

ES2.1

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Local Development Plan

Examination 2012

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Submission

Examination Statement Reference No:	ES2.1
Submission date:	18 th May 2012

BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN EXAMINATION

VACANT HOUSING PAPER

1. Estimate the current proportion of housing that is vacant and confirm the basis for reaching this figure.

For the financial year 2011/2012, the Council currently has a total of 1,576 (4.9%) long and short-term vacant houses within the Borough of Blaenau Gwent.

The total figure of long-term vacant houses is 776: long-term vacancy is classed as a property being empty for 6 months or more. This figure is made up from 519 privately owned vacant properties, 23 privately owned commercial properties that the Council are working on to bring back into use as residential properties/developments and 234 vacant social rented properties. This figure is based on the Council Tax data for the area, in accordance with the guidance produced by the Welsh Government.

2. Identify any geographic concentrations of vacant housing in the county and where the where the where the where n12 21.645 0 Td ()Tj EM2178 04ant hore tn10 0

3. Offer a plausible explanation for concentrations of vacant properties.

The residential areas of Llanhilleth, Aberbeeg and Cwm are classed as low demand areas with low rental values and where the Council has difficulty in letting social housing. In particular they are places where only people who have lived in these areas all or most of their lives tend to want to remain there. The Council has found that residents from other areas within the Borough are reluctant or unwilling to move into the area.

Cwm in particular also has a high concentration of vacant private commercial properties located in Marine Street. This area was once a viable commercial /shopping area but progressively over time has become a predominantly residential area.

Bryn Farm, Brynmawr has a reputation of anti-social behaviour and this has

Blaenau Gwent presently has 519 vacant private properties which are owned by individuals who either have no experience of being part of the housing market and have bought at the wrong time when there is no profit in property, has run out of money or simply does not know what to do with the property. Council Officers within the Borough offer tailored packages to assist owners in bringing properties back into use through various schemes. Last year the Council aided vacant property owners into

