

# Public Document Pack



Neuadd y Sir  
Y Rhadyr  
Brynbuga  
NP15 1GA

Dydd Mercher, 16 Mehefin 2021

**Hysbysiad o gyfarfod:**

## **Cyngor Sir**

**Dydd Iau, 24ain Mehefin, 2021 at 2.00 pm,  
County Hall, Usk - Remote Attendance**

### **AGENDA**

*Prayers will be said prior to the Council meeting at 4.55pm. All members are welcome to join the Chairman for prayers should they wish to do.*

| <b>Eitem No</b> | <b>Eitem</b>   | <b>Tudalennau</b> |
|-----------------|--|-------------------|
| 1.              | Ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb   |                   |
| 2.              | Datganiadau o Fuddiant   |                   |
| 3.              | Cwestiynau Cyhoeddus   |                   |
| 4.              | Cyhoeddiad y Cadeirydd a derbyn deisebau                               | 1 - 2             |
| 5.              | Adroddiadau ar gyfer y Cyngor:   |                   |
| 5.1.            | ADRODDIAD BLYNYDDOL Y PRIF SWYDDOG AR GYFER PLANT A PHOBL IFANC        | 3 - 30            |
| 5.2.            | NEUADD SIROL / AMGUEDDFA TREFYNWY                                      | 31 - 52           |
| 5.3.            | DIWEDDARIAD O'R STRATEGAETH ARGYFWNG HINSAWDD                          | 53 - 74           |
| 5.4.            | STRATEGAETH A FFEFRIR CYNLLUN DATBLYGU LLEOL SIR FYNWY                 | 75 - 328          |
| 6.              | Rhestr o Gynigion  |                   |
| 6.1.            | Wedi ei gyflwyno gan y Cynghorydd Sir Richard John, Arweinydd y Cyngor |                   |

Mae'r Cyngor:

Yn cydnabod bod Cyngor mwy cynrychioliadol yn well er mwyn adlewyrchu barn a phrofiadau trigolion ein sir.

Yn edifar mai ond 285% o Gynghorwyr yng Nghymru sydd yn fenywod ac nid oes yr un awdurdod lleol wedi sicrhau cydbwysedd rhyw o 50:50.

Yn croesawu'r gwelliant mewn cynrychiolaeth fenywaidd ymhlith Cynghorwyr Sir Fynwy i 35% yn 2017.

Yn datgan y bydd y pedair plaid wleidyddol yn cymryd camau er mwyn sicrhau mai Cyngor Sir Fynwy yw'r awdurdod lleol cyntaf yng Nghymru i sicrhau cydraddoldeb o ran y nifer o ddynion a menywod sydd yn cael eu hethol yn 2022.

## **6.2. Wedi ei gyflwyno gan y Cynghorydd Sir Paul Jordan**

Mae Cyngor Sir Fynwy yn galw ar Gymdeithas Pêl-droed Cymru i gyhoeddi adolygiad o'r penderfyniad a wnaed sydd yn golygu bod Clwb Pêl-droed Menywod Y Fenni yn disgyn i haen 2. Mae Clwb Pêl-droed Menywod Y Fenni wedi bod yn y gynghrair uchaf ers 9 mlynedd a nhw yw'r pedwerydd clwb mwyaf llwyddiannus yn hanes y gystadleuaeth. Mae Gymdeithas Pêl-droed Cymru wedi gosod Aberystwyth yn haen un, er nad iddynt ennill yr un gêm y tymor diwethaf.

Nid oes cynrychiolaeth gan Went nawr, er ein bod ymhlith yr ardaloedd mwyaf poblog yng Nghymru.

Mae'r hyn a wnaed gan Gymdeithas Pêl-droed Cymru yn gwbl annheg. Mae Clwb Pêl-droed Menywod Y Fenni yn cynnal gwerthoedd go iawn chwaraeon ac rydym yn galw ar Gymdeithas Pêl-droed Cymru i wneud yr un peth.

## **6.3. Wedi ei gyflwyno gan y Cynghorydd Sir Tony Easson**

Mae'r cynnig hwn yn gofyn am gefnogaeth y Cyngor i berswadio Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru i wyrdroi'r bwriad i ddisodli'r dulliau traddodiadol o bysgota, gan ddefnyddio rhwyd gaffl, i bolisi o "ddal a rhyddhau'r pysgod" ar draws aber yr afon Hafren

Hoffem fod hyn yn cael ei gymeradwyo a bod y sylwadau sydd wedi eu hatodi yn cael eu danfon i Gyfoeth Naturiol Cymru, Aelod Cabinet y Senedd ar gyfer Materion Gwledig a bod copi yn cael ei ddanfon hefyd at holl Aelodau Senedd Cymru sydd yn cynrychioli Dwyrain Casnewydd, Trefynwy a De Ddwyrain Cymru, gan gynnwys yr unig AS sydd yn cynrychioli'r Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol.

## **6.4. Wedi ei gyflwyno gan y Cynghorydd Sir Kevin Williams**

Mae'r Cyngor yn canmol y cyfraniad a wneir i'n bywyd cymundeol gan y bobl ifanc sydd yn gadael gofal y Cyngor, a hynny yn ystod eu hamser mewn gofal. Mae'n cydnabod yr effaith bositif yr ydym ni, fel Cyngor, yn medru gwneud i wella eu bywydau wrth iddynt adael y system ofal, a byddwn yn parhau i gynnig cymorth a chynghor iddynt ar ôl iddynt adael y sytem ofal, gan gynnwys y cymorth ariannol y bydd angen arnynt.

## **6.5. Wedi ei gyflwyno gan y Cyngorydd Sir Armand Watts**

Er mai'r dyddiad cau ar gyfer y Cynllun Preswyllo yw 30ain Mehefin 2021, mae'r Cyngor yn parhau i estyn allan i ddinasyddion yr Undeb Ewropeaidd ar draws Sir Fynwy er mwyn sicrhau bod eu hawliau fel dinasyddion yn cael eu cynnal a'u parchu.

Mae'r Cyngor yn nodi bod plant yr Undeb Ewropeaidd, sydd â'u rhieni heb wneud cais, yn methu sylweddoli bod angen i'w plant i wneud cais, neu'n credu ar gam fod y ffaith bod plant yn cael eu geni yn y DU yn golygu eu bod yn dod yn ddinasyddion y DU a'n derbyn statws preswyllo'n awtomatig. Felly, bydd y Cyngor yn sicrhau ei fod yn hysbysu ysgolion o hyn ac yn canolbwyntio cyfathrebu ar y teuluoedd a'r cymunedau sydd yn fwyaf tebygol o gael eu heffeithio.

## **6.6. Wedi ei gyflwyno gan y Cyngorydd Sir Tudor Thomas**

Mae'r Cyngor yn cytuno bod angen dysgu gwersi o'r ymgyrch ddiweddar gan Gynghorwyr Sir Y Fenni i ail-osod wyneb y ffordd ar Heol Henffordd, Y Fenni.

Mae'r Cyngor yn galw ar yr Aelod Cabinet sydd yn gyfrifol am briffyrdd i adolygu:

- Polisiau a gweithdrefnau Adran Briffyrdd CSF ar gyfer atgyweirio a chynnal a chadw priffyrdd ar draws yr awdurdod er mwyn sicrhau eu bod yn ddiogel ac yn addas i'r diben.
- Cyfnod amser cyn sicrhau bod priffyrdd yn cael eu hatgyweirio er mwyn sicrhau diogelwch.
- Cyfathrebu gyda thrigolion pan eu bod yn cwyno am briffyrdd anniogel.

## **6.7. Wedi ei gyflwyno gan y Cyngorydd Sir Dimitri Batrouni**

Dylai'r Cyngor greu tasglu ar gyfer Bulwark a Thornwell sydd yn cynnwys aelodau o'r gymuned, busnesau lleol, y Cyngor Tref a chynrychiolwyr o Gymdeithas Tai Sir Fynwy i wyntyllu'r opsiynau ar gyfer adfywio'r ardal benodol hon o Gas-gwent.

## **7. Cwestiynau gan Aelodau:**

### **7.1. O'r Cyngorydd Sir Paul Jordan i'r Cyngorydd Sir Paul Pavia, Aelod Cabinet dros Addysg**

Mae Strategaeth Argyfwng Hinsawdd a Datgarboneiddio Cyngor Sir Fynwy yn cynnwys cam gweithredu y bydd holl adeiladau newydd y Cyngor yn gweithredu gydag allyriadau carbon sero net, ac mae safle Ysgol Brenin Harri'r VIII ymhlith yr adeiladau mwyaf yn ystâd yr ysgol. Pa egwyddorion o ran dylunio a'r dechnoleg sydd i'w defnyddio er mwyn sicrhau bod yr ysgol newydd yn Y Fenni yn gweithredu gydag allyriadau carbon sero net, a pha ymrwymadau sydd yn cael eu gwneud er mwyn sicrhau bod y nodweddion carbon isel yma yn cael eu diogelu a'u heithrio o'r ystyriaeth i arbed arian cyn bod y broses o adeiladu yn

|             |   |           |
|-------------|---|-----------|
|             | dechrau?  |           |
| <b>7.2.</b> | <p><b>O'r Cynghorydd Sir Martyn Groucutt i'r Cynghorydd Sir Paul Pavia, Aelod Cabinet dros Addysg</b></p> <p>Mae'r ddogfen ymgynghori o ran sefydlu ysgol gydol oes ar gyfer plant a phobl ifanc 4 - 19 yn Y Fenni yn dweud mai un fantais o'r trefniant hwn yw y bydd yna 'gyfnodau pontio mwy effeithiol rhwng y cyfnodau allweddol o ddysgu'. Yn hyn o beth, pam nad yw'r ddarpariaeth Feithrinfa, sydd yn cael ei hystyried fel nodwedd mor bwysig o'r ddarpariaeth yn Ysgol Gynradd Deri View, yn rhan o'r cynigion ar gyfer yr ysgol newydd a bydd yn cael ei disodli gan ddarpariaeth gan y sector preifat, ac nid oes unrhyw arweiniad neu reolaeth gan yr ysgol drostynt? Beth fydd yn digwydd i staff yr ysgol sydd yn darparu addysg yn y Feithrinfa ar hyn o bryd os yw'r opsiwn yma yn cael ei mabwysiadu?</p> |           |
| <b>8.</b>   | <b>Yn cadarnhau cofnodion y cyfarfod a gynhaliwyd ar 13eg Mai 2021</b>  | 329 - 334 |

**Paul Matthews**  
**Prif Weithredwr**

## CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

### MAE CYFANSODDIAD Y PWYLLGOR FEL SY'N DILYN:

Cynghorwyr Sir:

P. Clarke  
D. Batrouni  
J.Becker  
D. Blakebrough  
L.Brown  
A.Davies  
L.Dymock  
A. Easson  
R. Edwards  
D. Evans  
M.Feakins  
P.A. Fox  
R.J.W. Greenland  
M.Groucutt  
L. Guppy  
R. Harris  
J. Higginson  
G. Howard  
S. Howarth  
R.John  
D. Jones  
L.Jones  
P. Jones  
S. Jones  
S.B. Jones  
P. Jordan  
M.Lane  
P. Murphy  
P.Pavia  
M. Powell  
J.Pratt  
R.Roden  
V. Smith  
B. Strong  
F. Taylor  
T.Thomas  
J.Treharne  
J.Watkins  
A. Watts  
A. Webb  
K. Williams  
S. Woodhouse

## Gwybodaeth Gyhoeddus

Mynediad i gopïau papur o agendâu ac adroddiadau

Gellir darparu copi o'r agenda hwn ac adroddiadau perthnasol i aelodau'r cyhoedd sy'n mynychu cyfarfod drwy ofyn am gopi gan Gwasanaethau Democrataidd ar 01633 644219. Dylid nodi fod yn rhaid i ni dderbyn 24 awr o hysbysiad cyn y cyfarfod er mwyn darparu copi caled o'r agenda hwn i chi.

### **Edrych ar y cyfarfod ar-lein**

Gellir gweld y cyfarfod ar-lein yn fyw neu'n dilyn y cyfarfod drwy fynd i [www.monmouthshire.gov.uk](http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk) neu drwy ymweld â'n tudalen Youtube drwy chwilio am MonmouthshireCC. Drwy fynd i mewn i'r ystafell gyfarfod, fel aelod o'r cyhoedd neu i gymryd rhan yn y cyfarfod, rydych yn caniatáu i gael eich ffilmio ac i ddefnydd posibl y delweddau a'r recordiadau sain hynny gan y Cyngor.

### **Y Gymraeg**

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu cyfraniadau gan aelodau'r cyhoedd drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg. Gofynnwn gyda dyledus barch i chi roi 5 diwrnod o hysbysiad cyn y cyfarfod os dymunwch siarad yn Gymraeg fel y gallwn ddarparu ar gyfer eich anghenion.

# Nodau a Gwerthoedd Cyngor Sir Fynwy

## Ein diben

Adeiladu Cymunedau Cynaliadwy a Chydnerth

### Amcanion y gweithiwn tuag atynt

- Rhoi'r dechrau gorau posibl mewn bywyd i bobl
- Sir lewyrchus a chysylltiedig
- Cynyddu i'r eithaf botensial yr amgylchedd naturiol ac adeiledig
- Llesiant gydol oes
- Cyngor gyda ffocws ar y dyfodol

## Ein Gwerthoedd

**Bod yn agored.** Rydym yn agored ac yn onest. Mae pobl yn cael cyfle i gymryd rhan mewn penderfyniadau sy'n effeithio arnynt, dweud beth sy'n bwysig iddynt a gwneud pethau drostynt eu hunain/eu cymunedau. Os na allwn wneud rhywbeth i helpu, byddwn yn dweud hynny; os bydd yn cymryd peth amser i gael yr ateb, byddwn yn esbonio pam; os na allwn ateb yn syth, byddwn yn ceisio eich cysylltu gyda'r bobl a all helpu - mae adeiladu ymddiriedaeth ac ymgysylltu yn sylfaen allweddol.

**Tegwch.** Darparwn gyfleoedd teg, i helpu pobl a chymunedau i ffynnu. Os nad yw rhywbeth yn ymddangos yn deg, byddwn yn gwrando ac yn esbonio pam. Byddwn bob amser yn ceisio trin pawb yn deg ac yn gyson. Ni allwn wneud pawb yn hapus bob amser, ond byddwn yn ymrwymo i wrando ac esbonio pam y gwnaethom weithredu fel y gwnaethom.

**Hyblygrwydd.** Byddwn yn parhau i newid a bod yn hyblyg i alluogi cyflwyno'r gwasanaethau mwyaf effeithlon ac effeithiol. Mae hyn yn golygu ymrwymiad gwirioneddol i weithio gyda phawb i groesawu ffyrdd newydd o weithio.

**Gwaith Tim.** Byddwn yn gweithio gyda chi a'n partneriaid i gefnogi ac ysbrydoli pawb i gymryd rhan fel y gallwn gyflawni pethau gwych gyda'n gilydd. Nid ydym yn gweld ein hunain fel 'trefnwyr' neu ddatrysyr problemau, ond gwnawn y gorau o syniadau, asedau ac adnoddau sydd ar gael i wneud yn siŵr ein bod yn gwneud y pethau sy'n cael yr effaith mwyaf cadarnhaol ar ein pobl a lleoedd.

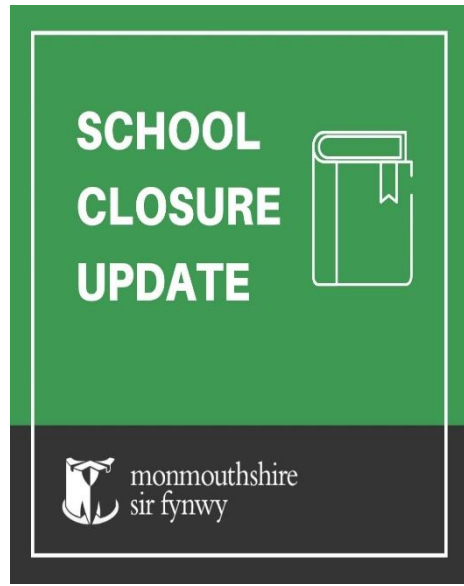
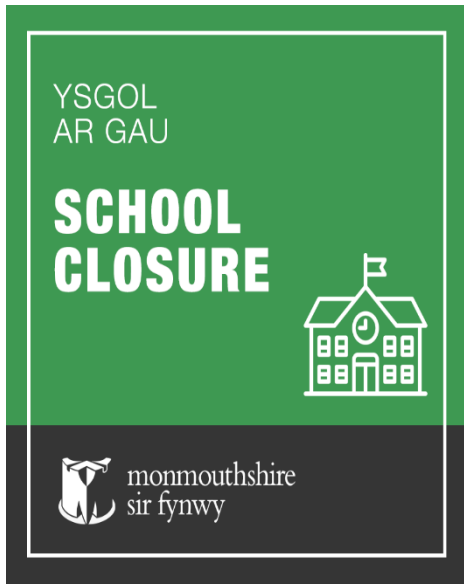
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## Chairman's Report

| <b>DATE</b>                    | <b>ENGAGEMENT/<br/>VENUE</b>   |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June | Official opening; Monmouth U3A pop up shop<br>The Tidings Community shop, Monmouth |

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# Chief Officer's Report – Children and Young People

Monmouthshire County Council

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2021



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- Student outcomes
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- Schools' Finances
- Future Focus
  - Purpose
  - People
  - Places
  - Pedagogy
- Conclusions



# Purpose

In every other year the purpose of my Chief Officer's report is to inform Council of the progress that the education system has made in the past twelve months. This year the report will be markedly different, the global COVID-19 pandemic left an indelible impact on education across the world and Monmouthshire did not escape.

This report includes the examination and assessment period that ended in August 2020. I set out in my report last year that the accountability framework in Wales had changed significantly; the pandemic and Government's efforts to ensure that schools were not overly burdened accelerated these changes.

There were no end of Key Stage Assessments for the Foundation Phase, KS2 and 3 this year. Furthermore, the outcomes for students at the end of Key Stage 4 and those sitting AS and A Levels were subject to a series of process and policy changes throughout the year. The eventually published Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) have not been compared with any previous years.

My report this year will focus on two distinct elements; a backward review of the response to the pandemic by the schools and education services across Monmouthshire and a future focus on the work that the system will have to undertake to support learners in the aftermath of the pandemic and address the challenges of the ongoing reform agenda in Wales.

The performance report on last year's areas of focus will be reported to Children and Young People's Select Committee in the coming half term.



# Introduction

My Chief Officer's Report is an annual 'state of the County' report that seeks to reflect the progress that has been made across Monmouthshire. Since my first report in 2016 it has reflected some important measures about the nature and standard of provision we offer. These have typically included measures around student outcomes, inspection results, school categorisation results and a range of 'proxy' indicators for wellbeing such as school attendance and exclusions.

This year's report is very different. Nearly none of those measures are available to me. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic education in Monmouthshire has experienced a year unlike any other. We have seen the cancellation of end of key stage assessments, the majority of children learning from home, schools providing childcare and the wholesale movement to a new pedagogical approach of 'blended learning'. New terms such as 'synchronous and asynchronous' have become part and parcel of our language.

Our schools, their teachers, leaders and support staff have been asked to work differently and do different things. Primary schools have been forced to think about how a curriculum predicated on collective play and development can be delivered at home while our secondary schools have managed a whole new approach to assessment.

Monmouthshire's Children and Young People's Directorate has also had to change the way in which it works and where it focuses its energy. Supporting schools to operationalise their obligations to support learners during the pandemic has meant procuring thousands of pieces of IT kit, organising a new payment process for free school meals, increasing cleaning capacity and changing the way in which meals are provided to children in our schools. Some of these may sound trivial but they have demonstrated that the ability to keep a school open and safe has been a huge effort by many people across many teams and is not limited to school based staff.

Ordinarily following a core Estyn Inspection (MCC was inspected in February 2020) an organisation would focus on meeting the report's recommendations. This year has inevitably been different but colleagues have continued to work in the background to further those areas. Draft ALN and FSM strategies have been taken to CYP Select and continue to be developed.

The other focus of a Chief Officer's report is the planning for the coming year. This year the report identifies four themes of work where we will develop further action plans. They are; Purpose, People, Place and Pedagogy. We have already seen areas where we know there is significant work to do. These include promoting wellbeing, understanding where are learners are and what skills they need to focus on and for our youngest learners, socialisation and taking their first steps in education with friends. There are also the themes that remain relevant from our Estyn inspection; pursuing excellence, creating an holistic vision and strategy for learners with additional learning needs, securing better outcomes for our learners eligible for free school meals (FSM) and improving the way we use data in our evaluations. We also continue to develop leadership across our schools and create better learning environments for all a our learners.



# Engagement with Members

6.5.20

Estyn Report presented to Cabinet

21.5.20

All members seminar on the Estyn Inspection

4.6.20

Annual Chief Officer's Report to Full Council 2019/2020

9.7.20

Reflections on Monmouthshire Schools through COVID 19 lockdown and the return to school in the summer

EAs Value for money study

Preparation for the September 2020 return to school

8.9.20

School examination performance Summer 2020

Return to School

13.10.20

School based support for emotional wellbeing

Blended learning in schools

8.12.20

Welsh Medium Education

21.1.21

All members' Seminar on Blended Learning

23.3.21

Feedback from Estyn's Thematic Review

20.4.21

Chief Officer's Report 2020/2021



# The shape of our place

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- # pupils
  - 6178 Primary (*38 in Special Needs Resource Bases (SNRB)*)
  - 4800 Secondary (*79 in SNRBs*)
  - 85 in Out of County Special Schools.
  - 14 Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)
- # schools
  - 30 Primary (*28 English Medium & 2 Welsh Medium*)
  - 4 Secondary
  - 12 Maintained nurseries (*474 children*)
  - 25 Non-maintained settings (*565 children funded*)
  - 1 PRU
- # Staff
  - 76 (*57.2 full time equivalents (fte)*) CYP Staff
  - 1,571 (*1064.4 fte*) Primary/Secondary/PRS based staff

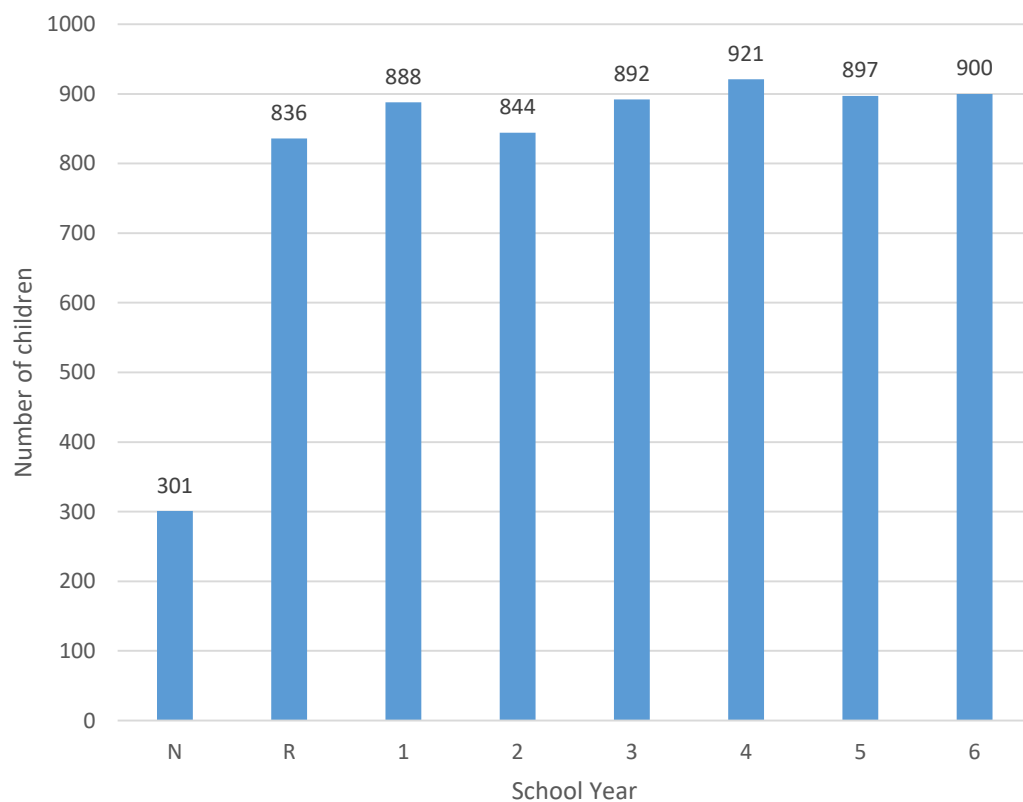




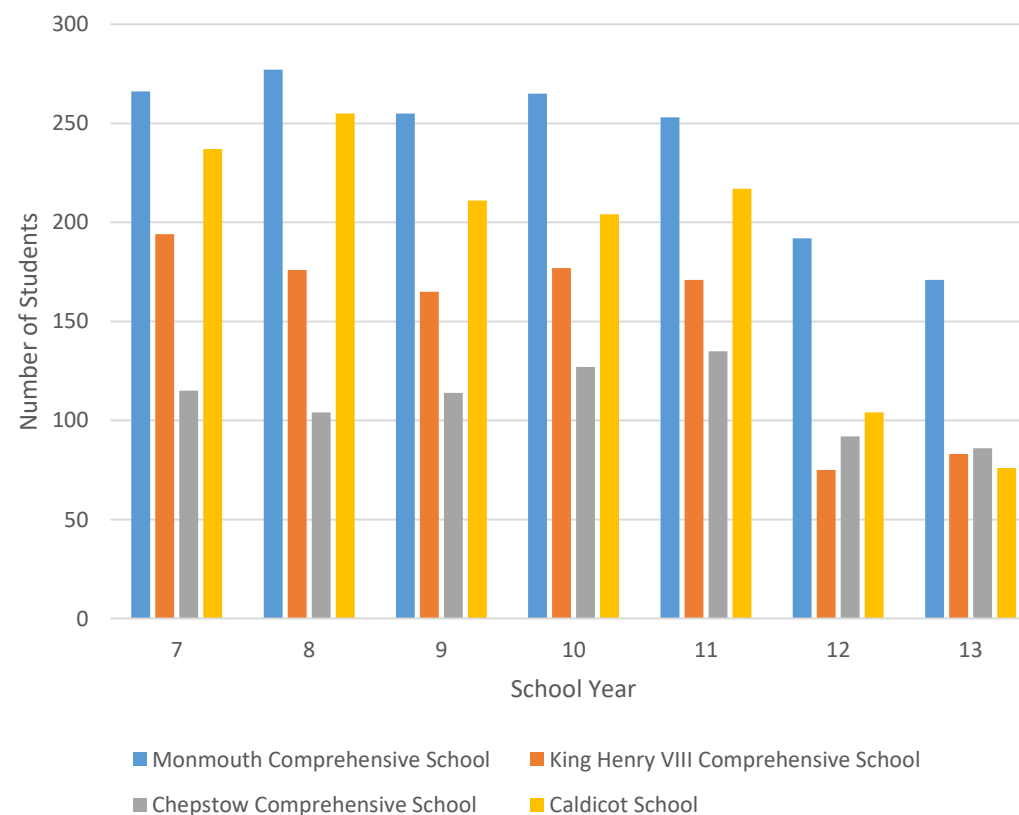
# Age & Gender Population Profile

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Number of Primary Children by School Year



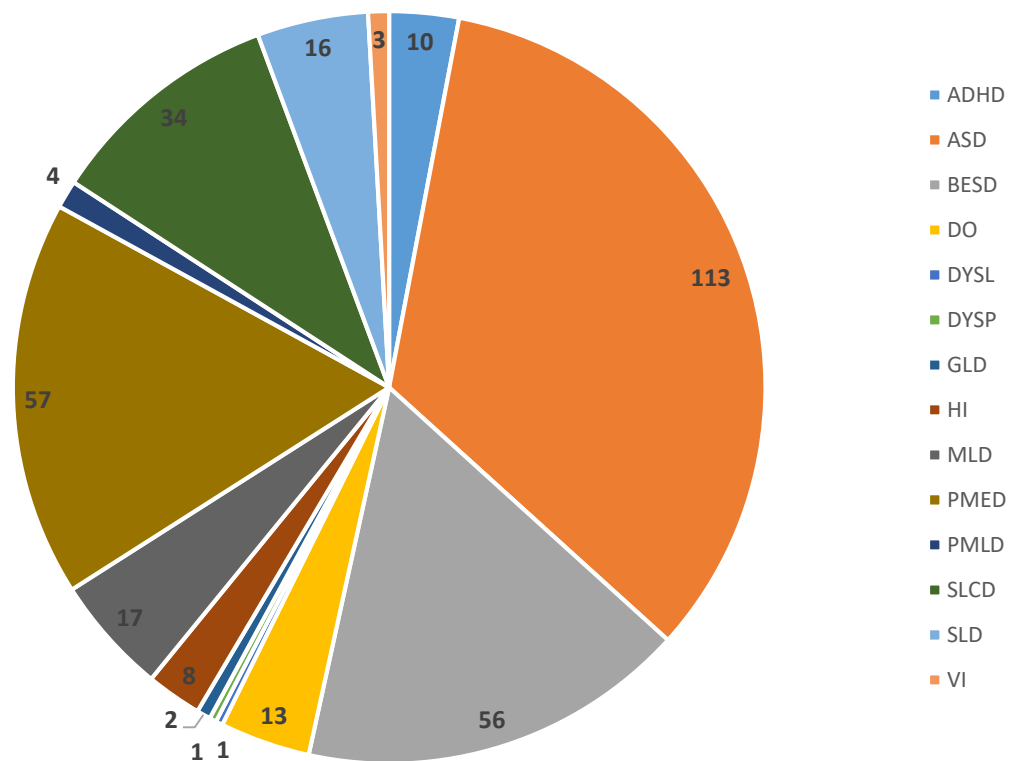
Secondary School Pupils by Year



# Statemented ALN Population Profile

Statements in Monmouthshire by primary need

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Key:

- ADHD – Attention Deficit Hyper Activity Disorder
- ASD – Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- DO – Downs
- DYSL - Dyslexia
- GLD – General Learning Difficulties
- HI – Hearing Impaired
- MLD – Moderate Learning Difficulty
- PMED – Physical and Medical Needs
- PMLD – Profound Multiple Learning Needs
- SLCD – Speech and Language Communication Difficulties
- SLD – Severe Learning Difficulties
- VI – Visually Impaired



# Reflections on 2020/21

## Initial response to the pandemic

The period leading up to the initial nationwide lockdown had been significant for Monmouthshire's Children and Young People Directorate. The Authority had just been through its core Estyn inspection and had spent the intervening period preparing our response to the report's recommendations. However, as March progressed it became clear that we should be preparing for a very different approach to schooling. It started with a reminder to schools that they should review their business continuity plans and ended with a full closure of all schools for face to face learning and the development of 'blended learning' a term that meant little to many in February 2020 but meant everything by April 2020.

The need to provide childcare for two cohorts of children became apparent very quickly. Vulnerable learners and the children of critical workers (NHS staff, blue light workers, a range of public servants and some identified private sector workers) would require childcare. Working with the schools nine childcare hubs were established by Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020. By the middle of the summer term that provision would have been re-shaped and include the four secondary schools, at our peak we operated 11 hubs and supported significant numbers of children everyday. Schools staff opened the hubs from 8am until 6pm ensuring NHS and other emergency services' shifts could be completed.

The childcare hubs were supported by staff from schools within the relevant cluster, the local authority managed the registration and allocation of places. Over time the provision flexed depending on take up in certain areas.

The next significant stage was the announcement of the Check In, Catch Up and Prepare a three week window at the end of the summer term when children would return for face to face engagement with their teachers. However, the capacity of schools was limited to 30% and in many Monmouthshire schools the requirement to continue the provision for children of critical workers and vulnerable learners saw the majority of children only offered one session a week.

It was against this limited provision that the decision was made not to provide an additional week in the summer term that the Minister had originally envisaged. It was felt that sacrificing one day in July for five days additional learning in October was not a good investment.

If there was one theme that emerged very quickly in the early stages of the pandemic it was that of collaboration, a real willingness to work together to ensure that our learners' needs were being met. I will reflect on different aspects of this collaborative framework but initially the way clusters of schools supported the hubs in each town (and our 'rural' hub in Raglan), the way in that CYP staff supported schools with the registration and guidance processes for the Hubs and the collaborative approach developed by CYP and colleagues from social care to identify and support vulnerable learners stand out as excellent examples of a system responding at pace to unprecedented circumstances.

In Estyn's letter to the Authority as a part of their specific remit review of the response to the pandemic said:

*'The authority's crisis management has been agile and responsive. Building on existing positive relations with schools and headteachers, senior officers have ensured effective communication and clear expectations. They have consistently sought the opinion of headteachers and worked to respond to their concerns and the needs of schools.'*

The highest attendance we had was on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June when there were a total of 401 pupils in our school hubs, this was made up of 329 key worker children and 72 vulnerable pupils.



# Promoting a new approach to learning

As soon as the scale of change required by the pandemic became apparent schools, the local authority and our partners in the Education Achievement Service (EAS) looked quickly to understand how we could provide an effective ongoing education for learners. This would have to be in a hugely different way to that in which all teachers had been educated, trained and learned their craft in. The traditional model of face to face teaching was in an instant changed and the challenge to our schools was how could we support children learning at home.

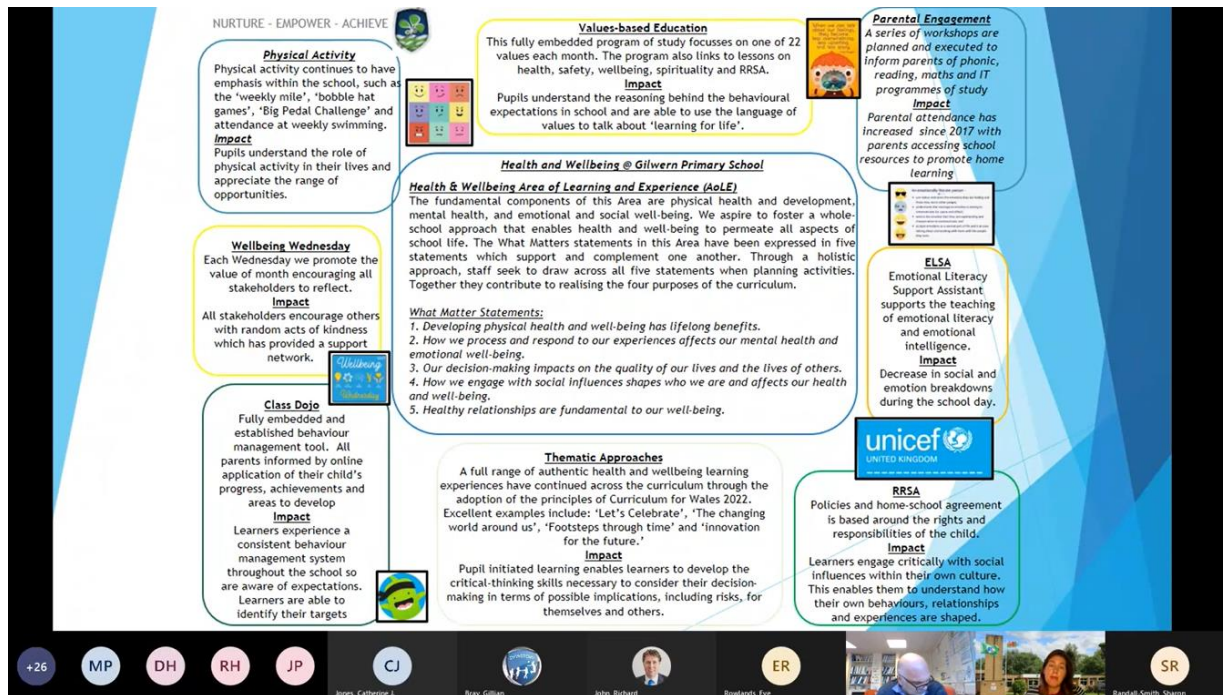
Previous Chief Officer Reports have highlighted the range of challenges that inequity amongst our learners presents in ensuring that all of our learners are able to fulfil their potential. The pandemic now shone a sharp light on this challenge. How did a school support learners who may not have their own suitable IT equipment, or potentially connectivity, beyond a mobile phone? How does a school legislate for family support. Indeed, the challenges in this regard were reflected in many different ways; some families may not be able to support their children in their learning and other families had parents who continued to work, often full time at home (interestingly often having to use a family's sole piece of IT equipment).

It was against this backdrop that the term 'blended learning' emerged. It has not yet become a full part of the educational lexicon in Wales. It would be entirely wrong to suggest that all schools were able to move to this new remote means of educating children easily but we were fortunate in being able to work closely with a number of schools who had made a rapid adaptation alongside our partners in the EAS. An immediate and widespread launch of professional learning and masterclasses saw the digital and pedagogical approaches improve across the County.

One of the key challenges of this change was that families and parents now saw the teaching of their children up close in a way that does not happen when children attend school everyday. A feature of the summer term 2020 was a number of concerns being raised about the quantity, quality and nature of the work being provided to learners (of all ages and stages). Schools worked hard to engage with parents to assure them that the developing curriculum was appropriate. In the 2021 spring term a number of Monmouthshire Schools have presented to County Councillors to demonstrate their new approaches to blended learning. This model of direct engagement by our schools was very successful and will be a part of our engagement in the future.

There has been significant interest in the way in which learners accessed IT to enable their learning. During the course of the pandemic Monmouthshire and our schools have:

- Gathered information from households on their ability to connect to the internet, and to provide Mi-fi units (mobile broadband) where needed.
- Provided laptops to learners that need an internet enabled device to access HWB (the all Wales Education platform)
- Provided several thousand new devices across schools to support future blended learning requirements, with allocation based on FSM in the Comprehensive Schools
- Worked with teaching staff to ensure that they have access to technical support here needed



**NURTURE - EMPOWER - ACHIEVE**

**Physical Activity**  
Physical activity continues to have emphasis within the school, such as the 'weekly mile', 'bobble hat games', 'Big Pedal Challenge' and attendance at weekly swimming.  
**Impact**  
Pupils understand the role of physical activity in their lives and appreciate the range of opportunities.

**Values-based Education**  
This fully embedded program of study focusses on one of 22 values each month. The program also links to lessons on health, safety, wellbeing, spirituality and RRSA.  
**Impact**  
Pupils understand the reasoning behind the behavioural expectations in school and are able to use the language of values to talk about 'learning for life'.

**Health & Wellbeing @ Gilwern Primary School**  
**Health & Wellbeing Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE)**  
The fundamental components of this Area are physical health and development, mental health, and emotional and social well-being. We aspire to foster a whole-school approach that enables health and well-being to permeate all aspects of school life. The What Matters statements in this Area have been expressed in five statements which support and complement one another. Through a holistic approach, staff seek to draw across all five statements when planning activities. Together they contribute to realising the four purposes of the curriculum.  
**What Matters Statements:**  
1. Developing physical health and well-being has lifelong benefits.  
2. How we process and respond to our experiences affects our mental health and emotional well-being.  
3. Our decision-making impacts on the quality of our lives and the lives of others.  
4. How we engage with social influences shapes who we are and affects our health and well-being.  
5. Healthy relationships are fundamental to our well-being.

**Wellbeing Wednesday**  
Each Wednesday we promote the value of month encouraging all stakeholders to reflect.  
**Impact**  
All stakeholders encourage others with random acts of kindness which has provided a support network.

**Class Dojo**  
Fully embedded and established behaviour management tool. All parents informed by online application of their child's progress, achievements and areas to develop.  
**Impact**  
Learners experience a consistent behaviour management system throughout the school so are aware of expectations. Learners are able to identify their targets.

**Thematic Approaches**  
A full range of authentic health and wellbeing learning experiences have continued across the curriculum through the adoption of the principles of Curriculum for Wales 2022. Excellent examples include: 'Let's Celebrate', 'The changing world around us', 'Footsteps through time' and 'innovation for the future.'  
**Impact**  
Pupil initiated learning enables learners to develop the critical-thinking skills necessary to consider their decision-making in terms of possible implications, including risks, for themselves and others.

**Parental Engagement**  
A series of workshops are planned and executed to inform parents of phonics, reading, maths and IT programmes of study.  
**Impact**  
Parental attendance has increased since 2017 with parents accessing school resources to promote home learning.

**ELSA**  
Emotional Literacy Support Assistant supports the teaching of emotional literacy and emotional intelligence.  
**Impact**  
Decrease in social and emotion breakdowns during the school day.

**RRSA**  
Policies and home-school agreement is based around the rights and responsibilities of the child.  
**Impact**  
Learners engage critically with social influences within their own culture. This enables them to understand how their own behaviours, relationships and experiences are shaped.

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## Supporting Schools

We maintained regular contact with headteachers throughout the last year to ensure that schools remained informed about policy changes and had an opportunity to identify the support they needed from officers to respond to the demands of the pandemic. The rapid deployment of Teams as a means of communication along with regular email updates provided an effective vehicle for the local authority to communicate.

We were in the fortunate position of being able to deploy Monmouthshire’s healthy schools team and local authority educational psychologists produced specific advice and guidance to support pupils and families during lockdown. This resource was further supplemented by ‘playlists’ produced by the EAS. This new way of sharing large amounts of information in a structured ways has been greeted positively by school leaders.

Working with colleagues across social services safeguarding remained a key area of attention. In order to support staff and other stakeholders it was agreed that safeguarding training would be delivered online. This was a significant development from previous practice.

In recognising the likelihood that the pandemic may well go on for an extended period of time Monmouthshire determined that schools should not be required to provide childcare for vulnerable learners and children of critical workers through the Easter holidays. MonLife were commissioned to deliver two weeks of provision across the existing school hubs. This was well received by children and school staff alike. It also meant that schools were prepared to offer the childcare provision through the May half term.

School leadership is challenging at all times and this period has exacerbated this and inevitably led to pressure on our Headteachers. In order to mitigate this we provided HR support but also recruited a recently retired Headteacher who was available to act as a sounding board for Leaders. This was an intervention short of some of the more formal interventions that are offered through regular HR processes.

A consistent area of focus for MCC throughout the pandemic was to alleviate as many burdens on the schools as we could to allow schools to focus on their blended learning offer and supporting their learners. This included supporting them in their risk assessments and interpretation of the operational guidance.

Working with our partners in the EAS we have continued to support schools in particular those who were in a group of requiring additional support. This has not been in the sense of accountability but rather greater support and wellbeing contact. We continued to work with schools, the EAS and Welsh Government to understand the way in which grants can be allocated and spent – this was particularly relevant to the ‘Recruit, Recover, Raise Standards’ grant stream.

We also worked closely with the EAS to promote a wide range of professional learning (CPD) opportunities to staff at all levels. Consequently, nearly all schools in the local authority have accessed online professional learning provided by the EAS.

Our ongoing focus on learners ensured a continual emphasis on supporting schools to establish pupils’ wellbeing, including that of our vulnerable learners.

The table below sets out all of the items procured and delivered to schools through the pandemic

| Item                                | Unit      | No. Issued |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Dust Mask Disposable (Flat Folded)  | Each      | 1100       |
| Face Mask Organic Vapour Respirator | Each      | 150        |
| Medical Mask                        | Each      | 28855      |
| Gloves Disposable                   | Box (100) | 875        |
| Kwik Wipes                          | Tub       | 508        |
| Hand Sanitiser (47ml)               | Each      | 493        |
| Hand Sanitiser (1L)                 | Each      | 334        |
| Hand Sanitiser (5L)                 | Each      | 221        |
| Reusable Masks Black/Blue           | Each      | 9440       |
| Virucidal Spray (750ml)             | Each      | 278        |
| Virucidal Spray (5L)                | Each      | 19         |
| Unisafe Spray (750ml)               | Each      | 197        |
| Monmouthshire Masks                 | Each      | 20         |
| Woven Cloths                        | Roll      | 49         |
| Disposable Apron                    | Each      | 28800      |
| Blue Rolls                          | Each      | 456        |
| Visors                              | Each      | 228        |

## Vulnerable Learners

Throughout the pandemic there has been a sharp focus on supporting those learners who we understood to be vulnerable. This was not driven by set a defined criteria but through a professional discussion with Headteachers and social services colleagues that had a very simple threshold at its heart – anybody who was safer in school, should be in school.

The children who were supported by being in school ranged from those with additional learning needs through to those children who school leaders felt would be better served in school. All of our Special Needs Resources Bases (SNRBs) were open throughout the pandemic. Not all families who were offered places in school chose to take them up. It is a reminder that the pandemic did not affect our communities equally and each family took their own decisions about how their children should be supported.

In a further example of collaboration early help teams in social services worked closely with Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) and the Education Psychology team to prepare specific wellbeing support for vulnerable learners. Many of these interventions were presented to the CYP Select Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

There was extensive phone contact with referred vulnerable families on a regular basis. Where necessary visits were made to families and where there were concerns referrals were made to Early Help Panel, women’s aid, young carers or formal MARFS were submitted to social care.

EWOs provided families with information on food banks and how to access them. They also liaised with relevant agencies and the third sector and delivered work packs to vulnerable pupils identified by schools.

This development of on-line training for Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinators and school staff (by ALN Transformation Team) increased participation and supported improving knowledge and skills of school staff in preparation for ALN reform changes.

Furthermore, the Education Psychology Service’s (EPS) new training platform was also rapidly developed with a high take up. This development allowed the EPS to establish that their role was more than providing cognitive assessments. It particularly helped ‘showcase’ their well-being responsibilities and has helped shaped future provision in this area.

However, in some regards, lockdown was a significant distraction with regard to the level of preparation, training, interaction that we had hoped to establish with Headteachers in preparation for the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Reform. Whilst work around this carried on at an ALNCo level there remain concerns that not all school leaders are as engaged as they should be.

Within our understanding of vulnerable learners were those children who were potentially at greater risk to harm through being at home for an extended period of time. An inability to have ‘eyes on’ those children caused concern amongst all professionals. As the pandemic progressed it became apparent that whilst the level of referrals from schools had understandably fallen community referrals took their place.

Schools undertook a significant range of engagement activities, many calling all pupils regularly and calling other students on a daily basis. As the pandemic progressed changes in the guidance from the Welsh Government allowed greater use of synchronous (live) lessons. This development allowed teachers and support staff to have far more frequent contact with their children and learners.

| Hub          | Number Identified | Provision Secured for | Taken up  | Not taken up       |           |            |
|--------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|------------|
|              |                   |                       |           | Children Isolating | Refused   | Not Needed |
| Deri View    | 13                | 13                    | 10        | 0                  | 1         | 2          |
| Dewstow      | 18                | 18                    | 12        | 0                  | 6         | 0          |
| Llanfoist    | 6                 | 6                     | 4         | 0                  | 0         | 2          |
| Overmonnow   | 12                | 12                    | 6         | 0                  | 6         | 0          |
| Raglan       | 2                 | 2                     | 0         | 0                  | 2         | 0          |
| Rogiet       | 9                 | 9                     | 6         | 0                  | 3         | 0          |
| Thornwell    | 6                 | 6                     | 6         | 0                  | 0         | 0          |
| PRU          | 6                 | 6                     | 4         | 0                  | 2         | 0          |
| Early Years  | 11                | 11                    | 9         | 0                  | 2         | 0          |
| Caldicot     | 2                 | 2                     | 1         | 0                  | 0         | 1          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>85</b>         | <b>85</b>             | <b>58</b> | <b>0</b>           | <b>22</b> | <b>5</b>   |
|              | 100%              | 100%                  | 68.23%    | 0%                 | 25.9%     | 5.89%      |

Number of FSM pupils at start of pandemic 1355

Number of FSM pupils March 2021 1662

We have made 55,000 payments to parents with a total value of £1.2m

## Working with partners

It has hopefully been clear throughout the report to this point that the response to the pandemic has been driven by partners working together in an accelerated and innovative way. Whilst I would always have hoped that the relationships with our partners (schools, MCC support services, Welsh Government, other regional authorities (including Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB)) and the EAS) was strong the pandemic has proven to me that these are robust and highly effective relationships.

Headteachers have responded excellently to the challenges of the pandemic and the need to work closely with the Authority has further developed already good existing relationships. As Estyn said in their most recent letter to the Authority:

*Overall collaboration and sharing of information have been effective. The local authority has used technology well to ensure clear communication, collaboration and sharing of information with and between schools. For example, regular headteacher meetings held via Microsoft Teams have helped to ensure that schools remained informed about policy changes and able to express their views on the support they require from officers.*

A further area of positive development was working across MCC's own directorates. The work under taken in the Enterprise Directorate to ensure that schools were cleaned, children provided with meals and transport arranged in a timely manner gave schools greater confidence. There were challenges of course, such as the difficulty to recruit new cleaning staff to meet the additional requirements of the Schools' Operational Guidance.

One unexpected benefit of the pandemic was that it brought to sharper focus the differentiation in the roles of the EAS and the local authority. This clarity meant that schools did not receive duplicated messages of support structures. Estyn noted:

*Collaboration with EAS has been beneficial in supporting schools to develop their support for distance learning and the delivery of the Welsh Government's Continuity of Learning Plan. Headteachers across the local authority have been positive about this support and engaged well with professional learning opportunities. In addition to virtual headteacher meetings, the Regional Headteacher and Governor Strategy Group continued to meet monthly and chairs of governing bodies met collaboratively on a six-weekly basis. Challenge advisors maintained supportive contact with schools and regional networks continues, such as the Professional Learning Schools and Deputy Headteacher Network.*

Colleagues noted improved access to health colleagues in terms of their availability to meet via Teams rather than travelling to venues and being able to meet in a more timely way has helped to resolve issues more effectively and built better working relationships. Positively we understand that health will be building and developing their virtual platform.

Further developments with ABUHB has been the development of an on-line training offer by therapy services including Q&A sessions this was very well received by schools and it has changed the way health services interact with school staff and positively impacted on interventions for children. This will positively support their responsibilities under the new Act.

However, there is still a need to have a more formal and face to face 'relationship' with health services, particularly in relation to more complex children in SNRBs.

Working with our schools on the ALN agenda has been accelerated through the pandemic and the SNRB network group has made more progress in the 3 /4 months of the first lockdown than I had in the previous year



# An enhanced focus on wellbeing

The last year has seen Wales public services respond to a public health crisis. Monmouthshire has experienced the worst of the pandemic, families have lost loved ones and we have seen infections and hospitalisations of members of our community, however when compared to other parts of Wales it is undeniable that the impact has been relatively lower here in Monmouthshire.

Despite this, the emergence of wellbeing needs across Monmouthshire has been clear to all professionals. How do we make sure that all of the impact of social distancing, of societal lockdowns, of restricted human contact do not disproportionately impact on learners and their learning.

There are a few areas in the 2020 School Health Research Network (SHRN) survey where students reported that their health behaviours have worsened since the last survey in 2018 and where improvement is required, these include; student levels of life satisfaction, respectful relationships, body image, alcohol misuse and sex and relationships. There have, however, been positive improvements in other areas of student health behaviours such as learner voice, a reduction in the number of students who share sexually explicit images, a reduction in the number of students who have tried e-cigarettes and a reduction in the number of students who have taken part in bullying and who have been bullied.

The Wellbeing Subgroup has an action plan that aims to improve these outcomes through working collaboratively with key LA officers and all four secondary schools. Actions include improving communication, access to targeted support, signposting to services, CPD for school and LA staff, working with schools to improve curriculum provision and promotion of active travel. This group now includes representation from all four secondary schools and primary representation is being explored as the SHRN project extends into working with primary schools.

The Subgroup continues to work on the Action Plan shaped largely by SHRN data aiming to contribute towards the broader MCC wellbeing agenda of:

- Working to ensure that schools and services for children focus on well-being,
- Supporting the resilience of children and young people in relation to their mental health and emotional well-being,
- Developing networks for all ages that support people's well-being in their local communities.

In 2021 the Welsh Government published a new statutory Framework for LAs and schools on Embedding a Whole School Approach to Emotional and Mental Well-Being (WSAMH). The guidance aims to address the emotional and mental wellbeing needs of all children and young people, as well as school staff as part of the whole school community. Emma Taylor (MCC's Healthy Schools' Lead) is the new Whole School Approach Regional Implementation Lead and this work will now be supported through the Wellbeing Subgroup.

The cross directorate Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) project continues with the EPS receiving WG Wellbeing Grant money from last year to produce the guidance and training to be delivered during the summer term to schools and other MCC partners. This aims to improve awareness, consistency and pathways in this area.





# Outcomes at Key Stage 4 & 5

In response to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, the Welsh Government cancelled all statutory data collections that would have been due to take place in Summer 2020.

This was initially announced in the Minister for Education's written statements of 18 March 2020 and 3 July 2020 and enacted in the Relaxation of School Reporting Requirements (Wales) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020.

The last update was the School Performance Reporting Arrangements Important Update (10 August 2020).

The Summer's examination results were subject to a number of differing approaches across the United Kingdom and this was a hugely unsettling time for all learners especially those whose next steps were dependant upon 'examination' outcomes.



# The National Picture

Figure 7.2: National GCSE summer cumulative C/4 results 2010-2020<sup>1)(2)</sup>

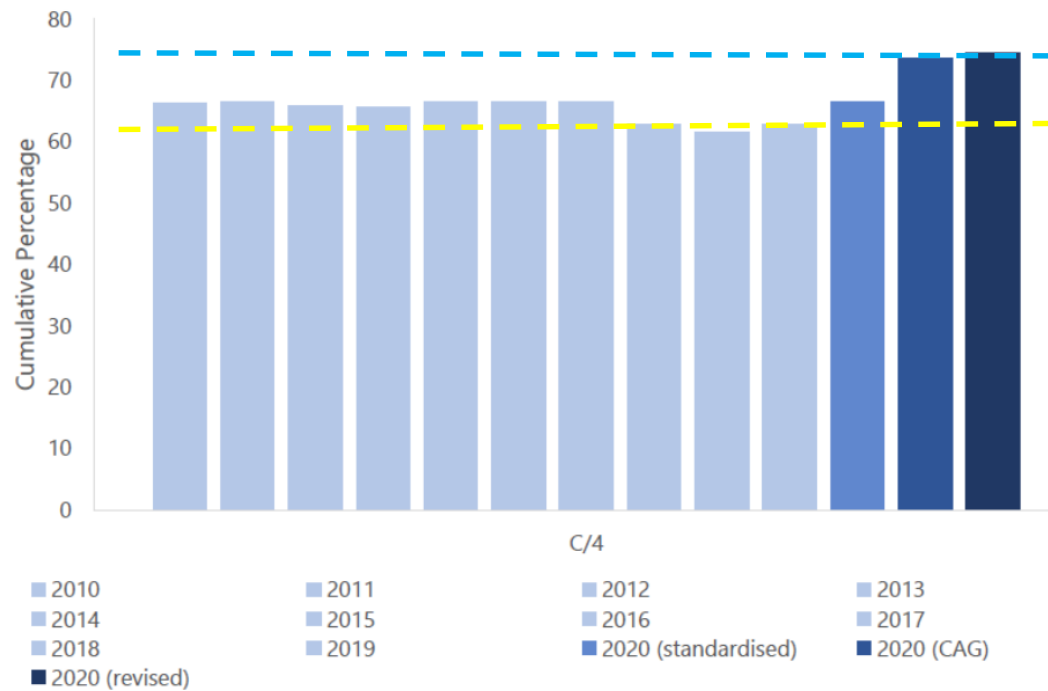
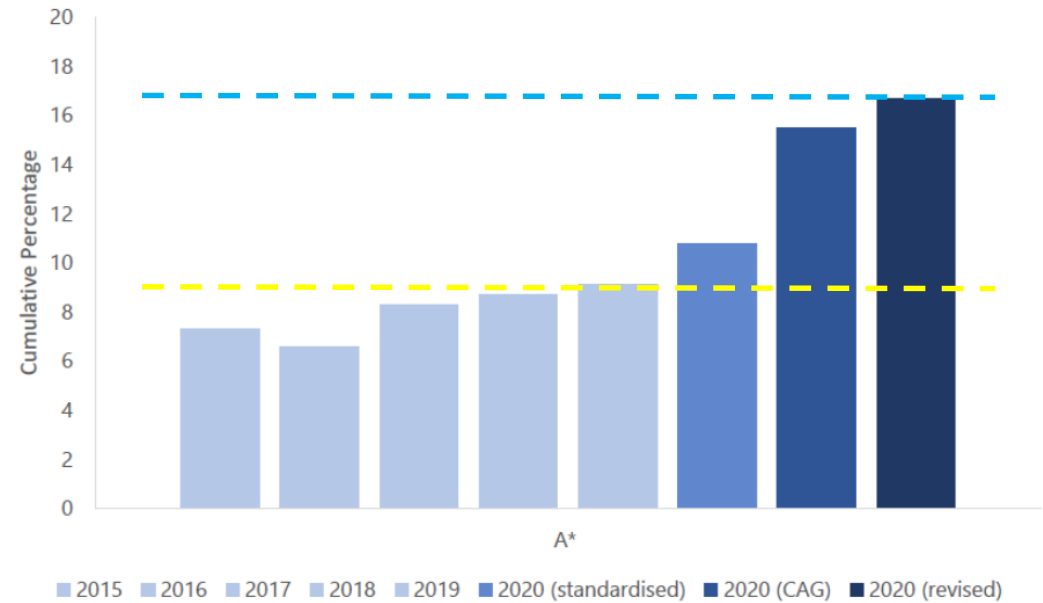


Figure 5.1: National A level summer A\* results 2015-2020

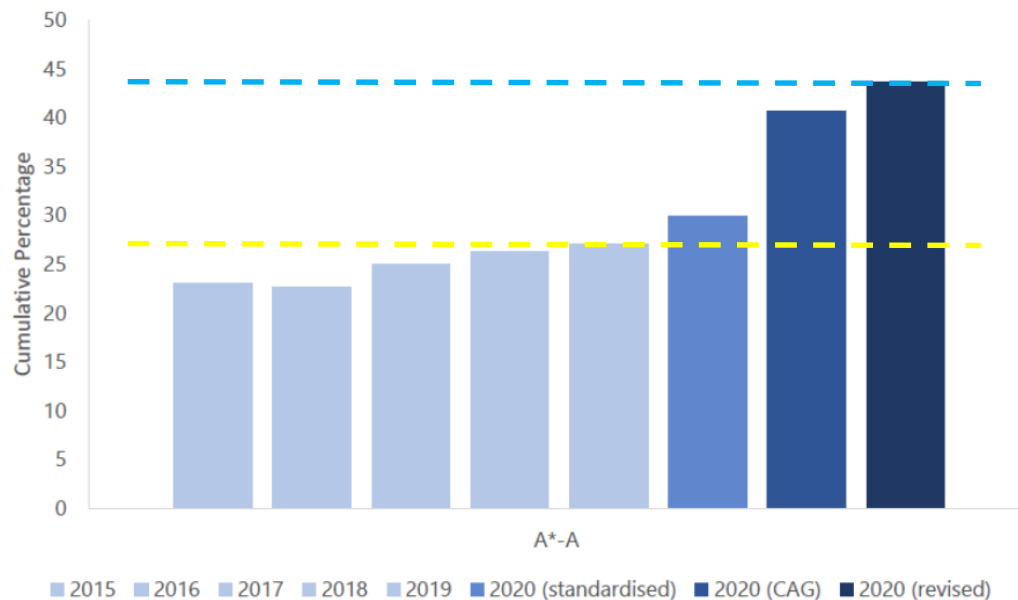


Source: 2015 to 2019 and 2020 (standardised): JCQ; 2020 (CAG) and 2020 (revised): awarding bodies



# The National Picture

Figure 5.2: National A level summer cumulative A results 2015-2020



Source: 2015 to 2019 and 2020 (standardised): JCQ; 2020 (CAG) and 2020 (revised): awarding bodies

The previous three charts (taken from the Qualifications Wales report) show, at a national level, the impact of the changing approach to grade allocation in 2020.



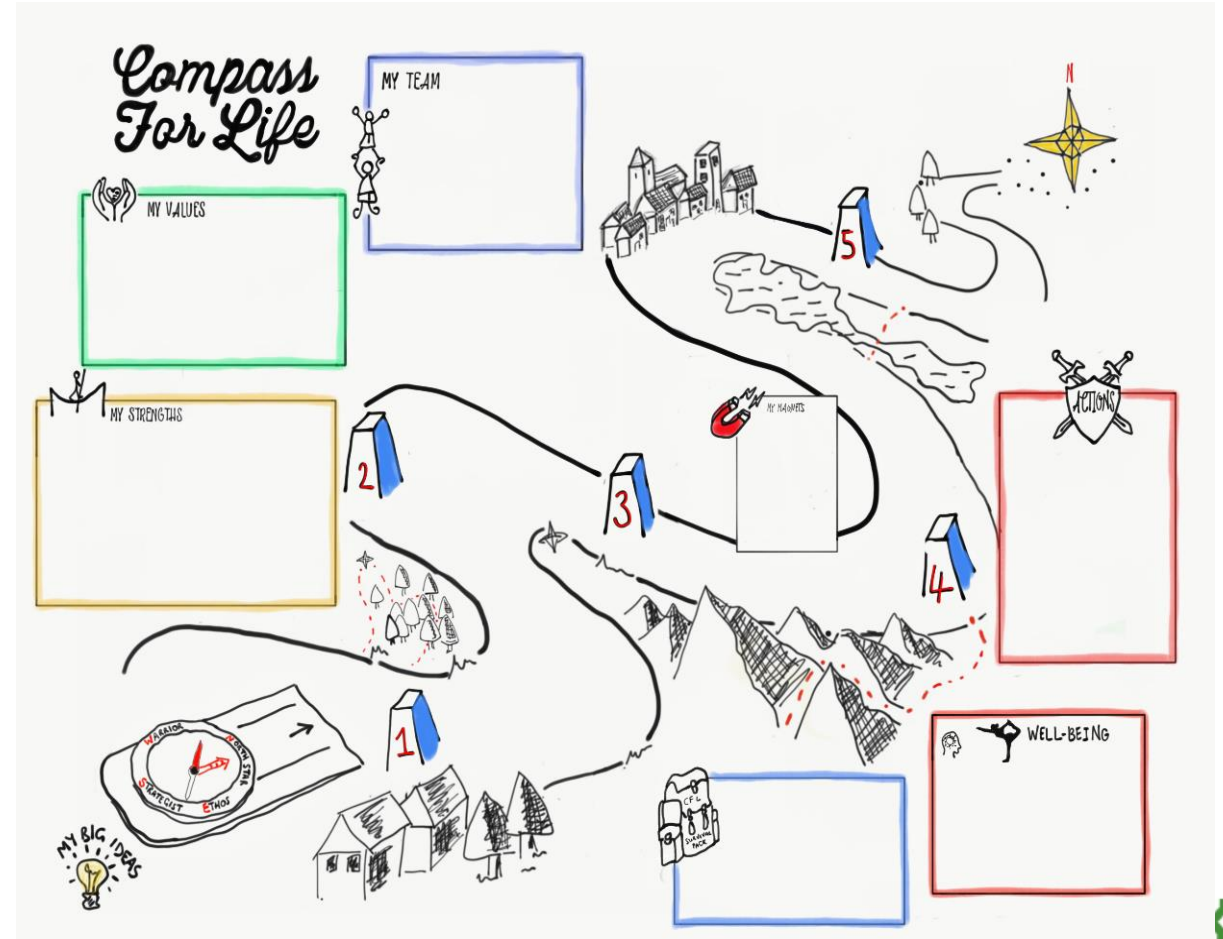
# Compass for Life

2020 saw the launch of a new initiative across all of Monmouthshire’s learners in years 5&6. The Compass for Life is aimed at raising the aspirations and resilience of all learners. It promotes children framing their aspirations and understanding the strengths they will have to show and steps they will have to follow if they are to achieve their ‘Super North Star’.

The work is promoted by the Compass for Life Foundation and children and teachers experience the same powerful workshop before following a bespoke curriculum. The workshop works through the four cardinals of the compass:

- The Super North Star
- Your Ethos (East)
- Your Strategist (South)
- The Warrior (West)

The sessions in Monmouthshire are being led by Floyd Woodrow, MBE, DCM. COVID has slowed the rollout of the programme but work was completed in four primary schools (Deri View, Thornwell, Overmonnow and Dewstow). The response from learners in all four schools was exceptional and the next group of schools will enjoy their sessions early in the summer term.



# The impact of COVID on our finances

## Schools

All schools have had the opportunity to claim additional expenses / loss of income from the hardship fund. The claims for the financial year have amounted to:

- £540k for staffing. This covered a range of staff costs including: Maternity cover from 28 weeks, staff having to self-isolate or shield. Any additional staff required to maintain class bubbles.
- £175k for all non-pay costs. This covered PPE, sanitisers, social distancing signs and any additional equipment required to maintain class bubbles.
- £178k loss of income. The majority of this is lost catering income for our secondary schools, but also covered loss of letting income in the primary schools including after school clubs.

Schools have also managed to make saving through reduced supply costs, given the blended learning approach it has not always been necessary to cover all staff absences.

In addition to this schools have received grants to support the return to school and any catch up programmes:

- Initial ALPS grant - £518k split over the academic year £302k to end of March 2021 and £216k to the end of August 2021. In addition to this a further £669k was announced in March to support schools returning prior to Easter.

Schools also received:

- £1,098k relating to revenue maintenance this will be used in the main to offset cleaning or caretaking costs in 20-21 allowing schools to roll forward the underspends in to the new financial year.
- £1,217k relating to capital maintenance for schools. This is for costs that are capital in nature. Property Services are identifying the costs that qualify and the balance will be slipped to be spent in the new financial year.

The Month 9 forecast showed a collective deficit balance for schools of £166k with 12 schools in a deficit. As at year end the number of schools in a deficit position had fallen to just two and the collective surplus across all of our schools has increased to £3.4 million.

## Central Budgets

The month 9 forecast for central costs centres showed an in year overspend of £75k the split is:

- £434k underspent ISB. This is a result of grant for teacher pay which had previously been afforded to schools and the over estimation of rates for Monmouth Comp.
- £3k overspent for resources this is a result of additional ICT costs.
- £518k overspent for standard, ALN is included in this as this is overspent by £608k.

Again the Local Authority has been able to claim for any additional costs or income losses as a result of COVID. This has been minimal for costs however £69k has been claimed for loss income for Before School Clubs.

During the year £185k was paid out to Childcare providers for loss of income due to COVID.

Two grants were received in March:

- £245k – ALN, this will be used to support the transition of pupils into secondary school with clusters working together to support this, in addition to this the Educational Psychologist service has increased its capacity to help support and identify the needs of young people at a very early stage.
- £122k – this is for any additional costs for covid that have not been claimed via the hardship fund and will support outdoor structures required to provide space and CO2 detectors.

The continued pressure on the ALN budget is an on-going concern, the appointment of two statutory officers and a cost planning tool will help to identify and control costs going forward.



# Our Future Direction

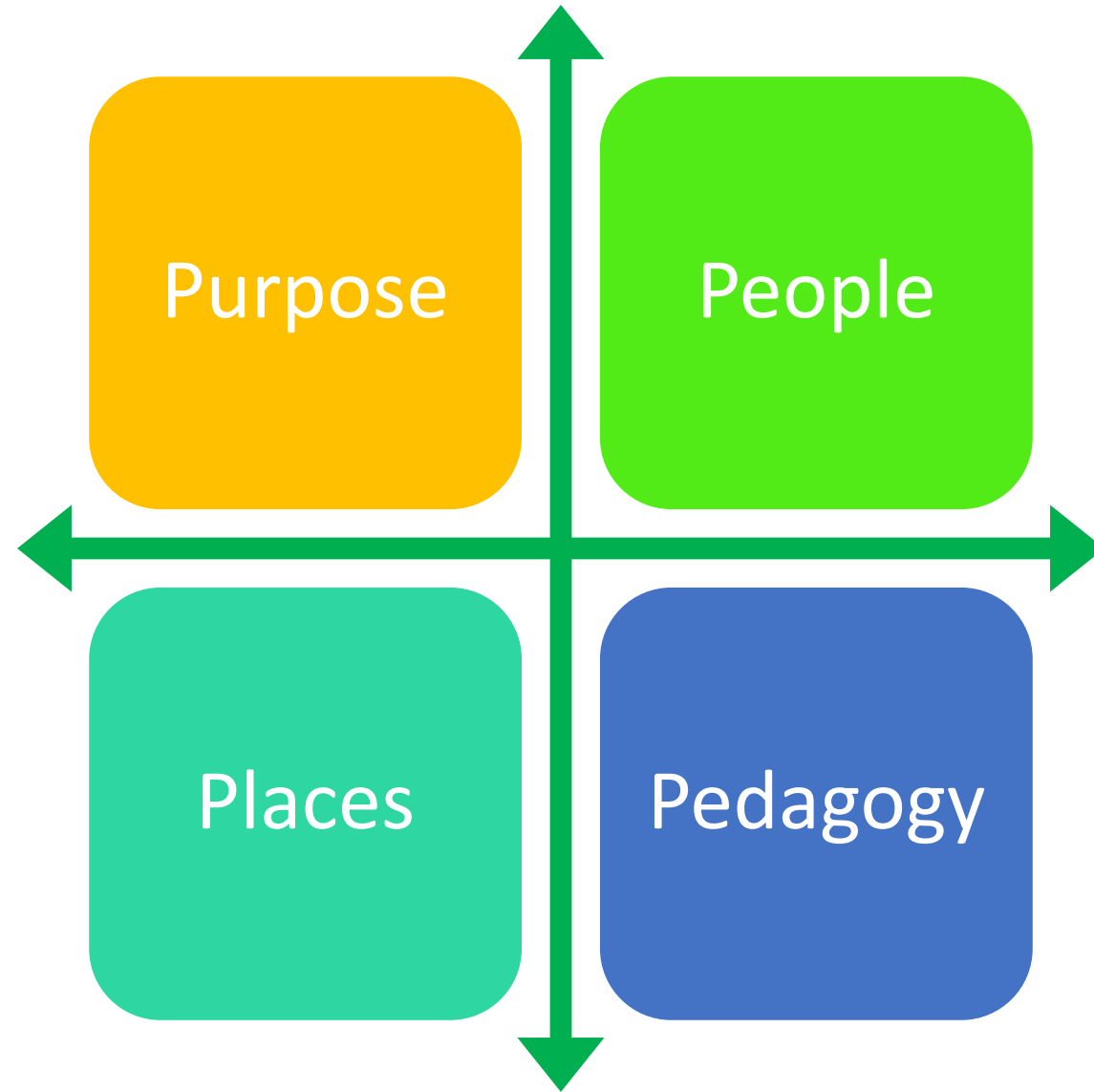
*How will Monmouthshire respond to the challenges of a post-pandemic world?*



# What our context could be...

- Negative impacts estimated at 50% worse for disadvantaged children
- The emergence of a ‘newly’ disadvantaged group of learners
- 80% of respondents agreed that the coronavirus pandemic had made their mental health worse. 41% said it had made their mental health “much worse” - increased feelings of anxiety, isolation, a loss of coping mechanisms or a loss of motivation. *Young Minds survey*
- By autumn 2020, significantly lower achievement in reading and maths compared to 3 years ago (UK) – *NFER study*
- 53% of learners questioned were struggling with learning at home – Spring 2020 – *WG review of impacts on Mental health*
- Long term loss of earning in children in the UK estimated at £350bn (and 100bn tax revenue) – *Institute of Fiscal Studies*







# Purpose

## Risk

1. *'Children and Young People have the best possible start in life'* may no longer be an adequate purpose in light of the COVID-19 pandemic
2. We are in the earliest stages of the post-COVID-19 period and as yet we do not understand fully the impact of the pandemic
3. The development of a new purpose (if one is required) will take time and need a collective input to frame it
4. Our purpose needs to reflect the changes to the education context in Wales and beyond. Reform is part of this agenda but so to are maximising the opportunities to our children and young people
5. Capitalise and build on the authority's work on social justice and anti-poverty

## Opportunity

1. Take the opportunity to work closely with our schools and partners to understand the needs that exist over the summer term and how we can prepare to deliver these in the coming years
2. Prepare our schools and services to allow them to align the new needs and the ambitions of the national reform agenda
3. Continue to develop our anti-poverty work and work with partners to maximise the impact this has on our learners and their outcomes in work
4. Continue to work closely with colleagues across the authority and in wider public services to develop a broader set of interventions to benefit Monmouthshire's children and young people



# People

## Risk

## Opportunity

1. The pandemic remains a risk to all school based staff
2. School staff may not be prepared for the return to school of their children and new additional needs that they may have
3. School leaders will need a new set of skills and approaches to support their own staff's wellbeing
4. Some more experienced members of staff may choose to curtail their careers leading to challenges around recruitment and retention
5. Learners at all stages of their education may have lost impetus and prior learning
6. School staff may require additional support for new interventions to enable all learners to make progress
7. The new themes of Curriculum and ALN reform require significant professional learning
8. As a County Monmouthshire needs all of its senior leaders, of which Headteachers are a critical element, to contribute to a new approach to public service post COVID-19
9. Increased Tribunals – if Wales follows what happened in England post their reform there will be a tsunami of tribunals, which could overwhelm services.
10. ALN budget – high risk of overspend continuing and growing.
11. Support schools in their preparations for the Centre Determined Grades (CDGs)
12. Implementation of ALNET Act – upskilling and supporting early years settings
13. Ensuring that there is sufficient capacity in the Welsh Medium sector to support the implementation of the ALN Act and the development of Welsh medium more generally
14. Addressing Child Development needs that have arisen as a result of Covid-19

1. Continue to work closely with colleagues across the Association of Directors of Education, Wales (ADEW) and the Welsh Government to ensure that forthcoming changes to the Operational Guidance are proportionate and timely
2. To work with schools, Qualifications Wales and the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC) to support the establishment of Centre Determined Grades
3. Continue to support all school staff ensuring that their wellbeing is maintained allowing them to support their learners
4. Work closely with partners to understand the most effective interventions to support learners returning to school
5. Continue to play an important role in regional endeavours to support schools to be ready for the implementation of the new curriculum and the ALN Act.
6. Develop greater integration of school leaders into the corporate leadership frame
7. To focus on the SNRB development process to provide enhanced and broader support to learners in these settings
8. Work with an integrated early years team to support our non-maintained early years settings



# Places

## Risk

1. The development of the new Abergavenny School
  - Budget and costs increasing
  - Not achieving the correct outcome from statutory consultation
  - Not achieving planning permission or delays in planning permission
  - Programme slips and opening is delayed
2. The lack of specialist provision places particularly regional special schools places and secondary specialist provision in MCC
3. Sustainability of early education and childcare providers (Loss of income last year and reduced demand has left some providers in a precarious position)
4. The need to rapidly develop new Welsh Medium provision in the north-east of the county

## Opportunity

1. The development of the new school in Abergavenny represents a significant opportunity to invigorate a community discussion about a significant investment in the town
2. The initial engagement with staff and governors has been positive and provides an opportunity to think about the new curriculum in a new setting
3. Continued investment in the authority's SNRBs to enhance provision
4. Continued development of Welsh medium provision across Monmouthshire in line with our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)
5. Continued development of our WESP to meet our targets in 2032



## Risk

1. Further extended closures, requiring a continued reliance on distance learning as the primary method of curriculum delivery, could result in learning experiences which do not support effective learning.
2. An expectation that school staff provide face to face and distance learning in parallel with distance learning for extended periods of time could be overwhelming and result in higher numbers of staff absence or leaving the profession.
3. Currently, wellbeing is the main priority for schools. Staff are investing their time in supporting learners as they return to school full time and this may impact on the time available to develop new pedagogical approaches to support the implementation of the new curriculum.
4. All schools and settings, early years and further education provisions will be affected by the Act and will need to change their approach to the identification and management of children and young people with ALN.
5. ALN reform – systems not being in place in schools and LA for September's implementation. A significant part of this risk is related to the late release of information and guidance documents from the Welsh Government.
6. Learners who experienced disadvantage prior to the pandemic are likely to see their needs increase in the post pandemic period

## Opportunity

1. In response to the pandemic, schools have developed bespoke distance learning offers to ensure that pupils can continue learning. The opportunity to innovate and experiment with the use of technology to support learning has given many schools the confidence to build on this further and develop a blended learning approach consisting of a mix of face to face learning supported by on-line tools.
2. Many schools have benefited from increased opportunities to share pedagogical expertise within and across schools to support the implementation of the new curriculum.
3. Increased engagement across schools through the use of technology is enabling school staff to share learning experiences and planning across clusters of schools. This is facilitating the sharing of good practice and resources and in doing so reducing workload.
4. Access to, and uptake of, professional learning to support pedagogy has increased as a result of the move to on-line training courses. Many schools have used the time to develop staff skills to support learning.
5. Parents have had the opportunity to engage with learning whilst their children have been at home. Schools have provided more support for parents to enable them to support their children and designed the curriculum to be suitably flexible to fit with other commitments. As a result, parents feel more confident about providing support and less pressured about when this support is provided.
6. Some groups of learners have benefitted from learning at home and in a more solitary way and in many cases, engagement from these learners has been far higher compared to more traditional models. This means that schools may be able to develop a more bespoke curriculum which balances home and school-based learning where it is more beneficial for the learner.



# Conclusions

As I observed in the introduction, this report feels and looks very different to those that have been previously offered to Select and Full Council.

However, I hope that this report has captured the challenges of 2020-2021 accurately and perhaps more importantly, the response of our services to support schools and our learners.

The future of education in Monmouthshire is well placed. We have the strongest school leadership we have ever had and the pandemic has promoted a renewed sense of common purpose across our system. The future will not be easy and as I present this report we cannot yet be certain about the full impact of the COVID pandemic but the system's ability to respond is secure.

There are a range of further challenges that we face; implementing the new Curriculum and the ALN Reform Act will require commitment and energy but they allow us to form our own teaching with pedagogy and wellbeing at its very heart.

Our ambitions with regards to ensuring that all learners achieving the very best that they can remain undiminished and we will continue to ensure that the emergent Welsh Government accountability framework is implemented effectively across the county. We will not relent on our work to ensure that success in school is not diminished or unduly affected by a young person's background.

Whilst COVID has presented a huge challenge to our system I believe it is a test we have passed and we will now look to the future and build on the good work that exists and has been recognised in both of Estyn's reports this year.



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**SUBJECT: SHIRE HALL / MONMOUTH MUSEUM**

**MEETING: Council**

**DATE: 24 June 2021**

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: DRYBRIDGE**

**1. PURPOSE:**

- 1.1 To inform members of progress on the feasibility study to establish a new cultural destination at the Shire Hall Monmouth including the relocation of the current Monmouth Museum and the review of museum collection storage.
- 1.2 To propose a phased approach to the new provision.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 To note the progress in undertaking a feasibility study to establish a new cultural offer at Shire Hall incorporating the Monmouth Museum and the review of museum collection storage.
- 2.2 To approve the establishment of an initial phase within Shire Hall and to confirm that Monmouth Museum will not reopen in Market Hall.
- 2.3 To reopen key areas of Shire Hall for public use, subject to Covid regulations and any restrictions required to allow the completion of the phase 1 provision incorporating temporary museum displays.
- 2.4 To approve a £250,000 contribution from capital receipts to facilitate the initial phase of works, as recommended by Cabinet on 9 June 2021. That in turn will also provide a match funding contribution to the Levelling Up Fund bid for Monmouth that would if successful enable the longer term vision to be achieved.
- 2.5 Future reports be presented to members as the long term proposals for Shire Hall, Monmouth and for museum collection storage are further developed.

**3. KEY ISSUES:**

- 3.1 Undertaking a feasibility study to establish a new cultural offer at Shire Hall incorporating the Monmouth Museum, including consideration of the implementation of an initial phase and options for a second phase to showcase the building and collections was approved in December 2020.

- 3.2 Innes Associates were appointed to undertake the study and it has progressed since January 2021 supported by a project team. Its scope includes examining the feasibility and phasing of an enhanced cultural destination at the Shire Hall, and to support that an assessment of collection storage options across all museum sites.
- 3.3 The study has confirmed the potential to create an exceptional, integrated visitor attraction that engages and inspires existing and new audiences: *“Powerful stories will be told about the history of Monmouth, beautiful and intriguing objects will be displayed in a magnificent setting, learning opportunities will be offered to all ages and the attraction will provide the possibility of continued third-party bookings and shop-generated sales. The project will maximise the value of this heritage asset, enhancing the vibrancy of Monmouthshire and promoting a deeply rooted sense of place”*.
- 3.4 The overall concept proposes changes to make the approach to the building more open, the entrance foyer larger and more transparent, and a clear transition to the main display area on the first floor. The scheme also creates a new, larger learning space for all ages, maintains bookable and flexible community spaces, continued accommodation for the Town Council and a larger shop / visitor information presence,
- 3.5 This would allow for a new visitor flow on the ground floor, including creating community exhibition and learning spaces. The main displays on the first floor, would use the full room volumes and the circulation spaces. The whole building will be used as a resource for storytelling, fully integrating the historic courtroom and cells into the visitor journey; all intended to create attractive animated spaces for visitors and community use.
- 3.6 The study suggest the building is suitable for museum use and the conversion can be achieved respecting the buildings historic importance and listing. Further detailed work will be required to ensure essential museum environmental conditions, energy efficiency and security standards; to confirm the acceptability of the design details with respect to building conservation requirements; and to refine the cost plan which is currently estimated to be in the region of £2.6M, subject to further detailed design.
- 3.7 In addition the study has reviewed the longer term museum storage strategy, as Shire Hall would only accommodate limited museum storage necessitating further provision elsewhere. The previously approved Museum Forward Plan envisaged a new centralised store, potentially as part of the re-provision of Monmouth museum. After discussion with potential funders, review of likely capital / revenue costs and carbon footprint the preferred option is now a decentralised storage strategy rationalising the use of space and environmentally controlled storage across all of the museums sites, supported by expanded off site stores. The museum storage strategy will be subject to further consideration by Cabinet.
- 3.8 This approach involves utilising the former conservation labs in Chepstow museum as stores and considering options for further off site storage – the basement at Chepstow Leisure Centre has been identified as a potential location, but requires more detailed assessment. The storage strategy is not costed and further detailed assessment is now required of individual collection requirements, security and environmental controls.



- 3.9 Delivery of the longer term vision will depend on resourcing and critically access to external funding. In respect of the long term ambitions for the Shire Hall museum it is proposed to include the full proposals within the Monmouth Levelling Up (LUF) bid to UK Government. Further reports will be presented to Cabinet as the long term proposals for Shire Hall, Monmouth and museum collection storage are refined.
- 3.10 Given the longer term strategy and the need to resolve the museum's current accommodation, and develop a more robust business model for Shire Hall, an initial phase is identified. This would comprise of the local history collection, temporary exhibition space, the Shire Hall courtroom and cells, learning space, shop and visitor information. It is proposed to develop the storytelling brief for the longer term provision through a wide consultative process including gauging visitor and community responses to temporary displays.
- 3.11 The estimated costs of the phase 1 provision including the necessary security and environmental adaptations, conserving collection objects for display and addressing immediate collection storage needs is in the order of £250,000. This will also be included as potentially eligible expenditure within the LUF bid. Subject to resolving detailed issues and consents it is anticipated that this provision would be in place later in 2021.
- 3.12 The proposals are informed by the wider retail assessment undertaken across all MonLife attraction and museum sites supported by the Cultural Services Fund. An overall business plan and staffing proposals are under development. It is anticipated that the combined facility and staffing will allow for extended opening hours compared to the current museum and the intention is to utilise the initial phase to explore options such as early evening opening.
- 3.13 In the ordinary course of events Monmouth Museum would have reopened after its winter closure. However given the Covid restrictions in place until recently both venues have remained closed to public use. In order to progress the collection review and associated tasks required to prepare for a move it is impracticable for Monmouth Museum to reopen in Market Hall. It is therefore proposed that key areas of Shire Hall will reopen for public use, subject to any temporary opening or access restrictions required to allow the completion of the phase 1 provision incorporating the temporary museum displays.
- 3.14 In terms of Market Hall the site is currently identified as a potential site to act as a hub for regional working. Feasibility works are being commissioned to assess options, cost implications and that will run alongside external funding sources being secured. The Market Hall also has the potential of being included in the LUF funding proposals for Monmouth.

#### **4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):**

- 4.1 Creating the offer at Shire Hall better tells the Monmouth story, it will address the need to improve facilities and the visitor experience and provides a framework for long term development of the offer and the engagement of new audiences improving people's

wellbeing. The process of developing new provision allows for full public engagement to help identify the stories important to all our communities. Better facilities will support children and young people, lifelong learning, wider community engagement and involvement.

- 4.2 The inherent purpose of MonLife is to make the best possible contribution to improving the quality of life for all of the communities, aligning to Public Service Board priorities from the Well-being Plan and Assessments. The positive engagement and activities with communities, customers and staff will enable a focus on investment in key aspects of this new visitor attraction to ensure the culture and business thrives and that it contributes to the economy, add vibrancy to the town centre and support artistic, cultural, heritage and tourism activity.
- 4.3 The Shire Hall has lift access to all floors and will ensure more people can view future displays and exhibitions.
- 4.4 The safeguarding responsibilities of the Authority and partners are fully integrated into the identification of appropriate actions, and reflected within MonLife’s culture and documentation for these services.

## 5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

| Option  | Benefit   | Risks   | Comments   |
|---|---|---|--|
| Not to proceed with merging the heritage offers at Shire Hall and Monmouth Museum and explore collection storage options                            | None  | Does not address the shortcomings in the Monmouth museum, the need for change in the business model for Shire Hall and the long term museum storage issue.<br><br>Does not allow for future use of the current museum accommodation in Market Hall.                   | Does not progress the ambitions set out in the Museum Forward Plan |
| To proceed with phase 1 and explore the longer term ambitions to establishing a new attraction at Shire Hall and resolve collection storage options | Provides the opportunity to creating a new attraction at Shire Hall that tells the Monmouthshire story in an integrated, engaging and more sustainable way.<br><br>Will develop a clear strategy to resolve long term museum collection storage.<br><br>Allows future options for Market Hall to proceed. | Sufficient resources need to be secured to ensure that the phase 1 offer meets public expectations and maintains Museum Accreditation standards.<br><br>The risk of later phases, which are dependent on attracting external funding, not proceeding in a timely way. | Supports the case for external grant.                              |

## 6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

6.1 Progress will be evaluated against the relevant MonLife Business and Service Delivery Plans. The framework will incorporate performance indicators including visitor numbers, visitor satisfaction, learning outcomes and income targets.

## **7. REASONS:**

7.1 The provision of a contemporary offer in Monmouth is identified within the Museum Forward Plan and provides a way to better tell the Monmouthshire story in an integrated, engaging and more sustainable way.

7.2 The creation of a new attraction at Shire Hall will contribute to the Destination Management Plan objective of developing the county's cultural product offer.

## **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

8.1 The estimated costs of the phase 1 provision includes the necessary security and environmental adaptations, conserving collection objects for display, moving and addressing immediate collection storage needs. Cabinet on 9 June 2021 recommended to Council that a £250,000 contribution from capital receipts be approved to facilitate this initial phase of works. The investment will in turn also provide a match funding contribution to the Levelling Up Fund bid for Monmouth that would if successful enable the longer term vision to be achieved.

8.2 It is not anticipated that there will be any additional revenue consequences on the combined Shire Hall and Monmouth museum budgets.

8.3 The cost of delivery of the full long term adaptation of Shire Hall is currently estimated, subject to further detailed design, to be in the region of £2.6M, and will be dependent on securing external grant funding from a variety of sources. As indicated above it is proposed that the project forms part of the Monmouth LUF bid. In addition external funding will be sought to support the full community engagement proposals.

8.3 The collection storage proposal have yet to be costed as further detailed assessment is required prior to a further report to Cabinet.

## **9. CONSULTEES:**

SLT

Cabinet

Ward / Monmouth members

Monmouth Town Council are supportive of the projects inclusion in the Monmouth LUF bid. Monmouth Field & History Society have presented a range of member's views from support, to concerns over the suitability of Shire Hall, a preference to refurbish and expand within Market Hall, and concerns over long term commitment to the Nelson collection.

**10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Appendix A - Equality and Future Generations Evaluation  
Appendix B – Feasibility Study extracts

**11. AUTHORS & CONTACT DETAILS:**

**Ian Saunders** - Chief Operating Officer MonLife –

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Email: [traceythomas@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:traceythomas@monmouthshire.gov.uk) Tel: 07818 016924



|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Name of the Officer</b><br/>Matthew Lewis<br/><b>Phone no: 01633 644850</b><br/><b>E-mail: <a href="mailto:matthewlewis@monmouthshire.gov.uk">matthewlewis@monmouthshire.gov.uk</a></b><br/>Rachael Rogers<br/><b>Phone no: 01873 854282</b><br/><b>E-mail: <a href="mailto:rachaelrogers@monmouthshire.gov.uk">rachaelrogers@monmouthshire.gov.uk</a></b></p> | <p><b>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</b></p> <p><b>Shire Hall / Monmouth Museum.</b></p> <p>To note the progress in undertaking a feasibility study to establish a new cultural offer at Shire Hall incorporating the Monmouth Museum and the review of museum collection storage. To approve the establishment of an initial phase within Shire Hall.</p> |
| <p><b>Name of Service area</b></p> <p><b>MonLife Attractions &amp; Museums and Arts</b></p>  | <p><b>Date 28 October 2020 updated 20 November 2020, 19 March 2021 &amp; 20 May 2021</b></p>  |

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**Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics?** Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

| Protected Characteristics | Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic  | Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic | What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?   |
|---------------------------|--|---|---|
| Age                       | The creation of a new heritage and museum offer in Monmouth enables us to better serve our existing and potential audiences with protected characteristics. The feasibility study outlines a community engagement programme including activities targeted at young people, families and those aged 55+ | None  | We are already consulting as part of the MonLife Heritage Strategy project and this will help inform our approach to the initial phase. The desired scope and content of further provision will be developed through a process of full public engagement and involvement. |

| <b>Protected Characteristics</b> | <b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b>                                  | <b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b> | <b>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>                                     |
|----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Disability                       | As above and unlike the existing museum building Shire Hall has lift access to all floors and meets access requirements | As above   | The proposal provides the opportunity to address issues of disability through interpretation of the collection, including the Nelson collection. |
| Gender reassignment              | As above  | As above   | As above   |
| Marriage or civil partnership    | As above  | As above   | As above   |
| Pregnancy or maternity           | As above  | As above   | As above   |
| Race                             | As above  | As above   | The proposal provides the opportunity to address issues of race through interpretation of the collection, including the Nelson collection.       |
| Religion or Belief               | As above  | As above   | As above   |
| Sex                              | As above  | As above   | As above   |
| Sexual Orientation               | As above  | As above   | As above   |

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## 2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

|   | <b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage</b>   | <b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.</b> | <b>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>   |
|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice</b> | Our role as a heritage service is to tell the stories of everyone in Monmouthshire. We would like to ensure we do this more effectively. The feasibility study outlines a community engagement programme including activities targeted at local people and those with lower income. The proposal provides the opportunity to address issues of social justice through interpretation of the chartist's stories. | N/A  | The desired scope and content of further provision will be developed through a process of full public engagement and involvement. We will consult on the display and interpretation of the Nelson collection to ensure that we take into account the modern day context. |

**Policy making and the Welsh language.**

| <b>How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:</b>  | <b>Describe the positive impacts of this proposal</b>  | <b>Describe the negative impacts of this proposal</b> | <b>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts</b> |
|---|--|---|---|
| <b>Policy Making</b><br><br>Effects on the use of the Welsh language,<br><br>Promoting Welsh language<br><br>Treating the Welsh language no less favourably | Telling the stories of all our communities would be central to the development of the new provision, including achieving full bilingual provision. | None  |   |

|   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Operational</b><br>Recruitment & Training of workforce   |   |  | Will seek when recruiting to increase the level of Welsh speaking staff and continue to offer language training |
| <b>Service delivery</b><br>Use of Welsh language in service delivery<br>Promoting use of the language | All promotional provision is produced bilingually and we will continue to do this |  |   |

**4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below?** Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!


| <b>Well Being Goal</b>   | <b>Does the proposal contribute to this goal?<br/>Describe the positive and negative impacts.</b>  | <b>What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>   |
|--|--|--|
| <b>A prosperous Wales</b><br>Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs | Creating a new heritage/museum offer at Shire Hall that better tells the Monmouth story will contribute to enhancing cultural and heritage presence in each of our towns, and uses resources to best effect. The delivery of enhanced arts, cultural and heritage provision is one of the agreed priorities within the Monmouthshire Destination Management Plan to grow tourism revenue to the county by supporting the artistic, cultural and tourism economy. The proposal utilises existing building resources in a more sustainable way and gives the opportunity for Landlord Services to consider future use of the Market Hall | The desired scope and content of further provision will be informed by stakeholder input and an assessment of how it can contribute to an improved visitor experience in Monmouth. |







| Well Being Goal  | Does the proposal contribute to this goal?<br>Describe the positive and negative impacts.  | What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?  |
|--|--|--|
|  | The combined offer also presents greater opportunities to support and enhance learning and skills development of all sectors of our communities.   |  |
| <b>A resilient Wales</b><br>Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)       | Continued participation as a member of the Happy Museum community ensures contribution to initiatives to positively contribute to biodiversity and climate issues.   | Shire Hall has previously hosted cultural and artistic activity such as the Wye Valley River Festival to raise awareness of environmental issues and will continue to do so as opportunities arise |
| <b>A healthier Wales</b><br>People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood  | The positive effects of cultural activities on people's wellbeing is well documented and the delivery of the new offer will enhance the ability to provide that opportunity to existing and new audiences.   | The new provision would enable a contribution to a healthier Wales through cultural activities, volunteering and engagement.   |
| <b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b><br>Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected  | Telling the stories of all our communities through heritage and museum provision is important in making our communities feel connected and attractive. Creating a new heritage/museum offer would present new opportunities to display and interpret the museum collections and Monmouth's stories in an engaging and relevant way, ensuring everyone's voice is represented | The desired scope and content of further provision will be developed through a process of full public engagement and involvement.  |
| <b>A globally responsible Wales</b><br>Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing | The Museum Services' continued participation as a member of the Happy Museum Community ensures contribution to museum based initiatives to positively contribute to global wellbeing. Re-providing stores gives the opportunity to consider more sustainable methods of museum storage.  | When fitting out new stores and deciding what objects are stored where close attention will be given to environmental impact.  |

| Well Being Goal   | Does the proposal contribute to this goal?<br>Describe the positive and negative impacts.  | What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?                          |
|---|--|--|
| <p><b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b><br/>Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p> | <p>Telling the stories of all our communities will be central to the development of the new provision, including achieving full bilingual provision and Museum Accreditation standards</p> <p>Local culture and heritage will provide a platform for both formal and informal learning including arts provision.</p> | <p>The desired scope and content of further provision will be developed through a process of full public engagement and involvement.</p> |
| <p><b>A more equal Wales</b><br/>People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances</p>   | <p>The further development of free to access provision assists together with engagement through the MonLife Heritage Strategy work and the development of the new offer will work towards reducing barriers to access</p>  | <p>The desired scope and content of further provision will be developed through a process of full public engagement and involvement</p>  |

5. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

| Sustainable Development Principle   | Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.  | Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts? |
|---|--|---|
|  <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p> | <p>Creating a new heritage/museum offer at Shire Hall that better tells the Monmouth story, including the current Monmouth Museum and the Shire Hall heritage offer address the need to improve facilities and the visitor experience and provides a framework for long term development of the offer and the engagement of new audiences.</p> |   |

| Sustainable Development Principle  | Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.   | Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?   |
|--|---|---|
|  <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p> <p><b>Collaboration</b></p>          | <p>Delivery of a new heritage/museum offer involves working closely with our colleagues across MonLife and MCC, existing stakeholders, including the Town Council, market and partnership with funders. It builds on the heritage strategy and collection review work already supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and continuing partnerships related to art, cultural and heritage activities</p>  |   |
|  <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p> <p><b>Involvement</b></p>              | <p>Delivery of a new heritage/museum offer involves consultation with stakeholders, volunteers and community partners. We intend to build on the engagement through the MonLife Heritage Strategy project and undertake a process of full public engagement and involvement to help us identify the stories important to all our communities.</p>   | <p>We will consult on the display and interpretation of the collection, including the Nelson collection, to ensure that we take into account the modern day context.</p>  |
|  <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p> <p><b>Prevention</b></p> | <p>Shire Hall has struggled to deliver the expected level of business or footfall expected and Monmouth Museum is dated and would require significant investment to bring the visitor experience up to modern expectations. The Museum Stores are almost at capacity and we need to address this in order to plan for the future. The proposal utilises existing building resources in a more sustainable way and gives the opportunity for Landlord Services to consider future use of the Market Hall</p> | <p>Creating a new heritage/museum offer at Shire Hall that better tells the Monmouth story helps addresses these issues relating to Shire Hall and Monmouth Museum and will contribute towards developing a wider solution for museum storage</p> |

| Sustainable Development Principle   | Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.  | Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts? |
|---|--|---|
|  <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p> | <p>It is well documented that participation in cultural life improves people’s wellbeing and this is something we consider throughout our work:</p> <p><a href="#">Museums Association Report</a></p> <p><a href="#">Happy Museums</a></p> <p><a href="#">Happy Museums: Future Generations Act</a> (Monmouthshire are specifically mentioned in this one)</p> <p><a href="#">Welsh Government Arts and Culture Vision Statement</a></p> |   |

**Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?**

|                     | Describe any positive impacts your proposal has   | Describe any negative impacts your proposal has | What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?   |
|---------------------|---|---|--|
| Safeguarding        | The safeguarding responsibilities of the Authority and partners for children and young people are fully integrated into the identification of appropriate actions, and reflected within MonLife’s culture and documentation for these services. | N/A   | Safeguarding procedures will be reviewed through the SAFE process as the new provision is planned and developed to ensure maintenance of existing standards. |
| Corporate Parenting | N/A   | N/A   | N/A  |

**7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?**

- Visitor figures / financial performance across the sites
- Experience of operations
- Discussion amongst / input from MonLife Attractions, Learning and Museum teams
- Development of MonLife Heritage Strategy
- Shire Hall Feasibility Study Innes Associates 2021

**8. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?**

Creating the offer at Shire Hall better tells the Monmouth story, it will address the need to improve facilities and the visitor experience and provides a framework for long term development of the offer and the engagement of new audiences improving people's wellbeing. The process of developing new provision allows for full public engagement to help identify the stories important to all our communities. Better facilities will support children and young people, lifelong learning, wider community engagement and involvement.

The inherent purpose of MonLife is to make the best possible contribution to improving the quality of life for all of the communities, aligning to Public Service Board priorities from the Well-being Plan and Assessments. The positive engagement and activities with communities, customers and staff will enable a focus on investment in key aspects of this new visitor attraction to ensure the culture and business thrives and that it contributes to the economy, add vibrancy to the town centre and support artistic, cultural, heritage and tourism activity. Creating a new heritage/museum offer will contribute to the economy, add vibrancy to the town centre and support artistic, cultural, heritage and tourism activity.

The Shire Hall has lift access to all floors and will ensure more people can view future displays and exhibitions.

The safeguarding responsibilities of the Authority and partners are fully integrated into the identification of appropriate actions, and reflected within MonLife's culture and documentation for these services

**9. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.**

| What are you going to do              | When are you going to do it?                  | Who is responsible            |
|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Seek approval for a feasibility study | ICMD 9 December 2020                          | Environment & Culture Manager |
| Consider the outcome of the study     | Cabinet 9 June 2021 & Council<br>24 June 2021 | Environment & Culture Manager |
| Develop a full implementation plan    | tbc   |                               |

**10. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.**

| Version No. | Decision making stage | Date considered | Brief description of any amendments made following consideration  |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------|---|
| 1.          | ICMD                  | 9 December 2020 | Subsequent to decision amended to reflect the work undertaken on community engagement and the concept options through the feasibility study |
| 2.          | Cabinet               | 9 June 2021     |   |
|             | Council               | 24 June 2021    |   |

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Shire Hall, Monmouth (cc-by-sa/2.0), © Philip Pankhurst (geograph.org.uk/p/5452789) license by Creative Commons



Plan of Town Centre - 1881



Plan of Town Centre - 1969



Plan of Town Centre - 1986



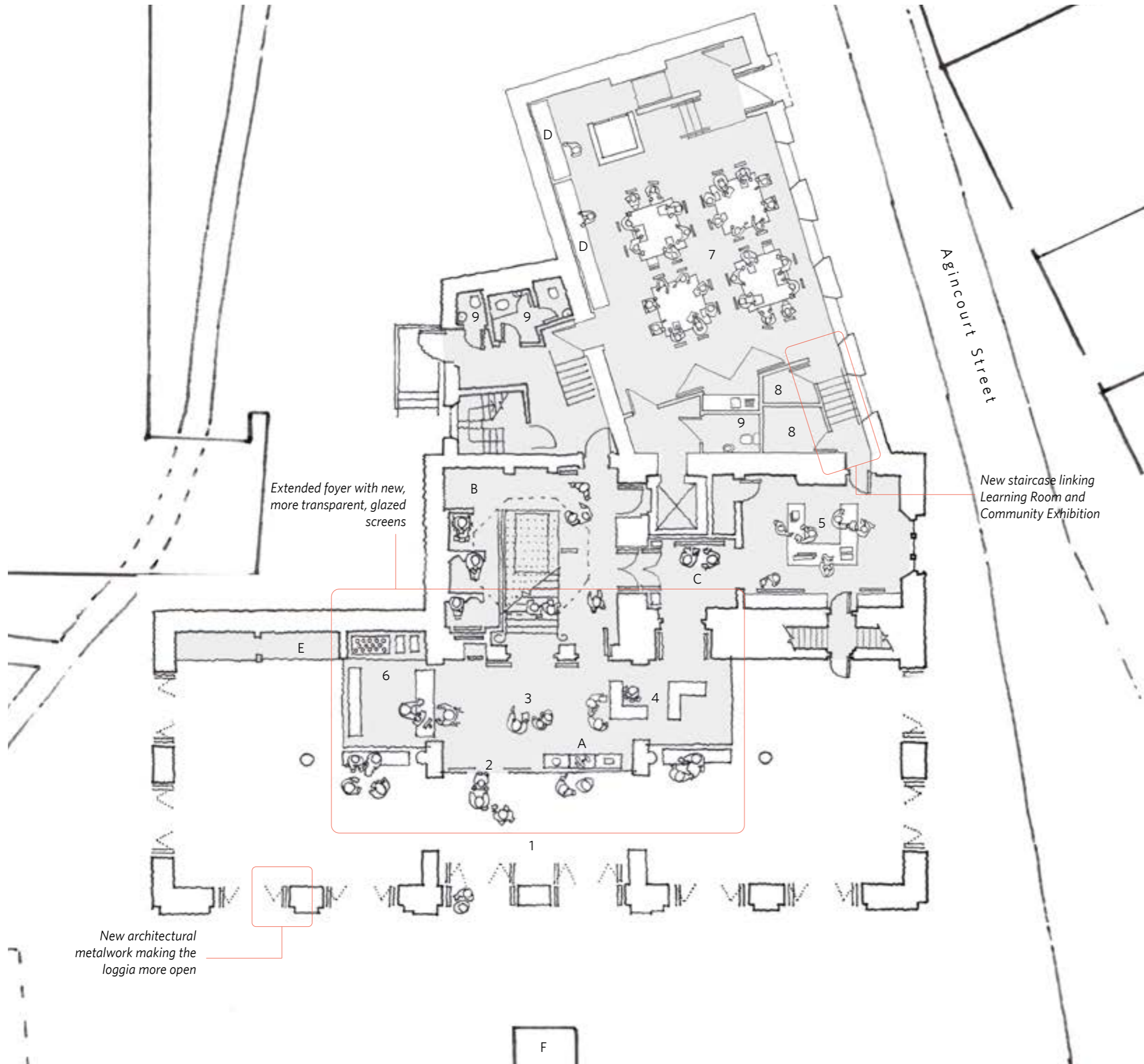
Configuration of existing railing and gates, while performing a necessary function, hinders open access to the loggia



Current screens to entrance foyer do not allow view to the inside from some angles



Entrance foyer is small and does not have much room for the shop



Key:

- 1 Loggia
- 2 Main Entrance
- 3 Foyer
- 4 Shop
- 5 Community Exhibition
- 6 Refreshment Bar
- 7 Learning Space [+Multi-Use]
- 8 Store
- 9 WC
  
- A. Museum shop-window display
- B. Video installation
- C. Extension area for community exhibition
- D. Collection Storage - cases and open display
- E. Amended Storage for Market
- F. Charles Rolls' statue



Shop Window, Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter



Sound sculpture giving a playful interpretation of the history of Stortorget town square as a location of vital wells, Kalmar, Sweden

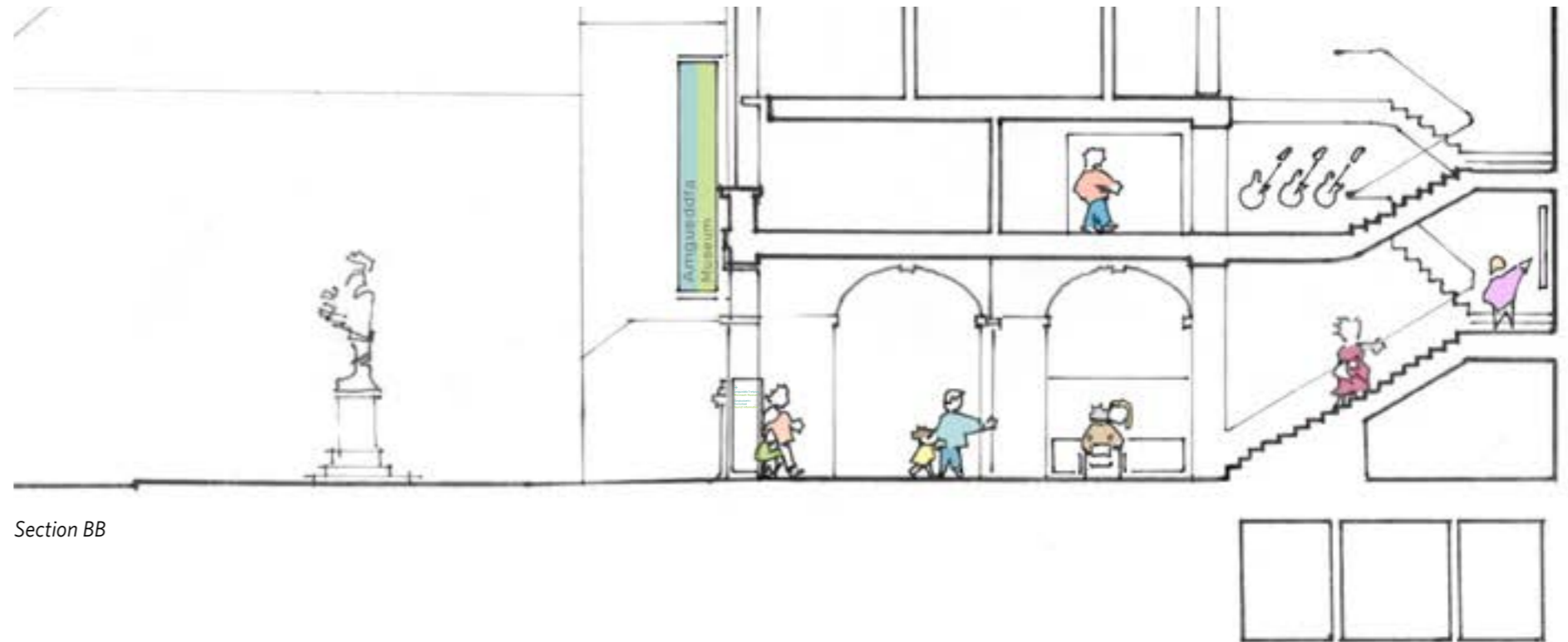
Ground Floor Plan, approximately 1:150 @ A3



## 3.2 Approach, Entrance and Transition to Main Displays



Main Entrance



Section BB

### Approach and Connection with Agincourt Square

New signage to the exterior will give the building a new visual identity and guide visitors towards the front entrance. There is a wider opportunity to take the museum out into the loggia and Agincourt Square with objects, interpretation and a playful interaction with the landscape. Examples installations such as the museum “shop window” for the *Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter* and the playful sound-sculptures in Stortorget, Kalmar show how a cultural destination can increase its presence in the town context.

New architectural metalwork able to be fully opened between stone piers will make the loggia space more accessible. Replacing the current part glazed, part timber-clad with fully glazed screens, including the new extended area, will make the entrance foyer more visible from the Square and give opportunities to entice visitors with a display of museum objects [as at Exeter], views of the shop and the other activities within. Either side of the screens are benches to give an opportunity to visitors for rest or decision-making, a sheltered place to drink a coffee.

Imaginative lighting and light and sound projections within the loggia space could extend the visual and audible identity further and create an interstitial space for intrigue and story-telling out of daylight hours.

### Entrance and Foyer

Entering the new foyer through a new glazed door a visitor will see:

- > reception desk is placed to the left of the front door, freeing up the middle of the space for the route to the main staircase, and the right-hand side for the enlarged shop and route through to the Community Exhibition Space;
- > two of the three original archways remain open, the larger central one opening onto the main staircase up to the first floor and Main Displays, the smaller on the right leading to the Community Exhibition room;
- > behind the now closed left-hand archway is a space for an AV installation. This can provide an introduction, conclusion or extension of interpretation to the visit.

### Education/Learning Room

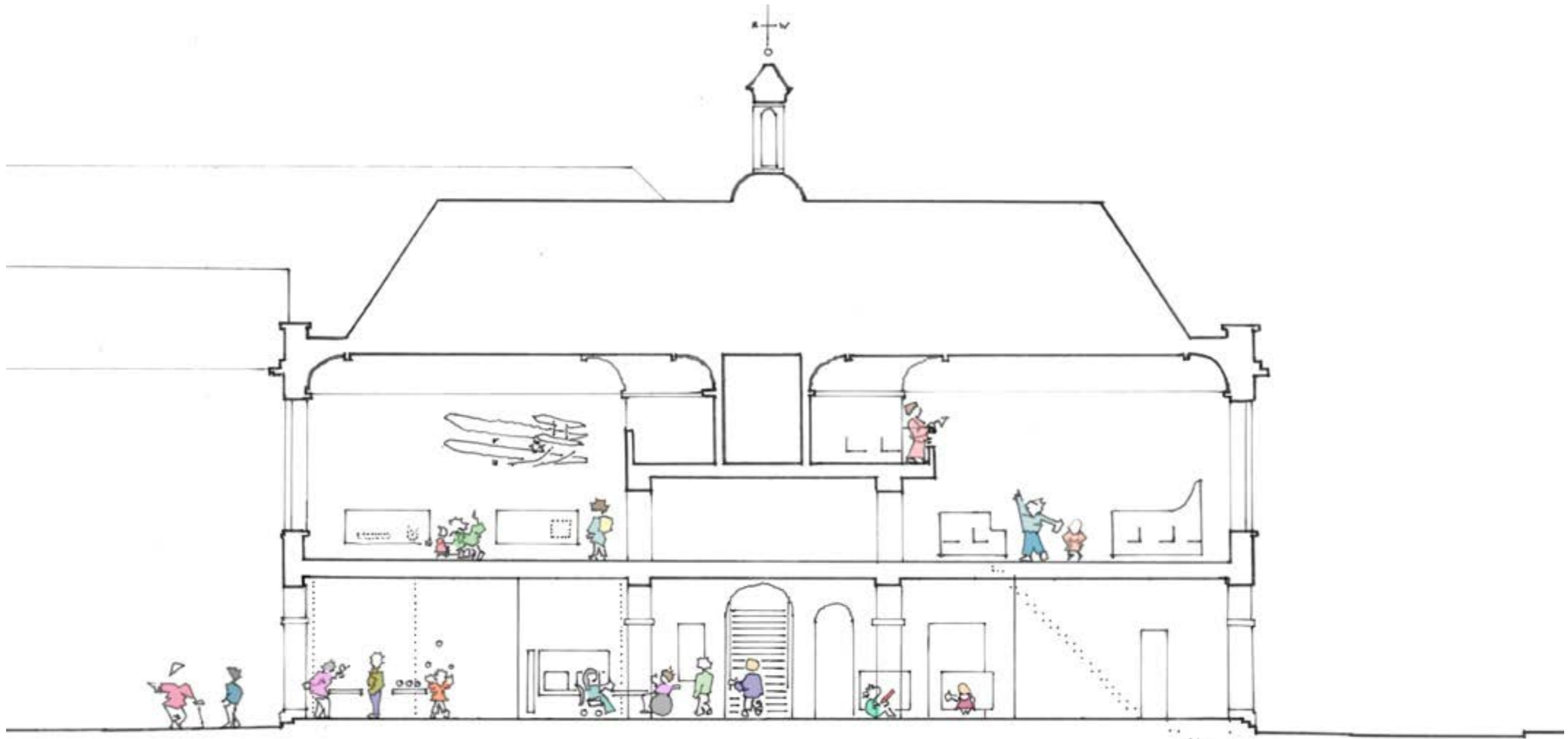
This new proposed use for the Community Room provides a space large enough to meet the Clore Education space standards. It already includes an independent front door, accessible WC, kitchenette and storage.

- > additional space is also available for further storage of MonLife collections. This is conceived as open storage, extending display and enabling collections to be used in learning exercises
- > new linking stair provided to the former Jury Room, now proposed as a community exhibition space. This increases possibilities for bookable spaces.

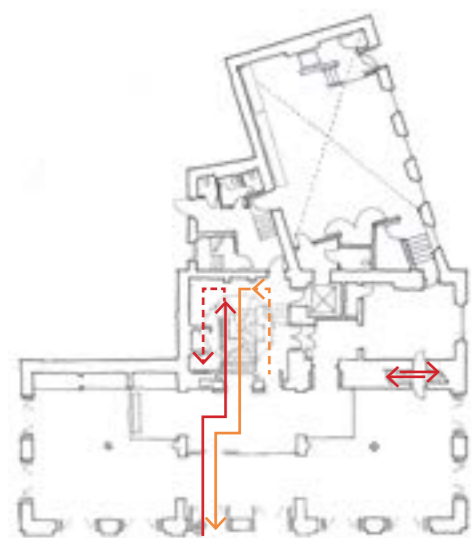
### Transition to Displays

Guiding visitors up the main staircase is an intriguing installation on the wall rising above the half-landing level at the end of the first flight. Natural daylight from the elegant lantern naturally draws the eye upwards and to this surface. Either an object, interpretative device such as a the costumed figure described in the Phase 1 Visitor Journey above, or a striking graphic can create a suitable invitation.

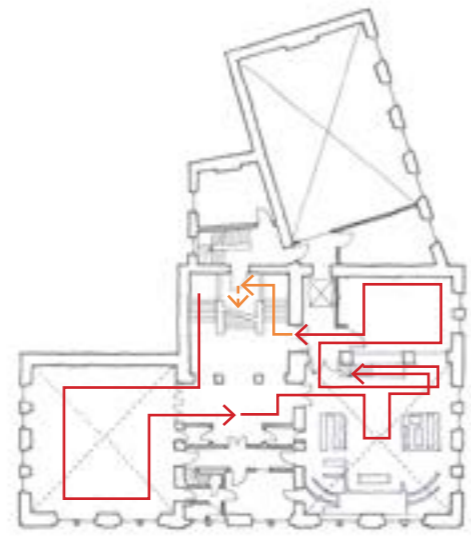
Although the Main Displays will be installed within the controlled conditions of Courtroom No.2 and the former first floor Education Room the main staircase and landings are opportunities for further display and interpretation. Projections, less-environmentally sensitive objects and interpretation can all add to these attractive and bright intermediate spaces.



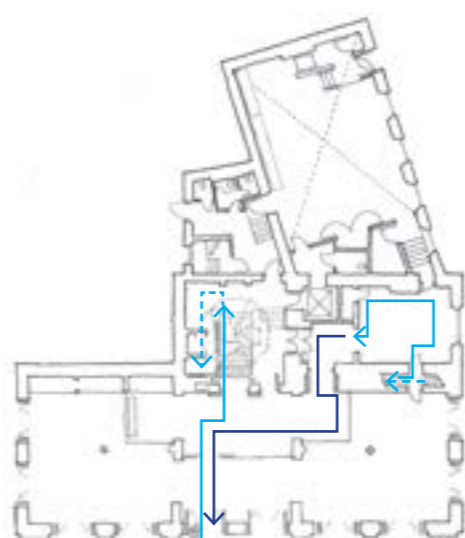
Section AA



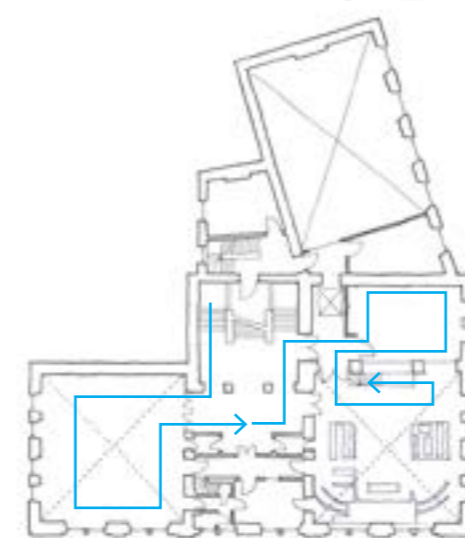
Option A - Ground Floor



Option A - First Floor



Option B - Ground Floor



Option B - First Floor



Key Plan showing position of section

- Entrance - Option A
- Exit - Option A
- Entrance - Option B
- Exit - Option B

Plans Showing Options for Visitor Journeys Through the Building

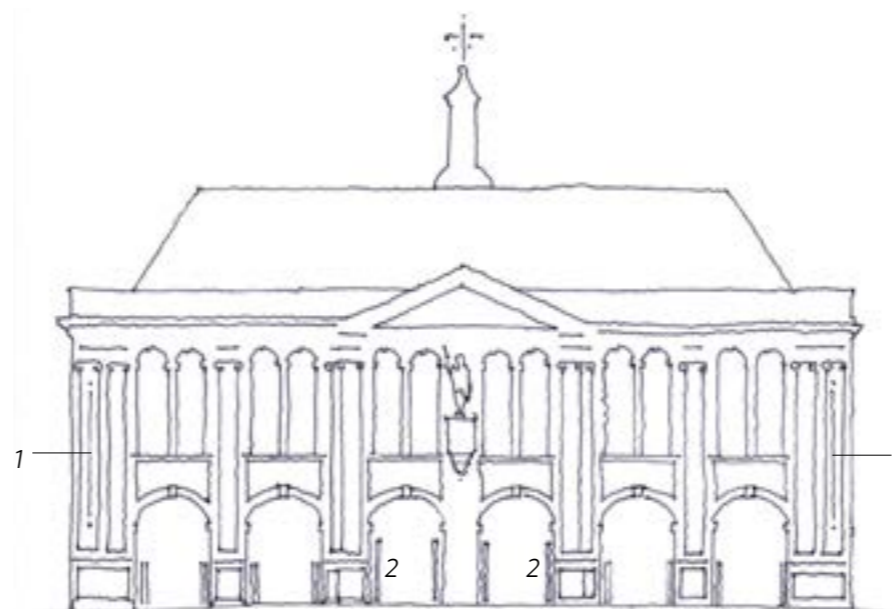
## 3.4 Signage and Wayfinding



Front Entrance from Agincourt Square



Flags and Banners at London's Science Museum and the RA



Sketch Elevation showing Signage Positions [1 - banner, 2 - totem]

### Using the Building for Signage

Shire Hall is its own best sign, so prominent and so well-positioned it is within the town. What is needed is to communicate to townspeople and visitors the new identity, treasures within and activities to be provided when its new life begins. Our thoughts on the permanent condition and transitional Phases 1 and 2 are set out below.

### Permanent Condition

Previous work has identified the potential for applying banners to the pilasters of the front elevation and we think this is a suitable proposal to help the Museum establish its presence in the Square. To this we could add the use of the flagpole and a modification to the existing fingerpost system to augment the identity when viewed from a distance. Many examples exist of sensitive banner designs for listed buildings and the consented proposals appears consistent with these.

Further consideration is necessary of how to guide visitors to the front entrance within the loggia and how to communicate the range of displays and activities available. We illustrate a slender totem adjacent the flanks of the central pilasters, both marking the entrance and providing a surface for identity and information. From this position the new glazed entrance area is clearly visible. Other museums have successfully used the idea of the "shop window" in which selected objects from the collection are displayed as an enticement to further attractions inside.

One additional possibility is the sensitive use of internal hangings to windows carrying graphics and information facing outwards. These would need to be carefully considered not to compromise the building character.

As with all work to Shire Hall detailed consultation will be required with MCC Heritage and Cadw.

### Transitional Phase 1

Temporary signage inviting visitors to participate in Phase 1 will be necessary, it would be right to conserve funds until detailed proposals for storytelling and content of the museum are worked through. Sandwich boards offer a low-cost option.

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|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>                 | <b>CLIMATE EMERGENCY STRATEGY UPDATE</b> |
| <b>MEETING:</b>                 | <b>COUNTY COUNCIL</b>                    |
| <b>DATE:</b>                    | <b>24 JUNE 2021</b>                      |
| <b>DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:</b> | <b>ALL</b>                               |

## 1 PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To set out progress towards Monmouthshire's Climate Emergency action plan which outlines how the council plans to reduce its carbon emissions to net zero by 2030, as committed to in the Climate Emergency declaration by Council in May 2019.

## 2 RECOMMENDATIONS:

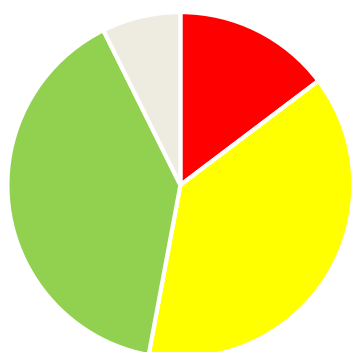
- 2.1 That Council receives a progress update on actions being taken to reduce the authority's carbon emissions in line with its agreed policy commitment.
- 2.2 That the Climate Emergency Working Group is tasked with updating the action plan to reflect the latest evidence and potential solutions to deliver the council's agreed policy position.

## 3 KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 On 16th May 2019 Council unanimously agreed to declare a Climate Emergency and passed the following motion:
- That this council will ensure it will reduce its own carbon emissions to net zero before the Welsh Government target of 2030.
  - That this council will develop a strategy and associated costed action plans to aim to deliver these targets as soon as practicable.
  - That this council revise the Corporate plan, Well-being plan, Local development plans and other relevant plans and policies in support of above.
  - Publicise this declaration of a climate emergency to residents and businesses in the county and encourage, support and enable them to take their own actions to reduce their carbon emissions in line with a 2030 target.
  - Work with partners across the county and other councils and organisations to help develop and implement best practice methods in limiting global warming to less than 1.5 degrees Celsius.
- 3.2 A strategy and an associated action plan was agreed in October 2019 which set out the things we will be focusing on. The strategic direction remain appropriate and it is not proposed that this needs adjustment at this point in time. The action plan remains a live and flexible document to which further actions and information can be added as it becomes available.

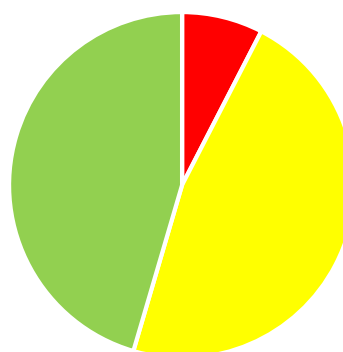
- 3.3 The member led Climate Emergency Working Group, chaired by the cabinet member with attendance from officers and members of the community has met regularly since January 2020 to ensure that this important agenda is progressed with the necessary pace and ambition.
- 3.4 Feedback has been gathered on progress made to date for each of the actions. These have been given a colour rating based on progress. Of the 66 actions in the plan, 30 are progressing as planned (green), 31 are showing some progress (yellow) and 5 not progressing as planned (red). Compared with the last report to Council in July 2020, there are more green and yellows, and fewer reds. This report aims to give an overview of progress, but the full action plan can be seen in Appendix 1, with some highlighted actions in the infographic in Appendix 2.

Progress on actions June 2020



■ No progress    ■ Some progress  
 ■ Good progress    ■ Not yet started

Progress on actions May 2021



■ No progress    ■ Some progress  
 ■ Good progress    ■ Not yet started

- 3.5 There is good progress being made on almost half of the actions, with some that had not started last year because of Covid 19 now underway. The reason for the slower progress with some of the actions is mainly because of delays due to the pandemic, caused by competing pressures, closure of venues or services, postponed consultation or engagement or delayed decisions on external funding.
- 3.6 Significant progress has been made against many of the actions. Examples include:
- Purchase of 7 electric vehicles for use by different council teams, with an electric minibus and two electric road-sweepers on order.
  - Establishing Libraries of Things, Repair Cafes and a second Re-use Shop using Welsh Government Circular Economy funding.
  - Developing further active travel routes, trial changes to traffic flows in town centres to allow active travel with social distancing and the purchase of E-bikes to pilot
  - Delivery of Carbon Literacy training to 113 representatives of Monmouthshire PSB partners
  - Nearly 10,000 streetlights converted to LED bulbs which use less energy.
  - 150,000 kg of carbon dioxide saved by reducing business mileage in 2020/21. Although this has been due to lockdown, we are likely to continue to work agilely more often and continue to hold online meetings.
  - Changes to grassland management, including reduced mowing and the purchase of new equipment to cut and collect mowings, all of which has benefited pollinators by allowing wildflowers to thrive.

- 3.7 Although good progress is being made against the actions in the plan, we still don't have enough detailed information about what our baseline emissions are and what the precise carbon savings of the measures we are taking are likely to be, in order to be able to accurately establish whether we are on track to meet the net zero carbon target by 2030. It is proposed we get additional expertise and capacity in to help us establish our emissions and a better understanding of the carbon savings included in the plan. This will enable us to establish where we should best be focusing our resources to generate the maximum carbon savings.
- 3.8 Once we have this information, we plan to do a refresh of the action plan, in order to make sure that our activity focuses on the most important areas for reducing carbon, and also to fully reflect the influence that the Council has over wider emissions across the county, not just within our own estate and fleet. The aim is to bring this to Council in November 2021, which will be 2 years since the Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan were adopted, and will be an important opportunity to gauge progress towards the 2030 target.

#### **4 EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):**

- 4.1 This report is an update on progress, rather than a decision or policy change, so does not need to complete an evaluation. However, the Climate Emergency Action Plan has significant positive contributions to make to the Well-being Goals with no negative impacts. There are no significant positive or negative impacts on the protected characteristics, safeguarding or corporate parenting. The principles of Long term, Prevention, Integration, Collaboration and Involvement have been used throughout the development of the Action Plan.

#### **5 OPTIONS APPRAISAL:**

- 5.1 Not required since the report is a progress report and does not propose any changes to policy.

#### **6 EVALUATION CRITERIA:**

- 6.1 Evaluation is undertaken by assessing progress against each of the measures within the Climate Emergency Action Plan. The Climate Emergency working group has representatives from each political group on Council and meets quarterly to hear updates on progress and identify where action needs to be taken.

#### **7 REASONS:**

- 7.1 To ensure that progress towards achieving the council's agreed policy aim is maintained and that the council is open and accountable to the citizens of Monmouthshire in demonstrating the activity that is being undertaken to achieve this important goal.

#### **8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

- 8.1 The activity within the Climate Emergency Action Plan all have different resource implications and will be funded in different ways. Some are zero cost, some will be grant funded, some will be funded by prudential borrowing and invest to save schemes. It is

anticipated that where additional funds are needed these will be subject to subsequent decision making processes.

## **9 CONSULTTEES:**

Cabinet  
Strategic Leadership Team

Progress against the action plan is being scrutinised by Strong Communities Select Committee at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> June.

## **10 BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan, October 2019

[https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2019/11/Climate-and-Decarbonisation\\_Strategy\\_v1.0.pdf](https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2019/11/Climate-and-Decarbonisation_Strategy_v1.0.pdf)

Appendix 1 Climate Emergency Action Plan 2020/2021 Summary

Appendix 2 Infographic showing progress towards the Climate Emergency Action Plan

## **11 AUTHORS:**

Hazel Clatworthy, Sustainability Policy Officer

Matthew Gatehouse, Head of Policy Performance and Scrutiny

## **12 CONTACT DETAILS:**

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E-mail: hazelclatworthy@monmouthshire.gov.uk



| Action   | Officer Responsible                                    | Timescale (month & year)        | Funding  | Progress during 2020/21  | Progress (red, amber, green, see below)                    |
|--|--|---------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>REDUCING ENERGY USE – Reducing the amount of energy that is used for buildings and street lighting</b>                        |  |                                 |  |  |  |
| New council buildings will operate with net zero carbon emissions by 2025 or use carbon offsetting where this cannot be achieved | Head of Commercial Property Fleet & Facilities         |                                 |  | The only new build currently being planned is the new secondary school in Abergavenny. The designers for King Henry are currently considering the technology and design solutions necessary to deliver a net zero building. Presentations have been made to the Project Board and Officer team and work remains on-going.  | Progressing, but the design is not yet finalised.          |
| Implement energy efficiency improvements across the existing council estate by 2022  | Energy Officer   | 2022                            | Salix interest-free loans                                    | Salix funding (interest free loans repaid from savings) has been awarded and Phase 1 of the Refit scheme has started. Phase 1 works to begin on site May-21. Majority of Energy Conservation Measures (solar PV, LED lighting, boiler upgrades etc) to be installed by Sep-21. Opportunities for Phase 2 and upscaling of maintenance works being considered for 2021/22.  | Progressing as planned                                     |
| Reduce CO2 emissions from our energy supply  | Energy Officer   | Electricity: 2020<br>Heat: 2030 |  | Energy consumption in buildings has reduced as a result of Covid. All electricity supplies either on or moving to 100% green tariffs. New / additional solar PV installations to be delivered at 13 sites in 2021/22 under Re:fit Phase 1. Options to decarbonise heat (heat pumps, district heat, carbon offsetting) being investigated.  | Progressing as planned                                     |
| All bulbs within council owned buildings will be LED   | Energy Officer   |                                 | Salix interest-free loans                                    | LED lighting upgrades to be delivered at 18 sites in 2021/22 under Re:fit Phase 1, including sports pitches and external lighting. Additional sites to be surveyed Q1 2021/22. LED lighting being specified as part of new build and maintenance programme works.  | Progressing as planned                                     |
| Use planning policy to insist on higher energy standards for new buildings   | Head of Placemaking, Regeneration, Highways & Flooding |                                 | RLDP budget for policy writing, higher build costs to be met | The RLDP is progressing as per the revised Delivery Agreement timetable, following the receipt of updated projected population figures. Consultation on growth and spatial options has been completed and we will be reporting the Preferred Strategy to Council in June 2021 for endorsement to consult. The detailed policies referred to by this action will form part of the Deposit Plan, which is the following stage. | Progressing as planned, although some delay due to Covid19 |

Red = not progressing as planned, Amber = some progress, Green = progressing as planned

| Action  | Officer Responsible                            | Timescale (month & year) | Funding                | Progress during 2020/21  | Progress (red, amber, green, see below) |
|---|--|--------------------------|------------------------|--|---|
|   |  |                          | by developer           |  |   |
| All remaining street lighting will be converted to LED bulbs  | Street Lighting Manager                        |                          |                        | To date we have converted 9651 lanterns to LED and have approximately 500 left to convert.   | As planned                              |
| Reduce carbon emissions across all public service buildings in in the county in partnership with the Public Service Board | Community & Partnerships Manager               |                          | £5k NRW funding        | JBA consulting have surveyed PSB partners to gauge potential for collaboration around assets, fleet and procurement.<br><br>A successful bid to Natural Resources Wales plus additional funding from NRW for Gwent has meant that we have delivered Carbon Literacy training in Feb/March 2021. In addition to the 56 MCC officers and members who have done the training, there were also 14 from Gwent Police, 29 from South Wales Fire, 5 from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, 2 from GAVO, 5 from NRW and 2 from Melin Homes (although these officers work across Gwent, not necessarily just in Monmouthshire) | Progress beginning to be made           |
| <b>50 USING RENEWABLE ENERGY – Speed up the move from fossil fuels to renewable energy</b>                                |  |                          |                        |  |   |
| Build and operate two new solar farms – subject to national grid capacity   | Energy Officer                                 |                          |                        | Welsh Government Energy Service preparing grid application and developing outline design for one potential Local Development Plan (LDP) solar farm site to confirm viability and business case assumptions. Initial feasibility studies for two other potential sites to be reviewed and progressed if and when development / grid connection / business case opportunities can be confirmed.  | Progressing as planned                  |
| Install photovoltaic canopies at council owned car parks to power electric vehicle charge points with renewable energy    | Head of Commercial Property Fleet & Facilities |                          |                        | The County Hall scheme is now being progressed with the support of Welsh Government Energy Service. This will be used as a model that can be rolled out to other sites.<br><br>Planning applications submitted for 2 smaller solar photovoltaic car port schemes as part of Re:fit Phase 1 with a third being considered, all 3 for delivery 2021/22. (Electric Vehicle Charging Points to be delivered separately.)   | Some progress                           |
| Require renewable energy on private sector developments   | Head of Placemaking, Regeneration,             |                          | RLDP budget for policy | The RLDP is progressing as per the revised Delivery Agreement timetable, following the receipt of updated projected population figures. Consultation on growth and spatial options has been completed and we will  | Progressing as planned, although        |

Red = not progressing as planned, Amber = some progress, Green = progressing as planned

| Action  | Officer Responsible                                    | Timescale (month & year) | Funding  | Progress during 2020/21   | Progress (red, amber, green, see below)           |
|---|--|--------------------------|--|---|---|
|   | Highways & Flooding                                    |                          | writing, higher build costs to be met by the developer | be reporting the Preferred Strategy to Council in June 2021 for endorsement to consult. The detailed policies referred to by this action will form part of the Deposit Plan, which is the following stage.      | some delay due to Covid19                         |
| Identify areas for renewable generation in the new Local Development Plan           | Head of Placemaking, Regeneration, Highways & Flooding |                          | RLDP budget  | The Carbon Trust are finalising their report and this will soon be available to inform decision making planning policies with the RLDP.   | Progressing as planned, some delay due to Covid19 |
| Develop a Whole System Smart Energy Plan as part of Cardiff Capital Region Approach |  |                          | Cardiff Capital Region / Welsh Government              | Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and Welsh Government have confirmed that they are developing a strategy and action plan to transform the way energy is generated, transported and utilised in South East Wales | Early steps of progress                           |
| Develop proposals for a district heating scheme                                     | Rural Programmes Manager                               |                          | RDP  | The heat mapping exercise is now complete, with draft report <a href="#">here</a><br>Final report expected end of April 2021.   | As planned  |

**MANAGING GREEN SPACES – To reduce energy use, to absorb carbon and be resilient**

|  |  |  |            |   |               |
|--|--|--|------------|---|---------------|
| Use our county farms as exemplars for sustainable agriculture. | Estates Development Manager                            |  |            | The Estates Development Team continue to assess the different opportunities for diversification of the agricultural portfolio. Areas of farm land have been promoted in Stage 1 of the LDP for this purpose, but there has been no further progress due to RLDP delays and additional constraints due to changes in planning over phosphate discharge.                                  | Some progress |
| Use low carbon building technologies like green walls or roofs | Head of Placemaking, Regeneration, Highways & Flooding |  | Developers | Continued support within existing LDP and within the Council’s Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to support low carbon technologies and manage green spaces appropriately. A working group is yet to be established due to other work pressures but it is still intended to do this, drawing on expertise from within the Community Climate Champions network. | Some progress |

Red = not progressing as planned, Amber = some progress, Green = progressing as planned

| Action  | Officer Responsible  | Timescale (month & year)     | Funding                               | Progress during 2020/21  | Progress (red, amber, green, see below)                        |
|---|--|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Ensure permeable materials and water storage is incorporated into new car parks                                 | Head of Placemaking, Regeneration, Highways & Flooding         |                              | Developer                             | Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SUDs) regulation fully in force and work is continuing to ensure that planning and colleagues in Highways and Flood Management continue to work collaboratively on development schemes. Robust planning policies within existing LDP and the latest regulations.   | Complete – WG regulation in place                              |
| Eliminate the use of peat based compost by our grounds maintenance teams  | Commercial & Operations Manager, Grounds & Cleansing           |                              |                                       | Our supplier of bedding material for our external contract does not use peat based compost. We continue to use non peat based composts   | As planned   |
| Expand pollinator friendly management work and reduce grass cutting frequency/extent where appropriate and safe | Commercial & Operations Manager, Grounds & Cleansing           | ongoing                      | Funding for new cut collector secured | In 2020/21 all mowing was suspended until June due to Covid. When mowing started in June we left approximately quarter to 1 third of areas within our parks and open spaces uncut, in addition to the original 3 million metres squared already being managed more sustainably with less mowing. Teams have had Nature Isn't Neat training, and are delivering reduced mowing to public open spaces, with cuttings collected. We are promoting "No Mow May" and carbon emissions have reduced due to less mowing. We have worked with the Green Infrastructure team on WG funded grassland management, to manage for biodiversity, and bring back neglected grass land to a more sustainable and resilient form.<br><br>We have now stopped spraying Glyphosate on all of our open spaces. Our Chepstow Town Team are trialling other methods of weed removal in streets and pavements around Chepstow Town centre, eg hand removal, heat. | Much better than expected                                      |
| Generate renewable energy from grass cuttings through anaerobic digestion                                       | Green Infrastructure Strategy & Projects Officer               | Complete feasibility by 2022 | Awaiting funding confirmation         | Still not able to continue with site visit to see anaerobic digestion equipment in action due to COVID. We are continually looking at possibility of other more local facilities, however no suitable premises to date   | Delays due to Covid 19 and funding announcement still not made |
| Plant 10,000 new trees by 2022  | Green Infrastructure Strategy & Projects Officer / Environment | By 2022                      | GGGP funding confirmation expected    | Despite impact of Covid current estimates of around 7,000 trees planted and plans in progress to identify further 3000, however there remains a funding gap to achieve this and these figures do not take account of the impact of Ash Die Back and associated tree loss. We are also looking for suitable sites to start up tree nurseries, one potential location is our Mitchel Troy depot. It is anticipated that we will also be able to benefit from The Queen's Green Canopy, a tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022   | Some progress and some remaining uncertainty over funding      |

Red = not progressing as planned, Amber = some progress, Green = progressing as planned

| Action  | Officer Responsible                        | Timescale (month & year) | Funding  | Progress during 2020/21   | Progress (red, amber, green, see below)                                      |
|---|--|--------------------------|--|---|--|
|   | and Culture Manager<br>MonLife             |                          | Q1 2021-22   | <p>We are working with approximately 17 schools to provide them with a raised bed each and soil so they can plant tree seeds to be then regrown on sites when more mature. We are also identifying tree planting opportunities in settlements as part of the identification of GI corridors.</p> <p>Need to review the target beyond 2022 in the light of Ash Die Back etc.</p>   |  |
| Promote sustainable land management and agricultural practices, including nutrient/soil management and natural flood management | Environment and Culture Manager<br>MonLife | 2020/21                  | £80k Local Places for Nature funding, £65k Env Growth grant                            | <p>Progress in delivering existing Living Levels and Sustainable Management Schemes continues. The changes to grassland management through the purchase of the cut and collect machinery (and communications elements) will have a considerable impact in relation to our estate but it's still quite a limited impact in the county overall.</p> <p>Wider impact is potentially quite limited as progress on wider adoption of natural flood management (NFM) is stalled (although some development work underway). NRW's future stance on these issue is critical</p> | In progress / some uncertainty over wider and longer term partnership action |
| <p>Page 6</p> <p>Maintain &amp; enhance biodiversity &amp; make ecosystems more resilient</p>                                   | Green Infrastructure Manager               | 20/21 and ongoing        | £10k LNP project costs, £28k RGG, £15k Local Places for Nature, £20k Preparatory Grant | <p>Good progress on existing programmes around small scale pollinator projects, sustainable communities project, rivers, invasive non-native species, community nature spaces and educational delivery. A further £88k Local Places for Nature funding received for 21/22</p>   | In progress  |
| Plant more trees and increase area of woodland, improve and increase woodland management and retain existing woodland           | Environment and Culture Manager<br>MonLife | 2020/21 and ongoing      | GGGP funding confirmation expected Q1 2021-22  | <p>No Welsh Government decision on Gwent Green Grid Partnership bid to support further tree planting yet;</p> <p>Tree Planting undertaken at Old Station Tintern during Autumn and winter 20/21 following diseased ash felling; Tree planting ; ongoing assessment of ash dieback impact and selective intervention where required on countryside access sites</p> <p>Need to review the tree planting target beyond 2022 in the light of Ash Die Back</p>  | Some progress. Some remaining uncertainty over funding                       |

| Action  | Officer Responsible          | Timescale (month & year) | Funding | Progress during 2020/21   | Progress (red, amber, green, see below) |
|---|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------|---|---|
| Secure more green infrastructure through development              | Green Infrastructure Manager | Ongoing                  |         | Ongoing working with Development Management – further refinement of guidance in relation to green infrastructure, open space and biodiversity under development   | Ongoing                                 |
| Promote and support local food growing                            | Food Development Officer     |                          | RDP /WG | Food Data Analysis project underway. Six months in and the system is being tweaked – data added which includes farms data, land, food poverty, food business and categories of use etc.<br><br>Food Land Action Group has been established. Terms of reference completed and forum for exchange of information has begun. Internal MCC group will move toward combined project development and update forum for relevant projects   | As planned                              |
| Reduce food miles by work with local farmers to market local food | Food Development Officer     |                          |         | Initial meeting to discuss shared gardens scheme. Town Council Survey undertaken to gauge interest. This will now be taken forward through Our Monmouthshire. Town Council will offer information to the new growers forum.<br><br>Redefining Green Spaces – consultant in place for pilot project to look at options for redefining under-used areas such a park (Pilot project in Monmouth).<br><br>RDP project in place which focusses on building resources for farm enterprises, including regenerative farming projects.<br><br>Success in attaining Sustainable Food Network development grant, co-ordinated by “Our Food” not for profit organisation. The first meeting will be in May with lead stakeholders. | As planned                              |

**WHAT WE BUY – Reducing carbon by thinking carefully about when and what we buy and whole life costs**

|  |                               |         |   |   |  |
|--|-------------------------------|---------|---|---|--|
| Eliminate single use plastics within the council | Sustainability Policy Officer | Ongoing | None (except c£60k period dignity grant | Period dignity grant again to be spent on eco-friendly and reusable products. Work underway with Sustainable You, Sustainable Me and Working Families project who are running workshops for residents to promote sustainable period products. Re-usable recycling bags only rolled out to around 3500 properties so far as original trial rounds were allowed to revert to single use at the start of covid. We aim to fully roll out the reusable bags in the autumn when we will cease to provide single use plastic bags, dependent on delivery of new vehicles. | Some delays of reusable recycling bag roll out due to Covid. |
|--|-------------------------------|---------|---|---|--|

| Action   | Officer Responsible           | Timescale (month & year) | Funding                                | Progress during 2020/21   | Progress (red, amber, green, see below)                                  |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--|---|--|
| All tender document will contain criteria to address climate emergency commitments | Strategic Procurement Manager |                          | Currently within existing officer time | <p>Contract Procedure Rules have been approved and came into operation on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. One of the central themes to the revamped rules is the importance of making sustainable procurement decisions that have a positive impact on the environment as well as the economy.</p> <p>Operationally, where practical carbon reduction measures continue to be a consideration as part of the award criteria of contracts.</p>  | Complete   |
| Incorporate climate and decarbonisation into strategic procurement collaborations  | Strategic Procurement Manager |                          | Currently within existing officer time | <p>Work has continued at pace with the completion of the Welsh Public Sector Social Value portal which has resulted in a set of social value indicators that are bespoke to Wales and align with the Well-Being of Future Generations Act themes.</p> <p>In parallel has been discussions with Cardiff City Council for the “discharge of procurement services for mutual benefit” which was approved in early April 2021. This means that more resource will be made available to ensure that climate change and decarbonisation are considerations in all outsourced tendering arrangements.</p>  | Progressing as planned   |
| Phase out fossil fuel investments from our pension fund                            | Deputy Chief Executive        |                          |  | <p>Greater Gwent Pension Fund Committee agreed to the recommendations to evolve an ACS Low Carbon Equity Tracker Fund. The proportion of the Gwent fund invested in fossil fuels has reduced from 9.10% to 2.35% since the Council’s 2018 commitment to divest from fossil fuels, with 21.7% of the fund now in the low carbon tracker.</p> <p>Further update was provided to the Greater Gwent Pension Fund Committee at its meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and which confirmed that the Wales Pension Partnership had established a Responsible Investment Sub-Group, with a broad and achievable remit. Cross-reference was to take place with the Greater Gwent Pension Fund’s own Responsible Investor Working Group (RIWG) to ensure that the Fund’s own objectives were reflected at WPP level.</p> <p>The meeting of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 noted the momentum around Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) issues were seen as unstoppable and required ongoing engagement with investment fund managers.</p> | Some progress. Progress governed by Greater Gwent (Torfaen) Pension Fund |

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**REDUCING WASTE – By encouraging people to reduce, re-use and recycle more**

Red = not progressing as planned, Amber = some progress, Green = progressing as planned

| Action  | Officer Responsible            | Timescale (month & year) | Funding | Progress during 2020/21   | Progress (red, amber, green, see below) |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------|---------|---|---|
| Reduce waste and increase recycling in all public spaces including retail centres     | Head of Neighbourhood Services |                          |         | Chepstow Town Council and Town Team are looking to install a new recycling litter bin for on-the-go litter which they will service (our vehicles currently unable to segregate recyclable/non-recyclable litter) and will be a useful trial to assess level of contamination. A limited number of “on-the-go” recycling bins have been placed across the county but difficult to gauge whether successful with behaviours changed with travel restrictions. Increased litter from drive through venues prevalent across the county’s verges. WG consultation on litter and fly-tipping may help tackle some of these issues and the introduction of deposit return schemes and extended producer responsibility should have positive impact when implemented. | Early steps have begun                  |
| Support, promote and expand the Repair Cafes and Upcycle movement                     | Head of Neighbourhood Services |                          |         | A successful Circular Economy bid for £626,000 was announced in Jan 2021. From this we are about to open a new re-use shop at Five Lanes, 4 Benthg Libraries of Things in Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow and Monmouth, with associated Repair Cafes and other repair and reuse projects.   | Rapid progress from Jan-March 2021      |
| Roll out re-use shops at Household Waste sites, and use revenue to fund tree planting | Head of Neighbourhood Services |                          |         | October 2020 Llanfoist celebrated its anniversary, with pots and tree seeds given away. A successful Circular Economy bid means that we will open a new re-use shop at Five Lanes, Caerwent soon. 4 Benthg Libraries of Things in Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow and Monmouth, with associated Repair Cafes and other repair and reuse projects.   | Rapid progress from Jan-March 2021      |
| Increase ‘reduce, re-use and recycling’ across the county                             | Head of Neighbourhood Services |                          |         | Recycling % has increased again this year and currently projected to be above 66%. This has been helped with the increased recycling at the HWRCs and increased numbers of residents using the kerbside collection system recycling rather than black bagging waste through the HWRCs.  | Some progress                           |
| Build a new high quality recycling facility in central Monmouthshire                  | Head of Neighbourhood Services |                          |         | Costings and drawings for an improved facility in Monmouth were carried out post-covid and funding was due to be applied for. The booking-in system brought in to manage safety on site during lockdown has been very successful in reducing traffic on site and CO2 journeys, increasing recycling by making people think more about the waste they produce. The 3 remaining sites in Llanfoist, Five Lanes and Mitchel Troy provide strategic coverage and the resident permit coupled with the booking system has almost eliminated cross border waste traffic. This Action will be put on hold while the long terms impacts of Covid on waste behaviour are assessed.   | On hold                                 |
| Require all households to recycle   | Head of Neighbourhood Services |                          |         | National campaigns like “Be Mighty” have been launched during the pandemic but are likely to have had less impact with news focussed on Covid and lockdowns. The travel restrictions and stay at home messages have increased kerbside take up and recycling and reduced black bag waste into HWRCs.  | Some progress                           |



| Action   | Officer Responsible                          | Timescale (month & year) | Funding                 | Progress during 2020/21   | Progress (red, amber, green, see below)                          |
|--|--|--------------------------|-------------------------|---|--|
| Reduce food waste in schools   | Catering Manager                             |                          |                         | Primary Schools are now back in full time but most children are eating in the classrooms. We are not able to visit schools to monitor due to Covid restrictions.<br><br>To be revisited in September 2021   | Delayed due to school closures.                                  |
| Make all of our buildings water refill stations  | Sustainability Policy Officer                | Ongoing                  | None                    | Refill stations will be considered as part of leisure centre site investments at Abergavenny, Caldicot and Chepstow.  |  |
| <b>WALKING AND CYCLING – Encouraging and making it easier for people to walk and cycle rather than drive</b> |  |                          |                         |   |  |
| Develop schemes that will increase walking and cycling to school   | Road Safety Officer / Active Travel Officer  |                          | Active travel = £90,000 | Excellent progress on Active Travel in a difficult year. Progress made in all areas of the grant. Notice just received of grant next year which means an additional three routes can be investigated  | Progressing as planned on Active Travel routes.                  |
|  |  |                          |                         | Green cone 'school street' scheme currently in operation within two schools, to make area immediately outside school site safer.  |  |
|  |  |                          |                         | Road safety training has been delivered to schools virtually, which has worked well. Notice just received of grant next year which builds on this and includes new initiatives such as 'scoot to school'.   | Some progress on cycle, scooter training due to virtual training |
| Introduce no idling near schools, and other appropriate locations  | Group Engineer – Highways & Flood Management |                          |                         | Anti-idling video was launched in September 2020 <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KlbGQFCtrpQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KlbGQFCtrpQ</a> with press releases and social media campaign. Poster competition relaunched with schools and each school has been sent an anti-idling toolkit to use. Winning designs will be made into metal signs and put up round borough with additional publicity. School closures from December to March means that we haven't yet had the signs manufactured and put up at schools and other locations. We aim to do this during April/May 2021, and will organise publicity alongside the signs going up. | Progress impacted by Covid19                                     |

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| Action  | Officer Responsible                               | Timescale (month & year) | Funding                          | Progress during 2020/21  | Progress (red, amber, green, see below)           |
|---|---|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--|---|
| Fit bike carriers to buses to encourage cycling                                   | Fleet Manager - Operations                        |                          |                                  | No progress – bus layout is incompatible with bike carriers.   | No progress due to vehicle layout                 |
| Improve and expand our cycle and footpath network.                                | Chief Operating Officer, MonLife                  |                          |                                  | <p>The plan that has developed is to ensure that maps for Active Travel are updated to ensure they form a firm foundation for a wider approach to cycling and walking and help link up the leisure network. Excellent progress was made on all AT schemes in very short period of time.</p> <p>The Council has just had notice that the Active Travel submission for 2021/22 was successful in all but one scheme. It did not achieve all the funding required for one scheme in Caldicot and this is to be discussed with Welsh Government. This means an additional three new routes have the funding to be investigated.</p> <p>Cycling and walking for leisure purposes will require additional funding. However active travel will help link these agendas and opportunities are being explored for further funding</p> | Good progress being made                          |
| Develop e-bike and cycle hire schemes beginning in town centres                   | Rural Programmes Manager or Active Travel Officer |                          | £20k Covid funding               | <p>Considerable progress this quarter. A number of e-bikes purchased via Active Travel and allocated to a local club to trial in Caldicot and two bikes allocated to a charity in Chepstow in relation to the Library of Things to loan out (the Benthylg project )</p> <p>Due to Covid the bikes could not be loaned out as planned currently and a greater level of monitoring is required in the new financial year.</p> <p>A total of four electric Cargo Bikes are also being purchased for loan via the Libraries of Things.</p>   | Progressing as planned after initial Covid delays |
| Maximise opportunities for active travel, ensuring routes are safe and convenient | Chief Operating Officer, MonLife                  |                          | Circa £1.5m for numerous schemes | <p>Excellent progress was made on all Active Travel schemes in very short period of time.</p> <p>The local authority has just had notice that the Active Travel submission for 2021/22 was successful in all but one scheme. It did not achieve all the funding required for one scheme in Caldicot and this is to be discussed with WG. This means an additional 3 new routes have the funding to be investigated.</p>  | Progressing as planned                            |
| Reduce business miles travelled by staff 25% by 2023                              | Chief Officer Enterprise                          |                          |                                  | Officers have developed proposals on the need and future use for office space called 'Changing Spaces'. The expectation is that the "new normal" post-Covid will see a reduction in travel by office staff working more significantly from home on a continued basis. Whilst not captured as business miles there will be a reduction in personal miles travelled by staff that otherwise would have been incurred travelling to and   | Some progress                                     |

Red = not progressing as planned, Amber = some progress, Green = progressing as planned

| Action   | Officer Responsible    | Timescale (month & year) | Funding | Progress during 2020/21   | Progress (red, amber, green, see below) |
|--|------------------------|--------------------------|---------|---|---|
| through use of technology  |                        |                          |         | <p>from work. The Changing Spaces project is currently considering potential office design and a hybrid working model for those who are able to utilise this model.</p> <p>Business mileage reduced by 45% last year from nearly 1.7 million to just over 900,000 saving over 150,000 kg of CO2. In terms of reduction in business miles and beyond those naturally caused by the restrictions in place during the pandemic work we will continue to explore options that enable staff to be able to work from locations that are closer to their home and where practicable.</p> <p>Work will continue to look at service design options that enable services to be delivered remotely and without it being at the detriment of the service delivered. Examples of this include the use of assistive and medical technology in a social care setting.</p> <p>Discussions and proposals are being discussed around the development of co-working and remote working spaces in our towns and with other Gwent PSB partners.</p> <p>The Cycle to Work Scheme is run annually for staff to purchase bikes through a salary sacrifice scheme.</p> |   |
| Introduce cycling mileage rates for staff to incentivise active travel over car journeys | Deputy Chief Executive |                          |         | A review of the mileage expenses policy will now be undertaken during 2021 and in readiness for implementation for 2022/23.   | Work on hold due to Covid19             |

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**GREENER VEHICLES – Reducing the impact of vehicle use and encouraging use of electric and hydrogen vehicles**

|  |  |  |   |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|--|---|
| Install EV charging points at all larger council buildings | Head of Commercial Property Fleet & Facilities |  | OLEV grant possible for some workplace EV CPs | A number of points have been installed at various venues, including EV chargers at two schools. Grant funding has been awarded to develop an EV charging strategy and work will commence on this from April 21.  | Progressing as planned, some delay due to Covid19 |
| Transition the council’s transport fleet to hybrid,        | Fleet Manager                                  |  | Budget for vehicles sits with                 | A survey has looked at Electric Vehicle Charging capacity at our existing depot sites which showed that we have limited capacity for charging of vehicles. We are in the process of installing EV points for the operational vehicles in the following locations – The One Planet Centre Llanfoist, Troy Depot, Caldicot | Some progress                                     |

Red = not progressing as planned, Amber = some progress, Green = progressing as planned

| Action  | Officer Responsible  | Timescale (month & year) | Funding                        | Progress during 2020/21   | Progress (red, amber, green, see below) |
|---|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| electric and hydrogen vehicles as these become available        |  |                          | service managers               | <p>Waste Depot and Raglan Depot. We have installed EV points in Kymin View and Deri view School, these are for the two new schools catering vehicles, but they are also available to the anyone visiting the school.</p> <p>Vehicles – we have taken delivery of 7 fully electric vehicles for the following sections –<br/>           2 x Electric vans for School’s catering, based at Kymin View &amp; Deri View School.<br/>           3 x Electric vans for Waste Wardens.<br/>           1 x Electric van for AONB section<br/>           1 x Electric pool car for Waste.</p> <p>We have on order –<br/>           1 x fully electric 17-seater low floor wheelchair accessible minibus for the PTU section.<br/>           2 x fully electric pedestrian sweepers</p> <p>We have 6 No. Hybrid cars in operation. These are with Social services, Planning and Property services.</p> <p>We currently have no hydrogen refuelling stations within Monmouthshire, so currently not practical to trial or operate hydrogen vehicles.</p> |   |
| Encourage the use of electric or hybrid taxis                   | Passenger Transport unit Manager / Principal Licensing Manager |                          | Cardiff Capital Region funding | <p>We have been working with the Regional transport authority on charging points for taxis and through CCR funding we will be piloting the use of 2 Electric taxis, with a charging point in the Abergavenny bus station for the electric taxis.</p> <p>Waiting on Cardiff Capital Region on details of how the electric taxi pilot will be managed.</p>  | Some progress                           |
| Launch the Riversimple hydrogen car pilot in Abergavenny        | Roger Hoggins  |                          |                                | <p>Several meetings have taken place over the last 3 months with Riversimple.</p> <p>We are aiming for May 2021 for the trials to take place with Riversimple, our registrars' section will be assisting with the first trials. We will then aim to trial the vehicle in other sections.</p>  | Some progress, delays due to Covid      |
| Develop a business case to move to a Council electric bus fleet | Fleet Manager  |                          |                                | <p>We are currently unable to convert the Council’s bus fleet due to the lack of energy capacity at the depots. A project has been commenced to identify alternative premises for the south of the county which would enable the installation of EV charging. EV charging points are being installed at Raglan as part of the taxi scheme that will be available for smaller vehicles.</p>  | Progress limited due to grid capacity   |

| Action  | Officer Responsible                                    | Timescale (month & year) | Funding                      | Progress during 2020/21  | Progress (red, amber, green, see below) |
|---|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|--|---|
|   |  |                          |                              | A fully electric 17 seater low floor wheelchair accessible minibus has been ordered which will be used on the Grass Routes Service, but we also hope to trial the vehicle on several school runs, which will assist us understand the vehicles range, to enable us to make informed decision for the future.   |   |
| Encourage service buses and contract buses to move to electric  |  |                          |                              | We are watching with interest the Newport electric bus pilot and other case studies, and on the basis of this research we will incorporate appropriate clauses in tender documentation when contracts come up for renewal to green the fleet and encourage the move to electric vehicles   | No progress yet – too early             |
| Introduce a green travel plan for staff and councillor travel   | Transport Projects & Programmes Manager                |                          |                              | Green Travel Plan measures are being considered as part of the “Changing Spaces” project looking at when and where staff work.<br><br>MCC have signed the Gwent Healthy Travel Charter which commits us to reduce staff travel and use more sustainable modes of transport.  | Some progress                           |
| Develop proposals for EV charging in street lights and new housing developments                           | Head of Placemaking, Regeneration, Highways & Flooding |                          | Developer/ MCC/grant funding | The RLDP is progressing as per the revised Delivery Agreement timetable, following the receipt of updated projected population figures. We will be reporting the Preferred Strategy to Council in June 2021 for endorsement to consult. The detailed policies referred to by this action will form part of the Deposit Plan, which is the following stage. RLDP progress is as outline above.<br><br>Welsh Government grant funding has been secured to develop an EV charging strategy for the county, looking at our car parks, on-street charging, our Council sites and our own fleet. Work will commence on this in April '21 | Some progress                           |
| Provide free car parking in MCC owned car parks for electric and hydrogen vehicles until 2025             | Head of Placemaking, Regeneration, Highways & Flooding |                          |                              | This proposal has challenges for enforceability, desirability and budgets. ULEV vehicles are not always easily recognisable, so enforcement would be difficult. Arguably this proposal will do little to encourage people to buy ULEVs but will encourage those who own one to drive to town, rather than walk, cycle or use public transport. As uptake of ULEVs increases, car park income will reduce having a significant impact on highway improvement budgets.   | To be removed from action plan          |
| Increase the mileage rates payable for staff who use electric vehicles relative to petrol and diesel cars | Deputy Chief Executive                                 |                          |                              | A review of the mileage expenses policy will now be undertaken during 2021 and in readiness for implementation for 2022/23. There will need to be consideration to ensure that there is a satisfactory EV charging infrastructure in place to support an update and promotion in the use of electric vehicles.   | Work on hold due to Covid19             |

| Action  | Officer Responsible                     | Timescale (month & year) | Funding                             | Progress during 2020/21  | Progress (red, amber, green, see below)                    |
|---|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>PUBLIC TRANSPORT – Encouraging people to use public transport rather than cars</b>                                 |   |                          |                                     |  |  |
| Encourage modal shift through the South Wales Metro   | Transport Projects & Programmes Manager |                          |                                     | Upgrade of Severn Tunnel Junction with park & ride expansion has faced delays for a number of reasons including Covid. Car park extension & improvement of active travel access across the Station Rd / Station Approach junction should happen in 21/22.<br><br>Several funding bids prepared and submitted   | Delayed due to Covid                                       |
| Continue to make the case to national governments for improved train frequencies and station provision                | Transport Projects & Programmes Manager |                          |                                     | Case made to South East Wales Transport Commission and agreed in principle by Welsh Government, issue to be reviewed in Chepstow Transport Study and Tfw Metro Enhancement Framework Newport-Chepstow Corridor Study.<br><br>The Burns Commission report makes helpful recommendations about how to deliver this, which will report at the end of 21/22  | Amber – case continues to be made but with limited results |
| Develop a 'Rural Uber' scheme linked to train stations  | Rural Programmes Manager                |                          | RDP                                 | The length of the software development cycle will prevent LEADER being involved, however we will look towards the £6.5m rural transport fund that is being set up by the RDP under Welsh Government as a means to develop this project further   | Delayed due to Covid19                                     |
| Trial digital solutions for next generation transport schemes that make better use of existing transport capacity     | Head of Policy Performance and Scrutiny | Sep 2021                 |                                     | We are planning for beta testing to take place in Monmouthshire on:<br>i) Public Transport Planner, ii) automated systems for community car share and Grass Routes, and iii) Tag-Along – A secure lift share scheme for residents. However, testing has been delayed due to the social distancing and stay local restrictions in place. We have been able to secure additional funding for the project from UK Government. | Progress slowed due to Covid                               |
| <b>EDUCATION AND INVOLVEMENT – Helping people understand climate change and what they can do to make a difference</b> |   |                          |                                     |  |  |
| Make energy data available to schools and encourage pupils to get involved in   | Energy Officer                          | Sep-20 (initial)         | Existing officer resource structure | Set up automated import of half-hourly energy data (where available) into central TEAM software. Users and permissions setup for simplified web browser access to TEAM software.   | Delayed due to school closures                             |

Red = not progressing as planned, Amber = some progress, Green = progressing as planned

| Action   | Officer Responsible                  | Timescale (month & year)           | Funding  | Progress during 2020/21  | Progress (red, amber, green, see below)    |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| managing energy consumption  |                                      | Ongoing development.               | /software licenses.                                      | Rolled out to small number of users for initial feedback, but the roll out to all schools has been delayed due to other workloads and school closures.   |  |
| Use the One Planet Centre as a focus for climate change education  | Head of Neighbourhood Services       |                                    |  | Use of the One Planet Centre has been limited due to Covid restrictions. Once open, we have been using the re-use shops as the focus for climate change education and linking profits from the shops into climate change with tree planting "O Fes Bach" "From small acorns" (approximately 7000 trees planted so far in conjunction with grounds and countryside on mostly council owned space). Encouraging residents to grow a garden tree could achieve over 30,000 trees being planted, improving the urban tree canopy, improving air quality and biodiversity in the main towns, this will be the focus of O Fes Bach in 21/22. | Progress limited due to Covid restrictions |
| Start local growing and cooking schemes in schools   | Food Development Officer             |                                    | RDP  | Gilwern and cluster schools project - This has been delayed somewhat by Covid 19 but the schools have now returned and we are re-assessing the project.  | Delayed due to Covid 19                    |
| Work with community groups to develop an Internet of Things sensor network to inform decisions and educate local communities | Rural Programmes Manager             |                                    | RDP  | Funding has been secured for a Halls Together project where the 80 Monmouthshire halls/community centres will share and collaborate in many ideas, but in particular climate change and what they can do to mitigate its effects. Covid has prevented much progress, however two officers have been allocated to the Halls Together project.   | Some progress                              |
| Introduce carbon literacy training for all council staff   | Sustainability Policy Officer        | First phase complete by March 2021 | £6600 funding from NRW to PSB, plus NRW funding to Gwent | A successful bid to NRW plus additional funding from NRW for Gwent has meant that we have delivered Carbon Literacy training in Feb/March 2021 targeted to different audiences. In total 56 MCC people have done the training (32 catalysts (incl. 4 community reps), 14 catalysts, 5 leaders and 5 elected members). An evaluation is about to be sent out to participants, and more would like to take part if funding is available for 2021/22.   | Progressing as planned                     |
| Change the council's default internet search engine to Ecosia which plants a tree for every search made                      | Digital Design & Information Manager |                                    | No cost  | Since 2019, the Council's default search engine has been Ecosia, so this action can be removed from the subsequent refreshed action plan.  | Complete                                   |

Red = not progressing as planned, Amber = some progress, Green = progressing as planned





# TAKING ACTION ON CARBON

## WE'RE MAKING PROGRESS...



**4**  
Libraries of Things  
about to launch



**8,500**  
trees planted

**52**  
Council Officers and  
Elected Members completed  
Carbon Literacy training



**15**  
projects  
for schools to grow  
trees from seed



**95%**  
Street lights  
converted to LED  
to use less energy



**21.7%** of  
Greater Gwent Pension Fund  
now invested in a low  
carbon tracker



**7**  
Electric vehicles were  
bought by the council  
in the last year



**150,000 kg CO2** saved  
by reduced business  
mileage in 2020/21



Working with community  
groups to distribute period  
products **100%** of which  
are re-usable or sustainable



**3 million +**  
square metres of  
grassland managed  
in a sustainable way  
to encourage pollinators

**2**  
Re-use shops opened,  
funding tree-planting by  
making one person's  
trash another's  
treasure



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**SUBJECT: MONMOUTHSHIRE REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN PREFERRED STRATEGY**  
**MEETING: COUNCIL**  
**DATE: 24 June 2021**  
**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL**

## 1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the preparation of the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) Preferred Strategy and to seek Council's endorsement of the Preferred Strategy to be issued for statutory consultation/engagement and stakeholder involvement.
- 1.2 Following the stakeholder involvement, engagement and consultation on the Preferred Strategy, responses will be collated and carefully considered. A consultation report will be prepared and published containing details of the representations and the Council's response to them. This consultation report and the Preferred Strategy with any necessary amendments will be reported to Council in approximately November 2021 to seek approval of the Preferred Strategy. The Deposit Plan will then be prepared and considered by Council prior to a statutory six-week consultation and engagement period in Summer 2022.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Council endorses the RLDP Preferred Strategy for statutory consultation/engagement and stakeholder involvement for a six-week period.

## 3. KEY ISSUES:

### Background

- 3.1 The Council is preparing a RLDP for the County (excluding the area within the Brecon Beacons National Park) to cover the period 2018-2033. The RLDP will set out land use development proposals for the County and will identify where and how much new, sustainable development will take place over the Replacement Plan period. It will also identify areas to be protected from development and contain policies against which future planning applications will be assessed. The RLDP will be adopted in Autumn 2023.
- 3.2 Members will be aware that the Plan had commenced consultation on the Preferred Strategy stage in March 2020 alongside the second Call for Candidate Sites, with non-statutory consultation on the Growth and Spatial Options having taken place between July and August 2019.
- 3.3 Progress on the RLDP was subsequently paused in March 2020 because the Covid-19 pandemic meant we could not continue with the Preferred Strategy public engagement events in the format prescribed in the Delivery Agreement. Following

advice from the Minister for Housing and Local Government<sup>1</sup>, the decision was made to cease the Preferred Strategy consultation and second Call for Candidate Sites on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020. This enabled the Council to undertake a review of the RLDP issues, vision, objectives and evidence base<sup>2</sup> in terms of sensitivity to the consequences the Coronavirus pandemic before progressing with Plan preparation. This concluded that the Plan's Issues, Vision and Objectives and evidence base remain relevant to Monmouthshire, with a number of issues and objectives considered to have increased emphasis and importance consistent with the priorities identified in the Welsh Government *Building Better Places* Covid-19 recovery document published in July 2020.

- 3.4 In August 2020 the Welsh Government published a correction to the 2018-based population and household projections. These projections form the starting point for the Plan's evidence base on growth levels. In order to ensure that the evidence base for the RLDP is robust and based on the most up to date information, the decision was made to revisit both the Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy stages of the RLDP process.
- 3.5 These unavoidable delays necessitated a further revision to the RLDP Delivery Agreement timetable and community involvement scheme. The Revised Delivery Agreement, together with the RLDP Review of Issues, Vision and Objectives and evidence base were reported to, and endorsed by, Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020. The Welsh Government approved the Delivery Agreement on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020. The revised Growth and Spatial Options Paper was endorsed by Council in December 2020 for non-statutory consultation for a four-week period in January-February 2021. Work on the RLDP is progressing in accordance with the revised timetable, the next key stage being the Preferred Strategy.

#### Pre-Deposit Plan Preparation

- 3.6 The Preferred Strategy represents the culmination of a period of pre-Deposit Plan preparation which has involved engagement and consultation from the outset in order to gather opinions and build consensus. Key previous stages are summarised in the footnote below<sup>3</sup>. Engagement and consultation at this early stage of the process will also ensure that the Council accords with the five ways of working as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act (in particular involvement and collaboration).
- 3.7 A revised Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020) was prepared and endorsed by Cabinet (16<sup>th</sup> December 2020) to be issued for non-statutory consultation for a four-week period in January and February 2021. This Paper set out a number of alternative options for how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and broadly where this growth should take place, together with the implications of each option and

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<sup>1</sup> Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid-19, 7th July 2020

<sup>2</sup> Monmouthshire RLDP Review of Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence Base in Light of Covid-19 (September 2020)

<sup>3</sup> Pre-deposit plan preparation stages:

- Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper was subject to non-statutory consultation in January-February 2019. This Paper has since been updated to reflect the Council's declaration of a climate emergency (this was agreed by Cabinet in July 2019) and the continued development of the RLDP evidence base and the spatial element of the Vision. The Issues, Vision and Objectives have also recently been reviewed in light of the Covid-19 pandemic which was endorsed by Council in October 2020, as noted above.
- Growth and Spatial Options Paper was subject to non-statutory consultation/engagement for a six-week period in July and August 2019. However, given the delays incurred to the Plan preparation process as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the publication of the Welsh Government 2018-based population and household projections, the Growth and Spatial Options stage has been revisited. As noted above, the revised Growth and Spatial Options Paper was subject to non-statutory consultation for a four-week period in January-February 2021.

the extent to which they will achieve the RLDP objectives. It also identified the Council's preferred growth and spatial options that are considered to best address the County's key issues/challenges and meet the RLDP objectives.

- 3.8 Notification of the consultation, inviting comments, was sent to statutory and other consultees, agents and individuals on the RLDP consultation database (793 notifications were sent). Given the Covid-19 restrictions in place at the time, a range of virtual consultation and engagement took place including a Joint Area Cluster meeting (21<sup>st</sup> January 2021), a Members' Workshop (8<sup>th</sup> December 2020), scrutiny by Economy & Development and Adult Select Joint Committee (10<sup>th</sup> December 2020) and internal discussions within the Council through DMT/SLT, as well as virtual engagement events which were open for all to attend (14<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021). The consultation responses received to this Paper have been considered and reported in the Growth and Spatial Options Report of Consultation and helped to inform the preparation of the Preferred Strategy. The Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021) complements the Report of Consultation and adds further analysis of the options considered.

### RLDP Preferred Strategy

- 3.9 The Preferred Strategy is the first formal publication and statutory consultation stage in the RLDP preparation process. It provides the strategic direction for the development and use of land in Monmouthshire (excluding the area within the Brecon Beacons National Park) over the Plan period 2018 to 2033 and identifies how much sustainable growth is needed and where this growth will broadly be located. Its preparation has been guided by a framework of key inputs that includes national legislation/policy, local and regional policies/strategies and an evidence base relating to key issues for the Plan to address.
- 3.10 The overall purpose of the Preferred Strategy is to:
- Identify key issues, challenges and opportunities for the County.
  - Develop a vision and set of objectives for the RLDP that respond to the key issues, challenges and opportunities.
  - Set out the Preferred Strategy including the scale of future population, housing and employment growth and establish the broad spatial distribution of growth.
  - Set out strategic policies that will deliver/implement the strategy.
- 3.11 The Preferred Strategy provides the strategic context for the preparation of more detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations which will be included in the Deposit RLDP. The Preferred Strategy does not identify any site-specific allocations nor does it identify designations for protecting areas from new development. Allocations and designations will be a key part of the Deposit Plan preparation process once the Preferred Strategy has been agreed. Only those candidate sites that accord with the Preferred Strategy will be considered for inclusion in the Deposit Plan.
- 3.12 The Preferred Strategy is attached at **Appendix 1**. An Executive Summary and Easy Read Summary version of the Preferred Strategy have also been prepared (attached at **Appendix 2 and Appendix 3** respectively).
- 3.13 The Preferred Strategy is structured as follows:

### **Executive Summary**

**Section 1: Introduction** – Provides a summary of the RLDP process and progress to date, outlines what the Preferred Strategy is/how this is prepared as well as a list of

supporting documents. It also sets out the consultation arrangements in relation to the Preferred Strategy and the next key steps in the RLDP process.

**Section 2: Context** – Presents an overview/profile of the County outlining the key economic, social, environmental and cultural characteristics of Monmouthshire. It also sets out the legislative and policy context and key influences on the Plan.

**Section 3: Key Issues, Challenges and Opportunities** – Provides a summary of the key issues, challenges and opportunities within Monmouthshire.

**Section 4: Replacement LDP Strategic Framework** – Outlines the RLDP Vision, Objectives, sets out the Preferred Growth and Spatial Option (i.e. the Preferred Strategy) and a key diagram.

**Section 5: Implementation and Delivery** – Sets out the Strategic Policies including Strategic Growth Options.

**Appendices** – provide further detail in relation to supporting evidence to the Preferred Strategy, the RLDP Issues, Strategic Growth Options and Development Management Policies.

### Preferred Strategy – the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy

- 3.14 The identification of the Preferred Strategy has been informed by a range of considerations, including the assessment and consideration of the growth and spatial options, responses from the consultation process, the findings of the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA), the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal, the newly published Future Wales 2040 (which is a statutory development plan), the LDP tests of soundness, Welsh Government's *Building Better Places*, and the pressing need to address the key challenges relating to the County's demography, affordability and the climate emergency to achieve a sustainable balanced deliverable outcome.
- 3.15 The Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy promotes and supports a level of housing and employment growth that will be distributed proportionately<sup>4</sup> across Monmouthshire up to 2033. The Strategy assists in addressing the demographic and affordability challenges facing the County and ultimately seeks to deliver the Council's core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The Strategy conforms with Policy 1 of Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (hereafter referred to as Future Wales 2040) which is the highest tier statutory development plan and supports sustainable growth in *all* parts of Wales that seeks to address local aspirations and need. The Strategy also meets a key 'Test of Soundness' of ensuring that the Plan's vision and strategy are positive and sufficiently aspirational<sup>5</sup>. A Self-Assessment of the Preferred Strategy against the Tests of Soundness is attached at **Appendix 4**, which includes an assessment of the Strategy's general conformity with Future Wales 2040. This demonstrates that the Preferred Strategy and the stages undertaken and processes followed to reach this stage are 'sound' and that the Strategy assists in the delivery of the Future Wales policies and is in general conformity with its overarching strategy. Further detail of the Strategy is set out in Section 4 of the Preferred Strategy (Appendix 1 refers) and is summarised below.

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<sup>4</sup> Proportionately' is deemed to mean that the level of growth directed toward a settlement will be proportionate to its population size. To calculate the proportion of development to be directed toward a settlement only the population of those settlements included in the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal has been used to contribute to the total population figure for the County. This takes into account the large areas of Monmouthshire which are rural and as such these areas would not be expected to have any significant development.

<sup>5</sup> Development Plans Manual, Edition 3, WG March 2020

3.16 In order to deliver the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy the RLDP will:

- Make provision for a total of **8,366 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 7,605 homes** (this provision is based indicatively on a 10% flexibility allowance which will be given further consideration and refined at Deposit Stage). This level of housing growth will enable the provision of market and affordable housing in both urban and rural areas and, importantly, provides the opportunity to address the unbalanced demography, improve labour force retention by retaining/attracting younger adult population age groups and assists in addressing the County's housing affordability challenge. Taking account of the existing housing land supply and projected windfall delivery, the RLDP will need to allocate sufficient land to accommodate **3,658 homes**. The various components of housing supply are set out in Table 1 below.
- Provide the **planning policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 additional jobs**. This level of job growth aligns with the projected population and housing growth and takes account of adjustments to household membership rates for key younger age groups and a reduced level of commuting by retaining more of the resident workforce and growing our working age demographic. There has been a fundamental shift in working practices since the start of Covid-19 pandemic with an increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that this trend will continue over the longer term and in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home is something that we wish to encourage and enable. This provides residents with the opportunity to both live and work in the County in this new way, providing a flexible approach to achieving this level of job growth, whilst also achieving the Welsh Government and Council's aim of reducing the need for commuting. This approach will help to reduce congestion, emissions and pollution, improve the work-life balance for employees and employers, support local businesses/services and enable the creation of sustainable vibrant communities and '20 minute neighbourhoods'<sup>6</sup>.
- Address economic growth and resilience within the County through the **provision of a sufficient range and choice of employment land**. To enable this a minimum of 43ha of employment land will be allocated to support the provision of industrial and business development (classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987), the location of which will be determined in the Deposit Plan. Other key employment sectors including retail, tourism and agriculture will also be an integral part of the County's economy and supported through the policy framework in the Deposit Plan. This approach reflects the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic Ambition Statement and Investment Prospectus.
- Distribute growth proportionately across the County's most sustainable settlements. Whilst housing and employment growth will be focused on the higher tiers of the settlement hierarchy, appropriate growth will also be channelled to the County's most sustainable rural settlements to facilitate the creation of sustainable and resilient communities throughout Monmouthshire.
- Collectively these measures will help us to fulfil our core objectives and create sustainable and resilient communities where an enhanced economically active aged population can both live and work in the County through supporting/enabling remote

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<sup>6</sup> 20 Minute Neighbourhoods are strong, well connected neighbourhoods where people live within a 20 minute walking distance of key everyday services. The RLDP supports a placemaking approach to future development and the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods.

and home working and local jobs in a range of sectors. Fundamentally, the Strategy will address the Council's key climate change objectives and reflect national planning policy placemaking principles whereby commuting/the need to travel is reduced and residents can access and support services/businesses locally, thereby enabling sustainable and vibrant communities.

- 3.17 The Preferred Growth Strategy is based on a population-led scenario with added policy assumptions to address the County's key demographic and affordability issues. The policy assumptions adjust in-migration rates to reflect local trends over a five year period (2015-2020) to take account the removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls, increase the household formation rates for three key younger age groups and reduce commuting ratio assumptions to reflect the Council's aim of addressing the unbalanced demographic in the County by retaining younger age groups and reducing out-commuting. This aligns with the Welsh Government ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from home or near home, and the Welsh Government's transport policy hierarchy which seeks to reduce the need to travel in the first instance, followed by active travel, then public transport, then the private car.
- 3.18 The Strategy also incorporates an affordable housing policy-led element which aims to meet 10% of the Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) need arising from this growth strategy on housing sites which deliver 50% affordable housing. This is considered to represent an appropriate starting point as it is widely accepted that the affordable housing need identified in the LHMA is beyond the scope of the development plan process to deliver in isolation. The resultant housing requirement addresses the RLDP issues/objectives while also performing well against the ISA themes: a larger addition would result in an environmentally unsustainable level of growth. This element of the Strategy will deliver approximately 1,551 homes over the Plan period (divided equally between affordable and market homes, including 10% flexibility allowance). This approach will help to explicitly address the key housing affordability issue in the County (RLDP Objectives 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13) and is consistent with Policy 7 of Future Wales 2040 (Welsh Government, February 2021) which requires local planning authorities to identify sites for affordable housing-led developments in response to local needs. Further detail on this scenario is set out in the Edge Analytics Report - Updating the RLDP Demographic Evidence Report (November 2020) and the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021).
- 3.19 The Preferred Strategy promotes sustainable economic growth that will help reduce levels of commuting and promote self-contained communities, ensuring the environmental and economic sustainability of our communities. This will be achieved by providing policy support to enable and facilitate the increased propensity for home/remote working, enabling economic growth through supporting the delivery of the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic Growth and Ambition Statement and Investment Prospectus, maximising opportunities from the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, targeting growth in key economic sectors and providing appropriate employment land in the right locations. Further information on employment land provision is set out in Strategic Policy S13 of the Preferred Strategy.
- 3.20 Housing and employment growth will be focused on the higher tiers of the settlement hierarchy<sup>7</sup>. This approach reflects the overarching principles of Future Wales 2040 by guiding growth towards building sustainable places that support placemaking principles but applied within a Monmouthshire setting to reflect the predominantly rural context. In this respect, the dominant role of the County towns of Abergavenny, Chepstow, Monmouth and Severnside Area focused around the town of Caldicot,

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<sup>7</sup> Sustainable Settlement Appraisal, June 2021



provide the focus of urban growth within a Monmouthshire context. This will be supported by an appropriate level of growth in the smaller settlements and a number of rural settlements to facilitate the creation of sustainable and vibrant rural communities consistent with the aims of Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities of Future Wales 2040. Policy S2 of the Preferred Strategy sets out an indicative spatial distribution of housing growth:

- Primary Settlements (Abergavenny, including Llanfoist; Chepstow; and Monmouth, including Wyesham) will account for approximately 58% of total housing growth.
- Severnside Settlements (Caldicot, Caerwent, Crick, Magor/Undy, Portskewett, Rogiet and Sudbrook) will account for approximately 28% of total housing growth.
- Secondary Settlements (Penperlleni, Raglan and Usk) will account for approximately 5% of total housing growth.
- Appropriate growth will also be channelled to the County’s most sustainable rural settlements (9%) to facilitate the creation of sustainable and resilient communities throughout Monmouthshire. Further refinement of the Main Rural and Minor Rural Settlements will take place for the Deposit Plan to establish which of these settlements are appropriate to accommodate a proportionate amount of growth to meet local needs and support sustainable rural communities.

3.21 Table 1 summarises the indicative spatial distribution of housing provision over the Plan period by the various components of housing supply.

**Table 1: Summary of Indicative Spatial Distribution of Housing Provision\***

| Settlement                    | Total Commitments     |  | Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy |  | Total Housing Provision 2018-2033* |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--|--|--|------------------------------------|
|                               | Completions 2018-2021 | Existing Commitments; LDP Rollover Allocations | Total Allowances (Small Sites; Windfalls)      | RLDP New Housing Allocations (Dwellings) |                                    |
| Abergavenny (incl. Llanfoist) | 362                   | 207  | 437  | 887                                      | 1,893                              |
| Chepstow                      | 96                    | 484  | 212  | 729                                      | 1,521                              |
| Monmouth (incl. Wyesham)      | 261                   | 226  | 182  | 749                                      | 1,418                              |
| Severnside                    | 300                   | 886  | 283  | 854                                      | 2,323                              |
| Secondary Settlements         | 87                    | 45   | 68   | 249                                      | 449                                |
| Rural Settlements             | 112                   | 94   | 366  | 190                                      | 762                                |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>1218</b>           | <b>1942</b>                                    | <b>1,548</b>                                   | <b>3,658</b>                             | <b>8,366</b>                       |

\*Figures include an indicative 10% flexibility allowance which will be subject to further consideration and refinement at Deposit Plan stage. The spatial distribution figures should be treated as indicative as they may alter following the consideration of sites submitted as part of the second Call for Candidate Sites and detailed site assessment work.

3.22 To encourage the promotion of sustainable communities where residents can live and work in the same area, housing growth will be accompanied by a commensurate amount of employment land. The proportion of employment growth to be accommodated in the settlement tiers will be set out in the Deposit RLDP. The submission of additional candidate sites for employment uses, aligned with our Growth and Ambition Strategy and Investment Prospectus, is sought during the second Call for Candidate Sites. It is, however, recognised that there has been a fundamental shift in working practices since the start of Covid-19 pandemic with an increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that this trend will continue over the longer

term in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home. This provides residents with the opportunity to both live and work in the County in this new way, providing a flexible approach to achieving the level of job growth, whilst also achieving a key RLDP objective of reducing the need to commute and thereby supporting our climate change objectives.

- 3.23 The exact distribution of growth will be determined following the second Call for Candidate Sites and subsequent site assessments which will inform the Deposit RLDP. Any decisions on whether or not to allocate particular sites for development in the settlements will also depend on such issues as their impact on the physical form of the settlement, placemaking, carbon footprint, landscape setting, environmental constraints and infrastructure capacity.
- 3.24 Detailed site allocations will be set out in the Deposit RLDP. However, the Preferred Strategy identifies potential strategic growth areas for each of the Primary Settlements and the Severnside area. The identified site options (Strategic Policy S8 refers) are considered to have the potential to underpin the Spatial Strategy by accommodating growth and focusing development within those settlements and areas which are identified as the most sustainable locations. Not all sites submitted within each settlement will be selected for inclusion in the Deposit Plan, as the combined capacity of those submitted during the first call for sites far exceeds the number of dwellings needed to meet the residual housing provision. The final selection of sites for the Deposit Plan will be dependent on further detailed assessment work.
- 3.25 The Preferred Strategy also contains a number of Strategic Policies which form the framework for implementing and delivering the Strategy. These are summarised below and detailed in Sections 4 and 5 of the Preferred Strategy.

Preferred Strategy - Strategic Policies:

- S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth
- S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy
- S3 – Sustainable Placemaking & High Quality Design
- S4 – Climate Change
- S5 – Infrastructure Provision
- S6 – Delivery of Homes
- S7 – Affordable Homes
- S8 – Strategic Development Sites
- S9 – Gypsy and Travellers
- S10 – Sustainable Transport
- S11 – Retail & Commercial Centres Hierarchy
- S12 – Community and Recreation Facilities
- S13 – Employment Sites Provision
- S14 – Rural Enterprise
- S15 – Visitor Economy
- S16 – Sustainable Waste Management
- S17 – Minerals
- S18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation

Supporting Documents

- 3.26 The Preferred Strategy has been subject to an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Well-being of Future Generations Assessment (WBFGA), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) to assess the

extent to which the emerging proposals and policies will help to achieve the wider environmental, economic, social and cultural objectives of the RLDP. The Initial ISA of the Preferred Strategy is published alongside the Preferred Strategy. The Strategy has also been screened under the Habitats Regulations Assessment; the HRA Report is also published alongside the Preferred Strategy. The Integrated Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment are iterative processes and will be updated as the RLDP preparation progresses.

- 3.27 The RLDP will be accompanied by an Infrastructure Plan, setting out what is needed to support the development of the allocated sites, and will sit alongside an updated Local Transport Plan and an Economic Ambition Strategy. Together, these Plans will seek to deliver on the Council's economic ambition and its core purpose to help build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The Deposit Plan will also designate land for protection and identify search areas for renewable energy and will be accompanied by a Green Wedge Review and Renewable Energy Assessment.
- 3.28 A number of additional supporting background documents have been prepared to inform the Preferred Strategy; these are listed in Appendix 1 of the Preferred Strategy and are available to view on the Planning Policy pages of the Council's website. These documents contain a significant amount of robust data/information and should be read alongside the Preferred Strategy.

#### Consultation, Engagement and Stakeholder Involvement

- 3.29 Regulation 15 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended 2015)) requires the Council to publish its pre-Deposit Plan proposals (Preferred Strategy) for public consultation prior to determining the content of its Deposit Plan. Subject to endorsement by Council, the Preferred Strategy will be subject to statutory engagement and consultation for a six-week period between Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July and Monday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021, whereby comments will be invited on the consultation questions set out in the Preferred Strategy. Where possible, the consultation will be carried out in accordance with the procedures set out in the Delivery Agreement's Community Involvement Scheme (Second Revision, October 2020). However, regard will be given to any Covid-19 restrictions in place at the time, meaning that procedures may be subject to change. It is anticipated that engagement/consultation will take place via:
- Notifying all parties on the RLDP database of the consultation;
  - Planning Policy Officer attendance at Area Cluster meetings during July-August 2021;
  - Members' Workshop 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021 (hosted by the Economy & Development Select Committee);
  - Scrutiny by Economy & Development Select Committee 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021;
  - Internal discussions within the Council through an officer workshop, Department Management Team and Senior Leadership Team;
  - Several RLDP Preferred Strategy Drop-in Sessions during July-August 2021. Full details of venues and dates will be available on the Council's Current Consultations page of the website. Should there be a further lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic, these drop-in sessions will be replaced by additional virtual events;
  - Two Webinar Sessions during July 2021;
  - We will seek to engage with seldom heard groups in particular young people, via the Youth Council and going into secondary schools, and Gypsy and Travellers via the GTAA work and reiterating the opportunity to promote sites during the Second Call for Candidate Sites.

- 3.30 A **Second Call for Candidate sites**, seeking the submission of new sites that accord with the Preferred Strategy and supporting information (viability and deliverability) for existing (previously submitted) Candidate Sites that accord with the Preferred Strategy, will commence alongside the consultation on the Preferred Strategy. This Second Call for Candidate Sites will run for six weeks from Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July – Monday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

#### Next Steps

- 3.31 Following the stakeholder involvement, engagement and consultation on the Preferred Strategy, responses will be collated and carefully considered. A consultation report will be prepared and published containing details of the representations and the Council's response to them. This consultation report and the Preferred Strategy with any necessary amendments will be reported to Council in approximately November 2021 to seek approval of the Preferred Strategy. The Deposit Plan will then be prepared and considered by Council prior to a statutory six-week consultation and engagement period in Summer 2022.

#### RLDP and Phosphates

- 3.32 As a result of recent evidence regarding the environmental impacts of phosphate in watercourses, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) have adopted tighter targets for the water quality of watercourses and have conducted an assessment of the 9 riverine Special Areas of Conservation in Wales. This assessment has established that phosphorus breaches are widespread within Welsh SAC rivers with over 60% of waterbodies failing against the challenging targets set.
- 3.33 Within Monmouthshire it was identified that within the River Usk, 88% of the river's water bodies failed to meet the required target and within the River Wye, 67% failed to meet the required target. As a result of this failure, NRW has issued detailed planning guidance to ensure that the environmental capacity of the rivers does not deteriorate any further. Any proposed development within the catchment areas of the rivers that might increase phosphate levels need to clearly evidence that the development can demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body. In most cases there will be limited capacity to connect to the public sewerage system and an alternative solution will have to be found. This requirement on drainage considerations will impact on all development that increases the volume or concentration of wastewater.
- 3.34 This recent announcement of phosphate water quality issues in the Usk and Wye Riverine SACs, has implications for the progression of the RLDP as our Preferred Strategy directs future growth to a number of key sustainable settlements within these affected catchment areas over the Plan period (2018-2033). Consideration has, therefore, been given as to how we progress with the preparation of the RLDP in light of this issue. The following three realistic options have been assessed:
1. Progress preparation of the RLDP with the Preferred Strategy with proportionate distribution of growth across the County's most sustainable settlements, in the anticipation that solutions to the phosphate issue can be identified and agreed by Deposit Plan stage.
  2. Halt/pause RLDP preparation until there is certainty that the phosphate issue can be resolved i.e. solutions determined/agreed with NRW and Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW).
  3. Withdraw the RLDP and commence a new RLDP with a revised Plan period on the basis that this would provide a longer Plan period giving us more time to address the phosphate issue.

- 3.35 A Risk Assessment and Options Appraisal of the three options considered (attached at **Appendix 5**) has been undertaken which considers the impact of each option on:
- Plan preparation - resources, work programme, expenditure
  - Addressing the RLDP Issues/Challenges/Objectives
  - Deliverability of the RLDP (including growth levels, market and affordable housing delivery, economic prosperity/recovery).
- 3.36 An option appraisal concludes that Option 1, to progress the preparation of the RLDP with Preferred Strategy which proposes proportionate growth across the County's most sustainable settlements including a number of settlements in the affected Wye and Usk catchment areas, is considered to be the most appropriate option. Good progress is being made, and it is anticipated that solutions to the phosphate issue can be determined and agreed by the Deposit Plan stage meaning that the Plan can be progressed and delivered in accordance with the Delivery Agreement (Second Revision, October 2020). Progressing the RLDP would reduce the risks associated with a policy gap and ensure the key demographic and affordability challenges facing the County, which have been exacerbated in light of the current pandemic, are addressed in a timely manner. Whilst all three options carry risks, the risks associated with Option 1 are considered to have less of an impact than Options 2 and 3, particularly in terms of addressing the RLDP issues, challenges and objectives and deliverability of the Plan. The Council is committed to seeking solutions to the phosphate issue by Deposit Plan stage and is in proactive discussions with key organisations, including NRW, WG, DCWW and the development industry, to seek viable and timely solutions in the affected settlements. Progress to date suggests that effective solutions, which are likely to involve both nature-based solutions and infrastructure upgrades to key treatment works, will be identified/secured by the time we reach Deposit stage. This situation will be kept under constant review as we progress with Plan preparation.

#### **4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):**

- 4.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) sets out the requirement for all LDPs to be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). All stages of the RLDP will be subject to an Integrated Sustainability Assessment (ISA) (including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Well-being of Future Generations (WBFG), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), and Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA)). The ISA findings have informed the development of the RLDP strategy and strategic policies, and will be used to inform detailed policies and site allocations in the Deposit Plan, in order to ensure that the Plan will promote sustainable development. The Initial ISAR is published alongside the Preferred Strategy.
- 4.2 An Equality and Future Generations Evaluation (including equalities and sustainability impact assessment) is attached to this report at **Appendix 6**.

##### Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting

- 4.3 There are no safeguarding or corporate parenting implications arising directly from this report. The RLDP has the potential to provide affordable housing, delivery and allocation of which should be cognisant of the needs of children leaving care.

##### Socio-economic Duty

- 4.4 The RLDP seeks to tackle house price unaffordability, which currently prevents some of our communities accessing suitable housing within the County. This is likely to benefit younger people in particular, which in turn will make our ageing communities

more socially sustainable. Good quality and affordable housing is important in achieving poverty reduction and equitable prosperity, and supporting the best start in life. Good spatial planning helps to build cohesive communities. The provision of affordable housing combined with policy interventions in relation to the requirement of a mix of market housing will increase opportunities for those in poverty to access safe, secure and suitable housing. In accordance with the WBFGA, the RLDP also seeks to prevent future problems and will therefore continue to avoid new development in flood risk areas and will seek low/zero carbon development to help address the climate emergency and also tackle issues such as fuel poverty.

## 5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

### Preferred Strategy

| Option   | Benefit  | Risk  | Comment  |
|--|--|---|--|
| Endorse the Preferred Strategy as attached for statutory consultation.     | This will enable the Preferred Strategy to be consulted on in accordance with the timetable set out in the Delivery Agreement (Second Revision October 2020) and enable the RLDP preparation process to progress in a timely manner. |   | The Preferred Strategy, as drafted, is considered to promote an appropriate level and spatial distribution of housing and employment growth for the County to 2033, which assists in addressing the demographic and affordability challenges facing the County and seeks to deliver the Council's core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generation.<br><br>This is the preferred option. |
| Endorse the Preferred Strategy for statutory consultation with amendments. | Preferred Strategy could be amended to reflect comments, as relevant.  | Any amendments to the Preferred Strategy would lead to a delay in the RLDP preparation process. This would necessitate a further revision to the Delivery Agreement with the Welsh Government which is unlikely to be supported. It could also have implications for the ISA and HRA processes. | As above, the Preferred Strategy, as drafted, is considered to promote an appropriate level and spatial distribution of housing and employment growth for the County to 2033. It is not considered necessary to amend the Preferred Strategy prior to consultation.  |
| Do not endorse the Preferred Strategy for statutory consultation.          |  | This would lead to a significant delay in the RLDP preparation process as the Preferred Strategy would need to be   | As above, the Preferred Strategy, as drafted, is considered to promote an appropriate level and spatial distribution of  |

| Option | Benefit | Risk   | Comment   |
|--------|---------|--|---|
|        |         | rewritten and additional associated evidence gathering needed to inform a new strategy. This would also have time implications in relation the ISA and HRA processes. This would lead to a significant delay in preparing further stages of the RLDP and in adopting the Plan with resultant implications, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A delay in addressing the key demographic and affordability challenges facing the County which have been exacerbated in light of the current pandemic</li> <li>• Policy gap - evidence/ policy framework in extant LDP becomes more out dated</li> <li>• Associated lack of certainty for communities and investors.</li> </ul> | housing and employment growth for the County to 2033. Not endorsing the Preferred Strategy for consultation would result in significant delays to the RLDP preparation process with associated negative implications. |

## 6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Officer and consultant time and costs associated with the preparation of the Preferred Strategy and carrying out the required consultation exercises. Any costs will be met from the Planning Policy budget.
- 6.2 Delivery of the RLDP, once adopted, will need to be accompanied by a range of infrastructure provision including transport, education, health care, leisure and affordable housing. The infrastructure requirements will be identified in the Infrastructure Plan and Local Transport Plan accompanying the RLDP. Although it is expected that most of this infrastructure would be funded via S106 planning contributions (or possibly a Community Infrastructure Levy), there may be a requirement for Council expenditure to assist in providing some infrastructure or in bringing some sites forwards. This might include the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders and/or potential commercial investment to provide ‘shovel ready’ sites or business premises. There may also be grant funding available.
- 6.3 The Preferred Strategy includes the allocation of land for approximately 1,551 homes (including 10% flexibility) on affordable housing-led sites with 50% affordable housing and 50% market housing. The Minister’s letter of July 2019 (**Appendix 7**) invites the inclusion of affordable housing-led sites in LDPs, with at least 50% affordable housing and, in the first instance, making use of public land. This approach is consistent with Policy 7 of Future Wales 2040 (Welsh Government, February 2021) which requires local planning authorities to identify sites for affordable housing-led developments in

response to local needs. This approach complies with Policy 7 of Future Wales 2040. Although sites have not yet been allocated at this Preferred Strategy stage, land within Strategic Growth Option zone J to the north-east of Caldicot includes Council-owned land and could form such a site. Allocation of land as a 50% affordable housing site will impact on land values, and if such a site were allocated on Council land, there would likely be an impact on capital receipt or commercial return.

## **7. CONSULTEES**

- Enterprise DMT
- SLT
- Member workshop 22 June 2021

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- RLDP Preferred Strategy (June 2021)
- Initial Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Report (AECOM, June 2021)
- HRA of the Monmouthshire RLDP Preferred Strategy (AECOM, June 2021)
- RLDP Delivery Agreement (Second Revision, October 2021)
- Sustainable Settlements Appraisal (June 2021)
- Growth and Spatial Options Report of Consultation (June 2021)
- Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021)
- Housing Background Paper (June 2021)
- Review of Candidate Sites against the Preferred Strategy (June 2021)
- Monmouthshire Employment Land Review (BE Group, June 2021)
- Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021)
- Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020)
- Monmouthshire RLDP Updated Demographic Evidence Report (Edge Analytics, November 2020)
- Monmouthshire Affordable Housing Report (Edge Analytics, November 2020)
- Review of RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence Base in Light of Covid-19 (September 2020)
- Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement (November 2019) and supporting MCC Economies of the Future Reports (2018)
- Candidate Sites Register (February 2019)
- Local Housing Market Assessment (September 2018)
- LDP Annual Monitoring Reports (2014-2020)

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**APPENDICES:**

**APPENDIX 1: Preferred Strategy**

**APPENDIX 2: Preferred Strategy Executive Summary**

**APPENDIX 3: Preferred Strategy Easy Read Summary**

**APPENDIX 4: Self-Assessment of the Preferred Strategy against the Tests of Soundness**

**APPENDIX 5: Risk Analysis and Options Appraisal of the Implications of Phosphates on the RLDP**

**APPENDIX 6: Future Generations Evaluation**

**APPENDIX 7: Letter from Minister for Housing and Local Government 8<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

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# Monmouthshire Replacement Local Development Plan

## **PREFERRED STRATEGY**

June 2021



monmouthshire  
sir fynwy





**Monmouthshire County Council**  
**Replacement Local Development Plan**

**Preferred Strategy**

**June 2021**

**Planning Policy Service**

**Monmouthshire County Council**

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## Executive Summary

### Replacement Local Development Plan

- i. The Council is preparing a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) for Monmouthshire (excluding the part of the County that is within the Brecon Beacons National Park). The RLDP will identify where and how much new development will take place during the 'Plan period' (2018-2033). It will allocate land for development, identify areas to be protected, and contain policies to guide decisions on applications for planning permission. We aim to adopt the RLDP in autumn/winter 2023.
- ii. The Council has now reached the Preferred Strategy stage of the development plan process. This is the first of the statutory consultation stages in the RLDP process. However, a number of earlier pre-deposit plan preparation stages have been undertaken which have informed the Preferred Strategy. The first stage involved the preparation of an Issues, Vision & Objectives Paper. This was first published in January 2019 and amended in June 2019 to reflect the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in May 2019. A review of the Issues, Vision and Objectives was also undertaken in June 2020 in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and incorporated into the Review of RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence Base in light of Covid-19 during September 2020. This concluded that the Plan's Issues, Vision and Objectives remain relevant to Monmouthshire with a number of issues and objectives now considered to have increased emphasis and importance consistent with the priorities identified in the Welsh Government Building Better Places Covid-19 recovery document published in July 2020. The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper has been updated to reflect the vision for the Preferred Strategy and issues that have emerged since the original version.
- iii. The Plan had progressed to the Preferred Strategy stage of the RLDP process in March 2020. Non-statutory consultation on the Growth and Spatial Options took place between July and August 2019 and statutory consultation on the RLDP Preferred Strategy and the Second Call for Candidate Sites commenced during March 2020. Progress on the RLDP was subsequently paused in March 2020 because the Covid-19 pandemic meant the Preferred Strategy public engagement events could not continue in the format prescribed in the Delivery Agreement. Following advice from the Minister for Housing and Local Government<sup>1</sup>, the decision was subsequently made to cease the Preferred Strategy consultation and second call for candidate sites on 20th July 2020. This enabled the Council to undertake a review of the RLDP issues, vision, objectives and evidence base<sup>2</sup> in terms of sensitivity to the consequences the Coronavirus pandemic before progressing with Plan preparation. This review was agreed by Council in October 2020.
- iv. In August 2020 the Welsh Government published a correction to the 2018-based population and household projections, which comprise important new evidence that require consideration and form the starting point of the Plan's evidence base. This

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<sup>1</sup> Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid19, 7th July 2020

<sup>2</sup> Monmouthshire RLDP Review of Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence Base in Light of Covid-19 (September 2020)

resulted in the need to revisit the Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy stages of the RLDP process. The Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020) was prepared and subject to non-statutory consultation for a 4-week period in January and February 2021. The outcome of which has informed and helped shape the Preferred Strategy (June 2021).

### **What is the Preferred Strategy?**

- v. The Preferred Strategy is the first statutory stage in the RLDP preparation process. It provides the strategic direction for the development and use of land over the period 2018-2033. The overall purpose of the Preferred Strategy is to:
- Identify key issues, challenges and opportunities for the County.
  - Develop a vision and set of objectives for the RLDP that respond to the key issues, challenges and opportunities.
  - Set out the Preferred Strategy including the scale of future growth in population, housing and jobs and establish the spatial distribution of growth.
  - Set out strategic policies that will deliver/implement the strategy.

### **Preferred Strategy – Sustainable & Resilient Communities Strategy**

- vi. The Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy promotes and supports a level of housing and employment growth that will be distributed proportionately<sup>3</sup> across Monmouthshire up to 2033. The Strategy assists in addressing the demographic and affordability challenges facing the County and ultimately seeks to deliver the Council's core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The Strategy conforms with Policy 1 of Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (hereafter referred to as Future Wales 2040) which is the highest tier statutory development plan (Welsh Government, February 2021) and supports sustainable growth in all parts of Wales that seeks to address local aspirations and need. The Strategy also meets a key 'Test of Soundness' of ensuring that the Plan's vision and strategy are positive and sufficiently aspirational. A Self-Assessment of the Preferred Strategy against the Tests of Soundness is published alongside this document, which includes an assessment of the Strategy's general conformity with Future Wales 2040. This demonstrates that the Preferred Strategy and the stages undertaken and processes followed to reach this stage are 'sound' and that the Strategy assists in the delivery of the Future Wales policies and is in general conformity with its overarching strategy.

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<sup>3</sup> Proportionately' is deemed to mean that the level of growth directed toward a settlement will be proportionate to its population size. To calculate the proportion of development to be directed toward a settlement only the population of those settlements included in the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal has been used to contribute to the total population figure for the County. This takes into account the large areas of Monmouthshire which are rural and as such these areas would not be expected to have any significant development



vii. A summary of the key points of the Strategy is set out in Box 1.

**Box 1: Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy**

In order to deliver the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy the RLDP will:

- Make provision for a total of **8,366 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 7,605 homes** (this provision is based indicatively on a 10% flexibility allowance which will be given further consideration and refined at Deposit Stage). This level of housing growth will enable the provision of market and affordable housing in both urban and rural areas and, importantly, provides the opportunity to address the unbalanced demography, improve labour force retention by retaining/attracting younger adult population age groups and assists in addressing the County's housing affordability challenge. Taking account of the existing housing land supply and projected windfall delivery, the RLDP will need to **allocate sufficient land to accommodate 3,658 homes**.
- Provide the **planning policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 additional jobs**. This level of job growth aligns with the projected population and housing growth and takes account of adjustments to household membership rates for key younger age groups and a reduced level of commuting by retaining more of the resident workforce and growing our working age demographic. There has been a fundamental shift in working practices since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic with an increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that this trend will continue over the longer term and in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home is something that we wish to encourage and enable. This provides residents with the opportunity to both live and work in the County in this new way, providing a flexible approach to achieving this level of job growth, whilst also achieving the Welsh Government and Council's aim of reducing the need for commuting. This approach will help to reduce congestion, emissions and pollution, improve the work-life balance for employees and employers, support local businesses/services and enable the creation of sustainable vibrant communities and '20 minute neighbourhoods'<sup>4</sup>.
- Address economic growth and resilience within the County through the **provision of a sufficient range and choice of employment land**. To enable this a minimum of 43ha of employment land will be allocated to support the provision of industrial and business development (classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987), the location of which will be determined in the Deposit Plan. Other key employment sectors including retail, tourism and agriculture will also be an integral part of the County's economy and supported through the policy framework in

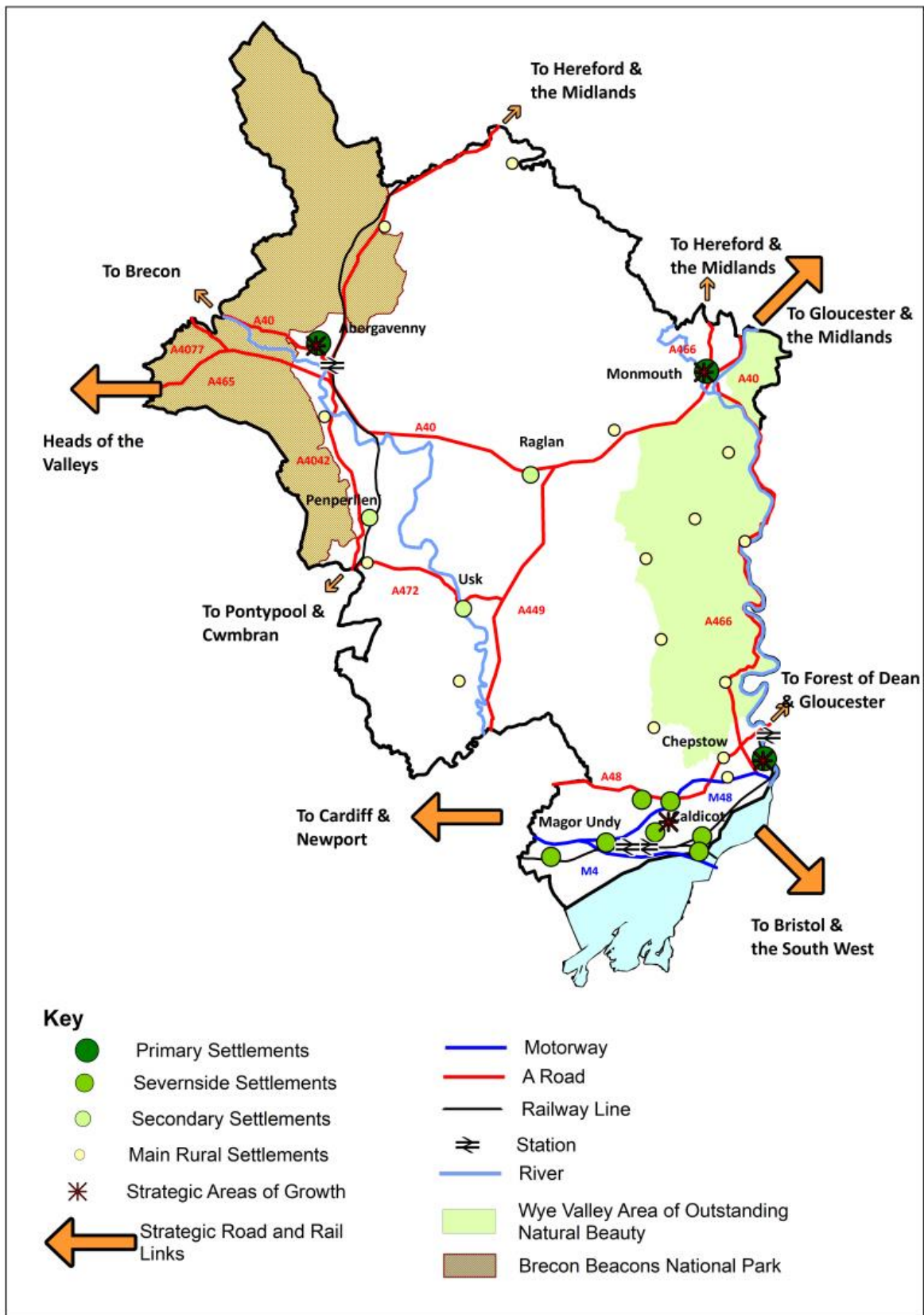
<sup>4</sup> 20 Minute Neighbourhoods are strong, well connected neighbourhoods where people live within a 20 minute walking distance of key everyday services. The RLDP supports a placemaking approach to future development and the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods.

the Deposit Plan. This approach reflects the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic Ambition Statement and Investment Prospectus.

- Distribute growth proportionately across the County's most sustainable settlements. Whilst housing and employment growth will be focused on the higher tiers of the settlement hierarchy, appropriate growth will also be channelled to the County's most sustainable rural settlements to facilitate the creation of sustainable and resilient communities throughout Monmouthshire.

Collectively these measures will help us to fulfil our core objectives and create sustainable and resilient communities where an enhanced economically active aged population can both live and work in the County through supporting/enabling remote and home working and local jobs in a range of sectors. Fundamentally, the Strategy will address the Council's key climate change objectives and reflect national planning policy placemaking principles whereby commuting/the need to travel is reduced and residents can access and support services/businesses locally, thereby enabling sustainable and vibrant communities.

## Preferred Strategy Key Diagram



## Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy

- viii. The Preferred Growth Strategy makes provision for a total of 8,366 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 7,605 homes over the Plan period 2018-2033 (this provision is based indicatively on a 10% flexibility allowance which will be given further consideration and refined at Deposit Stage). This results in a growth of the County's population of 12,443 (13.2%) and households of 7,255 (18.1%) over the Plan period.
- ix. The Growth Strategy is based on a population-led scenario with added policy assumptions to address the County's key demographic and affordability issues. The policy assumptions adjust in-migration rates to reflect local trends over a five-year period (2015-2020) to take account the removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls, increase the household formation rates for three key younger age groups and reduce commuting ratio assumptions to reflect the Council's aim of addressing the unbalanced demographic in the County by retaining younger age groups and reducing out-commuting. The latter aligns with Welsh Government's long-term ambition of 30% of Welsh workers working from home or near home and the Welsh Government's transport policy hierarchy which seeks to reduce the need to travel in the first instance, followed by active travel, then public transport, then the private car. The strategy also incorporates an affordable housing policy-led element which aims to meet 10% of the Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) need arising from this option on housing sites which deliver 50% affordable housing. Further detail on this scenario is set out in the Edge Analytics Report - Updating the RLDP Demographic Evidence Report, November 2020 - and the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021).

### Delivering the Residential Growth

- x. The overall housing provision figure of 8,366 homes (including an indicative 10% flexibility allowance) will be delivered through a number of housing supply streams. These include existing commitments that have planning permission, Adopted LDP Rollover sites, and an allowance for windfall and infill sites such as barn conversions and development sites that emerge throughout the life of the Plan. Combined these account for 4,708 homes. The remaining 3,658 homes will be delivered on new allocations to be identified in the Deposit RLDP.

### Economic Growth

- xi. The RLDP is underpinned by a level of growth that seeks to address the issues currently impacting on economic growth such as a shrinking working age population and high levels of out-commuting. The Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy provides the policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 additional jobs over the Plan period (481 jobs per annum). It should be noted that not all of these jobs will be in planning B-class uses<sup>5</sup> and will be delivered through a range of sectors such as tourism, leisure and retail. This will be achieved by enabling economic growth through supporting the delivery of the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic

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<sup>5</sup> B-class uses refer to industries such as manufacturing, offices and warehousing.

Growth and Ambition Statement, maximising opportunities from CCR City Deal, targeting growth in key economic sectors and providing appropriate employment land in the right locations.

- xii. Whilst the Strategy projects a significant growth in jobs over the Plan period, it is becoming widely accepted that the fundamental shift in working practices experienced as a legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic, with a significant increase in people working from home/remotely, has made it less important where some jobs are located as employees no longer need to commute for work in many cases. This has provided the opportunity for many people to live and work in the same location via a new remote working approach.
- xiii. The Preferred Strategy aims to build on this shift and the benefits that have occurred during the Covid-19 pandemic, as recognised in Welsh Government’s Building Better Places response to Covid-19. This acknowledges that even when all restrictions are lifted, the impacts on people working from home are likely to have longer term impacts on where and how we work. In this respect, these changes have opened up new opportunities for jobs to be secured through the increased propensity to work from home/remotely, including via community-based remote working hubs. It is expected that the trend for increased home and remote working will continue over the longer term in accordance with Welsh Government’s ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home. While it will not be possible for all employment sectors to work from home/work remotely, policy support requiring broadband connectivity and supporting the provision of local remote/agile community-based working hubs will enable those who can and choose to do so.

### **Sustainable and Resilient Communities Spatial Strategy**

- xiv. The Preferred Spatial Strategy seeks to distribute development across the County in a proportionate manner that reflects and address the aims of the overarching Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy. The level of residential growth will be proportionate to a settlement’s size and amenities and will reflect affordable housing need as identified in the LHMA in both urban and rural areas. The Spatial Strategy seeks to focus new development on the primary settlements of Abergavenny (including Llanfoist), Monmouth (including Wyesham) and Chepstow and the Severnside area, together with a proportionate amount of growth to the lower tier settlements to support sustainable rural communities. The exact distribution of development will follow in the Deposit RLDP following the second call for candidate sites and subsequent site assessments.
- xv. The spatial framework for distributing growth in the County has regard to the overarching principles of Future Wales 2040 by guiding growth towards building sustainable places that support placemaking principles but applied within a Monmouthshire setting to reflect the predominantly rural context. In this respect, the

dominant role of the County towns of Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth and the Severnside Area focused on the town of Caldicot, provide the focus of urban growth within a Monmouthshire context. This will be supported by an appropriate level of growth in the smaller settlements and a number of rural settlements to facilitate the creation of sustainable and vibrant rural communities consistent with the aims of Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities of Future Wales 2040 (February 2021).

- xvi. The Strategy also has regard to Policy 34 of Future Wales 2040 which requires the South East Wales Strategic Development Plan to identify a Green Belt to the north of Cardiff, Newport and the eastern part of the region to manage urban form and growth.

### **Economic Growth – Land Requirement & Spatial Distribution**

- xvii. The Council has commissioned the preparation of an Employment Land Review (ELR). This involves undertaking a review of employment forecasts and land requirements for the Plan period 2018 – 2033. The study recommends that a forecast scenario based on past employment land take-up rates is adopted for the RLDP. This provides a minimum requirement of 43ha of land for traditional B use class industries such as manufacturing and warehousing, including a five-year buffer to allow for choice and uncertainty in forecasting.
- xviii. Employment growth will be directed to sustainable locations across the County, which will assist in reducing the need to travel and levels of out-commuting and promoting self-contained communities which are also key objectives of the RLDP. As above, it is, however, recognised that in light of Covid-19 there has been a fundamental shift in working patterns with an increase in home and remote working, which is likely to continue over the longer term and further reduce commuting levels over the Plan period. The spatial distribution of employment allocations will be set out in the Deposit RLDP and will be consistent with the spatial strategy and commensurate to the level of housing growth proposed for an area.
- xix. Details of employment land allocations and existing protected sites will be provided in the Deposit RLDP, along with criteria setting out the exceptional circumstances in which the loss of existing industrial and business sites or premises will be considered acceptable. The Plan will also include policies that allow for the assessment of non-B use class industries such as leisure, retail and tourism to facilitate job growth in these key economic sectors.

## Strategic Policies

- xx. The main document also contains several Strategic Policies which form the framework for implementing and delivering the Preferred Strategy of the RLDP. A list of policies contained within the Preferred Strategy is set out below:

| Preferred Strategy - Strategic Policies  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth</li><li>▪ S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy</li><li>▪ S3 – Sustainable Placemaking &amp; High Quality Design</li><li>▪ S4 – Climate Change</li><li>▪ S5 – Infrastructure Provision</li><li>▪ S6 – Delivery of Homes</li><li>▪ S7 – Affordable Homes</li><li>▪ S8 – Strategic Development Sites</li><li>▪ S9 – Gypsy and Travellers</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ S10 – Sustainable Transport</li><li>▪ S11 – Retail &amp; Commercial Centres Hierarchy</li><li>▪ S12 – Community and Recreation Facilities</li><li>▪ S13 – Employment Sites Provision</li><li>▪ S14 – Rural Enterprise</li><li>▪ S15 – Visitor Economy</li><li>▪ S16 – Sustainable Waste Management</li><li>▪ S17 – Minerals</li><li>▪ S18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation</li></ul> |

## Supporting Documents

- xxi. The RLDP is accompanied by an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA), which considers the environmental, equalities, health and well-being impacts of the Plan, and a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The ISA and HRA are working documents, updated as the RLDP progresses. The RLDP will also be accompanied by an Infrastructure Plan, setting out what infrastructure is needed to support the development of the allocated sites, and an updated Local Transport Plan and Economic Strategy. Together, these Plans will seek to deliver on the Council's economic ambition and its core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The Deposit Plan will also designate land for protection and identify search areas for renewable energy and will be accompanied by a Green Wedge Review and Renewable Energy Assessment. There are also a range of technical Background Papers to provide additional detail on the evidence and methodologies used in developing the Preferred Strategy.

## Consultation Arrangements

- xxii. Community and stakeholder involvement is invited during the six-week statutory engagement and consultation on the Preferred Strategy between **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July and Monday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021**, whereby comments will be invited on the consultation questions set out in the Preferred Strategy. Our consultation and engagement arrangements have been revised in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and reflect the Coronavirus Regulations (2020) and recent Ministerial advice<sup>6</sup>. We have reviewed the use of digital involvement options to provide communities with information and the

<sup>6</sup> Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid19, 7th July 2020

ability to engage with the RLDP in a virtual manner. Further details are provided in the Revised Delivery Agreement (October 2020). Engagement/consultation will take place via:

- Notifying all parties on the RLDP database of the consultation;
- Planning Policy Officer attendance at Area Cluster meetings during July and August 2021;
- A Members' Workshop in June 2021 (hosted by the Economy & Development Select Committee);
- Scrutiny by Economy & Development Select Committee in July 2021;
- Internal discussions within the Council through an officer workshop, Department Management Team and Senior Leadership Team;
- Two Virtual Engagement Events during July 2021
- Several RLDP Preferred Strategy Drop-in Sessions during July-August 2021. Should there be a further lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic, these drop-in sessions will be replaced by additional virtual events. Full details of venues and dates are available on the Council's Current Consultations page of the website.
- We will seek to engage with seldom heard groups in particular young people, via the Youth Council and going into secondary schools, and Gypsy and Travellers via the GTAA work and reiterating the opportunity to promote sites during the Second Call for Candidate Sites.

xxiii. The closing date for the submission of comments is midnight on **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021**. For details of how to respond to this consultation please see the Planning Policy Current Consultations page on the Council's website. Feedback from the consultation/engagement on the Preferred Strategy will be considered and set out in the Consultation Report on the Preferred Strategy. This consultation report and the Preferred Strategy with any necessary amendments will be reported to Council in approximately November 2021 to seek approval of the Preferred Strategy. The Deposit Plan will then be prepared and considered by Council prior to a statutory six-week consultation and engagement period in Summer 2022.

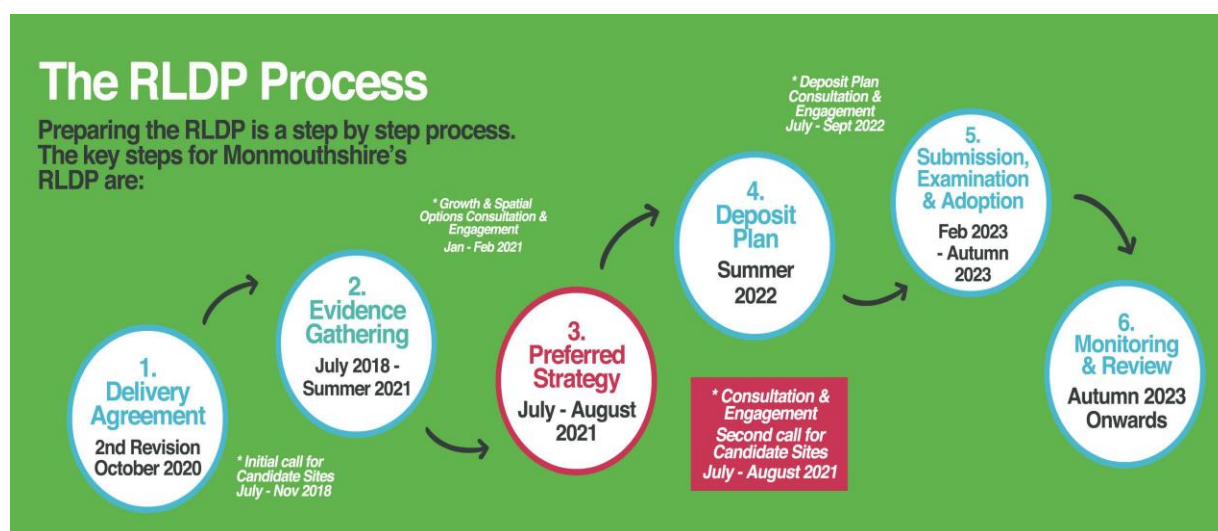


# 1 Introduction

## Replacement Local Development Plan

- 1.1 Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) is in the process of preparing a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) for the County (excluding the area within the Brecon Beacons National Park). The RLDP will cover the period 2018-2033 and will be the statutory land use plan to support delivery of the Council's core purpose of helping to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The RLDP will set out land use development proposals for the County and will identify how much new development will take place and where this will go over the Replacement Plan period. It will also identify areas to be protected from development and provide policies against which future planning applications will be assessed. The RLDP will build upon the current Adopted LDP which covers the period 2011-2021<sup>7</sup>.
- 1.2 The RLDP is being prepared in accordance with the Revised Delivery Agreement (October 2020) which sets out the timetable for plan preparation and the approach to community consultation and engagement. The Preferred Strategy is the first of the statutory consultation stages in the RLDP process. Figure 1 below provides a broad overview of the RLDP process.

Figure 1: Replacement Local Development Plan Process



<sup>7</sup> Ministerial Letter (September 2020) clarified that the provisions in the Planning (Wales) Act 2014 relating to LDP expiry dates do not apply to LDPs adopted prior to that Act coming into force. This means that the Adopted LDP (February 2014) remains an extant development plan for decision-making purposes until the RLDP is adopted.

## Structure of the Preferred Strategy

- 1.3 This Document is structured as follows:

### Executive Summary

**Section 1: Introduction** – Provides a summary of the RLDP process and progress to date, outlines what the Preferred Strategy is/how this is prepared. It also sets out the consultation arrangements in relation to the Preferred Strategy and the next key steps in the RLDP process.

**Section 2: Context** – Presents an overview/profile of the County outlining the key economic, social, environmental and cultural characteristics of Monmouthshire. It also sets out the legislative and policy context and key influences on the Plan.

**Section 3: Key Issues, Challenges and Opportunities** – Provides a summary of the key issues, challenges and opportunities within Monmouthshire.

**Section 4: RLDP Strategic Framework** – Outlines the RLDP Vision, Objectives, sets out the Preferred Growth and Spatial Option (i.e. the Preferred Strategy) and a key diagram.

**Section 5: Implementation and Delivery** – Sets out the Strategic Policies including Potential Strategic Growth Options.

**Appendices** – provide further detail in relation to supporting evidence to the Preferred Strategy, the RLDP Issues, Potential Strategic Growth Options and Development Management Policies.

### Preferred Strategy Background

- 1.4 The RLDP is being prepared in accordance with the Revised Delivery Agreement (October 2020). One of the first key stages of the RLDP process involved the preparation of the Issues, Vision and Objectives. The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper identifies the key issues, challenges and drivers facing the County and sets out the vision and objectives for the RLDP. This paper was subject to targeted engagement in January-February 2019. The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper was subsequently reviewed and amended in June 2019 to reflect relevant feedback from the targeted engagement process and the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in May 2019 and as part of the continued development of the RLDP evidence base.
- 1.5 Subsequent to the preparation of the Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper we progressed with the Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy stages of the RLDP process. A non-statutory consultation on the Growth and Spatial Options (June 2019) was undertaken for a four-week period between 8th July and 5th August 2019 and a statutory consultation on the RLDP Preferred Strategy (March 2020), together with the second call for candidate sites, commenced on the 9th of March 2020.

- 1.6 Progress on the RLDP was paused in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic which meant we could not continue with the public engagement events in the format prescribed in the Delivery Agreement. Following advice issued in a letter from the Minister for Housing and Local Government (7th July 2020), the decision was made to cease the RLDP Preferred Strategy consultation and second call for candidate sites on 20th July 2020. The letter requires Local Planning Authorities to undertake an assessment of the RLDP evidence base, strategy and policies in terms of sensitivity to the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic before progressing with Plan preparation.
- 1.7 A review of the RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives was undertaken in June 2020 and incorporated into the RLDP Review of Issues, Vision and Objectives (IVO) and Evidence Base (September 2020). This review demonstrated that the Plan's Issues, Vision and Objectives remain relevant to Monmouthshire. The review concluded that in light of Covid-19 a number of issues and objectives are now considered to have increased emphasis and importance, consistent with the priorities identified in the Welsh Government Building Better Places document published in July 2020.
- 1.8 At the time of the consultation on the Growth and Spatial Options in July/August 2019 the latest available projections were the WG 2014-based population and household projections. In August 2020, Welsh Government (WG) published corrected 2018-based population and household projections. These constitute a first update since the 2014-based population and household projections. National policy requires that updates to nationally published data, such as household and population projections should be taken into account in the plan preparation process (Development Plans Manual, March 2020, Para. 3.83). The latest WG population and household projections form the starting point for the Plan's evidence base on growth levels, onto which policy choices can be added to ensure that the issues are addressed, objectives met and vision achieved. The updated projections comprise important new evidence that requires consideration.
- 1.9 As a result of the unavoidable delays detailed above with regard to the Covid-19 pandemic, the review of the Issues, Vision, Objectives and Evidence Base, and the publication of updated key evidence the decision was made to revisit the Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy stages of the RLDP. This has necessitated a further revision to the RLDP Delivery Agreement which was agreed by Welsh Government in October 2020.
- 1.10 To take account of the 2018-based population and household projections, a revised Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020) was prepared and subject to non-statutory consultation for a 4-week period in January and February 2021. This Paper sets out a number of alternative options for how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and broadly where this growth should take place, together with the

implications of each option and the extent to which they will achieve the RLDP objectives. The consultation responses to this Paper have been considered/reported in the Growth and Spatial Options Report of Consultation and helped to inform the Preferred Strategy. The Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper complements the Report of Consultation and adds further analysis of the options considered.

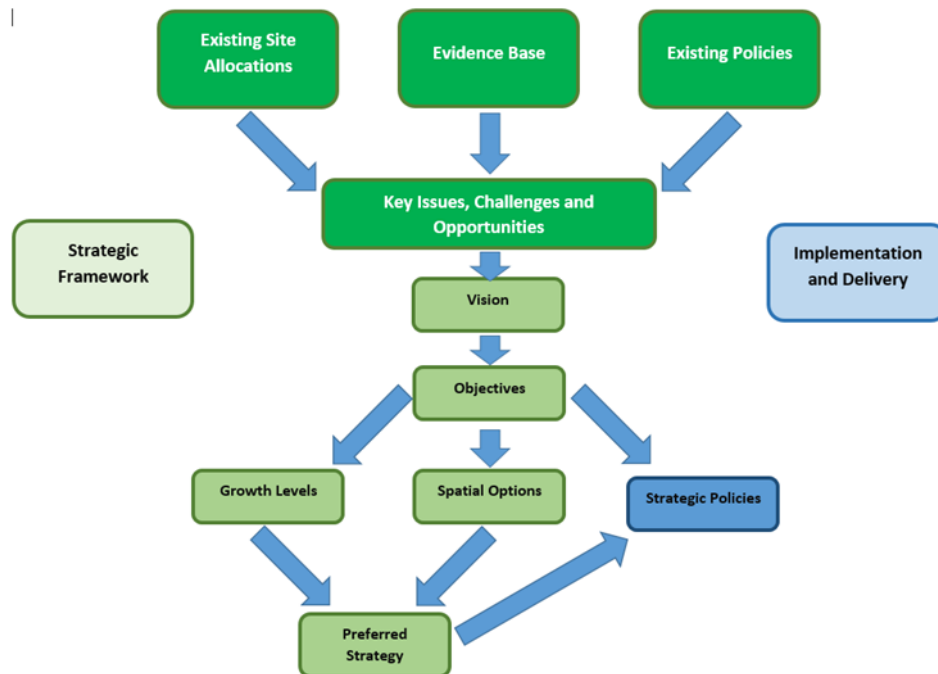
### What is the Preferred Strategy?

- 1.11 Regulation 15 of the Local Development Plan Regulations<sup>8</sup> requires the Council to publish its pre-Deposit Plan proposals (Preferred Strategy) for public consultation prior to determining the content of its Deposit Plan. The Preferred Strategy is the first statutory consultation stage in the RLDP preparation process. It provides the strategic direction for the development and use of land in Monmouthshire (excluding the area within the Brecon Beacons National Park) over the Plan period 2018 to 2033. It also identifies how much growth is needed and the broad locations of where this growth is likely to be. It represents the completion of a period of pre-Deposit Plan preparation and engagement (as referred to above), the outcome of which has had a clear influence over the selection of the Preferred Strategy.
- 1.12 The overall purpose of the Preferred Strategy is to:
- Identify key issues, challenges and opportunities for the County.
  - Develop a vision and set of objectives for the RLDP that respond to the key issues, challenges and opportunities.
  - Set out the Preferred Strategy including the scale of future growth in population, housing and jobs and establish the spatial distribution of growth.
  - Set out strategic policies that will deliver/implement the strategy.
- 1.13 Figure 2 overleaf provides a summary of the Preferred Strategy preparation process.

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<sup>8</sup> The Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended 2015)

**Figure 2: Preferred Strategy Preparation Process**



1.14 The Preferred Strategy provides the strategic context for the preparation of more detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations that will seek to deliver on the Council’s vision of creating sustainable and resilient communities, which will be included in the Deposit RLDP. As evidenced in the Annual Monitoring Reports for the Adopted LDP, it is recognised that many of the Adopted LDP’s policies are functioning effectively and will require only minor changes to reflect contextual changes and updates to national policy.

1.15 The Preferred Strategy identifies the strategic growth level and broad spatial distribution of growth but does not identify any site-specific allocations /designations at this stage. This will be undertaken as part of the Deposit Plan preparation process once the Preferred Strategy has been agreed. Only those candidate sites that accord with the Preferred Strategy will be considered for inclusion in the Deposit Plan.

1.16 What is NOT included in the Preferred Strategy?

- Site allocation, designations and defined settlement boundaries – these will be identified in the Deposit Plan.
- Detailed Development Management policies – these will be included in the Deposit Plan.

- A detailed evaluation of candidate sites. The Preferred Strategy is accompanied by a background paper that identifies those candidate sites that broadly accord with the Strategy. In accordance with our Delivery Agreement, a second call for candidate sites will take place alongside consultation on the Preferred Strategy. A detailed assessment of all candidate sites will be published alongside the Deposit RLDP.

## Supporting Documents

- 1.17 The Preferred Strategy has been subject to an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Well-being of Future Generations Assessment (WBFGA), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) to assess the extent to which the emerging proposals and policies will help to achieve the wider environmental, economic, social and cultural objectives of the RLDP. The Preferred Strategy has also been subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment. The Initial Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Report<sup>9</sup> and Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Preferred Strategy<sup>10</sup> are published alongside the Preferred Strategy. The Integrated Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment are iterative processes and will be updated as the RLDP preparation progresses.
- 1.18 The RLDP will also be accompanied by an Infrastructure Plan, setting out what is needed to support the development of the allocated sites, and will sit alongside an updated Local Transport Plan and an Economic Strategy. Together, these Plans will seek to deliver on the Council's economic ambition and its core purpose to help build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The Deposit Plan will also designate land for protection and identify search areas for renewable energy and will be accompanied by a Green Wedge Review and Renewable Energy Assessment.
- 1.19 A number of additional supporting background documents have been prepared to inform the Preferred Strategy. These are listed in Appendix 1 and should be read alongside the Preferred Strategy as only their main findings are highlighted in this document given the significant amount of data/information they contain. The documents are available on the Planning Policy page of the Council's website<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup>The Integrated Sustainability Appraisal of the Preferred Strategy can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/sa-sea-hra/>

<sup>10</sup> The Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Preferred Strategy can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/sa-sea-hra/>

<sup>11</sup> Supporting Background Papers can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

## How to Make Comments on the Preferred Strategy

1.20 Community and stakeholder involvement is invited during the six-week statutory engagement and consultation on the Preferred Strategy between **5<sup>th</sup> July and 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021**, whereby comments will be invited on the consultation questions set out in the Preferred Strategy. Our consultation and engagement arrangements have been revised in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and reflect the Coronavirus Regulations (2020) and recent Ministerial advice<sup>12</sup>. We have reviewed the use of digital involvement options to provide communities with information and the ability to engage with the RLDP in a virtual manner. Further details are provided in the Revised Delivery Agreement (October 2020). Engagement/consultation will take place via:

- Notifying all parties on the RLDP database of the consultation;
- Planning Policy Officer attendance at Area Cluster meetings during July-August 2021;
- A Members' Workshop in June 2021 (hosted by the Economy & Development Select Committee);
- Scrutiny by Economy & Development Select Committee in July 2021;
- Internal discussions within the Council through an officer workshop, Department Management Team and Senior Leadership Team;
- Two Virtual Engagement Events during July 2021;
- Several RLDP Preferred Strategy Drop-in Sessions during July-August 2021. Should there be a further lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic, these drop-in sessions will be replaced by additional virtual events. Full details of venues and dates are available on the Council's Current Consultations page of the website;
- We will seek to engage with seldom heard groups in particular young people, via the Youth Council and going into secondary schools, and Gypsy and Travellers via the GTAA work and reiterating the opportunity to promote sites during the Second Call for Candidate Sites.

1.21 The Preferred Strategy is available to view on the Council's website and at other locations within the County including County Hall, Usk and the Council's Community HUBs via advanced appointment. Please refer to the Planning Policy Current Consultations page on the Council's website<sup>13</sup> for further details of any restrictions and arrangements that are in place. An Executive Summary and an Easy Read Summary version of this document have been prepared which can also be viewed at the above locations.

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<sup>12</sup> Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid19, 7th July 2020

<sup>13</sup> The Planning Policy Current Consultations Page can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/planning-policy-current-consultations/>

- 1.22 The closing date for the submission of comments is midnight on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021. For details of how to respond to this consultation please see the Planning Policy Current Consultations page on the Council’s website.
- 1.23 Feedback from the consultation/engagement on the Preferred Strategy will be considered and set out in the Consultation Report on the Preferred Strategy. The feedback received will help to inform the Deposit Plan.
- 1.24 It should be noted that this consultation relates to the matters set out in the Preferred Strategy; it is not an opportunity to make detailed comments on individual candidate sites. All comments should relate to the questions included in the Preferred Strategy which are designed to assist with your representation.

### Next Steps

- 1.25 Following the consultation and stakeholder involvement on the Preferred Strategy, the Council will finalise the RLDP and place it on Deposit. Feedback from the Preferred Strategy consultation will be detailed in the Consultation Report on the Strategy. This report must accompany the RLDP ISA Report and the other supporting documents on Deposit, in accordance with Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended 2015). This Consultation Report and the Preferred Strategy with any necessary amendments will be reported to Council in approximately November 2021 to seek approval of the Preferred Strategy. The Deposit Plan will then be prepared and considered by Council prior to a statutory six-week consultation and engagement period in Summer 2022.
- 1.26 Pursuant to Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (LDP) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended 2015), the Deposit Plan will then be submitted to the Welsh Government who will appoint an independent Inspector to examine the RLDP. Having regard to the evidence and representations received during the Deposit consultation, the Inspector must determine whether the RLDP accords with the ‘tests of soundness’ set out in the Development Plans Manual.
- 1.27 Following the Examination, the Inspector will issue a report recommending any necessary changes to the RLDP. The Inspector’s report will be binding and the Council must accept the changes and adopt the RLDP as amended. Once adopted, the RLDP will replace the existing Adopted LDP.



## 2 Context

### Monmouthshire Profile and Overview

- 2.1 This section provides a broad introduction to the Plan area, outlining the key economic, social, environmental and cultural characteristics of Monmouthshire. It also identifies the policy context and other influences on the Plan due to the requirement to have regard to a range of plans, policies and programmes at the national, regional and local level. Of note, the Initial Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report also sets out a full list of policies, plans, programmes and strategies relevant to the RLDP.

### Geographical Context

- 2.2 Located in South East Wales, Monmouthshire occupies a strategic position between the major centres in South Wales, the South West of England and the Midlands. Monmouthshire covers an area of approximately 88,000 hectares (880 square kilometres), of which 3% is defined as 'built on'<sup>14</sup>. Monmouthshire has an estimated population of 94,590<sup>15</sup>, of which around 8% reside within the Brecon Beacons National Park area of the County. The County is bordered by a number of Welsh Local Authorities; Newport City Council to the south-west, Torfaen County Borough Council to the west and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority to the north-west. It is also bordered by a number of English Local Authorities; Herefordshire Council to the north-east, South Gloucestershire Council and the Forest of Dean District Council to the east (on the other side of the River Wye), with links to South Gloucestershire via the Severn Bridge.
- 2.3 The County has a distinctive identity arising from its location in the borderlands between England and the industrial heartland of South Wales. An integral element of Monmouthshire's distinctive settlement pattern arises from its historic market towns and villages and their relationship with the surrounding rural areas. The County has a rich and diverse landscape stretching from the coastline of the Gwent Levels in the south of the County, to the uplands of the Brecon Beacons National Park to the north-west and the river corridor of the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the east.
- 2.4 Located at the gateway to Wales and the Cardiff Capital Region, the County is easily accessible from the rest of Wales and England using a number of strategic routes including the M4 and M48 motorways, the Heads of the Valleys road (A465), the A449, A40 and A4042. Monmouthshire also has four railway stations at Caldicot, Chepstow and Severn Tunnel Junction in the south of the County, and, Abergavenny in the north.

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<sup>14</sup> Corine Landcover Inventory

<sup>15</sup> Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2019 Mid-Year Population Estimate

These provide rail links to the key settlements of Newport, Cardiff and to west Wales, as well as to Bristol, London, Gloucester, Cheltenham, the Midlands and Manchester. A walkway rail station is also proposed at Magor.

### Settlement Pattern

- 2.5 The main county towns of Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow and Monmouth, offer a wide range of opportunities for employment, shopping, community facilities and sustainable and active travel. Outside of these areas, additional opportunities are found at the wider Severnside area and in the smaller settlements of Usk, Raglan, Penperlleni, and a number of smaller rural settlements. Further details on individual settlements and the settlement hierarchy is provided in the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal<sup>16</sup> which has been developed to identify those settlements which are best suited to accommodate future growth in terms of their location, role and function. This has involved an assessment of the current role and function of settlements, as well as an understanding of the relationships between settlements and their potential future roles.

### Natural and Built Environment

- 2.6 Monmouthshire is renowned for its beautiful landscapes and biodiversity resource. As a largely rural County, Monmouthshire has significant landscape resources and is home to internationally and nationally designated landscapes ranging from the Wye Valley AONB to the east and the Brecon Beacons National Park and the Blaenavon Industrial World Heritage Site to the north west. It has substantial biodiversity and nature conservation resources, a number of which are internationally or nationally recognised, including the Severn Estuary which is designated as a Special Area for Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Ramsar Site. The County is also home to four other SACs, namely the River Wye, the River Usk, the Wye Valley Woodlands and the Wye Valley Bat Sites. These are supplemented by a rich resource of nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and non-statutory locally identified Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).
- 2.7 The Monmouthshire RLDP area also has a rich built heritage and historic environment which includes, 31 Conservation Areas, 44 Historic Parks and Gardens, 3 Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest, approximately 169 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and 2,146 Listed Buildings. There is a need to protect, promote and enhance the best of our landscape and heritage which are an important part of Monmouthshire's culture and play a key role in tourism and economic growth.

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<sup>16</sup> Sustainable Settlement Appraisal can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

## Population

- 2.8 Monmouthshire is a predominantly rural County with almost half (49%) of the total population living in wards defined as being in rural areas (i.e. with a population of less than 10,000). The County has a population of 94,590 based on the 2019 Office of National Statistics (ONS) mid-year estimate, with the three primary settlements of Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth accounting for over a third of the population between them at 39%. Caldicot, the main centre in the Severnside area, accounts for a further 11%, with the settlement of Magor/Undy following with 6.4% and Usk accounting for 3% of the population.
- 2.9 In terms of population make-up, Monmouthshire has a median age of 49 years compared to 34 years in Cardiff, and has a significantly higher proportion of older age groups (65+) and a lower proportion of young adults (16-44) compared to the Welsh average. The proportion of our population aged 65+ and 85+ is increasing well in excess of the Welsh average. For the County as a whole, the 2019 ONS mid-year population estimates identify that over 25% of the population is over 65 (compared to 21% in Wales), with 16% under 16 (18% in Wales) and nearly 59% in the working age population group (16-64) (61% in Wales). However, this differs by settlement across the County. The continuing trend for an ageing demographic is one of the key issues that Monmouthshire is facing. Abergavenny, Monmouth, Usk, Penperlleni and Raglan (as well the majority of villages) all have a higher than average proportion of their population in the over 65 age groups. However, a number of settlements also have a higher than average proportion of their population in both the working age and younger age groups including Chepstow, Magor/Undy, Little Mill, Rogiet, Caerwent/Crick, Portskewett and Llanishen. Table 16 in the Sustainable Settlements Appraisal provides more detailed information on this matter.
- 2.10 The relative absence of young adults is often linked to the affordability of housing across the County. Average house prices in the County are high at £297,628 when compared to the Welsh average of £187,477 (Hometrack, March 2020). House prices are also high in relation to earnings and there is a pressing need for additional affordable housing in the County in both urban and rural areas to assist in ensuring a more balanced population. This issue has been heightened by the current pandemic which has demonstrated the importance of ensuring our communities are balanced and socially sustainable, particularly in terms of demography.

## Economy

- 2.11 As the gateway to Wales, Monmouthshire is geographically well connected in a key strategic location with good transport infrastructure linking to the wider region. The County enjoys close proximity to the key growth areas of Cardiff, Bristol, Newport and the Midlands and is only a 45 minute drive to Cardiff and Bristol airports. It is the most competitive economy in Wales after Cardiff and is best placed for growth per capita

(UK Competitiveness Index 2019). Our residents are among the best qualified in Wales.

- 2.12 Monmouthshire is a key partner in the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal. The Council has had notable involvement in the delivery of its first initiative - the establishment of an Advanced Compound Semi-Conductor Cluster. With the recent abolition of the Severn Bridge Tolls, Monmouthshire's relationship with the Bristol City Region is also strengthening.
- 2.13 The January 2020 – December 2020 ONS Annual Population Survey indicated that over 83% (83.4%) of Monmouthshire's population were economically active, 80% of whom were in employment. Both these figures were higher than those for Wales, at 75.7% and 72.8% respectively, whilst the proportion of those unemployed in Monmouthshire was 2.6% compared to 3.7% in Wales.
- 2.14 Monmouthshire has a strong core of agri-food, tourism, manufacturing, digital and tech businesses. The Council's Economic Growth and Ambition Statement<sup>17</sup> recognises the importance of building on this success to generate growth in a spectacular setting. Maintaining the attractiveness of Monmouthshire to its current and future residents and visitors through sustainable growth is a key aim of the RLDP.
- 2.15 The 2011 Census travel to work data reveals that 8.7% of those commuting into Monmouthshire were from Torfaen, with 8.1% from Blaenau Gwent, 6.4% from Newport and 5.9% from the Forest of Dean. The main destination for those commuting out of the County for work was Newport which accounted for 12.1% of all those commuting out for work, whilst 7% commuted to Torfaen and 5.3% to Cardiff. At the same time, 4.5% commuted to South Gloucestershire, 4% to Bristol and 3.3% to the Forest of Dean, emphasising the County's connections with the South West of England. The 2011 Census also revealed that 36.7% of Monmouthshire residents live and work in the County. The removal of the Severn Bridge tolls is likely to have altered these figures. The most recent figures from the ONS 2020 Annual Population Survey reveal that 16.7% of Monmouthshire's working population currently commute to the SW of England for work. Welsh Government's Building Better Places response to Covid-19 acknowledges that even when all restrictions are lifted, the tendency for people to work from home is likely to have longer term impacts on commuting patterns. It is expected that the trend for increased home and remote working will continue over the longer term in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of people working from or near home.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> The Economic Growth and Ambition Statement can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://gov.wales/aim-30-welsh-workforce-work-remotely>

- 2.16 An Employment Background Paper<sup>19</sup> is prepared annually which assesses employment land take-up in the County's Identified Industrial and Business Sites (SAE1) and Protected Employment Sites (SAE2) as identified in the Adopted LDP. As of April 2021, of the 50.12ha allocated across SAE1 sites in the Adopted LDP, just over 33 hectares of land was available for B1, B2 and B8 uses. The employment land take-up rate has averaged 2.1 hectares per annum since the adoption of the LDP in 2014. The results from this annual survey will help to inform future employment land requirements.
- 2.17 In spatial terms, the larger of the employment sites referenced above are located in the South of the County and make use of the M4 and M48 strategic transport routes, with links to South Wales and the South West of England. Such sites include Newhouse Farm to the South of Chepstow and Severnbridge Industrial Estate to the east of Caldicot, the latter accounting for approximately 20% of all Protected Employment Sites in Monmouthshire. In the North of the County, both Abergavenny and Monmouth have employment land allocations which are largely built out. Similarly, the Secondary Settlements of Usk and Raglan have employment land allocations which are predominantly built out. Whilst there is provision in the North, the majority of employment sites are located in the Southern half of the County and more specifically around the M4 corridor and within the Severnside area. Given the increased propensity in agile and home working during the Covid-19 pandemic which is expected to continue over the longer term, employment land demand/requirements may change. However, the RLDP will continue to need to provide a range of sites to meet employment needs to 2033 to support the Council's ambitions and to support the local economy. The spatial provision of employment land will be given further consideration in the Deposit RLDP which will include the identification of suitable employment sites and premises to enable existing businesses to grow and to attract new businesses in key growth sectors.

### Climate Emergency

- 2.18 Tackling climate change is one of the biggest challenges facing our planet at a world wide scale down to the local level. In May 2019, Monmouthshire County Council unanimously passed a motion declaring a climate emergency and in doing so set an aim that by 2030 the Council will reduce its net carbon emissions to zero. This policy commitment strives to encourage and support residents and businesses to take their own actions to reduce their carbon emissions and work with partners to help develop and implement best practice methods in limiting global warming to less than 1.5 °C. The RLDP will play an important role in achieving a reduction in carbon emissions within the County through the allocation of appropriate patterns of development and a policy framework that supports sustainable development principles. The reliance on the private motor car and patterns of long travel to work distances are key considerations in efforts to reducing carbon emissions within a Monmouthshire

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<sup>19</sup> The Employment Land Background Paper – September 2020 can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/annual-monitoring/employment/>

context. However, efforts to tackle climate change are wide-ranging and will require a co-ordinated approach to development including aspects such as active travel, green infrastructure, effective use of land and resources and flood resilience.

## **Influences on the Replacement Local Development Plan**

### **Legislative Context**

- 2.19 The Preferred Strategy has been prepared in the context of several key pieces of legislation which set out the requirements for the emerging RLDP. A summary of this legislation is set out below.

#### **Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015**

- 2.20 The Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (WBFGA) sets the framework for improving the well-being of Wales by ensuring that sustainable development is at the heart of government and public bodies. It aims to make a difference to the lives of people in Wales in relation to a number of well-being goals including improving health, culture, heritage and sustainable resource use. The Act puts in place a ‘sustainable development principle’ and places a well-being duty on public bodies, including local authorities, to ‘act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’. Given that sustainable development is the core underlying principle of the RLDP (and SEA), the Act has a major influence on all aspects of the RLDP. Sustainable development must be carried out to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of the area by contributing to the achievement of the seven well-being goals as set out in Figure 3. The Act also sets out five ways of working needed for public bodies to achieve the seven well-being goals: (1) Long-term; (2) Integration; (3) Involvement; (4) Collaboration; and (5) Prevention. The five ways of working, have formed and will continue to form an intrinsic part of the RLDP’s development.

**Figure 3: Seven well-being goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**



2.21 Explanation of how the wellbeing goals, five ways of working and broader sustainable development principles have been incorporated into the RLDP will be provided at each key stage. The broader sustainable development principles will be demonstrated at each stage of Plan preparation through the five ways of working contained in the Act. The links between the RLDP objectives and Well-being Goals (and Local Well-being Goals) is clearly set out in the Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper<sup>20</sup>. Each Strategic Policy will closely link with and reference the relevant well-being goals which most relate to its purpose and implementation, with an emphasis on maximising social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits to ensure that the Council has fully met its sustainable development duty.

### **Planning (Wales) Act 2015**

2.22 The Planning (Wales) Act came into force in July 2015. It sets out a series of legislative changes to deliver reform of the planning system in Wales, to ensure that it is fair, resilient and enables development. The Act addresses 5 key objectives which includes strengthening the Plan-led approach to planning. The Act also introduces a legal basis

<sup>20</sup> The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper – (Updated June 2021) can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

for the preparation of a National Development Framework (NDF) and Strategic Development Plans (SDP), which are discussed in further detail below.

- 2.23 The Welsh Government have recently published Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 (hereafter referred to as Future Wales 2040) which has replaced the Wales Spatial Plan. This is considered further in paragraphs 2.33 to 2.39. Future Wales 2040 sets out the 20 year spatial framework for land use in Wales, providing a context for the provision of new infrastructure/growth. Future Wales 2040:
- sets out where nationally important growth and infrastructure is needed and how the planning system at a national, regional and local level can deliver it;
  - provides direction for SDPs and LDPs and supports the determination of Developments of National Significance;
  - sits alongside Planning Policy Wales, which sets out the Welsh Government’s planning policies and will continue to provide the context for land use planning;
  - supports national economic, transport, environmental, housing, energy and cultural strategies and ensures they can be delivered through the planning system; and
  - will be reviewed every 5 years.
- 2.24 The Planning (Wales) Act also provides the legal framework for the preparation of Strategic Development Plans (SDP) which are intended to provide a regional spatial framework for the future development and use of land within a defined region. In this case, Monmouthshire forms part of the Cardiff Capital Region and there is broad agreement that this will be taken forward as the basis for the footprint of a South East Wales SDP. This will allow larger than local issues such as housing demand, search areas for strategic employment sites and supporting transport infrastructure, which cut across a number of local planning authorities, to be considered and planned for in an integrated and comprehensive way. Whilst the Council is proceeding with a RLDP, simultaneous collaborative working is ongoing with neighbouring authorities and the broader region to prepare the SDP.

### **Environment (Wales) Act 2016**

- 2.25 The Environment (Wales) Act provides legislation for the environment to plan and manage Wales’ natural resources in a more proactive, sustainable and joined up way, providing an iterative framework which ensures that managing Wales’ natural resources sustainably will be a core consideration in decision-making. It includes an enhanced biodiversity duty which requires public authorities to maintain and enhance biodiversity and to promote the resilience of ecosystems.
- 2.26 The Act also introduced a requirement for Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to produce Area Statements. Monmouthshire is included in the Area Statement for South East



Wales. The overarching focus of the Area Statements is to review the way in which natural resources are managed and used, support ecosystem services and build resilience. The RLDP will have regard to the Area Statement for South East Wales.

### **Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013**

- 2.27 The Active Travel (Wales) Act aims to promote walking and cycling as an attractive mode of transport for purposeful journeys (i.e. to access work, school or shops and services). It seeks to instil a lasting transformation of how developments are planned to incorporate walking and cycling infrastructure from the outset as well as encouraging long term behavioural change.
- 2.28 The Act makes provision for the mapping of active travel routes and related facilities in connection with Active Travel Network Maps. It also requires local authorities in Wales to deliver year on year improvements in active travel routes and facilities to enhance opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists to make meaningful journeys without relying on the car. The principles of active travel are found throughout Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (2021), which stresses the need for the planning system to create an environment and infrastructure for people to walk and cycle.

### **A More Equal Wales - The Socio-economic Duty Equality Act 2010 (2021)**

- 2.29 The Socio-economic Duty came into force in Wales on the 31 March 2021. The Socio-economic Duty further supports the common purpose and ways of working put in place through the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. The Socio-economic Duty Equality Act compliments the Equalities Act by further contributing towards Wales' long term well-being goals, in particular "A more equal Wales" and "A Wales of cohesive communities". Further strengthening social partnership arrangements and advancing fair work ambitions. The Duty requires specified public bodies, when making strategic decisions such as 'deciding priorities and setting objectives', to consider how their decisions might help to reduce the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage. The Duty requires that 'Due Regard' has been given to the need to reduce the inequalities of outcome resulting from socio-economic disadvantage. The Duty applies to strategic policy development and as such applies to the RLDP. To meet the statutory requirements under the duty the RLDP will be supported by an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA), the duty will fall under and compliment the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) as part of the ISA.

## Policy Context

### Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (2021)

- 2.30 Edition 11 of Planning Policy Wales (PPW 11) sets out the land use planning policies and overarching sustainable development goals for Wales, revised to contribute towards the statutory well-being goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. PPW11 secures a presumption in favour of sustainable development and considers a Plan-led approach to be the most effective means of securing sustainable development through the planning system. PPW11 has a strong focus on promoting placemaking, which is considered instrumental to achieving sustainable places, delivering socially inclusive development and promoting more cohesive communities. Placemaking is deemed to be a holistic approach that ‘considers the context, function and relationships between a development site and its wider surroundings’ (PPW 11, 2021, p. 14). PPW11 sets out five National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes (Figure 4, p20) and four Themes which collectively contribute to placemaking (Figure 5, p21). At a strategic level planning policy topics can be clustered around these four themes which contribute individually to placemaking:
- Strategic & Spatial Choices
  - Active & Social Places
  - Productive & Enterprising Places
  - Distinctive & Natural Places
- 2.31 In order to inform the spatial strategy, PPW11 requires development plans to ‘include a spatial strategy covering the lifetime of the plan which establishes a pattern of development improving social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being’ (PPW 11, 2021, para 3.42). The link between the number of homes due to be provided and the expected job opportunities is clearly emphasised, as is the location of any new development in relation to existing or planned infrastructure. This is important to minimise the need to travel, reduce private car reliance and increase opportunities for cycling, walking and the use of public transport. Development Plans are deemed to ‘provide the main means for achieving integration between land use and transport planning’ (PPW11, 2021, para 4.1.5).
- 2.32 PPW11 specifies a well-defined search process to identify development land. Sustainable previously developed land and/or underutilised sites within existing settlements should be reviewed first before suitable, sustainable greenfield sites within or on the edge of settlements are considered. In either case, ‘a broad balance between housing, community facilities, services and employment opportunities in both urban and rural areas should be promoted to minimise the need for long distance commuting’ (PPW 11, 2021, para. 3.50). Significant weight is attached to developing active and social places in the form of well-connected cohesive communities. The Council is committed to a placemaking approach to future development and the

concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods.<sup>21</sup> These are strong, well connected neighbourhoods where people live within a 20 minute walking distance of key everyday services, prioritising mix-type development which combines housing, transport links, public services, workplaces and recreational facilities. The Council intend to sign up to the Placemaking Charter<sup>22</sup> which has been developed by Welsh Government and the Design Commission for Wales in collaboration with the Placemaking Wales Partnership.

### **Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 (Welsh Government, February 2021)**

- 2.33 Future Wales 2040 sets out 11 outcomes which collectively are a statement of where the Welsh Government want Wales to be in 20 years' time (Future Wales, 2021, page 52). Future Wales aims to develop:

A Wales where people live....

1. and work in connected, inclusive and healthy places
2. in vibrant rural places with access to homes, jobs and services
3. in distinctive regions that tackle health and socio-economic inequality through sustainable growth
4. in places with a thriving Welsh Language
5. and work in towns and cities which are a focus and springboard for sustainable growth
6. in places where prosperity, innovation and culture are promoted
7. in places where travel is sustainable
8. in places with world-class digital infrastructure
9. in places that sustainably manage their natural resources and reduce pollution
10. in places with biodiverse, resilient and connected ecosystems
11. in places which are decarbonised and climate resilient.

- 2.34 Future Wales notes these outcomes can be achieved through Future Wales and other Development Plans focussed on the long-term providing quality development in the right places for the right reasons (Future Wales, 2021, page 52). The outcomes are intended to be inter-related and inter-dependent, and are proposed to improve places and well-being across Wales. It notes growth and new development must be in the right place, undertaken in the right way and make efficient use of resources to achieve the Future Wales outcomes.

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.futuregenerations.wales/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/FGC-Report-English.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> <http://dcfw.org/placemaking/placemaking-charter/>

2.35 A number of policies are set out in the 'Strategic and Spatial Choices: Future Wales' spatial strategy section and include:

- Policy 1 - Where Wales will Grow,
- Policy 2 - Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking,
- Policy 3 - Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership,
- Policy 4 - Supporting Rural Communities; and
- Policy 5 - Supporting the rural economy.

Policies 4 and 5 specifically note that the Welsh Government supports sustainable and vibrant rural communities and appropriate proportionate growth in rural towns and villages, adding Strategic and Local Development Plans must develop policies that support rural areas. Where these plans identify growth in rural areas, it must be appropriate and proportionate to the needs of the settlement and the wider rural area they serve, adding that Strategic and Local Development Plans should plan positively to meet the needs of rural communities with regard to housing, transport, businesses, services, digital communications and diversification in the agricultural sector. As a rural authority Monmouthshire recognises the challenges facing our communities and will set out policies to help address them, considering the role that age appropriate housing, employment and home-working, health and social services, places of education, emergency services, shops and infrastructure can play in tackling these challenges and in helping create more sustainable places.

2.36 Policy 3 – Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership and Policy 7 – Delivering Affordable Homes, provide guidance on the Welsh Government's commitment to increasing affordable housing provision in Wales. Both policies provide a framework for reviewing publically owned land to help support the provision of affordable housing-led developments and explore all opportunities to increase the supply of affordable housing. It specifically notes that the reuse of publicly owned land will be important to the delivery of these homes.

2.37 In Section 5 'The Regions' Monmouthshire is included in the South East Wales region, although the indicative national growth area does not appear to extend into the County. The focus of growth is in Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys (Policy 33). It notes that Cardiff is to retain and extend its role as the primary national centre for culture, sport, leisure, media, the night time economy and finance and that Newport is a focus for sustainable long-term growth and investment. Future Wales aspires to promote Newport's strategic role in the region. The Welsh Government also supports co-ordinated regeneration and investment in the Heads of the Valleys to improve well-being, increase prosperity and address social inequalities.

- 2.38 While Monmouthshire does not appear to be included in the South East Wales growth area, Outcomes 2 and 6 support sustainable growth in rural areas and are therefore of particular relevance to the County. The supporting text to Outcomes 2 and 6 state that: *“In rural areas, job opportunities and community services will be supported to help attract and retain people. A balance will be found between development and preserving the character of rural Wales, ensuring our small towns and villages have bright futures as attractive places to live and work. The rural economy will be thriving and communities will be well connected digitally and physically. There will be support for the agricultural sector and its supply chains to boost resilience through diversification.”* And *“Development Plans will have a forward thinking, positive attitude towards enabling economic development, investment and innovation. Increased prosperity and productivity will be pursued across all parts of Wales, building on current activity and promoting a culture of innovation, social partnership, entrepreneurialism and skills-development in sustainable industries and sectors. The culture, heritage and environment of Wales will play a positive, modern role in the economy by attracting the interest and expenditure of tourists and providing a distinctive and trusted brand for Welsh businesses”*. However, it must be recognised that providing job opportunities and sustaining community services will require demographically mixed and resilient communities. Employers will be attracted by a workforce, which in turn requires housing and affordable housing that retains younger people and families. Providing a sufficient range of employment opportunities will also help reduce out commuting from the County and contribute to placemaking. These are key objectives of the RLDP.
- 2.39 An indicative green belt is identified across the south of the County in Policy 34 (Green Belts in the South East). Future Wales requires the identification of a green belt through a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) to the north of Cardiff, Newport and the eastern part of the region to manage urban form and growth. It states that regional plans should consider the relationship of the green belt with the green belt in the West of England. Future Wales states that Local Development Plans and development management decisions should not permit major development in the areas shown for consideration for green belts, except in very exceptional circumstances, until the need for green belts and their boundaries have been established by an adopted SDP. In advance of an SDP, the areas shown for consideration for green belts should be treated as if they have been designated as green belts by an SDP with PPW 11 setting out the circumstances and limited forms of development that may be appropriate in green belts.

**Building Better Places - The Planning System Delivering Resilient and Brighter Futures: Placemaking and the Covid-19 recovery (WG, July 2020)**

- 2.40 This document sets out the Welsh Government’s planning policy priorities to assist in taking action in the recovery period after the Covid-19 pandemic crisis. It states that the planning system should be centre stage in the consideration of built and natural

environment issues that have arisen from the pandemic. The document highlights the key existing planning policies and tools which should be used by all sectors in the environmental, social, cultural and economic recovery of Wales, recognising the continuing need for Planners to operate within a wider context of priorities and action at all scales. Local Development Plans should actively embrace the placemaking agenda set out in PPW, with each plan unique to an area, identifying its character, strengths and areas which need improving and set out policies on how these areas will be improved.

2.41 The document reinforces Welsh Government's commitment to better places, placemaking, quality outcomes and good design and identifies policy areas that should be the focus of consideration and action, in order to act as a catalyst for a recovery. It identifies key issues which bring individual policy areas together to ensure that action is the most effective. The RLDP as a key tool for addressing these issues will play an important role in supporting the post-covid recovery of the County. The 8 issues are:

- Staying local: creating neighbourhoods
- Active travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods
- Revitalising our town centres
- Digital places – the lockdown lifeline
- Changing working practices: our future need for employment land
- Reawakening Wales' tourism and cultural sectors
- Green infrastructure, health and well-being and ecological resilience
- Improving air quality and soundscapes for better health and well-being

#### **Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales (2019)**

2.42 This Plan sets the foundations for Wales to transition to a low carbon nation; setting out the Welsh Government's approach to increasing efficiency and cutting emissions of greenhouse gasses by at least 80% by 2050. This is vital to meeting the requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, thereby contributing to a fairer and healthier society. The five ways of working of the WBFGA guide Wales's decarbonisation action, ensuring effective collaboration and involvement with stakeholders to integrate decarbonisation, limit further effects of climate change and maximise all seven national well-being goals.

2.43 The planning system has an important role in facilitating decarbonisation. Planning Policy Wales' focus on placemaking encourages well-designed development that ensures communities have all the services they need within easy reach. A plethora of other planning related priorities also encourage lower carbon emissions whilst simultaneously creating places where people can live well. These include promoting

renewable energy developments, restricting the use of fossil fuels and incorporating active travel principles (walking and cycling) into new developments. Low carbon infrastructure can ultimately help increase efficiency through the way energy is produced and transmitted, the design and construction of buildings and the transportation of people and goods. All Development Plans must ultimately support these strategic decarbonisation goals to facilitate clean energy and build resilience to the impacts of climate change.

### **Welsh National Marine Plan (2019)**

- 2.44 It is a requirement under the Marine and Coastal Access Act (MCAA) to produce a Marine Plan, the Welsh National Marine Plan (WNMP) is the first marine plan for Wales and sits alongside Future Wales in identifying opportunities and guiding development both inshore and offshore, supporting integrated decision making and collaboration across marine and terrestrial interfaces and boundaries. The WNMP and Future Wales work together to provide a framework for the management of change around the coast. The WNMP contains plans and policies which will support the Welsh Government vision for clean, healthy, safe and diverse seas, guide future sustainable development and support the growth of marine space and natural resources ('blue growth'). The WNMP has informed the preparation of Future Wales and, where relevant, it should inform Strategic and Local Development Plans and planning decisions. This ensures that marine and terrestrial planning work together.
- 2.45 The joined up planning and management of the coastal zone will enable development to understand and be responsive to the challenges that result from the interaction of natural and development pressures in coastal areas. This will help ensure that coastal areas are planned in a socially, environmentally, culturally and economically sustainable way. As an authority which borders the Severn Estuary the Monmouthshire RLDP will need to consider these overlapping pressures to ensure impacts are avoided and opportunities are maximised. This will include impacts on water resources, heritage, landscape and seascapes and from pollution (water, noise, air, litter). There is a need to take into account the cumulative effects of all uses on the coastal environment, promoting the co-existence of compatible activities and supporting the avoidance or mitigation of conflicts between users wherever possible.

### **Regional Context**

#### **Cardiff Capital Region City Deal**

- 2.46 The Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) comprises ten local authorities across the South East Wales region, including Monmouthshire. These local authorities are working collaboratively on projects and plans for the area to seek to tackle issues that affect the whole of the region, such as worklessness and poor transportation links. The authorities forming the Cardiff Capital Region have entered into a City Deal to fund

projects aimed at boosting the competitiveness of the region over the next 20 years. The CCR City Deal will help boost economic growth by improving transport links, increasing skills, helping people into work and giving businesses the support they need to grow. Strong governance has been established across the region through the Cardiff Capital Region Joint Cabinet. A five year Strategic Business Plan to leverage maximum economic and social benefits was agreed in May 2018 by all 10 local authority partners. The plan specifies the regional strategic objectives of the CCR which are:

- Prosperity and Opportunity – building the capacity of individuals, households, public sector and businesses to meet challenges and grasp opportunity, creating a more productive economy;
- Inclusion and Equality – a vibrant and sustainable economy which contributes to the well-being and quality of life of the people and communities in the region now and in the future; and
- Identity, Culture, Community and Sustainability – forging a clear identity and strong reputation as a City Region for trade, innovation and quality of life.

### **South East Wales Metro**

- 2.47 To grow its economy, there is widespread recognition that the Cardiff Capital Region needs major investment in its infrastructure to help it play a bigger role in the UK economy. A regional approach, underpinned by a transformation in public transport, will help to fulfil this ambition, enabling the Cardiff Capital Region to raise its international profile and compete more effectively on the world stage. Monmouthshire, with its existing mainline stations which link to the wider South Wales rail network, will benefit from the Metro project.

### **Removal of Severn Bridge Tolls**

- 2.48 The removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls in December 2018, combined with the wider opportunities associated with the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal agenda, South East Wales Metro and the County's strategic location between the Great Western Cities of Cardiff, Newport and Bristol, offer significant economic and social opportunities for Monmouthshire by removing a perceived economic barrier to businesses entering Wales. However data shows that, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, car use increased markedly following toll removal.

### **Neighbouring Local Planning Authorities: Joint Working and Collaboration**

- 2.49 Monmouthshire as a border County adjoins both Welsh and English Local Authorities. Monmouthshire's neighbouring Welsh authorities of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (BGCBC), Torfaen County Borough Council (TCBC) and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA) are all currently in the process of revising their Local Development Plans. The current Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on the timetables



for all of the authorities. The BBNPA were further ahead in the process having consulted on its Preferred Strategy in July – August 2019. However, following a review of their LDP evidence base in light of the July 2020 Welsh Government guidance the Authority determined that they needed to revisit their Strategic Position. They have recently undertake a consultation on a Revised Delivery Agreement and Towards a Preferred Strategy document which sets out their rationale for revisiting the Preferred Strategy and a shift in their policy focus; the consultation closed on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021.

- 2.50 The timetables of BGCBC and TCBC were closely aligned with Monmouthshire with all expecting to publish their Preferred Strategies in early 2020. However, Plan progress has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, with each authority having published Revised Delivery Agreements. Blaenau Gwent CBC consulted on the Preferred Strategy in early 2020, prior to the Covid-19 lockdown, however, their Second Call for Candidate Sites was subsequently delayed. It is anticipated that Blaenau Gwent CBC will consult on the Deposit Plan in the Summer of 2021. Torfaen CBC also experienced a delay to the Preferred Strategy consultation, with the consultation period extended to allow for Covid-19 restrictions. It is anticipated that Torfaen CBC will consult on the Deposit Plan in Summer/Autumn 2021. Newport City Council began the formal review process of their LDP in October 2020 with consultation on the Review Report and Delivery Agreement in early 2021.
- 2.51 The Forest of Dean District Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan for the period 2021-2041 with consultation on the Preferred Option having closed in January 2021. South Gloucestershire Council has also commenced work on a new Local Plan with consultation on Phase 1 – Issues and Approaches, completed in March 2021. Phase 2 on potential options for growth, protection, site proposals and place discussions is proposed for late 2021. In November 2020 Herefordshire Council took the decision to update the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy.
- 2.52 Monmouthshire is committed to working collaboratively with its neighbouring authorities and a number of joint evidence base studies have been produced to date, with further joint research and evidence due to be commissioned to inform the Deposit Plans. Regular LDP progress meetings are held with these neighbouring Welsh authorities and adjacent English authorities on the emerging development plans.
- 2.53 As part of collaboration with neighbouring authorities, regard has been given to national guidance which requires consideration of a collaborative approach to the site selection process to promote the development of previously developed land. PPW11 states that where a need for new residential allocations is identified, first preference should be given to previously developed land within the authority or neighbouring authorities before consideration is given to greenfield development (para 3.44). As Monmouthshire has few previously developed sites to accommodate future growth, discussions have been held with neighbouring authorities in this regard (including Newport CC, Torfaen CBC, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and Forest of Dean

DC). These discussions have confirmed that there is no scope to accommodate any of Monmouthshire's growth on previously developed sites within these adjoining local authority areas; rather it has been confirmed that any such brownfield sites are needed for each authority's own growth requirements. Notwithstanding this, accommodating Monmouthshire's growth requirements in an adjoining authority area would not address the key demographic, affordability and economic issues/challenges facing the County and, therefore, would not assist in meeting the RLDP's key aim of delivering sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. In view of this, the homes and jobs required to deliver the RLDP Preferred Strategy will be provided within Monmouthshire.

- 2.54 The Brecon Beacons National Park is situated to the north and northwest of Monmouthshire. Consideration therefore will need to be given to the proposed delivery of housing in that part of the County which is covered by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA). Whilst the BBNPA consulted on its RLDP Preferred Strategy in July-August 2019 they have now gone back a stage and have recently completed consultation on a Revised Delivery Agreement and Towards a Preferred Strategy document. Monmouthshire will need to consider the impact of any proposed development within its administrative boundary. Monmouthshire's Preferred Growth Option includes an allowance for the BBNPA which equates to 33 dwellings per annum within the National Park area. At this stage it is proposed that the allowance of 33 dwellings will be met within the Monmouthshire planning area. This position will be further considered with the BBNPA as their RLDP progresses.

## Local Context

### **The Monmouthshire Well-being Plan (Public Service Board) February 2018**

- 2.55 The Monmouthshire Well-being Plan was prepared by the Public Service Board (PSB) which is made up of four statutory members namely; Monmouthshire County Council, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service and Natural Resources Wales. Other organisations are also invited, in Monmouthshire this includes; Public Health Wales, Gwent Police, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent, Monmouthshire Housing Association, Melin Homes and voluntary organisations represented through the Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations. While this work has been carried out on behalf of the Public Service Board rather than Monmouthshire County Council specifically, it identifies important issues for the County as a whole that must be considered.
- 2.56 The Well-being Plan identifies four objectives:
- Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.
  - Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.

- Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.
  - Develop opportunities for communities and business to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected County.
- 2.57 PSB partners are working on detailed action plans, which set out how they will deliver the steps identified in the Well-Being Plan. The prioritised steps for 2019-20 are set out in the 2020 Annual Report, which provides details of the progress made with each of these steps.

### **The Monmouthshire Corporate Business Plan 2017-2022 (Incorporating Well-being Objectives) February 2018**

- 2.58 The Corporate Business Plan is produced by Monmouthshire County Council: our core purpose is to help build sustainable and resilient communities for current and future generations. The Corporate Plan utilises the contributions made to the Well-being Plan along with issues raised most frequently to County Councillors and issues reported to Community Hubs, the contact centre and on the My Monmouthshire App. The Corporate Business plan 2017-2022 sets out the Council's four Well-being Objectives:
- Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.
  - Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of a thriving and well-connected County.
  - Maximise the potential of the natural and built environment for the well-being of current and future generations.
  - Maximise the potential in our communities to develop the well-being of people throughout their lives.
- 2.59 A well-functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places. The RLDP will be an integral means of enabling the well-being of Monmouthshire's communities and achieving these objectives. The links between the RLDP objectives and the Local Well-being objectives is set out in the Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper.

### **Monmouthshire Climate Emergency Declaration (May 2019)**

- 2.60 The Council declared a climate emergency on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2019 and has committed to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C. The declaration agreed is that this Council will:
- Strive to reduce its own carbon emissions to net zero in line with the Welsh Government target of 2030.
  - Develop a strategy and associated action plans to aim to deliver these targets as soon as practicable.

- Continue to review the Corporate Plan, Public Service Board Local Well-being plan, Local Development Plan and other relevant plans and policies to support the above.
- Publicise this declaration of a climate emergency to residents and businesses in the County and encourage and support them to take their own actions to reduce their carbon emissions in line with a 2030 target.
- Work with partners across the County and other Councils and organisations to help develop and implement best practice methods in limiting global warming to less than 1.5°C.

2.61 The RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper was revised in July 2019 to reflect the climate emergency declaration. A report on the climate emergency setting out the emerging actions to address/respond to the climate emergency was subject to political reporting in autumn 2019. Relevant actions will be reflected in the RLDP, recognising that the RLDP will have a key role in implementing a number of the identified climate emergency actions. The RLDP will set out a policy framework which assists in tackling the causes and effects of climate change within our communities through the adoption of sustainable development principles. Efforts to tackle climate change are wide-ranging and will require a co-ordinated approach to development including aspects such as active travel, green infrastructure, effective use of land and resources and flood resilience.

**Vision Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement (November 2019)**

2.62 Monmouthshire has produced a statement to consider the kind of future the Council wishes to create, including consideration of the demographic changes, infrastructure and skills needed to support this while at the same time ensuring environmental impact is limited. The statement reflects national and regional policies including the ambitions for the Cardiff Capital Region, the Council’s Corporate Plan and the RLDP. It focuses on building the County’s economic resilience to ensure the future generations of Monmouthshire have the best chance in life whilst respecting the incredible landscape that makes the County so special. As a consequence the vision of the Economic Growth and Ambition Statement is ‘helping to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations’. It sets out the Council’s aspirations to raise the profile of Monmouthshire as:

- A dynamic place to do business
- A credible place to invest
- An incredible place to live, visit and stay.

2.63 The Statement seeks to lay the ground rules for an economic environment that enables business to land and expand, providing sustainable employment opportunities for local people. A key aim is to attract investment and funding which

will generate the right conditions for an ‘inclusive economy’ - one that is equitable, sustainable, stable, participatory and growing - ensuring that our economy flourishes in a way that is sensitive to the landscape, to ensure that Monmouthshire remains an incredible place to live, visit, stay and invest. The Statement also sets out the implications for our population, young people, economy, environment and housing stock if we do not take action to address the issues and challenges facing the County’s communities. To support this aim the Council published an Inward Investment Prospectus 2020, which highlights what the County has to offer to businesses and employers. The Council is keen to work pro-actively with the private sector and engage with the local market to develop a balanced portfolio of employment sites.

- 2.64 The vision will be delivered through the implementation of four Aims
- Aim 1: A Productive Monmouthshire - A dynamic place for businesses to grow and invest
  - Aim 2: A Healthy and Happy Monmouthshire – An incredible place to live
  - Aim 3: A Prosperous Monmouthshire – A great place to thrive
  - Aim 4: A Welcoming Monmouthshire – An amazing place to visit and stay
- 2.65 The RLDP will have a key role in enabling the delivery of these aims, which will be reflected in the Plan’s policy framework.

#### **Monmouthshire Local Transport Plan (May, 2015)**

- 2.66 The Monmouthshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) identifies the key transport issues relevant to the County, the high level interventions needed to address these and the specific priorities for the local authority. The LTP includes a prioritised five-year programme of projects the Council wishes to see delivered between 2015 and 2020 as well as medium and longer term aspirations up to 2030.
- 2.67 The aim of the Monmouthshire Local Transport Plan is to facilitate and support the development of a modern, accessible, integrated and sustainable transport system, which increases opportunity, promotes prosperity for all and protects the environment; where walking, cycling, public transport and sustainable freight provide real travel alternatives.
- 2.68 The programme outlined in the LTP includes walking and cycling infrastructure, bus network, station and highway improvements, Cardiff Capital Region Metro schemes, 20mph limits and road safety schemes. In accordance with Welsh Government guidance it does not contain specific rail service and trunk road proposals. The LTP will be updated to inform the Deposit RLDP.

### 3 Key Issues, Challenges and Opportunities

#### Key Issues and Challenges

- 3.1 The key issues, challenges and opportunities/drivers facing the County (economic, environmental, social and cultural) are set out in the RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper<sup>23</sup> (Updated June 2021). As part of this process the existing Adopted LDP issues have been reviewed to determine whether they remain relevant for the RLDP. New issues, challenges and opportunities that have arisen since the adoption of the LDP have also been identified, informed by a wide range of evidence including the Monmouthshire Public Service Board Well-being Plan, Corporate Business Plan 2017-2022, LDP Annual Monitoring Reports (2015 – 2020) and LDP Review Report, along with wider contextual factors such as national guidance/legislation and the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal. They are also informed by key sustainability matters which must be developed as part of the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (ISA/SEA) of the RLDP.
- 3.2 A review of the RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives in light of Covid-19 was undertaken and endorsed by Cabinet on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and was incorporated into the Review of Evidence Base in light of Covid-19 (September 2020)<sup>24</sup>. This review demonstrated that the Plan's Issues, Vision and Objectives remain relevant to Monmouthshire. The review concluded that a number of issues and objectives are now considered to have increased emphasis and importance as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, consistent with the priorities identified in the Welsh Government Building Better Places<sup>25</sup> document published in July 2020. For example, the review recognises that lockdown has emphasised the value and importance of place-making and of the provision of locally accessible open/green spaces for health and well-being and recreation. Similarly, the role and function of the high street in the local community has been highlighted as well as ensuring a sufficient supply of affordable housing given the importance of ensuring our communities are balanced and socially sustainable, particularly in terms of demography.
- 3.3 The issues, challenges and opportunities have directly informed the development of the RLDP Vision, Objectives and Preferred Strategy. The issues, challenges and opportunities facing Monmouthshire have been identified and are listed in full in the Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021) and set out in Appendix 2. The Issues have been grouped to align with the Seven Well-being Goals as set out in

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<sup>23</sup> The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021) can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2020/11/Monmouthshire-RLDP-Review-of-Issues-Vision-Objectives-and-Evidence-Base-in-Light-of-Covid.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Welsh Government - Building Better Places: Placemaking and the Covid-19 Recovery can be via: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-07/building-better-places-the-planning-system-delivering-resilient-and-brighter-futures.pdf>

the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to ensure that they are framed within this context. A summary of the key issues, challenges and opportunities is provided below:

- There is a need to tackle climate change and carbon reduction. The Council recognises that we are in a climate emergency and has committed to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5 °C. The RDLP will provide the policy framework to support and enable renewable energy generation and establish requirements for low carbon developments and other sustainable development principles such as active travel and green infrastructure.
- Our population is getting older. By 2033 we will have more old people living in the County but fewer young people. The importance of addressing this issue has increased during the pandemic with renewed emphasis on ensuring communities are balanced, particularly in terms of demography.
- An older population changes the kind of services our communities will need, but also reduces the number of people using and financially supporting businesses and services. We will have a smaller economically active population making Monmouthshire a less attractive place for businesses to locate. This impacts on our future economic prospects.
- We have the highest average house prices in Wales. This means a large proportion of people cannot afford to buy a home so either leave the County, or, have to live with their parents or in shared housing for longer. High houses prices and associated affordability could be exacerbated by the impacts of Covid-19, potentially as a result of increased unemployment but also due to the continuation of home/agile working and increased importance on quality of life/environment. This could influence decisions on where to live making Monmouthshire an even more attractive proposition increasing house prices further.
- We have over 2,000 households identified as being in need of affordable housing. The RLDP will explore opportunities to ensure a range and choice of homes are incorporated within new developments and identify affordable housing-led sites.
- There is a need to consider whether existing employment land is suitably located and fit for purpose for appropriate growth sectors, along with the potential increase in agile and home working and the impact this may have on employment land demand/requirements. We also need to consider future demand in line with Council aspirations and the opportunities that a shift in working behaviour could create with businesses given greater flexibility over where to locate.
- There are opportunities associated with the removal of the Severn Bridge tolls and growth from both the Cardiff Capital region and Bristol region.

- Unemployment levels are low; however, these have increased during Covid-19 consistent with the national picture. Monmouthshire also has a net-outflow of commuters. To address these issues there is a need to provide support for inward investment and local employment growth/opportunities.
- Monmouthshire has a dual economy. The qualifications, skills and earnings of the residents are above the regional and national average, however, for those working in the area earnings are lower and employment is relatively less skilled.
- Vacancy rates in some of the County's retail centres have increased which is likely due to the changing role of high streets, in addition to Business Rates and further influenced by Covid-19 restrictions and the increase in online shopping.
- There are challenges of rural isolation and sustaining rural communities, including regenerating the rural economy. Lockdown has emphasised the value and importance of having locally accessible services and facilities.
- We want to protect the landscapes and heritage that make Monmouthshire a unique and attractive place to live. This key aim has been reinforced during Covid-19 with lockdowns emphasising the value and importance of placemaking and the provision of locally accessible open/spaces for health and well-being and recreation.
- Tourism plays a significant part in the Monmouthshire economy particularly in assisting in the diversification of the rural economy and in sustaining the County's historic town centres. This importance be may enhanced further by the increased demand for 'staycations', with particular emphasis on self-catering accommodation in the short-term.

### Development Constraints

- 3.4 The RLDP response to these issues must be considered and delivered with regard to development constraints that need to be avoided, mitigated and balanced to achieve sustainable development. Specific examples are discussed throughout the policy framework contained in the Preferred Strategy, but examples include the challenge of protecting the best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land given the high proportion of BMV land in the County and limited opportunities for brownfield development. Similarly, areas of flood risk will be avoided for inappropriate development, whilst also being mindful of potential policy changes that are anticipated through the revision of TAN15: Flood Risk (2004) currently underway by Welsh Government. Also of note is the requirement to demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment for developments within the River Usk SAC and River Wye



SAC catchment areas, following recent guidance from Natural Resources Wales. These challenges are discussed in more detail in relation to Policy S8 – Strategic Development Sites.

- 3.5 More generally, the appropriate policy response to the issues discussed above will also have to address overarching sustainable development principles such as placemaking, active travel and environmental considerations including high quality landscape across the County, biodiversity designations and green infrastructure. Collectively these constraints and policy requirements will need to be balanced and will influence the location and scale of development appropriate to different parts of the County.

### Key Opportunities

- 3.6 Having identified the key issues and challenges facing the County that the RLDP needs to address, the following sets out some of the key opportunities to realising some of the issues and challenges.

#### **Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (February 2021)**

- 3.7 As discussed in Section 2, Welsh Government published Future Wales 2040 in February 2021. While this sets out the national development framework and direction for development in Wales to 2040, it contains a number of policies that are considered to be of particular relevance to Monmouthshire providing the national policy context to address key issues facing Monmouthshire. Of note Policies 4 – Supporting Rural Communities and Policy 5 – Supporting the Rural Economy, provide the policy framework to consider how age balanced communities can be achieved, where depopulation should be reversed and allowing for sustainable, appropriate and proportionate economic growth. Policy 7 – Delivering Affordable Homes, also addresses the key issue of affordable housing prices in the County and provides the framework to address this through affordable housing led developments. These policies are considered to provide significant opportunities to address a number of the key issues facing the County.

#### **Building Better Places: The Planning System Delivering Resilient and Brighter Futures. Placemaking and the Covid-19 recovery (July 2020)**

- 3.8 The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in many challenges, but it has also resulted in some significant changes in how we operate our daily lives and use the neighbourhood spaces around us. Welsh Government's Building Better Places Covid-19<sup>26</sup> recovery policy document recognises this, and the opportunity it has created to continue with some of the shifts in behaviour and the increased importance on placemaking that

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<sup>26</sup> Building Better Places – Placemaking and the Covid-19 recovery – July 2020 can be viewed via: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-07/building-better-places-the-planning-system-delivering-resilient-and-brighter-futures.pdf>

have been highlighted as a result of Covid-19. In this respect, the RLDP is recognised as a key mechanism in delivering the planning policy priorities identified in the Building Better Places document to assist in the Covid-19 recovery and maintaining and enabling the sustainable improvements that have arisen from the situation. Examples include greater emphasis on creating neighbourhoods that enable residents to stay and move locally to access most services and amenities through revitalised town centres and the provision of locally accessible green spaces. Similarly, the importance of digital connectivity and necessity to incorporate sufficient infrastructure in developments from the outset has been highlighted, particularly in rural areas.

### **Climate Emergency Declaration**

- 3.9 In May 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency and published a Climate and Decarbonisation Strategy in October 2019. This sets out key actions the Council will take to reduce its own carbon emissions to net zero in line with Welsh Government's target of 2030, but also make a commitment to work with partners and organisations to develop and implement best practice in limiting global warming to less than 1.5°C. As recognised by PPW11 and Building Better Places, the RLDP and its policy framework and allocations provide a significant opportunity to address the causes and effects of climate change. It is recognised that efforts to tackle climate change are wide-ranging and will require a co-ordinated approach to development including aspects such as active travel, green infrastructure, effective use of land and resources and flood resilience.

### **Cardiff Capital Region City Deal**

- 3.10 As set out in Section 2, the overarching economic objectives of the City Deal are to create 25,000 new jobs and leverage £4 billion in private sector investment across the region. Key themes have been identified to focus the approach: Connecting the Region; Regeneration and Infrastructure; Skills and Employment. These strategic themes have implications for the RLDP including:

- Connecting the Region – Digital Strategy: this aims to create a smart region, driving innovation and solutions to attract private sector partnership and investment, including Welsh and regional connectivity, mobile 5G access and maximising open data.
- Metro – the South East Wales Metro Project provides much needed opportunities to increase train service frequency, improve inter-modal connectivity and coordination, streamline ticketing and improve bus services.
- Regeneration and Infrastructure – the Housing and Investment Fund has been proposed to support the need for more homes to be built across the region. This will include assistance in stimulating the SME sector across the region by providing loan development finance and launching a Customer Build Scheme releasing smaller plots of public sector land with a full package of support for SMEs to deliver new homes.

- Skills and Employment – the Skills for the Future Project provides region-wide school engagement with pupils and parents to offer careers advice and guidance, support for businesses to address barriers of participation, including a skills investment fund and a commitment to support delivery of over 10,000 additional apprenticeships, graduate internships and upskilled employees in the private sector.

**Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement and Inward Investment Prospectus 2020: Growing your Business in Monmouthshire**

- 3.11 As set out in Section 2 (paragraphs 2.62-2.65), the Council’s Economic Growth and Ambition Statement and Prospectus set out the aspirations to raise the profile of Monmouthshire as a dynamic place to do business, a credible place to invest and an incredible place to live, visit and stay. It recognises that Monmouthshire’s economy needs to grow to help build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations and sets out the priorities and aims to achieve this vision.
- 3.12 The Economic Growth and Ambition Statement and accompanying Prospectus will work alongside the RLDP and will assist in:
- Raising the profile of Monmouthshire as a key investment opportunity for the private sector.
  - Attract funding and investment to Monmouthshire to attract and facilitate economic growth to the County.
  - Increasing the take up of apprenticeships and reducing the number of residents who are not in education, employment or training.
  - Increasing next generation access broadband and mobile phone coverage across the County.

## 4 RLDP Strategic Framework

### RLDP Vision (2018-2033)

- 4.1 The Vision clarifies the core purpose of the RLDP and provides a framework for developing the Preferred Strategy and future detailed policies. The Vision set out in the adopted LDP 2011-2021 has been reviewed and updated to take account of the issues, challenges and opportunities facing the County and reflects key elements of the PSB Well-being Plan and Corporate Business Plan. The Vision has been reviewed in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and is considered to remain relevant and appropriate.

#### **By 2033 Monmouthshire will be a place where:**

- (1) People are living in sustainable, resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations and are more inclusive, cohesive, prosperous, vibrant and balanced demographically. Both urban and rural communities are well-connected with better access to local services and facilities, open space and employment opportunities.**
- (2) Communities and businesses are part of an economically thriving and well-connected County.**
- (3) The best of the County's built heritage, countryside, landscape and environmental assets have been protected and enhanced to retain its distinctive character.**
- (4) People enjoy healthier, more sustainable lifestyles with improved access to public transport and active travel opportunities and have a minimised impact on the global environment.**

#### **The spatial implications of achieving this Vision will be that by 2033:**

**Monmouthshire will have grown sustainably, with a proportionate distribution of new homes and jobs across the most sustainable settlements, which are supported by amenities and infrastructure with the delivery of affordable housing to meet local needs.**

**Development will have contributed to facilitating sustainable lifestyles by delivering high quality places that promote low carbon developments with an appropriate mix of uses and that are well-connected both digitally and physically to the wider area in terms of character, environment and movement by public transport, walking and cycling.**

## RLDP Objectives (2018-2033): Delivering the Vision

- 4.2 In order to address the key issues and challenges and deliver the Vision, 17 Objectives have been developed for the RLDP which build upon the Adopted LDP objectives and the well-being objectives set out in the Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan. The objectives were subsequently reviewed and revised following the climate emergency declaration. They were also reviewed in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and endorsed by Cabinet (June 2020) and by Council (October 2020) as remaining relevant. Accordingly, a number of the Objectives were found to have increased emphasis and importance in light of Covid-19, these are indicated in Table 2 below using an asterisk against the headline.
- 4.3 The Objectives are considered to be sufficiently aspirational yet also achievable within a spatial planning context. As with the RLDP issues, the objectives have been grouped in alignment with the seven well-being goals as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and are aligned with the RLDP issues, the main policy themes identified in Planning Policy Wales (PPW11) and the Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan objectives, as set out in Table 2.

Table 2 – Replacement LDP Objectives

| RLDP Objective Number                         | Headline  | RLDP Objective   | RLDP Issues addressed   | Main PPW11 theme                   | Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan objective  |
|---|---|--|-------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>A Prosperous Wales (Well-being Goal 1)</b> |   |  |                         |                                    |  |
| <b>Objective 1</b>                            | Economic Growth/ Employment*                      | To support a thriving, well-connected, diverse economy, which provides a range of good quality employment opportunities to enable and encourage indigenous business growth and attract inward investment and competitive innovative businesses in appropriate growth sectors, including through the provision of start-ups and grow on spaces.         | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 24 | Productive and enterprising places | Develop opportunities for communities and business to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county. |
| <b>Objective 2</b>                            | Retail centres*                                   | To sustain and enhance the County towns of Abergavenny, Chepstow, Monmouth, Caldicot and Usk as vibrant and attractive retail centres serving their own populations and those of their surrounding hinterlands, along with increasing the potential customer base through future growth whilst recognising that the role of these centres is evolving. | 8                       | Active and social places           | Develop opportunities for communities and business to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county. |
| <b>A Resilient Wales (Well-being Goal 2)</b>  |   |  |                         |                                    |  |
| <b>Objective 3</b>                            | Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape* | To protect, enhance and manage Monmouthshire's natural environment and ecosystems. This includes, the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the County's other high quality   | 11, 12, 35              | Distinctive and natural places     | Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and                                  |

| RLDP Objective Number | Headline           | RLDP Objective   | RLDP Issues addressed | Main PPW11 theme                   | Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan objective   |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--|-----------------------|------------------------------------|---|
|                       |                    | and distinctive landscapes, protected sites, protected species and other biodiversity interests, along with the connectivity between them by creating new linkages for them to adapt while at the same time maximising benefits for the economy, tourism, health and well-being.   |                       |                                    | adapting to the impact of climate change.   |
| <b>Objective 4</b>    | Flood risk         | To ensure that new development takes account of the risk of flooding, both existing and in the future, including the need to avoid inappropriate development in areas that are at risk from flooding or that may increase the risk of flooding elsewhere and the need to design development to appropriately manage surface water run-off. | 12, 13                | Distinctive and natural places     | Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change. |
| <b>Objective 5</b>    | Minerals and Waste | To meet the County's regional and local obligations to manage and dispose of its waste and to safeguard and exploit its mineral resource in a sustainable fashion.   | 14, 15                | Productive and enterprising places | Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change. |
| <b>Objective 6</b>    | Land               | To promote the efficient use of land, including the need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>maximise opportunities for development on previously developed land, whilst recognising that</li> </ul>  | 16, 17                | Strategic and spatial choices      | Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and   |

| RLDP Objective Number                         | Headline               | RLDP Objective  | RLDP Issues addressed | Main PPW11 theme                   | Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan objective   |
|---|------------------------|---|-----------------------|------------------------------------|---|
|   |                        | <p>brownfield opportunities are limited in Monmouthshire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>protect the best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land whilst at the same time recognising that this will not always be possible given high proportion of BMV land in the County and the limited opportunities for brownfield development.</li> </ul> |                       |                                    | adapting to the impact of climate change.   |
| <b>Objective 7</b>                            | Natural resources      | To promote the efficient use of natural resources including providing increased opportunities for water efficiency, energy efficiency, renewable energy, recycling and waste reduction.   | 14, 15, 31, 37        | Productive and enterprising places | Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change. |
| <b>A Healthier Wales (Well-being Goal 3)</b>  |                        |   |                       |                                    |   |
| <b>Objective 8</b>                            | Health and Well-being* | To improve access for all to recreation, sport, leisure activities, open space and the countryside and to enable healthier lifestyles.  | 18, 20, 21, 33, 35    | Active and social places           | Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.   |
| <b>A More Equal Wales (Well-being Goal 4)</b> |                        |   |                       |                                    |   |
| <b>Objective 9</b>                            | Demography*            | To increase opportunities for the younger population to both live and work within Monmouthshire to assist in ensuring a balanced demography.  | 2, 3, 4, 5, 24        | Active and social places           | Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.   |



| RLDP Objective Number                                      | Headline    | RLDP Objective  | RLDP Issues addressed                                 | Main PPW11 theme              | Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan objective  |
|--|-------------|---|---|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>A Wales of Cohesive Communities (Well-being Goal 5)</b> |             |   |   |                               |  |
| <b>Objective 10</b>  | Housing*    | To provide a level of housing that is sufficient to provide a wide ranging choice of homes both for existing and future residents, while ensuring that local needs for appropriate, affordable and accessible housing are met as far as possible, particularly in towns but also in rural areas, so long as such housing can assist in building sustainable balanced communities. | 23, 25, 26, 27, 28                                    | Active and social places      | Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.  |
| <b>Objective 11</b>  | Placemaking | To promote good quality sustainable places through design, layout and mix of uses that enhance the character and identity of Monmouthshire's settlements and countryside; create attractive, safe and accessible places to live, work and visit; and promote people's prosperity, health, happiness and well-being.   | 1, 11, 12, 18, 20, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35     | Strategic and spatial choices | Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.  |
| <b>Objective 12</b>  | Communities | To build sustainable resilient communities where people have good access to employment, shops, housing, public transport, active travel, healthcare, community and cultural facilities.   | 1, 5, 7, 8, 9, 18, 20, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 35 | Strategic and spatial choices | Develop opportunities for communities and business to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county. |

| RLDP Objective Number   | Headline                             | RLDP Objective  | RLDP Issues addressed        | Main PPW11 theme                   | Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan objective   |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Objective 13</b>   | Rural Communities                    | To sustain existing rural communities as far as possible by providing development opportunities of an appropriate scale and location in rural areas in order to assist in building sustainable rural communities and strengthening the rural economy. | 6, 7, 20, 22, 26, 29, 30, 34 | Productive and enterprising places | Develop opportunities for communities and business to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.          |
| <b>Objective 14</b>   | Infrastructure*                      | To ensure that appropriate physical and digital infrastructure (including community and recreational facilities, sewerage, water, transport, schools, health care and broadband etc.) is in place or can be provided to accommodate new development.  | 12, 19, 20, 31               | Productive and enterprising places | Develop opportunities for communities and business to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.          |
| <b>Objective 15</b>   | Accessibility                        | To seek to reduce the need to travel by promoting a mix of land use allocations and improved internet connectivity, and where travel is required, to provide opportunities for active travel and integrated sustainable transport.                    | 10, 30, 36                   | Active and social places           | Develop opportunities for communities and business to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.          |
| <b>A Wales of Vibrant Culture &amp; Thriving Welsh Language (Well-being Goal 6)</b> |                                      |   |                              |                                    |   |
| <b>Objective 16</b>   | Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language | To protect and enhance the built environment, culture and heritage of Monmouthshire for the future while maximising benefits for the economy, tourism and social well-being, including supporting and safeguarding the Welsh Language.                | 9, 32, 33, 34, 35            | Distinctive and natural places     | Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change. |

| RLDP Objective Number                                   | Headline        | RLDP Objective  | RLDP Issues addressed | Main PPW11 theme               | Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan objective   |
|---|-----------------|---|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>A Globally Responsible Wales (Well-being Goal 7)</b> |                 |   |                       |                                |   |
| <b>Objective 17</b>                                     | Climate Change* | To strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C, supporting carbon reduction through a variety of measures including the use of renewable energy, the design and location of new development, encouraging balanced job and population growth to reduce out-commuting, the provision of broadband connectivity to reduce the need to travel, the provision of ultra-low emission vehicle charging infrastructure to reduce emissions and improve air quality, and the provision of quality Green Infrastructure. | 10, 12, 36, 37, 38    | Distinctive and natural places | Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change. |

\* indicates the Objective has increased emphasis and importance in light of Covid-19

## Replacement LDP Preferred Strategy: Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy

- 4.4 The identification of the Preferred Strategy has been informed by a range of considerations, including the assessment and consideration of the growth and spatial options, responses from the consultation process, the findings of the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA), the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal, the newly published Future Wales 2040 (which is a statutory development plan), the LDP tests of soundness, Welsh Government's Building Better Places, and the pressing need to address the key challenges relating to the County's demography, affordability and the climate emergency to achieve a sustainable balanced deliverable outcome.
- 4.5 The Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy promotes and supports a level of housing and employment growth that will be distributed proportionately<sup>27</sup> across Monmouthshire up to 2033. The Strategy assists in addressing the demographic and affordability challenges facing the County and ultimately seeks to deliver the Council's core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The Strategy conforms with Policy 1 of Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (hereafter referred to as Future Wales 2040) which is the highest tier statutory development plan and supports sustainable growth in all parts of Wales that seeks to address local aspirations and need. The Strategy also meets a key 'Test of Soundness' of ensuring that the Plan's vision and strategy are positive and sufficiently aspirational. A Self-Assessment of the Preferred Strategy against the Tests of Soundness is published alongside this document, which includes an assessment of the Strategy's general conformity with Future Wales 2040. This demonstrates that the Preferred Strategy and the stages undertaken and processes followed to reach this stage are 'sound' and that the Strategy assists in the delivery of the Future Wales policies and is in general conformity with its overarching strategy.
- 4.6 Box 1 below provides a summary of the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy.

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<sup>27</sup> Proportionately' means that the level of growth directed toward a settlement will be proportionate to its population size. To calculate the proportion of development to be directed toward a settlement only the population of those settlements included in the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal has been used to contribute to the total population figure for the County. This takes into account the large areas of Monmouthshire which are rural and as such these areas would not be expected to have any significant development

### **Box 1: Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy**

In order to deliver the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy the RLDP will:

- Make provision for a total of **8,366 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 7,605 homes** (this provision is based indicatively on a 10% flexibility allowance which will be given further consideration and refined at Deposit Stage). This level of housing growth will enable the provision of market and affordable housing in both urban and rural areas and, importantly, provides the opportunity to address the unbalanced demography, improve labour force retention by retaining/attracting younger adult population age groups and assists in addressing the County's housing affordability challenge. Taking account of the existing housing land supply and projected windfall delivery, the RLDP will need to **allocate sufficient land to accommodate 3,658 homes**.
- Provide the **planning policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 additional jobs**. This level of job growth aligns with the projected population and housing growth and takes account of adjustments to household membership rates for key younger age groups and a reduced level of commuting by retaining more of the resident workforce and growing our working age demographic. There has been a fundamental shift in working practices since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic with an increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that this trend will continue over the longer term and in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home is something that we wish to encourage and enable. This provides residents with the opportunity to both live and work in the County in this new way, providing a flexible approach to achieving this level of job growth, whilst also achieving the Welsh Government and Council's aim of reducing the need for commuting. This approach will help to reduce congestion, emissions and pollution, improve the work-life balance for employees and employers, support local businesses/services and enable the creation of sustainable vibrant communities and '20 minute neighbourhoods'<sup>28</sup>.
- Address economic growth and resilience within the County through the **provision of a sufficient range and choice of employment land**. To enable this a minimum of 43ha of employment land will be allocated to support the provision of industrial and business development (classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987), the location of which will be determined in the Deposit Plan. Other key employment sectors including retail, tourism and agriculture will also be an integral part of the County's economy and supported through the policy framework in

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<sup>28</sup> 20 Minute Neighbourhoods are strong, well connected neighbourhoods where people live within a 20 minute walking distance of key everyday services. The RLDP supports a placemaking approach to future development and the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods.

the Deposit Plan. This approach reflects the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic Ambition Statement and Investment Prospectus.

- Distribute growth proportionately across the County's most sustainable settlements. Whilst housing and employment growth will be focused on the higher tiers of the settlement hierarchy, appropriate growth will also be channelled to the County's most sustainable rural settlements to facilitate the creation of sustainable and resilient communities throughout Monmouthshire.

Collectively these measures will help us to fulfil our core objectives and create sustainable and resilient communities where an enhanced economically active aged population can both live and work in the County through supporting/enabling remote and home working and local jobs in a range of sectors. Fundamentally, the Strategy will address the Council's key climate change objectives and reflect national planning policy placemaking principles whereby commuting/the need to travel is reduced and residents can access and support services/businesses locally, thereby enabling sustainable and vibrant communities.

### RLDP Growth and Spatial Strategy Options

- 4.7 The Sustainable and Resilient Communities strategy was arrived at following careful consideration of how much growth (housing and employment) is required over the Plan period (2018-2033) and where in the County this growth should be located, in order to deliver the RLDP vision and objectives identified above. This aligns with Policy 1 of Future Wales 2040 which supports sustainable growth in all parts of Wales that seeks to address local aspirations and need. A number of alternative demographic, dwelling and employment-led growth options and spatial options for the RLDP have been considered and assessed, the details of which are set out in the Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020). This Paper provides a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each option and considers the extent to which they will achieve the RLDP's objectives. The options have also been assessed under the ISA process as set out in the Initial Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Report<sup>29</sup>. This forms an important element in the process of selecting the most suitable growth and spatial options for Monmouthshire.
- 4.8 In order to engage with consultees and stakeholders at this early stage and to help build consensus, the Growth and Spatial Options Paper was subject to a four week non-statutory consultation during January/February 2021. The Paper included six growth options and four spatial options for consideration, and identified the Council's

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<sup>29</sup> <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/sa-sea-hra/>

Preferred Growth and Spatial Options that are considered to best address the County's key issues and challenges and meet the RLDP objectives.

- 4.9 The feedback from this consultation has been considered and is summarised in the Growth and Spatial Options Report of Consultation (June 2021), together with the Council's response to the comments made. Further detail on the growth options, including an explanation of why specific options would/would not meet the Council's ambitions and RLDP objectives, is provided in the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021). This should be read alongside the Preferred Strategy.

### **RLDP Preferred Growth Strategy - Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy**

- 4.10 The Council's Preferred Growth Option has been reviewed in light of consultation responses received to the Growth and Spatial Options Paper. Based on this detailed assessment, the ISA findings, the pressing need to address the key issues and challenges and the need to achieve a sustainable balanced deliverable outcome that has a meaningful impact on the objectives in order to deliver the vision, Growth Option 5 - Population-led projection (with added policy assumptions) – remains the Council's preferred Growth Option. This option best meets the RLDP objectives and is considered to be the most conducive to achieving the RLDP vision and the Council's core purpose of building sustainable and resilient communities across Monmouthshire without adversely impacting on the Council's climate emergency objective, and balancing the impact of development with the County's distinct natural environment. It is also in general conformity with Future Wales' overarching strategy and aligns with a key test of soundness<sup>30</sup> of ensuring that the Plan's Vision and Strategy are positive and sufficiently aspirational (as detailed above).

#### **Strategic Policy S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth**

**In order to meet Monmouthshire's core purpose of building sustainable and resilient communities, between 2018 and 2033 the Plan will make provision for:**

- **7,215 new jobs; and**
- **8,366\* homes to meet a housing requirement of 7,605 homes.**

**The focus of this development will be in accordance with the spatial strategy to distribute growth proportionately across the County's most sustainable settlements, as outlined in the sustainable settlement hierarchy set out in Policy S2.**

\*This figure includes an indicative 10% flexibility allowance, which will be subject to further consideration and refinement at Deposit Plan stage

<sup>30</sup> Development Plans Manual, Edition 3, WG March 2020

- 4.11 The Preferred Growth Strategy makes provision for a total of 8,366 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 7,605 homes over the Plan period 2018-2033 (this provision is based indicatively on a 10% flexibility allowance which will be given further consideration and refined at Deposit Stage). This results in a growth of the County's population of 12,443 (13.2%) and households of 7,255 (18.1%) over the Plan period.
- 4.12 The Strategy is based on a population-led scenario with added policy assumptions to address the County's key demographic and affordability issues. The policy assumptions adjust in-migration rates to reflect local trends over a five year period (2015-2020) to take into account the removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls, increase the household formation rates for three key younger age groups and reduce the commuting ratio to reflect the Council's aim of addressing the unbalanced demographic in the County by retaining younger age groups and reducing out-commuting. The reduction in commuting also aligns with Welsh Government's long-term ambition of 30% of Welsh workers working from or near home,<sup>31</sup> and the Welsh Government's transport policy hierarchy which seeks to reduce the need to travel in the first instance, followed by active travel, then public transport, then the private car.
- 4.13 The Strategy also incorporates an affordable housing policy-led element, which aims to meet 10% of the Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) need on housing sites which deliver 50% affordable housing. This is considered to represent an appropriate starting point for the affordable housing policy-led element as it is widely accepted that the affordable housing need identified in the LHMA is beyond the scope of the development plan process to deliver in isolation and the resultant housing requirement addresses the RLDP issues/objectives and performs well against the ISA themes. Further detail on this scenario is set out in the Edge Analytics Report - Updating the RLDP Demographic Evidence, November 2020, the Edge Analytics Report - The Affordable Housing Evidence, November 2020 and the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper, June 2021.
- 4.14 It is recognised that in order to create sustainable and resilient communities we must seek to achieve a more balanced age structure and enable those people who are currently unable to afford to buy or rent a home to remain in the County. The Preferred Growth Strategy assists in addressing these key demographic and affordability challenges.
- 4.15 Given the RLDP's key role in strengthening the local economy and ensuring an appropriate economic base for people to live and work in the County, the Preferred Growth Strategy seeks to address the unbalanced demographic in the County by retaining the younger age groups and reducing out-commuting. It aims to create a more balanced population structure to ensure that the County has a sufficient population base of working aged people to support the economy and to ensure our

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<sup>31</sup> <https://gov.wales/aim-30-welsh-workforce-work-remotely>



communities are sustainable and resilient, and to provide a level of growth that can provide opportunities for younger people to both stay in and move to the area. Addressing these key issues is directly relevant to achieving Policy 4 of Future Wales 2040 which states that policies should consider how age balanced communities can be achieved, where depopulation should be reversed and consider the role of new affordable and market housing, employment opportunities, local services and greater mobility in tackling these challenges. Similarly, Policy 5 – Supporting the Rural Economy – seeks to support sustainable, appropriate and proportionate growth in a range of sectors including the foundational sector and emerging technology businesses to help rural areas unlock their potential and provide an economic base to retain a more balanced population.

- 4.16 The Strategy begins to address the unbalanced and ageing demographic in the County with an uplift in the 0-19 and 30-49 age groups. The retention and provision of more established households in the 30-49 age groups will assist in achieving a younger, economically active population and in counter-balancing the ageing population, ensuring the social, cultural and economic sustainability of our communities. The projected increase in one and two-person (no children) households in the most absolute terms over the Plan period (25.5% and 16.1% respectively) will also assist in addressing the issues/challenges around demography. The Strategy will consequently assist in ensuring our communities are balanced and socially sustainable, particularly in terms of demography, which is a key RLDP objective and the importance of which has been clearly demonstrated during the current pandemic.
- 4.17 The Preferred Growth Strategy also seeks to address housing affordability which is one of the most fundamental challenges facing Monmouthshire’s communities. High average house prices<sup>32</sup> and high house prices in relation to earnings in the County has resulted in a pressing need for affordable housing. Consequently, a significant proportion of people cannot afford to buy or rent a home so either leave the County, or have to live with their parents or in shared housing for longer. The current pandemic has further increased the need for affordable homes and revealed the extent of hidden homelessness in the County. The Minister for Housing and Local Government has announced that post-Covid-19, no-one should return to the streets and Welsh Government’s Building Better Places response to Covid-19 also highlights how the delivery of new social and market housing can make a significant contribution to economic recovery and social cohesion.
- 4.18 In order to address this issue, the Preferred Growth Strategy incorporates an affordable housing policy-led element. This will assist in addressing this fundamental challenge by providing opportunities to retain/house those in need of affordable homes<sup>33</sup>. Sensitivity testing was undertaken as part of the Growth and Spatial Options

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<sup>32</sup> £297,628 March 2020, Hometrack

<sup>33</sup> Affordable housing as defined in Technical Advice Note 2 Planning and Affordable Housing (WG, 2006)

work in relation to affordable housing, the aim of which was to address the key issues associated with housing affordability in the County. These dwellings will be delivered on sites comprising at least 50% affordable housing and will meet 10% of the total affordable housing need within the County identified by Monmouthshire's Local Housing Market Assessment 2020<sup>34</sup>. This element of the Strategy will deliver approximately 1,551 homes over the Plan period (divided equally between affordable and market homes, including 10% flexibility allowance). This approach will help to explicitly address the key housing affordability issue in the County (RLDP Objectives 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13) and is consistent with Policy 7 of Future Wales 2040 (Welsh Government, February 2021) which requires local planning authorities to identify sites for affordable housing-led developments in response to local needs.

- 4.19 All opportunities to increase the supply of affordable housing will be explored and in considering site allocations, site promoters will be required to demonstrate that sites assist in meeting the Plan's objectives in addition to being viable and deliverable. Sites associated with the affordable housing policy-element growth will need to demonstrate that they are viable and deliverable with the provision of 50% affordable housing on site. These sites will be specifically included within the Strategy to provide a higher proportion of affordable housing to address the key issue of affordability in line with the requirements outlined within Future Wales 2040. All other sites will need to demonstrate that they are viable and deliverable based on the affordable housing thresholds that will emerge as part of the high-level viability appraisal being undertaken to establish the appropriate affordable housing thresholds. This will be a key consideration in the Plan preparation process.
- 4.20 In terms of economic growth, the RLDP is underpinned by a level of growth that seeks to address the issues currently impacting on economic growth such as a shrinking working age population and high levels of out commuting. The Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy provides the planning policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 additional jobs over the Plan period (481 jobs per annum). It should be noted that not all of these jobs will be in planning B-class uses: jobs will be delivered through a range of sectors such as tourism, leisure and retail. Supporting job growth in the County will also reduce the need to travel and travel to work distances, which will assist in addressing our challenges in relation to climate change.
- 4.21 Whilst the Strategy projects a significant growth in jobs over the Plan period, it is becoming widely accepted that the fundamental shift in working practices experienced as a legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic, with a significant increase in people working from home/remotely, has made it less important where some jobs are located as employees no longer need to commute for work in many cases. This has

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<sup>34</sup> Meeting 10% of the need identified in the LHMA on sites where at least 50% of the homes are affordable forms a starting point, the 10% target may be refined in light of the evidence as we progress through the Plan process.

provided the opportunity for many people to live and work in the same location via a new remote working approach.

- 4.22 The Preferred Strategy therefore aims to build on this shift and the benefits that have occurred during the Covid-19 pandemic, as recognised in Welsh Government's Building Better Places response to Covid-19. This acknowledges that even when all restrictions are lifted, the impacts on people working from home are likely to have longer term impacts on where and how we work. In this respect, these changes have opened up new opportunities for jobs to be secured through the increased propensity to work from home/remotely, including via community-based remote working hubs. It is expected that the trend for increased home and remote working will continue over the longer term in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home, making it less important where the jobs are located as commuting is reduced as a result of changing working habits.
- 4.23 Increased remote/home working will mean both employers and employees will have greater flexibility over where to locate with quality of life and environment potentially becoming increasingly important to Monmouthshire's benefit. Monmouthshire is a very attractive proposition and stands to gain from an increased economically active population without the associated problems of increased commuting, and local businesses and services would benefit from increased custom and footfall with workers spending their wages in local businesses and supporting local services helping to create vibrant neighbourhoods and sense of place.
- 4.24 The Covid-19 pandemic has also affected home-buying trends with an emphasis on quality of life, house size and access to outdoor green space rather than a focus on commuting times. Monmouthshire is a very attractive proposition and stands to gain from an increased economically active population without the associated problems of increased commuting. Local businesses and services would benefit from increased custom and footfall with workers spending their wages in local businesses rather than in the town/city in which they previously worked, helping to create vibrant neighbourhoods and sense of place. Appropriately located growth will increase the customer base and workforce supporting local facilities, businesses and services. Notwithstanding this, there remains a need to provide a sufficient range and choice of employment land in the County as not all businesses are able to operate remotely. To enable this the RLDP will allocate a minimum of 43ha of employment land, the location of which will be determined in the Deposit Plan.
- 4.25 The Preferred Growth Strategy promotes sustainable economic growth that will help reduce levels of commuting and promote self-contained communities, ensuring the environmental and economic sustainability of our communities. This will be achieved by providing policy support to enable and facilitate home/remote working, enabling economic growth through supporting the delivery of the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic Growth and Ambition Statement, Investment Prospectus

and climate emergency declaration, maximising opportunities from Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, targeting growth in key economic sectors and providing appropriate employment land in the right locations. Further information on employment land provision is set out in Strategic Policy S13.

- 4.26 Overall, the Preferred Growth Strategy will support the growth of sustainable and resilient communities in the County up to 2033, will assist in meeting the Council's ambitions and aspirations and align with proposed key elements of the RLDP objectives (as detailed in the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper). It will enable the provision of a sufficient range and choice of homes, both market and affordable, the need for which has been heightened by the current pandemic. The level of growth will also help support the rural economy and assist in addressing rural isolation. The increased reliance on access to local facilities and services during the current pandemic, has highlighted their importance to our communities. Policy interventions are likely to be required to ensure the housing mix achieves the objective of demographic balance and that carbon emissions are minimised. The Preferred Growth Strategy performs positively against the ISA themes relating to population and communities, health and well-being, economy/employment, transport and equalities. The Strategy also conforms with Policy 1 of Future Wales 2040 and meets a key 'Test of Soundness' of ensuring that the Plan's vision and strategy are positive and sufficiently aspirational (as detailed above).
- 4.27 A summary of the implications of the preferred growth strategy on population, households, dwellings and employment levels over the Plan period is set out in Table 4 below.

**Table 4: Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy – Summary of the Implications for Population, Households, Dwellings and Employment**

| Preferred Growth Strategy | Change 2018 – 2033     |                          |                        |                          | Average per year |                       |                | Total 2018-2033       |                |
|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                           | Increase in Population | % Increase in Population | Increase in Households | % Increase in Households | Net Migration*   | Number of Dwellings** | Number of Jobs | Number of Dwellings** | Number of Jobs |
|                           | 12,443***              | 13.2%***                 | 7,255                  | 18.1%                    | 1,223***         | 507                   | 481***         | 7,605                 | 7,215***       |

\* The net migration rate is the difference between the number of people moving into the County and the number of people leaving the County. When the number of people coming in is larger than the number of people leaving a positive net migration rate occurs.

\*\*Excluding 10% flexibility allowance

\*\*\*These figures only include the market element of the Affordable Housing Policy-led growth as the affordable housing need figure is derived from the LHMA and represents people already living and working in the County. As such, these people are already factored into the residential population and would not impact on population or job numbers.

Source: Monmouthshire Updating the RLDP Demographic Evidence, Edge Analytics November 2020

| <b>S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth - Links to Wider Policy Framework</b> |   |
|--|---|
| RLDP Objectives  | Objective 1 – Economic Growth/Employment<br>Objective 9 – Demography<br>Objective 10 – Housing<br>Objective 11 – Placemaking<br>Objective 12 – Communities<br>Objective 13 – Rural Communities<br>Objective 15 – Accessibility  |
| Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)                                 | Policy 1 – Where Wales will Grow<br>Policy 3 – Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership<br>Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities<br>Policy 5 – Supporting the Rural Economy<br>Policy 7 – Delivering Affordable Homes<br>Policy 34 - Green Belts in the South East     |
| Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)                                     | Strategic and Spatial Choices Theme (Chapter 3)   |
| Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)   | Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations:<br>Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (Page 14)<br>Changing working practices: our future need for employment land (Page 20)  |
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)                                  | A prosperous Wales<br>A resilient Wales<br>A more equal Wales<br>A Wales of cohesive communities  |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.</li> <li>• Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.</li> </ul>   |
| Key Evidence   | Growth and Spatial Options Paper – December 2020<br>Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper – June 2021<br>Growth and Spatial Options Report of Consultation – June 2021<br>Updating the RLDP Demographic Evidence Report, Edge Analytics November 2020<br>Housing Background Paper – June 2021 |
| Monitoring   | TBC   |
| Detailed Policies  | TBC in Deposit RLDP   |

## Replacement LDP Spatial Options

- 4.28 As well as setting out the preferred level of growth required over the Plan period, the RLDP must also put forward a clear spatial strategy for where this growth should be located in the County. Growth should be directed towards the County's most sustainable settlements to enable sustainable placemaking and to deliver the Council's core purpose of helping to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations.
- 4.29 Given the predominantly rural character of Monmouthshire, it is clear that some settlements have more potential to facilitate sustainable placemaking and to accommodate growth than others. The ability of settlements to accommodate growth is also dependent on their role, function, infrastructure, connectivity and capacity. Reflecting PPW11 and the Plan's aim of creating sustainable and resilient communities, a Sustainable Settlement Appraisal<sup>35</sup> has been prepared to identify those settlements which are best suited to accommodate future growth in terms of their location, role and function. This has involved an assessment of the current role and function of settlements, as well as an understanding of the relationships between settlements and their potential future roles. This appraisal should be read alongside the Preferred Strategy.
- 4.30 The methodology used for the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal is based on the approach set out in the draft South East Wales Strategic Planning Group (SEWSPG) Pathfinder Group Sustainable Settlement Appraisal Paper (SSAP), with some localised refinements to reflect Monmouthshire's rural character. Regard has also been had to relevant guidance set out in the Development Plans Manual (WG, March 2020). A total of 55 settlements have been assessed as part of the appraisal, which considers a range of factors to help establish a sustainable settlement hierarchy that can identify the most appropriate locations to accommodate future growth. To this end, the assessment is based on three guiding principles and further refined to take account of population and settlement size:
- Principle 1 – The level of sustainable transport and accessibility in and around settlements.
  - Principle 2 – The availability of local facilities and services in and around settlements.
  - Principle 3 – The level of employment opportunities in and around settlements.
- 4.31 This appraisal has enabled settlements to be grouped into different tiers based upon their role and function and has helped to inform the Plan's settlement hierarchy which is set out in Policy S2. However, it should be noted that the results of this assessment

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<sup>35</sup>The Sustainable Settlement Appraisal can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

will form part of a larger evidence base and whilst it will give some indication of the relative sustainability of the settlements, there are other criteria that will also need to be taken into consideration. For instance, any decisions on whether or not to allocate particular sites for development in the settlements will also depend on such issues as their impact on the physical form of the settlement, landscape setting, environmental constraints, infrastructure capacity and placemaking.

- 4.32 As part of the RLDP process, settlement boundaries (where relevant) will be reviewed in accordance with the settlement hierarchy, having regard to growth requirements and the Preferred Strategy. Development proposals will be directed to the most appropriate settlements at a scale commensurate with their role/function, environmental sensitivities and community needs, including affordable housing need. The boundary review will demarcate the extent of the built settlements from the countryside and provide certainty as to where appropriate development will be permitted. Where possible, the RLDP will prioritise the re-use/redevelopment of brownfield land, although it is recognised that such opportunities are limited in Monmouthshire.
- 4.33 Housing and employment opportunities need to be well-connected to ensure that the Council's placemaking aspirations are met and to reduce the need to travel. The Strategy assumes that housing development without employment opportunities in the same broad locations (and vice versa) is less sustainable and should be avoided. However, given the predominantly rural nature of the County this will not always be achievable. The fundamental shift in working patterns experienced as a legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic has also made it less important where some jobs are located as employees no longer need to commute for work. This shift has/will continue to open up new opportunities for jobs to be secured through the increased propensity to work from home/remotely, including via community-based remote working hubs. Infrastructure improvements must be aligned with new developments, including improvements to transport networks, green infrastructure, utilities, health, education and social facilities. Therefore, the terms 'growth and development' refer to the balance of housing, employment opportunities and accompanying infrastructure.
- 4.34 Within the framework of the settlement hierarchy, four spatial options have been considered and assessed as a means of accommodating future growth (housing and employment) in the County, as detailed in the Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020)<sup>36</sup>. The Paper identified the Preferred Spatial Option that is considered to best address the County's key issues and challenges and meet the RLDP objectives. The Paper provides a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each spatial option, along with a map to portray a spatial illustration, and considers

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<sup>36</sup> The Growth and Spatial Options Paper can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/plan-preparation/growth-and-spatial-options/>



the extent to which each option will achieve the RLDP's objectives. The options have also been assessed under the ISA process as set out in the Initial Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Report<sup>37</sup>. This forms an important element in the process of selecting the most suitable spatial option for Monmouthshire. As noted above, the Growth and Spatial Options Paper was subject to non-statutory consultation and engagement for a four week period between January and February 2021.

- 4.35 Further detail on the spatial options, including an explanation of why specific options would/would not meet the Council's ambitions and RLDP objectives, is provided in the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021)<sup>38</sup>. This should be read alongside the Preferred Strategy.

### Replacement LDP Preferred Spatial Strategy

The Preferred Spatial Option has been reviewed in light of consultation responses received as part of the stakeholder engagement. Based on this detailed assessment, the ISA findings, the pressing need to address the key challenges and the need to achieve a sustainable balanced deliverable outcome that has a meaningful impact on the objectives in order to deliver the vision, Spatial Option 2 - Distribute Growth Proportionately across the County's most Sustainable Settlements – remains the Council's preferred Spatial Option.

- 4.36 The Preferred Spatial Strategy seeks to distribute development across the County in a proportionate manner that reflects and addresses the aims of the overarching Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy. It will distribute growth across Primary Settlements, Secondary Settlements, Severnside and those Rural Settlements identified as having capacity for growth and/or in need of development to sustain them, including a small amount of development in the most sustainable Rural Settlements to bring forward affordable housing. The level of growth will be proportionate to a settlement's size and amenities, and will reflect affordable housing need as identified in the LHMA in both urban and rural areas – further details on this are provided in the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal<sup>39</sup> and Housing Background Paper<sup>40</sup>. This Spatial Strategy provides a land use framework that will help to deliver the Council's core purpose of building sustainable and resilient communities for current and future generations.

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<sup>37</sup> The Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report can be viewed <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/sa-sea-hra/>

<sup>38</sup> The Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

<sup>39</sup> The Sustainable Settlement Appraisal can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

<sup>40</sup> The Housing Background Paper can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

- 4.37 As such, the focus of growth will be channelled towards the most sustainable settlements that benefit from significant services, facilities, employment opportunities and active travel networks. The increased reliance on access to local facilities and services during the current pandemic has highlighted the importance of these to our communities. Importantly, the Preferred Spatial Strategy also allows some growth in the County's most sustainable rural settlements to support/enhance such areas, to bring forward affordable housing and address rural isolation. This is imperative given the predominantly rural nature of the County.
- 4.38 The Preferred Spatial Strategy provides the opportunity for a sufficient range and choice of homes, both market and affordable, and jobs to be provided throughout the County. Housing growth will be distributed proportionately and reflect affordable housing need in both urban and rural areas. This will assist in ensuring our communities are balanced and socially sustainable, particularly in terms of demography, which is a key RLDP objective and the importance of which has been clearly demonstrated during the current pandemic. Likewise, employment growth will be directed to sustainable locations across the County, which will assist in reducing the need to travel and levels of out-commuting, and promoting self-contained communities which are also key objectives of the RLDP. It is, however, recognised that in light of the Covid-19 pandemic there has been an increase in home and remote working which is likely to continue over the longer term<sup>41</sup> and further reduce commuting levels over the Plan period (as detailed above). The Plan will seek to create a planning policy framework that will facilitate/enable remote working opportunities and emerging ideas such as local working hubs.
- 4.39 The spatial framework for distributing growth in the County has regard to the overarching principles of Future Wales 2040 by guiding growth towards building sustainable places that support placemaking principles but applied within a Monmouthshire setting to reflect the predominantly rural context. In this respect, the dominant role of the County towns of Abergavenny, Chepstow, Monmouth and Severnside Area focused around the town of Caldicot, provide the focus of urban growth within a Monmouthshire context. This will be supported by an appropriate level of growth in the smaller settlements and a number of rural settlements to facilitate the creation of sustainable and vibrant rural communities consistent with the aims of Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities of Future Wales 2040 (February 2021).

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<sup>41</sup> Welsh Government announced in September 2020 that they have a long-term ambition for around 30% of the Welsh workforce to work remotely either from home or near to home using community-based remote working hubs <https://gov.wales/aim-30-welsh-workforce-work-remotely>

## Sustainable and Resilient Communities Spatial Strategy

| Strategic Policy S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy  |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p>In order to deliver sustainable and resilient communities, the main focus for new development will be distributed based on the following settlement hierarchy:</p> |  |  |   |
|   |  | <b>Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy</b>      |   |
|   |  | <b>Indicative Distribution of Residential Growth*</b>      | <b>Distribution of Employment Growth</b>                    |
| <b>Settlement Hierarchy</b>   |  | <b>Indicative % of distribution</b>                        | <b>Indicative No. of homes</b>                              |
| <b>Tier 1</b>   | <b>Primary Settlements:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abergavenny (inc. Llanfoist)</li> <li>• Chepstow</li> <li>• Monmouth (inc. Wyesham)</li> </ul>  | <b>23%</b><br><br><b>18%</b><br><br><b>17%</b>             | <b>1,893</b><br><br><b>1,521</b><br><br><b>1,418</b>        |
| <b>Tier 2</b>   | <b>Severnside Area comprising of:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caldicot</li> <li>• Caerwent</li> <li>• Crick</li> <li>• Magor Undy</li> <li>• Portskewett</li> <li>• Rogiet</li> <li>• Sudbrook</li> </ul> | <b>28%</b><br>across Severnside Area                       | <b>2,323</b><br>across Severnside Area                      |
| <b>Tier 3</b>   | <b>Secondary Settlements:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Penperlleni</li> <li>• Raglan</li> <li>• Usk</li> </ul>   | <b>5%</b><br>across Secondary Settlements                  | <b>449</b><br>across Secondary Settlements                  |
| <b>Tier 4</b>   | <b>Main Rural Settlements:</b><br><br>Devauden<br>Dingestow<br>Little Mill<br>Llandogo<br>Llanellen<br>Llangybi<br>Llanishen<br>Llanover<br>Llanvair Discoed<br>Llanvapley<br>Mathern<br>Penallt<br>Pwllmeyric             | <b>9%</b><br>across Main Rural and Minor Rural Settlements | <b>762</b><br>across Main Rural and Minor Rural Settlements |
| <p><b>This will be set out in the Deposit RLDP and will be consistent with the spatial strategy and commensurate to the level of housing growth.</b></p>              |  |  |   |

|           |   |  |  |  |
|-----------|---|--|--|--|
|           | Shirenewton/ Mynyddbach<br>St Arvans<br>The Narth<br>Tintern<br>Trellech<br>Werngifford/Pandy   |  |  |  |
| Tier<br>5 | Minor Rural Settlements:<br><br>Bettws Newydd<br>Broadstone /Catbrook<br>Brynygwenin<br>Coed y Paen<br>Cross Ash<br>Cuckoo's Row<br>Great Oak<br>Grosmont<br>Gwehelog<br>Llanarth<br>Llanddewi Rhydderch<br>Llandegveth<br>Llandenny<br>Llangwm<br>Llansoy<br>Llantilio Crossenny<br>Llantrisant<br>Llanvair Kilgeddin<br>Mitchel Troy<br>Penpergwm<br>The Bryn<br>Tredunnock |  |  |  |
| Tier<br>6 | Open Countryside  |  |  |  |

Development boundaries will be defined for Settlement Tiers 1 – 4, within which the principle of development is considered to be acceptable, subject to the detailed policy considerations to be set out in the RLDP.

Within Tier 5 – Minor Rural Settlements, minor infilling between existing buildings will be considered acceptable, subject to the detailed policy requirements to be set out in the RLDP.

Outside of Tiers 1 – 5, open countryside policies will apply where planning permission will only be allowed for the following types of development, subject to satisfying detailed planning criteria:

- Acceptable conversions of rural buildings
- Sub-divisions of existing dwellings
- Rural Enterprise Dwellings
- One Planet Development

- **Rural diversification and rural enterprise uses**
- **Affordable housing exception sites adjoining settlement boundaries to meet local needs**

\*Figures include an indicative 10% flexibility allowance which will be subject to further consideration and refinement at Deposit Plan stage. The spatial distribution figures should be treated as indicative as they may alter following the consideration of sites submitted as part of the second Call for Candidate Sites and detailed site assessment work.

4.40 Policy S2 seeks to focus new development associated with the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy on the primary settlements of Abergavenny (including Llanfoist), Monmouth (including Wyesham), Chepstow and the Severnside area, together with a proportionate amount of growth to the lower tier settlements. It sets out the indicative proportion of residential growth to be accommodated by each of the settlement tiers (a full breakdown can be found in the Housing Background Paper). The exact distribution of development will follow in the Deposit RLDP following the second call for candidate sites and subsequent site assessments. Any decisions on whether or not to allocate particular sites for development in the settlements will also depend on such issues as their impact on the physical form of the settlement, placemaking, carbon footprint, landscape setting, environmental constraints and infrastructure capacity. Where growth cannot be met in an individual settlement, development will be directed toward a same tier or higher tier settlement within the same Housing Market Area. A map of the Housing Market Areas is provided in the Housing Background Paper. Further refinement of the Main Rural and Minor Rural Settlements will take place for the Deposit Plan to establish which of these settlements are appropriate to accommodate a proportionate amount of growth to meet local needs and support sustainable rural communities.

4.41 To encourage the promotion of sustainable communities where residents can live and work in the same area, housing growth will be accompanied by a commensurate amount of employment land. The proportion of employment growth to be accommodated in the settlement tiers will be set out in the Deposit RLDP. The submission of additional candidate sites for employment uses, aligned with our Growth and Ambition Strategy and Investment Prospectus, is sought during the second Call for Candidate Sites. It is, however, recognised that there has been a fundamental shift in working practices since the start of Covid-19 pandemic with an increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that this trend will continue over the longer term in accordance with Welsh Government’s ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home. This provides residents with the opportunity to both live and work in the County in this new way, providing a flexible approach to achieving the level of job growth, whilst also achieving a key RLDP objective of reducing the need to commute and thereby supporting our climate change objectives.

- 4.42 The Preferred Spatial Strategy aligns with key elements of the RLDP objectives (as detailed in the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper) and performs positively against ISA themes relating to population and communities, health and wellbeing, economy and employment and equalities/social inclusion. The ISA recognises that the Strategy will likely positively address existing demographic issues, encouraging younger people to reside and work in the County, and performs positively in terms of providing housing to meet the identified needs of the County. It will provide affordable housing throughout the settlement hierarchy, ensuring a range and choice of homes is delivered, to assist in enabling a more balanced population and sustainable communities.
- 4.43 While growth will be focused in the most sustainable settlements, it must be recognised that landscape quality and agricultural land quality are high throughout the County, and as such these challenges cannot be avoided via a different spatial option. For example, all of our settlements are surrounded by agricultural land with a high level classification as best and most versatile land. Rather, the RLDP will seek to allocate those sites that are the best connected, most sustainable, best deliver placemaking and are least harmful, which will require balanced consideration and trade-offs at Deposit Plan stage. This is likely to mean allocating some sites for development that were rejected in the Adopted LDP.
- 4.44 Future Wales 2040 (Policy 34) requires the South East Wales Strategic Development Plan to identify a Green Belt to the north of Cardiff, Newport and the eastern part of the region to manage urban form and growth. The South East Wales Regional Strategic Diagram set out in Future Wales indicates the indicative extent of the Green Belt in the region which includes part of rural Monmouthshire. The Spatial Strategy has regard to Policy 34 and the indicative Green Belt boundary. Monmouthshire's five towns fall outside of the indicative Green Belt boundary and national planning policy<sup>42</sup> allows for extensions to existing settlements within and adjoining the Green Belt of an appropriate scale having regard to the identified and longer term need for development land, the effects of development pressures in areas beyond the Green Belt, the need to minimise demand for travel, and the purpose of the overall greenbelt designation. PPW11 states that this may require land to be safeguarded and boundaries of proposed Green Belts must be carefully defined to achieve this.
- 4.45 Table 5 sets out a summary of the overarching indicative spatial distribution of housing provision for the RLDP. A full breakdown of each component is set out in Table 10 of the Housing Background Paper.

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<sup>42</sup> PPW11, paragraph 3.72

**Table 5: Summary of Indicative Spatial Distribution of Housing Provision\***

| Settlement                    | Total Commitments     |  | Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy |  | Total Housing Provision 2018-2033* |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--|--|--|------------------------------------|
|                               | Completions 2018-2021 | Existing Commitments; LDP Rollover Allocations | Total Allowances (Small Sites; Windfalls)      | RLDP New Housing Allocations (Dwellings) |                                    |
| Abergavenny (incl. Llanfoist) | 362                   | 207  | 437  | 887                                      | 1,893                              |
| Chepstow                      | 96                    | 484  | 212  | 729                                      | 1,521                              |
| Monmouth (incl. Wyesham)      | 261                   | 226  | 182  | 749                                      | 1,418                              |
| Severnside                    | 300                   | 886  | 283  | 854                                      | 2,323                              |
| Secondary Settlements         | 87                    | 45   | 68   | 249                                      | 449                                |
| Rural Settlements             | 112                   | 94   | 366  | 190                                      | 762                                |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>1218</b>           | <b>1942</b>                                    | <b>1,548</b>                                   | <b>3,658</b>                             | <b>8,366</b>                       |

\*Figures include an indicative 10% flexibility allowance which will be subject to further consideration and refinement at Deposit Plan stage. The spatial distribution figures should be treated as indicative as they may alter following the consideration of sites submitted as part of the second Call for Candidate Sites and detailed site assessment work.

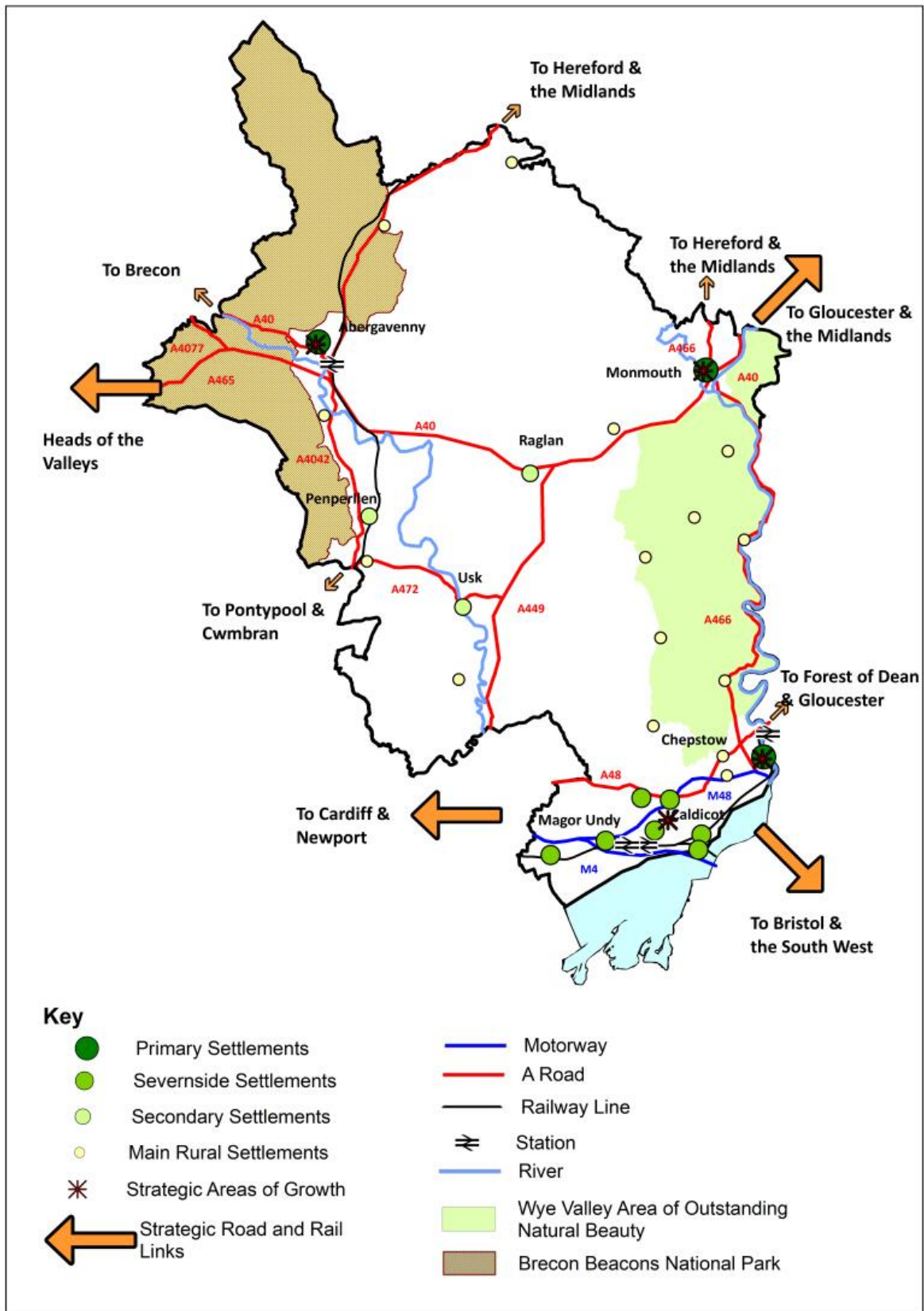
| <b>S2 – Spatial Distribution &amp; Settlement Hierarchy - Links to Wider Policy Framework</b> |  |
|---|--|
| RLDP Objectives   | Objective 1 – Economic Growth/Employment<br>Objective 9 – Demography<br>Objective 10 – Housing<br>Objective 11 – Place-making<br>Objective 12 – Communities<br>Objective 13 – Rural Communities<br>Objective 15 – Accessibility                      |
| Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)                                      | Policy 1 – Where will Wales Grow<br>Policy 3 – Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership<br>Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities<br>Policy 7 – Delivering Affordable Homes<br>Policy 34 – Green Belts in the South East |
| Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)  | Strategic and Spatial Choices Theme (Chapter 3)  |
| Building Better Places (W G, July 2020)   | Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations:<br>Staying local: creating neighbourhoods<br>Active travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods<br>Changing working practices: our future need for employment land         |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (W G, 2015) | A prosperous Wales<br>A resilient Wales<br>A more equal Wales<br>A Wales of cohesive communities  |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.</li> <li>• Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.</li> </ul>   |
| Key Evidence   | Sustainable Settlement Appraisal – June 2021<br>Candidate Site Register First Call – February 2019<br>Review of Candidate Sites against the Preferred Strategy – June 2021<br>Growth and Spatial Options Paper – December 2020<br>Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper – June 2021<br>Housing Background Paper – June 2021 |
| Monitoring   | TBC   |
| Detailed Policies  | TBC in Deposit RLDP   |

4.46 The Preferred Strategy is illustrated in the Key Diagram below.



Figure 5: Preferred Strategy Key Diagram



## 5 IMPLEMENTATION & DELIVERY - STRATEGIC POLICIES

### Introduction

- 5.1 This section sets out the Strategic Policies which form the framework for implementing and delivering the Preferred Strategy of the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) as set out in Strategic Policies S1 and S2. The format and structure reflect PPW11’s placemaking themes and the overarching aim of delivering sustainable development. The Strategic Policies are therefore grouped by the planning policy topics clustered around the four placemaking themes in PPW11<sup>43</sup>:

| PPW11 Placemaking Themes         | Planning Policy Topics Set Out in PPW11  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Strategic & Spatial Choices      | Good Design / Promoting Healthier Places / The Welsh Language / Sustainable Management of Natural Resources / Strategic Planning / Placemaking in Rural Areas / Managing Settlement Form |
| Active & Social Places           | Transport / Housing / Retail & Commercial Centres / Community Facilities / Recreational Spaces   |
| Productive & Enterprising Places | Economic Development / Tourism / The Rural Economy / Transportation Infrastructure / Telecommunications / Energy / Minerals / Waste  |
| Distinctive & Natural Places     | Landscape / Coastal Areas / Historic Environment / Green Infrastructure / Biodiversity / Water, Air, Soundscape & Light / Flooding / De-risking  |

- 5.2 It should be noted that not all of the PPW11 planning policy topics listed above are covered by the RLDP Strategic Policies. Some of those topics are best considered as underpinning matters of detail via other policies that will be included within the Deposit RLDP. Others are adequately covered by national planning policy which need not be duplicated via the RLDP.
- 5.3 It is recognised that there will be some overlap between the respective themes and the policies and as such they should be read in conjunction with one another. Each section highlights the relevant strategic policy, the reasoned justification for the policy and the summary table following each of the strategic policies provides a link back to the relevant RLDP objectives, Future Wales 2040 policies, PPW11 themes, Building Better Places priorities, Monmouthshire PSB Well-Being Plan (MWBEP) and the Well-being of Future Generations (WBFGE) Goals. An outline of how the Deposit Plan will respond with further criteria or topic based policies, where relevant, is also included. The ‘delivery and monitoring section’ at the end of each policy will be developed as part of the Deposit Plan. A review of the existing Local Development Plan (LDP) detailed Development Management policies is set out in Appendix 3. This identifies

<sup>43</sup> Figure 6 PPW11 – Page 20

policies which are functioning effectively, those where changes are likely to be required and highlights ones which may no longer be appropriate for inclusion in the RLDP.

## STRATEGIC & SPATIAL CHOICES

- 5.4 Within the context of PPW11's Strategic and Spatial Choices theme, the policies within this section focus on setting out how Monmouthshire's preferred level and spatial distribution of growth as set out in policies S1 and S2, will contribute to supporting sustainable and resilient communities. Where development does take place it is important that it contributes to the creation of sustainable places that focus on delivering placemaking and ensuring that Monmouthshire's communities are sustainable in the long-term and are attractive places to live, work and visit.

### Sustainable Placemaking & High Quality Design

#### **Strategic Policy S3 – Sustainable Placemaking & High Quality Design**

**Development shall contribute to creating high quality, attractive and sustainable places that support the well-being of the community. In order to achieve this, all development should:**

- i) Include and promote high quality, sustainable, safe and inclusive design that offers ease of access for all and provides connectivity between uses;**
- ii) Promote the co-location of uses to minimise the need to travel and to maximise opportunities for active travel and public transport use;**
- iii) Promote a Green Infrastructure-led approach that respects local distinctiveness and the character of the site and its surroundings; and**
- iv) Protect and enhance the natural, historic and built environments and show an understanding of how these function together to contribute towards the quality of places.**

- 5.5 Monmouthshire is renowned for its distinctive identity and the high quality of its natural, historic and built environments. It is intended to protect and enhance the quality of the County's settlements by ensuring that new development is designed to a high standard that creates buildings and places that are sustainable, well-integrated with their context and contribute to the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of strong, vibrant and healthy communities. The Plan will seek to achieve this by ensuring new development incorporates the principles of sustainable placemaking and good design.
- 5.6 PPW11 places the delivery of sustainable places which are attractive, sociable, accessible, active, secure, welcoming, healthy and friendly at the heart of the Plan and notes it as the optimal outcome of development plans. This is reflected in the Welsh

Government Building Better Places (July 2020) document where placemaking is considered to be a core value in the Covid-19 recovery in Wales. In order to achieve this, development plans must take forward the five national sustainable placemaking outcomes including creating and sustaining communities and facilitating accessible and healthy environments, supported by the five objectives of good design including access, character, community safety and movement, to develop an overarching set of outcomes for the RLDP.

- 5.7 The RLDP strategy and policies will seek high quality sustainable design and green infrastructure and will place people, natural resources and the natural environment at the heart of the design process. It should embrace a green infrastructure-led approach that is capable of delivering a wide range of social, economic, environmental, and health and well-being benefits for local communities and the County as a whole. This will enhance the character and identity of Monmouthshire’s settlements and countryside, encourage sustainable lifestyles and create attractive, safe and accessible places. The achievement of this will depend largely upon identifying and understanding the local characteristics which are distinctive to an area: a green infrastructure approach to design will be essential to delivering placemaking. A Placemaking Wales Charter has been developed by Welsh Government and the Design Commission for Wales in collaboration with the Placemaking Wales Partnership, the Council will consider signing up to these principles through the political process.

| Links to Wider Policy Framework                          |   |
|--|---|
| RLDP Objectives  | Objective 3 – Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape.<br>Objective 8 – Health and Well-being<br>Objective 11 – Place-making<br>Objective 12 – Communities<br>Objective 13 – Rural Communities<br>Objective 15 – Accessibility<br>Objective 16 – Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language<br>Objective 17 – Climate Change |
| Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021) | Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking<br>Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities   |
| Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)     | People and Places: Achieving Well-being Through Placemaking (Chapter 2)<br>Strategic and Spatial Choices Theme (Chapter 3)- Placemaking In Action: Good Design Making Better Places   |
| Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)                   | Priorities and Actions for Places – post Covid-19 considerations: Considering Health and Well-being throughout the Planning Process (page 12)<br>Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (Page 14)   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>Active travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods (Page 16)</p> <p>Revitalising our town centres (Page 18)</p> <p>Changing working practices – our future need for employment land (Page 20)</p> <p>Reawakening Wales’ tourism and cultural sectors (Page 21)</p> <p>Green Infrastructure, health and well-being and ecological resilience (Page 22)</p> <p>Improving air quality and soundscapes for better health and well-being (Page 23)</p>                    |
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)  | <p>A Resilient Wales</p> <p>A Healthier Wales</p> <p>A Wales of Cohesive Communities</p> <p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language</p>  |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.</li> <li>• Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.</li> <li>• Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.</li> <li>• Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.</li> </ul> |
| Key Evidence   | TAN 12 Design   |
| Monitoring   | TBC   |
| Detailed Policies  | TBC in Deposit RLDP   |

## Climate Change

|   |
|---|
| <b>Strategic Policy S4 – Climate Change</b>   |
| <p><b>All development proposals will be required to make a positive contribution towards addressing the causes of, and adapting to the impacts of, climate change. Means of achieving this will include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i) Having low/zero carbon energy requirements by reducing energy demand and promoting energy efficiency;</b></li> <li><b>ii) Supporting the development of renewable and low/zero carbon energy generation and a presumption against energy generation utilising fossil fuels, fracking and methods that are not low/zero carbon;</b></li> <li><b>iii) Utilising sustainable construction techniques and local supplies through the adoption of the circular economy principles;</b></li> <li><b>iv) Incorporating water efficiency measures and minimising adverse impacts on water resources and quality;</b></li> </ul> |

- v) Promoting the efficient use of land and co-location of uses to minimise the overall need to travel and maximise opportunities for active travel and public transport use;**
- vi) Promoting the provision of ultra-low emission vehicle charging infrastructure to reduce emissions and improve air quality;**
- vii) Support resilience of development through Green Infrastructure solutions including: opportunities for biodiversity and resilient ecosystems, greenspace provision and connectivity, sustainable energy use, local food production and flood attenuation and water resource management; and**
- viii) Avoid locating development in areas at risk of flooding, or where appropriate, minimise the risk of flooding including the incorporation of measures such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and flood resilient design.**

5.8 The need to tackle climate change represents a fundamental challenge if sustainable development and the obligations under the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 are to be delivered. One of the themes embodied in the Well-being of Future Generations Act is the need for ‘a resilient Wales’ whereby there is capacity to adapt to change such as climate change. A key principle of sustainable development, as recognised in PPW11, is tackling climate change by reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change and ensuring that places are resilient to the consequences of climate change. National guidance continues to outline how the planning system can play an important part in improving the sustainability of new developments whilst also tackling climate change. Welsh Government’s Building Better Places document recognises a plan-led approach is the most effective way for the planning system to combat climate change and encourage key steps in achieving the switch to a decarbonised and resilient society. Furthermore, Future Wales has an important role in driving sustainable growth and combating climate change and along with PPW11 stresses the importance of the focus on delivering a decarbonised and resilient Wales through ‘the places we create, the energy we generate, the natural resources and materials we use, and, how we live and travel’ (Page 46). Future Wales contains a number of policies to support their climate change and decarbonisation aspirations. This includes specific policies relating to Heat Networks (Policy 16), Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and Associated Infrastructure (Policy 17) and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments of National Significance (Policy 18). The RLDP will provide a positive planning policy framework to support and enable this approach to support climate change and decarbonisation.

5.9 In May 2019 Monmouthshire County Council passed a motion declaring a climate emergency and has committed to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures

to 1.5°C. The Strategy and draft Action Plan<sup>44</sup> accompanying the declaration were approved by the Council in October 2019, setting out the broad objectives and actions that the Council implement to deliver a net reduction in its own carbon emissions to net zero by 2030. Policy S4 builds on a number of these actions and draws together specific sustainability issues in relation to energy use and generation, efficient resource use and flood risk and provides a framework for sustainable growth which seeks to enable development that both mitigates the causes of climate change and is able to adapt to its likely effects. Such an approach is essential in ensuring that Monmouthshire meets its commitments contained within the Monmouthshire declaration on Climate Emergency (May 2019) and the economic, environmental and social objectives of the RLDP. The Council's Climate Emergency agenda will continue to be monitored and given further consideration in the Deposit RLDP.

- 5.10 The RLDP recognises, however, that the sustainability issues covered by Policy S4 are only part of the solution to addressing climate change, and while the planning system has an important role to play in this agenda, actions by individuals, communities and other organisations outside of the planning system are vital. The principles of sustainable development are wide-ranging and include such aspects as transport, green infrastructure, and the natural environment. These principles are dealt with in the Plan's other Strategic Policies, including S3 – Sustainable Placemaking & High Quality Design, S10 – Sustainable Transport and S18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation and are therefore not repeated in this policy. These policies should be considered as a whole.
- 5.11 The RLDP needs to ensure that new development has regard to broader principles of sustainable design in order to significantly reduce energy usage and carbon emissions, such as making the best use of orientation and shading. The Plan will also support, where appropriate, renewable and low/zero carbon energy generation technology, subject to a range of material planning considerations. An assessment of the potential for renewable energy generation, using the Welsh Government Toolkit, will inform the Deposit Plan in terms of specific areas of search or the potential for particular types of renewable and low/zero carbon energy. We will also consider the inclusion of a Policy within the Deposit RLDP to require all new developments to be Zero Carbon Ready in advance of the proposed changes to Building Regulations being implemented in 2025, the details and date of which will be determined in the Deposit RLDP.
- 5.12 PPW11 promotes the principles of a circular economy whereby the use of material resources in the building industry is influenced by making the most appropriate and sustainable use of finite resources. Such an approach sources materials as locally as possible, makes best use of the resources available through design and construction techniques, and minimises waste by re-using materials on site wherever possible.

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<sup>44</sup> The Climate Emergency Strategy and draft Action Plan can be viewed via:  
[https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2019/11/Climate-and-Decarbonisation\\_Strategy\\_v1.0.pdf](https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2019/11/Climate-and-Decarbonisation_Strategy_v1.0.pdf)

- 5.13 The sustainable provision and use of water resources is also an important consideration in terms of building climate change resilience. Developers will be required to use design approaches and techniques that improve water efficiency and minimise adverse impacts on water resources.
- 5.14 Development proposals will be expected to make full and appropriate use of land, with preference given to the development of previously development land, although it is recognised that there are limited opportunities for further significant brownfield development in Monmouthshire. The potential impacts of climate change should be central to the design process, including the contribution that location, density, layout, built form and mix of uses can make towards climate responsive developments. The RLDP categorises settlements into a hierarchy which reflects their relative sustainability and will be a guiding policy in terms of a site's ability to accommodate development. The Plan's aspirations of minimising the need to travel, particularly by the private motor car, and to realise opportunities to incorporate active travel modes and routes, seek to direct development to appropriate settlements which serve to achieve this. Furthermore, there has been an increase in home and remote working as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, which is likely to continue over the longer term, this combined with enhanced sustainable transport opportunities such as active travel networks, improved public transport and electric vehicle charging point infrastructure will help to reduce the impact of transport-based emissions and improvements in air quality. This approach is supported by Policy 12 of Future Wales relating to Regional Connectivity.
- 5.15 A key effect of climate change is the risk of flooding, both in terms of the likelihood of flooding as well as the intensity of flooding. The Development Advice Maps accompanying Technical Advice Note (TAN) 15: Flood Risk (2004) identify the flood risk zones as set out in the TAN. A revised version of this document and associated maps has been subject to consultation, the outcome of which will be taken into consideration as the Plan progresses. The information set out in TAN 15 will have an important influence on where development allocations will be located, along with the type of development, and will also inform appropriate local policies on flood risk whereby subsequent development proposals, in the form of planning applications can be assessed. The approach of the Plan will be to locate highly vulnerable development away from flood risk areas, to assess the implications of development in areas at risk of flooding and to ensure that development does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. The use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) must be considered as an integral part of a development to reduce the potential impact of new development with respect to surface water drainage discharges. A separate regulatory framework, namely the Sustainable Drainage Approving Body (SAB) is now in place to ensure this happens. The effective management of surface water drainage can mitigate the impact of development in terms of flooding, water efficiency and water quality.



| Links to Wider Framework                                 |   |
|--|---|
| RLDP Objectives  | Objective 4 – Flood risk<br>Objective 6 – Land<br>Objective 7 – Natural resources<br>Objective 15 – Accessibility<br>Objective 17 – Climate change  |
| Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021) | Policy 8 – Flooding<br>Policy 12 – Regional Connectivity<br>Policy 16 – Heat Networks<br>Policy 17 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and Associated Infrastructure<br>Policy 18 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments of National Significance   |
| Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)     | Productive and Enterprising Places Theme (Chapter 5)<br>Distinctive and Natural Places Theme (Chapter 6)  |
| Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)                   | Priorities and Actions for Places – post Covid-19 considerations:<br>Climate Change and Decarbonisation (Page 11)<br>Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (Page 14)<br>Green Infrastructure, health and well-being and ecological resilience (Page 22)<br>Improving air quality and soundscapes for better health and well-being (Page 23)  |
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)  | A resilient Wales<br>A healthier Wales<br>A globally responsible Wales  |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.</li> <li>• Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.</li> <li>• Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.</li> <li>• Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.</li> </ul> |
| Key Evidence   | TAN 8: Planning for Renewable Energy (2005)<br>TAN 12: Design<br>TAN 15: Development and Flood Risk (2004)<br>Development Advice Maps (TAN 15)<br>Practice Guidance – Planning for Sustainable Buildings (WG, 2014).<br>To follow in the Deposit:<br>Renewable Energy Assessment (using the Welsh Government Toolkit. Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Supplementary Planning Guidance - March 2016)  |

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
|                   | Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment will be prepared to inform the Deposit Plan |
| Monitoring        | TBC  |
| Detailed Policies | TBC in Deposit RLDP  |

## Infrastructure Provision

### Strategic Policy S5 – Infrastructure Provision

Where existing infrastructure is inadequate to serve the development, new or improved infrastructure and facilities to remedy deficiencies must be provided in phase with proposed development. Where provision on-site is not appropriate, off-site provision, or a financial contribution towards it, will be sought.

Financial contributions will also be required towards the future management and maintenance of facilities provided, either in the form of initial support or in perpetuity.

Planning Obligations may be sought to secure improvements in infrastructure, facilities, services and related works, where they are necessary to make development acceptable. In identifying appropriate contributions due regard will be paid to the overall development viability, including the cost of measures that are necessary to physically deliver a development and ensure that it is acceptable in planning terms. Such obligations may include:

1. Affordable Housing Provision
2. Education Facilities
3. Broadband Infrastructure
4. Active Travel
5. Sustainable Transport Measures
6. Transport Infrastructure
7. Recreation and Leisure Facilities including formal and informal open space
8. Green Infrastructure
9. Community and Cultural Facilities
10. Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement
11. Strategic utilities
12. Renewable / Low Carbon Energy Infrastructure
13. Local Climate Change Mitigation and Adaption Measures
14. Flood Risk Management Measures
15. Waste management facilities
16. Commuted payments for the management and maintenance of facilities provided
17. Other facilities and services considered necessary.

**In the event that viability considerations indicate that not all the identified contributions can be reasonably required, priority contributions will be determined on the basis of the individual circumstances of each case. In the case of housing developments, priority will be given to the affordable housing required by Policy S7 unless there is an overwhelming need for the available contribution, in whole or in part, to be allocated for some other necessary purpose/s.**

**Proposals for utility services to improve infrastructure provision will be permitted, subject to detailed planning considerations.**

- 5.16 The RLDP recognises the need to ensure that appropriate infrastructure is already in place or can be provided to accommodate the level of growth identified and is reflected in the spatial strategy. The increased reliance on access to local facilities and services has been heightened by the Covid-19 pandemic and has highlighted their importance to communities. The provision of a range of services and facilities is essential to delivering sustainable development and to meeting diverse community needs, and the provision of appropriate infrastructure will be supported by the Plan.
- 5.17 Infrastructure covers a range of services and facilities provided by public and private bodies and includes:
- Physical infrastructure such as transport facilities and related infrastructure (such as footpaths, cycleways), water provision and treatment, sewerage, flood prevention and drainage, waste disposal, power generation and supply, including renewables, digital infrastructure and telecommunications.
  - Community infrastructure such as schools, healthcare, transport services (including public transport), community buildings, community recycling facilities, sport and recreation facilities, open space, etc.
  - Green Infrastructure (as detailed in Strategic Policy S18)
- 5.18 Without appropriate investment to enable the provision of improved or new infrastructure, the proposed level of growth will be neither sustainable nor acceptable. New development will therefore be required to provide or contribute towards the provision of necessary infrastructure to enable it to be provided in a timely manner and to support sustainable development in Monmouthshire. Development will only be permitted when agreement has been reached between the relevant parties on the funding and programmed implementation of required provision in line with Policy S5. Financial contributions may be sought for the management and maintenance of the facilities provided.
- 5.19 Developers should consult and work with statutory undertakers and service providers to ensure that adequate provision is made for such infrastructure – this includes highways, utility services, and, surface water drainage and sewage disposal. Given

Monmouthshire’s rural character, the provision of adequate digital infrastructure is key to enhancing the County’s economic and community connectivity and communication needs and reducing the need to travel. Developers should liaise with broadband infrastructure providers to ensure future digital infrastructure requirements are addressed in developments. The reliance on staying digitally connected has become of particular importance throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and is essential to enable remote/home working in the long term. Welsh Government’s Building Better Places (July 2020) document recognises that having reliable and good quality communication systems in place is essential in helping the economic and social recovery, as a result of Covid-19.

- 5.20 This policy will be delivered through the development management process. Planning contributions can be secured via agreements entered into under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, or via a Community Infrastructure Levy. A decision on which tool best delivers the required infrastructure will be made as the RLDP progresses and the infrastructure needs are fully known. Planning obligations are a means of seeking contributions from developers to enhance the quality of a development, provide community benefits and infrastructure, and mitigate any negative impacts that may arise as a consequence of the development. In line with Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended), the Council will negotiate obligations where these are necessary, relevant to planning, directly related to the proposed development and reasonable in all other respects. Further guidance on the use of planning obligations is provided in PPW11 and Welsh Office Circular 13/97 Planning Obligations. Supplementary Planning Guidance will be prepared to provide further detail on the Council’s Planning Obligations policy.
- 5.21 Planning obligations will be sought, where relevant, in relation to the key infrastructure necessary to support the delivery of the strategy. An Infrastructure Plan will be prepared to accompany the Deposit RLDP, which will identify the key infrastructure needed, anticipated timescales of delivery and potential funding streams to support the delivery of allocated sites.
- 5.22 Where a viability assessment is deemed necessary, the Council will require applicants to provide detailed information and supporting evidence. The Council’s policy requirements should be the starting point for viability appraisals with an expectation that land values will reflect these. Where it is considered necessary to independently assess viability assessments, the costs will be borne by the developer.

| Links to Wider Policy Framework |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| RLDP Objectives                 | Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment<br>Objective 3 – Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape<br>Objective 4 – Flood risk<br>Objective 8 – Health and Well-being |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | Objective 10 – Housing<br>Objective 11 – Place-making<br>Objective 12 – Communities<br>Objective 13 – Rural Communities<br>Objective 14 – Infrastructure<br>Objective 17 – Climate Change   |
| Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021) | Policy 13 – Supporting Digital Communications<br>Policy 14 – Planning in Mobile Action Zones  |
| Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)     | Strategic and Spatial Choices Theme (Chapter 3) – Supporting Infrastructure   |
| Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)                   | Priorities and Actions for Places – post Covid-19 considerations:<br>Climate Change and Decarbonisation (page 11)<br>Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (page 14)<br>Active travel- exercise and rediscovered transport methods (page 16)<br>Digital places – the lockdown lifeline (pages 19-20)<br>Green infrastructure, health and well-being and ecological resilience (page 22)  |
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)  | A prosperous Wales<br>A resilient Wales<br>A more equal Wales<br>A Wales of cohesive communities<br>A globally responsible Wales  |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.</li> <li>• Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.</li> <li>• Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.</li> <li>• Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.</li> </ul> |
| Key Evidence   | Infrastructure Plan to follow alongside Deposit RLDP<br>Viability Assessments for Allocations to follow with the Deposit RLDP   |
| Monitoring   | TBC   |
| Detailed Policies  | TBC in Deposit RLDP   |

## ACTIVE & SOCIAL PLACES

- 5.23 The Active & Social Places theme aims to create well-connected and cohesive communities. The Strategic Policies contained within this section seek to deliver well connected, active and healthy communities that have access to good quality homes, services and community facilities.

### Delivery of Homes

#### Strategic Policy S6 – Delivery of Homes

**In order to meet the housing requirement of 7,605 new dwellings provision will be made for the development of up to 8,366 new dwellings during the Plan period to enable a 10% flexibility allowance (to be given further consideration through the Deposit Plan preparation process).**

- 5.24 A key function of the Plan is to provide an appropriate and deliverable supply of housing land. The Preferred Strategy provides the framework for the provision of 8,366 homes to meet the requirement of 7,605 dwellings over the Plan period (providing a 10% flexibility allowance). In accordance with the Development Plans Manual<sup>45</sup> (WG, March 2020) an allowance is provisionally made for a 10% flexibility allowance to factor in sites that may not come forward, unforeseen issues or to meet higher aspirations for the County to enable the provision/delivery of additional sites if all sites are delivered. The flexibility allowance will be given further consideration as Plan preparation progresses and may therefore be subject to change based on local evidence.
- 5.25 The provision of 8,366 new homes will be delivered through a number of different housing land supply components. A detailed description of each component is set out in the Housing Background Paper<sup>46</sup>, with a brief summary set out below.

### Existing Commitments

- 5.26 Existing commitments comprise of completions made in the first three years of the Plan period (2018 – 2021), existing land supply commitments including sites under construction or sites with planning permission as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 and LDP ‘Rollover Allocations’, where the site does not benefit from planning permission, but progress can be evidenced (these sites will be kept under review as the Plan progresses).
- 5.27 As noted in the supporting evidence to Policies S1 and S2, the starting point for the overall dwelling requirement is a population-led projection (with added policy assumptions) that aims to address the demographic challenges, out-commuting and

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<sup>45</sup> The Development Plans Manual (March 2020) states that a flexibility allowance must be embedded into the plan and that the Plan will need to evidence there is sufficient flexibility above the requirement to account for non-delivery and unforeseen issues.

<sup>46</sup> The Housing Background Paper can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

household formation on a County-wide basis whilst adjusting in-migration rates to reflect local trends from a 5 year period (2015-2020) to take into account the removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls. The methodology and assumptions behind this are set out in supporting evidence prepared by Edge Analytics<sup>47</sup>. This element of the Strategy establishes a housing requirement of 6,195 (6,815 including 10% flexibility) new homes. This will in part be met by trend based small site and windfall site completions expected over the Plan period. Details of where these windfall sites could potentially come from will be set out in a Housing Potential Study (HPS). Potential sources include possible regeneration schemes within settlements and empty homes and upper floors within town centres.

- 5.28 A residual requirement of 2,107 homes remains once the existing commitments and windfall and site allowances are accounted for. Sites will be allocated to deliver this residual requirement with growth distributed proportionately across urban and rural areas in accordance with the sustainable settlement hierarchy set out in Policy S2.

### **New allocations Provision – Sustainable & Resilient Communities Growth Strategy**

- 5.29 Once all of the existing land supply commitments and allowances for windfall/infill sites and ‘Rollover’ sites have been taken into account, the RLDP will need to make provision for new site allocations to deliver 3,658<sup>48</sup> homes over and above the existing commitments. Of these 2,107 homes are linked to the population-led element of the Strategy and will be delivered on sites where the appropriate mix of affordable and private market homes will be determined by viability work that is being progressed to inform the Deposit RLDP. The remaining 1,551 homes are derived from the policy-led affordable housing element of the Strategy and will be delivered on sites identified to specifically deliver 50% affordable housing and 50% private market housing. An indicative housing balance table is set out below and shows how the Plan’s housing provision figure is to be met through a mix of commitments, completions to date, allowances for small sites and windfalls, LDP ‘rollover allocations’ and new allocations. This is indicative at present and will be refined as the Plan progresses.

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<sup>47</sup> Updating Demographic Evidence Report (Edge Analytics, November 2020) can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

<sup>48</sup> The new site allocations figure takes account of completions and windfall and small sites allowances as of 01/04/2021 and the application of the 10% flexibility allowance. Further information with regards to this can be found in the Housing Background Paper which can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

**Table 6: Breakdown of Housing Supply**

| Element                          | Number of Homes              | Notes   |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Demographic-led Strategy</b>  |                              |   |
| <b>Housing Provision</b>         | <b>6,815</b>                 | Housing requirement under the population-led element of the Strategy for 2018-2033 = 6,195 + 10% flexibility allowance, to be considered further in the Deposit Plan  |
| <b>Less Commitments:</b>         |                              |   |
| 2018-21 Completions              | 1,218                        | Comprises 949 homes on large sites and 269 homes on small sites   |
| Existing Land Supply Commitments | 1,642                        | Sites have only been included if construction is already underway or they have planning permission or have planning permission subject to the signing of a S106 agreement as at 01/04/21, and they are expected to come forward over the Plan period.   |
| <b>Less Allocations:</b>         |                              |   |
| LDP 'Rollover Allocations'       | 300                          | This is based on adopted LDP Strategic Site allocations which do not currently benefit from a planning permission but where progress can be evidenced.  |
| <b>Revised Provision</b>         | <b>3,655</b>                 |   |
| <b>Less Allowances:</b>          |                              |   |
| Windfall Allowance (>10 homes)   | 553 (79 dwellings per annum) | The windfall allowance is calculated on the basis of the last 7 years of the Plan period (2026-2033) <sup>49</sup> . An allowance of 79 homes per annum is included. This is a future extrapolation rate which is based on an average of windfall completions over the past 10 years (2011-2021).     |
| Small Site Allowance (<10 homes) | 995                          | If the small sites allowance is calculated on the basis of the remaining 12 years of the Plan period (2021-2033) <sup>50</sup> , an allowance of 86 homes per annum would need to be included. This is based on an average of small site completions over the past 10 years (2011-2021), a small site |

<sup>49</sup> To avoid double counting five years of the remaining 12 years of the Plan period have been discounted as large windfall sites with extant permission are included within the existing land supply commitments

<sup>50</sup> The contribution from small sites for the first three years of the 15-year Plan period are included within the completions



| Element  | Number of Homes | Notes   |
|--|-----------------|---|
| <b>Demographic-led Strategy</b>                      |                 |   |
|  |                 | allowance of 1,032 homes. However, following an appraisal of small site opportunities, the allowance for sites of less than 5 homes in rural areas has been discounted by 10%. <sup>*51</sup> |
| <b>Remaining New Allocations Provision</b>           | <b>2,107</b>    |   |
| <b>Plus Policy-led Affordable Housing Provision:</b> |                 |   |
|  | <b>1,551</b>    | Housing requirement under the policy-led Affordable Housing element of the strategy for 2018-2033 = 1,410 + 10% flexibility allowance, to be considered further in the Deposit Plan           |
| <b>Total New Allocations Provision</b>               | <b>3,658</b>    |   |

\*Further information with regards to this can be found in the Housing Background Paper (June 2021)

5.30 The housing requirement of 7,605 homes equates to 507 dwellings per annum up to 2033. This figure is higher than the annual requirement of the Adopted LDP of 450 homes per annum, and is also higher than the completion rate achieved since the start of the Adopted Plan period (average of 300 completions per annum over the last 10 years). This slower than anticipated delivery rate is largely due to the speed at which the Adopted LDP Strategic Housing Sites have come forward. Significant progress is now being made with the delivery of these sites with six of the seven strategic sites now with planning permission<sup>52</sup>. The Council also sought to address the shortfall in housing completions and housing land supply through agreeing an approach to be taken in relation to unallocated housing sites<sup>53</sup>. One housing site has received planning permission for 130 dwellings under the unallocated sites policy.

5.31 Completions recorded for the 2018 - 2021 period are substantially higher than the average annual completion rates noted above, at 406 homes. The proposed annual build rate of 507 dwellings per annum is considered to represent a balance between

<sup>51</sup> There is limited scope for small site development within our existing rural settlements with many of the development opportunities already taken, to ensure that the small site allowance is achievable the estimated number of completions based on sites of less than 5 that have come forward in our rural settlements over the past 10 years has been discounted by 10%.

<sup>52</sup> The Adopted LDP Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) October, 2020 can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/annual-monitoring/ldp-annual-monitoring-report/>

<sup>53</sup> The Unallocated Housing Sites Council Report 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 2019 can be viewed via <https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/documents/s19399/1.%20Addressing%20our%20lack%20of%20a%20five%20year%20housing%20land%20supply%20-%20reviewing%20our%20approach%20to%20unallocated%20ho.pdf>

setting a deliverable completions rate when compared against longer term past delivery rates and a rate that addresses the aims of the Plan’s Strategy of providing for sufficient growth to address the demographic, out-commuting and affordability challenges the County is facing, and to enable sustainable and resilient communities, as evidenced in the Edge Analytics Reports (November 2020)<sup>54</sup>. The Preferred Strategy will support the growth of sustainable and resilient communities in the County up to 2033 and will assist in meeting the Council’s ambitions and aspirations.

5.32 The Deposit RLDP will set out a housing trajectory to demonstrate the proposed delivery rates of the housing supply components are achievable for the Plan period. Viability appraisals to evidence that key sites are viable and deliverable will also be undertaken to inform the Deposit RLDP.

| Links to Wider Policy Framework                          |  |
|--|--|
| RLDP Objectives  | Objective 9 – Demography<br>Objective 10 – Housing<br>Objective 11 – Place-making<br>Objective 12 – Communities<br>Objective 13 – Rural Communities  |
| Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021) | Policy 1 – Where Wales will Grow<br>Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking<br>Policy 3 – Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership<br>Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities<br>Policy 5 – Supporting the Rural Economy<br>Policy 7 – Delivering Affordable Homes<br>Policy 34 – Green Belt in SE Wales |
| Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)     | Active and Social Places Theme (Chapter 4)   |
| Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)                   | Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations:<br>Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (page 14).<br>Active travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods (page 16).  |
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)  | A resilient Wales<br>A more Equal Wales<br>A Wales of cohesive communities<br>A globally responsible Wales   |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.</li> </ul>  |

<sup>54</sup> Updating Demographic Evidence Report (Edge Analytics, November 2020) can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Plan (MWBP)<br>(February 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.</li> <li>• Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.</li> <li>• Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.</li> </ul> |
| Key Evidence                   | <p>Updating Demographic Evidence Report (Edge Analytics, November 2020)</p> <p>Affordable Housing Evidence Report (Edge Analytics, November 2020)</p> <p>Housing Background Paper – June 2021</p> <p>Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper – June 2021</p> <p>Sustainable Settlement Appraisal – June 2021</p>   |
| Monitoring                     | TBC  |
| Detailed Policies              | TBC in Deposit RLDP  |

## Affordable Homes

### Strategic Policy S7 – Affordable Homes

**The affordable housing target\* for the Plan period of 2018 – 2033 is set at 2,450 homes.**

**Further detail relating to affordable housing percentage thresholds will be included in the Deposit RLDP to reflect the outcomes of the emerging viability work.**

*\*This target is likely to change and will be finalised in the Deposit RLDP once detailed viability work has been undertaken.*

5.33 Affordable housing represents a key issue to be considered in the preparation of the RLDP particularly in addressing some of the County's key issues relating to demography and affordability, and contributing to the development of sustainable, resilient and balanced communities. The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021) identified a number of issues that the RLDP will seek to address through its affordable housing target:

- Average house prices in the County are high at £297,628 when compared to the Welsh average of £187,477 (Hometrack, March 2020), with the most significant increases experienced in recent years.
- House prices are high in relation to earnings and there is a pressing need for additional affordable housing in the County in both urban and rural areas to assist in ensuring a balanced population.

- A range and choice of housing is needed to both meet the needs of an ageing population and to attract and retain the younger age groups.
- The potential impact on house prices arising from the removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls, the ambitions and opportunities associated with the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, together with the opportunities for Monmouthshire as a border county are also factors that need to be taken into account when considering affordability issues.

5.34 The current pandemic has increased the need for affordable homes and revealed the extent of hidden homelessness in the County. The Minister for Housing and Local Government has announced that post-Covid-19, no-one should return to the streets and Welsh Government’s Building Better Places response to Covid-19 also highlights how the delivery of new social and market housing can make a significant contribution to economic recovery and social cohesion. The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised the need to ensure the provision of a range and choice of homes in new housing sites to address the County’s affordability issues and build sustainable and resilient communities throughout Monmouthshire.

### Affordable Housing Target

5.35 The delivery of affordable housing across the County that seeks to address these issues is a key aim of the overarching Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy, and an integral part of the general provision of housing in the RLDP which incorporates an affordable housing policy-led element. Economically viable and deliverable allocations will facilitate this aim and ensure communities have access to sufficient, good quality, affordable housing to meet a range of needs. The affordable housing policy-led element aims to meet 10% of the Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) need on housing sites which deliver at least 50% affordable housing.

5.36 The latest Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) (December 2020) identifies an annual shortfall of 467.81 dwellings for the 5 year period 2020-2025 for the affordable housing tenures of low cost home ownership, intermediate rent and social rent. This would represent an affordable housing requirement of 7,017 if extrapolated over the Plan period. This is not a realistic affordable housing target for the Plan and it is not expected to be as it is only one of a variety of means of achieving a supply of affordable housing. However, as set out in Section 4 and Policy S1, affordable housing provision is a key issue for the County and forms an integral part of the overarching Strategy with provision being sought on all sites, subject to viability, and more specifically on sites identified to deliver 50% affordable housing.

5.37 The affordable housing target is set at 2,450 affordable homes over the Plan period. Table 7 summaries the components of the target, with a brief description on each set out below.

**Table 7 – Summary of Affordable Housing Target**

| Source of Affordable Housing  | No. of affordable dwellings |
|---|-----------------------------|
| <p><b>Housing Delivery Commitments</b><br/>Affordable Housing secured on a tenure neutral basis either already completed, agreed on existing commitments or via an allowance for existing LDP ‘Rollover’ Allocations based on existing adopted LDP affordable housing percentage thresholds.</p>  | 731                         |
| <p><b>Housing Allowances</b><br/>Affordable Homes to be sought on a tenure neutral<sup>55</sup> basis related to windfall and small sites allowances. The percentage of affordable housing is based on the existing adopted LDP affordable housing percentage thresholds, which will be updated to reflect the outcomes of the emerging viability work.</p>   | 230                         |
| <p><b>Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy</b><br/>Affordable Homes to be sought on a tenure neutral basis on new housing allocations required to meet the housing requirement figure. The spatial distribution of housing is set out in Strategic Policy S2 and the Housing Background Paper (June 2021). The percentage of affordable housing is based on the existing adopted LDP affordable housing percentage thresholds, which will be updated to reflect the outcomes of the emerging viability work.</p> | 1489                        |
| <b>Overall Target</b>   | 2,450                       |

### Existing Commitments and Completions

- 5.38 A total of 284 affordable homes have been completed over the 2018 – 2021 period, and a further 357 homes are either under construction, benefit from planning permission or are agreed subject to the signing of a S106 agreement. A further stream of affordable housing factored in to the figures is from the LDP ‘Rollover Allocations’ equating to 90 homes, although it is recognised that this stream of housing land supply may change as the Plan progress. Combined these contribute 731 affordable (tenure neutral) homes to the affordable housing target.

<sup>55</sup> Neutral Tenure homes relate to where the tenure of housing is not predetermined but can vary according to needs, means and preferences of households to whom it is offered. This includes both Social Rented Housing which is led by Registered Social Landlords (RSL) and Intermediate Housing which are provided at a cost above social rent but below market levels, these can include shared equity and intermediate rent and are also provided through a RSL.

### **Affordable Housing Sources linked to Housing Allowances**

- 5.39 Windfall and small site allowances are estimated to contribute 230 homes to the affordable housing target. This estimation is based on current policy thresholds and requirements may therefore be subject to change as the Plan progresses. It is anticipated that sites of 4 or fewer homes will be required to pay a commuted sum towards off-site affordable housing provision, however, this will be considered further as part of the emerging viability work.

### **Affordable Housing element of the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy**

- 5.40 New housing allocations will be identified in the Deposit RLDP to address the residual dwelling requirement identified in relation to the Strategy once the above commitments and allowances have been accounted for. At present this is estimated to contribute 1,489 affordable homes to the target. This estimation may be subject to change as the Plan progresses and additional viability evidence is prepared. The RLDP will contain detailed policies setting out thresholds at which development will be required to provide affordable housing and the associated percentages of affordable housing provision that will be applied across different housing market areas, having regard to viability considerations. An Affordable Housing Viability Study will be undertaken to inform the appropriate thresholds and percentages set out in the Deposit RLDP. All relevant figures will be updated to reflect the outcome of this work.

### **Affordable Housing Sources linked to the Affordable Housing Policy-led Strategy**

- 5.41 As discussed in Section 4, the provision of affordable housing is a key issue to be addressed by the overarching Preferred Strategy. The Affordable Housing Policy-led Strategy accounts for 1551 homes (including a 10% flexibility allowance) of the overall housing requirement figure of 7,605 homes. In order to meet the affordable housing figure, the RLDP will seek to allocate sites in housing market areas where there is an identified need for Social Housing, Low Cost Home Ownership and/or intermediate rental as evidenced by the Local Housing Market Assessment. These sites are proposed to be delivered on a 50/50 split of affordable homes and private market homes.
- 5.42 The rationale behind the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy and housing requirement is set out in the Section 4 and discussed in more detail in the Housing Background Paper (June, 2021). However, in allocating suitable sites to deliver this element of the overall housing requirement figure, consideration has been given to the Minister for Housing and Local Government's letter of July 2019 which states that in the first instance affordable housing-led housing sites should make use of public land and, where this is not available, then privately owned land may be

identified. This approach is reflected in Policy 7 of Future Wales 2040 - Delivering Affordable Homes – which encourages local authorities, registered social landlords, small and medium sized construction and building companies to build more homes and to facilitate the reuse of publicly owned land to help support the provision of affordable housing-led developments.

5.43 The Council is undertaking initial appraisals, weighing up the merits of establishing its own Development Company to undertake residential and commercial developments, the residential arm of which would focus on the private and intermediate markets. The role of Registered Social Landlords in delivering affordable housing led sites will also be explored in the preparation of the Deposit Plan.

5.44 The Council will identify appropriate sites through the Candidate Site process.

| Links to Wider Policy Framework                          |  |
|--|--|
| RLDP Objectives  | Objective 9 – Demography<br>Objective 10 – Housing<br>Objective 11 – Placemaking<br>Objective 12 – Communities<br>Objective 13 – Rural Communities   |
| Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021) | Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking<br>Policy 3 – Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership<br>Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities<br>Policy 7 – Delivering Affordable Homes<br>Policy 33 – National Growth Area – Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys |
| Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)     | Active & Social Places Theme (Chapter 4)   |
| Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)                   | Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (Page 14)   |
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)  | A More Equal Wales<br>A Resilient Wales<br>A Wales of Cohesive Communities   |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.</li> <li>• Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.</li> </ul>   |

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
|                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.</li> </ul>   |
| Key Evidence      | Updating the RLDP Demographic Evidence Report, Edge Analytics November 2020<br>Housing Background Paper – June 2021<br>Monmouthshire Local Housing Market Assessment – December 2020<br>Affordable Housing Viability Assessment – to be undertaken for the Deposit RLDP. |
| Monitoring        | TBC  |
| Detailed Policies | TBC in Deposit RLDP  |

## Strategic Development Sites

### Strategic Policy S8 – Strategic Development Sites

**Strategic Development Sites will be allocated to contribute to the delivery of the housing and job growth rates set out in Policy S1.**

- **To be specified in the Deposit RLDP following consideration of the responses to the Preferred Strategy, the Second Call for Candidate Sites and detailed site assessments.**

## Strategic Growth Areas

- 5.45 In order to implement the RLDP’s Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy, possible strategic growth areas have been identified for each of the Primary Settlements and Severnside. To inform these possible strategic growth areas, a high-level assessment of sites submitted during the Initial Call for Candidate Sites has been undertaken to identify those sites which could potentially contribute to delivering the level of growth (housing and jobs) required to deliver the Preferred Strategy. At the present time only strategic sites and sustainable urban extensions of around 8ha in size and above have been considered. At this stage, identified site options (refer to Appendix 4 for further details) are considered in theory to have the potential to underpin the Strategy by accommodating growth and focusing development within those settlements and areas which are identified as the most sustainable locations (refer to Strategic Policy S2 Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy). It is important to note that not all sites will be selected for inclusion in the Deposit Plan, as their combined capacity exceeds the number of dwellings needed to meet the residual housing provision. The final selection of sites for the Deposit Plan will be dependent on the second call for candidate sites and further detailed assessment work.

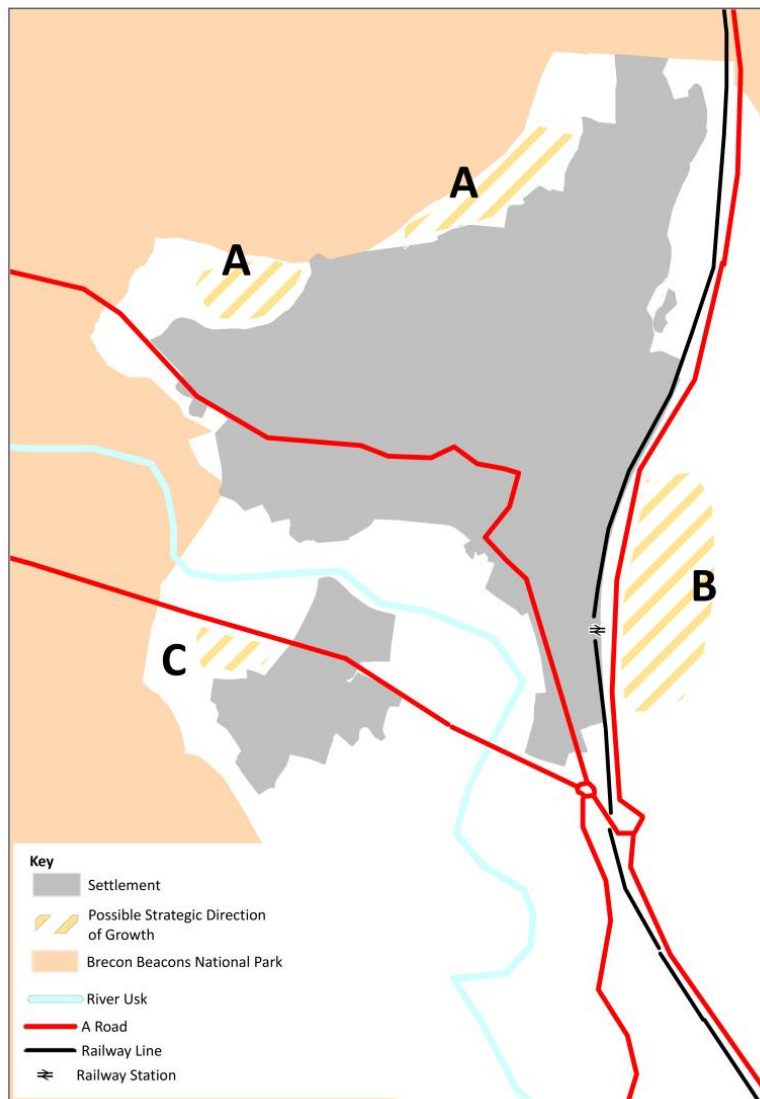


5.46 The indicative maps below set out the options for the future strategic growth of the Primary Settlements and Severnside. Please refer to Appendix 4 for further details on the potential strategic growth options.

### Abergavenny

- A Land north of Abergavenny
- B Land to the east of the A465
- C Land between the B4246

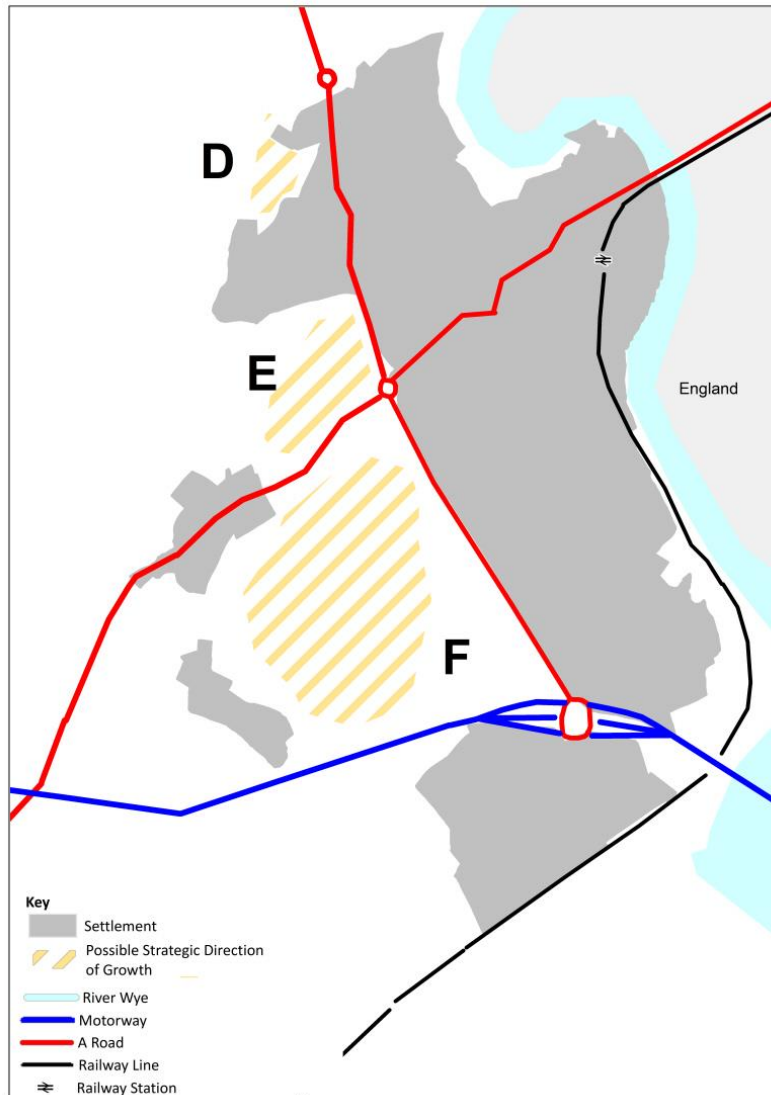
Figure 5: Abergavenny Strategic Growth Options



## Chepstow

- D Land north of the Bayfield Estate
- E Land between the Bayfield Estate and A48
- F Land between the A48 and M48

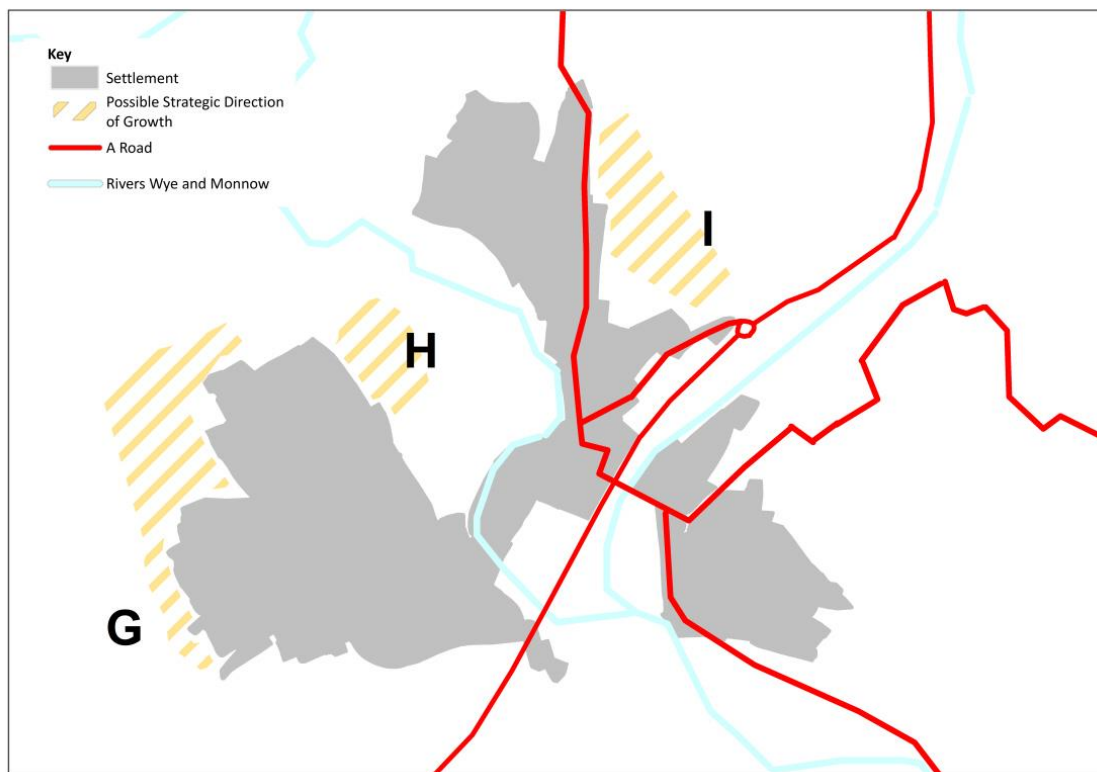
Figure 6: Chepstow Strategic Growth Options



## Monmouth

- G Land west of Monmouth
- H Land central Monmouth
- I Land north east of Monmouth

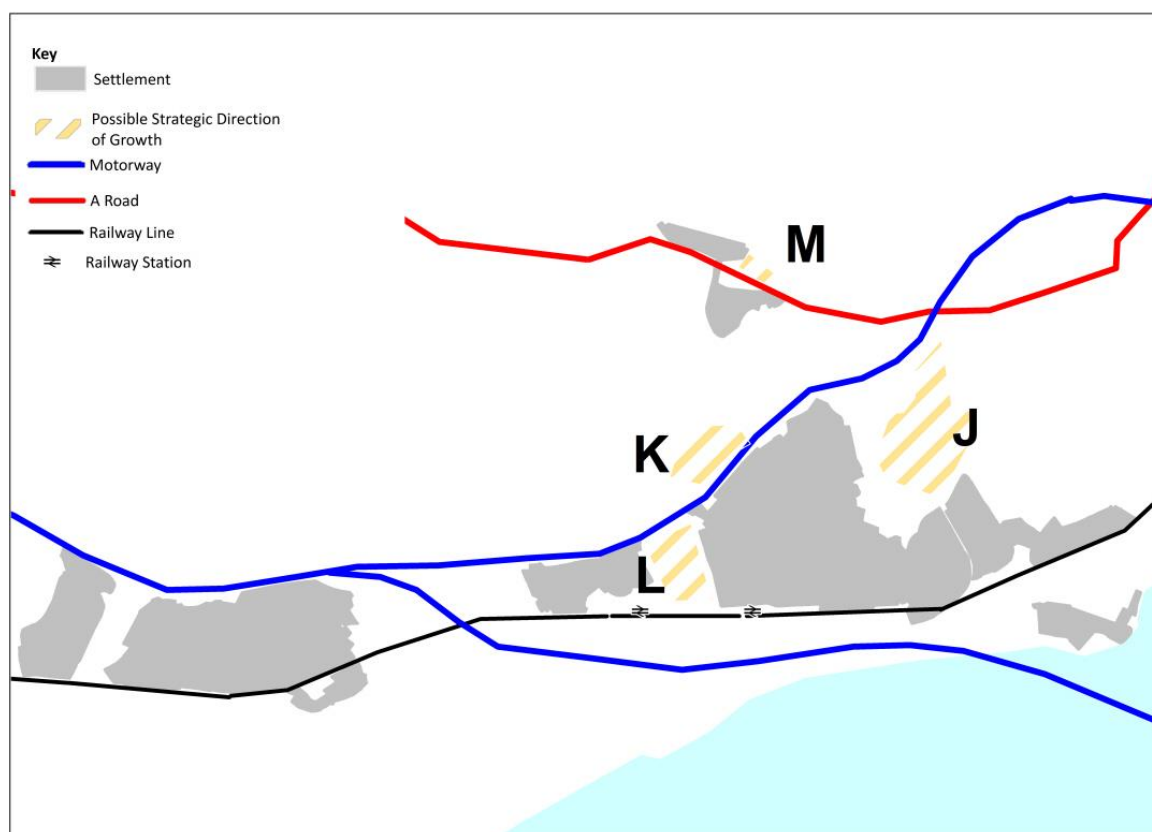
**Figure 7: Monmouth Strategic Growth Options**



## Sevenside

- J Land north east of Caldicot
- K Land north west of Caldicot
- L Land west of Caldicot / east of Rogiet
- M Land east of Caerwent

**Figure 8: Sevenside Strategic Growth Options**



5.47 Following the consultation on the Preferred Strategy and a second call for candidate sites, the Council will undertake a detailed assessment of potential sites available to deliver the Plan's Strategy which will include consideration of:

- The ability to deliver the level of supporting infrastructure required;
- A masterplanning process to ensure they create sustainable, cohesive, well-designed places delivered through a strong placemaking approach; and
- A financial viability assessment to ensure sites are deliverable within the Plan period.

### Site Sequence and Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

- 5.48 The approach to site selection will follow the Site Sequence outlined in PPW11, which prioritises the use of suitable and sustainable previously developed land before considering greenfield sites. This process will, however, also acknowledge the limited brownfield resource available in Monmouthshire and the environmental, social and economic considerations that need to be balanced in a Monmouthshire context.
- 5.49 A key consideration in assessing the Candidate Sites will be the high percentage of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land within Monmouthshire. An Agricultural Land Classification Background Paper will be produced at the Deposit RLDP stage setting out the Council's approach to protecting BMV land and minimising its loss through its growth strategy. The widespread distribution of BMV agricultural land throughout Monmouthshire means that it does not affect the spatial strategy: were only some of the County's sustainable settlements surrounded by BMV agricultural land, consideration could be given to a strategy that minimises development around those settlements. However, all our main settlements are surrounded by BMV agricultural land.
- 5.50 A sequential approach to assessing the loss of BMV agricultural land, as set out by PPW11, will be undertaken in the assessment of all candidate sites. However, as above, it is anticipated that due to the high percentage of BMV agricultural land distributed extensively throughout Monmouthshire it will be difficult to apply this sequential test. The aim at the outset, nevertheless, will be to protect the higher grades of BMV land; and to avoid/or minimise the loss of BMV land. Appendix 3 sets out the Council's anticipated approach to assessing the potential loss of BMV agricultural land.

### Future Wales 2040 – Green Belt

- 5.51 Policy 34 of Future Wales requires the South East Wales Strategic Development Plan (SDP) to identify a green belt to the north of Cardiff, Newport and the eastern part of the region to manage urban form and growth. The South East Wales Regional Strategic Diagram (page 163 of Future Wales) provides an indicative plan of the area for consideration with the detailed boundary to be defined through the preparation of the SDP. In advance of an SDP, the indicative area shown for consideration in Future Wales should be treated as a designated Green Belt.
- 5.52 While the County's main towns are situated outside of Future Wales' indicative green belt, in assessing candidate sites and their relationship to Policy 34 of Future Wales consideration will be given to paragraph 3.72 of PPW11 which states that when considering a Green Belt designation, a sufficient range of development land which is suitably located in relation to the existing urban edge should be made available, having regard to the longer term need for development land, the effects of development pressures in areas beyond the Green Belt and the need to minimise

demand for travel. This may require land to be safeguarded, and boundaries of proposed Green Belts must be carefully defined to achieve this.

### Phosphates – Water Quality in Riverine Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

- 5.53 Following new evidence about the environmental impacts of phosphate in watercourses, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has adopted tighter targets for the water quality of watercourses and have assessed the nine riverine Special Areas of Conservation in Wales. Within Monmouthshire it was identified that within the River Usk 88% of the river’s water bodies failed to meet the required target and within the River Wye 67% failed to meet the required target. As a result of this failure NRW has issued detailed planning guidance to ensure that the environmental capacity of the rivers does not deteriorate any further. Any candidate sites within the catchment areas of the rivers affected need to evidence as part of their candidate site submissions that the development can demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body. A plan of the catchment area of the rivers can be found on the Council’s website via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning/water-quality>. Strategic Growth Areas identified within Abergavenny fall within the River Usk SAC catchment area, and Monmouth within the River Wye SAC catchment area. However, all candidate site submissions are advised to refer to the catchment plans to determine if the issue of phosphate neutrality or betterment is a consideration.
- 5.54 NRW has provided interim planning guidance for developers which outlines what type of development is unlikely to have an impact on phosphate levels in the watercourses. This guidance can be found on the Council’s website via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2021/02/Interim-Planning-Advice-V2.0-FINAL.pdf>
- 5.55 This new guidance does have significant implications on development proposals within the river catchment areas and we are working with NRW, Dwyr Cymru Welsh Water, Welsh Government, the development industry and our biodiversity officers to find solutions and enable the progression of appropriate candidate sites through the RLDP process in a manner that does not harm the environmental capacity of our watercourses.

| Links to Wider Policy Framework |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| RLDP Objectives                 | Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment<br>Objective 6 – Land<br>Objective 9 – Demography<br>Objective 10 – Housing<br>Objective 11 – Placemaking<br>Objective 12 – Communities<br>Objective 14 – Infrastructure<br>Objective 15 - Accessibility |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Future Wales:<br>The National<br>Plan 2040 (WG,<br>February 2021)   | Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking<br>Policy 3 – Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership<br>Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities<br>Policy 5 – Supporting the Rural Economy<br>Policy 34 – Green Belts in the South East   |
| Planning Policy<br>Wales Edition 11<br>(WG, February<br>2021)       | Strategic and Spatial Choices Theme (Chapter 3) -<br>Spatial Strategy and Site Search Sequence  |
| Building Better<br>Places (WG, July<br>2020)                        | Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations:<br>Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (page 14)<br>Active Travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods (page 16)<br>Changing working practices: our future need for employment land (page 20)  |
| Well-being of<br>Future<br>Generations Act<br>(WBFGA)<br>(WG, 2015) | A prosperous Wales<br>A resilient Wales<br>A more equal Wales<br>A Wales of cohesive communities  |
| Monmouthshire<br>PSB Well-being<br>Plan (MWBP)<br>(February 2018)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.</li> <li>• Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.</li> <li>• Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.</li> <li>• Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.</li> </ul> |
| Key Evidence  | Sustainable Settlement Appraisal – June 2021<br>Review of Candidate Sites Against the Preferred Strategy – June 2021<br>Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper – June 2021<br>Growth and Spatial Options Consultation Report – June 2021<br>Housing Background Paper – June 2021   |
| Monitoring  | TBC   |
| Detailed Policies   | TBC in Deposit RLDP   |

## Gypsy and Travellers

### Strategic Policy S9 – Gypsy and Travellers

**Land will be made available to accommodate future unmet gypsy and traveller accommodation needs if a need is identified in the updated Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment.**

- 5.56 The Approved Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment was agreed in May 2016 and covers the 5-year period 2016 – 2021<sup>56</sup>. This concluded that Monmouthshire has an estimated unmet need for eight permanent residential pitches to 2021. The assessment did not identify a need for a transit site. An updated Gypsy & Travellers Needs Assessment for the Plan period 2018 – 2033 has been prepared and submitted to Welsh Government for approval. This identified a need for nine residential pitches between the period 2020 – 2025 and a further four pitches for the remaining Plan period of 2026 – 2033, giving a total need of 13 pitches for the Plan period. The update did not identify a need for a transit pitch. Land will be identified to accommodate unmet gypsy and traveller accommodation need in the Deposit Plan.
- 5.57 In terms of transit sites, it is considered that these would be best considered on a regional basis, requiring collaboration with neighbouring local authorities through the SDP process. Work on this has commenced through a SEWSPG sub-group.
- 5.58 Specific criteria-based policies to assess proposals for gypsy and traveller accommodation that come forward during the Plan period will be considered within the Deposit RLDP.

### Links to Wider Policy Framework

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| RLDP Objectives  | Objective 9 – Demography<br>Objective 10 – Housing<br>Objective 11 – Placemaking<br>Objective 12 – Communities<br>Objective 13 – Rural Communities |
| Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021) | Policy 7 – Delivering Affordable Homes   |
| Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)     | Active and Social Places Theme (Chapter 4) - Gypsies and Travellers  |
| Building Better Places (WG (July 2020))                  | Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (page 14)                                 |

<sup>56</sup> The Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment – May 2016 can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>



|  |  |
|--|--|
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)  | A more equal Wales<br>A Wales of Cohesive Communities<br>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language  |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.</li> <li>• Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.</li> </ul>   |
| Key Evidence   | Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment – May 2016<br>Draft Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment – 2020 – 2025 (January 2021) – submitted to Welsh Government for approval.<br>Housing (Wales) Act 2014<br>Welsh Government Circular 005/2018: Planning for Gypsy, Traveller and Showpeople Sites<br>TAN 6: Planning Sustainable Rural Communities (2010) |
| Monitoring   | TBC  |
| Detailed Policies  | TBC in Deposit RLDP  |

## Sustainable Transport

### Strategic Policy S10 – Sustainable Transport

Development proposals should promote sustainable, safe forms of transport which reduce the need to travel, increase provision for walking and cycling and improve public transport provision. This will be facilitated by:

- Favouring development that accords with the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy of reducing the need to travel, especially by car, and promoting walking, cycling and public transport.
- Promoting and enabling use of ultra low emission vehicles by providing charging infrastructure;
- Promoting active travel through safeguarding, enhancing and expanding on the Active Travel Network identified in the Integrated Network Maps;
- Favouring development close to public transport facilities and designing developments to facilitate and incorporate public transport infrastructure and connections;
- Improving road safety;
- Minimising the adverse effects of parking;
- Improving public transport links between the County's main towns and other key settlements in the region; and

- **Developing the role of the key settlements of Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow and Monmouth, around which high-capacity sustainable transport links can be developed.**

**The Deposit Plan will safeguard sites necessary to deliver the key transport measures and schemes identified in the Updated Local Transport Plan.**

- 5.59 The RLDP encourages development towards an integrated, sustainable and safe transport system, where possible reducing the need to travel, and enhancing the opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport as alternative modes to car travel. This is considered important to assist in reducing the impact of travel on the environment and climate change, encouraging more sustainable and healthy lifestyles and also encouraging more sustainable commuting patterns.
- 5.60 The spatial strategy of the RLDP is to focus development in those locations that provide the best opportunities for achieving sustainable development, which offer a choice of transport modes and contribute towards the development of a sustainable transport network. The Plan also proposes an appropriate amount of development in the County's rural areas, with a focus on those rural towns and villages that have the best access to public transport and services. However, it is recognised that many people are likely to continue to use their cars, particularly in rural areas where there is often no realistic alternative to car travel. The RLDP does, however, establish the foundations to encourage longer term changes to the historic high levels of car usage in Monmouthshire. This will include ensuring that development proposals make the best possible provision for alternative means of travel.
- 5.61 Emphasis will therefore be placed on improving the opportunities for sustainable travel in the County, particularly walking, cycling and public transport in accordance with PPW11's Sustainable Transport Hierarchy. Where cars are to be used there needs to be a move away from petrol and diesel vehicles to Ultra-Low Emissions Vehicles (ULEVs). It is important that new developments provide the charging infrastructure required to support a move to ultra-low emissions vehicles, particularly given Monmouthshire's dispersed geographical structure.
- 5.62 The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 makes walking and cycling the preferred option for shorter journeys, particularly everyday journeys, such as to and from a workplace or colleges and schools. In line with the Active Travel Act, the Council has produced Active Travel Network Maps<sup>57</sup>, identifying the walking and cycling routes required to create fully integrated networks for walking and cycling. The Council is also in the process of an active travel consultation throughout 2021 (which began in August 2020) to identify new and improve existing active travel routes throughout the

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<sup>57</sup> Monmouthshire's Active Travel Network Maps can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/monmouthshire-active-travel>

County<sup>58</sup>. The Deposit RLDP will identify and safeguard active travel routes and seek to integrate new development with the network, and where possible, expand and improve the network.

- 5.63 The RLDP will be accompanied by a Local Transport Plan (LTP). The Monmouthshire Local Transport Plan<sup>59</sup> includes a prioritised five-year programme of projects the Council wishes to see delivered between 2015 and 2020 as well as medium and longer term aspirations up to 2030. The programmes outlined in the LTP includes walking and cycling infrastructure, bus network, station and highways improvements, Cardiff Capital Region Metro schemes, 20mph limits and road safety schemes. The LTP will be updated to inform the Deposit Plan.
- 5.64 The updated Monmouthshire LTP will be informed by the South East Wales Transport Commission Final Recommendations Plan: November 2020<sup>60</sup>. This seeks to address the acute congestion problem on the M4 by proposing a ‘Network of Alternatives’ which includes rail/bus public transport infrastructure improvements and an emphasis on active travel/cycle corridors. Within Monmouthshire the report specifically recommends enhancement of Severn Tunnel Junction rail station and its access arrangements. The report also highlights the need for a behavioural shift to change people’s commuting patterns, such as promotion of ‘flexible office hubs’ and facilitating ‘working from home’. The RLDP policy framework will support provision of such facilities. It is expected that the trend for home working/working remotely (as a legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic) will continue in the long-term.
- 5.65 Welsh Government’s Building Better Places document further acknowledges the behavioural shift of increased cycling and walking activity and working from home patterns, which has been brought about by the unprecedented impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Building Better Places’ sets out that planning policy framework needs to maximise opportunities and further secure in the long -term this positive transport modal shift, kickstarted by the Covid-19 pandemic, from the car to active travel car-free journeys. In addition to this commitment of promotion of walking/cycling as the dominant transport mode the concept of the ‘20 minute neighbourhood’ whereby all people live within a 20 minute walking distance of key everyday services is a recent key Recommendation to Welsh Government Policy set out in the Future Generations Report Recommendations<sup>61</sup>.

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<sup>58</sup> Monmouthshire’s Active Travel consultation can be viewed via

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/active-travel-consultation/>

<sup>59</sup> Monmouthshire Local Transport Plan – May 2015 can be viewed via

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/local-transport-plan/>

<sup>60</sup> South East Wales Transport Commission Final Recommendations

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-11/south-east-wales-transport-commission-final-recommendations.pdf>

<sup>61</sup> Future Generations Report: Welsh Government Policy Recommendations

<https://www.futuregenerations.wales/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Welsh-Government-Recommendations.pdf>

- 5.66 Future Wales 2040 will also inform the updated Monmouthshire LTP. Policies 11 and 12 of the Plan set out that the Welsh Government will support and invest in improving the national and regional connectivity of Wales. Future Wales also includes a specific Policy 36 ‘South East Metro’, which Monmouthshire is a part of, to promote the investment and development of a “a major strategic opportunity to improve rail, bus, cycling and walking infrastructure across the region”<sup>62</sup>. The policy sets out that the local planning policy frameworks must ensure that long term strategic decisions maximise opportunities in areas that will benefit from the Metro.
- 5.67 An update of the Monmouthshire LTP taking into account recent key evidence and National Policy updates, will be undertaken alongside the preparation of the Deposit RLDP. The RLDP will support the transport schemes identified within the Monmouthshire updated LTP and, where appropriate, safeguard land for key transport proposals.

| Links to Wider Policy Framework                           |  |
|---|--|
| RLDP Objectives   | Objective 1 – Economic Growth/Employment<br>Objective 8 – Health and Well-being<br>Objective 9 – Demography<br>Objective 11 – Place-making<br>Objective 12 – Communities<br>Objective 13 – Rural Communities<br>Objective 14 – Infrastructure<br>Objective 15 – Accessibility<br>Objective 17 – Climate Change |
| Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (W G, February 2021) | Policy 11 – National Connectivity<br>Policy 12 – Regional Connectivity<br>Policy 36 – South East Metro   |
| Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)      | Active and Social Places Theme (Chapter 4) -<br>Moving within and between places   |
| Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)                    | Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations:<br>Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (page 14)<br>Active travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods (page 16)  |

<sup>62</sup> Policy 36 Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG 2015)   | A prosperous Wales<br>A resilient Wales<br>A more equal Wales<br>A Wales of Cohesive Communities  |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.</li> <li>• Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.</li> <li>• Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.</li> <li>• Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.</li> </ul> |
| Key Evidence   | Monmouthshire Local Transport Plan and updated LTP to be prepared alongside the Deposit Plan.<br>Integrated Network Maps for Monmouthshire<br>South East Wales Transport Commission: Final Recommendations: November 2020   |
| Monitoring   | TBC   |
| Detailed Policies  | TBC in Deposit RLDP   |

## Retail & Commercial Centres

### Strategic Policy S11 – Retail & Commercial Centres Hierarchy

To sustain and enhance a network of town centres, a retail hierarchy is defined below. All new or enhanced retail and commercial developments should be consistent in scale and nature with the size and character of the centre and its role in the retail hierarchy. Proposals which would undermine the retail hierarchy will not be permitted.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>County Towns</b>   | <b>Abergavenny</b><br><b>Caldicot</b><br><b>Chepstow</b><br><b>Monmouth</b>   |
| <b>Local Centres</b>  | <b>Magor</b><br><b>Raglan</b><br><b>Usk</b>   |
| <b>Neighbourhood Centres/Shops (These will be reviewed as</b> | <b>Abergavenny</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hillcrest Road</li> <li>• Rother Avenue</li> <li>• The Mardy</li> </ul> |

part of the Caldicot  
Deposit RLDP)

- West End

**Chepstow**

- Bulwark
- Thornwell

**Monmouth**

- Overmonnow
- Wyesham
- The Albion

- 5.68 PPW11 requires local planning authorities to identify a hierarchy of centres which distinguishes between higher order centres which have a wider range of uses and larger catchment areas, and lower order centres which are important to communities for day-to-day needs. Policy S11 sets out the retail hierarchy for Monmouthshire, although this will be given further consideration as part of the Retail Study which will inform the Deposit Plan.
- 5.69 The main County towns of Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth are akin to market towns, providing a broad range of facilities and services, of which retailing is a key component, for residents and visitors. The centres attract significant numbers of shoppers from their respective town and rural hinterlands. The towns are also main visitor destinations in the County, providing a range of leisure, tourism and cultural facilities. Caldicot town centre has a more limited retail offer than the other main towns, although it remains an important centre serving the area with a range of facilities. Monmouthshire County Council, with the support of key stakeholders such as Caldicot Town Council, Cardiff Capital Region and Welsh Government, is implementing an ambitious town centre regeneration project in Caldicot. While the area is not a major tourist destination, Caldicot is an important local attraction and the Council is promoting nearby tourist attractions such as Caldicot Castle and Country Park, Black Rock and the Gwent Levels.
- 5.70 The County's local centres – Magor, Raglan and Usk – also provide an important role in the retail hierarchy serving a more local function for residents, with a prominent focus on convenience (food) shopping and an element of comparison (non-food) shopping together with some local service provision. Neighbourhood centres and shops similarly provide an important local day-to-day function for their local communities. Monmouthshire County Council and Usk Town Council are jointly working on a regeneration masterplan for Usk.

- 5.71 The Monmouthshire Retail Expenditure Forecasts Update (2016)<sup>63</sup> notes that Monmouthshire’s centres are performing relatively well as destinations for convenience trading, but less well as destinations for comparison shopping. Further information on the health and function of the town and local centres can also be found in the latest Retail Background Paper March 2021<sup>64</sup>. The decline in the role of town centres as destinations for comparison goods shopping highlights the importance of attracting a diverse range of uses to commercial centres such as leisure and community uses. Given the changing role of commercial centres, the current Central Shopping Area and Primary Shopping Frontage boundaries will be reviewed in the Deposit RLDP and amended, if necessary, in recognition of the need for a degree of flexibility in maintaining occupancy, footfall and vibrant centres. An update of Monmouthshire’s Retail Expenditure Forecasts (2016) will also be undertaken to take account of the population growth levels established in the Preferred Strategy. If appropriate, land will be identified in the Deposit Plan for future retailing needs.
- 5.72 Given the essential role and function of commercial centres, it is important that a centre’s position in the hierarchy is maintained and, where possible, enhanced. A key objective of the RLDP is to sustain and enhance the County’s main towns as vibrant and attractive centres and to maintain the essential local shopping function of local centres, by focusing new and enhanced retail and commercial developments of an appropriate scale and nature, in designated centres. This is vital in ensuring that the centres remain attractive places to live and visit and provide a valuable role in meeting the needs of local communities and visitors.
- 5.73 Welsh Government’s Building Better Places (July 2020) document recognises the economic consequences to town centres as a result of Covid-19. It tasks the planning system with responding to this by ensuring that retail and commercial centres can operate as flexibly as possible. Whilst recognising the important role our town centres play, high streets will continue to change especially in the short-term due to the increase in online shopping associated with Covid-19, and there is a clear need for flexible planning policies in our central shopping areas to enable a ‘re-imagining’ of our high streets across the County. Increased agile/home working might also result in increased expenditure within our towns, with the community good-will encapsulated by the Covid-19 response helping to support local businesses and retailers. In light of these changes a need for greater flexibility will be reflected in the detailed planning policy framework which will be set out in the Deposit Plan.
- 5.74 Whilst recognising the need for greater flexibility Welsh Government in Future Wales has adopted a ‘Town Centre First’ approach. This puts the health and vibrancy of town centres as the starting point of locational decision-making. It also directs facilities and

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<sup>63</sup> Monmouthshire’s Retail Expenditure Forecasts – 2016 can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

<sup>64</sup> The Retail Background Paper – March 2021 can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/annual-monitoring/retail/>

services to where intended users can easily walk, cycle and/or use public transport to access them. Developments of an appropriate scale within town and local centres that maintain and/or enhance their vitality, attractiveness and viability to shoppers and visitors will be supported in the RLDP. The future size and scale of retail and commercial facilities is critical to the maintenance of the character and function of the County's settlements. It is therefore important that new developments are in keeping with the scale and function of the existing centres and have regard to their position within the overall hierarchy. Inappropriate developments which would undermine the vitality, viability and attractiveness of the main towns, local and neighbourhood centres will be strongly resisted. Detailed policies will be set out in the Deposit RLDP providing further clarification on where retail development will and will not be permitted, and where change of use will be limited.

- 5.75 The County's main towns and local centres provide employment, leisure, tourism and cultural opportunities as well as retail. Tourism, in particular, plays an important part in sustaining Monmouthshire's historic town centres of Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth, as well as Usk. It is essential that the role and function of these towns as important visitor destinations is maintained and enhanced over the Plan period. The co-location of retail, commercial and leisure and tourism facilities in these centres, where they can be accessed by public transport, walking and cycling, will help to sustain and enhance their vitality, viability and attractiveness and contribute to a reduction in travel demand.

| Links to Wider Policy Framework                          |   |
|--|---|
| RLDP Objectives  | Objective 1 – Economic Growth/ Employment<br>Objective 2 – Retail Centres<br>Objective 8 – Health and Well-being<br>Objective 9 – Demography<br>Objective 11 – Place-making<br>Objective 12 – Communities<br>Objective 13 – Rural Communities<br>Objective 14 – Infrastructure<br>Objective 15 – Accessibility<br>Objective 16 – Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language |
| Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021) | Policy 6 – Town Centre First  |
| Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)     | Active and Social Places Theme (Chapter 4) - Retail and Commercial Development  |
| Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)                   | Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations:<br>Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (Page 14)<br>Active travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods (Page 16)   |



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|  | <p>Revitalising our town centres (Page 18)</p> <p>Changing working practices – our future need for employment land (Page 20)</p> <p>Reawakening Wales’ tourism and cultural sectors (Page 21)</p> <p>Improving air quality and soundscapes for better health and well-being (Page 23)</p>  |
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)  | <p>A prosperous Wales</p> <p>A resilient Wales</p> <p>A more equal Wales</p> <p>A Wales of cohesive communities</p> <p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</p>  |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.</li> <li>• Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.</li> <li>• Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.</li> </ul>   |
| Key Evidence   | <p>TAN 4: Retail &amp; Commercial Development – Nov 2016</p> <p>Review of Central Shopping Area and Primary Shopping Frontage boundaries – this will support the detailed boundaries defined in the Deposit LDP.</p> <p>Monmouthshire Retail Study will be prepared to inform the Deposit Plan.</p> <p>Retail Background Paper – March 2021</p> <p>Primary Shopping Frontages SPG – April 2016</p> |
| Monitoring   | TBC  |
| Detailed Policies  | TBC in Deposit RLDP  |

## Community & Recreation Facilities

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|--|
| <b>Strategic Policy S12 – Community and Recreation Facilities</b>  |
| <p><b>Development proposals that provide and/or enhance community and recreation facilities will be permitted within or adjoining town and village development boundaries subject to detailed planning considerations. Development proposals that result in the unjustified loss of community and recreation facilities will not be permitted.</b></p> |

5.76 The Council is committed to protecting and enhancing community facilities to meet the needs of residents over the Plan period. Providing a range of community facilities which are accessible to as many people as possible is essential in developing sustainable, resilient and inclusive communities. Such facilities are valuable in terms of the facilities they provide, the employment they generate and in attracting people to live within an area. One of the Strategic Placemaking Principles in Future Wales considers that communities should be of a walkable scale with people able to easily

walk to local facilities. The value and importance of such local community facilities has been heightened during the current pandemic.

- 5.77 The Council is also committed to providing, protecting and enhancing open spaces in the County that are important for recreation, amenity, biodiversity, connectivity and/or heritage. Access to areas of open space is essential in enhancing the quality of life for all and promoting sustainable and resilient communities. It can help foster social inclusion, assist healthier lifestyles and allow for recreation and leisure activities. It is important that an accessible network of open space is maintained and improved.
- 5.78 The Covid-19 crisis has emphasised the importance of considering health and well-being throughout the planning system to ensure communities across Wales are healthy, vibrant and inclusive. Welsh Government's Building Better Places (July 2020) document recognises that the planning system has an important role in supporting healthier lifestyles.
- 5.79 The provision of new community facilities and areas of open space and/or contributions towards improving existing areas of open space will be sought in connection with new residential developments where they are needed and justified in accordance with Policy S6. This approach will help create sustainable developments that cater for the community's needs as well as promoting sustainable mixed use developments that facilitate access via public transport, walking and cycling.
- 5.80 For the purpose of this policy, community facilities are defined as facilities used by local communities for leisure, social, health, education and cultural purposes and include village halls and shops, schools, GP surgeries / health centres, leisure centres, public houses, places of worship, cemeteries, allotments and libraries. They can be owned by the public, private or community groups. Community facilities can be considered appropriate in residential and non-residential areas, where they satisfy the relevant policies, as they serve the needs of the wider community. Whilst there is a general presumption in favour of community facilities, they should not erode the character and appearance of the natural and built environment, nor the design qualities of their location. New facilities need to have good access to public transport and active travel routes, as well as be in walkable distance to as many homes as possible. The criteria against which proposals that involve the loss of community or recreation facilities will be assessed will be set out in Development Management policies in the Deposit Plan.
- 5.81 Recreation facilities include formal sport, recreation and leisure pursuits such as team games, children's play facilities, as well as more informal activities such as walking in the countryside. Further details on recreation categories and standards will be provided in the Deposit Plan as well as the designation of land to be protected for such purposes. Recreation and leisure facilities are an important generator of tourism and,

in practice, the difference between facilities for local residents and tourists is difficult to define. However, for the purposes of the Plan, policies which relate to recreation and community facilities refer to activities primarily undertaken by local residents as opposed to the more tourist related activities associated with visitors.

| Links to Wider Policy Framework                           |   |
|---|---|
| RLDP Objectives   | Objective 3 –Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape<br>Objective 8 – Health and Well-being<br>Objective 9 – Demography<br>Objective 11 – Place-making<br>Objective 12 – Communities<br>Objective 14 – Infrastructure<br>Objective 15 – Accessibility  |
| Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)  | Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking<br>Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities<br>Policy 34 – Green Belts in the South East  |
| Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)      | Active and Social Places Theme (Chapter 4) -<br>Community Facilities<br>Recreational Spaces   |
| Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)                    | Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations:<br>Considering Health and Well-being throughout the Planning Process (page 12)<br>Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (Page 14)<br>Active travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods (Page 16)<br>Green Infrastructure, health and well-being and ecological resilience (Page 22) |
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)   | A healthier Wales<br>A more equal Wales<br>A Wales of cohesive communities<br>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language  |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBPP) (February 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.</li> <li>• Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.</li> <li>• Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.</li> </ul>                          |
| Key Evidence  | TAN 16: Sport, Recreation and Open Space<br>Monmouthshire Amenity Open Space Audit to follow with the Deposit plan.   |
| Monitoring  | TBC   |
| Detailed Policies   | TBC in Deposit RLDP   |

## PRODUCTIVE & ENTERPRISING PLACES

- 5.82 Economic growth and resilience are key priorities for Monmouthshire County Council driven by the need to address the shrinking working age population and the high levels of out-commuting the County experiences. In order to create sustainable and resilient communities, the Preferred Strategy identifies a level of growth that aims to provide an appropriate balance of household and jobs growth. The RLDP will seek to facilitate this growth by providing a policy framework that allows Monmouthshire to attract and retain investment, create jobs, improve strategic infrastructure through the identification of sufficient employment land for traditional employment uses (B use class) and the promotion of other employment generators important to Monmouthshire's economy. Job growth will also come via the growth and retention of existing Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and the formation of new ones, with supportive planning policies, marketing and other interventions as required to make this happen.

### Employment Sites Provision

#### **Strategic Policy S13 – Employment Sites Provision**

**Provision will be made for a minimum of 43 ha of land on a suitable range and choice of sites for industrial and business development (classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987) in accordance with the Plan's Spatial Strategy.**

**Existing employment land and premises that continue to be required for employment purposes will be protected from alternative forms of development.**

**To ensure that a range of types and sizes of employment land and premises is provided, development for the following will be permitted, subject to detailed planning considerations:**

- **Small units and workshops for small businesses throughout the County to assist in providing regeneration opportunities, enabling SMEs to start up and grow, and ensuring sustainable economic growth;**
- **The integration of new employment opportunities in mixed-use developments.**

- 5.83 Monmouthshire's economic profile is characterised by low unemployment levels, but a high economic inactivity rate, reflecting its increasing ageing population and shrinking working age population. Levels of out-commuting and the distances travelled are also high. Combined, these factors are impacting on employment growth within Monmouthshire and the social sustainability of our communities. The Preferred Strategy seeks to address these issues by promoting a growth level and spatial strategy that will promote higher employment growth, supporting greater labour force retention and achieve a reduction in the net out-flow of workers. The Preferred Strategy provides the planning policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 jobs over the Plan period (481 jobs per annum). This level of job growth aligns

with the projected population and housing growth and takes account of adjustments to household membership rates for key younger age groups and a reduced level of commuting by retaining more of the resident workforce.

- 5.84 As noted in the Development Plans Manual (March 2020), the aim of a strategy is to achieve a balance between homes and jobs thereby reducing the need for commuting (paragraph 5.25). The Manual recognises that the scale of economic growth to be delivered in a plan will be strongly influenced by factors including the available labour force, skills, net migration levels and commuting patterns. While these factors remain relevant and are key objectives of the Plan, it is becoming widely accepted that the fundamental shift in working practices experienced as a legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic, with a significant increase in people working from home/remotely, has made it less important where some jobs are located as employees no longer need to commute for work in many cases. This has provided the opportunity for many people to live and work in the same location via a new remote working approach.
- 5.85 The Preferred Strategy therefore aims to build on this shift and the benefits that have occurred during the Covid-19 pandemic, as recognised in Welsh Government's Building Better Places response to Covid-19. This acknowledges that even when all restrictions are lifted, the impacts on people working from home are likely to have longer term impacts on where and how we work. In this respect, these changes have opened up new opportunities for jobs to be secured through the increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that the trend for increased home and remote working and/or provision of community-based remote working hubs will continue over the longer term in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home, making it less important where the jobs are located as commuting is reduced as a result of changing working habits.
- 5.86 Increased remote/home working will mean both employers and employees will have greater flexibility over where to locate with quality of life and environment potentially becoming increasingly important to Monmouthshire's benefit. Monmouthshire is a very attractive proposition and stands to gain from an increased economically active population without the associated problems of increased commuting, and local businesses and services would benefit from increased custom and footfall with workers spending their wages in local businesses and supporting local services helping to create vibrant neighbourhoods and sense of place.
- 5.87 Securing local economic growth and prosperity are also a key aim of the Plan and will be achieved through a range of mechanisms and sectors. Delivering on the growth ambition will require more than simply allocating land in the RLDP; the Economic Ambition Statement sets the Council's direction of travel and the combination of measures required, including an Investment Prospectus, close engagement with the business sector, demonstrating a pro-business culture and land assembly

interventions to ensure sites come forward. Policy interventions are also likely to be needed in terms of housing mix policies, to achieve the objective of retaining and attracting a younger demographic.

5.88 The RLDP has a key role in supporting the Council’s vision for economic growth and will be one of the main enablers in delivering sustainable economic growth and increasing employment opportunities in existing and emerging sectors. As noted above, Monmouthshire’s priorities for economic growth are set out in the ‘Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement’<sup>65</sup> and accompanying Investment Prospectus. The statement reflects national and regional policies including the ambitions for the Cardiff Capital Region and the Council’s Corporate Plan and builds on the recommendations of the ‘Economies of the Future Reports’<sup>66</sup>. As detailed in Section 2, the Statement sets out Monmouthshire’s economic priorities moving forward as being:

- A dynamic place to do business
- A credible place to invest
- An incredible place to live, visit and stay

5.89 Monmouthshire is geographically well connected, located in a key strategic location that benefits from good links to Cardiff, Bristol and the Midlands. With the recent removal of the Severn Bridge tolls, Monmouthshire’s relationship with the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), the Bristol City Region, Forest of Dean and South Gloucestershire is also expected to strengthen and enhance the County’s economic role in the region. Monmouthshire is well located to benefit from initiatives such as the Great Western Cities<sup>67</sup> and the Western Power House<sup>68</sup>, which aim to drive economic growth through regional collaboration.

5.90 Covid-19 is an ongoing situation and the nature of the full longer-term impacts on the economy have yet to be borne out and how the economy recovery transpires once restrictions are fully relaxed is yet to come. However, the Council has played an active role in administering UK and Welsh Government economic resilience funding for businesses throughout the pandemic to reduce the impact of Covid-19 and aid recovery. Welsh Government’s Building Better Places recognises that the planning system will need to adapt quickly to the economic changes that may emerge as a result of Covid-19 or trends that have been accelerated such as agile working.

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<sup>65</sup> Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement – can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

<sup>66</sup> The Economies of the Future Reports can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

<sup>67</sup> Britain’s Western Powerhouse Report – February 2016 can be viewed via <http://static1.squarespace.com/static/55e973a3e4b05721f2f7988c/t/56bda7c27da24fd5476ff00d/1455269827732/Great+Western+Cities+EXEC+SUMMARY.pdf>

<sup>68</sup> A Powerhouse for the West – July 2019 can be viewed via <https://www.apowerhouseforthewest.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/A-Powerhouse-for-the-West-Metro-Dynamics-July-2019.pdf>

5.91 In line with PPW and Building Better Places and the requirement to provide an economic development evidence base to support LDP preparation, the Council has commissioned the preparation of an Employment Land Review (ELR)<sup>69</sup>. This has undertaken a review of employment forecasts and B-use class land requirements for the Plan period 2018 – 2033. The study recommends that a forecast scenario based on past take-up rates is adopted for the RLDP. This provides a minimum requirement of 43ha of land, including a five-year buffer to allow for choice and uncertainty in forecasting. The ELR breaks this down by individual land use types as follows:

- B1: 3.9ha
- B2: 10.3ha
- B8: 28.8ha

5.92 Providing for this jobs growth is part of a complex picture. A fundamental element of achieving the job growth will be the provision of a deliverable range of employment land supply, in appropriate locations and in the right quantities to attract new businesses in key growth sectors and enable our existing businesses to grow. Many of the County's businesses are SMEs and may not require new land allocations to grow: the Covid-19 pandemic has seen an increase in new SMEs. Moreover, there is an increased propensity for agile and home working over the longer term, meaning demand for physical employment land or space is changing. It is acknowledged that this tends to relate more to office-based sectors, and that not all sectors are able to work from home or in an agile manner. The RLDP will continue to provide a range of sites to meet employment needs to 2033 to support the Council's ambitions and to support the local economy, being flexible to future changes. This is likely to include community-based remote working hubs that support a hybrid way of working from home and remotely at a local hub, and will support small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) needs which are a key sector in the County.

5.93 The ELR acknowledges that two large existing employment allocations – Quay Point and Gwent Europark, account for over half of the available supply of employment land. Whilst the ELR concludes that these sites should form part of the realistic supply of employment land, it also notes that it may be prudent of the RLDP to identify an increased level of employment allocations to enable further flexibility in the market and reduce reliance on these two sites. Further analysis in relation to the suitability and deliverability of existing Adopted LDP employment allocations will inform the Deposit RLDP. The outcome of this work as well as the ELR's review of candidate sites received at the Initial Call for Candidate Sites stage and sites yet to come forward as part of the Second Call for Candidate Sites will inform the employment allocations made in the Deposit RLDP.

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<sup>69</sup> Employment Land Review (BE Group, June 2021)

- 5.94 In accordance with PPW, the ELR sits alongside the Regional Employment Study<sup>70</sup>, which covers a Larger than Local Area of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen. This related study provides a regional scale analysis of the economic evidence base and the property and employment land market in the Larger than Local Area, up to 2040 (the ELR covers the 2018 – 2033). This Study provides a regional viewpoint of demand and land requirements within the region and recognises the important role the M4 corridor plays in the region as well as the strategic function of the north of the sub-region linking to Herefordshire and the west Midlands. Strategic employment should be geographically distributed throughout the region to support this. Gwent Euro Park is recognised as a sub-regional strategic employment site. The findings of this Study will be considered as part of the Deposit RLDP along with the ELR.
- 5.95 Having regard to the outcome of the evidence base set out above, the Deposit RLDP will allocate sufficient employment land (B use class) to cover the employment needs of the County in locations consistent with the Plan’s spatial strategy. Details of employment land allocations and existing protected sites will be provided in the Deposit RLDP, along with criteria setting out the exceptional circumstances in which the loss of existing industrial and business sites or premises will be considered acceptable.
- 5.96 It should be noted that not all these jobs will be in planning B-class uses and many will be delivered through foundational sectors such tourism, leisure, food and retail and the agricultural and forestry sector, which play an important role within Monmouthshire’s economy. Future Wales recognises and supports the significant role foundational and agricultural sectors can play in the Welsh economy generally but with significant relevance to supporting the rural economy (Policy 5 of Future Wales). The RLDP plans positively for these sectors through complementary Strategic Policies including S11 – Retail and Commercial Centres Hierarchy, S14 – Rural Enterprise and S15 – Visitor Economy.

| Links to Wider Policy Framework                                   |  |
|---|--|
| RLDP Objectives   | Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment<br>Objective 9 – Demography<br>Objective 11 – Place-making<br>Objective 12 – Communities<br>Objective 14 – Infrastructure<br>Objective 15 – Accessibility |
| Future Wales:<br>The National<br>Plan 2040 (WG,<br>February 2021) | Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities<br>Policy 5 – Supporting the rural economy<br>Policy 6 – Town Centre First   |

<sup>70</sup> Regional Employment Study: Larger Than Local (BE Group, March 2020)



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|--|---|
| Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)     | Productive and Enterprising Places Theme (Chapter 5) - Economic Development   |
| Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)                   | Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations:<br>Staying local: creating neighbourhoods<br>Revitalising our town centres<br>Digital Places – the lockdown lifeline<br>Changing working practices: our future need for employment land<br>Reawakening Wales’ tourism and cultural sectors  |
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)  | A prosperous Wales<br>A resilient Wales<br>A more Equal Wales<br>A Wales of cohesive communities<br>A globally responsible Wales  |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change</li> <li>• Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.</li> </ul>  |
| Key Evidence   | <p>Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement (November 2019)</p> <p>Vision 2040: Growing Your Own Business Monmouthshire Inward Investment Prospectus (March 2020)</p> <p>Monmouthshire Employment Land Review (June 2021)</p> <p>Regional Employment Study – Larger than Local Study – Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Torfaen, Monmouthshire and Newport (BE Group) (March 2020)</p> <p>Economies of the Future Analysis – Strategic Directions Report (October 2018)</p> |
| Monitoring   | TBC   |
| Detailed Policies  | TBC in Deposit RLDP   |

## Rural Enterprise

### Strategic Policy S14 – Rural Enterprise

**Development to enable rural enterprise uses and the diversification of the rural economy will be permitted outside settlement development boundaries where it is of a scale and type compatible with the surrounding area and will cause no unacceptable harm to the surrounding landscape, historic and cultural heritage, biodiversity or local amenity value. Development must re-use or adapt existing buildings where possible. The exceptional circumstances in which new buildings may be permitted outside the settlement boundaries to support the rural economy will be set out in the Deposit RLDP.**

- 5.97 A significant issue for Monmouthshire is the need to sustain and regenerate the County's rural economy. In allowing for an appropriate amount of diversification and enterprise in rural areas, the Plan seeks to sustain and enhance and, where appropriate, regenerate the County's rural settlements. The promotion of diverse economic activity is a key element of this, which is also recognised as a key objective of 'Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement'<sup>71</sup>. The Statement aims to continue to support and promote rural businesses and services and sits alongside the Rural Development Programme<sup>72</sup> (RDP), a seven-year investment programme (2014 – 2020) supporting a wide range of activities and schemes which are due to run until 2023. The LEADER initiative of the programme is designed to get local people, businesses and communities involved in delivering sustainable and innovative solutions to address some of the economic, social and environmental challenges facing rural areas and covers the Vale of Usk region (Monmouthshire and rural parts of Newport). The project is worth £2.79M has supported over 40 projects. The RDP team has also secured more than £8M funding sourced from other measures within the RDP and elsewhere. Discussions are ongoing regarding a replacement RDP post Brexit. In the interim, the UK Community Renewal Fund<sup>73</sup> has been launched by central government as a precursor to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to replace EU funding sources.
- 5.98 Future Wales 2040 has expressed a commitment to supporting vibrant rural areas. Policy 5 – Supporting the Rural Economy – establishes the national policy approach for LDPs to plan positively to meet the employment needs of rural areas through appropriate and proportionate economic growth. The role the rural economy can play in the Covid-19 recovery has also been recognised in Welsh Government's Building Better Places policy document. Local food production, improvements to digital infrastructure to facilitate changing working practices to work more remotely and supporting the tourism and visitor sectors are all noted as key areas to facilitate the Covid-19 recovery.
- 5.99 National policy supports rural enterprise and agricultural diversification where it is environmentally acceptable. TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (2010), advises that LDPs should facilitate the diversification of the rural economy by

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<sup>71</sup> Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2020/03/Economic-Growth-and-Ambition-Statement-November-2019.pdf>

<sup>72</sup> Details of the Rural Development Programme – 2014 – 2020 can be viewed via Monmouthshire's website at [Monmouthshire Business & Enterprise | Rural Innovation | Embracing innovation and enabling big things to happen in South Wales](https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/business-and-enterprise/rural-innovation/embracing-innovation-and-enabling-big-things-to-happen-in-south-wales) and Welsh Government via <https://businesswales.gov.wales/walesruralnetwork/wrn-support-unit/rural-development-programme-funding>

<sup>73</sup> Details of the UK Community Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund can be viewed via <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus-2021-22>

accommodating the needs of both traditional rural industries and new enterprises, whilst minimising impacts on the local community and the environment. New enterprises should be small-scale and be located within or adjoining settlement boundaries and not have an unacceptable impact on the local community or environment. Detailed criteria for assessing rural enterprise will be set out in the Deposit Plan. Separate criteria apply to rural diversification as set out in TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable Communities. Diversification may include livestock, non-traditional livestock and crop farming, tourism projects and renewable energy proposals that help to increase the viability of the rural enterprise by reducing their operating costs (5.6.13 – PPW11). The Deposit Plan will also provide detailed policy criteria to assess rural diversification proposals.

5.100 The significant role tourism plays in Monmouthshire’s economy particularly in assisting in the diversification of the rural economy is also recognised. Diversification for such purposes could therefore assist in maintaining and enhancing local employment opportunities.

5.101 It is recognised that an important balance exists between rural enterprise / diversification and the need to promote sustainable development and maintain the local distinctiveness and high quality of Monmouthshire’s environment. To achieve this balance, and in accordance with PPW11, priority should be given to the re-use of existing buildings rather than the development of new ones. Where this is not possible, limited new build may be acceptable in exceptional circumstances. Detailed criteria in relation to this will be set out in the Deposit RLDP.

| Links to Wider Policy Framework                                   |  |
|---|--|
| RLDP Objectives   | Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment<br>Objective 3 – Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape<br>Objective 6 – Land<br>Objective 7 – Natural Resources<br>Objective 9 – Demography<br>Objective 11 – Place-making<br>Objective 12 – Communities<br>Objective 13 – Rural Communities<br>Objective 15 – Accessibility |
| Future Wales:<br>The National<br>Plan 2040 (WG,<br>February 2021) | Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities<br>Policy 5 – Supporting the Rural Economy   |
| Planning Policy<br>Wales Edition<br>11 (WG,<br>February 2021)     | Productive and Enterprising Places Theme (Chapter 5)-<br>Rural Economy   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)                   | Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations:<br>Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (page 14)<br>Digital places – the lockdown lifeline (page19)<br>Changing working practices: our future need for employment land (page 20)<br>Reawakening Wales’ tourism and cultural sectors (page 21)   |
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)  | A prosperous Wales<br>A resilient Wales<br>A more equal Wales<br>A Wales of Cohesive Communities   |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.</li> <li>• Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.</li> <li>• Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.</li> </ul> |
| Key Evidence   | Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement (Nov 2019)<br>Vision 2040: Growing Your Own Business Monmouthshire Inward Investment Prospectus (March 2020)<br>TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (2010)  |
| Monitoring   | TBC  |
| Detailed Policies  | TBC in Deposit RLDP  |

## Visitor Economy

### Strategic Policy S15 – Visitor Economy

**Development proposals that provide and / or enhance sustainable forms of tourism will be permitted subject to detailed planning considerations.**

**Development proposals that would have an unacceptable adverse impact on features and areas of tourism interest and their settings, or that would result in the unjustified loss of tourism facilities will not be permitted.**

- 5.102 Future Wales 2040 recognises that tourism and leisure is a major and growing employer and contributor to the Welsh rural economy. Policy 5 sets out that sustainable forms of tourism including opportunities for active, green and cultural tourism should be explored within the planning policy framework. The role of tourism in the Covid-19 recovery has also been acknowledged in Welsh Government’s Building Better Places policy document whereby tourism and visitor sectors within rural areas of Wales are noted as key areas to facilitate the Covid-19 economic recovery.

- 5.103 PPW11 equally values the importance of tourism to economic prosperity and job creation and its ability to act as a catalyst for environmental protection, regeneration and improvement in both urban and rural areas. In rural areas tourism related development is an essential element in providing for a healthy, diverse local economy and in contributing to the provision and maintenance of facilities for local communities.
- 5.104 Tourism plays a significant part in the Monmouthshire economy, particularly in assisting in the diversification of the rural economy and in sustaining the County's historic town centres. Monmouthshire benefits from extensive natural and cultural assets that offer considerable potential for residents and visitors to enjoy. The County is noted for its natural beauty and has a rich and diverse landscape stretching from the coastline of the Gwent Levels in the south to the uplands of the Brecon Beacons in the north and the picturesque river corridor of the Wye Valley in the east. Monmouthshire's historic market towns and cultural/heritage assets are also key attractions. The importance of the local tourism economy will increase given Monmouthshire's desirable tourism offer, increased demand for 'staycations' rather than holidays abroad, and with a particular emphasis on self-catering accommodation in the short-term.
- 5.105 The visitor economy provides jobs, services and facilities that are essential to the well-being and enjoyment of local communities and residents of Monmouthshire. According to figures supplied by tourism economic indicator STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor), the sector brought in £245m to Monmouthshire in 2019 (latest figures available) and supported the equivalent of 3,119 full-time jobs (STEAM report 2019)<sup>74</sup>. The Council's vision and priorities for the visitor economy are set in the Council's Destination Management Plan – 2017-2020<sup>75</sup>. Although now out of date (due to impact of Covid-19 pandemic) the Management Plan is anticipated to be updated at its next opportunity. Given the importance of tourism to the Monmouthshire economy and its potential to aid economic recovery of the Covid-19 pandemic impact, the need to safeguard, provide and enhance the visitor economy/tourism facilities is essential, in ensuring that Monmouthshire realises its potential as a high quality and competitive visitor destination
- 5.106 The RLDP has a key role in supporting the Council's vision by enabling development that safeguards, provides and enhances tourism that both supports local communities and protects the natural and built environment, key drivers of Monmouthshire's visitor economy. The RLDP will seek to support the Council's tourism industry by encouraging and planning for sustainable forms of tourism in Monmouthshire. This is

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<sup>74</sup> STEAM Final trend report 2018-2019 <https://mediafiles.thedms.co.uk/Publication/MW-Mon/cms/pdf/STEAM%20Report%20Monmouthshire%202019.pdf>

<sup>75</sup> Monmouthshire's Destination Management Plan – 2017 – 2020 can be viewed via <https://mediafiles.thedms.co.uk/Publication/MW-Mon/cms/pdf/FINAL%20July%202017%20Monmouthshire%20Destination%20Plan%202017-2020.pdf>

defined as tourism that is economically viable, generates local benefits, is welcomed by and helps support local communities, reduces global environmental impacts and protects / enhances the local environment. Further advice on this can be found in the Adopted Sustainable Tourism Accommodation Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) (Nov 2017), particularly in relation to ‘glamping’. This SPG was produced to provide clarity on the Adopted LDP’s tourism policies, some of which require review and simplification for the Deposit RLDP to form the basis for assessing proposals for tourism development.

| <b>Links to Wider Policy Framework</b>                   |   |
|--|---|
| RLDP Objectives  | Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment<br>Objective 3 – Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape<br>Objective 11 – Place-making<br>Objective 12 – Communities<br>Objective 13 – Rural Communities<br>Objective 16 – Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language  |
| Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021) | Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities<br>Policy 5 – Supporting the Rural Economy  |
| Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)     | Productive and Enterprising Places Theme (Chapter 5)-<br>Tourism<br>Rural Economy   |
| Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)                   | Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations:<br>Reawakening Wales’ tourism and cultural sectors (page 21)  |
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)  | A prosperous Wales<br>A resilient Wales<br>A more equal Wales<br>A Wales of Cohesive Communities  |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.</li> <li>• Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.</li> </ul> |
| Key Evidence   | Sustainable Tourism Accommodation SPG – Nov 2017<br>Rural Conversions to a Residential or Tourism Use SPG - 2017  |
| Monitoring   | TBC   |
| Detailed Policies  | TBC in Deposit RLDP   |

## **Sustainable Waste Management**

| <b>Strategic Policy S16 – Sustainable Waste Management</b>                          |
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| <b>To facilitate the delivery of sustainable management of waste the Plan will:</b> |

- i) Ensure that proposals conform to the principles of the waste hierarchy supporting those that move waste up the hierarchy;**
- ii) Support an integrated and adequate network of waste management installations that has regard to the nearest appropriate installation concept and self-sufficiency principles where necessary;**
- iii) Identify suitable allocated and protected Class B2 industrial sites that are appropriate for in-building waste management treatment facilities, subject to detailed planning considerations;**
- iv) Support the circular economy by encouraging the minimisation of the production of waste and the use of reused and recycled materials in the design, construction and demolition stages of development; and**
- v) Ensure that provision is made for the sustainable management, sorting, storage and collection of waste in all new development.**

5.107 The planning system has an important role to play in facilitating sustainable waste management. Welsh Government’s Policy for waste management is set out in ‘Towards Zero Waste’ (2010) and associated Sector Plans. Local authorities are required to develop a sustainable approach to the management of waste, including the support of proposals which move the management of waste up the waste hierarchy, with waste prevention and re-use at the top of the hierarchy, followed by preparation for re-use, recycling, recovery and finally disposal.

5.108 The Collections, Infrastructure and Markets Sector Plan (CIMSP) sets out the waste management framework considered to provide the best solutions to meet environmental, social and economic needs in Wales to 2050. The CIMSP requires the provision of an integrated and sustainable network of waste facilities. The ‘Nearest Appropriate Installation’ concept and the principle of self-sufficiency will only be applicable in relation to mixed municipal wastes (covered by Article 16 of the revised Waste Framework Directive).

5.109 Future Wales recognises waste as a policy area requiring a co-ordinated framework through the preparation of a Strategic Development Plan (SDP). Progress on the preparation of an SDP for the South East Wales region will continue to be monitored as the Plan progresses. In the meantime, PPW11 and TAN 21: Waste, establish regional monitoring arrangements to inform the preparation of LDPs and assist in the determination of planning applications. The most recent Waste Planning Report for South East Wales was published in April 2016<sup>76</sup> and concludes that there is currently no need for additional landfill capacity within the region. In addition, the report advises that any new proposal for further residential waste treatment should be carefully assessed to ensure that overprovision does not occur within the region. As

<sup>76</sup> The SE Wales Waste Planning Report – April 2016 can be viewed via <https://gov.wales/waste-planning-monitoring-reports>

such, no specific need for such waste management facilities has currently been identified at a regional level.

5.110 At a local level, Monmouthshire has a number of partnerships in place to deal with its municipal waste.

- Residual Municipal Waste - Monmouthshire is a member of Project Gwyrdd, a residual waste procurement partnership made up of five local authorities, (Caerphilly, Cardiff, Monmouthshire, Newport and the Vale of Glamorgan) who have entered into a 25-year contract with Viridor Waste Management Ltd to treat municipal residual waste at their Energy from Waste Facility at Trident Park in Cardiff.
- Food Waste - Food waste is dealt with via a 15-year procurement partnership involving Bridgend, Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire and Torfaen with Severn Trent Water Anaerobic Digestion Facility at Stormy Down, near Porthcawl.
- Garden Waste – Monmouthshire has a three-year contract with Abergavenny Green Waste Company.
- Recycled Waste – is bulked and sent to reprocessors across the UK.
- Residual Commercial Waste – this is bulked and treated as part of the Project Gwyrdd arrangements.
- Trade Waste – Monmouthshire County Council also offer a trade collection service for residual waste, which is recycled in the same way as municipal recycled waste.
- Landfill – Less than 1% of waste from Monmouthshire goes to landfill, with the facilities used depending on where the reprocessing of material takes place.  
(Source: MCC Neighbourhood Services Section)

5.111 TAN 21: Waste, notes that many general employment sites and major industrial areas are likely to be suitable locations for waste facilities<sup>77</sup>. Details of those employment land allocations that are considered suitable for the provision of waste management facilities will be provided in the Deposit Plan as well as the detailed criteria against which planning applications for waste management facilities will be assessed. As required by TAN 21: Waste (2014), a 'Waste Planning Assessment' will be required for all applications for a waste facility classified as a disposal, recovery or recycling facility. The assessment should be proportionate to the nature, scale and size of the development proposed.

5.112 Developments should where possible minimise the production of waste in the development process through the use of secondary and recycled aggregates as part of the construction process in accordance with the circular economy principle.

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<sup>77</sup> Paragraph 3.19 of TAN 21: Waste (2014)



5.113 It is also important that new developments facilitate sustainable waste management options for the people living in and using new developments once complete. This Policy aims to encourage the recycling of waste materials by the provision of adequate facilities for storage and collection of waste and separation at source. Waste related considerations should be taken into account in the design of the development so that they are properly integrated into it, and fully accessible to collection vehicles.

| Links to Wider Policy Framework                          |   |
|--|---|
| RLDP Objectives  | Objective 5 – Minerals and Waste<br>Objective 7 – Natural Resources<br>Objective 14 – Infrastructure<br>Objective 17 – Climate Change   |
| Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021) | Policy 19 – Strategic Policies for Regional Planning  |
| Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)     | Productive and Enterprising Places Theme (Chapter 5) -  |
| Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)                   | Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Climate Change and Decarbonisation: take forward measures to embed the principles of a circular economy (page 11).  |
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)  | A resilient Wales<br>A Wales of cohesive communities<br>A globally responsible Wales  |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.</li> <li>• Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.</li> </ul> |
| Key Evidence   | Technical Advice Note 21: Waste (2014)<br>Waste Planning Monitoring Report South East Wales April 2016<br>Employment Land Review –June 2021   |
| Monitoring   | TBC   |
| Detailed Policies  | TBC in Deposit RLDP   |

## Minerals

### Strategic Policy S17 – Minerals

**The Council will sustainably manage its mineral resources by:**

- i) Safeguarding known / potential sand and gravel and limestone resources for future possible use;**
- ii) Maintaining a minimum 10-year land bank of crushed rock and 7 years land-based sand and gravel reserves throughout the Plan period in line with national guidance; and**
- iii) Encouraging the efficient and appropriate use of high-quality minerals and maximising the potential for the use of secondary and recycled aggregates as an alternative to primary land won resources.**

- 5.114 In accordance with national and regional policy requirements, the RLDP encourages a sustainable approach to minerals planning. This seeks to ensure that valuable finite resources are safeguarded for possible future extraction and that the use of secondary and recycled aggregates is maximised in preference to primary aggregates.
- 5.115 Future Wales recognises minerals as a policy area requiring a co-ordinated framework through the preparation of a Strategic Development Plan (SDP). Progress on the preparation of an SDP for the South East Wales region will continue to be monitored as the Plan progresses. PPW11 and Minerals Technical Advice Note 1: Aggregate (2004) (MTAN1) require Local Planning Authorities to make provision for a minimum land bank of 10 years for crushed rock and 7 years for land-based sand and gravel throughout the full 15 years of a development plan period. To establish these requirements MTAN1 requires the preparation of Regional Technical Statements (RTS) for the areas covered by both the South Wales and North Wales Regional Aggregates Working Parties (RAWPs).
- 5.116 A revised RTS – 2nd Review for South Wales<sup>78</sup> was published in September 2020 and endorsed by the Minister for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs in March 2021. The revised RTS makes recommendations for the apportionments necessary to ensure an adequate supply of crushed rock, including the nationally recommended minimum provision of 7 and 10 years, are available for the entire duration of the RLDP. The total apportionments required for Monmouthshire are zero for land-won sand & gravel and 5.866 million tonnes for crushed rock. These compare with existing landbanks

<sup>78</sup> Regional Technical Statement – Second Revision main report – Final September 2020 - [1 \(swrawp-wales.org.uk\)](https://www.swrawp-wales.org.uk) & South Wales Appendix B - [1 \(swrawp-wales.org.uk\)](https://www.swrawp-wales.org.uk)

(excluding dormant sites) of zero for sand & gravel and 11.25 million tonnes for crushed rock (as of 31st December 2016), reflecting the significant unworked permitted reserves of Limestone at the inactive quarry at Ifton. When compared against the apportioned requirement as set out in the RTS2, Monmouthshire has a surplus of provision and therefore no further allocations for future working are specifically required to be identified within the RLDP when determined on a Local Planning Authority basis.

- 5.117 On a regional basis Monmouthshire forms part of the former Gwent sub-region along with Torfaen, Newport and Blaenau Gwent. Within the sub-region there is an overall shortfall of reserves. PPW11 notes that in such circumstances authorities must agree a joint approach with neighbouring authorities in line with current regional arrangements<sup>79</sup>. Monmouthshire will work collaboratively with neighbouring authorities to consider options for satisfying regional apportionments. The latest position will be updated in the Deposit Plan.
- 5.118 Safeguarding areas for potential sources of sand and gravel and crushed rock aggregates will be identified on the Proposals Map accompanying the Deposit Plan in accordance with the National Minerals Resource Maps and the National Aggregates Safeguarding Maps for Wales.
- 5.119 The policy seeks to ensure that best use of high-quality mineral resources is achieved and is not used for a lower grade purpose than intended. The increased use of alternatives to naturally occurring minerals is also promoted. The re-use and/or recycling of construction and demolition material and industrial waste serves not only to reduce the amount of waste produced but also conserves scarce resources and minimises environmental damage.
- 5.120 The Deposit Plan will also set out detailed considerations for mineral planning including the criteria against which mineral applications will be assessed and the protection of buffer zones.

| Links to Wider Policy Framework |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| RLDP Objectives                 | Objective 1 – Economic Growth/Employment<br>Objective 5 – Minerals and Waste<br>Objective 6 – Land<br>Objective 7 – Natural Resources<br>Objective 14 - Infrastructure<br>Objective 17 – Climate Change |
| Future Wales:<br>The National   | Policy 19 – Strategic Policies for Regional Planning, identifies policy areas which cut across local planning authorities and require a regional, co-ordinated planning response through the            |

<sup>79</sup> Paragraph 5.14.16 – PPW 11 – February 2021

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| Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)                            | preparation of a Strategic Development Plan, including mineral extraction.  |
| Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)     | Productive and Enterprising Places Theme (Chapter 5) - Minerals   |
| Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)                   | Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Climate Change and Decarbonisation: take forward measures to embed the principles of the sustainable management of mineral resources (page 11).   |
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)  | A Prosperous Wales<br>A Resilient Wales<br>A Globally Responsible Wales   |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.</li> <li>• Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.</li> </ul> |
| Key Evidence   | Minerals Technical Advice Note 1: Aggregate (2004) (MTAN1)<br>RTS 2 <sup>nd</sup> Review published in September 2020 and endorsed by the Minister for Energy, Planning & Rural Affairs March 2021<br>National Minerals Resource Maps<br>National Aggregates Safeguarding Maps for Wales                             |
| Monitoring   | TBC   |
| Detailed Policies  | TBC in Deposit RLDP   |

## DISTINCTIVE & NATURAL PLACES

- 5.121 Monmouthshire has significant Green Infrastructure, landscape, biodiversity and nature conservation resources, a number of which are of international or national importance.
- 5.122 The need to protect and enhance these resources is a key focus of the RLDP. A fundamental element of the RLDP Vision is to protect and enhance the distinctive character of Monmouthshire's Green Infrastructure assets. This will be achieved by providing development opportunities, where appropriate, across the County while at the same time preserving and enhancing the best of its high quality natural environment, distinctive character and delivering a placemaking approach.
- 5.123 Reflecting this Vision, the Distinctive & Natural Places section seeks to protect, enhance and manage Monmouthshire's Green Infrastructure assets including its; natural heritage, high quality open spaces, distinctive landscapes, protected sites,

habitats and species and other biodiversity interests and the ecological connectivity between them. The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised the value and importance of placemaking and of the provision of locally accessible open/green spaces for health and well-being and recreation. This is essential to our core purpose of building sustainable and resilient communities.

5.124 Future Wales 2040 sets out a commitment to protect and enhance natural resources whereby Policy 9 ‘Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure’ sets out that RLDPs should identify areas to be protected and identify opportunities where Green Infrastructure can be maximised. Policy 15 ‘National Forest’ also commits to the need to identify national forest sites in order to increase woodland cover throughout Wales and help build the resilience of our ecosystems. The protection and enhancement of our natural places is further reinforced in the recent Welsh Government’s Building Better Places, which emphasises the importance of access to and provision of Green Infrastructure in aiding health benefits and well-being of people in the Covid-19 recovery. In addition to this Future Generations Report: Welsh Government Policy Recommendations sets out a commitment to large scale habitat restoration, creativity and connectivity as a top policy priority<sup>80</sup>. The RLDP will provide a positive planning policy framework to support and enable this policy approach through the provision of locally accessible open green space and the protection and enhancement of our natural environment.

## Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation

| <b>Strategic Policy S18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation</b>  |
|--|
| <p><b>Green Infrastructure assets and opportunities should embrace the placemaking approach and be designed and managed to deliver a multifunctional resource; capable of delivering a wide range of social, economic, environmental and health and well-being benefits for local communities and the county as a whole, including climate change action and mitigation.</b></p> <p><b>Development proposals must:</b></p> <p><b>Maintain, protect and enhance the integrity and connectivity of Monmouthshire’s green infrastructure, including landscape, biodiversity, public rights of ways and heritage assets through the following key functions:</b></p> <p><b>(i) Landscape Setting and Quality of Place, by identifying, protecting and, where appropriate, enhancing the distinctive landscape,</b></p> |

<sup>80</sup> Future Generations Report: Welsh Government Policy Recommendations  
<https://www.futuregenerations.wales/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Welsh-Government-Recommendations.pdf>

- historical, cultural, ecological and geological heritage, including natural and man-made elements associated with existing landscape character;
- (ii) **Biodiversity and Resilient Ecosystems** by protecting, positively managing and enhancing biodiversity and geological interests, including designated and non-designated sites, and habitats and species of importance and the ecological connectivity between them;
  - (iii) **Greenspace Provision, Connectivity and Enjoyment** by ensuring the creation of accessible multifunctional interconnected spaces that offer opportunities for recreation and health and well-being;
  - (iv) **Sustainable Energy Use;**
  - (v) **Local Food Production; and**
  - (vi) **Flood Attenuation and Water Resource Management.**

### Green Infrastructure

- 5.125 Green Infrastructure as defined by PPW11 “is the network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, rivers and lakes that intersperse and connect places”<sup>81</sup>. The importance of protecting and enhancing Green Infrastructure is a key policy theme within PPW11, recognising the multi-functional roles it has in delivering the goals and objectives of the Future Generation and Wellbeing Act through; active travel, placemaking, ecosystem services, improving ecosystem resilience, climate change mitigation and improving general health and well-being.
- 5.126 Investment in green infrastructure underpins the County’s ongoing economic, social and environmental success by supporting sustainable growth, improving quality of life and place, delivering ecosystem services and tackling climate change. Monmouthshire is a green and healthy place to live, with an increasingly coherent and resilient ecological network of wildlife habitats, helping conserve biodiversity. The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised the value of green infrastructure and its importance for people’s health and well-being.
- 5.127 Green Infrastructure assets are numerous and include parks, open spaces, playing fields, trees/woodlands, hedgerows, allotments, biological and geological conservation sites, landscape and heritage features, water courses, cycleways, bridleways, public rights of way and open access land.

<sup>81</sup> Paragraph 6.2.1 – PPW – Ed11 – February 2021

5.128 The common aim of spaces and other environmental features is to embrace a placemaking approach. This should help to create a strategically planned and delivered network of green infrastructure assets that should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource; capable of delivering a wide range of social, economic, environmental, transport and health and well-being benefits for local communities that include:

- Maintaining and enhancing biodiversity;
- Maintaining and Improving public rights of way and countryside sites;
- Tackling deprivation and disadvantage by removing barriers to active travel and to enable more participation in recreation and access to the natural environment and green space;
- Mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change;
- Improving health and well-being through a Green Infrastructure approach and through the approach in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan;
- Supporting and providing opportunities for community cohesion and social engagement;
- Delivering placemaking and embracing local distinctiveness; and
- Supporting the local economy through placemaking and a Green Infrastructure-led approach.

5.129 The Council recognise the role Green Infrastructure can play in sustainable energy use through efficient building and site design and construction. Concepts such as green roofs and planting of particular species to facilitate appropriate shading and cooling reinforce the role GI can play in reducing carbon emissions and providing opportunities for climate change adaptation such as flood attenuation and water resources management. The Council's Climate Emergency Strategy and draft Action Plan also recognises Green Infrastructure as a mechanism for addressing climate change action and mitigation and is also addressed in Strategic Policy S4 – Climate Change.

5.130 Monmouthshire has a strong rural and agricultural economy, and the contribution Green Infrastructure can play in supporting and enhancing this function, should be explored through local food production opportunities. This could include allotment provision, minimum garden sizes standards, the design and management of food production, planting in public realm spaces and supporting pollinating insects through enhancement of biodiversity and plant species.

### Area Statements

5.131 The Environment Act (Wales) 2016 introduced a requirement to produce an Area Statement for South East Wales, which Natural Resources Wales published in March 2020. The overarching focus for the Area Statement is to review the way in which natural resources are managed and used, support ecosystem services and build resilience. Green Infrastructure provision has been recognised as a key contributor to

both maintaining and enhancing the delivery of ecosystem services as well supporting the resilience of natural resources and therefore its protection and enhancement is a key mechanism in delivering national and local sustainability objectives. The RLDP will have regard to the Area Statement.

- 5.132 The Council has recently prepared the Monmouthshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019<sup>82</sup>, which has also informed the evidence base of the SE Wales Area Statement. The Strategy provides an overarching framework for positive actions by all stakeholders involved in the future protection, management and enhancement of Green Infrastructure in Monmouthshire and sets out key strategic objectives and priorities for guiding the planning management and delivery of GI in Monmouthshire. It also forms part of the baseline evidence to help inform the Strategic Regional Green Infrastructure Strategy for the Gwent Green Grid Partnership. The Adopted SPG<sup>83</sup> on Green Infrastructure will be reviewed as part of the RLDP process.
- 5.133 Furthermore, the Council has produced a Countryside Access Improvement Plan 2020-2030<sup>84</sup> (also known as Rights of Way Improvement Plan) which has also informed the SE Wales Area Statement and RLDP. It provides a 10-year plan to manage, promote and improve access, providing for the needs of the public both now and in the future.

### Landscape Character

- 5.134 Monmouthshire benefits from major landscape resources and areas of visual quality and is home to internationally and nationally designated landscapes. The County's key landscape attributes range from exposed upland moorlands in the northwest, to well-wooded central lowlands interspersed with good quality agricultural land, dissected by three rivers, and the historically and ecologically unique coastal landscape to the south. These provide significant environmental, economic and social benefits and help to create a sense of place.
- 5.135 Criterion (i) of Policy S18 seeks to protect, maintain and enhance the character and quality of Monmouthshire's landscape. Development Management policies in the RLDP will specifically protect the internationally designated Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site and the national landscape designations, the Brecon Beacons National Park and the Wye Valley AONB. Other landscape features which contribute to the County's distinctive character will also be afforded appropriate levels of protection and their significance highlighted using the LANDMAP process.

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<sup>82</sup> Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019

<https://www.monlife.co.uk/connect/green-infrastructure/green-infrastructure-strategy-2019/>

<sup>83</sup> Green Infrastructure SPG April 2015 <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2015/07/GI-April-2015.pdf>

<sup>84</sup> Monmouthshire Countryside Access Improvement Plan 2020- 2030 can be viewed via:

<https://www.monlife.co.uk/outdoor/countryside-access/rights-of-way-improvement-plan/>



- 5.136 A review of the Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) designations was undertaken as part of the evidence base for the Adopted LDP. This identified five areas that justified designation as SLAs, effectively covering the majority of Monmouthshire. It was concluded that the designation of the majority of the County as SLA may undermine the intention of the policy to protect those more special landscapes, as reflected in PPW11. Therefore, the Adopted LDP did not contain SLA designations and instead adopted a policy approach to landscape protection and management underpinned by LANDMAP. This approach is to be taken forward in the RLDP and a Landscape Character Assessment SPG for Monmouthshire will be prepared to support the RLDP landscape policies.
- 5.137 The Council has commissioned an update of the existing Landscape and Sensitivity Capacity Assessment which was prepared by Simon White Associates in 2008/2009 to inform the Adopted LDP. The update takes account of Adopted LDP allocations, development that has occurred since the adoption of the current LDP and assesses key areas submitted at the Stage 1 Call for Candidate Sites. This work focuses on the Primary Settlements, Secondary Settlements and the Severnside area and provides an opinion on the least sensitive areas in terms of landscape in these settlements for residential growth potential. The assessment takes account of the underlying ecosystem service and resilience assets together with a range of designations.
- 5.138 The information contained within the LANDMAP Landscape Character Assessments and the Landscape Sensitivity Update Study (October 2020)<sup>85</sup> should be used to ensure that development proposals reflect the distinctiveness, qualities and sensitivities of the County's landscape.

### **Natural Environment/Biodiversity and Ecosystem resilience**

- 5.139 Monmouthshire is rich in biological and geological diversity, which is reflected in the range of international, national and local designations within the plan area, which include:
- Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Areas for Conservation (SACs), Ramsar [international]
  - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs) [national]
  - Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) [local]

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<sup>85</sup> Landscape Sensitivity Update Study October 2020 <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

- 5.140 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introduced an enhanced Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty (Section 6 Duty) on public authorities in Wales. This places a duty on the Council to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity by ensuring development does not cause any significant loss of habitats or populations of species and must provide a net benefit for biodiversity. PPW11 notes that the broad framework for implementing the Section 6 Duty and building resilience through the planning system will include addressing five key themes of ecosystem resilience: Diversity, Extent, Condition, Connectivity and Adaptability to Change. Section 7 habitats and species are identified by the Welsh Ministers as those they consider are of key significance to sustain and improve biodiversity in relation to Wales.
- 5.141 The RLDP will seek to maintain and improve the biodiversity and geology of the County through the protection, restoration and enhancement of valuable ecological habitats, wildlife networks and corridors, as well as the creation of new habitats. This applies to both direct and indirect effects as development outside an important site can still have a damaging impact.
- 5.142 PPW11 and Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning, provide for the tiered protection of designated sites and set a clear context for the relevant policy approach to these sites, with those of international and national importance being afforded more protection than those of local importance.
- 5.143 Natura 2000 sites are classified under EU Directives and as such enjoy statutory protection under European legislation. The Habitats Directive requires that development proposals likely to have a significant effect on a European site are subject to an Appropriate Assessment. National guidance and legislation is provided on this matter. A Habitats Regulations Assessment is being prepared as part of the RLDP process.
- 5.144 Development proposals affecting locally designated non-statutory sites, or undesignated sites that satisfy the relevant designation criteria, and Section 7 habitats/species of importance, will be assessed against the relevant Development Management Policies included in the Deposit Plan.
- 5.145 Following new evidence about the environmental impacts of phosphate in watercourses, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has adopted tighter targets for the water quality of watercourses and have assessed the nine riverine Special Areas of Conservation in Wales. Within Monmouthshire it was identified that within the River Usk 88% of the river's water bodies failed to meet the required target and within the River Wye 67% failed to meet the required target. As a result of this failure NRW has

issued a Wales-wide river SAC phosphate compliance report<sup>86</sup> to ensure that the environmental capacity of the rivers does not deteriorate any further. Candidate Site submissions in affected catchment areas will need to consider this issue, as detailed in Policy S8 'Strategic Development Sites' paragraphs 5.55 – 5.57.

### Countryside Access

5.146 As noted in paragraphs 5.133-5.134, the Monmouthshire Countryside Access Improvement Plan has been produced after extensive consultation and assessments. The countryside access provision in Monmouthshire is extensive. There is over 2,100km of rights of way, of which over 500km is in the Brecon Beacons National Park. Only 11% of the network is either bridleways or restricted byways which can be used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. This network is fragmented and limited, therefore it is Monmouthshire County Council's policy to increase access to cyclists and horse riders wherever possible. This will give more opportunities to access the outdoors near where residents live in line with the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act 2015 and complement the provisions of the Active Travel (Wales) Act and the Environment (Wales) Act. The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised the value and importance of the provision of locally accessible open/green spaces for health, well-being and recreation.

| Links to Wider Policy Framework                          |   |
|--|---|
| RLDP Objectives  | Objective 3 – Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape<br>Objective 4 – Flood risk<br>Objective 6 – Land<br>Objective 7 – Natural Resources<br>Objective 8 – Health and Well-being<br>Objective 11 – Place-making<br>Objective 12 – Communities<br>Objective 14 – Infrastructure<br>Objective 17 – Climate Change |
| Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021) | Policy 9 – Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure<br>Policy 15 – National Forest  |
| Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)     | Distinctive and Natural Places Theme (Chapter 6)  |
| Building Better Places (WG July 2020)                    | Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Green Infrastructure, health and well-being and ecological resilience (page 22)   |

<sup>86</sup> NRW's Planning Interim Guidance <https://naturalresources.wales/evidence-and-data/research-and-reports/water-reports/compliance-assessment-of-welsh-river-sacs-against-phosphorus-targets/?lang=en>

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|  | Improving air quality and soundscapes for better health and well-being (page 23)  |
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)  | A resilient Wales<br>A healthier Wales<br>A more equal Wales<br>A Wales of cohesive communities<br>A globally responsible Wales   |
| Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.</li> <li>• Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.</li> </ul>  |
| Key Evidence   | <p>TAN5: Nature Conservation and Planning Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update Study (White Consultants, October 2020)</p> <p>LANDMAP Character Assessment SPG (to be prepared following Adoption of RLDP)</p> <p>Green Infrastructure Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019 Adopted Green Infrastructure SPG – April 2015 (to be reviewed as part of the RLDP process)</p> <p>Monmouthshire Countryside Access Improvement Plan 2020-2030</p> <p>NRWs River SAC (phosphate) Compliance Report</p> |
| Monitoring   | TBC   |
| Detailed Policies  | TBC in Deposit RLDP   |

## APPENDIX 1: RLDP Supporting Documents

A number of additional supporting background documents have been prepared to inform the Preferred Strategy. These are listed below and should be read alongside the Preferred Strategy as only their main findings are highlighted in this document given the significant amount of data/information they contain. The documents are available on the Planning Policy page of the Council’s website<sup>87</sup>.

| Supporting Document   | Purpose   |
|---|---|
| <b>Replacement LDP Documents</b>  |   |
| The Adopted LDP Review Report (March 2018)  | Evaluates the extent to which the Adopted LDP is functioning effectively.   |
| RLDP Delivery Agreement as Revised October 2020. (Initially agreed May 2018 and updated March 2020)                                   | The Delivery Agreement sets out how the RLDP is to be prepared and provides a timetable for Plan preparation along with a Community Involvement Scheme which outlines the Council’s principles of community engagement.   |
| Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021)   | Sets out the key issues, challenges and opportunities facing the County along with the RLDP vision and objectives to address the issues, challenges and opportunities identified.   |
| Review of RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence base in light of Covid-19 (September 2020 approved by Council October 2020) | This report provides an update and review on the preparation of the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and in response to publication of a letter from the Minister for Housing and Local Government on 7 <sup>th</sup> July 2020 <sup>88</sup> . The letter requires local planning authorities to undertake an assessment of the RLDP evidence base, strategy and policies in terms of sensitivity to the consequences of the current pandemic before progressing with plan preparation. |
| Candidate Site Register (February 2019)   | Provides a log of the Candidate Sites submitted during the first call for sites, to be considered for inclusion for development, redevelopment and/or protection in the RLDP.   |

<sup>87</sup> Supporting Background Papers can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

<sup>88</sup> Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid-19, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020

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| Growth and Spatial Options Consultation Paper (December 2020)                                     | Provides a range of growth and spatial options for the RLDP together with the implications of each option and the extent to which they will achieve the RLDP objectives. The options presented provide the scale of growth (housing and employment) the Plan will potentially need to include and how that growth could be distributed.  |
| <b>Integrated Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Related Documents</b>             |  |
| Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) Scoping Report (December 2018)                          | Updated to take account of responses from a targeted consultation, this sets out the background for the ISA/SEA process that will be followed throughout the RLDP process and considers the characteristics of the RLDP area through a review of relevant plans, policies and programmes, and baseline information.  |
| Initial Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report (December 2018)                    | Updated to take account of responses from a targeted consultation, this outlines the requirement to undertake a HRA in respect of the RLDP and identifies the relevant European sites for consideration within the HRA process.  |
| Initial ISA Report (AECOM, June 2021)   | The Initial ISA Report is the second stage of the ISA process and appraises the social, economic, environmental and cultural effects of the RLDP Preferred Strategy. This includes the Vision, Strategic Objectives, Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy, including the Strategic Policies.  |
| HRA of the Monmouthshire RLDP – Preferred Strategy (AECOM, June 2021)                             | The HRA Report provides a high level, preliminary assessment of the RLDP Preferred Strategy. At this stage, the aim of the report is to identify European sites which have the potential to be impacted by the RLDP, and to identify potential likely significant effects that the RLDP may have. It also identifies other plans, programmes and projects that may have ‘in-combination’ effects when considered alongside the effects of the RLDP. The Preferred Strategy does not identify any site-specific allocations and so a further, more detailed HRA will be carried out on the RLDP Deposit Plan. |
| <b>Supporting Evidence and Background Papers</b>  |  |
| Monmouthshire RLDP Updated Demographic Evidence Report produced by Edge Analytics (November 2020) | Edge Analytics was commissioned to prepare a range of up-dated demographic, dwelling and employment growth scenarios using the 2018-based projections as the starting point, to inform the RLDP growth options. In accordance with the requirements of the Development Plans Manual (March 2020), the Paper considers the 2018-based Welsh Government projections and applies a range of sensitivity assumptions to address key issues and challenges, to provide a range of growth scenarios for the County. The potential employment growth that could be  |

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|  | supported by the demographic and dwelling-led scenarios is also set out using key assumptions on economic activity, unemployment rates and commuting ratio linked demographic and economic change. The report provides a suite of population, housing and economic growth outcomes to consider in the formulation of the RLDP.  |
| Monmouthshire Affordable Housing Report produced by Edge Analytics (November 2020)     | This report extends upon the Demographic Evidence Report (November 2020) scenario analysis, with consideration of the impacts of the affordable housing policy-led element of the strategy on dwellings, population, households and employment.   |
| MCC Economies of the Future Reports, BE Group (2018)                                   | The MCC Economies of the Future Reports will inform the development of the revised Economic Growth and Inward Investment Strategy for the Council. The analysis is also a fundamental piece of work that provides evidence to support the Monmouthshire RLDP.   |
| Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement (November 2019)         | The Economic Growth and Ambition Statement sets out the economic ambition for the County and will work alongside the RLDP in identifying suitable employment sites and premises, to enable existing businesses to grow and to attract inward investment from new businesses in key growth sectors.  |
| Inward Investment Prospectus 2020: Growing your Business in Monmouthshire (March 2020) | This document supports the Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement (Nov 2019) noted above. The prospectus sets our aspirations to raise the economic profile of Monmouthshire with priorities to explore business opportunities and attract funding, while being sensitive to Monmouthshire's landscape.   |
| Sustainable Settlements Appraisal (June 2021)  | Assesses and identifies settlements within Monmouthshire, which are potentially suitable to accommodate future growth in terms of their location, size, role and function and sets out an initial settlement hierarchy arising from the appraisal to inform the Preferred Strategy.   |
| Growth and Spatial Options Report of Consultation (June 2021)                          | Sets out a summary of the comments received in the relation to the growth and spatial options consultation, together with a summary of the Council's response.  |
| Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021)                                | Expands upon the work completed to date on growth and spatial options, provides a summary of each option, an explanation of why specific options would/would not meet the Council's ambitions following evidence that has been collated.  |
| Housing Background Paper (June 2021)   | Identifies the amount of land the Council will be required to allocate for housing in the RLDP to meet the proposed level of growth. This process involves analysing the various components of housing supply, plus extant allocations that can be 'rolled forward' to the Replacement Plan. This paper analyses each component of housing supply in more detail before arriving at a new |

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|  | housing allocations provision based on the methodology detailed within the Welsh Government Development Plans Manual Edition 3 (March 2020). It incorporates a Housing Potential Study which aims to identify where windfall sites could potentially be located within the existing settlement areas of Monmouthshire.  |
| Local Housing Market Assessment (2020)   | Provides a detailed insight into the local housing markets across the County. It includes a quantitative assessment of housing need that will be used to inform the housing policies of the RLDP in terms of affordable housing provision, tenures and types of accommodation required.   |
| Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (May 2016). Update submitted to Welsh Government following Cabinet approval January 2021 – awaiting approval from Welsh Government. | Report assessing the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller families and establish the number of pitches required to meet the identified need.  |
| Review of Candidate Sites against the Preferred Strategy (June 2021)   | Provides an initial assessment of Candidate Sites in terms of their compatibility with the Preferred Strategy.  |
| Monmouthshire Employment Land Review, BE Group (June 2021)   | Evidence base undertaken in line with Welsh Government Guidance. The ELR provides an assessment of the supply and demand for employment land in the County, looking at the available employment allocations and existing employment areas and reviews the property market, consults with local stakeholders and forecasts employment growth to understand employment demand requirements for the Plan period.                             |
| Regional Employment Study – Larger Than Local Study, BE Group (March 2020)   | The report addresses the issues of employment land on a regional basis and covers five local authorities: - Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Caerphilly and Newport. It provides an economic evidence base, reviews the property and employment land market and recommends employment sites of regional significance for consideration in each of the constituent local authority areas.  |
| Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update Study (White Consultants, October 2020)   | An update to the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study carried out in 2009 setting out detailed assessments and sensitivity evaluations of local landscape character areas and strategic candidate sites, with a view to establishing the least sensitive areas in terms of landscape for housing growth potential. The study area includes areas and defined candidate sites around primary and secondary settlements and Severnside. |



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| Retail Background Paper (March 2021)  | Provides an annual retail 'health check' of our five main towns (i.e. Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow, Monmouth and Usk).   |
| Employment Land Background Paper (September 2020)                                   | Provides an annual assessment of employment land take up across allocated and protected employment sites as identified in the Adopted LDP.  |
| Minerals Regional Technical Statement – 2nd Review for South Wales (September 2020) | Minerals Technical Advice Note 1 (2004) requires the preparation of Regional Technical Statements (RTS) for the areas covered by both the South Wales and North Wales Regional Aggregates Working Parties (RAWPs). A revised RTS – 2nd Review for South Wales was published in September 2020 and makes recommendations for the apportionments necessary to ensure an adequate supply of crushed rock, including the nationally recommended minimum provision of 7 and 10 years, are available for the entire duration of the RLDP. |
| The South East Wales Waste Planning Report – April 2016                             | PPW11 and TAN 21: Waste, establish regional monitoring arrangements to inform the preparation of LDPs and assist in the determination of planning applications. The report assesses the need for additional landfill capacity and waste management facilities at a regional level.  |

## APPENDIX 2: RLDP Issues

Full details are set out in the Issues, Visions and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021)<sup>89</sup>. The table below provides an extract of the issues facing the County and how the RLDP can influence these issues. The RLDP issues have been reviewed in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and endorsed by Cabinet on 17th June 2020 and Council on 22nd October 2020 as remaining relevant. A number of issues were found to have increased emphasis and importance in light of Covid-19, these are indicated in the table below using an asterisk against both the headline and relevant individual Issues. An additional section has also been included within the table to provide further detail on how the RLDP can support such issues given their increased emphasis in light of Covid-19. The issues have been grouped in accordance with the Seven Well-being Goals as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to ensure that they are framed within this context. This allows for the appreciation of social, economic and environmental matters to be embedded into the Plan.

| A Prosperous Wales (Well-being Goal 1)   |
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| Employment & Economy*  |
| Issue  |
| <p><b>Issue 1*</b> - There has been a slow uptake of employment land in the past. There is subsequently a need to consider whether existing available land is suitably located and fit for purpose for appropriate growth sectors. There is also a need to consider potential future demand for employment land along with Council aspirations for innovation across Monmouthshire in light of the recent removal of the Severn Bridge tolls and the ambitions and opportunities associated with the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCDC).</p> <p><b>Issue 2*</b> - While unemployment is low there is a net-outflow of commuters, both levels of out commuting and distances travelled to work are relatively high. There is a need to provide support for inward investment and local employment growth/opportunities.</p> <p><b>Issue 3*</b> - Wage levels available for local jobs are lower than the average for Wales and the UK. Evidence continues to suggest that the income for economically active women who both live and work within the County is significantly lower than that of men within the same category. This coupled with high property prices makes it difficult for young people and future generations to live and work locally. Additional employment opportunities for young people are required to help reduce the numbers of this age group leaving the County.</p> <p><b>Issue 4*</b> - Monmouthshire has a dual economy. The qualifications, skills and earnings of the residents are above the regional and national average, however, for those working in the area earnings are lower and employment is relatively less skilled.</p> |

<sup>89</sup> The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021) can be viewed via the following link: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/plan-preparation/issues-vision-and-objectives/>

**Issue 5\*** - The increasing ageing population and shrinking working age population (the relative absence of 20-40 year olds and our median age of 48 years, compared to a median age of 34 years in Cardiff) is limiting employment growth within Monmouthshire and social sustainability of communities. This is exacerbated by limited Job opportunities and affordable housing availability.

**Issue 6\*** - There is a need to sustain and regenerate the County's rural economy. There is current uncertainty regarding the impact of Brexit on agricultural subsidies.

**Issue 7\*** - Higher levels of those in employment work at home compared to the Welsh average. Efficient digital infrastructure is essential to support home working and the general connectivity of the County's rural areas and to support economic growth<sup>90</sup>.

**Issue 8\*** - The role of high streets is changing due to out of town retail centres, the increase in internet shopping, changing shopping habits (e.g. top-up grocery shopping) and austerity and as a result vacancy rates in some of the County's retail centres have increased. There is a leakage of expenditure out of the County and a need to protect the County's retail centres from out of town developments.

**Issue 9\*** - Tourism plays a significant part in the Monmouthshire economy particularly in assisting in the diversification of the rural economy and in sustaining the County's historic town centres. In 2019 2.28 million visitors came to Monmouthshire, having an overall economic impact of £244 million. Staying visitors generate a higher economic impact than day visitors at £185million compared to £59 million in 2019 (Monmouthshire STEAM Report 2019) highlighting the continued need for visitor accommodation.

#### **How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?**

**A(i)** The RLDP can encourage a vibrant economy within the County, specifically by ensuring that sufficient employment sites are suitably located in attractive, accessible and sustainable locations and are of an appropriate size and type to meet the needs of the market/key employment/growth sectors, including, through support of start-up and growing businesses to help diversify the economy.

**A(ii)** The RLDP can aim to ensure that there is a portfolio of sites available which is appropriate to market conditions and the needs of the Monmouthshire economy along with the wider Cardiff Capital Region. Consideration can be given to using CPO powers to ensure sites come forward.

**A(iii)** The RLDP can ensure that, wherever possible, jobs and homes are located in close proximity to each other to provide greater opportunity for people to work and live locally. The Replacement LDP can also ensure a range and choice of homes are available, in new developments, particularly where there is a need for affordable housing, to assist in regaining a balanced population.

**A(iv)** The RLDP needs to take a role in strengthening the local economy, ensuring an appropriate economic base to enable people to live and work in the County.

**A(v)** The RLDP can contain policies that support the diversification of the rural economy.

<sup>90</sup> The current situational analysis of Superfast Broadband Next Generation Access (NGA) coverage in the Cardiff Capital Region, based on the OMR/SAPC undertaken prior to the Superfast Cymru Phase 2 (SFC2) Procurement, paints a stark picture in terms of the current lack of coverage in Monmouthshire in comparison to our other nine Local Authority partners - currently 12.56% of premises in Monmouthshire are NOT covered in comparison to 3-4% in the other nine Local Authorities within the region.

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| <p><b>A(vi)</b> The RLDP can help to address digital exclusion by seeking to support the improvement of rural broadband and delivery of high speed connections.</p> <p><b>A(vii)</b> The RLDP must contain policies that protect the vitality and viability of existing town centres, providing additional retail opportunities where appropriate, including in relation to the regeneration of Caldicot and Usk, and ensure that the distribution of development supports these main centres in order to retain retail expenditure.</p> <p><b>A(viii)</b> The RLDP will enable a review of the towns' primary shopping frontages (PSF) and related policies to have regard to the changing role of the high street.</p> <p><b>A(ix)</b> The RLDP can contain policies that encourage tourism development while at the same time ensuring that the natural and built heritage that attracts visitors to the area is preserved and enhanced.</p> |
| <p><b>How can the RLDP support these Issues given increased emphasis in light of Covid-19</b></p>   |
| <p>The RLDP will provide a positive planning policy framework to support and enable sustainable economic growth, including in relation to our high streets and tourism sector, over the Plan period.</p>  |
| <p><b>A Resilient Wales (Well-being Goal 2)</b></p>   |
| <p><b>Air</b></p>   |
| <p><b>Issue</b></p>   |
| <p><b>Issue 10</b> - While air pollution is not a major problem in Monmouthshire it can cause significant problems for people's health. The greatest problems associated with air quality in the County are caused by vehicle emissions, this is particularly apparent in the two Air Quality Management Areas in the County at Usk and Chepstow.</p>   |
| <p><b>How can the RLDP influence these Issues?</b></p>  |
| <p><b>B(i)</b> The RLDP can seek to minimise any polluting effects that might arise from new development in the County by encouraging appropriate patterns of development that seek to reduce the usage of private vehicles and to allow for increased walking, cycling and use of public transport (active travel). It can also take measures to ensure that the location of new development does not worsen conditions in existing Air Quality Management Areas or result in new ones.</p>  |
| <p><b>Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity &amp; Landscape*</b></p>   |
| <p><b>Issue</b></p>   |
| <p><b>Issue 11*</b> - Monmouthshire is renowned for its beautiful landscapes and major biodiversity resources including River SACs. The best of these assets should be protected, managed and enhanced for future generations.</p> <p><b>Issue 12*</b> - There is a need to improve connectivity within the landscape through protecting and improving existing wildlife networks and corridors, including both green and blue infrastructure, and creating new linkages to allow species to move and adapt to climate change impacts. GI is also beneficial to human well-being.</p>   |

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| <b>How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?</b>  |
| <p><b>C(i)</b> The RLDP should ensure that new development is sustainable, does not cause harm to international, national and locally protected sites and species and, that where appropriate, necessary mitigation measures are taken to avoid any such adverse effects. The River Wye and River Usk water bodies within the County are currently experiencing water quality issues, specifically in relation to phosphate levels, the RLDP must ensure development in these catchment areas does not contribute to or increase phosphate levels.</p> <p><b>C(ii)</b> The RLDP must ensure biodiversity is considered in any development in order to protect any interest on the site and encourage biodiversity enhancements where necessary.</p> <p><b>C(iii)</b> It will be necessary to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment of the RLDP to ensure that any cumulative effects of development in Monmouthshire and adjoining areas does not result in harm to internationally designated nature conservation sites.</p> <p><b>C(iv)</b> The RLDP can contain policies to protect and enhance the green and blue infrastructure networks across the County.</p> |
| <b>How can the RLDP support these Issues given increased emphasis in light of Covid-19</b>   |
| The RLDP will provide a positive planning policy framework to support and enable placemaking and the provision of locally accessible open /green space and to protect/enhance our natural environment.   |
| <b>Flooding</b>  |
| <b>Issue</b>   |
| <b>Issue 13</b> - Parts of the County are vulnerable to flooding. Climate change is likely to increase the risk of flooding, as well as many other risks, so mitigating climate change and building resilience is crucial.   |
| <b>How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?</b>  |
| <b>D(i)</b> The RLDP must ensure new development is located away from flood risk areas and has a role to play in terms of reducing the risk from present day flood risk, as well as in relation to climate change adaptation and resilience.   |
| <b>Minerals &amp; Waste</b>  |
| <b>Issue</b>   |
| <p><b>Issue 14</b> - Monmouthshire has made good progress in the promotion of the recycling and composting of waste, and the elimination of waste to landfill. Monmouthshire also has to make an appropriate contribution to the regional requirement for waste management.</p> <p><b>Issue 15</b> - Mineral extraction plays a limited role in Monmouthshire's economy but there is a need to safeguard the County's resources in order to make an appropriate contribution to the sustainable supply of aggregates to the South Wales economy as a whole.</p>  |
| <b>How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?</b>  |
| <b>E(i)</b> The RLDP can identify sites that are appropriate for waste management or disposal facilities to meet local or regional requirements.   |

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| <b>E(ii)</b> The RLDP can ensure that mineral resources are safeguarded and exploited in a sustainable fashion that also enables Monmouthshire to meet its obligation to make a contribution to the requirements of the South Wales region.  |
| <b>Land</b>  |
| <b>Issue</b>   |
| <b>Issue 16</b> - There are limited opportunities for brownfield development within the County's existing urban areas.<br><b>Issue 17</b> - Monmouthshire has a significantly high percentage of best and most versatile agricultural land (i.e. Grade 1, 2 or 3a). While there is a need to conserve these resources, there are limited opportunities within the County for brownfield development and development on lower grades of agricultural land (i.e. Grade 3b, 4 and 5).   |
| <b>How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?</b>  |
| <b>F(i)</b> The RLDP will seek to prioritise the use of previously developed land where opportunities arise.<br><b>F(ii)</b> The RLDP should seek to protect best and most versatile agricultural land whilst at the same time recognising that this will not always be possible where there is an overriding need for development.  |
| <b>A Healthier Wales (Well-being Goal 3)</b>   |
| <b>Human Health*</b>   |
| <b>Issue</b>   |
| <b>Issue 18*</b> - While Monmouthshire performs relatively well on indicators relating to health, there is a need to promote opportunities for healthy living particularly in the context of an ageing population.<br><b>Issue 19*</b> - While an ageing population brings many opportunities, it also brings challenges and increases in the number of people living with long term conditions can create pressures on existing health care provision.<br><b>Issue 20*</b> - On the whole Monmouthshire's residents have good access to public open space, however, there are deficiencies in many of the County's communities in relation to community and recreational facilities. This can contribute to rural isolation in certain areas.<br><b>Issue 21*</b> - Obesity is a growing problem throughout Wales. Although obesity rates in Monmouthshire are below the Welsh average consideration should be given to promoting healthy lifestyles. |
| <b>How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?</b>  |
| <b>G(i)</b> The RLDP can assist in creating a healthier Monmouthshire by ensuring sufficient policies are in place to support the provision of blue and green infrastructure and retention of the existing resource.<br><b>G(ii)</b> The RLDP can provide policies to ensure health care provision is supported.<br><b>G(iii)</b> The RLDP can affect the provision of public open space and recreation by protecting, where necessary, existing open space and facilities as well as requiring new development to make a contribution to the provision of additional facilities.  |

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| <b>How can the RLDP support these Issues given increased emphasis in light of Covid-19</b>   |
| The RLDP will provide a positive planning policy framework to support and enable placemaking and the provision of locally accessible open /green space and to protect/enhance our natural environment.   |
| <b>A More Equal Wales (Well-being Goal 4)</b>  |
| <b>Population*</b>   |
| <b>Issue</b>   |
| <p><b>Issue 22*</b> - Monmouthshire is a predominantly rural county with almost half (47%) of the total population living in wards defined as being in rural areas (i.e. with a population of less than 10,000).</p> <p><b>Issue 23*</b> - The population of Monmouthshire has shown a steady increase over a ten year period to 2011, although more recently the rate of growth has slowed. This growth is being fuelled by in-migration.</p> <p><b>Issue 24*</b> - Monmouthshire has a significantly higher proportion of older age groups (65+) and lower proportion of young adults (16 – 44) compared to the Welsh average, the sharpest decline of which is in the working age population. The relative absence of young adults is often linked to the affordability of housing across the County and has an impact on future prospects of economic growth.</p>  |
| <b>How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?</b>  |
| <p><b>H(i)</b> The RLDP must decide on the level of growth appropriate for Monmouthshire and the spatial distribution of this growth between different urban and rural communities to address the challenges we face (including demography and affordability), balancing the greater sustainability of urban settlements with the difficulties of maintaining services in rural areas.</p> <p><b>H(ii)</b> There is a need to achieve a more balanced population structure to ensure there is a sufficient population of working aged people to support the Monmouthshire economy and to provide more opportunities for young people to both to stay within and move to the area. The RLDP needs to take a role in strengthening the local economy, ensuring an appropriate economic base to enable people to live and work in the County and ensuring that demand for homes is satisfied by providing good quality affordable homes for those who need them.</p> <p><b>H(iii)</b> The RLDP can help to address issues surrounding the ageing population through facilitating the provision of accessible services supported by connective infrastructure to meet local population growth needs.</p> |
| <b>How can the RLDP support these Issues given increased emphasis in light of Covid-19</b>   |
| The RLDP growth levels will deliver positive demographic change over the Plan period that is essential to support and enable the provision of balanced communities throughout the County.  |
| <b>A Wales of Cohesive Communities (Well-being Goal 5)</b>   |
| <b>Housing*</b>  |
| <b>Issue</b>   |

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| <p><b>Issue 25*</b> - Average house prices in the County are high at £297,628 compared to a Welsh average of £187,477 (Hometrack March 2020). The most significant increases have been experienced in recent years. There is a need to consider the potential impact on house prices arising from the recent removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls, the ambitions and opportunities associated with the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and the South East Wales Metro, together with the economic growth of the Bristol/SW region and the opportunities for Monmouthshire as a border county and its location between Bristol and Newport and Cardiff, the 'Great Western Cities'.</p> <p><b>Issue 26*</b> - House prices are also high in relation to earnings and there is a pressing need for additional affordable housing in the County in both urban and rural areas to assist in ensuring a balanced population.</p> <p><b>Issue 27*</b> - A range and choice of housing is needed to both meet the needs of an ageing population and to attract and retain the younger age groups.</p> <p><b>Issue 28*</b> - There is limited scope for significant or long term expansion of the existing urban areas within the County due to a mix of physical, environmental and policy constraints.</p> |
| <p><b>How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?</b></p> <p><b>I(i)</b> The RLDP will affect the amount of housing to be provided by both deciding on overall levels of growth/spatial options and by setting thresholds and proportions to determine the amount of this residential development that is affordable. It can also ensure a range and choice of homes are available in new developments and influence the type, tenure and nature of housing built within the County.</p> <p><b>I(ii)</b> The RLDP will have to resolve the amount of housing to be built in rural areas, balancing the need to sustain rural settlements by supporting services and enabling people to remain in their communities with the need to protect the countryside and ensure sustainable patterns of development.</p> <p><b>I(iii)</b> The RLDP process must balance the extent to which the Main Towns and Severnside area can continue to accommodate further growth in the medium to long term against the potential for a new settlement in order to facilitate the creation of sustainable resilient communities.</p>   |
| <p><b>How can the RLDP support these Issues given increased emphasis in light of Covid-19</b></p> <p>The RLDP will ensure /enable a range and choice of homes (housing mix) in future housing developments to address affordability issues and to build sustainable and resilient communities. The Preferred Strategy allows for a level of growth and for affordable housing-led sites: this remains critical to addressing the issues and objectives.</p>   |
| <p><b>Infrastructure*</b></p>   |
| <p><b>Issue</b></p>   |
| <p><b>Issue 29*</b> - Poor access to community facilities and declining local service provision is a particular issue for rural communities.</p>  |



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| <p><b>Issue 30*</b> - Limited public transport, particularly in rural areas makes it harder to access jobs, services and facilities, which could be exacerbated by rising fuel prices. There are nevertheless future opportunities for investment in public transport through the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and advances in technology.</p> <p><b>Issue 31*</b> - There is a need to ensure that adequate physical, digital and social infrastructure is provided to support new development. This includes: broadband infrastructure, the provision of sufficient water and sewerage infrastructure, transport infrastructure and active travel to support non-car modes of travel.</p>  |
| <p><b>How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?</b></p>   |
| <p><b>J(i)</b> The RLDP can consider allocating land for housing and employment in rural areas in an attempt to sustain existing rural community facilities and services, weighing this against the need to avoid unsustainable travel patterns.</p> <p><b>J(ii)</b> The RLDP can help ensure adequate provision of infrastructure to serve new development and can contain support policies to enable improvements or enhancements for existing development, e.g. provision of electric vehicle charging (EVC), broadband connectivity and renewable energy.</p> <p><b>J(iii)</b> The RLDP will contain allocations and policies to support the priorities of the emerging local transport plan and cycling strategy.</p>   |
| <p><b>How can the RLDP support these Issues given increased emphasis in light of Covid-19</b></p>  |
| <p>The RLDP will ensure digital and charging infrastructure provision is in place or can be provided to accommodate new development and will support active travel opportunities.</p>  |
| <p><b>A Wales of Vibrant Culture &amp; Thriving Welsh Language (Well-being Goal 6)</b></p>   |
| <p><b>Cultural Heritage</b></p>  |
| <p><b>Issue</b></p>  |
| <p><b>Issue 32</b> - Monmouthshire has a significant built heritage resource in terms of scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens and archaeologically sensitive sites that, together with their settings, require protection and enhancement.</p> <p><b>Issue 33</b> - There is a need to protect, promote and enhance the best of our landscape and heritage which are an important part of our culture and play a key role in tourism and economic growth, along with providing support for the Welsh Language to ensure it is safeguarded and supported.</p> <p><b>Issue 34</b> - The distinctive settlement pattern of Monmouthshire relates to historic towns and villages and their relationship with the surrounding rural areas. There has nevertheless been substantial suburban expansion in the South of the County, particularly adjacent to the M4 corridor. This area is likely to receive further pressure for growth due to the recent removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls and the ambitions and opportunities associated with the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and the South East Wales Metro, together with the</p> |

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| economic growth of the Bristol/SW region and the opportunities for Monmouthshire as a border county and its location between Bristol and Newport and Cardiff, the 'Great Western Cities'.   |
| <b>How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?</b>   |
| <b>K(i)</b> The RLDP can contain measures to preserve and enhance the built heritage and best of the historic environment of Monmouthshire.<br><b>K(ii)</b> The RLDP can help protect, promote and enhance the best of our landscape and heritage which are an important part of our culture and play a key role in tourism and economic growth, along with providing support for the Welsh Language to ensure it is safeguarded and supported.<br><b>K(iii)</b> Community involvement provides an opportunity to seek views on how Welsh language and culture interact with LDP policies and proposals. The future of the Welsh language depends on a range of factors beyond the planning system, particularly education, demographic change, community activities and a sound economic base to maintain thriving sustainable communities. The planning system can contribute to the future well-being of the Welsh language by creating conditions for well-paid employment opportunities and a range of quality housing options resulting in sustainable communities. Planning policies must not seek to control housing occupancy on linguistic grounds <sup>91</sup> .<br><b>K(iv)</b> The RLDP can play a key role in promoting good quality sustainable design that will enable new development and future growth to respect and enhance the existing distinctive character of Monmouthshire. |
| <b>Landscape</b>  |
| <b>Issue</b>  |
| <b>Issue 35</b> - Monmouthshire has a rich and diverse landscape that brings wider benefits to the local economy particularly through tourism and health and well-being. Monmouthshire as a whole incorporates parts of the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Brecon Beacons National Park and the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site.   |
| <b>How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?</b>   |
| <b>L(i)</b> The RLDP must seek to protect high quality landscapes throughout the County, paying particular attention to those contained in the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Blaenavon World Heritage Site and in the setting of the Brecon Beacons National Park.   |
| <b>A Globally Responsible Wales (Well-being Goal 7)</b>   |
| <b>Climatic Factors*</b>  |
| <b>Issue</b>  |

<sup>91</sup> Technical Advice Note 20 paragraphs 1.7.3, 2.2 and 2.6.4

**Issue 36\*** - The volume of traffic in the County has continued to increase, up nearly 19% in the nine years to 2019 (StatsWales, April 2019). There is a pattern of relatively long travel to work distances, high levels of car ownership and reliance on the private car.

**Issue 37\*** - Small Scale and Local Authority wide Renewable Energy schemes are generally supported across Monmouthshire, however, a more proactive approach should be undertaken for schemes of a local authority scale (i.e. 5MW - 25MW).

**Issue 38\*** - Monmouthshire's rurality, limited public transport, high levels of car ownership and the subsequent reliance on the private car, combined with high energy consumption and waste management can all contribute to carbon emissions. MCC recognises that we are in a climate emergency and has committed to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5 degrees.

#### **How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?**

**M(i)** Concerns about climate change require that efforts are made to reduce the reliance on the private car and the consequent impact of carbon dioxide emissions. The RLDP needs to consider appropriate patterns of development that promote a safe, efficient, accessible and sustainable transport system that provides opportunities for walking and cycling and encourages active travel in order to support carbon reduction. The RLDP will provide a mix of employment and housing allocations with the aim of reducing the need to travel, acknowledging however that the reasons why people live where they do is complex.

**M(ii)** A renewable energy assessment will be undertaken to identify areas of potential for local authority and strategic renewable energy development.

**M(iii)** The RLDP will consider ways to support carbon reduction through a variety of measures including the use of renewable energy, the design and location of new development, encouraging balanced job and population growth to reduce out-commuting, the provision of broadband connectivity to reduce the need to travel, the provision of ultra-low emission vehicle charging infrastructure to reduce emissions and improve air quality, and the provision of quality Green Infrastructure. Proposals will be considered against our commitment to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C.

#### **How can the RLDP support these Issues given increased emphasis in light of Covid-19**

The RLDP policy framework will support and enable renewable energy generation and provide opportunities for active travel and integrated sustainable transport solutions.

*\* indicates the Issue has increased emphasis and importance in light of Covid-19*

### APPENDIX 3: Review of Adopted Local Development Plan Policies

The purpose of this assessment is to identify if the existing Adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) Development Management Policies are functioning effectively, whether any changes are likely to be required and if it is appropriate to carry forward the policies in the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). It should be treated as indicative at this stage as new evidence, guidance or local factors may emerge as the Plan process progresses to justify a different approach to the one noted below. The policies will also need to be regrouped/reordered to reflect the strategic themes set out in PPW11 and Strategic Policies section of the RLDP. The assessment is outlined in the table below.

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|  | Indicates that the Development Management policy will be carried forward possibly with minor amendments.   |
|  | Indicates that the Development Management will be carried forward as a Development Management policy with amendments to reflect updated evidence, updated national planning policy guidance or Officer Working Group comments. |
|  | Indicates that consideration is being given to deleting the policy either in its entirety or through the combination/inclusion of the policy objective with another policy.  |

| Existing Development Management Policies |   | Commentary  | Recommendation  |
|--|---|---|---|
| H1                                       | Residential Development in Main Towns, Severnside Settlements and Rural Secondary Settlements | Functioning effectively – slight amendment required to refer to the correct Strategic Policy and settlement hierarchy name amendments.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.   |
| H2                                       | Residential Development in Main Villages  | Functioning effectively – slight amendment required to refer to the correct Strategic Policy and settlement hierarchy name amendments.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.   |
| H3                                       | Residential Development in Minor Villages   | Main thrust of policy is functioning effectively - amendments required in response to Officer Working Group* comments relating to a maximum of 4 dwellings, along with settlement hierarchy name amendments | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments. |

| Existing Development Management Policies |  | Commentary   | Recommendation   |
|--|--|--|--|
| H4                                       | Conversion / Rehabilitation of Buildings in the Open Countryside for Residential Use | Amendments required in response to Officer Working Group comments to improve clarity. Further clarity is provided in the Adopted Rural Conversions to a Residential or Tourism Use SPG, which will be amended accordingly and readopted to accompany the RLDP.                       | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments.                              |
| H5                                       | Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside  | Amendments required in response to Officer Working Group comments. Further clarity is provided in the LDP Policies H5 & H6 Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside and Extension of Rural Dwellings SPG which will be amended accordingly and readopted to accompany the RLDP. | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments.                              |
| H6                                       | Extension of Rural Dwellings   | Policy functioning effectively. Further clarity is provided in the LDP Policies H5 & H6 Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside and Extension of Rural Dwellings SPG which will be amended accordingly and readopted to accompany the RLDP                                     | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.  |
| H7                                       | Affordable Housing Rural Exceptions  | Policy functioning effectively. Amendments required to reflect Officer Working Group comments and PPW11 guidance on Affordable Housing Exception sites being within or adjoining existing settlement boundaries.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments and national policy guidance. |
| H8                                       | Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites                                     | Policy functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be required to reflect Officer Working Group comments and to align with national guidance.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.  |
| H9                                       | Flat Conversions   | Policy functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be required to reflect Officer Working Group comments.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.  |
| CRF1                                     | Retention of Existing Community Facilities   | Amendments required to reflect Officer Working Group comments.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments.                              |

| Existing Development Management Policies |   | Commentary  | Recommendation  |
|--|---|---|---|
| CRF2                                     | Outdoor Recreation / Public Open Space and Allotment Standards      | Policy functioning effectively. Amendments may be required to reflect updated national planning policy on standards and Officer Working Group comments.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to the standards.            |
| CRF3                                     | Safeguarding Existing Recreational Facilities and Public Open Space | Policy functioning effectively.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.   |
| RET1                                     | Primary Shopping Frontages  | Principle of policy remains relevant. Amendments may be necessary to policy thresholds and Primary Shopping Frontages to reflect evidence, updated national planning policy and Officer Working Group comments.     | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect updated evidence. |
| RET2                                     | Central Shopping Areas  | Principle of policy remains relevant. Amendments may be necessary to policy wording and Central Shopping Areas boundaries to reflect evidence, updated national planning policy and Officer Working Group comments. | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect updated evidence. |
| RET3                                     | Neighbourhood Centres   | Policy functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be required to reflect Officer Working Group comments.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.                       |
| RET4                                     | New Retail Proposals  | Policy functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be required to reflect updated national guidance and Officer Working Group comments.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.                       |
| E1                                       | Protection of Existing Employment Land                              | Principle of policy remains relevant. Amendments may be necessary to reflect the findings of the Employment Land Review and Officer Working Group comments.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect updated evidence. |
| E2                                       | Non-allocated Employment Sites                                      | Amendments required to reflect Officer Working Group comments and limitations of current policy restricted to single user only or large employers.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments.                             |
| E3                                       | Working from Home   | Delete policy as considered unnecessary and sufficiently covered by other policies.   | Delete policy from the RLDP.  |

| Existing Development Management Policies |   | Commentary  | Recommendation   |
|--|---|---|--|
| RE1                                      | Employment within Villages  | Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments may be necessary to reflect the findings of the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal and the findings of the Officer Working Group comments.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments to reflect updated evidence.  |
| RE2                                      | Conversion/Rehabilitation of Buildings in the Open Countryside for Employment Use | Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.  |
| RE3                                      | Agricultural Diversification  | Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.  |
| RE4                                      | New Agricultural and Forestry Buildings   | Policy is functioning effectively.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.  |
| RE5                                      | Intensive Livestock and Free Range Poultry Units                                  | Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments and updated Welsh Government guidance set out in Chief Planning Officer letter of 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2018.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments and updated national policy guidance.   |
| RE6                                      | Provision of Recreation, Tourism and Leisure Facilities in the Open Countryside   | Amendments may be necessary to reflect update national planning policy and Officer Working Group comments and amendments to address the lack of clarity identified by Economy and Development Select Committee which the Sustainable Tourism SPG has sought to resolve. | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments and updated national policy guidance and to address the lack of clarity identified by Economy and Development Select Committee which the Sustainable Tourism SPG has sought to resolve. |
| T1                                       | Touring Caravan and Tented Camping Sites  | Amendments may be necessary to reflect update national planning policy and Officer Working Group comments and amendments to address the lack of clarity identified by Economy and Development Select Committee which the Sustainable Tourism SPG has sought to resolve. | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments and updated national policy guidance and to address the lack of clarity identified by Economy and Development Select Committee which the Sustainable Tourism SPG has sought to resolve. |

| Existing Development Management Policies |  | Commentary  | Recommendation   |
|--|--|---|--|
| T2                                       | Visitor Accommodation Outside Settlements          | Amendments may be necessary to reflect update national planning policy and Officer Working Group comments and amendments to address the lack of clarity identified by Economy and Development Select Committee which the Sustainable Tourism SPG has sought to resolve. | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments and updated national policy guidance and to address the lack of clarity identified by Economy and Development Select Committee which the Sustainable Tourism SPG has sought to resolve. |
| T3                                       | Golf Courses                                       | Amendments may be necessary to reflect update national planning policy and Officer Working Group comments and amendments to address the lack of clarity identified by Economy and Development Select Committee which the Sustainable Tourism SPG has sought to resolve. | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments and updated national policy guidance and to address the lack of clarity identified by Economy and Development Select Committee which the Sustainable Tourism SPG has sought to resolve. |
| SD1                                      | Renewable Energy                                   | Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments will be necessary to reflect updated national planning policy guidance and the outcome of the Renewable Energy Assessment.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect updated national planning policy guidance and evidence.  |
| SD2                                      | Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency     | Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments may be necessary to reflect updated national planning policy guidance.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect contextual changes and updated national planning policy guidance.  |
| SD3                                      | Flood Risk   | Review report recommends to delete this policy as flood risk considerations are covered by national planning policy.  | Delete policy from the RLDP.   |
| SD4                                      | Sustainable Drainage                               | Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments may be necessary to reflect updated national planning policy guidance and legislation on this issue.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect updated national planning policy guidance and legislation.   |
| LC1                                      | New Built Development in the Open Countryside      | Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.  |
| LC2                                      | Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site | Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.  |



| Existing Development Management Policies |   | Commentary   | Recommendation   |
|--|---|--|--|
| LC3                                      | Brecon Beacons National Park                      | Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.  |
| LC4                                      | Wye Valley AONB                                   | Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.  |
| LC5                                      | Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character | Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments. A Landscape Character SPG will be prepared to accompany the RLDP once adopted provide further clarity on interpretation and implementation of this policy once adopted.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.  |
| LC6                                      | Green Wedges                                      | This policy and associated boundaries will be amended as necessary to reflect a review of the Green Wedges which will be completed in time for the Deposit Plan to ensure designations are justified and consistent with updated planning policy guidance.   | Policy and associated boundaries will be amended and to reflect a review of the Green Wedges and updated planning policy guidance. |
| GI1                                      | Green Infrastructure                              | Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect updated national planning policy guidance and Officer Working Group Comments. The Adopted Green Infrastructure SPG provides further clarity on the implementation of the policy which will be amended accordingly and readopted to accompany the RLDP. | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.  |
| NE1                                      | Nature Conservation and Development               | Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect changes to the legislative framework, national planning policy guidance and Officer Working Group comments.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.  |

| Existing Development Management Policies |   | Commentary  | Recommendation   |
|--|---|---|--|
| EP1                                      | Amenity and Environmental Protection              | Policy functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect updated national planning policy guidance.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.  |
| EP2                                      | Protection of Water Sources and Water Environment | Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect updated national planning policy guidance.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.  |
| EP3                                      | Lighting  | Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.  |
| EP4                                      | Telecommunications                                | Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be required to reflect legislative framework and updated national planning policy guidance.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.  |
| EP5                                      | Foul Sewage Disposal                              | Policy is functioning effectively.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.  |
| W1                                       | Waste Reduction                                   | Limited application. Review Report notes the need to consider whether the policy is required. Policy has strong links to the circular economy objectives. Amendments may be required to reflect updated national planning policy guidance and MCC's climate change agenda.                        | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect contextual and national planning policy guidance.  |
| W2                                       | Waste Recovery Facilities: Household              | Limited application. Review Report notes the need to consider whether the policy is required. Principle of policy is considered relevant and necessary, but is adequately covered by the draft Strategic Policy S16 – Sustainable Waste Management set out in the Preferred Strategy (March 2020) | Delete policy as policy objectives are addressed by the draft Strategic Policy S16 – Sustainable Waste Management as set out in the Preferred Strategy (June 2021).  |
| W3                                       | Waste Management Facilities                       | Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments are required to replace the overarching acceptability of waste management facilities on B2 sites, to list specific sites and reduce the scope of the existing policy.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to replace the overarching acceptance of B2 industrial sites for waste management facilities with a list of specific sites and reduce the scope of the existing policy. |

| Existing Development Management Policies |   | Commentary   | Recommendation   |
|--|---|--|--|
| W4                                       | Rural Composting  | Policy is functioning effectively.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.  |
| W5                                       | Waste Disposal by Landfill or Landraising                                   | Policy functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be required to reflect national planning policy guidance.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.  |
| W6                                       | Waste Deposition on Agricultural Land for Agricultural Improvement Purposes | Policy is functioning effectively.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.  |
| M1                                       | Local Building and Walling Stone  | Policy is functioning effectively.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.  |
| M2                                       | Minerals Safeguarding Areas   | Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be required to reflect the findings of the Regional Technical Statement – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Revision and associated Mineral Safeguarding Maps.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments necessary to reflect the updated Regional Technical Statement – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Revision.   |
| M3                                       | Mineral Site Buffer Zones   | Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments may be necessary to reflect the findings of the Regional Technical Statement – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Revision. Buffer Zone for Livox Quarry requires deletion following a refusal of planning permission to continue mineral extraction. | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments necessary to reflect the updated Regional Technical Statement 2 <sup>nd</sup> Revision and planning status changes.   |
| MV1                                      | Proposed Developments and Highway Considerations                            | Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments may be required to reflect updated national planning policy guidance and to incorporate elements of Policy MV7 – Rear Access/Service Areas, which is recommended to be deleted.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments necessary to reflect updated national planning policy guidance and incorporate elements of policy MV7 – Rear Access/Service Areas, which is proposed to be deleted. |
| MV2                                      | Sustainable Transport Access  | Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments may be required to reflect updated national planning policy guidance.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments necessary to reflect updated national planning policy guidance.   |
| MV3                                      | Public Rights of Way  | Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be required to reflect the Monmouthshire   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments to reflect contextual changes.  |

| Existing Development Management Policies |  | Commentary   | Recommendation   |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  | Countryside Access Draft Improvement Plan – July 2019.   |  |
| MV4                                      | Cycleways  | Policy is functioning effectively.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.  |
| MV5                                      | Improvements to Public Transport Interchanges and Facilities | Policy has had limited use, but the principles remain relevant.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.  |
| MV6                                      | Canals and Redundant Rail Routes                             | Policy principle remains relevant, but has had limited use. Consideration will be given to amendments or combination with another suitable policy.   | Carry forward the policy principle, but with consideration to amendments or combination with another suitable policy.  |
| MV7                                      | Rear Access / Service Areas                                  | Policy is functioning effectively but has limited applicability. Consideration will be given to the deletion of the policy and inclusion its objective to Policy MV1.  | Consider deletion of the policy with amendments to Policy MV1 to ensure policy objectives are addressed.   |
| MV8                                      | Rail Freight   | Policy principle remains relevant, but has had limited applicability. Consideration will be given to combining policy objectives with another Movement related policy.   | Carry forward policy principle, but with consideration to combining with another suitable policy.  |
| MV9                                      | Road Hierarchy   | Policy is functioning effectively, but has had limited applicability. Consideration will be given to whether the policy is still required.   | Consider deletion of the policy.   |
| MV10                                     | Transport Routes and Schemes                                 | Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments are required to reflect updated Local Transport Plan and Active Travel Act and associated schemes.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy with amendments to reflect the updated Local Travel Plan and Active Travel Act.   |
| DES1                                     | General Design Considerations                                | Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments are required to reflect contextual changes, updated national planning policy guidance, Officer Working Group comments and consideration of the suggestions from Abergavenny Civic Society. | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy with amendments to reflect contextual changes, updated national planning policy guidance, Officer Working Group comments and consideration of the suggestions from Abergavenny Civic Society. |
| DES2                                     | Areas of Amenity Importance                                  | Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments are required to reflect the review of Areas of Amenity   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy with amendments to reflect updated Areas of Amenity   |

| Existing Development Management Policies |   | Commentary  | Recommendation  |
|--|---|---|---|
|  |   | Importance which will be completed in time for the Deposit Plan, updated national planning policy guidance on associated standards and associated changes to policy CRF2. | Importance Survey and national planning policy guidance.                            |
| DES3                                     | Advertisements  | Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments may be required to reflect Officer Working Group comments.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments. |
| DES4                                     | Advance Tourism Signs                                   | Policy is functioning effectively.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.                       |
| HE1**                                    | Development in Conservation Areas                       | Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments. |
| HE2**                                    | Alterations to Unlisted Buildings in Conservation Areas | Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.   | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments. |
| HE3**                                    | Design of Shop Fronts in Conservation Areas             | Policy is functioning effectively.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.                       |
| HE4**                                    | Roman Town of Caerwent                                  | Policy is functioning effectively.  | Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.                       |

\*Officer Working Group discussions refers to issues raised during a series of internal workshops with MCC Officers covering different topic areas. The findings of the workshops fed into the LDP Review Report (March 2018), including Table 2: Review of Development Management Policies.

\*\*Historic Environment Policies to be further reviewed in light of the Historic Environment Act and consideration given to the need for new or amended policies particularly with regard to Buildings of Local Interest and Historic Landscapes.

## APPENDIX 4: Potential Strategic Growth Areas

- A 2.1 In order to implement the RLDP's proposed Growth Strategy, potential strategic growth areas (for housing and job growth) have been identified for each of the Primary Settlements and Severnside. To inform these possible strategic growth areas a high-level assessment of sites submitted during the Initial Call for Candidate Sites has been undertaken to identify those sites which could contribute to delivering the level of growth required to deliver the Preferred Strategy. At this stage only strategic sites and sustainable urban extensions of around 8ha in size and above have been considered. Smaller sites which individually or combined may also be capable of contributing to delivering the required level of growth are not included, these sites will also be subject to consideration following the Second Call for Candidate Sites. The identified site options are considered in theory to have the potential to underpin the Spatial Strategy by accommodating growth and focusing development within those settlements and areas which are identified as the most sustainable locations (refer to Strategic Policy S2 Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy).
- A 2.2 Not all sites shown will be selected for inclusion in the Deposit Plan, as their combined capacity exceeds the level of growth needed to meet the employment and residual new housing allocation requirement (refer to Table 6 Breakdown of Housing Supply). Moreover, a Second Call for Candidate Sites will be undertaken alongside the publication of the Preferred Strategy and further site options which are compatible with the Preferred Strategy may be submitted at this time. The final selection of sites for the Deposit Plan will be dependent on further detailed assessment work, including:
- The ability to deliver the level of supporting infrastructure required;
  - A masterplanning process to ensure they create sustainable, cohesive, well-designed places delivered through a strong placemaking approach; and
  - A financial viability assessment to ensure sites are deliverable within the Plan period.
- A 2.3 Site promoters will be expected to submit specific information on the viability and deliverability of sites during the Second Call for Candidate Sites to facilitate this assessment work. If site promoters do not submit specific information during the RLDP Second Call for Sites, this could affect the prospect of site allocation in the Deposit Plan.
- A 2.4 In addition to the detailed assessment work an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) will also be carried out on each site that is considered compatible with the Preferred Strategy to assess whether there are any likely significant effects associated with the proposals. The ISA Report will identify likely environmental and wider sustainability effects from the delivery of all candidate sites (including potential LDP rollover sites). Where significant adverse effects are identified, sufficient information would need to be provided to demonstrate that identified constraints can be

overcome and that, after mitigation, any such effects would be acceptable, in order for the candidate site to be considered for allocation in the RLDP.

### Consideration of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

- A 2.5 There is a need to protect Monmouthshire's Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land. PPW11 Paragraphs 3.58 and 3.59 clearly sets out that *'...agricultural land of grades 1, 2 and 3a is the best and most versatile and should be conserved as a finite resource for the future.'* It further states that in development plans *'...considerable weight should be given to protecting such land from development, because of its special importance. Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a should only be developed if there is an overriding need for the development, and either previously developed land or land in lower agricultural grades is unavailable, or available lower grade land has an environmental value recognised by a landscape, wildlife, historic or archaeological designation which outweighs the agricultural considerations. If land in grades 1, 2 or 3a does need to be developed, and there is a choice between sites of different grades, development should be directed to land of the lowest grade.'*
- A 2.6 Monmouthshire is a predominantly rural county and one of the key issues that has been identified (Issue 17) is that *'...there is a significant high percentage of BMV agricultural land with limited Brownfield land development opportunities'*. The preparation of Monmouthshire's RLDP therefore needs to set out an approach to protect BMV land and minimise its loss as far as possible through its growth and spatial strategy.
- A 2.7 A sequential approach to assessing the loss of BMV agricultural land, as set out by PPW11, will be undertaken in the assessment of all candidate sites. It is anticipated however, that due to the significant amount of BMV agricultural land throughout Monmouthshire it will be difficult to apply this sequential test in practice. Furthermore, at this stage the indicative grades of BMV agricultural land are based on high level predictive maps and are therefore likely to be subject to change following detailed surveys. The aim at the outset nevertheless, will be to protect the higher grades of BMV land and to avoid/or minimise the loss of BMV land. The following pragmatic approach is anticipated:
- A desktop assessment using the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) predictive map for Wales, this provides a broad overview of the ALC for a particular area; however, it is not a detailed site assessment.
  - The Second Call for Sites form will include a specific question on ALC in order to gather information regarding the quality of, and potential loss of, agricultural land direct from site promoters.
  - Those sites selected for further consideration will be required to undertake a detailed agricultural land quality survey in order to further ascertain the precise ALC and quality of the land.
  - Consultation will be undertaken with relevant stakeholders/consultees including the Welsh Government Agricultural Land Unit.

- A 2.8 It is important to note that protection of BMV agricultural land must be balanced with other considerations. For example, lower quality agricultural land is typically found in floodplains, but these areas cannot be developed for other policy reasons. Consideration must also be given to proximity to amenities and infrastructure, landscape impact, ecology and site deliverability.
- A 2.9 An Agricultural Land Classification Background Paper will be produced at Deposit Plan stage, this will clearly set out the above methodology and the outcomes from the BMV land assessment.
- A 2.10 With these caveats in mind, the potential strategic growth areas and sites under consideration at this stage are set out below. These are not shown in any particular order of rank or preference.

### Abergavenny and Llanfoist

- A 2.11 Abergavenny is identified as a Primary Settlement in the RLDP settlement hierarchy. It has public transport links by rail and bus to Cwmbran, Newport, Cardiff and the Midlands, and road links to Cwmbran, Newport, Monmouth and the motorway system. It has a particularly important strategic role on the Heads of the Valleys road through its links to Brecon, Mid Wales and the wider Cardiff Capital Region. The A465 separates the town from Llanfoist to the south, and partly defines the town edge to the east. The built-up area to the north and west extends close to the Brecon Beacons National Park boundary, and Llanfoist adjoins the Blaenavon World Heritage Site.
- A 2.12 Facilities and services score well within the sustainability appraisal, as the town centre has a relatively large number and range of shops and restaurants, a theatre, cinema, and museum, and is a vibrant focus for the surrounding area. It is also one of the most self-sufficient settlements in terms of employment with a variety of employment sites within the town.
- A 2.13 Future growth of the town is constrained by a number of factors. Abergavenny's landscape sensitivity to residential development<sup>92</sup> is high and high/medium, with an area of medium sensitivity to the south of Llanfoist.<sup>93</sup> The areas immediately north and west of the town adjoin the Brecon Beacons National Park, and the town centre itself is a Conservation Area. The floodplain of the River Usk is a further constraint on development to the south of the town and in parts of Llanfoist.
- A 2.14 Abergavenny sits within the River Usk Special Area Conservation (SAC) catchment area. Candidate site submissions will therefore need demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body.

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<sup>92</sup> A standard methodology relating to the landscape sensitivity to housing development has been applied to the assessment of candidate sites in the Landscape Sensitivity Update Study – October 2020.

<sup>93</sup> Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update Study – October 2020 can be viewed via:  
<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>



A 2.15 Options for the future strategic direction of growth of the town are being considered. These include:-

- A - Land north of Abergavenny.** Development here would expand the existing built up area toward the boundary with the Brecon Beacons National Park (BBNP). Any development in this location would need to be carefully assessed to ensure that any effects on the setting of the BBNP are acceptable. The land is categorised as being of high/medium landscape sensitivity to residential development within the Landscape Sensitivity Update<sup>94</sup>. Other considerations include the area’s location in an area of predominantly predictive grade 2 BMV agricultural land<sup>95</sup>. With regard to the status of the agricultural land surrounding Abergavenny and Llanfoist it would need to be considered whether development of this area would be on ‘least bad’ agricultural land when considering the search sequence recommended in PPW11, given that much of the land under consideration is of BMV status. Development will need demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body of the River Usk SAC catchment area. Other considerations will include the area’s distance from the town centre, which is just under a mile or an approximate 14 minute walking distance and the impact of development on the surrounding road network.

| Candidate Reference No. | Site | Site Name                  | Site Area (Ha) |
|-------------------------|------|----------------------------|----------------|
| CS0094                  |      | Land at Penlanlas Farm     | 6.08           |
| CS0128                  |      | Land at Chapel Farm Fields | 9.6            |
| CS0192                  |      | Land off Old Hereford Road | 8.3            |

- B - Land to the east of the A465.** Development here would expand the built up area of the town beyond the A465, a natural barrier to development for some years. However, the size of the proposed candidate site as an urban extension to Abergavenny could provide the opportunity to provide a mixed-use development, which would contain a mix of residential uses alongside employment/commercial uses, facilities and services. Given the extent of this potential growth area, development would be likely to extend beyond the Plan period but its allocation could helpfully identify the long-term direction of growth for the town. In addition, the proximity of the area to Abergavenny

<sup>94</sup> Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

<sup>95</sup> At this stage the indicative grades of BMV agricultural land are based on a high level predictive map and are therefore likely to be subject to change following detailed surveys.

Railway Station could offer significant benefits to maximise opportunities for a modal shift to more sustainable forms of transport. The land is categorised as having high/medium landscape sensitivity to residential development in the Landscape Sensitivity Update<sup>96</sup>. Other considerations include the area’s location in an area of predictive grade 2/3a BMV agricultural land. With regard to the status of the agricultural land surrounding Abergavenny and Llanfoist it would need to be considered whether development of this area would be on ‘least bad’ agricultural land when considering the search sequence recommended in PPW11 given that most of the land under consideration is of BMV status. Development will need demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body of the River Usk SAC catchment area. In addition, other considerations will include the area’s distance from the town centre, which is just over a mile or an approximate 16 minute walking distance and the impact of development on the surrounding road network.

| Candidate Reference No. | Site | Site Name                   | Site Area (Ha) |
|-------------------------|------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| CS0125                  |      | Abergavenny Urban Extension | 65             |

- C - Land between the B4246 and Heads of the Valleys Road.** Development here would expand the existing built up area toward the boundary with the Brecon Beacons National Park (BBNP). Any development in this location would need to be carefully assessed to ensure that any effects on the setting of the BBNP are acceptable. Development here would also further expand the existing built area along the boundary with the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site. Any development in this location would need to be carefully assessed to ensure that any effects on the setting of this historic landscape are acceptable. The land is categorised as having medium landscape sensitivity to residential development<sup>97</sup>. Other considerations include the area’s location in an area of predictive grade 2 BMV agricultural land. With regard to the status of the agricultural land surrounding Abergavenny and Llanfoist it would need to be considered whether development of this area would be on ‘least bad’ agricultural land when considering the search sequence recommended in PPW11 given that most of the land under consideration is of BMV status. Development will need demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body of the River Usk SAC catchment area. In addition, other considerations will include the area’s distance from the town centre, which is around a 1.3 mile or an approximate 19 minute walking

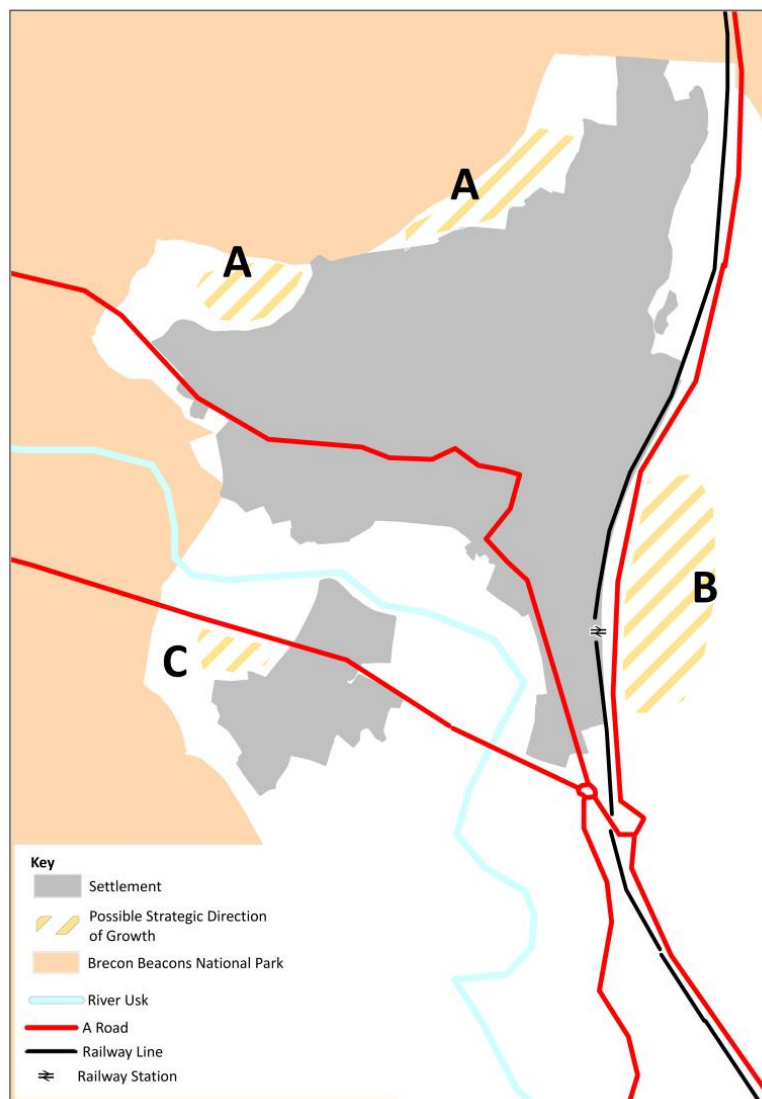
<sup>96</sup> Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

<sup>97</sup> Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

distance, the furthest of any of the possible strategic directions for growth and the impact of development on the surrounding road network. Shopping and employment opportunities are available in closer proximity than the town centre. Improved connectivity into Abergavenny would be required, such as the proposed Llanfoist bridge.

| Candidate Reference No. | Site | Site Name                            | Site Area (Ha) |
|-------------------------|------|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| CS0093                  |      | Land at Evesham Nurseries, Llanfoist | 8.3            |

### Abergavenny Strategic Growth Options



### Chepstow

A 2.16 Chepstow is identified as a Primary Settlement in the RLDP settlement hierarchy. Of all of the settlements appraised in the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal (June 2021) it

achieves the highest weighted score. Chepstow is well placed on the M4 corridor at the entrance to Wales to capitalise on its strategic road and rail links to the Cardiff Capital Region and South West England and associated economic opportunities. These opportunities have been enhanced given the recent removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls.

- A 2.17 Facilities and services score well within the sustainability assessment, as the town centre has a relatively large number and good range of shops and restaurants and is a vibrant focus for the surrounding area. The town is also one of the main focuses of employment within the County. Chepstow has a good range of employment sites within the town, with the largest being the Newhouse Farm Industrial Estate located to the south of the town on the motorway junction with the M48.
- A 2.18 Future growth of the town, however, is constrained due to a range of local and national environmental and heritage designations and its location on the River Wye / border with England. Chepstow's landscape sensitivity to residential development is high and high/medium to the north and south of Chepstow with medium sensitivity recorded for an area of land to west of Chepstow. The area immediately north of the town lies within the Wye Valley AONB<sup>98</sup>. Land to the west of the A466 is currently protected in the Adopted LDP by a "green wedge" policy to ensure the town's physical separation from Pwllmeyric and Mathern, although current green wedge designations will be reviewed as part of the RLDP process. South of the A48, the undeveloped land is also within a conservation area and, in part, within a designated historic park and garden.
- A 2.19 There are also highway capacity issues which will need to be addressed as part of any future development proposals. A section of the A48, which passes through the town and provides the main link between the southern part of the Forest of Dean and the motorway network, is designated as an Air Quality Management Area. Some parts of the historic centre benefit from flood relief measures, but other areas close to the River Wye remain at risk. The town centre itself is a Conservation Area.
- A 2.20 In addition, Policy 34 – Green Belts in the South East, of Future Wales designates a green belt on land to the north of Chepstow. In assessing candidate sites and their relationship to Policy 34 of Future Wales consideration will be given to paragraph 3.72 of PPW11 which states that when considering a Green Belt designation, a sufficient range of development land which is suitably located in relation to the existing urban edge should be made available, having regard to the longer term need for development land, the effects of development pressures in areas beyond the Green Belt and the need to minimise demand for travel. This may require land to be safeguarded, and boundaries of proposed Green Belts must be carefully defined to achieve this. This will be given further consideration through the SDP process.

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<sup>98</sup> Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update Study – October 2020 can be viewed via:  
<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

A 2.21 Options for the future strategic direction of development of the town are being considered. These include:-

- D - Land north of the Bayfield Estate.** Development here would expand the existing built up area west of the A466. Development to the south of the Usk road (B4235) would be outside the AONB but would adjoin it. PPW11 gives National Parks and AONBs equal status in terms of landscape and scenic beauty and requires that both be afforded the highest status of protection from inappropriate developments. Any development in this location would need to be carefully assessed to ensure that any effects on the setting of the AONB are acceptable. The land is categorised as being of medium landscape sensitivity to residential development<sup>99</sup>. Other considerations include the area’s location in an area of predictive grade 2 BMV agricultural land. With regard to the status of the agricultural land surrounding Chepstow development of this area would be considered to be on ‘least bad’ agricultural land when considering the search sequence recommended in PPW11 given that most of the land under consideration is of BMV status. In addition, other considerations will include its location in the limestone minerals safeguarding area, the area’s distance from the town centre, which is approximately a mile or an approximate 16 minute walking distance and the impact of development on the A466 and Highbeech roundabout. The site’s relationship with the green belt designated in Future Wales is also a consideration.

| Candidate Reference No. | Site | Site Name | Site Area (Ha) |
|-------------------------|------|-----------|----------------|
| CS0098                  |      | Bayfield  | 10.07          |

- E - Land between the Bayfield Estate and A48.** The area between Mounon Road and the A48 is currently designated in the Adopted LDP as “green wedge” and substantial development could affect the degree of physical separation between Chepstow and Pwllmeyric. The land is a mixture of medium and high/medium landscape sensitivity to residential development. Other considerations include the area’s location in an area of predictive grade 2 BMV agricultural land. With regard to the status of the agricultural land surrounding Chepstow development of this area would be considered to be on ‘least bad’ agricultural land when considering the search sequence recommended in PPW11 given that most of the land under consideration is of BMV status. In addition, other considerations will include its location in the limestone minerals safeguarding area and the visual impact of development and its effects on the A466 and Highbeech roundabout although a well-designed scheme could create an attractive gateway to the town. The area is less than a mile or an approximate 12 minute

<sup>99</sup> Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

walking distance from the town centre and the railway station, the closest of any of the potential strategic directions for growth. The site offers the potential for some employment and/or tourism-based development. The site's relationship with the green belt designated in Future Wales is also a consideration.

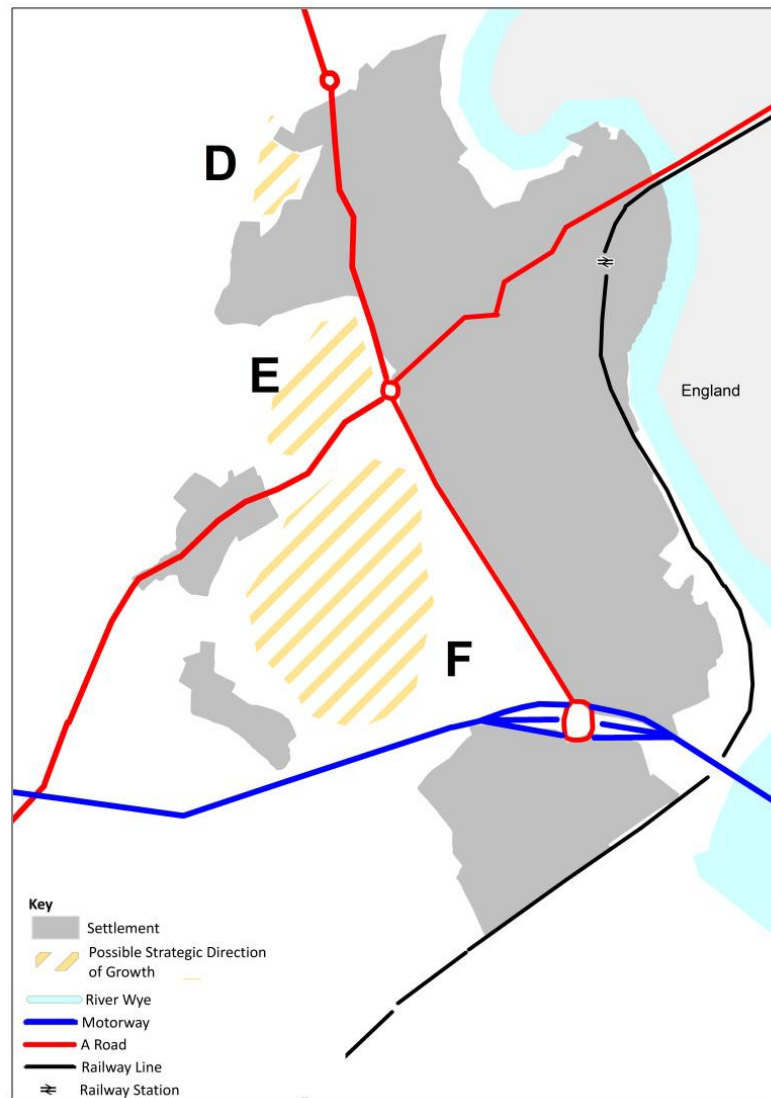
| Candidate Reference No. | Site | Site Name                     | Site Area (Ha) |
|-------------------------|------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| CS0112                  |      | Land at St Lawrence Lane      | 20.4           |
| CS0165                  |      | Land west A466 & Mounton Road | 12.8           |

- F - Land between the A48 and M48.** The area between the A48 and the M48, is currently designated as “green wedge”, and substantial development could affect the degree of physical separation between Chepstow and Pwllmeyric and Mathern. The land is categorised as high landscape sensitivity to residential development in the Landscape Sensitivity Update.<sup>100</sup> Other considerations include the area's location in an area of predictive grade 1 BMV agricultural land, its location in the limestone minerals safeguarding area, its location in the Conservation Area, the area's distance from the town centre, this area is the furthest away from the town centre approximately 1.1 miles or an approximate 17 minute walk, the visual impact of development and its effects on the A466 and Highbeech roundabout. Part of this area is also Historic Park and Garden. The site's relationship with the green belt designated in Future Wales is also a consideration.

| Candidate Reference No. | Site | Site Name        | Site Area (Ha) |
|-------------------------|------|------------------|----------------|
| CS0152                  |      | Land at Wyelands | 100            |

<sup>100</sup> Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

## Chepstow Strategic Growth Options



## Monmouth

A 2.22 Monmouth is identified as a Primary Settlement in the RLDP settlement hierarchy. It has excellent road links occupying a key strategic location on the road network between Newport (A449), Abergavenny (A40) and the Midlands (A466) and has a range of bus services to the South Wales cities and to Gloucestershire and Herefordshire.

A 2.23 Facilities and services score well within the sustainability assessment, as the town centre, which itself is a Conservation Area, has a relatively large number and good range of shops and restaurants, a theatre, cinema, and museum, and is a vibrant focus for the surrounding area. It also one of the most self-sufficient settlements in terms of employment with a variety of employment sites within the town. Monmouth's

largest employment area is Wonastow Industrial Estate to the south west of the settlement. There has also been recent strategic growth to the south west of the town with a mixed-use development to the west of the Wonastow Estate allocated under the Adopted LDP, which is near completion.

A 2.24 Future growth of the town is constrained by a number of factors. Monmouth's landscape sensitivity to residential development is high and high/medium around most of the settlement edge with an area of medium sensitivity adjoining the western boundary. Immediately to the South East of the settlement is the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). There is no rail network to encourage sustainable travel by rail and therefore highway capacity issues and the need to reduce travel/carbon and support active travel options need to be carefully considered.

Monmouth sits within the River Wye Special Area Conservation (SAC) catchment area. Candidate site submissions will therefore need demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body.

A 2.25 Options for the future strategic direction of development of the town are being considered. These include: -

- **G - Land west of Monmouth.** Given the potential extent of this growth area, development could extend beyond the Plan period but its allocation could helpfully identify the long-term direction of growth for the town. Development here would expand the settlement of Monmouth to the west. The land is not within a nationally sensitive landscape area, however, it has high/medium to medium landscape sensitivity as assessed under the Landscape Sensitivity Update Study<sup>101</sup>. Immediately west of the growth area is a designated Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), a large wooded area made up of several ancient woodlands collectively known as 'Kings Wood'. Agricultural land in this area is predicted to be part 2, part 3a and part 3b grades. With regard to the status of the agricultural land around the settlement edge of Monmouth, the land falling within the categorisation 3b would be considered to be on 'least versatile' agricultural land. Development will need demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body of the River Wye SAC catchment area. There is also opportunity to accommodate employment uses by extending upon the existing Wonastow industrial estate. Out of the possible growth areas of the settlement, it is the furthest away from the town centre, taken from roughly the centre point, approximately 1.6 miles and an approximate 24 minute walk. Connectivity to the town and amenities would need careful consideration.

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<sup>101</sup> Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update Study – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>



| Candidate Site Reference No. | Site Name                     | Site Area (Ha) |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| CS0051                       | Croft Y Bwla Farm             | 49.9ha         |
| CS0078                       | Land adjacent to Croft Y Bwla | 13ha           |
| CS0090                       | Land north of Wonastow Road   | 9.12ha         |
| CS0196                       | Land at Drewen Farm           | 11.52ha        |

- H - Land central Monmouth.** This area is Greenfield land outside Monmouth's settlement boundary; however, it is located in a central position within Monmouth, located north east of the town centre and River Wye. The land is considered to have a high amenity value and is designated in the current adopted LDP as an 'Area of amenity importance' (Policy DES2) and is categorised as high/medium sensitivity under the landscape assessment of the candidate sites<sup>102</sup>. It has a predictive 3a BMV agricultural land classification. Development will need demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body of the River Wye SAC catchment area. Its central location means that it is approximately 1 mile and a walking distance of approximately 16 minutes from town centre. This direction of growth would therefore be close to the existing facilities and services of Monmouth. There could be an opportunity to provide improved pedestrian links to the town centre and a car park serving the town.

| Candidate Site Reference No. | Site Name                     | Site Area (Ha) |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| CS0160                       | Land Known as Vauxhall Fields | 8.58ha         |
| CS0099                       | Land at Drybridge Farm        | 22.5ha         |

- I - Land north east of Monmouth.** Given the extent of this potential growth area, development would be likely to extend beyond the Plan period but its allocation could helpfully identify the long term direction of growth for the town. This area of land is located to the north east of Monmouth's settlement boundary, north of Dixton Roundabout. There could be an opportunity to provide a road link from Osbaston to the Dixton roundabout, to avoid car travel through Hereford Road and the town centre. The land is categorised as predictive grade 2 BMV agricultural land, which is the highest predictive grade BMV land of the agricultural land, which

<sup>102</sup> Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update Study – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

surrounds Monmouth’s settlement edge. It has been assessed as having a high/medium landscape sensitivity<sup>103</sup> and is at the gateway to Wales and to the town. Development will need demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body of the River Wye SAC catchment area. The site is approximately 1.2 miles from the town centre, equating to an approximate walking distance of approximately 17 minutes, and again is considered to be in close proximity and a sustainable distance from the existing services and facilities of Monmouth.

| Candidate Reference No. | Site | Site Name  | Site Area (Ha) |
|-------------------------|------|--|----------------|
| CS0182                  |      | Land North East of Monmouth and North of Dixton Road | 42ha           |

### Monmouth Strategic Growth Options



<sup>103</sup> Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update Study – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

## Sevenside

- A 2.26 Sevenside is a cluster of settlements identified within the RLDP sustainable settlement hierarchy. Within the Sevenside area, Caldicot and Magor Undy have been classified as higher tier settlements, which have functional geographic and transport links with the smaller tier settlements of Rogiet, Caerwent, Portskewett, Sudbrook and Crick, which together are considered to share social, economic and environmental characteristics to make up the identifiable group of Sevenside. The Sevenside area, has an important role as the ‘Gateway to Wales’, with the area immediately adjacent to the Second Severn Bridge (Prince of Wales Bridge) crossing, and as a whole is well located for the nearby employment markets of Newport, Cardiff and Bristol. There are key rail links to these employment markets with stations at Severn Tunnel Junction and Caldicot connecting with the key settlements of Cardiff in the West and Bristol /Cheltenham/Midlands in the East, with enhancements recommended to Severn Tunnel Junction recommended in the South East Wales Transport Commission Final Recommendation Plan (November 2020). There are also good road links to the M4 and M48 motorways, with the M4 Junction at Magor and Undy. The A48 also runs across the north of the Sevenside region connecting settlements along the A48 with settlements in Newport to the west, and Chepstow to the east.
- A 2.27 The future growth of the Sevenside region is constrained by flood plain on land to the south of the settlements of Magor and Undy, Rogiet, Caldicot and Portskewett. South of these settlements also lies the historic and archaeologically sensitive Gwent levels, which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Furthermore, the area beyond the Severn Estuary is subject to significant environmental designations including a designated SSSI as well as a Special Area for Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site (Wetland of international importance). A large proportion of the Sevenside area is also located in a Limestone Mineral Safeguarding Area.
- A 2.28 In addition to these Policy 34 – Green Belts in the South East, of Future Wales designates a green belt to the north of the A48 within the Sevenside area. In assessing candidate sites and their relationship to Policy 34 of Future Wales consideration will be given to paragraph 3.72 of PPW11 which states that when considering a Green Belt designation, a sufficient range of development land which is suitably located in relation to the existing urban edge should be made available, having regard to the longer term need for development land, the effects of development pressures in areas beyond the Green Belt and the need to minimise demand for travel. This may require land to be safeguarded, and boundaries of proposed Green Belts must be carefully defined to achieve this. This will be given further consideration through the SDP process.

### **Caldicot**

A 2.29 Caldicot achieves a high weighted score in terms of sustainability within the settlement appraisal. It has the largest physical urban area and population within the Severnside cluster. Caldicot has a rail station and is well placed on the road network with the M4 located south of the settlement and the M48 running adjacent to the north of the settlement, although the junction is at Magor for the M4 and at Chepstow for the M48. Caldicot is served by a town centre, currently undergoing regeneration, and has numerous educational facilities. Severnside Industrial Estate is located to the south east of the settlement, which is a significant employment base and separates Caldicot from neighbouring Portskewett. To the west of the settlement is land protected by a 'Green Wedge', which is in place to separate Caldicot from the neighbouring settlement of Rogiet. Green Wedge designations will be reviewed as part of the evidence base of the Deposit Plan. South of the settlement, the land is constrained by flood plain. Growth in recent years has been to the north east of the settlement.

### **Magor and Undy**

A 2.30 Magor and Undy also scores well within the sustainable settlement hierarchy, it is well connected with regard to road links and has the only motorway junction within the Severnside area, which is located north west of the settlement, with the M4 bounding the settlement to the north. In addition, the settlements have easy access to the Severn Tunnel Junction Station at Rogiet and there is potential for a walkway rail station in Magor itself. Bus services also pass through the settlements linking them with Caldicot and Chepstow to the east and Newport to the west. There is land allocated for employment to the north west with the established Magor Brewery site and Wales One Business Park, which capitalises on the good road links. Recent growth has been directed to the north east of the settlement. South of the settlement is constrained by flood plain and Gwent Levels SSSI.

### **Rogiet**

A 2.31 Rogiet is a smaller cluster settlement, which scores well in the sustainability appraisal due to its well-serviced Severn Tunnel Junction train station and proximity to nearby amenities especially in Caldicot. Located to the south of the B4245, Rogiet has public transport links to Caldicot to the east, and Magor and Undy to the west. Rogiet is constrained by Green Wedge, which lies to the east and west of the settlement, although current green wedge designations will be reviewed as part of the RLDP process. To the north of the settlement is the M48 and south of the settlement is the railway line with much of the land constrained by flood plain.

### **Portskewett**

A 2.32 Portskewett, a smaller cluster settlement, is located to the east of Caldicot, linked to that settlement by the Severnbridge Industrial Estate. Similar to the other settlements within the Severnside region, it is bound by the railway line and constrained by flood

plain land to the south. Its close proximity to Caldicot means that a range of facilities and services are easily accessible, and it also acts as a larger hub for the smaller settlement of Sudbrook to the south, which it has close ties with. Portskewett has recently had growth directed to the north west of the settlement under an allocated site in the Adopted LDP.

### Sudbrook

A 2.33 Originally established for workers constructing the Severn Railway Tunnel, Sudbrook is immediately adjacent to the Severn Estuary SSSI, SAC, SPA and Ramsar site. Sudbrook is well connected to the larger settlement of Portskewett. Sudbrook itself has grown in recent years with planning permission granted on two former employment brownfield sites, The Old Ship Yard, north east of the settlement; and at The Paper Mill, south west of the Settlement, where redevelopment is progressing well.

### Crick

A 2.34 Crick, the smallest settlement (by population and size) within the Severnside cluster, is located approximately 1 mile north east of Caldicot and 1 mile east of Caerwent. Crick itself is bisected by the A48 road, which runs from Chepstow in the south east of the County to Newport and beyond. The M48, which 'fly's-over' the A48 acts as a physical barrier to the west of Crick.

### Caerwent

A 2.35 The settlement of Caerwent sits astride the A48, north of Caldicot and west of Crick. Caerwent has important Roman history with the remains of the town of Caerwent acknowledged to be of European significance and to constitute one of the most important archaeological sites in Wales. The historic town of Caerwent is therefore designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and protected against development. Most recent development within the settlement, at Merton Green, has taken place to the north of the A48. There is a large expanse of Ministry of Defence (MOD) land located to the north of Caerwent, which also extends to the area north above the neighbouring settlement of Crick. The settlement's relationship with the green belt designated in Future Wales is also a consideration.

A 2.36 Options for the potential future strategic direction of growth of Severnside are being considered. Bearing in mind the constraints of the smaller cluster settlements and the recent growth directed to Magor and Undy, focus of the growth of Severnside is likely to be directed towards Caldicot, which is the most sustainable settlement within the Severnside region. The directions of potential strategic growth include:-

- **J - Land north east of Caldicot.** Development here would extend the settlement of Caldicot to the north east, towards the settlement of Crick and extend development north of the Caldicot Castle Country Park, a Conservation Area and an area currently designated as an Area of Amenity Importance under the Adopted LDP. Part of the growth area also includes a commercial equestrian centre.

Landscape sensitivity to residential development is high/medium<sup>104</sup>. In terms of agricultural land, the area is classified as predictive grade 1 BMV land, which is the highest predictive grade of agricultural land<sup>105</sup>. In terms of distance from Caldicot town centre, it is just under a mile (from a central point of the growth area) and approximately 14 minutes walking distance. Another consideration is that part of this area is within in the limestone minerals safeguarding area.

| Candidate Reference No. | Site | Site Name                       | Site Area (Ha) |
|-------------------------|------|---------------------------------|----------------|
| CS0065                  |      | Land at Bradbury Farm           | 29.1ha         |
| CS0087                  |      | The Showground                  | 36.06ha        |
| CS0127                  |      | Land to the east of Church Road | 10.09ha        |

- **K - Land north west of Caldicot.** Development here would extend the settlement of Caldicot to the north west, which would extend to the other side of the M48 motorway. Agricultural land here is also predictive grade 1 BMV land and part of the land to be developed is a former golf course. Other considerations include its location in the limestone minerals safeguarding area (the now dis-used Caerwent Quarry is within close proximity). The area has been categorised as being of high-medium landscape sensitivity within the Landscape Sensitivity Update<sup>106</sup> and its distance to the town centre from a central point of this growth area is approximately 1.3 miles, a walking distance of approximately 19 minutes.

| Candidate Reference No. | Site | Site Name    | Site Area (Ha) |
|-------------------------|------|--------------|----------------|
| CS0129                  |      | Dewstow Road | 37ha           |

- **L - Land west of Caldicot/east of Rogiet.** The land between the settlements of Caldicot and Rogiet is level agricultural land, which is identified as predictive grade 1 BMV land. The land is also currently designated as 'Green Wedge' and substantial development could affect the degree of physical and visual separation between these two settlements, as well as the visual impact upon the surrounding landscape. The Green Wedge designations will be reviewed as part of the evidence base for the Deposit Plan. The land is designated medium landscape sensitivity in the Landscape Sensitivity Update<sup>107</sup>. The walking distance to facilities

<sup>104</sup> Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via:

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

<sup>105</sup> Agricultural land around Caldicot is currently identified as Grade 1 BMV on the predictive map, however, these grades are likely to change following detailed surveys.

<sup>106</sup> Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via:

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

<sup>107</sup> Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via:

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

and services, the nearest being Caldicot town centre, is just under a mile, a walking distance of approximately 14 minutes. There are also some facilities and services available in Rogiet. Severn Tunnel Junction enhancements are also recommended as part of the South Wales Transport Commission Final Recommendation Plan (November 2020). Part of the growth area towards the south is constrained by a C1 flood plain. The site, however, is outside the limestone and minerals safeguarding area.

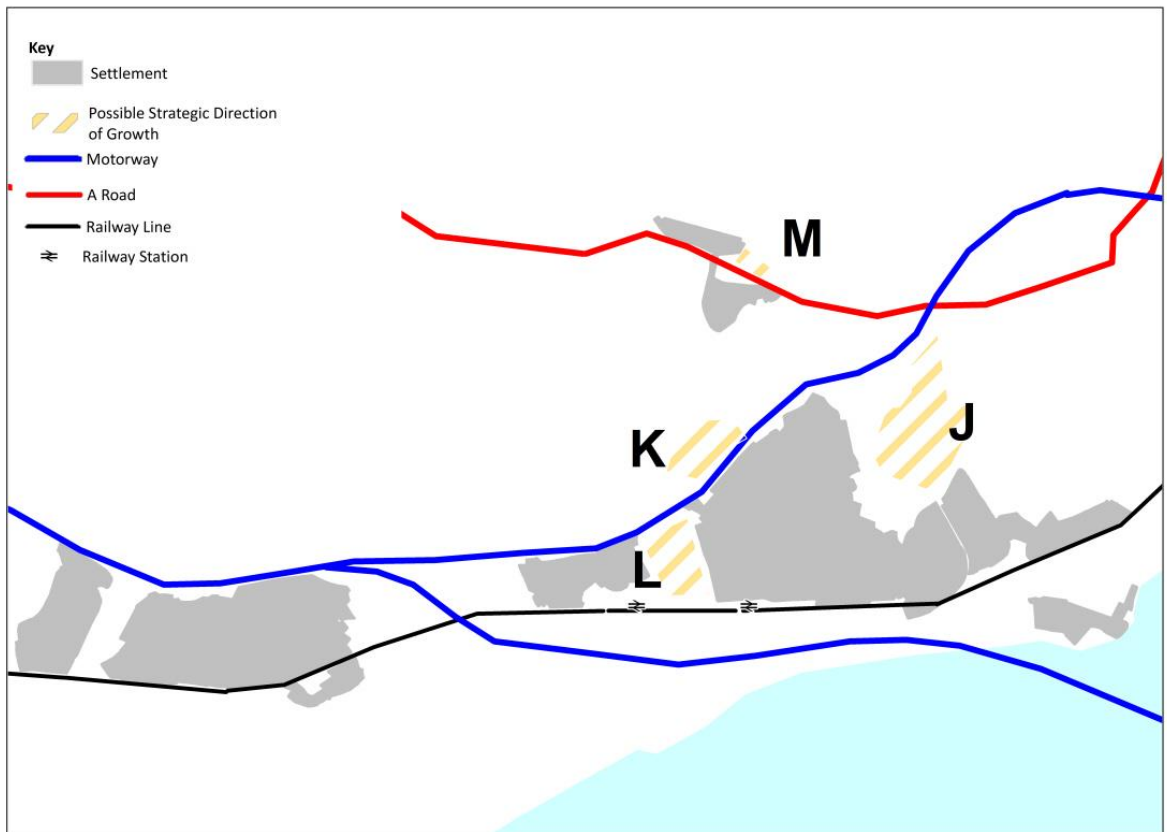
| Candidate Reference No. | Site | Site Name                                       | Site Area (Ha) |
|-------------------------|------|---|----------------|
| CS0150                  |      | Land East of Rogiet                             | 35ha           |
| CS0163                  |      | Land to the West of Caldicot and East of Rogiet | 34.6ha         |

- M - Land east of Caerwent.** Development here would extend the settlement of Caerwent to the east, north of the A48. The land is identified as predictive grade 1 BMV agricultural land and partly within the limestone and minerals safeguarding area. The distance to the facilities and services of Caldicot town centre is approximately 2.2 miles and an approximate 33 minute walk, although it is acknowledged there are some limited facilities, such as a Post Office in the nearest settlement of Caerwent. The land is identified as being of medium/low sensitivity to residential development in the Landscape Sensitivity Update<sup>108</sup>. The site's relationship with the green belt designated under Policy 34 of Future Wales is also a consideration.

| Candidate Reference No. | Site | Site Name  | Site Area (Ha) |
|-------------------------|------|------------|----------------|
| CS0166                  |      | Caerwent A | 8.8ha          |

<sup>108</sup> Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

## Sevenside Strategic Growth Options





**APPENDIX 2**

# **Monmouthshire Replacement Local Development Plan**

**PREFERRED STRATEGY:  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**June 2021**



**monmouthshire**  
**sir fynydd**



## Executive Summary

### Replacement Local Development Plan

- i. The Council is preparing a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) for Monmouthshire (excluding the part of the County that is within the Brecon Beacons National Park). The RLDP will identify where and how much new development will take place during the 'Plan period' (2018-2033). It will allocate land for development, identify areas to be protected, and contain policies to guide decisions on applications for planning permission. We aim to adopt the RLDP in autumn/winter 2023.
- ii. The Council has now reached the Preferred Strategy stage of the development plan process. This is the first of the statutory consultation stages in the RLDP process. However, a number of earlier pre-deposit plan preparation stages have been undertaken which have informed the Preferred Strategy. The first stage involved the preparation of an Issues, Vision & Objectives Paper. This was first published in January 2019 and amended in June 2019 to reflect the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in May 2019. A review of the Issues, Vision and Objectives was also undertaken in June 2020 in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and incorporated into the Review of RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence Base in light of Covid-19 during September 2020. This concluded that the Plan's Issues, Vision and Objectives remain relevant to Monmouthshire with a number of issues and objectives now considered to have increased emphasis and importance consistent with the priorities identified in the Welsh Government Building Better Places Covid-19 recovery document published in July 2020. The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper has been updated to reflect the vision for the Preferred Strategy and issues that have emerged since the original version.
- iii. The Plan had progressed to the Preferred Strategy stage of the RLDP process in March 2020. Non-statutory consultation on the Growth and Spatial Options took place between July and August 2019 and statutory consultation on the RLDP Preferred Strategy and the Second Call for Candidate Sites commenced during March 2020. Progress on the RLDP was subsequently paused in March 2020 because the Covid-19 pandemic meant the Preferred Strategy public engagement events could not continue in the format prescribed in the Delivery Agreement. Following advice from the Minister for Housing and Local Government<sup>1</sup>, the decision was subsequently made to cease the Preferred Strategy consultation and second call for candidate sites on 20th July 2020. This enabled the Council to undertake a review of the RLDP issues, vision, objectives and evidence base<sup>2</sup> in terms of sensitivity to the consequences the Coronavirus pandemic before progressing with Plan preparation. This review was agreed by Council in October 2020.
- iv. In August 2020 the Welsh Government published a correction to the 2018-based population and household projections, which comprise important new evidence that require consideration and form the starting point of the Plan's evidence base. This

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<sup>1</sup> Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid19, 7th July 2020

<sup>2</sup> Monmouthshire RLDP Review of Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence Base in Light of Covid-19 (September 2020)

resulted in the need to revisit the Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy stages of the RLDP process. The Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020) was prepared and subject to non-statutory consultation for a 4-week period in January and February 2021. The outcome of which has informed and helped shape the Preferred Strategy (June 2021).

### What is the Preferred Strategy?

- v. The Preferred Strategy is the first statutory stage in the RLDP preparation process. It provides the strategic direction for the development and use of land over the period 2018-2033. The overall purpose of the Preferred Strategy is to:
- Identify key issues, challenges and opportunities for the County.
  - Develop a vision and set of objectives for the RLDP that respond to the key issues, challenges and opportunities.
  - Set out the Preferred Strategy including the scale of future growth in population, housing and jobs and establish the spatial distribution of growth.
  - Set out strategic policies that will deliver/implement the strategy.

### Preferred Strategy – Sustainable & Resilient Communities Strategy

- vi. The Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy promotes and supports a level of housing and employment growth that will be distributed proportionately<sup>3</sup> across Monmouthshire up to 2033. The Strategy assists in addressing the demographic and affordability challenges facing the County and ultimately seeks to deliver the Council's core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The Strategy conforms with Policy 1 of Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (hereafter referred to as Future Wales 2040) which is the highest tier statutory development plan (Welsh Government, February 2021) and supports sustainable growth in all parts of Wales that seeks to address local aspirations and need. The Strategy also meets a key 'Test of Soundness' of ensuring that the Plan's vision and strategy are positive and sufficiently aspirational. A Self-Assessment of the Preferred Strategy against the Tests of Soundness is published alongside this document, which includes an assessment of the Strategy's general conformity with Future Wales 2040. This demonstrates that the Preferred Strategy and the stages undertaken and processes followed to reach this stage are 'sound' and that the Strategy assists in the delivery of the Future Wales policies and is in general conformity with its overarching strategy.
- vii. A summary of the key points of the Strategy is set out in Box 1.

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<sup>3</sup> Proportionately' is deemed to mean that the level of growth directed toward a settlement will be proportionate to its population size. To calculate the proportion of development to be directed toward a settlement only the population of those settlements included in the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal has been used to contribute to the total population figure for the County. This takes into account the large areas of Monmouthshire which are rural and as such these areas would not be expected to have any significant development

### **Box 1: Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy**

In order to deliver the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy the RLDP will:

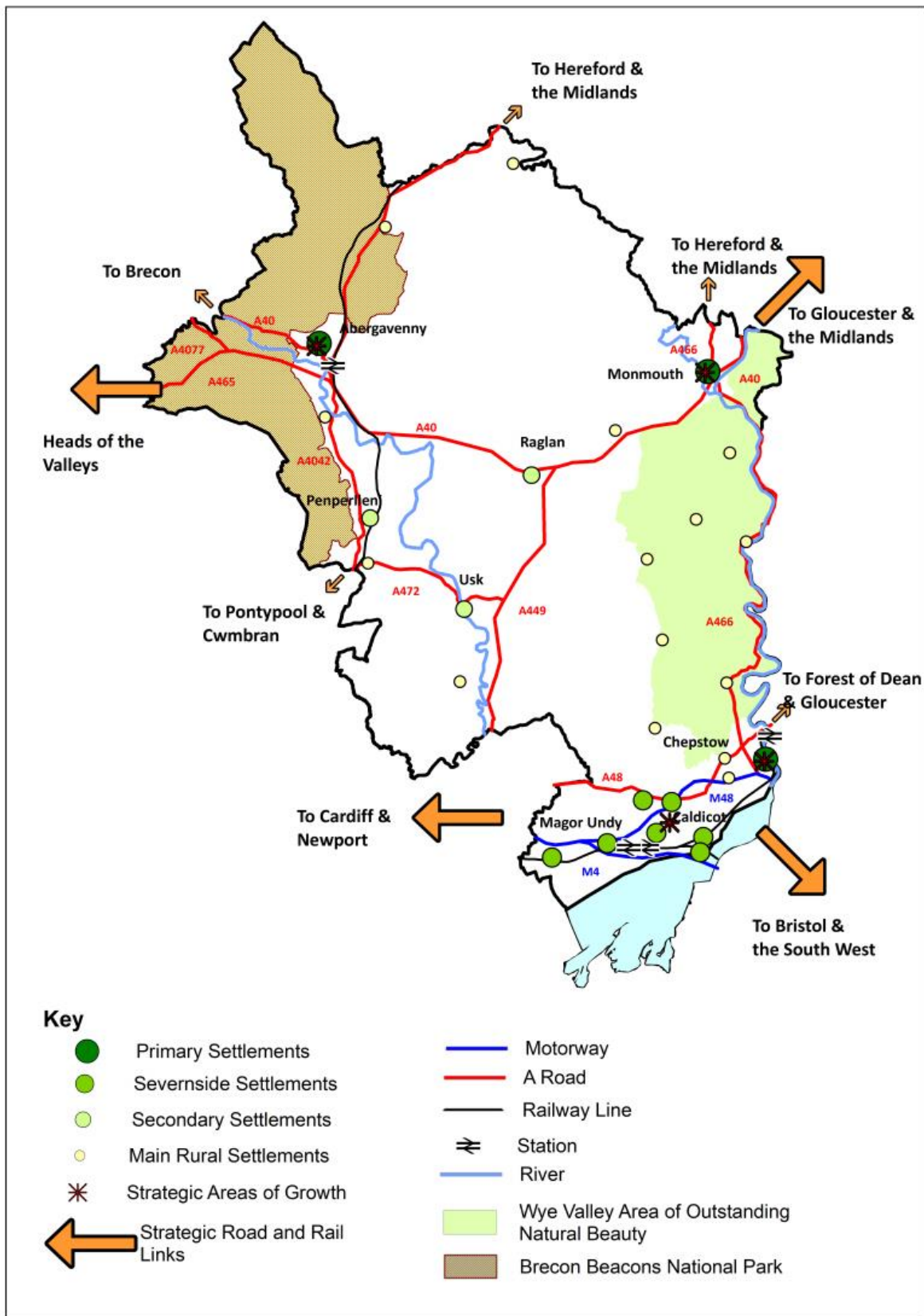
- Make provision for a total of **8,366 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 7,605 homes** (this provision is based indicatively on a 10% flexibility allowance which will be given further consideration and refined at Deposit Stage). This level of housing growth will enable the provision of market and affordable housing in both urban and rural areas and, importantly, provides the opportunity to address the unbalanced demography, improve labour force retention by retaining/attracting younger adult population age groups and assists in addressing the County's housing affordability challenge. Taking account of the existing housing land supply and projected windfall delivery, the RLDP will need to **allocate sufficient land to accommodate 3,658 homes**.
- Provide the **planning policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 additional jobs**. This level of job growth aligns with the projected population and housing growth and takes account of adjustments to household membership rates for key younger age groups and a reduced level of commuting by retaining more of the resident workforce and growing our working age demographic. There has been a fundamental shift in working practices since the start of Covid-19 pandemic with an increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that this trend will continue over the longer term and in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home is something that we wish to encourage and enable. This provides residents with the opportunity to both live and work in the County in this new way, providing a flexible approach to achieving this level of job growth, whilst also achieving the Welsh Government and Council's aim of reducing the need for commuting. This approach will help to reduce congestion, emissions and pollution, improve the work-life balance for employees and employers, support local businesses/services and enable the creation of sustainable vibrant communities and '20 minute neighbourhoods'<sup>4</sup>.
- Address economic growth and resilience within the County through the **provision of a sufficient range and choice of employment land**. To enable this a minimum of 43ha of employment land will be allocated to support the provision of industrial and business development (classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987), the location of which will be determined in the Deposit Plan. Other key employment sectors including retail, tourism and agriculture will also be an integral part of the County's economy and supported through the policy framework in the Deposit Plan. This approach reflects the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic Ambition Statement and Investment Prospectus.

<sup>4</sup> 20 Minute Neighbourhoods are strong, well connected neighbourhoods where people live within a 20 minute walking distance of key everyday services. The RLDP supports a placemaking approach to future development and the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods.

- Distribute growth proportionately across the County's most sustainable settlements. Whilst housing and employment growth will be focused on the higher tiers of the settlement hierarchy, appropriate growth will also be channelled to the County's most sustainable rural settlements to facilitate the creation of sustainable and resilient communities throughout Monmouthshire.

Collectively these measures will help us to fulfil our core objectives and create sustainable and resilient communities where an enhanced economically active aged population can both live and work in the County through supporting/enabling remote and home working and local jobs in a range of sectors. Fundamentally, the Strategy will address the Council's key climate change objectives and reflect national planning policy placemaking principles whereby commuting/the need to travel is reduced and residents can access and support services/businesses locally, thereby enabling sustainable and vibrant communities.

## Preferred Strategy Key Diagram



## Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy

- viii. The Preferred Growth Strategy makes provision for a total of 8,366 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 7,605 homes over the Plan period 2018-2033 (this provision is based indicatively on a 10% flexibility allowance which will be given further consideration and refined at Deposit Stage). This results in a growth of the County's population of 12,443 (13.2%) and households of 7,255 (18.1%) over the Plan period.
- ix. The Growth Strategy is based on a population-led scenario with added policy assumptions to address the County's key demographic and affordability issues. The policy assumptions adjust in-migration rates to reflect local trends over a five-year period (2015-2020) to take account the removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls, increase the household formation rates for three key younger age groups and reduce commuting ratio assumptions to reflect the Council's aim of addressing the unbalanced demographic in the County by retaining younger age groups and reducing out-commuting. The latter aligns with Welsh Government's long-term ambition of 30% of Welsh workers working from home or near home and the Welsh Government's transport policy hierarchy which seeks to reduce the need to travel in the first instance, followed by active travel, then public transport, then the private car. The strategy also incorporates an affordable housing policy-led element which aims to meet 10% of the Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) need arising from this option on housing sites which deliver 50% affordable housing. Further detail on this scenario is set out in the Edge Analytics Report - Updating the RLDP Demographic Evidence Report, November 2020 - and the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021).

### Delivering the Residential Growth

- x. The overall housing provision figure of 8,366 homes (including an indicative 10% flexibility allowance) will be delivered through a number of housing supply streams. These include existing commitments that have planning permission, Adopted LDP Rollover sites, and an allowance for windfall and infill sites such as barn conversions and development sites that emerge throughout the life of the Plan. Combined these account for 4,708 homes. The remaining 3,658 homes will be delivered on new allocations to be identified in the Deposit RLDP.

### Economic Growth

- xi. The RLDP is underpinned by a level of growth that seeks to address the issues currently impacting on economic growth such as a shrinking working age population and high levels of out-commuting. The Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy provides the policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 additional jobs over the Plan period (481 jobs per annum). It should be noted that not all of these jobs will be in planning B-class uses<sup>5</sup> and will be delivered through a range of sectors such as tourism, leisure and retail. This will be achieved by enabling economic growth through supporting the delivery of the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic

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<sup>5</sup> B-class uses refer to industries such as manufacturing, offices and warehousing.



Growth and Ambition Statement, maximising opportunities from CCR City Deal, targeting growth in key economic sectors and providing appropriate employment land in the right locations.

- xii. Whilst the Strategy projects a significant growth in jobs over the Plan period, it is becoming widely accepted that the fundamental shift in working practices experienced as a legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic, with a significant increase in people working from home/remotely, has made it less important where some jobs are located as employees no longer need to commute for work in many cases. This has provided the opportunity for many people to live and work in the same location via a new remote working approach
- xiii. The Preferred Strategy aims to build on this shift and the benefits that have occurred during the Covid-19 pandemic, as recognised in Welsh Government’s Building Better Places response to Covid-19. This acknowledges that even when all restrictions are lifted, the impacts on people working from home are likely to have longer term impacts on where and how we work. In this respect, these changes have opened up new opportunities for jobs to be secured through the increased propensity to work from home/remotely, including via community-based remote working hubs. It is expected that the trend for increased home and remote working will continue over the longer term in accordance with Welsh Government’s ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home. While it will not be possible for all employment sectors to work from home/work remotely, policy support requiring broadband connectivity and supporting the provision of local remote/agile community-based working hubs will enable those who can and choose to do so.

### **Sustainable and Resilient Communities Spatial Strategy**

- xiv. The Preferred Spatial Strategy seeks to distribute development across the County in a proportionate manner that reflects and address the aims of the overarching Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy. The level of residential growth will be proportionate to a settlement’s size and amenities and will reflect affordable housing need as identified in the LHMA in both urban and rural areas. The Spatial Strategy seeks to focus new development on the primary settlements of Abergavenny (including Llanfoist), Monmouth (including Wyesham) and Chepstow and the Severnside area, together with a proportionate amount of growth to the lower tier settlements to support sustainable rural communities. The exact distribution of development will follow in the Deposit RLDP following the second call for candidate sites and subsequent site assessments.
- xv. The spatial framework for distributing growth in the County has regard to the overarching principles of Future Wales 2040 by guiding growth towards building sustainable places that support placemaking principles but applied within a Monmouthshire setting to reflect the predominantly rural context. In this respect, the

dominant role of the County towns of Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth and the Severnside Area focused on the town of Caldicot, provide the focus of urban growth within a Monmouthshire context. This will be supported by an appropriate level of growth in the smaller settlements and a number of rural settlements to facilitate the creation of sustainable and vibrant rural communities consistent with the aims of Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities of Future Wales 2040 (February 2021).

- xvi. The Strategy also has regard to Policy 34 of Future Wales 2040 which requires the South East Wales Strategic Development Plan to identify a Green Belt to the north of Cardiff, Newport and the eastern part of the region to manage urban form and growth.

### **Economic Growth – Land Requirement & Spatial Distribution**

- xvii. The Council has commissioned the preparation of an Employment Land Review (ELR). This involves undertaking a review of employment forecasts and land requirements for the Plan period 2018 – 2033. The study recommends that a forecast scenario based on past employment land take-up rates is adopted for the RLDP. This provides a minimum requirement of 43ha of land for traditional B use class industries such as manufacturing and warehousing, including a five-year buffer to allow for choice and uncertainty in forecasting.
- xviii. Employment growth will be directed to sustainable locations across the County, which will assist in reducing the need to travel and levels of out-commuting and promoting self-contained communities which are also key objectives of the RLDP. As above, it is recognised in light of Covid-19 there has been a fundamental shift in working patterns with an increase in home and remote working, which is likely to continue over the longer term, and will further reduce commuting levels and support/enable self-contained communities. The spatial distribution of employment allocations will be set out in the Deposit RLDP and will be consistent with the spatial strategy and commensurate to the level of housing growth proposed for an area.
- xix. Details of employment land allocations and existing protected sites will be provided in the Deposit RLDP, along with criteria setting out the exceptional circumstances in which the loss of existing industrial and business sites or premises will be considered acceptable. The Plan will also include policies that allow for the assessment of non-B use class industries such as leisure, retail and tourism to facilitate job growth in these key economic sectors.

## Strategic Policies

- xx. The main document also contains several Strategic Policies which form the framework for implementing and delivering the Preferred Strategy of the RLDP. A list of policies contained within the Preferred Strategy is set out below:

| Preferred Strategy - Strategic Policies  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth</li> <li>▪ S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy</li> <li>▪ S3 – Sustainable Placemaking &amp; High Quality Design</li> <li>▪ S4 – Climate Change</li> <li>▪ S5 – Infrastructure Provision</li> <li>▪ S6 – Delivery of Homes</li> <li>▪ S7 – Affordable Homes</li> <li>▪ S8 – Strategic Development Sites</li> <li>▪ S9 – Gypsy and Travellers</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ S10 – Sustainable Transport</li> <li>▪ S11 – Retail &amp; Commercial Centres Hierarchy</li> <li>▪ S12 – Community and Recreation Facilities</li> <li>▪ S13 – Employment Sites Provision</li> <li>▪ S14 – Rural Enterprise</li> <li>▪ S15 – Visitor Economy</li> <li>▪ S16 – Sustainable Waste Management</li> <li>▪ S17 – Minerals</li> <li>▪ S18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation</li> </ul> |

## Supporting Documents

- xxi. The RLDP is accompanied by an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA), which considers the environmental, equalities, health and well-being impacts of the Plan, and a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The ISA and HRA are working documents, updated as the RLDP progresses. The RLDP will also be accompanied by an Infrastructure Plan, setting out what infrastructure is needed to support the development of the allocated sites, and an updated Local Transport Plan and Economic Strategy. Together, these Plans will seek to deliver on the Council's economic ambition and its core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The Deposit Plan will also designate land for protection and identify search areas for renewable energy and will be accompanied by a Green Wedge Review and Renewable Energy Assessment. There are also a range of technical Background Papers to provide additional detail on the evidence and methodologies used in developing the Preferred Strategy.

## Consultation Arrangements

- xxii. Community and stakeholder involvement is invited during the six-week statutory engagement and consultation on the Preferred Strategy between **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July and Monday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021**, whereby comments will be invited on the consultation questions set out in the Preferred Strategy. Our consultation and engagement arrangements have been revised in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and reflect the Coronavirus Regulations (2020) and recent Ministerial advice<sup>6</sup>. We have reviewed the use of digital involvement options to provide communities with information and the

<sup>6</sup> Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid19, 7th July 2020

ability to engage with the RLDP in a virtual manner. Further details are provided in the Revised Delivery Agreement (October 2020). Engagement/consultation will take place via:

- Notifying all parties on the RLDP database of the consultation;
- Planning Policy Officer attendance at Area Cluster meetings during July and August 2021;
- A Members' Workshop in June 2021 (hosted by the Economy & Development Select Committee);
- Scrutiny by Economy & Development Select Committee in July 2021;
- Internal discussions within the Council through an officer workshop, Department Management Team and Senior Leadership Team;
- Two Webinar Sessions during July 2021
- Several RLDP Preferred Strategy Drop-in Sessions during July-August 2021. Should there be a further lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic, these drop-in sessions will be replaced by additional virtual events. Full details of venues and dates are available on the Council's Current Consultations page of the website.
- We will seek to engage with seldom heard groups in particular young people, via the Youth Council and going into secondary schools, and Gypsy and Travellers via the GTAA work and reiterating the opportunity to promote sites during the Second Call for Candidate Sites.

xxiii. The closing date for the submission of comments is midnight on **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021**. For details of how to respond to this consultation please see the Planning Policy Current Consultations page on the Council's website. Feedback from the consultation/engagement on the Preferred Strategy will be considered and set out in the Consultation Report on the Preferred Strategy. This consultation report and the Preferred Strategy with any necessary amendments will be reported to Council in approximately November 2021 to seek approval of the Preferred Strategy. The Deposit Plan will then be prepared and considered by Council prior to a statutory six-week consultation and engagement period in Summer 2022.

# Monmouthshire

Replacement Local Development Plan

**Preferred Strategy**  
**Easy Read Summary**

JUNE 2021



monmouthshire  
sir fynwy

# What is the RLDP?

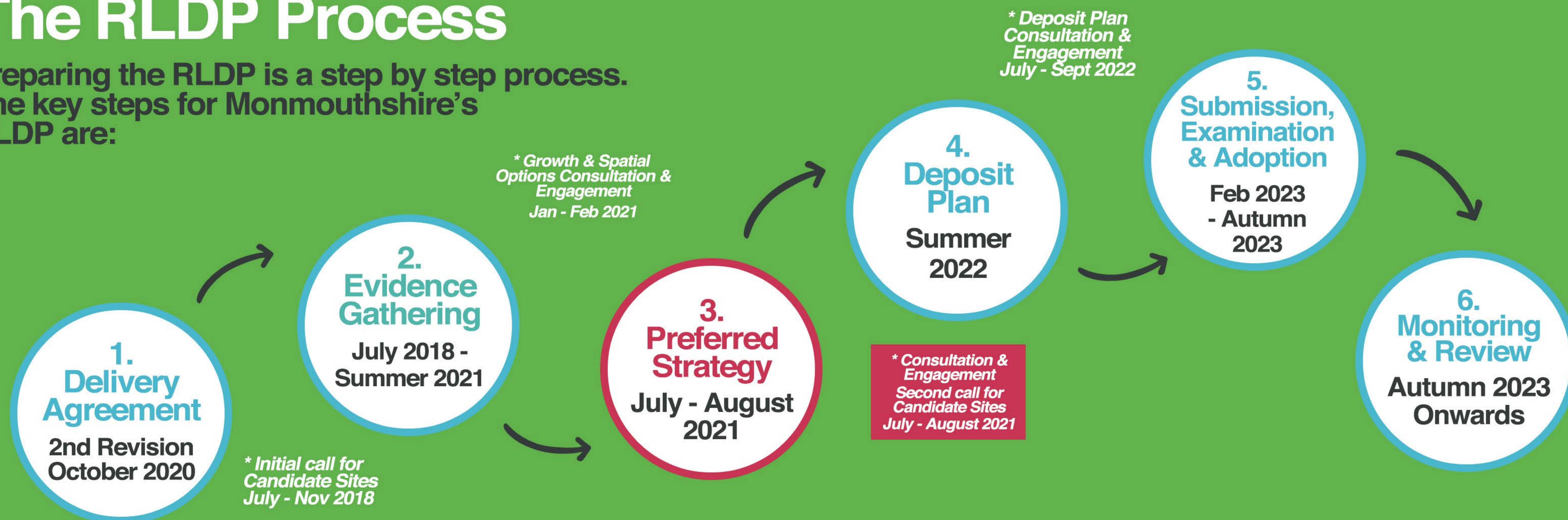
Monmouthshire County Council is preparing a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) for the period from 2018 to 2033. The RLDP will allocate land for development, designate areas for protection and contain policies to provide the basis for decisions on planning applications. It will cover the whole of the County except for the part within the Brecon Beacons National Park.

The RLDP process commenced in 2018, however the plan's timetable has been delayed primarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic and publication of updated key evidence. As a result we have revisited the Growth & Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy Stages of the Plan's process.



## The RLDP Process

Preparing the RLDP is a step by step process. The key steps for Monmouthshire's RLDP are:



# Our Key Issues, Challenges & Opportunities

We are currently at the Preferred Strategy stage, which is the first formal publication in the preparation of the RLDP and its overall aim is to:

- Identify key issues, challenges and opportunities for the County
- Develop a vision and set of objectives for the RLDP that respond to the key issues, challenges and opportunities
- Set out the level of growth (housing and employment) and broad spatial distribution of this growth  
(it does not specify sites – these will be included within the Deposit Plan)
- Set out the strategic policies that will deliver / implement the strategy



*These issues, challenges and opportunities have been re-assessed and endorsed by Council in October 2020 that they still remain relevant in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.*

## Our vision for Monmouthshire

# By 2033 Monmouthshire will be a place where:

People are living in sustainable, resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations and are more inclusive, cohesive, prosperous, vibrant and balanced demographically. Both urban and rural communities are well-connected with better access to local services and facilities, open space and employment opportunities.

Communities and businesses are part of an economically thriving and well-connected County.

The best of the County's built heritage, countryside, landscape and environmental assets have been protected and enhanced to retain its distinctive character.

People enjoy healthier, more sustainable lifestyles with improved access to public transport and active travel opportunities and have a minimised impact on the global environment.

The spatial implications of achieving this Vision will be that by 2033:

Monmouthshire will have grown sustainably, with a proportionate distribution of new homes and jobs across the most sustainable settlements, which are supported by amenities and infrastructure with the delivery of affordable housing to meet local needs.

Development will have contributed to facilitating sustainable lifestyles by delivering high quality places that promote low carbon developments with an appropriate mix of uses and that are well-connected both digitally and physically to the wider area in terms of character, environment and movement by public transport, walking and cycling.

*\* The Vision has been reviewed in light of the COVID-19 Pandemic and is considered to remain relevant and appropriate.*



# The RLDP Preferred Strategy



## How much growth?

By 2033 the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy aims to:

### Grow Monmouthshire between **7,605 - 8,366 homes**

As the Plan period has already begun, the existing supply of housing land contributes towards the Plan's housing target. We will therefore be required to allocate new areas of growth for approximately **3,658 new homes**. \* This level of housing will provide opportunities to deliver a wider choice and housing mix of market homes suitable for the younger working age population groups (smaller 2/3 bedroom homes)



### Provide approximately **2,450 affordable homes**

**Approximately 1,489** will be sought on a on new allocations.

\* The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the need for affordable homes and revealed the extent of hidden homelessness in the County. It has also emphasised the need to ensure the provision of affordable dwellings to address the County's affordability issues.

### Provide the planning policy framework to enable the provision of additional **7,215 jobs**

By allocating sufficient employment land in the right places in the County to meet the needs of new and existing businesses. The Plan will also include policies to facilitate growth in retail, leisure and tourism sectors.

\* There has been a fundamental shift in working practices since the start of Covid-19 pandemic with an increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that this trend will continue over the longer term and in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home is something that we wish to encourage and enable. This provides residents with the opportunity to both live and work in the County in this new way, providing a flexible approach to achieving this level of job growth, whilst also achieving the Welsh Government and Council's aim of reducing the need for commuting.

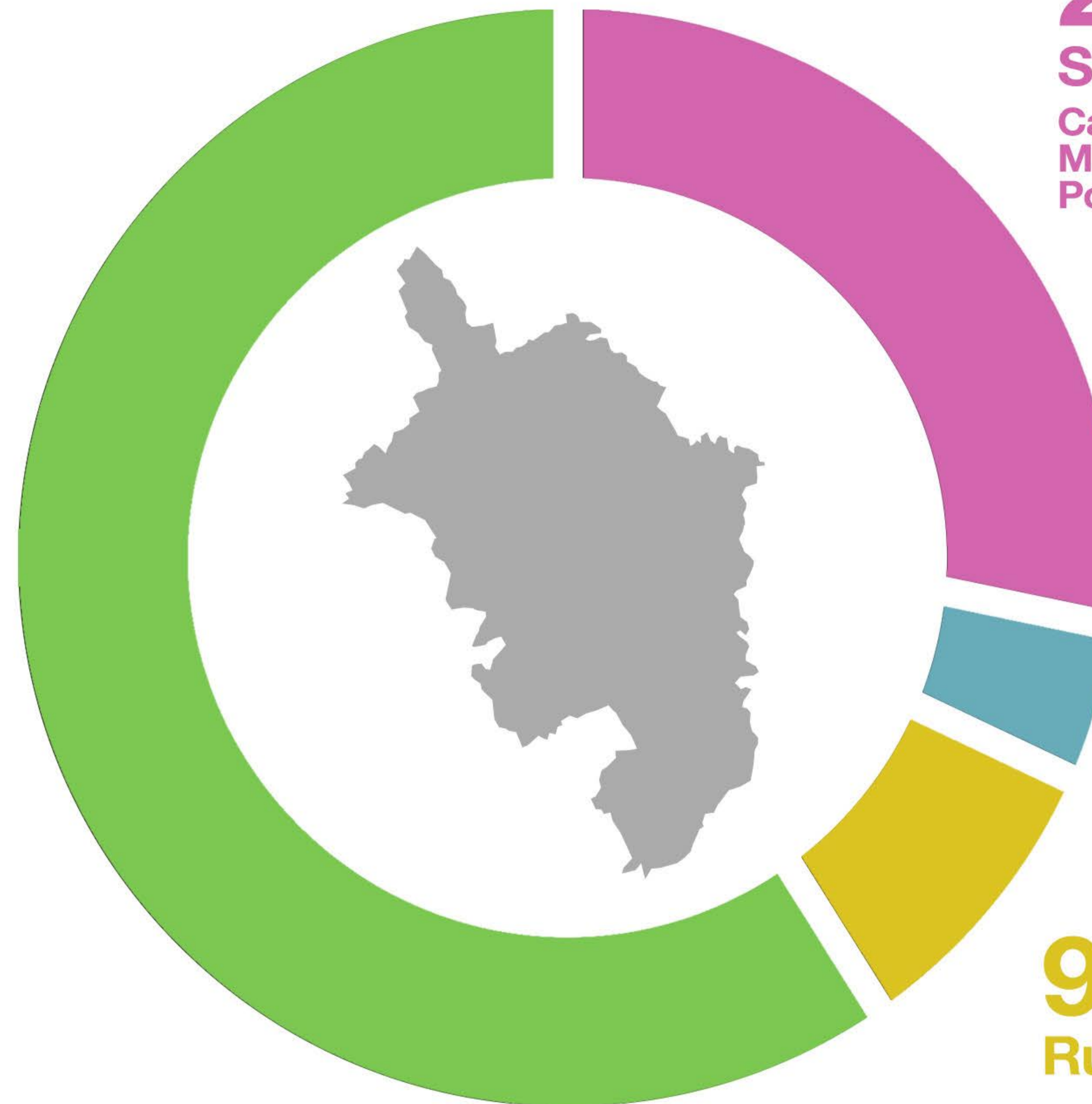


# Where will the growth go?

The Preferred Strategy also looks at where the level of growth that we have chosen should be distributed across the County. In making this decision we considered factors such as:

- Reducing the number and distance of journeys by car that we make
- The location of services and facilities
- Impacts on the environment
- Access to sustainable transport links
- Where employment land is located

**58%**  
**Primary Settlements**  
 Abergavenny (inc. Llanfoist),  
 Chepstow & Monmouth (inc. Wyesham)



**28%**  
**Severnside**  
 Caldicot, Caerwent, Crick,  
 Magor, Undy, Rogiet,  
 Portskewett & Sudbrook

**5%**  
**Secondary Settlements**  
 Penperlleni, Raglan & Usk

**9%**  
**Rural Settlements**



## Homes Delivered:

**Primary Settlements: 4,832 homes, of these 2,365 will be new allocations**

**Severnside: 2,323 homes, of these 854 will be new allocations**

**Secondary Settlements: 449 new homes, of these 249 will be new allocations**

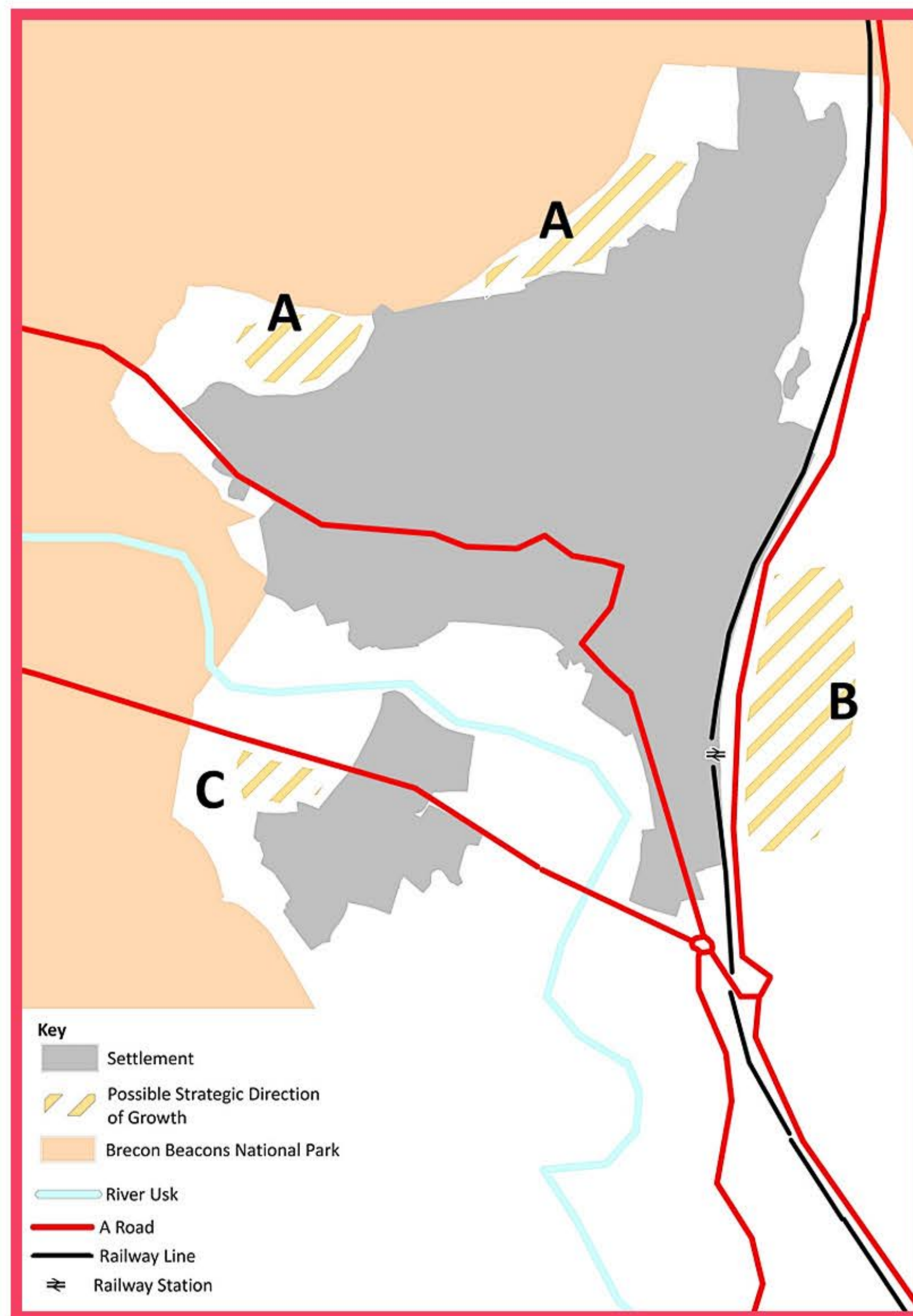
**Rural Settlements: 762 new homes, of these 190 will be new allocations**

\* This is indicative and the exact distribution of growth will be determined at the next key stage of the process - the Deposit Plan. The housing figures include a 10% flexibility allowance as per Welsh Government Guidance.

# Potential Strategic Growth Areas

We have identified possible strategic growth areas for each of the Primary Settlements and Severnside. At the present time only strategic sites and sustainable urban extensions of around 8ha in size and above have been considered. \* **Not all sites indicated within each of the possible strategic growth areas in the below diagrams will be selected**. The final selection of sites will be identified within the Deposit Plan and will be dependent on further detailed assessment work.

**Abergavenny (inc. Llanfoist)**



**A** - Land North of Abergavenny

**B** - Land to the East of the A465

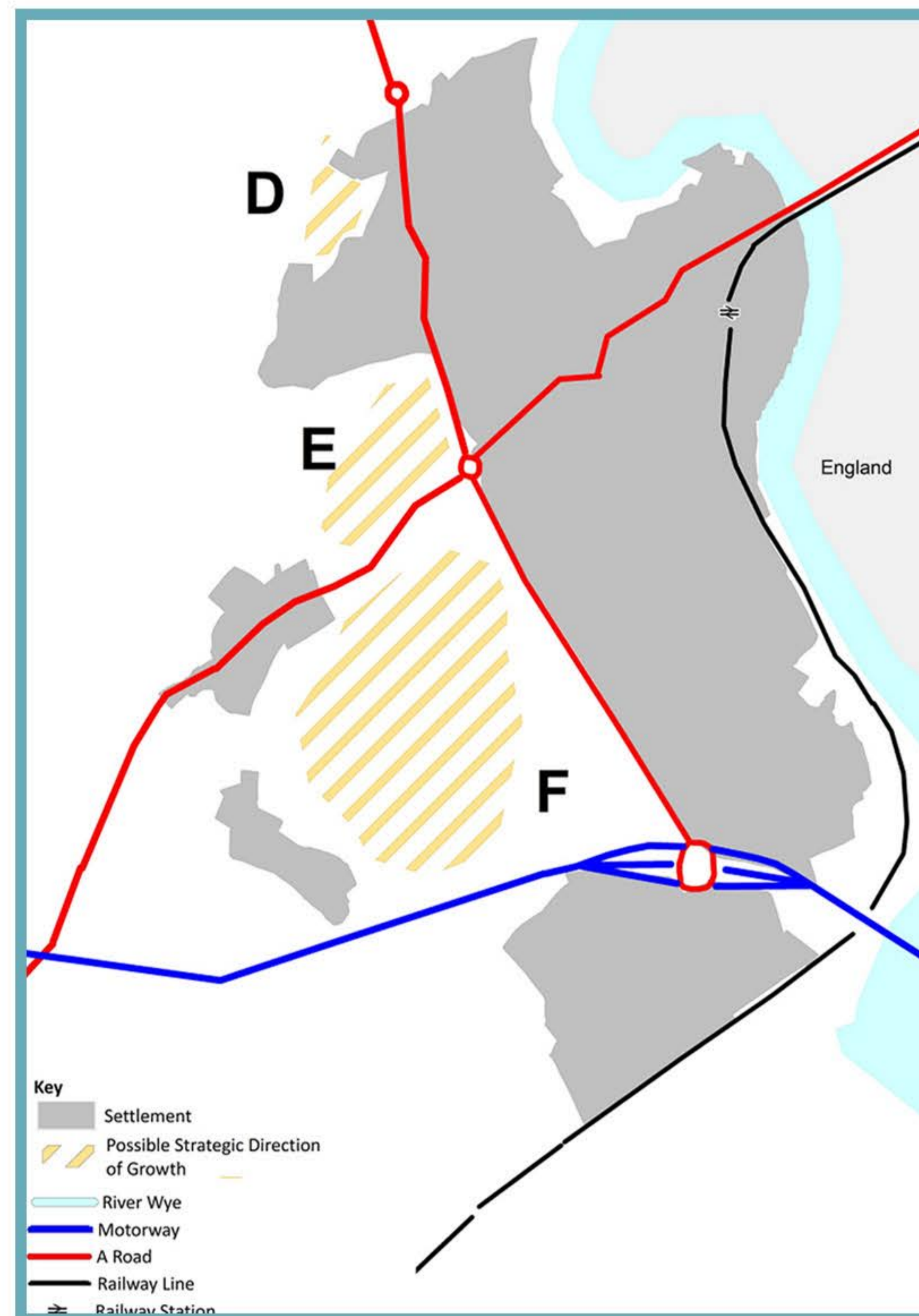
**C** - Land between the B4246 and Heads of the Valleys road

**D** - Land North of the Bayfield Estate

**E** - Land between the Bayfield Estate and the A48

**F** - Land between the A48 and M48

**Chepstow**



**G** - Land West of Monmouth

**H** - Land in Central Monmouth

**I** - Land North East of Monmouth

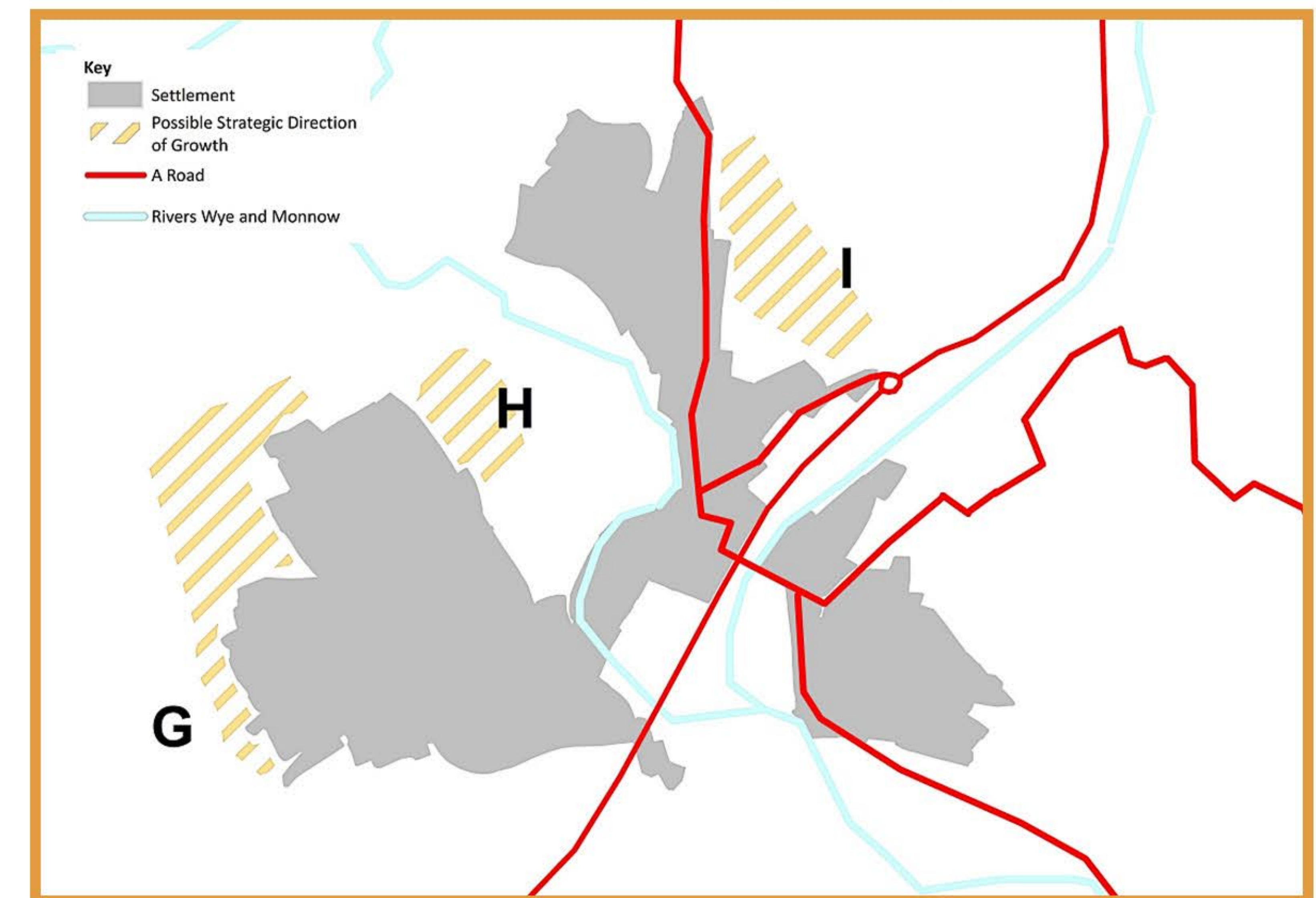
**J** - Land North East of Caldicot

**K** - Land North West of Caldicot

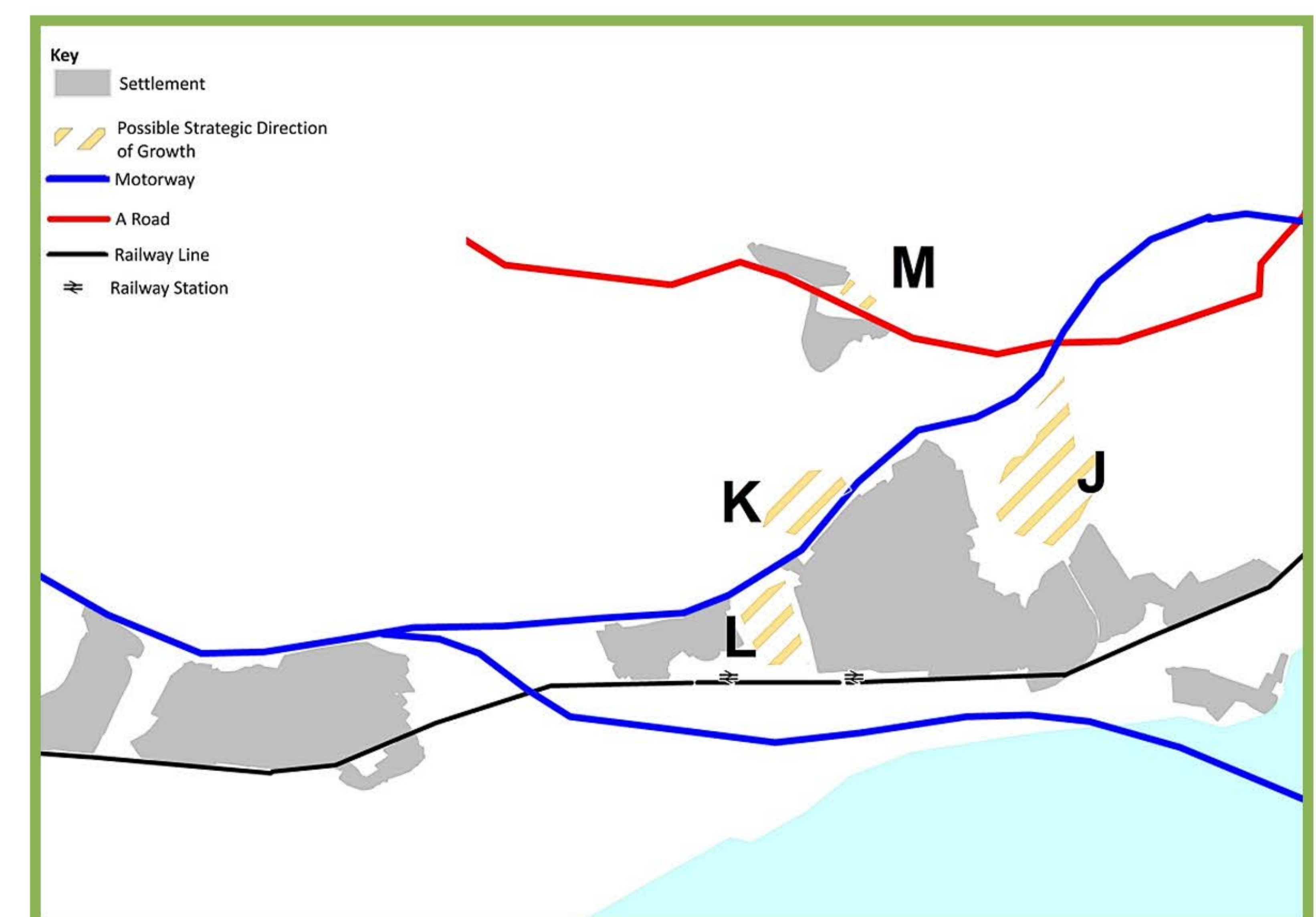
**L** - Land West of Caldicot / East of Rogiet

**M** - Land East of Caerwent

**Monmouth (inc. Wyesham)**

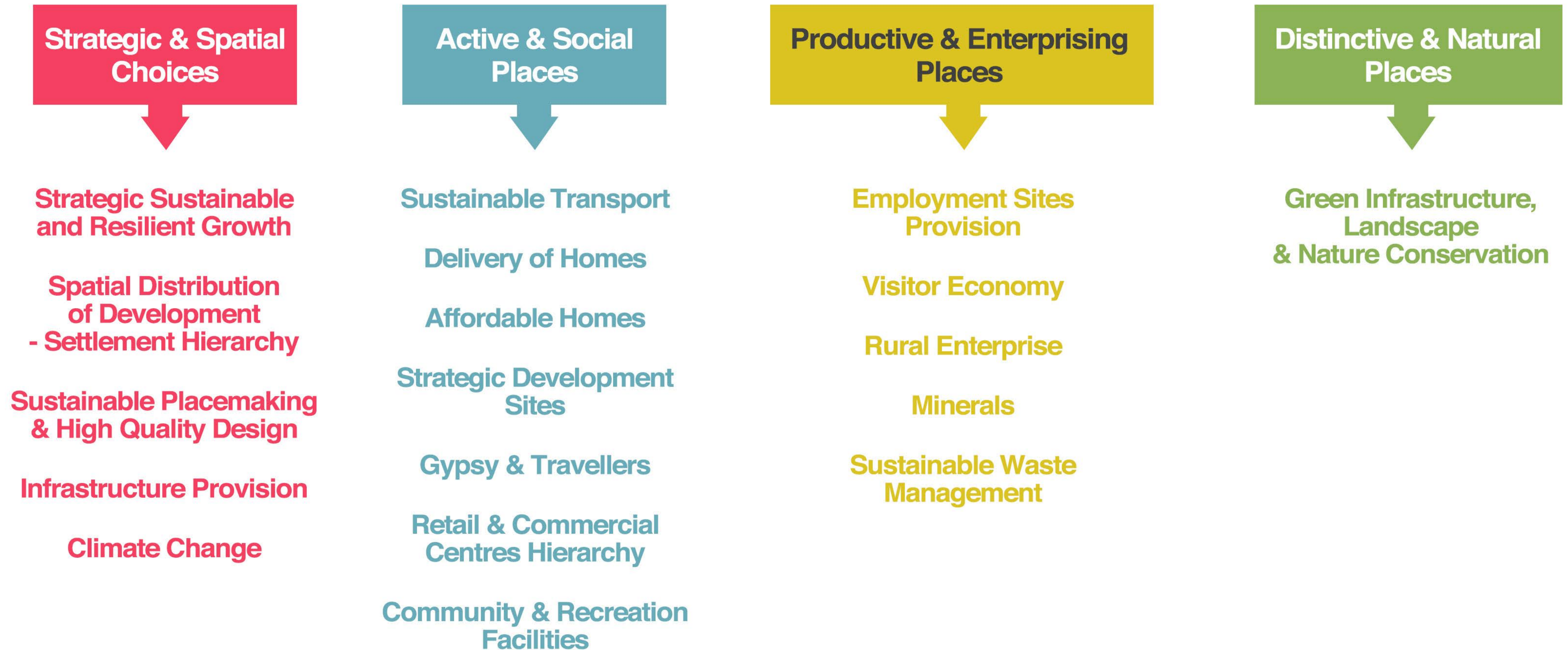


**Severnside**



# Strategic Policies

The Preferred Strategy also sets out 18 strategic policies which cover a whole range of topic areas. These reflect PPW11's (Planning Policy Wales) four placemaking themes:



To ensure that our plan is sustainable and that it does not have an impact on protected species the strategy is supported by an Initial Integrated Sustainable Appraisal and a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

# Consultation Process

A 6 week consultation will take place on the Preferred Strategy from **5<sup>th</sup> July 2021** until **16<sup>th</sup> August 2021**.

The consultation will give the public and other interested parties an opportunity to submit their views in writing to the Council. All representations received during the consultation will be recorded and considered by the Council.

It should be noted that this consultation relates to the matters set out in the Preferred Strategy; it is not an opportunity to make detailed comments on individual Candidate Sites. All comments should relate to the questions included in the Preferred Strategy which are designed to assist with your representation.

There will be also be community engagement drop-in session in various locations across the County, as well as two webinar presentations and Q&A sessions. For further information on our community engagement please visit our website on:

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/news-and-consultations>



To leave a consultation response please register on the RLDP database and submit comments direct onto the database at:

<http://monmouthshire.planning-register.co.uk>

*\* Should there be a further lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these drop-in sessions will be replaced by additional virtual events.*



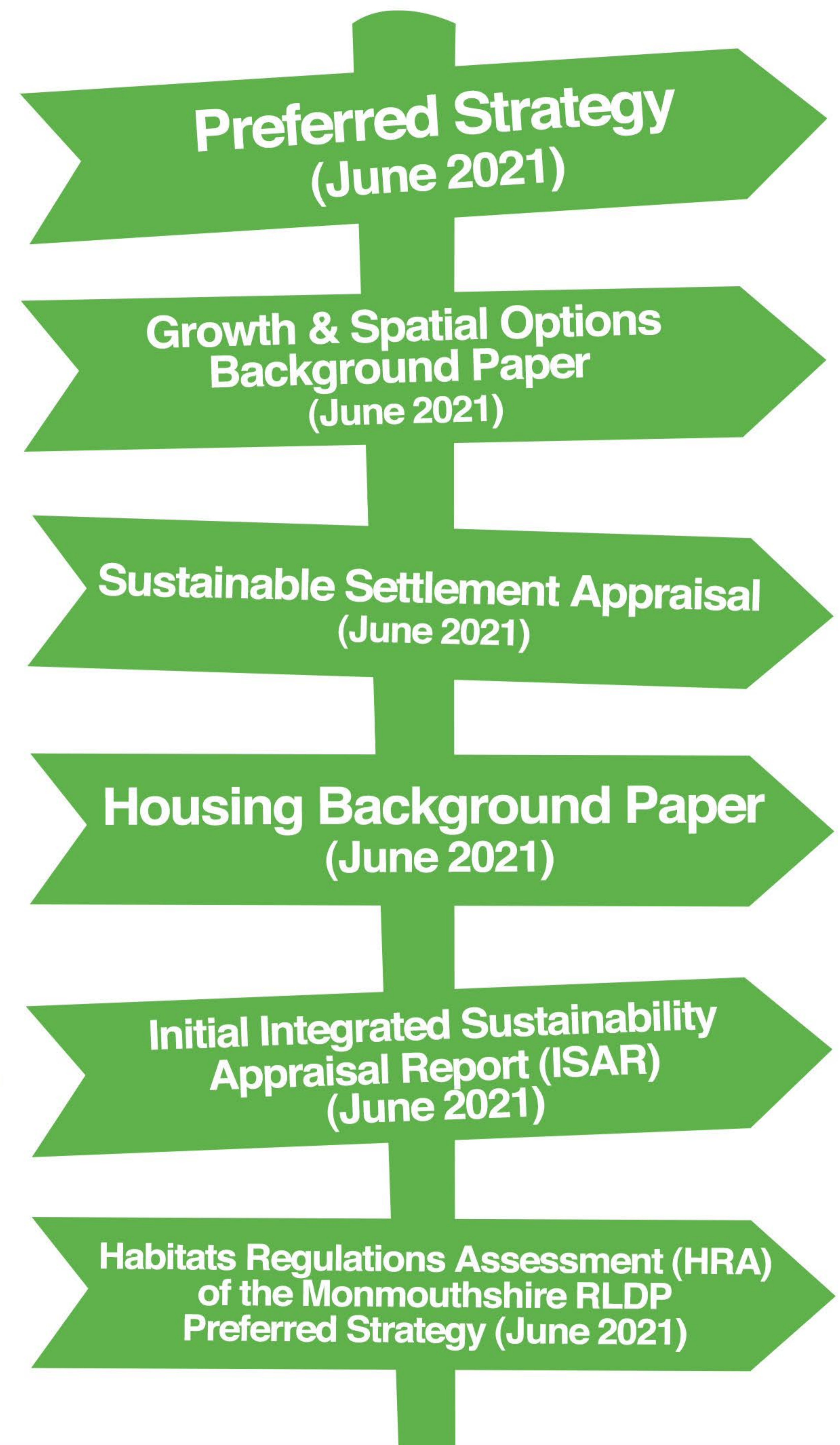
# Key Preferred Strategy Documents

## Next Steps

Feedback from the consultation / engagement on the Preferred Strategy will be considered and set out in the Consultation Report on the Preferred Strategy. This consultation report and the Preferred Strategy with any necessary amendments will be reported to Council in approximately November 2021 to seek approval of the Preferred Strategy. The Deposit Plan will then be prepared and considered by Council prior to a statutory six-week consultation and engagement period in Summer 2022.

Further information and documents in relation to the Preferred Strategy are available at:

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/plan-preparation/preferred-strategy>





**Name of the Officer** completing the evaluation

Mark Hand

**Phone no:** 07773478579

**E-mail:** markhand@monmouthshire.gov.uk

**Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal**

The Council has now reached the **Preferred Strategy** stage of the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) process. The Preferred Strategy is the first formal publication and statutory consultation stage in the RLDP preparation process. It provides the strategic direction for the development and use of land in Monmouthshire (excluding the area within the Brecon Beacons National Park) over the Plan period 2018 to 2033 and identifies how much growth is needed and where this growth will broadly be located. It provides the strategic context for the preparation of more detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations which will be included in the Deposit RLDP. It is proposed that the Preferred Strategy will be made available for statutory engagement/consultation with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders in July/August 2021. The consultation responses received will help shape the Deposit RLDP.

We originally commenced consultation on the Preferred Strategy in March 2020, however progress on the RLDP was paused in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic which meant we could not continue with the public engagement events. Following advice issues in a letter from the Minister for Housing and Local Government (7<sup>th</sup> July 2020), the decision was made to cease the RLDP Preferred Strategy consultation and Second Call for Candidate Sites.

A review of the RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives was undertaken in June 2020 and incorporated into the RLDP Review of Issues, Vision and Objectives (IVO) and Evidence Base (September 2020). This review demonstrated that the Plan's Issues, Vision and Objectives remain relevant to Monmouthshire. The review concluded that in light of Covid-

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <p>19 a number of issues and objectives are now considered to have increased emphasis and importance, consistent with the priorities identified in the Welsh Government Building Better Places document published in July 2020.</p> <p>In August 2020, Welsh Government (WG) published corrected 2018-based population and household projections. These constitute a first update since the 2014-based population and household projections. National policy requires that updates to nationally published data, such as household and population projections should be taken into account in the plan preparation process. The latest WG population and household projections form the starting point for the Plan's evidence base on growth levels, onto which policy choices can be added to ensure that the issues are addressed, objectives met and vision achieved. The updated projections comprise important new evidence that requires consideration to ensure that the evidence base for the RLDP is robust and based on the most up to date information.</p> <p>As a result of the unavoidable delays detailed above with regard to the Covid-19 pandemic, the review of the Issues, Vision, Objectives and Evidence Base, and the publication of updated key evidence the decision was made to revisit the Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy stages of the RLDP. This has necessitated a further revision to the RLDP Delivery Agreement which was agreed by WG in October 2020.</p> |
| <p><b>Name of Service area</b></p> <p>Planning (Planning Policy)</p> | <p><b>Date</b> 01/06/2021</p>  |

1. **Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics?** Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.



| Protected Characteristics | Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic  | Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic | What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?   |
|---------------------------|--|---|---|
| Age                       | The Preferred Strategy considers the demographic profile of Monmouthshire and aims to have a positive impact on people of all ages, particularly through increasing opportunities for the younger population to both live and work with Monmouthshire to assist in ensuring a balanced demography whilst also supporting the needs of the older population. The Preferred Strategy would benefit younger people but not to the detriment of older age groups.            | None.   | The Preferred Strategy sets out how much growth (housing & employment) is needed over the RLDP period and broadly where this growth should take place. It seeks to provide a more balanced demographic profile for Monmouthshire. This will make our communities more sustainable. The Preferred Strategy will inform the Deposit Plan which will include detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations. COVID-19 has demonstrated the importance of sustainable communities and a balanced demography to support the older age groups. |
| Disability                | The Preferred Strategy includes the need to ensure the provision of a wide-ranging choice of homes including meeting affordable and accessible housing needs as far as possible. The Preferred Strategy recognises the importance of the health and well-being of people and aims to create attractive, safe and accessible places to live, work and visit. At present, WG Development Quality Requirements for affordable housing incorporate Lifetime Homes standards. | None  | The Preferred Strategy aims to support the well-being of current and future generations that are more inclusive, cohesive, prosperous and vibrant. The Preferred Strategy will inform the Deposit Plan which will include detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations.  |
| Gender reassignment       | None   | None  | N/A   |

| Protected Characteristics     | Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic   | Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic  | What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?  |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Marriage or civil partnership | None  | None   | N/A  |
| Pregnancy or maternity        | None  | None   | N/A  |
| Race                          | None  | None   | N/A  |
| Religion or Belief            | None  | None   | N/A  |
| Sex                           | One of the challenges facing the County is the imbalance between male and female earnings, although this situation is improving. The Preferred Strategy aims to provide economic growth and employment provision, which could indirectly impact on wage equality. | The jobs in the foundation economy are disproportionately occupied by females. This sector is vital to support our communities, as are jobs in tourism. Neither sectors are generally well-paid, although they often offer flexible working conditions that can assist work-life balance. Wage levels are not within the remit of planning policy and policies to try to seek only high paid jobs could be to the detriment of this vital economic sector. | The Preferred Strategy aims to support economic growth and prosperity. The Preferred Strategy will inform the Deposit Plan which will include detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations. |
| Sexual Orientation            | None  | None   | N/A  |

**2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice**

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The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions. This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

|  | <b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage</b> | <b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.</b> | <b>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b> |
|--|---|--|--|
|--|---|--|--|

### Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Social Justice strategy focuses on three main areas: tackling loneliness and isolation; tackling poverty and promoting equitable economic prosperity; and giving children the best start in life. The Preferred Strategy seeks to tackle house price unaffordability, which currently prevents some of our communities accessing suitable housing within the County. This is likely to benefit younger people in particular, which in turn will make our ageing communities more socially sustainable. Good quality and affordable housing is important in achieving poverty reduction and equitable prosperity, and supporting the best start in life. Good spatial planning helps to build cohesive communities. The provision of affordable housing combined with policy interventions in relation to the requirement of a mix of market housing will increase opportunities for those in poverty to access safe, secure and suitable housing. Improved energy efficiency requirements for new build properties will reduce the cost of living. The provision of suitable employment land, planning policy tools to support business and the use of other (non-planning) tools to stimulate economic activity will increase employment opportunities within the County. In accordance with the WFGA, the RLDP also seeks to prevent future problems and will therefore continue to avoid new development in flood risk areas and will seek low/zero carbon development to help address the climate emergency and also tackle issues such as fuel poverty.

People in poverty or on low incomes might not be able to access digital opportunities to work from home and/or are more likely to be employed in roles that cannot work from home.

We will consider the need for planning policies in the Deposit Plan to control the housing mix of the market housing on development sites, to ensure it helps create mixed communities and supports the retention of younger people who can afford an open market home were there sufficient supply of 2 and 3 bedroom homes.

We will consider the need for small affordable housing schemes in rural settlements similar to the current LDP's 60/40 sites in the Deposit RLDP.

We will consider a range of policies in the Deposit RLDP around the climate change theme to minimise the carbon footprint of new development, and therefore mitigate negative impacts associated with the proposed growth.

A policy requirement for broadband infrastructure provision will maximise opportunities for all to access the technology to work from home where possible, reducing commuting and associated costs.

### 3. Policy making and the Welsh language.

| How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:  | Describe the positive impacts of this proposal   | Describe the negative impacts of this proposal   | What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts  |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p><b>Policy Making</b></p> <p>Effects on the use of the Welsh language,</p> <p>Promoting Welsh language</p> <p>Treating the Welsh language no less favourably</p> | <p>The Welsh Language is a material planning consideration and is included within the RLDP Objective relating to Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language to ensure there is no negative impact. Any level of growth for the County relies on in-migration, some of which, whether English or Welsh or other by nationality will choose Welsh Medium education for their children. Also in-migration to Monmouthshire comes from other areas in Wales (including rural Welsh speaking areas e.g. Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion, Gwynedd, Ynys Môn, Denbighshire). This is in the main due to the significantly increased employment opportunities offered in Cardiff, Newport and in adjacent areas of England e.g. Bristol, Gloucester etc. Monmouthshire with its' border location and transport links is accessible to all of these areas. This in-migration, together with the ambition to retain and attract younger families, will expose more children to Welsh curriculum education in all schools, increasing the number of Welsh speakers in the County. The Preferred Strategy has been subject to a Welsh Language Impact Assessment</p> | <p>Any level of growth for the County relies on in-migration, being a border County a proportion of this is likely to be from England.</p> | <p>The Preferred Strategy aims to support Culture and the Welsh Language. The Preferred Strategy will inform the Deposit Plan which will include detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations.</p> <p>We will liaise with the Local Education Authority to understand if the proposed level and location of growth necessitates additional Welsh medium school provision.</p> <p>There are already significant plans and proposals in place in terms of expanding Welsh Medium education in Monmouthshire. This is due to a number of factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the increased popularity of the Welsh Language.</li> <li>- the opportunity for children to be become bilingual</li> <li>- the increased employment opportunities that this affords them in Wales.</li> </ul> |

|   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
|   | (WLIA) as part of the wider Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report (ISAR).   |  |   |
| <b>Operational</b><br>Recruitment & Training of workforce   | An expansion of the provision of Welsh Medium education in the county will increase the opportunities for Welsh speakers to apply for vacancies within the council thus increasing the council's Welsh speaking capacity.   | None of the current Planning Policy team are Welsh speakers, however, there are robust systems in place to deal with phone calls and correspondence without delaying the provision of the service. | N/A   |
| <b>Service delivery</b><br>Use of Welsh language in service delivery<br>Promoting use of the language | All documentation on the RLDP and the consultation along with notices, social media and correspondence will be bilingual. A document will be in English only if it comes from an external source that is not subject to compliance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. Emails/letters etc will make it clear that correspondence in Welsh is welcome and will not lead to a delay in response or a lesser standard of service . When requests are made for people to be added to the RLDP consultation database we will record language choice and communicate accordingly. | None of the Planning Policy team are Welsh speakers, however, there are robust systems in place to deal with phone calls and correspondence without delaying the provision of the service.         | The Welsh Language is a material planning consideration and is included within the RLDP Objective relating to Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language to ensure there is no impact. The Preferred Strategy has been subject to a Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) as part of the wider Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report (ISAR) we will review this further if any additional assessment is required as we go through the RLDP process. |

**4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below?** Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!

| Well Being Goal  | Does the proposal contribute to this goal?<br>Describe the positive and negative impacts.   | What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?   |
|--|---|---|
| <p><b>A prosperous Wales</b><br/>Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>                                 | <p><b>Positive:</b> The Preferred Strategy sets out how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and broadly where this growth should take place. It sets out the preferred growth spatial options which as well as housing growth and aims to provide economic growth and employment provision in both urban and rural areas.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> Higher levels of growth would require more land to be developed, careful site selection is required to minimise loss of best and most versatile agricultural land and mineral resource.</p>  | <p>The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives relating to economic growth/employment and retail centres, which have been set in order to address the identified issues relating to creating a prosperous Wales.</p>   |
| <p><b>A resilient Wales</b><br/>Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p> | <p><b>Positive:</b> The Preferred Strategy sets out how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and where this growth should take place. The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives including the impact of development on the natural environment in already constrained areas. It is however recognised that developments could improve connectivity through opportunities to create new linkages. The limited supply of brownfield land within the County is a recognised issue. The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against a climate change objective which recognises that we are in a climate emergency and has committed to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C. Resilience of new development to aspects of climate change can be achieved via the design and location of new developments. Developments can provide opportunities to minimise carbon by providing opportunities for renewable energy</p> | <p>The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives relating to Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape, Flood Risk, Minerals and Waste, Land and Natural Resources which have been set in order to address the identified issues relating to creating a resilient Wales.</p> <p>Recently it has been announced that there are phosphate water quality issues in the River Usk and River Wye SACs, any proposed development in these catchment areas needs to clearly evidence that the development can demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or contribution to the water body.</p> <p>Strategic Policy S4 specifically relates to Climate Change, and S18 relates to Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation.</p> |

| Well Being Goal   | Does the proposal contribute to this goal?<br>Describe the positive and negative impacts.   | What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?   |
|---|---|---|
|   | <p>generation, seeking to reduce commuting, supporting use of ultra-low emission vehicles and public transport, and the provision of quality Green Infrastructure. Recently it has been announced that there are phosphate water quality issues in the River Usk and River Wye SACs. There is a legal and national policy requirement to maintain and enhance ecology. The current pandemic has emphasised the need to enable such responses in delivering sustainable and resilient communities. The Covid-19 pandemic has also emphasised the importance of place-making and Green Infrastructure for the provision of open spaces in close proximity to homes for physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> Higher levels of growth would likely result in further pressure on the natural environment. New developments could nevertheless improve Green Infrastructure and ecological connectivity through opportunities to create new linkages. The value and importance of having access to locally accessible open/green spaces to assist in recreation and health and well-being has been heightened during the current pandemic.</p> |   |
| <p><b>A healthier Wales</b><br/>People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood</p> | <p><b>Positive:</b> The Preferred Strategy sets out how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and broadly where this growth should take place. It is recognised that any developments will be encouraged to support healthier lifestyles and provide sufficient open space. The RLDP will encourage Active Travel and will reflect the Integrated Network Maps. The Covid-19</p>   | <p>The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives including Health and Well-being in order to address the identified issues relating to creating a healthier Wales. The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised the vulnerability of those in our communities with underlying health conditions, as well as the importance of place-</p> |





| Well Being Goal   | Does the proposal contribute to this goal?<br>Describe the positive and negative impacts.   | What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?  |
|---|---|--|
|   | <p>pandemic has emphasised the vulnerability of those in our communities with underlying health conditions, as well as the importance of place-making and green infrastructure for the provision of open spaces in close proximity to homes for physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> Higher levels of growth have the potential to increase commuting which could affect areas with air quality problems, however, the RLDP seeks to provide for jobs within the County. Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated that a significant proportion of our communities can work from home which is likely to continue over the longer term.</p> | <p>making and green infrastructure for the provision of open spaces in close proximity to homes for physical and mental wellbeing.</p>   |
| <p><b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b><br/>Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p> | <p><b>Positive:</b> The Preferred Strategy sets out how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and broadly where this growth should take place and considers the balance of housing, employment and infrastructure in both urban and rural areas. The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised the importance of socially sustainable communities and ensuring a balanced demography. The role of younger age cohorts providing voluntary support to the over 70s who have been self-isolating has been vital. Unchecked, our ageing demography presents a very real challenge to how such support would be offered in the future.</p>                                    | <p>The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives including housing, place-making, communities, rural communities, infrastructure and accessibility in order to address the identified issues relating to creating a Wales of cohesive communities.</p> <p>Detailed policies included in the Deposit Plan will consider design and placemaking in more detail.</p> |

| Well Being Goal   | Does the proposal contribute to this goal?<br>Describe the positive and negative impacts.  | What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?  |
|---|--|--|
|   | <b>Negative:</b> Lower growth levels would result in communities that are not viable.  |  |
| <p><b>A globally responsible Wales</b><br/>Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>                                | <p><b>Positive:</b> The Preferred Strategy sets out how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and where this growth should take place. It has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives including the impact of options on climate change. The climate change objective recognises that we are in a climate emergency and has committed to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C. The Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated that a significant proportion of our communities can work from home which is likely to continue over the longer term. Home/agile working combined with school closures and reduced leisure-based travel over the course of the pandemic has significantly reduced congestion and evidence suggests air quality has improved markedly. The RLDP seeks to reduce the commuting ratio and to enable home-working: Covid-19 has demonstrated that this is achievable. The Preferred Strategy also includes a specific Strategic Policy relating to climate change (S4).</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None.</p> | <p>The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives including climate change which has been set in order to address the identified issues relating to creating a globally responsible Wales. Climate change considerations will inform the Deposit Plan which will include detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations.</p> <p>Strategic Policy S4 specifically relates to Climate Change.</p> |
| <p><b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b><br/>Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p> | <p><b>Positive:</b> The Preferred Strategy sets out how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and broadly where this growth should take place. It has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives including the impact on Culture, Heritage and the Welsh Language.</p>   | <p>The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives including including including Culture, Heritage and the Welsh Language which has been set in order to address the identified issues relating to creating a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language. We will liaise with the</p>   |

| Well Being Goal  | Does the proposal contribute to this goal?<br>Describe the positive and negative impacts.  | What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?   |
|--|--|---|
|  | <b>Negative:</b> Any level of growth for the County relies on in-migration, being a border County a proportion of this is likely to be from England.   | Local Education Authority to understand if the proposed growth necessitates additional Welsh medium school provision.   |
| <p><b>A more equal Wales</b><br/>           People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances</p> | <p><b>Positive:</b> The Preferred Strategy sets out how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and where this growth should take place. It sets out the preferred option which through housing and economic growth in both urban and rural areas aims to assist in balancing the demography across the County and in addressing the County's affordability challenges. The preferred growth option aims to readdress the higher proportion of older age groups and lower proportion of young adults compared to the Welsh average. One of the key objectives of the RLDP is to deliver affordable housing, having a safe secure and suitable home gives people the best start in life.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None.</p> | <p>The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objective relating to demography which has been set in order to address the identified issues relating to creating a more equal Wales. The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the links between poverty and resilience as well as the higher level of homelessness. The Preferred Strategy seeks to take action to enable younger people who are currently priced-out of the County an opportunity to remain living here by striving to maximise affordable housing delivery to help tackle this. It also seeks to provide additional jobs.</p> |

**5. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?**

| Sustainable Development Principle  | Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.   | Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?  |
|--|---|--|
|  <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p> | <p>The Revised Preferred Strategy sets out the preferred option for housing/employment growth and spatial distribution of this growth across the County, including the identified level of growth and broad locations for development for the period 2018 - 2033. It also sets out the RLDP Vision, the role of which is to clarify the core purpose of the RLDP and provide a framework for developing the Preferred Strategy and future detailed policies. The Vision sets out the overarching context for Monmouthshire for the period up to 2033</p> <p>The Preferred Strategy will inform the Deposit Plan which will include detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations. Some of the long term implications of COVID-19 are not yet known, for example the impact longer term on our High Streets. The Deposit RLDP can incorporate flexible policies to seek to adjust to the unknown longer term implications.</p> | <p>The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives in order to address the issues, challenges, opportunities and drivers facing the County. It seeks to balance the need to tackle issues facing Monmouthshire's communities such as housing affordability, our demography and community sustainability, and commuting levels with landscape protection and the climate emergency declaration. This is informed by the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal.</p> |

| Sustainable Development Principle   | Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.   | Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?   |
|---|---|---|
|  <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p> <p><b>Collaboration</b></p> | <p>The Preferred Strategy represents the culmination of a period of pre-deposit plan preparation and engagement which has involved engagement and consultation at an early stage of the Plan preparation process in order to gather opinions and build consensus from the outset. This has involved the preparation of an Issues, Vision &amp; Objectives Paper (updated June 2021) and a Growth &amp; Spatial Options Paper (December 2020). The feedback from these papers has been considered and helped shape the Preferred Strategy. Pre-deposit plan preparation and engagement has also included: collaborative working with neighbouring local authorities; Member involvement; discussions with key stakeholders including internal departments and external organisations including key infrastructure providers.</p> <p>The Preferred Strategy will be made available for statutory engagement/consultation with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders in July/August 2021.</p> | <p>The Preferred Strategy will be made available for statutory engagement/consultation with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders in July/August 2021. The consultation responses received will help shape the Deposit RLDP.</p> <p>A number of events have been attended previously to seek to integrate the LDP and Climate Emergency declaration.</p> <p>The Public Service Board will be involved at key stages of Plan-making.</p> <p>The Revised Delivery Agreement (October 2020) ensures full stakeholder /community's involvement to shape the RLDP.</p> <p>Future key stages of the RLDP process will be subject to engagement/consultation with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders.</p> |



### Involvement

Involving those with an interest and seeking their views

The Preferred Strategy has been informed by pre-deposit plan preparation and engagement which has involved engagement and consultation at an early stage of the Plan preparation process in order to gather opinions and build consensus from the outset. This has included engagement/consultation on the Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (updated June 2021) and Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020) and a range of collaborative working.

Pending endorsement by Council, statutory consultation and engagement on the Preferred Strategy will take place for a six week period between 5 July 2021 and 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021 and will include:

- Notifying all parties on the RLDP database of the consultation.
- Planning Policy Officer attendance at Area Cluster meetings during July and August 2021;
- Members' Workshop 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021 (hosted by the Economy & Development Select Committee);
- Scrutiny by Economy & Development Select Committee 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021
- Internal discussions within the Council through an officer workshop, Department Management Team and Senior Leadership Team;
- Several RLDP Preferred Strategy Drop-in Sessions during July and August 2021 in Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow, Monmouth, Magor/Undy, Raglan and Usk. Should there be a further lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic, these drop-in sessions will be replaced by additional virtual events.
- We will seek to engage with seldom heard groups in particular young people, via the Youth Council and going into secondary schools, and Gypsy and Travellers via the GTAA work and reiterating the

Feedback from Preferred Strategy consultation will be noted and considered, and will help to shape the detailed proposals, site allocations and policies which will be set out in the Deposit Plan.

A Candidate Site Advice service, similar to planning pre-application advice, has been made available and will continue to be made available to site promoters to support their Candidate Site submissions.

| Sustainable Development Principle | Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.   | Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts? |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
|                                   | <p>opportunity to promote sites during the Second Call for Candidate Sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Two RLDP Webinar Sessions in July/August 2021.</li> </ul> <p>Our consultation and engagement arrangements have been revised in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and reflect the Coronavirus Regulations (2020) and recent Ministerial advice. We have reviewed the use of digital involvement options to provide communities with information and the ability to engage with the RLDP in a virtual manner.</p> |   |



Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse

The Preferred Strategy promotes an appropriate level and spatial distribution of housing and employment growth for the County to 2033, which assists in addressing the key demographic and affordability challenges facing the County and ultimately seeks to deliver the Council's core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. A climate change objective is included in the assessment of the Preferred Strategy which recognises that we are in a climate emergency and has committed to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C. The purpose of the Preferred Strategy is to:

- Identify key issues, challenges and opportunities for the County
- Develop a vision and set of objectives for the RLDP that respond to the key issues, challenges and opportunities
- Set out the growth and spatial options that the Council has considered in determining the Preferred Strategy.
- Set out the Preferred Strategy including the scale of future population, housing and employment growth and establish the broad spatial distribution of growth.
- Set out strategic policies that will deliver/implement the strategy.


The Preferred Strategy provides the strategic context for the preparation of more detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations which will be included in the Deposit RLDP.

The Preferred Strategy will inform the Deposit Plan which will be subject to statutory consultation in Summer 2022. The RLDP seeks to address the key issues, challenges and opportunities identified (in a land use context) and supports the delivery of the Council's core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations.

A number of events have been attended previously to seek to integrate the LDP and Climate Emergency declaration.

The Public Service Board will be involved at key stages of Plan-making.



| Sustainable Development Principle   | Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.  | Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?   |
|---|--|---|
|  <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p> | <p>The Preferred Strategy sets out the preferred option for housing/employment growth and spatial distribution of this growth across the County, including the identified level of growth and broad locations for development for the period 2018 – 2033. The Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives which seek to address the issues, challenges and opportunities identified (in a land use context) and support delivery of the Council’s vision/objectives for the future of the County and its communities. The RLDP (including the Preferred Strategy) will be subject to an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Well-being of Future Generations (WBFG), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), and Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA)). The ISA findings have informed the development of the RLDP strategy, and will inform the policies and site allocations in the Deposit RLDP in order to ensure that the Plan will be promoting sustainable development.</p> <p>The Preferred Strategy sets out the Vision and overarching context for Monmouthshire for the period up to 2033. MCC recognises that we are in a climate emergency and has committed to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C. The importance of carbon reduction is recognised as a key issue that the RLDP should seek to address.</p> | <p>The RLDP will be subject to an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Well-being of Future Generations (WBFG), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), and Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA)). The ISA findings have informed the development of the RLDP strategy and will inform the policies and site allocations in the Deposit RLDP in order to ensure that the Plan will be promoting sustainable development.</p> <p>We will continue to work closely with our neighbours, both in Wales and England, including the joint procurement of evidence as applicable.</p> <p>An officer workshop will be held to enable colleagues in all service areas an opportunity to be involved and consider any implications for the services they deliver.</p> <p>The RLDP will align with the new Integrated Network Maps for Active Travel, and will be accompanied by an Infrastructure Plan and revised Local Transport Plan.</p> |

**Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?**

|                     | <b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has</b>  | <b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has</b> | <b>What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b> |
|---------------------|---|--|---|
| Safeguarding        | None.   | .None.   | N/A.  |
| Corporate Parenting | The RLDP has the potential to provide affordable housing, delivery and allocation of which should be cognisant of the needs of children leaving care. | None.  | N/A.  |

**6. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?**

An extensive range of background evidence and data has been used to prepare the Preferred Strategy, from a wide range of sources both internal and external to the Council. These are clearly referenced in the Preferred Strategy, but include:

- Monmouthshire Public Service Board Well-being Plan (April 2018) [https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2017/10/Monmouthshire-PSB\\_well-being-plan\\_3.0.pdf](https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2017/10/Monmouthshire-PSB_well-being-plan_3.0.pdf)
- Monmouthshire County Council Corporate Business Plan 2017 – 2022 (February 2018) [https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2018/03/Monmouthshire-Council\\_Corporate-Plan\\_1.0.pdf](https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2018/03/Monmouthshire-Council_Corporate-Plan_1.0.pdf)
- Monmouthshire Local Development Plan Review Report (March 2018) <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2018/03/Final-Review-Report-1.pdf>
- Monmouthshire Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Reports (2015- 2020) <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/annual-monitoring/ldp-annual-monitoring-report>
- Monmouthshire Replacement Local Development Plan Candidate Sites Register (February 2019): <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/monmouthshire-replacement-ldp-candidate-sites-register-february-2019/>
- Habitat Regulations Assessment Initial Screening Report (December 2018) <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2020/03/HRA-Screening-Report-December-2018.pdf>
- Replacement LDP Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (As amended December 2018) <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2020/03/Final-SA-Scoping-Report-Dec-2018-1.pdf>
- MCC Economies of the Future Reports (2018) and associated economic ambition (November 2019)

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- Monmouthshire LDP 'Retail Background Paper', March 2021. <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2021/05/Retail-Report-2020.pdf>
- Monmouthshire LDP 'Employment Background Paper', September 2020. <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2020/09/Final-Report-September-2020.pdf>
- Monmouthshire Housing Land Availability Schedules (2018-2019) and 2019/2020 Trajectory <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/housing-land-supply/?preview=true> .
- Review of the RLDP Issues, Vision, Objectives and Evidence Base in light of Covid-19 (September 2020) <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2020/11/Monmouthshire-RLDP-Review-of-Issues-Vision-Objectives-and-Evidence-Base-in-Light-of-Covid.pdf>
- Monmouthshire RLDP Revised Delivery Agreement (October 2020) <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2020/11/Revised-DA-October-2020-Final.pdf>
- Updating the RLDP Demographic Evidence produced by Edge Analytics (November 2020)
- Monmouthshire Affordable Housing Evidence Addendum Report produced by Edge Analytics (November 2020)
- Monmouthshire Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020) <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2021/04/Growth-and-Spatial-Options-Paper-Dec-2020.pdf>
- Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021)
- Initial Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) Report for the Monmouthshire RLDP produced by AECOM (June 2021)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Monmouthshire RLDP Preferred Strategy produced by AECOM (June 2021)

External sources of data include Welsh Government, Cadw, Natural Resources Wales, Hometrack, Office for National Statistics and Stats Wales.

**7. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?**

**Positive -**

The RLDP Preferred Strategy promotes an appropriate level and spatial distribution of housing and employment growth for the County to 2033, which assists in addressing the key demographic and affordability challenges facing the County and ultimately seeks to deliver the Council's core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. This is a positive impact for social justice.

The Preferred Strategy provides the strategic context for /will inform the preparation of more detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations which will be included in the Deposit RLDP.

**Negative –**

None. There are no implications, positive or negative, for social justice, corporate parenting or safeguarding.

**8. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.**

| What are you going to do  | When are you going to do it?   | Who is responsible   |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Inform the Economy and Development Select Committee of the intention to undertake consultation on the RLDP Preferred Strategy, and to seek Committee's feedback/comments on the Strategy.</p>  | <p>Scrutiny by Economy &amp; Development Select Committee on xxxxx.</p> <p>Consultation on the Preferred Strategy will take place in July/August 2021.</p>   | <p>Head of Placemaking, Housing, Highways and Flooding<br/>Head of Planning<br/>Planning Policy Team</p> |
| <p>Seek Council's endorsement to undertake statutory consultation on the Preferred Strategy. Feedback from this consultation will be noted and considered, and will help to shape the proposals, land use allocations and detailed polices in the Deposit Plan.</p> | <p>Statutory consultation and engagement on the Preferred Strategy will take place for a six week period between 5 July 2021 and 16 August 2021 and will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Notifying all parties on the RLDP database of the consultation.</li> <li>➤ Planning Policy Officer attendance at Area Cluster meetings during July and August 2021;</li> <li>➤ Members' Workshop 22nd June 2021 (hosted by the Economy &amp; Development Select Committee);</li> <li>➤ Scrutiny by Economy &amp; Development Select Committee 15th July 2021</li> </ul> | <p>Head of Placemaking, Housing, Highways and Flood<br/>Head of Planning<br/>Planning Policy Team</p>    |

- Internal discussions within the Council through an officer workshop, Department Management Team and Senior Leadership Team;
- Several RLDP Preferred Strategy Drop-in Sessions during July and August 2021 in Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow, Monmouth, Magor/Undy, Raglan and Usk. Should there be a further lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic, these drop-in sessions will be replaced by additional virtual events.
- We will seek to engage with seldom heard groups in particular young people, via the Youth Council and going into secondary schools, and Gypsy and Travellers via the GTAA work and reiterating the opportunity to promote sites during the Second Call for Candidate Sites.
- Two RLDP Webinar Sessions in July/August 2021.

**9. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.**

| <b>Version No.</b> | <b>Decision making stage</b>   | <b>Date considered</b> | <b>Brief description of any amendments made following consideration</b>   |
|--------------------|--|------------------------|---|
| 0.0                | LDP Review Report and Delivery Agreement   | 20/04/2018             | Draft for Council 10 <sup>th</sup> May 2018   |
| 1.0                | Issues, Vision and Objectives scrutiny   | 01/02/2019             | Draft for Economy & Development Select Committee 14 <sup>th</sup> February 2019   |
| 1.1                | Issues, Vision and Objectives endorsement following consultation   | 09/04/2019             | Draft for Cabinet 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2019   |
| 1.2                | Issues, Vision and Objectives endorsement following consultation   | 14/06/2019             | Amended for Cabinet 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2019 to reflect 16 <sup>th</sup> May 2019's Climate Emergency declaration by Council   |
| 2.0                | Growth and Spatial Options endorsement to consult  | 07/06/2019             | Draft for Cabinet 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2019   |
| 2.1                | Growth and Spatial Options scrutiny  | 09/07/2019             | Draft for Economy & Development Select Committee 17 <sup>th</sup> July 2019   |
| 3.0                | Preferred Strategy endorsement to consult  | 11/12/2019             | Draft for Council report 5 <sup>th</sup> March 2020   |
| 3.1                | Preferred Strategy endorsement to consult  | 17/02/2020             | Social Justice Strategy reviewed with Judith Langdon  |
| 4.0                | Revised Delivery Agreement   | 05/03/2020             | Timetable amended further to account for slippage as a result of the pre-election period preceding the December 2019 General Election, the additional time and work needed to inform the Preferred Strategy and delays associated with joint working with neighbouring local authorities on joint evidence base work. |
| 4.1                | Revised Delivery Agreement and review of Issues, Vision and Objectives and of evidence base in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic. | 07/10/2020             | Timetable amended further to account for Covid-19 pandemic and revised Welsh Government population and household projections.   |
| 5.0                | Revised Growth and Spatial Options scrutiny  | 17/11/2020             | Draft for Economic Development Select Committee 10 <sup>th</sup> December 2020  |

|     |  |            |   |
|-----|--|------------|---|
| 5.1 | Revised Growth and Spatial Options endorsement to consult, including identifying growth option 5 and spatial option 2 as the preferred options at this stage of the process. | 03/12/2020 | Draft for Cabinet report 16 <sup>th</sup> December 2020 |
| 6.0 | Preferred Strategy Consultation endorsement to consult   | 24/06/2021 | Draft for Council Report 24 <sup>th</sup> June 2021     |

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# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 8

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Minutes of the meeting of County Council held Remote Meeting on Thursday, 13th May, 2021 at 2.00 pm

**PRESENT:** County Councillor M. Feakins (Chairman)  
County Councillor A. Webb (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: C. Edwards, P. Clarke, D. Batrouni, J. Becker, D. Blakebrough, L. Brown, A. Davies, L. Dymock, A. Easson, R. Edwards, D. Evans, P. A. Fox, R. J. W. Greenland, M. Groucutt, L. Guppy, R. Harris, J. Higginson, G. Howard, S. Howarth, R. John, D. Jones, L. Jones, P. Jones, S. Jones, S. B. Jones, P. Jordan, M. Lane, P. Murphy, P. Pavia, M. Powell, J. Pratt, R. Roden, V. Smith, B. Strong, F. Taylor, T. Thomas, J. Treharne, J. Watkins, K. Williams and S. Woodhouse

#### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Matt Phillips     | Chief Officer People and Governance and Monitoring Officer |
| Paul Matthews     | Chief Executive  |
| Peter Davies      | Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer, Resources        |
| Nicola Perry      | Senior Democracy Officer                                   |
| Frances O'Brien   | Chief Officer, Enterprise                                  |
| Matthew Gatehouse | Head of Policy and Governance                              |
| Joe Skidmore      | Communities and Partnership Development Lead               |

#### **APOLOGIES:**

County Councillors A. Watts

##### **1. Declarations of interest**

None.

##### **2. To elect a Chairman of the County Council for the Civic Year 2021/22**

Council observed a minute silence in respect of the passing of Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Philip and all those affected by the COVID 19 pandemic.

Congratulations were offered to Councillor Peter Fox and Councillor Laura Jones on their Senedd appointments.

The Leader addressed Council and, on behalf of the Council, thanked County Councillor Woodhouse for her second year in office, and reflected on the work and achievements of the Chairman. Liberal Democrat and Independent Group Leaders echoed the sentiments of the Leader.

The Chair and Vice-Chair thanked Council and colleagues for their support.

It was proposed by County Councillor P. Fox, and duly seconded by County Councillor P. Murphy, that County Councillor M. Feakins be elected as Chairman of Monmouthshire County Council for the Civic Year 2021/22. Upon being put to the vote it was agreed to elect County Councillor Feakins as Chairman. County Councillor M. Feakins made and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

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Councillor Feakins thanked Council and introduced Bishop Cherry Vann as his Chaplain.

#### **3. To appoint a Vice-Chairman of the County Council for the Civic Year 2021/22**

It was moved by County Councillor P. Jones and seconded by County Councillor J. Pratt that County Councillor A. Webb be appointed as Vice Chairman of the County Council for the Civic Year 2021/22.

Upon being put to the vote it was resolved that County Councillor A. Webb be appointed as Vice Chairman. County Councillor Webb made and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and thanked Members for their support.

#### **4. Public Questions**

None.

#### **5. Receipt of petitions**

No petitions presented.

#### **6. To elect the Leader of the Council and to receive notification of Leader delegations (appointments to the Cabinet)**

As out-going Leader, County Councillor P. Fox moved that County Councillor R. John be elected as Leader of the Council. This was duly seconded by County Councillor S. Jones.

There were no further nominations and upon being put to the vote it was resolved that County Councillor R. John be elected as Leader of the Council for the Civic Year 2021/2022.

Councillor John thanked Council for their support and advised the following appointments to Cabinet:

County Councillor Sara Jones, Economy and Deputy Leader  
County Councillor Bob Greenland, Governance and Strategic Planning, and Deputy Leader  
County Councillor Paul Pavia, Education  
County Councillor Penny Jones, Social Care, Safeguarding and Health  
County Councillor Lisa Dymock, Community Wellbeing and Social Justice  
County Councillor Jane Pratt, Infrastructure and Neighbourhood Services  
County Councillor Phil Murphy, Resources

Councillor John assured Council that this team would be doing everything they can to continue delivering on the promises in the manifesto, encapsulated in MCC Corporate Plan and condensed into the 'plan on a page'.

#### **7. Representation of Political Groups**

The report was presented for Council to review the representation of different political groups on the bodies to which the Council makes appointments.

**Upon being put to the vote Council resolved to accept the recommendations:**

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That the Council decides to accept the report (and appendices) as a review under Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and to initially allocate ordinary committees with the numbers as indicated below as a fair representation:

| Committee   | Con | Lab | Lib Dem | Ind Gp | Ind |
|---|-----|-----|---------|--------|-----|
| Select (x 5) (9)                                      | 26  | 9   | 3       | 6      | 1   |
| Licensing & Regulatory (12)                           | 7   | 3   | 1       | 1      | 0   |
| Planning (16)   | 9   | 3   | 1       | 2      | 1   |
| Democratic Services (12)                              | 7   | 3   | 1       | 1      | 0   |
| Governance & Audit (11)<br>note – this excludes 1 lay | 7   | 2   | 1       | 1      | 0   |
| Aggregate Entitlement (96)                            | 56  | 20  | 7       | 11     | 2   |

That the 2 Planning Committee seats allocated to the Independent Group continue to be filled by representatives of the Conservative and Labour Groups only with the permission of the Independent Group Leader

#### **8. Appointments to Committees**

The Leader presented the report to appoint committees together with their membership and terms of reference. In doing so he moved that Group Leaders email Democratic Services to confirm their appointments to each committee and we move to receiving nominations for the Chair of Democratic Services Committee.

County Councillor Howarth proposed County Councillor David Jones as Chair of Democratic Services Committee, seconded by County Councillor Blakebrough.

County Councillor Batrouni proposed County Councillor David Evans as Chair of Democratic Services Committee, seconded by County Councillor Thomas.

**Upon being put to the vote Council resolved to accept the recommendations:**

**That the committees be appointed together with their membership as set out in the report**

**That Council appoints County Councillor David Evans as the Chair of Democratic Services Committee**

#### **9. Appointments to Outside Bodies**

The Leader presented the report to appoint representatives to serve on outside bodies.

The Leader advised the following changes:

Oldbury Power Station Stakeholder Group – Councillor M. Feakins  
Natural Resources Wales Advisory Group – Councillor J. Treharne  
Wye Valley AONB – Councillors Edwards and Feakins  
Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for Wales – Councillor L. Dymock  
Scrutiny Champion – Councillor A. Webb  
Living Levels Partnership Board – Councillors Dymock and Pratt

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ABUHB Stakeholder Reference Group – Councillor C. Edwards  
EAS – Councillor P. Pavia  
Yprentis – Councillor S. Jones  
Pratts Charity – Councillor P. Murphy  
Armed Forces Champion – Councillor L. Dymock.

It was agreed that Councillor J. Higginson remains on Joint Council for Wales.

**Upon being put to the vote Council resolved to accept the recommendations:**

**That the Council make appointments to the outside bodies set out in the schedule, with the exception of joint committees listed in Category B, which are Cabinet appointments**

#### **10. Freedom of the Borough - Royal British Legion (RBL)**

Council received the report to seek a decision on whether the Council admit as Honorary Freeman of the County the Royal British Legion in recognition of their 100th Year Anniversary on 15th May 2021 and to honour the charitable work of the organisation supporting ex-service men and women and their families. This will give public recognition to the recipient as an expression of high esteem in which they are held by Monmouthshire County Council and the people of the County on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Royal British Legion.

Under Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 a Council can grant the Freedom of the Borough to "persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the authority, rendered eminent services to place place or area". In order to grant the Freedom of the Borough, a resolution must be passed by not less than two thirds of the members voting at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose.

County Councillor Laura Jones declared, with enormous pleasure that, as her last act as Armed Forces Champion, she was able to recognise the Royal British Legion, on behalf of Council. For 100 years the Royal British Legion has been a symbol of hope for the British Armed Forces Community. As a Council who is keen to support our servicemen, women and families in any which way we can we are thankful for the key role played by the Royal British Legion in supporting our Armed Forces Community and championing remembrance today.

County Council would like to honour the work of the Royal British Legion, the centenary of the highly respected organisation, by offering the Freedom of the Borough.

**Upon being put the vote Council resolved to accept the recommendation:**

**Council are asked to recommend the following: In pursuance of Section 249 (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council confers upon the Royal British Legion in 2021, the Freedom of the County of Monmouthshire**

#### **11. Members Questions**

#### **12. From County Councillor M. Groucutt to County Councillor R. Greenland**

*The two Inspire programmes – Inspire to Achieve and Inspire to Work – both seek to support young people who have complex home backgrounds, and who are among our most vulnerable and challenging. The programmes are currently funded by the European Union and matched funding from the county council. The present funding period expires in December 2022 and, although talks are underway to prepare a bid under the Shared Prosperity Fund, there is currently nothing definite in place to continue the current provision. Even if alternatives to the*

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*current programmes are agreed, there might be a potential gap in funding. This would mean that the current, very experienced team who deliver the programmes in our four secondary schools, face an uncertain future, as do the schemes themselves.*

*Can the cabinet member for enterprise give assurances that the county council will do all within its powers to ensure that equivalent funding is made available once the current EU funding stream ends, including the provision of any short-term support to plug a gap should a new funding stream not be agreed by the time the current provision ends?*

The Cabinet Member for Economy thanked Councillor Groucutt and responded:

In terms of the gap in funding and what we are going to try and do to ensure we have sustainability of these projects going forward, the match funding is around £300,000, being the figure we are working towards. We have been identifying ways to try and ensure that gap is filled, with work going on for the last 12 months. We are carrying out local evaluations of the projects themselves and looking how we can learn best practice, working with stakeholders and partners and other areas we can streamline collaborative working. We are working with the 10 local authorities across the Cardiff Capital Region to develop new delivery models, and looking at exploring funding opportunities. We are putting forward part of a regional bid for community renewal funding.

To ensure we are successful in ensuring these programmes continue we need to ensure that all levels of government work together.

As a supplementary Councillor Groucutt suggested that the hopes for maintaining the provision is based on the shared prosperity fund, and was concerned that we may not replace like with like. He sought assurance that, if possible, the projects would continue as closely as they operate at present.

The Cabinet Member explained the experience of the team that deliver the fantastic support across the employability programmes, and provided assurance that all would be done to deliver and continue the programmes as they currently are.

#### **13. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of County Council held on 11th March 2021**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021 were accepted and approved.

#### **14. To exclude press and public**

It was resolved that Press and Public be excluded from the meeting.

#### **15. URGENT BUDGET DECISION - ASSET DISPOSAL COSTS**

Council resolved to accept the recommendations as set out in the report.

**The meeting ended at 4.45 pm**

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