

Issues For and Against the Conservation of Heritage

CASE STUDY : BLAENAVON
INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE

BLAENAVON INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE TOURISM.

- 2000 – Area of Blaenavon was designated a WORLD HERITAGE SITE.
- Since being appointed a WHS, this has had several impacts on the area – (MAINLY POSITIVE!) = Environment, Community, Economy Based.



BLAENAVON

WORLD HERITAGE SITE

SAFLE TREFTAETH BYD



BLAENAVON WHS = BIG PIT + IRONWORKS.



- BIG PIT = Dates back to 1860. Mine closed in 1980, Re-opened in 1983 (Charitable Attraction – Community Based), Absorbed by NMGW in 1999. Has become one of the leading attractions in Wales.

BLAENAVON WHS = BIG PIT + IRONWORKS.



- IRONWORKS opened in 1789. Ceased production early 1900s, considered for development in 1970. Salvaged by the State in 1974. Currently managed by CADW.



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.

- POSITIVES:
 1. Inward Investment for Structural Development = Housing, Retail
 2. Regeneration / Reconstruction of Heritage Sites = BIG PIT, Historic Town – Blaenavon / Torfaen, Ironworks
 3. Transforming Local Area = Community Schemes (Aesthetics)
 4. Improved Image – Marketing of WHS (W.H Centre – 2008)

Social Impacts

- POSITIVES

1. Community Inclusion – Addressing Deprivation / Poverty – Eg; Injection of £20million from B.Pit
2. Increased Events – Eg; “Book Town”, Education Events / Festivities. (SEE EVENTS CALENDAR)
3. Raising Morale – Pride related to past industries (Coal / Iron)
4. Improving Education – School projects related to historical past.
5. Developing Employment Opportunities – Eg; 60 staff working at Big Pit.

Economic Impacts.

Positive

- 1) Attraction of Inward Investment – Retail Set Up.
- 2) Employment – FT / PT – Employment of Ex-miners.
- 3) Opportunities for Funding - Loans, Sponsorship, Grants / Budgetary Increases.....
- 4) Local Entrepreneurship Opportunities – Business Set Up.....
- 5) Creation of New Developments – eg; World Heritage Centre 2005.
- 6) Creation of New Industries – Tourism / Heritage / Culture

NB: Negative Impacts from Industrial Heritage Tourism

- Environmental = Over Development, Commercialisation of natural landscape, Congestion, Ill-planning for development.....

NB: Negative Impacts from Industrial Heritage Tourism

- Social = Commercialisation of Heritage - lack of authenticity, Community apathy, Difficult relationships with developers, Biased work Ops, Authenticity of educational links, Over-population during Summer months, over-reliance on Tourism.....

NB: Negative Impacts from Industrial Heritage Tourism

- Economic = Biased employment ops, Minimal jobs offered (60 @ Big Pit – previous working mine offered over 1500 jobs, Over-reliance on grant support, Loss of traditional industries move towards 'new' economies – Tourism / Heritage, Tourism seen as a panacea.....

BLAENAVON WHS

- Irrespective of 'debated' negative impacts, the Blaenavon WHS is considered a BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE.....

“In the decade since receiving World Heritage Status, the town of Blaenavon has enjoyed a successful period of urban and environmental regeneration. Although there have been some set-backs and some projects have proved less successful than others, the town has undoubtedly improved during the early years of the twenty-first century. There is still much work to be done in developing the World Heritage Site and maintaining the historic buildings. Global, national and local economic trends pose difficult challenges for local businesses but the town of Blaenavon, increased in confidence, is now well-prepared to face the future” (visitblaenavon.co.uk)

