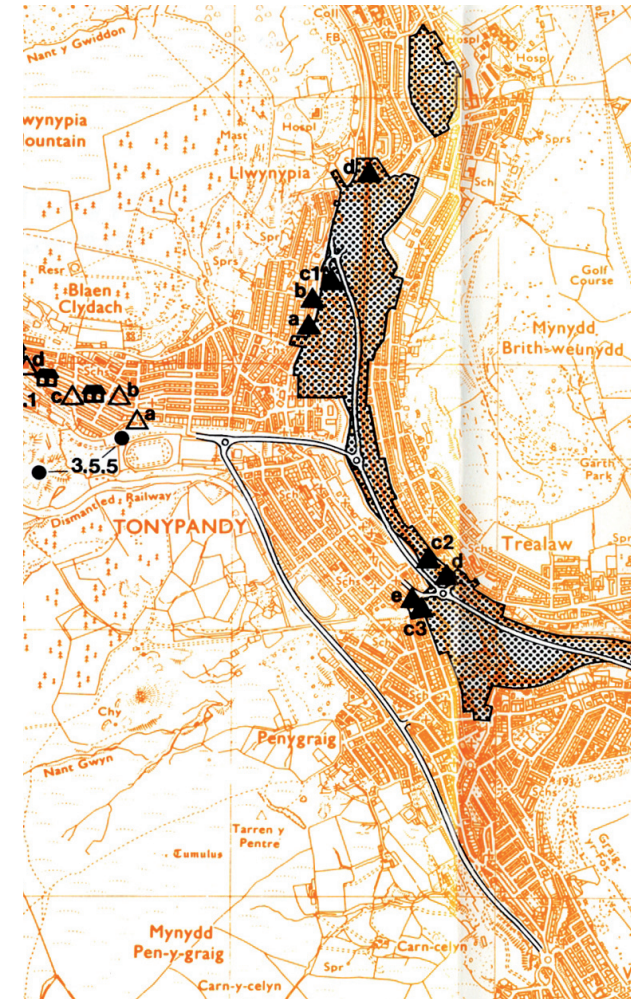


Fig. 38: Rhondda Valleys Initiative Submission 1986, Tonypany Proposals.

Note: The initiative focused on the heads of the valley region, as well as transport and retail centres in the valley. It allocated large areas of Rhondda towns for major restructuring that was for political reasons never realised.

39 Rhondda Cynon Taff (01.2010) ‘Supplementary Planning Guidance: Design and Placemaking - Creating New Places to Live and the Regeneration of Existing Communities’, p.5

40 Ibid. p.9

41 Rhondda Cynon Taff (01.2010) ‘Supplementary Planning Guidance: Nature Conservation’

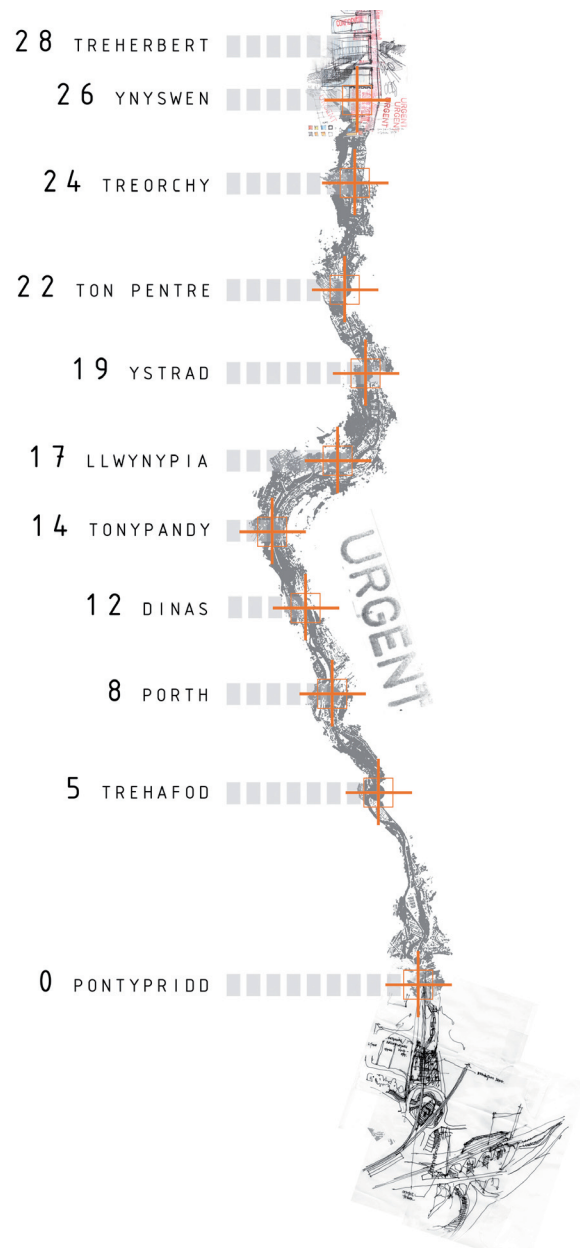


Fig. 39: Network: town-town train time schedule

### 1.3.8 \_ Conclusion

The historical analysis has shown that the characteristics of the Rhondda Valley are in part the product of its shrinking urbanism. In the past Rhondda has been a place of opportunity, to which outsiders came in large numbers for homes and for jobs in the coal mining industry. In the latter half of the 19th and early part of the 20th century, the small ‘townships’ of The Rhondda were hives of commercial activity<sup>42</sup>. Although strong communities remain to this day a decline in the economic base have brought about a range of problems (environmental, economic, social and demographics) which have never been fully resolved and limit the achievement of future generations.

42 Rhondda Heritage [<http://webapps.rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk/heritagetrail/rhondda/>]





# 2

## EXPLORING TEMPORARY URBANISM

- 2.1 \_ Definition: Degrees of Temporariness
- 2.2 \_ Adhocism, Avant-Garde & Alternative Planning
- 2.3 \_ Contemporary Literature and Practice of Temporary Urbanism
- 2.4 \_ Relevant Temporary Urbanism Strategies
- 2.5 \_ Learning from the Ruhr Valley





## 2 . 1 DEFINITION: DEGREES OF TEMPORARINESS

“Temporary adj. 1. not permanent; provisional. 2. lasting only a short time. ~n. 3. a person employed on a temporary basis. – ‘temporarily adv. – ‘temporariness n.”

“Temporal adj. 1. of or relating to time. 2. of secular as opposed to spiritual or religious affairs. 3. lasting for a relatively short time. 4. Grammar. Of or relating to tense or the linguistic expression of time.”

“Permanent adj. 1. existing or intended to exist for an indefinite period: a permanent structure. 2. not expected to change; not temporary: a permanent condition. – ‘permanence or ‘permanency n. –‘permanently adv.”

### 2.1.1 \_ Introduction

A temporary urbanism can be broadly defined as a temporary occupation of space to define a short-lived urbanism. Temporary urbanism is not a unique phenomenon but a vital aspect of everyday urban life and can be understood at a variety of scales. With regards to residual space, this research will explore how the temporary can appropriate and establish permanence, and the scales under which this can happen. In general a temporary urban condition may range from the extra small such as an individual vending stall to the extra large represented by the temporary urbanism of a ‘shanty town’ or the 2012 Olympic Games layover. In this section, the writing will firstly investigate the complex definition of temporary in the built environment, coupled with a study of the degrees of temporariness.

## 2.1.2 \_ Defining Temporariness

This research proposes temporary as a suitable means for intervening in the Rhondda's residual spaces. However, temporary urbanism/temporary use can be a highly controversial term and there are conflicting interpretations. In planning, a change of use of land would require planning permission, but there are exceptions that apply to temporary uses<sup>1</sup>. Significantly, the legal definition of temporary emphasises the irrelevance of any temporary condition, focusing on the notion of non-permanence<sup>2</sup>. This anomaly deliberately avoids reference to the temporary, suggesting it is something you cannot classify measure or rely upon.

“Adj. Something that will last for only a limited period of time; transitory. Temporary is meaningless with regard to the duration of the length of time that it will last; however, it is used to designate absence of permanence.”<sup>3</sup>

A clear stance on temporary can be seen in mapping processes, where the temporary has been traditionally ignored, as a primitive preoccupation of society has been to record things of permanence such as mountains, oceans, constellations and cities. In the novel 'Invisible Cities' (1972) by Italo Calvino, the explorer Marco Polo passionately recounts a multitude of bizarre and fantastical cities. However, over the course of his journeys, it gradually becomes evident to the reader that the great tales are actually an ambivalent interplay of different temporal apprehensions of the same city, Venice<sup>4</sup>.

Note: It could be argued that everything is temporary on a relative time scale. The earth's ozone layer is temporary, the National Health Service, the Coalition Government or the red squirrel. Equally, it could be said that nothing is in fact temporary, permanence is a state of being, however fleeting. It is important to ask with what becomes longevity; a second, a day, week, month, year or century [...]

1 Spur, Harry. (11.01.2008) Temporary Planning Permission. [<http://www.propertyweek.com>]

2 Ellis Wild, Susan. (2006) 'Webster's New World: Law Dictionary', Wiley Publishing, Inc., Hoboken: New Jersey.

3 Ibid.

4 Welsh, John. Colleta, Christina Della. (2007) 'Erasing the Invisible Cities: Italo Calvino and the Violence of Representation', UPenn Department of Romance Languages. Downloaded from: [<http://www.pennworkingpapers.org/articles/2007/06/07/welsh-coletta-erasing-invisible/>]

Thus in the sense of Marco Polo, it is expectable to think that numerous temporal perceptions of a city can emerge from single permanent environments and reciprocate the measure of time, event, place and people<sup>5</sup>.

In the web series ‘Mapping the Temporary’<sup>6</sup>, the writer James Cook maintains that a great value can be found in mapping the ephemeral. His philosophical standpoint presses that the only thing of permanence is impermanence.<sup>7</sup> Cook’s argument is grounded in cultural and economic assumptions; he describes the ‘temporary’ as anything that was not intended to last:

“A definition of intention rather than a certain period of time”<sup>8</sup>

Cook believes that mapping permanence is simply the process of recording affluence and his research focuses on cartographers who have mapped large temporary urban areas such as the ‘Hoovervilles’ (shanty towns of the American Depression). Cook maintains that mapping transience allows us to abstract information to, ‘accurately convey the greater truths of people and place’.<sup>9</sup>

Note: ‘Crisis of Representation’ (Wales, Collet, 2007) - Calvino’s poetics of erasure carefully edit the truth to immortalise temporary cities within the permanence of Venice’s stone walls.

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- 5 Calvino, Italo. (1978) ‘Invisible Cities’, 1st Harvest/HBJ ed. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich: New York  
6 ‘Colliers Atlas’ [<http://colliersatlas.blogspot.com/>]  
7 Cook, James. (28.06.2008) ‘Mapping the Temporary: Part I’ (Cities of the Lost), Colliers Atlas Blog [<http://colliersatlas.blogspot.com/>]  
8 Ibid.  
9 Ibid.

Note: For alternative contemporary mapping, refer to: <http://www.bricoleurbanism.org/> (‘An ongoing series of reflections on the city, the landscape and the fields that manipulate them from the perspective of urban design, landscape architecture’). See, ‘Deconstructing the Shanghai Expo’ series.

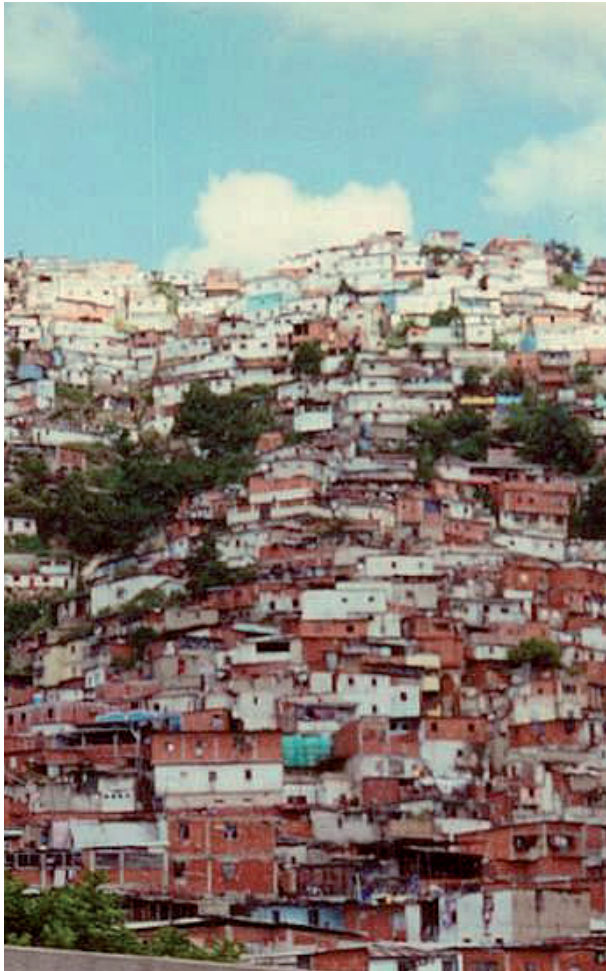


Fig. 1: 'Favela', Caracas

### 2.1.3 \_ XL, L, M, S, XS Everyday Temporary Urbanism

Before theorising the potential of a looser, more temporary urbanism, it is essential that the research comprehends the short-lived within an everyday context.

#### [XL] Extra Large: Shanty Towns

'Shanty towns' (also called squatter camps or 'favelas') are settlements (sometimes illegal or unauthorized) of impoverished people who live in improvised dwellings made from local scrap materials<sup>10</sup>. These 'informal cities' are usually built on the periphery of 'formal cities' <sup>11</sup> in developing nations and historically considered the, 'undesirable component of the urban structure' (fig.1)<sup>12</sup>.

In America, this unique urbanism was a result of the Great Depression of the 1930s which spurned massive unemployment. Now, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, many of these settlements are strongly established and therefore cannot be considered temporary in the traditional sense. The question this revelation poses is that; if the nature of 'favelas' etc is not in fact temporary, how have they developed this association? In addition to more apparent socio-economic issues, the reason can be linked to issues of time and construction; 'favelas' are a purely adhoc system. In an interview with BLDG BLOG, the urban commentator Mike Davis discusses, 'Slums and their Rogue Micro-Sovereignties', describing their temporal environments as being non-hierarchical and 'off-the-radar' places that survive on 'informal urban economies'<sup>13</sup>.

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10 Zarzar, Karina Moraez. (2008) 'Understanding Meaningful Environments: Architectural Precedents and the Question of Identity in Creative Design', Delft University Press: Amsterdam. From C6; 'Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: The Articulation between Formal and Informal City – Spontaneous Growth, Social Participation and Design Responses in Favela Settlements', by Roberto Serge. pp.77-79

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 Manaugh, Geoff. (Ed.) (2009) 'THE BLDG BLOG BOOK', Chronicle Books: San Francisco. p.103

As a whole shanty towns are no less permanent than the city of Venice, yet due to the fragility and constant dynamism of its content it can be considered temporary.

Temporary environments can be perceived and understood in a variety of ways. The nomadic 'Drop City' hippy artist settlement of 'bricolage' buildings was famed for travelling around America in the 1960's (fig.2). 'Drop City' pushed architectural parameters and represented 'a creative laboratory for cultural and environmental praxis'<sup>14</sup> that is still commonly referenced (Sadler, 2006). Whereas 'Drop City' is evidently 'temporary' and nomadic, there are also deterministically static temporary urban environments such as the 'Freetown of Christiania, squatted into the Christianshavn district of Copenhagen; Denmark. Similar to 'Drop City', the Christiania utopian vision for an alternative society was established in the 1970's by hippies and artists and qualifies as temporary urbanism in much the same way as a Favela or Shanty Town. Its urbanism epitomises the spirit of 'do-it-yourself' (fig. 3) and deconstructs the argument between regulation and anarchism<sup>15</sup>. Also, its life is temporary and unstable as the land it inhabits is owned by Denmark's Defence Ministry who through the courts and parliament have regularly ordered Christianites to vacate the old fortress<sup>16</sup>.

The objective behind the physical organisation of buildings and streets in Christiania is never determined by one body, or single-line of thinking. The emphasis is on the individual, a notion generally accepted in most urban design theory; that of the urban designer as the instrument of society he serves and whose validity of choice has to be tested against the requirements of that society<sup>17</sup>.



Fig. 2: Hippy Settlement, 'Drop City', US 1960's

14 Sadler, Simon. (2006) 'Drop City Revisited', Journal of Architectural Education, vol. 58, no. 1, 2006, pp. 5-14

15 Ibid., p.126

16 Christiania [<http://www.christiania.org/>]

17 Gosling, David. Maitland, Barry. (1984) 'Concepts of Urban Design', Academy Edition/St. Martins Press: New York, p. 125





Fig. 3: Improved 'Glass House', The Freetown of Christiania, Copenhagen

Note: The self-actualised architecture of Christiania is derived from a logic of reclamation; homes built from scraps that nobody else wanted with walls and murals decorated by squatters. New prototypes include a building composed of small windows, garage like schools and structures saturated with vegetation.



Fig. 4: 'Freedom to Roam', The Mobile Home

In spite of their degenerative traits, Christiania/Drop City are arguably realized utopia and represent an economic and sociological contrast to the Favela. Physically, and in architectural terms, they are similar as both are constructed on an adhoc basis with the major difference in this case falling on practicalities of density and re-use. For instance, whereas the growth of the 'favelas' was exponential, Christiania used existing structures as a basis and parameter for development.

### [L] Large: Nomadic Settlements and Urban Scale Interventions

Over the past 30 years, former agricultural landscapes have failed to absorb the impact of a declining industry<sup>18</sup>. With planning procedures unprepared to deal with building-less towns, caravan parks have rapidly emerged from what was previously a desolate rural landscape<sup>19</sup>.

Caravans, as lightweight mobile home units, evoke a primitive sense of 'nomadism' (fig.4). The irony being however, that in most situations (especially 'static' caravans) they are in no way temporary in their location and many of the 1960's caravans on the mass sites of 'Porthcawl' and Newquay, West Wales, have outlived their concrete high-rise counterparts.

### [M] Markets, Industry & Alternative Landscapes

Medium sized short-lived urbanism forms a fundamental aspect of everyday life and can be seen all around us. The markets of our towns and cities are central to formulating a concept of temporary urbanism. For example, a small lightweight market stall is the epitome of temporary, but when multiplied on a common template it develops the perception of permanence through repetition and presence.

Temporariness, variability and adaptation reach its extremes in the fascinating railway

18 Evans, N.J. Ilbery, B.W. (01.1992) Farm-based accommodation and the restructuring of agriculture: Evidence from three English counties) Journal of Rural Studies, Volume 8, Issue 1, pp.85-96

19 Ibid.

urbanism of Thailand as viewed in the notorious Maeklong Market<sup>20</sup>. On this particular piece of infrastructure, the Maeklong people pack their stalls immediately against the train lines whilst material canopies float overhead creating a tunnel effect. As the train passes through, the market contracts with folding sliding components resembling an ad hoc jewellery box or dilapidated chest of draws (fig.5).

### [S] Small: Parasites & Pavilion

Since it's regeneration in 1988, the South Bank on the River Thames in London, has emerged as a popular arts quarter where the eccentric ephemeral events and performances of quotidian life can fluctuate and re-occur at varying scales. Its temporary activities vary in scale and duration, some may be considered 'everyday' and 'ad hoc' whilst other are designed specifically for their situation (fig.6). For instance, the daily second hand and vintage book market under the arches of Waterloo Bridge benefits from the shade and shelter of the bridge structure, as well as the business generated from the consistent pedestrian flow through the space. This is a planned, designed and licensed temporary intervention. When the book market closes, the mass of foldable tables and various goods tuck away into a series of weathered timber chest boxes safely chained to the Thames edge railings.

In contrast, sporadic temporary occurrences and idiosyncratic spaces are a regular feature of the South Bank, as seen in the theatrical sandcastle design emerging from the small segment of beach near the OXO building or the woman who paints renaissance imagery on the concrete paving outside of the Royal Festival Hall.



Fig. 5: The ephemeral Maeklong Market, Thailand



Fig. 6: 'Walking in My Mind', one of 24 trees wrapped in red spotted fabric by Japanese Artist Yayoi Kusama

20 See Maeklong Market 'You Tube' video:  
[[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJL9vHtrHDI&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJL9vHtrHDI&feature=player_embedded)]





Fig. 7: Pavement painting, near Waterloo Bridge



Fig. 8: Sandcastles on South Bank Thames Beach

### [XS] Obscure Situations & Ephemera:

“Ephemera. n., pl. 1. mayfly, esp. one of the genus Ephemera. 2. something transitory or short-lived.”

“Expropriate. vb. (tr.) 1. to deprive (an owner) of (property), esp. by taking it for public use.”

The fleeting moments of urbanism are difficult to register and are perhaps best captured in the temporalities of performance. In Trafalgar Square for example, the Sculptor Antony Gormley performed a 3-month art experiment titled, ‘One & Another’<sup>21</sup> in which individuals (know as ‘Plinther’s) were offered the opportunity to temporarily become human sculptures by occupying the Fourth Plinth of the famous square for 60 minutes.

In addition to ‘one-off’ art interventions, the extra small in temporary urbanism can be defined by the architecture of street performance such as La Ramblas, Barcelona. The lightweight units and transportable structures selling flowers, small animals, souvenirs and scratch cards that adorn the strip create an alternative dimension of urbanity. These parasitical objects, a combination of fold away and dismountable processes, thrive on tourism and equally support a temporary urbanity through definition of place.

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21 One & Other, Antony Gormley. See; <http://www.oneandother.co.uk/> and, <http://www.london.gov.uk/fourthplinth/index.jsp>

## 2.1.4 \_ Conclusion

The study of everyday temporary urbanism has brought to light the diverse and variable layer of temporary activity that is unknowingly commonplace to daily life. We have seen that greater emphasis should be given to the boldness and eccentricities of the short-lived in our towns and cities and should be valued alongside longer standing architectures. Collectively, temporary urban interventions, situations, events, rituals and expropriations of space form a 'light' network whose nodes helps to animate public life and provide distinct meaning and character to urban areas. In this sense, one can conceptualise urbanism as a matrix of ephemeral organisms, such as the Mayfly.

On the other hand, the study has struggled to reach a definition of temporary urbanism and exposed the difficulty in registering ephemera or relating temporary architectures to more 'permanent' developments. Also, what has been revealed is the link between an interest in lost spaces and the broad definitions of the temporary. The next step therefore is to broaden the scope of observation to encompass programmed architectural interventions, structures, ideals and movements as instigators for reactivating residual areas.

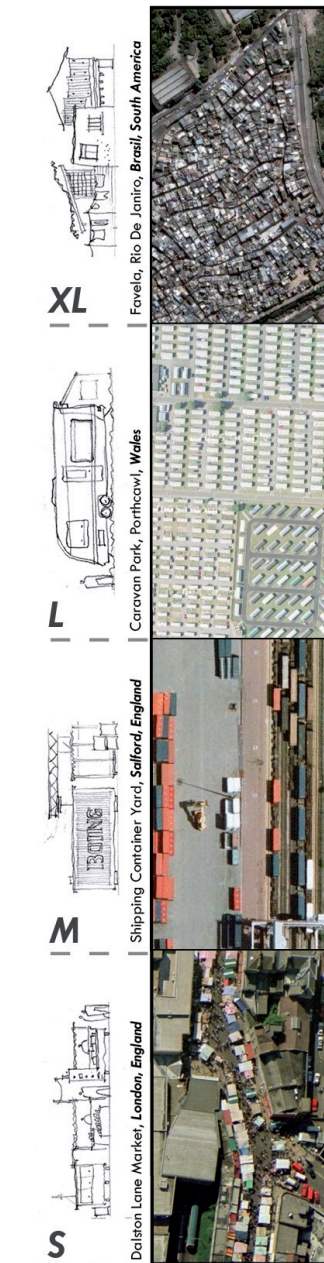


Fig. 9: Degrees of temporariness





Fig. 10: Helicopter Lifting a Geodesic Dome in Raleigh, 1954. R. Buckminster Fuller.

Note: The geodesic dome is a lightweight structure that has been used as inexpensive emergency shelter in relief urbanism and even to house weather stations in 180 mph winds in the Antarctic.

## 2 . 2 ADHOCISM, AVANT-GARDE & ALTERNATIVE PLANNING

### 2.2.1 \_ Introduction

After exploring the degrees of temporariness, the research will now look back to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century to the modern routes of temporary urbanism when pioneering groups of designers and activists were questioning conventional planning under a new determinism against the repetitive in everyday life captivated by the moments and construction of situations, urbanism and popular construction, individual and collective adventure.

### 2.2.2 \_ Placing Temporary Urbanism

In 1974, Barbara Chabrowe wrote in the 'Burlington Magazine' an article, 'On the Significance of Temporary Architecture'. Chabrowe's discussion contextualises in very practical terms the discourse between notions of permanence and temporariness in architecture.

“Obviously, temporary architecture serves a different purpose from permanent architecture... Yet the tradition of temporary architecture goes back further than the mid-nineteenth century. In fact, it goes back to antiquity.”<sup>22</sup>

She pronounces an age old belief that architecture by definition is intended to be permanent, 'to serve a practical and also aesthetic purpose over an indefinite period of time'<sup>23</sup>.

22 Barbara Chabrowe, 'On the Significance of Temporary Architecture', *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 116, No. 856. (Jul., 1974): p. 386 n. 4.

23 Ibid.





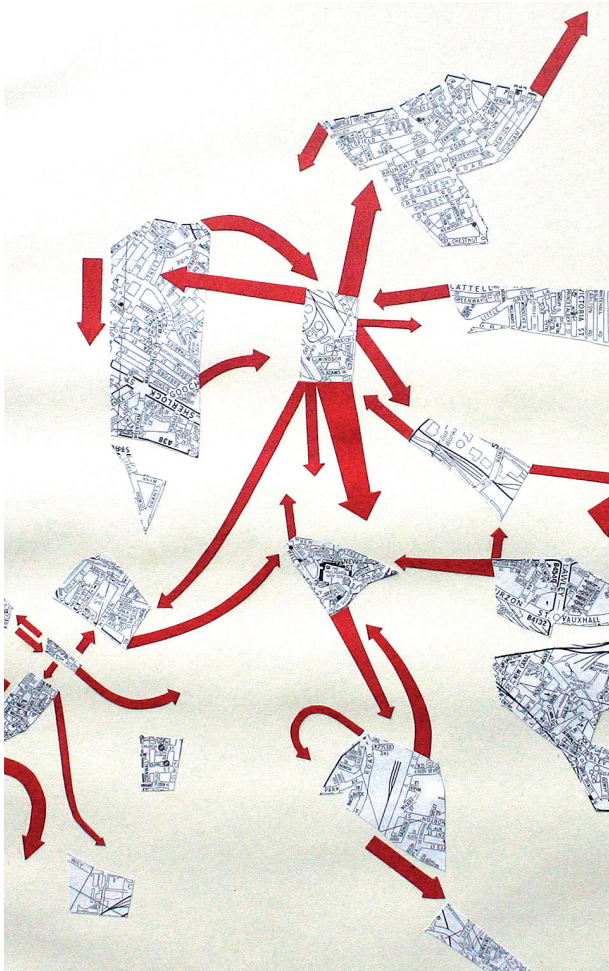


Fig. 12: 'The Invisible City: Illustration for the Hypothesis of a Psychogeographic Map of the Back of Rauchams'

Note: For aspects of the Situationists temporary urbanism agenda, refer to, 'Proposals for Rationally Improving the City of Paris' in Simon Sadler, *The Situationist City* (1998) and Ken Knabb (ed.), *Situationist International Anthology* (1995).

## 2.2.4 \_ Situationists and 'Self-determination'

Whereas Buckminster Fuller's concepts celebrated new technology, the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century observed the rise of movements that revolted against the insurgence of technocracy in everyday life<sup>28</sup>. This revolutionary response was delivered in the, 'Basic program of the Bureau of Unitary Urbanism' (1961); a bold and daring manifesto arising from the Situationists Movement that exploded onto the scenes at a time when 'conventional planning' was rarely questioned (Sadler, Knabb).

The Situationist<sup>29</sup> movement was initiated in the 1950's by the Situationists Internationale (SI)<sup>30</sup> under a new pluralism and self-determination that responded to the homogenizing and disciplining effect of functional planning and regulation<sup>31</sup>, formulating a new approach to the social space of the city calling for:

- Mobile urban spaces.
- A modifiable architecture.
- Cultural products for alternative purposes.
- Psycho-geographical explorations to bring out social aspects of the topography and the effective dimensions of constructed space<sup>32</sup>.

Significant to the emergence of temporary urbanism is that the Situationists wanted to banish all things functional and explore the variability of space for playful activities, culminating in the concept of a temporary city subject to a continuous, active process of

28 Knabb, Ken. (1981) *Situationist International Anthology*, Bureau of Public Secrets, p.51

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid., p.173. 'Situationist International Anti-Public Relations Notice'

31 Ibid., p.38. 'Towards a Situationist International'

32 Ibid., p.18. 'Psycho-geography/Detournement/Derive'

construction and decay<sup>33</sup>.

“Unitary Urbanism would battle against planners and efficiency experts and men in suits who sat in fancy offices high above everyone else”....“The unitary city would be disruptive and playful; reuniting all that had been physically and socially sundered, emphasising forgotten and beleaguered places, mysterious corners, quiet squares, teeming neighbourhoods, sidewalks filled with strollers....”<sup>34</sup>

### 2.2.5 \_ Cedric Price and ‘Expediency’

Following on from the Situationists idea of ‘construction and decay’, the British architect Cedric Price was also fascinated in the notion of life-cycles in urbanism, his work dealt with; the birth, the in-between and especially the decomposition of the built environment<sup>35</sup>. As a designer, he celebrated and obsessed with the abject; the ruin<sup>36</sup>. His alternative appreciation of the derelict past and theoretical revolt resulted in a process of exploration into lightweight structures with a fixed, short life span driven by technology and originating from industrial processes rather than grand civic architecture. In this sense, Price was the pioneer of temporary urbanism as a form of urban design.<sup>37</sup>

Price’s temporary urbanism is epitomised in the unrealised project, ‘Potteries Thinkbelt’ (1964). The ‘Thinkbelt’ was a critique of the rigid British university system and proposed mobile learning resources using a derelict rail network and large areas of dead space in a declined industrial zone (Hardingham, Rattenbury: *Supercrit#1*, 2007). For the ‘Thinkbelt’

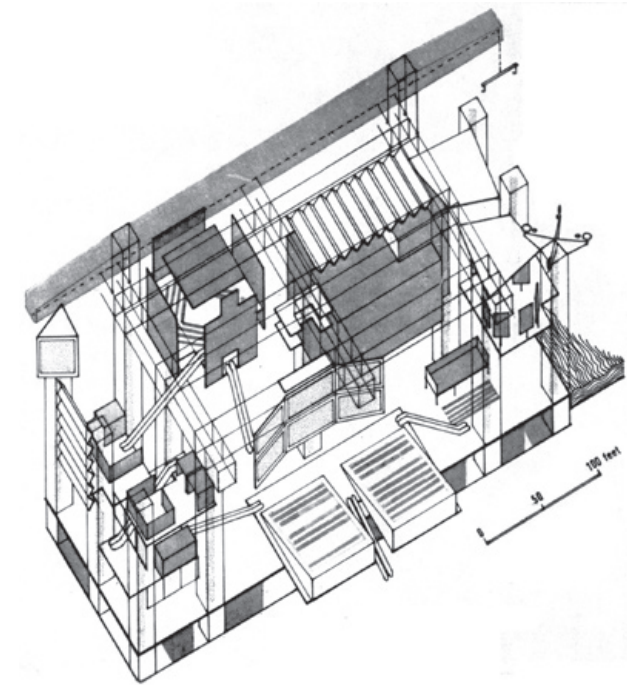


Fig. 13: ‘Fun Palace – University of the Streets’, Cedric Price & Joan Littlewood. Axonometric Section, 1964



Fig. 14: ‘Interactioncentre’ Cedric Price, Kentish Town 1976 (Demolished 2003)

33 Ibid., pp.29, 52-54. ‘The framework of ‘cultural decomposition’  
34 (2000) *Sprawl and Spectacle*, Harvard Design Magazine. No. 12  
35 Price, Cedric. (2006) *Re:CP*, Berlin: Birkhauser  
36 Ibid.  
37 Ferguson, Francesca. (Ed.). (2006) *Talking Cities: The Micro-politics of Urban Space*, Birkhauser: Berlin, p.16



Note: Cedric Price, together with the Smithsons and Venturi/Scott-Brown fascinated in the ordinary and crudeness of society's everyday environment enabling a microscopic analysis of the city as a substitute utopia (Koolhaas: Re: CP, 2006).

Note: 'Utopie' were a French architectural group established in 1967 in Paris to promote expendable, inflatable, pneumatic, temporary, transportable structures.



Fig. 15: From the exhibition 'The Dream of Fluxus'

Note: Fluxus were an international avant-garde group of artists founded in Germany in 1962 whose members explored media ranging from performance art to poetry to experimental music. Fluxus staged "action" events, engaged in politics and public speaking, and produced sculptural works featuring unconventional materials.

Price, like Fuller, championed expediency and the role of time in architecture:

"...The acceptance of expediency can well be a key to excellence since it is wholly dependant on the recognition of time as the fourth vital dimension of creative activity. Expedient, meaning advantageous or suitable, can only be accorded to action when the timing and duration of such is both advantageous and suitable"<sup>38</sup>

## 2.2.6 \_ Archigram and 'Expendables'

The opportunities of new technology and futuristic lines of thinking celebrated by Fuller and Price meant that it was possible to envisage unprecedented utopian environments. By the 1960's, further influential groups of thinking such as 'TEAM X', 'Archigram' and 'Utopie' could propose with conviction radical new ideas and concepts for the organisation of urban life that were based on temporary architecture<sup>39</sup>. Archigram imagined a world of 'throw away' architecture and temporary installations. They wanted the city to be an, 'ongoing festival, urbanism itself a social event of near-constant renewal and change'.<sup>40</sup>

Archigram were fascinated in the idea of a city as a 'mound'; conceived as one nebulous organism ('Metropolis', 1964-65), whose nature is either static or displaceable ('Walking City', 1964)<sup>41</sup>. Both of these hypothetical constructs speculate a temporary urbanism. Firstly, the static mound as a base for 'artefacts as transient plantings'<sup>42</sup>, a varying environment where objects can be uprooted and moved to their required location. Secondly, the assembly of temporary artefacts around a more substantial framework, both as building blocks of a

38 Price, Cedric. (2006) 'Re:CP', Berlin: Birkhauser

39 Biklen, Noah K. Hiremath, Amet N. Purdy, Hannah H. (Eds.). (Spring 2003) 'Perspecta 34: Temporary Architecture', MIT Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts. p.6

40 Manaugh, Geoff. (Ed.) (2009) 'THE BLDG BLOG BOOK', Chronicle Books: San Francisco. p.28

41 Cook, Peter. (Ed.) (1999) 'Archigram', Princeton Architectural Press: New York. p.140

42 Ibid.



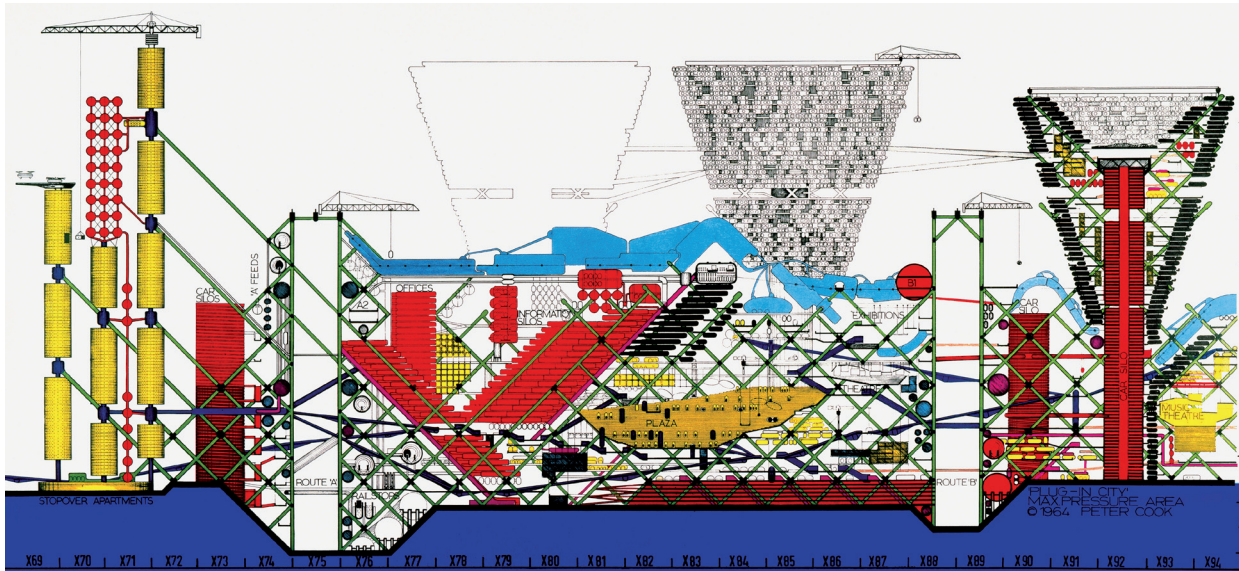


Fig. 16: 'Plug in City: Max Pressure Area' ©1964 Archigram

mound or parasitical entities within ('Instant City', 1969, 'Plug-In City', 1964).

### 2.2.5 \_ Superstudio and 'Subversion'

In parallel, and following on from Archigram in the 1960's and 70's, the Italian subversives 'Superstudio' exploded on the scene with provocative stunts, photo-collages, films and exhibitions.

They modelled themselves partly on art-house movements such as 'Situationists' and 'Fluxus', Their primary objective was to critique the modernist conformity that had engulfed 20<sup>th</sup> century design thinking<sup>43</sup> and push the audacious claim, that architecture was dead<sup>44</sup>.

This very serious point in the context of car-dominated, welfare state cities, protested that

43 'Superstudio Retrospective' [<http://www.designmuseum.org/design/superstudio>]

44 Dyckhoff, Tom. (March 11, 2003) 'Naughty, not nice'  
[http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts\\_and\\_entertainment/article1118180.ece](http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/article1118180.ece)



Fig. 17: 'The Falling in Love Machine' 1968, Superstudio

the quest for utopia had reached a dead-end. Through ephemeral installations such as, ‘The Wife of Lot’ (1978), Venice, Superstudio set out to comment on the unprecedented changes of their era through process and the temporary object<sup>45</sup>.

## 2.2.8 \_ Self-Realisation, Adhocism & Do-It Yourself

The counterculture of the 1960s had a direct influence on the architectural world. The movement began in the United States as a reaction to the conservatism of the 1950s, the political uncertainty of the Cold War period, and the US government’s extensive prolonged occupation of Vietnam.<sup>46</sup>

The Counterculture Movement is inherently connected to contemporary interpretations of temporary urbanism by way of deregulation, social-freedom, spontaneity and opportunism. In this section, the research will discuss one of the most significant architectural texts in contextualising this topic; the book by Charles Jencks and Nathan Silver, ‘Adhocism: the Case for Improvisation’ (1972).

Theories of ‘Adhocism’ were coined by Charles Jencks and Nathan Silver towards the end of the counterculture movement. It can also be applied to many human endeavours, denoting a principle of action having ‘speed’ or ‘economy’ and ‘purpose’ or ‘utility’<sup>47</sup>. Jencks and Silver define it concisely as the use of an available system or dealing with an existing situation in a new way to solve a problem quickly and efficiently<sup>48</sup>.

The book is structured in two parts; the first by Jencks establishes a theory of ‘adhocism’, which is then applied to aspects of art, the city and the consumer marketplace. Within the complementary parts of both authors we see two different adhocist actions;

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45 Lang, Peter. Menking, William. (2003) ‘Superstudio: Life Without Objects’, Skira: Milan, p.241

46 ‘Counterculture’ [[http://www.artandpopularculture.com/Counterculture\\_of\\_the\\_1960s](http://www.artandpopularculture.com/Counterculture_of_the_1960s)]

47 Jencks, Charles. Silver, Nathan. (1972) ‘Adhocism: The Case for Improvisation’. Secker & Warburg: London, p.9

48 Ibid.

- |i.| Using contingent situations as opportunities for resourcefulness
- |ii.| Using opportunities to produce contingent, open-ended results

The authors considered ways in which designers could take immediate action through the use of readily available components. Their philosophy was based on chance and opportunity affirming that Ad hoc means, “‘for this’ specific need or purpose”<sup>49</sup>

“A purpose immediately fulfilled is the ideal of adhocism; it cuts through the usual delays caused by specialization, beauracracy and hierarchical organization”<sup>50</sup>

Adhocism should be distinguished from random. It is purposeful yet is different to conventional directed behaviourism by advocating flexible and relaxed approach to a problem as opposed to a controlled and systematic one<sup>51</sup>. In fact, it is purposefulness that differentiates ‘adhocism’ from other activities and theories such as; empiricism, trial and error, mechanistic determinism and, most emphatically, behaviourism<sup>52</sup>.

The French anthropologist, Claude Levi Strauss was a firm believer in the ‘bricoleur’; a person who is adaptable, a ‘jack-of-all-trades’ and makes do with whatever is at hand. Jencks dedicates major discussion to the forces that repress adhocism and describes the battle between purposeful creativity and conditioning<sup>53</sup>. There are no happy accidents in this sense, the bricoleur acts on impulse and makes a change.

“Adhocism is based on the premise that the human condition is a perpetual plurality

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49 Ibid.,p.15  
50 Ibid., p16  
51 Ibid.  
52 Ibid., p.17  
53 Ibid.

of questioned and unquestionable ends...”<sup>54</sup>

There were numerous objections to the pluralism of ‘ad hocism’ from planners, Marxists and visionaries alike complaining that it’s too permissive.

“Ad hocism preserves the status quo; it sacrifices future goals for preset expediency and it tends to be confused, arbitrary, cute and complacent”.<sup>55</sup>

Towards the end of Jencks’ writing it becomes obvious to the reader that the paradigm at the heart of ‘ad hocism’ is the complex relationship between encouragement and expectation. The clarity and conviction in the ad hoc philosophy further deteriorates when applied to society, as any attempt to impose ideas on a group should be understood in the ‘ad hoc’ context as inherently hypocritical. The closest example to an actual ad hoc movement is compared to the rise of the ‘Do-it-yourself’ culture in the 1960’s<sup>56</sup>.

Ad hocism is a theory of the individual or small community. It envisions an environment designed unselfconsciously without architects and without specialized technicians:

“Everyone should be able to build, and so long as this freedom to build does not exist, the planned architecture of today cannot be considered an art at all. Architecture with us is subject to the same censorship as painting in the Soviet Union...only when architect, bricklayer and occupant are a unity, i.e. one and the same person, can one speak of architecture. Everything else is not architecture but the physical incarceration of a criminal act”<sup>57</sup>

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54 Ibid., p.36

55 Ibid., p.35

56 Ibid., p.70

57 Conrads, Ulrich. (1970) ‘Programs & Manifestoes on 20<sup>th</sup> Century Architecture’, pp.157-160



## 2.2.9 \_ Conclusion

What the Situationists, Superstudio, Archigram, Cedric Price etc have in common is that they all had unique and alternative dreams and desires on the environment, yet none were able to realize them.

R Buckminster Fuller routinely demonstrated his ideas in what he called “artifacts” - tangible prototypes or models of designs and principles. Archigram have inspired temporary architectures and were arguably the first to truly imagine a temporary city, testing the balance between temporary and permanent. Cedric Price was obsessed in the ruin, the derelict (an abundant resource in the Rhondda Valley) and is essential to the research as part of a process towards acquiring an understanding of temporary urbanism. Significantly, Price’s theoretical revolt resulted in a process of exploration into lightweight structures with a fixed short-life span, driven by technology and originating from industrial processes rather than grand civic architecture. Equally, the accidental nature of ‘ad hocism’ is relevant to the Rhondda Valley as a validating discourse for the regions improvised architecture and informal urbanism.

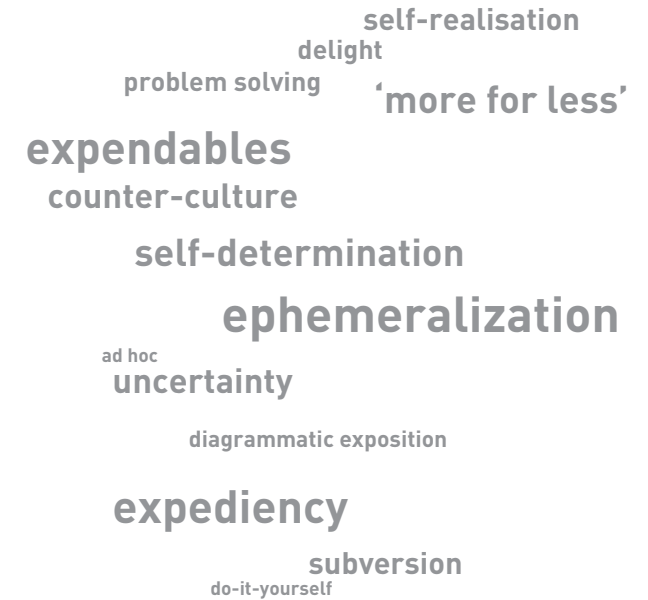


Fig. 18: Text collage of 20th Century 'Avant-Garde' discourse



## 2 . 3 CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE AND PRACTICE OF TEMPORARY URBANISM

### 2.3.1 \_ Introduction

There is currently a broad spectrum of literature that can be applied to discourse on residual space and temporary urbanism. However, in contrast to writings on permanent architecture, there are relatively few books that engage with the temporary. In fact, literature relating to temporary architecture tends to exist predominantly in journals, magazines, 'blogs' or tagged onto 'new' publications. In this section, the research will discuss several of these publications and the light they draw onto three aspects of temporary urbanism relevant to the Rhondda Valley condition:

- Temporary Urbanism as a Strategy for Shrinking Territories
- Temporary Urbanism as Experimentation and Liberation
- Temporary Urbanism as Dynamic Planning

### 2.3.2 \_ Temporary Urbanism as a Strategy for Shrinking Territories

As defined in earlier chapters, we have seen that the Rhondda is a victim of shrinking territories resulting in troubled landscapes and there is research to suggest temporary urbanism as a valid approach towards their reactivation.

For example, in spring 2003, the Yale Architectural Journal published, 'Perspecta 34: Temporary Architecture' to address the link between troubled landscapes and temporary architectures. The journal explores ideas and alternative practices of architecture arising

from ‘conditions of growth, movement and change’<sup>58</sup>. The underlying theme of the research is an uncertainty resulting from the multifaceted processes of globalization, shifting urban dynamics and the capacity for temporary projects to, ‘cut straight to the performative aspects of architecture’<sup>59</sup>. The journal is a portfolio of ‘architectural propositions and recordings of transient urban conditions’ that explore the correlation between the figure of architecture and the ecology of ‘fluctuating urbanism’.

“The irony of the temporary architectural figure is that it lasts. Conditions that describe a temporary, shifting ground persist, evolve, and repeat in various forms. Though buildings, urban formations, and landscape might disappear, residual effects remain: physical traces, economic ripples, social relationships”<sup>60</sup>.

‘Fluctuating urbanism’ is also the topic of, ‘Talking Cities: The Micro-politics of Urban Space’ (2006), a collaborative work that sets out a series of questions, all of which are equally pressing in the Rhondda; how do we re-engage, re-position, re-ignite spaces that are undervalued, in-transition, or at the margins of perception? <sup>61</sup>

The discourse is ordered so that articles discuss the significance of old industry, dereliction, evacuated sites and utopian thinking, stitched together through reference to the concepts of Cedric Price. The chapter, ‘Fragmented Cityscapes’, explores free-land, emptiness and its role in navigating the city to develop an understanding of the everyday and pragmatism in urbanism. Many landscapes analysed in ‘Talking Cities’ and ‘Perspecta’ strike significant parallels with the Rhondda Valley, however the territories are far wider and exist within

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58 Biklen, Noah K. Hiremath, Ameet N. Purdy, Hannah H. (Eds.). (Spring 2003) *Perspecta 34: Temporary Architecture*, MIT Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts. p.5

59 Ibid. p.6

60 Ibid. p.8

61 Ferguson, Francesca. (Ed.). (2006) ‘Talking Cities: The Micro-politics of Urban Space’, Birkhauser: Berlin’



drastically different political and cultural contexts.

Shrinking territories can be a universal issue for urban areas to contend with, the scale and variety of these spaces vary immensely. In ‘Residual Space Re-evaluated’ (2000), Daniel Winterbottom gives an account of troubled landscapes in Seattle and how a strategy of temporary creative projects by local communities has led to their reintegration into neighbourhoods. The reason that Seattle has become interested in residual space was the drive to ‘address a number of problems’<sup>62</sup>;

“One is the fragmentation of neighbourhoods through intensive siting of arterials, bridges, freeway ramps, and strip development. Another concern is that as infill housing projects are built, the amount of informal open space available to communities is decreasing”<sup>63</sup>.

Winterbottom highlights the potential and limitations of community projects, focusing on methods of ‘self-empowerment’<sup>64</sup>. In addition to outlining what can be achieved independently and what requires external input.

### 2.3.3 \_ Temporary Urbanism as Experimentation and Liberation

In addition to facing troubled landscapes, temporary urbanism in the Rhondda could give rise to urban experimentation and liberation from conventional planning. The ‘instant’ nature of temporary projects is evidently desirable to those wanting to re-define space and bypass limiting bureaucracy.

One example is the paper, ‘Walking as Do-It Yourself Urbanism’ (2004) from Belgian

62 Winterbottom, Daniel. (2000) ‘Residual Space Re-evaluated’ [Portfolio], Places: Vol. 13: No. 3, Article. p.40. Downloaded from: [<http://repositories.cdlib.org/ced/places/vol13/iss3/Winterbottom>]

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid.

Architect and Urban Designer Kenny Cupers that elucidates theories arising from the art project. 'Where do you Breathe', London 2004. This dynamic inquiry challenged the concept of 'authorship' in the public realm by proposing the act of walking as mutation of public space towards highlighting London's fringe, "breathing spaces";

"...tranquilised terrain open to contemplation – a post-industrial and uprooted, yet surprisingly bucolic landscape of roaming and lingering."<sup>65</sup>

Cupers desire to interact and appreciate what others would consider forgotten and neglected is refreshing, and potentially an alternative take on Rhondda's shrinking territories:

"...in which ways can people be stimulated to see urban space in alternative ways? How can imagination be released on the physicality of urban space? Can the city be transformed by using it, by looking at it or walking it?"<sup>66</sup>

It is noteworthy that Cupers objectives for a contemporary 'self-determination' form a typological breakdown of temporary 'do-it-yourself' urban situations and are divided as follows:

1. Experiential transformation of the city by the individual i.e. direct examples in living which have immediate aesthetic quality.
2. Immediate material transformation that changes the way space itself is perceived.
3. Urban intervention which can influence the way space is perceived.<sup>67</sup>

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65 Cuper, Kenny. (2004) 'Walking as Do-It-Yourself Urbanism', University of London: Goldsmiths, p.4

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid., p.6

Even though Cupers study relates to the highly urbanised outskirts of London, the objectives do nonetheless reveal transcending aspects of a temporary urbanism.

Further ambiguity on the liberating possibilities of the temporariness and indeterminability of architectural space is tackled by Carole Levesque as part of the ‘Reconciling Poetics and Ethics in Architecture’ series. Levesque explains that even though temporary architecture has a long history of existing in parallel to more permanent constructions<sup>68</sup>, major characteristic differences mean that they are often not considered ‘architecture’:

“By their very nature, they dispute the dominant role of architecture as lasting and providing permanent solutions, because they can exist without a determinate function, free to suggest uses rather than being governed by them, and free to exist on sites inaccessible to permanent architecture”<sup>69</sup>

Unfortunately, ‘the architecture of indeterminability’ blurs into the crowd of temporary architecture discourse by limiting its scope to the architectural installation. The paper is however expansive on the definition and references to temporary intervention; from installations as ‘environments’ or ‘happenings’ (ref Allan Kaprow 1960’s) to ‘fantasy universes’ and ‘concrete situations’ (Superstudio/Archigram, Hanes-Rucker-Company), or perhaps more fundamentally ‘the creation of settings’ (Cedric Price). Critically, these examples are very different; ‘paper architectures’<sup>70</sup> that mostly deal with exploratory attitudes as opposed to actual physical manifestations.

In contrast, the seminal 2008 exhibition ‘Instant Urbanism’ celebrates realised ‘instant’ projects and promotes the polemic that we as a society urgently need to re-think the city in order to speculate and test non-standard methods of advancing the built environment.

68 Levesque, Carol. (2008) ‘Actions in Indeterminability: Exploring the Possibilities of Temporary Architecture’, Reconciling Poetics and Ethics in Architecture. University of Montreal, p.1

69 Ibid.

70 Ibid., pp.2-4

“The social consequences of contemporary urbanism call for temporary and mobile solutions, spontaneity and social innovation in creating architecture and urban spaces”<sup>71</sup>

The exhibition is divided into two sections, ‘Temporary and playful architecture’, and ‘Revolutionizing of everyday life’. The temporary and playful section illustrates built architectures that convert ‘marginal places’ and ‘densely built-on areas’ into sites for play and action realised through sensual and surreal devices<sup>72</sup>. The works focus on stripped-down ideas of mobility, basic construction, assemblage, reuse and expedient solutions, thus recognizing diverse influences beyond ‘Situationism’ essential in the comprehension of temporary urbanism.

#### 2.3.4 \_ Temporary Urbanism as Dynamic Planning

In the ‘Shrinking Valley’ chapter, analysis of the Rhondda Valley planning documents has exposed the rigidity of current development guidance and lack of awareness to alternative land uses available. Consequently, it is clear that the Valley demands a fresh perspective on re-activating residual space. In Berlin, the proposition of ‘temporary urbanism as a dynamic planning tool’ has been comprehensively tried and tested with the City commonly described as ‘a laboratory for the business of temporary use’<sup>73</sup>.

In the essay, ‘Temporary Use: A Planning Strategy for the Uncertain’ (2006), Joseph Mackey argues the case for temporary use projects as a ‘valid planning strategy’ and introduces the concept of ‘dynamic masterplanning’ as a flexible strategy that can change and

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71 DAC. (2009.10.12) ‘Exhibition Review: Instant Urbanism: Tracing the Theories of the Situationists in Contemporary Architecture & Urbanism’ [<http://www.english.dac.dk/>]

72 Ibid.

73 Ibid. p.17



respond to the realities of the contemporary landscape<sup>74</sup>. One of the major protagonists of dynamic planning is the ‘Urban Catalyst’ (UC) programme, from the Claus Overmeyer group Studio UC, and is widely recognised as the most significant research project in the realm of temporary urbanism discourse and its synthesis in European Metropolises. As a planning strategy, Mackay believes:

“By curating the ‘soft programme’ of temporary use, Urban Catalyst have suggested a new form of urban planning that has the potential to change and respond to contemporary landscape of indeterminacy”<sup>75</sup>.

‘Urban Catalyst’, is funded by the EU; ‘City of Tomorrow Cultural Heritage’ programme to explore strategies for temporary uses for urban residual areas in European Metropolises and their potential as motors for change<sup>76</sup>. The UC network focuses on test areas characterised by a ‘time-gap’ and ‘interim uses’ resulting from particular economic situations. Their aim is to examine strategies for temporary use and to develop instruments and methods that integrate its potential into modern city management and urban design.

“The temporary and semiformal use of central residual space is often the starting point for strengthening the local economy and new services and for enhancing the social and cultural sphere”<sup>77</sup>.

Note: The network ‘Urban Catalyst’ group has developed models of action and strategic planning tools, integrating the potential of temporary uses into a long lasting urban development and forming a unique archive which is now available to architects, planners, municipalities, developers, property owners and temporary users. See: UC Website [<http://www.urbancatalyst.net/projekte.php>]. Also refer to: ‘Spatial Agency’ website that invaluable structures a forum related to temporary urbanism on topics of: Appropriation, Dissemination, Empowerment, Networking and Subversion [<http://www.spatialagency.net/database/urban.catalyst>]

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74 Mackey, Joseph. (2006) ‘Temporary Use: A planning strategy for the uncertain’, Sheffield University. p.4

75 Ibid. p.5

76 Misslwitz, P. Oswald, P. Overmeyer, K. (2003) ‘Urban Catalyst: Strategies for Temporary Uses – Potential for Development of Urban Residual Areas’, Studio UC: Berlin. p.2

77 ‘Urban Matrix - Digital Library’ [[http://www.eukn.org/urbanmatrix/themes/Urban\\_Policy/Social\\_inclusion\\_and\\_integration/](http://www.eukn.org/urbanmatrix/themes/Urban_Policy/Social_inclusion_and_integration/)]

Urban catalyst research is both prospective and retrospective, in addition to strategising how temporary uses emerge, the group analyse how residual sites have already been developed by cultural pioneers explaining that, ‘found spaces’ and materials are recycled with a minimum of investment and physical intervention<sup>78</sup>.

The UC research is significant as it has revealed key conclusions on how temporary uses emerge and operate. The parameters of the study are that it focuses purely on strategies and mechanisms, whilst ignoring ideas of architecture, space and meaning. Thus, detailed studies of existing temporary uses suggest clear patterns and processes that do not emerge accidentally and are guided by different factors and rules.

“Temporary uses are often associated with crisis, a lack of vision and chaos. But, despite all preconceptions, examples like the vital scene of Berlin’s nomadic clubs or temporary events proves that temporary users can become an extremely successful, inclusive and innovative part of contemporary urban culture<sup>79</sup>”.

The primary conclusions from the UC team are as follows:

- A. Citizens become temporary users in order to follow different aims
- B. Specific vacant sites attract specific temporary uses
- C. Temporary uses flourish with a minimum of investment
- D. Temporary uses are mostly organised in networks and use clusters
- E. Temporary uses are initiated through agents
- F. Temporary uses are a laboratory for new cultures and economies.

The key strategies from UC to be noted for the Rhondda are the desire to; recognise

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78 Misslwitz, P. Oswald, P. Overmeyer, K. (2003) Urban Catalyst: Strategies for Temporary Uses – Potential for Development of Urban Residual Areas, Studio UC: Berlin. p.3

79 Ibid., p.4

existing potential and resources that can be activated in residual urban areas, eliminate developmental obstacles, stimulate interaction between potential partners and generate temporary activities, and to support the further development of the activation processes and allow them to be transferred into lasting developments.

Many of the alternative uses and examples of dynamic planning celebrated by ‘Urban Catalyst’ are also collated in the temporary urbanism compilations, ‘Urban Pioneers: Temporary Use and Development in Berlin’ (2007) and ‘Temporary Urban Space: Concepts for the Use of City Spaces’ (2006). Both publications promote the potential of temporary space to highlight undiscovered districts and ‘dead territories’<sup>80</sup>. Collectively, they both assimilate an extremely wide-range of concepts and timeframes, from one-off events through to seasonal projects and initiatives that were originally intended for a short-run<sup>81</sup>. ‘Temporary Urban Space’ deals with the notion of a process orientated methodology in planning, hailing temporary users as economic and legal exceptions who ‘observe social relations and exploit gaps and niches’<sup>82</sup>.

“...temporary uses and uses for which a society does not usually provide space, and they use spaces that, for whatever reason, stand vacant, and hence lie in the shadows of social or private attention”<sup>83</sup>.

In the preface to ‘Urban Pioneers’, Ingeborg Jung- Reyer, Senator for Urban Development in Berlin solidifies the key constraints, opportunities and threats involved with temporary urbanism and dynamic planning. He identifies a tense dualism between the attitudes of

Note: The book Urban Pioneers coins the term ‘Space Pioneers’, as a description for individuals and groups who set out to discover abandoned sites and reinvent them, adapting to the environment at hand and exploiting its resources.

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80 Studio UC. (2007) Urban Pioneers: Temporary Use and Development in Berlin, Jovis Verlag: Berlin, p.17

81 Ibid., p.37

82 Haydn, Florian. Temel, Robert. (Eds.). (2006) Temporary Urban Spaces: Concepts for the Use of City Spaces. p.31

83 Ibid.

‘creative minds’ and that of urban planners<sup>84</sup>, explaining in Berlin’s case that the opposition is not strictly the planners but the public who are naturally reluctant to the use of urban temporary space<sup>85</sup> without the power to impose a fresh line of thinking.

‘Urban Pioneers’ is a comprehensive presentation mainly as it is coordinated by the same group responsible for ‘Urban Catalyst’, whilst the limitations of ‘Temporary Urban Space’ is forced by the sheer number of projects covered and the editors decision to evade any opportunity to distinguish what qualifies as ‘temporary urban space’. The essay, ‘Temporary Uses, Deregulation and Urbanity’, does however go forward to argue the temporary as a new planning method, but regrettably through well trodden criticism of Functionalism as ‘a negative movement towards uniformity’<sup>86</sup>:

The benefits of integrating temporary urbanism into urban planning are inextricably linked to discussions of land value and property development creating a vested interest for Real Estate businesses. Michael Meredith from the Real Estate Academic Initiative at Harvard University is currently opening up the discussion of Temporary Urbanism and its role as part of the larger urban condition<sup>87</sup>. Equally the journalist Chris Steins writes in, ‘How Temporary Uses Can Revitalize Neighbourhoods’, that ‘temporary, interim, or intermittent uses’ are part of a growing trend that creatively responds to new planning needs<sup>88</sup>. Steins persuades that temporary uses can draw positive attention to underused or vacant sites, as well as adding immediate neighbourhood amenities. Capable of incubating innovative

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84 Studio UC. (2007) ‘Urban Pioneers: Temporary Use and Development in Berlin’, Jovis Verlag: Berlin, p.17

85 Ibid., p.39

86 Haydn, Florian. Temel, Robert. (Eds.). (2006) ‘Temporary Urban Spaces: Concepts for the Use of City Spaces’. p.26

87 Meredith, Michael. ‘Temporary Urbanism’, Harvard University  
[<http://www.reai.harvard.edu/temporary-urbanism>]

88 Steins, Chris. (28.12.2007) How Temporary Uses Can Revitalize Neighbourhoods, American Institute of Planning

business ideas and occupy a gap while longer planning and community consultation is undertaken.

Overall, we see that temporary urbanism through dynamic planning can offer a ‘stand-by urbanism’ where adaptive interim programmes protect crucial fragments of the built environment from becoming de-contextualised and inadvertently falling off the social and cultural radar.

Due to the recession, the amount of central ‘mothballed’ sites in the UK, especially London\* reached a peak in November 2009<sup>89</sup> when ‘Building Design’ magazine reported on several alternative public uses planning to appropriate the in-between period. There are however numerous constraints associated with mothballed sites such as the public safety, responsibility and management. These issues and minor investment are offset against the potential long-term gain to the commercial developer as interim projects can focus engagement with communities, improve relations and strengthen ties with local councils.

“Many communities have been angry that city centres have been left derelict and unusable. The ‘Site Life’ (British Property Federation) campaign will see the property industry foot the bill for short term changes to the sites, provided councils can assure them that planning permission will remain”<sup>90</sup>.

Note: Plans for ‘mothballed site’ included a major mixed-use scheme master-planned by Terry Farrell to be temporarily turned into a five-a-side pitch and the Richard Rogers’ stalled “cheese grater” site to be offered as a new public space. Stanhope, the developer of the empty city block known as ‘Noho’ in the void of the former Middlesex Hospital in the Fitzrovia district of London’s West End were to permit local residents to grow food on the site following the collapse of the Make Architects £150million scheme.

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89 BD. (19.11.2009) ‘British Land shifts goalposts in City’ [<http://www.bdonline.co.uk/story.asp>]

90 British Property Federation. (15.03.2010) ‘Westfield and Land Securities back Campaign to let Communities use Mothballed Development Sites’ [<http://www.bpf.org.uk/westfield-and-land-securities>]





Fig. 19: Text collage of contemporary temporary urbanism discourse

### 2.3.5 \_ Conclusion

From this exploration, it is possible to extract a number of key lessons and commonalities in temporary urbanism discourse and practice. With reference to the Rhondda Valley, it is clear that there exist fundamental lines of thinking that should be embraced when deriving a strategy for dealing with the creative and appropriate use of residual space.

Certain research projects in the analysis stand out as particularly informative, such as the unprecedented and methodological UC study. Its relevance however is limited for this research due to the different backgrounds upon which it is based. In contrast to the central urban objective of the UC study, the Rhondda research explores the potential for a temporary urbanism to exist in the sporadic townships of the Valley and its semi-rural peripheries.

In summary, the research has identified the following conclusions relevant to the Rhondda Valley on the potential of temporary urbanism:

- Temporary Urbanism is by necessity highly responsive to its context and can be planned but also adapted to the evolution of specific sites functioning, on a 'soft programme' (Urban Catalyst).
- Temporary urbanism is resilient and exploratory, capable of manifesting in unexpected locations (Where do you Breathe/Residual Space Re-Evaluated)
- Temporary use can improve perceptions of public spending - use of tax/public money (Seattle community projects)
- Temporary urbanism can be more manageable in the hands of the community and even perform as testing ground for entrepreneurs (Urban Pioneers/Temporary Urban Space)
- Temporary use can initiate creative partnerships between community interests and the private sector, allowing for greater inclusiveness. ('Mothballed' Sites)

## 2 . 4 RELEVANT TEMPORARY URBANISM STRATEGIES

### 2.4.1 \_ Introduction

The following section provides a sample of temporary urbanism strategies believed to be relevant to the Valley context. Each project is presented in terms of duration, location, site area, ownership, sponsors, funding and partners. The objectives are to summarise the core strategies of each project to support a generic strategy for the Rhondda.

### 2.4.2 Sample of Temporary Urbanism Strategies

### Key data

Duration: 01/2010-04/2010 (3 Months)

Location: 455-497 Oxford Street, London

Site: 0.65ha

Ownership: Land Securities (Developer)

Sponsor: 'Progressive Events'

Description: Temporary event making the site home to 24 life-size animatronic dinosaurs roaming a Jurassic forest as part of the 'Dinosaurs Unleashed exhibition'.

Funding & Partners: Land Securities, Mayor of London, GLA (Greater London Authority), Central Government.



Fig. 20: Diagrammatic section through 'Parklife' to Oxford Street

## Parklife, Oxford Street

### Land Securities

#### Category: Temporary Urbanism as Dynamic Planning

Further to the ongoing debate of how to deal with frozen construction sites (p.87), it was revealed by developer Land Securities in early 2010 that a prominent vacant Oxford Street site was to exhibit a large collection of robotic dinosaurs.

The 3 month temporary event receiving 3,000 visitors a day during half-term, provided an interim use for a construction site that has been put on hold due to the recession. The proposed residential development for the site is believed to be the largest development on Oxford Street in 40 years scheduled to be completed in 2012<sup>91</sup>.

As part of the exhibition, the site is converted into a realistic 'Jurassic Park' that surrounds an entrance pavilion showing the only public face to the street. For the developer, the Oxford Street case demonstrates how temporary use can be exploited as a financial mechanism to maximise resources, PR technique to raise the profile of the site, illustrate a concern on the environment and showcase resilience to the challenges brought about by the economic crisis. Equally, it has been proven that temporary use can be pushed by the City to promote tourism and footfall to a particular area<sup>92</sup>.

91 BBC News. (28.01.2010) Robotic Dinosaurs to Walk on Oxford Street  
[<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/london/8483899.stm>]

92 British Property Federation. (15.03.2010) Westfield and Land Securities back Campaign to let Communities use Mothballed Development Sites  
[<http://www.bpf.org.uk/westfield-and-land-securities>]

### Strategy summary

- Temporary use as income stream and PR mechanism for developer.
- Mutually beneficial partnership for city, developer and the industry
- Formal agreements required for temporary use of site.



Fig. 21: Birds eye view of 'Parklife, Oxford Street'

### Key data

Duration: 5 days, July 2008

Location: 100 Union St., Southwark, SE1 0NL

Site: 0.08ha, Site in transition from empty lot to new residential and office buildings

Ownership: Lent by Solid Space (Collaboration with Bankside Open Spaces Trust)

Sponsor: Borough Market, Neill's Yard, A. Booths  
Finest Fruit Veg and Mushrooms, Culture 2000, Travis Perkins, Northfield Farm, Hozelock-Tricoflex [...]

Description: Temporary 'lido' following in the tradition of Roman baths and Turkish hammams, which provided a setting for social gathering, ritual cleansing and uninhibited political discussions.

Funding & Partners: London Architecture Festival, Sara Muzio (Filmmaker)

## Southwark Lido

EXYZT & Architecture Foundation (curators)

Category: Temporary Urbanism Experimentation and Liberation

EXYZT are a multi-disciplined Paris based collective consisting of artists, architects, dj's, vj's, chefs, botanists and film makers, who specialise in short-lived interventions<sup>93</sup>. The group have become particularly popular on internet sites such as 'You Tube'<sup>94</sup> for time lapse videos of, 'installations underpinned by speedily erected scaffold poles'.

For five days in July 2008, a temporary 'Lido' including a swimming pool, timber sunbathing deck, bar and garden was erected on a vacant site in Southwark as part of the London Festival of Architecture. The project aims were to define a temporary occupation of space as a 'forum for films and discussions' about architecture', as well as a place of relief to combat the repetitiveness of everyday city life. Fundamentally, EXYZT believe that architecture should not be concerned with appearance or representation, but as fabrication,

“Architecture as means or alibi opening up a space for invention, creation, improvisation, encounter, meeting, exchange and enhancing human relationships”<sup>95</sup>.

The Lido offers a degree of escapism and questions conventional relationships and perceptions of the city and its citizens. The adventurous and chimerical concept of creating a place for bathing in the centre of London provokes ideas of play latent in the writings of the Situationist International, especially Raoul Vaneigem.

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93 EXYZT Website [<http://www.exyzt.org/>]

94 EXYZT You Tube Channel [<http://www.youtube.com/user/exyzt>]

95 EXYZT Website [<http://www.exyzt.org/>]



This is a utopian and distinctly cheerful temporary urbanism with a finite and predefined life that reassesses the value and function of residual spaces.

### Strategy summary

- Architecture as fabrication
- Place for encounters & collective memory
- Creating the unexpected
- Urban camp/retreat
- Constant dynamic
- Everyday experience



Fig. 23: Southwark Lido

### Key data

Site Acquisition: 1996 (Long Lease)

Duration: 2001 [-]

Location: Leamouth Peninsula, East London

Site: 2.88ha post-industrial site

Ownership: Trinity Bouy Wharf Trust

Sponsor: London Docklands Agency (LDA)

Description: Site for artistic and cultural activities combining innovative shipping container structures and re-use of post industrial buildings.

Funding & Partners: Leaside Regeneration, Lea Rivers Trust, Groundwork East London, Thames Explorer Trust, Lea Valley Regional Port Authority, Museum of London.

## Trinity Bouy Wharf, East London Docklands

Urban Space Management (developers) & various architects

Category: Temporary Urbanism as a Strategy for Shrinking Territories

Trinity Buoy Wharf is a post industrial urban headland situated roughly one mile East of Canary Wharf, the site comprises a collection of warehouses and maritime artefacts that have been boldly reinterpreted for a diversity of cultural activities, both long and short term.

The main components of the site are the multicoloured 8ft x 8ft x 40ft containers stacked 5 storeys and connected with steel walkways and stairs. Each insulated container is a suitable size for a small office or studio.

Trinity Buoy Wharf has come to signify an alternative and flexible regeneration model founded on principles of organic urban growth and 'low cost, low risk activity'. In 1996, Urban Space Management was chosen from a shortlist of developers by the London Docklands Agency to "procure a place for creative enterprise". By avoiding commitment to large funding and any associated delays, the programme could develop sequentially and rapidly within realistic financial constraints. At present, habitable space on the site is at 100% (350 artists and creative businesses) with people working, exhibiting and rehearsing.

### Strategy summary

- Flexible and phased sustainable regeneration
- Low cost/low risk development
- Rapid construction
- Innovative re-use of steel containers
- Unique architectural language
- Re-use of derelict warehouse buildings and 80% recycled material.
- Open to the public
- Range of spaces for diverse long and short-term artistic and cultural use



Fig. 25: Two-storey office from adapted shipping container, Trinity Buoy Wharf

### Key data

Construction: 2005-2008

Duration: May 2009 [-]

Location: Aberystwyth, Mid-Wales

Site: 0.9ha landscape site (non-residual)

Ownership: Aberystwyth University

Sponsor: University of Wales Aberystwyth,  
Aberystwyth Arts Centre

Description: 8 buildings 10m × 8m × 5m divided into  
16 Creative Business Units (CAB)

Funding & Partners: Arts Council of Wales Lottery  
Fund, The Welsh Assembly Government and also  
Aberystwyth University, Esme Fairbairn Foundation  
for artists, Wales Arts International.

## Creative Business Units, Aberystwyth University

Thomas Heatherwick Studios

Category: Temporary Urbanism Experimentation and Liberation

A strategy of temporary use within a permanent framework can also be seen in the Thomas Heatherwick Studios competition winning scheme for Creative Business Units (CAB's) for Aberystwyth Arts Centre, part of the University of Wales Aberystwyth.

To avoid proposing a single campus style block, the studio employs a strategy of dispersal based on eight smaller structures mirroring an area of trees. The buildings have a unique and affordable cladding system that manipulates steel the thickness of cooking foil to create a crinkled effect, that when coupled with foam insulation also determines an environmental strategy. The shiny reflective foil surfaces juxtapose against the dense green of the surroundings and frame segments of sky.<sup>96</sup>

Whereas the Heatherwick scheme does not propose a temporary life for the structures it does strategically accommodate facilities for temporary occupation. The site contains 16 low-cost facilities that can be temporarily appropriated by start-up arts enterprises for an open-ended period. Three units will be used for the Arts Centre's Artists in Residence scheme, which will offer 12 visual and applied artists the opportunity to develop their work during a set three-month long residency. The objective is to encourage a creative environment for interaction between a mix of businesses to support the realization of their economic and creative potential.<sup>97</sup> Since its launch in May 2009, all 16 units have been occupied but only retrospective studies could accurately conclude how temporary or permanent each tenant's period may become.

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96 Thomas Heatherwick Studios [<http://www.heatherwick.com/index>].

97 Project Specification Review  
[<http://www.designbuild-network.com/projects/aberystwyth/>]



Strategy summary

- Permanent basic, affordable structure
- Innovative cladding solution
- Environmental strategy
- Semi-Private
- Low cost temporary occupation



Fig. 27: Temporary allows testing of innovative cladding solution



### Key data

Construction: N/A, Timeline for site 1996-2025

Duration: Strategy Established 2006 [-]

Location: Greenwich Peninsula (Largest Brownfield site in UK)

Site: 100ha

Ownership: Combination of, English Partnerships, Quintain (MDL), Transport for London (TFL), Greenwich Yacht Club, Greenwich Ecology Park, AEG, Greenwich Millennium Village Ltd (GMVL).

Sponsor: Greenwich Millennium Village Ltd (GMVL).

Description: A multi-stranded strategy to create a unique identity for the Peninsula through temporary works, events and performance, as well as the making of public spaces and places.

Funding & Partners: English Partnerships (EP), Meridian Delta Ltd (MDL), Greenwich Millennium Village Ltd (GMVL), London Borough of Greenwich (LBG), Arts Council England (ACE).

## Greenwich Peninsula Art Strategy

MUF Architecture/Art

Category: Temporary Urbanism as Dynamic Planning

In 1996, the post-industrial Greenwich Peninsula was selected by the Deputy Prime Minister as the venue for the Millennium Celebrations. An outline masterplan for ‘tabula rasa’ site was produced by Richard Rogers and further developed by the Greenwich Millennium Village LTD consortium under the direction of Ralph Erskine Architects. From the outset, it was clear that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister wanted to use the regeneration of the Peninsula as an exemplary model for C21st living.

At the centre of this objective, the client team emphasised the importance of artwork in the public realm. As such, MUF architects were commissioned to address the social and material conditions of the Peninsula and produce a comprehensive art strategy. The first strand of the MUF strategy is titled ‘Temporary Experiences, Places and Spaces’ and sets out to identify strategic sites where existing dormant land can be activated to create meaningful connections and legible public space.

“In an environment in flux such temporary works respond to a changing situation, their lifespan may run from a number of months to a limited number of years”.<sup>98</sup>

Three temporary projects are proposed to interface between areas of existing and future phase public realm development:

1. Urban Meadow: Accessible and experiential urban meadow as an interim use for dormant site to attract both dedicated art audiences and casual passers by.
2. Local and Remote: Using existing construction and other development infrastructure as a canvas for artists to reinterpret the surroundings and frame new views of the Peninsula i.e. using site hoardings for constructing photographic tableaux with the drama students from the Millennium School as characters, time-lapse film of the tidal ebb.
3. Links and Routes: Capitalise on strategic value of riverside walk and pedestrian cycle path with temporary works to attract the public and highlight the Peninsula's assets.

#### Strategy summary

- Create linking spaces on site
- Underscore connections to the wider area
- Build social relationships
- Establish the Peninsula as an “art” destination
- Soften the impact of dormant land

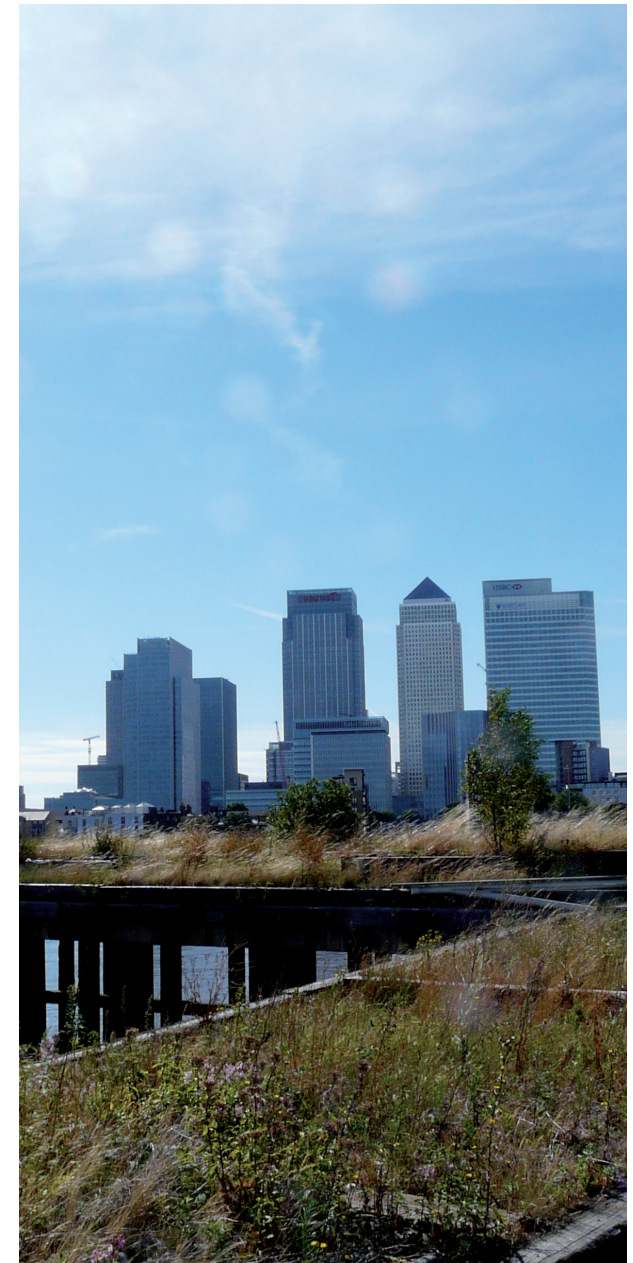


Fig. 29: Greenwich Peninsula 'In-between landscape'

### Key data

Construction: unknown

Duration: Jun 30th - Sep 30th 2009

Location: 10th Floor, Peckham Multi Storey Car Park

Site: 0.4ha

Ownership: Local Authority

Sponsor: Campari (liquor brand)

Description: Short-lived pop-up café/bar to appropriate a failing 'eyesore' carpark rooftop with views over central London.

Funding & Partners: Hannah Barry Gallery

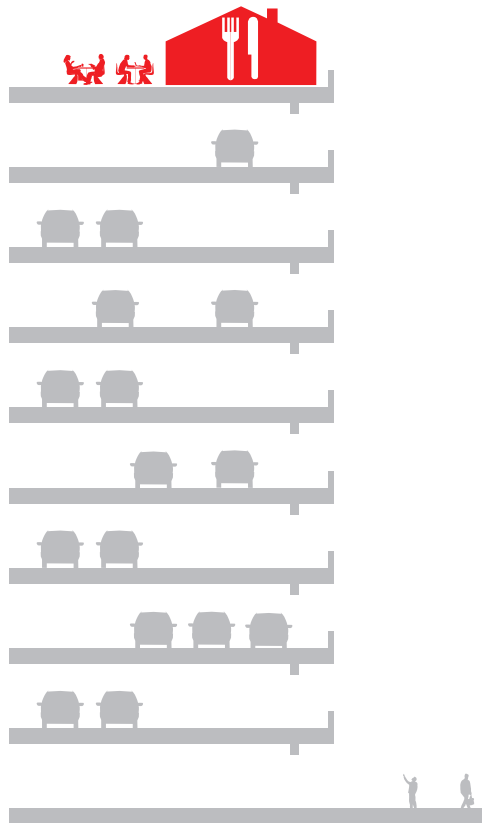


Fig. 30: Diagram - rooftop parasite

## Franks's Cafe, 10th Floor, Peckham Multi-Storey Carpark, London

Lettice Drake & Paloma Gormley, Graduates of Cambridge Architecture Faculty

Categories: Temporary Urbanism as a Strategy for Shrinking Territories

Franck's café is a parasitic structure bolted to the top floor concrete deck slab and balustrade of an underused and abused south London carpark. The temporary project was realised by two graduates in the spirit of adhocism, relying on the cheapest and most readily available materials and construction methods appropriate for the unconventional site.

The structure represents alternative urban 'genius loci' typical of new temporary parasitic structures. In this case, the primary laminate timber frame is attached by minimal plate footings to the level 10 slab and tensioned by straps that loop across the Level 9 soffit to support a sheltering canopy. Other principal components are scaffold decking and plastic sheeting.

For a short time, Franck's café/bar transformed the car park combining improvised furniture, distinct product branding, spectacular panoramic views and artwork. It served a practical solution to a common urban condition, focused activity and in its fleeting life left little marks on the structure. One criticism is that whilst Franck's bar offered a clear commentary on the state of neglected council property, it did however target a particular young, trendy and affluent part of society within a highly deprived area. Its architectural merits cannot be questioned but it balances on the edge of self-indulgence and social responsibility.

### Strategy summary

- Brand promotion
- Challenge perceptions of place
- Economic and material functionality
- Exploiting existing site features



Fig. 31: View of adjustable canopy and anchoring hoists





Fig. 32: 12th May 1945 - Sprawling German industry in the Ruhr Valley 108 (HDeVoe)



## 2 . 5 LEARNING FROM THE RUHR VALLEY

### 2.5.1 \_ Introduction

The urbanism of the Ruhr Valley, Germany contains many parallels with the Rhondda Valley. Both have been historically the victims of rapid deindustrialisation resulting in large areas of vacant and derelict land. The main difference being that the Ruhr has benefited from substantial funding towards its regeneration. In this section, the research will interrogate the re-activated Ruhr landscape to draw lessons from its implemented strategy of permanent and temporary interventions.

### 2.5.2 \_ The Ruhr Valley

The Ruhr, encompassing the cities of Dortmund, Duisburg and Essen, is described by MVRDV as a ‘dispersed and low-contrast periphery’ of suburbs, green spaces and old industrial sites that, ‘resemble a lining up of in-between areas’<sup>99</sup>. The two valleys of Rhondda and Ruhr are similar in the sense that they are both victims of a shrinking city syndrome<sup>100</sup>; suffering from depopulation, high unemployment and an overlapping relationship between nature and industrial decay (fig.33).

The scale of both cases are however very different. For instance, heavy industry operations in the Ruhr were rapidly restructured over 30 years, a process that was prolonged for nearly a century in the Rhondda. Also, the scale of mining in the Rhondda was constrained by its narrow topographical structure, existing communities and limited capacity for infrastructure.

99 ‘Emscher Park: From Dereliction to Scenic Landscapes’  
[<http://sustainablecities.dk/en/city-projects/cases/emscher-park-from-dereliction-to-scenic-landscapes/>]  
100 Shrinking Ruhr described in the Dortmund + Duisburg section of the Shrinking Cities website  
[<http://www.shrinkingcities.com/>]

#### The Ruhr Valley:

Country: Germany  
Urban Scale: 17 Cities in the Ruhr District  
Area: 800km<sup>2</sup> (landscape 460km<sup>2</sup>)  
Population: 2.5m (1998)  
Density: 2,300/km<sup>2</sup>  
GDP (per capita): 40,400 USD (Ruhr only)

#### The Rhondda Valley:

Country: Wales  
Urban Scale: 16 Communities in the Rhondda Valleys  
Area: 440km<sup>2</sup> (Total for Rhondda County Borough)  
Population: 0.0596m (2001)  
Density: 550/km<sup>2</sup> (Almost 4 times as densely populated as Wales)  
GDP (per capita): 30,546 USD (All of Wales GDP)

The massive Ruhr however could sprawl its operations within a designated industrial area (fig.32).

In the 21st century, the biggest difference in both Valleys is evident in the substantial degree of investment experienced by the Ruhr and the complete abandonment of the Rhondda by its country<sup>101</sup>. In this section, we will see how the Ruhr came to achieve its renaissance and what lessons could be applied to Rhondda's post-industrial future regeneration.

### 2.5.3 \_ IBA, Project Ruhr and Capital of Culture 2010

#### Programme 1: IBA Ruhr

The notion of an International Building Exhibition or World Fair is well recognised as a tool for drawing attention to particular areas and celebrating new technologies and movements in design<sup>102</sup>. A strategy epitomised by the 1957 Berlin 'Interbau'<sup>103</sup> and subsequent 10 year process of 'Critical Reconstruction'<sup>104</sup> in Berlin from 1979.

Inspired by Berlin and in order to regenerate the abandoned and contaminated Ruhr area, in 1989 the Ruhr District initiated a plan for its own IBA at Emerscher Park<sup>105</sup>. The objective was to stimulate the 'ecological, economic and urban revitalization'<sup>106</sup> of the Ruhr Valley through a strategy of partnering. At inception, the objective of the IBA project was certainly



Fig. 33: The Ruhr Valley derelict industry (parallels with Rhondda)

- 101 Wales Online (2010.10.07) 'RCT's Funding Gap the Biggest' [<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/south-wales-news/rhondda/2010/10/07/rct-s-funding-gap-the-biggest-91466-27407731/>]
- 102 Miller, Wallis. (1993) 'IBA's "Models for a City"', Journal of Architectural Education: Princeton University Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture Vol. 46, No. 4, May 1993, p.202
- 103 Parkinson, Michael. Bianchini, Franco. (1993), 'Cultural policy and urban regeneration: the West European experience', Manchester University Press: Manchester, p.2
- 104 'Critical Reconstruction', Architecture in Berlin [<http://www.architectureinberlin.com>]
- 105 'Emscher Park: International Building Exhibition' (IBA) [[www.eaue.de/winuwd/](http://www.eaue.de/winuwd/)]
- 106 'Emscher Park: From Dereliction to Scenic Landscapes' [<http://sustainablecities.dk/en/city-projects/cases/emscher-park-from-dereliction-to-scenic-landscapes>]

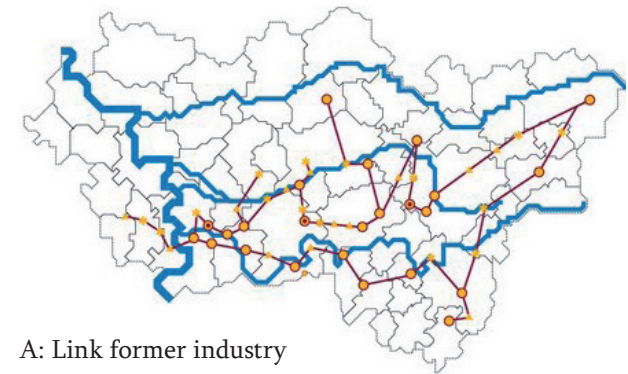
not considered simple as the Ruhr faced some of Germany’s highest unemployment rates and it was commonly unclear to what extents the arts could address the legacy of industrial collapse<sup>107</sup>. The IBA was a collaborative partnership engaging various agencies and 17 local authorities.

## Programme 2: Project Ruhr

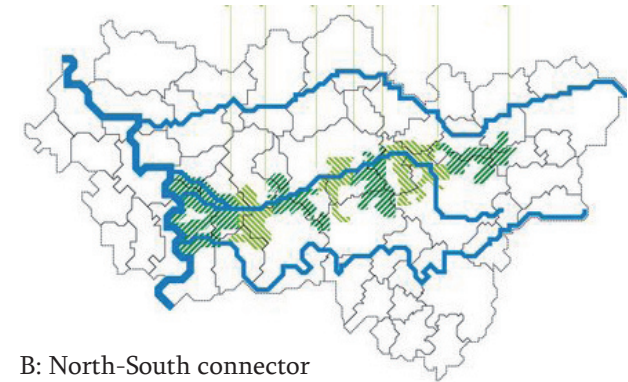
The IBA was by its nature a temporary strategy and therefore a ‘successor plan’ was established to promote the rebranded and modified, ‘ Project Ruhr’. Part 2 of the regeneration focused on green interventions and the general cleaning up of the Emscher River all to be completed for 2014.

The Emscher River is key to the regeneration of the Ruhr as it defines the path of the Emscher landscape park whose purpose is to function as a ‘green connector’<sup>108</sup> between the settlements of the Valley and re-linking the existing north-south greenbelts. The new green infrastructure of Emscher Park embraces nature to unite regenerated brownfields, reclaimed forests and existing recreational areas<sup>109</sup> (fig.34). Landscape interventions have been realised with long and short-term programmes including culture, housing, leisure and commerce.

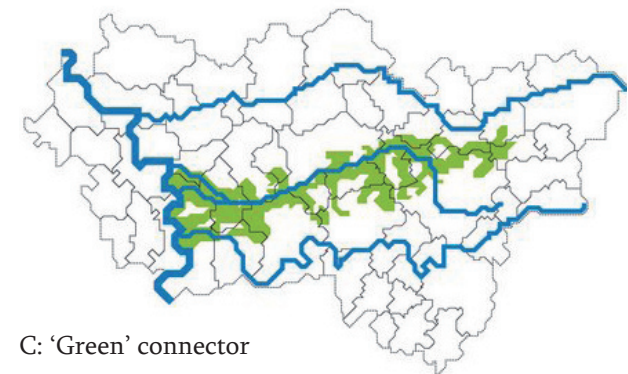
As a strategy, the large scale masterplan for the Ruhr along the Emscher River targeted residual industrial sites. The tactics of this strategy were identified as the opportunity to re-use existing road and rail infrastructure, as well as to preserve the impressive relics of the industrial era and celebrate the regions identity.



A: Link former industry



B: North-South connector



C: ‘Green’ connector

Fig. 34: IBA Ruhr masterplan strategy

107 Maguire. Helen (22.06.2010) ‘Ruhr valley seeks creative solutions to industrial demise’  
[[http://www.monstersandcritics.com/news/europe/features/article\\_1565188.php/Ruhr-valley-seeks-creative-solutions-to-industrial-demise-Feature](http://www.monstersandcritics.com/news/europe/features/article_1565188.php/Ruhr-valley-seeks-creative-solutions-to-industrial-demise-Feature)]

108 ‘Emscher Park: From Dereliction to Scenic Landscapes’  
[<http://sustainablecities.dk/en/city-projects/cases/emscher-park-from-dereliction-to-scenic-landscapes>]

109 Ibid.





Fig. 35: Lido temporary use within the Zollverein Colliery, Emscher Park

### Programme 3: Ruhr Valley Capital of Culture 2010

An additional bonus to the Ruhr's already accomplished regeneration is its EU Designation as European Capital of Culture (ECOC) for 2010<sup>110</sup>. The dense Ruhr conurbation is hoping to profit from by attracting visitors and further investments, as well as being a kick-starter for its legacy vision.

The temporary year-long programme structure, "Essen for the Ruhr" consists of three guiding themes: mythology, metropolis and Europe. Collectively, these interwoven topics set out to combine image, theatre, music, language, creative industries and festivals towards a multi-layered narrative of change<sup>111</sup>.

In comparison to the Ruhr's ECOC success, the Rhondda Valley was blamed as the reason for Cardiff losing out on the 2008 Capital of Culture in 2002. Significantly, comments from Sir Jeremy Isaacs who led the judging panel suggested that the reason Cardiff lost was partly because it did not include the Valleys enough<sup>112</sup>. Further light has since been drawn on the failure of the bid in Ron Griffiths contribution to the European Planning Studies, 'City/Culture Discourses: Evidence from the Competition to Select the European Capital of Culture 2008' (2005). Through comparison of three competing cities, the paper concludes that Cardiff's failure was due to its undefined conception of culture and unsubstantiated narrative of 'networks' through Wales<sup>113</sup>. In retrospect, the disappointment for the Valleys is obvious as the region could have employed the ECOC status as a catalyst for 'culture-led' regeneration and adjusted its funding balance with the capital.

110 'Essen for the RUHR.2010' Capital of Culture 2010  
[<http://www.essen-fuer-das-ruhrgebiet.ruhr2010.de>]

111 Ibid.

112 Sir Jeremy Isaacs, Capital of Culture Judging Panel. Quote from BBC News Article: BBC News (04.06.2003) 'Valleys link blamed for culture failure'  
[[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/south\\_east/2963888.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/south_east/2963888.stm)]

113 Griffiths. Ron (2005) 'City/Culture Discourses: Evidence from the Competition to Select the European Capital of Culture 2008', European Planning Studies Vol. 14, No. 4, May 2006. Routledge. p. 421

## 2.5.4 \_ Conclusion

The Ruhr project successfully met its objectives through the complex coordination of 17 local authorities. The Rhondda is managed under one authority with specialist divisions which in theory should ease the process and by-pass overlapping responsibilities.

The combined IBA\Project Ruhr has benefited from a clear strategy allowing for a methodological approach to regeneration where the rules are pragmatic and flexible to individual situations. In order for the Rhondda to follow in the Ruhr's footsteps, the Welsh Assembly Government would need to explore mechanisms within existing National and local plans for coherent and holistic regeneration. In this sense, we see that the success of the Ruhr plan can be related to the clarity of the original vision and that all third parties were able to agree on common goals. Also, the Ruhr has many industrial monuments that have been elevated to World Heritage Status whilst the Rhondda has not achieved the same associated protection. In addition, the financing of the Ruhr Valley project is significant as two thirds of the investment was derived from public funds. There are currently no similar avenues for the Rhondda and the pain of Cardiff's failed 2008 Capital of Culture bid stands as a reminder of 'another missed opportunity'.

In summary, lessons from the Ruhr case beneficial to the Rhondda are as follows:

- Focus on the river and invest in upgrading existing natural resources.
- Encourage land owners, companies and groups with vested interests to participate in the project and potentially fund particular aspects.
- Engage collaborative partnerships





# 3

## STRATEGY FOR TEMPORARY URBANISM IN THE RHONDDA

- 3.1 \_ Rhondda Temporary Urbanism Strategy
- 3.2 \_ Record of Residual Space and Temporary Urbanism Options
- 3.3 \_ Stage 1: Residual Space Matrix
- 3.4 \_ Stage 2: Temporary Urbanism Options Matrix



## 3 . 1 RHONDDA TEMPORARY URBANISM STRATEGY

### 3.1.1 \_ Introduction

The hypothesis for this research is the assumption that a programme of diverse temporary interventions employed on residual sites in the Rhondda can regenerate the valley. Research into temporary urbanism has displayed the benefits of temporary projects over conventional methods of development, including speed, diversity, cost and flexibility. In the proceeding chapter, the research into temporary urbanism shall be transferred into a strategy composed of multiple strands that reflect urban issues apparent in the Valley.

Temporary urbanism is not a familiar subject to the Rhondda Council; therefore the following section will also test the strategy against 11 specific residual spaces in the Rhondda identified as a result of urban shrinking. The different residual areas will be compared in a matrix that appraises each site based on conventional architectural site analysis including points of land ownership, planning context, existing resources and physical context. A summary of the research is provided in a two-stage matrix that firstly analyses each residual site, and secondly tests a strategy of temporary urbanism.

### 3.1.2 \_ Strategy Objectives

In this section, the inquiry will conceptualise the notion of a temporary urbanism in the Valley through various strands of a strategy employing lessons learnt from the previous analysis. It will also question how can the Rhondda reverse a process of shrinking? Can it embrace non-traditional tools of urbanism?

The strategy outlines key objectives that temporary urbanism projects should aim to achieve tailored to the Rhondda and is also aligned with the objectives of the Local



Development Plan but is focused on more flexible and expedient means of ameliorating residual space. The strategy strands are set-out below:

Strand i: Reactivate & Maintain: Understand the current urban issues of the local area, reactivate neglected space and promote a new stewardship of the Valleys public realm.

Strand ii: Promote Circular Processes

Focus on circular processes, promoting prudent use of on site resources and design for reuse and recycling.

Strand iii: Strengthen Connections

Capitalise on proximity of residual sites to train line and highways, drawing activity and tourism to dislocated areas.

Strand iV: Increase Biodiversity

Engage the river Rhondda; explore options for cultivation, edible landscapes and greening of residual space and structures.

Strand V: Community & Partnerships

Encourage community participation through local agenda focusing on inclusive community needs with emphasis on young people. Establish multiple partnerships with relevant funding opportunities and existing knowledge base.

Strand Vi: Temporary Use/Maximum Legacy

Define a limited life-span and touch the ground lightly whilst also leaving a positive legacy where applicable. Provide minimum measures to improve the quality of a place.

Strand Vii Reinforce culture & local economy

Provide space for art, creative industries and support entrepreneurship.

# 3 . 2 RECORD OF RESIDUAL SPACES AND TEMPORARY URBANISM OPTIONS

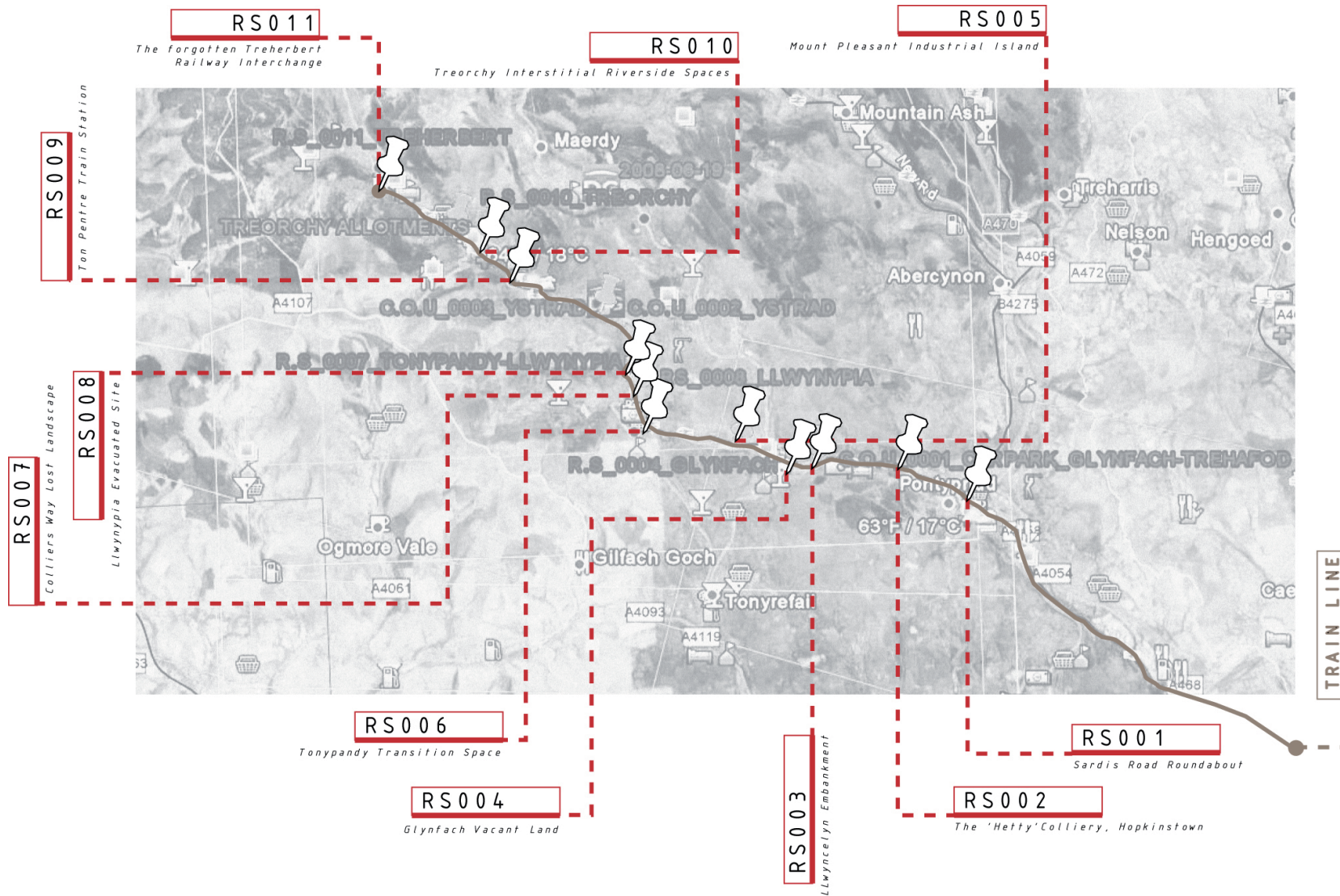
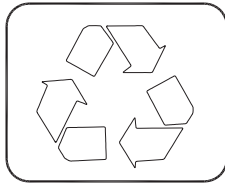
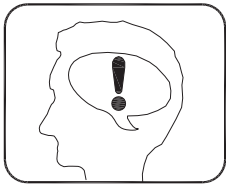
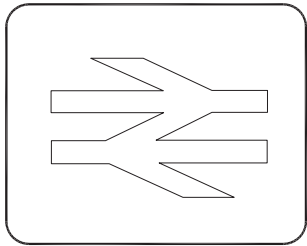


Fig. 1: Record of Rhondda Valley residual spaces

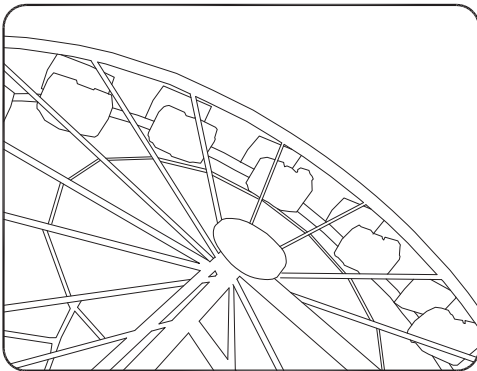
## Sardis Road Roundabout, Pontypridd #RS001



The town of Pontypridd is the regions largest conurbation, most historically infamous and has for a long time been suffering from a delayed and under-funded regeneration programme. The town's apathetic urbanism<sup>1</sup> can be seen in its problematic edges where residual space RS001 is located within the centre of the Sardis Road roundabout, locked between two of Thomas Telford's Newbridge Viaducts.



For the first test, the inquiry conceptualises a constellation of 'pre-cycled' temporary structures for alternative uses as part of a strategic partnership with the RCT Local Service Board who are responsible for the pioneering recycling project, 'Tomorrows Valley'. The network would be charged and fed by a large recycling factory appropriating the arches of the viaduct that would contain workshops to build experimental new forms from reclaimed materials. Completed forms would be craned into the valleys greatest resources; its river and train line, from which they would be transported to the valleys numerous residual spaces. An intervention on the site would be a 'permanent' proposal to facilitate the growth of temporary urbanism elsewhere in the valley.



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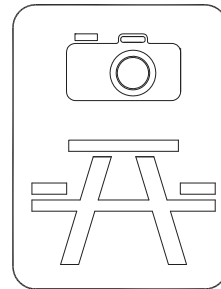
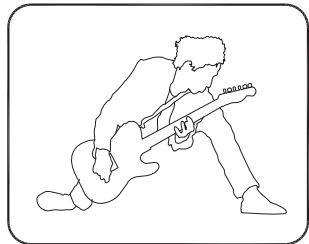
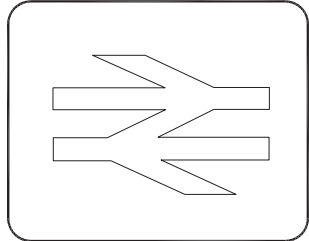
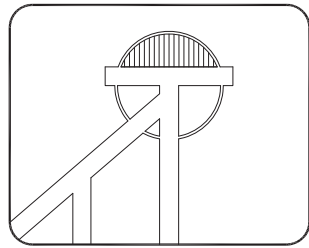
1 'the biggest disease in Pontypridd is apathy' - Pontypridd Town Community Website  
[<http://www.pontytown.co.uk/>]





Fig. 2: Aerial view of #RS001 site





## The 'Hetty'/Great Western Colliery, Hopkinstown #RS002

The site is a grade 1 listed building known locally as the 'Hetty', a derelict coal mine that was once part of the former 'Ty Mawr' Colliery complex which is classed as an industrial monument by CADW, the historic environment service of the Welsh Assembly Government. The most iconic element of the site is the winding gear structure that stands above the defunct pit on raised landform. For a complexity of reasons, it is now a fenced off strip of land lying between the train line and the 'Gyfeillion' road (A4058).

As a strategy the site would be adapted through minimal intervention to allow for a programme of temporary events. Such an initiative could capitalise on the unique characteristics and notoriety of site, highlight need for local urban improvements, as well as add new socio-economic and cultural value to the defunct structure. As the majority of the colliery is at the same level to the railway line, there is great potential for the site to become a transport node/destination embracing tourism through new bus and train links to the heritage site.

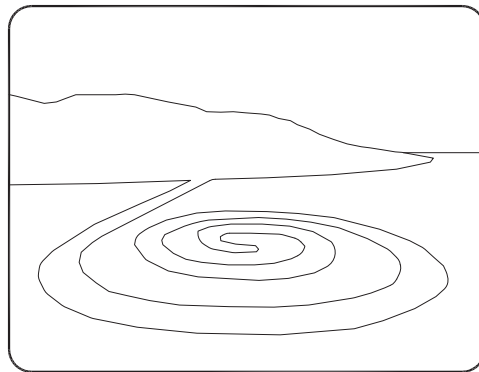


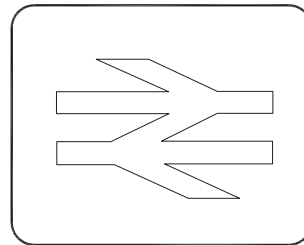
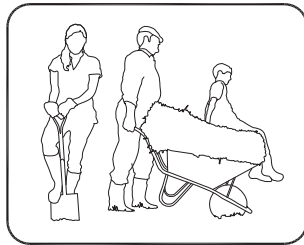




Fig. 3: Aerial view of #RS002 site



## LLwyncelyn Embankment #RS003



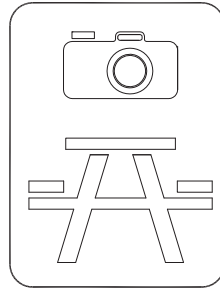
An island/embankment site consisting of some light industry positioned at low level against the river 'Rhondda Fawr' with a dedicated vehicular bridge. The site is characterised by its bizarre emptiness/openness and lies within a mostly rural area of the valley on the outskirts and relative borders of two small towns, 'Glynfach' and 'Trehafod'.

A temporary use aimed towards nature conservation could be sought through liaising with local farming community [[www.llwyncelynfarm.co.uk](http://www.llwyncelynfarm.co.uk)] in order to free-up the site for live-stock/stables/horse-riding. Participating groups could work in parallel to the local 'Communities First' programme that provides opportunities for integrated training/courses. A temporary agricultural intervention could transform the lost pocket of land into a sanctuary and retreat that evokes the pre-industrial Rhondda.



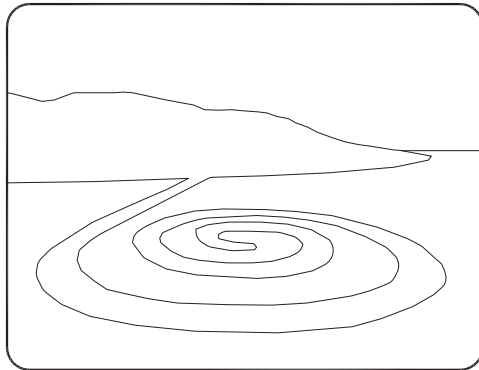
Fig. 4: Aerial view of #RS003 site

## Porth Water Containers #RS004



On the eastern side of the valley overlooking the small town of ‘Glynfach’ and local retail centre of ‘Porth’, there is a collection of four ‘flying saucer’ shaped concrete water containing concrete structures perched on the exposed hillside. The site owned by the ‘Dwr Cymry’ (Welsh Water) Water board lies beyond the urban realm of the valley where local mountain road networks merge into farmland.

The intriguing and emblematic containers are dislocated from transport networks but are highly visible from the train line itself. A major land art commissioning strategy could approach ‘DWR Cymru’ on a mutually-beneficial partnership with potential backing from ‘Partnership and Communities Together’ (PACT) who collaborates to raise the profile of Porth. Other temporary activities to draw crowds could range from paintballing to a picnic/ viewing platform.





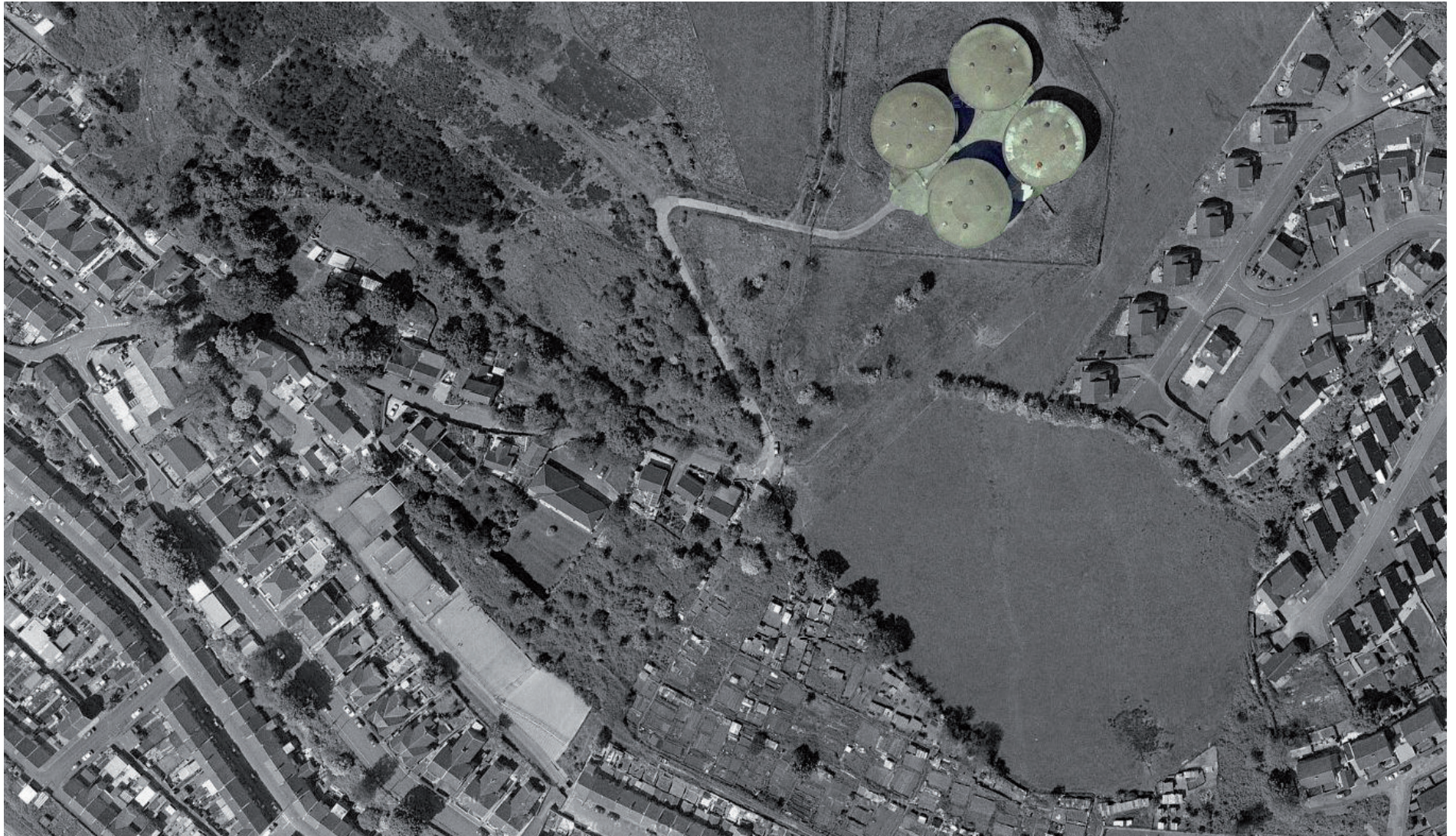
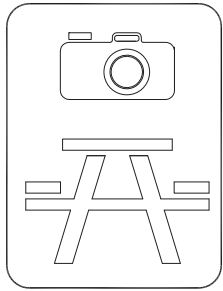


Fig. 5: Aerial view of #RS004 site



## Mount Pleasant Industrial Island #RS005

The brownfield site is a forgotten slither of land occupied by defunct light industry dividing two suburban residential areas bordering the central valley town of 'Dinas'. This typology of residual space is unique as it occurs within the simultaneous widening of the 'Rhondda Fawr' river and narrowing of the valley floor.

In order to awaken the space from its state of paralysis, a strategy of 'sportification' could convert the site to an informal venue for adrenaline/outdoor sports, the initial occupation as a social gathering could develop into a certified activities centre linked to 'the Valleys\*' tourism board. In turn, similar appropriations could materialise in equally suitable residual spaces.





Fig. 6: Aerial view of #RS005 site

## Tonypandy Transition Space #RS006

'Tonypandy' is a composite 1<sup>st</sup> phase settlement that was later re-developed as a key commercial centre in the 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century. Now, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, 'Tonypandy' is struggling to compete against the influx of larger supermarkets and the shrinking territories of the high street.

The site lies at the foot of the high street composed of a dark underpass, disused public footpath and oversized car-park all hidden and neglected beneath the busy roundabout that opens the A4068 arterial valley road to the neighbouring towns of 'Penygraig' and 'Trealaw'.

As a strategy to boost retail activity, vacant shop fronts could be used to advertise a temporary micro-commercial quarter on the car-park as an extension of the failing high street. Once a week, the residual car park site would explode to life with local businesses and creative groups showcasing their goods in low-rent market stall type artefacts. At other times, the carpark would return to normal use and the artefacts could be stored in empty shops or alternatively stacked to form a totem for advertising to passing traffic.

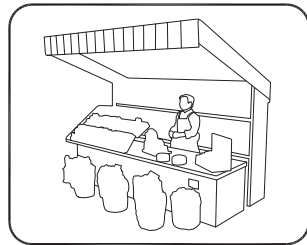
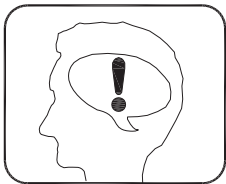
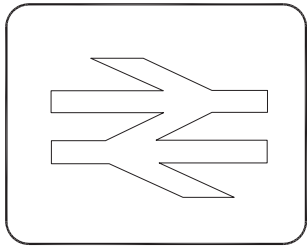


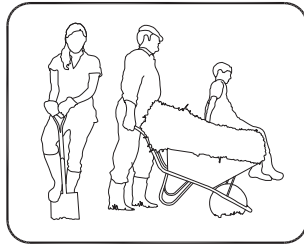




Fig. 7: Aerial view of #RS006 site

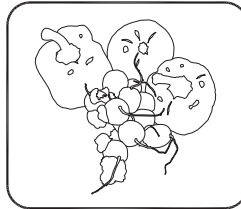
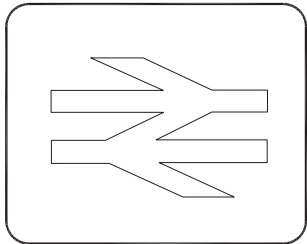


## Colliers Way Lost Landscape #RS007



The site is effectively an elongated patch of greenfield amenity area parallel to the infamous ‘Colliers Way’ road and ‘Rhondda Fawr’ river. It comprises a relatively flat area of land, extending from ‘Ynyscrug’ roundabout along the north western boundary of the A4119.

The site is dissected by a significant pedestrian path that connects residential areas of ‘Trealaw’ and ‘Llwynypia’. At the time of writing, the land stands for sale from private vendor.



Since 1991, the Rhondda Cynon Taff district has seen a substantial rise in the older population with 7.8% aged 75 and over<sup>2</sup>. Depending on the future developer, an interim use strategy of cultivation and inter-generational exchange could be agreed as a gesture to surrounding communities and to reactivate the area until planning permission is obtained.

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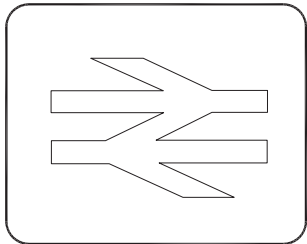
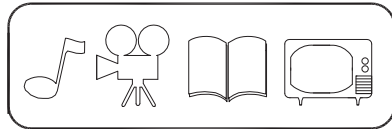
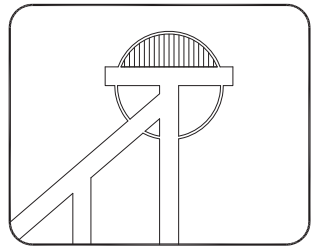
2 Rhondda Cynon Taff Assistive Technology Partnership. (2006) Draft Assistive Technology Strategy 2006 – 2009. p.4





Fig. 8: Aerial view of #RS007 site





## Glamorgan ‘Scotch Colliery’, Evacuated Site, Llwynypia #RS008

In the heart of the town lies the decommissioned public services residual site of the former Glamorgan ‘Scotch Colliery’ which can only now be located by the industrial monument of the ‘Llwynypia Colliery Engine House’. The residual space RS008 persists as an area of evacuated concrete landscape behind the former Power House. The site is imprinted by the foundations of the former large-scale steel drum ‘Gasometer’ structures that previously dominated the marked private land. In 1995, the Land Artist Andrew Cooper was commissioned by British Gas to design a temporary art piece for the residual structure that stood for two years until it was demolished (see Appendix 7.2).

The Former Power House itself has remained unoccupied since the 1960s, and in 2003 the building passed to the responsibility of the Crown following a period of irresponsible ownership<sup>3</sup>. Current proposals for the Powerhouse are a mixed use scheme with the objective to create employment opportunities, foster entrepreneurship in the community through small business incubators<sup>4</sup>.

During the Powerhouse’ time of transition and in anticipation of its future, it could be used by the ‘Llwynypia Community & Arts Centre’ (theatre company), as a backdrop for film screenings infusing the heritage site with new meaning.

3 Correspondance with Leanne Lott, Rhondda Cynon Taff Council (20.05.2010). See annex 8.2

4 The Rhondda Powerhouse website by the Rhondda Powerhouse Trust  
[<http://www.rhonddapowerhouse.co.uk/Future>]

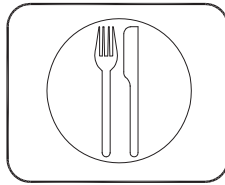




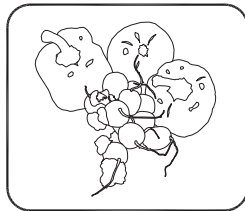
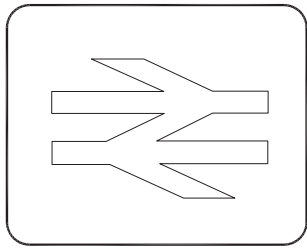
Fig. 9: Aerial view of #RS008 site



## Ton Pentre Train Station #RS009



The former parochial centre of 'Ton Pentre' is a residential colliery village orientated around the long high street, intermittently dotted with shops, that runs from 'Gelli' to the train station. The site is located near the towns train station and is sunken from the adjacent pedestrian footway; bound by river, road, railway, and public path. It is both open and exposed, but at the same time defines a hidden, under kept and anonymous area. The station is a common gateway to a Valley town and perhaps the least appreciated.



A strategy of beautification proposes to reactivate and maintain the residual space through a compact garden provided with small environmental learning centre, space for inner-valley camping and community allotment. This strategy of increasing biodiversity implies a more permanent response to residual space through the injection of nature that is accessible to all and can be nurtured, respected and persisted.



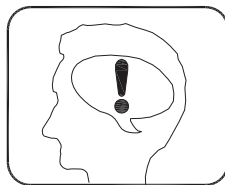
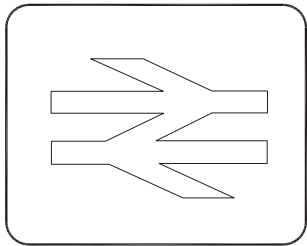


Fig. 10: Aerial view of #RS009 site



## Former Burberry Factory and Interstitial Riverside Spaces #RS010

In March 1997, the internationally renowned clothing company Burberry shut its ‘Treorchy’ base with the loss of 300 jobs. In its wake, it left a 35,000m<sup>2</sup> concrete island of abject buildings. However, a project is currently underway to refurbish the site into a new £3.6 million business centre with accommodation for small and medium sized businesses. The businessman, Robert Kearns affirmed that the venture is,



“...a perfect example of how the public and private sector in Wales can work hand in hand to re-vitalise sites abandoned by multinationals in favour of cheap labour overseas,”<sup>5</sup>

However, since the recession the project has descended into a political limbo period and a temporary activity could serve to accelerate decisions on its future. With the support of multi-levelled partnerships, it is possible to envisage a ‘Container City’ type development model, coupled with the creative re-use of existing warehouse buildings to house start-up enterprises over the projects interim period.

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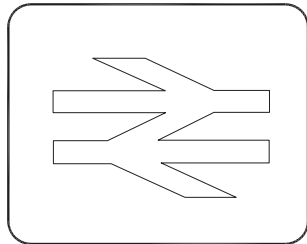
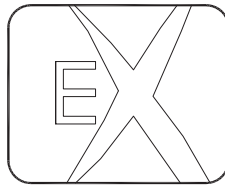
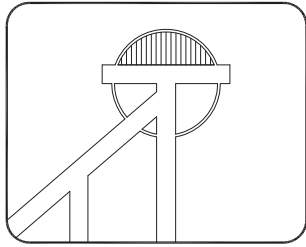
5 Jobs hope at former Burberry site, BBC Wales News, 12.11.2009  
[[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/south\\_east/8355735.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/south_east/8355735.stm)]





Fig. 11: Aerial view of #RS010 site





## The forgotten Treherbert Railway Interchange #RS011

The final recorded residual site is located at the head of the Rhondda Valley on the rural periphery of the regions linear urban development. The site is the beginning of a little known community walkway that includes a half a kilometre of dismantled rusting ribbons of closely packed rail tracks stretching beyond 'Treherbert' station, the northern terminus of the Rhondda line (37 km North West of Cardiff Central). These remnants of the former railway, fenced from the public, extend beyond the station to an indiscriminate overgrown end where old infrastructure is consumed by nature.

A strategy could be to feed into the rapidly developing local adventure tourism market and benefiting from the sites proximity to the expansive Brecon Beacons by providing temporary/transportable accommodation modules for hanggliders/rock climbers/ramblers etc. Alternatively, the ex-colliery mountainside could form a regional 'network centre' and destination for linking valley towns through diverse-media connections.



Fig. 12: Aerial view of #RS011 site

## 3 . 3 STAGE 1: RESIDUAL SPACE MATRIX

### Key

The rating system is a high level classification tool and indicates the potential of each residual site identified as a result of urban shrinking in relation to the chosen criteria (planning context, legal ownership etc). For instance, a site with 'good' (++) potential will have immediate access for both cars and people, or may fall within the local authority demise providing greater flexibility for temporary urbanism. However, a site with limited potential (-) would most probably require significant measures to make the site available for a temporary urbanism. The shortlisted sites deemed most suitable to accept a temporary urbanism are highlighted in a colour tone.

- + + + High Potential
- + + Good Potential
- + Potential
- Limited Potential
- - Not Feasible



Rhondda Valley RESIDUAL SPACES	STAGE 1: Opportunities/Constraints						SHORTLIST
	Overview	Planning Context	Form & Topography	Access & Circulation	Ownership & Demise	Environment & Resources	
RS001 Sardis Road Roundabout, Pontypridd AREA: 0.07ha	Pontypridd: Regions largest conurbation, most historically infamous. Problematic edge condition. Island site defined by infrastructure +	Periphery of principal town/growth area	Severe sloping banks, located between two of Thomas Telford's Newbridge Viaducts ---	Due to its relationship to the train lines and interchange, the site is inaccessible to the public ---	Land adjacent to railway signalling facility and train lines ---	Overgrown wilderness, dense shrubbery. Exposed site. --	
RS002 The 'Hetty' Colliery, Hopkinstown AREA: 0.65ha	Former colliery, grade 1 listed structures. Classed as an industrial monument by CADW. Heritage aspect. Outskirts of Hopkinstown ++		Flat land on valley floor, iconic winding gear structure stands above the defunct pit on raised landform. ++	Fenced off strip of land lying between the train line and the Gyfeillion' road (A4058). Potential for future transport node/destination +++	Obtained in the mid 1980s by the former Mid Glamorgan County Council for land reclamation purposes. Funding uncertain ++	Nature presently recapturing site. Potential for integration of existing masonry and steel structures/misc. steel elements ++	Viable site, suitable conditions. Opportunity for local government support/sponsorship ++
RS003 Llwyncelyn Embankment AREA: 0.60ha	An island/embankment site positioned against the river 'Rhondda Fawr' with a dedicated vehicular bridge link to unspecified warehouse -		Flat, empty & open land interrupted with light industrial elements, steep embankment to the river +	Adjacent to train line, accessible from road ++	Unknown, TBC. -	Edge of non-distinct town, minimal activity. Natural resources of river. High risk of land contamination -	Physical viability, neutral potential. Requires land agreement or change of use. +
RS004 Porth Water Containers AREA: 0.39ha	4 water containing concrete dome shaped structures overlooking small town of Glynfach and retail centre, Porth +	Periphery of key settlement/growth area. Higher than 'settlement boundary' - no development permitted unless compliant with RCT policies -	Exposed hillside site composed of solid structures on concrete plateau, urban edge of valley (farmland to east) -	Situated at end of local mountain road network. Detached from town centre, no permitted pedestrian access. ---	Dwr Cymry'-Waterboard. Potentially mutually-beneficial partnership +	Opportunity for creative re-use of structures, visually prominent site. Not suitable for large crowds - potential detriment to existing wildlife -	
RS005 Mount Pleasant Industrial Island AREA: 0.58ha	Forgotten slither of land occupied by defunct light industry dividing two suburban residential areas bordering Dinas -		Low lying site defined by physical boundaries of river and railway. -	Single bridge link from residential close leading to Cymmer Road (A4058). Designed for heavy transit. -	Unknown, TBC. Presumed local industrial manufacturers ---	Brownfield site facing widening of Rhondda Fawr river within narrowing of valley floor. Some existing shed structures. +	
RS006 Tonypanydy Transition Space AREA: 0.82ha	Riverside strip opposite to Tonypanydy Station (town gateway). Parallel to B4278, linking to A4068 arterial valley rd./roundabout to 'Penygraig' & 'Trealaw' +	Centre of key settlement/growth area	Site in 2 segments edging onto steep embankment, south section possessing formidable level changes, north section includes flat concrete carpark -	Direct access from high st. and train station, vehicular & pedestrian links: underpass, bridge, footpath, road. Crossed by disused cycle path +++	Car park is owned by the Co-Operative Store. +	Embankment swathed in misc. vegetation. Clustering of trees near river & Bridge St. Some shadowing from roundabout to south & B4278 road to east -	Tactful position between train station and town centre, potential for commercial aspect (extension of high street) and engaging routes through site. ++
RS007 Colliers Way Lost Landscape AREA: 2.31ha	Elongated amenity area parallel to the infamous Colliers Way road. Land currently for sale subject to any wayleaves/rights of access ++		Comprises a relatively flat area of land, extending from Ynyscrug roundabout along the North Western boundary of the A4119 +	Significant pedestrian connection between town's of Trealaw and Llwynypia. Direct road access to/from Mid-Rhondda Bypass ++	For sale from private vendor via informal tender. Potential for interim use agreement +	Greenfield area described by estate agents as 'suitable for amenity/grazing, other use subject to planning permission'. -	*Site discounted from shortlist due to quality of existing landscape ++
RS008 Glamorgan 'Scotch Colliery', Evacuated Site, Llwynypia AREA: 0.36ha	Prime town centre location, site of the former Glamorgan 'Scotch Colliery', adjacent to industrial monument of the Llwynypia Colliery Power House. ++	Site includes Grade II listed derelict Power house building central to a major sustainable regeneration initiative for the town	Flat, mass concrete landscape with markings of former public services gasworks since demolished +++	Single access from road, pedestrian links from near by town. Next to A4119, main route from the Rhondda to the M4, central valley town. ++	British Gas (previously commissioned temporary art installation in 1990's on site). Ownership reverted to Crown Estates +++	Hard landscape hidden from road by dense periphery of trees and vegetation. +	Site conditions suitable for immediate construction, benefits from previous temporary intervention on site. Future proposals in place for the Powerhouse. + / ++
RS009 Ton Pentre Train Station AREA: 0.06ha	Prominent unloved patch of riverside land fronting onto street, part of train station and gateway to town ++	Community Action Plan in place for Ton Pentre established by council via Town Planning Consultancy Ltd. (TPC) supported by Rhondda Community Business Initiatives (RCBI)	Sunken from the adjacent pedestrian footway, bound by river, road, railway, and public path. Slopes to river. -	Direct pedestrian access from station platform and Ystrad Road (A4058). Close to bus stop + / ++	Rhondda Cynon Taff council/South Wales Valleys Lines ++	Currently target for fly-tipping, drug abuse; opportunity to challenge perceptions of station +	Prominent site, opportunity for Rhondda Community Business Initiatives (RCBI) to invest in local people and environment. ++
RS010 Former Burberry Factory & Interstitial Riverside Spaces AREA: 2.55ha	Series of derelict structures on site of former Treorchy Burberry Factory currently in limbo pending confirmation of funding for future development +	Centre of key settlement/growth area	Inconsistent concrete surfaces surrounding a mix of poor condition 2 storey warehouse type buildings. +	Due to former use, the site has good access from the town centre, connected to rugby club, hospital and bridge link to local school ++	Local community consortium ++	Site within 150m of Treorchy allotments, close to river and dense tree growth. + / ++	Politically sensitive site, benefits from community ownership and potential high level funding. Future plans already in place. + / ++
RS011 The forgotten Treherbert Railway Interchange AREA: 1.01ha	Stretch of derelict rail line and nebulous land beyond Treherbert station on the rural periphery of the regions linear urban development +	Strategic site in the Northern Rhondda Strategy Area. Nature conservation area.	Uneven land with obstacles/opportunities linked to disused rail tracks. -	Northern terminus of the Rhondda line, 37 km North West of Cardiff Central. No access - rail land. ---	Unknown, presumed South Wales Valleys Train Lines ---	Faces the mountain forests, old infrastructure consumed by nature. Remnants of former 'Rhondda and Swansea Bay Railway' ++	

Fig. 13: 'Residual Space Matrix'

## 3 . 4 STAGE 2: TEMPORARY URBANISM OPTIONS MATRIX

### Key

The rating system for the 'temporary urbanism matrix' is an extension of the 'residual space matrix'. Each site is explored under a particular strand of the temporary urbanism strategy and is assigned a temporary use that is assessed against the pre-determined criteria. For instance, it would be expected that a strategy of 'reinforcing culture and heritage' would be most effective on a post-industrial site with derelict structures.

- + + + High Potential
- + + Good Potential
- + Potential
- Limited Potential
- - Not Feasible

Rhondda Valley RESIDUAL SPACES	STAGE 2: Temporary Urbanism Options						Reinforce Culture & Local Economy	CASE STUDY SITES
	Reactivate & Maintain	Promote Circular Processes	Strengthen Connections	Increase Biodiversity	Community & Partnerships	Temporary Use/Maximum Legacy		
RS001 Sardis Road Roundabout, Pontypridd AREA: 0.07ha	- Addresses Pontypridd over-provision of carparking. - Ongoing of scheme reliant on funding -	- Potential key start/end node in a networked valley; Recycling Factory for a 'pre-cycled' architecture/Micro-college for new construction methods ++		- 'Greening' of stringent road-side spaces, green connector/link to town centre +	- Pontypridd in Partnership (PIP): Unite Glamorgan Uni students + community - Pontypridd Chamber of Trade [pontypriddbiz.co.uk/] +	- Carpark site suitable for programme of events i.e. ice-rink/winter wonderland, fun fair, music events, temporary lido ++	- Capitalise on current public realm improvements - Commercial opportunity to link Pontypridd town centre and upper Valleys -	
RS002 The 'Hetty' Colliery, Hopkinstown AREA: 0.65ha	- Potential negative effects/damage to existing structure. Regulation/ 24hr security/ management required. -	- Instigator for future events in the Valley/trigger for 'event network' +	- Tourism attractor links to heritage site: scope for new train stop, bus stop and pedestrian links. Parking opposite. +++	- Wildlife habitat/ bird aviary/ <i>Rhondda Valley Pidgeon Federation</i> [rhonddavalleypigeon.com/] --	- Tourism: visitsouthwales.com - Partnership with Rhondda Heritage Park [rhonddaheritagepark.com] +++	- Capacity for an event urbanism with unique backdrop for diverse land art, exhibition, expo's, concerts, outdoor film/theatre ++	- Add new socio-economic and cultural value to the defunct structure. - Initiate rallying process for EU/ high-level funding. ++	Capitalise on symbolism and notoriety of site, highlight need for local urban improvements, value to defunct structure
RS003 Llwyncelyn Embankment AREA: 0.60ha			- Highlight shrinking territory by establishing new links through site +	- Urban agriculture/ commodity farming [llwyncelynfarm.co.uk]: Freeing up site for live-stock/stables/horse-riding +	- 'Communities First': Opportunity for integrated training/courses +	- Change of land-use to encourage development interest +		
RS004 Porth Water Containers AREA: 0.39ha	- Draw attention to intriguing structures, promote debate on site future +		- Dislocated physically from the valleys transport network/highly visible from train line -		- Partnership and Communities Together (PACT): Work with group who set-out to raise the profile of Porth. +	- Opportunity for major land art using the 4 existing concrete container structures - Structures adapted for energy generation/solar field ++	- Picnic/viewing platform, temporary provision for food/drink. Local tourism - Interpretation signage & wayfinding strategy +	
RS005 Mount Pleasant Industrial Island AREA: 0.58ha	- Strategy of 'sportification' appropriating informal venue for adrenaline/outdoor sports. +			- Remediation, productive landscapes and eco-systems function - Tree nursery/crop rotation +			- Opportunity to establish multi-activities centre linked to tourism board, 'The Valleys: Heart and Soul of Wales' [www.thevalleys.co.uk] +	
RS006 Tonypandy Transition Space AREA: 0.82ha		- Train station site integral to network/link to town centre - Constellation of the networked valley: theatre/music/recording artefact +				- Carpark site suitable for programme of events i.e. ice-rink/winter wonderland, fun fair, music events, temporary lido ++	- Potential temporary micro-commercial quarter as extension of failing high street (managed workspace) - Encourage younger generations/local creative ++	Home for young entrepreneurship/ creative industries/ multi-levelled partnerships. New agenda for high street. Reinststate cycle route & station link
RS007 Colliers Way Lost Landscape AREA: 2.31ha				- Remediation of urban edges, tree nursery - Beautification/cultivation of land parallel to town links footpath +	- Interim use strategy of cultivation as gesture to surrounding communities from developer +			
RS008 Glamorgan 'Scotch Colliery', Evacuated Site, Llwynypia AREA: 0.36ha		- Constellation of the networked valley: cluster of museum/library/heritage artefacts related to history of site and Valleys -			- Alternative space for Llwynypia Community & Arts Centre (theatre company) - 'Arts Factory' link [www.artsfactory.co.uk/] +	- Opportunity for major land art using the existing Powerhouse and vacant Gasometer site [A. Cooper 1995 intervention precedent] +++	- Start-up business incubators for 3-month let - Temporary space/storage for businesses moving into 'Powerhouse' ++	
RS009 Ton Pentre Train Station AREA: 0.06ha		- Constellation of the networked valley: immediate access to river, train line, roads (buses). - Cultivation artefact/transportable greenhouses +		- Beautification: Compact garden, small environmental learning centre, inner-valley camping, community allotment. - Memorial garden +++	- Rhondda Community Development Association (RCDA), Rhondda Community Business Initiatives Ltd (RCBI) - Allotment Association +++			Horticultural intervention to renew distressed site, improve image of train station and re-brand gateway to town. Community agenda
RS010 Former Burberry Factory & Interstitial Riverside Spaces AREA: 2.55ha			- Minimal intervention to make site publicly accessible - Define new face of site to engage struggling high street +		- Interim use agreement - Public/private sector: former Burberry Factory workers + 'Treoerchy Business Park' partners +++		- 'Container City' type model, coupled with the creative re-use of warehouse buildings for start-up enterprises to fill the void of former factory ++	
RS011 The forgotten Treherbert Railway Interchange AREA: 1.01ha		- Potential key start/end node in networked valley (extng. end of train line) - Artefacts promoting, <i>Heads of the Valley Programme</i> (HOVP). +	- Regional 'network centre'/destination for linking valley towns through diverse-media connections: radio, music recording, film +		- 'CwmNi': Community sports regeneration partnership [treherbert.info/cwmni.htm]: hanggliders/rock climbers/ramblers etc. +		- Feed into local adventure tourism market - proximity to Brecon Beacons/'Blaencwm' Scenery: transportable accommodation modules ++	

Fig. 14: 'Temporary Urbanism Options Matrix'

### 3 . 5 APPRAISAL: SHORTLIST OF TEST CASES

As a result of studying the Rhondda valley, it is possible for the research to identify a number of residual sites between the towns of ‘Pontypridd’ and ‘Treherbert’ that would benefit from a temporary urbanism. The majority of residual areas explored through the analytical process are products of ambiguous land ownership, disconnection, a time-gap in construction or neglect. The main issues related to residual space in the Rhondda are listed below:

- Funding: economic climate, investment, trust.
- Timeframes and restrictive planning legislation.
- Complex legal ownership and overlapping responsibilities
- Community attitudes and perception including lack of pro activeness and participation
- Disconnectivity, distance from town centres, restricted access and minimal public activity
- Public safety and security in relation to train lines and river etc
- Limited available resources and information.



Fig. 15: Network of problematic sites



Based on the key issues, the stage 1 matrix derives a short-list of 6 sites with potential for re-activation. The second stage matrix then applies the generic strategy to identify three case study sites representative of the typical characteristics of residual space in the Rhondda, but also possess the ingredients for a temporary urbanism.

In conclusion, the greatest potential is latent to residual spaces with the least constraints or fall within zones of strategic future development plans and active collaborative groups. The highest public impact sites exist in the more utopian locations where a segment of land is dislocated from the centre of town, or where the site devolved around an industrial relic or long standing artefact. The expedient use of residual sites in centres of the Rhondda's towns that are easily accessible and publicly owned would provide the most immediate local and community benefit.

For the final part, the research will filter the strategies through the following case study sites: #RS002, #RS006 & #RS009. It is expected that the strategies will change in the course of design (finding tactics). The result will be tested and modified strategies.



# 4

## RHONDDA CASE STUDY SITES FOR TEMPORARY URBANISM

4.1 \_ Case Study: The 'Hetty' Event Factory #RS002

4.2 \_ Case Study: 'Tonypandy' Creative Quarter #RS006

4.3 \_ Detail Case Study: 'Ton Pentre' Transient Allotments #RS009

## 4 . 1 CASE STUDY: THE 'HETTY' EVENT FACTORY #RS002

### Key Data

Duration: 2 Weeks

Location: Great Western 'Hetty' Colliery, Hopkinstown

Site: 0.06ha

Ownership: Rhondda Cynon Taff Borough County Council (RCT)

Sponsor: Hypothetical Event Organiser/ SWB Cymru (Welsh Biodiesel Producers),

Description: Venue for a programme of temporary events on the site of a former colliery

Funding & Partners: CADW (the Historic Environment Service of the Welsh Assembly Government), Cywaith Cymru (Artworks Wales), SWB Cymru (Welsh Biodiesel Producers), The University of Glamorgan, RCT

Cultural Services, The Arts Factory

The first case study explores the dilemma between preservation and reactivation of forgotten heritage. The history and political narrative of the chosen site provokes the question of, 'how to intervene?'

### 4.1.1 \_ Site Overview

The site is short-listed as it includes a prominent neglected industrial monument with long standing and frozen plans for development<sup>1</sup>. Its location between towns provides opportunity to draw attention to gaps in the Valley and potential as a tourism attractor connected to the near-by 'Rhondda Heritage Park'. Using the strategy strand of 'temporary use/maximum legacy', the temporary urbanism matrix envisages the dormant site temporarily engulfed in an event urbanism inspired by the unique backdrop (p.116).

<sup>1</sup> Correspondance with Chris Macey, Corporate Feedback Scheme Co-ordinator, Rhondda Cynon Taff Council (07.08.2009). See Annex 8.2.



Fig. 1: #RS002 Figure Ground context, scale 1:10,000@A4 approx





Fig. 2: Existing raised landscape over decommissioned colliery





Fig. 3: 'Hetty' Colliery, view from train window

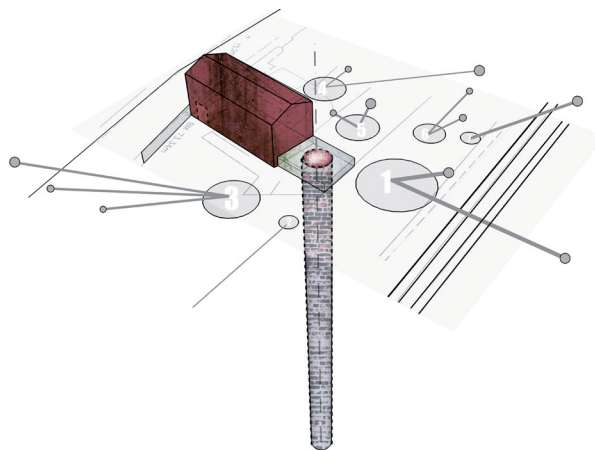


Fig. 4: Residual Site as platform for events

#### 4.1.2 \_ Constraints\Opportunities

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Rhondda's history is perhaps its greatest untapped resource. In fact, the council borough of Rhondda Cynon Taff has 366 listed buildings across 16 conservation areas, including 86 Scheduled Ancient Monuments.<sup>2</sup> One of the greatest monuments of the mining age is the Great Western 'Hetty' Colliery, Hopkinstown (RS002); a site loaded with complex history of production, exploitation, death and dereliction whose industrial structures now persist unnoticed.

In the mid 1980s, the former Mid Glamorgan County Council bought the site for land reclamation purposes. A scheme was drawn up to create a heritage-based tourist attraction and the provision for a number of small business units, but due to local government re-organisation the scheme has never been implemented<sup>3</sup>. In order to occupy the interim period and promote the local area, a temporary urbanism could challenge the future museum use of the site.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, several influential thinkers and movements have attempted to reinterpret and question our conventional conceptions of what a museum is and should be? The Situationists for instance, proposed that all works of art in Parisian Galleries should be liberated (p.68). Cedric Price (p.69) believed strongly that a museum was information to be consumed and questioned whether to preserve or record<sup>4</sup>. In the article, 'Obselence and Exchange in Cedric Price's Dispensable Museum' (Invisible Culture, 2007), Lucia Vodanovic writes that Price does not perceive past objects as eternal truths but rather as future transformable artefacts<sup>5</sup>, his legacy described as:

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- 2 Rhondda Cynon Taff (01.2010) 'Supplementary Planning Guidance: The Historic Built Environment'
  - 3 Correspondance with Jane Cook, Director of Regeneration and Planning, Rhondda Cynon Taff Council (20.08.2009). See Annex 8.2.
  - 4 Price, Cedric. (2006) 'Re:CP', Berlin: Birkhauser, p. 14
  - 5 Vodanovic, Lucia. (Fall 2007) 'Obselence and Exchange in Cedric Price's Dispensable Museum', Invisible Culture, Issue 11

“...an opposition to the institutional consecration of the outdated and to the arbitrary politics of historicism—and also as a reconsideration of the museum’s role by revisiting matters such as retrieval, access, and interval.”<sup>6</sup>

The constraints to this strategy would be set by the difficulty of convincing the authorities of the possible benefits and to cut through the red tape of engaging with historically significant structures. The local community would need to be engaged immediately, as well as extensive consultation with high-level conservation group CADW (the Historic Environment Service of the Welsh Assembly Government) who classify the site as an ‘Industrial Monument’.

There are also general security constraints and management issues related to the derelict structures but strong potential in relation to access and location. With regards to licensing, each short-lived event/intervention would require a ‘Temporary Event Notice (TEN)’ from the Rhondda Council.

#### 4.1.3 \_ Precedent

There are numerous examples of where similar strategies have been employed elsewhere. In land art for example, there are artists such as Christo & Jean Claude who have become famous from wrapping monuments such as the Kunsthalle, Bern, Switzerland (1968)<sup>7</sup>. Recently in the UK, strategies for re-engaging residual sites have gathered pace since the recession. For instance, the decommissioned Battersea Power Station has become a popular venue for all manner of events<sup>8</sup>, ranging from extreme motorcycling (fig.5) to art auctions.

The values of staging such a programme of events can be evaluated as follows:

6 Ibid.

7 Christo & Jean Claude [<http://www.christojeanneclaude.net>]

8 Battersea Power Station Events [<http://www.industri.uk.com/battersea/index.html>]

Note: The Licensing Act 2003 introduced a system to allow small-scale events to take place at any premises without a premises licence or designated premises supervisor, called Temporary Event Notice (TEN). The regulation state that, a TEN can cover small events involving no more than 499 people at any one time, and can last for up to 96 hours. Also, no more than 12 Temporary Event Notices can be given for one premises per calendar year [[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003)].

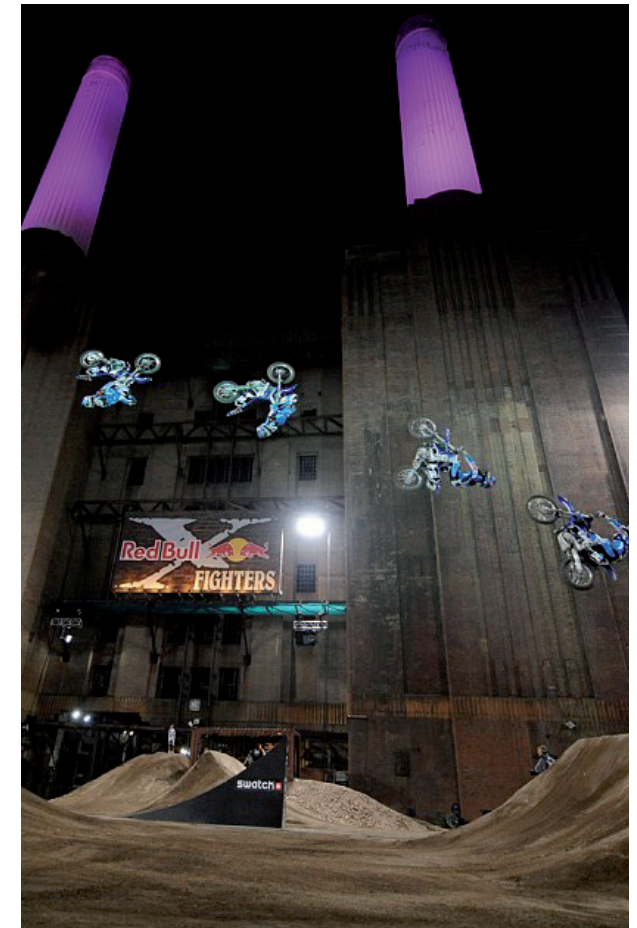


Fig. 5: ‘Moto-Cross’ event, Battersea Power Station

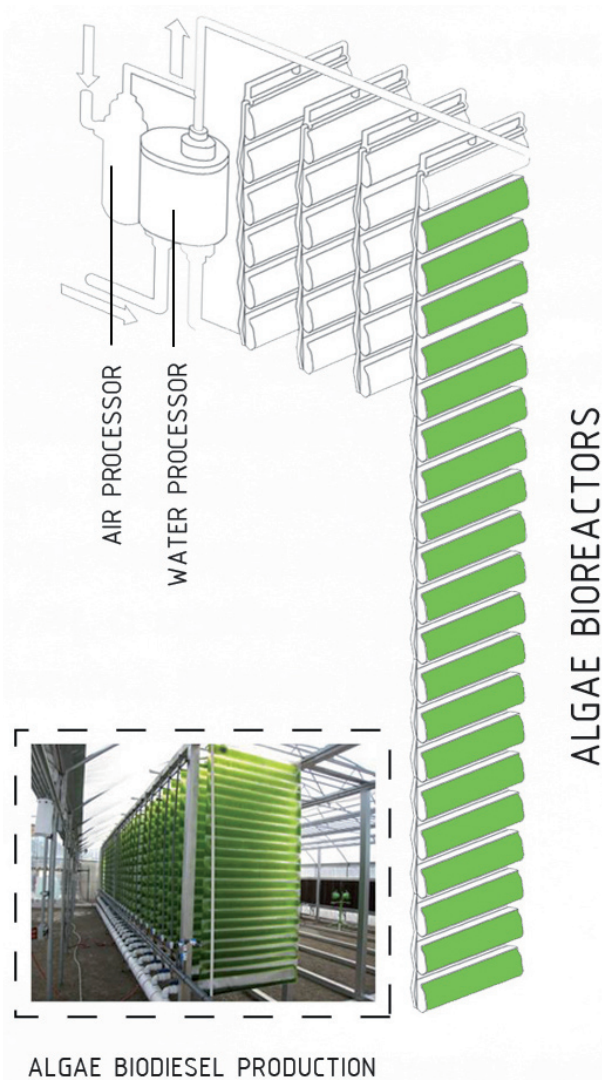


Fig. 6: Biodiesel - engaging the industry & embracing new technologies through temporary urbanism

- Public focus on the site, elevating it's status
- Low cost to land owner, financed by event organiser
- Event capitalises on unique characteristics and notoriety of site.
- Beneficial to future development on the site as it highlights a need for ameliorating its surroundings.
- Gives value to a formerly defunct structure

There is already precedent for a temporary urbanism established in the Rhondda from when Land Artist Andrew Cooper was commissioned by British Gas and Cywaith Cymru (Artworks Wales) in 1995 to produce an artwork to disguise a gas works tower on the site of the former Scotch Colliery (#RS008). Cooper's self-realised pixelated abstraction of the sites wooded hillside context was conceived as a short-life installation to improve a forgotten space (p.197). In an interview with Cooper, he admits to not being particularly aware of the regions residual spaces but values the great network of rusting industrial monuments that persist in the Rhondda. He also highlights how higher level powers in Wales have neglected the valleys leaving worryingly little future in its remaining industries<sup>9</sup>.

Cooper feels strongly that Wales could give greater support to public art and that for him the role of temporary urbanism should be to engage the industry and experiment with new products, materials and alternative technologies.

#### 4.1.4 \_ Diagram

Based on the precedent strategy and site opportunities/constraints, the strategy proposes a temporary experimental art and events venue, funded by revenue from a small-scale on-site biofuel production facility (fig.6) to appropriate the colliery site until 'permanent future plans are consolidated. The project would 'engage the industry' and 'embrace new

9 See Appendix 7.2: Interview with Andrew Cooper, Land Artist



technologies' in partnership with (fig.9):

- SWB Cymru (Welsh Biodiesel producers)<sup>10</sup>
- The University of Glamorgan,
- RCT Cultural Services<sup>11</sup>
- 'Fuel Factory' – A joint venture between two development trusts including 'The Arts Factory' to produce Biodiesel in the Rhondda using waste vegetable oil from the catering industry.<sup>12</sup>

The short-term goals of the temporary intervention would be to highlight the site and related issues, attract tourism to the area, as well as providing a unique exhibition platform to showcase local and national talent. The long-term goals would be to inspire young generations on alternative methods of development and secure the future of the industrial monument. The validity of the strategy could be honed through synchronisation with the Local Development plan whose objectives for the Rhondda stipulate that all new developments should, include public art (Point 6), reflect and enhance the cultural heritage of Rhondda Cynon Taff (Point 13), and promote energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy (Point 15).

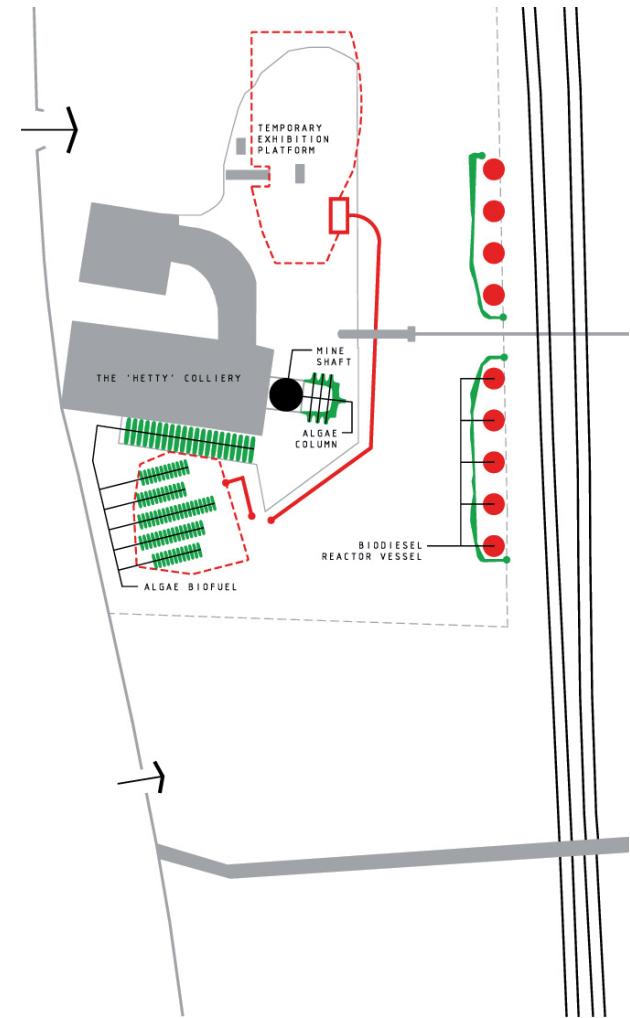


Fig. 7: Diagram of site temporary urbanism

Note: The Arts Factory is a trust of 1300 members established in 1990 by local people who were sick of being labelled as “problems” and wanted to ‘build a stronger community’ by generating income through enterprise and using it to create solutions, refer to: [www.rhonddavalleys.co.uk/Local Attractions/](http://www.rhonddavalleys.co.uk/Local%20Attractions/) and [www.artsfactory2.intheuk.com/](http://www.artsfactory2.intheuk.com/).

10 For more information on ‘SWB Cymru’, see: <http://engineeredfuels.com/biodiesel/>

11 For more information on ‘Rhondda Cynon Taff Cultural Services’, see: <http://rct-arts.org/>

12 ‘The Arts Factory: Fuel Factory’ [<http://fuelfactory.blogspot.com/>]

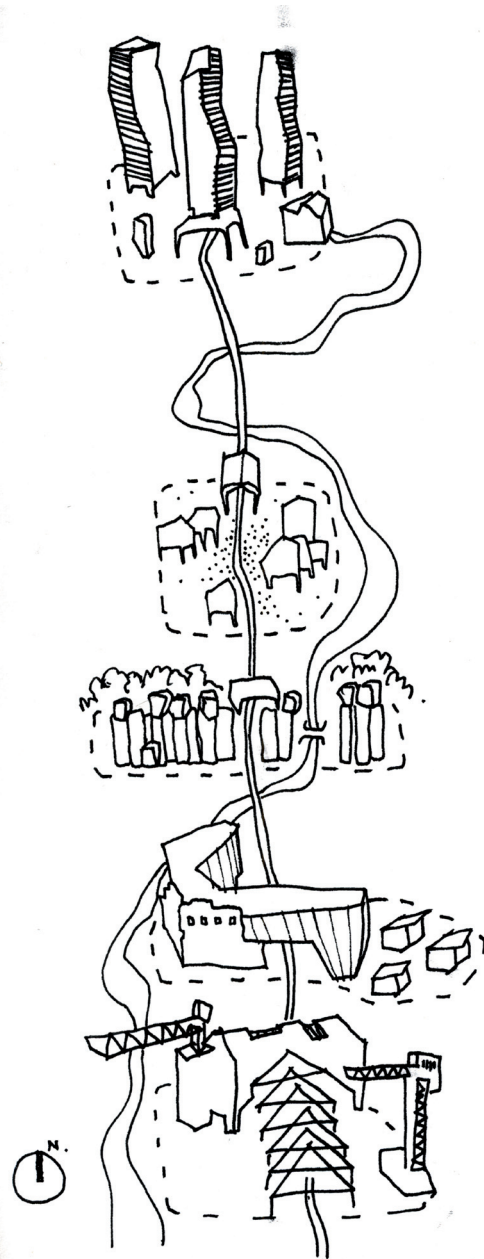


Fig. 8: Site as instigator for network of temporary interventions

### Emerging Tactics

- Variable programme of lightweight events/interventions with the objective to leave the site as found.
- Showcase for industry focused on celebrating the shift from old to new and innovations in Wales.
- Multi-disciplinary partnerships between: local and national government, universities, local industry, CADW, tourist board.
- Temporary urbanism as a form of symbolism

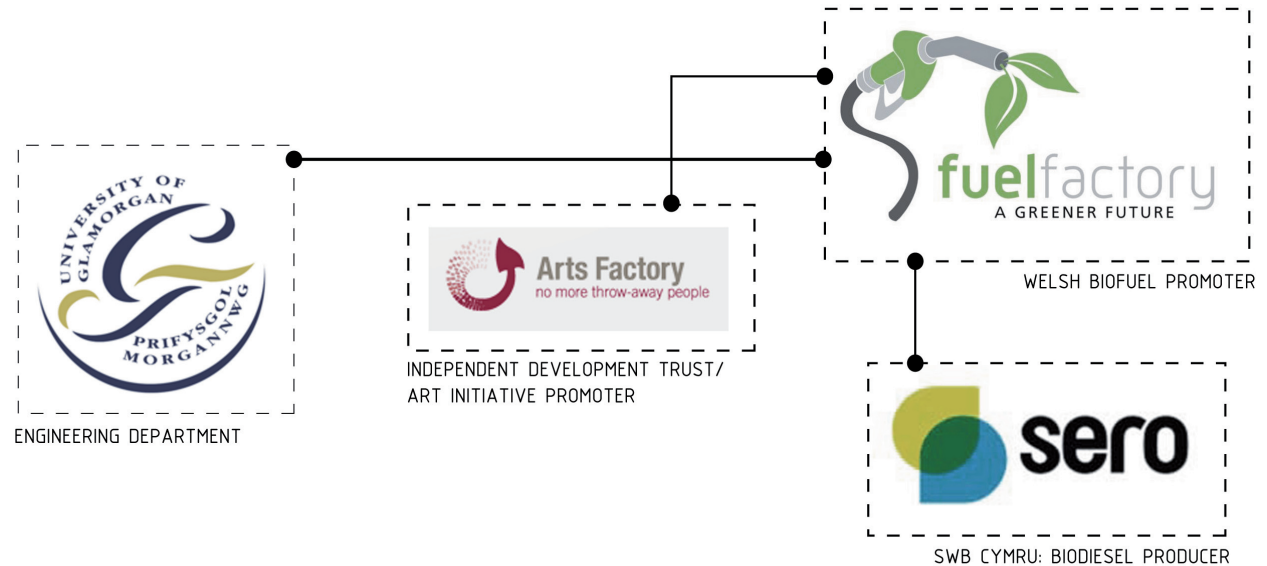


Fig. 9: Potential partnerships diagram

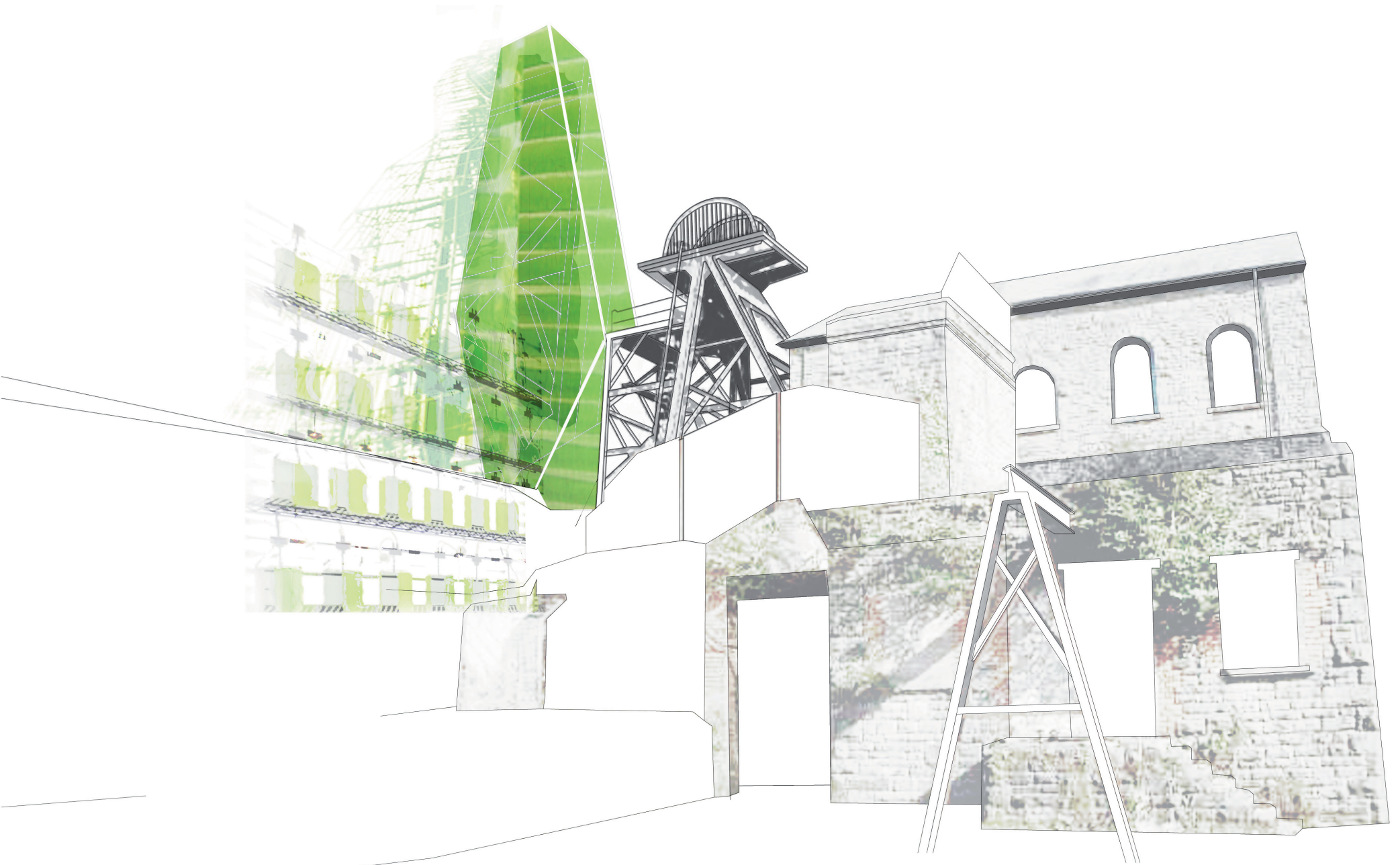
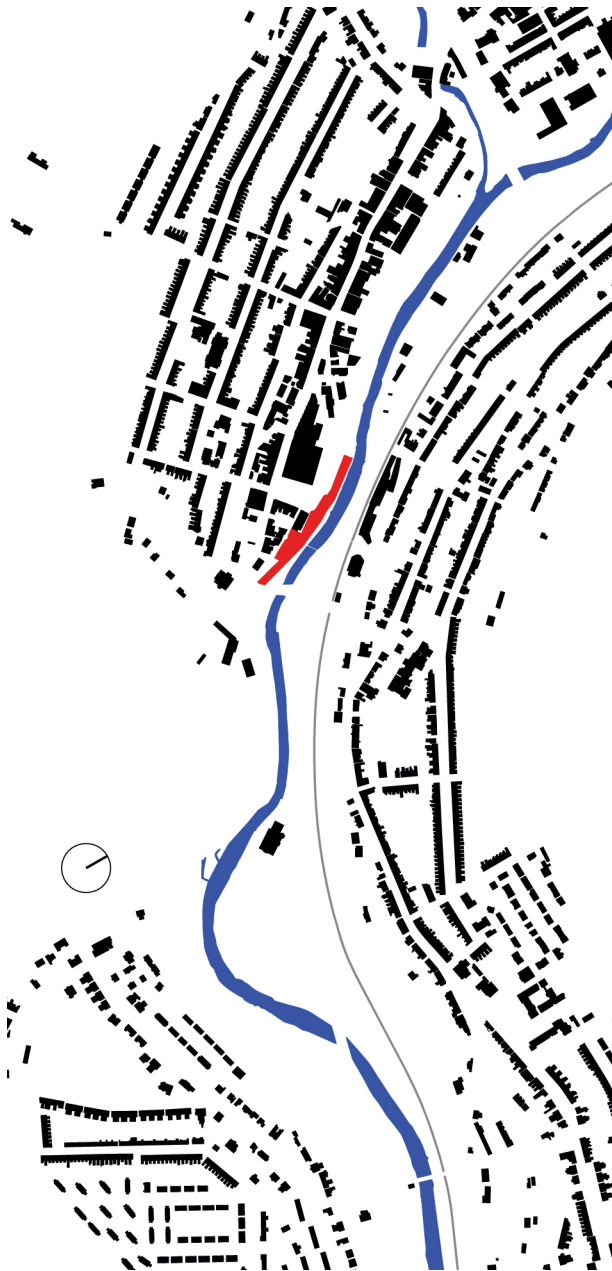


Fig. 10: 'Event 1- Temporary Algae Monument', tall scaffold structure anchored from derelict colliery winding gear containing algae 'bio-reactors'



## 4 . 2 CASE STUDY: 'TONYPANDY' CREATIVE QUARTER #RS006

### Key Data

Duration: 18 months

Location: Somerfield Carpark, Tonypandy

Site: 0.82ha, (0.24ha Carpark only) Potential for to extend to Bridge Street and river embankment

Ownership: Somerfield (Supermarket & Shopping Centre)

Sponsor: Hypothetical developer interested in acquiring the site in the future/vested high street interests

Description: Creative quarter appropriating existing carpark, composed of temporary lettable plug-in units for entrepreneurship.

Funding & Partners: Glamorgan University/RCT Arts & Regeneration Department

In contrast to the previous case study that tackles a site with historical significance, the second case explores alternative uses for a vacant site with no tangible heritage or identity and queries, 'how can temporary urbanism grow from nothing'?

### 4.2.1 \_ Site Overview

The site characterised by its bridge linkages and elongated residual spaces, was noted in the analysis as being; a non-place, forgotten void and threatening environment. The pedestrian connection across this area represents a missed opportunity as a gateway to the town centre from its train station. For the purpose of this case study, the inquiry proposes a temporary creative quarter for 'Tonypandy' with potential to reinforce routes, reactivate a neglected area and forage space for creative industries (p.124).

Fig. 11: #RS006 Figure Ground context, scale 1:10,000@A4 approx





Fig. 12: View to forgotten footpath/cycle route and underpass from pedestrian link bridge to high street

#### 4.2.2 \_ Opportunities\Constraints

The constraints of the residual site are currently the dark, neglected and overgrown river bank, as well as the uninviting underpass connection to the train station. Ameliorating this area is essential in order for a temporary use to capitalise on the sites location as the pedestrian gateway to 'Tonypanyd'. The strategy could therefore explore the tactic of intervening beyond the site extents with the objective to re-engage the river and reinstate the lost riverside cycleway and public footpath (fig.12). The primary opportunity is the potential to draw activity from the town centre and extend the psychological space of the high street (fig.13). The 'creative quarter' could generate revenue by selling products from particular creative industries independently or through the high street shops.

Potential partnership would include Glamorgan University (8miles south in Trefforest), who are a research partner for the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), world's largest and most prestigious entrepreneurship research project. The University is also responsible for producing the highest number of graduates of successful businesses in the UK.

Observation of the site has shown the existing carpark to be underused and an opportunity could be to engage in a mutually beneficial and informal agreement with the landowner Somerfield, whereby the car park is downgraded to 25% capacity in return for the increased footfall past their shopping centre. From a legal perspective, the proposals would be comparable to transforming the carpark into a caravan park. The implications being a license required from the local authority under the 'Caravan and Control of Development Act 1960\*'. Therefore, in order to relax licensing laws, the project could team with the local authority arts and regeneration department in a joint initiative to enhance, regenerate and add cultural value to the town centre.

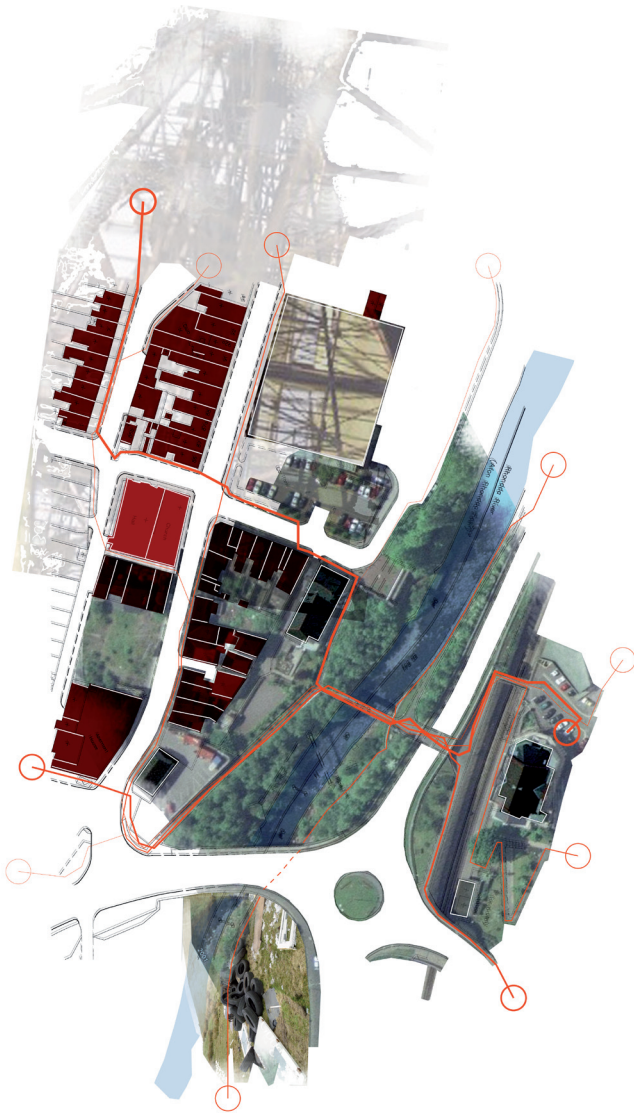


Fig. 13: Site opportunities - capitalise on existing routes, link to high street

Support from the local authority would be feasible, as the proposals are aligned with the specific aspirations of the Local Development plan, 'Point 12. Schemes incorporate flexibility in design to allow changes in use of buildings and spaces as requirements change'.

#### 4.2.3 \_ Precedent

The primary reference to this particular strategy is represented by the 'Urban Catalyst' (p.83) study which has found temporary uses to begin in niches and have better chances to evolve in low economic pressure areas, possessing almost an 'anti-monetary' character. UC have also established that temporary uses tend to aim towards 'self-containment' and independence who's future is flexible. As the town of 'Tonypandy' is experiencing prolonged economic strain, the site is appropriately positioned in relation to the retail centre for a localised urban renaissance.

The theoretical precedent for this proposal is the notion of an urban environment programmed for change. This is epitomised in the ideas of the Situationists who protested for mobile urban spaces and a modifiable architecture (p.68), also Archigram (p.71) who investigated potential for expendable buildings that could be exchanged every 15 years in favour of more efficient systems. Outside 20<sup>th</sup> century theory, there are numerous realised examples of adaptive environments such as 'Container City' (p.94) in London's docklands which can expand or reassemble itself through rapid construction techniques and low cost/ low risk development.

#### 4.2.4 \_ Diagram

The strategy of pre-cycling presupposes a future of permanent change and adaptability for temporary elements where the accumulation of plug in units appropriating the Somerfield

Note: Exemption from the license is possible unless; the sites is occupied by the local authority, to be used for temporary and special purposes such as caravan rallies, agricultural and forestry workers, building and engineering sites and travelling salesmen or up to three caravans on a site of not less than five acres for a maximum of 28 days in any 12 months.



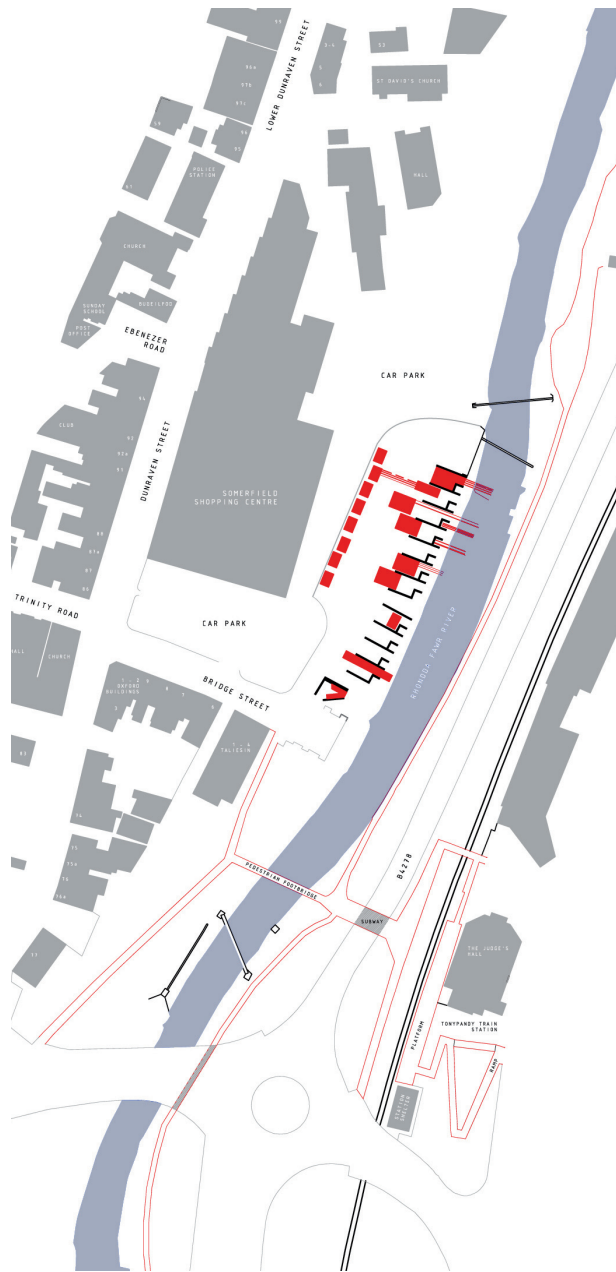


Fig. 14: Plan diagram of plug-in units, 'Tonypandy Creative Quarter'

carpark for creative enterprises would define a creative quarter (fig.14).

In order to preserve the car parks use for the future and execute a strategy of minimal intervention, the proposals would lay out a lattice grid of concealed sunken anchor points on a module that would reflect standardised shipping container sizes and allow for sliding \ moving elements. The creative quarter would be tested for 18 months and depending on its success (measured by economic viability and public feedback), more permanent structures would be progressively erected and infested with a perpetual sequence of temporary 'cling-on' or 'plug-in' additions. Towards the latter stages of the test period, improvised artefacts would migrate from the original node, becoming viral and interbreeding with their surroundings such as the nearby underpass and pedestrian bridge. The sphere of the cultural quarter would subsequently extend with new hybrid anchor points to reactivate the river bank and forgotten footpath (fig.15).

Alternatively, at the end of the 'test period', the temporary skeleton of the creative quarter would be relocated to another part of the Valley in greater need of an economic injection. The carpark site would therefore return to its previous use but maintain anchor points to support future town markets and events.

### Emerging Tactics

- Designing the built environment with 'pre-cycled' reconfigurable architecture to be flexible for future temporary uses, creating urban adaptability based on permanent and temporary infrastructure.
- Appreciating the value and potential of 'everyday' spaces.
- If it is not possible to work within legal parameters, engage the vested interests towards a mutually beneficial outcome.
- Temporary urbanism as a stimulus for economic regeneration



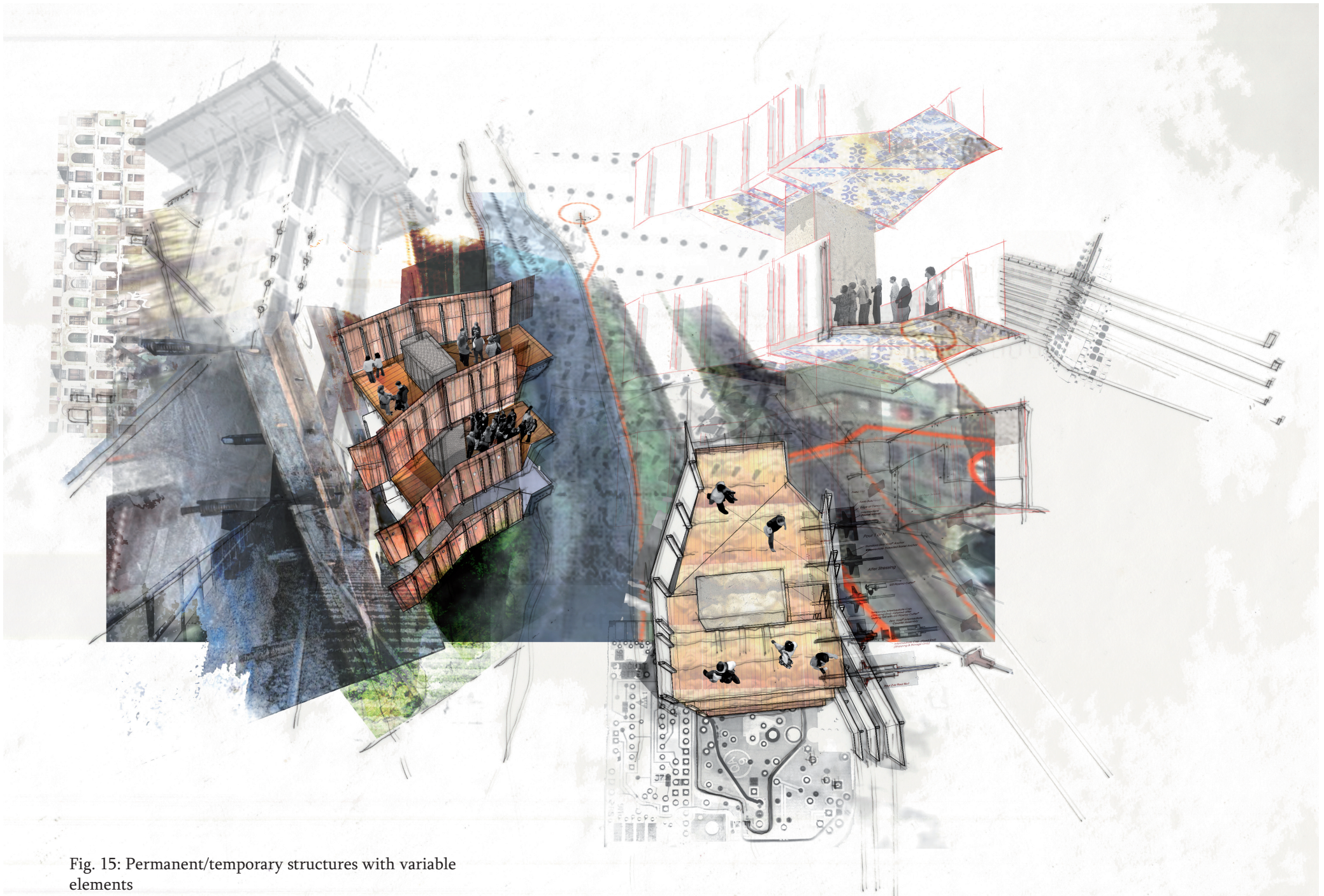


Fig. 15: Permanent/temporary structures with variable elements





## 4 . 3 DETAIL CASE STUDY: TON PENTRE' TRANSIENT ALLOTMENTS #RS009

For the purpose of the final case study, the research will explore in greater detail the potential for temporary urbanism to reactivate a typical urban condition in the Rhondda. A detailed study is required to test the practicalities of site, legality, community context, and in order to reveal the important relationships and limitations of temporary urbanism.

### 4.3.1 \_ Expanding the Matrix

In the following section the case study will expand on the opportunities and constraints outlined for the site within the 'Stage 1: Residual Space Matrix' (Part 3.3/p.136). This process will begin by exploring the planning and economic context, followed by the role of community, analysis of precedents and finally the testing of strategies.

STAGE 1: Opportunities/Constraints						SHORTLIST
Overview	Planning Context	Form & Topography	Access & Circulation	Ownership & Demise	Environment & Resources	
Prominent untoved patch of riverside land fronting onto street, part of train station and gateway to town	Community Action Plan in place for Ton Pentre established by council via Town Planning Consultancy Ltd. (TPCI) supported by Rhondda Community Business Initiatives (RCBI)	Sunken from the adjacent pedestrian footway; bound by river, road, railway, and public path. Slopes to river.	Direct pedestrian access from station platform and Ystrad Road (A4058). Close to bus stop	Rhondda Cynon Taff council/South Wales Valleys Lines	Currently target for fly-tipping, drug abuse; opportunity to challenge perceptions of station	Prominent site, opportunity for Rhondda Community Business Initiatives (RCBI) to invest in local people and environment.
**		-	+/**	**	+	**

Table. 1: Extract from the 'Residual Space Matrix'

### 4.3.2 \_ Choice of Detailed Case Study Site

The detailed case study site is Ton Pentre train station (#RS009) at the head of the Valley where the new volatility and effects of shrinking are most prevalent. In contrast to the previous cases, the Ton Pentre residual space is very ordinary neglected and indistinct which is hoped to question the potential of temporary use and whether it is a realistic approach in the troubled Valleys context.

Fig. 16: #RS009 Figure Ground context, scale 1:10,000@A4 approx





Fig. 17: View of residual site neglected in winter



Fig. 18: View from road-bridge of residual site overgrown in summer





Fig. 19: FORMAL?: Muni Arts Centre, Performance



Fig. 20: INFORMAL?: ‘Rural Gentlemen’s Club’, Ton Pentre private improvised mountainside allotments & retreat.

Note: In 1929, during the start of an era of decline and depression, the Allotment Association was founded for the whole of South Wales to encourage local men to take up growing fruit, vegetables and flowers.

### 4.3.3 \_ Planning: Formal & Informal

Within the ‘Residual Space Matrix’, the ‘Planning Context’ category focuses on policy that could support a temporary intervention. For the detailed case, we can interrogate the significance of town planning in temporary urbanism and implications to creating a temporary use on the site.

There is a limited sphere of legal literature on temporary urbanism. Online guidance on the subject suggests that it is fundamental to establish whether a development can actually be classed as a building and would therefore be subject to the planning regulations:

“Local Planning Authorities will not grant permanent permissions for buildings of temporary construction. It is up to the end-user to specify how long they would like the temporary permission.”<sup>1</sup>

As such, we encounter the problem inherent in this research being the tension between formal and informal classifications of temporary urbanism. A basic appreciation of this distinction is given as follows:

#### Formal

The formal basis of temporary urbanism in the UK can be seen in ‘Part 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995’, which permits ‘the temporary use of any land for any purpose for not more than 28 days in total in any calendar year’ (although some purposes are restricted to no more than 14 days in total such as markets) and ‘the provision on the land of any moveable structure for the purposes of that

1 ‘Planning for Temporary Industrial and Commercial Buildings’, Accessed in 01.10.2011, [<http://www.mosaictownplanning.co.uk/files/Planningfortemporaryindustria landcommercialbuildings.pdf>]



use<sup>2</sup>. In the Rhondda Valley, formalised temporary use can be seen in the regions seasonal local government organised events (fig.19).

### Informal

Whereas traditional urban planning tends to follow a formal, compartmentalised approach, informal urbanism is independent, responsive and inquisitive. ‘Informal Urbanism’ is a term that follows much temporary urbanism discourse and commonly associated with analysis of third world settlements (Dovey, 2010). In the book, ‘Loose Space: Possibility and Diversity in Urban Life’ (2007), the authors discuss temporary urbanism as integral by-products of urban development processes with capacity for, ‘extensive formal and informal networks of exchange.’<sup>3</sup> Conversely, they also maintain:

“In most cases, however, temporary uses do not have a formal basis at all. They are either tolerated by the owner (who can decide to cancel this arrangement when he chooses) or simply by illegal or semi-legal; or they may lack necessary building permission.”<sup>4</sup>

In the Rhondda Valley, informal temporary uses are less visible such as the numerous private improvised allotments (see example p.230-231). As we have seen in the earlier research, informality is critical to the intellectual basis of temporary urbanism in the revolutionary theories of the Situationists, Superstudio and Adhocism etc. Further clarity will be given to the paradigm of informal urbanism when analysing strategies for the site.

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- 2 Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, (03.2005) ‘Changes of Use of Buildings and Land: The Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987’, ODPM Circular, London: ODPM
  - 3 Franck, Karen A. Stevens, Quentin., (Eds). (2007) ‘Loose Space: Possibility and Diversity in Urban Life’, New York: Routledge’, p.275
  - 4 Ibid.



Fig. 21: FORMAL or INFORMAL?  
Aerial view of Treorchy Allotments inhabiting residual space adjacent to the train line and former Burberry Factory.

#### 4.3.4 \_ Making Provisions for Temporary Use – Towards a New Flexibility?

In 2002, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now the Department for Communities and Local Government) put out to consultation a document called, 'Possible changes to the Use Classes Order and temporary uses provisions'. The objectives were to make provisions for temporary uses without the need for planning permission in order to be 'beneficial to the community, by providing for infrequent recreational and fund raising events to be held'<sup>5</sup>. The significance to the Rhondda in this study is the recognition at governmental level of the role of temporary urbanism as a dynamic concept and its potential to rural communities;

“In particular, the temporary use provisions can be of great benefit to the rural economy, for example by allowing farmers markets and similar events to take place. There are clear benefits to planning authorities from avoiding the need for a very wide ranging but generally harmless (by their nature, and/or by being intermittent or infrequent) group of activities to be subject to planning procedures.”<sup>6</sup>

However, the reason for consultation was to widen the debate on the more informal blurry aspects of temporary urbanism within planning and the impact that might arise or the types of location that might be affected by a more general freedom.

The primary concerns with temporary uses provision were how to monitor activity, regulate multiple sites and distinguishing between the landowner, the operators and vendors to establish the identity of the responsible persons<sup>7</sup>. Equally, the uncertainty relating to how temporary can establish permanence such as the case of 'Christiania' in Copenhagen

Note: At its height, Dale Farm housed over 1,000 people, the largest Traveler concentration in the UK. The site owned by residents is an interesting case for temporary urbanism in planning as half of the site has planning permission and the other was refused due to the green belt policy but built on anyway. Over 20 years since its conception, the illegal part of the site was evacuated. Accessed in 15.10.2011, [http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/dale-farm]

5 Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, (05.2006) 'Possible Changes to the Use Classes Order and Temporary Uses Provisions: P8 – Temporary Uses, Order 1987', London: ODPM. Accessed in 12.10.2011, [<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/155388.pdf>]

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

(p.62) and more recently Dale Farm, the Irish Traveler halting site in Essex, or the St. Paul's campsite as part of the 'Occupy London' movement.

In summary, we see the general considerations for temporary urbanism from a town planning perspective, and those to be investigated further in the proposal, are as follows:

- Formal or informal: Status of temporary use, degree of regulation and control
- Duration: Specific thresholds related to temporary licenses or full planning permission
- Type of activity: Commercial, cultural, recreational, educational, other etc
- Scale: Size of temporary use, magnitude and capacity, national, regional or local
- Type of construction: Permanent, semi-permanent, temporary etc
- Responsibility: Local Government, site owner, organization, community, sole practitioner
- Other sites: Related temporary uses in other locations at the same or different times.

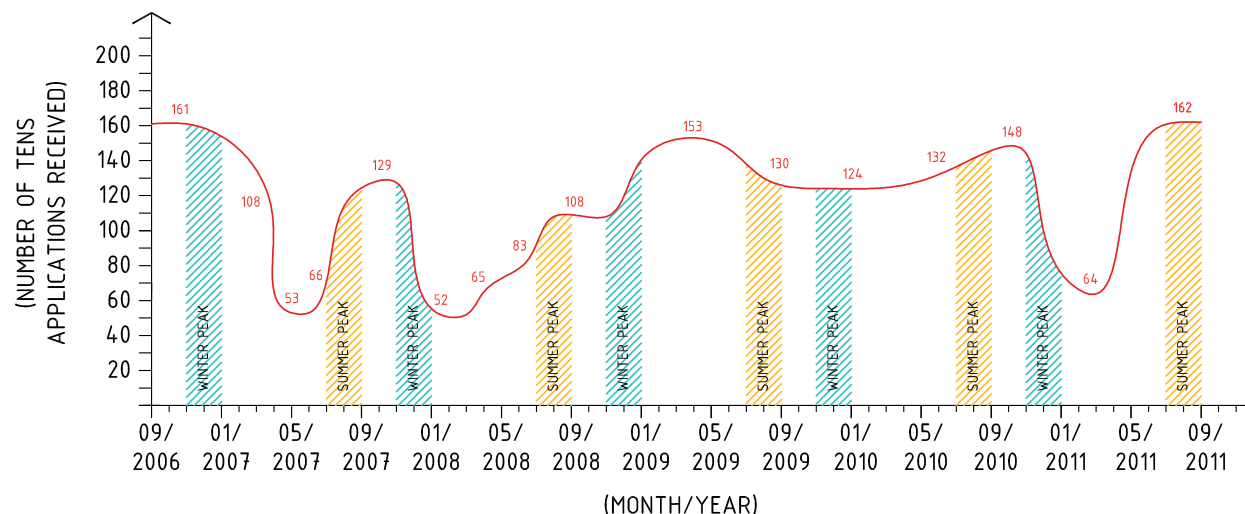
#### 4.3.5 \_ Licensing Temporary Urbanism

The dilemma between formal and informal temporary uses raises a number of issues on the potential for intervening in the Valleys residual spaces as the constraints are set by local authority regulation. Monitoring comes from the Rhondda Cynon Taff Licensing Committee sitting in its role under the Licensing Act 2003<sup>8</sup> who reviews applications for Temporary Event Notices (TENS). However, in light of the many restrictions it is significant that a recent report from the committee for the period between 13 April 2011 and 4th September 2011 indicates an increasing trend towards temporary events in the Valley (table.2). In order to situate this statistic, the graph diagram on the following page (graph.1), plots the gradual increase in 'TENS' license applications over a five year period.

8 HMSO, 'Licensing Act 2003', The National Archives: [Office of the Queen's Printer for Scotland](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/17/pdfs/ukpga_20030017_en.pdf) p.4. Accessed in 30.09.2011, [[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/17/pdfs/ukpga\\_20030017\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/17/pdfs/ukpga_20030017_en.pdf)]

<b>Application Type</b>	<b>Number received</b>
Personal Licence	62
Premises Licence	16
Transfer (Premises Licence)	18
Vary (Premises Licence)	7
Club Premises Certificate	0
Vary (Club Premises Certificate)	1
<b>Temporary Event Notice (TEN)</b>	<b>162</b>
Application to Review	1
Interim Authority Notice	0
Change of DPS	32
Minor Variation	12
Dissapply provision of DPS (Community Premises)	0
Notification of Interest in Premises	3

Table. 2: Licensing Act 2003: Applications received in the Rhondda Valley, period 13th April 2011-4th September 2011



Graph. 1: Plotted graph of number of TENS Applications received by the RCT over a five year period. Data extrapolated from the Licensing Committee’s quarterly reports for periods 09.2006-09.2011

The benefit of TENS to the Rhondda Valley is that it allows ‘small-scale events’ to take place at any premises without a premises license (see p.147). What is clearly demonstrated in the graph is the direct relationship between events in the Valley and the peak summer and winter seasons. According to the RCT Licensing Committee, the general increase in TENS applications is attributed to the, ‘reluctance on behalf of the trade to apply for full variations in this current economic climate.’<sup>9</sup> Therefore, licenses in the Valley are seen to event holders as a way to by-bass costly planning processes.

The peaks and troughs of the TENS graph suggests three potential approaches for the Ton Pentre site: 1. Capitalize on intensity of seasonal events and ‘plug-in’ to the events calendar, or 2. Aim to occupy the gap between peak seasons when events may be considered more unique. 3. Propose consistent events throughout the year.

It is significant to the study of residual space in the Valley that the Licensing Committee

9 RCT Licensing Committee, ‘Licensing Act 2003: Item4-Report 20 Sep 2011’. Accessed in 30.11.2011, [http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/Licences]



also notes the profile of premises utilising TENS is changing:

“The majority continue to be utilised by licensed premises, (accounting for approximately 47%), but there is an increase in ‘Other Premises’ to facilitate licensable activity which include parks, fields, TV Studios, a local town centre and a Fire Station.”<sup>10</sup>

Observation of the increase and diversification of temporary uses can be construed as a shift towards a less-formal environment and the ‘Other Premises’ are necessary to respond to the regions urban condition and static economy. The key point here is that due to a change in attitude, neglected sites could become increasingly accepted as a location for temporary events.

#### 4.3.6 \_ Economic Context

The detailed case study site and the network of residual spaces through the Rhondda valley exist within a volatile economic situation. As we have seen in Part 1 of the research, the region is shrinking due to depopulation and the vacating of industry from the Valleys in favour of other countries with lower manufacturing costs (p.21-22). The Valleys continue to face some of the worst socio-economic problems in Wales with high levels of unemployment concentrated in a few black spots at the heads of the Valleys.<sup>11</sup>

The economic situation is forcing changing trends in the way we approach the built environment and at a political level Council chief executives are pushing for, “local

10 RCT Licensing Committee, ‘Licensing Act 2003: Item4-Report 20 Sep 2011’. Accessed in 30.11.2011, [<http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/Licences>]

11 ‘2010 Constituency Profile: Rhondda’. Accessed in 12.10.2011, [<http://waleshome.org/2010/04/2010-constituency-profile-rhondda/>]



Fig. 22: Economic issues: Vacant terrace housing in the heads of the Valleys area

government to be at the forefront of the public sectors' response to the economic crisis."<sup>12</sup>

The Rhondda council has a history of failed initiatives on vacant land and in-between spaces (p.50, 51) however recently a new impetus has been given to this process:

- Rapid economic change, flipping from a period of growth to recession
- South Wales Valleys desires to be a more significant visitor attraction

On a positive note for the Rhondda, there are many examples where temporary urbanism emerges from economic flux, such as the new wave of temporary use community projects in shrinking US cities. There are also certain commentators that believe temporary urbanism can improve economic competitiveness<sup>13</sup>. This notion is supported by the research of groups that focus on temporary urbanism to the periphery of cities such as 'Urban Catalyst' (p.83). However, there is little research on the economic benefit of temporary urbanism in rural areas and thus a limited pool of strategies to draw upon for the site or similar residual spaces.

#### 4.3.7 \_ Economic Value of Temporary Urbanism

The fragmented nature of the residual spaces in the Rhondda Valley, especially those in relation the train line create an unattractive environment to visitors and an unpleasant place to live. There is an argument for temporary use to improve the visual quality of the public realm, change perceptions, engage the local community, or potentially stimulate the local economy.

In the book 'Loose Space' (2007), temporary urbanism is very much presented as a

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12 Vize, Richard. (2011) 'Local democracy in crisis as councils struggle to trust citizens', The Guardian Online. Accessed in 30.09.2011, [<http://www.guardian.co.uk/local-government-network/editors-blog/2011/oct/14/local-democracy-crisis-councils-trust-citizens>]

13 McKone, Jonna. (2011) 'The Contradictions of Regulating "Pop-up" Spaces'. Accessed in 01.11.2011, [<http://thecityfix.com/blog/the-contradictions-of-regulating-pop-up-spaces/>]

commercial tool with economic value. This approach derives from observation of post-industrial European cities where, ‘originally informal, intermediate usage has mutated into a profitable permanent use’<sup>14</sup>. From this perspective, the value of temporary use is measured on its impact to the economic context as opposed to the temporary use itself:

“....although temporary they do leave traces and often influence other developments.... eventually being replaced by higher land value uses”<sup>15</sup>

A criticism of this approach to temporary urbanism is that it strips the concept down to a formulaic development strategy. Perhaps high-level direction is what is required for the Valley but what these statements ignore, and research has shown to this point, is that temporary urbanism tends to follow a ‘grass-roots’ approach.

#### 4.3.8 \_ Local Community in the Valleys

Further to the economic issues, it is clear that local communities are fundamental to the potential for temporary urbanism to reactivate the Valley’s residual spaces. There are already several examples in the Rhondda where both formal and informal groups of people engage in a variety of activities to address their problems and improve their towns and communities (‘Arts Factory’, p.149). Notwithstanding these cases, organisational capacity building at the community level is an important consideration in envisaging temporary use projects in the Valley, even though in this context the distinctions between community-based organisations (CBOs) and other community actors can often become blurred<sup>16</sup>.

14 Franck, Karen A. Stevens, Quentin., (Eds). (2007) ‘Loose Space: Possibility and Diversity in Urban Life’, New York: Routledge, p.275

15 Ibid. p.276

16 ‘Organisational Capacity Building at the Community Level’, International NGO Training and Research Centre. Accessed in 30.09.2011, [<http://www.intrac.org>]



Fig. 23: Profitable Temporary Use: 'Eichbaumoper' - Transformation of the Eichbaum metro station into a temporary opera house, Germany.



Fig. 24: Non-Profitable Temporary Use: 'Bridge Mix' - Pedestrian bridge converted into a temporary space for art and inhabitation, Cleveland.

When discussing 'community', it is important to remember the current and historical context that have made the Rhondda people such a unique and strong-minded race, but also how there remains a downtrodden mentality that manifests in a lack of belief in urban changes (p.20-21).

Why propose a temporary use for the site? How can it help the Ton Pentre community?

In section 2.3.2, the research noted the benefit of temporary urbanism to communities by means of 'self-empowerment' (p.79), especially the scope to instigate change as demonstrated in Seattle's creative rediscovery of its many fragmented neighbourhoods. Other examples of community empowerment and cohesion are provided in the book 'Pop-Up City' (2009) as part of 'Urban Infill' anthologies series from the Cleveland Urban Design Collective (CUDC). The study documents and presents temporary use community projects as a 'counter-culture' movement with their refreshing motto being, 'stop complaining about Cleveland! Fix it yourself!'<sup>17</sup> Another useful document from the CUDC is, 'Re-imagining Cleveland: Vacant Land Re-use Pattern Book' (2009). This anthology of ideas, provided with 'cost estimates' for green intervention, culminates in four steps to create a 'Successful Community Land Reuse Project'<sup>18</sup>:

1. Identify vacant land – research and analyse the context
2. Host a visioning session to introduce the opportunity to neighbours
3. Hold a follow-up meeting to plan the details
4. Carry out your plans and keep neighbours involved in the process

17 Schwartz, Terry., Rugare, Steve., (ed.). (2009) 'Pop-Up City: Urban Infill', No.2, Kent State University: CUDC, p.1

18 CUDC (2009) 'Re-Imagining Cleveland: Vacant Land Re-use Pattern Book', Cleveland: Neighbourhood Press, p.32



The CUDC have fallen on a clear strategy here but its over-simplification of the issues and idealism would be stretched in the Valley's rigid political context. Equally, it must be noted that even though 'shrinking urbanism' is a common issue in this research, it is potentially risky to compare the prospects for temporary use in US cities with South Wales. Less the issues of scale and urbanity, there is an undercurrent of apathy in the Valleys (p.114) that seems to contradict the 'do-it-yourself' attitude of the more successful US cases.

In contrast to the romanticism of certain US projects, temporary use of 'Stalled Spaces' in Glasgow, Scotland has identified a range of barriers, blockages and constraints to community use of vacant land. The scoping report highlights a lack of awareness and understanding amongst stakeholders, low expectations of the community and local conflict through differing perspectives.<sup>19</sup> The report also draws on experience with publicly funded community programmes that suggest, 'communities in many urban areas may not be ready to take ownership of local greenspace development. Assumptions that the community will lead the process may therefore prove to be ill-founded.'<sup>20</sup>

In summary for the Ton Pentre site, the optimism of temporary use projects must be balanced with the realities of working with the community. The following factors abstracted the CUDC and Greenspace, Scotland literature should be considered:

- Existing community groups: activities, funding, organisation, roles and responsibilities
- Capacity of the community: diversity, awareness, understanding, confidence, expectations, experience, skills, knowledge and know-how
- Socio-economic context of the town: this will vary across the length of the Valley and become critical in the most deprived and peripheral areas.

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19 Greenspace Scotland, (2010) 'Stalled Spaces: Delivering Community and Environmental Benefits through Temporary Greenspaces', Stirling: Greenspace, p.6

20 Ibid.

### 4.3.9 \_ Key Actors in the Valleys Communities

In Germany, research by the ‘Urban Pioneers’ on small-scale temporary use projects (p.85) has expanded the knowledge base on the key actors and user groups involved in Berlin’s temporary urbanism. These groups range from: young well educated students, people with regular income looking for hobbies and socio-cultural projects, to ‘drop-outs’ or individuals wanting to build alternative living arrangements.

This summary is very specific to the Berlin context and has been reproduced in certain publications referenced as ‘Types of Temporary Users’ (Pop-Up City, 2009). The problem is that these definitions reflect a highly urbanized context and do not always ‘fit’ with the community profile of the Rhondda Valleys towns. As such, the table below (table.3) adapts the Urban Pioneers user groups in order to situate the potential key actors in Ton Pentre towards a temporary intervention on the site.

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Young people	Local businesses	Rhondda Community Businesses	High level government (WAG)
Local schools/colleges	High street traders	Initiatives (RCBI).	Local government (RCT) - events
Unemployed	Entrepreneurs	Rhondda Community Development	Local government (RCT) - planning
Allotment owners	Allotment Association	Association (RCDA).	Valleys train lines
Train commuters	Act1 Theatre Group	Community Liaison officer	Site owners

Table. 3: Potential key actors in Ton Pentre towards a temporary use project

When discussing the Rhondda Valley, it is important to contextualise the above user groups. The following provides a brief overview of the potential formal actors in a temporary use project. The role of the community will be expanded upon in the proposal.

## Site Owner

The Urban Pioneers maintain that site owners play a key role in facilitating temporary use and note the dangers of ignoring ‘contractual agreement’. Their experience in Berlin is that site-owners are increasingly recognising the benefits of successful temporary use<sup>21</sup>; it hinders vandalism and decay and creates a new identity for a site within the public eye. The role of the ‘site-owner’ in the Rhondda is perhaps less onerous as the majority of land-use, especially residual space is either not registered or falls within local authority remit.

## Community liaison Officer

The ‘Potential User Groups’ table also includes a ‘Community Liaison Officer’. An example to where this position has been employed in conjunction with a temporary use is the ‘Vertical Gardens’ project in Ebbw Vale<sup>22</sup> (located in another South Wales Valley suffering the impact of deindustrialisation: see Appendix 7.3). The project is a transformation of a former steelworks open concrete basement into ‘vertical allotments’ for local schools to ‘occupy the gap’ for 5 years whilst the surrounding post-industrial site is developed for residential use. Alternative to other cases, this temporary project is commissioned by high government (Welsh Assembly Government) and managed for the pre- and post-construction period by the local authority (fig.25).

The role of the ‘Community Liaison Officer’ (fig.26) was to bring together design specialists (Architects, Landscape Architects, Engineers, Ecologists, Town Planners etc) with future users (local schools, community groups, young people etc.). A particular benefit of this individual was the scope to pursue a ‘public liaison strategy’, including engagement with food growing expertise groups. The downside of this social agenda is the inevitable sense of

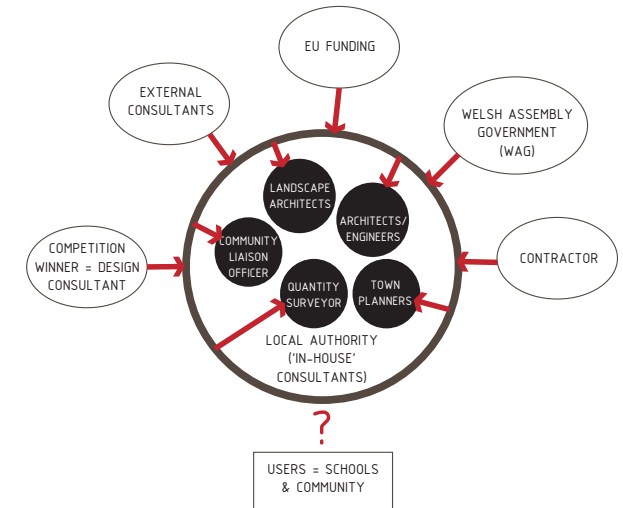


Fig. 25: Diagram illustrates structure and roles of key actors within the realisation of the ‘Vertical Gardens’.

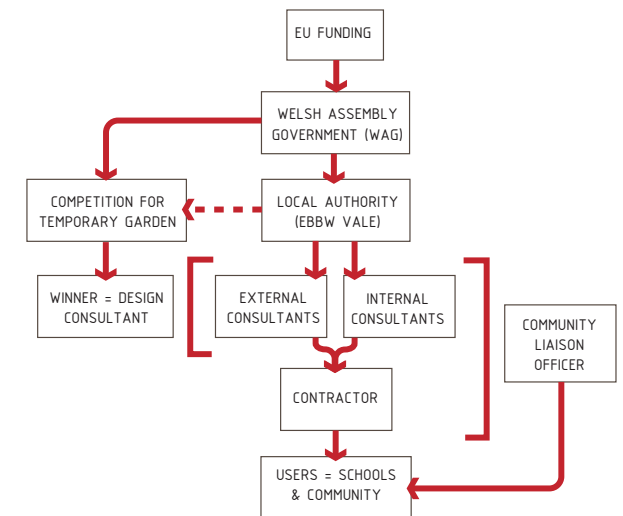


Fig. 26: Diagram illustrates process and relationships of key actors within the realisation of the ‘Vertical Gardens’.

21 Studio UC. (2007) ‘Urban Pioneers: Temporary Use and Development in Berlin’, Jovis Verlag: Berlin, p.40

22 BBC News (24.06.2009) ‘Steel Bunker is Made into Garden’. Accessed in 24.06.2009, [<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/8116943.stm>]

Note: The shared aims of RCBI and RCDA are to:

- Develop and support local initiatives
- Build international links through youth and community enterprises.
- Develop mechanisms for employment
- Help to regenerate communities
- Raise levels of skill
- Contribute to community and social wealth

expectation amongst the community which can be frustrated by the inherent bureaucracy of working for a public body. Also, the issue with this model of temporary urbanism is that it is perhaps too closely aligned with typical building processes - 'too formal', resulting in a convoluted design process and rigid programme that requires a specific 'end date'<sup>23</sup>.

### Local Authority Partnerships

Two of the most influential groups in the table are the local residents and the local authority partnership schemes; Rhondda Community Development Association (RCDA) and partner organisation, Rhondda Community Businesses Initiatives (RCBI). In contrast to other Valley towns, Ton Pentre has a strong 'Community Action Plan'<sup>24</sup>, established by the council and supported by the RCDA and RCBI. Whereas the existence and aspirations of these partnership schemes are generally positive for the area in terms of employment and enterprise, there is journalistic research to suggest these actors may constrain the potential for temporary urbanism.

“Government involvement contradicts the concept of temporary space”<sup>25</sup>

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23 Based on the author's experience through active involvement in the design and build of the temporary 'Vertical Gardens' project. Refer to Appendix 7.3 for full description.

24 Rhondda Community Business Initiative (RCBI), Rhondda Community Development Association (RCDA), 'Community Action Plan'. From RCBI website:  
<http://www.rcbi.co.uk/>

25 McKone, Jonna (22.02.2011) The Contradictions of Regulating "Pop-Up" Spaces,  
[<http://thecityfix.com/>]



#### 4.3.10 \_ Conflicts of Regulation

Increasingly temporary urbanism is being picked up as a legitimate planning tool but there are lines of thinking that are beginning to question this trend. In the article, ‘The Contradictions of Regulating “Pop-Up” Spaces’, the author criticises the objectives of temporary use, especially those with a commercial agenda as top-down gentrification.

“Others might see these projects as interventions that take away ownership from something that should be fluid and community driven”<sup>26</sup>.

As noted in the earlier discussion on planning, local government involvement generally means laws, rules and paperwork and can contradict the sort of ‘ground-up’ collaborative potential of the community:

“Projects coined ‘temporary urbanism’ supported with grants from a governmental initiative, risk creating a formulaic model”<sup>27</sup>

Also, working with local government requires targets and tangible results. The proposal of a temporary urbanism in the Rhondda might be faced with scepticism on the back of past failed initiatives. By setting a project apart from local government, local people may have greater impetus to engage with something less regimented, but the question remains; what type of temporary urbanism can function outside of formal systems?

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26 McKone, Jonna (22.02.2011) The Contradictions of Regulating “Pop-Up” Spaces, [<http://thecityfix.com/>]

27 Ibid.



Fig. 27: 'EcoBOX' garden project, A.A.A, La Chapelle, Paris. 2001 (-).



Fig. 28: 'Le 56/Eco-interstice' project, A.A.A, St. Blaise, Paris. 2006 (-).

#### 4.3.11 \_ Precedent Projects

The limitations of the temporary urbanism matrix are that it does not allow for precedent which in the context of this research can draw valuable lessons on temporary use projects. In this section, the research will discuss two projects by the same group that may inform tactics for intervening on the Ton Pentre site. The projects by the Parisian collective, 'Atelier d'Architecture Autogérée' (A.A.A) have been chosen due to similarities of scale, level of intervention, type of activity, key actors and agenda.

The AAA studios are contributors to 'RHYZOM' – a collaborative network that map emerging cultural production and forms of 'collective organisation' in isolated settlements<sup>28</sup>. The AAA focus on empowering communities to question urban mutations through what they believe to be 'micro-political actions'<sup>29</sup>. The relevance to the Rhondda is the acknowledgment of urban peripheries and how small-scale actions when joined together can represent a bold statement that demands recognition at governmental level.

The AAA define their works as encouraging participation of inhabitants towards a 'self-management' of disused urban spaces in order to make the city more ecological, democratic and accessible to its user. The concept of 'self-managed architecture' is suggested to strike a balance between completely liberal 'ad hoc urbanism' (p.72) and conventional local government-led initiatives. This middle approach focuses on 'relationships, processes and agencies of persons, desires, skills and 'know-hows'<sup>30</sup>. The AAA claim that this can be achieved through,

28 'RHYZOM'. Accessed in 04.10.2011, [<http://rhyzom.net>]

29 Atelier d'Architecture Autogérée, 'Urban Tactics'. Accessed in 06.06.2011, [<http://www.urbantactics.org/>]

30 Ibid.

“New forms of association and collaboration, based on exchange and reciprocity and involving all those interested (individuals, organisations, institutions), whatever is their scale.”<sup>31</sup>

One example of this approach to temporary urbanism is the ‘Ecobox/Eco Urban Network Project’ (2001). The ‘Ecobox’ is a series of self-managed projects in the La Chapelle area of Northern Paris that encourage and facilitate local residents to transform forgotten spaces and add value to the local area (fig.27).

The key lessons from Ecobox transferrable to the Rhondda relate to the process and role of various actors in its development (see fig.29). For instance, by establishing a temporary garden constructed of recycled materials, the A.A.A were able to engage local residents to reflect on their surroundings and participate in the curation of the garden as a space for ‘urban criticism and creativity’. In addition, local people were given the opportunity to debate the local environment on an equal forum which was deemed to catalyse further ‘trans-local improvements’<sup>32</sup>. One concern with this approach is that it assumes a lot of the community and calls for a high level of informal participation. Also, there is a lack of clarity on the formality of the project such as the source of the materials used, funding and general legality of the intervention.

On another site, the ‘Le 56/Eco interstice’ project also demonstrates the A.A.A’s concept of ‘collectively self managed space’, in which their role was to manage the programme for an ‘eco-construction’. Their management technique means that more space and time is created for partnerships to develop which in turn is expected to promote a greater sense of ownership of the final product within the participating groups.

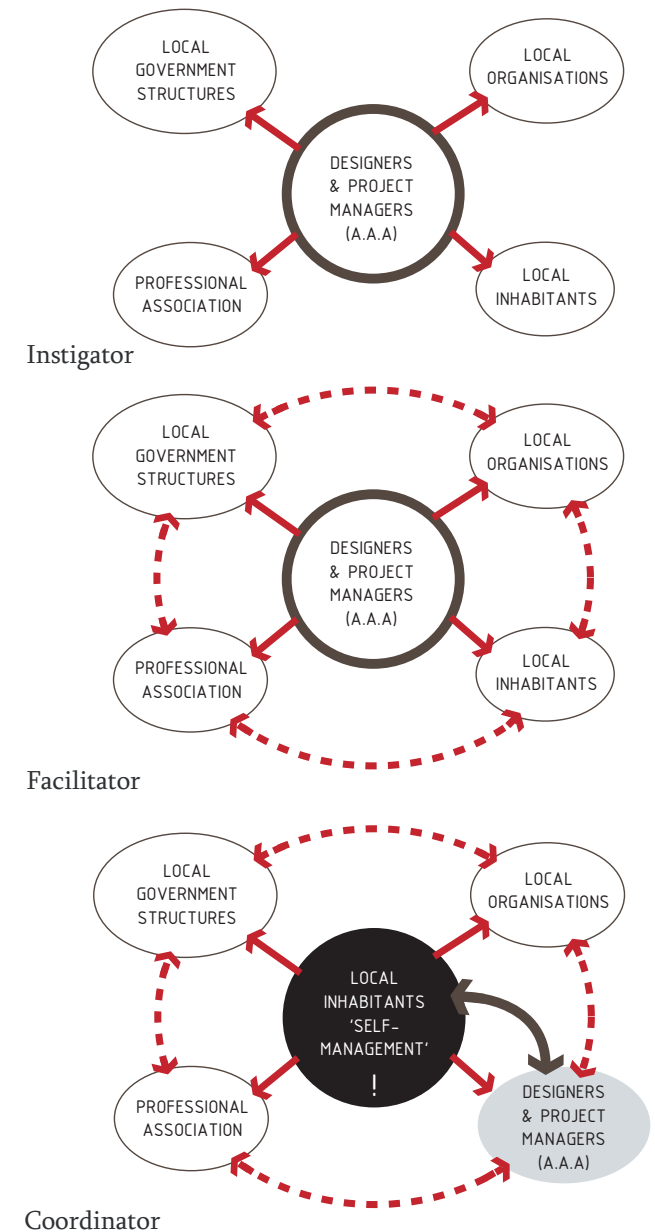


Fig. 29: Diagram illustrates different roles played within the A.A.A projects.

31 Atelier d’Architecture Autogérée, ‘Urban Tactics’. Accessed in 06.06.2011, [http://www.urbantactics.org/]

32 Atelier d’Architecture Autogérée, ‘ECObox’. Accessed in 06.06.2011, [http://www.urbantactics.org/projects/ecobox/ecobox.htm]

As a strategy for the Rhondda, the notion of 'self-management' is powerful as it takes away the need for specialist input in the running of a project. However, the term is slightly misleading as it suggests the community will manage a temporary use themselves, which is not fully the case. From analysis of these examples, it is evident that the key agents are not solely the inhabitants/users who eventually manage the project, but the A.A.A. as the 'designer' and 'facilitator' in the process. These roles are required to highlight an issue to the local people, as well as a 'coordinate' between the active involvement of municipal stakeholders and the diverse life-styles and living practices of the residents.

Unfortunately, within the potential temporary users identified for the Ton Pentre site there is no clear individual to take on this role. Therefore, the responsibility for instigating change would probably fall to the local government through partnerships or the collective organisation of the community.



#### 4.3.12 \_ Territorial Synchronisation

What the Valley lacks at a national level is a modern identity that demonstrates progress from its industrial history. What the valley lacks at a regional scale is an offer substantial enough to draw local and non-local people up the valley to the most troubled towns.

In the section, 'Learning from the Ruhr Valley' (p.103-107) many parallels are made between the urbanism of the Rhondda Valley and the Ruhr Valley. The difference however in recent years is that the Ruhr has enjoyed long-term funding towards a masterplan of regeneration based on permanent and temporary interventions. As a basis to analysing a temporary use on the Ton Pentre site, the research can explore the potential for a similar territorial synchronisation by feeding residual spaces into both the Valleys existing and emerging networks.

#### 4.3.13 \_ Networks & Linking

The Ton Pentre site is linked as part of the Rhondda Valleys long and linear urban structure whose primary connection is through the train line that joins each of its towns. There is also a psychological connection through river that runs along the Valley floor and the mountainside landscape that runs continuously above the settlement boundary. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the town of Ton Pentre is also connected by the Valleys existing network of events organised by the local government, Rhondda Cynon Taff. The events team are responsible for organising weekly and seasonal activities, as well as their promotion and debate across social media. One of the primary temporary events network is the regions broad range of outdoor markets (fig.30).

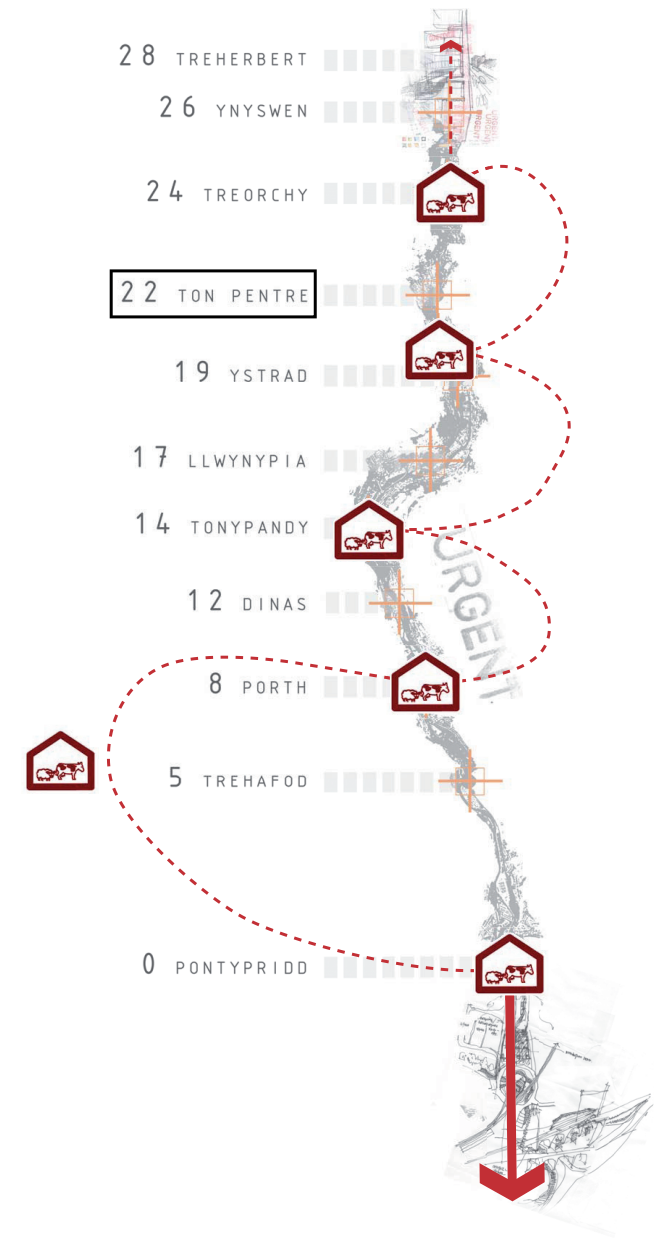


Fig. 30: Rhondda Valley local government outdoor market events network



Fig. 31: Bustling outdoor market, Pontypridd circa 1950



Fig. 32: Empty high street with quiet and underused outdoor market, Pontypridd 2011

#### 4.3.14 \_ Farmers Market

Urban allotments/farming and agriculture is an omni-present subject that's firmly embedded in modern ecological and political issues, making individuals more interested in self-reliance<sup>33</sup>. Precedent of this movement can be observed in the work of London based architectural practice Bohn & Viljoen, whose project for a 'Continuous Productive Urban Landscape' (CPUL) in Middlesbrough, Yorkshire, attempts to link a network of existing open spaces and derelict sites into a food growing linear park<sup>34</sup>.

The Rhondda is not outside of these trends with farmers markets for example popping up in unexpected locations such as car parks<sup>35</sup>. The significance here is that the Valley's communities are responding to the increase in food prices and awareness for environmental issues. Correspondence with the RCT Events Team echoes the observations of the RCT Licensing Committee in that temporary events, especially farmers markets are becoming increasingly popular<sup>36</sup>. It is noteworthy that produce for the markets come from local allotments and the location of sites are diversifying. The benefit of the farmers market is that it can:

- Create a temporary event in unexceptional places
- Offer an alternative to supermarket goes and supporting local economy
- Promote healthy lifestyles

33 'London Yields', ICON Magazine Online. Accessed in 10.12.2010, [<http://www.iconeye.com/london-yields>]

34 Viljoen, André. (ed.) (2005) 'Continuous Productive Urban Landscapes: Designing Urban Agriculture for Sustainable Cities', Architectural Press: Oxford. See also Bohn & Viljoen architectural practice website: <http://www.bohnandviljoen.co.uk/>.

35 'Farmer's Market', RCT Events Website. Accessed in 20.10.2011 [<http://www.rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk/en/events/archive/2011/10/farmersmarket.aspx>]

36 Correspondence with Rhian Edwards, RCT Events Team, Rhondda Cynon Taff Council (22.10.2011). See Annex 8.2.

The proposal of pop-up farmers markets can be linked to the long standing allotment / outdoor market culture in the region (p.48). The dominance of Cardiff has however taken much of the social and economic life from town centres leaving empty high streets<sup>37</sup> (fig.31). As such, one can speculate on the mutual benefit to local people, local traders and local government of extending the allotment/farmers market relationship throughout the region.

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37 Arad Consulting, (2006) 'Rhondda Cynon Taff: Economic Development Prospects and Employment Land Prospects', p.3.



Fig. 33: Aerial view of Ton Pentre train station site

#### 4.3.15 \_ Ton Pentre Train Station (#RS009)

The preliminary study as summarised in the ‘Stage 2: Temporary Urbanism Options Matrix (Part 3.4/p.138) suggests that one response to site could be a ‘horticultural intervention’ with a ‘community agenda’ to ‘improve the image of the train station and rebrand the gateway to the town’ (table. 4).

STAGE 2: Temporary Urbanism Options						
Reactivate & Maintain	Promote Circular Processes	Strengthen Connections	Increase Biodiversity	Community & Partnerships	Temporary Use/Maximum Legacy	Reinforce Culture & Local Economy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Constellation of the networked valley: immediate access to river, train line, roads (buses).</li> <li>- Cultivation artefact/transportable greenhouses</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Beautification: Compact garden, small environmental learning centre, inner-valley camping, community allotment.</li> <li>- Memorial garden</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rhondda Community Development Association (RCDA), Rhondda Community Business Initiatives Ltd (RCBI)</li> <li>- Allotment Association</li> </ul>		
	+		+++	+++		

Table. 4: Extract from the ‘Temporary use Options Matrix’

Research in the detailed case study has highlighted the complexities of intervening in the Rhondda’s residual spaces and the myriad of contextual factors that must be considered in any proposal. As such, strategies for temporary use on the Ton Pentre site must look beyond the limitations of the matrix and respond to the headline issues raised so far, notably; town planning, economy and community.



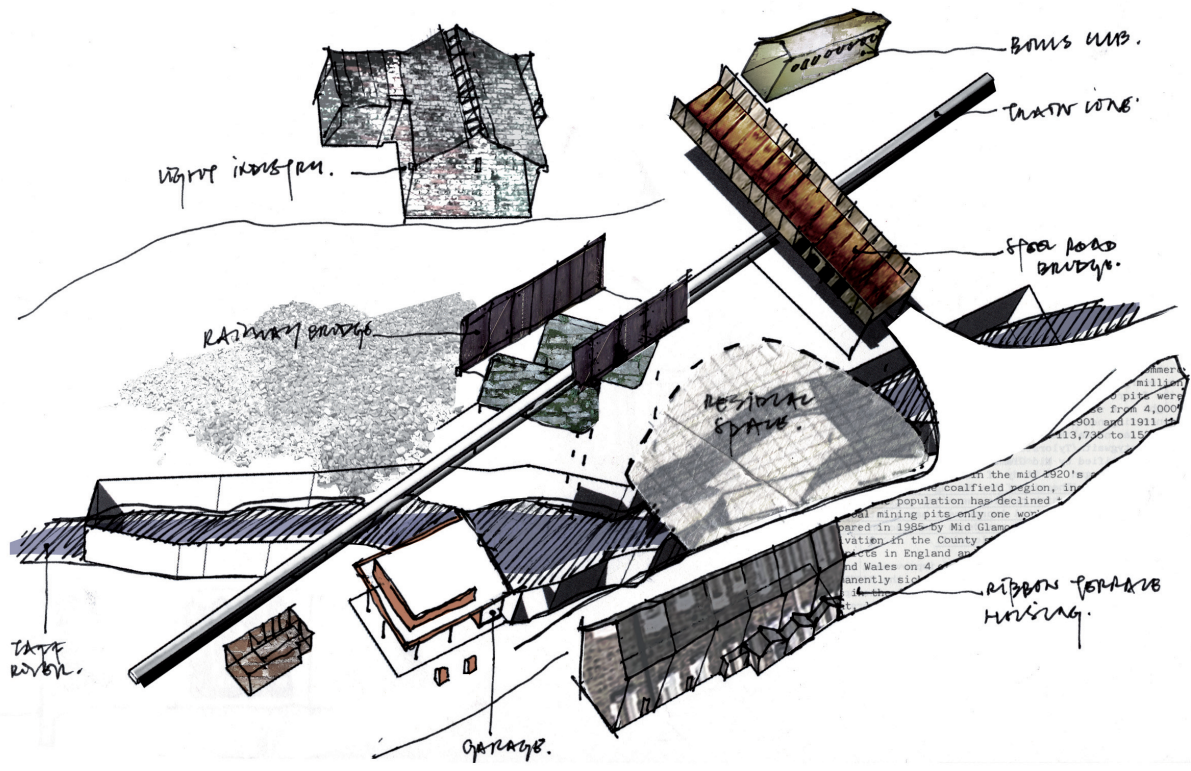


Fig. 34: Exploded elements of the Ton Pentre train station site



Fig. 35: View of the river to the edge of the Ton Pentre train station site (railway bridge to the left)



Fig. 36: Residual spaces in the town of Ton Pentre

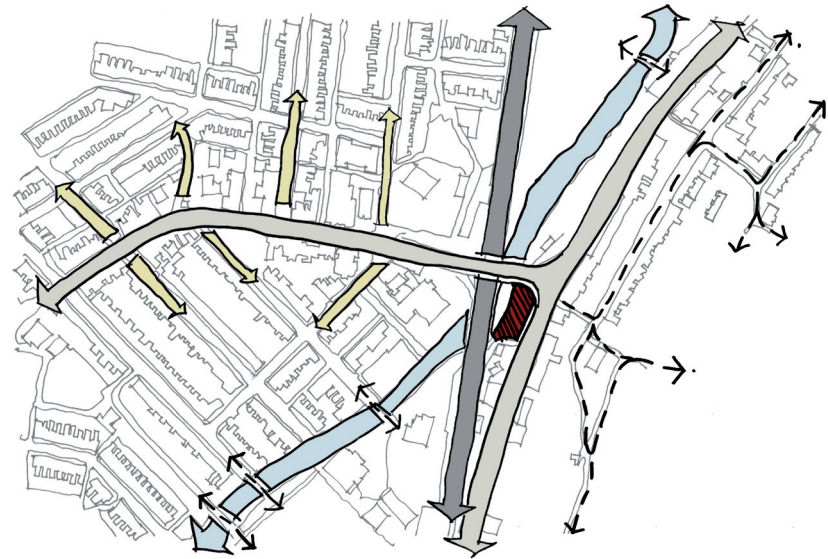


Fig. 37: Capitalise on existing connections

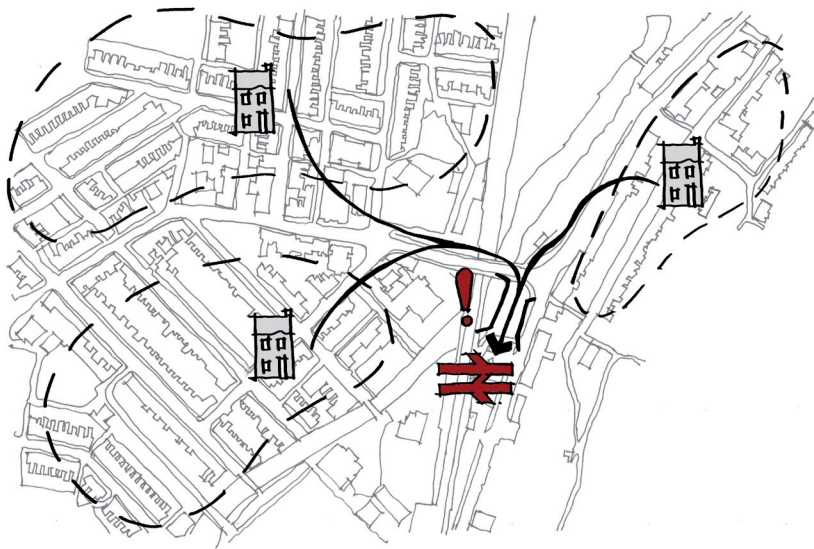


Fig. 38: Mobilisation of residents

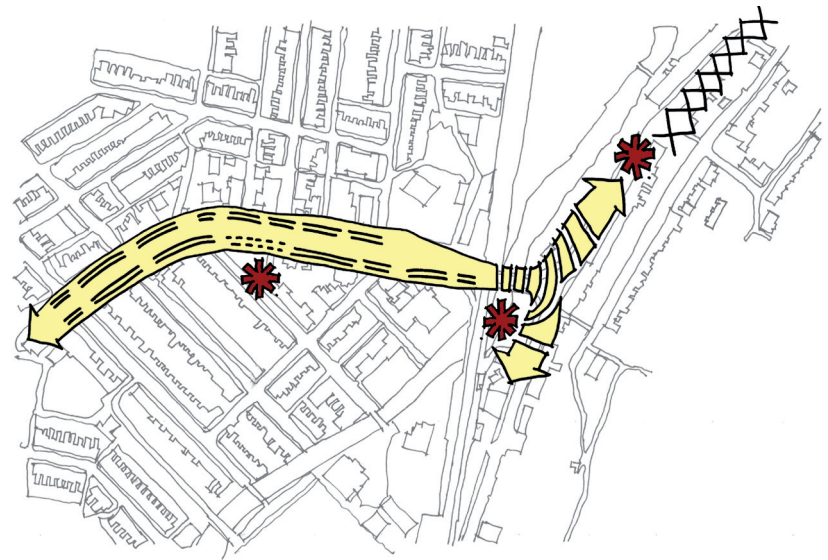


Fig. 39: Opportunity - extending the high street



#### 4.3.16 \_ Urban Context

The site is one of three distinct residual spaces that share an osmotic relationship with Church Street; the road linking the fragmented high street shops and the train station (fig.36).

The residual site (1) furthest west is the location of the former Welsh Baptist chapel that was demolished in 1998<sup>38</sup> and remains empty and overgrown. The residual site to the north (2) is a narrow anonymous embankment that stretches towards the edge of the neighbouring town. What all three spaces have in common is the concept of a 'shrinking urbanism' (Part 1.12/p.19) and are part of a wider trend in the Valley where towns, especially former key retail centres, are contracting resulting in a patchwork of abandoned urban spaces. The result is epitomised in residual site #RS009 (3) where a prime streetscape location adjacent to the towns essential transport link is left discarded.

The reality and potential of the site typical to many other Rhondda residual spaces is that it lies within the intersection of road, river and rail (fig.37). As such, it is probably best categorised as an 'in-between' place (p.25) or a 'space of uncertainty' (Cupers, p.27). It also echoes the concerns of the CABI report on 'vacant urban land' in the UK (see p.25), as far as 'neglect is an easy option' and '(not) great expectations'.

Earlier research has shown that the concept of linking residual spaces in the Rhondda is central to any ambition for the future of the site. By capitalising on the site's location within the town and daily footfall, one can begin to engage with the potential of reactivation through temporary urbanism (fig.38). The diagram left (fig.39) illustrates the potential to extend the activity of the high street to engulf the three troublesome residual spaces, this could be achieved through the temporary use of shop fronts.

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38 'UK & Ireland Genealogy'. Accessed in 25.09.2011,  
[<http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/wal/GLA/Ystradyfodwg/Chapels.html>]

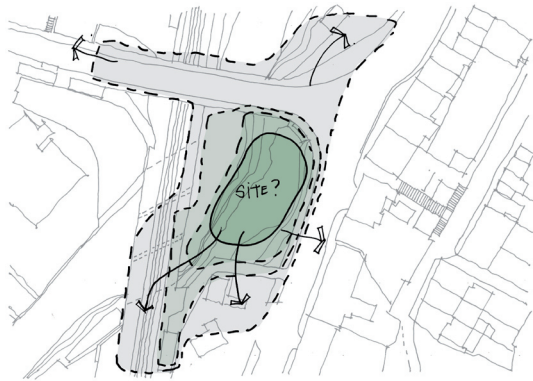


Fig. 40: Elastic Boundaries

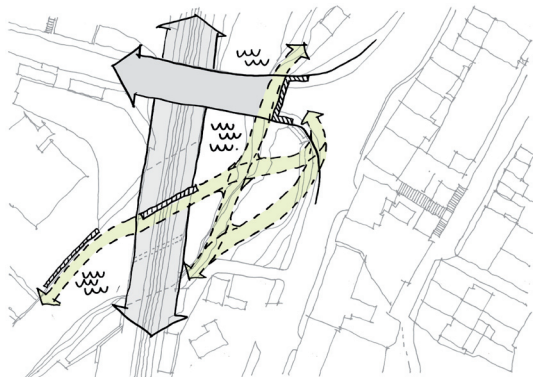


Fig. 41: Intersecting



Fig. 42: Engaging the river

#### 4.3.17 \_ Response to Site

##### Legal Ownership

The site is not registered with the Land Registry<sup>39</sup> however there is no guarantee that a private land owner could not emerge and insist on putting a stop to the temporary use. This level of uncertainty may limit certain temporary uses on the orphaned land but also focus opportunities for ephemeral ‘pop-up’ events or more informal uses for example.

##### Boundaries

The temporary rarely function within a definitive ‘boundary’ in the same sense as more permanent developments. Subsequently, there could be an opportunity to engage the railway platform and the migration of resident commuters who use the station to make the 50mins journey to work in Cardiff on a daily basis. Therefore, we can assume ‘soft boundaries’ that are elastic, capable of expanding and contracting when necessary (fig.40).

##### Accessibility

The problem with the site is that it is both physically and psychologically detached from its surroundings. In response, potential strategies would be to open-out to the public, take routes across / short-cuts / intersecting / make connections or simply draw attention to its existence (fig.41). Also, there is an opportunity to engage the river (fig.42) which was a fundamental strategy in the success of the Ruhr Valley regeneration (p.107).

<sup>39</sup> Correspondence with Chris Macey, Corporate Feedback Scheme Co-ordinator, Rhondda Cynon Taff Council. (11.08.2009)

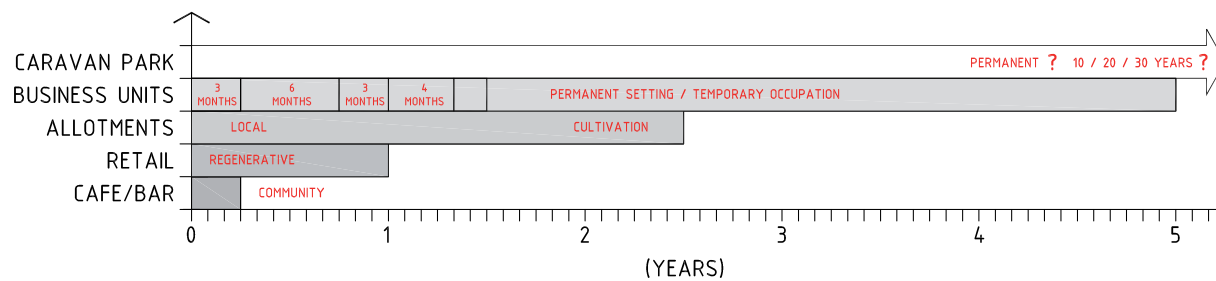
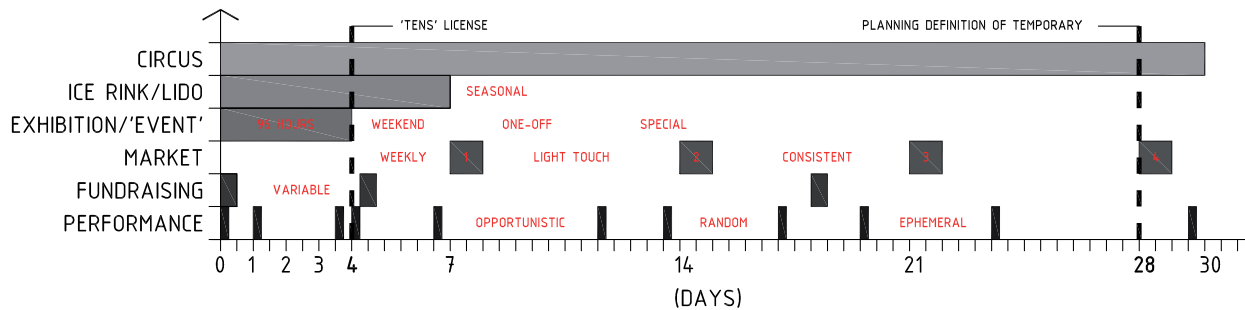


## Form and Topography

The fact that the site is not a flat car park surface means that temporary use would need to be adaptive to the physical features of the site including the changes in levels. Also, depending on the type and scale of temporary use, the site could be set out in a grid (fig.43), divided into smaller portions (fig.44) or different phases (fig.45).

### 4.3.18 \_ Potential Uses

The graph below (graph.2) collates a range of potential temporary uses and compares by duration and highlights the various stages at which temporary uses are required to become formalised. The graph also begins to focus appropriateness of uses.



Graph. 2: Potential temporary uses for the Ton Pentre site



Fig. 43: Laying-out



Fig. 44: Parceling

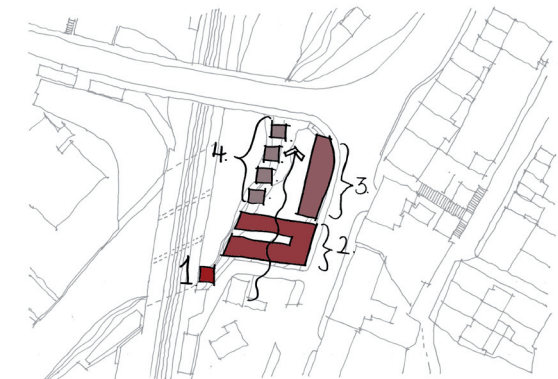


Fig. 45: Phasing

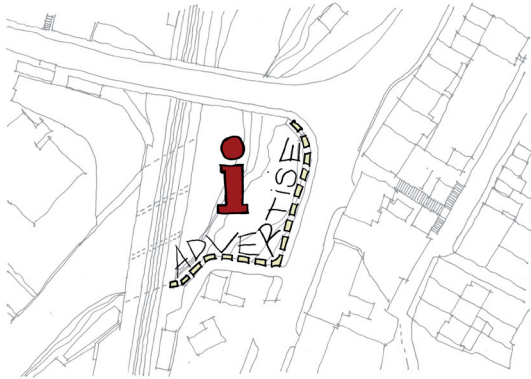


Fig. 46: Grand billboard



Fig. 47: Outdoor performance

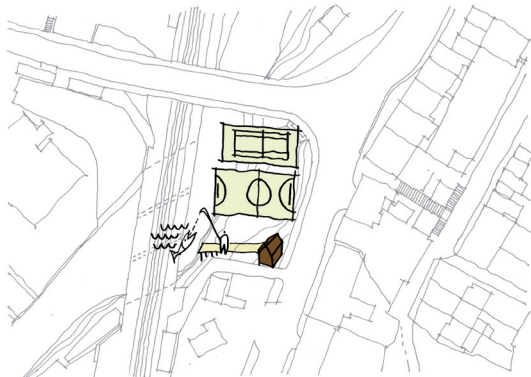


Fig. 48: Sportification

From the graph it is clear that a temporary use could take two approaches by either lasting less (or significantly more) than the threshold duration and remain informal or work within the required timescales. The prominence of the site in relation to the street and train station means that any use would be extremely visible and public, thus suggesting more formal uses such as the following:

### Practical

Reinforcing connection, providing information through signage and wayfinding or by advertising and branding (fig.46). The key actors may be local businesses; Valleys train lines and the local government. Issues would relate to ownership, funding and maintenance.

### Cultural

Cultural uses could allow the site to link in with the Valleys network of temporary events or offer something new through outdoor shows and cinema (fig.47), pop-up theatre, short-lived public art or weekend exhibition space. Key actors would be the local government events team, young people in local schools and colleges, Act1 Theatre Group, cultural institutions. Issues are the practicalities of the site condition, weather and the potential to draw crowds.

### Commercial

Pop-up coffee stand or shops could capitalise on the number of people using the station and relate back to the wider strategy of extending the high street. The diversification of market locations in the Valleys could present an opportunity and once again allow the site to link up with constellations of farmers markets and set a precedent for other residual spaces. Key actors would be the local government events team, business partnerships, local traders, entrepreneurs, commuters, allotment owners.

## Recreational

Recreational uses could be the ‘sportification’ of the site for fishing, BMX, 5-a-side football for example (fig.48), or the beautification / ‘greening’ of the site for use by the local community (fig.49). The Rhondda has a long history of popular allotment usage which is still thriving within the regions strong and resourceful communities<sup>40</sup>. The community drive to secure the future of allotments over recent threats to close a number of the Valleys main sites<sup>41</sup> is a strong indicator for temporary use. Key actors are local people, existing and new allotment owners, and community figure-heads.



Fig. 49: Beautification & vistas

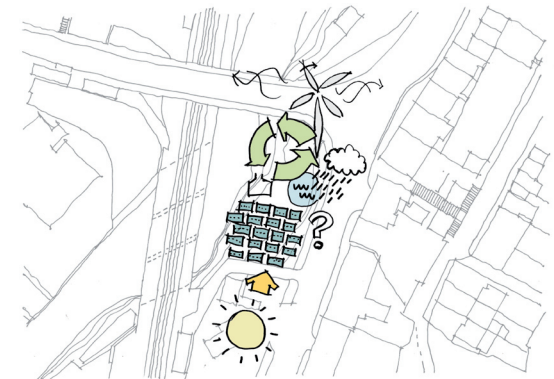


Fig. 50: Harvesting energy & recycling

40 May, John. (2003) ‘Rhondda: 1203-2003: The Story of Two Valleys’, Castle Publications: Cardiff. p.42

41 Green Drinks Website (04.2008) ‘Save Our Rhondda Cynon Taff Allotment’. Accessed in 08.07.2009, [<http://www.valleysgreen.co.uk>]

#### 4.3.19 \_ Concept: 'Transient Allotments'

With reference to the issues raised in the detail case, the concept proposes a temporary combined farmers market and allotments run by the community as a catalyst for the local area. The transient market/allotment would capitalise on the dynamism of the location, local interest in cultivation and link into the regions events network.

The Ton Pentre site would be the first of a series of farmers markets to be inserted into residual spaces along the train line (fig.51). The market structures would follow in the Situationist notion of 'continuous drifting'<sup>42</sup> by constantly relocating and leaving sacrificial productive landscapes behind. In turn, it is expected that this process would facilitate the greening of vacant land and a new conception of Valley urbanism.

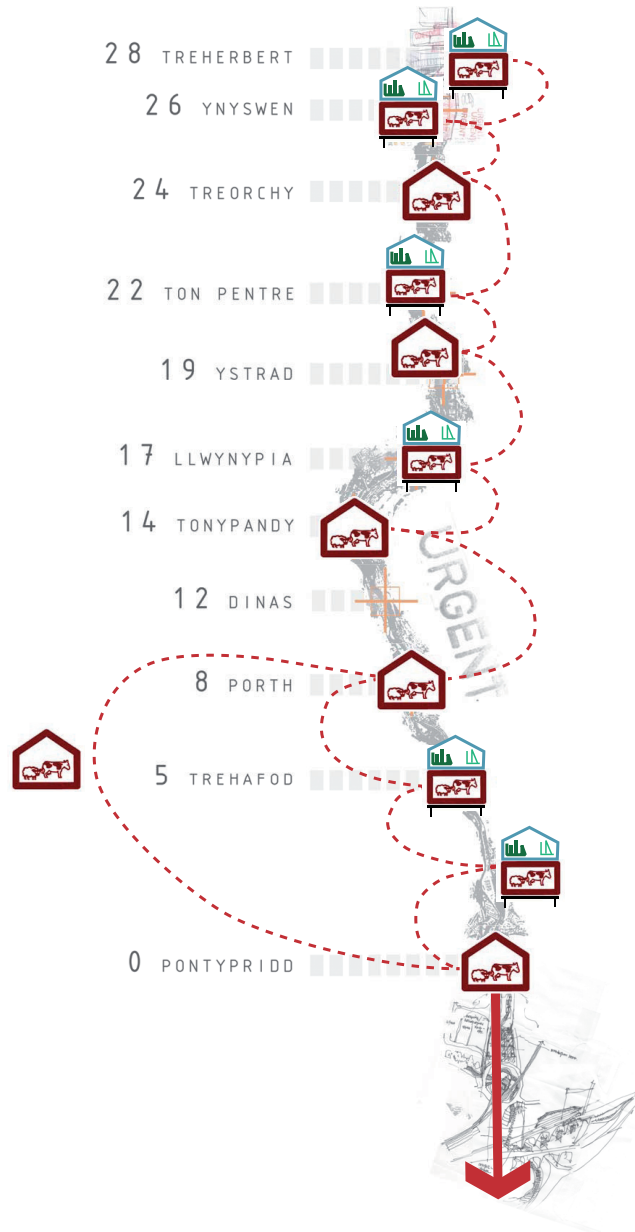


Fig. 51: 'Transient Allotments' amplify existing market networks and cultivate residual spaces leaving a green legacy

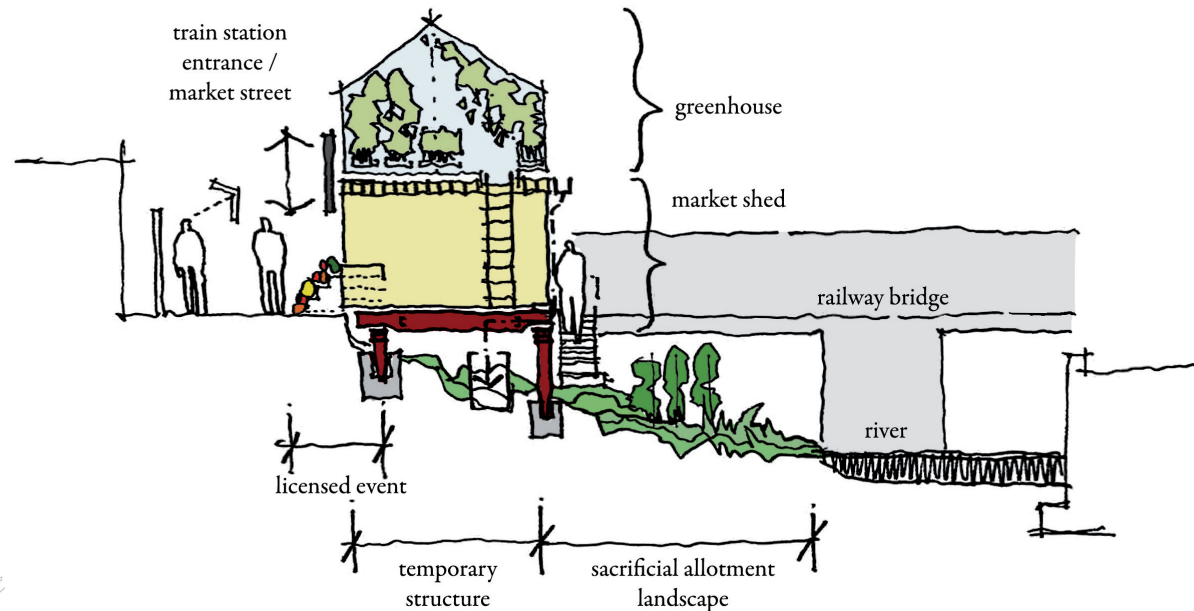


Fig. 52: Illustrative section through typical 'Transient Allotment' unit

42 Knabb, Ken. (1981) 'Situationist International Anthology', Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, p.7



When static, each market/allotment unit would be lettable at the same cost of a standard allotment. The difference being that local youth, the next generation of allotment owners, would benefit from the opportunity to cultivate and sell their produce once-a-week to commuters, passers-by and market goers. Each unit owner would partner with an older member of the local allotment community in order to learn the key skills and encourage a process of inter-generational exchange.

Other than the revenue from the markets, the objectives would be non-commercial and would not aim to attract higher land values to the site but to improve a forgotten space and empower the community to reclaim their town.

The intervention would be composed of a series of two-storey lightweight sheds. The bottom storey could be opened up once a week to sell produce cultivated on site, and closed up in the meantime with lockable front panels that serve as advertising boards for local businesses. The top storey would be more transparent composed of a lightweight greenhouse for more sensitive cultivation and showcasing production.

The units could also be provided with chalkboard fronts to be employed as a canvas for networking between allotment owners and the community – local people could share recipes, buy sell gardening equipment or request specific vegetables.

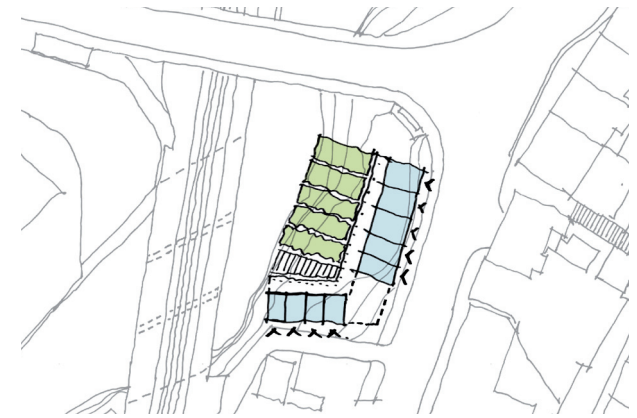


Fig. 53: Market / allotment units arranged to form terraces to the public frontages

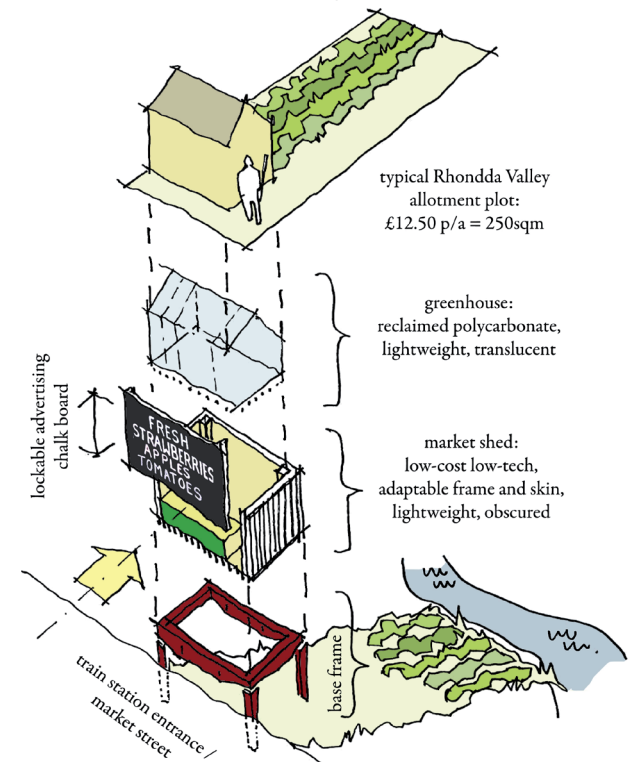


Fig. 54: Illustrative exploded view of a typical 'Transient Allotment'



Fig. 55: Illustrative view of a single 'Transient Allotment' inhabiting the Ton pentre residual space.

#### 4.3.20 \_ Obstacles

### Town Planning

From a planning perspective, the farmers market would set-out to be ‘temporary’, avoiding full planning permission. This approach and attitude to planning would be divided into three elements:

1. Market: The market would be classified as an ‘event’ and would therefore require a TENS license limiting use to a certain number of days per year.
2. Structure: The market sheds would be erected without planning permission as there is no disadvantage of retrospective planning applications<sup>43</sup>. If permission should not be granted the council could require the temporary structures etc to be removed and the ‘land reinstated to its original condition accordingly’<sup>44</sup>.
3. Allotments (sacrificial) landscape: Behind the licensed market fronts, the more permanent and informal allotments would develop at risk of being considered a trespass even though the site is unregistered. If a dispute were to arise, an unreasonable council would be acting within their powers to request the offer of a sacrificial productive landscape be destroyed in favour of reinstating the original fly-tip site.

### Deregulation?

The dilemma of town planning regulations and temporary urbanism has emerged a consistent theme in the detail case study and one that represents a significant constraint to the potential for temporary use in the Valleys. The deregulation and reduction of hurdles to temporary use have become an important research topic and is discussed by the CUDC in

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43 ‘GPDO Part 4: Temporary Buildings & Uses’. Accessed in 28.11.2011, [<http://www.planning-applications.co.uk/gpd3.htm>]

44 Ibid.



Terry Schwartz paper on 'Lite Urbanism' (2009);

“Through strategic deregulation, the development of ecologically-sound transitional landscapes, and the widespread deployment of temporary use initiatives, shrinking cities can define a new form of urbanism, one that is flexible, responsive and ultimately sustainable”<sup>45</sup>

As a compromise to complete deregulation, the concept of 'Lite Urbanism' (originally coined by Koolhaas and Mau in S,M,L,XL, 1995) or 'touching the ground lightly' (Smout Allen, 'Augemented Landscapes', 2007), is an interesting prospect as it takes away some of the concerns created by permanence. The notion of flexible and responsive urbanism suggests a particular type of architecture, one that emphasises the founding of temporary structures and its interaction with the ground plane. Also, in planning terms, foundations tend to be the key indicator when differentiating between temporary and permanent<sup>46</sup>. Therefore, as a strategy the farmers market structures would be transportable, lightweight, minimise foundations and employ low-tech materials that emphasise temporariness.

### Key Actors

The key actors would be grouped from the local community and consist of young unemployed people looking for opportunities, existing allotment owners with the knowledge and know-how, fund raisers, as well as a main representative. The representative's role would be to oversee and coordinate the process; capable of liaising between the local government events team for licenses, networks and promotion. Potential conflicts would be

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45 Schwartz, Terry. (2009) 'Lite Urbanism: Improvisational Approaches to Shrinking Cities'. The Creativity of Shrinking Cities International Symposium.

46 HSE: 'The Management of Temporary Works in the Construction Industry'. Accessed in: 02.11.2011, [<http://www.hse.gov.uk/foi/internalops/sectors/construction/021004.htm>]



the tension between local government involvement on the back of past failed initiatives and freedom of the community group to maintain and develop the temporary use.

The missing link in the community group would be an individual with the relevant experience to ‘design’ the project. Without the presence of design professionals or students in the area, there would inevitably be a lesser prospect for ‘design’ to play a role in the making of the project.

Alternatively, the lightweight market sheds could be fabricated locally off-site using low-cost recyclable materials sourced from the adjacent builder’s merchants to a basic specification agreed upon by the community group. Even though research has shown that people’s expectations of a temporary space will accommodate less ‘finished’ solutions<sup>47</sup>, the risk is that without design input and avoiding building regulations it may become an eye sore to the public, raise health and safety issues, develop permanence through unresolved foundations or simply limit the potential of the site.

In criticism of this approach, it is noted that the research has exposed a number of issues with community involvement and the practical application of temporary urbanism. A general concern is that temporary use ‘assumes a lot’. Residents/locals are understandably risk adverse when it comes to short-lived fluctuating business opportunities, especially in the current economic climate.

Another potential concern is that a strategy of temporary use is not supported and the community react adversely to the lack of commitment to a ‘permanent’ fix for the towns problem spaces. A concern shared with certain critics who refuse to acknowledge temporary use and protest the point that, ‘focusing on temporary urbanism is misguided and can jeopardise areas that require attention’<sup>48</sup>.

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47 Greenspace Scotland (09.2010) ‘Stalled spaces – delivering community and environmental benefits through temporary greenspaces’

[<http://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/upload/File/Stalled%20Spaces%20report.pdf>]

48 Layman, Richard (17.11.2009) ‘Focusing on “Temporary” Urbanism is Misguided’. Accessed in 01.11.2011, [<http://urbanplaces.com>]

#### 4.3.21 \_ Emerging Tactics

The detailed case study has gone beyond the previous case studies by raising doubts and fundamental questions on the potential of temporary urbanism in the Valley, especially on the topic of regulation and community potential. Equally, there is a fundamental dilemma and critical dualism in the relationship between formal and informal approaches to temporary urbanism that is difficult to address without multiple case studies. The range of approaches and combination of relationships between the key actors raises a conceptual issue on whether it is feasible to plan for a temporary urbanism.

The reality in the Valley is that it has limited resources and unless the local government or a third party are willing to engage with the regions residual spaces, the potential is limited to the capacity of the community. An alternative approach would be for the Valleys to embrace temporary use as a non-confrontational concept and a matter of balancing the benefits of both creativity and legislation.

In conclusion, it is possible to list from the detailed case study the following emerging tactics:

- Short duration for formal uses (less than 28 days) in order to avoid licenses and planning permission.
- Long duration for informal uses – aim for long-term impact, ‘sacrificial landscapes’
- ‘Touching the ground lightly’ / ‘Lite Urbanism’ – minimise foundations, removable, lightweight, low-cost, recyclable materials
- Link into existing networks and constellations – capitalise on emergent trends
- Community ‘self-empowerment’ – reclaim residual spaces without the need for local government support







# 5

## ENVISIONING TEMPORARY URBANISM: TACTICS

5.1 \_ The Potential for Temporary Urbanism

5.2 \_ Further Research



## 5 . 1 THE POTENTIAL FOR TEMPORARY URBANISM

### Potential

In conclusion, we have seen that temporary urbanism is not a purely academic concept, but a reality of everyday environments. It is grounded in a latent ‘self-determination’ to question, experiment and liberate (Situationists, Archigram, Superstudio). The existing body of research on temporary urbanism is concentrated on projects that inhabit the margins and inbetween spaces of urban areas, as opposed to rural fringes such as the Rhondda Valley.

The pre-existence of derelict iconic post-industrial structures (‘Hetty’ #RS002 and ‘Scotch’ #RS008 Collieries), ‘time-gap’ (Burberry #RS008) and neglected spaces (‘Ton Pentre’ #RS006) located in and around the Valleys transport infrastructure lends themselves to a network of temporary urbanism. In this research, we have seen that networks are more important than individual sites, creating momentum towards addressing shrinking territories.

The research has exposed that temporary urbanism is not necessarily a foreign concept (UK ‘stop-gap’ sites), but a theory and practice that should be considered in government planning guidance and immediately accessible to local communities to reactivate residual spaces where they are most required (CABE, p.23, Seattle p.79). This research process has shown that there are many examples of where temporary urbanism can be utilised as a method of inquiry to assess the status quo of a site and offer alternative ideas (Urban Pioneers, p.85). Small-scale temporary uses in the Rhondda could serve as viable catalysts for re-activating shrinking territories realised through a flexible programme of dynamic planning reflecting European precedent (Urban Catalyst, p.83).

In summary, potential strategies of temporary urbanism in the Rhondda could set out to:

1. Appreciate the value and potential of 'everyday' spaces in the Valley (Adhocism, p.72)
2. Identify and map residual spaces through the internet and share sites similar to the 'RIBA Forgotten Spaces' (p.29/Appendix 7.4) or 'Where do you Breathe' (p.80) models. This will facilitate a basic yet wide-ranging site analysis in order to acknowledge why residual spaces have been created, and potentially develop into a virtual network that links temporary projects and creates a dialogue between different sites.
3. Question legal parameters where possible or alternatively engage the vested interests towards a mutually beneficial outcome (Francks Café, p.100/Southwark Lido, p.92), explore multi-disciplinary partnerships between local and national government (Trinity Buoy Wharf, p.94), universities (Aberystwyth CBU's, p.96), local industries, cultural institutions and tourist boards (Greenwich Peninsula, p.98).
5. Employ temporary urbanism as a symbol and stimulus for economic regeneration, with the aim to link into the local community agenda (Cleveland Urban Design Collective, p.168).
6. Consider temporary urbanism from a green agenda to promote healthy lifestyles from a young age, training and qualifications through integrated horticultural courses, community engagement, intergenerational exchange of knowledge and skills, arts projects and social enterprise (Ebbw Vale Vertical Gardens Project, see 7.3).
7. Capitalise on existing networks and the proximity of the Rhondda's residual sites to the train line; temporary projects in the Rhondda could develop as a constellation of events and



become an advertising and economic factor for the Valley, as both a vehicle for regeneration of residual sites or as an attraction for tourists (see Residual Space Matrix, Part 3.3).

8. Temporary projects can create opportunity to engage the industry and the opportunity to showcase materials/products/technologies, and even move them forward (Andrew Cooper interview, see Annex 7.2).

## Method

The objectives of this research are to understand the potential of temporary urbanism in the Rhondda Valley. The research process has revealed the opportunities and constraints with this urban design approach. Significantly, the strategy developed for the Rhondda through the matrix of sites has exposed the limitations of conventional analysis.

In order to summarise the breadth of residual spaces in the Rhondda, the residual space matrix (3.3/p.136) has to develop into a selection tool focusing on common site factors. Equally, the temporary urbanism matrix (3.4/p.139) constrains approaches to generic options. In retrospect, this approach is too rigid and limits the scope of the research. The next iteration of this methodology to temporary urbanism research could allow the matrix to expand to address temporality and phasing, catchment areas, potentialities and skills, detailed design and people: their behaviour, local knowledge, know-how or even tradition.

Finally, it should also be noted that the detail case explores the potential for temporary urbanism in greater depth but gives rise to new regulatory issues which inevitably distract the subject from its conceptual origins. In conclusion, we see that temporary urbanism is not necessarily an umbrella term and in hindsight future research trajectories could benefit from separating theory and practice.

## Issues & Dilemmas

As temporary urbanism seems to become an increasingly common part of urban design so do its associated issues and dilemmas. The core paradigm of temporary urbanism is evidently within the politics of its purpose. The conflict between the goals of the developer and the needs of the community are now routinely demonstrated in the site-owners use of temporary urbanism as a sophisticated form of gentrification, branding, publicity and raising the value of sites.

Equally, temporary urbanism in certain situations has become a tool for privatisation of public space. By capitalising on the short-term life of these projects, developers and companies can temporarily apply private space regulations to the public realm.

The risk of privatisation and/or gentrification is perhaps less of an issue in the Rhondda Valley due to the monopoly of local authority ownership of residual spaces. As such, the main problem facing the Rhondda Valley is that the excess of post-industrial sites and lack of governmental vision for their reintegration has led to a landscape of uncertainty. The people of the Rhondda have been forced to lower expectations for their surrounding environment and given little opportunity to engage in its future. The ongoing debate at the core of these problems surrounds the dilemma of whether to preserve/protect or reactivate these sites, a conflict whose detriment is epitomised in the long-running struggle to reintegrate the former 'Hetty' Colliery (#RS002).

As such, an alternative approach for Rhondda Valley could be to offer temporary urbanism as a tool of empowerment for the community to take back spaces that have been politicised and detached from the public realm.

## Observations

One of the key ideas to emerge from the detailed case study is the subject of deregulation and the issues of legality. It is clear that legislation is yet to catch-up with the fluidity of temporary urbanism as reflected in the faintly ridiculous and out-dated town planning development thresholds. Notwithstanding the problems of regulation, it is ironic that analysis of the increase in 'TENS' licenses demonstrates that temporary urbanism has already arrived in the Valley. The emergence of regular and seasonal 'pop-up' events, as well as the diversification of event locations suggests that residual space may suddenly have become a valid option.

The research has also illustrated the ambiguity of legal parameters relating to temporary use and land ownership. The vicious circle is therefore between the desire to change and improve the public realm and the legality of what can be feasibly achieved. There is also a discussion between control and freedom; should temporary urbanism remain informal in the Rhondda through adhoc allotments etc, or become formalised through public bodies in order to force change?

Current development indicates a crisis of planning in the Rhondda where the piecemeal approach to urban transformations with growing tendencies to big box retail isolates change. Taking all into account, the research can speculate that the greatest opportunity for the Rhondda Valley is to embrace both formal and informal urbanisms towards the territorial synchronisation of small-scale, yet wide-spread intervention.

## Limitations

The limitations, in comparison to more urban areas, are that the Rhondda lacks the availability of key agents of temporary urbanism such as design specialism that research has

shown to play an essential role. However, what the Rhondda miss in design terms, they gain in a strong, resourceful community supported by a range of cultural institutions and a local authority structure that encourages social enterprise and environmental improvements. Nonetheless, an important point is that the latent optimism of temporary use must be balanced with the realities of working with the community.

Another constraint is funding, however research has captured a variety of projects that have emerged without client or budget through alternative processes. Unfortunately, knowledge of such projects and processes are still alien to the risk adverse people responsible for the region's development. There is hope in nearby Valley's such as Ebbw Vale where temporary use has been combined as a phasing strategy within wider proposals. The success of this approach is yet to be determined as the scheme faces political pressure and becomes engulfed in the beauracracy of the masterplan.

A primary concern emerging from the research is the need to expand definitions of land classification to encompass the many typologies of residual space. In addition, in order for temporary projects to be successful, the local authority needs to review the possibility of integrating temporary use into the Local Development Plan. Equally, the local authority should follow precedent of cities like Berlin, Cleveland and London in making allowances for temporary users. A first step to ensure the validity of temporary projects for the Rhondda, would be to extend the limited sphere of temporary licenses available within the RCT ward and re-evaluate their parameters. The Rhondda should also open her eyes to the numerous cultural opportunities and partnerships that already exist within the Valley. Therefore, temporary urbanism may not be a matter of importing new methods of development, but a fresh look at The Rhondda's existing resources.







## 5 . 2 FURTHER RESEARCH

The limitations of the exploration into ‘strategies of temporary urbanism for re-activating the Rhondda’ are limited by the lack of knowledge on the crucial social aspects of shrinking territories. As such, further research could take a more direct empirical approach to urban issues in the Rhondda through gathering statistical information on a target population. A two-part quantitative opinion survey could be developed with a set of structured questions allowing responses to be tabulated.

The first part would establish an individual’s knowledge of problematic spaces in the local area and offer questions that would extrapolate the key urban issues for each town, as well as draw light on attitudes towards local authority and awareness of past failed initiatives.

The second part would focus on temporary urbanism and present a series of hypothetical temporary use options to gauge what type of interventions would receive backing and understand who (age, gender, ethnicity etc) would be interested in participating in a temporary urbanism.





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## Temporary Urbanism

- Atelier d'architecture autogérée (A.A.A)  
'Urban Tactics' [<http://www.urbantactics.org/>]
- 'Holicim Forum' 2007 [<http://www.holcimfoundation.org/>]
- Flick R Group: London Underground Temporary Notices  
[<http://www.flickr.com/groups/lu-temp-signs/>]
- Layman, Richard (17.11.2009) 'Focusing on "Temporary" Urbanism is Misguided'. [<http://urbanplaces.com/>]
- Rackowitz, Michael. (1998-2004) 'ParaSITE',  
[<http://michaelrakowitz.com/parasite/>]
- 'RHYZOM'. [<http://rhyzom.net/>]
- Spatial Agency  
[<http://www.spatialagency.net/database/urban.catalyst>]
- 'Spirited Caravans: Re-imagining Bangalore's Outdoors'  
(12.07.2009-20.07.2009) [<http://cityspinning.org/>]
- Spur, Harry. (11.01.2008) Temporary Planning Permission.  
[<http://www.propertyweek.com>]
- Steins, Chris. (28.12.2007) 'How Temporary Uses Can  
Revitalize Neighbourhoods', American Institute of Planning  
[<http://www.planetizen.com/>]
- Studio EU, Berlin [<http://www.studioeu.net/>]
- Urban Catalyst [<http://www.urbancatalyst.net/>]

## Temporary Art

- Andrew Cooper, Artist [<http://andrew-cooper.org/>]
- Christo & Jean Claude [<http://www.christojeanneclaude.net/>]

## Welsh Culture

- Leighton Andrews, Assembly Member for the Rhondda on  
'Culture & Regeneration'  
[<http://www.therhondda.com/files/culture-and-regeneration>]
- Museums in South Wales. South Wales Index  
[<http://www.southwalesindex.co.uk/pages/93.html>]
- 'Rachel Trezise', Author (04.2010)  
[<http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/arts/sites/rachel-trezise/>]
- RCT Cultural Services: 'Where Culture Blossoms'  
[<http://rct-arts.org/>]
- BBC News (04.06.2003) 'Valleys Link Blamed for Culture  
Failure'  
[[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/south\\_east/2963888.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/south_east/2963888.stm)]
- The Rhondda Valleys Website [<http://www.rhonddavalleys.co.uk/>]

## The Ruhr Valley

- 'Emscher Park: International Building Exhibition (IBA)'  
[<http://www.eaue.de/winuwd/>]
- 'Essen for the RUHR.2010' Capital of Culture 2010

[<http://www.essen-fuer-das-ruhrgebiet.ruhr2010.de>]

- Maguire. Helen (22.06.2010) 'Ruhr Valley Seeks Creative Solutions to Industrial Demise'

[[http://www.monstersandcritics.com/news/europe/features/article\\_1565188.php/Ruhr-valley-seeks-creative-solutions-to-industrial-demise-Feature](http://www.monstersandcritics.com/news/europe/features/article_1565188.php/Ruhr-valley-seeks-creative-solutions-to-industrial-demise-Feature)]

- Sustainable Cities (2000) 'Emscher Park: From Dereliction to Scenic Landscapes'

[<http://sustainablecities.dk/en/city-projects/cases/emscher-park-from-dereliction-to-scenic-landscapes>]

## Video

- Maeklong Market, Thailand.

[[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJL9vHtrHDI&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJL9vHtrHDI&feature=player_embedded)]

## Exhibitions

- 'One & Other', (06.06.2009-14.10.2009), Antony Gormley.

[<http://www.oneandother.co.uk/>]

- 'Intervention from 8<sup>th</sup> International Istanbul Biennial' (09.10.2007-06.04.2008) Doris Salcedo, Exhibition: Tate Modern, London

For 6 months over 2007-2008, Doris Salcedo was given the opportunity to intervene in the famous turbine hall of London's Tate Modern Gallery. She produced a piece of work's titled, Shibboleth in which the South American artist created a subterranean chasm that stretched the length of the halls concrete floor.

The chasm was playful as it ignores the modern constraints of Health & Safety regulations in public buildings. In the ruptures spaces of the Tate, people were for a short time forced to concentrate on the floor instead of the impressive hall and upper galleries. This was a temporary intervention that was to leave a permanent mark on the hall that is easily visible in the repaired surface of the gallery. Through further research into the artist,

I was struck by one particular image where the artist took her own view on urban infill and residual/left-over space by stacking hundreds of chairs into a gap between two buildings on a street.

- 'Richard Long: Heaven and Earth' (03.06.2009-06.09.2009)

Richard Long, Exhibition: Tate Britain, London

When developing the case study of temporary land art, I was inspired by the work of the artist Richard Long. Long's work was particularly relevant to this project as his approach is to avoid alterations to the landscapes he passes through. Instead he marks the ground or adjusts the natural features of a place by up-ending stones for example, or making simple traces.

- 'How it is', Exhibition: Miroslaw Balka. Tate Modern, London

An oversized steel container elevated on RSJ's with a 15m high back facing onto the public entrance and mezzanine level of the gallery. The single open side is accessed via a steel ramp at half size of the opening and folded down at a severe angle to the concrete floor. The artist writes that to experience this temporary artwork is to 'confront the terror of the unknown, that without light'.

Essentially, the depth and darkness of the steel container is used to engage and trick the visitor's senses. Upon entering the structure, one is faced with a pitch black void of illegible depth, even though from outside it is clear that there is a finite end. As one carefully treads into the space, the eyes are forced to adapt and peripheral vision is sharpened in order to make sense of the silhouettes confidently passing in the opposite direction. The uncomfortable journey ends in the comforting material surface of the container's suede lined back wall. Eventually, the body synchronises with the strange environment and the view out frames the weary entrance of further visitors.







# 7

## ANNEX

7.1 \_ Photographic Survey of Rhondda's Residual Spaces

7.2 \_ Interview: Andrew Cooper, Land Artist

7.3 \_ Temporary Vertical Garden, Ebbw Vale

7.4 \_ Scrapbooks: Experience & Short Explorations





## 7 . 1 PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF RHONDDA'S RESIDUAL SPACES



View of #RS001 residual space from adjacent car park





'House of Pain', typology - derelict warehouse adjacent to Sardis Road, 'Pontypridd' RFC



Former networks, derelict warehouse



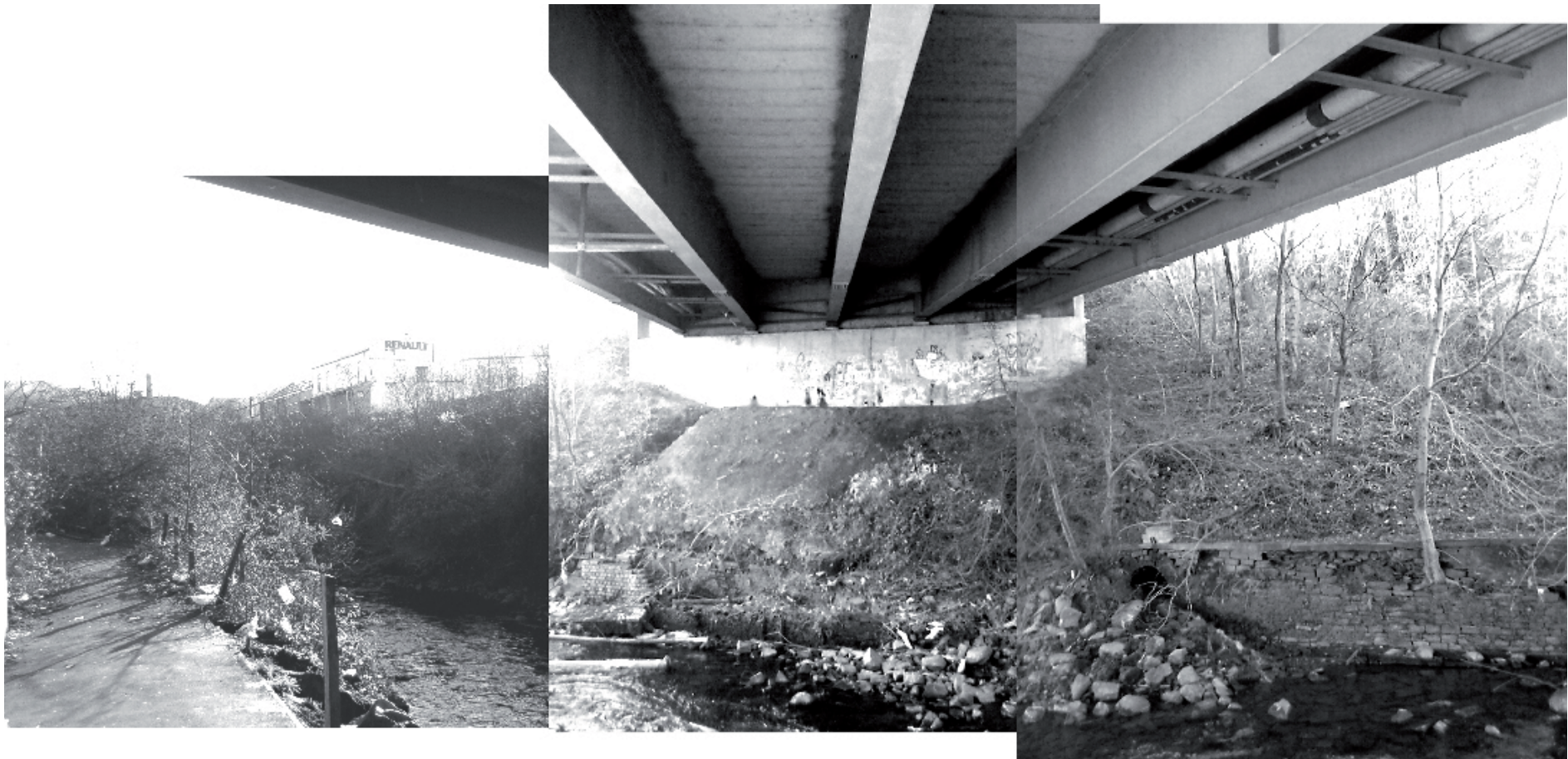


Evacuated land #RS002, the 'Hetty' Colliery, Hopkinstown

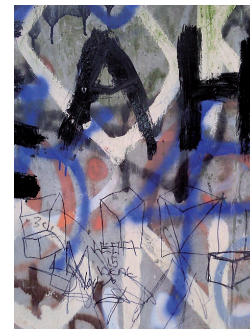


'Imprints', colliery winding gear





Lost riverside cycle path #RS006, near 'Tonypandy' train station



'Layers' #RS006, vandalism and weathering to underpass





'Shrinking territory' #RS011, gaps between 'Blaenrhondda' and 'Treherbert'



Shrinking territories abused, semi-rural periphery



#RS011, defunct rail lines beyond 'Treherbert'

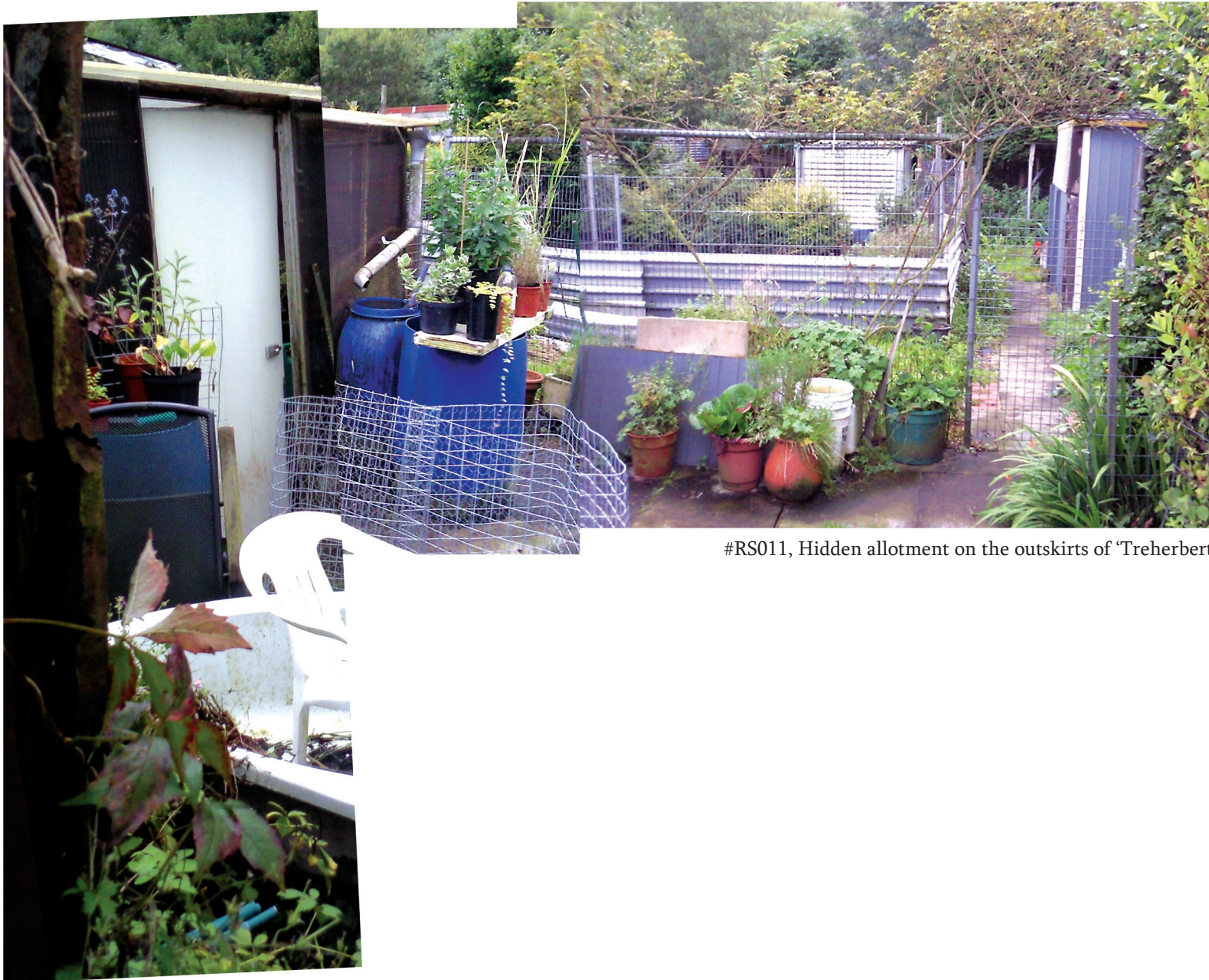
## Eileen Place, Alley, CCTV and Hidden Allotment

The 100m x 3m alley that winds near the river behind 'Eileen Place' represents a typical Rhondda urban condition and quality. Here, the temporary thrives in the form of illegally appropriated land for community cultivation.

At the centre of the alley, a conglomeration of adhoc sheds conceal an exclusive hidden allotment running alongside the river whose walls are improvised from wooden door leaves, steel wire mesh, plastic off cuts, corrugated iron and distorted chipboard panels. The secret walled garden contains vegetables, live chickens, fruit and flowers. This example of a guerrilla urbanism realised by a collection of enthusiastic neighbours is a firmly rooted intervention with many temporary associations. The space appropriated for the allotment sits comfortably between the river and back alley. It allows a degree of privacy and looks out on the picturesque landscape of 'Blaencwm'.

There is a narrow 'front' door situated on the secluded dead end of the allotments screen wall, constructed of steel mesh and a colourful medley of recycled signs. One can peer through the limited gaps in the door leaf and see a modest chicken run, low shed and some deck chairs, and a greenhouse structure manipulated from a rusting camper van.





#RS011, Hidden allotment on the outskirts of 'Treherbert'





Llwynypia from Penrhys Road

View of 'Scotch' Colliery, Llwynypia from Penrhys Road



## 7 . 2 INTERVIEW: ANDREW COOPER, LAND ARTIST

### 7.2.1 \_ Introduction

When researching the residual area, #RS008, I discovered that for 2 years in the mid-90's there had previously been a temporary artistic intervention appropriating a gas structure on the site. By searching the local council archives on the internet, I discovered that the project was commissioned in 1995 by British Gas and 'Cywaith Cymru' (Artworks Wales). The commission was won through competition by artist Andrew Cooper. Further internet research led me to Cooper's website where art critics described his work as speaking of;

“...personal and emotional states of being in the world, drawing together his interests concerning time, proportion and space and how audiences react to particular atmospheres and resonances.”

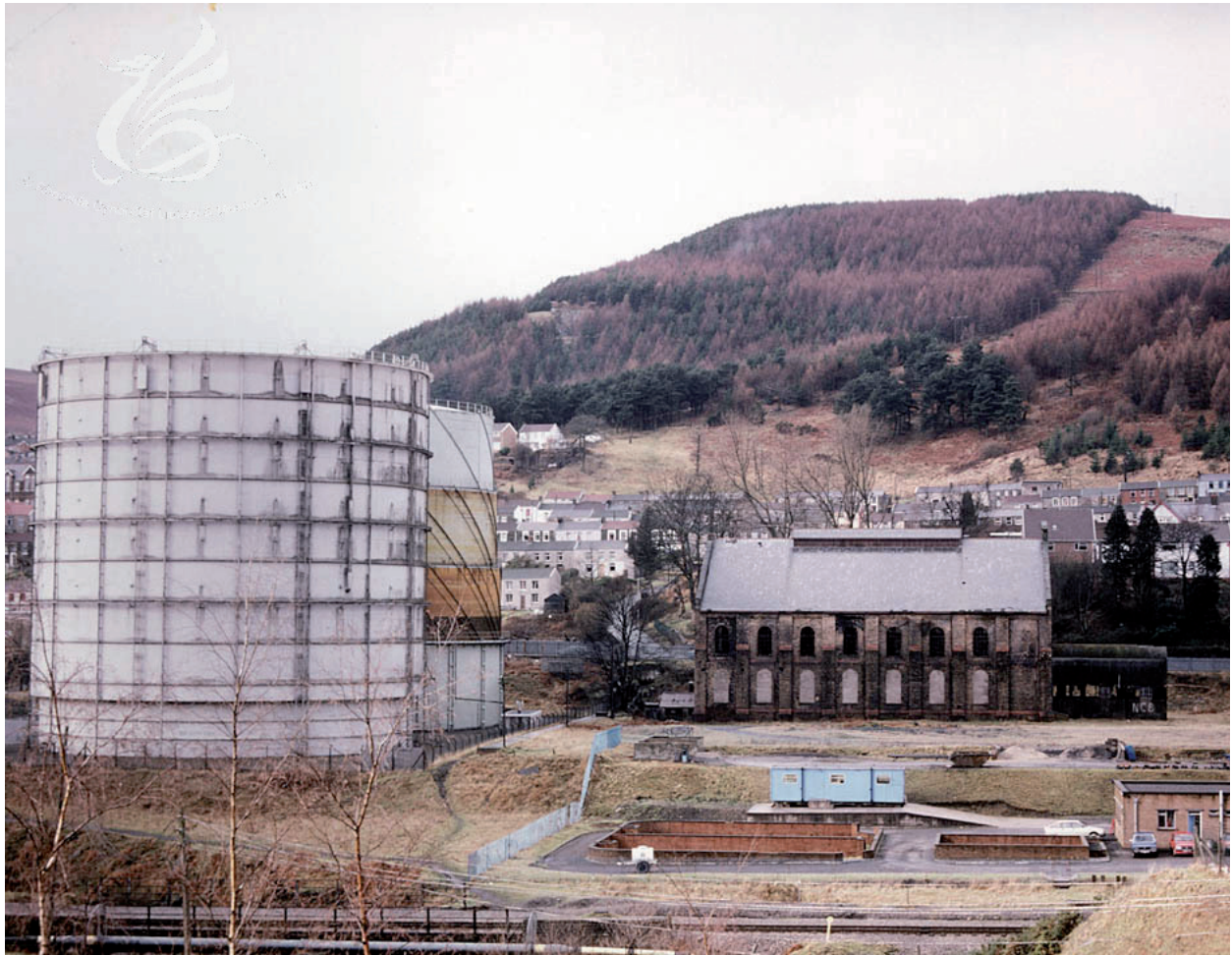
In the past projects section there remained a short description of the 'Llwynypia' 'land art piece'. The unique design was realised by the artist himself through the collage of 50,000 individually painted 1ft x 1ft tiled squares attached to the active gas structure. The final effect was a pixelated abstraction of the sites wooded hillside context.

### 7.2.2 \_ Discussion

The project was conceived as a short-life installation to improve a forgotten space, therefore it was prudent for the development of the research to meet with Andrew Cooper and extrapolate his impressions of the valley and any lessons learnt from designing for temporariness.



Gasometer & Valley context



Former Gasometer structure within Valley context

Q: As an artist and Welshman, how do you perceive the post-industrial Rhondda Landscape?

AC sees the valley as a series of 'ghost towns' that are almost shadows of their former selves. With special reference to 'Pontypridd', he laments the loss of town centre markets and the diminishing social aspects that made the valley and its people so strong. He describes the domination of nature in the valley and its influence on his work in the Rhondda.

Q: What is your opinion on the numerous residual spaces dotted along the Valley floor: are you aware of them?

AC does not admit to being particularly aware of the regions residual spaces but does value the great network of rusting industrial monuments that persist in the Rhondda. He admits that the higher level powers in Wales have neglected these parts of South Wales and there is worryingly little future in the Valley industries.

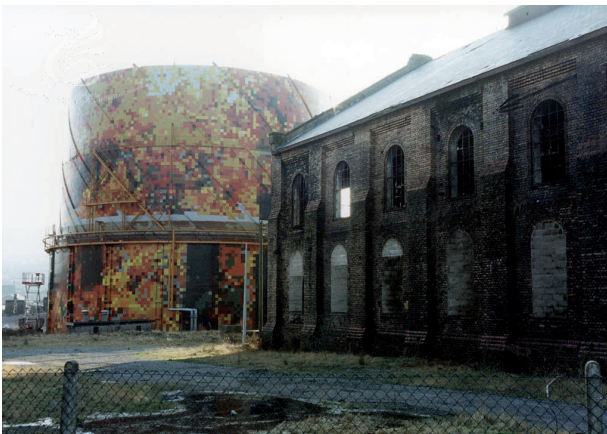
Q: What is the potential value of artistic intervention (in the broadest sense) within the confines of the Rhondda Valley?

If funding and support are in place, the possibilities are great. For example, AC is currently collaborating with Lloyn Architects, Cardiff on a public realm project for the regeneration of Belfast Harbour. A consistent theme throughout the artists work has been notions of the ephemeral and dealing with temporalities, ideas that he is further developing in Belfast. The concept proposes an experiential route defined by fractal edges that lead to a public gathering space. The walls of the space and their transparency fluxate through new glass technology to reveal views of the harbour or even define an outdoor room.





View to derelict 'Powerhouse' building with former gasworks structures before the temporary artwork



Gasometer artwork against industrial context

Q: Do you think Wales lacks ambition in facilitating raw artwork to escape the gallery capsule and challenge urban space?

AC agrees that Wales could give greater support to public art and works that challenge the norm. However, the public domain is loaded with politics and issues of funding that limit creative opportunities. He provides the example of the 'miner's statue' in the road island adjacent to the site - an uninspired way of dealing with what is an undeniably epic heritage.

Q: The 1995 'Gasometer' project, Llwynypia was always intended to be temporary, what were your feelings on this aspect of the commission?

AC proclaims that the project provided an opportunity to introduce aspects of new technology to a site forgotten by old industry. At the time of conceiving the artwork, desktop computers were a relatively new phenomenon and only a few households would be fortunate enough to have them. Subsequently, AC wanted to exhibit the creative potential of these revolutionary systems with a visual intervention derived from a pixelated image of the dramatic mountain backdrop of the site. An effect that can be easily reproduced in 'Photoshop' now but would have represented an advanced imagery to the public at the time.

Designing for the temporary also sometimes demands a bespoke solution. The Gasometer is exemplary of this presumption as embedded in the artists approach to realising the concept is the solution to its application. The idea of breaking the design down to a series of squares of solid colour allowed a foolproof method for contractors to apply the design. This approach also ensured a consistency of image as the gas tank periscoped depending on the amount of gas within the holder.

Generally speaking, AC goes on to explain that the benefit of a temporary project is that it provides unprecedented opportunity to experiment with new products, materials



and alternative technologies. Temporary projects can also make it possible to engage the industry, draw upon their skills and ability to showcase a product or even move it forward. What may be conventionally employed as a high tech element in an office for example can be reinterpreted and made public.

Q: As part of the' project description, you affirm that the public reacted positively to the artwork, why do you think this was the case? What role (if any) did public participation and commercial partnership's play in the final outcome?

Interviewing the public was essential in drumming up community support. Equally negotiating with the client British Gas in order to protect the idea. There was however a negative reaction from the media that was mostly misaligned with public opinion.

Q: Part of my research is concerned with the scope for temporary projects to focus attention on neglected space. How effective was your concept in highlighting the vacant land on the site of 'Llwynypia's' former Scotch Colliery?

When the artwork stood on the Gasometer, it was recognised as;  
“... a fiery explosion of unexpected colour that stood like a beacon on the road to Treorchy. In this simple way, a monolithic remnant of an old outdated industry was re-invented and became a symbol of hope in the valley”. AC sees it as an investment in the local area and opportunity to engage the community. Significantly, the fact that nothing has happened on the site since the demolition of the structure shows ‘the remaining poverty of the valley’.

Q: Upon reflection, what were the opportunities and constraints in your Rhondda commission?



Pixelated image of mountain backdrop

Surprisingly, the primary constraint did not come from the site but from the dictation of the board. Like many projects in varying sectors their input can pollute the original objectives. This is also the reason why in 1999 AC moved from 'explicitly architectural projects' to gallery based work as he was frustrated by the overbearing restrictions and hindrances imposed by third parties.

Q: What would you like to see happen to the Gasometer site in the future, and other key left over spaces in the Valley?

When temporary projects are successful, 'a fantastic project', one starts to think that it's a shame it's temporary and not permanent. AC agrees that the Rhondda should invest in art and event. Rhondda has enough museums with cliché welsh references, the region should welcome artistic interventions to explore and bring life to a residual land before imposing definitive uses.

### 7.2.3 \_ Conclusion

To conclude, the interview with Andrew Cooper was highly beneficial to this research into temporary urbanism as it provided a first hand overview of a temporary project from original conception to demolition within the Rhondda context. The discussion also provided an opportunity to present the research to an individual with experience of dealing with both the practical and artistic requirements of implementing a temporary installation. What is clear from Cooper's Gasometer project was that there was a clear strategy required for its execution. The strategy had to be flexible and adaptive to the constraints of the site in addition to political, cultural and social pressures. In summary, the key lessons learnt that can be taken away from the Gasometer installation are as follows:

- Temporary projects can be used to showcase materials/products/technologies, and even move them forward.
- Designing for the temporary can create opportunity to engage the industry.
- Temporary projects can benefit from community participation/liaison at the initial stages.
- It is advantageous if temporary projects possess clear and feasible concepts in order to defend the ideas and objectives against external dilution.

The strategy employed by the land owner British Gas via the nominated artist Andrew Cooper followed a linear process:

Land owners define problem and establishes brief = National competition = Multiple artist concepts (used as mechanism to gather free ideas on site) = Winner chosen = Public exhibition and consultation + negotiations with the client = Concept refined = Detail design and implementation = 2 year lifespan = Public perception/controversy/delight = Demolition.

## 7 . 3 TEMPORARY VERTICAL GARDEN, EBBW VALE

### 7.3.1 \_ Competition Brief

The competition was based in the town of ‘Ebbw Vale’, located in another South Wales Valley, 30 miles from the Rhondda. Like the Rhondda, Ebbw Vale was strongly hit by the impact of deindustrialisation however it suffered specifically from the loss of its steel industry in 2001. The closure of its massive Corus steel factory that once employed 10,000 people, and demolition of its numerous buildings in 2002 left a scarred community and a physical void in the centre of town.

In 2004, the town was awarded European funding towards regenerating the 77ha (200 acre) derelict site. The regeneration project was named, ‘The Works Masterplan’ and includes a 100 bed community hospital, learning campus, basement park, commercial units, eco-community and activity centre.<sup>1</sup>

In order to help preserve the site’s heritage a number of legacies of its industrial past were retained; in particular there are a number of former steelworks basements to be restored with individual programmes to provide a distinctive features in the new development.<sup>2</sup> One of the basements, the ‘5 Stand Cleaning Line’ was identified as a structure for which a competition would be initiated to propose innovative ideas for its re-use. Notably, the brief requested that any proposal reflect the four main objectives of ‘The Works Masterplan’; to achieve a sustainable economy, social progress, environmental protection and enhancement, and prudent use of resources.



Aerial view of 77ha demolished steelworks site, 2000

1 ‘The Works Masterplan’ [<http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/theworks/masterplan/>]

2 ‘The Blaenau Gwent Eisteddfod 2010 Design Competition’, EDC Brief English Version Rev E (02.2009)



### 7.3.2 \_ Temporary/Permanent Function

The brief states that the regeneration of the basement is intended to have a temporary and permanent function. Firstly, it would serve in the short term as a feature garden within the forthcoming National Eisteddfod festival in 2010. Secondly, as a temporary landscape to occupy the ‘gap’ left by the demolition of the factory whilst the surrounding development is constructed. In the long term, the basement would form a focal urban space at the core of a vibrant mixed-use community. It is intended that the temporary basement park will be implemented prior to phased development and will be a local and regional attraction. Within this context, the research set out to develop a temporary garden environment with the scope to become a permanent edition. The ambition is to formulate a model for reactivating residual structures and spaces through community involvement and nature.

### 7.3.3 \_ Concept Description

Initial design responses reacted to the absolute lack of nature that existed anywhere on the site, coupled with the briefs intention for a temporary landscape.

The design progressed into a ‘Vertical Garden & Elevated Allotments’. The proposal is a contemporary reinterpretation of the town’s powerful industrial history through the bold and dynamic elevation of nature, ecology and the definition of place. The key principles inherent throughout the scheme are aligned with those of the ‘Works Masterplan’ and are firmly rooted in aspirations for community participation and ‘low-tech’ sustainability.

The concept originates from the desire to question traditional perceptions of conventional park and garden design by providing routes for nature to grow vertically out of the basement. This objective, merged with the dramatic imagery of Ebbw Vale’s steel production heritage from the early 20th century, has led to the development of the iconic green



View of Steelworks Blastfurnace, Ebbw Vale, 1937



Steelworks Chimneys, Ebbw Vale, 1969





'5 Stand Clean Line', derelict concrete basement structure, 2009



Peppers emerging up into 'Vertical Allotments', 2010

chimneys and the mass of vertical allotments that appropriate the existing concrete columns. The verticality of the garden is also a direct response to the existing condition of the basement in the local urbanity. Instead of cloaking the basement with a green surface the design presses the significance of maintaining its original roughness and memory by ensuring that all green elements rise from the scarred foundations.

#### 7.3.4 \_ Construction / Implementation

In August 2009 following the design competition, we were retained as design consultants to support the process of gaining planning approval, detailing and procurement of the Vertical Gardens basement. The proceeding months have served as a valuable tool in understanding the mechanisms towards realising a temporary intervention in a residual structure on a politically loaded site.



The process deals with value engineering exercises to which I have seen temporary projects to be more resilient due to the nature of their intentions. However, the arduous and continual coordination of consultants is necessary to ensure the project is completed expediently and for its intended start date.

As part of requirements for a public liaison strategy and the integration of the 'Growing Together in Wales' programme, the proposals were recommended for review by the food growing expertise group, FCFCG – 'Federation of City Farms & Community Gardens'. In addition to commenting on the viability of the allotment aspect of the scheme, the independent group produced recommendations on; permaculture techniques, training and qualification, ensuring community engagement and participation, intergenerational exchange of knowledge and skills, arts projects and social enterprise.<sup>3</sup> Specifically, the FCFCG recommended that in order to safeguard the future of the garden from vandalism, the project should engage young people and establish links with the FE college to offer accredited courses in horticulture, landscaping and permaculture. This could extend into intergenerational exchange of horticultural knowledge and skills with potential for connections to crime prevention, probation young offenders etc.

It is commonly believed in urban design theory and practice that the promotion of public participation in regeneration can instil a respect for the site to minimise future vandalism and appreciation of the local environment. This approach is advocated by the local council in Ebbw Vale and the FCFCG who have experienced its benefits in a socially deprived region. The research can therefore assume that participation, especially in social enterprise incorporating food production & training, should therefore be given front seat in strategies for regenerating conflicted urban residual spaces.



Vertical Gardens, National Eisteddfod 2010

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3 Jones, Katie. (2009.08.10) 'FCFCG Site Visit and Recommendations The Works', Report produced for the Ebbw Vale Vertical Gardens project.

The realisation of the vertical gardens has been a process that has made evident the importance of improvisation in temporary projects. Temporary projects drive unique solutions, challenge conventional construction programmes and create new opportunities.



Vertical allotments and seed nurseries for local schools

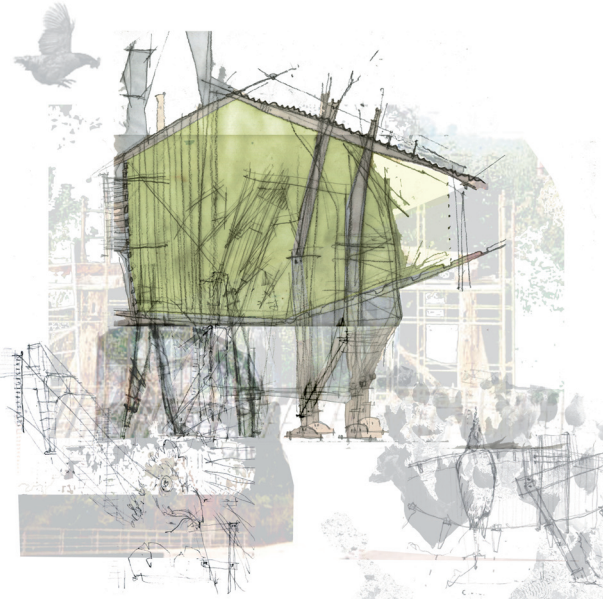




EBBW VALE VERTICAL GARDENS  
GREEN CHIMNEYS & ELEVATED ALLOTMENTS



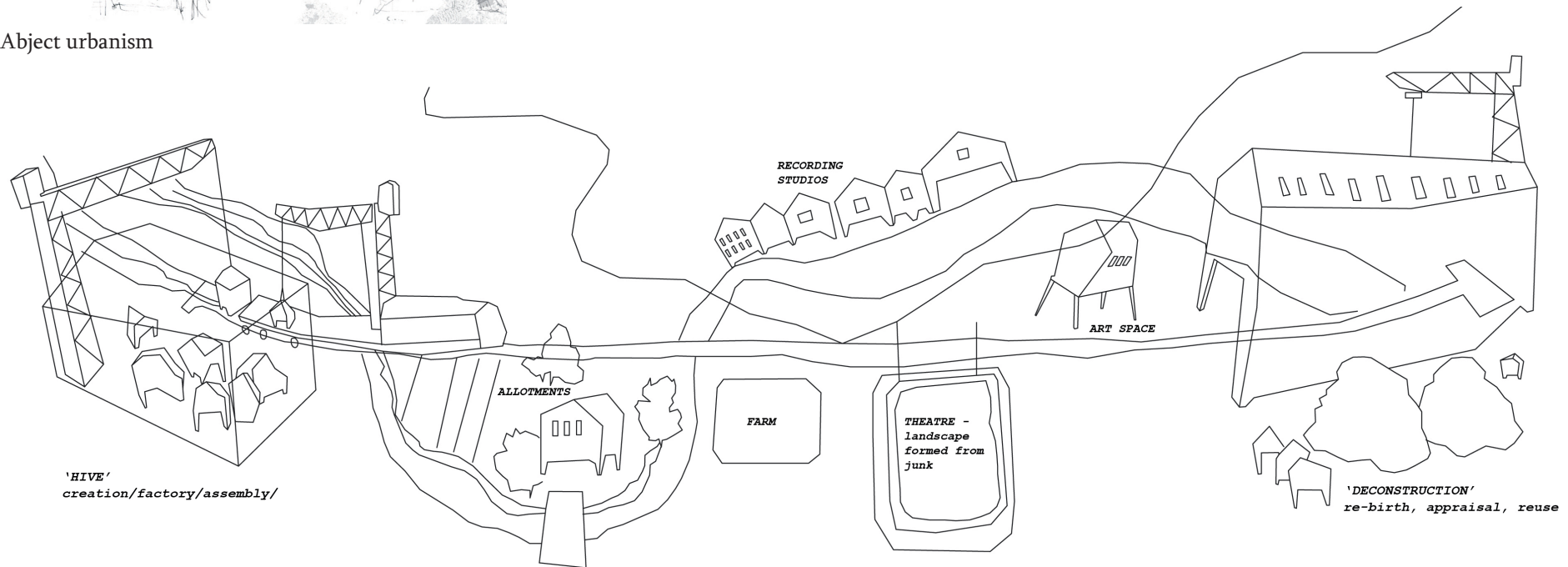
## 7 . 4 SCRAPBOOKS: EXPERIENCE AND SHORT EXPLORATIONS



### Insect Urbanism

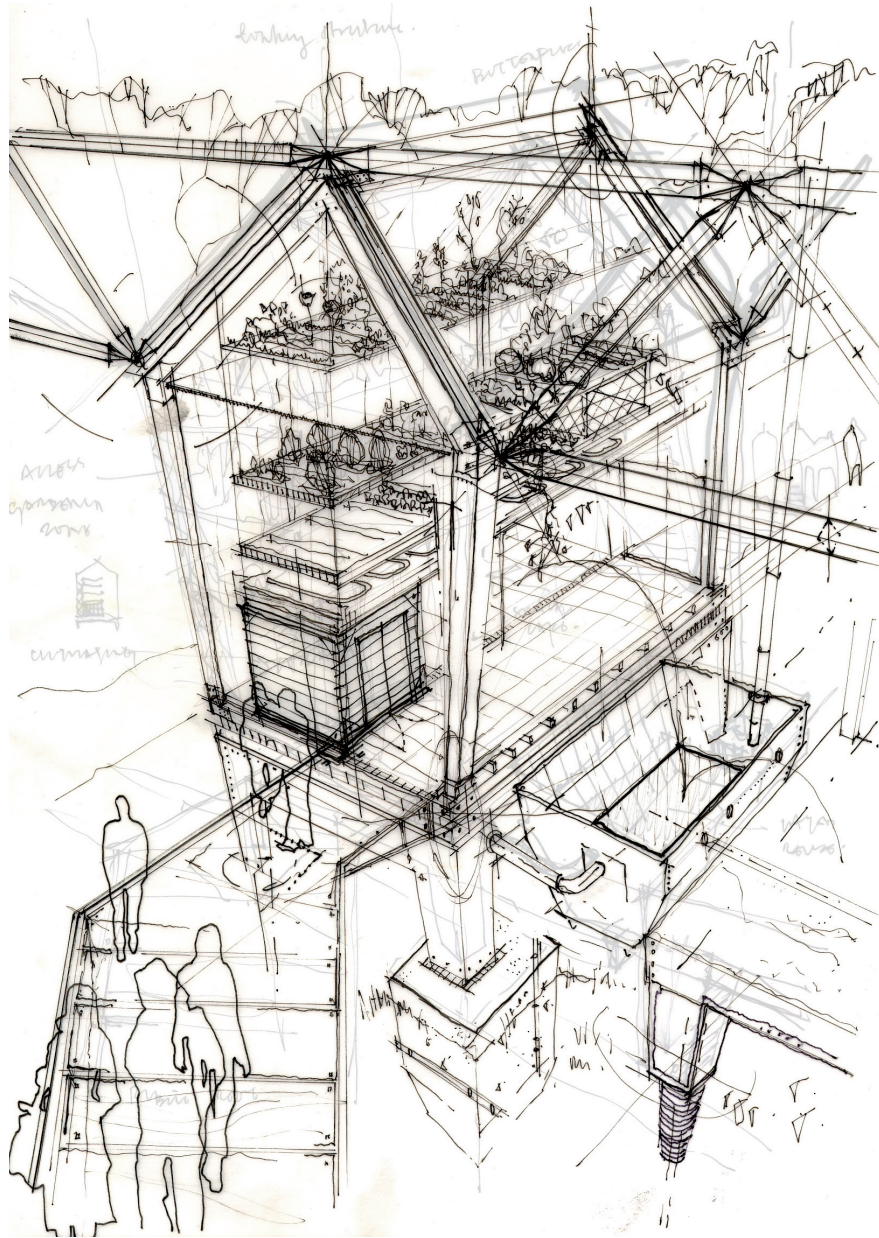
Insect Urbanism investigates how short-lived structures mimicking conventional building types could be dropped into dead space visible from the Valleys train window. The insects are intended to provoke a reaction and not to be analysed as architectural pieces. One insect might be lifted by a helicopter from a reclamation yard where it is assembled by a small team, then placed almost at random at a road side. It may be used as a rest stop shelter for a cup of tea, or a recycling point for people on long journeys. Its life would be highly ephemeral and the by product could be reused on another site or further down the road.

### Abject urbanism

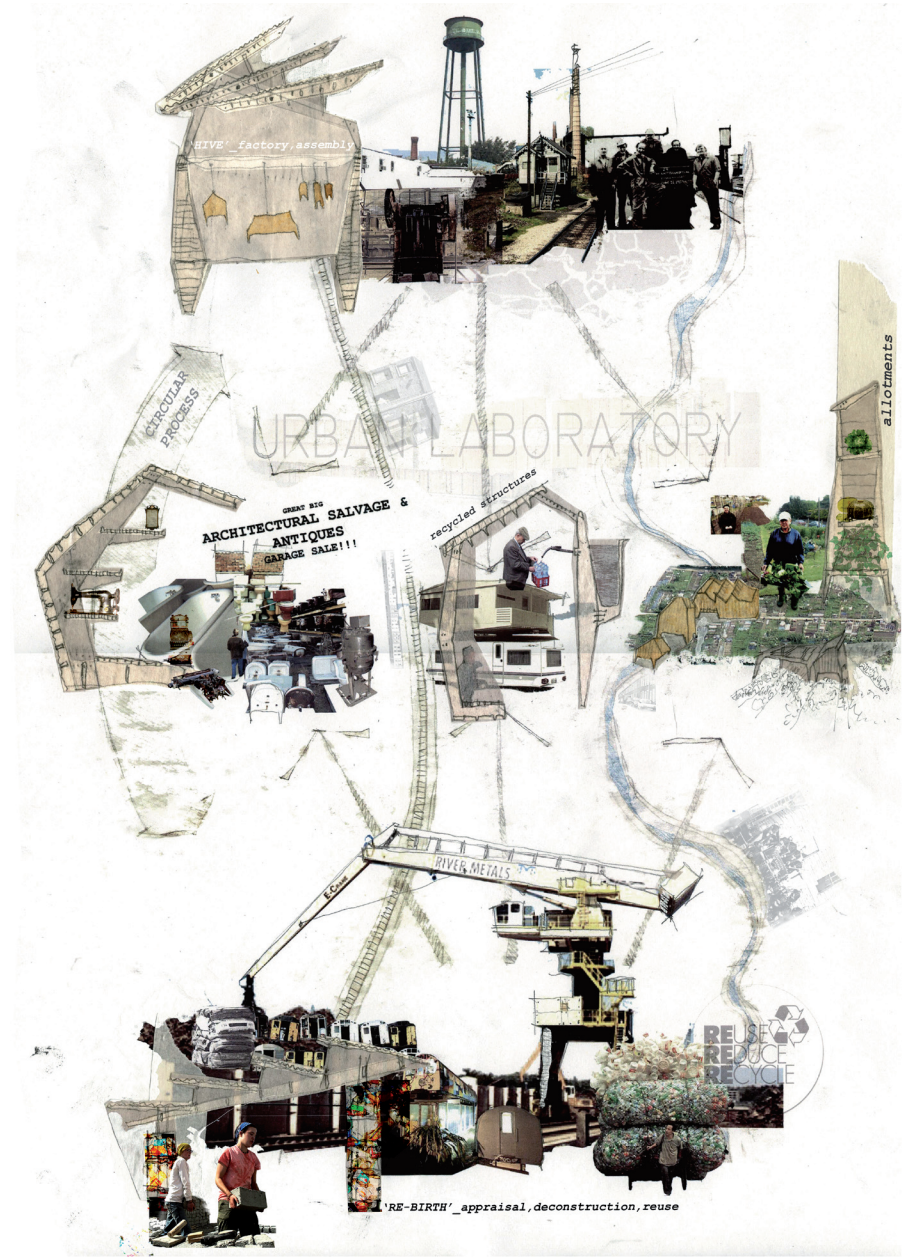


### Circular processes: the endless network



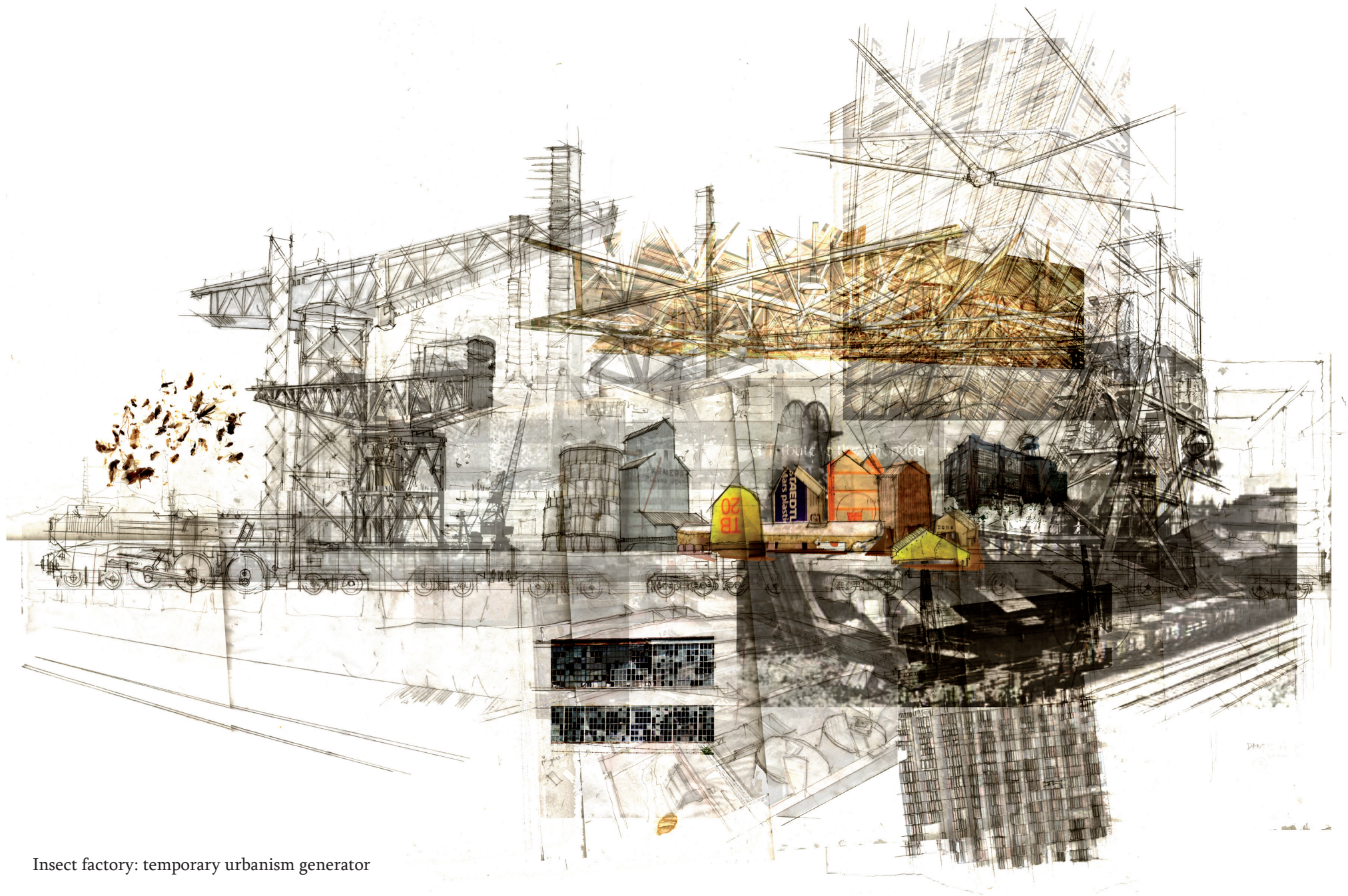


Transportable greenhouse



Continuous process of construction and decay





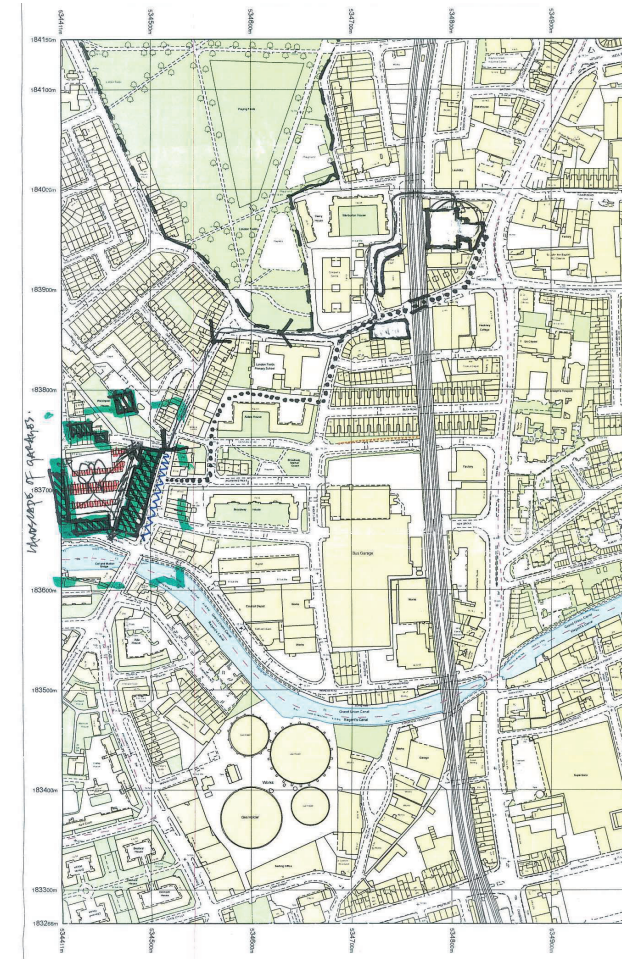
Insect factory: temporary urbanism generator



# Remembering Spaces Mapping Event, Hackney February 13th 2010

As part of the RIBA Forgotten Spaces competition and research project, the SMA (Space Makers Agency) organised an event to map and educate people on forgotten spaces in Hackney, East London.

In the venue, people participating in the event were briefed on discovering and classifying forgotten spaces. Each group were issued with an OS map of the area covering a 10min walk radius, as well as a 'forgotten space register'. It was encouraged that non-locals would partner with people living in, or familiar with Hackney. To register the forgotten space, entrants could upload photos, drawings, provide a brief narrative on its relevance and most importantly pin-point and save its location. Based on the outcome of the competition, it is clear that the RIBA have established a beneficial strategy for identifying residual space. A strategy that can be easily applied to other areas and further developed if people are willing to engage with a project. The strategy is also easily adoptable by laypeople as it is grounded in observation and everyday experience.



Remembering Spaces

Site No	Street location	Description of site	Photo Nos	Notes
X. BROADWAY MARKET MENS.	ENTRANCE FROM 'BENJAMIN CROSS'.	LANDSCAPE OF single storey GARAGES AT THE CORNER OF AN L-SHAPED HIGHWAY BRIDGE.		EVEN THOUGH THE SITE IS ADJACENT TO THE BUSY BROADWAY MARKET, THE AREA IS DEAD AND FORGOTTEN. THERE SEEMS TO BE A DIVIDE BETWEEN LOCAL COMMUNITY AND YUPI VISITORS!
REGENTS ROW (MR CANAL).				

RIBA 'Forgotten Space Register'

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The representation of a road, track or path is no evidence of a right of way.

The representation of features as lines is no evidence of a property boundary.

Scale 1:2500  
0 20 40 60 80 100 Meters

Supplied by National Map Centre  
Scale number: 2000-5000  
Grids coordinate: 528200 183900  
Further information can be found on the OS Sitemaps information leaflet or the Ordnance Survey web site: www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk

Handwritten notes:

- messy
- very cluttered
- noise, vibration

Handwritten notes:

- community spaces.
- \* very interesting.
- \* particularly
- \* site - appropriateness.
- 'Pot (on) landscape'

Handwritten notes:

- > what are the plans? who has the right?
- > what are the plans? who has the right?
- > what are the plans? who has the right?

OS map for registering forgotten space



# 8

## APPENDIX

8.1 \_ Rhondda Valley Historical Maps

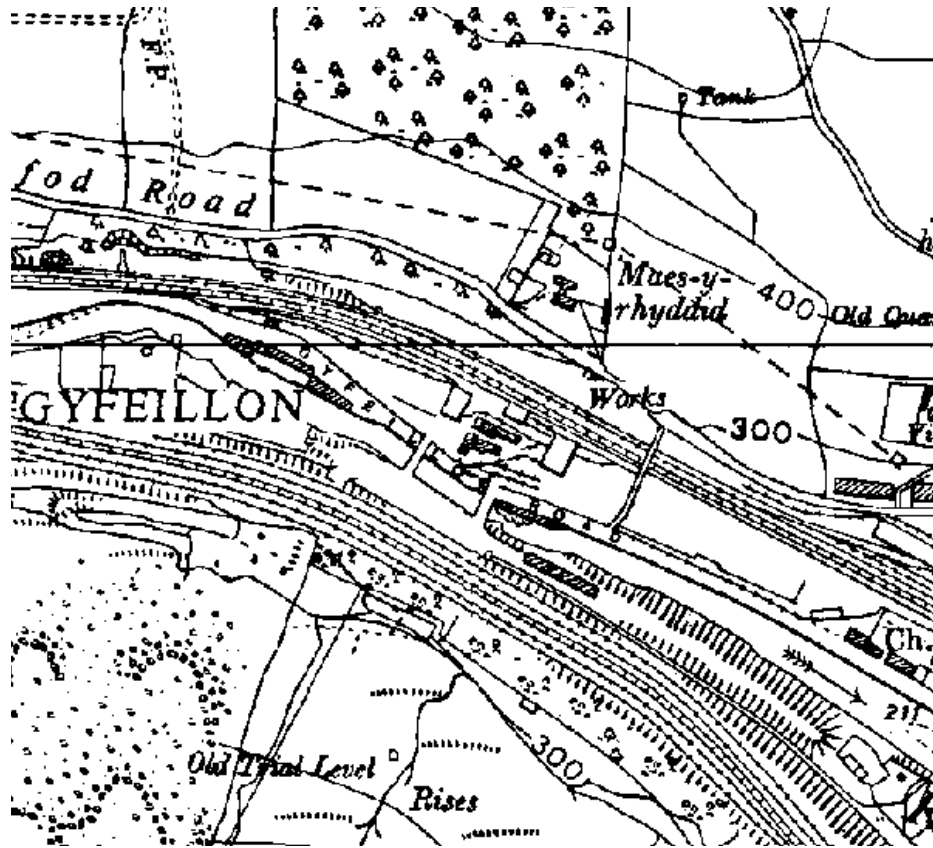
8.2 \_ Correspondence

8.3 \_ Rhondda Council Events

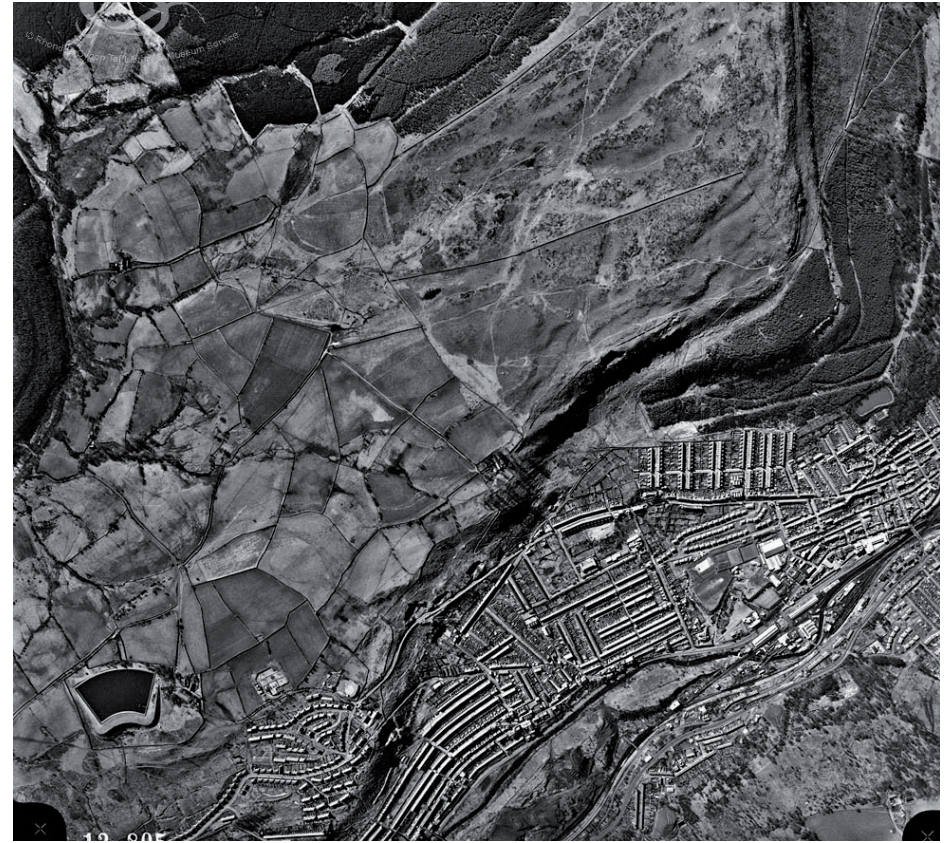




# 8 . 1 RHONDDA VALLEY HISTORICAL MAPS



Great Western 'Hetty' Colliery, 1945

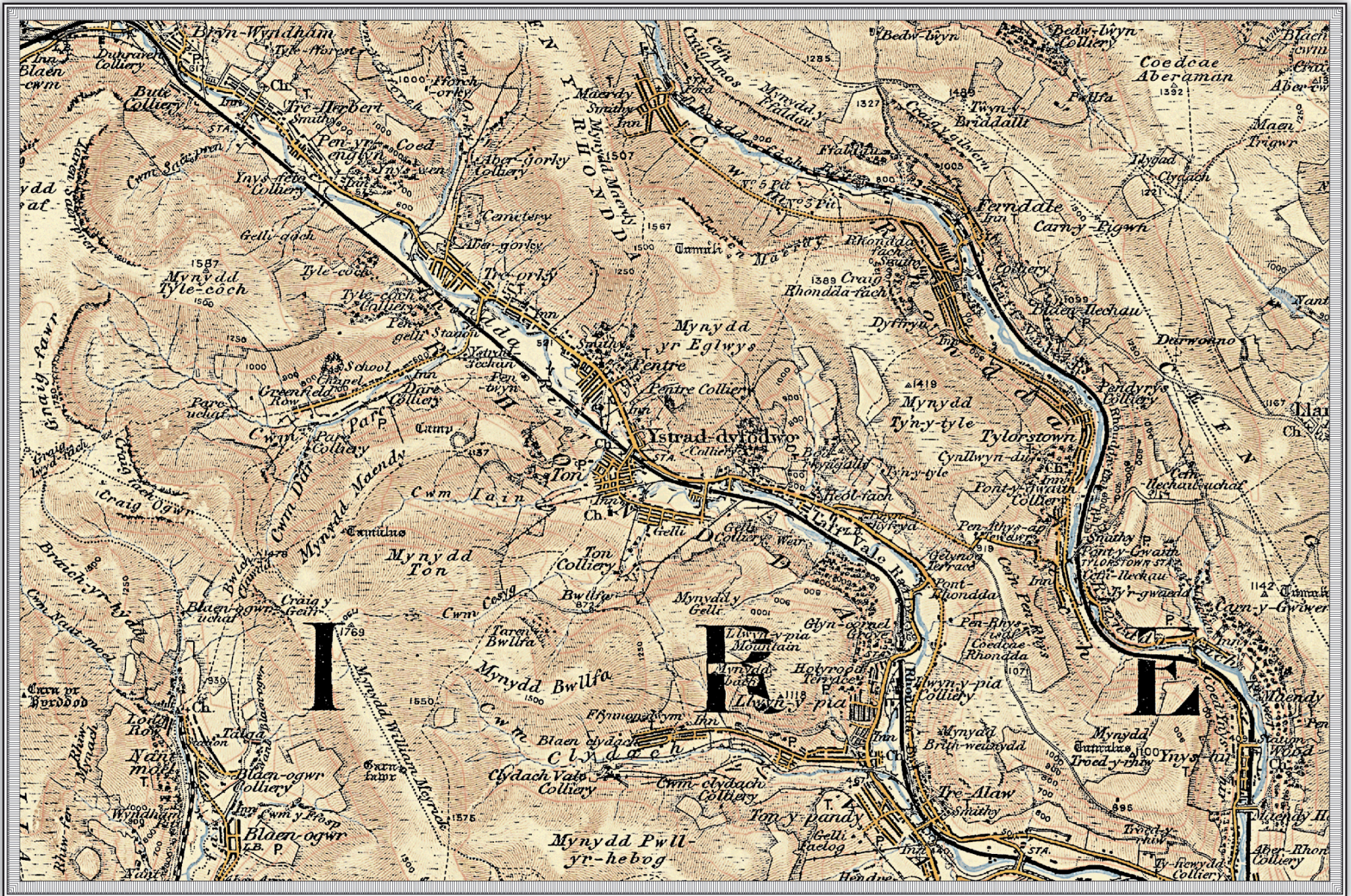


Mountain Ash, Penrhiwceiber 1968









Created from Ordnance Survey Revised New Series maps first published 1899-1900. Original scale 1:63,360 enlarged here to 1:30,000.

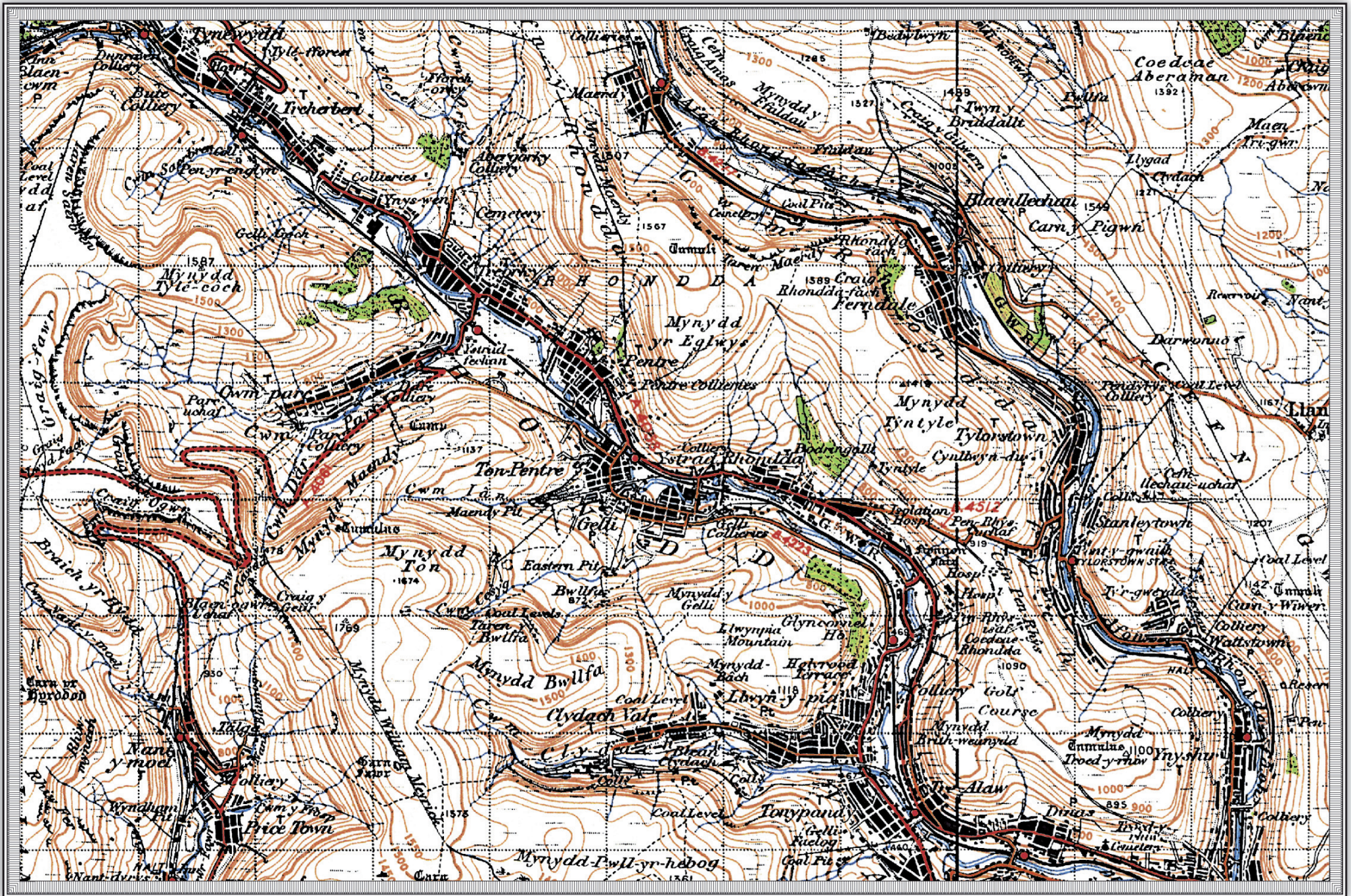
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### 1899-1900 - Revised New Series









Created from Ordnance Survey New Popular Edition maps first published 1947. Original scale 1:63,360 enlarged here to 1:30,000.

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1947 - New Popular Edition





# 8 . 2 CORRESPONDENCE

## FW: Feedback Form

From: **Macey, Chris** (Chris.Macey@rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk)  
Sent: 07 August 2009 14:14:11  
To: [henshawpd@hotmail.com](mailto:henshawpd@hotmail.com)

Dear Mr Henshaw

RE: CONTACT MADE WITH THE COUNCIL UNDER THE CORPORATE FEEDBACK SCHEME

I refer to your recent comments received at our offices on 7th August 2009 submitted via the Council's Corporate Feedback S

OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS TO DATE

With regard to your enquiry the Council's Estates Team have advised as follows.

The site is a grade 1 listed building which is classed as an industrial monument by CADW.

The building was originally intended to be incorporated as part of Rhondda Heritage Park but due local government re-organi

The building has had around £100k restoration works carried out on it during the last 8-9 years and the work was carried ou

Full restoration is the long term goal but this will be dependant on funding, which has yet to be secured. However, it is e

The building is known locally as the Hetty Colliery site and now houses a fully operational engine which will be open for v

Further information is available from The Pontypridd Museum 01443 490748, in particular Mr. Brian Davies, whose e-mail addr

I trust that you have been provided you with a satisfactory reply and would again like to thank you for bringing your conce

Yours sincerely

Chris Macey

Corporate Feedback Scheme Co-ordinator

-----Original Message-----

From: Feedback Form - Compliments [<mailto:henshawpd@hotmail.com>]  
Sent: 07 August 2009 12:16  
To: Macey, Chris; ICT Orders  
Subject: Feedback Form

Electronic Online Form for Feedback.

Do you have a comment, compliment or complaint regarding an aspect within Rhondda Cynon Taf C.B.C.?

Data Protection:

Do you live within Rhondda Cynon Taf? Yes  
If 'No', in what area do you live? london

Problem / Query: Good afternoon,

I am an architecture student from Cardiff University currently studying the idea of land art in Rhondda Fawr.  
As part of my research, I am designing a hypothetical art project for the derelict colliery in Hopkinstown. I believe the c

Any information would be massively appreciated.  
kind regards,

Phil Henshaw  
07774017702  
Date reported:

Your Details:  
Phil  
Henshaw  
415 Montana  
Deals gateway  
South Greenwich  
London  
SE13 7QF

## The Hetty Colliery site, Hopkinstown.

From: **Macey, Chris** (Chris.Macey@rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk)  
Sent: 11 August 2009 10:03:42  
To: [henshawpd@hotmail.com](mailto:henshawpd@hotmail.com)

Dear Mr Henshaw,

Further to my response last week, I have established the following.

The land in question is not owned by the Council, so to establish the owner of the land, you are advised to contact the Lan

The Council's Local Development Plan may indicate whether there are any long term plans registered for the site and I have

Should you wish to contact the Development and Regeneration Team direct about your enquiry, please telephone 01443 495170.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Macey

Corporate Feedback Co-ordinator

-----Original Message-----

From: Macey, Chris  
Sent: 07 August 2009 14:14  
To: 'henshawpd@hotmail.com'  
Subject: FW: Feedback Form



10335457 - Feedback Enquiry re: the Hetty Colliery Site, Hopkinstown

From: **Chard, Leanne** (Leanne.Chard@rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk)  
Sent: 20 August 2009 10:56:35  
To: henshawpd@hotmail.com  
Attachments:  
[Feedback Form.mht \(3.1 KB\)](#)



Dear Mr Henshaw

Thank you for your email of 7<sup>th</sup> August 2009, which you enquired about the derelict colliery at Hopkinstown..

The site in question, known locally as the 'Hetty', was part of the former Ty Mawr Colliery complex. In the mid 1980s, the former Mid Glamorgan County Council bought the site for land reclamation purposes. A scheme was drawn up to create a heritage-based tourist attraction and the creation of a number of small business units. Unfortunately because of access problems the scheme has never been implemented.

The site is still in the Council's ownership and remains part of the future land reclamation programme. I am however, unaware of any current proposals for the redevelopment of the site.

If I you require any further information, please contact the Spatial Development Manager Nicola Gullely on 01443 490409, who will be happy to assist .

Yours sincerely

Jane Cook

Director of Regeneration and Planning

--Forwarded Message Attachment--  
Subject: Feedback Form  
Date: Fri, 7 Aug 2009 12:16:09 +0100  
From: henshawpd@hotmail.com  
To: Chris.Macey@rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk; Lee.Jones3@rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk

Electronic Online Form for Feedback.

Do you have a comment, compliment or complaint regarding an aspect within Rhondda Cynon Taf C.B.C.?

Data Protection:

Do you live within Rhondda Cynon Taf? Yes  
If 'No', in what area do you live? london

Problem / Query: Good afternoon,

I am an architecture student from Cardiff University currently studying the idea of land art in Rhondda Fawr. As part of my research, I am designing a hypothetical art project for the derelict colliery in Hopkinstown. I believe the current long standing proposals for the site are for a museum? I was wondering if there was any possibility of finding out any more information about the future of the site?

10553554 - Hetty Colliery Site, Hopkinstown

From: **Lott, Leanne** (Leanne.M.Lott@rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk)  
Sent: 28 May 2010 15:19:31  
To: henshawpd@hotmail.com

Dear Mr Henshaw

With reference to your recent email, I've attached a link to the Local Development Plan which may be of interest [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/hcst/content/hcst?lang=en&&xNodeID=2016](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/hcst/content/hcst?lang=en&&xNodeID=2016). I've answered your questions below in the same order as you raised them.

- The Council does not own the containers on the hillside in Porth. You could run a Search with the Land Registry Office Swansea to find out who owns the land (Tel 01792 355000). The local water board is Dwr Cymru - Welsh Water who can be contacted on 0800 052 0145 for general enquiries.
- The Co-Operative store owns the car park and I've passed your cycle path query onto Environmental Services.
- Allison Harrison of our Corporate Estates Service is unable to locate Colliers Way adjacent to the A4119 - please contact Allison on 665710 with further details.
- The Former Power House, Scotch Colliery, Llwynypia had been in private ownership in the 1990's but ownership has now reverted to the Crown Estates. A Building Preservation Trust based in Llwynypia has been formed to develop restoration proposals for the building and site. They have recently submitted funding applications which if approved will facilitate purchase and restoration of the building. Further information can be found at the organisation's website:<http://www.rhonddapowerhouse.co.uk/>.
- RCT Council does not own this land, again you could run a Search with the Land Registry Office.
- The Former Burberry Factory, Treorchy is currently being refurbished to be a new business centre with accommodation for small and medium sized businesses. It will comprise a range of different size and specification business units some of which will benefit from central support facilities and services. Parc Busnes Treorci is a private sector led initiative which has benefited from a grant from the EU Convergence Programme of £2 million with a total project cost of £3.6 million. More information can be obtained from the Project Manager, Michael Henderson, Parc Busnes Treorci, Former Burberry Factory, Treorchy, CF42 6EF.
- I believe this land to be a dismantled railway north east of Treherbert Train Station. It is currently a community walk way. Clive Williams, Countryside Manager can be contacted on 01443 490221.

## Comments, Compliments & Complaints

### Service request confirmation

Thank you for your service request. Please print these details for your records.  
 A confirmation email has been sent to [henshawpd@hotmail.com](mailto:henshawpd@hotmail.com) to confirm your service request.

### Your Details

Name: Mr Philip Henshaw  
 Tel No: 07774017702  
 Email: [henshawpd@hotmail.com](mailto:henshawpd@hotmail.com)  
 Address: 3m Shillington Old School, 181 Este Road, London, London, SW11 2TB

### Enquiry details

Details of comment, compliment or complaint: Comment: I am currently researching temporary use of former industrial sites in the Rhondda and have heard mention of the Blaenrhondda 'Cowboy Town'. Please can you confirm its existence and provide any further information? Or, point me in the direction of groups or organisations that can draw further light? Many thanks in advance

## Re: Lost towns beyond Treherbert

From: **ray smith** ([ray2001smith@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ray2001smith@yahoo.co.uk))  
 Sent: 13 December 2010 14:23:13  
 To: [henshawpd@hotmail.com](mailto:henshawpd@hotmail.com)

Hello Phil,  
 Don't know how you got my "E" mail address but I have info ;  
 There were two streets at the top of Blaenrhondda, one was called Caroline street, which was sited on the Dunraven side of Fernhill Colliery. The other street which was on the Rhigos road side of Fernhill Colliery, was called Fernhill houses. There was in fact a small number of houses on the Fernhill Houses' side but built on the same row as the Colliery Office. There were about 5 of these houses. All these houses have been demolished. Not to complicate matters, these were streets. Now the towns at the top of the valley branching at the top of Tynywydd are Blaencwm branching left, and to the right branches Blaenrhondda. You can get photographs of these small communities by going into Google and searching for, "Caroline Blaenrhondda" or Blaenrhondda and Blaencwm.  
 Hope this helps you.  
 Regards,  
 Ray Smith. (ex Fernhill Colliery employee.)

--- On **Sun, 12/12/10**, [henshawpd@hotmail.com](mailto:henshawpd@hotmail.com) <[henshawpd@hotmail.com](mailto:henshawpd@hotmail.com)> wrote:

From: [henshawpd@hotmail.com](mailto:henshawpd@hotmail.com) <[henshawpd@hotmail.com](mailto:henshawpd@hotmail.com)>  
 Subject: Lost towns beyond Treherbert  
 To: [ray2001smith@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ray2001smith@yahoo.co.uk), [treherbert.info@btinternet.com](mailto:treherbert.info@btinternet.com)  
 Date: Sunday, 12 December, 2010, 13:25

Hello!

My name is Phil and I am a cardiff university student studying the Rhondda Valleys. I believe from a friend in Treorchy that there used to be two towns at the top of the valleys that have since disappeared/demolished? One may have been called 'Caroline'?

Any information you could provide would be very much appreciated!!

Thank you very much,  
 Phil

T: 07774017702  
 Sent from my BlackBerry® wireless device

From: **Edwards, Rhian** (Rhian.Edwards@rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk)  
Sent: 09 November 2011 11:16:04  
To: Philip Henshaw (henshawpd@hotmail.com)

Hi Phil

Sorry for the delay in responding to your e-mail.

I have answered your points in blue text.

I apologise for the brief answers - we are just about to start our busy Christmas event period.

I hope this helps with your studies, if you want to discuss further maybe we could book half an hour where we could talk on the phone?

Let me know if this is something you would like to pursue.

Kind regards  
Rhian

---

**From:** Philip Henshaw [mailto:henshawpd@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** 22 October 2011 13:47  
**To:** Events  
**Subject:** Farmer's Market

Hello,

My name is Philip Henshaw and I am an architecture student in Cardiff University looking at how temporary uses can activate everyday spaces.  
As such, I was very interested to see on the RCT website how a Farmers Market in Tonyrefail occupies the leisure centre car park every on the second Tuesday of the month!

If it is not too much trouble, I was wondering if I could request further details on the market, such as:

- Who is the organiser? Do you their contact details? [Rhondda cynon Taf Events Team organise this event](#)
- Where does the market produce come from; local allotments? if so where? [Local allotments in Abercynon, home made items from throughout South Wales](#)
- How difficult was it to reach an agreement with the leisure centre to temporarily use their car park? [We are all Rhondda Cynon Taf Council so we work with each other throughout the year delivering different events etc](#)
- Does the market have a special license from the council to use the space? [no license required, however if alcohol was on sale a TENS license would be required.](#)
- Why do you think farmers market are becoming so popular? [People are realising the](#)

14/11/2011

Windows Live Hotmail Print Message

[importance and benefits of eating fresh and buying local.](#)

- Do you know of any other locations in RCT where similar temporary uses are emerging? [Pontypridd Park, Aberdare Park, Ty'n y Bryn Park are all locations that are used for festivals and events throughout the year.](#)

Many thank in advance,  
Phil

Philip Henshaw  
m: 07774017702

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For the full disclaimer please access <http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/disclaimer>

Mae'r neges ar gyfer y person(au) a enwyd yn unig a gall gynnwys deunydd sensitif neu ddeunydd sy wedi'i farcio hyd at 'CYFYNGEDIG' a dylid ei thrin yn unol a hynny. Os nad chi yw'r person a enwyd (neu os nad oes gyda chi'r awdurdod i'w derbyn ar ran y person a enwyd) chewch chi ddim ei chopio neu'i defnyddio, neu'i datgelu i berson arall. Os ydych wedi derbyn y neges ar gam a wnewch roi gwybod i'r sawl sy wedi anfon y neges ar unwaith. Mae modd cofnodi a/neu fonitro holl negeseuon GCSX yn unol a'r ddeddfwriaeth berthnasol.

I weld yr ymwadiad llawn ewch i <http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/ymwadiad>







# 8 . 3 RHONDDA COUNCIL EVENTS

The screenshot shows the Twitter profile of Rhian Edwards (@RhianXxx), located in South Wales. The profile picture is a purple square with a white egg. The bio includes a 'Follow' button and a text follow instruction: 'Text follow RhianXxx to your carrier's shortcode'. The 'Tweets' tab is selected, showing a list of recent posts. The tweets include announcements about a Welsh food festival, dog day events, a new Facebook group, and event listings on whatsonrct.co.uk.

**Rhian Edwards**  
@RhianXxx South Wales

[Follow](#) [Text follow RhianXxx to your carrier's shortcode](#)

**Tweets** Favorites Following Followers Lists

- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
Follow my other account: BigBiteFoodFest - Welsh food festival in Pontypridd  
5 May 09
- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
Love Your Dog Day In Pontypridd this Saturday  
27 Apr 09
- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
new facebook group created - WHAT's ON RCT - JOIN PLEASE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
27 Apr 09
- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
@whatsonrct it looks fab!!!  
27 Apr 09
- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
New event added on whatsonrct.co.uk  
27 Apr 09
- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
Just started following whatsonrct - events listing in RCT, South Wales  
24 Apr 09
- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
Just started following whatsonrct  
24 Apr 09
- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards

This screenshot shows a vertical list of tweets from Rhian Edwards (@RhianXxx). The tweets are primarily promotional for events and food festivals, often mentioning 'whatsonrct.co.uk' and 'Welsh food'. The dates range from February to May 2009.

- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
New event added on whatsonrct.co.uk  
27 Apr 09
- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
Just started following whatsonrct - events listing in RCT, South Wales  
24 Apr 09
- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
Just started following whatsonrct  
24 Apr 09
- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
Welsh food wanted  
19 Apr 09
- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
Any Welsh food providers want to attend a three day food festival in Pontypridd July/August?  
17 Apr 09
- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
Still need Welsh food and drink producers for 3 day event in Pontypridd July/August  
30 Mar 09
- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
I'm looking for Welsh food and drink producers to attend the Big Welsh Bite food festival in Pontypridd end of July beginning of August  
28 Feb 09
- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
I'm looking for Welsh food and drink producers to attend a food festival in Pontypridd end of July beginning of August  
26 Feb 09
- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
RhianXxxI'm looking for Welsh food and drink producers to attend a food festival in Pontypridd end of July beginning of August...  
26 Feb 09
- RhianXxx** Rhian Edwards  
@bernap Sounds great!!!1 Who is organising body?  
26 Feb 09

Rhian Edwards 'Twitter feed', Rhondda Cynon Taff Events Team.



in association with / mewn partneriaeth â

Facebook

01443 424123 | www.whatson.co.uk

31 December/Rhagfyr  
16.30 - 21.00

mountain ash | aberpennar

2011

A VERY DIFFERENT NEW YEAR'S EVE | NOSON DRA GWAHANOL

**Santa is coming to...  
Mae Siôn Corn yn dod i...  
Rhondda Cynon Taf**

Christmas events listings for 2011  
Achlysuron y Nadolig, 2011

www.rctcbc.gov.uk/whatson • Tel/Ffôn: 01443 424123

What's On  
www.rctcbc.gov.uk/whatson  
RHONDDA CYNON TAF

STRONG HERITAGE | STRONG FUTURE  
RHONDDA CYNON TAF  
TREFDINETH GARDNAN | DYFFORDOL SICR

# Christmas Events Achlysuron y Nadolig

**TONYPANDY...** November/Tachwedd

**Saturday 19 November**  
Dydd Sadwrn Tachwedd

**Victorian Christmas & Lantern Parade  
Nadolig Fictoriaidd a Gorymdaith Lanterni**  
From 10:00 Market, funfair, performances and workshops  
10:00 Marchnad, ffair, perfformiadau a gweithdai  
1:00 - 5:00 Santa's Grotto / Ogof Siôn Corn  
5:30pm Lantern parade & Christmas lights switch on  
Gorymdaith lanterni a chynnau'r goleuadau

**ABERDARE / ABERDÂR...** Thursday 24 November  
Dydd Iau Tachwedd

**Reindeer Parade / Gorymdaith Ceirw**  
2pm - 6pm Santa's Grotto, street entertainment and funfair  
Ogof Siôn Corn, adloniant ar hyd y stryd a ffair  
6:30pm Reindeer parade & Christmas lights switch on  
Gorymdaith ceirw a chynnau'r goleuadau

**TREORCHY / TREORCI...** Friday 25 November  
Dydd Gwener Tachwedd

**Christmas Market & Lantern Parade  
Marchnad Nadolig a Gorymdaith Lanterni**  
2pm - 7pm Christmas Market & Santa's Grotto (until 6pm) in  
Boys & Girls Club plus street entertainment and funfair  
Marchnad Nadolig ac Ogof Siôn Corn (tan 6pm) yng  
Nghlwb y Bechgyn a Merched, adloniant ar hyd y stryd a ffair  
6:30pm Lantern parade / Gorymdaith lanterni

**PORTH / Y PORTH...** Monday 28 November  
Dydd Llun Tachwedd

**Reindeer Parade / Gorymdaith Ceirw**  
2pm Christmas service at the cenotaph  
Gwasanaeth y Nadolig wrth y golgoflôn  
2.30pm - 6pm Santa's Grotto, street entertainment and funfair in  
West Taff Street car park  
Ogof Siôn Corn, adloniant ar hyd y stryd a ffair ym  
maes parcio West Taff Street  
6:30pm Reindeer parade & Christmas lights switch on  
with special guest Morgan Stoddart  
Gorymdaith ceirw a chynnau'r goleuadau  
gyda gwastai arbennig Morgan Stoddart

**www.rctcbc.gov.uk/whatson**  
Tel/Ffôn: 01443 424123

**Disclaimer:**  
All details correct at time of printing.  
Events are subject to change, please  
contact Strategy, PR & Tourism for  
more information.

**Ymwadiad:**  
Roedd y manylion yn gywir adeg agraphu. Mae'n  
bosibl bydd yr achlysuron yn newid, am ragor o  
contact Strategy, PR & Tourism for  
Cysylltwch â'r gafarn Strategaeth,  
Cyhoeddiadau Cyhoeddus & Twristiaeth.

**TONYREFAIL...** December/Rhagfyr

**Thursday 01 December**  
Dydd Iau Rhagfyr

**Reindeer Parade / Gorymdaith Ceirw**  
2pm - 6pm Santa's Grotto, street entertainment and funfair,  
rear of leisure centre  
Ogof Siôn Corn, adloniant ar hyd y stryd a ffair  
y tu ôl i'r ganolfan hamdden  
6:30pm Reindeer parade / Gorymdaith ceirw

**PONTYPRIDD** Parc Cofia YNYSANGHARAD War Memorial Park  
**Saturday 03 December**  
Dydd Sadwrn Rhagfyr

**Ski Slope, Christmas Market & Farm Animals  
Llethr Sgïo, Marchnad Nadolig ac Anifeiliaid Fferm**  
10am - 4pm Ski Slope, Christmas market & farm animals  
Llethr sgïo, marchnad Nadolig ac anifeiliaid

**MOUNTAIN ASH / ABERPENNAR...** Tuesday 06 December  
Dydd Mawrth Rhagfyr

**Christmas Market / Marchnad Nadolig**  
3pm - 7pm Christmas Market, Santa's Grotto, local choirs,  
funfair and street entertainment  
Marchnad Nadolig, Ogof Siôn Corn, corau lleol,  
ffair ac adloniant ar hyd y stryd

**FERDALE / GLYNRHEDYNOG...** Wednesday 07 December  
Dydd Mercher Rhagfyr

**Reindeer Parade & Christmas Market  
Gorymdaith Ceirw a Marchnad Nadolig**  
2pm - 6pm Christmas Market in Trethondda Chapel, plus Santa's Grotto,  
funfair and street entertainment in The Strand car park  
Marchnad Nadolig yng Nghapel Trethondda, Ogof Siôn Corn,  
ffair ac adloniant ar hyd y stryd ym maes parcio The Strand  
6:30pm Reindeer parade / Gorymdaith ceirw

**LLANTRISANT...** Wednesday 14 December  
Dydd Mercher Rhagfyr

**Christmas Market & Lantern Parade  
Marchnad Nadolig a Gorymdaith Lanterni**  
3pm - 8pm Christmas market in Gwaunruperra car park  
Marchnad Nadolig ym maes parcio Gwaunruperra  
3pm - 7pm Santa's Grotto, funfair and street entertainment  
Ogof Siôn Corn, ffair ac adloniant ar hyd y stryd  
6:40pm Lantern parade / Gorymdaith lanterni  
7pm Christmas Carols on the Bull Ring  
Carolau yng Nghylch y Teirw

'Events Flyer - Winter 2011'  
Rhondda Cynon Taff Events Team.

